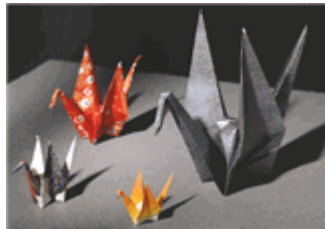




## In this issue, you'll find...

- Susie's "[Fox Tales](#)"
- LSC Events
  - [March Meeting: Going Global or Going Native? GILT edged, or guilty...](#)
  - [February Meeting Review: Three Two Guys on Interaction Design](#)
- Articles:
  - [FEATURE: Paper Still Speaks](#)
  - [Using Enhance for Adobe FrameMaker](#)
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  - [Communicating with the New Brains](#)
- [STC 2008 Elections & Director-At-Large Candidate Articles](#)
- and all the other items

### FEATURE ARTICLE: Paper Still Speaks



As technical communicators, all we hear is that we are a paperless society: we use applications like instant messenger, e-mail, and databases, as well as the Internet. Many of these applications require that we maintain our own paperless filing system. Everyone is concerned about saving trees; we recycle and reuse. However, we still need paper. Sometimes you cannot replace [more](#)

### March 13: Going Global or Going Native? GILT edged, or guilty...

Are you creating material for customers not in the United States or users for whom English is not their primary language? Can you recognize the sometimes subtle differences between American English and British English? Did you know that there are sharp cultural differences between consumers in China, Japan, and Korea, such that product documentation often must be carefully customized for each audience? [more](#)



## Home > Editor Corner

### Editor Corner

by [Jackie Damrau](#), Managing Editor



Spring is around the corner and so much is gearing up within STC that it's time to put the running shoes on again. Here's a list of what I know about in the upcoming months to keep you all in step with me as I begin on the STC marathon.

**March:** We have a dynamic speaker, our incoming President, Mark Clifford, who's a great person and one that you'll enjoy hearing talk about his view of STC and many things international. So get ready to be **I18N'd** (for those who don't know, that's an abbreviation for the word "internationalization"). Send me an [email](#) if you figure it out; who knows the first person that answers correctly will win something.

We also have STC elections starting. You'll find a few articles from six of the eight Director-At-Large candidates to help you in determining who to elect. And, finally, early bird registration for the annual conference is open until March 17<sup>th</sup>.

And, don't forget, Easter is on March 23<sup>rd</sup> this year. Of course, it's a special day for me as I turn the "Big 5-0" on that day at exactly 8:25 a.m. So now you know that I do drastic highlights to my hair, while the rest ages with me.

**April:** A month for fools and IRS forms abounds. We have another stellar monthly program that reprises a popular session held during the 2006 STC Region 5 conference, which LSC hosted. We also will be holding our local community elections. Interested in becoming an officer to lead this great community, contact [Mel Haughton](#).

From the STC perspective, STC elections close on April 14<sup>th</sup> and everyone begins making all their plans for conference. This year, conference is the first week of June (yay! Mothers will be so happy that their sons, daughters, and other family members are not missing this wonderful day for yet another STC conference). Plan on joining Susie, me, and a host of other LSC'ers in Philly.

**May:** This is another special month as we celebrate our mothers. If your mom has passed on, remember her but also consider making a visit to a nursing home or assisted living home to bring a smile to someone else. Of course, don't forget to thank your mothers-in-law. They gave you a wonderful mate and deserve recognition for that

LSC closes its program year with Thiagi providing an exciting instructional design presentation. If you don't know him, come expecting to be wow'ed. We also install your new officers for the 2008-2009 year. President-elect Elisa Miller will take the gavel and, I'm sure, continue to call us to order.

So now that we've made our first water stop for this marathon, I'll leave you to read this very inspiring letter I received from David Dick, who's written a couple of our feature articles.

### Letters to the Editor

Finally, I want to end this column by sharing e-mails I received this past month. You all make this newsletter a joy to produce. Thank you.

I am proud to have my articles published in your newsletter. I sent the link to the article & your newsletter to my manager, and he sent it to all the members of the department.

– David Dick

Until next month...

## Home > Fox Tales

### Fox Tales: Does the Early Bird Get to Philadelphia Any Sooner?

by [Susie Lynn Fox](#), President



It's that time of year again when Arctic cold fronts dip down and skate across the wide-open Texas plains. The cold temps make you wonder if winter will ever end. A few years ago, I finally moved my sun-starved houseplants outside on a bright, sunny March 31<sup>st</sup>. Later in the day, snow began falling and even sticking to the ground. So, I hauled the tender houseplants back inside for further safekeeping.

Sometimes it seems like winter will stick around forever, especially on days when temperatures can easily range from 80 degrees to freezing. But seasonal change harbingers, the neighborhood gardening and hardware stores, start planting spring gardening ideas in our collective heads early, and we realize there is hope for sunnier days. But you have to be careful what you wish for, too. Sunnier, spring days in Texas easily stretch into warmer, summer days of possibly 120 degrees in the shade.

### Watching for Harbingers of Spring

Other spring harbingers, the birds, instinctively begin their seasonal migration returning home for the spring and summer months. If you are beginning to look ahead to warmer days, are you also thinking like an early bird and instinctively planning your migration to the upcoming Society for Technical Communication (STC) 55<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference to be held in Philadelphia, PA, June 1-4, 2008?



If so, you can take advantage now of the **early-bird registration deadline of March 17, 2008**. Even if you are a semi-late-bloomer, you also have a chance to register by the advanced registration deadline of May 23, 2008. For last-minute attendees, you can register on site. For more information about registration of all types, go to <http://www.stc.org/55thConf/index.asp>.

While early-bird registrants might not get to Philadelphia before everyone else, they can certainly save money on their conference fees. Current STC members can also save money, which is a great deal for your pocketbook and for your career.



### Double-Checking Conference To-Do List

This time of year, I usually start double-checking my STC conference to-do list:

- Check out the conference hotels and make reservations for a hotel within walking distance of the conference.
- Register for the conference, networking lunches, and honors banquet by the early-bird registration deadline.
- Research and make airline and airport/hotel shuttle travel arrangements.
- Review and prioritize my favorite list of session topics, which is the hardest job of all.
- Plan on arriving a day early, if possible, to attend Leadership Day sessions.
- Compare notes with others from my community who are planning to attend the conference.
- Plan on a sight-seeing tour or attending a special event that highlights the conference city.

## Reviewing Parade of STC Conference Highlights

Looking back over the STC conferences I've attended, I realize that I've learned many things and met some pretty interesting folks, too.

- **2003 STC Conference in Dallas, TX.** As a new STC member, this was a great starter conference for me because it was in my own backyard of Dallas/Fort Worth. So I drove to and from the conference each day, learned about the types of sessions that I get the most out of, had lunch with friends who were also attending the conference, and also saw the fun side of the Lone Star Community (LSC) members who organized the 50<sup>th</sup> annual conference. I attended sessions on metrics, mentoring, content management, documentation strategies, information process maturity model, skills for managing my career, moving from paper to electronic distribution, and writing and editing tips.
- **2004 STC Conference in Baltimore, MD.** For the first time, I registered for the networking lunches and honors banquet, which were great networking opportunities. I attended sessions about constructing a one-stop answer station, using and calculating metrics, documentation quality tracking system, creating graphics, managing large and small projects, planning for tomorrow, getting information online, and mentoring, coaching, and creative thinking. In my spare time, I toured the nearby National Aquarium in Baltimore.
- **2005 STC Conference in Seattle, WA.** My session picks were textual bloopers and how to avoid them, planning for tomorrow's trends and technologies, usability testing, FlashHelp, WebHelp, and Web Help, working with interns, card sort usability testing, improving documentation through customer feedback, measuring technical communication projects, and Longhorn Help. I enjoyed the networking lunches and honors banquet as usual and took side trips to the famous Pike Place Fish Market, Space Needle, and Science Fiction Museum.
- **2006 STC Conference in Las Vegas, NV.** My hubby came the weekend before the conference so that we could tour the "Star Trek the Experience" exhibit ... twice! We also enjoyed going with fellow LSC members to the Cirque O show. At the conference, I learned about migrating from RoboHelp to Flare, collaborative programs between STC chapters and universities, group dynamics, usability of Help systems, accessibility and usability differences, editing from an author's point of view, understanding and applying editing, planning for tomorrow's trends and technology, golden rules of grammar, and creating show-me demos with Macromedia Captivate. The networking lunches and honors banquets were much fun, too.
- **2007 STC Conference in Minneapolis, MN.** For the first time, I attended Leadership Day, which offers great resources to community leaders. My session favorites were Web 2.0 and its impact on technical communication, myths and trends in the changing English language, podcasting production, how the Web sounds, using wikis for collaborative writing, e-mail and digital literacies, coaching, and the art of friendly persuasion. Besides the networking lunches and honors banquet, I attended other networking events. Before the conference, I also attended a live radio broadcast of "A Prairie Home Companion" with Garrison Keillor.

## Flocking to Philadelphia

What will the **2008 STC Conference in Philadelphia, PA**, bring? I don't know yet, but I'm sure that I'll learn more, meet some interesting folks, and come away inspired and enthused for my future projects at work. So I'll start planning ahead now, check my to-do list, and register early to reserve my place. I hope to see a bunch of early birds and others flocking to Philadelphia, too!



## Home > Meetings

### Meetings

#### Read about:

- [March Meeting: Going Global or Going Native? GILT edged, or guilty...](#)
- [February Meeting Review: Three Two Guys on Interaction Design \(Rob Brown\)](#)

### March Meeting: Going Global or Going Native? GILT edged, or guilty...

by [Jim Korth](#), PR Committee member

Are you creating material for customers not in the United States or users for whom English is not their primary language? Can you recognize the sometimes subtle differences between American English and British English? Did you know that there are sharp cultural differences between consumers in China, Japan, and Korea, such that product documentation often must be carefully customized for each audience?

Mark Clifford, an authority on international technical communication, will provide significant insight on the opportunities and pitfalls of this growing field. He is the incoming President and the speaker for the March 13<sup>th</sup> program.

Economic globalization is an inevitable trend as many large U.S. companies earn half of their revenues from overseas operations. Product designers and the documentation writers who support them must make effective decisions about visual design for diverse audiences as well

as be aware of and sensitive to cultural differences between customer groups. Documentation professionals must decide when to use controlled languages, wherein the grammar and vocabulary in a technical communication is restricted to reduce or eliminate ambiguity and complexity.

Technical writers creating material for non-English speaking users must often understand and assess translation methods. Writers may need to be knowledgeable about language localization, the process of translating written material into different languages, or adapting a language for a specific country or region. Different national varieties of widespread languages have evolved. Linguistic differences include pronunciation, spelling conventions and grammatical patterns. It is important for companies to consider such differences, for example, when creating Web sites for specific regional markets.



Mr. Clifford will provide a look at international technical communication and the need to design the communication about products, services, and business processes to address the global marketplace. He will discuss the main issues around globalization—cultural diversity, media, audiences, tools, and the impact these issues have on the technical communication profession.

