



The ISTC is the United Kingdom's professional association for technical authors, technical illustrators, and information designers.

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This monthly Newsletter is emailed to about 1500 people. As well as ISTC news, *InfoPlus<sup>+</sup>* aims to cover anything of interest to the profession. To subscribe, contact the office.

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## ISTC news

This month's newsletter kicks off with some area group news. As ISTC council member Rachel Potts has pointed out in previous issues of *InfoPlus<sup>+</sup>*, local area groups are a great way to meet up with fellow technical communicators to network and share knowledge and expertise. They are open to everyone (you don't need to be an ISTC member to attend), and they're usually free, so please give your support these events. If you are already involved in ISTC area groups, please keep us posted so we can spread the word.

Speaking of events, we have plenty of events news this month. Of particular note are the forthcoming North West Area Group and Cambridge Technical Communicators events both with Chris Atherton, who presented at the ISTC's *TCUK09* conference.

There is also a feature on a recently published book by ISTC member Dirk Manuel. We are always pleased to publicise

work by ISTC members and so the editor would like to take this opportunity to encourage readers to send us contributions or news about their professional technical communication exploits for future editions of *InfoPlus<sup>+</sup>*. Just email [newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk).

## Area group news London Area

*From David Farbey*

The first London Tech Writers Social of 2010 takes place on 25 February 2010, 6:30pm at the Garrick Arms, 8-10 Charing Cross Road, London WC2H 0HG. The Garrick Arms pub is two minutes walk from Leicester Square station (Northern and Piccadilly lines) and less than ten minutes walk from Charing Cross main line station.

We should have an area of the bar reserved for us (ask for the London Tech Writers

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Group), and as before, you will be able to buy your own drinks and snacks or meals at the bar.

This is an informal social meeting, supported by both the ISTC and the UK and Ireland Chapter of the STC, and open to everyone. If you are thinking of taking part, please email David Farbey ([david@farbey.co.uk](mailto:david@farbey.co.uk)), so we can let the venue know how many people we are expecting.

## Cambridge Technical Communicators and North West Area Group

From Richard Truscott (Cambridge) and David Jones (North West)

Both Cambridge and the North West are hosting meetings with talks by Chris Atherton entitled Visual attention: a psychologist's perspective. The North West event is on Monday 15 February with the Cambridge meeting scheduled for the following Monday 22 February. Please see the *Events news* section of *InfoPlus+* for more information about these meetings.

## Attention ISTC members!

Membership subscriptions are now due. Please contact the office as soon as possible to renew your membership for 2010 and continue to receive the benefits reserved for members.

### Localization into all main languages

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## Communicator commissioning and production editors: deadline for tenders extended

Last month's *InfoPlus+* included a prompt about the appointment of new suppliers for the commissioning and production roles on its quarterly journal *Communicator*.

Details are available in the notice on page 27 of the Winter 2009 issue of *Communicator*, but please note that we have extended the deadline for tenders to 17:00 on Friday 12 February because some people did not receive the Winter 2009 *Communicator* on time due to an error by the mailing house.



## Industry news

### Stilo strengthens team to deliver intelligent content conversion solutions

Stilo International has announced the appointment of Phillip Barratt to the role of Business Development Manager, XML Content Processing Solutions.

Educated at the University of Central England to Postgraduate Level in Psychology, Sociology and Computer Sciences, Phill started his career as a developer/project manager with Thomson Corporation. He subsequently worked for Software AG as an XML enterprise integration consultant; SoftQuad, where he was responsible for strategic accounts management; Corel, as director of XML content solutions and Blast Radius, director of enterprise solutions.



Phillip Barratt

Phill was most recently director of sales and marketing, EMEA, with XML content management system vendor, Ovidius.

Commenting on the appointment, Les Burnham, CEO, Stilo International, said: 'We're delighted to welcome Phill to the Stilo team. For the last 15 years, Phill has been immersed in the world of SGM/XML content processing and, as such, he brings a wealth of experience and industry knowledge to the role.' He added: 'The XML content processing market is driven by the growing requirement for large organisations to aggregate content from disparate sources and repurpose that content as part of an enterprise publishing application. Stilo has been developing applications for high-performance content processing and content conversion for more than 20 years, as well as leading the market with online and customisable content conversion solutions that deliver high quality XML, converting content from any source format to any target format.'

In his new role, Phill will be focused on the promotion of intelligent content conversion solutions, based upon Migrate and OmniMark technologies, into the publishing and technical documentation

sectors. This includes managing partnerships with content management system vendors and system integrators, providing custom solutions for legacy data conversion, content aggregation, and content repurposing to support enterprise publishing applications.

'I'm delighted to take up the role of business development manager at Stilo as they look to further develop their position as a leading provider of intelligent content conversion solutions,' said Phill. 'I've been aware of Stilo for a number of years, having worked with their OmniMark content processing application in a previous role, and followed the launch of their on-demand content conversion solution, Migrate. Stilo are content engineering experts, they've been at the forefront of intelligent content conversion for more than two decades, and I welcome the opportunity to further develop their business.'

If you'd like to talk Intelligent Content Conversion, or explore partnership opportunities, contact Phill direct at: [pbarratt@stilo.com](mailto:pbarratt@stilo.com).

