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STC Mission Statement:

Creating and supporting a forum for communities of practice in the profession of technical communication.
 Contact the STC at
 901 N. Stuart St., Suite 904
 Arlington, VA 22203-1822
 Phone: (703) 522-4114
 Web site: www.stc.org

Southern Arizona Chapter Mission Statement:

To increase public awareness of the technical communication profession and to serve as a resource to STC-SAZ members.

Meeting Notice

A Night at the Round Table: Contracting and Independent Consulting

Please join us for a fun, casual, interactive session on jobs, finance, and marketing. This lively session will provide you with different perspectives on the business of contracting and consulting.

This program format offers several short concurrent sessions. Each speaker hosts a table that seats up to 10 people. Speakers give a brief oral presentation and moderate discussion for 15 minutes. The 20-minute sessions will be repeated three times (one hour total). You'll have an opportunity to ask questions or discuss individual issues with each of our experts.

About the Speakers

JOBS: Amy Calimeri is the business development manager of the Yoh Company Tucson office. She has been with the company for over six years, and has placed many technical writers in positions in Tucson.

FINANCE: Kimberly Dangremond is the principal of TaxTrac, a tax preparation and accounting service specializing in small businesses and individuals. She's also an enrolled agent with the Internal Revenue Service.

MARKETING: Tina Roesler is a marketing strategist with project: brainstorm, a strategic marketing firm that's been serving Tucson for 13 years.

Save the Date: Thursday, March 9

Place: Smuggler's Inn located at 6350 E. Speedway (SE corner of Speedway and Wilmot, in the Buccaneer room).

Time: Registration from 5:30 to 6 p.m. Dinner from 6 to 7 p.m. Program from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Menu: Choice of either Beef Stroganoff or Garden Delight Salad.
 Dinner includes tossed salad, rolls and butter, coffee, iced tea, and dessert.

Cost: Dinner and meeting: \$20 STC chapter members; \$25 nonmembers
 Meeting only (no dinner): \$5 STC members and students; \$10 nonmembers

RSVP: To reserve your spot and specify a meal choice, send an e-mail message to Sue Norris (sue.norris@comcast.net) **by Monday, March 6**. If you plan to join us for dinner, specify your meal choice when you RSVP.

No-shows will be billed. Walk-ins are welcome but we cannot guarantee a meal.





Message from Our President

Leadership Is a Collection of Qualities!

By Kitty Aughey, Associate Fellow

When you assume a position of leadership, the first thing to do is look at your true self. You should have vision, lots of energy, skill at setting goals, and a genuine interest in people and results.

That having been said, here are some qualities for successful leadership you may not have considered. Robert Goffee and Garth Jones, writing in the October 2000 *Harvard Business Review*, recommend the following qualities:

- Capitalize on what is unique about you. Do not be afraid to show your differences.
- Show some weaknesses. If you express some vulnerability, you appear approachable and human.
- Manage people with tough empathy. Inspirational leaders empathize passionately and realistically.
- Care deeply about the work people do.
- Rely on intuition to gauge the appropriate timing and course of actions you will take.
- Express your appreciation for work well done. Thank you is a powerful expression.

The conclusion to be gathered is to be authentic and be you!



Program Review

Looking for Work with Your Recruiter

By Robert Prater, Member

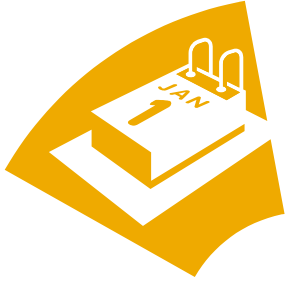
The speaker, Jack Molisani, is now on the other side of the fence, as a recruiter for workers like us. At last month's meeting, he discussed a number of things for us to keep in mind as we look for work. First and foremost, we are to read and write.

- Read the directions for submittal, and read the work experience requisites. Then submit only appropriate applications, following the directions.
- Write the résumé well, highlighting strengths, minimizing weaknesses; with good grammar, free of typos. Demonstrate good information presentation practice, using matrices or paragraphs that correlate posted job requirements with relevant work skills. As in all our work, find and use a willing editor.

Underlying all the details of good self-presentation is the fact that we are building a relationship with our recruiters, for better or worse. Show consideration for the recruiters doing their work, and for the hiring agents seeking to get their work done; and, by analogy, for ourselves – as we build good reputations as writers, and as people.