Mr. Clifford is a consultant and manager with Clifford Sells, Ltd., an information design and recruitment firm in Bedford, United Kingdom. He is a graduate of the University of Luton in the UK and has worked as an editor, writer, manager, and recruiter, primarily with publications consultancies and service companies across Europe.

#### Details

**Thursday, March 13, 2008, 6:15 to 8:00 p.m.**

Crowne Plaza Hotel North Dallas-Addison  
14315 Midway Road  
Addison, Texas

**Directions:** [http://www.stc-dfw.org/pages/meet\\_monthly.htm#locations](http://www.stc-dfw.org/pages/meet_monthly.htm#locations)

**Reservations (Reservations made after 5pm on March 10 are subject to a \$5 penalty)**  
[Click to register for the meeting now!](#)

#### Dinner (with reservations):

- \$20 STC members / Students with student ID
- \$25 non-members

#### Program Only Attendance:

- \$5 STC members / Students with student ID
- \$10 non-members

## February Review: ~~Three~~ Two Guys on Interaction Design

by Rob Brown, Member



Perot Systems Interaction Designer Vic Case's pet peeve is when his technical colleagues confuse interaction design with visual design. "I am not a visual designer. Graphic design definitely has functional value, but interaction design defines how a system behaves in response to the person using it. It is much more than just visual design," he says.

The Lone Star Community hosted interaction designers Vic Case and Kevin Mattice from Perot Systems in a panel discussion entitled "~~Three~~ Two Guys on Interaction Design" at its February 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. The third panel member was ill and unable to attend.

Vic has worked with interactive software development since 1991. For several years he focused on interactive multimedia training as an instructional designer. He migrated to designing and developing Web sites and joined an Internet consultancy, where he worked as an Information Architect for major corporate business-to-business and consumer Web sites. He has been at Perot Systems since 2001 supporting the Tenet Healthcare account. Vic has experience in designing user interfaces and interactions for both Web and Windows applications.

Kevin Mattice has worked as instructional designer, interaction designer, 2D and 3D illustrator, and technical writer. With recent experience at the Department of Homeland Security and Travelocity.com, Kevin currently works for Perot Systems as a User Experience (UX) Architect specializing in the design of Web- and desktop-based user experiences for the healthcare industry.

### Interaction Design Defined

So just what exactly is interaction design? This somewhat academic definition comes from [Wikipedia](#):

"Interaction Design (IxD) is the discipline of defining the behavior of products and systems that a user can interact with. Typically, the practice centers on complex high-technology systems such as software, mobile devices, and other electronic devices. However, it can also apply to other types of products and services, and even organizations themselves. Interaction design defines the behavior (the "interaction") of an artifact or system in response to its users."

Vic and Kevin provided their own more workaday explanation:

"Interaction design defines how a system behaves in response to the person using it. By incorporating the user's needs, desires and goals in the design, user experience designers work with business analysts and developers to create an interaction that is both simple and usable."

### Putting Interaction Design to Work

Kevin and Vic outlined a four-step process showing how interaction design usually takes place when it is part of an information technology project:

1. User-experience designers and business analysts gather requirements and interview users.
2. Information architects develop an interactive prototype in [Axure RP Pro](#), or non-interactive wireframes in Microsoft Visio.
3. Demonstrate the prototype to the business decision makers and development team.
4. Validate the design's ease of use through usability testing.

## Key Players Leverage Interaction Designs

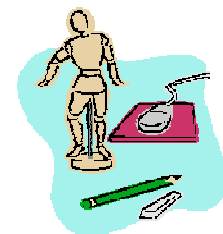
Vic and Kevin stressed that once complete, their interaction designs do not sit on a shelf getting dusty. Instead, the project team members actively used the designs. Business decision makers use the interaction designs to envision how an application's functionality will actually work in the hands of the users. Developers use the interaction designs to help determine how to code interface behaviors. Usability analysts present interaction design prototypes to potential users to see how well the designs work in practice. Quality assurance team members test the user interaction designs to evaluate how well the final code compares to the behavior defined in the design.

## Interaction Designs Importance

Interaction design enhances the quality of a product through improving marketability, increasing user accuracy and safety, improving user acceptance, decreasing training, reducing operating costs, and streamlining business processes. All this contributes to a more satisfying user experience by reducing steps, eliminating "friction" by reducing mental and physical work, and preventing predictable errors.

## Good Interaction Design Principals

Vic and Kevin described several core principals that must be met in every superior interaction design:



Every user experience with a Web site or application involves many "micro interactions" such as entering data into a field, moving the cursor across a window to click a button, reading a field label, selecting an action from a menu list, and so forth. Each of these micro-interactions by itself is relatively insignificant, yet when taken together they form the user's overall experience, so good interaction design must be applied to each micro-interaction. A good interaction designer will try to design out predictable errors, for example making sure that back-end code allows a phone number to be entered either with or without dashes. "Otherwise you are just setting the user up to fail," said Vic.

Little failures like this are like little cuts, or nicks, on your body. One nick won't kill you, but a thousand nicks will cause you to bleed to death. The same is true for the user experience. "Too many little failures, and the user will avoid your application," said Kevin.

Good interaction design must always include attention to:

- Text (copywriting, field labels)
- Technology (AJAX versus straight HTML)
- Visual design (layout, positioning, proximity, typography)

Also consider the user role and task analysis during interaction design so that the solutions fit both the user and the context of the task.

"There is a trade-off between the simplicity of the interaction design and the power of the application, and you constantly have to work to find a balance between the two," said Vic.

A certain amount of art exists as well as science in interaction design, so that an aspect of subjectivity is always present. The best designs occur when that subjectivity is tempered by years of seeing what works and what doesn't in user interaction, Vic said.

## Getting Started

Vic and Kevin both started their careers as technical communicators, and said it was their frustration with having to document poor user interfaces that spurred them to advocate for better interaction design. As technical communication professionals, we can start to promote better interaction design in our products by ensuring we and the rest of the project team really know who the product users are and how they will use it. We can learn more of the interaction design vocabulary by studying the references listed on the last slide of their presentation.

Vic and Kevin urged us to consider multiple approaches for a solution, instead of relying on the same interface for all solutions. One way to do this is to look for real-life examples—see how persons accomplish this or a similar task without a computer. Another approach is to ask for opinions from others outside the project.

Finally, as a technical communication professional, you can start developing simple prototypes of different solutions, and then start performing some simple usability testing.

Before you know it, you will be on the road to becoming an interaction designer yourself! Your users will thank you.

**For more information**

Go to the last slide in Vic and Kevin's presentation at <http://ux/prchealth.com/ID> for a list of books, articles, and Web sites.

## Home > Articles

### Articles

#### Read about:

- [Feature: Paper Still Speaks \(Mary Jo Stark\)](#)
- [Using Enhance for Adobe FrameMaker \(Lance-Robert\)](#)
- [What Happens When Your Iceberg Starts to Melt? \(Louellen Coker\)](#)
- [Communicating with the New Brains \(Alan Oak\)](#)

## FEATURE: Paper Still Speaks

by Mary Jo Stark, Fellow and Rocky Mountain Chapter member

As technical communicators, all we hear is that we are a paperless society: we use applications like instant messenger, e-mail, and databases, as well as the Internet. Many of these applications require that we maintain our own paperless filing system. Everyone is concerned about saving trees; we recycle and reuse. However, we still need paper. Sometimes you cannot replace documentation, marketing materials, or résumés with a paperless alternative.

This article came about when Jackie Damrau and I were discussing award certificates as we both admitted we love shopping for paper. (If you don't think others do, go to [www.paper.com](http://www.paper.com) and see over 40,000 different types of paper at one Web site alone.) I personally like going to the local paper stores, so that I can touch the paper, feel the quality of it, and make sure that it says what I want it to say. Yes, it is true, paper speaks. I had a lecture in school on the exact subject, choosing paper to reflect your message.

### Do You Know Your Paper Terminology?

Any good paper store will help you find the correct paper for your needs. That is, you need to look at the type of papers such as writing/bond paper for everyday communication, text for manuals, special for a special need such as a résumé or book cover. You need to understand the basis weight, which is determined by the end use and described in pounds and grams. You need to think about the caliper/bulk or the thickness of the paper, which again is determined by the end use. The chief end use is how you will use and print the paper, and of course, you will need to think price. This information can be found anywhere. What I want to address is the message of paper.

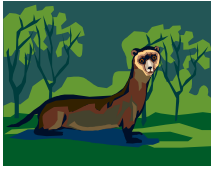


### Paper's Message: I Have My Own Identity

In the case of the award certificates, the chief end use is to thank someone for their time and expertise and to give them something to include in their portfolio. What would say a special thank you better: a nice weight, high-quality paper or a thin bond certificate created from the copy machine? If prospective employers are looking at your portfolio, they are more likely to read an award printed on quality paper suitable for the occasion than something that is not.

When I first graduated with my technical communication degree, I took all the skills I had learned about résumés and printed my well-written, laid-out résumé on the most beautiful, expensive light gray paper I could find; the touch was exquisite. I then went to an STC résumé review where the first thing I was told was to tone down my paper! It was giving the wrong message; it said I expect to be paid a lot of money although this is my first job and I might not work well within budgets. As an older employee changing careers, this was not the message I wanted to give out. Paper speaks of your identity.

Paper also speaks of your company's identity. We all design with a consistent look and feel and have seen how marketing materials, logos, and messages can work together to describe a company's identity. The paper it is printed on is part of the identity package.



As an example, I work for an energy company that daily sends out tons of printed material worldwide. Energy companies are changing their focus from oil and gas to alternative energy sources. They are advertising about how they are helping the environment with new and innovative drilling methods, sponsoring research for alternative fuel sources to replace traditional oil and gas reserves, and are concerned with the mating habits of the black-footed ferret.

([http://www.defenders.org/wildlife\\_and\\_habitat/wildlife/black-footed\\_ferret.php](http://www.defenders.org/wildlife_and_habitat/wildlife/black-footed_ferret.php)). The message would not mean anything if it was printed on paper from fresh cut trees. Instead our communications department chose to go "green" and print most everything on post-consumer recycled and tree-free fibers from chlorine-free bleaching processes. When you see the paper, you can tell it says "green" by its look and feel; it says we are going green and we are concerned about the environment.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, it is true we are becoming more of a paperless society, yet we will always have a need for paper. So, if you find yourself in a situation where you have to print hardcopy, remember paper still speaks.

## Using Enhance for Adobe FrameMaker

By Lance-Robert, Orange County STC Senior Member (*Reprinted with permission*)

Sandybrook Software's "Enhance for Adobe FrameMaker" is a powerful FrameMaker add-on that helps you to view, edit, print, and create FrameMaker documents in outline mode, similar to what comes standard with Microsoft Word. This is especially helpful when you:

- Work with long documents
- Work with documents imported from Word
- Create indices using another tool, like IXgen by Frank Stearns Associates
- Want to ensure that your headings are at the right level
- Want to ensure that your headings display properly
- Want to ensure that your document has parallel structure

Enhance for FrameMaker costs \$99.95 for a single license, and is available for purchase and download from Sandybrook Software's web site: <http://www.sandybrook.com>.

