

Trends for 2006

by Kit Brown

With everyone reflecting on the past year and planning for the upcoming year, January seems like a good time to predict the hot topics for technical communication in 2006. These topics fall into three categories: organization, process, and tools....

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- **Technical Communication**

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The IPCC 2005 Proceedings are available at IEEE Xplore. Currently, 103 of those papers have been posted. Three other papers, accidentally omitted from the conference proceedings CD, will be available soon. (An addendum CD with copies of the three omitted papers has also been mailed to all conference attendees.)

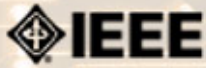
You can browse the IPCC 2005 Proceedings Table of Contents on [IEEEExplore](#).

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- **Related Events**

2006 Events for Other Organizations

Several other organizations have submitted information about their events, which are listed in chronological order. This list will be updated each month. [Read More](#).



Feature

Trends for 2006

by Kit Brown

With the usual reflections on the past year and planning for the upcoming year, January seems like a good time to predict the hot topics for technical communication in 2006. These topics fall into three categories: organization, process, and tools.

Organization

At the organizational level, globalization continues to shrink our world, presenting both new opportunities and new challenges even to small companies that, because of the Web, have access to customers worldwide, on a scale inconceivable even 10 years ago. Opportunities abound for building relationships with people all over the world, for entering new markets, and for gaining a new appreciation and understanding of other cultures and value systems. The challenges include preventing the loss of cultural and biological diversity, as well as recognizing that globalization is inevitable and generally beneficial, though it's important to mitigate the issues that do exist.

Offshoring is one example of the challenge globalization brings. For the countries/regions benefitting from offshoring, new prosperity brings with it challenges for finding ways to build a sustainable economy without destroying cultural values or widening the gap between the rich and the very poor. For companies doing the offshoring, the challenge lies in ensuring that the move is profitable and effective. And, the individuals who are adversely affected by offshoring must reinvent themselves, gain new skills, innovate, or find other ways to add value if they want to continue being successful.

In this new business climate, being a good writer, editor, trainer, or graphics person is no longer enough. Professionals at every level must begin to understand how their jobs affect the business bottom line and how what they do adds value to the company, to the industry, and to the profession. The demand for information, research, and training on the business side of things is increasing. This trend will continue for the foreseeable future, fueled not only by the economy, but also by the processes and tools that enable fewer people to perform the same tasks in a shorter time.

Process

Content management, migration from unstructured to structured documentation, and working effectively with distributed teams continue to drive much of the innovation in our profession.

Content management (the creation, storage, and retrieval of information) facilitates efficiency and enables fewer people to perform the work. Enterprise-level content management systems automate workflow, facilitate localization by smoothing out the workload during a project and ensuring better consistency, as well as facilitating the transition from unstructured to structured documentation.

As more companies realize the power of XML, the best practices and tools for developing structured documentation are becoming better understood. Standards are being developed (with IEEE-PCS playing a key role in this effort), and more and more employers are expecting skills in this area as part of the repertoire of the documentation staff.

All of the trends mentioned above drive the increase in distributed teams. Improved collaboration tools, coupled with centralized content management enable teams to work effectively without being in the same office or even in the same country. For many companies, it is now routine for project team members to be located around the world. This situation enables faster turnaround times on projects by taking advantage of the difference in time zones, provides opportunities to learn about other cultures, and gives documentation teams better insight into the values and learning styles of other cultures. The challenges involve developing ways to establish rapport and to communicate effectively with people one has never met face-to-face, while honoring cultural diversity.

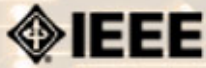
Tools

DITA (Darwin Information Type Architecture) has received the most attention lately. Using DITA enables you to create topic-based content using XML and publish it in myriad formats. DITA provides a flexible architecture that is scalable to a variety of levels, and though it's been around for several years, is just starting to reach critical mass in terms of awareness. Look for DITA to become a standard against which other structured authoring architectures will be judged.

Collaboration tools, particularly wikis, have also received a lot of attention. Wikis are websites created using open source techniques so that everyone on the team can contribute to, edit, and manage the content contained within it. At their best, wikis are self-sustaining and self-correcting communities that facilitate team collaboration. Together with other existing technology such as instant messaging, Skype and other voice over internet protocols, and intranets, wikis will continue growing in popularity and usage.

Conclusion

The trends this year are continuations of things that have been coming to fruition over the past several years. While the ideas are not new, the tools that enable us to successfully implement the ideas are just now maturing. Look for these trends to continue for the next couple of years.



Newsletter



IEEE Professional Communication Society Newsletter • ISSN 1539-3593 • Volume 50, Number 1 • January 2006

President's Column

President's Column

by Luke Maki

Editor's Note: Luke Maki is the 2006 IEEE-PCS president. He is an engineer with Boeing and lives in Philadelphia, PA USA.

Infectious enthusiasm. This phrase captures a trait that each of us has exhibited many times, whether at work or at play. The degree of intensity to which it is exhibited, and the duration, depends greatly on the skills and attitude of the individual providing the initial 'spark,' the task at hand, and those around them at the moment when it emerges. It may be a trait you find common in those you consider 'leaders.' Perhaps. However, *infectious enthusiasm* goes beyond mere 'enthusiasm,' as it surely involves more than one person, and the enthusiasm of each person involved serves to further energize the entire community of participants to even higher levels of enthusiasm. In fact, when it happens, it may be hard to discern just who the leader is!

Infectious enthusiasm, I am happy to report, exists in the IEEE-PCS. I have certainly seen it in the Administrative Committee (AdCom) meetings, of which I have been a part since 1999; every person serving on AdCom has at one time or another been the 'spark.' I have seen it at the yearly international conferences, where the atmosphere is comfortable, the presenters and attendees personable, and the enthusiasm for our professions is surely evident. I have also seen it in e-mail communications with conference planners and volunteers during my tenure these past two years as Vice President and Meetings Chair, as the details for the future events are discussed, issues are worked, and the event unfolds.

