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From Content Creation to Content Management - Scaling Technical Writing at Impala Services

At Impala Services, technical documentation had become a scaling problem. The company had built a business producing user manuals, assembly instructions, maintenance guides, and related technical documents for global retailers and manufacturers. But continued growth depended on the hiring and training of experienced technical writers – people who were difficult to find because the role combined technical understanding, writing ability, compliance knowledge, and presentation skill.

Impala responded by creating Pergamon, a tool that moved much of the logic, structure, and compliance knowledge required for technical documentation from individual experts into a scalable organizational system. Instead of asking every writer to create each manual largely from scratch, Impala turned technical writing into a guided workflow. This allowed less-experienced staff to contribute much earlier, senior experts to focus on higher-value judgment, and the company to grow without being constrained by the limited supply of experienced technical writers.

Background

Impala Services is a technical documentation and product-marketing company with more than 20 years of experience and over 100 professionals across three offices. It works for more than 50 retailers and manufacturers, including Amazon, Lidl, and Aldi. A core part of its business is creating user manuals, assembly instructions, quick-start guides, and related documents that explain how products should be used safely and correctly.

This work is more complex than it first appears. A manual typically combines at least two elements: the legal and safety content required for a given market, and the operational instructions telling users how to use the product. Both parts can vary by country, product category, and audience. Writers, who often work under intense time pressure, therefore need a rare mix of technical understanding, writing ability, and presentation skill.

Core Challenge: Technical Writing as a Bottleneck

Before Pergamon, 60 to 70 percent of a technical writer's time was spent on writing and presentation work. Completing a manual typically took around four weeks, with four to six weeks common across the broader market. Training experienced writers took a long time and recruitment remained difficult, so Impala sometimes had to turn down client work because it simply could not find enough qualified people.

This was a structural problem. As a service firm, Impala scaled largely with headcount, but the headcount it needed most was also the hardest to recruit. Existing content-management systems did not solve the issue because they were designed for experts and assumed users already knew how to create compliant manuals. What Impala needed was not software that made experts slightly faster, but a system that embedded expert knowledge so that less-experienced people could contribute productively.

The Intervention: Pergamon

Impala's response was to build **Pergamon** rather than retrofit an existing platform. The initiative began in 2020, produced a prototype by 2021, ran extended pilots from 2022 to 2024, and launched globally on 18 December 2025. Pergamon was designed as an ICAS — an Intelligent Content Authoring System — for regulation-compliant technical documentation at scale.

The most critical design choice of Pergamon was its architecture. Because compliance is crucial, a pure large-language-model approach is too risky: a hallucinated warning or an invented standard is not a harmless error but can have huge (reputational and legal) consequences. Pergamon therefore followed a hybrid logic, combining structured databases, deterministic rules, reusable content blocks, built-in validation, and bounded AI support. Importantly, major regulatory requirements are encoded directly into the platform rather than left to manual checking. Instead of relying on unconstrained generation for compliance-critical content, the system works within a controlled framework and uses AI where speed helps while keeping legal traceability anchored in structured knowledge.

Internal Workflow Change

Pergamon changed how work is organized at Impala. Writers answer a guided questionnaire and provide key product inputs, after which Pergamon generates a first draft. The writer reviews and finalizes the draft before it moves to internal quality control and then to the client. Senior

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writers and knowledge engineers become involved when cases are complex or compliance-sensitive, such as novel product categories, contested regulatory interpretations, or multi-market edge cases.

Results

Based on Impala's internal project tracking, the clearest effect was speed: end-to-end completion time fell from about four weeks to about two weeks, with one week as the next target. First drafts became 25–40% faster; localization and quality-control review each improved by 30–35%; compliance research per document fell from about 45 to 15 minutes; and internal revision loops typically dropped from two or three to one. In complex cases, safety analyses that previously took two or three days can now often be completed the same day. Overall writer throughput increased by up to five times.

The second effect was quality. Because more of the process is structured and validated, fewer errors and rejections occur, while clients benefit mainly through faster time to market rather than lower prices.

The third effect was a new talent model. Impala broadened its hiring pool by onboarding approximately 10 new employees with technical knowledge but less documentation experience. New hires can now reach productivity in one to two months rather than after several months. Experienced writers were not removed and formal titles or pay did not change, but from April 2026 their scope shifted toward content management, quality validation, knowledge engineering, and complex case oversight.

Organizational Redesign: The Impala–Pergamon Dual Model

The AI initiative also changed how Impala structured its business. In 2020, Impala's co-founders decided to build Pergamon Labs as a separate company rather than merely as an internal tool. This created a dual model: Impala remained the service business, while Pergamon became the product layer with a different growth logic, revenue model, and culture.

The two entities are separate but tightly connected, with Impala acting as Pergamon's builder, first power user, and financier: its technical writers and knowledge engineers use the system in daily production, test its limits, and feed their domain expertise back into the product. Pergamon, in turn, gives Impala a way to scale through subscriptions, infrastructure, and reusable knowledge rather than only through additional headcount.

Clients can engage with this dual model in different ways. Companies without their own documentation team can continue to use Impala as a managed service provider, with Pergamon

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operating behind the scenes. Companies with internal documentation capabilities can use Pergamon directly as a self-serve authoring system. Larger retailers, manufacturers, sourcing offices, and agencies can combine Pergamon access with Impala’s content, layout, and knowledge-engineering support when they need custom structures, supplier coordination, or complex compliance work.

This combined service-plus-product model became strategically important. It allowed Impala to capture efficiency gains in its existing service business while also building a more scalable product business around the same expertise. More broadly, Pergamon changed the company from a service agency constrained by specialist headcount into a hybrid organization that could scale expert knowledge, not just expert labor.