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PCS LOSES A "PRESTIGIOUS TECHNICAL COMMUNICATOR"

BY RUDY JOENK AND RON BLICQ

One of PCS's most respected members died in 1997, but news of his death has only just reached us. This was Ustus Agur, who was PCS's first "Prestigious Technical Communicator" (*Newsletter*, July/August 1993).

Ustus Agur was a gifted lecturer, a prolific writer, and a multilingual translator. During his career he authored 10 books and over 300 technical papers and journal articles. Among them, in 1977, the "Information Science and Processing Vocabulary: Estonian-German-Russian"; and in 1991, the "Dictionary of Computers: English-Russian-Estonian." He was also a scientific editor of over a dozen books on electrical and computer technology, information processing, and linguistics.

Ustus was Director of the Estonian Informatics Fund. He was planning to resign from that post to assume the duties of Director of Research, but his death intervened on his birthday, January 1, 1997, the day the change was to be made. In a letter informing us of her father's death, his daughter Tiina wrote: "He was a man who devoted much more attention on everyone else than himself—a truly modest man."

We (with Deborah Kizer and Nancy Corbin) first met Ustus in Kabli, Estonia, in September 1990 where we represented PCS at the first international communication conference in a country that was just emerging from behind the Iron Curtain. We remember how well he organized the events, quietly and unobtrusively keeping the pace moving yet at the same time ensuring that everyone, from the many nations who took part, was comfortable and that their personal needs were attended.

Two years later (October 1992) Ron and Nancy returned to Tallinn to teach a course that Ustus had arranged. The evening before the course, they were met by Tiina Agur, who apologized for her father's absence; he was at that moment disembarking from a ferry that had just arrived from Stockholm, and would meet them at the entrance to Tallinn's Old Town. Without showing any of the weariness he must have experienced from traveling and participating in a foreign-language conference the previous three days, Ustus escorted them through the Old Town, showing and describing the history of the numerous ancient buildings, mostly unscathed by war. Then he and Tiina took them to a restaurant on an upper floor of an old, beautifully restored building where the food and the service were exemplary.

Although the 1993 *Newsletter* article describing Ustus Agur told much about him and his extraordinary communication background, Ron writes now that it will be that evening and Ustus's gentleness and kindness that will remain foremost in his memory.

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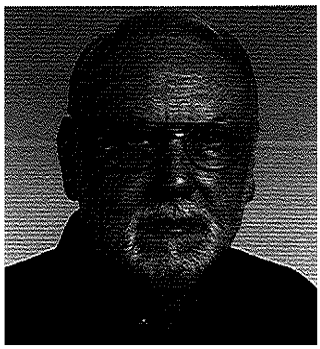
FROM THE EDITOR



RUDY JOENK

Unbundling

A method used by about one-third of the IEEE Societies to reduce an imbalance between member dues and the cost of services provided (as described here in the previous *Newsletter*) is to "unbundle" the group's *Transactions* or other publication. This means that a Society publication is removed from the group-benefits package and is sent only to members who indicate that they want that publication by entering a subscription to it, and paying a separate subscription fee.

We will soon set up an e-mail distribution list and use it to collect opinions about unbundling the PCS *Transactions* and what subscription fee you'd be willing to pay for it. If you'd like to receive the questionnaire, send the following message to *majordomo@majordomo.ieee.org*:

subscribe pcs-members yourname@youraddress
end

AdCom Meeting

The next Administrative Committee (AdCom) meeting will be another two-day brainstorming session—largely about membership and finances, this time in Denver, Colorado, July 10-11. Members are welcome at AdCom meetings.

Info for Authors

One thousand words makes a nice page-and-a-half article, although longer and shorter articles may be appropriate. Proposals for periodic columns are also welcome. If you use a wp program, keep the format simple; multiple fonts and sizes are likely to be stripped by an ASCII filter before being coded in *Newsletter* style for the publishing software.

Usually wp codes can be converted from one program to another but this is seldom true for the newest releases of the programs (conversion utilities are low on the manufacturer's priority list); headers, footers, and tables seem to lead the casualty list.

Use e-mail for transmitting an article. My address is in the boilerplate at the bottom of this page.

The deadline for articles is usually the first Friday of the odd-numbered month preceding publication, and we publish in the odd-numbered months. So the next year's deadlines are:

Issue	Deadline
Sep./Oct. 1998	10 July 1998
Nov./Dec. 1998	11 Sep. 1998
Jan./Feb. 1999	6 Nov. 1998
Mar./Apr. 1999	9 Jan. 1999
May/June 1999	5 Mar. 1999
July/Aug. 1999	7 May 1999

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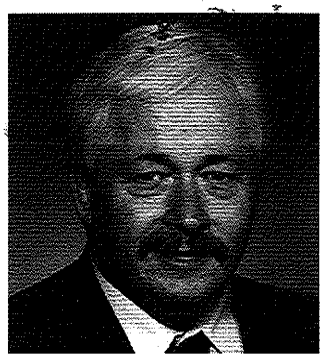
PRESIDENT'S COLUMN



ROGER GRICE

PCS AND IEEE—WHAT'S THE CONNECTION?

I've been a member of PCS for about 20 years. At the time I joined PCS, I also joined the IEEE. When I talk about the group, I generally refer to it as "IEEE PCS" or "IEEE's Professional Communication Society." Kind of makes sense coming from someone who has worked as a professional technical communicator all his adult life and has a B.S. degree in electrical engineering. Right?

PCS people can and do influence the IEEE.

