

ROUGH DRAFT

The newsletter of the STC Phoenix Chapter

December 2006

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Meeting Information

Using Your Technical Communication Skills for Other Areas (Culinary Writing) - Jim Morgan

Tuesday, December 12, 2006

Jim Morgan is past president of the STC Phoenix Chapter. Morgan calls himself a "Renaissance Soul" because of the wide array of interests he has pursued, including not only technical writing but also photography and videography, ultralight flying, sailing, and scuba diving.

Recently, Morgan decided to pursue his culinary interests. He graduated with honors with a degree in Le Cordon Bleu Culinary Arts from Scottsdale Culinary Institute. Since graduating, he has authored the textbook *Culinary Creation*, and has appeared not only on the reality TV series "Masterchef USA," but also on "Bobby Flay's FoodNation," and Cajun Chef John Folse's PBS series "Taste of Louisiana."

Morgan will speak about the relationship of culinary books to technical writing and discuss how his tech writing experience allowed him to slip easily into the task of authoring a cooking-related text.

Where: University of Phoenix - Chandler Campus - 2975 W. Linda Lane (Off Price-Loop 101 and Ray Road)[Map](#)

Buffet Dinner:

- Chicken a la Nicholas
- Eggplant Involtini: Stuffed in a tomato sauce (vegetarian)
- Plentiful garden salad
- Fresh mixed grilled vegetables
- Assorted homemade bread
- Light dessert
- Iced tea, lemonade, water

Cost: \$20 members
\$25 nonmembers
\$15 student members
\$10 program only, includes dessert & beverage.

- Pay by check or cash at the door.
- Pay by credit card using PayPal (online registration form). Dinner price includes tax, tip, and program.

Note: \$5 charge for late dinner reservations. **NO SHOWS WILL BE BILLED.**

Register: RSVP no later than noon Thursday, December 7. Register online at www.stc-phoenix.com, e-mail Deb Duane at stcphoenix@yahoo.com, or call Norm Haskett at 480-963-8102.

Rough Draft is the official newsletter of the Society for Technical Communication, Phoenix Chapter community. The newsletter provides news about chapter events, members, and publishes members' opinions about technical communication topics.

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Submitting Content

We invite readers to submit articles, columns, photos, and other material on subjects of interest to Chapter and Society members. Deadline for submissions is the 10th of the month prior to publication.

We accept articles submitted as e-mail, or files in Microsoft Word® or FrameMaker® format. We prefer GIF, PNG or JPEG graphics. Please include your e-mail address and your phone number. If you want to send material by fax, first call the Managing Editor, Karen Zorn, at 408-354-0537.

The Rough Draft staff reserves the right to edit articles for clarity and length and to reject submissions judged unfit for publication. We try to review substantive editing of feature articles with the author before pub-

lication. Our style guide is *Chicago Manual of Style*.

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Phoenix Chapter Mission Statement

As a world-class educational and informational forum, we discuss cutting-edge concepts and technology, encourage sharing information among members, and sponsor top-quality seminars and conferences.

We give our members the opportunity to grow professionally and be creative; to develop leadership, management, and other skills; to be recognized for their outstanding skills and service; to be the most sought-after employees in our field; and to attain international status as Society-level leaders.

We provide a fun and friendly, high-energy environment that fosters associations and friendships. We promote the value of technical communication and communication in general.

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Society for Technical Communication

<http://stc.org/>

Membership Matters

by Debra Duane, Membership Manager, STC Phoenix

Renew Early and You Could Win!

Okay, do I have your undivided attention? How can renewing your STC membership make you a winner? All you need to do is renew on or before January 1, 2007, and your name will be entered in a drawing for some great prizes.

We're still working out the details for the Grand Prize (valued at \$150), but we will be offering runner-up prizes of \$25 gift certificates to Barnes and Noble as well as subscriptions to the [Chicago Manual of Style Online](#) (a \$30 value).

Membership Statistics

As of October 31, the Phoenix chapter now numbers 187 members

Dear Santa,

I've been a really good Technical Writer and Instructional Designer this year. My clients were very happy with my products; the users learned what they needed to know (and more) to do their jobs. Since I've been so good, please deliver the following to my home office:

- A new notebook computer with a dual-core processor, 200GB hard drive, 2GB memory, DVD R/W, 17" screen, USB ports—in other words LOADED!
- A 21" LCD wide-screen monitor
- Software: Flash, Dreamweaver, Adobe Creative Suite (PhotoShop, Illustrator, Acrobat, GoLive, InDesign), FrameMaker 7.2,

(.5% increase). On the International level, membership now totals 15,453 members (1.6% increase).

On behalf of the entire chapter, I'd like to welcome Paul Bass to our community of members. We hope to see you at a future event.

I encourage you to join us at the meeting location nearest you. Networking and volunteer opportunities abound. You'll enjoy a good meal with great people, and you might even learn a thing or two. I hope to see you on December 12. I welcome your comments and suggestions, feel free to e-mail me at:

stcphx-membership@cox.net

Breeze, Captivate, MadCap Flare, Quickbooks Pro 2007

- An LCD projector
- A comfortable, ergonomic office chair
- An iPod with a player/speaker system
- A rolling computer case (you'll find that at Costco)
- Secure, well paying contracts for 2007
- My 2007 STC membership dues
- STC conference fees, airfare and hotel

And, as always, Peace on Earth and Goodwill to Humankind.

Distance Got You Down? Carpool!

by Karen L. Zorn, 2006-2007 Vice President

This year our meeting locations are alternating between northwest (NW) and southeast (SE) valley locations. If you live or work opposite the meeting location, getting there in time for networking, let alone dinner, can be a trying experience on our crowded highways.

For me, the commute to the NW location is a trek of at least 50 miles one way over very crowded routes. My solution: gather a couple STC friends for a carpool and make an evening of it. The major advantage is legally using the carpool lanes on I-10, I-17 and US 60 (what were the Loop 101 designers thinking?). What could have been a horror commute for the November meeting turned into a 40 minute (from ASU) drive. And, as a bonus, I had company both ways which led to interesting discussions.

