

D5: Documentation Plan

Our documentation plan describes who will use Media Markup, what information each audience will need, and how we will provide that information in a way that is practical and easy to use. Because the project is a desktop application that will be both used directly by the client and maintained after handoff, our documentation needs to support both day-to-day operation and longer-term technical upkeep.

User Groups

We expect two primary documentation audiences.

The first is the end user of the application. This user needs to know how to install or access the application, open a media file, control playback, place and refine markers, validate segments, and export CSV output correctly. This documentation will be concise, task-oriented, and written with minimal technical jargon.

The second is the maintainer or developer. In our case, this is primarily the client in their role overseeing future development, maintenance, and distribution of the application. Therefore, they will need more technical documentation covering environment setup, project structure, how to run the application locally, how to run tests, how to build and package the application, how releases are produced, and how to troubleshoot common setup or build issues.

Documentation We Will Provide

For end users, we will provide a user manual focused on how to use the application itself. This will explain the basic workflow of the tool, the meaning of major interface elements, and the steps required to complete the intended task from opening a file through exporting results. We will keep this document brief and organized around common actions rather than technical background.

For maintainers and developers, we will provide developer documentation focused on setup, maintenance, and release workflows. This will include quick-reference documentation stored directly in the repository, along with a more detailed handoff guide that explains the system at a higher level and gives more complete instructions for building, testing, packaging, and maintaining the project over time.

We will also provide short video walkthroughs. These videos will show how to access the project, install or launch the application, and use its core workflow. We expect this to be especially useful because some parts of setup and usage are easier to follow visually than through text alone.

Documentation Formats

We will use several documentation formats because different kinds of information are best delivered in different ways.

The user manual will be a written reference document linked from our project website and included in our final handoff materials. This is appropriate because users may need a concise document they can quickly scan while using the application.

Our developer documentation will be split between in-repository quick-reference pages and a more detailed handoff or maintenance guide. The quick-reference pages are appropriate for recurring tasks such as building, testing, and local development because they are immediately accessible next to the codebase. The longer guide is appropriate for more detailed topics such as system context, maintenance expectations, packaging, release flow, and troubleshooting.

Our video walkthroughs will supplement both types of written documentation. They are appropriate because they reduce ambiguity during installation, setup, and first use, and they give the client a practical demonstration of the intended workflow.

Why This Approach Is Appropriate

We do not expect most users to want or need a long traditional manual. The application has a focused workflow and a graphical interface, so user-facing documentation should be short, direct, and organized around tasks. At the same time, because the client may continue development and distribute future builds, we do need stronger technical documentation for maintenance and release tasks.

This combination gives us a layered approach. Users get concise instructions for using the software. Maintainers get both quick command-level references and more detailed technical guidance. Videos provide an additional practical layer for setup and onboarding.

Final Documentation Deliverables

At final delivery, our documentation package will include a user manual, developer and maintenance documentation, repository-based quick-reference docs, and short walkthrough videos linked from our project website and shared with the client during handoff.

Outcome

By following this documentation plan, we will provide each audience with the level and format of documentation they actually need, while keeping the overall documentation package concise, usable, and aligned with the real ways the project will be used and maintained.