But during the time I have been active in IEEE PCS I have seen my first loyalty be to PCS, my field of interest. When I thought about IEEE, I thought of an umbrella organization that helped ensure PCS's survival, or I thought of the prestige associated with being part of the world's largest professional technical organization. People talked of IEEE benefits—insurance, travel services, and the like—but such benefits came to me from my job, so I never really investigated the IEEE versions.

I guess if I were to be brutally honest, I'd have to say that I saw IEEE as a bureaucracy that accepted my dues and returned little to me. I was happy that IEEE "tolerated" PCS, but I didn't see much beyond that.

My eyes were really opened when I attended my first IEEE Board of Directors meeting series in Anaheim, California, this February. Here was a very interesting group of people, very dedicated to their profession and to standards of professionalism. And the shocker, to me at least, was that they were very interested in technical and professional communication, in PCS, and in ways that we could work together.

I went to the meeting hoping that people would be politely tolerant of a "non-techie" in the midst of this large body of professional engineers. I came away from the meeting with a to-do list of activities that are geared toward all of IEEE—book reviews, plans for articles in *The Institute*, committee assignments, on-going discussions of the need for workshops and tutorials on some of the communication issues that we in PCS are so interested in: designing sites for the World Wide Web, learning HTML, planning effective presentations—things that we in PCS are good at.

I was also surprised to see familiar PCS faces at the meeting: Deborah Flaherty Kizer as chair of a committee on packaging; Dave Kemp as a regional director; Emily Sopensky and Dan Daley as PCS's representatives to the Intelligent Transportation Systems Ad Hoc Committee; Leann Kostek involved in membership and regional activities; and Mark Haselkorn seeming in charge of everything. (OK, that last one was an exaggeration, but I really was impressed with the influence people of PCS can have within IEEE.)

I also became aware of a whole new (to me) dimension of IEEE—the regional activities and regional councils that make up a large part of IEEE activities and that are, for many people—especially those without local Society Chapters—the main connection to IEEE. (For example I had the opportunity to hear about the Los Angeles Council's regular meetings that include hundreds of people. That's big time!)

What did I come away from the meeting with? What is it that I'd like to share with you? It's this:

It often seems that we in PCS see IEEE as the "them"—a group very much apart from us that takes away our money (often unbalancing our budgets in the process)—a sort of hostile Big Brother out to milk us dry. But, in fact, PCS is part of IEEE, one of the 37 technical groups under the direction of the Technical Activities Board (TAB) that carry on the technical activities

(continued on page 6)

Do You Know a "Prestigious Technical Communicator"?

By Ron Blicq

Four years ago the PCS *Newsletter* ran a series of articles featuring "Prestigious Technical Communicators." I would like to run a second series, but need input from *Newsletter* readers: Can you identify a prestigious technical communicator for me?

The intent is *not* to feature people already well-known among PCS members. We try to seek out less-well-known technical communicators from around the world. For example, the first series featured Ustus Agur of Tallinn, Estonia; Ann Laster of Hinds Community College, Mississippi; and Pradeep Henry in India.

I have had two worthy suggestions, and articles are being prepared about them. But for this to be a series, I need more names, plus someone to provide the history on which to base each article. Please e-mail me at *rgi_ron@compuserve.com*, or fax to (204) 488-7294, describe the candidate, and give me a brief summary of why you think the person should be featured.

TC-Forum Issue Available

By Ron Blicq, PCS Representative to Intecom

I have a limited number of copies of the March 1998 issue of *TC-Forum* on hand and will mail them to PCS *Newsletter* readers who would like to see what this relatively new journal is like. (*TC-Forum* is supported by Intecom, the International Council for Technical Communication, of which PCS is a member.)

Maintains a dialogue in the years between Forum conferences.

TC-Forum describes itself as "An Interactive Discussion Medium." It looks like a well designed journal, its appearance is attractive to the eye, and its content is appealing to readers interested in hearing an exchange of views from technical communicators around the world.

"But it's not a magazine!" editor Hans Springer insists. "Its purpose is to provide a forum for readers to present an opinion or to respond to a contributor's opinion." The current issue features these topics:

- Translation
- Readability/Usability/Quality
- Consulting
- Education and Training
- Tools

Articles are short and often ask readers to respond with comments to Hans, or to correspond with the author. The responses are featured in the next issue, thus forming a continuing dialogue on each topic.

TC-Forum evolved following Intecom's Forum 95 conference. The conference organizers felt that five years between conferences was too long, and that a vehicle was needed to maintain a dialogue between technical communicators. Mercedes-Benz AG generously put up the first year's funding, and has renewed funding for 1998.

The language of *TC-Forum* is English, but the contributors are mainly from Europe. There is also input from Australia, Israel, and North America; the range of writers varies from issue to issue. Publication occurs in Germany, where the publisher is Brigitte Beuttenmueller of Stuttgart and the editor is Hans Springer of Scheinfeld.

I invite you to gain "a taste of *TC-Forum*." E-mail your name and address to *rgi_ron@compuserve.com*. If you like what you see, the journal contains directions for requesting further issues. (Currently there is no charge for TC-Forum.)

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

CHERYL REIMOLD

HANDLING TOUGH SITUATIONS

Part 2: The Art of Buying Time

Last time, we discussed the advantages of attacking tough situations not all at once but in four phases: (1) minimal immediate response, aimed at buying time; (2) realistic preparation based on a complete scenario; (3) problem-solving discussion focused on reaching an agreement; and (4) follow-through to ensure that agreements are carried out. The main argument for this approach is simple:

- To be persuasive, you need good arguments.
- When you are surprised and upset, you can't think of your best arguments.
- Therefore, whenever possible, give yourself time to calm down, think, and prepare properly.

