# ISTC Newsletter

*In this issue:*

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 e-mailed to about 1500 people. As well as ISTC news, the *Newsletter* aims to cover anything of interest to the profession.
To subscribe, contact the Office.

Advertising: Felicity Davie or phone 01344 466600.
Editorial: Newsletter Editor. Letters: Letters Editor.

If you're reading a printed copy of this newsletter, go to www.istc.org.uk/pages/newsletters.php and open it online to explore the links mentioned.

For all e-mail addresses given in the *Newsletter*, don't forget to remove the **bonus amphibian** before e-mailing.

## ISTC news

**Mike Unwalla** was recently re-elected as Director of the Sheffield Business Club (www.sheffieldbc.co.uk). During his first term of office, Mike helped to re-establish the Marketplace – a business-to-business e-mail marketing system.

Mike has also been involved, through his company TechScribe, in providing content for a handbook for students studying technical communication at Mount Royal College in Canada (www.mtroyal.ca) – a collaboration which he hopes will 'put the digital industries of Yorkshire on the global map'.

### ISTC Conference 2004



Don't miss this year's Conference on 8–10 October! This edition of the *Newsletter* contains a full timetable of presentations and workshops, together with more detailed information about some of the presentations. It's not too late to book; see www.istc.org.uk/pages/conference.php for details.

### Salary survey

A reminder that the salary survey form is still available until 21 October (see the September *Newsletter* for details). You can find the form at www.istc.org.uk/pages/members/surveys/salben_2004/salben_2004_01.php.

## London Area Group meetings

The next meeting of the London Area Group will take place on Friday 15 October from 7 pm to 9 pm at Stephen Helms's house, 55 Chelverton Road, Putney, London SW15 1RW (enter the postcode on www.streetmap.co.uk to see a map). The location is close to Putney rail station (frequent trains from Waterloo) and East Putney Underground station.

A collection of £3 per person (exact change appreciated) will be taken to pay for the food and drink.

Our speaker will be Margery Watson of our New Zealand sister society TCANZ. Margery will be visiting the UK in her capacity as President of INTECOM, the international grouping of technical communication societies, of which the ISTC has been a member for many years.

Margery will outline the nature of INTECOM, how it operates, what it does, the services INTECOM provides to individuals and the member organisations, and how individuals can contribute to INTECOM's work.

If you want to come to the meeting, please send a message to Alan Fisk at alanfisk@yahoo.com, or phone him on 020 8670 4290.

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# ISTC Conference 2004 – Presentation summaries

The following pages give more detailed information about some of the presentations. Other presentation summaries can be found in the June to September issues of the Newsletter (see www.istc.org.uk/pages/newsletters.php).

## Using XML to achieve it all

What is technical documentation there for? It's an indispensable component of all industrial and consumer products these days. When selling into multiple countries combined with the effect of global competition there has never been a greater need for the cost-effective, fast and reliable production of technical documentation.

XML does it all. Using a real case study this presentation will show how it works and that a publishing solution based on XML is affordable and can achieve true return on investment.

Once the audience has been shown the basics, I intend to present a few ideas that can be used to assist the communicator in creating very useful diagrams and illustrations for documentation.

Finally, I intend to show how to get the diagrams produced during the presentation into a Microsoft Word document.

**Richard Wall**, *Advent3B2*.

## Making interactive demonstrations with RoboDemo

Following on from last year's presentation of the basic features of RoboDemo, Greg will create a series of Flash-based demonstrations showing how users can exploit the power of the program to produce movies for a variety of purposes. This will be a hands-on demonstration of the flexibility of the software.

Starting from a basic movie recorded with RoboDemo's screen cam, he will create a set of files varying from an annotated demo to a fully functioning software simulation. Using a variety of techniques he will add all the features you need to produce professional results from an original simple movie.

**Greg Daffern**, *GD Consultants*.

After many years in chemical engineering and working in electronics with computer-aided design, Greg moved into technical documentation back in the early 1980s. He spent almost 10 years documenting RADAR and SONAR systems for a major UK defence supplier.

