



# Introduction to online help development training course

## Course objectives

Our *Introduction to online help development* training course teaches:

- ▶ The basic principles of online help and the purpose it is intended to achieve.
- ▶ How to plan online help.
- ▶ A style of writing appropriate to help.

On completing the course you will know how to plan and write 'state-of-the-art' online help to be incorporated in a software application.

You will know what help format is most appropriate for your requirements, and the best tool for developing it.

## Who should attend?

Anybody who has been tasked with producing online help for the first time.

## Duration

One day.

## Courseware and certification

Delegates receive courseware to refer to throughout the course, and to use as a refresher following the course. Delegates are also issued with a certificate confirming they have attended and successfully completed the course.

## Course outline

### ▶ Introduction

Introduction and course objectives.  
Recommended reading list.  
The benefits of online help.  
Online help and paper based guides; alternative or complimentary approaches?

### ▶ Module 1: Help fundamentals

Understand the terminology used in online help development.  
Appreciate how users scan online help.  
Learn about the different types of help systems, web enabled, Flash and HTML.

### ▶ Module 2: Planning and designing your help

Use the analysis, design and build phases to organise your project.  
Understand the different types of help topics.  
Appreciate the different approaches to structuring help and the 8 golden rules of online help structure.

### ▶ Module 3: Writing skills for online help

Improve online help usability through concise, readable and objective writing.  
Understand some of the basic techniques of writing, such as the use of the active voice, being positive and the importance of being consistent.  
Discover writing to make your topics more 'scan-able'

### ▶ Module 4: Designing the online display

Use colour and graphics to improve scanning.  
Learn which fonts to use and which never to use.  
Design tables, lists and jump-lists for the online help medium.

### ▶ Module 5: Online help navigation

Learn the rules for hypertext linking and why it's important not to over-use it.  
Understand the importance of indexing and the use of headings.  
Appreciate the benefits of 'Related Topic' lists, browse sequences and task-maps.

### ▶ Module 6: What do users prefer?

Understand the 10 things that users prefer in online help systems.

### ▶ Module 7: Mainstream help authoring tools

Understand the main online help authoring tools, RoboHelp, Madcap Flare and others.

### ▶ Module 8: The future of online help

What format will online help take in the future?