

General template concept

Keep reading for a description of the general template concept in tts performance suite.

1 Introduction to templates

Various drafts and content definitions can be specified in tts performance suite. *Templates* play a major role in this system. Template elements include:

- Step templates
- Object templates
- Document templates

A **step template** can contain specifications regarding the design and content of a step for an e-learning, but also for the Documentation view. Only the Guide view is not impacted by this. Examples of step templates include title steps, test questions, master steps etc., and they are comparable with slide masters in PowerPoint.

Object templates are elements on the object level that can be used in step templates (for example). They can also include special predefinitions. Here too, it's possible to specify different appearances for an e-learning and documentation. Examples of object templates include textbox templates, tooltips etc.

Document templates consist of various step templates and outline elements, and contain specifications regarding general document properties, such as the publishing formats, e-learning play modes etc.

The use of templates brings many benefits: Templates

- boost efficiency during the creation of e-learning content,
- ensure that content has a uniform look and feel, and can also contain design specifications in accordance with the desired corporate identity,
- provide inexperienced authors with the opportunity to create attractive, engaging and consistent content,
- simplify the introduction of design changes in already existing content, and
- simplify the creation of content prototypes.

2 Global and own templates

tts performance suite facilitates the definition of two different types of templates: **global templates** are included in the customer configuration and are automatically distributed to all authors via the inbuilt mechanisms in tts performance suite. Author roles can be used to authorize certain users to make changes to these templates.

In addition to this, there are also **own templates** which are **not** included in the main configuration. These allow authors to define their own templates in order to speed up the individual production process.

The creation procedures for global and own templates are practically identical. However, own templates do have one decisive disadvantage: the fact that they are not included in the main configuration and can therefore not be distributed for use by other authors. This explains why we recommend the exclusive use of global templates.

3 Special characteristics of templates

Templates are edited in the **Template Editor**. This Editor is basically a variant of the regular Document Editor, supporting practically identical functions and options. The definition of templates is primarily helpful from a **design** perspective, but templates actually include a lot more.

On the one hand, they support the **definition** of particular **step and object properties**, such as specifying the Study mode (Film mode, Presentation mode) in step templates or the default coordinates for the insertion of object templates into documents.

On the other hand, they can be used to allow authors to edit just certain template elements (**template authorizations**). This includes enabling authors to introduce color changes to particular template areas, to change selected text areas or to specify with pinpoint accuracy the position of particular objects.

Both mechanisms serve the purpose of ensuring visual and functional consistency in projects involving the collaborative generation of content by several authors.

When defined accordingly, it's possible that changes made to templates in the main configuration even impact on existing content. If templates include the appropriate specification, existing content can be given an updated design via the "Republish" function – all this without any kind of effort on the part of the authors.

4 Nesting of templates

In principle, the Template Editor allows templates to be nested within one another. This means that it's possible to insert object templates, which themselves can also be composed of template elements, into a step template. When this is done, all properties are inherited upward. Whenever a textbox template includes the specification that the color of text cannot be changed, this will also be impossible in the step template in which the object template is used. The template properties also cascade in the same way.

However, when dealing with a nesting arrangement that extends beyond two or more levels, we recommend dissolving it only after consulting with the Professional Services Consultant. As a matter of principle, we suggest reducing the complexity of templates to an absolute minimum and using just one nesting level.