How can you become an expert at phase 1? First, develop restraint. Second, practice a set of safe minimal responses that defuse the immediate threat. As you'll see, anybody can learn this; all you need is a little willingness.

One skill is indispensable in tough situations: restraint.

The Three-Beat Silence

Giving a minimal response should be a simple matter: Just say nothing or very little, and avoid anything that is negative or that commits you to something you may regret. Why then can so few people do it? Because it requires that precious commodity: *restraint!* If there is one skill that is indispensable in tough situations, this is it. Just think back over the times you got into trouble. How often could you have avoided the problem if you'd kept your mouth shut?

Make this your first focus: Instead of responding, just ***pause and think!*** Right now, look at your watch and count three seconds. Do it again and get used to how long it feels. That's how long you should pause, at the least, before talking. Notice that there is nothing awkward about three or even five seconds of silence. On the contrary: It encourages people to take your response more seriously, because it appears thought out rather than emotional.

What do you do in those three seconds? You make eye contact, smile if at all appropriate, and think about just one thing: ***What is the real issue here, and must it be dealt with at once?*** Generally, there are only three situations calling for instant resolution: (1) an emergency, (2) a public threat to your professional reputation, and (3) an interaction with someone (such as a visiting top manager) who won't be available for follow-up discussion.

For example, suppose you make a suggestion at a meeting, when a manager interrupts with a sarcastic remark such as: "Gee, I had no idea they taught far-out stuff like that at Crackerjack University!" In three seconds, you may realize that there is no real issue at all—this person simply wants to show off by taking a cheap shot at you. Your only task is to get smoothly back on track. (On the other hand, if you see a threat to your reputation because you sense real disagreement, the immediate issue becomes uncovering the objections and showing that your suggestion has practical merit.)

Or suppose your boss comes to your office and yells at you about a goof-up that occurred in your department yesterday, without your knowledge. If you keep your focus away from the trauma of being blamed, you should be able to see that the issues are that (1) some damage may have to be corrected and (2) as department head, you must make sure that this problem will not recur.

Neither of these issues can be resolved on the spot—all you can do is to listen and show determination to solve the problem.

Less Is More

After about five seconds, it's definitely time to make some noise, or people will think you've turned mute. What you say must meet four requirements: (1) It must be so simple that it will occur to you no matter how upset you are; (2) it must not sound

as if you've lost your cool; (3) it must be broadly appropriate for the occasion; and (4) it must not commit you prematurely.

Requirement 1 excludes clever comebacks and intricate arguments. For instance, when that manager says, "Gee, I had no idea they taught far-out stuff like that at Crackerjack University!" it would be nice to reply with something like, "Ah, that's freshman stuff!" Unfortunately, most of us think of such comebacks three hours later! If you can come up with a humorous (but not sarcastic!) reply, that's fine—but something straight and simple will do: "Mhmm," "Sure," "Oh, yes!"

Don't commit yourself prematurely.

Requirement 2 rules out expressions of hurt, annoyance, or shock, such as: "What's that supposed to mean?" "What!" "Oh, come on!" or "What's that got to do with the subject under discussion?" Another no-no is the all-too-common "Well, uhm...," which gives you away as a waffling wimp.

Requirement 3 means that, unfortunately, even a semiverbal grunt can't be totally rote but must be matched to the occasion. For instance, if somebody bursts out: "Are you out of your mind?" you wouldn't use "OK," "Sure," "Right," or "Mhmm" but rather "Uh-uh," "No, I don't think so," or "What's the problem you see with my suggestion?"

Here are some categories of words or word-noises to add to your repertoire and practice:

Agreement (not necessarily with a *viewpoint* but with the validity of the *subject*): "Right," "OK," "Uh-huh," "Mhmm."

Acknowledgment "I see," "I see what you mean," "Uh-huh," "Mhmm."

Empathy "I see your point," "That must have been upsetting," "I understand."

Overriding an interruption "OK," "All right," "OK. Anyway..." "OK. As I was saying..."

Seeking clarification "I'm not sure I fully understand you. What do you mean when you say..." "Could you explain exactly what happened?" "Exactly what would you like me to do?" "Why do you think this won't work?" and other focused questions.

Judgments about other people's emotions, by the way, are never appropriate. For instance, "You seem upset" or "Can we all calm down a bit?" will probably spawn nasty reactions.

Requirement 4 means you don't say "yes" or "no" to requests for action if you haven't had time to think the problem through. If you need more time, just say so politely but firmly: "Let me think about it. I'll get back to you this afternoon." In the case of the departmental goof-up that upset your boss, this might take the form: "This is the first I heard of this problem. Please let me find out exactly what happened and how we can make sure it will never happen again. I'll get back to you within an hour."

Next time, we'll see what to do in those situations where you either can't or don't need to buy time.

Cheryl Reimold has taught communication skills to engineers, scientists, and businesspeople for 15 years. Her firm, PERC Communications (6A Dickel Road, Scarsdale, NY 10583, telephone (914) 725-1024, e-mail CReimold@aol.com*), offers businesses writing services and customized in-house courses on writing, presentation skills, and on-the-job communication skills.*

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

(continued from page 3)

of IEEE. Some of the Societies are small, like PCS, some are mammoth, like the Computer Society. But each is an IEEE Society; each has one vote at TAB meetings.

One way we can increase the strength and effectiveness of PCS is to find allies within IEEE and ways to work within IEEE to everyone's advantage.

The opportunities are there. The interest in PCS and in technical and professional communication is there. It really is a place for us to grow and thrive.

FLOCCINAUCHINIHILIPILIFICATION

OED II

BY MICHAEL BRADY

On your marks! An evening contest is underway. My teenage son saw a copy of the PCS *Newsletter* with this column and asked "What's the meaning of its title?" "Look it up," I said, "we have two sources in the house. There's a third, the second edition of the *Random House Unabridged Dictionary*, but it's in my office downtown. So you'll have to look in one of the two on hand, the printed books or the CD-ROM of the second edition of the *OED II*—the complete second edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Your choice. With the patience of a teenager he asks, "Which is quicker?"

"Which do you think?"

"CD-ROM for sure! I don't see why you have all those books on the shelf upstairs."

"Want to bet on it—and find out why?"

"You're on!"

Physically, he has a point. The two versions reflect their differing technologies. The 20 volumes plus three updating additions of the original scholarly masterpiece, the printed *Oxford English Dictionary*, take up 140 cm of shelf space, occupy a volume of 78 liters and weigh 59 kg. In its box with its manual and installation floppy, the CD-ROM *OED II* takes up 5 cm of shelf space, occupies a volume of 2.3 liters and weighs 0.6 kg. The printed version weighs 96 times as much and occupies nearly 34 times the volume of the CD-ROM box.

Have you wondered about the title of this column?

It's also more expensive. When ordered for export from the Oxford University Press U.K. distribution center, the 23 volumes of the printed version together cost £1730, whereas the CD-ROM version costs £250. As each has the same "word power," clearly no one wants a seven times more expensive, traditional-technology heavyweight when there's a cheap, high-tech featherweight on the market. Or do they?

We settle on the contest goal: a printed copy on the kitchen table, with stopwatch timing. Go! The boy sprints to my PC, a youngish pentium with the *OED II* program installed. I walk the stairs to our second-floor library.

He's quick, as are most kids who spend their leisure hours at a PC. Turning on the PC and loading Windows® 95 takes him just two minutes, and accessing the *OED II* CD-ROM for the word and printing it out takes another two. In just a few seconds more than four minutes, he's back at the kitchen table with a neat printout.

But I've been there for two and a half minutes. It took me less than half a minute to find the word on page 1073 of Volume V of the printed *OED II*, and as long to copy the entry on our Canon home copier. He lost the race against the clock. But he contends that his printout is neater. I agree; it looks like this:

"flocci"nauci"nihili"pilifi'cation. *humorous.* [f. L. *flocc⁻, nauc⁻, nihil⁻, pil⁻* words signifying 'at a small price' or 'at nothing' enumerated in a well-known rule of the Eton Latin Grammar + -FICATION.]
The action or habit of estimating as worthless.

1741 SHENSTONE *Let.* xxii. Wks. 1777 III. 49, I loved him for nothing so much as his flocci-nauci-nihili-pili-fication of money.

1816 SOUTHEY in *Q. Rev.* XIV. 334.

1829 SCOTT *Jrnl.* 18 Mar., They must be taken with an air of contempt, a flocci-paucinihilipilification [*sic*, here and in two other places] of all that can gratify the outward man.

Also

flocci'naucical *a.*, inconsiderable, trifling.
flocci'naucity, a matter of small consequence.

1826 SOUTHEY *Vind. Eccl. Angl.* 38 The Poet used them significantly, and never intended them to bear a flocci~naucical signification.

1829—in *Q. Rev.* XXXIX. 108 The flocci-naucities to which so much importance is attached.

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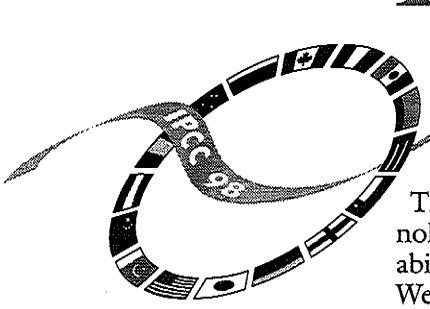
A TECHNICAL TASTE OF IPCC 98

Abstracts of three conference presentations...

Here are the abstracts of three presentations that you can attend at IPCC 98.



Using Server-Side XML to Individualize Web Pages

Mark Baker, OmniMark Technologies Corporation, Gloucester, Ontario

The power of XML as a client-side technology is well recognized. It gives us the ability to create sophisticated interactive Web pages. The power of XML on the server side is perhaps less well understood. On the server side, XML gives us the ability to create whole sophisticated interactive Web sites, as well as making it much easier to compose and manage the sophisticated interactive pages of client-side XML.

Companies are making increasing use of databases to drive interactive Web sites. Databases drive interactive Web applications very well because they make information highly processable. Information from multiple fields in a database can be combined on the fly to create *ad hoc* pages that meet a specific user's information need. Databases can also store information about users to aid in delivering individualized information. But, whereas databases can store large chunks of descriptive text, they have no way of processing that text as part of individualizing an *ad hoc* page for a user. All they can do is throw out the whole text as an undigested blob. The price for dynamic delivery, therefore, has been either a lack of rich production values and in-context linking, or simply an avoidance of rich descriptive material in dynamic sites.

