MEMO TO MEMBERS

"Creating and supporting a forum for communities of practice in the profession of technical communication."
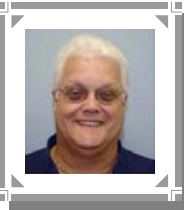
Winner of STC's Chapter of Distinction Award, 2003 and 2004

From the President's Desk
Chapter Leadership Retreat: Fun, Sharing, and Personal Development
By Mike Murray, Orlando Chapter President

While most chapter members were enjoying their summer swimming, working on tans, or just relaxing, members of the Orlando Chapter core leadership team were updating their skills and sharing ideas and years of experience.

This year's retreat, which was held in chapter president Mike Murray's home, was well attended by twelve leaders, including:

- Erika Coto, Newsletter Editor
- Christina Hammock, Vice President
- Mark Hanigan, Former Society President
- Jon Kessler, Webmaster
- Karen Lane, Treasurer
- Gail Lippincott, Incoming Education Committee Manager
- Mike Murray, President
- Richard Phipps, Employment Committee Manager
- Jen Selix, FTC President
- Bob Shydo, Nominating Committee Manager
- Bonnie Spivey, Public Relations Committee Manager
- Dan Voss, Outgoing Education Committee Manager

Highlights of the 2004 retreat included special presentations by Cathi Balboa of Intuitive Information, Inc. and Mark Hanigan. Cathi led us through an exercise designed to ignite team spirit and introduced us to the "Team Spirit Spiral," a model for facilitating spirited, high performing individuals, teams, and organizations. Mark took us through one of his newest presentations, "The Leader's Armada," and described the various "ships" in the armada, such as "leadership." Both presentations were insightful and extremely well done, bringing our team even closer together as a cohesive unit.
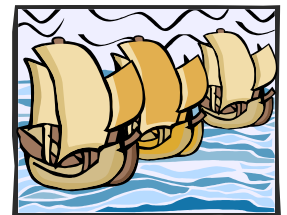
Other leadership retreat highlights included:

- A review of the STC-UCF relationship

Come Kick-start the Chapter Year!
Washlines X Has a New Wrinkle: A Mini-Conference
By Dan Voss

Baltimore is coming to Orlando!

That's right, folks—the Orlando STC Chapter of Distinction is going to kick off its 2004-2005 chapter year by putting a new spin cycle on its traditional August *Washlines* meeting where chapter members who attended the international conference share what they learned with their colleagues.

Washlines X will preserve the traditional clothesline and colorful signs, but the dial on the "washing machine" will be turned to an all-new setting: MINI-CONFERENCE!

So mark your calendars and be sure to be at the "Laundromat" (a.k.a., Winter Park Civic Center) Tuesday, August 24, at 6:30 p.m. to get your STC year off to a rousing start.

The evening will begin with social time and networking, featuring a Baltimore Harbor motif and refreshments, and including the

Chapter Leadership Retreat, continued

and ideas for making it even stronger and more effective

- A frank and open discussion of "lessons learned"
- Identifying, recruiting, and developing new leaders
- Discussion of committee goals
- Program planning review
- Update on the STC transformation process
- Focus on 2004-2005 chapter goals

By taking advantage of the chapter meeting "down" month

as an opportunity to hold a leadership retreat, the Orlando Chapter leadership team refocused on the basics, built additional unity and trust, built a stronger sense of team and commitment, refocused on chapter vision, and explored new initiatives.

Personal and professional development – just one of the many values of STC membership and chapter participation! *MtM*

Mind Your Budget Without Sacrificing Functionality: New Options in Content Management
By Bret Freeman, *special to the Memo*

Not all technical writers and editors work for major corporations with (what seem like) unlimited resources. What if you work for a small- to medium-sized company? Are you doomed to limited resources and mediocre software products?

NO! Some content management vendors are providing budget conscious options without sacrificing functionality, specifically designed for smaller editorial groups. The key to taking advantage of these options is knowing what to look for and what to watch out for.

The Options
First, it is important to emphasize that not all vendors are offering specific budget-conscious options. Some of them will tell you that their prices are so competitive that they do not need to have low cost alternatives. Other vendors will have their sales representatives offer you a "special price." These two scenarios may save you money in the initial purchase, but beware of large customization fees later on.

Subscription Option
Having said that, other content management software vendors have designed options specifically to entice small- to medium-sized editorial groups. One of these is the subscription option. With a subscription option, organizations usually pay a monthly fee to use a system over a set period of time, such as 24 months. The main benefit here is that there is no large upfront investment, which is often the scariest part of a large software purchase. Instead there is only a manageable monthly subscription fee. A subscription option also frees you from making a lifetime commitment. Once the subscription period is up, the organization can choose to renew or to discontinue their use of the system.

