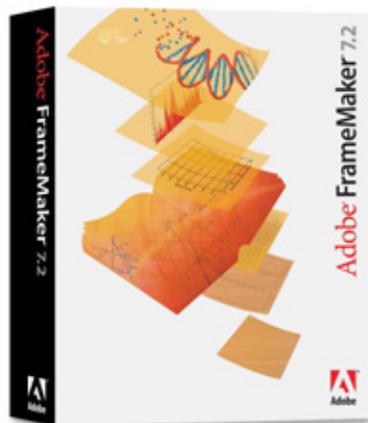**Adobe FrameMaker 7.2**

Free Structured FrameMaker training

Take the fast track to implementing structured XML documentation.

The FrameMaker 7.2 Tour provides every attendee with a hands-on experience to learn the benefits of structured publishing with XML and our new DITA and S1000D application packs.

Each session is limited to just 30 attendees and benefits from the experience of an Adobe Accredited Trainer. With the content of the training packed efficiently into just 2.5 hours, we 'll help you accelerate your learning curve, giving you the knowledge and confidence to start adopting structured documentation workflows. Book now to avoid disappointment.
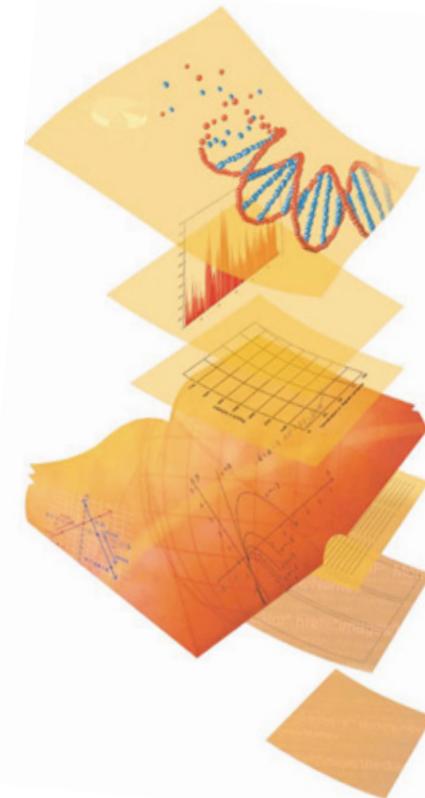
London – October 18th 2006
9.00am to 11.30am
11.30am to 2.00pm
2.00pm to 4.30pm

Manchester - November 21st 2006
9.00am to 11.30am

Register Now!

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ISTC Newsletter

October 2006

In this issue:

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

ISTC Office: PO Box 522, Peterborough, PE2 5WX. Tel: 01733 390141. E-mail: istc@istc.org.uk Web: www.istc.org.uk

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. Events: Events Editor.

If you're reading a printed copy of this newsletter, go to www.istc.org.uk/Publications/Newsletter/newsletter.htm 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

ISTC Conference 2006 set for success

This year's ISTC Conference, which kicks off on 3 October, is set to be the ISTC's biggest Conference in recent years with three streams of presentations from top speakers, more vendors, service providers and Conference visitors. Don't miss out!

This year's Conference, entitled "There is a better way," aims to show us what new techniques and ideas could help us to work more easily and efficiently.

Conference exhibitors that you will see include Adobe, Mekon, PDA Services, Across Systems, Inmedius, Ovidius, Lloyd International Translations, and the Society of Indexers. Sponsors include Adobe, AST, Plain Words, Techscribe, AuthorIT, ITR and 3di.

"We have a team of top-notch speakers lined up for you as well as **Patrick Hofmann** giving the keynote speech and a prestigious recipient of the Horace Hockley award," says ISTC President **Gavin Ireland**. "Don't forget the Documentation Awards and Gala dinner which is always a fun evening and a chance to relax and set the world to rights with your friends and colleagues," he adds.

For more information visit www.istc.org.uk/Events/Conference/conference_2006.htm.

Could you be the next *Newsletter* layout editor?

Do you have good layout/typographic skills and some spare time? Would you like to become more involved in promoting the ISTC? Do you want to earn some extra money? If so then you could be just the person we are looking for.

ISTC *Newsletter* Layout Editor **Sophie Watson** is stepping down from the role after two years, as a result of increasing work and personal commitments, and is hoping to be able to hand over to a new editor by the end of 2006.

The job essentially involves combining the copy and the adverts, all of which are supplied separately by our Copy Editor, Events Editor and the individual advertisers, to give a series of visually balanced pages with a consistent typographic "look and feel". Of course there's more to it than that, but if you think you might be interested, please contact Sophie at newsletter.layout@istc.org.uk for more details.

