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February 2012

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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				
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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
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STC LINKS

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STC Orlando chapter
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EMPLOYMENT

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From the Editor's Desk

Alex Garcia

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Hello friends and members of the Orlando Chapter STC!

Welcome to another exciting issue of Memo to Members.

I'm happy to announce that I have accepted a full time, direct Technical Writer position with Lockheeed Martin Global Training and Logistics. I could not have made it through this job search without the support and networking opportunities that membership in the Orlando Chapter STC has provided. I would like to thank everyone within STC that has helped me along the way. I truly do value my STC membership.

Speaking of membership

Have you renewed yours yet?

No matter when you joined or last renewed, your membership expired on 31 December 2011. We are currently in a grace period for membership, but you must renew soon. In addition, you must renew by 29 February to be eligible to vote in the STC election. Visit the STC website to join or renew today.

Are you on Facebook? "Like" the Orlando Chapter STC at: Orlando Chapter STC on Facebook

Follow us on Twitter: STCOrlando on Twitter

Do YOU have an article you'd like to submit for Memo to Members? Don't be shy... email me at newsletter@stc-orlando.org You will get an Active Member point for your submission

Alex Garcia
Editor
Orlando Chapter STC Memo to Members

President's Corner

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By Karen Lane
President
Orlando Chapter STC

This column is addressed to all Orlando Chapter members, current and former, renewing and non-renewing.

Membership numbers are down throughout the Society for Technical Communication and, for that matter, throughout the working world for all professional organizations. It's a fact of the challenging economic times in which we find ourselves. We at the chapter

Karen Lane

level—along with the folks up at the Society level—are concerned about this trend, naturally.

So I have a question for you, whether you have renewed yet or not, and I hope you will think about the question and respond (president@stc-orlando.org):

What can we offer you that would convince you that membership is in your best interest, particularly now and particularly during these tough times?

My question is not rhetorical. You know if you have been reading my columns that the Administrative Council of the Orlando Chapter takes member services very seriously. Put very simply, members are our only reason for existence. So, no members, no chapter. More than that: below a certain "critical mass" we cannot present the programs and services we want to give you in order to make your membership worth the money you pay.

So we have to think that if you are not renewing, you are not seeing sufficient value to justify the expense. We want to fix that. The two sides of the equation are value and expense. There is little we can do to change the expense, since the dues are fixed at the Society level (although we are working on some options for you in that regard, too —stay tuned). We are looking at the other part of the equation: we want to give you more value—enough value so that you renew your membership and recruit your colleagues to join STC because Orlando Chapter is a community of value.

Please take a moment right now to think about this: Can the Orlando Chapter make changes that would entice you to renew your membership right now? We are considering workshops and webinars, virtual meetings to enable remote attendance, networking opportunities, reduced meeting rates for frequent attendees, access to offerings by profession gurus and innovators, and on and on. Perhaps these are exactly what you want, and perhaps you will think of other ideas. Just let me know.

As an incentive to join or renew, if you are a student your membership dues will be partially subsidized by the Orlando Chapter when you renew no later than February 29. New student members will have $20 rebated to them by the chapter; renewing student members will receive $20 worth of meeting admission coupons. And if you are a recently graduated student (within the past three years), you are eligible for the New Technical Communication Professional rate of $160.00. This reduced fee includes a chapter membership and a SIG membership, plus of course access to all other member benefits enjoyed by regular and senior members. It's a terrific deal and will help you transition to regular membership when your career is more established.

In the past year we have continued to add value to our membership: We now offer the opportunity for members to list themselves and their résumés on a dedicated Web page in order to attract potential employers (http://www.techcommcandidates.net/). We have an active employment list—members only—to distribute notices about available jobs in the local area, regionally, and nationally (http://www.wordsandwit.com/joblistings). For the first time we offered access at one of our meetings to a Society-level webinar, and we will be doing that again from time to time. Since our recent merger with the SpaceTech chapter, we have begun planning for geographically dispersed face-to-face meetings, one of which will be coming in the spring. We have been talking with our sister chapter, Suncoast (Tampa area) about collaborating on programs via webinars and remote feeds for innovative programming. Both members and non-members are always welcome to attend our meetings, but we

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SOCIETY FOR TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION (STC)

STC

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.

VISITS TO THIS SITE

10,605 views

hope you will join us as a member and enjoy membership's many rewards, including reduced admission fees at our events.

If you have already renewed, thank you. We hope the reason you renewed is that you find your membership to be valuable. But we still want to hear from you: What *do* you like? What *don't* you like? What can we do to make your membership more valuable to you?

We need to hear both from renewing members and not-yet-renewing members. Please take a moment to write to me (president@stc-orlando.org) and tell me what you want from your membership and how we can provide the value you require in exchange for your membership dollars. We will take all serious suggestions under consideration. We are working for you and want to serve your needs and interests.

Also, you should know that we are investigating options at the chapter level to address the Society's cancellation of the installment dues option, and we'd welcome hearing from 2011 members for whom absence of the installment option is motivating non-renewal.

