Table of Contents

1. Page update dates 1
1.0.1 How time zones are handled 2
1.1 Place the website date 2
1.2 Understand the PDF position 3
1.3 Override one page's date 3

1. Page update dates

Page update dates are optional. Use this feature only when readers need to see when individual pages changed. If dates are not required, do not run `prodockit update-dates`; an ordinary Zensical build needs no replacement command or other configuration.

When enabled, page update dates record when each source page was last changed. After the publication build, Prodockit finds the HTML page produced from each Markdown file and supplies its update date. It uses the latest Git author date when history is available and the Markdown file's modification date otherwise. Every automatic timestamp is converted to UTC before its `YYYY-MM-DD` calendar date is selected, so the result does not depend on the time zone of the computer running the build.

Figure 30.1 shows the two date sources converging on the author-selected position in both outputs.

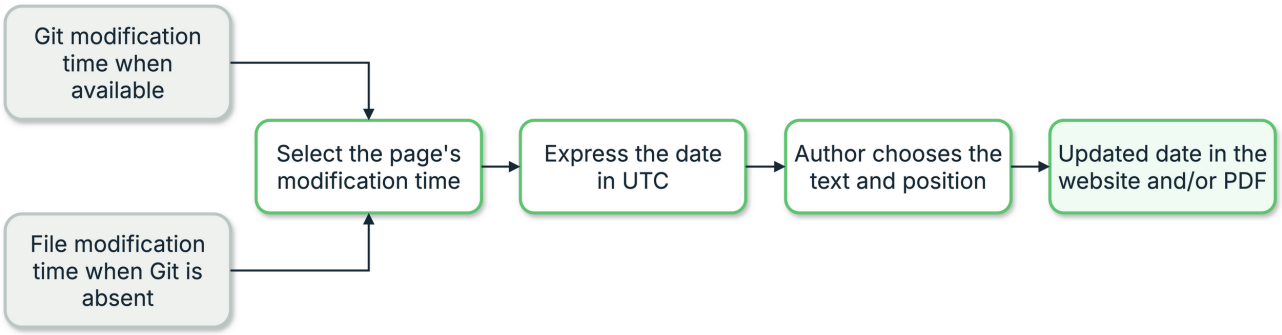

Figure 1.1. Page update-date workflow

1.0.1 How time zones are handled

All automatic timestamps are converted to UTC before prodockit selects the calendar date, regardless of where the build runs:

- **Git history:** the author timestamp includes its recorded UTC offset. Prodockit converts that instant to UTC, then selects its calendar date.
- **File modification time:** the filesystem timestamp is converted directly to UTC before its calendar date is selected.
- **Manual front matter:** a `revision_date` is already a calendar date, so Prodockit uses the author's value exactly as written.

Only the resulting `YYYY-MM-DD` value is displayed; no time or time-zone label appears. The website and PDF use the same resolved date.

1.1 Place the website date

Write the introductory text you want and put `<!-- prodockit-update-date -->` at the exact insertion point:

Copyright © 2026 Mark Buckwell and contributors.
Made with Zensical and prodockit.

```
Document reviewed: <!-- prodockit-update-date -->
```

The completed website renders, for example:

> Document reviewed: 2026-08-27

The text before or after the marker is ordinary Markdown and is entirely the author's choice. Without a marker, Prodockit retains the default behaviour and places an **Updated** fact at the bottom of the generated page.

During `zensical serve`, the marker itself is invisible and only the author's text is shown. Run the static build followed by `prodockit update-dates` to inspect the date in its final position.

1.2 Understand the PDF position

The PDF uses the same page date automatically. `prodockit pdf` prints `Updated on YYYY-MM-DD` below the page number for each source section. The PDF position follows the document's running-footer design and is not controlled by the website marker.

The website and PDF need no date macro, Markdown extension, or change to `zensical.toml`.

1.3 Override one page's date

To override the automatic date for one page, add `revision_date` to that page's YAML front matter:

```
---
revision_date: 2026-08-27
---

# Page title
```

The explicit value appears in a `zensical serve` preview and takes priority in the completed website and PDF. Use it only when the displayed date needs to be controlled independently of the file's history.

This page was updated:

Continue to Build with revision dates for the two publication commands, Git and non-Git behaviour, and CI history requirements.

Copyright © 2026 Mark Buckwell and contributors.
Made with Zensical and prodockit.