Jack himself demonstrates high energy. He obviously has thought through what looking for work is all about, and follows up, as he handed out token chocolates for vocal participation in his lively, interactive discussion. This observer is delighted to see vital humanity in action, in the pursuit of work in technical writing.





Chapter Activity

SAZ Program Schedule

Programs are held on the **second Thursday** of each month, except February and May, in Tucson, Ariz.

New meeting location effective September 2005: Smuggler's Inn, 6350 E. Speedway Blvd. (southeast corner of Speedway and Wilmot)

- **September 8, 2005:** Network and Nibble.
- **October 13, 2005:** Bob Lane, "Visual Interactivity through Relational Presentation."
- **November 10, 2005:** Iris Yoffa discusses HTML and Web design.
- **December 8, 2005:** Alaina Levine, Self-promotion, plus annual holiday party and silent auction.
- **January 12, 2006:** Casual networking dinner (no program), at El Charro (NE corner of Oracle and Orange Grove).
- **February 16, 2006:** Jack Molisani, "The Top 10 Mistakes Writers Make When Looking for Work."
- **March 9, 2006:** Independent contracting.
- **April 13, 2006:** Brenda Huettner discusses accessibility.
- **May 18, 2005:** Annual Meeting: Awards and Recognitions.

The program schedule is subject to change without notice; for up-to-date meeting information, visit www.stc-saz.org.

SAZ Planning Schedule

All chapter members are invited to join the executive council and committee heads at the monthly planning meetings. Come participate in the way the chapter is run! You'll have an opportunity to express your opinion and learn about the inner workings of our chapter.

September 27, 2005	January 24, 2006	May 23, 2006
October 25, 2005	February 28, 2006	
November 29, 2005	March 28, 2006	
December 2005 (e-mail)	April 25, 2006	

Regular planning meetings are held in the café at Barnes and Noble on Broadway (east of Swan) at 6 p.m. on the **fourth Tuesday** of the month.

Donations To the Food Bank

We seem to focus on holidays for giving to food banks. People are hungry every day of the year. Please bring canned and nonperishable food items to our membership meetings and our planning meetings (March, April, and May). These needed items will be forwarded to the Tucson Community Food Bank.





Chapter News

Southern Arizona Chapter Elections 2006

By Patricia Markey, Immediate Past President

The Nominating Committee is pleased to announce our preliminary slate of candidates for Southern Arizona chapter offices for fiscal year 2006–2007. We have great candidates. Many thanks to the others on the committee (**Brenda Huettner** and **Judy McCabe**) for all their hard work.

Remember that any chapter member can submit a nomination for a chapter member to be added to the ballot. The nomination must be in writing, and must be signed by five voting members of the chapter. Send the nomination to President Kitty Aughey (c/o P.O. Box 14333, Tucson, AZ 85732-4333). Nominations must be received by March 24.

Candidate for President

Carrie Cooper Carrie has over 12 years' experience in technical communication and holds a BA in English (summa cum laude) from the University of Arizona. Carrie works for ACS in software quality control, testing the MIDAS+ healthcare information system and hunting bugs. Areas of professional interest include usability testing, information design, file organization, and concise documentation.

A senior member, she joined STC in 2000 and has served the Southern Arizona chapter in many capacities: vice president (two terms), treasurer (two terms), program manager, scholarship manager, newsletter editor, speaker at meetings, and competitions judge. Her STC recognitions include the SAZ President's Service Award and awards in chapter-level publication competitions. As president, Carrie has two main goals for our "small but mighty" community: 1) ensure that we continue to earn Chapter Achievement Awards, because that means we are doing lots of good things and 2) plan and host great monthly programs that meet the needs of our members.

Candidate for Vice President

DeAnn Drottz has worked in the defense and aerospace industries. She is currently employed at Raytheon performing testing and certification of raw materials. She has an MBA, and is currently enrolled in the Professional Writing Certificate Program at Northern Arizona University to obtain qualifications as a writer. She is starting her own business in commercial writing, and plans to make the career transition to technical writer within the next two years. DeAnn has been a member of STC for three years and serves as secretary and as a copy editor for *The Border Line*.