Small-Group Version
The other option some vendors are offering is an alternative

version (but not a smaller version) of their software designed for small editorial groups. Usually this is a fully functional, or slightly modified, version of the software with a limited number of seats.

ASP Model
There is one last budget option to look for when shopping for a content management system: application service provider (ASP) models. ASP model content management systems offer different benefits over a traditional client/server systems – the biggest benefit being that the software and the content is hosted by the vendor. With an ASP model, there is no need for an organization to spend money on purchasing a server and hiring an IT staff. The vendor hosts everything on its server and is responsible for all backups, upgrades, and technical support.

Why This Is Good For Both You and the Vendor
Why is a *subscription* option such a good idea? Because without a large initial investment, a subscription option allows many organizations to take advantage of a content management system without going through the capital budget process. The monthly payments work to everyone's advantage, because the organization avoids a large upfront fee, and the vendor can enjoy a steady income stream. The subscription period allows users to take advantage of the system, without a lifetime commitment. At the end of the subscription period, the users have the option to renew the subscription or purchase the system.

Why is a *small group* option a good idea? Because content management systems are like shoes—they work better when they fit. If you have a small editorial group, then it makes sense to get a system designed for small groups, rather than to pay all the money for a "full size" system that you'll have to modify to fit. This is true for the vendor also. Forcing a large

Mind Your Budget, continued

system on a small editorial group does not make happy customers – selling a system that is the perfect fit, does.

Why is an *ASP model* a good idea? Because it makes content management so easy! With an ASP model, organizations do not have to worry about system maintenance, backups, or technical support of any kind. The content is hosted on the vendor's server, and they take care of the technology while the organization benefits from simply using the content management software. Authorized users can still access their content 24/7 from any computer with an internet connection, which increases productivity and fosters collaboration.

A Few Things To Look For
If these options sound like they might apply to your small- to medium-sized organization, here are a few more points that you should keep in mind:

- **Choose the right option for your organization.** If you know that you have a small editorial group and that only several people will need to use the system, then you probably want a small group option. However, if you are more concerned about the initial investment, then a subscription option might be better for you.

- **Make sure that the low cost option you choose still provides you with full functionality and support.** This is especially important if you are interested in a "small group" option. Make sure that you still get the full functionality of the product, even though you're paying for fewer seats. In addition to functionality, it's also important to make sure that full technical support and upgrades are included (or find out how much extra they will cost).

- **Understand your agreement.** For both the subscription and ASP model options, be sure that you completely understand your agreement. For example, while both will often require monthly payments, an ASP model may still require an initial investment and a longer commitment. Be sure that you understand who is responsible for what aspects of the system, when payments are due, etc.

Finally, if you are a part of a small- to medium-sized organization and you are interested in a content management system, talk to vendors! The budget-conscious options discussed here are just the beginning. As customers demand more options, vendors will eventually step up and provide them! *MtM*

Bret Freeman is Vasont Systems' Sales Engineer for Vasont Content Management Solutions. Bret has more than ten years of experience in the information management and publishing industry and has delivered numerous presentations and training courses to various groups in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. He has extensive knowledge in content management strategies and complex multilingual outputs.

Call for Mentors and Mentees ... Sign Up Now!
By Dan Voss

It's time to get moving on Year 2 of the highly successful formal mentoring program that was initiated this time last year, pairing professionals in the chapter with seniors in the technical communication program at the University of Central Florida.

If you are interested in participating in this richly rewarding program, either as a mentor or a mentee, please contact the co-coordinators for this year's program, Future Technical Communicators (FTC) club president Jennifer Selix at jen_selix@hotmail.com and incoming Education Committee manager Gail Lippincott at glippincott@earthlink.net (please include both in your e-mail response) no later than the August 24 chapter meeting.

As outgoing coordinators, Bonnie Spivey and I are presently analyzing the data from the program's first year, and between now and August 24, we will be providing Jen and Gail with recommendations for improvements in the program based on pre- and post-assessments, contact logs, and program evaluations by the 10 mentors and mentees who participated in Year 1 of the program.

We will be publishing a detailed report on the first-year program as part of a planned presentation at the 52nd annual STC international conference in Seattle, as well as an article in the *Proceedings*.

First-Year Program Gets High Ratings
In the meantime, we are pleased to report that the evaluations were generally very favorable, and we are even more pleased to report that several of our 2003-2004 mentors have agreed to remain with the program as it moves into its second year.

In addition, two of our mentor-mentee pairs have elected to continue their relationships into the current year.