I'm proposing that we form a "Share A Ride" resource for STC meetings. If you are interested in carpooling, send me

an e-mail at: rough_draft@zorntech.com with the following details:

- your name
- the location you will be coming from, for example: Elliot and I-10
- contact information, e-mail address and phone numbers (work, cell)
- willingness to drive, auto capacity.

For now, I'll publish the carpool list in *Rough Draft* and let you work out your rides. Consider meeting at one location and going from there. Also, some carpoolers may be enroute and picked up on the way.

If this initial effort is a success, the list will move to the web site where the information is easily updated.

Editorial Blithers

Get Your Questions Ready!

Susan Burton, STC Executive Director Visits February 15, 2007

Are you curious about the future of STC? Have you been wondering what is happening with the transition program? Do you have burning questions about membership plans, the annual conference, or just want to get the inside scoop? If so, mark your calendar for **Thursday, February 15, 2007** because Susan Burton, STC Executive Director is coming to Phoenix!

Instead of meeting on the second Tuesday in February, we'll be meeting on Thursday, February 15. Your CMAC is planning two different style meetings. In the afternoon, 3 pm to 5 pm, we've planned a Town Hall style meeting where you can ask Susan those burning questions. For those who will not be able to attend the meeting in person, we'll be setting up an e-mail address where you can mail your question.

After the Town Hall meeting, we'll have an hour of networking followed by dinner, then Susan will address the attendees.

Although every Phoenix STC meeting is important—you'll always meet someone you don't know, learn something new, and have a good meal—this meeting is very special. It isn't often an STC executive visits. We're expecting many members of the Southern Arizona Chapter to come up. So not only will you get to mingle with our members, meet the Executive Director and you'll also have the opportunity to meet SAZ members.

Keep an eye on the web site (www.stc-phoenix.com) and *Rough Draft* as we'll be publishing more information as it develops.

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Comments? Other views? *Rough Draft* publishes Letters to the Editor. Send e-mail to rough_draft@zorntech.com, or snail to Rough Draft, c/o Zorn, 8515 E. Milagro Ave., Mesa, AZ 85209-7327.

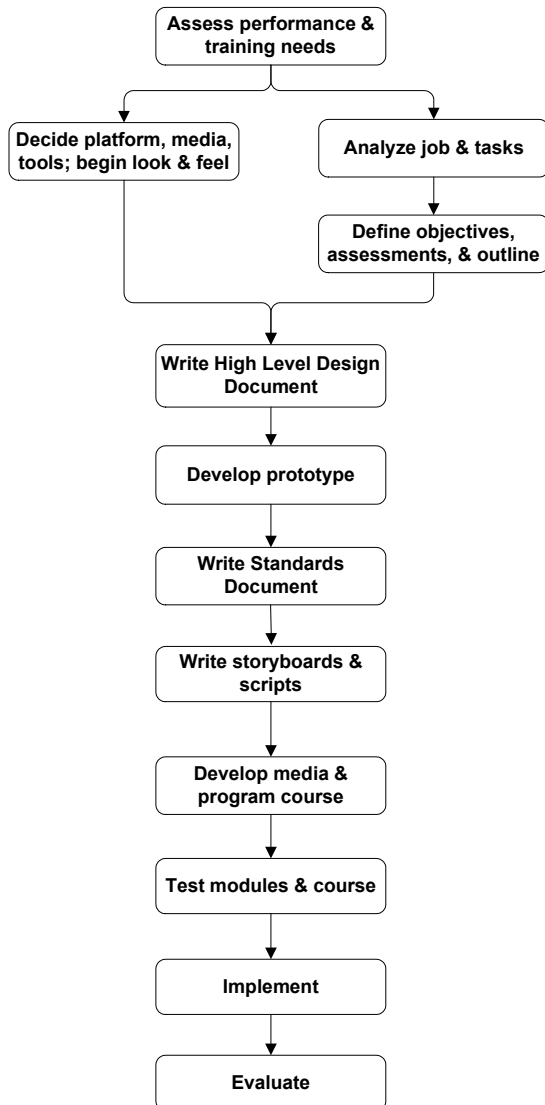
Standards Document for e-Learning Courses

by Jane Smith, STC Associate Fellow

The question came up on an e-mail discussion list about the contents of a standards document for e-Learning and what parts of that should come from the client.

Introduction

In e-Learning, the standards document is an output after several other stages of design and development. The following diagram shows where the development and writing of a standards document typically falls in the process.



As shown, the standards document summarizes all the efforts and decisions that have been made up to date. The document can be a separate document or sections appended to the design document.

The Design Document: A Precursor

Generally, the design document precedes and sets the stage for the details of the standards document. So let's talk a minute about what is contained in the design document.

The design document specifies agreements made during and as a result of the task analysis and includes all objectives and assessments as part of a full course outline. The design document also specifies information known about the infrastructure and platform for the course, media that can be used on that platform, and the tools that will be used to develop the course. Screen templates/layouts can also be included but may be modified and will be more fully documented in the standards document.

Typical contents of the design document include but are not limited to:

- Purpose of the course
- Audience description
- Course learning objectives
- Final course assessment decisions/needs
- System requirements
- Instructional architecture and media types that will be used
- Estimated seat time of course
- High level outline including units and lessons
- Course structure diagram/flowchart
- Course structure description from the user standpoint
- Media
- Tools
- Talent needed (voice over and actors)
- Navigation and course operations
- Detailed outlines by unit, including objectives, practice exercise types and content, and instructional methods
- Ownership and maintenance
- Estimated development time based on current knowledge
- Support requirements from SMEs and client
- Project sign-off

The Prototype

As you look at our process flow, typically we develop a prototype after the basic decisions have been made and prior to writing the standards document and beginning full course development. The prototype is a fully developed 10 - 15 minute piece of content that represents some of the more complex content pieces and interactions as well as all screen layout types and navigation. The internal or external client typically reviews the prototype thoroughly for:

- Does the course work on the intended end-user's platform? Does it load and play well with no delays or unintended breaks in delivery?
- Screen layouts - do they work?
- Colors - how are they when used with content (even though colors and layouts will have been shown and reviewed in the look and feel stage)?
- Navigation - do they work properly, are they intuitive, and are appropriate navigation elements used on each screen type?
- Interactions - do they work properly and support learning, are they instructionally sound?
- Media use - is it appropriate, does the use of any media get in the way?
- Are all elements used consistently, both in placement and in functionality? Is there anything that would be confusing to the user?
- Is the language used appropriate for the audience and in keeping with the client's corporate standards?
- If using audio, are the voices audible and appropriate for the audience and content? Do they have the right level of enthusiasm and emphasis?
- If using video, does it play on the infrastructure and end-user's workstation?

At the prototype stage, the complete accuracy of content is not as important as is the functionality of the course, its entire look and feel, and its usability. At this stage, we want all input from the client that we can get, so that we don't end up changing some aspect later that impacts several developed units or lessons. Here the client and team make final decisions about all areas of functionality and look and feel for the course as well as continuing to ensure that the course plays on the specified platform.

The Standards Document

The standards document, as shown by our diagram, comes after the prototype stage and documents all decisions made to that point. It can be a separate document or appended to the design document. The client signs off on the document, and it is then distributed to the development team so that each person who is writing

storyboards or developing course elements will write or develop to the same standards. Generally, it includes these elements:

- An introduction
- Screen layouts: specific ones used. Content and elements included on each, and screen captures of each
- Navigation and operations for menus, navigation bar, each screen type, help, search, and other course-wide screens
- Course flowchart (probably the same one as in the design document)
- Guidelines for writing
- Guidelines for art
- Logo use
- Audio use and standards
- Video use and standards
- Interactions (questions and exercises): functionality, types, feedback, and evaluation standards
- Other standards
- Sign-off

The Basic Question

The question that was asked was what should come from the client. Ultimately, all the decisions are made by and with the client, often with heavy input and guidance from the development and design team. Clients help answer all questions of standards that are documented in the standards document. A client that has developed several other e-Learning courses may, in fact, come to the project with a lot of their standards pre-determined and documented. Standards for the current course are then made with those other standards in mind. Sometimes the nature of the new course requires modification of existing standards, and other times not. When a client has not developed e-Learning courses before, the design and development team must provide guidance and assistance to the client in developing the standards. Regardless of the experience of the client, all standards and standard functionality must work with the course type, job and tasks to be trained, and the platform on which the course will play. It is in these latter areas that the design team provides input and advice to most clients.

So the answer is a definite ID - **It Depends.**

Templates

Templates for design and standards documents are available at www.jemcommunications.com/templates.htm.

Tooling Around

Tips for Common Tools: Adobe Acrobat

by Gloria McConnell

Part 2...

This month's column continues with information about commonly used tools. This column focuses on Acrobat Professional.

I often discover tools tidbits in the course of solving a problem. User forums are my greatest tool—hope that you make use of them, too. For Acrobat, the [Adobe Users Forums](#) and [Acrobat Users Community](#) are tops.

Acrobat 8 Overview

Adobe released Acrobat 8.0 in early November. As of the writing of this column (mid-November), Adobe Reader 8 had not yet been released. I have not yet downloaded a trial of Acrobat 8 Professional, mainly because the Acrobat User Forum members are citing enough problems with the download that I want to wait. Included are: “Unable to install Acrobat 8 Professional,” “Acrobat 8 won't start,” and “Acrobat 8 crashes,” and “Why Did They Do That?” Hopefully, by the time you read this column, the problems will be solved.

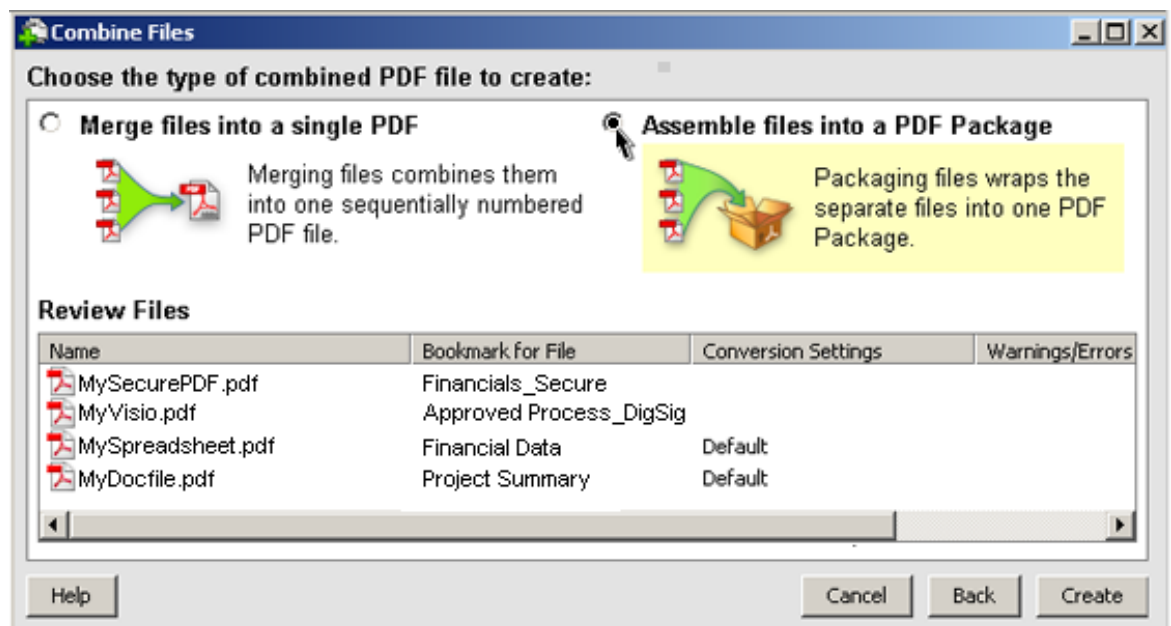
Trepidation doesn't stop me from reading and viewing, however. On Adobe's [New Features](#) page, you can view a feature tour and learn about version 8's new features, which include:

- **PDF Packages**
Create a “package” of multiple files that can be searched and sorted. Individual documents maintain their own security settings and digital signatures. It looks pretty cool, actually. The figure at the bottom of this page shows the dialog box for merging or packaging files.

