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Schedule at a Glance

The full list of speakers is available at https://summit.stc.org/conference/speakers/.

SATURDAY, 13 MAY
Preconference Workshop
9:00 AM–5:00 PM

SUNDAY, 14 MAY
Preconference Workshops
9:00 AM–1:00 PM
2:00–6:00 PM

Illuminariun: After Dark
6:00–9:30 PM

MONDAY, 15 MAY
Concurrent Sessions
9:00–9:45 AM
10:00–10:45 AM
11:00–11:45 AM

Opening Session and Lunch
12:00–2:00 PM

Concurrent Sessions
2:00–2:45 PM
3:00–3:45 PM
4:30–5:15 PM

STC Community Leadership
Information Exchange
5:30–6:15 PM

Sky View Ferris Wheel
6:00 PM

TUESDAY, 16 MAY
Concurrent Sessions
9:00–9:45 AM
10:00–10:45 AM
11:00–11:45 AM

STC Platinum
Anniversary Colloquy
11:00 AM

Honors Celebration and Lunch
12:00–2:00 PM

Concurrent Sessions
2:00–2:45 PM
3:00–3:45 PM
4:30–5:15 PM

STC Communities Social
and Networking Event
5:30–6:15 PM

Dine Around Atlanta
6:00 PM

WEDNESDAY, 17 MAY
Concurrent Sessions
9:00–9:45 AM
10:00–10:45 AM

Closing Session
11:00 AM–12:30 PM

Georgia Aquarium and
Behind the Scenes Tour
1:30 PM

Registration
Sunday 8:00am–5:00pm
Monday 7:00am–5:30pm
Tuesday 7:00am–5:30pm
Wednesday 8:00–11:00am

Expo Hours
Monday 8:00am–3:00pm
Tuesday 8:00am–4:30pm

Thank You,
2023 Summit Committee

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LavaCon
Booth 13

ProSpring
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 Booth 23
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 Booth 7

Visit the Expo Hall

HOURS
Monday 8:00am–3:00pm  |  Tuesday 8:00am–4:30pm

EXHIBITORS

madcap
 Booth 20
software

precision
 Booth 24
content

STROBER
 Booth 11
CONSULTING

TANNER
 Booth 22
CORPORATE SERVICES INC.

STC COMMUNITIES
 Booth 17 and Booth 18

STC 70TH ANNIVERSARY
 Booth 15 and Booth 16

STC CONFERENCE INFORMATION
 Booth 1 and Booth 2

STC ATLANTA CHAPTER
 Booth 19
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CPTC Foundation Level Certification Exam Prep Course (Full Day)

PRESENTER: Dr. Craig Baehr

DESCRIPTION: This one-day preparatory course provides an overview of the Certified Professional Technical Communicator (CPTC) Foundation level exam offered through STC and AMPG International. This course will help you prepare for the Foundation level exam, providing a detailed review of each of the nine core competencies (project planning, project analysis, content development, organizational design, visual communication, written communication, reviewing and editing, content management, and production and delivery) and related learning objectives covered by the exam. Additionally, the course will provide an overview and walkthrough of the major question types, study resources, tips, and a sample examination paper.

SPEAKER BIO: Craig Baehr, Ph.D., STC Fellow, is an APMG International accredited professional trainer, instructional designer, and technical communicator with more than 25 years of technical communication experience. Currently, he serves as STC Chief Examiner for the Certified Professional Technical Communicator (CPTC) certification program and Executive Editor for Intercom magazine. Dr. Baehr is author of numerous books, articles, and presentations on technical communication topics including Web development, online writing, agile communication, and information experience. He has worked in both academia as Professor and Graduate Director of Technical Communication at Texas Tech University and in industry as technical writer/editor, Web developer, and program director for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He is also a Past President of STC and has served multiple terms on its Board of Directors. You can contact Dr. Baehr at stcbaehr@gmail.com.

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**9:00 AM–1:00 PM**

**Advanced Editing for User-pleasing Content**

**PRESENTER:** Leah Guren

**DESCRIPTION:** Are you drowning in a sea of dense legacy content? Do you find yourself fixing typos, rewriting a few heavy sentences, and perhaps enforcing some terminology consistency? The results are better, but the improvement is usually slight, at best. This workshop helps you shift your perspective to make bold and substantive edits, leading to refined content that your users will appreciate.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Leah Guren is the owner and operator of Cow TC. She has been active in the field of technical communication since 1980 and now devotes her time to training and consulting. Leah works with technical communication teams all over the world, using humor and a lively interactive training approach to help them solve their biggest content development challenges. She also provides consulting services to companies, emphasizing documentation UX and creating global-ready content. Leah’s clients include some of the top high-tech and biotech companies, including Intel, IBM, Microsoft, NICE, Johnson & Johnson, RAD, Cisco, Medtronic, and Rambam Medical Center. Leah is a popular speaker in the field of technical communication, a published author, and a leading instructor in the field. She has helped hundreds of new practitioners enter the field of technical communication in Israel, the United States, and throughout Europe. Leah is a Fellow in STC and a founding member of tekcom Israel.

**2:00–6:00 PM**

**The Information Design Workshop**

**PRESENTER:** Saul Carliner

**DESCRIPTION:** Consider the trap of online content. The more that’s available, the more effort required to get what’s needed. This half-day workshop shows you how to design content that users can easily find and comprehend, and generate the desired response. Through a case-study approach, you identify the fifteen essential information design techniques pertaining to issues such as setting effective, measurable goals for projects, gaining, holding the attention of users, and following writing techniques that promote user effectiveness.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Saul Carliner is a professor and chair of the Department of Education at Concordia University in Montreal, the author of over two hundred publications (including the books Career Anxiety: Guidance Through Tough Times, Training Design Basics, and The E-Learning Handbook), president of the Canadian Network for Innovation in Education, and a Fellow and past President of STC. He has received the STC Outstanding Service, Frank R Smith (multiple times), Distinguished Chapter Service, Kenneth Rainey, and Jay Gould Awards.
How to Tell If Your Documentation Is Really Helping Your Users

**PRESENTER:** Dave Lines

**DESCRIPTION:** As technical writers we spend a lot of time developing user-facing content, but how can we tell if our content is actually helping our users? A couple of years ago the Epic Games IT team introduced a support bot that uses artificial intelligence (AI) to help users directly in Slack. The team hoped that the bot would help answer frequently asked questions, which would free up the Support team to focus on more complex issues. We identified and recorded success metrics when the bot was released, but the IT Documentation team, which was responsible for writing content for the bot, wanted to go a step further and find out how much (or how little) of the bot’s success was attributable to their content. In this session, you will learn how we identified, captured, reported, and reacted to documentation success metrics.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Dave Lines is an IT technical writer at Epic Games. He has over twenty years experience in software development, and in addition to technical writing, he has worked as a visual designer, technical artist, and project manager. Throughout his career, Dave has had a special interest in user experience, and has used various techniques, including usability testing, focus groups, surveys, and web analytics to measure product and content effectiveness. Dave is also an amateur musician, and when he’s not writing docs or reviewing metrics, you can find him playing double bass in the Indie Strings community orchestra.

How to Move from Linear Technical Publications to Context-Based Instructions

**PRESENTER:** Kees Van Mansom

**DESCRIPTION:** Imagine yourself picking up a new car. As you explore the interior of your brand-new car, you find a 500-page owner manual that takes up half of your glove compartment. If you’re like me, the first thing you do is start browsing through this book, trying to find out as much as possible about the cool features of your new car. But every time, I’m disappointed and start figuring out things myself. If only I could ask my car to explain how to do something and then get an answer that gives me exactly the information I need. In short, wouldn’t it be great if we could offer users the experience they deserve: documentation that is tailored to their needs, presented in a non-linear way in multiple formats and on multiple devices, and that is not limited to user documentation alone? In this session, we will zoom in on how technical publication departments can increase the value of their documentation products by transforming their way of working.

**SPEAKER BIO:** I lost my first temp job by mentioning that I found the work so repetitive that I felt like a robot. Since then, I have dedicated my working life to using and explaining technology to motivate people and to help them achieve more. By choosing such a people-first approach to technology, I believe organizations can enable and inspire their people and use technology to offer a highly personalized, context-driven experience to their customers. As a leading technical solution architect in Accenture, I help my clients to become more successful by architecting state-of-the-art technical solutions for various business problems. These solutions include, but are not limited to, process transformation and orchestration, often combined with AI, robotic process automation, and augmented reality-based solutions.
Structured Strategy: How to Supercharge Your Content Analysis with XML and XPath

**PRESENTER:** Josh Anderson

**DESCRIPTION:** The best content strategists are limited by how much content they can analyze. There comes a point where a content set becomes too large to analyze using usual methods. Do you have the skills to scale your strategy? Enter XML and XPath, two languages that provide deep insight into content with superhuman efficiency. This session teaches code-shy content strategists enough of these languages to be effective. You may be used to interviewing your users. Now learn how to query your content itself!

**SPEAKER BIO:** Josh Anderson is an American-Canadian information architect at Precision Content. He analyzes and structures content to reveal the insights that come from the creative organization of information. Josh was an English teacher in Japan and an SEO specialist in the Chicagoland area before earning a Master of Information at the University of Toronto. Josh has spoken at industry conferences such as ContentTECH Summit, ConVEx, LavaCon, and World IA Day events in Toronto and Okinawa. In his free time, Josh creates and listens to a wide variety of music.

Interviewing Subject Matter Experts Effectively

**PRESENTER:** Nicky Bleiel

**DESCRIPTION:** Interviewing subject matter experts (SMEs) is an important skill technical communicators need to master to do our jobs effectively. In this talk, we will discuss tips and tricks for all three stages of an interview — preparing, conducting, and following up. We’ll discuss how to use the principles of both journalism and technical communication for an efficient and productive interview — whether the interview is in-person, virtual, or asynchronous.

We will discuss:
- The 3 stages of an interview
- Preparing questions
- The “magic” question
- Virtual, asynchronous, and proactive interviewing

Resources for both technical communicators and SMEs will be provided.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Nicky Bleiel is the Senior Information Developer & Content Strategist at Innovative Systems. She is a Fellow and Past President of STC with more than 20 years of experience writing and designing content for software products in a variety of industries. She is a popular speaker at many conferences, including the STC Summit, tcworld, WritersUA, CIDM, CPITC, IEEE ProComm, and LavaCon; and has been published in STC’s Intercom, tcworld magazine, ISTC Communicator, and more. Nicky is the Chair of the STC 70th Anniversary Celebration Task Force. In 2021, she was the inaugural recipient of the STC Lifetime Achievement for Excellence in Service. See nickybleiel.com for a list of her talks and articles.

From Google to TikTok: Rationalizing the Digital Tutorial

**PRESENTER:** Liping Yang

**DESCRIPTION:** The article “For Gen Z, TikTok Is the New Search Engine” published by the New York Times on September 17, 2022, indicates that TikTok allows young people to “search and figure out how to do something”. TikTok presents challenges and opportunities to the design and the galvanization of digitalized life. It has shifted the perception of learning and tutoring. The digital tutorial is a trend, and technical communication may eventually have to “roll with the ride”.