I look forward to hearing from you. And speaking for your friends and colleagues who have already renewed, if you haven't renewed yet I hope you will be renewing this month during the membership "grace period," after which your renewal will be subject to a "rejoin fee." Please don't let your membership lapse if you can avoid it.

Comments : Leave a Comment »

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A View From Number Two

Debra Johnson

by Debra Johnson
Vice President
Orlando Chapter STC

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Debra is currently the Lead Documentation Specialist at Wyndham Vacation Ownership in Orlando, FL where she is responsible for setting up and leading the Technical Communications discipline within Wyndham's Information Technology department.

Hi Everyone!

As someone who has seen quite a few changes to our industry over the last 18 years, I was very excited after attending Tristan Bishop's presentation at the 2011 STC Summit last May. I often wonder where our industry is heading and whether I could remain relevant in a time where everything is changing so rapidly. I can only imagine how students must wonder what lies ahead as they enter this profession. So I was very excited when he agreed to speak at our meeting this month.

It was Tristan's presentation that confirmed what I suspected, while opening my eyes to the possibilities for the future. Plus… he is very funny. So let's meet up, share, laugh, and connect with each other.

Tuesday February 21, 2012

Networking 6:30pm

Dinner   7:00pm

MEETING FEES:

Students who are Orlando Chapter STC members are $5.00

Students who are not Orlando Chapter STC members are $10.00

Orlando Chapter STC members (non-students) are $10.00

All others are $20.00

First time visitors and presenters are free

Please CLICK HERE to RSVP: vicepresident@stc-orlando.org

Winter Park Civic Center

1050 Morse Blvd

Winter Park, FL 32789

So we'll see you there....Don't forget to RSVP

P.S. Look for the announcement soon about our Employment Meeting coming in March....

Comments : Leave a Comment »

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If You Missed Last Meeting…

Brittney Adams

By Brittney Adams
Vice President
Future Technical Communicators at UCF

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…Then you missed a thought provoking presentation by Joe Welinske from WritersUA on "Optimizing the Googleability of Your Content," also known as Search Engine Optimization (SEO).

The Pegasus Ballroom at UCF was the place to be on January 24, 2012. Over 70 people attended the event, including STC members from the Orlando and Suncoast Chapters, as well as FTC members and interested students at UCF.

If you missed the meeting, here are a few major ideas that Joe went over:

- He encouraged students and professionals to learn how to make their websites appear higher in the rank of a Google search.
- He mentioned that Hypertext Markup Language websites are processed easier on Google than PDF's.
- He also considered people that do not want their sites to appear often on a Google search. He mentioned that security settings and firewalls could be used to prevent your site from showing up on top of a Google search inquiry.
- He seemed to understand that there were some people at the seminar who were less familiar with the technical aspects of the search engine. He repeatedly stated how important it was to stay up to date on technology and to understand where your information is going and ways you can control how it is found publicly.

"Now and looking forward more people are going to be looking for information on our

products and services on Google and other search engines," said Welinske.

Whether for an e-portfolio, a blog, or a professional website, all Internet users can benefit from knowing how to optimize their searches on Google. Welinske made it clear that this is also true for other search engines, not just Google.

Overall, the joint meeting was a success. A big thanks are in order to the STC and FTC members who helped put the event together. Everyone did a great job and the attendees seemed to enjoy this presentation immensely.

Comments : Leave a Comment »

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Tool Tips

by David Coverston
Membership Manager
Orlando Chapter STC

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Before I get into this edition of Tool Tips, I want to ask you to stop, go back and read the President's article if you haven't read it already. This is a really important message, and even if you have already renewed, I thank you for taking the time to read it.

David Coverston

Mailing Lists (You Should Know About)

Mailing lists are a great way to keep up with developments on particular topics, or to ask question and get answers. Of course, some mailing lists are more relevant than others, depending on the environment you work in, the tools you use, and your skill level. Here are some of the lists to which I subscribe. Look them up, thy them out, increase your knowledge!

WordTips and the next item, ExcelTips are both written by Allen Wyatt. There are two versions of the newsletter, one for the ribbon interface featured in Word 2007 an 2010, and one for the menu interface found in earlier versions. The tips vary in experience level from beginner to advanced users. The web site has a search engine, or you can use the menu on the site to search for answers to your questions.

Menu item include the topics:

- ⊞ Editing
- ⊞ Fields
- ⊞ Files
- ⊞ Find and Replace
- ⊞ Formatting

If you can't find your answer, then you can submit your questions. The list is free, but there is a paid version that has more content. Occasionaly Wyatt will offer a book he has written. The material is excellent, and if you are new to using Word, you may want to get the premium content.

