Technical Communication Summit Session Descriptions

STC PRESENTS the preliminary listing of sessions for the 2013 Summit, being held 5–8 May in Atlanta, GA. The listing includes session titles, speakers, and descriptions. This list will be updated online (see *http://summit.stc.org*) as more sessions and speakers are added to the conference. Conference education sessions are included with your registration.

There are seven tracks offered, organized to best suit your needs. Below are the sessions organized by track, and alphabetized by session title within each track. A future issue of *Intercom* will have the preliminary program schedule by date and time.

Project Showcase Session

The Project Showcase sessions will include presenters at tables to share their projects with groups of attendees as they walk from table to table. These small groups and discussions will allow technical communicators to share their experiences and discuss various ways to approach projects and solve the related issues. We bring the Project Showcase back for another year and are excited to invite you to be a part of it again. Currently scheduled are:

- **Eileen Palsson,** *Creating and Cultivating Community Via CHM*
- **Erin Brennum and Celia Groff,** *From Confusion to Cohesion: Process-Oriented Documentation*
- **Katherine (Kit) Brown-Hoekstra,** *Gamifying Your Content*
- **Judy Hall and Laura Hartman,** *How Tos: Creating a Quick Path to Success!*
- **Neil Perlin,** *MotoDawg: A Case Study in Native App Development*
- **Xiling Wang and Feng Wang,** *Role of Attitudes in Assessing TC Instruction Feasibility*
- **Michael Boses and Patrick Quinlan,** *Using Automation to Improve Your Content for Free*

Lightning Talks

The popular "Lightning Talks" return to the Summit as well. These talks are five-minute presentations on topics of interest to technical communicators. Each speaker gets 20 slides, displayed for 15 seconds per slide. Timing is strictly enforced. Expect presentations that are insightful, thought-provoking, humorous, and possibly controversial. Expect to see oratory skills tested, and expect to have fun. Currently scheduled are:

- **Jamie Gillenwater,** *101 Reasons We Love Tech Comm*
- **Bill Swallow,** *Any Ol' Lightning Talk*
- **Katherine (Kit) Brown-Hoekstra,** *Changing the World*
- **David Caruso,** *Inspiration Redux: Move In The Right Direction*
- **Alyssa Fox,** *Management Munchies: Nibbles of Leadership Advice*
- **Richard Hamilton,** *Marketing Copy is Dead*
- **Marcia Wood,** *Motivational Editing*
- **Rhyne Armstrong,** *Oh, the Crap I've Seen*
- **Robert Hershenow,** *Quality Recordings: Quick and Clean*
- **Ray Gallon,** *The Hairball of Content*
- **Brenda Huettner,** *The Mars Science Laboratory Tweetup From Close Up*
- **Michael Opsteegh,** *To Serif or Not to Serif*
- **Nathaniel Lim,** *What's in a Nametag*

Progressions

Progressions are round-table discussions on a general topic, with multiple presenters per session. Attendees can join any presenter during the progression, and will be able to switch tables to hear multiple progressions.

Education and Training Progression

Includes topics such as *Using Mentoring Programs to Collaborate With Industry* and more still to be added.

Professional Development Progression

Includes topics such as *Building and Maintaining Your Personal Brand*; *The Retirement of Technical Communicators*; *Growing Opportunities in Content Management and Social Media*; *Technical Communication: A Map to Better Understanding*; *Shock-Proofing Your Use of Social Media*; and *Strategic IA Careers: Skills and Knowledge for Success.*

Writing and Editing Progression

Includes topics such as *Cultivating In-House Sources of Documentation*; *PlainTalk: Get the Marbles Out of Your Message*; *Defining Policy, Procedure, and Other Governing Documents*; *Managing Technical Knowledge: Overcoming Roadblocks*; *Technical Editors and Converting Documentation to DITA Content*; *Career Development for Policies & Procedures Writers*; and *Every Topic Is Page One.*