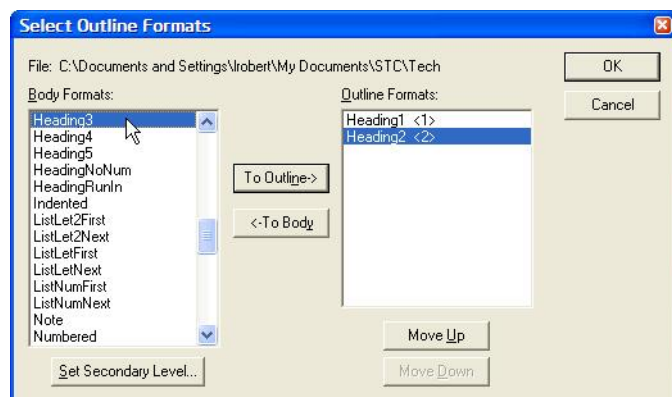
A trial version is also available.

Once installed, Enhance is added to FrameMaker's menu bar.

To use Enhance, click the **Enhance** menu and select **Enhance View**.

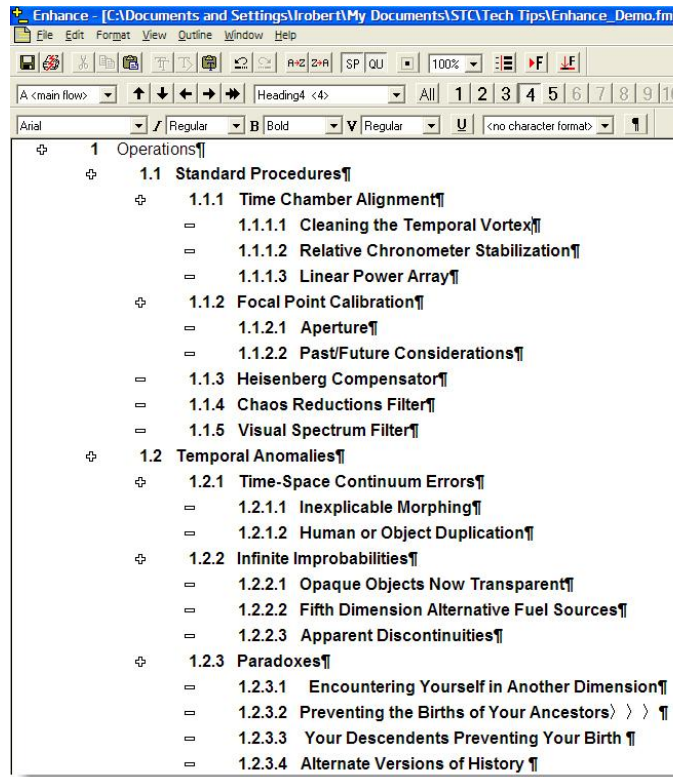
The first time you view a particular document in Enhance, the program will ask you to define the hierarchy of the heading paragraph tags, especially if your document uses tags other than the standard ones that come with FrameMaker (e.g., Heading1, Heading2).

To move tags from the Body Formats to the Outline Formats, double-click them.



To make one or more tags have the same level of hierarchy, such as a Heading1 and AppendixHeading1, click **Set Secondary Level**.

When you are finished, click **OK**. The outline version of your document opens.



You do not need to redefine the hierarchy the next time you open the document, provided you save it before closing FrameMaker.



You can show or hide the paragraph format names (e.g., Heading1, Heading2) by clicking **Show/Hide Paragraph Names**.

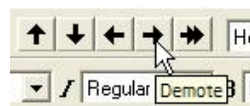


You can change the number of levels that are displayed by clicking the level you want.

You can promote, demote, or reorder headings as needed. For example, let's demote the second and third headings (1.1.4 and 1.1.5 in this example).



To do this, highlight them with the mouse and click **Demote**.



The second and third headings are now demoted.



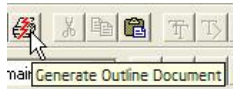
- 1.2.3 Paradoxes¶
  - 1.2.3.1 Encountering Yourself in Another Dimension¶
  - 1.2.3.2 Preventing the Births of Your Ancestors¶ > > ¶
  - 1.2.3.3 Your Descendents Preventing Your Birth ¶
  - 1.2.3.4 Alternate Versions of History ¶

Enhance is especially handy if you have imported a document from Word. When you do that, it is not uncommon to have leading or trailing spaces or tabs in your headings.

Having these spaces or tags does not affect the readability of the FrameMaker document, but it can cause visual misalignments if you use FrameMaker to generate a Table of Contents or an Index. To remove them, simply delete them as you would any unwanted characters from the Enhance screen.

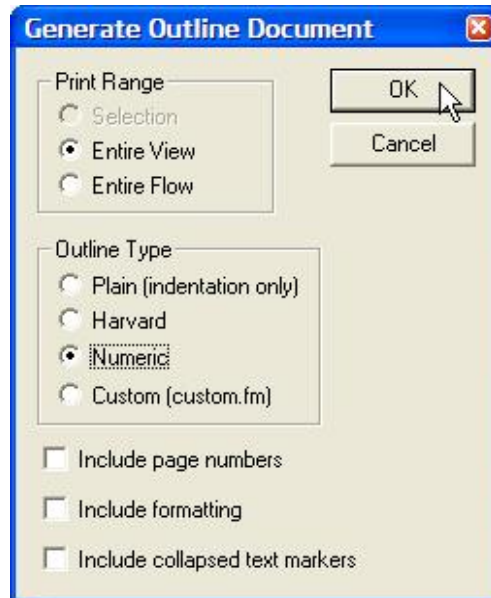
Index and other markers are displayed as a red T where applicable:

- 1.3.1 Primary Considerations¶
  - 1.3.1.1 Present Time Determination¶
  - 1.3.1.2 Present Dimension Determination¶



If you like, you can generate a document that contains just the headings you have selected by clicking **Generate Outline Document**.

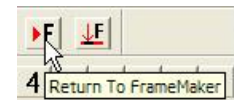
The program gives you a variety of display options for the generated file:



Once created, the generated file looks something like that shown on the next page.

Printing out the generated document is also handy when creating an index from paragraph tags using IXgen, and saves you from having to switch between multiple screens.

After you finish making your changes, click **Return to FrameMaker** to incorporate your changes into the document:



Remember to save your document at this point!

This is just a short list of Enhance's many features. I hope that you give the program a try, and that you find this information helpful!

1.0	Operations
1.1	Standard Procedures
1.1.1	Time Chamber Alignment
1.1.1.1	Cleaning the Temporal Vortex
1.1.1.2	Relative Chronometer Stabilization
1.1.1.3	Linear Power Array
1.1.2	Focal Point Calibration
1.1.2.1	Aperture
1.1.2.2	Past/Future Considerations
1.1.3	Heisenberg Compensator
1.1.3.1	Chaos Reductions Filter
1.1.3.2	Visual Spectrum Filter
1.2	Temporal Anomalies
1.2.1	Time-Space Continuum Errors
1.2.1.1	Inexplicable Morphing
1.2.1.2	Human or Object Duplication
1.2.2	Infinite Improbabilities
1.2.2.1	Opaque Objects Now Transparent
1.2.2.2	Fifth Dimension Alternative Fuel Sources
1.2.2.3	Apparent Discontinuities
1.2.3	Paradoxes
1.2.3.1	Encountering Yourself in Another Dimension
1.2.3.2	Preventing the Births of Your Ancestors
1.2.3.3	Your Descendents Preventing Your Birth
1.2.3.4	Alternate Versions of History
1.2.4	Interphasing
1.2.4.1	Disappearance Versus Invisibility
1.2.4.2	Object Displacement
1.2.4.3	Tactile Loss
1.3	Master Reset
1.3.1	Primary Considerations
1.3.1.1	Present Time Determination
1.3.1.2	Present Dimension Determination
1.3.2	Permutations
1.3.2.1	Causality Loops
1.3.2.2	Parallel Dimensions

A version of this article appeared in the March 2006 issue of San Diego Signature, STC San Diego's chapter newsletter. Lance-Robert is a senior member of the San Diego and Orange County chapters. You can reach Lance-Robert at [progs@stc-sd.org](mailto:progs@stc-sd.org).

## What Happens When Your Iceberg Starts to Melt?

by [Louellen S. Coker](#), Senior Member



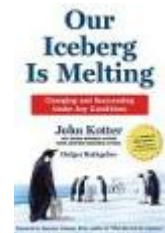
I started my business five years ago mostly because I got tired of commuting and being "out of control" of my fate in the company by which I was employed. You see, after experiencing layoffs personally and witnessing friends in the same situation, I learned that no matter how skilled or personable you are nor the amount you produce, a "captive" employee is every bit as dispensable as a contractor or consultant. We're all a commodity and fickle winds of the economy determine our fate. It's nothing personal, it's just business.

If we care to recognize the signs, we often have a good idea that our situation is going to change before it does. Everyone that I've talked with can point to warning signs that they cared not to acknowledge when they arose. It seems that hindsight is indeed 20-20.

As a consultant, it is in my best interest to look for those warning signs so that I can prepare my business for their impact. With the media's current feeding frenzy over the economic changes, it is no surprise that I'm getting a little nervous. I've talked to several other consultants, contractors, and even captive employees who are starting to get an uneasy feeling in the pit of their stomach.

The purpose of this column is not to raise an alarm that our industry is going to be negatively impacted by our economy that is in a state of flux. I hope otherwise. But the interests of my company and those in my employ urge me to be sensitive to any and all warning signs. As professionals, we need to look for what lies ahead in our careers, and plan accordingly.

When discussing this issue with a colleague, it was recommended that I read John Kotter's *Our Iceberg Is Melting: Changing and Succeeding Under Any Conditions*. It's a small book, complete with pretty pictures and large type scattered throughout. And best of all, it's an enjoyable fable about penguins.



As much as I liked the presentation and the story line, my eyebrows raised at what I expected to be just another motivational book. Kotter more than delivered as he spun a tale about how a group of penguins discovered that their home on the iceberg was melting and how they handled the situation.

The underlying tenet to the story is what Kotter calls the [8- Step Process of Successful Change](#):

Set the stage

1. Create a Sense of Urgency
2. Pull Together the Guiding Team

Decide what to do

3. Develop the Change Vision and Strategy

Make It Happen

4. Communicate for Understanding and Buy in
5. Empower Others to Act
6. Produce Short-Term Wins
7. Don't Let Up

Making It Stick

8. Create a New Culture

After making my way through this quick read, I was happy to have it on my bookshelf. It is one of those books that make you feel good while making you think. Kotter gets your mind drafting a plan of action throughout the pages.

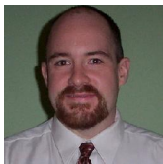
I was glad to have the book on the desk waiting for a closer look. On the day I finished the book, I consulted with a client on a project and was greeted with “We’ve been told not to talk to you, call my boss to find out what’s up.”

In that moment, I realized that my iceberg can indeed implode at any time. And, while fortunately, my subject matter expert was mistaken and “was” supposed to work with me; the incident has let me know that the stage is set for my company to make a change. And as I pursue other contracts and work to strengthen this relationship, my company is poising itself to create a new culture as we evolve from a fledgling business into our next growth stage.

