

# Quark Publishing Platform

**Client:** Australian Building Codes Board (ABCB)  
**Use Case:** Standards & Codes  
**Users:** 200  
**Country:** Australia  
**Goal:** Digital Transformation, Customer Satisfaction and Regulatory Compliance



## ABCB Reduces Its Standards Publishing Window from Several Weeks to Just Four Hours

The ABCB is a standards-writing body responsible for safe and sustainable building and plumbing systems through regulatory and non-regulatory measures in collaboration with Australian governments and industry.

### Challenge

The standards written by ABCB are published across multiple channels as the National Construction Code (NCC), which must be maintained, updated and accessible to the building industry and general public, among other stakeholders.

### Solution

The ABCB is using **Quark Publishing Platform (QPP)**, with **Quark XML Author**, not only to publish the NCC on its website but also to produce what it describes as regulatory technology that could revolutionize the industry.



### Results

- Authoring tool adopted widely for its ease of use and similarity to Microsoft Word
- One person can create a new edition of the NCC in only four hours, as opposed to three staff during the course of six to eight weeks
- Eliminated the need to print out the PDF, compare it to the HTML and make edits to ensure the two match – that accuracy and consistency is now guaranteed
- The XML from Quark XML Author is migrated directly to the ABCB website's content management system (CMS), eliminating the need for third-party coding at a considerable cost
- Provided an extra three months for public review and official comment during the legal adoption phase of a new edition

The ABCB began its digital transformation in 2015, with the goal of digitizing the NCC. This document initially was comprised of three volumes without a consistent structure and almost 1,300 A4 pages in total. Publishing the NCC to the ABCB website involved creating a PDF, converting it to HTML through third-party developers during a three-month period, and then importing the HTML into the website CMS. “Needless to say, this proved to be a clunky, manual process,” explained Richard Czeiger, ABCB’s Director of Digital Transformation.

But with Quark XML, ABCB’s authors can easily add new clauses or update existing ones within a predetermined, consistent format, according to Czeiger. They are free to focus on the technical aspects of their jobs as building experts, rather than worry about the technicalities of creating structured content in XML format. Because of its similarities to Microsoft Word, authors simply type while the XML coding happens automatically in the background.

“A new edition of the NCC now can be assembled within QPP and published as a PDF in three hours and then posted to our website in one additional hour,” explains Czeiger. By automating the assembly of the NCC, the ABCB has reduced the publishing window from six to eight weeks to only four hours. In addition, the job can be managed by one staff member instead of three and there’s no outside consultant charging them to convert the PDF to HTML, he noted.

“We used to have to print out the entire PDF [of the NCC], so staff could manually compare it to the HTML and make edits to ensure the two versions would match,” Czeiger said. “Now we know the website version will be perfect because we get clean and lean XML from Quark that we migrate directly into our CMS.”

Another benefit of being able to publish the NCC faster is that the official review and comment period can be extended. A new edition is produced every three years with five cycles of review by the public and other stakeholder groups before it can be legally adopted. These groups now have an additional three months to thoroughly review and comment on the new building and plumbing codes proposed. And finally, the digital version of the NCC also includes state clauses and updates to strengthen compliance at the local level. The future addition of such metadata and quantification metrics as climate zone and building classification would also make it easier and significantly faster for stakeholders to identify the clauses most relevant to them.

The ABCB also would like to make the NCC integrated and interactive. For example, enabling an architect to incorporate CADs to ensure their compliance at the start of a construction project – if a proposed door is not positioned within code, then an alert would occur automatically. “The construction industry could save billions if building designs were checked for compliance from the outset,” Czeiger says.

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