Server-side XML provides a solution to this problem. Relational databases and XML both provide ways of structuring information. Both make information processable. But each provides a different kind of structure and therefore a different kind of processing capability. XML alone can make an individual page dynamic, but it cannot build pages on the fly in response to user input. Databases can build *ad hoc* pages, but without descriptive richness. Combining XML with relational databases gives us a way to get the best of both worlds.

Designing an Effective Intranet/Extranet

Ann Rockley, The Rockley Group Inc., Stouffville, Ontario

Intranets allow corporations to distribute information in a timely fashion and in an effective way throughout the organization. Intranets take advantage of Web technology, providing a fast and cheap solution for information distribution. However, large volumes of information and multiple authors throughout the organization often push intranets/extranets to the limit. In this session you will address the issues of analysis, design, tool selection, and information management of an intranet; you will learn about:

(a) What makes an effective intranet/extranet

(b) Using analysis to determine the most effective design for your intranet/extranet

(c) Determining what should go on your intranet/extranet
- Reference
- Usage
- Learning materials

(d) Design guidelines that will improve the usability of your materials

(e) Designing standards

(f) Working with multiple contributors

(g) Designing a site that you can manage and grow in a controlled fashion

(h) Selecting the right tool

(i) Managing the Web site

The Design of Electronic User Information—the Technical Communicator's Contribution

Julie Fisher, University of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia

It could be argued that any element of the user interface that communicates information from the computer system to the user

is electronic information. For this discussion, electronic information includes aspects of the interface such as system status and error messages and online help. Although technical communicators are employed for their communication skills, these skills are often overlooked when the communication aspects of a system are designed. Too often the system and status and error messages and online help are written by programmers and subsequently fail the user because they do not communicate the intended message effectively.

Recent Australian research sought to determine if, through the contribution of a technical communicator, the quality of electronic information delivered to users was improved. A series of case studies involving 20 information systems, half involving a technical communicator and half not, explored the effectiveness of electronic user information. This paper reports on the results of that research which demonstrates that the involvement of a technical communicator does improve the quality of electronic user information.

FLOCCI...PILIFICATION

(continued from page 7)

He claims that I loaded the contest in my favor. I confess that he's right. If the PC had been up and running, with the CD-ROM in its drive, and the goal were a display of the information, he would have won comfortably. But the PC is not always up and running. And rhetoric enters any search for a word, not least the spelling of it. Misspelling a word slows the computerized search for it, sometimes to a standstill, as whenever initial letters are transposed or are phonetically correct but orthographically wrong, as would be an initial "ph" instead of "f."

Finally, there's the dimension of the search. All computerized searches are linear: straight through the alphabet to the target word. Few human searches of printed pages work that way. Psychologists are still debating how a successful proofreader can glance at a page of text and immediately spot an error, but it's clear that visual language comprehension involves scanning, to use the technical term. Perhaps that capability will someday be associated with a DNA identified in the mix that makes a writer. Search for a word in a familiar text, dictionary, or encyclopedia, and you often come across something else. That's how I found the title of this column.

So the printed and CD-ROM versions of *OED II* both have their strengths, and neither supplants the other. They are available from Oxford University Press, Saxon Way West, Corby NN18 9ES, U.K., +44 1536 741519, e-mail *orders@oup.co.uk*; or Oxford University Press, 200 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016 U.S.A., (212) 679-7300.

Year 2000

Myth: Y2K is about time as measured on the calendar and experienced by people.

Fact: Y2K is about time as represented by data and processed by an electronic system.

— *Mark Haselkorn*

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MARCH ADCOM MEETING

BY MURIEL ZIMMERMAN

The Professional Communication Society's Administrative Committee (AdCom) met on March 13 and 14 in Washington, DC. Major items we addressed included education, marketing, publications, IPCC 98, and an AdCom experiment with electronic conferencing. Karl Smart, chair of the Snowbird conference, received an enthusiastic and unanimous vote of appreciation for his work. Mark Haselkorn, in his role as immediate past president, will be working to strengthen PCS's ties to the rest of IEEE.

Education

PCS presently offers a series of practical courses on technical communication topics and presents those courses to IEEE groups, industry, and academia. We considered providing additional courses through the Internet in correspondence-course format, and also expanding the subjects to include topics like netiquette and information design. The Education Committee, chaired by Janet Rochester, will produce a new course catalog. We viewed a video produced by IEEE's Professional Activities Committee for Engineers (PACE).

Marketing

In two breakout sessions, the AdCom brainstormed ideas for marketing PCS and its services. Paul Seesing, PCS Webmaster, has redesigned the Web site (check it out at *http://www.ieee.org/pcs/pcsindex.html*), and Web marketing has considerable potential. IPCC 98 conference abstracts will be available there. Other plans include purchasing a tabletop display for use at conferences (including the ITCC in Anaheim, California); bundling the PCS *Newsletter* with the publications of other IEEE Societies; producing a videotape about how to make a good oral presentation—and selling the tape to other IEEE Societies and to businesses. Each AdCom member agreed to make a presentation about communication to a local IEEE Section.

Publications

Stephanie Rosenbaum presented a proposal for usability testing of the new design of the *Transactions* pages. This will be a joint university-industry project, with assistance from the Department of Language, Literature, and Communication at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. Several sources are available to support the project, and if the Editorial Advisory Committee is unable to raise the full required amount, the remainder will be provided from PCS reserves.