After taking time out to write press releases, magazine articles and speeches for major IT companies, he moved into software documentation – and has never looked back! Gaining experience as a part-time Further Education lecturer, Greg added documentation

training to his portfolio and in early 1998 became the first Certified RoboHELP Instructor (CRI) outside North America. Greg formed GD Consultants later that year, and the business has grown steadily since.

## Targeting help to a specific audience

We all need to ensure that the documents we produce meet the needs of our target audience. In this presentation, Greg will give a case study of a recent project with a well-defined target audience.

The product, called LifeThemes, is essentially a tool for recording everything about a person's life. Based on a diary, it allows users to link a wide range of information – including photographs, people, pets and even favourite recipes – to any event.

The software is generally aimed at older users, and this study will look at the special challenges this presented to the author and how these challenges were met.

**Greg Daffern**, *GD Consultants*.

**Expanding Your Horizons**
The 13th annual ISTC conference
8th - 10th October 2004, Oxford

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## Delivering internationalised global content electronically

- Introduction
- What do we mean by Internationalisation?
- The translation process
- Electronically delivered content
    - Websites
    - Knowledge management systems
    - Online help/doc
    - PDF
    - Flash
    - WAP and 3G content
- Mark-up languages – SGML, XML, HTML, WML, DHTML (localisation issues)
- Static content – HTML, PDF, DHTML (localisation issues)
- Dynamic content – database-driven ASP, JSP, PHP, CFM etc. (localisation issues)
- Case studies
- Solutions through planning

**Dáire Lawlor** is Managing Director of *Lloyd International Translations*, one of Europe's leading technical translation companies.

He has over fifteen years' hands-on experience in localisation engineering, evaluation and planning and project management.

His career has seen him work in Ireland, the UK and India, where he spent a year in the mid-90s establishing a localisation engineering centre in Bangalore.

## Corporate terminology

What does 'corporate terminology' mean? Why is it important? Who is involved in the process? How can a strategy be implemented?

A lot of companies do not pay much/enough attention to their terminology. However, corporate terminology is a part of corporate branding and marketing, and inconsistency in terminology can result in confusion in company-internal communication, problems for authors and translators in interpreting the source or development data, and users misunderstanding instructions.

However, a well-developed approach towards terminology management may support the corporate message and marketing efforts.

When it comes to creating user and maintenance instructions the author may benefit from standardised terminology, the translator in turn will have less work, which in turn may give cost benefits – and a very important factor is that high-quality user information may bring higher customer satisfaction.

I would like to give some examples of terminology management systems and companies that have implemented them, the use of tools and how to implement processes within a company – all of this using day-to-day examples and issues that authors and translators face.

**Eline Beun**, *Rubric*.

Eline Beun holds a degree in English and German from the Maastricht State School of Translation in the Netherlands and has worked in translation, project management and in sales with companies such as Stork TPS, Alpnet and SDL. She is currently working as a VP for European Sales for Rubric Europe Ltd.

## Outsourcing information development

The ever-increasing need to develop new products but without the freedom to increase staff levels led to Motorola outsourcing some of its documentation development. The need to reduce the costs further then meant that during this year Motorola entered its first venture into offshore outsourcing in India.

This paper will discuss some of the reasons why outsourcing is seen as a necessary step for information development, and what considerations were taken into account to make it successful. It will also discuss the critical elements that need to be in place before considering outsourcing, especially offshore.

Anyone who is involved in information development will benefit from the content of this paper, from a departmental manager to an individual contributor and even someone who is involved as an outsourcing agency. It will help them take control of their own destiny by

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understanding what can be done to 'embrace' an offshore solution rather than being seen to fight what may considered as a critical business need.

On the face of it there is some cost saving to be made in sending information development offshore, but there are some necessary considerations that must be taken into account before this should happen. Obviously, the return on investment is not as simple as replacing an author in the UK with one in India, so how can this be proved to the financial people who are driving the decisions?

Then what if it all goes wrong or there is a change of strategy to bring information development back in-house?

**David Bathe**, *Motorola*.

David Bathe started his career as an Electronic Engineer with the Ministry of Defence. He then spent several years working as a production engineer where he developed an interest in process improvement and optimisation.