Candidate for Treasurer

Richard Cook, treasurer, has 13 years' experience in the profession. He currently works at Intuit as a staff business analyst. Richard is a senior member of STC, has been treasurer for the last three years, and previously served as the Southern Arizona chapter's first secretary.

Richard has a master's degree in econometrics and has been trained as a financial advisor. Previous experience includes work as a technical writer and documentation project manager at GE, writing as an independent contractor, and as a technical writer and director of technical communications at Persistech.

Candidate for Secretary

Bill Rost has written documentation for hardware and software at several small and large companies, from Boston to Tucson, over a 20-year career. Most recently, he closed out a 10-year stint at Misys Healthcare Systems, Inc., and is writing and editing material for several local businesses while learning Web development at PCC. Bill joined the Boston chapter of

STC in 1985, when he began his career as a writer, capturing and transposing "a's" and "r's" that flitted around the Boston Common.

Watch for these dates:

March 24 – Deadline for submitting additional nominees.

April 7 – The Election Committee distributes ballots to chapter membership.

April 21 – Members must return ballots postmarked by April 21.

April 25 – Election Day (votes are counted).

May 5 – Deadline for notifying chapter membership of election results, which will appear in the May issue of this newsletter.



Society News

STC Elections 2006

Voting in STC's 2006 election begins in early March. Visit www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/index.asp to read about the candidates and submit questions by clicking the "Ask the Candidates" links. Questions are forwarded to all of the candidates running for a particular office; candidates are not required to respond.

Voters will also be asked to approve a proposed amendment to the STC Bylaws. Please read the article for an explanation of the reasoning behind the proposed amendment.

STC Change Form

If you wish to upgrade your STC membership or add chapters or SIGs to your existing membership, please mail or fax a completed STC Membership Change/Upgrade Form to the STC office. You can download and print the form from the STC Web site at www.stc.org/chapterResources.asp.



Chapter Membership News

Members Packets

By Helen Marty, Membership Committee

Membership packets are available at all meetings. Contact me at hmarty@cox.net if you would like a packet to be mailed to a prospective member.





Rahel Anne Bailie

Feature Article

Content Management Technologies: Picking Through the Alphabet Soup

By Rahel Anne Bailie, STC Associate Fellow, Senior Member, STC Canada West Coast

Managing content takes many forms. In fact, you could serve up a veritable alphabet soup of acronyms that vary on the content management theme: the basic CM (content management), WCM (Web content management), ECM (enterprise content management), DMS (document management system), DAM (digital asset management), KM (knowledge management), LM (learning management), PIM (product information management), RM (records management or rights management), and CRM (customer relationship management). These terms refer to different types of content, with specific business requirements and processes that drive the feature set of the particular technologies.

Not surprisingly, none of the technologies mentioned so far support the production of content for purposes of producing technical documentation. That is a specific type of content management system that has specialized functions for technical communicators doing multichannel publishing, yet it hasn't spun off its own specific acronym. Sometimes called structured content management with XML – personally, I think XSCM would make a fine acronym for XML content management – it refers to what I hear many writers still do with “FrameMaker and an Excel spreadsheet”: facilitate re-use of content across multiple output channels such as print, PDF, online help, and customer support knowledge base.

So when confronted with this jungle of acronyms, how can you tell what's what? Borrowing heavily from the glossary compiled by CM professionals at www.cmsglossary.com, here is a quick tour:

All Content Management systems support the creation, approval, storage, retrieval, versioning, re-use, and delivery of content objects. What differs is the type of content that's being managed and the features that manipulate the content in specific ways for different purposes.

Web Content Management, usually referred to by the generic term “content management,” is a system for handling content on one or more Web sites. WCM can range from an extraordinarily simple application, such as a blog, to feature-rich applications that run portals delivering personalized content, such as a “My Yahoo” page. Some WCM applications are known for their specializations, such as the handling of localized content.

XML Structured Content Management has functions that allow authors to product technical documentation and publish that content to multiple channels. These systems usually have more functions, such as the ability to generate PDFs and online help as well as Web pages, and have features that generate authorities (table of contents, index, glossary) and let authors view their content in a familiar split-pane “table of contents” format common in help authoring tools. Of the 2,000-plus commercial CM systems, only a dozen or so are intended for the power-publishing done by technical communicators.