## Samsung unveils its first e-Book for reading, writing and sharing 'on-the-go'

Samsung Electronics Co. Ltd unveiled its first e-book at the 2010 International Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in Las Vegas.

'We've used our expertise to create a high-quality e-Book with today's on-the-go consumer in mind,' said Dominic Webb, General Manager, Display Division, Samsung Electronics UK and Ireland. 'Samsung is addressing a common frustration that users experience with many of today's e-Books by using an electromagnetic resonance pen to save them time when writing on their e-Book.'

Samsung's new 6-inch E6 and 10-inch E101 e-Books are equipped with an e-paper display similar to real paper to enable a



clearer display even outdoors. Many other functions are also included to provide an effective reading environment. The global e-Book formats ePub, PDF and TXT are all supported, and the built-in dictionaries can be used just by touching the screen with the stylus.

A built-in MP3 player function allows users to listen to an audio book, or to listen to music whilst reading a book. In addition, Samsung's unique 'Text-to-Speech' engine can read a book with accurate pronunciations for users who are driving or in noisy environments.

### Handwriting recognition capabilities

Unlike other e-Book devices, Samsung's E6 and E101 use handwriting recognition

to allow users to annotate their reading selections, calendars and notes with a built-in electromagnetic resonance (EMR) stylus pen. This dedicated pen prevents mistypes caused by hands and other objects that may graze the screen's surface. A variety of pen and eraser thicknesses make the Samsung e-book perfect for drawing and

writing. The E101, in particular, boasts additional functions such as calligraphy and edit functions (cut, copy and paste) with the stylus pressure sensitivity feature.

### Wi-Fi wireless

Samsung's e-Book devices are equipped for wireless connectivity as well. Wi-Fi 802.11b/g allows users to download content such as books and newspapers from a server wirelessly, as well as to share content with other devices. The Samsung E6 and E101 will be available in the UK during March 2010.

For more information, visit:

[www.samsung.com](http://www.samsung.com).

### Hyperlinks disclaimer

The appearance of external hyperlinks does not constitute endorsement by the ISTC of the linked websites, or the information, products or services contained on those sites. All external hyperlinks were accurate and working at the time of writing. However, the ISTC does not exercise any editorial control over the information you may find at these locations, so the ISTC cannot be responsible for changes to content found at these locations or any material on those sites that may be inaccurate, misleading or offensive to you. All links are provided with the intent of meeting the mission of the ISTC and its Newsletter, and the ISTC disclaims any responsibility for the accuracy, completeness and availability of any linked site. Please let us know about existing external links which you believe are inappropriate or inaccurate and about specific additional external links which you believe ought to be included.

## New grading structure for professional indexers

The Society of Indexers' online directory, [Indexers Available](#), is the essential reference source for anyone needing a professional indexer. Clients consulting the directory will notice a number of changes during 2010 as a new membership grading structure is implemented. 'We now have a logical, stepwise progression from student membership through to Fellowship and the membership grades more clearly associate professional indexers with the name of the Society,' said SI Chair Ann Kingdom. The new structure also encourages continuing professional development (CPD) and recognises the acquisition of practical skills and experience.

There will now be three grades for qualified members:

- The new designation **Professional Member (MSocInd)** indicates an indexer who has successfully completed initial training and is working as a professional indexer (or has many years' continuous experience).
- A new grade of **Advanced Professional Member (MSocInd(Adv))** will come into force from April 2010. This will recognise skills and experience gained following initial training and act as a stepping stone between the basic professional grade and Fellowship.
- **Fellows** of the Society of Indexers (**FSocInd**) are indexers whose work has been through a rigorous assessment procedure and is judged as achieving exemplary professional quality.

Members of the society who are currently undertaking the Society's [training course](#) will be designated **Student Members**, although of course they won't have an entry in the directory until they qualify.

Identifying an indexer with the appropriate subject expertise is an essential part of the commissioning process. This is a point

### About the Society

The Society of Indexers was established in 1957 to raise awareness of indexing and promote improved standards in all forms of indexing. Further information about the Society, about training as an indexer and about indexing in general can be found on its website ([www.indexers.org.uk](http://www.indexers.org.uk)), together with the online directory of freelance indexers ([Indexers Available](#)) and extensive advice for anyone commissioning an index.

Ann Kingdom is quite emphatic about: 'No matter how skilled and experienced the indexer, they must also be familiar with the subject matter.' Apparently this is something that editors don't always seem to rate sufficiently highly and she's been surprised at the number of times she's been approached to index books in specialist areas she knows absolutely nothing about. Hopefully this will soon be a thing of the past. 'We're planning a major overhaul of *Indexers Available* during 2010-11,' said Ann. 'The idea is to make it much easier for an editor or author to choose an indexer with the relevant subject background.'

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## Publication news

### Oracle User Productivity Kit 3.5 by Dirk Manuel

ISTC Fellow Dirk Manuel has written a book for training developers who will be using Oracle UPK or OnDemand to create their training material. It is ideally suited to developers who want to tailor UPK to meet their own, specific requirements.