To Prospective Mentors: We encourage you to make this valuable contribution to the technical communicators of tomorrow. We can almost guarantee you that at the end of the year when you look back upon how you helped an aspiring technical communicator to grow into the profession, you will recognize that you grew professionally as well during the experience.

Call for Mentors, continued

To Prospective Mentees: We urge you to take advantage of this marvelous opportunity to get a running start on your career in technical communication. Last year's mentees reported that the program was greatly beneficial—especially in the critical area of job search and placement.

For an in-depth look at mentoring—both in general and the Orlando Chapter's program—see the August 2003 special edition of *Memo to Members* at http://www.stc-orlando.org/education/mentor/BridgingGap.pdf. Further details on the program are available on the chapter Web site, at http://www.stc-orlando.org/education/mentor/mentor.asp. (Note that the guidelines, procedures, and administrative forms posted there will be undergoing minor updates between now and August 24 based on feedback from participants in last year's program.)

The Path Forward
Jen and Gail will be sending out applications to new mentors and mentees shortly after August 24, with a September 7 due date. It's a simple form that takes only a few minutes to complete. (Returning mentors can simply update and resubmit the application they provided last year.)

Next, Jen and Gail, assisted by chapter president Mike Murray, will meet to establish the mentor-mentee pairs for 2004-2005, based on information provided in the mentor and mentee applications.

This accomplished, they will be inviting all the mentors and mentees to a kickoff meeting. Last year's kickoff meeting at UCF was very successful, but for various reasons it did not happen until October. In response to feedback from several "graduating" mentees, we are going to make every effort to kick off the program in September this year.

But to achieve this goal, we need mentors and mentees. That's you. Give it a try. You'll be glad you did. *MtM*

Tool Tips: Use the Tools That You Have

By David Coverston, Chapter Secretary

Sometimes the best investment of your time is spent in learning to use the tools that you already have. Saving time in small increments can add up to a lot of time. Take your mouse for example: how long does it take to click your mouse? Not long? How about double-clicking? A little longer. Let me tell you how I save myself clicks.

First of all, you have to have a decent mouse. If you have an older mouse, get yourself another one today. I like the optical mouse because there is no ball and rollers to clean, and using it is much smoother. If you do any graphic editing, consider spending a little more and getting a wireless optical mouse.