Since 1993 he has worked in technical publications in the telecommunications industry.

These engineering skills have developed into a focus on Kaizan, or continual improvement, by using a practical and logical approach. Using a pragmatic approach has meant the implementation of solutions that actually work for technical writing as opposed to being driven to a superficial short-term solution with no long-term benefits.

## Goal setting and goal getting!

How to get what you really, really want – both in your career and in your personal life. This is the ISTC insider's practical guide to living your life without regrets, expanding your horizons and creating a great future for yourself.

Have you ever wondered how it is that some people, often starting from quite humble beginnings, seem to have all the 'luck' – becoming multi-millionaires, super athletes, stars of stage and screen? How did it 'happen' to them, and not to you?

You made those New Year resolutions with the best of intentions, didn't you?! Yet how many of those good intentions have actually borne fruit? How many of your dreams seemed to evaporate in the harsh light of what you have labelled 'reality'?

Fortunately you can create a kinder reality for yourself, using the wisdom, courage and compassion that you most certainly have (but maybe you have forgotten about, or ignored).

Awareness of this 'new' reality will support you in achieving your goals, benefiting not only yourself but also your colleagues, your family, your friends, and your community.

**Terry Marsh**.

# EIDC 2004

The European Information Development Conference (EIDC) will take place at the Rhein-Main-Hallen in Wiesbaden, Germany on 10–11 November 2004.

The programme will include expert forums with presentations and workshops on online help, localisation, XML, usability, content management and terminology, and an international trade fair on tools and technologies.

The programme, registration form and further information are available from www.tekom.de/tagung/tagung.jsp or www.tceurope.org/conference/eidc_conference.htm, or by e-mailing h.allmaras@tekom.de. (If you get a German language version of the tekom site, click the EIDC logo in the top right-hand corner.)

We will be including a longer article about the conference in the November *Newsletter*.

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# Marching Forwards: Society of Indexers Conference 2004

At the annual SI conference (held at Chester College, 24 April) delegates had ample opportunity not only to learn how indexing and information organisation are marching forwards but also to consider how we can all march forwards as professional indexers (the majority of delegates were freelancers). Various types of indexing were examined, as well as problems that indexers come across: an oft-repeated theme in every context was *consistency, importance of*. This brief report can do no more than highlight some of the topics covered through a mixture of lectures, plenary sessions, workshops and discussions.

**Plus ça change:** A survey of 2000 years of indexing highlighted its circularity: scrolls had no page numbers, and neither do websites; words were once highlighted in different colours, like web pages and association links in topic maps. Current styles may be no more than fads; an index is for the reader and not for rules.

**Libraries evolving:** We heard how the extension to the John Rylands Library of the University of Manchester will enhance storage facilities, public access and physical conditions for the collections and staff, while computerised cataloguing and indexing are helping to improve access to the information in the collections.

**Publishing developments:** Freelance indexers cannot afford to sit back, expecting a steady supply of work from regular clients. We were reminded how the harsh laws of economics dictate that publishers must save time and money, whether by commissioning companies (rather than sole traders) or outsourcing work to Eastern Europe or even the Far East. (There is already some interest in indexing training in India.) And in the world of mergers and takeovers, in-house editors may disappear, leaving another group of freelancers with one less in-house contact. Copy-editing also impacts on indexing, with everything from schedule delays and poor copy-editing to copy corrections and pagination changes having a knock-on effect.

**Technological innovation:** Another route to saving costs is technology. An experienced Cambridge University Press indexer outlined the latest developments in CUP's new mark-up system for XML indexing. However, since 90% of CUP indexes are written by the authors, it would seem that there may not be much business for freelancers here.

**Business development and marketing:** Several sessions covered business aspects of indexing, including VAT registration, accounting methods and how to undertake market research. We learnt that successful marketing requires communication skills, a strong personal profile and the establishment of credibility and trust, and were reminded that another marketing tool, the website, must grab the reader's attention in 20 seconds! A well-designed website with thoughtful layout and professional content will create a good first impression. Reputation and money are at risk with Internet security breaches; straightforward advice on the precautions that all freelancers should be taking was given in one of the final sessions of the conference.