Published in paperback and eBook format by Packt Publishing, the book guides readers from the basics of recording through to adding value through Web Pages (Infoblocks), Packages, Role filters, Glossaries, and more. The book starts with the recording of a simple simulation, and builds on this recording throughout, by introducing new UPK features and incorporating the lessons learned into this recording. Interwoven into this, the key tasks



(how-tos) are formatted in such a way that they can be quickly identified and referred to, making this book useful as an ongoing reference to UPK functionality.

*InfoPlus+* asked Dirk how the book came about: 'I started using OnDemand (Oracle UPK's predecessor before it was bought by Oracle) around five years ago. My client had chosen OnDemand as the preferred tool for developing training simulations (having just decided that training simulations were preferred over 'live' training clients), and my project was one of the early adopters within the Corporation. I joined the project for the second phase, and was asked to manage the training developers, who were from a third-party consultancy. Because I was responsible for reviewing the work of these developers, I took it upon myself to learn OnDemand, so that I could better understand what they were producing.'

Because he wasn't officially an 'OnDemand developer', Dirk received no formal training, and had to content himself with reading the extremely dry and functional documentation

that came with OnDemand, and 'playing around' in the system to see what it could do.

'After a month or so, I had a very good understanding of the capabilities of OnDemand' said Dirk. 'Although 'self-taught' users are seldom the experts they claim to be, the advantage of this approach was that I learnt everything about OnDemand, and not just what an OnDemand trainer thought I needed to know. I also discovered that the external developers were using very little of OnDemand's extensive functionality, and were consequently turning in inferior work. So I dispensed with their services, and started developing all of the project's training simulations myself.'

Over the next couple of years, other projects and organisations in the Corporation liked what Dirk had done, and started approaching him to do the same thing for them. He remarked: 'This approach typically followed the same path: First, an attempt to persuade me to come and join their project (which worked the first time, only!), and when this didn't work, a request to train their developers. I did train several other projects, but eventually I ran out of available time, at which point the final request was: "Well, can you at least recommend a good book on OnDemand?" Unfortunately, I could not,

because there simply were no books on OnDemand, good or bad.'

'After giving this answer for the umpteenth time, I decided to do something about it. I had been proofreading for Packt Publishing, a specialist publisher of technical references for a while, and that had taught me that (1) there was certainly a market for specialist publications, and (2) I could certainly write as well as most of the authors for whom I had proofed. Consequently, I reasoned that I could write a half-decent book on OnDemand.'

Dirk started with his course notes, and added in all of the hints and tips and advice that he typically gave verbally during his training courses on OnDemand (and which the trainees said they benefited most from).

### Book details

540 pages  
191mm x 235mm  
ISBN 1849680167  
(ISBN 13 978-1-849680-16-5).

The cover price for the paperback edition is £46.99, but the book is also available from Packt Publishing as an eBook. For more information and up-to-date prices, visit: [www.packtpub.com/oracle-user-productivity-kit-upk-3-5/book](http://www.packtpub.com/oracle-user-productivity-kit-upk-3-5/book). The book is also available to order from book retailers and online stores, such as [Amazon.co.uk](http://Amazon.co.uk).

In the mean time, Oracle bought OnDemand from Global Knowledge and issued a new release under its new name of Oracle User Productivity Kit (UPK), so Dirk then had to spend another couple of months learning the new features and adding them to the book.

By the time he had finished, he had a 550-page book, structured as a guided tutorial, which contained pretty much everything he knew about OnDemand and UPK.

Dirk explains: 'With the book all but finished, I approached Packt Publishing, to see if they had any interest in publishing it, and was relieved to find that they did indeed think it was commercially viable (as a print-on-demand publisher, they can easily cater for such niche topics). After another couple of months, during which I worked with several publications coordinators, editors, and proofreaders, the book hit the (virtual) shelves, and has been selling steadily – not least to developers at my current client, who were, after all, the main reason I wrote the book in the first place – ever since.'

Dirk admits that overall, the book is unlikely to make his fortune (UPK remains a relatively niche area), but that it has been an enjoyable and rewarding process, during which he learned more about the publishing industry than he thought he would ever need to know!

TRANSLATION  
CONFERENCE  
CRACOW (POLAND)

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days

technology,  
know-how, money

18-19 March 2010

## Blog news

### New Year, New Ideas

By Gordon McLean, MISTC

A new year usually heralds some deep thinking and soul searching for many people, and it's no different on the blogs. While some people pick up right where they left off, others pause to consider what they are doing it and that has made for some interesting, and diverse, topics.

One question that many of us have to answer is [How do you prove you're worth it?](#) 'Documentation is often seen as just a cost centre. And when the spreadsheet guys are looking at what's costing money and what's winning new business it often looks like documentation is something you could do without. Because – think about it – when did good documentation, by itself, ever win one dollar of new business?' Alistair Christie goes on to discuss some ways of proving the worth of documentation, and readers of his blog also chip in with some interesting points.

Away from the written word, Craig Haiss looks at some ways of improving screencasts. His post [How to create engagement and add integration](#) includes

some good tips if you are, or are planning to, include more video content to your repertoire: 'Increasing the amount of visual content you provide is likely a safe investment. Don't fear duplicate content. Publishing text and video addresses multiple learning styles, and video provides a lower barrier to entry for most people.'