Enterprise Content Management does both WCM and XSCM and more. Each ECM system has its own unique combination of modules that handle content that ranges from unstructured content, such as e-mail, to records, documents, and product information for e-commerce sites – in fact, any or all of the types of content mentioned here. These are usually massive, expensive systems that often get semi-implemented. (The words “SAP implementation” and “ECM implementation” often cause the same

type of hysterical laughter from staff who have survived such projects.)

Document Management is a way of controlling native-format documents (such as Word or Excel) through their creation, storage, retrieval, and versioning. A document management system does not support the re-use of content chunks within the documents. From a technical communication point-of-view, a writer manipulates content objects in an XSCM system and generates a document, which then gets managed through a document management system. Some XSCM systems include basic DM functions with their systems, but these are often not robust enough to meet the specialized needs of an organization.

Digital Asset Management is a system for handling rich media, which may include still graphics such as photos, video clips, sound files, and other types of multimedia. It is used by libraries, museums, and media outlets such as television stations to deliver content, and handles such challenges as categorizing hundreds of photos of painting called "Untitled 1" and encoding video with metadata.

Knowledge Management essentially uses content management technology for the purpose of gathering information to help with business processes, best practices, expert systems, and other information that can lead to better business intelligence. This affects the way the content is searched and retrieved.

Learning Management manages content for online courses, along with the management of supplemental information such as student information and test scores. Many LM systems use SCORM (Sharable Content Objective Reference Model) standards that specify ways to catalogue, launch, and track course objects.

Product Information Management, sometimes called Product Data Management, handles content for online catalogues and e-commerce systems. The content includes product names, images, and descriptions, part numbers, quantities and corresponding prices, and perhaps language variants. Some PIM applications are connected to "configurators" that calculate the various ways that a product can be sold. For example, a piece of equipment might come with attachment A in blue or red, or two of attachment B, one each of red and blue or both red or both blue, and a slightly different price depending on the options chosen.

Records Management handles data that becomes aggregated into a record and can be sorted in various ways. For example, all the information that makes up personnel records would be handled in a records management system. Controlling access to these records is handled by rights management.

Customer Relationship Management is a variant on records management, handling information about customers to help companies better understand customer needs. CRM resembles knowledge management in that it uses CM technology with a view to supporting certain business goals.

When sorting through the various types of content management systems, an important consideration is to determine the business needs, and then match the system to those needs, and becoming familiar with the various types of CM can open up a world of possibilities.

About the author: Rahel Anne Bailie operates Intentional Design Inc, (www.intentionaldesign.ca/) a Vancouver, British Columbia, consultancy focused on content management, content development, and user experience services. Bailie has many years as both line staff and management in technical communication and usability environments, and her perspectives, both about content use and staff management, are informed by her experience and studies. A self-identified geek, she is drawn to technology like a moth to flame, and works hard to stay current with the technical side of content management. Bailie is also a partner in Strategy A, a management consulting firm. You can reach her via e-mail at rabailie@intentionaldesign.ca. ■



Networking

STC Phoenix Chapter News

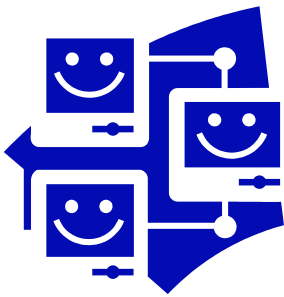
Join Phoenix chapter members Tuesday, March 14, for their program meeting: "Introduction to Flare – or – The RoboHelp saga, what actually happened?" with Mike Hamilton, vice president Product Management, MadCap Software.

What happened with RoboHelp in its journey from Blue Sky Software to eHelp to Macromedia? What has happened to the core talent that created and nurtured RoboHelp? Where have they gone? What are they doing?

Find out the answers to these questions, as well as future directions in help authoring and a new tool from MadCap Software called Flare, a new XML-based authoring tool designed for technical writers, Help authors, and other documentation professionals. See a demo of Flare and learn how you can develop content in XML format without knowledge of the XML language or XML programming, and import and convert existing RoboHelp content.

Before joining MadCap Software, Mike was the product manager for the RoboHelp product line since the days of Blue Sky Software, eHelp, and Macromedia. Mike joined the RoboHelp team in 1999 as a founding member of the training solutions program team, where he co-authored the certified training materials supporting the RoboHelp family.

For more information, visit the Phoenix Web site, www.stc-phoenix.com.



