



MEMO TO MEMBERS



"Creating and supporting a forum for communities of practice in the profession of technical communication."

STC Orlando Chapter: A 2003 and 2004 Chapter of Distinction

Volume 3, Issue 6 ♦ June 2004

In This Issue . . .

Call for Proposals for STC's 52nd Annual Conference	1
If You Missed Our Last Meeting	1
End-of-the-Year Banquet	2
Evidence of Job Market Growth: A Recruiter's Perspective	3
Word Mint XVII:	4
Tool Tips	5
STC's Transformation Initiative	6
From the Editor's Desk	7
Your Opinion Counts!	7
Mark Your Calendars	7
New Members	7

Call for Proposals for STC's 52nd Annual Conference

By Maurice Martin, STC Communication Director

Have you always wanted to present at STC's annual conference but never taken the time to submit a proposal? Perhaps you were put off by the cost in time and money of filling out and mailing the proposal form. If so, you're out of excuses: STC's new online proposal process eliminates the hassle of making copies, dealing with the post office, and cramping your writing hand. Submitting conference proposals has never been easier.



member number and password, you can automatically populate the name and address fields with information from STC's membership database. And when you're done with the form, a single click allows you to upload your presentation file to the STC server. Please note that your file must be submitted as a PDF; in case you don't have Adobe Acrobat, the proposal form provides a link to Adobe's free online conversion tool.

Aspiring presenters for STC's 52nd Annual Conference, which will be held May 8-11, 2005, in Seattle, Washington, can access the new proposal form at www.stc.org/52ndConf/Proposal. Note the list of information you'll need to complete the form. You'll want to have this information on hand before you enter any data. Using your STC

Presenting at STC's annual conference helps prepare you for presentations to clients and employers, and it raises your visibility within the profession. The new online form greatly simplifies the proposal process, but don't delay. *The deadline to submit your proposal is July 30, 2004.* **MtM**

If You Missed Our Last Meeting . . .

By David Coverston, Orlando Chapter Secretary

If you missed our last meeting you missed an excellent comparison of technical writing versus marketing writing. Mike Murray, Dan Voss, and a panel of volunteers gave us several points to ponder.

Mike compared technical writing to the Rock of Gibraltar -- what you see is what you get; there is nothing below the surface. Marketing writing, on the other hand, is like Godzilla. Borrowing from the Bard, Mike said marcom is much ado about nothing. It is full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.

For a technical writer, the important thing is not what you think, it is the customer's perception that is important. A tech writer cannot allow the reader to misunderstand. A helpful tidbit of wisdom from Mike is, "When you don't know what you mean, use big words. They often fool little people."

Dan Voss countered that tech writing and

marcom writing are actually quite similar. For both types of writing, conciseness, clarity, and creativity are needed, and the up-front strategic planning is the same for both. Dan shared how his team of 40 technical writers created a 4,000 page Joint Common Missile proposal in 45 days, and referred to that project as Godzilla.

One key to his team's success was to identify themes early in the proposal process so that the proposal presented a consistent message. The marketing team then drove this theme into all its productions. You can't approach this type of project with just words, Dan said. You have to use images along with good technical writing. The advertising emphasized the program's past successes, using a variety of media including print, radio, billboards, web site, company newsletters, coffee mugs, shirts,

(Continued on page 6)



Winner of STC's Chapter of Distinction Award, 2003 & 2004



You and a guest are cordially invited to attend the 2004 Orlando Chapter STC Year-End Banquet

This year's banquet will be at the
Hollerbach's Willow Tree Cafe in Sanford

Date: Tue, June 22, 2004

Time:
6³⁰ - 7³⁰ PM Check-In/Networking
7³⁰ PM Dinner/Program

RSVP must be received by:
June 15, 2004

Cost : See Menu Selections

Dress: Business Casual/Casual



MENU SELECTIONS

Your choice of one of the following entrees will be served with soup or salad, bread, and iced tea, coffee, or soda. A dessert buffet will be available compliments of the Orlando Chapter.

