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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

ABCs of Accessibility in Technical Publications

with Brenda Huettner

The United States Census Bureau estimates that 19 percent of the population has a disability of one kind or another. For people over age 65, this number leaps to 42 percent. U.S. legislation, such as Section 508 and the Americans with Disability Act, have helped to bring these numbers to the attention of both government agencies and commercial providers.

Technical communicators are responsible for ensuring that the information about these products is delivered to the users. This session will describe ways for communicators to ensure that different types of messages can be received by people with varying abilities.

About the Speaker

Brenda Huettner is owner of P-N Designs, Inc., a communications consulting company. She writes articles and teaches workshops on management, usability, and technical writing. Brenda has several books in print, including *Career Tactics for Technical Communicators* and *Macromedia Captivate: The Definitive Guide*. She is a fellow of the Society for Technical Communication, active in the Management and AccessAbility Special Interest Groups. She also sits on the administrative committee for the IEEE Professional Communication Society.

Save the Date: Thursday, April 13

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 old fashioned homemade meat loaf with mashed potatoes and vegetable or fruit 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, April 11**. 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

Job Burnout

By Kitty Aughey, Associate Fellow

Job burnout is the result of being gradually worn down from excessive demands until your energy, strength, and resources are totally depleted, says Herbert J. Freudenberger, Ph.D., the psychologist who coined the term *burnout* over 30 years ago.

Burnout happens over a period of months when workplace management exposes you to nonstop stress, work overload, and a must-complete-assignments-on-time attitude. About 25 percent of workers experience burnout during their careers according to Freudenberger.

Drawing from personal experience, as you get overloaded you seem to have endless ailments like colds, headaches, and gastrointestinal problems, and you are always tired. You are quick to become irritated, frustrated, and hypercritical of everyone and everything. It becomes difficult to make decisions and easy to become angry. In today's tight job market, it is hard to walk away from a job.

Here are some simple ideas that helped me cope better:

- Vacations and time to yourself are necessary.
- Learn to say "no."
- Lower your self-expectations for a while.
- Delegate!
- Learn who or what is bugging you most in order to take steps to solve the problems.

Don't quit. Talk to family and friends and perhaps seek out a therapist before you make a bad decision.



Program Review

A Night at the Round Table: Contracting and Independent Consulting

By Patricia Markey, Senior Member

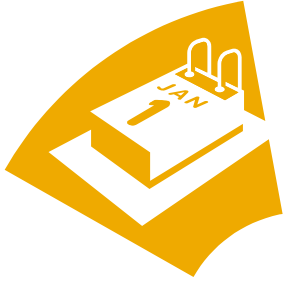
This meeting was very helpful for anyone in technical communication.

Amy Calimeri, the business development manager of the Yoh Company Tucson office, said that the job market in Tucson is improving for technical communicators. She also reiterated something Jack Molisani said last month: You should get to know your recruiter. Don't miss opportunities to meet recruiters at our meetings.

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, and everyone took her card and the IRS CD.

Tina Roesler, a marketing strategist with project: brainstorm, discussed how to present yourself to a community. She distributed a marketing plan outline. Tina might present a workshop next season, so stay tuned.





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 (April and May). These needed items will be forwarded to the Tucson Community Food Bank. 🍲

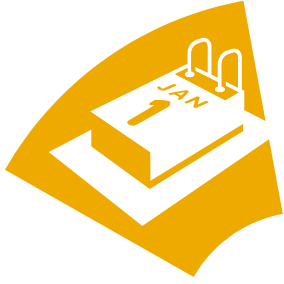


Chapter Membership News

Members in the News

By Helen Marty, Membership Committee

Congratulations to **Tom Barnett** for being awarded the honor of STC fellow. Tom lives in Phoenix and has been involved with our chapter before it was a chapter. Tom joined the Southern Arizona chapter in July 2005 in an effort to support us. 🍷



Chapter News

Southern Arizona Chapter Elections 2006

By Patricia Markey, Immediate Past President

The nominating committee is pleased to announce our slate of candidates for Southern Arizona chapter offices for fiscal year 2006–2007.