**Time and stress management:** In both business and work terms, saving time means maximising efficiency. We were urged to examine equipment and systems and learn what they can do for us; to categorise, prioritise and delegate; and to break work into manageable slices, doing 'nasties' before they become critical. For the freelance indexer managing stress and achieving a work/life balance is crucial: exercise, diet and making time for other activities were all recommended, as well as deep breathing and postural changes (including shutting down the computer to achieve this).

**Global co-operation:** Indexers from the USA, Canada, Australia, South Africa and the Netherlands attended the conference, reporting on indexing in their respective countries. We also learnt about the benefits of the International Good Practice website for indexing, which is still in the planning stage. A joint venture for all the indexing societies, this will primarily be aimed at clients, complementing the standards and guidelines that indexers themselves are familiar with.

**Networking:** Always an important aspect of any conference, especially for freelancers, this was no exception, with ample opportunity to catch up with old friends, make new ones, and foster those vital contacts that lead to new working relationships.

**Ann Kingdom**
*Society of Indexers*

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# Software news

## FrameMaker for Mac

If you're upset by Adobe's decision to withdraw support for FrameMaker for Mac, reported in the April *Newsletter* (www.istc.org.uk/downloads/istcApr2004.pdf) then sign the online petition at www.petitiononline.com/fmforosx/petition.html. At the time of writing, 2294 signatures have been collected.

## FrameMaker plug-ins

US author Russ Ward has developed two plug-ins for FrameMaker.

**Sourcerer** is a single-sourcing solution for structured FrameMaker that replaces native conditional text, and thus eliminates many of the limitations associated with it. For details, see www.advantica.biz/sourcerer/.

**FrameSLT** (Full) is an XSLT emulator for structured FrameMaker, allowing structural transformations and extensive, granular single-sourcing of your structured FrameMaker content. For details, see www.weststreetconsulting.com/WSC_FrameSLT_Full.htm.

You can download evaluation copies from both sites.

## RoboHelp for FrameMaker

Readers may recall Macromedia's surprise move withdrawing RoboHelp for FrameMaker from sale just a few months after its first release. Another petition seeks to reinstate RoboHelp for FrameMaker: www.petitiononline.com/rhfn14us/petition.html.

This is doing rather less well than the FrameMaker for Mac one, with just 126 signatures as we go to press, no doubt reflecting the product's short life rather its inherent quality.

(It was reviewed in the Spring 2004 *Communicator*; the review can be found at www.istc.org.uk/downloads/Commo403Screen.pdf, which is posted as a sample on the public part of the ISTC site.)

## Camtasia Studio 2.0.5

The screen recording tool Camtasia Studio (www.techsmith.com/products/studio/default.asp?lid=CamtasiaStudioHome) has had a maintenance release 2.0.5.

See their version history page for details: www.techsmith.com/products/studio/history.asp?DCMP=NLC-news60&ATT=csversions.

It's also now available in German at de.techsmith.com/products/studio/default.asp.

# Training courses

If you hear of any training courses that you think might be of interest to *Newsletter* readers, please contact the Newsletter Editor.

Regular course providers include:

**Cherryleaf**. Tel: 01784 258672.
E-mail: info@cherryleaf.com

**SfEP** (Society for Editors and Proofreaders). Contact details vary from course to course. See the programme on their website.

**SI** (Society of Indexers). Workshops Administrator: Julie Miller. Tel: 01229 464878 (preferably early evenings on workdays).

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# STC Trans European Technical Communications Competition 2004

Have you produced some outstanding work this year? Would you like to share it with your fellow technical communicators and maybe even win an award?

For the second year the six European STC chapters have come together to organise the Trans European Technical Communications Competition. This international aspect of the competition is unique in STC technical communications competitions.

There are two separate competitions, each with several categories:
1. Technical Publications: 12 categories
2. Online Communications: 3 categories

We accept entries in five languages: Dutch, English, French, German, and Italian.