Whether you’re on stable ground, noticing the winds of change, or in the midst of a change, you’ll enjoy reading this book. While it’s not a “how-to” book with step-by-step guidelines, you will benefit from reading it.

## Communicating with the New Brains

By [Alan Oak](#), Member



Data from the [U.S. Census Bureau](#) and the [National Endowment for the Arts](#) shows that readership of books and other media continues to drop every year, even as the amount of time Americans spend ingesting media goes up. The only area of reading increase is in Web use. Caleb Cain, Critic at Large for the [New Yorker](#) magazine, cites research in his article, “[Twilight of the Books](#),” suggesting this trend will result in less literacy and change the very structure of people’s brains and thinking. How, then, will we communicate with our audience in a post-literate world?

We’ve little reason to think people will start reading more. No matter how many books get scattered like parade candy from bookmobiles, they just won’t be as interesting to most people as Halo and Lost. It’s time to get past hand-wringing and cries of woe to begin thinking about what we’re going to do. I know it’s hard. Most technical communicators are voracious readers, and I bet I can’t walk through an STC meeting without bumping into half a dozen part-time novelists and screenwriters. We’re a literate bunch. We are not the vanguard.

In the 1970s, psychological research of newly literate cultures, with a mix of literate and illiterate people, showed that illiterate people think differently. Illiterate people have difficulty recognizing optical illusions, thinking abstractly, and using conceptual categories. They don’t like understanding things through analytical and theoretical language. Instead, illiterate people prefer communicating information through stories.

If a post-literate culture grows, how will that affect what we do? Say you’re designing a Web-based help system, but the audience of the future is not able to easily use a hierarchical listing of topics and text-based advice. Does the help system rely on an artificial intelligence (AI) application that extrapolates what kind of problem a user is having from their practical explanation of, “It’s broken, and the light is off”? Does it then whisk them to a YouTube-style video telling a little teaching story, or maybe to a Virtual Reality guide of an engine with flashing colors and moving parts to demonstrate exactly what needs to be done? Do all our books and Web sites start to resemble the Sprint instruction cards Patrick Hoffman showed us in his “Intuitive Images” lecture? After all, most people will be reading English as if it’s a second language.

We’re not to that day yet, if we ever get there. Reading on the Web may alter brains’ cognitive functions in a new way. Yet there will be changes. In the meantime, the Internet communication genius, Jakob Nielson, has some [great advice](#) on writing Web content for low-literacy audiences, which is about 30% of Web users. With a little creative modeling, we can adapt his ideas for the entire 48% of the U.S. population that has low literacy. The rest we’ll have to figure out.

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**LSC Notes and Committee Reports****Review of the 2008 Awards: Celebrating our Members and our Students**

by [Mel Haughton](#), LSC immediate past president

During the 2008 Awards Banquet, LSC recognized the following recipients:

- 2008 BALA, recipient: Dale Erickson
- 2008 Scholarship recipient: Lacy Landrum
- Student Web Site recipients (two UNT teams): Shannon Sawyer and Christye Fuller, student representatives
- 2007 Star Parade: Clare Davis and Rob Brown

**BALA.** Binion Amerson presented the Binion Amerson Leadership Award (BALA) to **Dale Erickson**. Dale's plaque reads: "In recognition of your exemplary leadership, service, and dedication to the Lone Star Community, the Society, and the Technical Communication profession."

Dale Erickson is a Senior Technical Writer who writes online help for supply chain software. He has volunteered at STC LSC for over two decades and has served as Second Vice President, Treasurer, Membership Manager, Internet SIG Co-Manager, Web Page Competition Co-Manager, and Web Master.

On the national level, Dale has served as Membership committee member, Financial Manager of the STC 40th Annual Conference, SIG Advisory committee member, New Media Delivery Systems Manager, Community Achievement Award Evaluation Committee Manager.

Congratulations Dale, for this most deserving honor!



**Scholarship.** Lacy Landrum was the winner of the Spring 2008 LSC Traditional Scholarship. LSC awarded \$1000 to finish her doctorate at Oklahoma State University. Although she was unable to attend the awards banquet, she was extremely excited to be this year's scholarship recipient. This scholarship will help her complete her dissertation, which explores accessibility issues when designing Web sites for people who are deaf. Read Lacy's article about this subject that appeared in last month's "Technically Write".

**Student Web Site Awards.** Mel Haughton, LSC Immediate Past President, began the Awards portion of the ceremony by introducing the student Web site awards. During the Fall 2007 semester, LSC partnered with three University of North Texas (UNT) Technical Writing classes to create a new look for the LSC Web site. The LSC council selected two winning Web sites and will use them as a basis to create its new Web site in the next few years. Two UNT students, Shannon Sawyer and Christye Fuller, represented their teams and accepted the awards.

**2007 Star Parade.** After the presentation of the Merit, Excellence, and Distinguished awards, Kathryn Poe, Competitions Manager, introduced Clare Davis, from MLink Technologies, to begin the Parade of Stars. Clare talked about the winning Nokia entry: Nokia N95 8 GB e-learning.

Rob Brown, with RDB Consulting, Inc., discussed his winning entry: HP OpenView Select Identity 4X-Adv. Product training. To close the Parade of Stars, Fredrick M. Stowell, with Fire Protection Publications, talked about their winning entry: Fire and Emergency Services Company Officer.

### **February's "U" Rock Award Recipients**

by [Mel Haughton](#), LSC immediate past president

Every year, the LSC presents "U" Rock awards to LSC members who went above and beyond and provided outstanding service to the community.

During the February program meeting, we presented two "U" Rock awards:

- **Louellen S. Coker** for going the extra mile and doing an outstanding job as Technical Publications Manager during the 2008 LSC Competition
- **Diane Mazarella** for doing an outstanding job as Online Communication Manager during the 2008 LSC Competitions

Congratulations, ladies! Well deserved!



## **Member Recognition Committee: Are You a Superstar?**

by [Mel Haughton](#), LSC immediate past president



Do you like making a difference and stepping up to help? Do you need a few more samples for your portfolio? Do you want to work on your networking skills? How about get your head around a new piece of software?

If you answered **yes** to any of these questions, then dive in and start volunteering today. You'll be on your way to becoming a Superstar!

You automatically receive points each time you participate in LSC activities. Points are based upon the activity and its point values and are listed in the table below.

LSC Activity	Points
Attend a monthly meeting	1
Attend a council meeting	1
Volunteer at an event	2
Contribute to a community service effort	1
Judge competitions	3
Contribute an article to newsletter	1
Bring a guest to meeting	1
Be a mentor	5
Present at an STC event (Local, regional, or international)	2
Speak to a student group about Technical Communication and STC	2
Convince a guest to join	5

Our Volunteer Wrangler will keep score from August 1, 2007 to June 1, 2008. Collect a total of 20 points to become an LSC Superstar. All Superstars will be recognized at the September 2008 meeting.

So, start volunteering today and become a Superstar and become part of the Superstar team. Winners receive a unique LSC Superstar shirt. The only way to get this shirt is to get involved and earn those points.

Send an e-mail to [volunteers@stc-dfw.org](mailto:volunteers@stc-dfw.org) to learn more about volunteer opportunities.

## **Scholarship Committee – February’s Raffle Recipients**

by Robert Carr Harris, Manager, Scholarship committee



Once again, thanks to the generous donations of our sponsors and meeting attendees, the door prize drawing was successful. As always, the proceeds from our monthly fundraiser support the Scholarship fund. February’s main sponsors included the Dallas Desperados, Sweet Factory in Plano, Barnes & Noble, and Crane & Co.

The following three were the meeting’s lucky prize recipients:

- **Heather Steele**, LSC Second Vice President, won a desk-sized Classic Gumball Machine from the Sweet Factory. The prize also included a 2008 pocket planner and Classic Trains calendar from Barnes & Noble.
- Member **Rob Brown** scored a Dallas Desperados prize pack to the team’s game day opener. The prize included six tickets to the Desperados game, as well as T-shirts, stickers, and footballs.
- **Kristin Kirkham**, LSC Secretary, won an STC tote bag filled with various goodies, including Harry & David chocolates, Adobe and TechSmith T-shirts, and much more from other donors.



**Application deadline:  
March 28 at midnight**

LSC is again offering two scholarships:

- The “Traditional Education Scholarship,” which assists students who are pursuing a technical communication degree or certificate and who intend a career in the field.
- The “Continuing Education Scholarship,” which helps professionals enrolled in workshops or courses in the field of technical communication or who are planning a professional conference to advance their professional development in technical communication.

Visit the [Scholarship](#) link on the LSC Web site for more information on these scholarships.

## **Volunteer Committee: Want to help a little?**

by [Mel Haughton](#), LSC Volunteer Wrangler

Have you thought about the difference you can make in someone's life just by offering a bit of your time? How does it make you feel when you need help and someone actually comes through? Does it bring you happiness? Does it feel good to get something done as a team?

Where I come from we have a saying: "One hand helps the other." If you give a bit of your time to help someone, one day someone will help you out as well. That's how we like to work here at the LSC. We're a big happy family, and we're always looking for talented individuals to help us out!

We currently have the following opportunities that would take a limited amount of your time:

- Edit our Web site (a two- to three-hour job)
- Be a greeter or help at the Registration desk (a 30-minute job) during our monthly meeting
- Write, edit, and print programs for our monthly meetings (a two-hour job)
- Write articles for our online newsletter, *Technically Write*. (The time commitment depends on how much you write!)

So it doesn't take that much time! And if you think you can spare more time than this, think about organizing half-day workshops or serving as an assistant to a committee manager.

E-mail me at [volunteers@stc-dfw.org](mailto:volunteers@stc-dfw.org) if you want to make a difference in LSC.

What's in it for you, you ask? Think about how you will increase your network! Think about the additions you can make to your résumé and your portfolio! Think about how many people will appreciate you for your efforts.

Send your e-mail to me right away, and let me know where you can help. I look forward to hearing from you!

## **Mentor Committee**

by [Ann Balaban](#), Associate Fellow and Manager, Mentoring Committee

Early in their careers, technical communicators in corporate environments often find that technical writing is perhaps the easiest and quickest of the many tasks they perform.

Probably the most difficult, time-consuming chore they face is locating the information needed to perform the writing task. First, the writer needs to find the person with the required knowledge and then find the right way to interact successfully with this individual while navigating within corporate cultures and politics.

How do new technical communicators find the best mentors to help them solve these problems? One way is to take advantage of the Mentoring program from the STC Lone Star community. As a new technical communicator or as a student in technical communication, you have valuable resources available to you through STC.

Research literature shows that mentors provide vocational and psychosocial support to protégés. One researcher found a link between these functions and the career mobility of protégés. Research also shows that technical communicators have relatively high job satisfaction, but that their corporate mobility and career development is relatively low. Mentors can help technical communicators become aware of additional avenues for career advancement because they often know what is required for other positions and how to prepare for assuming them.

Having a mentor can improve your skills in organizational communication and management, as well as increase your overall productivity and job satisfaction.