Once you have a good mouse, spend a few minutes setting it up. I am amazed at how many people accept the default settings when a little bit of personalization would make work much easier. Adjust how fast your mouse moves, set your double-click speed to your temperament, change your cursors to something that is the easiest for you, and set
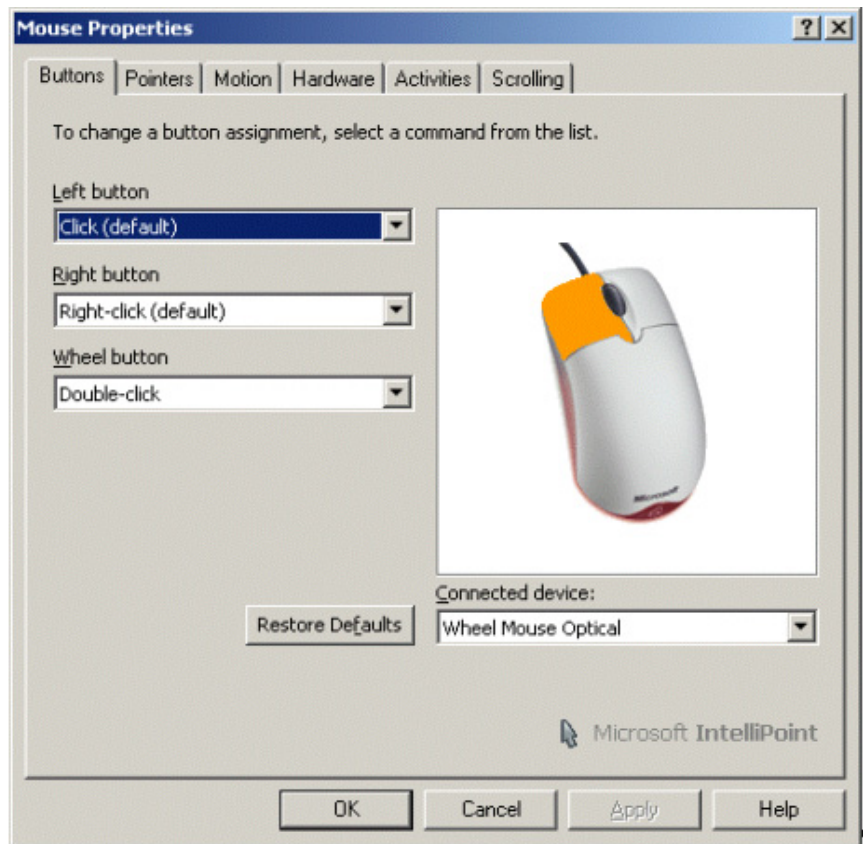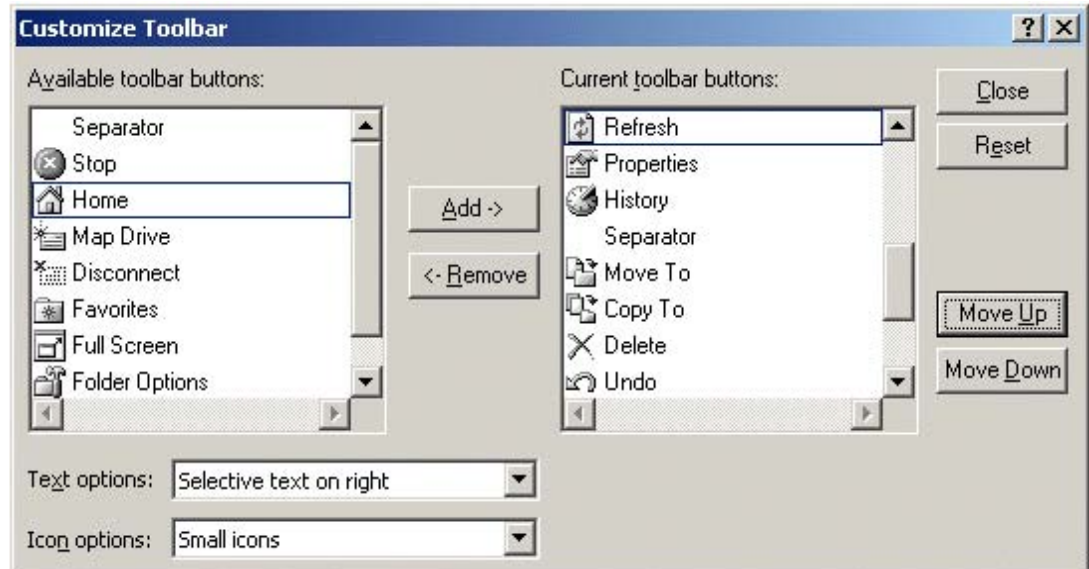
Mouse Properties dialog box

Tool Tips, continued

the button action for your
most common tasks.
Don't forget the wheel in
the middle. Many of them
have a click function as
well as a scroll function,
so use it. I set my wheel
click as the double-click
and the scroll to three
lines. Yes, you can change
the amount of scroll, too.
If you have never done
any of this before, access
your mouse settings by
clicking Start >Settings >
Control Panel > Mouse.

One more mouse tip: set
up your mouse settings on
your home computer the

Customize Toolbar dialog box

same as the ones on your work computer. After using your
settings for a while, your actions will become automatic and
you don't want to switch back and forth. You can probably
use the same mouse driver. Most drivers will work with a
similar type of mouse. The Microsoft Intellipoint and the
Logitech drivers are fairly interchangeable.

To help with your file management tasks, customize your
Windows Explorer. Open the Customize Toolbar dialog box
by choosing View > Toolbars> Customize.

I set my toolbar to have Cut, Copy, and Paste in a row, just
as I have them in Word and many other applications. I move
a lot of files around, so I put the Refresh button on my

toolbar as well. I also look at the properties of files quite
often, so I put the Properties button right there so I can save
myself another click or two. Clicks do add up.

You know that you can add to your Favorites list from the
Windows Explorer, right? Make links to files and folders that
you use a lot instead of sticking them all on your desktop.

Finally, learn the shortcut keys for the applications you use.
If you want an easy way of getting a list of the standard
Windows shortcuts, see the Tool Tips in the December 2002
Memo to Members. The tool featured in that issue, WinKey,
will not only give you a pop-up list of shortcut keys, but will
also let you define your own shortcuts. Now go customize
your setup and save your time and your fingers. *MtM*

Guest Article
Seven Leadership Qualities
By Jackie Damrau, Senior Member and President, Lone Star Chapter

As a leader, I'm always reading. I don't get enough time to read, but I do have a reading folder that I carry with me in my briefcase. This folder contains articles that are torn out of magazines, printed from on-line e-zines, and personal e-mails that come to me that spark an interest that I say to myself, "Aha! That will make a great article to write for one of the SIGs or chapter newsletters."