There are three levels of awards, Distinguished, Excellence, and Merit. There is also a Best of Show award and a Best Judging Team award. English-language Distinguished winners automatically qualify to the second-level international competition, which is held in the US.

Entries are evaluated by peers and all entrants receive a detailed evaluation of their entry. Winners receive an award certificate and acknowledgement of their accomplishments from the technical communications community across Europe.

The closing date for sending entries is **Friday 8 October**. The results will be announced in mid-December.

## Call for judges

We are also recruiting judges for the competition across all five languages. This is an excellent opportunity for you to share your expertise and knowledge. Judges must be located in Europe.

## For more information

For further details on the competition, how to enter, and how apply to be a judge, please refer to the following forms:

- Call for entries
- Entry form
- Judge application form
- Fee payment form

They are available online on the following STC chapter websites:

**UK**: www.stc-europe.org/uk/
**Belgium**: www.stc-europe.org/belgium
**France**: www.stcfrance.org
**Nordic**: www.stc-nordic.org/sweden/
**TransAlpine**: www.stc-transalpine.org/tac

The forms are in pdf format. If you would like to receive the forms in Word format, please contact the competition manager.

We would like to thank GE Security EMEA for their support and encouragement in helping us organise this competition.

If you would like to know more about the competition, contact your local STC chapter or the competition manager.

**Jennifer O'Neill**
*Trans European Competition Manager*, Jennifer.oneill@village.uunet.be

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# Events

As we're coming across many more events than can easily fit into the *Newsletter*, the *Newsletter* will only introduce new events, list the ones most relevant to our profession, and, of course, list ISTC-related events, which are in bold.

## October

8–10    **ISTC Conference 2004** – Expanding Your Horizons, Oxford.

12    Extend XML Publishing to Your Entire Organization. Abortext online seminar.

13    Reduce Costs and Streamline Translation of Technical Publications. Abortext online seminar.

13    Sign Design Society talk, London.

14–16    GraficEurope, Berlin.

15    **ISTC London group meeting**. Talk on INTECOM, by its president, Margery Watson. See the London Area Group news on page 1 for more details.

25    Inspired Media, London. Digital imaging and video tools.

25–28    Momentum Montréal. Montréal, QC, Canada. Documentum User Conference.

29–30    WritersUA Conference, London.

## November

10–11    EIDC 2004: 2nd European Information Development Conference, Wiesbaden, Germany. Organised by tekom. Expert forums with presentations and workshops on online help, localisation, XML, usability, content management and terminology. International trade fair on tools and technologies.

16    TICAD Conference, Manchester.

16    Macromedia MX Event. The first of Macromedia's quarterly technology forums for designers and developers. See the Macromedia newsflash on page 10 for more details.

18    Information Architecture & Findability, Washington, DC, USA. Peter Morville's Road Show covers information architecture from top to bottom, explaining how search and navigation systems can be designed to support and shape user behaviour.

24    Xplor 2004 Global Review, Manchester. Gilles Biscos, founder of INTERQUEST, will provide an overall review of the conference and exhibits, as well as presenting document industry trends based on their research in the past year. There will also be reviews of the software environment, and the education sessions and special technical programs from the conference.

23–26    International technical-writing and media-skills workshop, Port Macquarie, New South Wales, Australia.

29    Enterprise Information Architecture Seminar: Louis Rosenfeld. London.

30–2    Content Management Europe (CME) 2004. Olympia, London.

30–2    Online Information. Olympia, London.

30–2    Enterprise Document & Records Management Europe (EDRM). Olympia, London.

## December

15    Good Picture 2004: Digital De-mystified, University of Westminster, London. Tutorial seminar, open to all, organised by the Imaging Science Group of the Royal Photographic Society.