President	Carrie Cooper
Vice president	DeAnn Drottz
Secretary	Bill Rost
Treasurer	Richard Cook

Voting Options

People who are members of the Southern Arizona chapter as of Feb. 28, 2006, are eligible to vote in this election. This year there are two ways to vote:

- **Online**
Information to log on and vote will be distributed separately to members by way of e-mail on April 7.
- **Paper ballot**
Member must request a paper ballot by contacting Pat Markey at:

e-mail: pat.Markey@comcast.net

-or-

phone: 520.733.5720

Watch for these dates:

April 7 – The election committee distributes notification of online voting to chapter members.

April 21 – Members must vote online or 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.



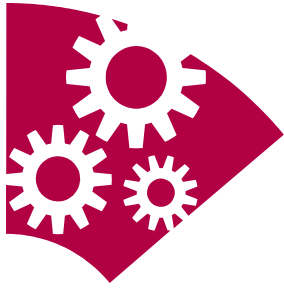
Society News

STC 53rd Annual Conference

Don't forget that the conference will be held at Bally's Las Vegas Hotel and Paris Las Vegas Hotel in Las Vegas, Nev., May 7–10, 2006. For more information, please visit www.stc.org/53rdConf/. The deadline for advanced rates is April 21.

Complimentary Membership for Nonmember Conference Attendees

Nonmembers who register at the full conference rate for STC's 53rd Annual Conference will be invited to join STC – free – for the remainder of 2006. The STC office will include an application for a complimentary membership with the conference registration confirmation receipt letter. ■



Feature Article

Ten Tips for Writing Compelling White Papers

By Michael A. Stelzner

Are you looking for a few good white paper writing tips? This article will help you tackle this complicated task with 10 proven techniques.

This article was reprinted from *The San Diego Signature* online issue of **February 2006**.

1. **Identify your ideal reader.**

Are you fishing for whales or guppies? Identify your ideal reader with precision. Pinpoint the intended reader's industry, job title, age and general disposition. Keep the reader in mind as you write the white paper.

2. **Decide on an objective.**

Figure out your endgame early. Do you want to educate, sell, inform or differentiate? Is this paper designed to generate leads? Will it be technical or business-benefits focused? Be sure to stay on task through the entire white paper.

3. **Develop an outline.**

Good directions get you to your destination. An outline helps break a paper into manageable pieces and keeps you on track. Be sure to get buy-in from key people before you write the first word.

4. **Interview the experts.**

The best content lives in someone else's head. If you are not the sole content expert, interview other sources to gather a fresh perspective. When interviewing experts, be sure to ask probing questions such as "Why is that important?" and "What is the implication of that?"

5. **Research.**

The Web is your library. Read as much as you can about your paper's topic. Seek industry analysis, competitor information and internal documents.

6. **Develop the problem.**

Condense the core issue to a few sentences. Be sure the problem is compelling and appropriate to your primary target audience. This step should be followed by a brief introduction of the solution.

7. **Avoid early self-promotion.**

Avoid going into any depth about your solution until you have described the problems that justify your solution in detail. Expand by discussing the impact of not properly addressing problems. After this foundation has been established, introduce the details of your solution.

8. **Rewrite often.**

Self-impose pit stops. Continue to repeatedly refine, streamline, redraft and fine-tune your messaging. I suggest coming back to your paper many times over a period of days. Taking breaks gives your mind a clean perspective on your previous work.

9. **Add captions, callouts and subheads.**

Guide your reader with helpful signs. Most people like to skip around or just want to understand the essence of your paper. Nicely written callouts and subheads help pull in the reader. Be sure to add descriptive captions to your support images as well.

10. **Hire an editor.**

For a refining touch, seek an editor. As a painter is blind to missed spots on a wall, so too will you be blind to errors in your writing. An editor can provide

an objective safety net for correcting glaring problems and can ensure your words are well-written (special thanks to my editor for help with this piece).