## Resources:

1. Henrietta N. Shirk and Howard T. Smith, "Developing Effective Mentorships for Technical Communicators," STC 1994 Annual Conference Proceedings.
2. Gordon, Thomas, *Leadership Effectiveness Training*, Wyden, New York, 1974.

## Why Mentoring Matters

STC is always looking for new leaders. One way to locate and retain our next generation of leaders is by mentoring.

Mentoring can help STC develop new leaders while enhancing your career development and improving your technical knowledge. Besides all these great benefits, it really improves your self-esteem! The mentor's growth occurs right along with the protégé's.

The purpose for mentoring is to encourage growth of a less experienced person in their profession and within STC. Your experiences learning about and working with others qualifies you to be a mentor. If you had a mentor when you were starting out, imagine what a difference it would have made—if only I knew then what I know now! This is your chance to share your experiences, your enthusiasm for your work, and your interests with someone just starting out in technical communication.

In a mentoring relationship, the mentor and protégé:

- Identify objectives, goals, and development needs
- Define and establish a plan to accomplish goals
- Meet regularly in person, by phone, or through e-mail to review and evaluate progress

Mentoring is all-inclusive—no one is excluded who wants to participate. You do not have to be a student to be a protégé. Whether you are new to technical communication—just starting out or making a career change—or you have been a technical communicator for awhile and need guidance to jump-start your career, you can be a part of the mentoring program. Success is based on what you want to do. A mentor can suggest methods for advancement, recommend books and other resources, and offer résumé assistance and career guidance. As a protégé, you have requirements to fulfill, too. You should ask questions, listen and be open to suggestions, and keep the lines of communication open.

The STC Lone Star community is continually looking for mentors and people who need mentors. This is a wonderful program that benefits all involved.

## Resources:

1. About.com: [www.about.com](http://www.about.com)
2. The Mentoring Leadership & Resource Network: [www.mentors.com](http://www.mentors.com)
3. The Resources Agency Mentor Program
4. Catheryn Mason and Elizabeth Bailey, "Benefits and Pitfalls of Mentoring," STC 2005 Annual Conference Proceedings.

## LSC Membership Minute

by [Jeanne Foster](#), Manager, Membership and SIN SIG

The Lone Star Community currently has 296 members. Are you one of the 296? If you are and you need advice on claiming membership dues on your federal tax return, check out the *Tieline* article, "U.S. Members: Deduct Your STC Dues" located at <http://www.stc-cdx.org/node/820>.



**New Member Spotlight:** This month we have 15 new members. Let me introduce you to a handful of them here, and if you see them at an LSC function, please introduce yourself.

- **Cory Abbott** has been a technical writer for 25 years, and he claims that 17 of those years, "I've also been a Texan (by way of New York City)." Maybe some of you know Cory. He has been involved with STC on and off since coming to Texas. Cory has been with Siemens for the past five years. He is the Illustrated Parts

Breakdown group lead for his Technical Communications department. He uses [Arbortext Editor](#) as his XML editor and the [Astoria On-Demand](#) content management system to create the newest manual for our United States Postal Service flats sortation device.

- **Lynn Cloude** works for elnstruction Corp. in Denton, TX. She's been involved in technical work for over 15 years and freelance writing for even longer, but she says, "I never dreamed I'd get the chance to combine my interests. I've only been a full-time technical writer since November of 2007." Many of us can identify with Lynn, who says "It feels a little overwhelming." Lynn joined STC for the fellowship and the potential opportunities to expand her knowledge in technical communication. For the past two years, she has lived in Denton with her partner and her cat.
- After a small stint at Texas A&M, **Sarah McWhorter** graduated from DeVry University with a B.S. in Technical Communication Management. Sarah tells me that she's been working in the field of Technical Support for the last five years and honing her technical writing skills. She says, "I've joined STC to further polish and hone my skills to fully integrate into the technical writing industry." Sarah is, in her words, "a voracious book reader with a myriad of genres, themes, and topics."
- **Sam Iannuzzi** is another of our new members. Sam currently lives in Lewisville, yet he hails from the east coast. He grew up outside Philadelphia, PA in southern New Jersey and obtained his B.A. in Communications from Temple University in Philadelphia. Sam has had some exciting experiences working as a full-time sportswriter for five years for Gannett in the Philadelphia area and as a freelance sports writer for Dallas Cowboys Publications—Dallas Star Magazine. For the past year, he has been a Publications Developer in Ground Operations Training for Southwest Airlines, and his manager (also a member) is Libby Mazur. Libby brought Sam to LSC when she asked her team to join STC. Thanks, Libby! Sam's experience with Southwest Airlines before moving to Ground Operations includes 12 years in Reservations and five as an Assistant Manager of the Help Desk. Sam says, "I'm single with one son, 17 years old—Sam."
- She's baaaaaaack. **Jacque Parentis** thought it would be strange for me to introduce her since some of you might remember her. She was a member of STC for many years, but her membership lapsed while she was in England working for Amadeus. Before that adventure, she worked for IBM for 27 years, and part of that time was in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Welcome back, Jacque!

Besides Cory, Lynn, Sarah, Sam, and Jacque, we also welcome new members:

- |                       |                   |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| • Beth Allphin        | • Daniel Howcroft |
| • Cindy Bathea        | • Charles LeBleu  |
| • Dale Carter         | • Sarah McDonald  |
| • Susan Fields-Martin | • April Miller    |
| • Sandra Goeller      | • Leah Schooling  |

Welcome to LSC!

**SIN SIG (Shy, Inactive, and New).** Looking for new people? Join us! The Shy, Inactive, and New Special Interest Group (SIN SIG) meeting is open to all our members. This informal gathering is a great way to network before the meeting and learn more about our community. All are welcome!

**Plan Ahead.** Before the March 13<sup>th</sup> LSC meeting, SIN SIG will once again meet at 5:45 p.m. at the Crowne Plaza Hotel Dallas-Addison. This month, our guests of honor are Kathryn Poe and Jackie Damrau. This duo will share some thoughts on the annual STC conference. This year, STC's 55th Annual Technical Summit will be held in Philadelphia, PA, June 1-4, 2008.

**We Miss You!** Please help us find **Rebecca Marsh**, who is listed in the "undeliverable addresses" category of the monthly STC membership report. If you have contact information for Rebecca, e-mail me at [membership@stc-dfw.org](mailto:membership@stc-dfw.org):

**Change or Upgrade Your Membership.** Upgrade your STC membership (from "Limited" or "E-membership" to "Classic") or add communities or SIGs to your existing membership.

- Mail or fax a completed STC Membership Change/Upgrade Form to the STC office.
- Download and print the form: [http://www.stc.org/PDF\\_Files/memberApp2006.pdf](http://www.stc.org/PDF_Files/memberApp2006.pdf)

## Human Factors

by [Kathryn Poe](#), Associate Fellow



Welcome to the Human Factors column. My intent is to talk with some of our senior members and officers so you can get to know them and they can share with you. LSC has a plethora of folks who have been in technical communications for some time. We have seen major changes in technology, expectations, and direction since we started and here is our chance to communicate some of that to you. As I like to tell the newbies I meet, if I can keep you from stepping in a few of the potholes I have found, it is worth the effort.

By way of exposition, I will ask one of our veteran LSC members the same questions each month and her or his answers will appear right here. Please feel free to send your ideas and comments to me at [kpoe@ursaminorservices.com](mailto:kpoe@ursaminorservices.com) to make this info more useful to you.

+++++

## Getting to Know Mike Hiatt



**Job Title:** Senior Technical Writer

**What do you actually do?**

Ask lots of questions – who uses it, how do they use it, what do we need to tell them, how do they view the docs (online, hardcopy, help).

Do some screen captures; occasional line drawings in FrameMaker (Frame); Visio drawings, create PDFs, convert Frame source to help and online docs with Quadralay ePublisher, pack everything onto a CD or post to a Web site.

Attend meetings representing the technical publications department; plan documentation effort and schedules; send out documents for reviews; review specifications when requested.

Help others in the company with documentation issues from creating documents in Word to making PDFs and anything else.

**What hard skills have you found most useful and how do you continue to cultivate those skills?**

Understanding and pushing FrameMaker to reduce repetition of information and single source as much as possible. I try to read posts to Frame lists, attend Frame sessions at the STC conference, attend Frame conferences (In February, I'll be attending the FrameMaker Chautauqua training in North Carolina). I'm constantly on the lookout for interesting plug-ins that enhance Frame's capabilities.

**Do you consider yourself a guru at any particular subject?**

FrameMaker. I've been using it for several years and I've found some good capabilities, developed some good practices, and discovered and used some really cool and useful plug-ins.

**What is the greatest benefit of being an STC member?**

For me, it's the people with their varied backgrounds and work experience. I know that if I run into a situation that has me stumped, I can contact any number of people or corner them at the next meeting to get feedback and ideas on dealing with it.

**Why have you stuck around so long? What's kept you here?**

Same answer — the people. I really enjoy listening to the members talk about what they've done in the past, what they're doing now, what they've tried that has worked and hasn't worked. I get many good

ideas about how to approach tasks from good “nuts and bolts” information to the underlying reasons why it works and why it should be done a certain way.

**What positions in LSC and STC have you held?**

I've attempted to help the newsletter a couple of times, was treasurer for three years, am currently in my second year as parliamentarian, and am serving as the public relations manager. I've also served as a competitions judge.

**How have you benefited from volunteering?****Advice/Thoughts on STC for Newbies?****How can I get involved and if I do, what's in it for me?**

Find an officer or the volunteer wrangler and ask “What needs done?” It's really that simple. Don't be afraid to say what you will and won't do. Also be sure to let the volunteer wrangler know if you have time restraints.

**How do I meet/recognize senior members?**

Use that famous icebreaker – How long have you been a member? If the answer is “uhh, I can't remember” you've found one. Basically listen to the conversations, and don't be afraid to ask questions. Heck, we're always interviewing everyone else, interview each other including asking how long have you been a technical writer (or technical communicator if you're trying to lift the image) and how long have you been an LSC or STC member of LSC or STC or both.