Networking and Education

WritersUA Annual Conference

The WritersUA Conference for Software User Assistance will be in Palm Springs, Calif., April 9-12. One of our members, **Brenda Huettner**, will be making a presentation. For more information, visit the Web site at www.writersua.com.

Preparing for the Content Management Tipping Point

The worlds in which technical communicators work are fast reaching the point where content is becoming unmanageable. IT groups are recognizing that little is being solved by adding more disk space or setting up new servers. The increasing rates at which new information is generated, consumed, and then lost is becoming unsustainable. Technical communicators have a role to play if they are prepared to step up to the challenge.

A number of factors are converging that promise to change the landscape for good. The technology and tools are maturing. A set of best practices is emerging that will enable us to effectively manage the increasing demands on our resources. We are already seeing a swing in the adoption of structured authoring in many tech pub environments. It won't be long before we're adopting formalized content management

solutions. We believe that content management is about to "tip." Will you be ready? This year's Toronto STC conference features a series of advanced, half-day workshops in information design and content management led by several of our industry's revered luminaries from across North America. Join us in Mississauga, Ontario, for three days in March and see Ann Rockley, Jim Purdy, Michael Priestley, Saul Carliner, and Scott Abel - The Content Wrangler. We are also pleased to be working with the content management professionals to host the first ever Toronto Summit at the conference.

Monday, March 27	Tuesday, March 28	Wednesday, March 29
Information Design S. Carliner	DITA Workshop M. Priestley	Content Reuse A. Rockley
Information Mapping® J. Purdy	CM Technology S. Abel	CM Summit CM Pros
See Program Details for more information		

Don't miss this conference. Register before March 10 and save on registration fees.

DITA 2006

DITA 2006 presenters will demystify DITA, explore its usefulness, expose its limitations, describe its components, reveal its flexibility, and showcase its success. Hands-on workshops and real-world case studies will demonstrate the strength and usefulness of DITA, reveal valuable tips and tricks, and help attendees avoid costly mistakes made by others.

STC Member Discount: Save \$245 on DITA 2006 conference registration.

Bright Path Solutions is pleased to offer STC members a discount rate to attend their upcoming conference – DITA 2006. The event, scheduled for March 23–25, in Raleigh, N.C., is the first annual gathering of DITA users, bringing together experts from around the globe for a three-day conference designed to help attendees leverage the power of the Darwin Information Typing Architecture OASIS Standard.

STC members who register online for DITA 2006 will enjoy \$245 off the full retail event price. That means you'll gain access to the event for just \$700!

When registering online, enter discount code: **STC**. For more information, visit <http://conf.travelthepath.com/>.



Employment Information

WritersUA Salary Survey

The results of the [2006 WritersUA Salary Survey](#) are now available.

"The WritersUA Salary Survey provides detailed and comprehensive information about compensation for user assistance professionals. Our 2005 Salary Survey results were viewed on our Web site by over 30,000 visitors.

"The final results presented here represent 904 responses from people in the U.S., Canada, and other parts of the world."





Educational Opportunities

STC Remote Seminars

With all seminars, the cost is per site, not per person. There are additional seminars scheduled for the summer. For more information, visit the STC Web site, www.stc.org/seminars.asp. Please note that registration closes 24 hours before the seminar.

Instructions for Writing Instructions: Guidelines for Organization and Content

Increasingly, technical communicators are asked not only to write documentation, but to teach subject matter experts how to write their own process explanations. Writing good documentation is an art; however, formulas and templates can help guide effective process explanation. Whether instructions appear in written, verbal, or digital formats, they should observe basic conventions for graphics, layout, content organization, overviews, development of ideas, warnings and cautions, troubleshooting, and tool lists.

This active-learning presentation will examine effective design, as well as documentation bloopers, to help participants write, edit, and teach effective process explanation. You'll also receive checklists and a template to use as a step-by-step guide on how to write instructions. Practical examples, illustrating every principle of process explanation, will demonstrate exemplary and problematic documentation approaches. For those interested in expanding their knowledge of this professional arena, a list of Web resources to help guide and inform effective documentation will be provided.

With a doctorate in instructional design, Caroline Stern teaches composition, source-based writing, and technical and business communication at Ferris State University in Big Rapids, Mich. An internationally recognized author and speaker, she has received the Michigan Association of Governing Board's Teacher of the Year award and has been designated a Ferris State University Distinguished Teacher.