- **Auto-recognized Form Fields**
New for Windows only. I'm not a forms person, but it appears that Adobe has made several improvements in this area. (And auto-recognize is Adobe's term, not mine.)
- **Document Reviews**
Collaboration and review improvements. Real-time online review meetings.
- **Reader Enhancements**
Advanced features are available in Adobe Reader.
- **“Sanitized” Documents**
Sensitive information can be permanently removed, including hidden data such as metadata/layers. Also, redaction tools are now available.
- **e-mail**
Microsoft Outlook or Lotus Notes e-mail can be archived in PDF files.
- **Microsoft Word Format**
Says their Word exporting capabilities are improved.
- **User Interface**
New intuitive user interface. (*Was the old one not intuitive?*)

For several assessments of the new product, see articles in the [Acrobat User Community](#).

(Continue to the next page for an Acrobat tip!)



(Continued from previous page.)

Acrobat Tip



I've recently discovered Acrobat's **Typewriter Tool** in my Acrobat Professional 7.0.8 for Windows; it's already helped me with a scanned form.

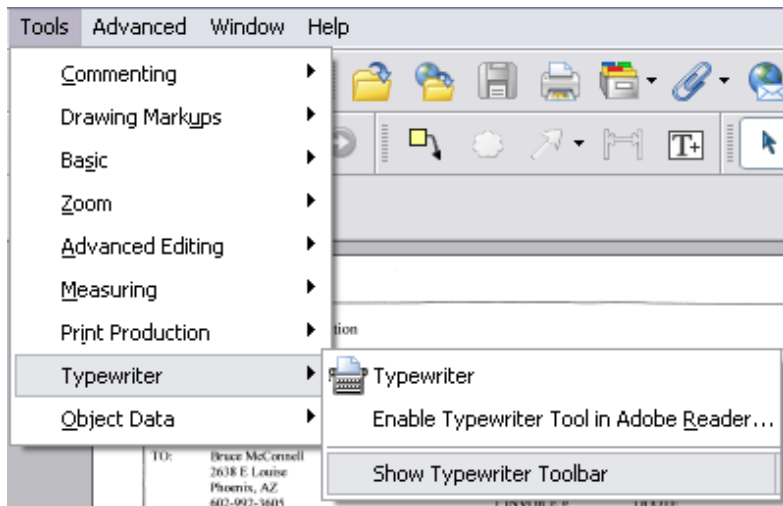
This little tool was introduced in Acrobat 7.0.5. It's a simple version of the Text Box tool, and it allows an Acrobat or Adobe Reader user to type text anywhere in a PDF document. It's particularly handy for filling out forms that lack interactive form fields, and it works well on a scanned image to which you want to add text. (My recent home sale experience indicates that more and more people are scanning documents and e-mailing them, rather than faxing them.)

- The upsides?
 - It's so easy to use—select the Typewriter, click, and start typing. The background is transparent. Use a Select Tool to move or resize the text box.
 - You can enable the Typewriter for your Adobe Reader users.

- The downside? The font, which is monospaced (looks to be Courier Std, about 9 point), cannot be changed. Remember, it's a typewriter (but not a *Selectric*).

Access the Typewriter from the **Tools** menu, as shown in the following figure.

Check out the Typewriter! For Acrobat's explanation see Adobe's Knowledge base article [#332263](#) (you won't find online Help about this tool).



Snippets from listservs & miscellany

From a discussion of the dangers of spell checkers comes:

"Ode to a Spellchecker"

James Barrow, Sam Witt, Yvonne Boecker

Eye halve a spelling check her;
It came with my pea sea.
It plane lee marks four my revue
Miss steaks aye kin knot sea.

Eye ran this poem threw it
Your sure reel glad two no.
Its vary polished in it's weigh,
My checker tolled me sew.

A check her is a bless sing;
It freeze yew lodes of thyme.
It helps me right awl stiles two reed,
And aides me when aye rime.

Each frays come posed up on my screen
Eye trussed too bee a joule;

The checker pours o'er every word
To cheque sum spelling rule.

Bee fore wee rote with checkers
Hour spelling was inn deck line,
Butt now when wee dew have a laps,
Wee are knot maid too wine.

Butt now bee cause my spelling
Is checked with such grate flare,
Their are know faults with in my cite,
Of nun eye am a wear.

Now spelling does knot phase me,
It does knot bring a tier;
My pay purrs awl due glad den
With wrapped words fare as hear.

To rite with care is quite a feat
Of witch won should be proud;
And wee mused dew da best wee can
Sew flaws are knot aloud.

That's why eye brake in two averse
Cuz eye dew want too please.
Sow glad eye yam that aye did bye
This soft wear four pea seas.

How often have you been asked "What do you do?" and have struggled for a chic answer? Culled from a techwr-l's discussion, check out <http://tinyurl.com/ot9sk> for answers.

A new version of RoboHelp (and a beta test invitation). A new version of FrameMaker just around the corner. Cool (and useful) support of 360 degrees viewing in Acrobat 3D. Captivating interactivity tools that are changing the way

technical communicators communicate. Expanded DITA and S1000D support. And even more reasons why Word -- and pure-play XML editors -- just can't compete.

Check out this exclusive TheContentWrangler.com interview with RJ Jacquez, Adobe Product Evangelist.

Looking for cool new tools? Geoff Hart suggests: <http://www.cavebear.com/cavebear/catalog.html>. He especially likes "percussive maintenance."

(Geoff Hart) Questions about copyrights? Then read the comics! The Center for the Study of the Public Domain at Duke University has created an interesting and clever online comic book to help educate people about copyright and fair use: <http://www.law.duke.edu/cspd/comics/zoomcomic.html>

Technical Communicator Certification - Boon Or Bane?