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This Newsletter is posted at www.istc.org.uk/Publications/Newsletter/newsletter.htm

ISTC website news

Keep informed of developments in our profession

The ISTC is pleased to announce that it has implemented a series of mailing groups. By subscribing to one or more of these groups, you will receive periodic electronic notifications. These are available free of charge and enable you to be kept informed of newly-published material on a number of subject areas. Initially, the notifications will cover material published on the ISTC website, in the *Newsletter*, or in *Communicator*. The ISTC hopes to expand the scope to cover other media and publications in due course.

The mailing groups are available in the following subject areas:

- Careers
- Design and delivery
- Education, training and research
- Globalisation, internationalisation, localisation, translation (GILT)
- Methods and standards
- Technical illustration
- Technical writing, editing and indexing
- Tools and techniques

To subscribe to one or more of these groups, go to www.istc.org.uk/Publications/notifications.htm.

1. Click on the link under Subscribing to display the subscription form.

2. Enter the required details and click OK.

3. You will be sent a confirmation e-mail, with your Personal Subscription Code. Make a note of this code as you will need it to manage your account.

4. You will receive periodic notifications of newly-published material under the various subject areas.

5. You can unsubscribe at any time by clicking on the links under Unsubscribing.

6. You can also view the mailing groups to which you are subscribed by clicking on the links under Viewing your subscriptions.

Technical Authors

We have immediate requirements for permanent and contract roles in Hampshire in the following sectors;

> Marine Technical Authors
> SGML Senior Authors
> Publication Project Managers

For more information, contact Paul Smith on 023 9248 8518
www.parcrecruitment.com

parc

Although subscriptions to the mailing groups are free, the ISTC reserves the right to charge non-ISTC members for supplying copies of the published material.

The ISTC hopes that you find this new service useful and welcomes your feedback.

You can e-mail your feedback to webmaster@istc.org.uk.

ISTC website tips

Do you want to be kept informed of updates to the ISTC website? If so, and you are an ISTC member, then:

1. From any page on the ISTC website, click on the Manage my account link under Member Services in the left navigation menu.

2. When requested, enter your Login ID and password.

3. Click Log on.

4. When the User Panel is displayed, click Update Info.

5. When your User Profile is displayed, check the Inform me of site updates? box.

6. Click Modify.

7. Your profile is now updated and you will receive notifications of new site content.

8. Click Logout to exit from the User Panel.

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Considering working from home?

*By **Kathryn Valdal Fourie***

The possibility of working from home attracted much interest on the ISTC online discussion group last month and is a topic that has attracted much interest nationwide. A growing number of employees as well as employers are considering flexible working as a viable option with many benefits to employees and employers. Benefits include office space savings, improved retention of employees, reduced commute times and costs, as well as a better life balance.

This year, Work Wise UK launched a three-year national campaign to encourage flexible working and predicts that the percentage of home workers – people who work mainly in their own home, or in different places using home as a base – could grow to as much as 50% of the workforce within five years. In the UK, home workers form 11% of the total workforce (3.1 million out of 28.76 million), according to Work Wise UK.

HR adviser Businesshr reports that since 6 April 2003, the parents of children under the age of six or disabled children under 18 have had the right to request flexible working arrangements, provided they have worked continuously for the employer for a minimum of 26 weeks. However, the right to work from home is not automatic and an employer might be unable to accommodate the request.

Requests to change working hours, times of work or the location of work should be made in writing. Amongst other requirements, the written request should detail what work arrangements the employee is requesting, when the change in working practice would occur and the likely impact on the business. More detailed guidelines on the requirements needed to make a written request are available on the Work Wise UK website at www.workwiseuk.org, or on Business Link's guidelines developed by the Department of Trade and Industry at http://tinyurl.co.uk/2b8d. Please note that you can only make one request each year, although temporary change and a trial period can be agreed upon. Therefore, you should consider all aspects of the request carefully.

If you want to become a home worker, Quality Management Editor **Iain Wright FISTC**, who is a home worker himself, recommends you consider the following.

1. **Insurance**
   According to an overview of current legislation by Flexible Employment Options, an organisation normally covers the insurance of the employee while he or she is on the company premises, but additional insurance is required if an employee is working from home.

   Personal insurance
   Am I covered by the company's personal accident insurance or injury compensation schemes?

   Property insurance
   Does the company's property insurance cover all company equipment provided for home-based and occasional home working?

   Liability insurance
   Does the company's liability insurance operate in the home-based working environment?

2. **Health and safety**
   According to an overview of current legislation by Flexible Employment Options, "if individuals are working from home, the employer has a responsibility to ensure that the home environment is suitable and safe for the purposes of work".

   As a result, the employer will have to conduct a risk assessment of your home-working environment or home-office. Your work station will be checked to ensure it is safe and ergonomically correct.

3. **Communications and equipment**
   You might require:

   - A separate phone line

   - Anti-surge protection on your power supplies

   - Information security and backup

     You might need to have a fireproof, secure, data store elsewhere in the house; the means of accessing the company's network needs to be secure and all antivirus software must be updated daily.

