

## Introduction

- At the WritersUA conference in 2006, I was on a panel hosted by Microsoft. Each panel member was supposed to take 5 minutes to describe what future help authoring tools and platforms should do. Here are my slides from that presentation. --rob

## Using Help in Unintended Ways

- Decentralizing Content Creation
- Building Communities of Users
- Consolidating UA Management

## Using Help in Unintended Ways

### Decentralizing Content Creation

- SMEs need a simplified way to add and edit content without having the source “files” on their local machine
- Editing tool should be web-based with no installation or individual licensing
- Editing tool should not remove or break any output specific functionality added by the help author
- Content should be manageable by a third-party source control system
- Content should be object-based, not topics

## Using Help in Unintended Ways

### Building Communities of Users

- Users should be able to customize content inside the help
- Users need a way to rate new content and content providers
- Help authors need a way to promote and integrate the best new content
- Customizations must migrate to new releases of the help

## Using Help in Unintended Ways

### Consolidating UA Management

- Move storage of the UI text from the programming tool to the same location as the help content
- Make it easier for help authors to edit context IDs without using the programming tool
- Support more sophisticated printed documentation to allow better single-sourcing for user/reference manuals, training guides, and job aids
- Track the questions users are asking in help
- Track the content users view in help and the sequence in which they view it