As well as video, graphics play a large part in technical communications, but have you considered comics? It's not as far fetched as it sounds, as Alan J. Porter points out in [Comics Can Make You A Better Communicator](#) 'Just thinking about the way that comics work can improve your existing communications. Consider [a] page from a photocopier manual. It doesn't look like a comic yet it uses sequence, colour, narrative, concise language, symbols and icons.'

Comics are one route that you can look to for ideas and inspiration, and if you are involved in any other form of infographic or are struggling to put together a graphic, then [this collection of resources](#) will 'get you going down the information architecture and data visualisation path.'

I realise I'm somewhat biased but I do think safe to say that Internet is changing the way people use information and it not only offers

### Quick links to the bloggers and their blogs

Alistair Christie:

[www.ithauthor.com/2010/01/15/documentation-metrics-how-do-you-prove-youre-worth-it](http://www.ithauthor.com/2010/01/15/documentation-metrics-how-do-you-prove-youre-worth-it)

Craig Haiss:

[www.helpscribe.com/2010/01/screencasts-20-how-to-create-engagement.html](http://www.helpscribe.com/2010/01/screencasts-20-how-to-create-engagement.html)

Alan J. Porter:

<http://thecontentwrangler.com/2010/01/08/comics-can-make-you-a-better-communicator>

Max Klein:

<http://maxklein.posterous.com/on-how-google-wave-surprisingly-changed-my-li>

Will Kelly:

<http://willkelly.typepad.com/willkelly/2010/01/3-bad-microsoft-word-template-decisions-to-avoid.html>

A technical writer for almost 16 years, Gordon has been blogging for almost 10 of those. He monitors a large breadth of blogs covering most aspects of both technical communications and software development. You can download the full list of RSS feeds from his blog at [www.onemanwrites.co.uk](http://www.onemanwrites.co.uk).

different ways of consuming information but different ways to interact with colleagues and customers. Google Wave is one of the newest and remains a mystery to many people. Max Klein has been trying it out and has shared his thoughts [On how Google Wave surprisingly changed my life](#). His situation may not be a perfect match to the average day of a technical writer but there are many aspects of how he uses Google Wave that seem to fit.

Getting back to basics to finish up this month, and in his post [3 Bad Microsoft Word Template Decisions to Avoid](#), Will Kelly offers some good advice: 'keep them simple especially if the organisation doesn't have a full time writer dedicated to the project or the documents are being shipped around to non-writers a lot.'

If you are toying with setting up your own technical writing blog, or if you have any questions, please feel free to get in touch. Similarly if you have a technical writing blog that you think should be featured here, do let me know at [blogs@istc.org.uk](mailto:blogs@istc.org.uk).

## Software news

### Quark offers printers free QuarkXPress 8 and priority technical support

In continued support of the print community, Quark has announced special offers that allow eligible printers to join Quark output provider programmes at no cost. Adobe Service Network (ASN) members and current QuarkAlliance members are invited to take advantage of complimentary QuarkAlliance membership. Membership benefits can include priority technical support, a free copy of QuarkXPress 8, increased market visibility, and potential revenue opportunities.

#### Technical Communicators

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'We are excited to extend our output provider programmes by offering these special enrolment incentives,' said Cyndie Shaffstall, director of QuarkAlliance. 'Quark remains a consistent and committed partner to printers. In the last year alone, we have demonstrated this commitment by adding print-oriented, PDF enhancements to QuarkXPress and expanding QuarkAlliance to include an online searchable directory.'

There are a variety of ways output providers can participate in the special programme enrolment offers:

- Existing ASN (Adobe Service Network) members that register now will receive a complimentary one-year enrolment to the Quark Alliance Output Provider Programme as an Authorised Partner
- Current members of the QuarkAlliance Output Provider Programme are eligible for a complimentary one-year membership renewal

To begin the registration process, visit: [www.quarkalliance.com](http://www.quarkalliance.com). Rules and regulations apply and ASN members will be required to provide proof of membership.

# Training courses

## February

- 2 Adobe Photoshop Intro**  
This Photoshop Introduction course enables delegates with no previous experience of Photoshop to acquire this level of theoretical and practical proficiency and those with a repro background, and an understanding of related theory to adapt their expertise efficiently.
- Mekon Creatives, Sutton, Surrey.  
[www.mekon-creatives.com/courses.cfm](http://www.mekon-creatives.com/courses.cfm).

Listings are restricted to scheduled courses that are low cost or are in some way unusual. Listings are a service to members. A listing does not imply ISTC endorsement.

If you hear of any training courses that you think might be of interest to *InfoPlus*<sup>+</sup> readers, please contact the Newsletter copyeditor at [newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk).

If you would like to promote your course or event to ISTC members, why not consider giving ISTC members a discount for courses and events listed in our newsletter. For more information, please email [istc@istc.org.uk](mailto:istc@istc.org.uk).

- 4-5 Introduction to Adobe InDesign CS4**  
This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the powerful capabilities of InDesign, including setting up new documents, shapes, frames and using InDesign's most popular features.
- 10% discount for ISTC members  
Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands.  
[www.armadaonline.co.uk/techauthortraining](http://www.armadaonline.co.uk/techauthortraining).

