

Memo to Members

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



Worthwhile Workshop

by Erika Higgins, Orlando Chapter President

On Saturday, February 2nd, Neil Perlin of *Beyond the Bleeding Edge* fame presented a full-day Saturday workshop for STC Orlando. The topic of this workshop was, "Structured Authoring without DITA or Frame". As Neil explained, structured authoring evolved from single sourcing's need for automated output. While structured authoring can be done via Frame or DITA, Neil believes that it can also be done using templates and CSS. These methods do not allow for the enforcement of the structure, but they do provide programmatic structure. There are many challenges to instituting a structured authoring (SA) program in any writing shop. When using SA, we need to think strategically about how today's format choices will work with future formats, consider whether our company wishes to have or has a cutting-edge image, plan for things like legacy materials, prioritize materials to be structured. Neil also warned that a SA project may fail if it doesn't consider culture and politics including overall corporate "techni-ness" and receptivity to change.

During the course of the workshop session, participants were provided several practice opportunities and were able to get to the root of whether SA was the right path for their organization. In the end, all participants gained the skills and knowledge necessary to "future-proof" their operations and prepare for the changes that are to come in the world of tech comm.



If You Missed Our Last Meeting...

by Cindy Skawinski, Orlando Chapter Secretary

... then you missed learning lots of behind-the-scenes information about one of Central Florida's biggest industries: theme parks! STC Orlando brought in four speakers that have worked on the design and development of many theme park locations throughout the world, including some attractions developed here in Orlando.

- Chris Stapleton of the UCF Media Convergence Laboratory talked about designing entertainment. His specialty is experiential material. Chris uses three main elements – story, play, and game – to create mixed-reality experiences.
- Fran Boettcher is an entertainment architect for PBS&J. Entertainment architects specifically design structures to support user experiences. All elements of theme park architecture contribute to the story. Fran was also able to share a little bit of information on exciting projects that she is currently developing.
- Doug Joseph of FirstFlite Technology Inc. discussed his role in engineering attractions. He described engineering as the department that figures out how the ideas the creative teams come up with physically are possible. Doug explained that creating immersive experiences involves using technology carefully. Using the most cutting-edge technology to develop a ride may sound appealing, but it's even more important to select technology, new or old, that allows users to remain immersed in the story rather than distracted by its mechanics.

Finally, Bruce Noyes, a project designer for PBS&J, discussed the vital role that civil engineering plays when developing the infrastructure of a theme park. Civil engineering prepares the property so that the designs – attractions, stores, restaurants, and other locations – can be easily built on top.

After providing the audience with brief descriptions of their jobs, STC members and guests were able to ask the panelists questions about their projects and experiences. Although we only had time to uncover the tip of the theme park development iceberg, the joint STC-UCF meeting for 2008 was very informative and lots of fun!

If it's been a while since you've attended an Orlando STC meeting, you'll want to check out our next monthly meeting.



(Okay, so we're not actually serving beer, but read on)

The Orlando Chapter of Society for Technical Communication brings you: Obligations and Responsibilities of Content Creators "Would you sell beer to a 10-year old?"

presented by
Max Croft of UCF, department of Digital Media
Tuesday, February 19
at the Winter Park Civic Center
6:30 p.m. for snacks (and possibly root beer) and networking, 7:00 for the meeting

As a member of the Visual Language program at UCF, Max Croft brings the experience of a 27-year career in the entertainment industry. During a decade in Los Angeles, Max presented over 75 plays as Executive Producer/owner of the acclaimed Tamarind Theatre, and as Managing Director of the award-winning Pacific Repertory Theatre Ensemble. His independent production company produced music videos and developed film projects.

In the corporate world, his work with the multi-million dollar Westgate Resorts centered on his creation of a full advertising agency, which focused on branding new resorts, building and programming a new radio station and creating media for television, internet and print.

His work in sports marketing started with the Championship group and included coordinating the SOCKO-sponsored extreme beach sport championships. Max was also the media representative for the Panasonic Formula One racing team.

For the last several years, Max has produced 3-D and traditional animation for television and feature film including SHEENA for Columbia Television, Adam Sander's EIGHT CRAZY NIGHTS for Columbia pictures, Skate Ratz for NBC Television and ILLUMINA GOLD for Tyndale House Publishers.

To RSVP for this meeting, please email vicepresident@stc-orlando.org by Monday, February 18.

Cost: \$8 for members and non-member students, \$5 for student members, \$15 for non-members

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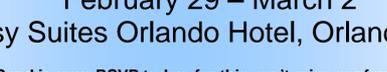
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Sponsor A Meeting!

Your company name and logo can appear here. Just sponsor one of our upcoming chapter meetings. Sponsorships start as low as \$125 and include such benefits as, free admission for up to 10 employees, expo space during our meeting networking hour, and a click-through on our chapter website. For more information, contact Kelli Pharo at vicepresident@stc-orlando.org.



Register now for the Florida American Medical Writers Association (AMWA) Conference

February 29 – March 2

Embassy Suites Orlando Hotel, Orlando, Florida

Send in your RSVP today for this can't-miss conference.

In addition to many great topics on medical writing, several STC members will be presenting on skills and tools that affect just about everyone.

Take a look at this sampling:

How to Communicate More Persuasively on the Job, Dan Jones and Gail Lippincott
Getting Yourself Hired, Dalton Hooper
Understanding Web 2.0 and its Impact on Communication, Scott Abel

Because the Orlando Chapter is guest hosting this event, STC members get in for the AMWA member price. And students are free!