Communication and Translation Progression

Includes topics such as *SME>Me>E: Screencast Creation and Collaboration*; *When Words are Not Enough*; *Is Your Content Ready for Localization?*; *You Want That in Chinese—Yesterday??*; *Traditional Executive Summary versus the Videogame Proposal One-Sheet*; *Localization Is Key to Going Global*; *New International Standard for Content Management*; *There's Nothing Simple About Simplified Technical English*; and *Plain Language: Accessibility for Content.*

Education Sessions

Track: Content Development and Delivery

ELISA SAWYER, *A Technical Writer's Trip to Hollywood*
While getting a certificate in screen writing through UCLA, the presenter discovered that an understanding of how to craft scenes and characters improved her technical writing. She will summarize key information provided in screen-writing curriculum, and how it relates to information architecture and addressing the needs of our technical audiences.

RITA BRIODY and BRETT MCCORKLE,
Baby Steps: Automated Publishing Using Arbortext and SharePoint
Learn how Erie Insurance is developing an automated publishing system based on SharePoint 2010 to provide targeted search results for Agents and Employees, thereby saving time and improving efficiency.

PAUL WLODARCZYK, *Collaborating in DITA*
In 2012, easyDITA conducted a survey of the current state of collaboration in information development organizations. Despite widespread DITA adoption, most review happens in PDF. This presentation discusses DITA-based collaboration best practices and demonstrates emerging technologies that improve the speed and effectiveness of review and collaboration.

JEAN-LUC DOUMONT,
Conveying Messages with Graphs
Graphical displays are still poorly mastered by technical communicators and other professionals. They seldom think of using graphs to communicate about data; when they do, they often use the wrong graphs or in the wrong way. Based on Doumont's book *Trees, Maps, and Theorems* about "effective communi-cation for rational minds," this session discusses how to select the right graph, how to optimize the graph's construction, and how to phrase a useful caption.

MATSO LIMTIACO, *DITA*
Proof-of-Concept Publishing System
This presentation describes how the presenter's team developed a proof-of-concept DITA publishing system using existing tools and without a CMS or a dedicated DITA resource. The presenter's company is using the system to produce several 180-page user manuals, some in 10 languages.

SARAH MADDOX, *Doc Sprints: The Ultimate in Collaborative Document Development*
This session describes how to plan and run a successful doc sprint. The result? High-quality documentation, happy customers, and an enhanced reputation for your tech comm team.

LEAH GUREN, *Editing as an Extreme Sport*
Forget bungee-jumping and rock climbing: are you bold enough to take on the challenge of Extreme Editing? It takes nerves of steel, quick reflexes, and razor-sharp intellect. Learn how to fearlessly cut through the fluff, boldly slash vague prose, and bravely restructure to improve usability. No safety equipment required!

RAY GALLON, *Embedding User Assistance Using DITA*
This presentation demonstrates a real (and ongoing) DITA implementation at a small, startup company, on a single application at very low cost. The project is a "just in time" layered user assistance system. Ample time is provided for interactive discussion and comment on technique and design principles.

SCOTT PRENTICE, *EPUB and Tech Comm—Are We Ready?*
This presentation will bring you up to speed on the current state of EPUB tools and technologies, and show you how to make the most of this new content delivery option. EPUBs, ebooks, and technology are changing the way people consume information. Can the tech comm industry make efficient use of this technology? What type of content is it best suited for? Does it really make your documentation available on every device and platform? Is it really ready, and if so how do you get started? Come see.

JURGEN MUTHIG, *Functional Design: Developing a Standard That Fits Your Needs*
The functional design method is based on a useful linguistic approach that guides you in defining all the rules which are necessary for consistent documentation. And if you work with DITA, it helps you develop an authoring guide which guarantees that DITA can keep its promises.

CAROL LOSAPIO, *Key Principles and Practices for Communicating Science*
The call for scientists to do a better job of communicating both the meaning and the nature of their work is getting louder. Public understanding of science affects people's ability to appreciate and make full use of the products of science.