- 9 Photoshop – Web**  
This course is aimed at Web professionals who need to create quality images specifically for display on the Web. The aim is to achieve the best possible compromise between small file sizes for faster down load times and maintaining image quality.
- Mekon Creatives, Sutton, Surrey.  
[www.mekon-creatives.com/courses.cfm](http://www.mekon-creatives.com/courses.cfm).

- 15 Introduction to online help development**  
This short course teaches the fundamental principles for developing online help of a professional standard. Covers the different types of help systems and formats, user approaches to online help, writing for the online media and designing the online help display.
- 10% discount for ISTC members.  
Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands.  
[www.armadaonline.co.uk/techauthortraining](http://www.armadaonline.co.uk/techauthortraining).

- 16 Adobe Illustrator Advanced**  
This course focuses on the advanced features of Illustrator and power shortcuts to enhance your workflow. A methodical approach to using the vector drawing tools in Illustrator will be taught to help you unlock your creative potential.
- Mekon Creatives, Sutton, Surrey.  
[www.mekon-creatives.com/courses.cfm](http://www.mekon-creatives.com/courses.cfm).

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**16-17 Basic and Intermediate Adobe RoboHelp**

This course for beginners teaches how to use RoboHelp to create online help in most popular formats, and produce hard copy guides in Word format from the same project.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands.

[www.armadaonline.co.uk/adobettraining](http://www.armadaonline.co.uk/adobettraining).

**17-18 Adobe Flash Introduction Course**

This Flash course is aimed at web designers and animators who need to create dynamic and exciting animations. The course is conducted over two days.

Mekon Creatives, Sutton, Surrey.

[www.mekon-creatives.com/courses.cfm](http://www.mekon-creatives.com/courses.cfm).

**18 Advanced Adobe RoboHelp**

This course teaches the use of RoboHelp's advanced features. Covers the use of styles and stylesheets, the development of skins, creating context-

sensitive help and using the RoboScreenCapture and RoboSource utilities that are bundled with RoboHelp.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands.

[www.armadaonline.co.uk/adobettraining](http://www.armadaonline.co.uk/adobettraining).

**22 Photoshop - Print**

This course is aimed at graphic designers and other professionals who need to create quality images for print. In this course, you will learn professional techniques for obtaining high-quality images in PhotoShop.

Mekon Creatives, Sutton, Surrey.

[www.mekon-creatives.com/courses.cfm](http://www.mekon-creatives.com/courses.cfm).

**23-24 Adobe Dreamweaver**

This two-day course includes understanding the development process, creating and laying out a new site, adding content, understanding and authoring cascading style sheets (CSS),

adding and editing graphics, building navigation and creating jump menus, designing web forms, and publishing, testing and maintaining your site.

Mekon Creatives, Sutton, Surrey.

[www.mekon-creatives.com/courses.cfm](http://www.mekon-creatives.com/courses.cfm).

**24 Writing for the Web**

This course teaches about the priorities and practicalities of writing to create an engaging website with a clear, concise message. Learn how to overcome the challenges of Web writing, and get your message across.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands.

[www.armadaonline.co.uk/businesswritingcourses.htm](http://www.armadaonline.co.uk/businesswritingcourses.htm).

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## ...February

### 25-26 **Website creation essentials with Adobe Dreamweaver**

This is a course for new or novice website designers, and anyone who is responsible for creating or updating web pages. It teaches how to design, develop and maintain a professional website using Dreamweaver. During the course, delegates create a fully functioning website, and receive a copy of their files to take away.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands.

[www.armadaonline.co.uk/coursedreamweaver.htm](http://www.armadaonline.co.uk/coursedreamweaver.htm).

3

FrameMaker's most popular features.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands.

[www.armadaonline.co.uk/adobettraining](http://www.armadaonline.co.uk/adobettraining).

### Advanced Adobe FrameMaker 9

This course teaches FrameMaker's advanced features when working in unstructured mode. It covers variables, books, contents, index and cross-references.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands.

[www.armadaonline.co.uk/adobettraining](http://www.armadaonline.co.uk/adobettraining).

8-9

### Introduction to Adobe Captivate 4

This course for beginners teaches how to create web enabled simulations, demos and tutorials for software applications.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands.

[www.armadaonline.co.uk/techauthortraining](http://www.armadaonline.co.uk/techauthortraining).

## March

### 1-2 **Basic/Intermediate Adobe FrameMaker 9**

This course provides beginners with a thorough grounding in FrameMaker. Starting from first principles, delegates learn how to create new documents, modify existing ones and use

5

### Introduction to technical authoring

This is a short course for new technical authors and people in other roles who need to carry out technical authoring work. It covers audience analysis, structuring and designing documents, writing in plain English, punctuation and grammar, designing an effective

### 10-12 **Advanced technical authoring techniques**

This is an intensive course for career technical authors who want to improve their skill set and the quality and effectiveness of the documentation they produce.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands.

[www.armadaonline.co.uk/techauthortraining](http://www.armadaonline.co.uk/techauthortraining).