The article that spurred this one came from *Selling Power* magazine's May 2004 issue, entitled "Tap into the 7 Qualities of the Best Sales Managers: Improvement Isn't Optional, It's Mandatory (If You Want to Survive)" written by Maryann Hammers and Gerhard Gschwandtner (pp. 61–65, 91). While reading this article and the 7 qualities, it made me realize that transformation and chapter leadership fit very well. So I'd like to share with you my views using Hammers and Gschwandtner's seven qualities.

Seven Leadership Qualities

1. Become a master of change
2. Earn their trust
3. Give feedback
4. Build enthusiasm
5. Get involved
6. Growth & development
7. Lead STC improvement

Quality 1: Become a Master of Change
The Transformation Initiative is asking all chapter leaders to support the change, communicate it to the chapter members, and be the master of change when this initiative starts rolling. Many chapter leaders are for it; many are against it; and many are not sure where they stand. Change has been in the business world for many years.

The STC itself has been set in one mold for too many years. With the economic swings that rise and fall, so does participation in non-profit organizations. I am a member of two non-profit professional organizations, and both are suffering from a decrease in membership and conference attendance. Our organization is not alone!

Peter Drucker (as quoted in the *Selling Power* article) says, "Every organization has to prepare for the abandonment of everything it does." The STC has started doing this through its Transformation efforts. This follows on the heels of so many members saying, "If you increase my dues, what additional benefits (values) will I get?" In one respect, the member is trying to justify the additional cost (especially if they are not receiving company monetary support). Yet, the member needs to be asking what can I do to make STC become a better organization for me and others.

This leads to the next quality.

Quality 2: Earn Their Trust
The STC leadership needs to earn the trust of its members that they have a solid direction in which they are taking us. Without this, the members may envision a sinking ship and jump to other professional organizations to get the services they need. During the STC 51st Annual Conference, our leadership held several sessions about transformation and what the plans are to date and how they will communicate.

For me at the time as the newly elected Lone Star chapter president, I felt that they shared as much as they could with us. The two subsequent publications that they provided during the conference (check out www.stc-org/transformation) earned them my trust.

Remember, trust is a relationship foundation. My belief is that they are not intentionally keeping things from us. They are communicating when they have a solid decision and direction that will fit all our needs.

Trust builds upon and requires your feedback.

Quality 3: Give Feedback
Giving feedback requires setting clear expectations and realistic goals. As the Society leaders are mapping out the expectations and goals for the Transformation Initiative, we need to be prepared to offer our *constructive* (not destructive) feedback. Through our support and our voice, they will be able to make the necessary changes that will (hopefully) infuse members back into the organization by providing additional member benefits. Will these benefits be a little costly? Sure, but the cost of a quality education is also costly. We need to invest in our own education and professional development. What better organization to support than our own?

Our leadership needs feedback on our individual and collective thoughts about this transformation. As chapter leaders, we are the ones that our members will look to for direction about the Transformation Initiative. Our responsibility is to provide both the positives and negatives of what transformation means to the Society as a whole and to the Chapters individually. Yes, we may lose a few members to other new or renewed communities. Yet, if we determine who we are and make known to ourselves and to them the value we provide to our members, those members will return.Under the new STC organization, it will be easier

Seven, continued

for members to choose what type of community to belong to, and can easily choose more than one community to be part of.

From trust to giving feedback, we turn to the fourth quality of building enthusiasm.

Quality 4: Build Enthusiasm
The wheels of transformation are beginning to roll. The first major outpouring of the Society's direction started at the 51ˢᵗ Annual Conference in Baltimore. The chapter leaders who attended the two transformation Q&A sessions and the members who attended the transformation progression received the latest information available at the time. The Society's goal is to openly communicate with the membership at large when it has a solid decision.

Does this mean that you do not have a voice in the decision? No! It means that you need to look for the silver lining for your chapter, your members, or yourself, and support the initiative enthusiastically. We are the foundation builders, cheerleaders, or support group for this initiative. Let's embrace this and move into a new era of professional development.

Embracing our professional development and the direction of the Society has one key element: our involvement.

Quality 5: Get Involved
It is well and good to sit on the sidelines and squeal our disgust at the direction that the Society is going in. Have you made your concerns known? Have you read the information on the Transformation Web site (www.stc.org/transformation)?

The Society does have certain things that cannot be discussed in an open forum. However, those things that are for open discussion are made available to us. The Society officers have established independent committees that are looking into various aspects of the transformation. These committees include Communication, Communities, Education, Finance, Governance, Membership, and Technology.

Take the time to go to the Web site and read Newsletter Issue 2: Communities. The purpose for each committee appears

> "...you need to look for the silver lining for your chapter, your members, or yourself, and support the initiative enthusiastically."