To sign up: http://wordribbon.tips.net/

ExcelTips has two versions for the two interfaces , as I mentioned in the first item. There is likewise a free and paid version, a search engine and menu on the web site, and the occasional book offer. Menu items include:

- ⊞ Formulas
- ⊞

- ⊞ Graphics
- ⊞ Linking
- ⊞ Macros
- ⊞ PivotTables

To sign up: http://excelribbon.tips.net/

Adobe Forums have a lot of information about applications technical communicators use. Although technically it is not a mailing list, I am treating it as such because I have the discussions emailed to me so that I don't have to visit the forums to listen in on the discussions. Occasionally an Adobe employee will enter the discussion and provide useful information. You won't see FrameMaker listed on the web page, but click the *Select forum* drop-down > *FrameMaker* > *Go* to view the discussions. Current discussions include:

- ⊞ Barcode – code39 –where do i get this?
- ⊞ Has anyone seen framemaker crash if you do a find and replace of a character format?
- ⊞ How do I make endnotes?
- ⊞ TOC Generated in Wrong Order
- ⊞ How can I create one pdf from a FrameMaker Book with mixed page sizes.

To sign up: http://forums.adobe.com/ You will need an Adobe account (free) and will have to log in and set your profile to receive email notifications.

Framescript users is a Yahoo news group that you can set to email you the discussions from the group. Of course this is only of interest to FrameMaker users who have the FrameScript add-in. This is a more technically-oriented group, but they are friendly to newcomers.

To sign up: http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/framescript-users/ and sign in with your Yahoo ID.

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STC Upcoming Webinars

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STC has released the full schedule of webinars for February and March 2012. To view the entire listing, as well as the collection of archived webinars available for viewing 24/7, check out the STC website.

Content Management with Microsoft SharePoint 2010

Nicky Bleiel

Wednesday, 22 February | 1:00–2:00 PM EST (GMT-5)

Managing your content ensures efficiency and accuracy in your documentation, and consistency across the enterprise. SharePoint is a popular content management system

(with an estimated 100 million users), so chances are good your company is using it. This session will explain the content management features in SharePoint 2010 from the perspective of technical communicators and will include a demonstration of these features in a documentation workflow.

Style Guides and Style Manuals: Virtual Tools in an Editor's (and Writer's) Toolkit

Elizabeth (Bette) Frick

Thursday, 23 February | 4:00-5:00 PM EST (GMT-5)

Editors use style manuals and style guides as a vital tool in their toolkit. In this webinar, Bette Frick will provide an overview of their importance in the editing profession. This webinar will explore why to use a style manual or a style guide; what published style guides are available for general use, what specific style guides you should use for your editing, and how you can customize your company's style while still using a published style guide.

Getting Ahead As a Lone Writer

Kai Weber

Wednesday, 29 February | 1:00-2:00 PM EST (GMT-5)

Writers are often the only person in a company who create and maintain documentation. Lone writers who operate without a dedicated budget or specific managerial guidance find it hard to excel in their work. In this presentation, Kai Weber will draw on his years of experience to show lone writers how to make the most of this "benign neglect."

Designing Visual Texts for Print and Digital Publications

Kenneth Price

Tuesday, 6 March | 9:00-10:00 PM EST (GMT-5)

Effectively laying out technical information goes far beyond using bulleted lists and choosing an attractive font. In designing a page, you should create visuals patterns that help your readers to find, understand, and remember information. This webinar will introduce the principles of visual language, information architecture, and page design. These principles, based entirely upon research on how people learn, will help you to design effective electronic and print publications to make technical information more accessible.

Going Green as a Technical Communicator

Cheryl Landes

Wednesday, 7 March | 1:00-2:00 PM EST (GMT-5)

The green movement is growing rapidly, and it's creating a high demand for great technical communicators. In this session, Cheryl Landes, who is working with clients in the green industry, will describe the opportunities in this field and provide tips on how to break in.

Automated Quality Assurance through a DITA-OT Plugin

Patrick Quinlan

Thursday, 8 March | 4:00-5:00 PM EST (GMT-5)

A successful build does not always yield a successful document. Verifying that a document set uses the correct product terminology, follows language standards, and is correctly tagged with proper nesting and attributes can be a tremendous challenge. Don't have the time or resources to conduct editing and tag reviews on thousands of DITA topics? Join Patrick Quinlan from ditanauts.org as he demonstrates how to address these challenges with the open-source QA plugin for DITA-OT.

Your Career Is Your Job

Linda Oestreich

Tuesday, 20 March | 9:00-10:00 PM EDT (GMT-4)

In this time of career turmoil and economic upset, how can we ensure that our careers progress and our professional development grows? What makes the difference between those who love their jobs and those who don't? How can you find your bliss at work? Linda Oestreich will explore these topics and others with the participants of the webinar. Attend this webinar for a lively discussion and a few tools to help you find your own best path.

Confessions of an IT Contractor

David Dick

Thursday, 22 March | 4:00-5:00 PM EDT (GMT-4)

Contractors are skilled professionals assigned to short-term and long-term assignments to client companies. They have the talent to quickly get a project started and see it through completion. In this webinar, David Dick explain how to break into the profession, how to interview with recruiters, how to keep skills marketable, and how to be successful.

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