RHYNE ARMSTRONG, *Multiple Roads to Knowledge Management*
Taking the wrong road can be dangerous. If you go too far without making sure you are in the right direction, you might end up somewhere that can be harmful to your organization, your team, or even to yourself.

MICHAEL OPSTEEGH, *Planning and Creating Engaging Infographics*
Infographics are a powerful way of communicating large amounts of disparate data to inform or persuade your audience in a manner that is often more engaging than text alone. This presentation covers the different methods of displaying data, planning and wireframing, tools that can be used, and ethical considerations.

BILL SWALLOW, *Six Easy Ways to Control Your Localization Costs*
There is a continually growing need to deliver content in multiple languages for a diverse geographic and cultural audience. The cost of producing all of this information can seem staggering, but there are some fundamental ways in which you can lower these costs.

JEAN-LUC MAZET, *Take Control of Your Content*
The source of all evil is The Source. Do you want to learn more about controlled authoring tools and practices to facilitate, control, and automate content creation tasks? This tool-agnostic session will present advantages and raise questions about using these tools for content development, translation, and maintenance.

HALCYON LAWRENCE, *Using Foreign-Accented Speech: To Localize or Not?*
There are currently more non-native speakers of English in the world than native speakers, yet existing speech-mediated applications marginally reflect this fact—in part because not enough is known about how people will respond to accented speech-mediated technologies. This presentation addresses the conditions best suited for use of foreign-accented speech.

KEES VAN MANSOM, *Using Semantic Technology to Create Process-Driven Documentation*
Online documentation often requires users to search for information and interpret it within their context. This session demonstrates how, by using semantic technologies, instructions can be embedded in a process and made actionable, providing users the right information at the right time and making their actions reproducible.

Track: Content Strategy and Design

RAHEL BAILIE, *Big Content: Content Strategy as a Design Framework*
Content becomes the lynchpin around which the rest of the design, technology, and user experience revolve. Good content is the logical nexus of the user experience; it makes sense to start a project with the content. Content strategy promises to upend the framework used for development projects.

R. N. HOMER CHRISTENSEN, *Collaborative Single-Source Development of Documentation and Training*
This session provides a fast-paced exploration of how the presenter's company developed and implemented a multi-author, single-source (non-DITA) workflow into a project mid-stream to provide a flexible, well-received set of documentation and training materials for the world's largest prison system. He will discuss general principles, getting buy-in from management and team members, challenges, and the pay-offs.

CHARLES COOPER and ANN ROCKLEY, *Content Strategy for Mobile Devices*
Mobile has forever changed the way people access and interact with your content. This session introduces the concepts of mobile content strategy and design and the tools you need to address the requirements of the customer, the content to be delivered, and the ever-changing array of devices for delivery.

ANDREA AMES and ALYSON RILEY, *Defining and Evaluating Success: Metrics for Information Architects*
Demonstrate your impact on your customers and business! Make better design decisions! Discuss and learn to define metrics, evaluate, and articulate the value of your strategic architecture and content initiatives.

SCOTT DELOACH, *Embedded User Assistance 101*
In this session, the presenter will share examples of real-world embedded UA and discuss how you can get started creating embedded UA for your new or existing projects.

SARA WACHTER-BOETTCHER, *Flexible Content Demands Future-Ready*
Your users are mobile and they expect your content to be. But locked into inflexible pages and documents, today's content isn't ready for the world of responsive sites, apps, APIs, and read-later services. Instead of scrambling to make more content, you need content that does more: Content that's structured so it can travel and shift while keeping its meaning intact. But structured content isn't just about your CMS. It affects your whole organization.

ALAN PORTER, *From Technical Writer to Content Strategist*
Content strategy is a hot topic right now. The rise in corporate awareness of the value of content represents a great opportunity for technical writers to leverage their skills and experience. This session will help you position yourself to take advantage of that opportunity.

EDNA ELLE, *Managing and Optimizing Unstructured-to-Structured Conversions*
This session describes steps to manage and optimize conversions from unstructured content to XML. It includes planning strategies and pre-conversion tasks, tips, and tools that save time and yield more accurate conversions.