> "Embracing our professional development and the direction of the Society has one key element: our involvement."

in that issue. I encourage you to get involved in embracing this effort by providing your feedback to the officer(s) of the committees. They are not doing all of this in a "closed-door" environment.

Just like we grow from baby to child to teen to adult, the Society needs to grow and develop into a more viable professional organization. This takes us to the next to last quality, growth and development.

Quality 6: Embrace Growth and Development
The Society has reached its zenith. It is time to launch a new nova that will help the Society to grow back into an organization that meets our ever-changing needs. In years past, Society members were *only* technical writers inside technical industries. Through the years, we have been able to redevelop ourselves into webmasters, instructional designers, facilitators, project managers, proposal developers, and the list goes on.

Regardless of your profession today, the world of technical communication is growing into new areas. Many other professional organizations exist that may directly focus on one particular aspect of what we do, but STC offers you a more rounded opportunity to meet with other technical communicators to learn from their experiences. The Society and each chapter/SIG/community will be growing and developing as a result of the transformation effort.

We can focus on the good side, which is to return to a successful professional organization. Or, we can focus on the bad side, which means the demise of the Society, in general. Should this happen, we will turn to one of the other professional organizations to meet our needs. Will we be any happier with that organization? Will it address our specific needs as technical communicators? Will they be (or are they now) experiencing the same growth and development pains?

The final quality is leading people to improvement. I'd like to rephrase this to:

> "Just like we grow from baby to child to teen to adult, the Society needs to grow and develop into a more viable professional organization. "

> "We can focus on the good side, which is to return to a successful professional organization."

Quality 7: Lead STC Improvement
Hammers and Gschwandtner say:

"There are subtle, yet profound differences

Seven, continued

between innovation and ongoing improvement. Innovation demands big steps leading to breakthroughs and fast results. Ongoing improvement depends on small steps, relies on conventional common sense, pays great attention to process, and teases out results in small doses over time." (p. 65)

Leading the Transformation Initiative requires innovation and ongoing improvement. Innovation to provide additional membership value, ongoing improvement to look at how to restructure itself into a viable professional organization that can continuing meeting its members' ever-changing needs for their professional

growth and development.
As Hammers and Gschwandtner said, it takes small steps, common sense, attention to process, and communication in small doses to effect a major change. The Transformation Initiative is following this process.

We are the future of the Society. Without our acceptance of change, trust, feedback, enthusiasm, growth and development, and ability to improve, we will not have a Society that meets our professional careers. Let's support the Society and stand behind them as they take the baby steps needed to transform us into a renewed professional organization. *MtM*

> "As Hammers and Gschwandtner said, it takes small steps, common sense, attention to process, and communication in small doses to effect a major change. The Transformation Initiative is following this process."

Washlines X, continued

Blue-Star focused networking initiative that got underway last spring. (To participate, get your topics to Education Committee Manager Gail Lippincott by August 20, and watch the listserv on August 23.)

Following a brief business meeting, 11 chapter members who attended the 51st annual international STC conference in Baltimore in May will bring you a full-blown mini-conference in a unique format that is half progression, half Orlando Fringe Festival.

The format is designed to simulate a realistic conference experience—including the sometimes vexing challenge of selecting the selections you attend from a staggering array of fascinating and informational alternatives.

Eight progression tables will offer you the opportunity to choose from more than 40 mini-presentations covering a wide range of topics within technical communication (see box). The complete program is published in this edition (pp. 12-13) and will also be available at the event. A word of warning, however—choose *now* (with first and second choices for each rotation), because the mini-conference, just like the real thing, will fly past you at breakneck speed! Six color-coded tables—we're calling them "venues," a la

Orlando Fringe Festival—will be "open" in each of four 25-minute rotations; two venues will be "dark," thereby allowing the venue performers (a.k.a., table hosts) to take a break and attend one rotation at another venue.

In addition to choosing which four venues you are going to visit, you will also be faced with another panoply of choices at each table. The number of topics at the venues ranges from 3 to 8, and the level of possible treatment varies from brief summaries to in-depth presentations. Each rotation at each venue will be different—somewhat like an interactive audience-driven "Improv" performance at the Fringe Festival, but with well-prepared material and valuable handouts to boot.

Note that venue hosts will be providing enough copies of their handouts to cover the full meeting attendance; consequently, at the end of the fourth rotation, you will be able to collect handouts from the venues you were not able to visit to complete your mini-conference information package (our answer to the conference *Proceedings*).

Participants at each venue session will choose which topics on that venue's program list they wish their host(s) to address in that rotation and, as appropriate, the depth of treatment they would like to receive in each selected topic. This may require some real-time negotiating and compromise—which will serve to make an already high-octane evening all that much more lively.

Topics at Washlines X			
Accessibility	Branding	Central Florida high school writing competition	Conference proposals
Corporate style guides	Entrepreneurism	Gloria Jaffe Awards	Indexing
Job search	Left-handedness	Measuring value added by technical communicators	Melissa Pellegrin Memorial Scholarships
Metrics	Online education	Online Help!	Proposals
Science writing	UCF/STC partnership	Usability	Using games to teach
Web design	Web mapping	… and more	… and more!

Washlines X, continued

Since they will be paid based on audience size (just as at the Fringe), venue performers will be competing vigorously for your valuable patronage by offering not only information and experience, but also a wide range of trinkets, goodies, and other bribes to lure you to their tables.

Thus, we literally do not know exactly what will happen at *Washlines X* until it happens (just as in the previous nine *Washlines* sessions), but we <u>do</u> know this—it will be richly varied, vastly informative, thoroughly entertaining, probably quite loud, and unquestionably a whole lot of fun! *MtM*

FYI

According to the latest Society membership counts as of June 30, 2004, the Orlando Chapter ranks:

★ 1st in size in the state of Florida
★ 2nd in size in Region 3 (Atlanta 1st with 469)
★ 3rd internationally in the number of student members at 40 (New Zealand 1st with 58 and Twin Cities 2nd with 55; largest actual student chapters are Southwest Missouri State U. with 35 and Texas Tech U. with 34)

Society News

✷✷BEST PRACTICES CONFERENCE & INNOVATOR'S FORUM
JoAnn Hackos's 6th annual Best Practices Conference will be held in Chatham, MA, on October 18-20, 2004, and Innovator's Forum on October 21, 2004. For additional information, please visit the conference Web site at http://www. infomanagementcenter.com/BestPractices/2004/index.html.

✷✷STC TRANSFORMATION RESOURCES
You've said you want more value in your STC membership, and we're listening! As you might know, the STC Board of Directors and a team of amazing additional volunteers are leading the Society through a transformation to provide increased and improved value to you. You probably have many questions about this effort and what it means to you, so the Communication Committee is providing several information resources for you to read and hear about the transformation and ask questions and provide feedback. Here's a list and brief description of what's available today:

★ www.stc.org/transformation/: On the Transformation Web site you'll find articles and presentations, as well as instructions for subscribing to the Transformation News distribution list. (Go to the Web site, and click the "Transformation Discussion List" link at the top of the left column of the page.)

★ Transformation News (transform@lists.stc.org): Subscribe to this distribution list to receive Web site update information and other tidbits. (Go to the Web site, and click the "Transformation Discussion List" link at the top of the left column of the page.)

★ transform@stc.org: Send a note to the Communication Committee to ask questions or provide transformation feedback and suggestions.

✷✷ACADEMIC PROGRAMS DATABASE IS UP AND RUNNING
To assist those interested in pursuing a career in technical communication, STC provides a database of academic programs worldwide. Schools are welcome to add their programs to the database. For more information visit: http://www.stc.org/academicDatabase.asp *MtM*

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Welcome to another exciting STC-Orlando year. This year's complete program schedule will be announced soon, but I can tell you now that you will be quite pleased and impressed with what you see offered.

Our traditional program kickoff, Washlines X, is going to be our best yet. Please be sure to RSVP with our new chapter vice president, Christina Hammock, to ensure that you do not miss out on this informative meeting.

As always, I welcome your feedback and opinions, so feel free to e-mail me at newsletter@stc-orlando.org.

Thanks for reading,
Erika

YOUR OPINION COUNTS

We did not conduct a survey at the June meeting because it was our end-of-year banquet.

Remember to let a chapter leader (red badge) know if you have any ideas for ways we can make chapter meetings even more valuable to you. *MtM*

Mark Your Calendars!

✓ **August 24th: Chapter Meeting at the Winter Park Civic Center, 6:30 PM***

*Please note the new meeting admission fees:

★ Student members: $5 (unchanged)
★ Student non-members: $8
★ Regular members: $8
★ Visitors: $12

✓ **September 8th: Council Meeting**

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

(This is a (partial) copy of an e-mail from Pittsburgh visitors thanking Orlando Chapter members for support during their visit to Central Florida.)

Hello Richard (Phipps, Employment Manager),

Given that the wind damage here around Merritt Island was relatively mild, we were amazed to see the extent of damage from Hurricane Charley on the east side of Orlando on our way to lunch with Mike on Monday. How wonderful it is that you and your colleagues are lending a hand to each other. We hope things are back to normal soon for all those affected by the storm.