Digital tutorials, compared with paper-based tutorials, act as an effective technique in multimodal learning. This session examines video tutorials and interactive web or program tutorials. The session discusses the strengths and limitations of their affordability, UI, UX, and effective design principles in various rhetorical settings. It also covers the pedagogical practices that challenge students to move beyond the traditional and toward more digitally inclusive and sensitive approaches.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Liping Yang is a PhD student of rhetoric and composition at Georgia State University. Liping’s research and teaching interests include digital rhetoric, technical communication, history of rhetoric, activism rhetoric, professional writing, cross-cultural communication, composition pedagogy, and composition studies. Currently, she has published a book translation and eight journal articles. She also teaches English composition to freshmen. Her major academic presentations include those at CCCCs (2022) and SMLA (2022). In addition, she has a master’s degree in English language and literature and a bachelor’s degree in English.
**Publishing DITA with the DITA Open Toolkit**

**PRESENTER:** Alan Houser

**DESCRIPTION:** The DITA Open Toolkit is an open-source software package that supports processing and publishing DITA content. The DITA Open Toolkit is often an organization’s and a writer’s first exposure to automated publishing. Particularly when coming from conventional desktop publishing or help authoring tools, automated publishing with the DITA Open Toolkit can seem constraining, particularly when compared to the former ease of developing publishing templates and adjusting publishing formats.

This presentation is for writers new to, or curious about, the DITA Open Toolkit. We will discuss how to invoke the DITA Open Toolkit, how to specify output formats that the DITA Open Toolkit supports, and how to make relatively simple customizations to the DITA Open Toolkit to adjust the formatting of your PDF and HTML output.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Alan Houser is a technical communication consultant and trainer in the fields of XML technologies, publishing workflows, authoring and publishing tools, and technical communication best practices. Alan is a Fellow and former president of the Society for Technical Communication, a former member of the OASIS DITA technical committee and Lightweight DITA subcommittee, and an adjunct instructor at Carnegie Mellon University. Alan holds degrees in electrical engineering and professional writing from Carnegie Mellon University, and is a former member of the board of governors of the IEEE Professional Communication Society.

Alan is a frequent presenter at technical communication conferences and enjoys deploying best practices and standards to help organizations improve the efficiency of their technical communication workflows.

**Bringing Instructional Design Perspectives to User Interface Design Education**

**PRESENTER:** Kei Tomita

**DESCRIPTION:** It is important for designers to communicate their design decisions in a logical, concise, and convincing manner to their clients and internal team members. However, many students in our interaction design program struggle with explaining why they make certain design decisions. With this context, I decided to teach instructional design theories in my User Interface Design course. The idea behind these instructional design theories is that human cognition has a limited capacity and we need to design materials in ways that makes it easy for people to process the information (Mayer, 2009). If students can talk about how people process the information and justify their design decisions based on their understanding of human cognition, they can logically and convincingly explain their design process. In my presentation, I will provide a small mock-up lecture on Mayer’s (2009) Spatial Contiguity Principle. This mock-up lecture will provide the audience with a concrete idea of how instructional design theories can help user interface design education.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Dr. Kei Tomita is an assistant professor of interactive design at Kennesaw State University. She received her PhD from the Department of Instructional Systems Technology at Indiana University-Bloomington. Her research investigates how the visual design of instructional media can enhance peoples’ cognitive and affective learning experiences.

**Building a Taxonomy: A Star Wars Journey**

**PRESENTER:** Amanda Patterson

**DESCRIPTION:** Establishing a well-defined global taxonomy is a critical step in untangling your content hairball, especially when cross-functional teams are involved and there are a variety of products to consider. Although a critical challenge, organizing your content can be daunting. Join me to discuss how my team strives to bring together multiple divisions and products to create a taxonomy that puts the customer first.

Amanda will take you through her thought process, talking about what worked and what things she’d do differently. She will share where Hunter Douglas is today in the journey to classify content, making it as findable and helpful as possible.

**SPEAKER BIO:** After several years of teaching college-level writing, Amanda “fell into” her first tech writing job. And it was love at first manual! Amanda has spent much of her tech writing career building and deploying automated assembly equipment in the manufacturing industry. Currently, she is the technical communications manager at Hunter Douglas, where her foci are on internal and external product documentation for luxury window coverings and growing her rock-star team. Outside of the office, Amanda is the current programs manager for the Rochester chapter of the Society of Technical Communication, a role she loves because she connects with exciting people and helps share their work with the tech comm community. Her PhD is in comparative literature with a specialization in sci-fi and the human experience of the future. Feel free to ask her if she thinks she’s a robot today…
Inside Paligo: Achieving Enterprise-Grade Structured Authoring in a Familiar SaaS UI

**PRESENTER:** Mike Hovan

**DESCRIPTION:** Companies seek to make their documentation more efficient through single-sourcing and reuse. But many single-sourcing projects fail due to the steep learning curves and costs of implementation of traditional systems. So cloud-based solutions like Paligo aim to enable greater collaboration and efficiency. Using modern web technology reduces the costs of implementation, to increase usability and thereby user acceptance.

A true cloud-based authoring and publishing platform to reuse and single-source documentation with a clear focus on usability and user acceptance can improve the chance of realizing the return of investment and actually achieving the increase in efficiency. Why not learn all about it here at STC?

**SPEAKER BIO:** As a content strategist and technical writer, the majority of Mike’s work has been in the financial, real estate, and insurance industries. He’s done UX writing for online banking platforms, managed content migrations, and built context-sensitive help systems from the ground up. Mike also developed the content for an interactive credit card fraud alert system which is now in use by a top bank. Helping to address complex technical communication challenges provides him with a great deal of personal satisfaction.

Let’s Get Accessible: Free Tools with Powerful Results, 1 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Laura Palmer

**DESCRIPTION:** Learn how you can gather basic accessibility feedback using free tools. Enterprise-level accessibility tools are expensive, and often it’s difficult to convince an employer that the investment is warranted. In this session, you’ll learn how to show real value for accessibility tools through the use of a personally curated selection of online resources. You’ll learn quick and easy ways to find common barriers to accessibility. Does your HTML work for accessibility? You’ll learn how to check. Have you leveraged affordances like alt text to help users with screen readers? Again, you’ll learn where the gaps are in your digital products. You’ll leave this session with new ways to assess the products you produce and how well they meet accessibility standards.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Dr. Laura Palmer is the chair of Technical Communication and Interactive Design (TCID) at Kennesaw State University. Her current research focuses on gaming and accessibility; in particular, she wants to learn more about how game design programs teach accessibility and what graduates know about designing for alternatively-abled persons.

The SWAG: How to Estimate Effort for Your Project Manager Using Excel, 1 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Ray Davis

**DESCRIPTION:** Project managers must balance three resources: time, scope, and personnel. When an update to a document is scheduled, project managers ask, “How long is this going to take?” Eight pages per day was the standard for estimating writing time, but in the world of topic-based authoring, the “page” has no meaning. The page doesn’t exist until it springs into existence when published. So how do you answer your project manager’s questions?

You create a SWAG, Scientific Wild . . . Guess. Using Microsoft Excel, you can quantify the effort of writing and updating topics. This method is the “science” in your SWAG. The approach provides input to the project manager’s schedule for every stage of the writing process and sets expectations with leadership that all effort takes time.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Ray Davis has a master’s degree in technical communication and more than twenty-five years of experience as a technical writer, technical writing manager, and software engineer. The majority of his experience is in the health care and medical device domain where he has written instructions for use, service and repair instructions, and managed writers doing the same.

Developing Intelligent and Responsive Content, 1 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Scott DeLoach

**DESCRIPTION:** Intelligent content automatically adapts to the users’ needs and preferences. Responsive content automatically adapts to the size of the screen. This session discusses the best practices and examples for creating, designing, and delivering intelligent and responsive content. We will explore real-world examples for hiding expired content, highlighting new content, filtering content, storing and using user preferences, and adjusting content based on the screen size. You will receive sample prototypes to use to implement these techniques in your own projects.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Scott DeLoach is the CEO of ClickStart, an STC Fellow, and an ATD Certified Professional in Talent Development (CPTD). He has thirty years of experience as a technical writer, instructional designer, trainer, and UX architect. At ClickStart, Scott provides content strategy development, design, consulting, and training services for P&P, knowledge base, eLearning, and technical documentation projects developed using MadCap Flare.
How to Localize Docs as Code

**PRESENTER:** Laura Zdanski

**DESCRIPTION:** In a docs-as-code world, writers work in parallel with developers. We use their tools and version control, and we ship the docs on the same continuous integration and continuous deployment (CI/CD) cadence as code. This creates several fundamental challenges for localizing the docs, because unlike writing docs along the code development process, you must finish writing before translation. So if we publish the docs with the code, when do we translate the content? How do we maintain translations of CI/CD docs?

To answer these questions, first, we review how localization software works, including machine translation and translation memory. Next, we’ll discuss common challenges that emerge when we scale localization and maintain docs over longer timescales. After we’ve covered the foundations of localization and the specific challenges of localizing the docs, we’ll review three case studies that include both operational and technical models for localizing software docs: two CI/CD models and one on-prem or regular release cadence docs model.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Laura started her career off in environmental science. She began technical writing as part of her work in research and development. She returned to school and earned her MS degree in technical communication from North Carolina State University. At IBM, she worked in IBM Cloud and Cognitive Services on the WebSphere Application Server Information Development team before moving to IBM Systems to work as an executive communications assistant for the strategy and development GM. Since 2020, she has worked on the docs team at Stripe, where she analyzes customer feedback, creates resources to help developers improve their technical writing, and manages docs release work.

Investigating Data Analytics with AI for User Analysis in Technical Communication

**PRESENTERS:** Daniel Hocutt, Nupoor Ranade

**DESCRIPTION:** In this presentation, we provide a brief demonstration and review of using analytics data for user research and examine the challenges and opportunities of conducting user research with AI.

Web analytics is a complex information system that serves as a tool for technical communicators to conduct user analysis when usability testing methods fall short. Many technical communicators, when hired, will be asked to manage and edit existing web content, content design, and information architecture based on users’ needs, which can be analyzed using reports generated by a data analytics tool.

We recommend using data analytics to understand user characteristics and behavior, validating that understanding using internal and external data sources, and recommending website changes based on conclusions drawn through the validations.

While the use of tools like Google Analytics (GA) to understand users is popular, we present the opportunities and challenges of using GA’s AI features, such as formulating a question using NLU, handling predictions, and training the AI algorithm to give more accurate results.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Dr. Daniel L. Hocutt serves as the web manager on the marketing and engagement team at the University of Richmond (UR) School of Professional & Continuing Studies in Richmond, Virginia. He also serves as an adjunct professor of liberal arts at UR, teaching composition, technical communication, and research methods.

Dr. Nupoor Ranade is an assistant professor at George Mason University, whose research interests focus on how technical communication, content strategy, and data analytics improve ethics and user experience in technological advances, particularly around artificial intelligence and machine learning.

Transform PowerPoint Presentations into Fully Interactive eLearning Courses for Your LMS

**PRESENTER:** Chuck Campbell

**DESCRIPTION:** You are sitting at your desk at work, and you see an email message with a PowerPoint file attached. The message is from someone in another department asking you if you can “put this training in the LMS.” You are either partially or fully responsible for implementing online training at your company.

This session explains how you can take static PowerPoint slides and turn them into a fully interactive eLearning course for your learning management system (LMS).

To demonstrate this process, I will use an existing PowerPoint slide presentation, import it into Articulate Storyline 360, then make the necessary changes to transform the former PowerPoint presentation into an interactive eLearning course. Although I am using Articulate Storyline 360 for this demonstration, you can accomplish the same outcome with other software applications such as Adobe Captivate, Camtasia, Lectora, etc. The process may be slightly different.

After the presentation, you will know the end-to-end process so that you can make better decisions and time estimates when asked to put that PowerPoint presentation in the LMS.