My reasons for joining the IEEE-PCS were twofold. First, the fields of interest for this society mapped quite well with the nature of my job, and I felt I could learn much from the members and the society publications. Second, I had a strong desire to become *active* in my membership. Both, of course, have happened....but the real benefit that resulted from becoming *active* was the multitude of professional relationships and personal friendships that have resulted. For this, I am not only grateful, but enthusiastic!

Now, some of you reading this, I know, are also members in other IEEE societies, and may even have a leadership role. I congratulate your enthusiasm, may it be infectious, and perhaps you can throw some our way! Others of you have contributed your professional expertise via the *Transactions*, articles in this Newsletter, papers at the conferences, and volunteering to support all of these efforts. We have all been your beneficiaries.

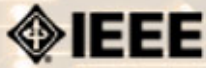
How about the rest of you? I invite you--encourage you--to contact me or anyone on the AdCom to see how you can become more involved, and have an opportunity to experience infectious enthusiasm as a member. Your involvement can be as little, or as much, as you decide. There are plenty of opportunities, and with the society's 50th anniversary coming in 2007, this would be a great time to step up. Let's start by using available tools to make a connection. For those of you I haven't met, I hope to at one of our future conferences...but, I and the AdCom are only an e-mail away otherwise. It would be great to hear from you.

I look forward to serving as your President in 2006, and seeing you in Saratoga Springs, New York!

Luke Maki

P.S. For those of you who like to hear about PCS administrivia in this column, I want to assure you that there will be plenty of that in next month's column. Happy New Year!

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Technical Communication

What is Technical Communication and Why Should We Care?

by Sara Szeglowski

In 1975, Earl Britton defined technical communication using music as a metaphor. Like many technical communication theorists and practitioners before him, Britton thought of technical communication as objective, singular, and purposeful like science or like a bugle call designed to wake up soldiers. For Britton, complexity in music was a symphony; complexity in writing was literature. Technical writing was like a bugle call-- simple and purposeful. Since before Britton's time, technical communicators have been trying to define themselves, and we still are. Britton's definition points to several important components of the definition process. The use of rich theoretical concepts to define a practical field, the borrowing of theory and ideology from other fields, and the positioning of technical communication against other disciplines in order to define what is distinct in technical communication.

Why do we need a definition?

Academics and practitioners in fields outside of technical communication wonder why the debate over defining technical communication is so important. Even within the field of technical communication, some wonder if definition is a waste of time and energy. However, it is essential to define ourselves because discourse communities create and regulate knowledge.

If we do not have a well-defined identity, we also do not have a clear definition of what we do and how we do it. It is essential that we define technical communication so that employers understand what the job title "Technical Communicator" means, and so that research is productive. Currently, our discourse community is unable to define the knowledge base of technical communication because technical communication in academia and in the job market varies so widely. In a sense, for technical communication, everything is doable. A review of STC job ads shows that employers look for a huge range of job skills under the heading "technical writer." Similarly, in academics, courses offered and theory associated with technical communication vary widely.

While it is true that departments at different universities usually specialize in different fields, there always exists a body of knowledge that defines the field. Our favorite rival, the English department is a good example of this. Some English departments may have a strong departmental base in Victorian literature and another may specialize in postmodern literature, but both departments rely on a specific way of reading the world, through literature, and a shared theoretical base. This is what technical communication needs--a clear theoretical base that specialized fields can be applied to.

How have we been defining ourselves and why doesn't it work?

Technical Communication is stretched out in a way that makes it unique as a field. We are knowledgeable in technical and scientific discourse in a way usually associated with "practical" fields like computer science or engineering. We also write from a theoretical perspective based in rhetoric, a practice that is usually associated with the humanities. Increasingly, as jobs become scarcer and as technical communication jobs are being outsourced, we are becoming managers, which requires business savvy and skills. In addition, technical communication programs are often housed by other departments, usually

English or Engineering. Clearly, the fields of English and Engineering are not usually associated with one another, and have quite different discourse communities as well as ideologies. It is easy to understand why the courses taught in a technical communication program housed by an engineering department would differ from the courses offered by one that is part of an English department. These differences create some of the hurdles that we have in defining ourselves and in creating a strong discourse community. But, the biggest barrier of all has and continues to be technical communication's historic dilemma of whether it is a vocation or an academic field.

Defining ourselves through a historical legacy

As a result of the historical and changing composition of our field, technical communication has been defined as objective, singular, and purposeful. Theoretical language, such as the harmonics metaphor, is used to define technical communication as both academic and practical. Theory from vastly different fields like science and classical philosophy are used as technical communication theory. Britton, for example, uses the theory that science is objective, that music has varying degrees of complexity, and the rhetorical theory that music and writing should be aware of and appropriate for its audience. Finally, technical communication is often defined by what it isn't, against other fields, particularly English departments. Britton makes a point of describing the symphony as literature and the simple bugle call as technical communication.

The methods used to define technical communication come from its historical position, and from the practical consideration that technical communication has had to bridge disciplines that are not usually associated with one another. At this point, for our field to continue to grow, technical communicators must define the field according to existing needs rather than historical ones.

By defining ourselves according to our field's history, we have limited the growth of technical communication as an academic field and deregulated technical communication in industry. Historically, technical communication emerged as an academic field to train engineers how to write. Technical communication did not have a strong academic basis, but it does now. Technical communication no longer focuses on training professionals; we train academics with rigorous research skills, and sound theoretical background. Historically, technical writers and communicators held expendable jobs and were forced to learn new skills to remain employed. Today, we are essential to almost every industry. We have many skills, including writing, rhetorical knowledge, technical skills, and managing skills, but it should not be a requirement that technical writers know every obscure computer language that emerges. Employers of technical communicators should base employment decisions on the strong skill set that a permanent employee brings to a company rather than specific job requirements that meet a single project's needs. By defining our skill set, we can help to make this happen.