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# ISTC Conference 2004 – Schedule of events

## Friday 8th October 2004

| | |
|---|---|
| 3.00 pm | Hotel check-in opens |
| 5.30–7.00 pm | Conference registration in the College Lounge |
| 7.30 pm | Buffet dinner in Merton Room<br>Welcome from *Gavin Ireland*, ISTC President<br>Keynote address from *Julian Murfitt*<br>Horace Hockley Presentation, followed by acceptance speech<br>Horace Hockley Reception (sponsored by ITR) – an opportunity to meet up with old friends and colleagues and to meet new ones |

## Saturday 9th October 2004

| | |
|---|---|
| 7.00–9.30 am | Breakfast in Rycote Restaurant |
| 8.30–9.00 am | Registration for day delegates in College Lounge |

**College Lounge**

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|---|---|
| 9.00–5.00 pm | Exhibition of technical communications products & services |

**Lincoln Room**

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|---|---|
| 9.00–1.00 pm | Indexing Workshop – *Derek Copson* |
| 1.00–2.00 pm | Lunch in Rycote Restaurant |
| 2.00 pm | Understanding & Using XML with RoboHelp X5 – *Justin Darley* |
| 3.00 pm | Arbortext 5 – Vendor Presentation – *Sakis Prassas* |
| 3.50–4.10 pm | Tea break |
| 4.10 pm | Myths, Mysteries & Magic of Data Presentation – *Sally Bigwood* |

**Pembroke Room**

| | |
|---|---|
| 9.00 am | Developing an Inclusive Intranet – *David Bailey & Gordon Ingram* |
| 10.00 am | Producing Help for Generative Programming Environments – *David Smith* |

| | |
|---|---|
| 10.50–11.10 am | Tea break |
| 11.10 am | Intecom – *Margery Watson* |
| 12.10 pm | Tekom's Certification Programme – *Michael Fritz* |
| 1.00–2.00 pm | Lunch in Rycote Restaurant |
| 2.00 pm | A Novel Use for your Writing Skills – *Alan Fisk* |
| 3.00 pm | Add Drama to your Writing – *Ron Blicq* |
| 3.50–4.10 pm | Tea break |
| 4.10 pm | Getting In – Imaginative & Low Cost Ways to Attract New Clients' II – *James Bromley* |

**University Room**

| | |
|---|---|
| 9.00 am | Standards in Information Design & Process Management – *Eddie Moore* |
| 10.00 am | Do Technical Communicators Need Professional Indemnity Insurance? – *Paul Bakker* |
| 10.50–11.10 am | Tea break |
| 11.10 am | Technical Communication Systems – A New Market! – *Luc Van Haute* |
| 12.10 pm | Implementing an Information Architecture using OASIS DATA – *Indi Liepa* |
| 1.00–2.00 pm | Lunch in Rycote Restaurant |
| 2.00 pm | Delivering Internationalised Global Content Electronically – *Dáire Lawlor* |
| 3.00 pm | The Role of the Technical Communicator in the DEF-STAN 00-60 Process – *John Nicolson* |
| 3.50–4.10 pm | Tea break |
| 4.10 pm | Using XML to Achieve It All – *Richard Wall* |
| 7.00 pm | Drinks reception in the College Lounge |
| 8.00 pm | Gala dinner in the Merton Room<br>Presentation of the ISTC Documentation Awards<br>Raffle draw |

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## Sunday 10th October 2004

| | |
|---|---|
| 7.00–9.30 am | Breakfast in Rycote Restaurant |
| 8.30–9.00 am | Registration for day delegates in College Lounge |

**College Lounge**

| | |
|---|---|
| 9.00–1.00 pm | Exhibition of technical communications products & services |

**Lincoln Room**

| | |
|---|---|
| 9.00 am | Interactive Help & Training – *Greg Daffern* |
| 10.00 am | Docs 'n' Disks – *Ralph Maciejewski* |
| 10.50–11.10 am | Tea break |
| 11.10 am | Targeting Help to a Specific Audience – *Greg Daffern* |

**Pembroke Room**

| | |
|---|---|
| 9.00 am | PDF at Your Service – *Geoff Dawson & Marilyn Heron* |
| 10.00 am | Terminology Management – A waste of time or a Corporate Asset? – *Eline Beun* |
| 10.50–11.10 am | Tea break |
| 11.10 am | The Motorola Approach to Outsourcing Information Development – *David Bathe* |

**University Room**

| | |
|---|---|
| 9.00 am | Goal Setting & Goal Getting! – *Terry Marsh* |
| 10.00 am | Ten Tips to Save Money in Localisation – *Marie-Louise Flacke* |
| 10.50–11.10 am | Tea break |
| 11.10 am | Classifying Content Reduces Cycle Times for Technical Publications – *Jim Stock* |

**Trinity Suite**

| | |
|---|---|
| 12.10 am | AGM |
| 1.00 pm | Lunch in Rycote Restaurant |

# Macromedia MX days – Technology forums for designers and developers

***Macromedia*** *newsflash:*

Join us on 16 November 2004, for the first of our quarterly Technology Forums for Designers and Developers.

- Hear breaking news from Macromedia
- Network with peers and industry leaders
- Get technical training
- Gain new skills

Learn the best techniques from industry experts, get current on new products, and more importantly, share ideas in a forum dedicated to delivering the next wave of great websites and applications. Macromedia Alliance partners will show their products and services and demonstrate how their company works together with Macromedia to deliver industry-leading solutions for Macromedia developers and designers.

Nothing beats first-hand experience to sharpen and develop your skills. With sessions for both designers and developers, we've created a schedule to meet all your needs.

## Why Attend?

These forums are the only European events designed by Macromedia with input from the user community and in partnership with our authorised training partners. Together, we are offering attendees the opportunity to get technical training, gain new skills, hear breaking news from Macromedia, network with peers and industry leaders, and ultimately become more successful developing and delivering applications using Macromedia products. To get a better idea of what's in store for you, visit the website: www.macromedia-seminar.com/mx-events.

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# The back page

## Gargoyle circumvents flatulence

A list of alternative meanings for common words www.cobracountry.com/articles-cobra/humordept-cobra/washtonpostcontest-2004.html is well worth a look. It's attributed to the readers of the *Washington Post* and can be found at various sites on the web but not, apparently, at the *Washington Post*.

## No joke

Another campaign (no petition this time) is Ban Comic Sans (www.bancomicsans.com/home.html). The campaign writes:

'In 1995, Microsoft released the font Comic Sans, originally designed for comic book-style talk bubbles containing informational help text. Since that time, the typeface has been used in countless contexts from restaurant signage to college exams to medical information. These widespread abuses of printed type threaten to erode the very foundations upon which centuries of typographic history are built.

'While we recognise the font may be appropriate in a few specific instances, our position is that the only effective means of ending this epidemic of abuse is to completely ban Comic Sans.'

We couldn't agree more.

## Grating English?

Now, here's a chap who really says what he thinks! Are you constantly irritated by people misusing the English language? If so, you might be amused by www.staff.ncl.ac.uk/nikolas.lloyd/opinion/badeng.html (assuming, that is, that you can read the site – a most peculiar choice of colours!).

## Brain teaser

*Thanks to **Iain Wright** for this one...*

This quiz is supposed to have been written by Einstein. He said that 98% of people in the world cannot solve the quiz. Could you be among the other 2%?

There are five houses, each in a different colour.

In each house lives a person of a different nationality.

These five owners all drink a certain beverage, smoke a certain brand of cigar and keep a certain pet.

No owner has the name pet, smokes the name brand of cigar or drinks the same drink as another owner.

1. The Briton lives In a red house.
2. The Swede keeps dogs as pets.
3. The Dane drinks tea.
4. The green house is on the left of the white house (they are also next door to each other).
5. The green house owner drinks coffee.
6. The person who smokes Pall Mall rears birds.
7. The owner of the yellow house smokes Dunhill.
8. The main living in the house right in the centre drinks milk.
9. The Norwegian lives in the first house.
10. The man who smokes Blend lives next to the one who keeps cats.
11. The man who keeps horses lives next to the man who smokes Dunhill.
12. The owner who smokes Blue Master drinks beer.
13. The German smokes Prince.
14. The Norwegian lives next to the blue house.
15. The man who smokes Blend has a neighbour who drinks water.

THE QUESTION IS: WHO KEEPS THE FISH?

*Answer in the December newsletter!*

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