**Do senior members/council members really want to talk to me?**

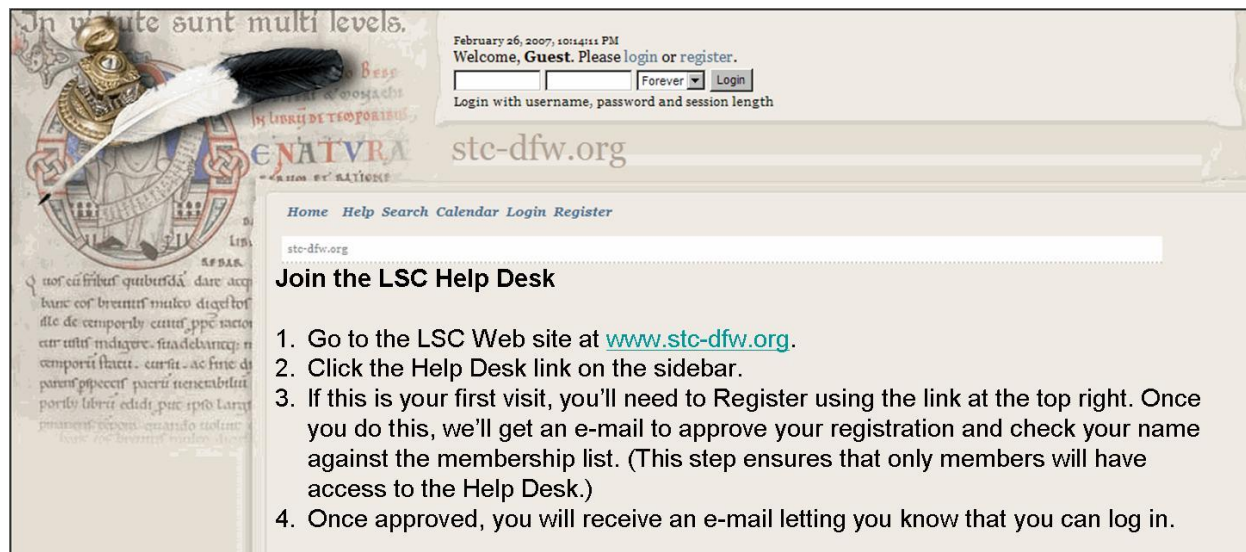
Most of us will talk to anyone, especially if you ask our opinion about something related to technical communication. You may not agree with the opinion, but you'll get one and it can open up a great conversation or discussion.

**Can STC really help me find a job?**

Yep. Every time right out of the box – heck no, not even the job boards can do that. But the job board provides opportunities, but the best is networking with other STC members. Let people know you're looking and they'll pass along tips. You might not be looking for a job, but someone may recommend you for a position they have to pass up for any number of reasons. That happened to me, and it's been a great ride.

## LSC Help Desk

by [Kathryn Poe](#), Associate Fellow



February 26, 2007, 10:14:11 PM  
Welcome, **Guest**. Please [login](#) or [register](#).  
Login with username, password and session length

[Home](#) [Help](#) [Search](#) [Calendar](#) [Login](#) [Register](#)

Join the LSC Help Desk

1. Go to the LSC Web site at [www.stc-dfw.org](http://www.stc-dfw.org).
2. Click the Help Desk link on the sidebar.
3. If this is your first visit, you'll need to Register using the link at the top right. Once you do this, we'll get an e-mail to approve your registration and check your name against the membership list. (This step ensures that only members will have access to the Help Desk.)
4. Once approved, you will receive an e-mail letting you know that you can log in.

## LSC SIG News

### Independents and Networking

by [Jo Byrd](#), CIC SIG Manager

Working in the consulting/contracting arena requires an extensive network if we're to be successful or if we want to enjoy more or less continuous employment. Sadly, we all need to expand our network.

Send e-mail to [jbyrd@byrdwrites.com](mailto:jbyrd@byrdwrites.com) for more information.

### Lone Star Job Bank



Lone Star's [Job Bank](#) is online at the LSC Web site, listing local employment opportunities. The Job Bank is updated as jobs are submitted.

If you're looking for work, or wish to post a position, visit the Web site and follow the instructions.

The international [STC Web site](#) maintains nationwide job listings, along with some international opportunities.

## STC Texas Communities

Links to Texas STC resources:

### STC Communities in Texas

[Alamo](#)

[Austin](#)

[Houston](#)

[Alamo Tech Line](#)

[Austin Newsletter/Blog](#)

[Dateline Houston](#)

### STC Student Communities in Texas

[College Station \(TAMU\)](#)

[Texas Tech University \(TTU\)](#)

[Events](#)

## Educational and Networking Opportunities

Organization	Day	Place
North Texas PC Users Group (NTPCUG)	Third Saturday	King of Glory Lutheran Church
DFW Usability Professionals' Association (UPA) E-mail: <a href="mailto:dfwupa@yahoo.com">dfwupa@yahoo.com</a>	Third Tuesday	varies
Dallas Association of Women in Computing	First Thursday	Crowne Plaza, Addison
North Texas Adobe Captivate User Group E-mail: <a href="#">Walt Stewart</a>	Third Tuesday	varies

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### STC News

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- [STC Director-At-Large Candidates Share Their Views](#)
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### STC 2008 Elections: Candidate Slate

The election is important to STC's future since these leaders will be guiding the organization. Voting instructions and ballots will be sent to members in March, and the election will be held in March and April, closing on **April 14**. This closing date allows winning candidates more time to plan for the conference and prepare for their first Board meeting.

Office	Candidate / Web Site URL	Candidate Biography URL
2 <sup>nd</sup> VP	Michael A. Hughes <a href="http://www.mindspring.com/~mikehughes">www.mindspring.com/~mikehughes</a>	<a href="http://www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=1">www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=1</a>
	Larry Kunz <a href="http://lk81924.googlepages.com/home">lk81924.googlepages.com/home</a>	<a href="http://www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=2">www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=2</a>
Secretary	Sharon K. Garrity	<a href="http://www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=3">www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=3</a>
	Char James-Tanny <a href="http://www.helpstuff.com">www.helpstuff.com</a>	<a href="http://www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=4">www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=4</a>
Directors	Suzanne E. Guess <a href="http://www.210comm.net">www.210comm.net</a>	<a href="http://www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=5">www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=5</a>
	Rob B. Hanna <a href="http://www.ascan.ca/stc/election">www.ascan.ca/stc/election</a>	<a href="http://www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=6">www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=6</a>
	Hillary Hart <a href="http://www.ce.utexas.edu/prof/hart/">www.ce.utexas.edu/prof/hart/</a>	<a href="http://www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=7">www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=7</a>
	Judith M. Herr <a href="http://wellchosenwords.biz">wellchosenwords.biz</a>	<a href="http://www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=8">www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=8</a>
	Linda S. King	<a href="http://www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=9">www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=9</a>
	Rich Maggiani <a href="http://users.adelphia.net/~richmaggiani/">users.adelphia.net/~richmaggiani/</a>	<a href="http://www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=10">www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=10</a>
	Lisa Pappas <a href="http://www.stc-carolina.org/tiki-index.php?page=Resume+of+Lisa+Pappas">www.stc-carolina.org/tiki-index.php?page=Resume+of+Lisa+Pappas</a>	<a href="http://www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=11">www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=11</a>
	Garret H. Romaine <a href="http://writingdocs.blogspot.com/">writingdocs.blogspot.com/</a>	<a href="http://www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=12">www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=12</a>
Nominating Committee	Dia H. Burroughs	<a href="http://www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=13">www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=13</a>
	Carolyn Kelley Klinger	<a href="http://www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=14">www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=14</a>
	Carolyn Luttrell	<a href="http://www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=15">www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=15</a>
	Thea Teich	<a href="http://www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=16">www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=16</a>

## STC Director-At-Large Candidates Share Their Views

We have eight STC members running for four Director-At-Large positions. All candidates were invited to write an article, five of whom have submitted an article for publication.

- [Suzanne Guess](#)
- [Hillary Hart](#)
- [Linda King](#)
- [Rich Maggiani](#)
- [Lisa Pappas](#)
- [Garret Romaine](#)

### Suzanne Guess: Pushing Buttons – Member Value & Service



In December, I participated in an STC Board of Directors Orientation phone call after being nominated as a Director-at-Large candidate. The candidates learned about face-to-face meetings, conference calls, and the time commitment we can expect (which is, incidentally, whatever you think it might be multiplied by three) if elected. As we talked about the campaign guidelines and how to craft our own individual messages, I started thinking about STC governance and why it is important to me. What pushes my buttons is clear: value and service to our members.

Service delivery and member value are hot buttons with others, too. Since the beginning of the year, I've heard and read many discussions about whether to renew membership. Many feel that they are not getting the value for the dues paid. As with many things in life, we often get out of something exactly what we put in. Do you go to meetings? Do you attend Web seminars? Do you belong to discussion lists? If not, is it because you don't feel like your professional needs are being met? Have you told your chapter, SIG and Board leaders what you'd like to see? You have a say.

That's only part of the equation, though. STC's operations have not always reflected sound business practices. Even though many may disagree, STC is a business, and it cannot survive if we continue to do things "like we've always done it." That's clear given membership declines, revenue reductions, and the resulting difficulties with delivering service and providing member value in our global workplace. To improve service and value, we need to better align our business model with our objectives. This means we'll have to prioritize and spend strategically to get the most value and impact for our dollars.

As a business owner, I've learned how to prioritize, strategize, spend, and deliver service and value. This involves hard, unpopular choices that are often required for stability and for growth. I used these same skills during my term as president of the STC Central Iowa chapter. During those two years, our community accomplished rechartering, revised our by-laws, implemented a strategic plan (where none existed before), implemented a new Web site using open source technology, and cut unnecessary expenses to establish a scholarship program. I'm prepared to roll up my sleeves, look at what STC does, and ask if should we stop doing it, continuing doing it, or do something else.

I'm running for Director-at-Large because I believe in the value of membership, the value of networking, and the value of professional development. I'm qualified for Director-at-Large because I have STC experience, industry experience, leadership experience, business experience, academic experience, and from my point of view, one of the most important prerequisites: a sense of humor to keep it all in perspective. One of your STC member benefits is a vote in our annual election. I ask that you use it and elect me as one of your Directors-at-Large.

## Hillary Hart: Defining a Technical Communications Body of Knowledge

STC Fellow & member of Austin; Academic; and Environmental, Safety, & Health Communication communities



As a director-at-large [candidate](#), I believe that one of the most important initiatives STC can undertake is to define a Body of Knowledge for the technical communication profession (TC BoK). As co-chair of the STC BoK committee, I am dedicated to bringing our profession into the 21<sup>st</sup> century by actually defining it, in all its variability. Why is this effort necessary?

First of all, a profession cannot be recognized as a profession until it is defined as such. Engineers, for instance, have a body of knowledge they must master before they can practice as engineers, whether structural, electrical, or mechanical. Although technical communicators may not yet want such a highly codified and subdivided set of skills and practices, we do need an authoritative place to find answers to that eternal question: “What do technical communicators do, anyway?” New practitioners need to see their professional development pathways spelled out, along with concomitant educational/training opportunities. Veteran practitioners need a means to assess their progress and determine what additional training they may need. Or they may simply need quick access to guidelines for new techniques and technologies (such as structured authoring, content management, and others). And executives, who may never have heard of technical communication, need a place to find out what it is that technical communicators can do for their company. That place is the Web-based set of definitions, domains, and documents that will bring together a TC BoK.

Secondly, many recent studies of technical communicators show that writing is just a part (and sometimes a small part) of what successful technical communicators actually do. In my co-authored survey (see [Technical communication, November 2006](#)), only eight out of the 75 responses listed “writer” as a unique identifier. Our data show that communicators seem to be spending about the same amount of time on communication “processes” as they are on creating end-user documents or “products.” If we want to maximize our value to the business functions of corporations and agencies, we need a body of knowledge that will make that value clear to employers.

The TC BoK effort is currently being led by a team of experienced industry and academic STC members. This spring, you will be invited to look at the initial outline of a hierarchy of domains, skills, and knowledge levels. This BoK is yours to develop; the start-up team is simply trying to put together a “straw” site to start the collaborative effort. Some of us are usability experts; some of us manage content; some of us train and teach other technical communicators. What are the essential skills, concepts, and knowledge bases that unite us? When we can answer that big question, we will be a true profession.