4. Critical checks

- You should advise your mortgage lender before commencing home-based working.
- You should check with your home insurer that your policy is not affected by home working.
- You might need to check with your trade union that you will still be covered by them and to which branch you will belong.

Employment in technical communication is well suited to home working or other flexible working options and is becoming a more commonplace and popular practice. It need not only be a sought-after working ideal; it could become a reality for you.

Helpful resources

The Telework Association
www.tca.org.uk

Work Wise UK
www.workwiseuk.org

Flexible Employment Options
www.staffs.ac.uk/feo/

Flexworks
www.flexecutive.co.uk

Business Link (from the Department of Trade and Industry)
http://tinyurl.co.uk/2b8d

ISTC History Project: contributions from long-standing members

The ISTC is in the process of documenting its history and you might be able to help.

This time we're looking for contributions from those of you with a long-standing ISTC membership.

- How has the ISTC changed since you joined?
- What do you think are the main achievements of the ISTC during your membership?
- What, in your view, are the most memorable moments in the history of the ISTC so far?

Those of you with a long-term experience of the ISTC have a particular overview of the organisation and its development over time. Please share your views and experiences, anecdotes and memories with the rest of the membership by contributing to the ISTC History Project.

You may well be in possession of some vital information or material relating to the history of the ISTC. Nothing is too small or insignificant to be shared, so please make that important contribution in one of the following ways:

- E-mail: emma.bayne@comhem.se
- Tel: +46 (0)8 553 85459 or +46 (0)73 7584949

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Industry news

tcworld Conference expands

The tcworld Conference has grown rapidly in the last four years and, this year, tekom, the professional association for technical communication and information-development in Germany, is expecting to welcome more than 2,100 participants to the conference which will be held from 8–10 November.

Tekom reports that "within only four years the tcworld Conference – formerly known as the EIDC – has developed into a major international event in the field of technical communication." So far 110 exhibitors have registered, with 25 coming from outside Germany. Tekom also says, "Almost the whole exhibiting space has been taken, which represents a 25% increase over last year."

In addition to product vendors, user assistance forums, workshops, presentations and networking opportunities, this year's

Conference will be complemented by an OASIS Open Standards Day and a Localisation Forum organised by GALA.

For more information about the Conference and to attend, visit www.tekom.de/conference. See also the advert on page 11.

Improving rankings of technical communication sites

Software documentation company TechScribe has launched a project to improve the rankings of the UK technical communications profession as a whole in search engine results. The project uses website addresses that are related to the products and services that technical communicators sell. For more information about the project, visit www.web-site-address.com.

Broadening your horizons

The Technical Communicators Association of New Zealand (TCANZ) and The Australian Society for Technical Communicators (ASTC) would like to encourage ISTC members to submit articles to *Southern Communicator* as well as to the ISTC's *Communicator*.

The ISTC has a reciprocal arrangement with TCANZ and the ASTC to exchange PDFs of the associations' journals on the member areas of the three associations' websites.

If you would like to write for *Southern Communicator*, please contact the Vice-President of TCANZ, **Steve Moss**, at thevicepresident@tcanz.org.nz.

For more information about TCANZ and ASTC, please visit www.tcanz.org.nz/ and http://astcvic.org.au/index.html.

Conversis unveils in-depth report on South Africa

Conversis – a globalisation, internationalisation, localisation and translation (GILT) services provider – has published another country report on its website. The new report, which focuses on South Africa's changing political and economic climate, has been added to a section of the website called Cultural Commentaries: A Closer Look.

"At Conversis, we know how important it is to provide a tool to educate our clients as they expand and develop their businesses on a global scale," says Conversis CEO **Gary Muddyman**. "As political and economic climates change in different parts of the world, we will continue to examine how to provide the proper resources and expertise which make doing business globally more seamless."

Reports for Japan and Sweden will soon be added to the Conversis website. The free reports published to date are currently available on the Conversis website at www.conversisglobal.com.

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Affiliate news

IBM technology translates Arabic media broadcasts into English

Global computer company IBM has developed technology to translate Arabic media broadcasts into English in near real-time and has licensed the technology to Critical Mention, a web-based real-time television news search and broadcast monitoring service.

Codenamed "TALES" (Translingual Automatic Language Exploitation System), the IBM technology processes the audio signal from Arabic television and radio stations and translates its spoken content into English text. Once this text is indexed by the CriticalTV platform, Critical Mention's clients will be able to conduct real-time searches of Arabic media and receive alerts instantly when a search term is detected.

Under the agreement, IBM Research will provide Critical Mention a multi-year license to its speech-to-text translation solution for Arabic and English sources, with the ability to expand to other languages in the future.