- **1: Hunter chicken** with Spatzel (homemade noodles) in gravy, with mushrooms and red cabbage. \$21 per person
- **2: Three Sausage Platter:** One Bratwurst, Bockwurst, and Knockwurst with sauerkraut and German potato salad. \$21 per person
- **3: Wiener Schnitzel** Pork Loin lightly breaded and pan-fried, with Spatzel and gravy. \$21 per person
- **4: Spinach Quiche** (Vegetarian) with eggs, sauteed onions, cooked spinach and Swiss emmentaler cheese and fresh fruit. \$14 per person

Note: Alcoholic beverages will also be available for purchase during the banquet.

Join your fellow STC Chapter of Distinction members for:

- ◆ A wonderful dinner and dessert in a unique setting
- ◆ A celebration of our repeat "Chapter of Distinction" status
- ◆ The end-of-the-year awards
- ◆ Mike Murray's "State of the Chapter" address
- ◆ An introduction to the 2004-2005 Administrative Council

DIRECTIONS

Take I-4 East to exit 101BC/SR 417 South/SR-46 towards Mount Dora. Go about two miles, then turn right on W. 1st Street/W SR-46. Continue on W. 1st St. until you reach 205 E. 1st St., Sanford.

Hollerbach's Willow Tree Cafe

205 E. 1st. Street Sanford, FL 32771-1372
407-321-2204



Mail RSVP and payment to be received* by June 15th, 2004 to:
Check or money order **only**, please, made payable to the *Society for Technical Communication - Orlando Chapter*.
*should be mailed in enough time to arrive by the 15th.

STC-Orlando (Attn: Treasurer)
Post Office Box 540444
Orlando, FL 32854-0444

If you have any questions, contact Erika Coto (ecoto72@yahoo.com), or Janette Farnsworth (janette@scribetree.com).

Member Name _____

Guest's Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

\$ _____
Total amount enclosed

Please indicate any special dietary needs and we will do our best to accommodate you, if possible.

Meal Selection

	<u>Member</u>	<u>Guest</u>	<u>Price</u>
1. Chicken	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$21 pp
2. Sausage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$21 pp
3. Wiener	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$21 pp
4. Quiche	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$14 pp

Evidence of Job Market Growth: A Recruiter's Perspective

By Richard Phipps, Employment Committee Manager



For a number of months now, I've been hearing news reports about the continued (albeit slow) job growth in our economy. I decided to check in with some of the recruiters in my network to see if they are noticing any evidence of job growth, too, and I learned that we are indeed seeing evidence of a local job market comeback. So exactly what are we seeing? What are some of the ways we can tell?

First of all, we've all been much busier lately trying to fill more openings than usual, which seems like an obvious sign of job growth. To a recruiter, however, that alone is still too microeconomic. Being busy may simply mean that our own company is on a hiring spree. To a recruiter, it's the experiences we have with our candidates that can better paint the local picture.

As we discussed our experiences in the Orlando market, we noticed that we are seeing more candidates getting multiple interviews. More candidates are reporting multiple job offers. Lastly, we notice that people are starting to leave stable, decent paying jobs for new jobs – something that was extremely rare following the 9-11 events.

After I pondered whether all of these local signs could be evidence of something bigger, I decided to do some research at the Department of Labor/Bureau of Labor Statistics web site. What I was seeing with my own eyes in the Orlando market was backed up by the national data that I found. The

following statistics include a national perspective as well as a drill-down into our local market.