Please look for news of the TC BoK project, and plan to attend the 2008 STC Technical Summit in Philadelphia to hear about progress and to participate in developing a meaningful TC Body of Knowledge.

I ask for your vote so that this important project stays on track for the next three years!

## Linda King: Why I Seek Your Vote



The past few years have been a time of significant change and challenge for our industry and for STC. At the Society level, the STC Board of Directors is driving changes that will shape our organization and our profession in the coming years. I am a staunch advocate for STC and believe passionately in the unique value that skilled technical communicators can provide. Active membership in STC has been a significant factor in my own professional success, so I want to help ensure its continuing value for technical communicators worldwide.

Careful strategic planning, professional management, and effective delegation are critical to ensure the health and growth of STC. Cost-effective avenues for continued training and skill building are essential for advancement in our careers. Initiatives to raise the visibility and stature of our profession are needed to increase employers' perceived value of technical communicators. At the same time, STC members need more and clearer communication from the Board and administrative staff to understand issues, the basis of decisions and positive steps being taken, and the expanded information and services becoming available to members.

As a 30-year technical communicator, career-long member of STC, and an STC community leader, I have followed developments at the Society level with keen interest. While serving as STC Houston president this year, I've had new opportunities to learn what is happening at the Society level and have become directly involved whenever possible. I am an LCR volunteer and a member of the STC Finance Task Force, Voice of the Communities committee, and 2007 Academic-Industry Leaders Summit. I am also a volunteer member of the proposed initiative to develop a technical communication body of knowledge. I regularly attend STC conferences, where I've led springboard sessions and made presentations. I co-hosted international judging in Houston, judged internationally in 2006, and hope to be an international judge again this year. I have also served effectively on boards of other non-profit organizations.

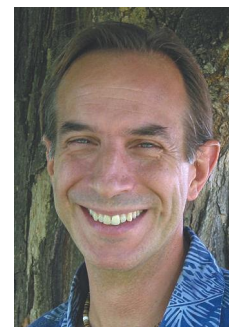
I am running for a position on the STC Board of Directors because I want to contribute directly to sound decision-making for the benefit of the entire organization and to expand and improve communication from the Society to our members. As an STC Director I will bring dedication, valuable listening, analytical, negotiation, and mediation skills and an unusual breadth of experience that enables me to conscientiously represent all communities in our organization: I have lived abroad; worked in a variety of technical industries for companies large and small; contributed as a lone writer, team member, and manager; and been a member of both very small and very large STC communities.

I hope you will allow me to serve you at the Society level by casting your vote for me in the STC election occurring March 12 through noon on April 14, 2008.

## Rich Maggiani: My Vision – STC as the Global Leader for Technical Communicators

STC Fellow

STC needs Board members who are experienced in the field, who understand our profession and the contribution we make to the world, who recognize the role STC plays in representing and promoting our profession, who understand the services STC must provide for our membership, and how STC must be the global leader for us. This is my vision for STC, and one that I will arduously pursue as your Director-at-Large.



**I care deeply about STC.** I have been an STC member for more than 12 years. I have held a volunteer position in every one of those years, beginning with being a co-founder of the Vermont chapter to my current role as leader of the Public Relations committee (which has 18 international members). Last month, I was honored to become an STC Fellow in recognition of my work as a marketing and technical communicator.

**My profession is technical communication.** I have been practicing that profession for well over 20 years. In my work, I constantly focus on promoting technical communication as a profession and technical communicators as professionals who create unending value.

**Experienced with STC Board matters.** I have been doing STC Board-related work for over three years now. Three consecutive Board Presidents have appointed me: one year as Assistant to the President for Competitions and two years as Public Relations leader (my current position) where my committee has been breaking new ground in researching and promoting technical communication and technical communicators around the world.

**Experienced as a Board Director.** I am experienced with boards of directors. I have been Board President for the Vermont Businesses for Social Responsibility (VBSR) after sitting on that board for four years. VBSR is a state-wide business organization. As Board President, I directed a transition from a tactical to a strategic board. I have also been Board President for two years for a food cooperative in New York after having sat on that board the two previous years.

**Business experience.** For over sixteen years, I owned and operated a full-service marketing and technical communication agency. Currently, I am running Solari Communication, a company dedicated to applying technical communication to help clients increase sales and profitability. As a business owner, I understand how STC as an organization must operate to be successful. I understand the inner workings of technical communication and how to successfully market and promote our profession.

**Educational experience.** I currently teach technical communication to undergraduate students at Champlain College in Vermont. Previously, I taught graduate students at Saint Michael's College business writing and communication skills. I am certified to teach secondary education through adult learners. I have also presented numerous sessions on communication topics to STC local, regional, and international conferences as well as other organizational conferences.

**A humble testimonial.** "The Society needs dedicated members like Rich representing it." —Dr Thomas Barker, STC Fellow and Director of Technical Communication at Texas Tech University.

## Lisa Pappas: STC's Future: Reaching Out and Reaching In

In response to globalization, outsourcing, and an ever-increasing rate of technology change, our profession has been diversifying. We still share attributes, but opportunities for specialization have multiplied. The effect on STC has been, I fear, to disperse group identity and shared mission. In the next few years, to evolve and thrive, I believe that Society leadership must ask its membership both to reach out and in.



We talk of “telling our powerful story,” but to whom? We need to raise awareness of our organization, our profession, and the value both provide. One way to do so is to reach out to related organizations. Many STC members also belong to other professional organizations, such as [Usability Professionals Association \(UPA\)](#) and [American Society for Training & Development \(ASTD\)](#). I propose that joint members engage in cross-organization publications. For example, in April 2007, Karen Mardahl, my co-manager in the [AccessAbility SIG](#), and I submitted an article for the UPA newsletter, *The Voice* (see “Seeking an Accessible and Usable Survey Tool” available: [http://www.usabilityprofessionals.org/upa\\_publications/upa\\_voice/volumes/2007/april/access.html](http://www.usabilityprofessionals.org/upa_publications/upa_voice/volumes/2007/april/access.html)). Efforts such as this can help other professionals learn about our society and recognize what we offer.

We also need to raise awareness of our value to employers of technical communication professionals, including organizations that contract with technical communication consultants. One way is by recognizing members' contributions and alerting employers to those. I would also like to see the Society sponsor research to provide quantitative evidence of added value. For example, could we demonstrate that technical publications written and edited with translation in mind were in fact more efficient and less costly to translate?

A third way that we should reach out is through volunteerism. Our technical communication skills can be invaluable to non-profits who might not have those skills. For instance, we could encourage Society members to contribute to standards organizations. I have, for some months now, been an invited expert of the W3C Protocols and Formats working group as an editor on the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) Accessible Rich Internet Applications (ARIA) suite (see WAI-ARIA Introduction, available: <http://www.w3.org/WAI/intro/aria>). Through that effort, I have introduced others to Society for Technical Communication and demonstrated the value that a technical communication professional can contribute.

Besides reaching out, however, I believe strongly that the STC leadership must reach in. Our membership is diverse, and for the Society to remain relevant and resilient, we must evolve to meet those disparate needs. One way diversity is served is through the virtual communities, our SIGs. We need to do a better job of supporting these virtual communities to retain and grow membership and strengthen our group identity.

In March, I encourage you to cast your votes and to choose the leaders who can best guide our organization.

- For insight to my background and motivations for running, see <http://www.stc.org/candidatesFAQ/candBio01.asp?candID=11>
- In this interview, learn what led me to a career in technical communication, and what prompted some interesting turns: <http://stc-carolina.org/newsletter/tiki-index.php?page=Reinventing+a+Career%3A+An+Interview+with+Lisa+Pappas>

## Garret Romaine: Looking to the Future

My credentials, experience, and passion for our profession make me an excellent choice as an at-large director on the STC board. This article reviews my background, explains some of the challenges as I see them, and explains my goals for our future.



I hope your career as a technical communicator is rewarding, whatever your expertise. Most of us make a good living, and salaries are holding up. Having thrived during the boom in the technical writing field of the late 1990s, we have expanded our expert skills and abilities. Our toolset is incredibly robust, and those of us in the technology world have core capabilities that rival software engineers. We have come a long way as a profession, and part of that is thanks to the efforts of STC members.

### Significant Issues Ahead

At the same time, though, our professional organization faces serious issues. There is a continuing challenge to deliver value to individuals. We need creative solutions if we are to expand the organization. The economy is slowing, and our members will need the most current skills and abilities in order to compete.

We face this opportunity from the vantage of a Society that has many moving parts. We are more than just cutting-edge XML experts in high demand; we are also the academics who keep classes relevant and send forth graduates of interest to hiring managers. We are writers in the public sector, facing tight deadlines with dwindling resources. We are the editors who mark up text and make others look good in any media. We are the illustrators and designers who marry visuals to words. We are the managers who send employees to annual conferences as wise investments. And—finally—we are the members who show up at local meetings or log on to virtual communities and participate. Our needs are different, but our goals are the same: we want the time we spend as volunteers to directly benefit our careers.

We all rely on STC for expanded networking opportunities, cutting-edge classes, lectures, and workshops, and enhanced professional advocacy. Through STC, we have the opportunity to share ideas, learn new tools, and make ourselves more productive and efficient. New and prospective members ask me all the time, and sometimes in just these words: “What’s in it for me?” It takes longer and longer to answer that question, because there are so many different STC communities to join.

### Relevant Experience

My experience as an educator, active STC volunteer and experienced technical communicator is relevant to this election. I have taught technical writing and editing at the university level for the past 12 years. My goal has been to deliver information that bolsters the careers of neophyte undergraduates as well as seasoned communicators in graduate studies. I have taken advantage of STC volunteer opportunities as chapter president, mentor, employment manager, competition manager, and workshop organizer. I have presented at conferences, written for *Tieline*, *Intercom*, and *Technical Communication*, and served as a judge for local and international competitions. In 2005, my colleagues both honored and humbled me as an Associate Fellow, and since then I have attended board meetings, worked on the Fresh Eyes team, and served on a committee. I am ready to step up to the job of director.

While teaching and volunteering, I have worked steadily as a senior writer, lone writer, author, contractor, consultant, and manager. My STC experience has been a key talking point for me, and I am sure it has on occasion led directly from the interview to the job offer.

### Helping Your Career

I hope you can say that STC has made a positive difference in your career. Knowing STC members, I would expect to hear from you if that has not been the case. High expectations are good; none of us should be complacent.

I thus ask for your vote—and I also ask that each of you help move our profession forward. We are all in this pursuit together.

## Other STC Community Events

### **March 14, 2008**

**France Chapter STC** will host its annual conference in Paris. The theme is "Communicating Europe" celebrating the diversity of technical communication.

For more information, e-mail [conference@stcfrance.org](mailto:conference@stcfrance.org) or visit [www.stcfrance.org](http://www.stcfrance.org).

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### **March 14 – 15, 2008**

**Atlanta Chapter STC** will host its conference, "Current 2008," at the Southern Polytechnic State University campus in Marietta, Georgia.