Defining ourselves as a discourse community

For technical communication to develop as a field and as a discourse community, we professionals must take several steps. The first is to recognize that like most fields, we have borrowed theory from other fields. But, also like most established fields, we have employed theory in unique and productive ways. Second, we need to establish that our unique position as a field that marries different theoretical and practical perspectives has allowed us to generate important work. For example, technical communication has helped to change the way that our culture views science and technology. Carolyn Miller's landmark article, "A Humanistic Rationale for Technical Writing" points out that the introduction of rhetoric from the perspective of technical communication rather than from a literary perspective has helped us to see science itself as more fluid, more dependent on perspective and language than on simple fact. In the world that we live in, this seems like a remarkable discovery and one that should be recognized as a major academic achievement.

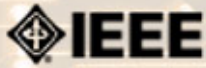
Conclusion

Achievements should be the foundation for defining our field and an example for our discourse community of what it means to be a technical communicator. We need to look at the important and excellent work that is done in technical

communication and work to expose this work to the larger industry and academic community. By focusing on what we are and what we do rather than comparing ourselves to others or scrambling to gain more skills and more knowledge, we can grow as a defined community.

Sara Szeglowski is currently a Master's student in Technical Communication at Texas Tech University. Her focus is grant writing and design. She will be graduating this Spring.

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ABET

ABET Countdown: ABET Annual Meeting in San Diego

By Julia Williams

At the end of October, I headed west for the Annual Meeting of ABET in San Diego, California. This meeting draws faculty and administrators from schools all over the country. Their single goal is to figure out how to prepare for and to successfully survive the ABET accreditation visit. Granted, I have worked at an engineering, mathematics, and science college since 1992, and I was even aware of the ABET visit when it last occurred on our campus. But, this year things are different. I was promoted in August 2005 to the post of Executive Director of the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment. One important dimension of our office's work this coming year is to manage the data collection and analysis, and to generally facilitate the work of engineering departments as they write their ABET Self-Study Reports and prepare for the on-campus visits of the evaluators. My attendance in San Diego provided me a new window on the process that I wrote about in my last column.

I have never been to San Diego before, and from what I could see from the hotel meeting rooms, it is beautiful. But my Dean didn't send me out there to sail and play golf; I was there to work, so that's what I did. The actual meeting began on Thursday, continued through the rest of the week and featured presentations by experts in the field of accreditation and assessment. I knew I would have to be back on campus for at least some of my class meetings that week, so I decided to leave on Monday afternoon in order to attend the first two days of the conference, which were devoted to workshops.

As a result, I was able to participate in the Faculty Workshop Version 2.0 conducted by Dr. Gloria Rogers. Dr. Rogers is an old friend who only recently left Rose-Hulman to take a job as Director of the Research and Assessment Department at ABET. Dr. Rogers offers workshops on assessment plan development at schools across the US and in foreign countries, and much of what she was doing during her workshop at the ABET annual meeting was familiar to me. But, I was interested in determining how faculty from other schools, institutions that do not possess a climate of assessment and evaluation, begin to prepare for ABET.

The following information about the workshop on the ABET site was provided:

"Upgrade your assessment skills with this one-day workshop: During Version 2.0, participants will hone their assessment knowledge, broaden their understanding of continuous improvement processes, and learn new assessment strategies they'll be ready to implement when they return to campus.

Faculty will leave the workshop able to . . .

- Identify key elements of a functional assessment plan.
- Put objectives and outcomes to work by developing performance criteria.
- Build a robust assessment-planning matrix.
- Create clear and concise reports on assessment and continuous improvement.

Here is a brief outline of the day:

- Introduction and Review of Key Terminology and the Attributes of Well-Stated Objectives and Outcomes
- The Challenges of Implementation
- Introduction to Assessment
- Developing Measurable Performance Criteria
- Assessment Tools Exercise
- Curriculum Mapping
- Assessment-Planning Matrix
- Reporting Results
- Points of Learning and Wrap-Up"

Interestingly, the faculty who attended the one day workshop were at a variety of stages in ABET preparations and at different levels of familiarity with assessment. I sat at a workshop table with engineering faculty from several different disciplines; their institutions were large and small, public and private. Dr. Rogers led us through a series of exercises to help us define a student learning outcome, then to develop performance criteria. The distinction between these two items rests in terminology. "Objectives" and "outcomes," according to ABET, are as follow:

"Performance criteria" are the measures that allow you to determine if a student has met the outcome. So, for instance, the communication outcome may be defined as a program outcome: "the ability to communicate in written, oral, and graphical forms" (Rose-Hulman's communication outcome). But in order to assess student learning, a set of performance criteria must be used that describe what a student can do: "the student can identify an audience and assess its needs for information." Against the performance criteria, the evaluator can apply a rubric, or measure, that describes what a student can do at varying levels of performance. *(from the ABET Accreditation Policy and Procedure Manual, 10/29/2005)*

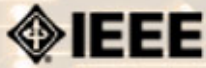
During the workshop, the group at my table took on a version of the ABET outcome for Global. As I did this work, I realized that our institution had performed similar exercises in the late 1990s, when we first agreed to adopt the Engineering Criteria 2000. In fact our last accreditation visit from ABET was conducted under EC 2000. But, here it was the year 2005, and some faculty at the workshop had never before defined the outcomes for student learning. It made me wonder if they were ready to meet Engineering Accreditation Commission (EAC) evaluators who would visit their campus and use outcome statements to evaluate their engineering programs.

Not surprisingly, there was plenty of resistance to the activities that Dr. Rogers asked us to perform. The resistance was not for defining student learning outcomes; that dimension of the project has buy-in, or at least recognition that this aspect is here to stay. The issue at hand now is how to collect evidence of student learning outcomes at schools, both large and small. When we developed the RosE Portfolio system at Rose-Hulman beginning in 1997, we believed that the trend in accreditation of engineering education was away from the "bean counting" mentality. (This means the way evaluators counted how many courses a student had in design or communication as evidence that the student had learned the skills that the program purported to teach.) Every indication was that ABET was moving toward outcomes assessment, that is, devising a system by which student learning was assessed based on what the student could do, rather than which courses the student had taken. Portfolios could be one way to collect such evidence if the student used a portfolio to submit projects, papers, and exams as evidence of achieving specifically defined learning outcomes.