Now that you are equipped, get going and remember to keep plenty of caffeine on hand! If you find yourself dazed, confused or running out of bandwidth after following these tips, consider outsourcing the project to a professional white paper writer.

About the Author:

Michael A. Stelzner has written more than 70 papers for high-technology corporations such as Motorola, Cardinal Health and HP, and is the editor of the [WhitePaperSource Newsletter](#), a 18,000 subscriber, monthly publication on writing white papers. If you need more help writing white papers, download his free "How to Write a White Paper" paper by visiting <http://www.stelzner.com/copy-HowTo-whitepapers.php>. Michael can be reached at mike@stelzner.com.



This article was reprinted from the *Dateline Houston* online issue of **January/February 2006**.

Book Reviews

Google: From the Basics to the Features No One Knew Existed

By Robert Delwood

If ever there was a simple application, it's Google (<http://google.com>). Three new books expose the details and workings of this application. But who needs a book on it, much less three of them? The answer is equally simple: anyone who **thinks** he or she knows Google.

Although everyone knows how to use it (and might even take it for granted), Google goes beyond just being an easy search tool. It's about finding the exact information you need from among four billion Web pages and getting the most from your time. The 31 words on their home page and the intuitive interface hide a surprisingly complexity.

The Basics

In spite of its simplicity (the **I'm Feeling Lucky** button is trademarked by the way), the quality of the results you get depends directly on the quality of the search that you specify. The easy stuff first. The default is an AND search. That is, Google will look for pages containing all the words you specify. When you specify:

Olympics synchronized swimming

Google looks for pages with all three of those words.

You can combine logic operators:

Olympics synchronized OR swimming

which is the same as using parentheses to reorder the search:

Olympics AND (synchronized OR swimming)

The results have to have "Olympics" and either "synchronized" or "swimming."

Exact phrases should be set in quotation marks:

Olympics "synchronized swimming"

Finally, you can exclude words and phrases by using the minus sign:

Olympics -"synchronized swimming"

which probably makes for better Olympics anyway.

Another basic search principle is knowing that Google is case-insensitive. Word order matters because more search weight is assigned to words in the beginning of the list than later words. Curiously, repeating words affects the search, although Google is not forthcoming about why it does. Small words such as "the" and "an" are usually ignored unless they are in quotation marks or are preceded by the plus sign (+). You can use wildcards but only for whole words. Google does not support stemming (partial wildcard searches). Therefore,

synch*

does not search for variations of "synch," such as "synchronized," "syncopate," or "syncytium." However,

"red, *, blue"

looks for patterns such as "red, white, and blue" and "red, green, and blue."

Google limits searches to 10 items. Phrases inside quotations are considered one item. The wildcard character itself is considered one item, although it can return any number of words. Google limits you (actually, your IP address) to 1,000 searches per day. — hardly a problem for anyone except hackers.

Specialized Syntaxes

The searches become more specialized with syntaxes. Syntaxes are searches that specify a part of a Web page only. For instance, the syntax "inurl" limits the search to only the URL. So that:

inurl:help

finds the word "help" in Web addresses. Here are some other syntaxes:

Syntax	Meaning
intext	Searches the body text.
inanchor	Searches the anchor phrase or the text displayed as part of an HREF statement.
daterange Example: imclone daterange:2452439-2452441	An undocumented feature allows searching by date range. The numbers are ranges, expressed as the number of days since January 1, 4713 B.C. Perhaps they'll work on this feature a little more.
site	Searches a domain name.
cache	Searches the Google cache for Web pages (handy if you're looking for older Web material).
phonebook	Searches the Google phonebook.

Syntaxes can be mixed with other searches such as:

homeschooling filetype:pdf

Other Google Features

Many (but not all) of these searches are also available in the advanced search page. Google is becoming more than just Web searches. Obvious services on their home page include searching images and news, but they also have groups and Froogle (a price-comparison service and an intentional pun with "frugal"). The More categories are often interesting to look at. These may be additional or experimental services. Google Answers provides a professional research service so that you can ask any

question for a fee or, to be technically correct, a tip. You offer a price (usually not less than \$25) and if they think it's worth it, they'll find the answer for you. Google Labs provide experimental services, but those are not always officially supported. Subject to change (they've since removed a speech recognition service but added a Froogle wireless one), it's worth the occasional visit.