For more information, visit [www.stcatlanta.org/](http://www.stcatlanta.org/)

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### **March 28, 2008**

**Rochester Chapter STC** will hold "Spectrum 2008" at the R.I.T. Inn and Conference Center in Rochester, New York. Ginny Redish, a usability consultant for Redish & Associates, Inc., is the keynote speaker.

For more information, watch [www.stcrochester.org](http://www.stcrochester.org).

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### **April 14 – 15, 2008**

**Manitoba Chapter STC** and Red River College will hold their fifth annual conference at the Red River College Princess Street campus.

For more information, contact Brad Friesen at [Brad.L.Friesen@gmail.com](mailto:Brad.L.Friesen@gmail.com) or visit [www.stcmanitoba.org](http://www.stcmanitoba.org).

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### **April 16 – 18, 2008**

**TransAlpine Chapter STC**—representing Austria, Germany, Italy, Slovenia, and Switzerland—will hold its 2008 conference in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

For more information, visit [stc-on.org/transalpine/](http://stc-on.org/transalpine/).

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### **June 1 – 4, 2008**

**Technical Communication Summit — STC's 55th Annual Conference** will be held at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



For more information, visit [www.stc.org/55thConf/index.asp](http://www.stc.org/55thConf/index.asp).

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March 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Time: Event
2 Time: Event	3 Time: Event	4 Time: Event	5 Time: Event	6 6:15pm LSC Council	7 Time: Event	8 Time: Event
9 Time: Event	10 Time: Event	11 Time: Event	12 <a href="#">BALA Apps Due</a>	13 5:45pm <a href="#">LSC Meeting</a>	14 Time: Event	15 Time: Event
16 Time: Event	17 	18 Newsletter Articles due	19 Time: Event	20 Time: Event	21 Time: Event	22 Time: Event
23 Time: Event	24 Time: Event	25 Time: Event	26 Time: Event	27 Time: Event	28 Time: Event	29 Time: Event
30 Time: Event	31 Time: Event					

April 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		 1	2 Time: Event	3 6:15pm LSC Council	4 Time: Event	5 Time: Event
6 Time: Event	7 Time: Event	8 Time: Event	9 Time: Event	10 5:45pm LSC Meeting	11 Time: Event	12 Time: Event
13 Time: Event	14 Time: Event	 15	16 Time: Event	17 Time: Event	18 Time: Event	19 Newsletter Articles due
20 Time: Event	21 Time: Event	22 Time: Event	23 Time: Event	24 Time: Event	25 Time: Event	26 Time: Event
27 Time: Event	28 Time: Event	29 Time: Event	30 Time: Event			

May 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 6:15pm LSC Council	2 Time: Event	3 Time: Event
4 Time: Event	5 Time: Event	6 Time: Event	7 Time: Event	8 5:45pm LSC Meeting	9 Time: Event	10 Time: Event
11 Time: Event	12 Time: Event	13 Time: Event	14 Newsletter Articles due	15 Time: Event	16 Time: Event	17 Time: Event
18 Time: Event	19 Time: Event	20 Time: Event	21 Time: Event	22 Time: Event	23 Time: Event	24 Time: Event
25 Time: Event	26 Time: Event	27 Time: Event	28 Time: Event	29 Time: Event	30 Time: Event	31 Time: Event

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Dallas, TX 75251-5065  
Attn: Treasurer, Newsletter Ad

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## Submit to *Technically Write*

*Technically Write* is pleased to accept contributions from community members and student members on a wide variety of topics, including (but not limited to):

- Evaluations of tools, software, trade publications, and the like
- Lessons learned, tips, advice for the newbie
- Testimonials regarding the value of STC to the member
- Sharing STC Conference insights
- Bios of STC members
- News of charitable undertakings by members, whether or not they involve trade skills.

*Technically Write* is published on the first Thursday of each month (September through May).

The editorial team retains and exercises the right to edit submitted and requested material for clarity, length, and appropriateness.

## Contributions to *Technically Write*

- Must be submitted no later than the deadlines listed below.  
E-mail: [newsletter@stc-dfw.org](mailto:newsletter@stc-dfw.org).
- Are best submitted in Word format, or in the text of an e-mail message.
- Have no length limit, but need to be written with online presentation in mind.
- May have accompanying graphics in GIF or JPG format. Editors reserve the right to resample, crop, or exclude images if necessary.
- Should also include a short (25-word) biography of the author.

## Author Guidelines

In case you haven't noticed, *Technically Write* is an online magazine, or e-zine. From Kurt Ament to Strunk and White, e-zine savvy people have this advice:

- Write short sentences.
- Make short paragraphs, 3 to 5 sentences at the most.
- Do not use semicolons (;). They are an excuse to lengthen sentences.
- Aim for no more than 500 to 700 words of content. If you desire to write a longer piece, please subdivide it with subheads, so that it can be serialized.
- Use our Style Guide when writing your articles.

## 2007-2008 Submission Deadlines

Deadlines for article submissions for this year are:

Issue	Deadline
September	August 21
October	September 18
November	October 23
December	November 20
January	December 18
February	January 22
March	February 19
April	March 19
May	April 16
June	May 14

### Technically Write Staff

Managing Editor: [Jackie Damrau](#)

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Contributing Editor: **OPEN**

Copyeditors: [Jeanne Foster](#)

[Alan Oak](#)

[Mary McWilliams Johnson](#)

[Paula Robertson](#)

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Columnists: [Louellen Coker](#), [Susie Lynn Fox](#), [Alan Oak](#), [Kathryn Poe](#)

Photographers: [Dale Erickson](#)

Photo Editor: [Douglas Dow](#)

Graphics: [Mary McWilliams Johnson](#)

Ex-Officio: [Chapter Officers](#)

### LSC Officers

President: [Susie Lynn Fox](#)

1st Vice President: [Elisa Miller](#)

2nd Vice President: [Heather Steele](#)

Newsletter Editor: [Jackie Damrau](#)

Visit the [LSC Web site](#) for a complete list of community contacts.

## Staff Bios

**Ann Balaban**, a former LSC president (1996-97), has produced award-winning documentation at Texas Instruments (TI) for many years. Recently, high-quality documentation was cited as a significant factor in obtaining new business at TI.

**Jo Byrd** survived through two degrees and a job from hell before she discovered she didn't want to be a librarian and after several additional missteps to find technical writing. A member of STC since 1992 and CIC SIG Manager since 1995, Jo helps others as she was helped early on.

**Louellen S. Coker**, owner of Content Solutions, a certified Women's Business Enterprise (WBE), is a past president of the Lone Star Community and is also a member of the CIC, Lone Writers and Marketing SIGs. When not at her computer, you can find her training for that next marathon or sailing with her husband.

**Jackie Damrau** works at T-Mobile USA. She has more than 26 years of combined experience in technical writing and instructional design. Besides supporting STC activities through LSC and two national SIGs, Jackie enjoys going to the movies and reading classic literature, Irish/Scottish/English historical romance novels, or time-travel romance novels.

**Doug Dow** has been a member of the Lone Star Chapter since 1990, when he transferred from the Boston chapter. He has served in various capacities, including competition judge, chair of the Community Service Committee, and five years as newsletter Managing Editor. His interests outside of the cubicle include T'ai Chi, swing dancing, and honking on one of his many saxophones.

**Dale Erickson** serves the Lone Star Community as a Technically Write photographer and manager of the IPIIC mailing list. He has been an STC member since 1982 and holds the rank of Fellow. Dale is senior technical writer at One Network Enterprises in Dallas.

**Jeanne Foster** is a lone writer for Jasper Design Automation, a privately-held electronic design automation (EDA) company headquartered in Mountain View, California. Besides technical communications, her varied career includes everything from government service to early childhood and elementary education. Jeanne is a recipient of the LSC 2007 Distinguished Community Service Award. She has volunteered as Region 5 Conference Registration manager and LSC Hospitality manager, and she is currently the Membership chair and SIN SIG manager. Beyond LSC volunteer opportunities, Jeanne enjoys beach vacations, dining at fine restaurants, and light-hearted banter with her colleagues.

**Susie Lynn Fox**, a Lone Star member since 2003, is serving as the 2007-2008 President of LSC. She enjoys the great learning opportunities and fun at the local meetings and national conferences. Susie is a senior technical writer at American Airlines, Inc.

**Melissa (Mel) Haughton** is an Instructional Designer and Project Coordinator for MLink Technologies in Lewisville, TX. She has a Master's degree in Technical Writing from the University of North Texas. Mel is the immediate past president and volunteer wrangler of the Lone Star Community.

**Mike Hiatt** is a former journalist who owned his own newspaper at one time before realizing surviving in Dallas required a bigger paycheck. Mike's father, a technical writer for 30 years, prompted his move into technical communications. He started as a proposal writer (responding to customer requests for proposals, not grant writing) before moving into the technical publications department at a small Dallas telecommunications company. Mike has primarily documented software writing user guides and help files

**Mary McWilliams Johnson** is a retired technical writer and Web designer. Check out her Web site: GraphicsByMary.com: <http://www.graphicsbymary.com>. (The SuperConnect site no longer exists.)

**Jim Korth** has worked in technical communications and support for twelve years with Microsoft, Compaq, and IBM. He holds technical certifications from Microsoft, Novell, and ITIL. Jim previously worked in banking at Citigroup and holds a B.S. Degree in Accounting from Lehigh University in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

**Elisa Kaplan Miller** took a checkered path to her current position as User Experience Architect at Perot Systems. She's been a journalist, trainer, college professor, editor, analyst, and usability lab manager. She spends her free time as LSC membership manager, trying to expand the view of what STC thinks of as technical communication professionals.

**Alan Oak** is majoring in English–Professional Writing at Ellis College of the New York Institute of Technology to train for a new career in technical communication. His prior career experience is in information technology. Alan is looking forward to paying work as a technical communicator after his 2008 graduation. Currently, he is serving as Web master of the Lone Star Community's Web site.

**Kathryn Poe**, Associate Fellow and past chapter president, is a self-proclaimed Knowledge Wrangler. She is currently enlightening minds in the financial sector.

**Paula Robertson's** Technical Communication career comprises twelve years as writer and editor of software and hardware documentation for domestic and international clients in transportation, telecommunications, and other industries. A previous career in computer graphics rounds out her skills as a "full-service" editor. As a Senior Member of STC, Paula has learned the value of the term and the practice of "networking."

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A proof-of-concept experiment in 1996, Technically Wired took the content of Technically Write and combined it with the graphical potential of the Web. Three issues were produced until the Internet Professional Interest Committee (IPIC)—as SIGs were known then—decided it was too intensive an effort for one person.

Links and e-mail addresses in these issues have been disabled, since they're likely to be extinct.

September 1996 October 1996 November 1996

**STC Mission Statement**

**“STC advances the theory and practice of technical communication across all user abilities and all media.”**

STC is an individual membership organization dedicated to advancing the arts and sciences of technical communication. It is the largest organization of its type in the world. Its 18,000 members include technical writers and editors, content developers, documentation specialists, technical illustrators, instructional designers, academics, information architects, usability and human factors professionals, visual designers, Web designers and developers, and translators - anyone whose work makes technical information available to those who need it.

For more information, contact the STC headquarters:

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