However, the portfolio data collection method has met with stiff resistance at large schools, which claim that the method is only usable at small schools. Instead, a number of programs use specified questions on graded exams as their method of data collection. I'll have more to say about this issue in my next column.

***Julia Williams** is the Executive Director of the Office of Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment and an Associate Professor of English for Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology.*

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Translation

Mediterranean Editors and Translators Hold First Meeting

by Alan Lounds

The First Mediterranean Editors' and Translators' Meeting (METM) was held in Barcelona, Spain on November 4-5. It marked the launching of Mediterranean Editors and Translators (www.metmeetings.org), an interdisciplinary association of people in the Mediterranean and southern Europe who facilitate international communication for those whose native language is not English—a group who are not suitably represented by national associations of translators or associations of scientific editors.

Over the two days of the meeting, what one speaker described as a “motley crew” of language facilitators working in a wide variety of scientific fields joined publishers and scientists to discuss issues related to scientific communication. The enthusiasm of the 80+ participants showed that the original idea had been well-grounded. There was a general consensus on the high quality of the programme offered, and the fact that much could be gained from future contacts. The meeting was held at the Institut Europeu de la Mediterranea, a Catalan and Spanish research foundation dedicated to European-Mediterranean cooperation. This will also be the venue for the 2006 meeting to be held on **10-11 November 2006**.

Presentations

Joy Burrough-Boenisch, a founding member of the Society of English-Native-Speaking Editors in the Netherlands (SENSE), described the Society and discussed ways that MET could profit from its experience. She also presented a workshop on “Unclogging Dutch English” that she developed for SENSE in 2005. (Her visit to Barcelona was sponsored by the Dutch Consulate.)

Ana Marusic, editor of the *Croatian Medical Journal (CMJ)*, described the experience of working for a small journal in a small country, in which editors must play an important role as educators, providing help with writing and organising courses and workshops to allow authors to communicate their research to the international scientific community. (Dr. Marusic's visit to Barcelona was sponsored by Prous Science.) Details of the process of manuscript editing and practical examples were presented by Aleksandra Misak, language editor of the *CMJ*.

The publishers' perspective was presented in a panel session on the skills needed to support print or web presentation. This panel involved representatives of Elsevier/Doyma, Prous Science, and International Micobiology.

Karen Shashok (translator and editorial consultant, Malaga, Spain) dealt with the issues involved when translators take on new roles as editors. Ann King and Jane Lewis (freelance translators, Barcelona) organised a hands-on session dealing with the pitfalls of style, grammar, and usage that may arise when one is editing texts by non-native speakers. The contrasting discourse styles of Spanish and English were discussed by Ian Williams (University of Cantabria, Santander, Spain), who presented an analysis of medical research articles in the two languages. Malcolm Hayes (International Communications and

Technical Services, Lleida, Spain) examined techniques for improving the quality of corrections through negotiation with the authors. Iain Patten (freelance translator, Valencia, Spain) described the problems of inconsistent citation of sources and ways in which language consultants may be able to help authors develop their referencing skills. Valeria Materese (UpTo.it, Italy) described how biomedical research communication can be improved through an introductory course on journal reading.

Susan DiGiacomo (freelance translator and author's editor, Barcelona, Spain) brought together a panel of scientists to discuss the implications of translation as critical reading and dialogic practice in situations in which the translator is also an expert in the field. The varied background of scientific editors and translators, and the transition from this background to working as language facilitators, were discussed in a panel session led by Catherine Mark (Department of Immunology & Oncology, CSIC, Madrid).

Mary Ellen Kerans (freelance author's editor and translator, Barcelona, Spain) described the challenge of full bilingual publication of scientific journals, an increasing trend that allows scientific societies to join the mainstream academic discourse without abandoning their local languages. Ben Young (Young Medical Communication, Madrid) presented an overview of the profession of medical writing and client needs in the regulatory environment. Anthony Pym (Rovira i Virgili University, Tarragona) described the present situation of localisation theory and practice, and how it is challenging the traditional models of translation. Alan Lounds (Technical University of Catalonia, Spain) led a panel discussion on the restrictions of scientific translation and editing in university language services in Spain.

An historical perspective to Mediterranean science communication was provided by Frances Luttkhuizen (editor and independent scholar, Barcelona, Spain), who described the role of the Nestorians in scholarly enquiry in pre-Islamic times, and Alain Touwaide (Smithsonian Institute, Washington DC, USA), who gave a talk on Arabic literature and science in Byzantium.

***Alan Lounds** is the Head of the Foreign Language Unit, Language and Terminology Service, Technical University of Catalonia, Barcelona, Spain. He is also Treasurer of Mediterranean Editors and Translators.*

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Newsletter



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Reviews

Editor's Note: If you have books or websites that you've accessed on a particular topic, please let me know. I would love to publish a short review by you.

FastCompany

by Kit brown

FastCompany (<http://www.fastcompany.com>) is both a magazine and a website that caters to business people who are looking for innovative ideas and trying to spot industry trends. Both the website and magazine are full of ideas from a variety of industries. Often solutions to business problems in one industry can provide ideas for solving similar problems in another industry.

This month, the website seeks nominations for the Fast 50 people who represent the creme de la creme of business innovation and has an article about China's new economy.

Worthwhile

by Kit brown

Worthwhile (<http://www.worthwhilemag.com/>) provides ideas for entrepreneurs who want to build social consciousness into their business life. The short articles provide ideas for balancing work and life, profile entrepreneurs who successfully use their social conscience when making business decisions, and show ways to bring passion to your work.

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Newsletter



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Editor's Column

Ready for 2006

by Kit brown

It's hard to believe that this issue marks my first anniversary of being the IEEE-PCS newsletter editor. It's been an interesting year--moving the newsletter to an electronic format and increasing the publication frequency, getting to know the dedicated volunteers on the AdCom, attending the conference in Limerick, participating in standards development, and continuing to find topics and content that help you do your jobs more effectively.

To be sure, there are things I want to add or improve on. Some of my goals for this year include the following:

- Creating a member survey
- Sending quarterly postcards to people whose emails are bouncing or are not available (to subscribe, go to http://www.ieeepcs.org/activities_publications_newsletter_subscription.php and enter your contact information.)
- Reinstating the member profiles
- Finding volunteers to assist with the book and website reviews
- Finding a new columnist for the Tools and Technologies column
- Figuring out a way to encourage more questions for Ask the Expert
- Tweaking the print CSS so that it provides continuous page numbers and includes the list of topics

If you are interested in assisting with any of these efforts, contact me at pcsnews.editor@ieee.org.

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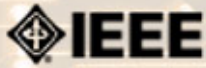
Society News: AdCom News

AdCom Virtual Meeting Scheduled 28 January 2006

Contributed by Mark Haselkorn and Luke Maki

Each January, the AdCom for IEEE-PCS holds a virtual board meeting. This year's meeting is scheduled for 28 January 2006. AdCom reports are due to Luke by **20 January**. After the meeting, the minutes will be published here, and the 2006 committee chairs will be announced.

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Newsletter



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Society News: PCS Events

2006: Call for Proposals

by IPCC 2006 Conference Committee

The IEEE Conference on the Convergence of Technology and Professional Communication will be held 23-25 October, 2006 in Saratoga Springs, New York USA.

We welcome proposals for this conference, which explores dimensions of professional and technical communication in an environment that places increasing emphasis on effective use of technology and on communication as an essential tool for management and innovation. The Call for Proposals is available for downloading at <http://www.ieeepcs.org/ipcc2006/PDF/IPCC%202006%20Call%20for%20Proposals.pdf>

The conference will be held at the Gideon Putnam Hotel in Saratoga Springs (www.gideonputnam.com), located New York's Capital Region and emerging "Tech Valley." Sessions will include paper presentations, panel discussions, workshops, opportunities to "share a table with a member of various professions," and "the winners' circle"—a forum for the free and lively exchange of ideas on a variety of topics.

Proposal topics suggested, but not limited to, are:

- Information Usability
- Web Development
- Managerial Communication
- Innovation in Education
- Communication in High-Tech Environments
- Collaborative Design and Communication
- Innovations in Communication
- Information Evaluation and Testing
- New Communication Media

Send 1-2 page proposals by 10 January 2006 to **Roger Grice**.

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Newsletter



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Society News: IPCC

IPCC 2005 Proceedings Available on IEEE Xplore

Contributed by George Hayhoe

If you didn't attend the 2005 IEEE International Professional Communication Conference (IPCC) in Limerick, Ireland back in July, you can share at least part of that experience at IEEE Xplore, the Institute's digital portal.

While there is no virtual medieval banquet at Bunratty Castle available on Xplore, you can feast on the intellectual fare of the conference in the form of most of the papers presented at IPCC 2005.

A total of 106 papers will be available at IEEE Xplore. Currently, 103 of those papers have been posted. An additional three papers, accidentally omitted from the conference proceedings CD, will be available soon. (An addendum CD with copies of the three omitted papers has also been mailed to all conference attendees.)

You can browse the IPCC 2005 Proceedings Table of Contents at <http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/xpl/tocresult.jsp?isnumber=32120&isYear=2005>.

If you do not subscribe to the IEEE Member Digital Library, or if your company or university does not subscribe to the IEEE Electronic Library, each paper you download will cost US\$13 (IEEE members) or US\$35 (non-members).

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Newsletter



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Society: Non-Society Events

IEC Centenary Challenge

W3C Workshop on the Ubiquitous Web

Content Management Strategies Conference 2006

Advanced Visual Interfaces International Conference

IEEE International Conference on Management of Innovation and Technology

Usability Professionals Association Conference

International Conference on Enterprise Networking and Services

IEEE International Conference on Web Services

IEEE Communications Society GLOBECOM 2006 Expo

IEEE Sponsor in IEC Centenary Challenge

From IEEE-SA News 8 November 2005

The International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC), in partnership with IEE, IEEE and VDE, and in association with *The Economist*, have launched the IEC Centenary Challenge. The IEC Centenary Challenge is a competition for papers on the economic, business, and social impact of International Standards on business. Prizes of US\$15,000, US\$5,000 and US\$2,000 will be awarded to the first, second and third place winners, respectively.

The IEC Centenary Challenge is open to anyone affiliated with an academic institute, including members of faculty, individual professors, heads of faculty and teaching or research staff. More than one entry is permitted from each academic institute. For registration forms, rules and further information, visit <http://www.iecchallenge.org/>.

Registration is open until midnight (CEST) on **3 March 2006**. Final papers must be submitted through this website by midnight (CEST) on **1 September 2006**. The awards ceremony will be held in London at the IEE on 14 December 2006.

W3C Workshop on the Ubiquitous Web

Title: W3C Workshop on the Ubiquitous Web
Dates: 9-10 March 2006
Location: Tokyo, Japan (hosted by Keio University)
More Information : <http://www.w3.org/2005/10/ubiweb-workshop-cfp.html>

The main purpose of this Workshop is to build a better understanding of the Ubiquitous Web, and to identify potential areas

for standardization:

- To explore the vision of the Web as a distributed applications platform that works across a wide range of devices in areas such as offices, home networks, mobile, automotive, aviation, etc. with the potential for increasing the range and reducing the cost of developing and deploying such applications.
- To explain how current W3C work fits into this vision, e.g., work on Web Application API's, Delivery Context Interfaces, Device Descriptions, Multimodal Architecture, etc.
- To identify and prioritize additional areas which would benefit from standardization, in particular, the integration of sessions and device coordination into Web Applications, as a means to enable the Ubiquitous Web.

Content Management Strategies Conference 2006

Title: Content Management Strategies Conference 2006
Dates: 3-5 April 2006
Location: San Francisco, CA USA
Online submission: <http://www.cm-strategies.com>

Are you considering a move to DITA? Deciding how to implement content reuse with DITA? Anxious to design and deliver reusable learning content with DITA? Wondering how to create a DITA specialization? Want to communicate with others about DITA best practices?

Join colleagues for the following exciting DITA events at the 2nd Annual DITA track at the Content Management Strategies conference:

- Attend any of the 17 sessions specifically about DITA.
- Technical Committee Members -- a face-to-face DITA TC meeting occurring at the same time as the Tuesday meetings.
- DITA Q&A session Tuesday evening for any conference participants interested in DITA -- ask questions directly with technical committee members and other DITA implementers.

CM Strategies 2006 brings you the 2nd annual DITA track. Attend the session by Dan Dionne from IBM to learn about "Implementing Content Reuse in DITA: The Nuts and Bolts." Learn about "DITA Specialization" from Chris Kravogel from SeicoDyne, or learn how to "Design and Deliver Reusable Learning Content with DITA" from John Hunt at IBM. Additional sessions in the DITA track include content reuse, roles of the information architect and editor, moving from DocBook to DITA, DITA open toolkit, and what's new in DITA 1.1.

After the conference on April 5, 2006 enjoy one of the three half-day post-conference workshops: "DITA Open Toolkit," "CMS Solutions: Six Important How To's," or "Developing Requirements and Selecting a CMS."

Advanced Visual Interfaces: International Working Conference

Title: Advanced Visual Interfaces: International Working Conference
Dates: 23-26 May 2006
Location: Venice, Italy
Online submission: <http://www.dsi.unive.it/avi2006>

The 8th International Working Conference on Advanced Visual Interfaces (AVI 2006) will be held in Venice, Italy on **May 23-26, 2006**. Started in 1992 in Rome, and held every two years in different Italian towns, the Conference traditionally

brings together experts in different areas of computer science who have a common interest in the conception, design and implementation of visual and, more generally, perceptual interfaces, with a growing interest for mobile devices such as smartphones, palmtops and PDAs, in the framework of traditional and emerging environments, such as ubiquitous and pervasive computer applications.

A special theme of this edition, suggested by the beautiful town hosting the conference, will be the design of advanced interfaces for art, cultural heritage and tourism. Both formal methods and concrete applications fit into the framework of the conference, whose program also includes invited talks, given by leaders in the field.

Third IEEE International Conference on Management of Innovation and Technology

Title: Managing Innovation in Emerging Markets
Dates: 21-23 June 2006
Location: Singapore
Online submission: <http://cms.inmeet.com/delegate/login/login.asp?confid=conf85>

Deadlines

Submission of Abstract: 1 January 2006
Notification of Acceptance: 1 February 2006
Camera-Ready Copy: 1 April 2006

About ICMIT2006

ICMIT2006 continues a series of international conferences (ICMIT2000, ICMIT2002 and IEMC2004) devoted to the area of innovation and technology management first initiated by the IEEE Engineering Management Society Singapore Chapter. These conferences aim to provide a platform for international scholars to meet and exchange ideas in exciting locations within Asia.

We invite papers for presentation at the conference. All those interested should submit one-page abstracts (500-750 words) through the conference website (www.icmit.net). Each submission will be peer-reviewed for technical merit and content. Papers accepted for presentation will appear in the *Conference Proceedings*, provided at least one author registers for the conference. The full paper must be IEEE Explore compliant.

Suggested Topics

Topics for the conference include, but are not limited to, the following subjects:

- Technology Management
- New Product Development
- Innovation Policy and Management Entrepreneurship
- Managing IT and E-Commerce Organizational Culture
- Human Resource Management Intellectual Property

- Knowledge Management R&D and Risk Management
- Project Management Six Sigma and Quality Management
- Supply Chain Management Business Strategy
- Sustainable Development Globalization
- Patent Strategy and Mapping Management/industry case studies

Publication

Proceedings will enter the IEEE book broker program and papers are indexed in common Engineering abstract databases (COMPENDEX/INSPEC etc.). Special issues of selected/expanded papers will be published in refereed journals.

Contact

For further information, please contact:

ICMIT2006 Secretariat

C/O Integrated Meetings Specialist

1122A Serangoon Road, Singapore 328206

Tel: (65) 6295 5790, Fax: (65) 6295 5792,

E-mail: icmit2006@inmeet.com.sg

Web: www.icmit.net

2006 Usability Professionals' Association Conference

Title: UPA 2006: Usability Through Storytelling
Dates: 12-16 June 2006
Location: Broomfield, CO USA

The UPA Invited Speakers' track features professionals from other disciplines to encourage practitioners to think 'outside of the box.' *UPA 2006: Usability Through Storytelling*, will bring together engaging speakers from the fields of education, culture, design, technology and entertainment.

So what do you think happened when the musicologist met the information architect?

Get the whole story at: http://www.upassoc.org/conferences_and_events/upa_conference/2006/speakers/

2006 UPA Conference Overview: http://www.upassoc.org/conferences_and_events/upa_conference/2006/

2006 International Conference on Enterprise Networking and Services

Title: International Conference on Enterprise Networking and Services
Joint Conference with IEEE and IEC

Dates: 11-13 September 2006

Location: Vancouver Convention and Exhibition Centre
Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Deadlines

Call for Proposals: <http://www.ieee-entnet.org/2006>.

Submission of Abstract: 10 April 2006

Notification of Acceptance: 29 May 2006

Camera-Ready Copy: 3 July 2006

The IEEE Communications Society (ComSoc) and the International Engineering Consortium (IEC) cordially invite you to participate in the International Conference on Enterprise Networking and Services 2006 (EntNet 2006) and co-located with Broadband World Forum Americas. EntNet 2006 will present an excellent opportunity for enterprise networking and services professionals to examine the key enterprise networking business issues, learn new enabling technologies, and evaluate solutions for improving the enterprise operations and the quality of delivered services.

The target audience for EntNet is enterprise practitioners, researchers, designers, developers, integrators, and technical leaders engaged in the enterprise networking, services and vertical market applications development and deployment, enabling technology R&D, evaluation and planning, enterprise business process design and requirement analysis, and enterprise operations support.

2006 IEEE International Conference on Web Services

Title: 2006 IEEE International Conference on Web Services
(ICWS 2006)
Celebrating the 60th Anniversary of IEEE Computer Society!

Dates: 18-22 September 2006

Location: Hyatt Regency at O'Hare Airport
Chicago, Illinois USA

Conference Website: <http://conferences.computer.org/icws/2006>

Deadlines

Call for Proposals: <http://conferences.computer.org/icws/2006/cfp.html>

Submission of Abstract: 16 January 2006

Notification of Acceptance: 24 April 2006

Camera-Ready Copy and Pre-Registration: 31 May 2006

About ICWS

The 2006 IEEE International Conference on Web Services (ICWS 2006) will be part of the IEEE Computer Society Congress on Software Technology and Engineering Practice (CoSTEP), celebrating the 60th Anniversary of IEEE Computer Society!

ICWS has been a prime international forum for both researchers and industry practitioners to exchange the latest fundamental advances in the state of the art and practice of Web Services. ICWS also aims to identify emerging research topics and define the future of Web Services.

ICWS 2006 will be co-located with the 2006 IEEE International Conference on Services Computing (SCC 2006), the 30th Annual International Computer Software and Applications Conference (COMPSAC 2006), and the 2006 IEEE Workshops on Software Technology and Engineering Practice (STEP 2006). IEEE Services Oriented Architecture (SOA) Industry Summit and IEEE International Services Computing Contest will also be featured at this joint event.

The technical program will include refereed paper presentations, panels, and poster sessions in both research and industry tracks. Workshops and tutorials will run before and throughout the conference.

ICWS 2006 program seeks original, unpublished research papers reporting substantive new work in various aspects of Web services. Papers must properly cite related work and clearly indicate their contributions to the field of Web services. Topics of interest include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Mathematical Foundations for Web Services Computing
- Web Services-based Service Oriented Architecture
- Web Services Modeling
- Web Services Standards and Implementation Technologies
- Web Services Specifications and Enhancements (e.g., UDDI, SOAP, WSDL)
- Web Services Discovery
- Web Services Composition and Integration
- Web Services Invocation
- QoS for Web Services (e.g., security, privacy, reliability, performance, fault tolerance, etc.)
- Web Services Assessment (i.e., validation & verification)
- Web Services-based Testing Methodologies
- Web Services-based Software Engineering
- Web Services-based Project Management
- Semantic Web Services
- IT Infrastructure Management for Web Services
- Solution Management for Web Services
- Multimedia Web Services
- Web Services-based Business Process Management
- Web Services-based Mobile Computing

- Web Services-based Grid Applications (e.g. OGSA)
- Domain Specific Web Services Applications and Solutions

IEEE GLOBECOM 2006 Expo

Title: IEEE GLOBECOM 2006 Expo
Dates: 27 November to 1 December 2006
Location: San Francisco, CA USA
URL: <http://www.ieee-globecom.org/2006/index.html>

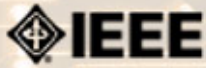
The IEEE Communications Society (COMSOC) has selected San Francisco for its first ever Communications EXPO, which will be co-located its 49 th Annual IEEE Globecom conference in November 2006.

The new EXPO will have exhibits by industry and a quality technical program focused for the design and development engineers in the communications industry. This will include:

- Design & Developers Forum
- Tutorials & Workshops
- Telecom Business Forum

Historically, the IEEE Globecom conference is focused on research and development. The technical program for IEEE Globecom 2006 will continue this emphasis. There will be 16 symposium conducted by the various COMSOC technical committees covering the major industry technologies and numerous hot topics.

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Tidbits

Editor's Note: I am always looking for strange, fun, or interesting technical communication tidbits. Please contribute freely.

Technical Communication in the News

Recent articles have named Technical Communication one of the hot jobs in the near future...[Read more.](#)

Worst Analogies

Contributed by Rudy Joenk

Examples of the worst analogies ever written by high school students:

- He spoke with the wisdom that can only come from experience, like a guy who went blind because he looked at a solar eclipse without one of those boxes with a pinhole in it and now goes around the country speaking at high schools about the dangers of looking at a solar eclipse without one of those boxes with a pinhole in it. *Joseph Romm, Washington*
- She caught your eye like one of those pointy hook latches that used to dangle from screen doors and would fly up whenever you banged the door open again.
Rich Murphy, Fairfax Station

...[Read More.](#)

Waitress Writes Book on Idiomatic English

contributed by Rudy Joenk

May Pare, a Glendale waitress who earned a master's degree from UCLA specializing in English as a second language, wrote a book dealing exclusively with body part idioms. Here is a selection of her entries and definitions:

- **Fire in your belly** (expression): Enthusiasm/driving force/passion for what you are doing.
- **Rub elbows with** (verb phrase): To interact socially with.
- **Face the music** (verb phrase): To suffer the unpleasant consequences, especially of one's own actions.
- **A hair-trigger temper** (noun phrase): A tendency to become angry very easily.

The book is titled, *A Frog in Your What?*...[Read More.](#)

Winning Trial Presentations

Contributed by Roger Boyell

In April 2005, TechnoLawyer recently did an article on how to develop winning presentation for legal trials. You must be a member to access the archives (<http://www.technolawyer.com>).



Guidelines

Newsletter Article Submission Guidelines

by **Kit Brown**

Submit articles by the **15th day of the month before publication**. The newsletter is published monthly around the 1st of the month. The [editorial schedule](#) provides the proposed themes for each month. Additional suggestions are always welcome.

For book and website reviews, see also the [book and website review guidelines](#).