IPCC 98

Ron Blicq reported that planning for IPCC 98 is progressing well. Program chair Lisa Moretto has received 74 proposals from eight countries, 53 for presentation as regular papers and 21 for presentation in the Idea Market format. Terry Malkinson at the University of Calgary has taken over as Publications chair, and a preliminary program should be ready in May (it will be distributed at the STC conference in Anaheim). Local arrangements include a shuttle service from the Quebec airport and a banquet at the Chateau Frontenac.

IPCC 98 will again be a cooperative effort with SIGDOC. The SIGDOC conference will run the same days, and the crossover fee, for either PCS or SIGDOC delegates to also attend the other conference, will be $125US.

Electronic Conferencing

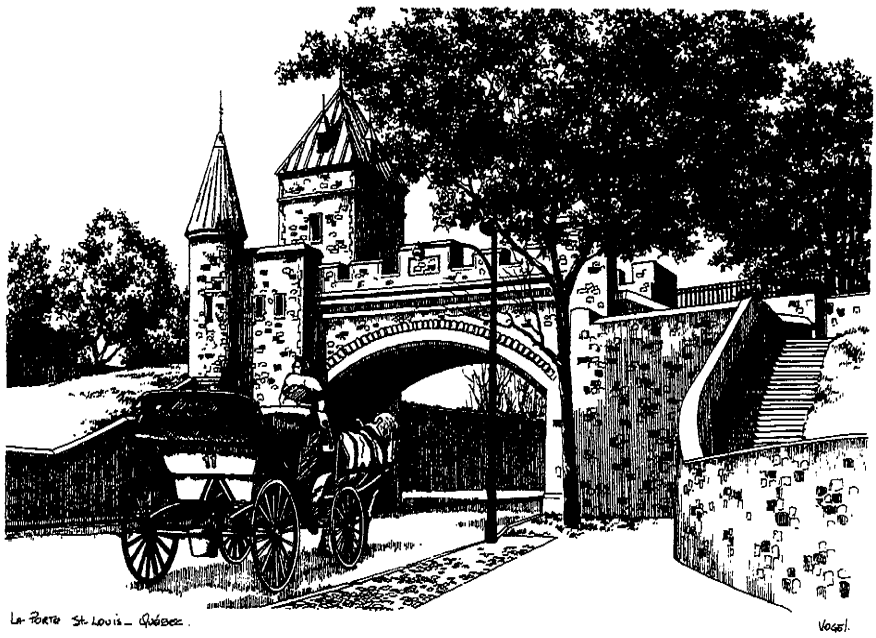
Paul Seesing, Electronic Information Committee chair, has arranged for the AdCom a one-month experiment in electronic conferencing using a software product called *Caucus*. During the conference, hosted by Meta Network in Arlington, Virginia, the AdCom will discuss four topics: 1999 budget, long-range strategic planning, using electronic media to promote PCS, and the electronic conferencing process itself. We hope that conferencing technology will be an effective way to continue important discussions.

COME TO QUEBEC!

BY CHERYL REIMOLD

Come to Quebec City for the 1998 International Professional Communication Conference, September 23-25! Our theme is "A Contemporary Renaissance—Changing the Way We Communicate," and we would love to have you participate. The conference will take place at Loews Le Concorde Hotel, which is offering special conference rates for dates before, during, and after the conference for those who would like to explore marvelous Quebec City.

Come for the unique experience! IPCC 98 will be a special PCS conference, unlike any held before. First, it will have two kinds of presentations: regular papers and "Idea Markets"—discussion sessions that center on an idea presented briefly and informally by the presenter followed by the group of participants "selling" their ideas about the topic. Second, it's a dual language conference: Papers may be presented in English or in French. And finally, IPCC 98 will be a truly international conference, with more papers and Idea Market sessions given by international members than ever before. Note: There's still time to suggest a topic for an Idea Market session. Just send a message to Lisa Moretto at *rgi_lisa@compuserve.com.*



La Porte St. Louis—One of the four entrances into Old Quebec. The etching is by Jean-Phillipe Vogel, and is reproduced with permission.

Come for the ideas! The topics we'll be discussing cover a wide range of interests. Here are just a few to whet your appetite: online/electronic resumes • gender and learning styles • distance learning • telecommuting • developing and testing Internet and intranet Web sites • cultural differences in translations • building teams • wordless manuals • the year 2000 and technical communicators • writing to global audiences.

Come for the people! We will have a wonderful group of people at IPCC 98. Our keynote speaker is Canadian Broadcasting Corporation producer Kim Echlin, author of the book *Elephant Winter.* Our delegates come from many countries and disciplines, with speakers from Canada, the Netherlands, the U.K., Norway, Australia, Sweden, Mexico, India, and the U.S. Also, the SIGDOC conference is being held in parallel with IPCC 98, in the same hotel. (SIGDOC is the Special Interest Group on Documentation of the Association for Computing Machinery.) PCS members can attend SIGDOC sessions in addition to PCS sessions for a nominal fee.

Come for the fun! Quebec City is truly fabulous, and we mean to show you the best of it. There will be a reception and banquet, with entertainment, at the prestigious Chateau Frontenac. And the program committee has an extra-special surprise up its sleeve, but you'll have to come to Quebec to find out what it is.

Come for Quebec! Early fall is a marvelous time to be in Quebec City. It's still warm enough to sit at outdoor cafes; enjoy the true French Canadian experience. You don't need to be fluent in French! You can wander down into the Old Town, visit the galleries and gourmet restaurants (the U.S. dollar is at a special advantage: currently for each U.S. $1 you get $1.42 Canadian),

(continued on page 12)

A Taste of Quebec 4

By Cheryl Reimold

French cooking brings a special flair to every dish. Here, our grand chef **Jean Soulard** takes gazpacho, a traditional Spanish soup, and gives it a fabulous French twist. Try this perfect spring soup at home. Then join us in Quebec from September 23 to 25 for IPCC 98—and taste the original made by Chef Soulard himself!