- ↑ In the service-providing sector, professional and business services added 64,000 jobs from April 2003 – May 2003.¹
- ↑ Employment in temporary help services continued to rise (31,000) and has grown by 299,000 (or 14 percent) since April 2003.²
- ↑ Florida ranked 1st in number of jobs added (+171,900) from April 2003 – April 2004. Virginia ranked 2nd (89,200) and California ranked 3rd (86,700). (Nonfarm payrolls, non-seasonally adjusted.)³
- ↑ “Among the 274 metropolitan areas for which April nonfarm payroll data were available, 183 reported increases in employment, 84 recorded decreases, and seven had no change. The largest over-the-year employment increases were posted in:
 - Washington, D.C.-Md.-Va.-W. Va. (+77,300)
 - Phoenix-Mesa, Ariz. (+45,300)
 - Las Vegas, Nev.- Ariz. (+39,300)
 - Riverside-San Bernardino, Calif. (+22,500)
 - **Orlando, Fla. (+19,900)**
 - Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, Fla. (+19,700)”⁴

The good news in the data is that both Orlando and Florida are leading the nation in the job recovery. Statistics may lie, but the combination of statistics and our personal experience is reassuring. **MtM**

¹ <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm>

² <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.nr0.htm>

³ <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/metro.t02.htm>

⁴ <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/metro.nr0.htm>

Orlando Chapter Lapel Pins!

Now available at our chapter meetings—the one-of-a-kind Orlando Chapter lapel pins.

Only \$5⁰⁰ Each

Buy Your Lapel Pin at the next meeting!



Join the Blue Star Network!



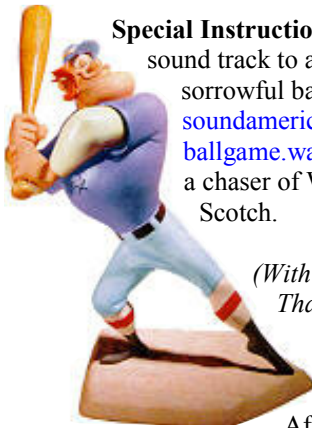
If you want to focus your networking opportunities at chapter meetings, join our new “Blue Star Network” by identifying your area of interest/expertise before the meeting and sporting a gummed blue star on your name badge at the meeting. Contact Madeline Betchold (maddy@madwriter.com) or Gail Lippincott (gail@unt.edu).



Word Mint XVII: The Last Hurrah!

Dan'l at the Bat . . . The End of an Era (uh, Error?)

By Dan Voss



Special Instructions: For the original Broadway sound track to accompany the reading of this sorrowful ballad, click on <http://www.soundamerica.com/sounds/themes/Misc/ballgame.wav>. The ballad is best if taken with a chaser of Warsteiners beer or a single-malt Scotch.

(With Apologies to Ernest Lawrence Thayer)

The outlook wasn't brilliant for Dapper Dan this day;
After sixteen sterling columns, his

Muse had turned away.

A pile of crumpled papers lay forlornly by his side;
His readers gaped in horror, but Dan was zombified!

No spring can last forever; debloviation always ends.
"Y'all'll've seen my best shot, so farewell to all, my friends!"
Sesquipedalianism was dealt a fatal blow
As Word Mint sank into the tar where T-Rex once did go.

"Reverticalization!" cried Dapper Dan's true fans.
"Dewidowfy forever, as you promised in your plans!"
But alas, the Muse stayed silent and the pen produced no ink.
Dan'l seized a stein of brew and took a long, deep drink.

"I *must* produce my column, I owe it to the world!
Polysyllabic tomes must fly, their verbal flags unfurled!"
But wishing isn't writing and brewskies numb the brain,
And when evening fell upon poor Dan, his Muse slid down the drain.

He stumbled to the dugout, the crowd cried in despair.
"How can we win the war of words if Dan'l isn't there?"
Unless he broke right through the block and found his former voice
Autodefensation was the only noble choice.

"That's it!" Dan said. "I'll go to bed, and when I wake, I'll write!"

He tossed and turned and dreamt and churned all through the long, dark night.

When morning came he grabbed his bat and strode up to the plate

From the fans there came a mighty roar—it might not be too late!

Word Mint can live a hundred years, a thousand columns hence

If Mighty Dan'l can once more hit the ball beyond the fence.

Although the count was 0 and 2, it did not matter none . . .
It only takes one pitch to hit . . . the next would be the one.

The pitch flew fast, the crowd did gasp—anticipation grew.

Dapper Dan drew back to swing, still sipping on his brew.

...

...

Oh somewhere the sun is shining, where writers home runs clout

But there is no joy in STC—Mighty Dan'l has struck out!

Editor's Note: This is the seventeenth and final installment of the *Word Mint* column. The author thanks his faithful readers. He has signed over residuals from the reprints under syndication to cover the cost of his upcoming retirement at the CFSMMDTC (Central Florida Sanitarium for Mildly to Moderately Deranged Technical Communicators). He welcomes visitors and co-residents. **MtM**



Rising Stars Corporate Sponsors

LOCKHEED MARTIN 
We never forget who we're working for™


TAD PGS, Inc.
Proscribed Government Services
Our People Perform!


PATRIOT PRESS
Pride is the Patriot Difference!

Tool Tips: AVICodec for Video Files

By David Coverston, Chapter Secretary

Now that summer is upon us, it's a good time to look at a tool that can be used for fun things as well as some serious work. That is if your serious work involves multimedia files.

AVICodec is an application that tells you information about your video files. It integrates into the Windows Explorer shell so that all you have to do is right click a video file and choose *AVICodec*: detailed information from the Explorer pop-up menu, and the interface opens with information on the file you selected. You can also click *Sel.dir.* to select a directory and get info on all the files in that directory.

AVICodec also tells you what codec you need to play a video file. So what's a codec? It's an old camera and film company. Moving right along, codec stands for compressor/decompressor and is the driver software that allows you to

play audio and video files on your computer. It translates video and audio between their uncompressed and compressed forms. When you click the Web button, AVICodec takes you to web sites where you can download the codecs you need to play the file.

Now is that cool or what? Besides telling you information about files, AVICodec can tell you what codecs you have installed on your computer. Click the *Codecs and Filters* tab and you get a listing of the codecs on your machine.

If you want to save this in a list, click *Export List* to create a .csv (comma separated value) file. You can download this free program from <http://avicodec.duby.info/>. While you are there, check out some of the links. There is a lot of useful information about multimedia files there. **MtM**