- **Presenter:** Caroline Stern
- **Date:** Wednesday, March 8 | 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m. Mountain Standard Time
- **Seminar Level:** Beginner/Intermediate



Editor's Notes

Distinguished Chapter Service Award

By Pat Markey, Editor

At the February program, Kitty Aughey announced the winner of the Distinguished Chapter Service Award (DCSA) who is **Helen Marty**. Helen has supported our chapter even before she became a founding member of its current incarnation. Since then she has held nearly every position possible, including president, vice president, and treasurer. Helen has made presentations at STC conferences and has given much of her time and energy to the pursuit of technical communication.

So, Helen, on behalf of all of us who have benefited from your work, thanks.





Sherry Michaels

Director's News

R5 Report Back & January 2006 Board Meeting Report

By Sherry Michaels, Director Region 5

The hard part of this column is to convey to you everything that I think is important to you as members, with all the color commentary that makes it come to life. I use "color commentary" because in my mind sports is an easy, handy metaphor to explain things that are often strategic in nature, and the board of directors (BoD) meeting is just that.

1. Thanks to Tom Barnett of the Phoenix and UK chapters, the Region 5 Web site is live and functioning at <http://www.stcregion.org/region5/>. You'll find this column and a ton more information at this site. It's got a new, current look, and if you want to link your newsletters and other info to it, let Tom know at the Region 5 webmaster link on the home page. Thank you, Tom! Well done!
2. Thanks to volunteers Ann Wiley and her whole team, and Merrick Bechini, director of IT, we put the STC Member Forum live. It is at <http://stcforum.org/index.php>. You must register as an STC member. It only takes a second or two, and inside you'll see all kinds of STC interests, including STC governance discussion areas. Please participate.
3. Thanks to Rob Moran and the office staff, and for the first time ever, we conducted a member survey prior to the board meeting. More than 1,000 members submitted what they thought STC should be doing for them in areas we knew we'd be talking about at the meeting. There were a lot of diverse opinions! This information gave us a lot of clear guidance, and we will continue to conduct this survey prior to BoD meetings. The surveys will get better and more specific as time goes on. Please be involved.
4. I received the chapter reports and compiled them into successes and concerns columns. In particular, I presented as information to the board that in the viewpoint of some of you, we aren't getting enough of the right information to you fast enough. This view was helpful to shape some of our priorities. In some cases, we can't provide more information because the committees involved aren't ready to present their plans for approval by the BoD. This means that some awkward situations affecting community planning still exist, despite best efforts of everyone involved. It is an unfortunate effect of trying to shape a better Society, and we regretfully realize the uncertainty this produces. Please contact me if you have any questions at all.
5. We included STC Society office management staff members Peg Cottrell, director of administration; Merrick Bechini, director of IT; and Maurice Martin, director of Publications, in our meetings. In my opinion, this has proven to be one of the single most beneficial moves we have made. We are experiencing a whole new level of effectiveness by having the staff involved while we make our decisions. They can participate by letting us know what is feasible immediately. We are no longer simply lofting demands over the wall at them with no background or context. It is a most remarkable and welcome change.
6. We performed a strategic planning exercise that culminated into four priorities for functioning over a 16-month period. The priorities chosen are:
 - a. **Telling our Powerful Story.** We have more than 17,000 members within a hugely diverse profession and the resources to impress corporations about what we do and how we do it. We have focused on implementing changes to make this happen. As you read through, I believe you'll see how all the things we are doing are interrelated.