Gazpacho with Spinach, Buttered Shrimp, Hazelnut Oil, and Fiddleheads* for Four

The goodies

- 7 oz fresh spinach
- 12 large shrimp
- 20 fiddleheads
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 1⅓ cups milk
- salt and pepper to taste
- ½ cup olive oil
- ⅔ oz butter
- ½ tablespoon hazelnut oil

The decoration

- A few spinach leaves
- Some whole hazelnuts

*Little swirly edible fronds, available from specialty grocers.

Wash, pick out, and remove the stems of the spinach and keep some leaves for the decoration. Toss the others into a non-stick oiled pan on medium heat for one to two minutes.

Put the spinach, yogurt, milk, and a little salt into a food processor. Process them, adding the olive oil gradually. The gazpacho must be creamy.

Add seasonings to taste and chill the soup.

Cook the fiddleheads in boiling salted water for four to five minutes, drain them, and keep them warm.

Put the butter in a hot non-stick pan and cook the shrimp lightly, stirring them continuously for several minutes. Put pepper on them and keep them warm.

Pour the spinach gazpacho into a tureen and decorate it with the spinach leaves.

Put the shrimp, the fiddleheads, and the hazelnuts onto a separate plate and dot the plate with a few drops of hazelnut oil.

We bet you've never had a gazpacho like this before. It is ambrosial. Enjoy it—and we'll see you in Quebec City, Loews Le Concorde Hotel, September 23-25, for IPCC 1998!

Nous serons enchantés....

Come to Quebec

(continued from page 11)

Come early, stay late; enjoy the French Canadian experience.

or just feel the history of the place as you gaze out over the St. Lawrence River from the ramparts of this ancient walled city.

Come for communication! The Mayor of Quebec has declared the week of September 21-25 as International Communication Week. If you are interested in communication, don't miss this special time.

Use the registration form on page 13. Come and join us!

For more information on the conference, visit these URLs: *engine.ieee.org/society/pcs/confrnce.html* or *www.quantumlynx.com/ipcc98*; and for information on Quebec City, *www.otc.cug.qc.ca.*

IPCC 98 | *The* 1998 International Professional Communication Conference *of the* IEEE Professional Communication Society

Quebec City, Canada • September 23-25, 1998

Conference Registration Form

(Please PRINT Whole Form)

Name: _____
(First) (Middle Initial) (Last)

Preferred first name on badge: _____ IEEE/PCS Member No.: _____

Company/Institution: _____

Address: _____

City and State/Province: _____ Zip/Postal Code: _____

Country: _____ Telephone: (_____) _____

Fax: (_____) _____ E-mail: _____

Conference Fees	US Dollars	Canadian Dollars
Advance Registration *(until August 21, 1998)*		
IEEE/PCS Members *(includes members of INTECOM Societies)*	$325	$435
Nonmembers *	$400	$540
Regular Registration *(after August 21, 1998)*		
IEEE/PCS Members *(includes members of INTECOM Societies)*	$400	$540
Nonmembers *	$475	$640
Full-Time Student or Retiree *(advance registration only)*	$162.50	$215
SIGDOC Crossover Fee		
IEEE/PCS Members *(includes members of INTECOM Societies)*	$125	$145
Nonmembers	$150	$175

* $25 US of nonmember registration fee may be applied toward 1999 PCS membership (apply at registration desk).

Payment Computation	Please Fill in the Appropriate Column If you Pay in US $	If you Pay in Canadian $
Delegate Registration (see Notes p. 14)		
Registration fee (Note 1)	$_____	$_____
SIGDOC crossover fee (Note 2)	$_____	$_____
Airport arrival transfer (Note 3)	($9) $_____	($12) $_____
Chateau Frontenac Banquet (Note 4)	($35) $_____	($47) $_____
Additional Publications or Tickets		
Extra Conference Proceedings	($30) $_____	($40) $_____
Extra Banquet Tickets	(No.___ @ $45) $_____	(No.___ @ $60) $_____
Extra Lunch Tickets		
Networking Luncheon: Wed Sept 23	(No.___ @ $30) $_____	(No.___ @ $40) $_____
Awards Luncheon: Fri Sept 25	(No.___ @ $30) $_____	(No.___ @ $40) $_____
Total	$_____	$_____

NOTES

1. Registration fee includes: admission to all IPCC 98 conference sessions; a copy of the conference *Proceedings*; a daily continental breakfast; luncheon on Wednesday and Friday; nutrition breaks morning and afternoon.
2. SIGDOC crossover fee includes admission to all SIGDOC conference sessions (Sept 23, 24, 25) and one copy of the SIGDOC conference *Proceedings*.
3. Airport arrival transfer includes being met at Quebec airport by QVC services, handling of your luggage, and one-way transfer by bus or limousine to Loews Le Concorde hotel. (Available for delegates arriving Tuesday Sept 22nd).
4. The IPCC 98 banquet ("The Chateau Frontenac Experience") will be held Thursday evening, Sept 24th. Special banquet rate applies to IPCC 98 registered delegates.

I can't attend IPCC 98 but would like to order the *Proceedings*.