If you have questions, comments, or suggestions, please contact [Kit Brown](#).

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Writing Tips: If you aren't sure how to construct the article, try using the 5-paragraph essay method. (Note: The 5-paragraph concept can be expanded to longer formats, so don't be overly literal about the five paragraphs.)

1. Identify your theme and 3 main points in the introductory paragraph. This lead paragraph should draw readers in and make them want to read on.
2. Use each of the 3 body paragraphs to discuss the one of the 3 main points you identified in the first paragraph. (discuss them in the order that you listed them in the introduction). Show, don't tell. Give examples. If you express an opinion, back it up with evidence.
3. Summarize your thoughts in the conclusion paragraph and provide the reader with any actions that you want him/her to take. (The conclusion should not introduce new information, but should encapsulate what was said in the article and provide recommendations if appropriate.)

Guidelines: Please review the following information when submitting articles or regular columns to the newsletter:

- **Submit articles electronically in MSWord or RTF format to pcsnews.editor@ieee.org.** These formats are more easily available to me than other word processing applications.
- **Provide articles that are 200-1000 words in length.** People tend to scan rather than read in an online environment. Short, well-written and relevant articles will be more beneficial to the audience than longer ones.
- **Provide a short bio (~25 words) and contact information.** Readers want to know about you. At a minimum, write a bio that tells your name, company, primary job title, email address and why this topic is of interest to you or what experience you have in the area you wrote about. (This doesn't count as part of your word count.)
- **Indicate whether the article is time sensitive.** Because of size considerations and editorial schedule, newsletter articles may not be published immediately upon submission, unless it is date critical (e.g., information about the upcoming conference or an article about a current event that relates to technical communication.)

- **Indicate copyright information if applicable.** If you own the copyright for an article, indicate this with your submission so that we can provide appropriate attribution. If you don't own the copyright, but think an article is interesting, provide the article, along with the contact information for the copyright holder and the name of the publication where it was originally published.
- **Insert the URL into the text so that I can easily create the link.** For example, if you want to reference the w3c, you would say "refer to the W3C (<http://www.w3c.org>) guidelines". Don't create the hyperlink in Word.
- **Provide complete bibliographic information for references.** Include author(s), title, date of publication, publisher, page numbers or URL, ISBN number.
- **Use a friendly, casual tone.** We want to invite people to read and to make the information as accessible as possible.
- **Use 1-inch (2.54 cm) margins; don't indent paragraphs.** I have to reformat the text so it's better to minimize the formatting you include. Instead of indenting, put an extra line between paragraphs
- **Avoid using lots of formatting within the text.** I will have to format the articles for the online environment, so don't put lots of bold and italic in the text.
- **Use subheadings generously.** Subheadings help the reader identify the information that is important to them. Subheads are especially helpful in orienting the reader in the online environment.
- **Use active voice and short sentences.** At least 40% of our audience is outside of N. America. For many members, English is their second (or third) language. Short sentences and active voice are easier to absorb and understand than complex sentence structures.
- **Avoid jargon and "big" words when a simpler term will work.** Approximately 90% of our audience is engineers who need to write effectively on the job. Avoid using writer's jargon, or explain the term in the context. By "big" words, I mean complicated, less commonly used words that may have the same or similar meaning to other, more commonly used words (e.g., instead of "obfuscate", just say "confuse").
- **Avoid idioms.** Idiomatic phrases are those colorful sayings we use to mean something else. For example, "once in a blue moon", "jump right in", "on the fly". Unfortunately, these sayings often have no equivalent in other languages, and can be difficult for non-native English speakers to interpret.
- **Submit graphics as JPGs or GIFs.** Web graphics need to be in one of these formats for most browsers. SVGs and PNGs are not yet universally accepted. If you want graphics included in your article, you need to give me the JPG. Don't just embed it in Word.



Newsletter



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Guidelines

Editorial Schedule for 2006

by **Kit Brown**

The following table shows the proposed themes for each issue through January 2006. If something particularly timely occurs during the year, these themes may change.

If you have questions, comments, or suggestions, please contact **Kit Brown**.

Editorial Schedule for 2005

Month	Theme
January 2006	Trends
February	Emergency/Disaster Communication
March	eLearning and Training
April	Ethics
May	Web Development
June	Embedded Help
July	Distributed Project Teams (international cooperation)
August	Project Management
September	Teaching Writing Skills to Engineers
October	Communication and Technology (conference theme)
November	Usability
December	Technical Review Process
January 2007	Trends

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Guidelines

Book and Website Review Guidelines

by Kit brown

Have you read a good book lately? Found a website you can't wait to tell people about? Here's your chance to share your newfound knowledge with your colleagues.

Here are some hints for constructing the review:

1. Include the complete bibliographic information for the book or website immediately after your byline. For example:
Now, Discover Your Strengths by Marcus Buckingham and Donald O. Clifton. 2001. The Free Press: New York. pp.260. ISBN: 0-7432-0114-0. URL: www.strengthsfinder.com
2. In 2-3 sentences, tell the reader what the book or website is about and how it relates to technical communication.
3. Provide 2-3 things you got out of the book or website, and if applicable, 2-3 things that you wish they had done differently. Opinions are OK if they are supported
4. Support your opinions using specific examples from the book or website. This analysis should be brief--1-2 paragraphs at most.
5. Conclude with a recommendation of how this information might be useful to the user.

The reviews should meet the following guidelines:

- **Keep it short.** The reviews should be 300-500 words. A couple of paragraphs can tell the reader a great deal about what the book/website is about and why one should read it.
- **Focus on the big picture.** In a short review, there isn't room to go page by page and analyze every detail. Instead, pick out the main themes and write about the overall impression. This style is much more interesting to read.
- **Use an informal, conversational tone.** Pretend you are talking to someone about the book or website, and that you only have one minute to explain it to them. What would you tell them about it?
- **Review the article guidelines.** These guidelines provide more detail about the grammar and style for presenting the information, as well as the format the editor needs to receive the information in.