- b. **Building Relationships and Choosing Partners.** We have significant opportunities to work with other associations and with employer companies to provide additional benefits and opportunities to our members. Some of these relationships and partnerships are already under development. In all cases, as we go carefully into this area, we are using the criteria:
 - i. How is this relationship good for the members?
 - ii. What are the downsides, if any? Can we contain the risks, if any?
 - iii. Is the business case overall compelling enough to undertake this relationship?
 - c. **Generating Funds to Support Delivery of Member Value.** As we become a more vital organization and deliver the value requested in your surveys and conversations, it is clear we need, as a Society, to learn how to generate funds in other ways besides through dues. Currently, member dues do not fund everything STC offers members. Although we are eliminating those things that do not deliver member value in our current budget, these efforts alone will not sustain the demands of our members. During the January meeting, we mapped out the priorities in which to achieve this goal over the next 12 months.
 - d. **Building a Business Model.** This title is a little misleading. STC has always had a business model. Importantly, however, the business model has not supported the membership as it exists today. We put together plans for bringing a new, more viable model online and aligning it with the old one. We will potentially adjust the budget to include line items that we haven't had before, but we will hold that budget to more rigid standards during BoD meetings. For instance, in order to "tell our powerful story" we unanimously approved having a special "expert columnist" for the STC.org Web site. Our hope is to get a columnist who already has national and corporate readership on a "high fame" level because it is part of our strategy to elevate STC's corporate and national image. It is a new budget approval line item. Our new business model will have enough flexibility to accommodate special projects, but we will refrain from too many "exceptional expenditures." We will view all expenditures in terms of whether they meet the majority of STC members' goals.
7. The Leadership Community Resource (LCR) is much closer to providing support to all communities. In fact, they are about 12 months ahead of schedule in some areas:
- a. There are communities that feel they've been "on the bubble" for years and have desperately needed some mentoring and advice. The Triage for Communities in Crisis is ready to assist communities by May 2006.
 - b. By fall 2006, the Mentoring Students Community will be available to assist student communities that feel need of the active support of mentors.
 - c. New presidents or managers of communities have a whole host of questions, including community guidelines. The Mentoring Leaders and Communities Committee will be ready by May 2006.
8. The ongoing work of the board continued.
- a. We approved the awards for Fellow, Associate Fellow, and Distinguished Chapter Service awards.
 - b. We approved the re-charter of seven communities.
 - c. We reviewed the budget as it compares projected versus actual. Our treasurer made his report. Our budget is in good shape. The finance

- oversight committee made a report and has found everything to be in perfect order. Our auditors submitted a report and found everything to be in perfect order.
- d. We have begun and will continue a technology upgrade that will assist the BoD, office staff, and community leaders in meeting and exceeding member needs. Our technology hasn't given our volunteers or staff the tools they need to implement well. We are pushing to change that.
 - e. We are implementing a communications plan that helps us to be more effective. Our goal is to make communications succinct, accurate and timely. Our focus is to continue to get more information from you, respond to it, and get the results back out to you effectively. It is one of the toughest challenges we face. It's a lot harder than it looks.
 - f. We are working on new models for getting corporations involved. Two other companies are interested in taking part in a program that involves them at the corporate level, and adds new members to our ranks that would not otherwise be able to join. Criteria for these programs are:
 - i. Is this fair to new and/or existing members?
 - ii. Does this provide new members that grow to be loyal members for the future?
 - iii. Does this provide opportunities for all involved?
 - iv. Does this make business sense for the Society and the members?
 - g. In her board report, Paula Berger announced the first 2006 BoD meeting will be held in London to coincide with the R2 conference. The BoD has only met in Europe once before, in September 1998, when they met in Paris. Paula reported that she considered the following in making her decision:
 - i. Airfare from U.S. cities is generally less than airfare within the continental U.S., thus our actual travel costs will be lower.
 - ii. Assistants to the president will not attend this meeting unless they have a specific business case to present and defend.
 - iii. This meeting is an important opportunity to meet a greater number of members at one time. Further, it is part of STC's continued strategy of global image and impact.

As usual with BoD meetings, the days were jam-packed. We discussed other topics and made decisions or asked for business plans. Secretary Lori Fisher will be posting the minutes as soon as she can. Be sure to read them to get details without "color commentary!"

John Hedtke put a perspective on this meeting in his letter to Region 7 I'd like to share, and excerpts follow: "The way I think about [all the changes] ... STC was like a room that had filled up with ratty furniture, dusty boxes of old books, and a threadbare rug. The [Society leadership] has gone in and cleaned out all the old stuff and mopped and vacuumed. The place looks clean right now ... but it's a little empty. What we put into the room is something that's still being discussed, but we've gotten the old stuff out and cleaned up the mess."

I do not believe we are done with the house cleaning. Housekeeping is a nearly daily chore. I would say, however, that we've done a fair amount of work, and we are still thwacking away at it.

Please let me know if you have any questions. I'm available at dir5@stc.org, and through the R5 Region site!



About the Newsletter

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