By Bill Thomas, Sr. member, Rocky Mountain Chapter

Since I first joined STC in 1974, there have been discussions of whether Technical Communicators form a profession and whether certification would be a good idea. There have been roundtables, articles, recommendations, and hallway discussions in companies, chapter meetings, and presentations at STC conferences.

With the STC re-vitalization and transformation initiative, there has been renewed interest in certification and a new task force has been formed to look into answers. From STC President Paula Berger's July Board Meeting Minutes, "I have asked Jonathan Baker and Dan Wise to lead a Certification Evaluation Task Force. The purpose is to investigate the issue of certification from all sides - value to employers and members, financial impact, feasibility of implementation, interest level - and report to the Society in May 2007 about their findings." Jon Baker is a Program Manager within Technical Publications Operations within EMC Corporation and Dan Wise is an editor with the International Code Council.

Meeting weekly for the last month, Jon and Dan and a cadre of 18 STC members all across the country and in Canada have been meeting via conference call to determine the starting point and progress of this task. Once the questions have been hammered out and organized, the task force members will take these questions and attempt to get them answered in preparation for making a formal report to the STC board.

Questions typically asked have been along these lines: Is there a body of knowledge defining this profession? What would be the core competencies required? Would certification help or hurt the cause of the technical communicator in the field? How would employers react to certification? Would academia respond positively to a professional body of knowledge and teach standard courses to develop certified students? Would STC provide post-graduate, continuing education courses? Should certification be based on knowledge, experience or both? Would there be levels of certification (basic, advanced, master)? Will there be financial concerns on the part of STC, academia, employers, or practitioners that need to be addressed? Are there international or cultural considerations needing to be addressed? How would certification be marketed to sell the value of such a program and the profession to practitioners, employers, and academia? Would professional certification enhance the group or cause some to leave?

If you have comments or recommendations that this task force might consider, please send your information to STC_CTF@yahoo.com. If you would like to participate in the research the task force will be doing, contact Jon Baker, jbaker2525@earthlink.net, or Dwise@iccsafe.org. We look forward to representing you and the profession to the Board in May 2007.

On the Job

Walking the Line between Paraphrase and Plagiarism, Part 2

By Kathy Graden, *Rough Draft* Contributing Editor

The vast wealth of information offered on the Internet provides virtually limitless resources and opportunities for learning. Yet, this huge pool of easily-accessible knowledge also presents opportunities for would-be plagiarists to do “cyber shoplifting,” as they plunder others’ work for their own use while happily assuming that information obtained from the Web is “free.”

Part 1 of this article, published in last month’s *Rough Draft*, defined plagiarism and discussed the following:

- Situations that are or aren’t likely to be plagiarism
- Intentional vs. unconscious plagiarism
- Self-plagiarism
- Whether information reuse in technical writing constitutes plagiarism.

In Part 2, we’ll examine the myth of “free” Internet content. We’ll discuss how online plagiarism has increased academic cheating and what learning institutions are doing about it. We’ll also report on Web sites and software dedicated to detecting or preventing plagiarism. And we’ll look at strategies for citing sources correctly to avoid plagiarism.

Is Internet Information “Free”?

The freewheeling, “anything out there is fair game” attitude that many Internet users have toward Web content, plus the instant access that the Web provides, make it fairly easy to forget that nearly all content has an owner, so reusing it without attribution is stealing.

In her article, “Issues in Plagiarism for the New Millennium: An Assessment Odyssey” (online at <http://ultibase.rmit.edu.au/Articles/dec98/gajad1.htm>), Joan Gajadhar notes that “Once a message is sent online, a sender loses ownership. Information can be altered, distributed and even attributed to someone else. The words no longer belong to the original sender.” She adds that “A book has a physical, tangible presence, whereas the Internet is almost ephemeral. Without exception a book has a specific warning such as ‘all rights are reserved.’”

Internet information often carries no such warning. As a result, many people mistakenly assume that information they find online is exempt from the usual rule that reference sources must be acknowledged. Of course,

that’s not true; no matter where the source information resides, writers who don’t want to be accused of plagiarism must always give credit where it is due for things someone else says, writes, e-mails, draws, or even implies. Many professional organizations have extensive guidelines for citing sources—and those guidelines are readily available on the Web.

Students, Schools, and Plagiarism

Recent research has found that an increasing number of students, at all education levels, improperly use information they obtain through the Web. But Internet plagiarism isn’t limited to students wanting to score better grades without studying; it’s a far more common phenomenon. Using the Alta Vista search engine, Joan Gajadhar found 37,419 matches for the word “plagiarism” and 305,709 Web sites containing both “plagiarism” and “Internet.” When I ran the same searches through Google, it returned 13.2 million hits for “plagiarism” and 7.86 million hits for the words “plagiarism” and “Internet” together.

A quick browse through these hits turned up hundreds of pages defining plagiarism; discussing copyright and intellectual property issues; offering explicit, detailed guidelines for faculty members reviewing and punishing plagiarism; and warnings for students or advice for avoiding plagiarism. However, I also found a number of Web sites that offered already-written essays and term papers for students to copy or purchase.

One such site, www.planetpapers.com, advertises “a free database of student-written example essays to help other students in writing their own essays and papers” but says that “Planet Papers (does) not encourage plagiarism. The essays on this site are useful to get ideas, quotes, bibliographies or another viewpoint when writing your own essay.” (I confess to some skepticism about this.) I also found a frightening number of Web sites eager to sell students “thousands of...the lowest priced, highest quality term papers/research papers,” for (ahem) “academic research.”

There’s even a Web site called Evil House of Cheat (at <http://osiris.978.org/~brianr/mirrors/www.cheathouse.com/>) that offers tips for cheating on tests as well as falsifying writing assignments.

Most educators blame students' plagiarism on one of two causes:

- Lack of knowledge or understanding of the rules for citing references sources. (A student tries to give sources credit but doesn't do it correctly.)
- Students think their cheating can't be caught because of the vast volume of information available and easy access to it through the Web.