It's That Time Again...

by David Coverston, Orlando Chapter Membership Manager

It's time to renew your STC membership, if you haven't done so already. It's easy to do with the online renewal system. All you have to do is go to www.stc.org, click the Renew button on the main page. This will take you to the next iMIS logon page.

iMIS Logon

Username/Member ID

Password

Remember me next time.

[Trouble logging on?](#)

Not a member of STC and want to sign up for an event? [Please create an account...](#)

Type your Username/Member ID and your Password in the textboxes, and click the Log On button. Select Remember Me Next Time if you share your browser to remember your login information. You do not want to do this on a public computer or if you share your computer with someone else.

STC Online Renewal Application System

Step: 1:2:3:4:5:6:7:8:9

GENERAL INFORMATION

Membership dues depend on which membership category you select and where you live (each country falls into one of three tiers each of which has different dues). The costs for different membership categories that you see on the following pages should be automatically adjusted to reflect the dues structure for your tier.

All new members pay an enrollment fee of \$30. Renewing members do not pay this fee, unless there is a break in their membership of more than a year.

Members whose membership expired less than a year ago must pay a reinstatement fee of \$15.

Members outside of the United States who choose classic membership must pay additional postage for their printed copies of *Intercom* and *Technical Communication*. This additional postage is \$15 for Canadian members and \$35 for all other countries. (Those who choose electronic membership avoid these postage charges by receiving STC publications in electronic form.)

By joining STC, you agree to all terms outlined in the [STC ByLaws](#). Please also note that STC dues are not refundable.

Profile:

First Name: *Required

Middle Initial:

Last Name: *Required

Suffix:

Employer:

Fill in the fields and click the Continue button on the next several pages. Most of the information will be filled in for you if you are an existing member. Asterisks mark required fields. Use your credit card to pay, or even better, your company's credit card, and you are set for the year!

You can also manage your member profile online. Just click the Login button, and enter your ID and password.

Welcome

This site makes it easy to interact with us when and where it is convenient for you.

From this site you can:

- Manage contact and profile information
- Pay for dues and subscriptions

Don't remember your username? [Look it up.](#)

Not a member of STC and want to sign up for an event? [Please create an account...](#)

After you login, the iMIS page displays, with a link to Manage contact and profile information. Click that link and a page will display with your name and a set of links on the left side of the page. The Preferences link will present you with options to change your email, phone number. The id and password link lets you change your logon information. The address link lets you... oh you know. Now you can finally change that User ID you have always wanted to change.

Try it out!

"On the whole, I'd rather be in Philadelphia."

by Al Brown, STC Senior Member-Philadelphia Metro

We [I?] hope you take W.C. Fields' epitaph* to heart and join us [me] here for the Technical Communication Summit June 1-4. You know what to expect at the Summit itself: news and friends, the latest techniques and techniques in our field and the chance to get together with colleagues and friends, old and new. But there are plenty of surprises and unexpected pleasures waiting for you in the City of Brotherly Love.

Just a few examples: you can

Visit the Liberty Bell and Independence Hall, where it all began. Or Franklin's Court to see a working replica of Ben Franklin's printing press and find out how things were done before laser printers.

Wander out Ben Franklin Parkway to see the Museum of Natural History, the original dinosaur museum; climb aboard a full-size Baldwin locomotive at the Franklin Institute (almost everything here was founded by or named after Old Ben); or check out the world's largest collection of work by Dadaist master Marcel Duchamp at the Art Museum.

Hop on the SEPTA subway to take in a Philadelphia Phillies (baseball) home game at Citizens Bank Park. (Yep, they are in town May 30th through June 5th.)

Head down the Avenue of the Arts for a musical, theatrical, or dance performance by one of our world-class companies.

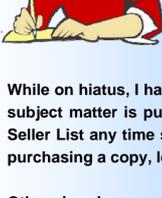
Or if you really want to go hard-core Philly, try the Mummer's Museum (2nd Street at Washington Avenue).

In short, there are lots of things to see, do, and eat (not just pretzels and cheese steaks) in William Penn's "Greene Country Towne."

Stop by the STC-Philly Metro Chapter's Hospitality Booth and say hello. We'll be glad to suggest something exciting that fits your particular interests.

See you there!

*Well, it isn't really, but why spoil a good intro?



From The Editor's Desk...

by Dalton Hooper, Orlando Chapter Newsletter Editor

I was away for a while, but I'm back now. I want to thank Erika for filling in for me and keeping the newsletter alive. As a result, it seems that the "E-News" format implemented by Erika was well-received. Since it is also a much easier method to employ, I will continue with the medium.

While on hiatus, I had the opportunity to publish my first book, *Why Is A Microphone Like A Breath Mint?* The subject matter is public speaking and how to become better at it. I doubt if it will make the NY Times Best Seller List any time soon, but it is very gratifying just to have done it. If you think you might be interested in purchasing a copy, let me know. It is available in both paperback and audio CD.

Otherwise, I am currently, as they say, "between gigs." I assume my next job will be as some level of technical communicator, but I can't be certain at this point. Whether it is or isn't, though, I will continue to belong to, and be active in, STC. I discovered it is embedded too much in my core to give it up.

I hope you feel the same.

Memo to Members is published monthly and is copyright 2008 by Orlando Chapter STC. If you would like to contribute an article or obtain permission to re-publish an article contained in this newsletter, please contact Dalton Hooper at newsletter@stc-orlando.org.

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