## ...March

### 25-26 Introduction to Adobe Photoshop

This is a course for beginners. It provides delegates with essential knowledge including repairing photos, selections and layers, compositing images, and vector drawing techniques.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands.

[www.armadaonline.co.uk/  
printdesigntraining.htm](http://www.armadaonline.co.uk/printdesigntraining.htm).

### 29 Introduction to online help development

This short course teaches the fundamental principles for developing online help of a professional standard. It covers the different types of help systems and formats, user approaches to online help, writing for the online media and designing the online help display.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands.

[www.armadaonline.co.uk/  
techauthortraining](http://www.armadaonline.co.uk/techauthortraining).

## Events news

### Visual attention: a psychologist's perspective

Chris Atherton will be giving a talk at meetings of the Cambridge Technical Communicators and North West Area groups in February.

Chris Atherton says that beneath the surface of every psychologist lurks a latent instructional designer. Chris presents some key findings from cognitive psychology, to show how humans process visual information, and then narrow the focus to look at the usefulness of slideware (such as PowerPoint) in teaching. Chris argues that dense, simultaneous verbal and visual delivery risks overloading the audience's working memory, impairing learning, and present data showing that sparse slide content improves students' recall of the material presented. Finally, Chris discusses the implications of these findings for audiovisual instruction, and instructional design.

There will be plenty of 'hands on' practicals to amuse and challenge you. There will be plenty of time for questions and answers and discussion of your ideas and

Dr Chris Atherton is a Senior Lecturer in cognitive psychology at the University of Central Lancashire, with a background in visual perception:



she holds a PhD in the cognitive neuroscience of human vision from the University of Wales (Bangor). Chris has spent the last ten years researching the relationship between visual processing, physical experience, and brain function, and the last seven communicating the results of this research to undergraduates and anyone else who will listen. Her current research focuses on the relationship between visual and auditory presentation, and how these two processes interact to affect learning and memory; applications include instructional design for lectures and juror memory for witness testimony. Chris has a postgraduate certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, is a Higher Education Authority registered practitioner, and a member of the Association for Psychological Science.

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experiences. Chris's talk is an extended version the talk she gave at *TCUK09*.

**For the North West Event:**

This takes place on Monday 15 February at 7:00pm at MadLab 36–40 Edge Street, Manchester, M4 1HN in the Northern Quarter. Contact David Jones at [dacjones40@hotmail.com](mailto:dacjones40@hotmail.com).

**For the Cambridge Event:**

This takes place on Monday 22 February at Red-Gate Software. The meeting starts at 7:00pm at Red-Gate on the Business Park ([www.red-gate.com/about/Map\\_colour.pdf](http://www.red-gate.com/about/Map_colour.pdf)).

For building security reasons please let Richard Truscott know by email that you are coming at [richard.truscott@btinternet.com](mailto:richard.truscott@btinternet.com) or text to 07751 722828 by midday on the 22 February.

If you're travelling by car there is plenty of parking on the Business Park ([www.red-gate.com/about/Map\\_colour.pdf](http://www.red-gate.com/about/Map_colour.pdf)). The Business Park is on the north side of Cambridge off Milton Road, near the A14 junction 33, (A1309/A10). Public transport by bus see: <http://tinyurl.com/o7w3xe> (X9, C2, 9 and Milton Park and Ride (route 99) pass nearby.

**18th annual WritersUA conference for software user assistance**

Registration is open for this event, which takes place 21–24 March 2010, in Seattle, Washington. The conference goal is to continue to provide an event with the most comprehensive and timely information specifically designed for user assistance professionals. It features over eighty cutting-edge topics from over fifty experts, project demonstrations from other user assistance developers, plus an exhibition of products and services, certificate programs, and networking events.

The conference topics cover a broad range of key tools, processes, technologies, and techniques including:

- DITA, XML, information architecture
- User-centred design and usability
- eLearning tools and techniques
- Hands-on computer tutorials
- UA for mobile devices
- Adobe, Microsoft, Google
- Case studies

For further information, visit: [www.writersua.com/ohc/index.html](http://www.writersua.com/ohc/index.html).

**TMS Inspiration Days – new translation market conference**

TMS Inspiration Days is the first translation market conference where participants can obtain knowledge that will inspire them to explore and introduce new business solutions and get information on the latest trends in technology and market development. The initiator and organiser of the meeting in Cracow (Poland) is XTRF™ Translation Management Systems, which is mainly known in the market for its unique customer approach as well as its continuous and exceptionally rapid development. The conference will take place 18-19 March 2010 and is entitled Technology, know-how, and money!

The topics will include models of business management with the use of ISO certification. It will contain sales and motivational training, presentation of the experience of the translation companies participating in the project Translation Management Systems User's Experience, as well as workshops and training on selected technological tools (among others: the latest version of XTRF™ 2.0). TMS Inspiration Days is also an excellent opportunity to make new and interesting business contacts.

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Networking is one of the main values of conference meetings so this part of the conference will be a priority. Information about the conference, programme, and accreditation can be found at [www.inspirationdays.xtrf.eu](http://www.inspirationdays.xtrf.eu).