___ copies at $45 US (only) $_____

Shipping *($5 per copy for delivery to US and Canada)* $_____

($13 per copy for delivery outside US and Canada) $_____

(Add 7% GST for orders delivered to a Canadian address) $_____

Total (in US $) $_____

Orders must be postmarked before September 25, 1998. *Proceedings* will be shipped by October 2, 1998.

PAYMENT METHOD

❑ Check enclosed (Make check payable to IPCC 98)

❑ Visa ❑ MasterCard Cardholder's Name: _____

Credit Card No.: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Cardholder's Signature: _____ Date: _____

CHECK BOXES THAT APPLY

❑ This is my first PCS conference. ❑ Special needs: _____

❑ I am a full-time student and will provide proof of current student status at registration desk.

What influenced your decision to register for IPCC 98? (check all that apply) ❑ I will be presenting a paper.

❑ The location. ❑ The program. ❑ The marketing. ❑ Experience: attended previous PCS conference.

HOW TO REGISTER

By mail: Registrar, IPCC 98
c/o Agora Communication
2600, Boulevard Laurier
Tour Belle Cour
Bureau 2580
Sainte-Foy (Québec) G1V 4M6
Canada

By fax: (418) 658-8850
Voice: (418) 658-6755

E-mail: *agoracom@microtec.net*

Photocopy this form for your records.

Note: To receive early registration rates, your application must be received by August 21, 1998.

HOW TO RESERVE HOTEL ACCOMMODATION

By mail: Reservations
Loews Le Concorde Hotel
Ville de Québec
1225 place Montcalm
Québec, Québec G1R 4W6
Canada

By fax: (418) 647-4710
Voice: (800) 463-5256

The conference rate is $148 Canadian per room, single or double occupancy (approx $102 US).

Loews Le Concorde will honor the $148 rate for the four days before and after the conference.

Be sure to mention IPCC 98 when reserving accommodation. (To obtain special conference rates, your reservation form must be received by Loews Le Concorde no later than August 21, 1998.)

AVAILABILITY OF IPCC 98 PROCEEDINGS

If you won't be able to attend IPCC 98 but would like to have the *Proceedings*, you can order one or more copies. Send your payment (in US$ only) with name and address for shipping to:

Registrar, IPCC 98
c/o Agora Communication
2600, Boulevard Laurier
Tour Belle Cour
Bureau 2580
Sainte-Foy (Quebec) G1V 4M6
Canada

Cost per copy for US mailings is $50 ($45 plus $5 S&H); for Canadian mailings, $53.50 ($3.50 GST and $5 S&H); and $58 ($13 S&H) elsewhere.

All orders must be postmarked by September 25, 1998, and will be shipped within a week of that date. Because of IEEE requirements, later orders cannot he honored.

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TECHNICAL TRAINING MANAGER

Technical Training Manager wanted for the leading provider of Semiconductor IP to the ASIC world. This is a high visibility position requiring excellent customer and presentation skills. Training Manager must understand library development, ASIC design, and ASPEC design methodology and tools. Position interfaces with marketing, engineering, and software development. Candidate must be able to develop and present lesson plans, course workbooks, laboratory demonstrations, and tutorials. Some travel required.

JOB DESCRIPTION

Plan, create, and provide technical training classes on ASPEC products and methodology for ASPEC customers and employees. Create test cases to illustrate product capability and features. Convey ASPEC methodology and design flows to customers.

Work with Applications Engineering to determine areas with which customers have problems and create curricula to address those problems. Work with Technical Publications to create Application Notes if needed. Use contact with customer to determine areas where product should be improved.

Work with Applications Engineering and Technical Publications to create an on-line help desk.

As requirements grow, be responsible for recruiting, training, and managing Training Group.

REQUIRED SKILLS

- Thorough knowledge of ASIC design issues and flow
- Familiarity with major front- and back-end EDA tools
- Ability to create curriculum plans and course outlines
- Ability to create test cases and labs to support curriculum
- Good oral and written communication

EXPERIENCE

Successful candidate will have strong understanding of ASIC design, EDA tools, and libraries. M.S.E.E./B.S.E.E. degree + minimum three years in EDA/semiconductor-related field. Previous Applications Engineering experience a plus.

SEND RESUME TO:

Lesley Nemeth • Aspec Technology, Inc. • 830 East Argues Avenue • Sunnyvale, CA 94086
Voice: (408) 328-9691 • Fax: (408) 522-9450 • E-mail: lesleyn@aspec.com

FORMER *NEWSLETTER* EDITOR RECEIVES AWARD

David E. Nadziejka, editor of this *Newsletter* from November 1993 through November 1995, and winner of PCS's Alfred N. Goldsmith Award in 1996, was recently named an Associate Fellow of the Society for Technical Communication. He is being recognized for "outstanding contributions to the technical communication profession and for dedicated service to the technical communication community as a technical editor and mentor."

David joined the Upjohn Institute for Employment Research in Kalamazoo, Michigan, in 1997 after 10 years at Argonne National Laboratory in Illinois, where he was a senior technical editor. He is currently writing a guidebook on levels of technical editing.

SPECIAL AIRLINE RATES FOR IPCC 98

Air Canada is the designated air carrier for IPCC 98 and will be offering special rates for delegates, including 5% less than most discount fares. Air Canada is linked with United Airlines, providing excellent connections and through fares.

To obtain the conference special fares, call Air Canada direct at 1-800-361-7585. Alternatively, book through your regular travel agent. In either case, quote contract No. CV983265.

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