VAL SWISHER, *The 10 Golden Rules of Global Content Strategy*
A global content strategy is a structure for managing all of your content that is consumed by people in languages other than the source. Take the best of unified content strategy and Web strategy, put them into a blender, puree, and garnish with many languages. Voila!

LEE LEFEVER, *The Art of Explanation*
Description to be determined.

MOLLYE BARRETT, *The Content Life Cycle: A Strategic Compass*
Use the content life cycle to help identify business requirements for how content must be treated, handled, and processed. This session will demonstrate how to analyze the content life cycle for workflow improvements, automation, and ways to measure cost, and provide the basis for identifying hardware, software, and human requirements.

SARAH O'KEEFE, *Transforming Technical Content into a Business Asset*
Technical content is often the last in line for investment and innovation, but poor content has profound effects inside and outside the organization. Before relegating technical content to the necessary evil role with minimal investment, consider whether it might actually be less expensive to create high-quality technical information.

Track: Education and Training

JAMIE GILLENWATER, *Create Learning that Lasts with Interactive Documents*
Take a lesson from the trainer's handbook: Engage your users with interactive chunks of information. Learn how to apply adult learning styles through various tools.

TOM JOHNSON, *Creating Video Tutorials in an Agile Environment*
In agile environments, video tutorials often have a short shelf-life—remaining current only until the next release. When you create videos, therefore, you have to create them inexpensively and quickly. At the same time, you must maintain professional standards for the visual display and sound quality.

PHYLISE BANNER,
Massive Open Online Learning
This session will explore design strategies and delivery processes related to Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). Focus will be on using the MOOC as a framework for professional development and workplace learning.

NICKY BLEIEL, SAUL CARLINER, and TOM JOHNSON, *User Assistance, Tech Comm, and Learning*
This panel will explore the role of user assistance in learning for the workplace and why this is important. We will invite the audience to join us in a conversation about how learning happens through UA and techniques we can use to make our UA a more effective learning resource.

Track: People, Projects, and Business Management

ALYSSA FOX, *Bending Without Breaking: Info Dev Flexibility in Agile*
This session helps technical communicators face challenges in agile planning and execution. It's increasingly common for writers to work on multiple agile teams. The session includes tips for better communication and teamwork on your agile team, with the goal of a "whole team approach" in mind.

ALYSON RILEY, *Building Effective IA Teams in Resource-Challenged Times*
How do you build a world-class team of information architects? Adopt a collaborative, community-based approach with corporate-level sponsorship. Learn techniques to break down organizational barriers, lead with a common vision and set of goals, navigate tricky political waters, drive change with metrics, and grow IA skills.

JENNA MOORE, *Documentation Thrives in an Agile Methodology*
The agile software development methodology offers new opportunities for documentation teams to integrate schedules, eliminating many traditional blocks that have stood in the way of timely and accurate information development. When documentation is included in the agile schedule, everybody wins. Learn how to make your agile documentation project thrive.

LISA PIETRANGELI, *How to Build a Business Case and Influence*
In this workshop, the presenter will address the information and tools necessary to influence change and present a case for improvements at your company. Through use of an actual case study and practical tools, you will explore how to start building a case as a group.

ANDREA WENGER, *Less Pain, More Gain: Personality and Change Management*
Humans are the most adaptable species on earth. Yet when change is imposed on us in the workplace, it can create stress and resistance. This session offers insight into how you can leverage knowledge of personality type to effectively manage change, whether in a supervisory or staff position.

KATE FLETCHER and MCKENZIE ZEISS, *Supporting Customers: Onsite and Online*
The presenters discuss two key ways technical communicators can directly support customers: helping clients process and manage our documentation set and crafting training materials on-the-fly at software go-lives. Connecting writers with clients provides consistent feedback about our documentation set and gives technical communicators real-world insight into their industry.

Track: Professional Development

BARBARA GIAMMONA and VICTORIA KOSTER-LENHARDT, *A Marketing Communications Career: Making the Transition*
Your technical writing skills can enable you to move into the lucrative and exciting career of marketing communications. Learn about the pros and cons and how to grow your career in this direction from people who've made the change.

KIRSTY TAYLOR, *And Then There Was One ... Documentation Team*
This session discusses keeping your sanity in a merger. In the past year, the presenter's team of technical communicators was merged with another global team due to being acquired. Kirsty will look at the facets of a doc team merger—culture, standards, time differences, and multiple Englishes.

JACK MOLISANI, *Career Lessons I Learned from Selling Ginsu Knives*
The presenter was laid off in the 1990s and a friend offered him a summer job selling Ginsu knives. Fifteen years later, he now has his own technical writing and staffing company, but will always remember seven career lessons he learned from selling Ginsu knives—and shares them in this session.

HANNAH MORGAN and BEN WOELK, *Empowering the Introvert Within: Becoming an Outstanding Leader*
Introverts possess a quiet confidence that commands respect. When you leverage the innate strengths of introverts—self awareness, concern, and communication—you gain recognition as a leader. Discover how you can become an outstanding leader.

JENNIFER ANTHONY, CARRIE CHAMBERS, BARBARA GIAMMONA, SABINA HORIGAN, RICK MERWIN, and BIANCA SZCZESNIAK, *Interviewing SMEs: Covering the Bases and Hitting Homers*
Is it only an urban legend that brownies will guarantee that a Subject Matter Expert will make time to meet with you? And when s/he does agree to meet, how do you make good use of that time? Come learn SME-handling tips from this multi-industry, multi-generational panel of experts.

CRAIG BAEHR, HILLARY HART, JOEL KLINE, and LIZ POHLAND, *Reanimating the TC Body of Knowledge*
Since June 2012, a team of STC members and staff has been redeveloping the beta knowledge portal known as the TC BOK (Technical Communication Body of Knowledge) for launch at the STC Summit in Atlanta. The overall goal of the project was to reinvigorate the design, content, and delivery of the TC BOK, filling in gaps in content and integrating the development site with the STC website. This presentation introduces the new beta version and each lead facilitator describes his/her specific focus:
• Information development and content management
• Community and social engagement
• Editing and integration of publications/ intellectual property
• Resource development
Come and see how you can use and contribute to this important resource for the profession.

LAURA PALMER, *Staking Your Claim in the Social Media Frontier*
This session explores the roles for technical communicators who would like to be involved with social media. The presenter will engage participants with the critical intersections of tech comm and social media competencies for risk management, tone/style development, communication strategies, training, SME knowledge, and strategic integration of multiple social media channels.

Track: User Experience and Usability

MIKE PACIELLO, *Accessibility*
Description to be determined.

KAI WEBER, *Addicted to Meaning: Mental Models for Technical Communicators*
This presentation explores how "meaning" works in technical communication, why it fails, and how you can create meaningful documentation. Drawing on the cognitive psychology of mental models and user experience design, Kai shows with examples why minimalism works but FAQs don't, and how to write for users without irritating them.

WHITNEY QUESENBERY, *Content for Everyone: Making Information and Multimedia Accessible*
Information is critical, whether reading an article or using an application. And content authors are critical to accessibility. From informative headings to links that make sense to meaningful alternatives for images or multimedia, making content understandable and perceivable is the front line of accessibility. If the audience can't read and understand the information, then it might as well not be there. Come learn how to make sure that your documents, websites, help, or application content is accessible for everyone.

DONN DEBOARD, *Customer Journey Maps: Visualizing an Engaging Customer Experience*
Customer journey maps visually illustrate your customer's experience using your product. We'll define customer journey maps, their components, and how to create them. We'll discuss the benefits of customer journey maps and how we can measure success. Finally, we'll create a customer journey map for a real-world situation.