## Calling all Arbortext APP (3B2) Users

*From Chris Western, tformat*

Users of the Arbortext Advanced Print Publisher software (formerly '3B2') may be interested to know that there is a users meeting being held in London on 8 and 9 March. Supported by Parametric Technology Corporation (PTC), there will be a number of technical and non-technical sessions running over the two days giving new and existing users a great opportunity to see the new version 10 in some depth, as well as meeting other users of the powerful composition system. For more information on this event, visit:

[www.tformat.com/appum2010](http://www.tformat.com/appum2010).

## Global authoring the VMware way – improving documentation quality with SDL technology

Do you wish that you could improve the style and quality of your technical documentation? On 17 February 2010 (16:00 GMT, 11:00 Eastern, 08:00 Pacific), SDL is providing a webinar so you can learn how technical authors and editors at VMware are enjoying significant improvements in productivity and quality of documentation due to sophisticated linguistic technology from SDL.

During this webinar, Louise Galindo, Senior Technical Editor, VMware will share her story on how:

- VMware tackled the challenges of geographically dispersed authoring teams and the need to write for a global audience;
- SDL technology helped streamline the authoring and editing process and prepare content for translation;
- VMware improved the style and quality of its documentation for its global customers.

To register, go to: [www.sdl.com/VMware/istc.asp](http://www.sdl.com/VMware/istc.asp).

## Best-selling author of What Would Google Do? Jeff Jarvis, To Open IBF 24

The Intranet Benchmarking Forum (IBF) today announced that Jeff Jarvis, author of *What Would Google Do?* will be a studio guest at IBF 24, 24 hours of the world's best Intranets – live on the web on 2 and 3 June 2010.

Jeff is an influential blogger and writes a new media column for *The Guardian* newspaper and is host of its Media Talk USA podcast. He is associate professor and director of the interactive journalism programme at the City University of New York.

Running from 2 June (12:00 BST) to 3 June (12:00 BST), IBF 24 is a landmark event for the global intranet industry. It gives IBF members and paying participants access to 24 hours of the world's best intranets live on the web.

There will be live tours of more than 20 of the most innovative intranets including those operated by Citi, Kellogg's, Sony, Google, CNN, Ernst & Young, Microsoft, HSBC, IBM, Thomson Reuters, Disney, Nike, Apple and ExxonMobil.

Jeff Jarvis's book *What Would Google Do?* (Harper Collins, 2009) attempts to 'reverse-engineer the success of the fastest-growing company in the history of the world, the one company that truly understands how to succeed in the internet age, and then take those lessons and apply them to a number of industries, companies, and institutions, from carmakers to restaurants to universities to government.'

On IBF 24, Jeff will be discussing the profound changes taking place on the Internet reflecting the new economic model demonstrated in the declining values of traditional media and the rise of new media such as LinkedIn and Twitter. Jeff will also be looking at the implications of the new economy for the enterprise and for people managing workplace technology.

IBF 24 will also feature question-and-answer sessions with other thought leaders globally including Charlene Li, author of *Groundswell*, the acclaimed insight into the next wave of online services inside and outside the enterprise.

This ground-breaking event will bring together more than 1,000 intranet

practitioners worldwide to come in what will be the largest-ever online gathering in the global workplace technology field. Eighty per cent of the Fortune 500 and equivalent organisations are expected to be represented at the event.

To take part in IBF 24, participants pay a fee of £400 (approximately \$635 or €445). They can join IBF 24 whenever they wish during the 24-hour period without even leaving their desks – and access the archive afterwards. Register now at [www.ibforum.com](http://www.ibforum.com).



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Responsible for creating high quality, technical marketing collateral and product operating manuals. Must have engineering expertise.  
**Contact:** Wendy Holmes  
**Call:** +44 (0) 1403 799979 or  
**Email:** [wendy.personnel@mecmesin.com](mailto:wendy.personnel@mecmesin.com)  
[www.mecmesin.com](http://www.mecmesin.com)

## Events listings

This section introduces new events and reminders of the most relevant events in the coming months. ISTC events are highlighted.

You can view previous events listings on the ISTC website's Newsletter archive at [www.istc.org.uk/Publications/Newsletter/newsletter.htm](http://www.istc.org.uk/Publications/Newsletter/newsletter.htm)

To include an event in the listings, please email [events@istc.org.uk](mailto:events@istc.org.uk)

### February

- 2 Sign Design Society February talk: Pedestrian sign design for the external urban realm**  
An illustrated talk by Roger Crabtree of fwdesign will reflect on the pitfalls of external product design and summarise how to get it right through successful example.  
London, UK.  
[www.signdesignsociety.co.uk/content.php?folder\\_id=21](http://www.signdesignsociety.co.uk/content.php?folder_id=21).

**15 North West Area Group meeting**  
Chris Atherton will give a talk entitled Visual attention: a psychologist's perspective including practical exercises and a question and answer session. Chris will present some key findings from cognitive psychology, to show how humans process visual information, and discuss the implications of these findings.

19:00 at MadLab 36-40 Edge Street, Manchester, M4 1HN.

Contact David Jones at: [dacjones40@hotmail.com](mailto:dacjones40@hotmail.com).