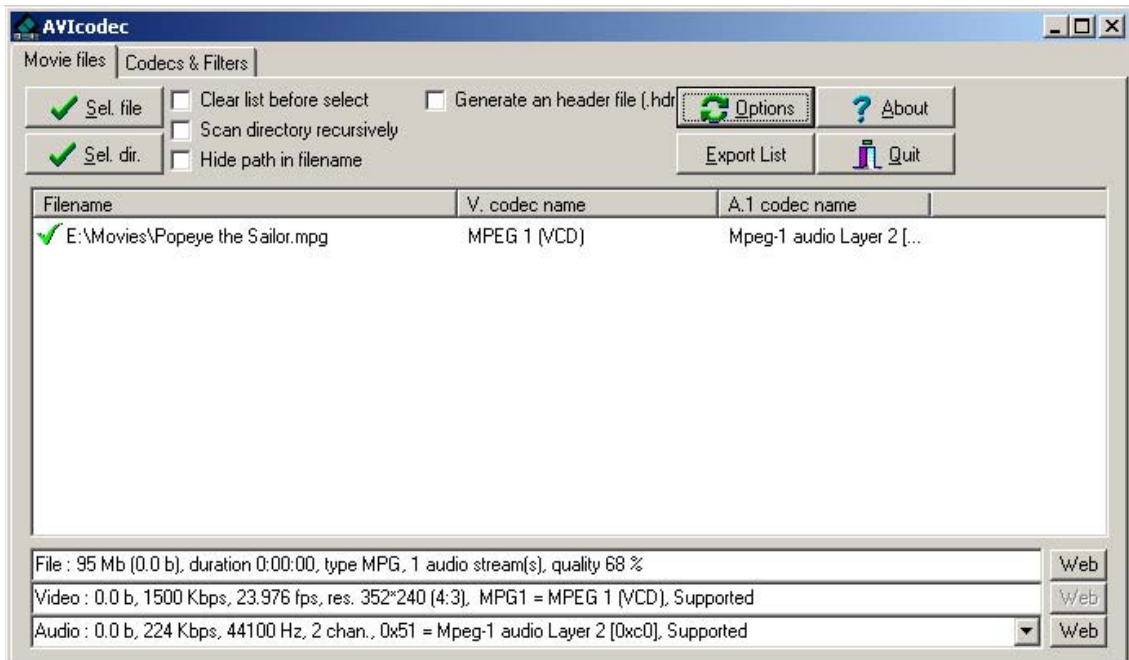


Figure 1: The AVICodec Interface.

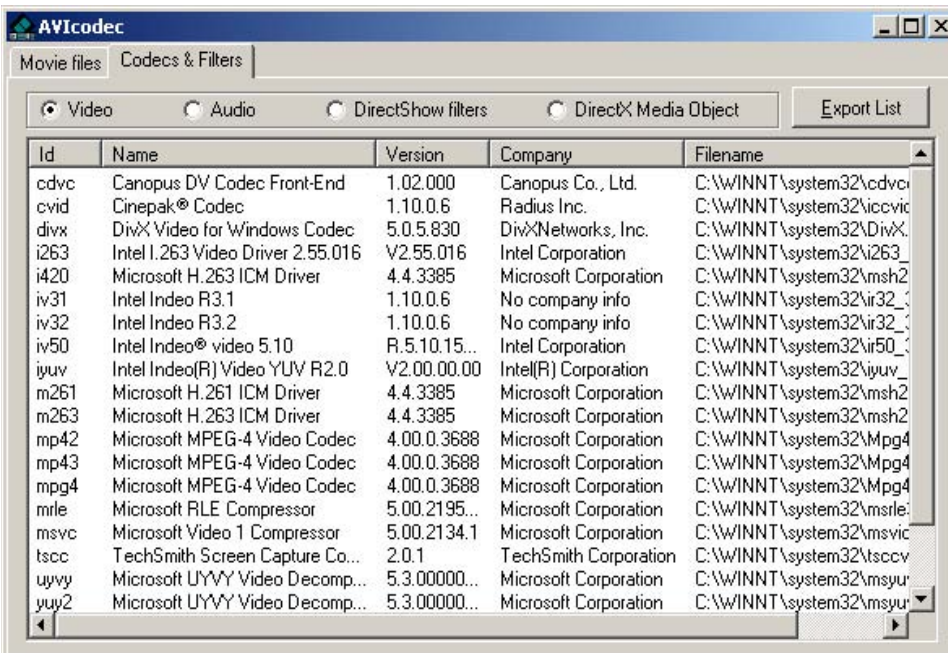


Figure 2: The Codecs & Filters Tab.

STC's Transformation Initiative

from STC's Transformation [Web Site](#)

STC is undergoing a Transformation. Why? To provide greater value to our members.

The Transformation team has a vision of what STC should look like in the future. That vision came from members in all communities and all levels of involvement.

We encourage you to learn as much as possible about the transformation—and then get involved in making it happen! Ask questions, send us ideas, help us shape STC to better meet your needs. E-mail us at transform@stc.org. We are committed to providing speedy responses to your messages.

The [Transformation web site](#) will keep you informed about what is happening. We plan to update the site regularly, so check back often for new information.

We know that STC can become what we envision, because when a collection of minds, hearts, and talents work together, great things can happen!
MtM

If You Missed, *continued*

(Continued from page 1)

and a logo designed for the project.

Panel member and Space Tech Chapter President Linda Lee said that proposal and grant writing offer a blend of creative and technical writing. A good way to get started in this field is to start with a nonprofit organization to gain some experience.

Our own incoming vice president, Christina Hammock, said that some of her work experience was so technical she couldn't even talk to other tech writers at the national conference about her work.