Although it's the interface that Google is best known for, they're taking Web searches to new dimensions. First, you can write your own HTML code that submits a query. This is convenient if you want to incorporate a search in your own page or to be able to share that search with others. Taking that one step further, Google released its API (application programming interface) in April 2002 so that you can have programmatic access to Google. Common implementations include a company's Web pages that let you search only their Web site. Third-party companies also make contributions. XooML wraps Google results into XML for Web services; search results may be parsed or saved to files. You can also get results back by e-mail. This is useful if you need to schedule queries or if your mobile device (such as wireless phone) handles e-mail better than it does Web browsing.

References

Three books cover Google in excellent detail. Addition details can be found through the links.

[Google Hacks: 100 Industrial-Strength Tips and Tricks](#)

Tara Calishain and Rael Dornfest

O'Reilly Books, 352 pages, ISBN: 0-596-00447-8

Google Hacks is a programmer or technical approach. It is written precisely and tersely (a touch of light writing takes edge off the hard edge) but is rich in detail with plenty of examples. It covers the use of the search effectively, but most of the book addresses the Google API and programming Google. It provides copious code samples, usually with PERL, but uses .NET also. There are 100 hacks, although 50 seem to be tips.

[Google Pocket Guide](#)

Tara Calishain, Rael Dornfest, and D.J. Adams

O'Reilly Books, 140 pages, ISBN: 0-596-00550-4

Google Pocket Guide is a variation of *Google Hacks* and the same authors wrote it. The book compiles the nonprogramming topics from *Hacks* and keeps the details and interesting aspects. True to its title, it does fit into a shirt pocket.

[Google: The Missing Manual](#)

Sarah Milstein, Rael Dornfest

O'Reilly Books, 311 pages, ISBN: 0-596-00613-6

The Missing Manual explains Google in a conversational tone. Marketed with the tag line question "Why would such an easy-to-use program need (a manual)," the manual not only looks at the basics of searching but also goes into the news, Google groups, Google Answers, and new technology, such as bookmarklets. A chapter covers improving your Google rating for helping others to find you and gives you tips to decrease your rating if you're out for Web anonymity.





Networking

STC Phoenix Meeting

Join Phoenix chapter members Tuesday, April 11, for their program meeting: "Collective Wisdom: Sharing Lessons Learned."

Join us for networking and round table discussions of favorite tools, communication techniques, an exchange of the "best lesson I ever learned" working with others. Each of us brings a wealth of experience from the challenges we face as technical communicators. Share what you've learned or bring a problem you face and let "collective wisdom" provide new ideas and perspective.

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



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.

Software Simulations: Tips, Tricks, and Best Practices

Would you rather learn to use a computer program by reading about it or from a personal coach who shows you how and then guides you through your first steps? Software simulations provide that coach and make learning more like playing a game than reading a manual. Today, easy-to-use tools like Captivate, Camtasia, and even PowerPoint can create highly interactive, instructionally valid learning simulations. But what makes for an effective simulation? This presentation will show you how to—

- Turn passive watchers and readers into active learners and doers.
- Create the levels of interactivity necessary to ensure that learning sticks.
- Avoid the most common mistakes in software simulations.
- Streamline your workflow to avoid errors and wasted time.

William Horton is a recognized international authority on appropriate uses of new electronic media. He is author of nine books on technical communication, including *Designing and Writing Online Documentation* (John Wiley & Sons, 1994), *The Web Page Design Cookbook* (John Wiley & Sons, 1996), and *Designing Web-based Training* (John Wiley & Sons, 2000).

- **Presenter:** William Horton
- **Date:** Wednesday, April 12 | 10 a.m.–11:30 p.m. Mountain Standard Time
- **Seminar Level:** Intermediate





This course is offered by the Education Committee of the Orange County chapter of STC. It is free of charge and open to anyone who has at least a basic knowledge of information architecture and content management. Visit their [Web site](#) to register.