Teachers, professors, and instructors admit to finding plagiarism difficult to detect despite receiving training on how to do it. Some academic staffers have proposed changing the types of assignments they give students in order to discourage cheating. For example, Robert Harris of Southern California College, in his article "Anti-Plagiarism, Strategies for use in Assigning Research" (at http://www.sccu.edu/faculty/R_Harris/antiplag.htm), says he encourages students to do their own writing by asking them to deliver an oral presentation on their research. He also advises educators that if they make unique assignments and encourage students to value them, the students will feel less desire to plagiarize. Other educators have suggested tactics such as asking students to write about their own experiences rather than about topics they don't know well, or engaging students to apply their own ideas about a topic instead of describing it.

Cyber Tools to Detect Cyber Cheaters

Increasingly, schools, their employees, and students are turning to software and Web sites or Web-based tools to detect and deter plagiarists. A sampling of the tools I found follows.

SafeAssignment

An online service called SafeAssignment uses an algorithm to compare students' submitted manuscripts against an archive containing more than 8 billion documents, scholastic and news databases with more than 9 million articles and database of previously submitted papers. In minutes, SafeAssignment generates a report that identifies unoriginal content, including modified or paraphrased text. Instructors can also use SafeAssignment as a learning tool for students, by letting them view reports on their own papers and identify all instances of unintended plagiarism. For more information about SafeAssignment, visit www.MyDropBox.com.

Turnitin

A product called Turnitin, available through www.turnitin.com, performs a similar originality check on papers submitted to the Web site by licensed users of the tool.

EVE2

Essay Verification Engine 2 software, which runs on the Windows operating systems, performs complex searches to find material a writer has plagiarized from any Internet site. EVE2 can read documents in plain text, Microsoft Word, or Corel Word Perfect format, and it returns links to Web pages from which a student may have plagiarized. If it finds evidence of plagiarism, EVE2 records the URL where the source information resides and gives teachers a full report on the percent of the essay plagiarized, and a copy of the paper showing all plagiarism highlighted in red. For more information, see www.canexus.com/abouteve.shtml.

Glatt plagiarism detection tool set

A company called Glatt Plagiarism Services (their Web site is www.plagiarism.com) offers three anti-plagiarism applications:

- GPTeach is an online tutorial that teaches students how to avoid plagiarism, detect it in their writing, and properly paragraph and attribute quotations.
- GPSP (Glatt Plagiarism Screening Program) detects possible plagiarism by eliminating every fifth word of the suspected student's paper. The student is asked to supply the missing words. Then, GPSP considers the student's correct responses, the amount of time intervening, and other factors in computing a final Plagiarism Probability Score.
- The Glatt Plagiarism Self-Detection Test, at www.plagiarism.com/self.detect.htm, allows writers to test themselves for plagiarism. The writer provides an e-mail address and copies his or her text to this Web site. The test then runs and sends the results to the submitter via e-mail.

However, automated plagiarism detection tools aren't infallible; they can sometimes find evidence of stealing where none has occurred. In his article, "The Web's Plagiarism Police" at www.salon.com/tech/feature/1999/06/14/plagiarism/print.html, Andy Dehnaut says that when he used one online plagiarism testing service to analyze his 30-page senior thesis, the service reported that his paper was plagiarized. Upon checking the URL identified as the source of the plagiarized information, Dehnaut found that the link connected to an online copy of his thesis. The detection tool had not recognized that the online document was the same thesis being checked.

Dehnaut goes on to say that plagiarism detection services can and sometimes do flag papers using identical quotes or papers written on similar topics. When he tested another research paper, the tool found phrases that matched other sources found on the Net and stated that the "paper probably contains plagiarized material from the given manuscript." But, according to Dehnaut, "A

quick check showed that the indicated sentences were all legitimate excerpts, appearing within quotation marks and citing sources. Again, the service came across like a hanging judge.” Ultimately, he argues, “nothing can completely replace the watchful eyes of human beings.”

Using Reference Sources without Plagiarizing: Guidelines

No writer can avoid plagiarism without learning to recognize its various forms. Here are some guidelines to help you cite sources properly:

- You can borrow another writer’s phrases or ideas if you cite their origin and your usage conforms to fair use laws. However, make sure your document contains more original than borrowed content; the more that’s original, the better. If your work contains mostly someone else’s words or ideas, you may still open to charges of plagiarism.
- Fair use laws specify that merely copying something is not “fair use.” But if you transform the material in an original way, it’s more likely to be considered “fair use” rather than plagiarism.
- Your reuse of information is less likely to be plagiarism if your work’s content, or its target audience, is significantly different from that of the original source.
- Changing only a few words or phrases or only rearranging the original sentence order of another author’s work is plagiarism. To paraphrase effectively, make every effort to restate the content in your own words.

Always give credit to or document the source of the following:

- Ideas or words presented in any public (broadcast, written, or online) medium.
- Information you gain through interviews or conversations with another person.
- Graphics or other materials you didn’t create.
- Direct, verbatim quotations.

You don’t need to attribute or document items such as:

- Your own experiences, observations, thoughts, or conclusions.
- Results you obtain through your own research.
- Graphic or visual images you created.
- Folklore, myths, urban legends, or historical events.
- Generally-accepted facts or truisms.

For a concise review of the Chicago Manual of Style’s rules for formatting citations, visit <http://library.osu.edu/sites/guides/chicagogd.php#newsarticle>.

Kathy Graden is a technical communications professional whose experience includes corporate communications, software and hardware documentation, technical article authoring, and technical publications management for employers including Computer Associates, Lucent Technologies, Honeywell, and Acxiom, Inc. She holds Six Sigma and Project Management Professional certifications. A senior member of STC, she has received a Distinguished Chapter Service Award and other recognition for services to the Phoenix Chapter Community.

Danger! Will Robinson, Danger!

We were very happy to see our smiling Hospitality Manager, Norm Haskett up and about at the November meeting. He has healed from his adventure cleaning out the gutters. Norm says that he’s now hired a landscaping crew to come weekly to handle the chores that get the best of him.