**SPEAKER BIO:** I work at the New York Power Authority as a senior manager of instructional technology solutions. I have created and delivered numerous technical presentations over the past twenty-five years to small and large clients, including the US Navy, US Postal Service, FedEx Express, Cargill, US Department of Treasury’s Bureau of Engraving and Printing, and Norwich Pharmaceuticals. I have also presented at several STC chapter conferences, including Interchange, Spectrum, and Summit, and have given webinars for STC and SIGs.
ChatGPT—Not Just Hype or a Word on Your Buzzword Bingo Card

**PRESENTER:** Pam Noreault

**DESCRIPTION:** Come to this interactive session to gain and share insight, new ideas, and practical uses of ChatGPT. This session will delve into how I am using these AI mechanisms to support a large Information Development team, including translators. I will discuss the ways my colleagues are using ChatGPT to increase productivity, speed up content migrations, improve content quality, plus more. I’ll touch on the plan to use ChatGPT to add additional automation to team processes. Additionally, I want to hear from you. What are you doing with this technology, what is your company doing with this technology, and how is it impacting what you do? Come to learn and come to share.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Pam Noreault is a Principal Information Architect at Ellucian. She has over 25 years of experience in technical communications, education, and management. She specializes in content strategy, customer engagement, content conversions, and social networking strategies. Pam has an undergraduate degree in education from The Ohio State University and a master’s degree in English and Professional Writing from Wright State University.

Let’s Get Accessible: Free Tools with Powerful Results, 2 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Laura Palmer

**DESCRIPTION:** Learn methods, tools, and practices for identifying common barriers to accessibility. For details, see page 13.

Developing Intelligent and Responsive Content, 2 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Scott DeLoach

**DESCRIPTION:** Real-world examples highlight this discussion of best practices for delivering intelligent and responsive content. For details, see page 13.

The SWAG: How to Estimate Effort for Your Project Manager Using Excel, 2 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Ray Davis

**DESCRIPTION:** Using Excel, learn to estimate the scope of writing effort and set realistic expectations with your stakeholders. For details, see page 13.
Testing Well: Ensuring Validity and Reliability in Documentation

**PRESENTER:** Rachael Graham

**DESCRIPTION:** No technical writer wants their documentation to be wrong. But how do you ensure that your documentation is right? In this session, we'll go beyond the principles of editing and reviewing docs to the process of testing out the docs for yourself.

Testing your docs primarily ensures that they are valid and reliable. You can determine whether your docs accomplish what they promise to in action, and whether those results are repeatable in various scenarios. However, the secondary benefits of docs testing are perhaps more interesting. First, when you test docs in the same environment and with the same tools as your users, you approach the docs with a true user's mindset. Second, there's no better way to become a subject matter expert than by getting your hands dirty with the product. After hearing about testing guidelines, we'll put a software instructional guide to the test in a live demonstration. The takeaways from this talk will increase your confidence in testing your own documentation, especially if you don't have a formal testing process or budget within your organization.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Rachael Graham works as a technical writer and content developer focusing on cloud-native, open-source technologies, such as Kubernetes, Istio, and more. She enjoys being integrated in code development squads in an agile, fast-paced environment, and collaboratively developing documentation with other writers. She currently works at Solo.io to create content such as tutorials, task instructions, diagrams, reference information, API docs, CLI strings and error messages, and GUI text.

What is OpenAPI? How Writers Can Use OpenAPI for Documentation

**PRESENTER:** Robert Delwood

**DESCRIPTION:** OpenAPI is an industry standard for writing both REST APIs and REST API documentation. It is known mostly as a developer’s tool. They use it to create REST call signatures and integrate into their development cycle and their actual coding. However, it is perhaps the most important authoring tool for the API documentation writer. It is surprising then, that it is largely unknown in this role by developers, and even more so among writers. As an authoring tool, it is overshadowed by technical writer’s other tools such as Flare, Framemaker, and DITA.

OpenAPI revolutionized API documentation writing. How does it do it? This presentation will introduce OpenAPI as a writing tool. Topics will include an overview, its role in development, its role in documentation, and how writers will use it, literally on a daily basis. The concepts of tags, description fields, and styling, which includes both Markdown and HTML, will be discussed in detail. Understanding OpenAPI makes an author’s transition into this documentation community easier and more effective.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Robert is a programmer, a writer, and a programmer-writer in Chicago’s legal community and formerly with NASA’s Johnson Space Center in Houston. He is passionate about technical writing, dedicated to API documentation, and obsessive about making the complex into the simple. With more than eighteen years of experience, he has written Microsoft documentation for device drivers and speech recognition APIs and SDKs, and help-desk and application manuals for the military. But it’s really all about API documentation.

How to Build a Functional Online Technical Writing Portfolio, 1 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Swapnil Ogale

**DESCRIPTION:** This demonstration spans two sessions. I will walk you through the do’s and don’ts of building an online technical writing portfolio, along with walking the tools and processes to create the portfolio.

The first session focuses on general topics such as: the concept, benefits, tools, and other factors to consider for the portfolio. I will introduce the tools and workflow that I used for creating my portfolio.

The second session focuses building a technical writing portfolio. I will provide instructions on how to use a template, which includes adding and updating content to the portfolio.

At the end of the sessions, you will walk away with a minimum viable product (MVP) version of your portfolio, along with portfolio tools and knowledge.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Swapnil has over sixteen years of technical documentation experience across a range of industries in Australia and globally. He currently works as a technical writer with Amazon Web Services (AWS), documenting solutions and services for the solution engineering teams. He initiated the Write the Docs community in Australia in 2016 and has been organizing local meetups and the annual conference. Swapnil loves travelling and reading, is a foodie, and sometimes even manages to combine all of this simultaneously.

While he is not doing any of that, he presents at technical meetups and conferences about various things around technical writing and raising the profile of documentarians globally.
How to Set Up (and Improve) a Documentation Portal

**PRESENTER:** Allie Proff

**DESCRIPTION:** If you had free rein to document a company’s internal processes from scratch, how would you do it? Listen to the story of how that exact scenario successfully played out at a mid-size technology company and all the tech-writing concepts that went into important decisions. Customer journeys and user needs? Check. Usability? Check. Content management system, software, and translation needs? All there as well.

This session is geared towards employees at small- or mid-sized businesses who are looking to set up or improve documentation within their companies. Although this is primarily the story of one company, the session will also pull in examples of other companies in other industries to provide a holistic view for all attendees.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Allie Proff, CPTC, is passionate about technical writing because it combines her loves of reading and writing with math and science. She has been communicating technical knowledge for over fifteen years, whether it be in the US Navy, as a high school math teacher, or as a technical communicator for other companies. Her aim is to help people do amazing things by connecting them with the content they need in a way they understand.

Time Management for the Junior Writer and Beyond

**PRESENTER:** Mark Medalle

**DESCRIPTION:** The transition to one’s first role as a technical writer can be difficult. Juggling documentation work across multiple projects, teams, and time zones presents unique challenges. Effective time management is essential for quick turnaround on documentation, as well as reducing some of the headaches and confusion that can come with context switching. By learning various time management skills and tools, new technical writers can build the foundation for a successful career path, and more seasoned writers can improve upon their existing processes. In this session, you will learn the best practices for effective time management, as well as some of the tools that can automate and increase our productivity.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Mark Medalle is a technical writer for Crunchyroll, the world’s largest anime streaming service. Having completed coursework in the Technical and Professional Writing program at San Francisco State University, he finds creative ways to use his technical documentation and communication skills. As a former tennis coach and martial artist for over two decades, his well-rounded experience gives him a unique perspective on navigating the world of technical communication.

Sustainable Content Practices Are the New Best Practices, 1 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Chris Hester

**DESCRIPTION:** While content is a business asset, how often do we consider that content can also be a liability? What is the impact of unused and outdated content on our customers and organization? More importantly, what is the impact on our environment?

Planning, creating, and delivering content impacts our environment. By establishing sustainable content practices, we can reduce that impact and continue to provide quality content.

- Part one of this session defines sustainable content practices, shows how they can be used, and demonstrates how they can be effective.
- Part two dives into content debt and the hidden cost of unplanned, unwanted, or outdated content. This part shows how and why content debt management is the most important sustainable content practice for projects.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Chris Hester manages a team of web content designers and publishers at UL Solutions and oversees web content strategy and governance, and taxonomy management. She is an accredited instructor for CPTC training, a Fellow of the Society for Technical Communication, and has presented at the STC Summit, the TCUK conference, and other events.

What’s Ahead for Technical Communication?

**PRESENTER:** Saul Carliner

**DESCRIPTION:** Will technical communication merge with instructional design? What will be the role of AI in the work of technical communicators? What kinds of products and services will we be documenting? Will we work on-site? Remotely? What will be the status of technical communicators in organizations? And did the pandemic change everything, pause everything or, in the end, not really make a difference? Looking at the research evidence on general trends in the economy and industry and specific research on technical communication, this session explores these and similar questions.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Saul Carliner is a Professor and Chair of the Department of Education at Concordia University in Montreal, the author of over 200 publications including the books Career Anxiety: Guidance Through Tough Times, Training Design Basics, and The E-Learning Handbook, president of the Canadian Network for Innovation in Education, and a Fellow and past international president of the Society for Technical Communication. He has received the STC Outstanding Service, Frank R Smith (multiple times), Distinguished Chapter Service, Kenneth Rainey, and Jay Gould Awards.
How to Use Data to Inform Your Decisions

**PRESENTER:** Carl DeBeer

**DESCRIPTION:** Every day, technical writers are asked to do more with less. They are expected to be top-notch authors, cut-throat editors, eagle-eyed information architects, and inquisitive researchers. That’s a lot of hats to wear. Making these decisions for your content is difficult in the best of times. When you are working under deadlines and with inadequate resources, it can seem impossible. That’s where analytics steps in.

Using analytics to make data-driven decisions enables you to quickly understand how users interact with your content and where you should prioritize your efforts. And as an added benefit, backing up those decisions with objective data simplifies stakeholder management.

With analytics you can know:
- Where do my users find my content?
- How long do they engage with content?
- Is our TOC important?
- Should we be providing PDFs?
- Do I really need to document how to use an edit button? (Spoiler: You don’t!)

**SPEAKER BIO:** Carl DeBeer is an evangelist for SEO in technical documentation. With nearly a decade dedicated to improving content findability, he enjoys crunching data, finding solutions, and the Oxford comma.

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How to Take Screenshots: Best Practices for Grabbing and Managing Screen Captures

**PRESENTER:** Malinda Dietrich

**DESCRIPTION:** Screenshots are the bane of our existence! We use screen captures in procedural documentation to provide information to our users and to guide them through a particular process or to help them achieve a certain goal. While many of us know how to take screen captures and how to implement them within our documents, the naming and storage of the media can be a struggle. This education session starts with some of the best practices for taking and using screenshots, and it will largely focus on the management and storage of screen captures. In particular, we will highlight ways to improve the storage and management of screen captures, with or without a digital asset management (DAM) or content management system (CMS). We hope that you will leave this session with a better idea of how to implement these practices to improve not only searchability and reuse of your screenshots, but also your screenshot lifecycles more generally.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Malinda (Mally) Dietrich is a technical writer at Epic Games. While she is new to her role as a technical writer, Mally has almost a decade of interest within the technical communication field—not to mention an almost-complete PhD to show for it. When she’s not working on documentation or her dissertation, Mally is spending time with her dog and partner, blazing new trails, or trying the newest food truck.

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Mind Mapping Your Way to Organized Success, 1 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Tricia Spayer

**DESCRIPTION:** Do you have to deliver so much information that you struggle to begin organizing it? Or do you need to create well-organized presentations in a short amount of time, and have to deliver it in a coherent manner? If so, this session is for you!

Learn how to create mind maps, how to organize information quickly, and how to use mind maps to deliver well-organized presentations.