**22 Cambridge Technical Communicators meeting**  
Chris Atherton will give a talk entitled Visual attention: a psychologist's perspective including practical exercises and a question and answer session. Chris will present some key findings from cognitive psychology, to show how humans process visual information, and discuss the implications of these findings.

Red-Gate Software,  
Cambridge at 19:00.

Please contact Richard Truscott by email before midday on the 22 February.

[richard.truscott@btinternet.com](mailto:richard.truscott@btinternet.com).

**22-24 FOWA (Future Of Web Applications) Miami 2010**

The Miami event will include speakers from Twitter, Freshbook, and Reddit.

Miami, Florida.

<http://events.carsonified.com/fowa/2010/miami>.

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and The Localization Institute  
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# The Localization Certification Program San Francisco



- ▶ Localization Certification Program: March 22-24, 2010
- ▶ Localization Project Management Certification: March 25-26, 2010



## Localization Certification Program

- Canada: Gatineau, Quebec
- ▶ June 21-23, 2010
- Europe: Cologne, Germany
- ▶ September 6-8, 2010

## Localization Project Management Certification

- Canada: Gatineau, Quebec
- ▶ June 24-25, 2010
- Europe: Cologne, Germany
- ▶ September 9-10, 2010

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**25 London Tech Writers social**  
This is an informal social meeting, supported by both the ISTC and the UK and Ireland Chapter of the STC, and open to everyone. It takes place at 6:30pm at the Garrick Arms, 8-10 Charing Cross road, London.  
Please email David Farbey ([david@farbey.co.uk](mailto:david@farbey.co.uk)) if you're coming along.

**21-24 WritersUA Conference for Software User Assistance**  
Registration is open. The conference will focus on developing the best possible user experience for all types of software applications through well-designed interfaces and helpful and accessible support information.  
Seattle, Washington.  
[www.writersua.com/ohc/index.html](http://www.writersua.com/ohc/index.html).

**17 A new decade for technical communication: 2010 and beyond.**  
The date for the 10th TCeurope Colloquium was chosen to follow the STC's Content Strategy Forum 2010.  
Paris, France.  
[www.tceurope.org/index.php/colloquium/25-2010.html](http://www.tceurope.org/index.php/colloquium/25-2010.html).

#### April

**15-16 Content Strategy Forum 2010**  
The forum comprises two days of workshops, presentations and discussions by experts and practitioners from the emerging field of content strategy. Topics include designing a holistic customer experience, editorial strategy, localisation, content marketing and its place in technical communication.  
Paris, France.  
[www.regonline.co.uk/builder/site/Default.aspx?eventid=766137](http://www.regonline.co.uk/builder/site/Default.aspx?eventid=766137).

**20-22 info360: AIIM international exposition + conference**  
The Association for Information and Image Management conference program includes 80 sessions and real-world case studies including:  
BPM/Workflow  
Collaboration/Social Software  
Data Capture + Imaging  
Document Management  
ECM essentials  
Information Organization + Access  
SharePoint and Web Content Management/Portals.  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.  
[www.aiimexpo.com](http://www.aiimexpo.com).

#### March

**16-18 Worldware conference**  
The Worldware conference is inviting proposals. Presenters are encouraged to submit proposals complementary to the general conference scope, for example, the business of internationalisation, product internationalisation management, ROI, and case studies.  
Santa Clara, California.  
[www.worldwareconference.com](http://www.worldwareconference.com).

## Back page

### Boobs

Thanks to Sophie Watson for the following contribution from the *Bumper Book of Technical Boobs*.

- The means of escape strategy should take into account the potential for reverse flows that may occur in this scenario.
- The stock of the test bar shall be dimensioned so as to ensure correct fitting with the test machine.
- Please note: The Undo operation itself cannot be undone.
- The hardness of the connector shall be assured by use of quality assurance procedures.
- As you can see from attached one of our drafting experts will be attending to help you with the text, etc.  
(From a memo.)
- The maximum wave period,  $T_{max}$ , is the period of the maximum wave.
- Those who work at a height should never forget that gravity is no respecter of persons.
- A terylene rip cord shall be included to facilitate stripping.
- Core Module: A module that is supplied to all customers of your product. You may not have all the core modules on your installation.
- The broadly acceptable category covers individual risk levels that may be considered insignificant, for which no further mitigation is required to reduce the risk further. As a guideline in the UK, this category covers individual risk levels below one in a million per annum or receiving a dangerous doze or worse. (From a discussion of risk assessment. Zzzzzzzz.....)
- Pedestrians can be regarded as approximately cylindrical.
- THIS IS NOT A MISSPRINT
- Re above I have consulted internally on a limited basis and we make the following observation/comments: (From an e-mail. Sounds painful, not to mention undignified!).
- If the means for moving the car can be driven by the lift moving, then it shall be a smooth spokeless wheel.

### The perils of texting

ISTC member Richard Truscott of Cambridge Assessment was amused to hear this gem on BBC Radio 4's today programme:

Mary had a text-phone,  
she texted night and day,  
but when it came to examinations,  
she'd forgotten how to write.

If you have any material suitable for the back page, please submit it to: [newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk).