

Memo to Members

The newsletter of the Orlando Central Florida Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication



[HOME](#) [ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL](#)

September 2010

12
09
2010

Memo to Members



Inside this issue:



- [President's Corner](#)
- [The View from Number Two](#)
- [If you Missed Our August Meeting](#)
- [STC's Annual Gift for Teaching](#)
- [Future Technical Communicators Kick Off a New Year](#)
- [Get Active, Get Recognized, Show Off](#)
- [In the National Spotlight](#)

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Select Month

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[CALENDAR OF EVENTS](#)

To view details about a particular event, hover your mouse over the highlighted date. To RSVP, click on the highlighted date.

Regular Meeting		ADCO Meeting		Special Event		
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
April 2012						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					
May 2012						
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

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Categories : [September 2010](#)

President's Corner

by Dalton Hooper
Orlando Chapter President

12
09
2010



When is Value not Valuable?

Several years ago, the United States Postal Service (USPS) began offering *Priority Mail* 2-3 day service. According to USPS's advertising campaign of the time, the *Priority Mail* service offered an expedited process designed to get your letter-size package delivered anywhere in the country within 2-3 business days for \$3.00. While \$3.00 was significantly more than the typical cost of sending a first class letter, the first class process offered no guarantee of an arrival date.

Around this time, I had occasion to be in California on a week-long business trip. When I checked into my hotel room on the first night, a Sunday, I realized that I had left a vital document at my home in Florida. While I didn't require the document on the first day of my business trip, I would definitely need to have it before I returned home on Friday. I knew that a regular 29-cent first class stamp (this was 1991!) would *probably* get the document across the country to me by the end of the week, I couldn't take the chance. I decided it would be worth the \$3.00 to send it via the new *Priority Mail* 2-3 day option.

On Monday morning, my wife went to the local post office in Deltona, Florida, paid the \$3.00 fee, and sent my document addressed to me at my hotel in California by means of the new *Priority Mail* 2-3 day service. It should have arrived on either Wednesday (day 2) or Thursday (day 3). It didn't.

On Friday morning, I found a toll-free "800" customer service number for the USPS. I called them demanding to know why my package had not yet arrived. Their answer was astounding to me.

I was told that the *Priority Mail* 2-3 day service was not a guaranteed service. Furthermore, since my package was not being tracked, they could offer no estimate as to when it would arrive. I asked what I thought was the obvious question: "If *Priority Mail* 2-3 day service doesn't necessarily get my package delivered in 2-3 days, then why did I pay a premium for it?"

"Because mail sent via the *Priority Mail* service is handled using a different process which increases the likelihood of it arriving within the 2-3 day time frame", she said.

"How do I know that's true?", I asked.

The customer service representative seemed puzzled by my inability to understand the value of the service and its benefit to me. It was clear to her as a USPS employee familiar with the inner routing processes involved in delivering the mail that the additional charge was worth it. From my perspective however, the results were the same as if I had simply used a 29-cent stamp.

Want to post a job opening? You

Blog at WordPress.com.

clicking here.

NOT A MEMBER?

Want more information on being an STC Orlando Chapter member? You can contact our Membership Manager, David Coverston, by clicking here. Your first meeting is free!

ACTIVE MEMBER SHIRTS

Want to be in the running for an Active Member polo shirt? You can contact our Active Members Manager, W.C. Wiese, by clicking here.

RISING STARS



Want to help our Chapter in support of our educational outreach initiative? You can make a tax-free donation. Just click on the above image for more information.

STC ORLANDO LOGO ITEMS

Our Chapter web store is now open!
[Click here for great STC-Orlando logo items](#)



Show your STC Orlando pride by purchasing an item imprinted with the STC Orlando logo! Click on the above image to see the catalogue and/or to place an order.

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Because of this incident, I created a sign that I kept hanging in my office for many years. It read,

“Your product has no value until the customer perceives it.”

I referred to my sign on many occasions through the years to keep me grounded. It reminded me that value is in the mind of the beholder. The customer defines value – not the supplier.

Who are the Customers of the Orlando Chapter STC?

If you’ve visited our Orlando Chapter web site recently (www.stc-orlando.org) you may have noticed something new – my picture and a welcome message. This is the first step in our “*What can we do for you today?*” campaign. It is directed at our current and future customers – Orlando area technical communicators. As you know, an overwhelming majority of the Orlando area technical communicators do not belong to the STC in general and the Orlando Chapter in particular. This can be a result of many different factors, a few of which may include the following.

1. They are not aware of STC’s existence.
2. They are aware of STC, but do not know there is a local chapter.
3. They are aware of the STC Orlando Chapter, but do not feel we have any value to offer them.

While those of us who are already members of STC and the Orlando Chapter understand the value of our membership, it is not necessarily perceived by our customers. This challenge is at the heart of our “*What can we do for you today?*” campaign. We need to ask this question of our friends and co-workers who are also technical communicators, but not STC members. Ask them what they would perceive as value from us. Relay their answers to me or any member of the administrative council. We have no value to them until they perceive it.

P.S.: In case you are wondering, my package did not arrive at the hotel in California until four days after I had returned to Florida.



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Categories : [September 2010](#)

The View from Number Two

by Debra Johnson
Orlando Chapter Vice President



Well, Washlines XVI – Dallas is over and what a huge success. What an amazing group of presenters. Our members presented on a host of subjects ranging from Content Management to Motivating without authority to Visual Explanations for writers just to name a few.

Since last month, I have had the opportunity to speak to many wonderful and brilliant people in my quest to find interesting and informative topics of discussion for our



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Mission: STC advances the theory and practice of technical communication across all user abilities and media so that both businesses and customers benefit from safe, appropriate, and effective use of products, information, and services.

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12
09
2010

Chapter meetings.

Here is the lineup for September and October meetings so far:

September 21, 2010: Elizabeth Holubek, Senior Business Analyst

Elizabeth and I work closely together at Wyndham Vacation Ownership a division of Wyndham Worldwide Hotels, and Resorts. She specializes in Business Analysis and Business Process Modeling (BPM). She is currently working on building a BPM discipline at WVO. She will explain how BPM allows business and technology to communicate more collaboratively and develop software that supports an ever-changing business model. Elizabeth has over 12 years of experience working on multi-million dollar IT software projects in Finance, Banking, Pharmaceutical, and Hospitality industries with companies such as: AOL, Target, Wachovia, Washington Mutual, Celgene, Expedia, Starwood, and Wyndham.

Elizabeth's presentation will cover:

- The role of a business analyst
- Business Analysis skills technical writers already possess
- Comparing and contrasting the skills of a business analyst and those of a technical writer
- The value a business analyst brings to an organization
- Describing the various ways you can use the skills you already possess as a technical writer, in the area of business analysis if you are looking for a new challenge

October 19, 2010: Traci Wilbanks, Senior Technical Writer - MEDai an Elsevier company.

Traci will talk about how she documents things such as:

- Real-time evidence-based medicine guideline compliance monitoring
- Accurate identification and stratification of high-risk/high-cost patients
- Identification of patients at risk for readmission and hospital acquired infections
- Physician and facility profiling
- Identification of population-risk drivers and potential mitigation strategies
- Actuarial and underwriting support
- Retrospective outcomes analysis

Next month I will tell you more about Traci as a writer, as well as, what's on the agenda for Nov, and Dec

See ya next month!

P.S. See you September 21, 2010 at 6:30 pm at the Winter Park Convention Center. Bring someone with you!!!

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Categories : [September 2010](#)

If you Missed our August Meeting...

by Kit Kittrell

...you missed a host of interesting mini-presentations based off the informative presentations given at this year's National STC Conference in Dallas, Texas. Washlines, our annual recap of the National Conference, allows members of the Orlando chapter to see just what's going on at our national conference - and this year, Washlines XVI, included a Dallas theme!

12
09
2010

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Categories : [September 2010](#)

September 21st, STC Gift for Teaching

by Michael Wilson
Public Relations

12
09
2010

At the September STC Orlando meeting, we will be collecting school supplies - new and gently used - to donate. These items can range from crayons to company stationery. Additionally, we will be collecting money if you are interesting in donating that way. A Gift for Teaching (AGFT) is a non-profit organization that helps students and classrooms through collecting school supplies.

What started as a way to recycle unwanted or surplus supplies from businesses has grown into tri-county-wide operation that distributes more than \$39,000 worth of school supplies and incentives daily for free. With "Free Stores" in each of the counties they serve, AGFT is able to get free school supplies into the hands of our community's highest-need schools and classrooms. AFGT provides necessary tools to students who otherwise would have none while making sure teachers don't have to spend their own money.

Join us this month for a presentation from Elizabeth Holubek, Senior Business Analyst. Her presentation will include a discussion of the role of a business analyst, business analysis skills technical writers already possess, comparing and contrasting the skills of a business analyst and those of a technical writer, the value a business analyst brings to an organization, and describing the various ways you can use the skills you already. We look forward to a great turnout this month. We hope that will lead to a substantial philanthropic effort.

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Categories : [September 2010](#)

Future Technical Communicators Kick Off a New Season

12
09
2010

FUTURE TECHNICAL COMMUNICATORS @UCF

Future Technical Communicators is a registered student organization at the University of Central Florida. While not affiliated with the Society for Technical Communication, we have a rich history of working closely with the Orlando Chapter of STC.

As we have done in the past, this year we focus on offering classes and workshops. UCF offers classes that teach collaboration and writing skills to enable us to become excellent technical writers. Unfortunately, this focus does not teach us very much about the ever-changing technology that we will also need to be familiar with in order to enter the work-force. FTC hopes to meet this need through our organization.

Our first workshop/meeting is on the use of Sharepoint as a collaboration tool. This software is frequently used in groups, to check documents in and out as they are being

worked on (to ensure that only one person works on each document at a time).

If you or anyone you know is interested in presenting for our small group of students, please contact our officers at ftc@bacaworld.com.

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Categories : [September 2010](#)

Get Active, Get Recognized, Show Off

by W.C. Wiese

12
09
2010



They come in **pepper**, **yellow**, **seafoam green**, and **powder blue**. They come in **forest green**, black, and **artillery red**. And there are maybe 175 in the whole wide world. What are they? Highly prized Orlando Chapter STC Active Member shirts!

To reward the members who powered the chapter to a fifth STC Chapter of Distinction recognition, Membership Chairman David Coverston recognized 17 Orlando Active Members at the year-end banquet in June. Receiving distinctive pepper-colored polo shirts were David Coverston, Michele Damron, Alex Garcia, Dan Heath, Erika Higgins, Dalton Hooper, Dana Hratko, Jon Kessler, Karen Lane, Terry Leach, Gail Lippincott, Kelli Pharo, Cindy Skawinski, Dan Voss, W.C. Wiese, and Michael Wilson.

For 10 years, the Orlando Chapter has recognized members who are consistent in their attendance and help make the chapter a success. These distinctive leadership shirts cannot be bought, only earned. They set our membership apart at STC conferences and in the workplace. (After years of envy, several other chapters have copied us and begun their own active membership programs in the past 4 years.)

As the points table shows, you earn points every month you attend a meeting, put on the program, attend an Administrative Council meeting, or serve as a judge or mentor.

Activity	Point Value

Attend Chapter Meeting	1
Chairman/Officer	0.5 for office 0.5 for attending AdCo!
Present a Program	2
Visit Class or Other Chapter	1
Be a Mentor/Month	1
Be a Judge/Month	1
Sponsor a Orlando New Member	1

You must earn 14 points to earn a 2011 Active Member shirt. But it will be worth it!

The shirt lets our members celebrate chapter pride in the workplace whenever they choose to wear it. It sends a positive message to employers, clients, and co-workers: *I am committed to my profession and committed to self-development. I am a member of STC!*

Will you be an active member? We'll keep score in upcoming issues of *Memo to Members!*

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Categories : [September 2010](#)