Janette Farnsworth elicited quite a response from the crowd when she talked about her specialty, web site search engine optimization. Search engine marketing is a billion-dollar industry. A good site will be written for the search engines, she said. Having meta-tags on your pages, even the right meta-tags, is not enough any more. Web site optimization is also a blend of technical and marketing writing.

Our current vice president, Greg White, said he got started in technical writing after a stint in the service by writing about weapons systems. If you want to know how to destroy something, Greg is your man.

See you at the next meeting! **MtM**

Juggling too many projects?

Juggling more deadlines than you have time or resources to meet?

Attend LavaCon and learn best practices for estimating projects, meeting multiple deadlines with minimal resources, and more.



September 26-30, 2004
Chateau Sonesta Hotel
New Orleans, Louisiana



Comments from Previous Attendees:

"This was a terrific conference!"

"Best conference I ever attended!"

"Great info and LOTS of real-world examples. I wish I had attended these sessions a year ago!"

Early Registration Discounts Available—Register Today
www.lavacon.org

LavaCon

The International Conference on Technical Communication Management

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



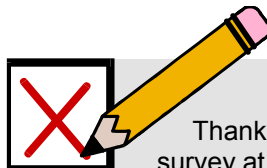
Our end-of-the-year banquet promises to be even better than last year.

For starters, the gala event will be held in historic downtown Sanford at Hollerbach's Willow Tree Café. Not only will we be partaking of some wonderful German food and atmosphere, we will also enjoy Mike Murray's "State of the Chapter" address, and we will be introduced to our new Administrative Council for 2004 - 2005.

That's not to mention our awards ceremony and lots more fun and surprises. Hope to see you all there. Remember to RSVP as soon as possible.

As always, I welcome your feedback and opinions, so feel free to e-mail me at ecoto72@yahoo.com.

Thanks for reading,
Erika



YOUR OPINION COUNTS

Thanks to everyone who filled out a meeting survey at the May meeting: "Marketing Writing vs. Technical Writing." Check out the results.

✓ **Topic Quality**
 Excellent – 7
 Satisfactory – 2
 Not Satisfactory – 0

✓ **Speaker Quality**
 Excellent – 8
 Satisfactory – 1
 Not Satisfactory – 0

✓ **Comments:**

- ☞ "Very interesting."
- ☞ "Cool!"
- ☞ "I learned much."

Remember to fill out a comment card at every chapter meeting you attend. We value and listen to your comments; they guide our efforts towards making each monthly program worthwhile. **MtM**

THE ORLANDO CHAPTER STC WELCOMES THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS!



- ☞ Dalton Hooper
- ☞ Ray Jose
- ☞ Kristina McLean
- ☞ Diana Oriel
- ☞ Thomas Steinmeyer



Mark Your Calendars!

✓ **June 22nd: End-of-Year Banquet at the Willow Tree in Sanford at 6:30 PM!**



Help Support Orlando-STC.
 Click on the button to go to Amazon.com. **Remember:** A percentage of your purchase is rebated to the Orlando Chapter when you use our click-through.

Memo to Members is published monthly for members of the STC-Orlando chapter and distributed via our e-mail distribution list. This newsletter is also available on our chapter website at www.stc-orlando.org under the link [Newsletters](#). Comments, suggestions, and questions are always welcome and should be directed to the Editor, Erika Coto, at ecoto72@yahoo.com.

Please submit articles, graphics, and letters of opinion for publication. *Note: By submitting an item for publication, you implicitly grant a license to Memo to Members to run the article and for any other STC publications to reprint it without permission. Copyright is held by the writer. Please let the editor know if an item you are submitting has run elsewhere, and if it has been submitted for consideration to other*

publications. Permission to reprint any material herein is given provided that credit is given and a copy of the issue is sent to the editor.

Mailing Address:
 STC Orlando, P.O. Box 540444 Orlando, FL 32854-0444
www.stc-orlando.org
[Contact Us](#)

President: Mike Murray
Mike.Murray@lmco.com
Vice President: Greg White
Gwhite@tadpgs.com