On the other hand, Dana Osborne, looked elegant with her bright orange cast and “knee scooter.” She is not healing

as well as the doctors would like, so she will have the break surgically repaired on November 20th.

For the rest of our membership:

- Look both ways when you cross the street!
- Don’t climb ladders without a spotter!
- Stay out of the ice and snow (*right, Arizona, uh huh*).
- Be careful out there, we need you.

Grammar Anyone?

Can vs. May

by Ms. Grammar



A question beginning “Can I...” has been spoken by most of us at some point. As children, if we asked, “Can I have some candy?,” many of us heard, “I don’t know, *can* you?” Our parent or teacher was teaching us that *can* denotes ability to do something, *may* denotes permission.

The experts disagree

For Merriam-Webster Dictionary, this distinction is no longer true. www.m-w.com includes this meaning for *can*: “have permission to—used interchangeably with *may* <you *can* go now if you like>.”

This issue has been discussed from time to time in technical writing forums. Ms. Grammar says that laziness should not guide usage, particularly in technical writing! The Oxford dictionary and several others agree. www.AskOxford.com states, “When expressing or asking permission, *may* is regarded as more correct (and more polite) than *can*.” The verb *can* should be used to express ability or capability.”

In addition to the usage described above, *may* is also used to indicate possibility, as in “It may rain tonight.”

Simple advice for consistency and clarity

An article by Lynn Gaertner-Johnston discusses the questions that sometimes arise in trying to choose between *can* and *may*: [Can vs. May--Not So Simple!](#)

Educational Opportunities

December 6, 2006

Our own **Maggie Haenel** will present an STC Web-telephone seminar, “Creating Training that Sticks,” from 1 to 2:30 PM Eastern Time. The seminar will focus on how adults learn and what makes them remember information. For more information or to register for the seminar, please visit stc.webex.com.

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Jane Smith presents Effective Interactions in Learning to the Arizona Chapter of ISPI. Effective interactions spell success or failure for any learning event. Jane Smith

To paraphrase her advice, base your usage on the intent of the sentence:

- Ability or capability → *can*
- Possibility or permission → *may*

Test yourself

1. For this product, tasks (*can*, *may*) represent one or many operations.
2. According to the memo, everyone in the Engineering Department (*can*, *may*) go to the celebration.
3. The equipment (*can*, *may*) be started manually or automatically.
4. If the function does not complete, the level (*can*, *may*) go up.
5. Rates (*can*, *may*) vary, as (*can*, *may*) the benefit programs.

Answers:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. <i>Can</i> (ability) | 4. <i>May</i> (possibility) |
| 2. <i>May</i> (permission) | 5. <i>Can</i> . (ability) |
| 3. <i>Can</i> (ability) | |

Do you disagree? Send a note to the [Rough Draft](#) editor and she’ll forward it to me.

will then share their screen sequence and receive feedback.

DATE: Wednesday, December 6, 2006
TIME: 5:30 - 6:00 p.m. Light Refreshments, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. Program
COST: Free for members, \$10 non-members
RSVP: Eva Martony at President@AZISPI.ORG
LOCATION: Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA)* 4220 N. 25th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85016

More information at: <http://www.azispi.org/index.htm>

Upcoming STC Web Seminars

Full information at: stc.webex.com

January 17, 2007
 The Xfactor-From HTML to XHTML
 Presenter(s): Neil Perlin
 Level: Beginner/Intermediate

January 31, 2007
 ANSI Z535.6- A New Standard for Safety Information in Product-Accompanying Literature
 Presenter(s): Steven Hall and Elaine Wisniewski
 Level: Intermediate/Advanced

February 7, 2007
 Creating Indexes on Web Sites and Intranets
 Presenter(s): Heather Hedden
 Level: All Levels

February 21, 2007
 Working in Global Teams
 Presenter(s): Melanie Doulton and Makarand Pandit
 Level: All Levels

March 14, 2007
 Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Content Management, But Were Afraid to Ask
 Presenter(s): Rahel Bailie
 Level: Beginner

March 28, 2007
 Visible: The New Valuable
 Presenter(s): Austin Skaggs and Christine Granger
 Level: Intermediate

April 11, 2007
 Creating Interactive CBTs with Captivate-in Half the Time
 Presenter(s): Kevin Siegel
 Level: All Levels

May 2, 2007
 Choosing the Right Usability Technique (to answer the right question)
 Presenter(s): Whitney Quesenbery
 Level: Intermediate

November Meeting Evaluations

Date: November 14, 2006

Speaker Name/Topic: Jane Smith-Managing e-Learning Projects: Avoiding the Pitfalls

Total attendees: 32

Total number of evaluation sheets completed: 26 (61.7%)

1. Your overall impressions.

	Disappointing	Acceptable	Good	Very Good	Outstanding
Speaker(s)		1	4	8	10
Topic			4	15	11
Geographic Location		8	6	10	6
Meal Options			6	9	1
Networking Opportunity			9	13	3
Price			10	12	1

2. The content you found most useful:
 - Sample pitfalls and interaction activities

- How to apply managing projects to technical writing. Many of the principles of avoiding e-Learning pitfalls apply to technical writing.
- All of the content was useful and interesting. (3)

- Design flowchart/kickoff meeting
- Process, roles, PM guidelines
- Range of roles
- E-learning process, problems and how to handle
- Presentation and handout
- Exercise with large group
- Examples
- Real world experience
- The e-learning project model

3. What motivated you to attend this month's meeting?

- Jane!!
- Networking (2)
- Topic and location
- Co-workers
- CMAC
- Being a good active member
- Near my home and topic of interest
- I love STC!!
- I come every month!