More Educational Opportunities

Information Architecture and Content Management for Technical Writers

Free Six-Lesson Course

This course (IACM201) is free to everyone. Please note, this course is intended as a continuing education experience for practicing technical writers. All course materials are presented in American English. You will receive a new lesson at one month intervals.

Course Objectives

At the conclusion of the IACM201 course you will have a clear understanding of the principles of information architecture (IA) and content management (CM). More important, you will be able to apply these principles to help improve your performance as a technical writer.

Course Overview

The first lesson is an overview of IA and CM. The objective of the first lesson is to bring all students to a common level of understanding and expectation of the course. Subsequent lessons will present foundations of IA and CM. Concluding lessons will present practical applications of IA and CM. Each lesson will include written discussion, online references for further research, an application example, and an online quiz. When the quiz has been satisfactorily completed, you will have demonstrated your mastery of the learning objectives for that lesson. A certificate will be awarded to each student who satisfactorily completes each of the quizzes.



Editor's Notes

Support the Chapter and Vote

By Pat Markey, Editor

All people who were members of the Southern Arizona Chapter as of Feb. 28 will be able to begin casting their votes on Friday, April 7. Although we have no contested positions, it is important for everyone to vote, because it shows support for the work that we are doing to run our chapter and provide you benefits. You may not be able to participate in coordinating chapter activities at this time, but by voting, you let us know that you are out there and aware of what the chapter is doing on your behalf.

Speaking of chapter membership, 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.



About the Newsletter

Editor

Pat Markey:
pat.markey@comcast.net

Copy Editors

DeAnn Drottz:
chemist@c2i2.com
Judy McCabe:
caribe966@aol.com

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Publication Policies

We welcome contributions, book and product reviews, letters, and articles that are relevant to the field of technical communication. **The submission deadline for the next issue is the 2nd Tuesday of the month: April 11.** Your text may be edited to conform to style guidelines and space restrictions of the newsletter.

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Chapter Contacts

Administrative Council

President

Kitty Aughey: kaughey@cox.net

Vice President

Carrie Cooper: carrie.cooper@acs-inc.com

Secretary

DeAnn Drottz: chemist@c2i2.com

Treasurer

Richard Cook: rcook6701@yahoo.com

Immediate Past President

Pat Markey: pat.markey@comcast.net

Committee Contacts

Bylaws Committee

Manager – Carrie Cooper: carrie.cooper@acs-inc.com

Communication, Community Outreach, and Competitions Committees

Manager – Brenda Huettner: bphuettner@aol.com

Newsletter Editor – Pat Markey: pat.markey@comcast.net

Newsletter Copy Editors – DeAnn Drottz: chemist@c2i2.com
and Judy McCabe: caribe966@aol.com

PR/Publicity – Open

Web Site – Kim Diezel: kdiezel@pacbell.net

Education Outreach Committee

Manager – Carrie Cooper: carrie.cooper@acs-inc.com

Election and Nominating Committee

Manager – Pat Markey: pat.markey@comcast.net

Committee – Brenda Huettner: bphuettner@aol.com and
Judy McCabe: caribe966@aol.com

Membership Committee

Manager – Helen Marty: hmarty@cox.net

Membership Assistant – Open

Database – Richard Cook: rcook6701@yahoo.com

Employment – Paul Veverka: paul.veverka@misyshealthcare.com

Listserv – Helen Marty: hmarty@cox.net

Program Committee

Manager – Carrie Cooper: carrie.cooper@acs-inc.com

Facilities – Sue Norris: sue.norris@comcast.net

Past Presidents of the Southern Arizona Chapter

1998-1999 – Dirk Arnold

1999-2000 – Debra Parker (Crawford)

2000-2001 – Barbara Fraps

2001-2002 – Brenda Huettner

2002-2003 – Helen Marty

2003-2004 – Patricia Markey

2004-2006 – Kitty Aughey