KAREN BACHMANN, *Effectively Communicating UI and Interaction Design*
Effective design documentation helps ensure the final UI matches the original user goals and informs required changes that are inevitable during a project. Learn what content to include in design documentation as well as different delivery approaches to help communicate effectively with the project teams.

LORI FISHER, *Formalizing the Technical Communication and User Experience Relationship*
We must move beyond collaborative synergy and matrixed teaming of technical communication and user experience to a more formalized relationship, where dedicated user experience skill becomes required staffing for tech comm projects. The user experience must drive the optimal information experience and the required information architecture and design.

MARTA RAUCH, *Game On! Creating User Experience for Gamified Products*
Gamification is coming soon to a product near you. Are you prepared? In 2015, market research predicts that 70% of enterprises will have at least one gamified product. Attend this session to understand gamification's impact on documentation, and gain strategies and best practices for creating gamified user experience.

GINNY REDISH, *Purposes, Personas, Conversations*
Learn and practice making purposes, personas, and conversations as a way to successfully plan, create, and evaluate your work. With examples and a fun practice exercise, you'll see the power of writing specific, measurable, user-focused purposes; creating mini-personas; and conversing with them through your writing.

CAROL BARNUM, *Storytelling the Results of Heuristic Evaluation*
Despite the popularity of low-cost usability testing methods, heuristic evaluation continues to be a popular UX research method. This session reviews the basics and sheds light on new approaches to conducting an expert review and reporting the results.

MICHAEL HUGHES, *Useful, Saleable, and Buildable: The Role of UX*
This session recounts the author's transition from usability expert to user experience architect. Emphasis is placed on making UX an essential and valued role in the requirements definition process. This presentation is particularly appropriate for developers of software or Web applications and documentation professionals who support them.

CHAR JAMES-TANNY, *Writing for Everyone: SEO, ESL, Translation, and Accessibility*
"Keep your feet on the floor. Keep your hands on your lap. Keep your eyes on me." During this session, you will learn about the benefits of consistency, word selection, and careful sentence structure. While anaphora (a rhetorical device using repetition for emphasis) is a valid technique, it can lead to confusion. "Keep" does double duty, meaning "place" in the first two but "watch" in the third. The words we write are available to everyone (blogs, Twitter, Facebook, and more) so we no longer know our audience. Writing needs to be for everyone and easier for them to get the information they need, reduce confusion, translation costs, improve searches, and optimize content strategy.

Track: Web Design and Development

NEIL PERLIN, *Beyond the Bleeding Edge*
As technical communication becomes increasingly technical and as the pace of change accelerates, it's important for technical communicators to stay informed about new tools, technologies, and trends. That's the job of Beyond the Bleeding Edge, a session that provides an early warning system for attendees.

MARK BAKER, *Every Page is Page One*
In a world in which readers arrive at content by doing a search or following a link, every page is page one. Content must not only be findable, it must work once found. Is your content ready for a world in which every page is page one?

MIKE HAMILTON, *Going Mobile? How to Optimize Content and Format*
This session will cover an overview of the mobile space. A one-size-fits-all approach will never be optimal, and with the correct techniques and strategies your content can be optimized for multi-device publishing. We will cover content techniques, CSS techniques, and the various publishing formats available.

DONTE ORMSBY, *How to Build a Referral Machine*
What do successful websites do that others do not? We're revealing the common traits all successful websites share and how you can duplicate their techniques. Learn the common pitfalls that prevent websites from succeeding and the simple steps you can take today to start converting visits into referrals.

ROBERT HERSHENOW, *Make High-Quality Voice Recordings with Simple Equipment*
Increase the quality of your voice recordings, easily and at low cost. Learn about microphones, room acoustics, effective techniques, and why audio quality matters—all in simple, nontechnical language.

MATTHEW PIERCE, *Screen Video: Best Practices, Regardless of the Tool*
Screen videos are used for tutorials or sharing any type of information. Come practice skills that everyone should use before creating a screen recording. Discussion will include concepts of how to create great videos through the editing process and how to choose the file format right for you. ℹ️