4. How far did you travel to attend this meeting? (Circle mileage or note the zip code from which you traveled)

0 - 5 miles	6-10 miles	11-15 miles	15+ miles	Zip Code
1	2	6	8	85045 85226 85239 85296 85209 85034 85032 85259 85027 85203 85205 85305 85255 85258 85251 85302

5. How do you prefer to learn about upcoming meeting topics and locations? Rank your selections if marking more than one. (1-5, most-least preferred)

1st choice	2nd choice	3rd choice	
6	5	3	STC-Phoenix Chapter Web site
2	5	1	Rough Draft
13	2		e-mail notification
1	1		Other mode (please note preference details) Postcard
			Other professional organization announcement

6. General comment or suggestions:

- The food was outstanding! Better than the 'old' hotel. Would prefer different drink choices.
- Encourage carpooling to save time, fuel and sanity.
- Keep up the great work!
- Food was great! Best ever.
- Often too many tangents during presentation.
- Great examples.
- Terrific handout, useful for discussions with clients.
- Loved the food! (wished I had a doggy bag).
- Very good!
- The buffet style meal is a good idea.
- This location was a bit far north for me. The commute time was over an hour.
- Food was excellent.
- Great topics, great food, great location.
- Great meeting!

A few evaluation comments have mentioned the limited beverage selection. We are providing the basics, which means beverages that are easily transportable and fit in the meeting budget.

If you want something other than water, iced tea, or lemonade, feel free to bring it yourself. Keep in mind that University of Phoenix *does not allow alcohol* on its campuses.

You also have the option of bringing your own meal if the evening's menu is not to your taste.



Help Wanted

Your STC Phoenix chapter needs volunteers in many areas. There are current opportunities as well as ones for the upcoming 2006-2007 program year.

Why should you volunteer?

- You can practice or enhance existing skills or learn new ones.
- You'll meet new people and expand your network.
- You'll have fun!
- You can add your volunteer position to your resume or portfolio.

We are currently seeking volunteers in the following areas:

- **Rough Draft Associate Editor:** work with the Managing Editor producing the month newsletter.
- **Volunteer Manager:** recruit volunteers for positions within the chapter, maintain list of volunteers.

- **Arrangements Manager:** contact caterers and plan meals for monthly program meetings. This manager works with the President and a review committee.
- **Program committee members:** help plan and organize programs for the upcoming year.
- **Education committee members:** help plan and organize seminars and workshops for the upcoming year.
- **Newsletter contributors:** help keep our members informed with news regarding our profession, community and SIG activities.

To volunteer or to get more information: contact Tim Eull or any one of the **Phoenix Community Contacts** members.

Have skills in an area not mentioned above? Not sure of what you want to do or how you can help? LET US KNOW! We'll find a place for you!

Phoenix Chapter 2006-07 Calendar

Here's the calendar for the 2006-2007 program. As you'll notice, we have several open dates for programs. If you know presenters whose topics would be of interest or a topic idea for the program, please contact Maggie Haenel mhaenel@earthlink.com.

This is *your* chapter. The Committee Managers and Administrative Council (CMAC) want to present programs of interest to you. As always, members are welcome to

attend CMAC meetings. We try to arrive by 5:30 to order dinner, the business meeting starts at 6 p.m. Locations will be posted as soon as they are available.

We are always looking for north/south locations to host CMAC meetings. If you know of a facility that has a private room, preferably with a door, contact Dana Osborne, danaosborne@cox.net

Date	Purpose/Subject	Location
Tuesday, October 3, 2006	CMAC meeting	Old Chicago - 530 W Broadway, Tempe AZ Map
Tuesday, October 10, 2006	Program meeting: Blogging, Podcasting, and VLogging - Matt Moran	University of Phoenix - Chandler Campus - 2975 W. Linda Lane (Off Price-Loop 101 and Ray Road) Map
Tuesday, November 7, 2006	CMAC meeting	Havana Café-Ahwatukee, 4232 E Chandler Blvd, 480-704-2600. For meal - arrive at 5:30 pm. Meeting begins promptly at 6:00 pm
Tuesday, November 14, 2006	Program meeting: Project Management for E-Learning: Avoiding the Pitfalls - Jane Smith	University of Phoenix - Northwest Campus - 15601 North 28th Avenue (Just west of I-17, north of Greenway Rd.) Map
Tuesday, December 5, 2006	CMAC meeting	Keegan's Tavern & Grill, 32nd & Camelback, Phoenix
Tuesday, December 12, 2006	Program meeting: Using Your Technical Communication Skills for Other Areas (Culinary Writing) - Jim Morgan	UoP - Chandler Campus - 2975 W. Linda Lane (Off Price-Loop 101 and Ray Road) Map
Tuesday, January 2, 2007	CMAC meeting	TBD
Tuesday, January 9, 2007	Program meeting: How to Be the Hero in Your Own Life - Rebecca Joy	UoP - Northwest Campus - 15601 North 28th Ave. (Just west of I-17, north of Greenway Rd.) Map
Tuesday, February 6, 2007	CMAC meeting	TBD
Thursday, February 15, 2007	Program meeting: An Evening with Susan Burton, STC's Executive Director	UoP - Chandler Campus - 2975 W. Linda Lane (Off Price-Loop 101 and Ray Road) Map
Tuesday, March 6, 2007	CMAC meeting	TBD
Tuesday, March 13, 2007	Program meeting: Localization - Hans Fenstermacher	UoP - Northwest Campus - 15601 North 28th Ave. (Just west of I-17, north of Greenway Rd.) Map
TBD, Spring 2007	CARSEF	TBD
Tuesday, April 3, 2007	CMAC meeting	TBD
Tuesday, April 10, 2007	Program meeting: Topic TBD	UoP - Chandler Campus - 2975 W. Linda Lane (Off Price-Loop 101 and Ray Road) Map
Tuesday, May 1, 2007	CMAC meeting	TBD
Tuesday, May 8, 2007	Program meeting: Topic TBD	UoP - Northwest Campus - 15601 North 28th Ave. (Just west of I-17, north of Greenway Rd.) Map
May 13-17, 2007	STC International Conference	Minneapolis, MN
Tuesday, June 5, 2007	CMAC - Turnover	TBD
Tuesday, June 12, 2007	Program meeting: Topic TBD	UoP - Chandler Campus - 2975 W. Linda Lane (Off Price-Loop 101 and Ray Road) Map