Our lunch with Mike (Murray, President) was such a pleasure. The food was good, and the conversation was even better. Mike urged us to keep plugging away at our job search and to keep in close contact with you.

We are so thankful for having met two wonderful people, you and Mike. Thanks again!

Ken Poppell (and Terri)

Tonight's Schedule:
6:30-6:55   Socializing and Blue-Star Networking
6:55-7:15   Chapter Business
7:15-7:40   Rotation 1: Green and Orange venues dark
7:40-8:05   Rotation 2: Pink and Red venues dark
8:05-8:30   Rotation 3: Yellow and Turquoise venues dark
8:30-8:55   Rotation 4: Purple and Blue venues dark
8:55-9:00   Collect Handouts
9:00-9:15   Informal Networking

Tonight's Program:
- 8 venues (6 open, with lighted candles, for each rotation)
- 11 performers
- 40+ topics

Venue:
Purple

Presenter(s):
Dan Voss

Topics:

- White Papers in Your Future
- How NOT to Prepare a Proposal
- My Favorite Metrics
- Communication Skills for Managers
- Usable Intranets—Providing Information Employees Want and Need
- Good, Fast, and Cheap—A Balancing Act
- Secondary Disabilities: The Vicious Circle (How One Impairment Can Cause Another)
- The Ninth Annual Central Florida High School Technical Writing Competition
- Melissa Pellegrin Memorial Scholarships

Venue:
Red

Presenter(s):
Mike Murray

Topics:

- Communicating Technical Communicators' Value Added
- Bringing Brand Alive for Software and Web Sites
- Section 508 for Dummies
- All You Ever Wanted to Know About the STC Transformation Initiative and Were Afraid to Ask
- The Ninth Annual Central Florida High School Technical Writing Competition

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Venue:
Turquoise

Presenter(s):
W.C. Wiese

Topics:

- John Nardone – Transformation Consultant/Annual STC Forum Response
- Keynote Address – Dr. Ben Schneiderman: Digital Initiative
- Local SIGs and Chapters Working Together
- Successes and Failures in Risk Communication
- Trends, Technologies, and Skill Sets – Annual Outlook
- The Third Annual Gloria Jaffe Awards
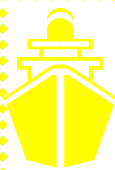

Venue:
Green

Presenter(s):
Karen Lane

Topics:

- Dealing with Genes (Science Writing)
- Guerrilla Usability for Tech Writers: Lowering the Water Instead of Writing about the Bridge
- Designing Search Pages: Strategies and Best Practices
- Connecting the Dots: Using Your Indexing Skills to Develop Effective Metadata
- Leading the Shackleton Way (Management)
- Does Your Web Site Need an Index?

The Way It Works:
- Check out the 8 venues on the master washline; follow the colors to the venues.
- Read the program to see which topics each venue will be addressing.
- Determine your first and second choices for each rotation. (this is important, in case there is a rush to certain tables)
- Select which topic(s) you plan to ask your venue host(s) to address and at what level of treatment (summary level, medium depth, full detail).
- Make sure the color-coded candle at your selected venue is lighted (if it's not, the venue is dark for that rotation).

Venue: Pink

Presenter(s):
Bonnie Spivey
Robin Horn

Topics:

- The Writer and the SME
- What Generation Gap? In Orlando, STC and UCF Are a Winning Combination!
- Setting the Bar: Developing a Corporate Style Guide
- Tech Writer's Essential Toolkit
- Creating Your Own Professional Website
- Using Games to Teach
- Teach Online Courses: Encouraging and Managing Online Student Discussions
- Melissa Pellegrin Memorial Scholarships

Venue: Orange

Presenter(s):
Christina Hammock

Topics:

- Submitting a Good Conference Proposal
- Marketing Yourself
- Entrepreneurial Lessons Not Found in a Classroom
- Successes and Failures in Risk Communication

Venue: Blue

Presenter(s):
Laura Moll
Alex Garcia

Topics:

- Mapping the Current State of Web Sites/ Graphics, Web Site Maps, and Visual Design of Digital Media
- Developing Your Own Professional Web Site
- Setting the Bar: Developing a Corporate Style Guide
- Considering the Left-Hander

Venue: Yellow

Presenter(s):
Jen Selix
Rose Petralia

Topics:

- Resolving Team Conflict
- Resumes, Portfolios, and All the Rest
- Windows Longhorn Help
- Learning from Our Mistakes
- Tips-Based Help
- Web State Maps