Bring two or three blank sheets of paper, a pen or pencil, and a few colored pencils or pens.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Tricia Spayer, technical writer, illustrator, and STC Associate Fellow, has more than twenty-six years of technical communication experience with Pressco Technology Inc. in Cleveland, Ohio. Her leadership experience includes serving the Ohio STC Chapter, The STC board of directors, and Toastmasters District 10 as district director. In her current roles, she manages technical documentation, develops training guides and web sites, and oversees a non-profit Google Workspace and eleven Zoom accounts. She also administers a content management system and delivers training and presentations regularly.

For over six years, Tricia studied, used, and taught mind mapping, using its simple and effective benefits to organize web sites, solve complex problems, and create well-structured presentations, sometimes just minutes before delivery. Tricia will share her mind mapping secrets during this session to help you communicate successfully.
What’s New with the TCBOK? Announcing TCBOK 2.5!

**PRESENTER:** Deanne Levander

**DESCRIPTION:** The TCBOK editors have been very busy upgrading the TCBOK experience. There are many hands at work behind the scenes to bring the TCBOK to a point where technical communication students, practitioners, and hiring managers can find answers to their most pressing questions. Get a glimpse of our progress, and determine if joining our team is something you’d like to do. We can always use more help!

**SPEAKER BIO:** Deanne Levander is an STC Fellow, past Society and chapter leader, longtime TCBOK and STC volunteer. She currently serves as the TCBOK Chief Editor and Committee Manager. She works for an international biomedical manufacturing company and lives in St. Paul, MN.

How to Build a Functional Online Technical Writing Portfolio, 2 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Swapnil Ogale

**DESCRIPTION:** Get in-depth with the steps for building an online portfolio; walk away with an MVP of your own portfolio. For details, see page 16.

Sustainable Content Practices Are the New Best Practices, 2 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Chris Hester

**DESCRIPTION:** Dive into content debt and the hidden cost of unplanned, unwanted, or outdated content. For details, see page 17.
How to Make Your Deliverables Accessible

**PRESENTERS:** Danielle Mathews, Erin Wiedemer

**DESCRIPTION:** In this session, Danielle Matthews and Erin Wiedemer will discuss the merits and requirements of accessible documentation for those using Microsoft Word, Adobe PDF, and Confluence. Attendees will learn how to create and remediate their documents to meet accessibility standards through step-by-step demonstrations using tools within these commonly used programs.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Danielle Matthews has been in the technical writing field for twelve years and is currently a PMP-certified senior technical content strategist for Medidata Solutions, supporting clinical-trial applications and programs through high-quality documentation. Danielle frequently presents on accessibility in documentation and software design, believing strongly that accessibility benefits everyone. She has previous experience in software training, teaching, and counseling.

Over the last fourteen years, Erin Wiedemer has worked as a technical writer with several Fortune 500 companies. As accessibility standards have evolved, she has developed skills for delivering documentation that meets or exceeds the standards. She spearheaded adherence to HIPAA and Section 508 accessibility requirements in medical software documentation for the US Department of Veterans’ Affairs. In her roles with Google and Salesforce, she has been an accessibility and WCAG standards subject matter expert. She and Danielle Matthews have given several webinars and workshops on documentation privacy and accessibility at STC and other venues.

Workplace Safety and Health: Communications That Could Save a Life!

**PRESENTER:** David Caruso

**DESCRIPTION:** Communication products developed at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) explain important concepts and information to workers and employers... and in some cases, what they have to say might just save the reader’s life. Over his years at NIOSH, David Caruso has worked to effectively communicate important workplace safety and health issues in a way that resonates with them. In this session, attendees will see how some of those communication products were developed and learn how health communication professionals took the highly technical source material and turned it into practical infographics, web content and videos. You will also learn how NIOSH continues to make sure their communication products to adhere to and often exceed plain language and accessibility standards and how tools like the CDC Clear Communication Index fit into the process.

**SPEAKER BIO:** David L. Caruso, STC Fellow, currently serves as a senior health communication specialist and program coordinator for the oil and gas safety and health program within the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). Since 2002, he has helped NIOSH disseminate its research to employers and workers to help make their workplaces safer and healthier.

How to Cross the Street into Tech Comm

**PRESENTERS:** Em Turner, Jo (Joyce) Lam

**DESCRIPTION:** Em Turner always wanted to work with words for a living, and after getting their start in technical writing has since become a technical editor. Jo Lam had never even heard of “technical communication” until her third career change and has become an information architect. Two professionals with drastically different backgrounds met in this industry and devoted their efforts towards building crosswalks for future generations of technical communicators.

Join Em and Jo in a discussion about finding tech comm—related interchangeable skills in prospective employees and yourself. Learn how to make the career switch while working in other roles.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Em Turner is a technical editor based in Durham, North Carolina, with experience writing documentation in the tech industry. Outside of work, Em keeps busy with many hobbies, including knitting, cross stitching, exercising, playing video games, caring for two cats, and of course, writing.

Jo (Joyce) Lam is an information ambassador with experience focused on content automation. Her background in video game design drives her enthusiasm for user experience and intuitive design. Jo is a solutions engineer; an information architect; the past president of STC Toronto; and a member of Women in Tech, Women in STEM, Information 4.0 Consortium, and the Semantic Content Graph Guild.

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**MONDAY, 15 MAY
4:30–5:15 PM**

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**20** Technical Communication Summit

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Creating a Sense of Belonging: Engaging the Virtual Workforce

**PRESENTER:** Ben Woelk

**DESCRIPTION:** How do we integrate an increasingly virtual workforce into an organizational culture that's been based on face-to-face interaction? How do we build communities of practice, and how can they help to create a sense of belonging? Are there tools and processes that can help facilitate engagement? How do we know if we're successful? The presenter will share strategies identified and adopted by his organization, and personal collaboration success stories.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Ben Woelk, CISSP, CPTC, is governance, awareness, and training manager in the Information Security Office at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), where he's responsible for content strategy, security awareness, and program management. Ben teaches RIT courses in cybersecurity policy and law, technical writing, and introverts and leadership. His Hope for the Introvert podcast shares conversations with introverted leaders and how they apply their strengths in the workplace and other parts of life. Ben is co-founder of Your Journey to Leadership.

Information Topology: Using Data Visualizations for Content Strategy

**PRESENTER:** Tyrin Avery

**DESCRIPTION:** Ever wished you could see how your content connects? Figure out what will break when you migrate? Prioritize topics that need maintenance easily? Quickly identify pages that need better discoverability? It's easy to build a simple Python application that does all of the above. Come and see how to use data science and dynamic visualizations of content to gain insight into patterns of connection and usage in your documentation, and make better strategic decisions.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Tyrin Avery has created leading-edge documentation tool chain solutions and help systems for over twenty years. Among the first to build a DITA tool chain in 2004, she has continued to innovate new solutions for organizations of every size. These solutions grew out of the challenges of a working writer for complex applications and diverse audiences. She is currently a lead technical writer.

Mind Mapping Your Way to Organized Success, 2 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Tricia Spayer

**DESCRIPTION:** Mind-map your way to coherent, easily organized, and well presented information in this hands-on session. For details, see page 18.

New Attendee KnowledgeXchange

**PRESENTER:** Christina Mayr

**DESCRIPTION:** New to the Summit or the Society for Technical Communication? Curious about everything else that STC offers and how you can get involved? On Monday, Society leaders, staff, and publication editors will gather for a moderated panel. This is your chance for an intimate conversation and a “behind-the-scenes” look that will help you better understand STC as an organization.

STC Community Leadership Information Exchange

**DESCRIPTION:** Join the STC Community Affairs Committee (CAC) as we share ideas and tips your communities can use to develop leadership, highlight your community's strengths, and attract new members. Meet and exchange ideas with fellow chapter and SIG leaders and volunteers. All Summit 2023 attendees — including students and members interested in learning more about STC communities — are welcome.
How to Write a Book Review for STC’s Technical Communication Journal

**PRESENTER:** Jackie Damrau

**DESCRIPTION:** Book reviews are an interesting format in which to learn more about your specialty area or to branch out of your comfort zone and read about other areas within the technical communication field. Sharing what you read with our broader STC membership and institutional subscribers helps you exercise your writing in a different manner and increases your ability to know more about our field.

This how-to session will walk through the steps of grasping the big picture, developing an information evaluation plan, reading your evaluation plan again, writing your first draft, editing your draft, and submitting your review for the book review editor to review, edit, and approve.

Upon approval, your benefit is seeing your review published in the Technical Communication journal, receiving a PDF of the Book Reviews section to use in your professional portfolio or to add to your website, blog, etc. provided you give attribution to STC and the Technical Communication journal.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Dr. Jackie Damrau is a Fellow of STC, the book review editor of the Technical Communication journal, and a co-chair of the 2022-2023 Education Committee. She works at Cathedral Plumbing LLC (assigned to the MiView IS application team) as a project manager, scrum master, and senior business analyst on projects related to a new home construction application suite centered on the plumbing industry. Current projects include purchasing, item management, and software integrations. Jackie facilitates the project and scrum events, conducts product demos for assigned application modules, and provides management with project statistics.

How to Create the “Write” Culture

**PRESENTERS:** Anisi Rouleau, Abby Brunn

**DESCRIPTION:** Sure, having a good company culture is great. But what does it have to do with technical communication? In this session, hear how technical writers and editors create the “write” culture at a 2022 Fortune Best Place to Work.

We’ll cover our three Cs of creating the “write” culture: cultivating, campaigning, and communicating. First, you’ll learn how to cultivate your team’s skills with thorough training, support from leadership, and team-building activities. Then, you’ll learn how to campaign for the importance of technical communication throughout your company so that you can get involved with processes from start to finish. Lastly, you’ll learn how to communicate using “radical transparency” and “extreme ownership” to resolve issues and welcome feedback.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Anisi and Abby are content team leads at KnowBe4. Together, they hope to encourage other writers to embrace their expertise and create a culture where writing thrives.

As a technical content team lead, Anisi leads her team to write knowledge base articles, release notes, video scripts, and UI text. Both in and out of the office, Anisi prides herself on being “extra at all times.” She loves bad jokes, video games, and any reason to wear a costume.

As a content editing team lead, Abby is the resident word nerd who reviews all technical content from product manuals to UX writing. When she’s not editing content or double-checking herself in Grammarly, she loves to hang out at the beach with her boyfriend, cuddle with her cat, and play cozy games on her Nintendo Switch.

KnowBe4 is the world’s largest integrated platform for security awareness training combined with simulated phishing attacks. On Fortune’s Best Places to Work lists, KnowBe4 has been named a best place to work for women and a best place to work in technology for five years in a row.

Students’ Success, Your Success: How to Build an Impactful Internship Program

**PRESENTER:** Ashley Gordon

**DESCRIPTION:** Technical writing internships are practical, hands-on ways for students to explore how they can apply their academic know-how in a professional setting. Researching changes to functionality, discovering what questions to ask, and learning how to ask them are all important skills that can’t be captured in a classroom. On top of that, confidence and comfort with working on the fly, and knowing how to handle last-minute changes is necessary for being successful in the industry.

At the same time, internships need to be a symbiotic relationship. Students should make real contributions that they can be proud of and that have a real impact on the growth and success of a team. In this session, I’ll discuss how I’ve built a successful paid internship program at Luma Health, where interns own their own projects, measure their success, and help the documentation team thrive. I’ll describe the hiring process we use to find the right candidate, and discuss how we onboard and integrate interns for a successful experience for everyone.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Ashley Gordon is a professional technical communicator with experience in both the enterprise and startups. She specializes in customer-facing instructional and expository content and has also produced promotional and product marketing materials. Ashley has years of experience collaborating across teams to create content that answers users’ questions and drives them towards decisions. She also enjoys taking on internal initiatives that promote a company-wide culture of documentation. Ashley is the vice president of STC’s Chicago chapter. She lives in Chicago, Illinois, with a rotating cast of foster dogs whom she hosts through the nonprofit One Tail at a Time.
How to Create a Doc Feedback SLA Tracker, 1 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Vladimir Petrov

**DESCRIPTION:** Now more than ever, data is all around us, but still technical communicators rarely succeed in bridging the gap between analytics and results. This fact is true for documentation feedback, where most organizations do not have a solid way to track, report, and measure response to customer feedback. Learn a simple way to create a doc feedback SLA tracker in Tableau. Writers and managers can quickly draw conclusions or act upon resolving feedback bugs right from the tracker. It is not necessary that your organization has defined doc feedback SLAs to use such a tool, but SLAs certainly help. You can design dashboards that provide per user or per group views with visual hints that allow you to see SLA compliance on different SLA levels, smart tooltips to show days remaining or past to a given SLA, a KPI view that tracks resolution time and bug age, and an interactive view that allows drill down by product, publication, topic, team, and author.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Vladimir Petrov is a staff project manager at VMware. Vladimir implemented a process to improve the visibility of code enhancement in the flagship product of VMware, vSphere. Vladimir works with engineering and writing teams to manage, track, and drive projects that require quick turnaround on delivering fixes to vSphere for customers. He is a certified PMP with a decade of experience in creating tools and the automation and synergy of processes to improve work efficiency. Vladimir also led a team of technical writers, covering products across the VMware business units.

Practical Sketching for Technical Communicators

**PRESENTER:** Elizabeth Alley

**DESCRIPTION:** Practical sketching, using basic shapes and lines to convey a word or idea, is scientifically proven to help your memory and attention. It can also help you nurture your creativity and bring fresh ideas to your writing. We’ll explore using this method as part of a process that begins with taking notes, having conversations, and reading; then helps you develop your ideas and think through problems; and ends with a well-thought-out draft, a new idea, or a solution.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Elizabeth Alley is a Certified Professional Technical Communicator (CPTC) with over twelve years of experience in technical communication preceded by over twelve years in nonprofit public art project management. She advocates for the user, providing clear and concise information to help readers do their jobs or understand a product or process. As an artist, she focuses on sketching, painting, teaching art to adults, and advocating for the use of sketching in everyday life as a tool to improve memory and observation skills. She has organized, curated, produced, and participated in over forty-five solo and group shows since 1999.

UI Text: Simplicity is Difficult

**PRESENTER:** Mike Jang

**DESCRIPTION:** Have you ever looked at a beautiful website and said, “Huh?” You can incorporate the latest JS framework, the best CSS, excel in accessibility, and make your website as beautiful as a Rembrandt, but websites with walls of text will drive users away. Mike Jang explains how to keep users happy. You need excellent UI text, also known as microcopy. Microcopy can save time and make the difference in selling an application.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Mike Jang is a Lead Technical Writer for Forescout, where he’s helping to document their cybersecurity tools. In his past lives, he’s helped UX designers and product managers learn best practices in UI text at ForgeRock, GitLab, and Cobalt. To figure out what to write, Mike spends much of his time analyzing and testing new software. Mike has written a couple of dozen technical books, including multiple editions of McGraw-Hill’s RHCSA/ RHCE Red Hat Linux Certification Study Guide. He’s also the author of O’Reilly’s Linux Annoyances for Geeks.
How to Incorporate Sustainability Metrics into Your Content

**PRESENTER:** Alisa Bonsignore

**DESCRIPTION:** The accelerating wave of digital content is increasing the energy demands on an already overextended planet. There is a perception that digital is less environmentally costly than cutting down trees for paper. Yet, the energy costs for our digital lives can be steep.

Every byte uses energy, and energy has a carbon cost. And our digital footprints are ever-increasing. In 2018, Forbes reported that the world is generating more than 2.5 quintillion bytes of data annually, no doubt a significant contributor to the fact that the world has almost doubled its energy consumption since 1980.

I have developed formulas to calculate the carbon impact of your digital initiatives. These formulas can be applied proactively to new projects to understand the carbon cost of content. All communications teams should keep these numbers in mind when deciding what needs to be communicated, and how.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Alisa clarifies complex ideas, developing sustainable content strategies for a global clientele. Her experience spans several industries over more than two decades, with particular focus on making the world a better place through sustainability communications aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). She is an Associate Fellow of the Society for Technical Communication, executive editor of STC’s Intercom magazine, a certified master gardener, and frequently speaks at conferences and workshops.

Ethical Editing: How to Follow, Break, and Change the Rules

**PRESENTER:** Nupoor Ranade

**DESCRIPTION:** This session will help audiences learn how to balance rule-following with ethical decision-making to develop and edit inclusive documentation.

All of us come across several terms which are outdated or not fitting in certain contexts. For example, GitHub’s shift from “master” to “main,” to replace references to slavery with terms of inclusion that cannot be misconstrued. This presentation will suggest a step-by-step methodological framework for identifying unethical or biased language in technical documentation, replace it with inclusive terminology, and update existing style guides with fitting terminology.

I will also offer four suggestions for editing ethically. Editors work with writers to enforce rules stated in the style guide, such as punctuation and subject-verb agreement. After identifying biased language, they have to work together to develop new rules that are inclusive. This requires steering away from the style guide and developing new rules and documentation practices for the organization. Four tips will help them achieve that.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Dr. Nupoor Ranade is an assistant professor at George Mason University, who teaches graduate courses on technical writing and editing. Her research interests focus on accessible technical communication, data analytics, and responsible AI. In the past, Nupoor has worked at Citrix Systems, Palo Alto Networks, SAS Institute, and Tibco Software and has over ten years of experience in the field of technical writing. Nupoor combines her engineering and technology background with humanistic research to bring ethical discussions to the classroom and practice. She collaborates with professional organizations such as STC, APMP, ACES, and Ladies that UX to bring real-world examples to her classrooms.

Building Your Brand as a Woman in Tech: Telling Your Story

**PRESENTER:** Susan E. Kelley

**DESCRIPTION:** Developing a personal brand is an important part of any career, but perhaps even more so for women in technical communication. As a small but mighty segment of the field, women are making notable progress in leveling the playing field. As pandemic pressures ease, it’s more important now than ever to write a personal branding story that is authentic and that will amplify your career.

Your personal story is about more than where you grew up or what you studied in school. Your story plays a key role in establishing, continuing, boosting, and even changing your career. In telling your story, you are building a personal brand. Will it be one that highlights your strengths, builds trust and confidence, and communicates all that you can do? Or will it fall flat, leaving you wondering why your growth path is slow and your potential unrecognized?

This session will examine personal brand best practices, industry trends for women and non-binary persons, and how to leverage social media, from LinkedIn to TikTok, professionally.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Susan Kelley is a veteran technical communicator and author of the blog, Have a Pint at the Tech Pub. She has taught professional and technical writing to students at Duquesne University and Carnegie Mellon University’s Human-Computer Interaction Institute. Her academic work focused on the differentiation of men’s and women’s persuasive speech in politics and science. Formerly a content strategist for mainframe automation systems, her work now centers on documenting artificial intelligence tooling and advancements, specifically clinical trial predictive modeling. She has widely published personal and professional essays on Medium and Substack.
Ensuring Usability and Accessibility When Adding Images to Technical Documentation, 1 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Tyler Breedlove

**DESCRIPTION:** Images are fundamental tools in technical documentation. However, like most tools, images can be used effectively and ineffectively. While implementing images into a piece of documentation, consider the following areas:

- **Usability and Accessibility:** Users are drawn to images and consume them in the same way as they consume documentation. This method turns images into swim lanes for user attention.
- **Information Blocking:** Not all content is appropriate for technical documentation. Understanding how to properly censor content, prevent the need to censor, and save images assists users and improves documentation.
- **Technical Integration:** Images must be integrated into documentation while using the right format and resolution.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Tyler Breedlove is a technical communicator with eight years of applied experience in the technical communication field. He graduated from Pittsburg State University with a master of arts degree in English with an emphasis in professional writing. Tyler is a senior technical writer at Oracle Cerner and has facilitated updates to image standards used for Oracle Cerner product documentation and created image training for new Oracle Cerner technical writers. Tyler also works with accessibility and user experience teams to ensure that the image processes and guidelines of the Oracle Cerner documentation team remain accurate and appropriate for the health information technology industry.

Guide Users to the Perfect Content Experience, 1 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Bernard Aschwanden

**DESCRIPTION:** As companies grow in size (solutions, clients, employees, content volume) it is tougher to come up with a local, national, international, or global solution to manage content and its associated complexity. See how to create content you can trust. Participate ‘hands-on’ in this interactive session where we’ll tour a CCMS as part of an effective content strategy.

We’ll ingest content, edit, review, update, version, and publish to multiple outputs, collaborate as we do it, and see the results in real-time. We’ll explore translation workflow, content migration, and interactive real-time review. When done, you’ll have a chance to continue to explore the workspace after the conference and continue to discover how a CCMS can truly change the way writing is done.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Bernard Aschwanden is a recognized publishing technologies expert. He is an Adobe Certified Expert, a Certified Technical Trainer, and the author of numerous articles on XML-based publishing and single sourcing. He is the founder and president of Precision Content. He works with clients to convert legacy content, analyze documentation, review workflows, and identify best practices in technical communications. Bernard is a past president of the Society for Technical Communication. He remains active in STC, delivering in-person seminars and online webinars to members around the world. He has helped hundreds of companies implement successful publishing solutions.

How to Create a Doc Feedback SLA Tracker, 2 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Vladimir Petrov

**DESCRIPTION:** Learn to create dashboards that allow you to track documentation feedback and response effectively. For more details, see page 23.
The Value of Markdown in Technical Writing

**PRESENTERS:** Zara Reyes, Libertad Pantoja

**DESCRIPTION:** With the recent emergence of the programmer-writer in the tech comm community, this new type of writer is booming. With this new focus come various new tools and changes in current practices. Often used as an intermediate to Markdown, XML is seeing its popularity decrease as writers transition to Markdown and web-based editing. The increasing complexity of documentation is lowering the business priority of content reuse. Competition for other tools over XML editing has grown stronger, with increasing preference for internal tools and technology for publishing. This session will give an overview of this shift and discuss the value of Markdown in the software technical writer portfolio of tools. We will also show how to use Markdown and how to add value to software documentation.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Originally from England, Zara has over ten years of experience in Technical Communications, and her love for writing has taken her across the globe. Less than a year into her career as a Technical Writer, her winning elevator speech took her to New York to ring the Nasdaq bell live on TV. Her double degree in Life Sciences with a Modern Language from the University of Manchester ignited her passion for finding innovative ways of delivering technical content. She has worked as a Scientific Translator, Technical Writer, and, more recently UX Creative Specialist, where she designed and oversaw the production and AV setup of UX sessions and video content. She now works at Wizeline as a consultant Software Technical Writer in Mexico.

Dr. Libertad Pantoja Hernández has over three years of experience as a Technical Writer, primarily in the financial industry. With a background in Computational Biology, she has worked as a Data Scientist. She is now a Technical Writer at Wizeline, where she reviews and publishes API documentation using a DocOps approach. In 2021, she received a Mexican fellowship for Young Creators to continue improving her narrative skills. She launched the project Calladium to help the Spanish-speaking community learn LaTeX as a self-publishing tool.

DITA 201: How to Optimize Conditional Text and Reuse

**PRESENTER:** Lael Butler

**DESCRIPTION:** If learning how to write for topic-based authoring in a structured format is the first hurdle of using DITA, then mastering conditional text and reuse is the next. Conditional text and reuse are powerful tools and one of the biggest advantages to DITA, but learning how and when to use them effectively can be a challenge. Words and phrases like “conditional processing”, “variables”, “attributes”, and “conref” can feel like a foreign language to the new DITA user. Being able to understand those terms and then implement conditional text effectively will make reuse an even more powerful tool.

This session will introduce some of the ways to set up conditional text in DITA and how to use them in conjunction with reuse. It will also address how to develop a strategy for conditional content while remaining software agnostic. Participants will learn how to add conditional text to allow for two or more variants of a document.

**SPEAKER BIO:** As the technical communication specialist at Streamline Designs, Lael works with client and in-house SMEs to develop, implement, and maintain a host of technical documentation including manuals, operating handbooks, checklists, and more. After receiving her BA in public relations, advertising, and communication, Lael worked with a Fortune 50 company, first in marketing and later in operations.

STC Platinum Anniversary Colloquy

**PRESENTER:** Nicky Bleiel

**DESCRIPTION:** The Society for Technical Communication is turning 70 in 2023! Technical communication has been around since roughly 6000 BC, which means STC has been successfully shepherding our ever-evolving profession for a fraction of its existence. Our field is always growing and changing, and STC has changed right along with it. Join us in celebration of both the profession and the Society. We’ll take a quick spin through history, but spend the majority of our time celebrating our journeys. STC’s milestone birthday festivities include webinars, articles, and other surprises. Learn more about STC’s history on the anniversary webpage: www.stc.org/about-stc/stc-70th-anniversary

**SPEAKER BIO:** Our colloquy host, Nicky Bleiel, is the chair of the STC 70th Anniversary Celebration Task Force. She is a Fellow and past president of STC and has over twenty years of experience writing and designing content for software products in a variety of industries.
Piecing Together a Docs-as-Code Build Framework without Engineering Experience

**PRESENTER:** Arthur Berger

**DESCRIPTION:** Docs-as-code is an approach to technical writing where technical writers use the same tools and processes as the engineers of the product, usually software developers. While such an approach has many benefits, such as increased integration with engineering and higher content accuracy, many writers find several drawbacks. Because docs-as-code tools were developed for highly specialized engineers, such tools can be challenging for writers to use.

In particular, the way that content is sourced, authored, built, and deployed as a documentation website—the docs framework—can be difficult for both developers and technical writers to maintain. This session shares the experiences of a small team of technical writers without coding backgrounds who increasingly took ownership of the docs framework. The team mapped out their content needs against the existing framework. Then they compared various tools that could be adopted to help solve such needs. Finally, the team integrated different pieces of content-tailored solutions into the docs framework.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Art Berger works as a technical writer for Solo.io, where he helps create technical documentation for the company’s service mesh and API gateway technologies and open source projects. He produces a wide range of products, including instructions, training materials, API documents, UI text, command line interface (CLI) strings, error messages, videos, infographics, and more. As the president of the STC Carolina chapter, he enjoys helping people in the local area connect with other professionals, events, and resources to succeed in their tech comm pursuits.

I Lost My Job! Now What?!? A Survival Guide for the Unemployed

**PRESENTER:** Ray Kim

**DESCRIPTION:** You’ve just been told by Human Resources that you are no longer a part of the organization. You’ve been kicked to the curb. You are now living in the no-man’s land called “unemployment”.

Unemployment is a scary situation. You’re dealing with emotions and uncertainty. You don’t know if you’ll be out of work for days, weeks, or months.

Fortunately, unemployment is survivable. In this session, I’ll share my own experiences with unemployment (and perhaps we’ll talk about some of yours) and how I managed to get through the tough times. We’ll discuss emotional impact, the job hunt, and things you can do to get yourself through this. Hopefully, it won’t be too long before you land on your feet once again!

**SPEAKER BIO:** Ray Kim is an advocate for documentation and technical communication. He is a co-founder of the Albany, New York, SQL group (CASSUG), a member of the AlbanyUX user group, and a member of the Society for Technical Communication (STC). He has spoken at numerous SQLSaturdays and at PASS Summit. He has worked in various positions in technology, including developer, webmaster, analyst, technical writer, and instructor. He holds an MS in technical communication from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and a BS in computer science from Syracuse University.

A musician in his spare time, Ray plays four different instruments (piano, clarinet, mallet percussion, saxophone). He also enjoys going to ball games and doing CrossFit, and is a two-time SQLServerCentral.com fantasy football champion. He lives in Troy, New York, with his wife, Lianne, and their two cats.

Guide Users to the Perfect Content Experience, 2 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Bernard Aschwanden

**DESCRIPTION:** Get hands on with a component content management system. For more details, see page 25.

Ensuring Usability and Accessibility When Adding Images to Technical Documentation, 2 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Tyler Breedlove

**DESCRIPTION:** Discover the importance of Usability, Accessibility, Image Blocking, and Technical Integration when adding images to your content. For more details, see page 25.
HONORS CELEBRATION AND LUNCH

Using Flow to Craft a Life of Excellence in Tech Comm

PRESENTER: Judith L. Glick-Smith, PhD

DESCRIPTION: You have chosen an amazing career. Because the Tech Comm profession is ever emergent, your opportunities will never stop. However, you must be resilient and be willing to learn new tools, new processes, new systems, new content sources as they present themselves. Tech Comm requires a love and commitment to life-long learning. To stay relevant, you must commit to being a change agent for yourself and for your profession. Using Tech Comm as a base, you can create a life for yourself that never gets boring or stale and which contributes to the betterment of others.

Let’s talk about Flow and how it fits into crafting a life of excellence. We have all experienced it. Flow is what you feel when you are challenged in the moment but know you have the skill to meet that challenge; you are off-the-chain productive; time has no meaning; you feel great when you finish your work.

This presentation discusses my research in flow-based decision making and flow-based leadership as it relates to the Tech Comm profession. We will also discuss how you can use a flow-based approach to improve your own sense of well-being and to help improve the lives of others.

SPEAKER BIO: Judith L. Glick-Smith, Ph.D., is an author, technical communication expert, knowledge architect, and leadership development consultant for over 40 years. Judy is a Past International President and Fellow of the Society for Technical Communication.

Judy has been studying flow-based decision making and leadership in Fire and Emergency Management Services for over 15 years. She is the author of Flow-based Leadership: What the Best Firefighters Can Teach You About Leadership and Making Hard Decisions, which was number one on Fire Chief Magazine’s Top 9 Public Safety Leadership Books of 2016.

She is a recognized expert on the topic of “flow” and “flow-based leadership.” She is passionate about helping individuals and organizations make better decisions and prepare for the unexpected by facilitating flow in their lives and work environments.

Judy has been studying flow-based decision making and leadership in Fire and Emergency Management Services for over 15 years. She is the author of Flow-based Leadership: What the Best Firefighters Can Teach You About Leadership and Making Hard Decisions, which was number one on Fire Chief Magazine’s Top 9 Public Safety Leadership Books of 2016.

She is, also, a co-contributor and co-editor of the following books:

- Visionary Leadership in a Turbulent World: Leading in the New VUCA Context, which made the Forbes’ Summer Reading List for 2017
- Exceptional Leadership by Design
- Women Courageous: Leading through the Labyrinth.

Her Ph.D. is in Transformative Studies with a concentration in Integral Studies from the California Institute of Integral Studies. She has a Master of Science in Conflict Management from Kennesaw State University.
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Learn to Speak ID: A Brief Introduction to Instructional Design

**PRESENTER:** Jennifer Goode

**DESCRIPTION:** Are you considering a career pivot to instructional design (ID) or training? Are you scheduled to collaborate on a new project with a team of instructional designers? No need to panic if you’ve never heard of ADDIE, SAM, learner analysis, xAPI, governance, Kirkpatrick, DEI, distractors, or vILT. A basic understanding of ID can help you understand the goals of your project, the strategies guiding the work, and the broader context of your individual tasks. Before you take on your next instructional design project, learn the lingo and foundational processes that guide and direct ID work.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Jennifer Goode, PhD, CPTC, is the founder at Anypso, a consultancy that specializes in strategic learning, organizational change management, and people and performance measurement. She has worked with a variety of clients to provide targeted learning solutions with a focus on learner experience, measurable outcomes, and large-scale organizational change. Jennifer has over twenty years of experience in learning and development practice, including sixteen years as a corporate trainer and higher education instructor. She is also a co-founder of Your Journey to Leadership and founder of Anypso Academy, where she lends her expertise to individual, group, and organizational development programming. She is a frequent presenter and workshop leader at international conferences and seminars. In her spare time, Jennifer enjoys adventuring with her family—in the kitchen, in the garden, and on the road.

I Am My Own Brand: Uncovering Our Potential through Personal Branding

**PRESENTER:** Rachana Chitre

**DESCRIPTION:** Personal branding is not just about public perception, but also about giving us a direction that helps us to achieve career goals, establish credibility, create an identity, and live our brand and life proudly. It can mean different things to each of us, a new job opportunity, career aspirations, or personal growth.

The first step is to understand why personal branding is so important, and then ask ourselves:
- What sets me apart and what do I need to work on?
- What are my goals or what is my focus?
- What do I want to be known for?

Attend this session to learn why it is important, the key attributes, and the steps to develop a personal brand. I will also share some personal experiences about my journey.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Rachana Chitre works as a senior principal information developer with Veritas Technologies LLC, Pune and has over seventeen years of experience. Her areas of focus include simplifying technical content for users, collaborating with teams for various documentation initiatives, creating and editing videos, and improving experience in the product user interface.

She is working with both enterprise and SMB products and has extensive knowledge of working with localization teams. Rachana has spearheaded the effort to modernize a product’s help to a new Veritas-developed help system with the vision to improve customer experience. She has also been part of process improvements for information developers at Veritas.

How to Prepare for a Post ChatGPT World

**PRESENTER:** Marco Angiuoni

**DESCRIPTION:** ChatGPT is a large language model developed by OpenAI that is capable of generating coherent and natural-sounding text in response to prompts. When it was introduced to the general public it quickly became the application with the fastest adoption rate in the history of IT.

What does this mean for technical writers? Is this technology going to disrupt the industry? Is there a way that we can leverage language models to improve our writing and how can we overcome their limitations?

In this session, we are going to take a look at ChatGPT and generative AI from the point of view of technical writers, we will cover use cases and share some recommendations on how to mitigate risks and avoid pitfalls associated with this powerful tool.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Marco Angiuoni is a seasoned professional managing a team of technical writers at VMware. With a strong background in Localization, extensive Agile project management experience and a passion for all things AI, Marco brings a unique perspective to his role. When he is not exploring new ideas in technical communication, you can find him relaxing with his dog and cats.
Bring Your Content into Focus Using Data Driven Analytics

**PRESENTERS:** Rachel Walters, Timothy Esposito

**DESCRIPTION:** As content developers, especially those working in an agile environment, we can relate to the challenge of prioritizing a backlog. There is so much content to produce, organize, and prioritize, with so little time! Our team struggled with this challenge through a few sprints until we realized we could use data analytics as a useful tool to give us insight into prioritization.

In this interactive session, we will walk you through our team’s personal journey developing a quarterly strategy for generating data analytics for our documentation views, interpreting that data, and then leveraging it to our advantage. We’ll demonstrate how we are using this data to drive customer satisfaction and to more easily identify priorities for our documentation backlog.

We’ll show you how leveraging data is a great way to demonstrate to your management the value that you and your team bring. You may even pique the interest of members of customer support and development because content analytics can provide valuable insight into all areas of the product.

**SPEAKER BIO:**

Rachel Walters is a documentation and content manager for Oracle Warehouse Management (WMS) Cloud Development. Rachel has been a writer, analyst, and manager in tech comm for over twenty years for both small and large companies, working in industries that include wireless technology, transportation, finance, and health care. She leads a team of technical content writers and works together with members of the product management team to develop vital content for customers. She strives to create searchable, optimized, and impactful content throughout the customer journey.

Timothy Esposito is the Manager of Logistics Documentation at Oracle Corporation where he supervises an international team of technical writers. An STC member since 2005, Timothy serves on the Board of Directors as the Vice President. STC honors and awards include Society Fellow, the STC President’s Award, Distinguished Chapter Service Award for the Philadelphia Metro Chapter (PMC), and the Chicago Chapter’s President’s Award. During his term as PMC president, the chapter won a Pacesetter award, the platinum level Community Achievement Award twice, and was named Community of the Year for 2017. When not working on PMC projects, Tim volunteers with his township historical commission where he creates a monthly email newsletter and curates a museum. Tim also spends time with his family, rescues greyhounds, and tries out new board and card games with friends. (www.linkedin.com/in/timothyesposito/)

How to Make Your Writing More Inclusive, 1 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Shawneda Crout

**DESCRIPTION:** This session provides technical communicators with high-level inclusive writing practices, as well as dynamic resources for staying abreast of empathetic, inclusive language parameters that support creating accessible content across multiple mediums.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Shawneda Crout is a solver and author with a passion for injecting empathy into technical communication. Crout is the Technical Project Manager, Product for Women Who Code and author of over twenty women’s empowerment books showing the beauty of diversity, benefits of equity, and power of inclusion.
What Tech Comm Professionals Can Learn from Museum Curators

**PRESENTER:** Leah Guren  

**DESCRIPTION:** Museum curators are experts at organizing and presenting items in ways that engage and inform the public. Some of these techniques are applicable to our work as tech comm professionals. By exploring how museum exhibits are organized, arranged, and classified, we can find creative solutions to some of our more challenging content problems.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Leah Guren is the owner and operator of Cow TC. She has been active in the field of technical communication since 1980 and now devotes her time to training and consulting. Leah works with technical communication teams all over the world, using humor and a lively interactive training approach to help them solve their biggest content development challenges. She also provides consulting services to companies, emphasizing documentation UX and creating global-ready content. Leah's clients include some of the top high-tech and biotech companies, including Intel, IBM, Microsoft, NICE, Johnson & Johnson, RAD, Cisco, Medtronic, and Rambam Medical Center. Leah is a popular speaker in the field of technical communication, a published author, and a leading instructor in the field. She has helped hundreds of new practitioners enter the field of technical communication in Israel, the United States, and throughout Europe. Leah is a Fellow in STC and a founding member of tekom Israel.

Nobody Wants to Read Your Writing: Strategies for Effective, Relevant Documentation

**PRESENTER:** Amelia Lax  

**DESCRIPTION:** We all know the pain of trying to navigate a poorly formatted manual or an overstuffed FAQ page. Whether your audience is looking through a troubleshooting guide or an internal process document, they want to be in and out as quickly as possible. Strong organization helps readers cut to the chase and accomplish what they set out to do. Together, we’ll walk through how to apply minimalism principles to determine what a reader needs, what they don’t, and which pieces get prime real estate. If you have a reluctant readership, this session will help you make documents with good flow and seamless navigation for a painless reader experience. This presentation is most beneficial for authors who create task-based or decision-based documentation, such as user guides, release notes, or troubleshooting materials.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Amelia is a knowledge editor for Sub-Zero Group, Inc., where she revises customer how-to articles, technician-facing manuals, corporate memos, and the occasional cookbook. She has eight years of professional writing experience, including in medical software documentation and tutoring academic writing. Amelia is passionate about workflow optimization, conflict management, education, and accessible communication on complex topics.

Getting the Most Out of a Proof-of-Concept Project for DITA Adoption

**PRESENTER:** Peihong Zhu  

**DESCRIPTION:** Transitioning from unstructured authoring to structured authoring with DITA is a major investment for an organization. For the transition to be successful, people, processes, tools, and resources need to work in sync. It is surely not for the faint of heart, but it does not have to be a scary process. A well-thought-out proof-of-concept (PoC) project can provide many benefits and insights to ensure the success of your DITA adoption project. The benefits of PoC include providing proof of feasibility and proof of value, reducing risks, getting team and leadership buy-in, and providing rationales to secure funding.

This presentation defines the concept of PoC and details the factors you need to take into consideration when conducting a PoC project for DITA and CCMS adoption so that you can reap the full benefits of the PoC project.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Peihong Zhu is an associate information architect at Precision Content Authoring Solutions Inc, a technical writer (CPTC), and a council member of the Toronto Chapter of the Society of Technical Communication. With previous work experience in life science and bioinformatics, she has intimate knowledge about the scientific research, pharmaceutical, and software industries. Peihong has years of experience in researching, organizing, and analyzing information, as well as formal training in DITA, user experience research, and technical writing. Peihong is passionate about adopting innovative information architecture approaches to solve content problems.
How to Make Your Writing More Inclusive, 2 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Shawneda Crout

**DESCRIPTION:** Stay abreast of empathetic, inclusive language parameters using the tools presented in this session. For more details, see page 31.

An Experiential Journey: How to Convert Complex Technical Content into Easy-to-Follow Content, 2 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Jyoti D. Nerkar

**DESCRIPTION:** Learn how to simplify and present complex technical information using the entire content experience. For more details, see page 31.

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- **Network!** Meet like-minded colleagues and partners from numerous companies, including those prepared to unveil and demonstrate new and exciting products, services, and technology to the world of technical communication.
- **Have fun!** Explore the host city and attend fun social events planned with the local chapter members. Celebrate with honorees and awardees at the Honors Event.

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[Image of a crowded event with people networking and attending educational sessions.]
How to Translate Your Communication Degree into a Job

**PRESENTER:** Mickella Rast

**DESCRIPTION:** For new graduates or young professionals who are preparing to enter the workforce for the first time, translating a communication degree into a job can be difficult. This is especially true for communication majors who do not have a specialty or concentration, and who are instead faced with applying a theoretical-based and broad major to a more practical purpose. As communication and technical communication expands to encompass more facets, such as user experience, this task becomes even more daunting. Even university resources, such as graduation counselors, only offer so much help in providing students with direction. Burgeoning young professions would be better served by examining their strengths and experience and translating these into quantifiable skills. Once recognized, these skills can be used to identify valuable employment opportunities that new professionals may not have previously considered. Using these techniques, new professionals may have the confidence to expand their interests into heretofore overlooked fields and jobs.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Mickella Rast is a young professional with a dual BA in communication and English. She is currently working toward an MS in technical communication and works as a proposal writer for a government contracting organization. Prior to this, she worked as a technical writer and a freelance writer. As part of the generation stuck between Millennials and Generation Z, and as a young professional, she is cognizant of the challenges her peers, new graduates, and other young professionals face in the workforce.

The Importance of Editing from Your Audience’s Perspective

**PRESENTER:** Ann Marie Queeney

**DESCRIPTION:** Understanding a document’s audience is a critical, but sometimes overlooked, component for producing documentation that is clear, accurate, and compliant. This interactive session covers a three-step approach to editing from the audience’s perspective. This proven approach is based on the presenter’s experience editing SMEs’ documentation. While this session focuses on procedures and other documentation used to manage a company’s operational and manufacturing processes, the information also applies to other types of technical communication.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Ann Marie Queeney is an STC senior member with more than twenty years’ technical communication experience primarily in the medical device industry. Her STC experience includes serving as a 2020–2022 board member and Communities Affairs Committee (CAC) chair, special interest group leader, and STC Education Committee member. Ann Marie is the owner of A. M. Queeney, LLC.

STC Publications: Meet the Editors

**PRESENTERS:** Craig Baehr, Miriam F. Williams

**DESCRIPTION:** Attend this session to meet the editors of Intercom and Technical Communication, learn more about how to get published, find out about upcoming themes, and ask any questions you may have.
How to Embed a Digital Adoption Platform in the Help Architecture

**PRESENTERS:** Robert Sims, Lindsay Alvarado

**DESCRIPTION:** During this session, a real-world case study is presented to demonstrate how a digital adoption platform (sometimes known as performance management tools) can be integrated with traditional help content assets. When properly integrated into the application, the digital adoption platform can increase the usage and value of all help assets (online knowledge bases, user guides, how-to videos, etc.).

Using the digital adoption platform, the technical communication team constructed three unique types of interactions to support more than six thousand users monthly:

1) A step-by-step tutorial that users can use while performing basic steps within the application
2) Conditional pop-up messages that deliver in-the-moment guidance to users, based on their actions
3) Menus that function as learning paths for users who want to acquire more extensive knowledge from traditional help assets

The digital adoption platform also generates valuable data, such as search terms and click behavior, which can lead to improvement across all help assets.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Rob Sims is a technical writer at GS1 US, managing the searchable help center, user documentation, and instructional videos. He has over twenty-five years in the technical communications field as both a technical and marketing education specialist.

Lindsay Alvarado is the Technical Training Project Manager for GS1 US. In this role, she oversees the development of the online help center, user documentation and instructional videos. Lindsay is also an adjunct professor of business and has an extensive background in corporate training.

Making Access First: How to Make Aural Information Accessible in Technical Communication

**PRESENTERS:** Philip B. Gallagher

**DESCRIPTION:** This session responds to the challenges faced by users of technical information with hearing impairments. A rapid increase in digital documentation in the last twenty years has led to technical multimedia that uses verbal and aural communication. Unfortunately, there is not an established concerted effort within the field to train technical communication professionals in making audio content accessible. In our presentation, we discuss using audio descriptions, captions and subtitles, synced transcripts, and live transcription services to make all aural information accessible to users with hearing impairments. Based on empirical research, we provide instruction on how to use four audio accessibility elements during information design to address the challenges faced by users of digital documentation, who cannot hear the information we have to share. Ultimately, we support technical communicators looking to ensure that this user group can get the job done.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Dr. Philip B. Gallagher is an assistant professor of technical communication at Mercer University. His current research interests are accessibility and UX biometrics for technical communication, user-centered design of visual information, and the influences of technology in writing ecology. Recently, his publications appeared in Computers and Composition, the Journal of Interactive Technology and Pedagogy, and in the 2022 and 2021 STC Summit Conference and Expo proceedings.

STC Communities Social and Networking Event

**DESCRIPTION:** Join the STC Community Affairs Committee (CAC) for an informal get-together with fun activities, engaging conversations, a celebration of STC’s 70th birthday, and opportunities to expand your STC network. All Summit attendees are welcome!
Resume Review, 1 of 2

**DESCRIPTION:** Experienced hiring managers will be on hand to assist attendees by reviewing their resumes and offering tips to develop a strong resume that highlights your professional experience and achievements. You’ll get 15 minutes with a hiring manager to ask questions, get advice, and hear about what that manager looks for when hiring technical communicators—which is about 1 1/2 minutes longer than most managers take to review a resume when hiring! Our resume reviewers have extensive experience hiring technical communicators, UX writers, content strategists, knowledge management team members, marketers, project managers, and instructional designers. To sign up, visit the Education booth in the Summit registration area starting Monday morning, 15 May.

**SPEAKER BIO:** STC Members who are Experienced Hiring Managers

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How to Run an Inclusive Meeting

**PRESENTER:** Christine Christensen

**DESCRIPTION:** This session will cover what an inclusive meeting looks like, why they’re important, and how anybody, regardless of the role they have in meeting, can contribute to make it an inclusive experience.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Christine Christensen is the documentation manager at Cityworks, the leading provider of GIS-centric asset management and permitting software solutions for local government agencies and utilities. She has worked in the tech comm field for eleven years and has a master’s degree in technical communication from Minnesota State University, Mankato, and a bachelor’s degree in English from Utah State University. She is a Certified Professional Technical Communicator (CPTC) and currently serves as the president for the STC Rochester chapter and the co-facilitator for the Women in Tech Comm SIG. She lives near Salt Lake City, Utah, with her husband and two dogs.

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Comm and Get ‘em: We Have Answers to Your Questions

**PRESENTER:** Kirsty Taylor, Bernard Aschwanden, Alisa Bonsignore

**DESCRIPTION:** Do you have burning questions about business cases, building teams, choosing new authoring tools, establishing department style guides, and more? Bring your burning discussion topics to this session and ask our experienced facilitators for their suggestions for your best course of action.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Kirsty Taylor is the Integration Success/Content Manager for RPMGlobal, based in Brisbane, Australia. In her role, communication and documentation are key for ensuring collaboration and project success. Kirsty has recently served on the STC Board of Directors as Immediate Past President. See Bernard Aschwanden’s bio on page 25 and Alisa Bonsignore’s bio on page 24.
**Inclusive Technical Editing: How, Why, and When to Use Alternative Style Guides**

**PRESENTER:** Jonathan Arnett

**DESCRIPTION:** Technical editors commonly rely on the big four style guides—the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, the MLA Handbook, The Chicago Manual of Style, and The Associated Press Stylebook—when writing for general audiences, and they also consult other style guides such as the IEEE Editorial Style Manual when they write for technical audiences. However, these mainstream guides do not necessarily serve the needs of diverse audiences, and they may unintentionally alienate or disenfranchise readers. Thus, technical communicators need to consider employing alternative style guides that explicitly address diverse audiences and edit their materials with an eye toward ableism, ethnicity, race, nationality, gender, sex, and sexuality in order to make their language more universal, inclusive, and respectful.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Dr. Jonathan Arnett is an associate professor of technical communication at Kennesaw State University and is the program coordinator of the Bachelor of Science in Technical Communication degree. Dr. Arnett holds both an MATC in technical communication and a PhD in technical communication and rhetoric from Texas Tech University. His research interests include technical communication pedagogy, technical editing, and research methods, and he is a co-author of the widely used online, free textbook Open Technical Communication.

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**Creating an Infographic Using PowerPoint: Let’s Do It!, 1 of 2**

**PRESENTER:** Kelly Schrank

**DESCRIPTION:** An infographic is a great way to cover a topic, using both words and visuals, especially if the finished product will be posted online. Many people think they don’t have the tools or the skills to make an infographic, but you might just need a little knowledge to bridge that gap! In this session, we will briefly discuss some of the tools out there, and then, we will dive into the one tool that all of you probably have on your desktop: PowerPoint. After some discussion on what makes an infographic an infographic, what types of tools are available, and how we can use PowerPoint to make an infographic, we will walk through a demonstration of how to make an infographic live.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Kelly Schrank, MA, ELS, has been in technical and medical communication for over twenty years. Through her business, Bookworm Editing Services, she brings consistency, structure, and clarity to her clients’ content regardless of whether she is writing content like blog posts, style guides, and standard operating procedures or editing formulary dossiers, manuscripts, proposals, slide decks, and training materials. She has created infographics and infographic elements for her own business and her clients, covering topics from the light-hearted to the pharmaceutical industry.

Kelly is an Associate Fellow of STC and a BELS-certified Editor in the Life Sciences. Kelly has presented on checklists, Microsoft Word and PowerPoint, editing, infographics, side gigs, and networking in webinars and conferences.

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**Plotting to Help People: Utilizing Dramatic Structure for Better Communication, 1 of 2**

**PRESENTER:** Kim Chmielewicz

**DESCRIPTION:** We are all characters who’ve been antagonists in someone else’s play, which may detract from our ability to communicate effectively. But if you rewrite the plot of your content creation using drama as a metaphor, you can redirect negative emotions in positive directions and enhance your ability to work effectively in a wide variety of scenarios. To build useful skills for understanding the essence of how you, your collaborators, and audiences are cast in a project, we’ll discuss the best approaches for interacting with team members and planning documentation tasks to minimize points of conflict. Adjustments to accommodate scope and duration changes will also be covered, so potential tragedies becomes triumphs, with better outcomes and productivity.

You’ll leave this session with ideas on how to analyze and create management strategies and accompanying roles for yourself and others that transform everyone into heroes and leave your audiences applauding!

**SPEAKER BIO:** Kim Chmielewicz holds degrees from Hamilton College in Clinton, New York, and the University of Buffalo in anthropology, creative writing, and clinical laboratory science. She currently lives in East Amherst, NY and is employed at Kodak Alaris. Her greatest professional accomplishments have come from instructing others and seeing them put their new knowledge to use as well as problem-solving collaboratively to resolve issues and facilitate product improvement.
Creating an Infographic Using PowerPoint: Let’s Do It!, 2 of 2

**PRESENTER:** Kelly Schrank

**DESCRIPTION:** Join for a step-by-step demo of making an infographic using a tool most people already have on their desktop. For more details, see page 37.

How to Make the Business Case for Documentation

**PRESENTER:** Caity Cronkhite

**DESCRIPTION:** You probably already know the importance of good documentation to your company’s and customers’ success. So why does your company’s leadership team always seem to deprioritize and underinvest in important documentation efforts that you know will help users and improve the company’s bottom line?

In this talk, Good Words LLC CEO Caity Cronkhite walks you through how to make a compelling, numbers-based business case to help your company’s leaders understand the importance of documentation to a company’s overall success. You’ll learn:

- How to evaluate the bottom-line cost and business risks of neglecting critical writing and documentation projects.
- Easy calculations to determine the impact documentation has on your company’s bottom line, including how much money the company can save overall by investing in strategic documentation projects.
- How to prepare a compelling proposal for leaders to increase budget for strategic documentation projects, including how to tie documentation initiatives to your company’s larger strategic goals, vision, and even profits and revenue.

**SPEAKER BIO:** Caity Cronkhite is the founder and CEO of Good Words LLC. Good Words delivers ongoing strategic, management, and implementation support for our clients’ technical writing needs. Good Words’ consultants bring their concise and accurate writing skills and ongoing strategic plans to streamline even the most complex communications for some of the most technically sophisticated companies across industries, from Fortune 500 companies to five-person startups.

Caity was born and raised on a remote farm in rural Indiana. She eventually left her prairie roots to attend Carnegie Mellon University, where she received a degree in technical writing and communication. After college, Caity went west—first to the San Francisco Bay Area, then to Seattle—to start her career as a technical writer and, eventually, an entrepreneur. She is passionate about using her personal and professional experience to uplift others, including advocating for increased labor and wage protections for freelance workers and empowering employees with meaningful career opportunities no matter where they live.

CPTC Certification Program Overview and Top 10 Study Tips

**PRESENTER:** Craig Baehr

**DESCRIPTION:** Join us for an interactive session on the CPTC Program, including an overview of the three levels and nine core competencies, what you need to know about the exam, sample questions, informative resources available, and the top study tips for preparing for each of the exams. We’ll also be available to answer your questions about the program, too.

Create Great Learning Results with the Power of Personas

**PRESENTER:** Jill Stanton

**DESCRIPTION:** When designing learning, it’s easy to get so focused on the content and goals that you forget about the learners. Following a “content is king” approach without focusing on your learners can create learning that subject matter experts and stakeholders love, but it doesn’t help learners learn and it can even make it difficult for them. Identifying some audience characteristics during an initial analysis helps, but that doesn’t go far enough to keep the learners alive and in focus as you build learning and make myriad design decisions that have the potential to hinder learning. King content can prevent or destroy effective learning!

**SPEAKER BIO:** Jill Stanton has more than twenty-three years of learning and development experience and a BA in education, theatre, English, and psychology. She loves the learning industry and the constant sharing and curiosity that learning professionals foster, and she has been observed to get disproportionately excited about research study summaries. Her career has included designing and managing many different and award-winning learning projects, including: video, interactive video, eLearning, curriculum design, HR strategy, IT system development, performance support, learning strategy and design consulting, classroom training, and translation projects for clients across all industries.

Caity was born and raised on a remote farm in rural Indiana. She eventually left her prairie roots to attend Carnegie Mellon University, where she received a degree in technical writing and communication. After college, Caity went west—first to the San Francisco Bay Area, then to Seattle—to start her career as a technical writer and, eventually, an entrepreneur. She is passionate about using her personal and professional experience to uplift others, including advocating for increased labor and wage protections for freelance workers and empowering employees with meaningful career opportunities no matter where they live.
PRESENTER: Scott Abel

DESCRIPTION: It is more important than ever to use language that is inclusive and respectful to all. Technical communication professionals have a critical role to play in promoting inclusive language, but what does that mean in practice? In this presentation, content strategy evangelist Scott Abel will share the findings of a recent survey of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) professionals on the topic of inclusive language.

Conducted by The Content Wrangler, Content Science, and the Center for Information Development Management, the survey aims to help conference attendees better understand which departments are actively involved in guiding and funding inclusive language initiatives. The survey also examines the reasons organizations aim to produce more inclusive language.

Gain insights into the current state of inclusive language initiatives, as well as best practices for developing and implementing an effective content strategy for promoting inclusivity. Abel will also discuss the challenges and opportunities associated with using inclusive language, and provide tips from members of impacted communities for incorporating more inclusive language in your work.

You will come away from this presentation with a deeper understanding of the importance of inclusive language in today’s diverse and ever-changing world, and practical strategies for promoting inclusivity. Abel will share personal anecdotes he’s collected during interviews with people impacted by less than inclusive communication.

If you aim to craft content that is not only effective and engaging, but also respectful and inclusive of all, this is a must-attend closing session.

SPEAKER BIO: Scott Abel is a content strategy evangelist, known as The Content Wrangler. He has helped countless organizations to streamline their content production and delivery processes and improve the quality and effectiveness of their technical product information. He is a recognized thought leader in the field of content strategy and has been a featured speaker at numerous industry events around the world.

Scott is the co-author of the books “The Language of Content Strategy,” (a go-to resource for content professionals looking to improve their skills and knowledge) and “Intelligent Content: A Primer” (a comprehensive introduction to the concept of intelligent content). He is also the founder of The Content Wrangler, a content strategy consultancy that works with organizations of all sizes to develop and implement effective content strategies, and Information Development World, a conference that focuses on the latest trends, tools, and best practices in the field of information development. With a deep passion for content and a strong focus on the needs of end-users, Scott has built a reputation for providing pragmatic, results-oriented advice that helps organizations to create content that is engaging, effective, and relevant to their audiences. His approach is centered on the belief that great content is the result of a well-defined strategy that is grounded in an understanding of user needs and business goals.

Currently, Scott is working with component content management system maker, Heretto, to educate leaders outside the content industry about content production capabilities like content operations and single-source omnichannel publishing that can differentiate their firms from their competition.
STC Summit is back in Atlanta!

This year’s theme is
The “How-To” Conference:
Learn Well through Show and Tell.

All 2023 Technical Communication Summit events, sessions, and meetings will take place at Hyatt Regency Atlanta located in the heart of Atlanta on Peachtree Street.

Check here for more details on STC Atlanta Chapter-hosted events: https://summit.stc.org/conference/entertainment-and-social-events/. These events allow Summit attendees the chance to experience some of the wonderful aspects of the city of Atlanta!

The Hyatt Regency Atlanta is minutes away from several attractions:
- Georgia Aquarium
- World of Coca-Cola
- Center for Civil and Human Rights
- College Football Hall of Fame
- Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historical Park
- Jimmy Carter Presidential Library and Museum

For even more to do, Atlanta’s public transportation system, MARTA, with onsite access, will take you to activities in nearby Buckhead, Midtown, Inman Park, or Old 4th Ward.

Piedmont Park is also minutes away. Stretch your legs, unwind, and enjoy the view or ride a bike along the Beltline.

See you at Summit! Register at summit.stc.org.