The TALES system combines three core technologies: search, speech-to-text conversion, and statistical machine translation. If a user selects a news source and a particular video clip, for example, the spoken words in this foreign language file are converted into written words. TALES then translates the written foreign-language text into the target language, English in this case. To provide the most accurate results, TALES uses statistical machine translation that employs automatically extracted word-to-word and phrase-to-phrase translations as used by the United Nations' simultaneous translators. The statistical model for translation improves TALES effectiveness in capturing the meaning of the news it translates.

Critical Mention is also adapting the speech-to-text conversion and statistical machine translation components to integrate with its existing TV search and monitoring platform, CriticalTV, to provide subscribers with real-time monitoring of Arabic TV.

International translation day

торжество – Did you know that this means "celebration" in Russian?

On Saturday 30 September the international community comes together to celebrate International Translation Day.

Translation company Lloyd International is doing something a little different to celebrate. From Friday 29 September to Monday 2 October, Lloyd International will be translating a variety of greeting messages and publishing them on its website, www.lloyd.co.uk.

Chairman of Lloyd International **Mike Lloyd** says, "Our clients have contacts all over the world and as language specialists we are always encouraging better communication, so this year, to celebrate International Translation Day we thought we'd make greetings available to encourage better relationships as well."

If you have ever wondered how to say "Hello!" in Japanese or "Happy Birthday" in Norwegian, then visit www.lloyd.co.uk.

Lionbridge's financial results exceeds expectations

The financial results of globalisation and offshoring services company Lionbridge show record revenue growth. In the quarter ending on 30 June this year, Lionbridge reports revenue of US$110.5 million, which is an increase of $11.4 million, or 12% from the previous quarter.

During the first ten months of combined operations following the merger, **Rory Cowan**, CEO, Lionbridge says, "We have grown our customer relationships while delivering on our commitments for margin expansion, cost synergies and, most importantly, the stability of our blue chip customer base. The benefits of our thoughtful, customer-focused integration are evident. Our language technology deployment is outpacing our expectations and we have aligned our business worldwide under a single leadership team. This combination is accelerating our software-as-a-service transformation. As we continue to drive solid organic growth and streamline our operational platform, we expect a strong second half and financial year in 2007."

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Letters to the Editor

So you write manuals... but do you think you could write a novel?

Every November, thousands of people across the world attempt to write a 50,000 word novel in 30 days for no other reason than to prove they can. National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo) was founded in Oakland, USA, in 1999. Now in its eighth year, it has produced millions of words, thousands of novels, several published authors, and quite a lot of money for the Room to Read and Libraries in Laos projects.

Last year, I was one of the 59,000 people taking part, and for the first time in four years of trying, I completed my 50,000 words (if not the novel itself). The idea is to start as soon as you please after 00:01 on the morning of 1 November; by 23:59 on 30 November, you must have your word count verified on the NaNoWriMo website in order to become a winner. There's no official prize, but the sense of accomplishment is for most of us a reward in itself.

Writing 1,667 words a day is quite a daunting task, particularly while holding down a full-time job, but for me it offered some wonderful light relief from the strictures of technical writing. In order to achieve the full word count, I had to turn off my inner editor (quite a scary proposition) and just write (type) as much as I could, as fast as I could. Everything I wrote came out of my imagination, rather than being based on technical specifications and software screenshots and vague hints from developers. It's exhilarating and liberating to be free to write whatever you like and let the commas go hang, although it proved impossible to stop myself occasionally going back and correcting grammar and punctuation, and improving readability.

Doing NaNoWriMo doesn't have to be a solitary experience though, and there's plenty of support and advice for those who want it. The website forums are arranged by genre, by geographical area, and also include threads in which to ask questions, rant or rejoice. Meetups and write-ins are arranged by your friendly local municipal liaison and you might get some official NaNoWriMo goodies if you're lucky!

For more information about NaNoWriMo, and to sign-up to take part, visit www.nanowrimo.org.

Feel free to contact me at farfalla@gmail.com for more information – I'll be looking after the Ireland: Elsewhere area (everywhere except Dublin) again this year.

Catherine Sharp MISTC
Technical Writer

Software news

Introducing CrossCheck for multilingual DTP documents

Global Databases has announced the release of its CrossCheck software service, which makes the automated verification of DTP documents now a reality. Using artificial intelligence to check translated DTP documents against an original document in another language, CrossCheck scans documents for text, formatting and graphic layout errors.

CrossCheck works as a plug-in, operating inside Adobe DTP applications such as InDesign and FrameMaker, making it fast and user-friendly.

There are hundreds of errors CrossCheck can report; users choose which errors to check in the options menu, creating different profiles for different documents. Searches can include text which has not yet been translated and missing text, mismatching numbers, text overflows, errors in fonts, missing graphic objects and many more.

"We believe that CrossCheck will fundamentally redefine the documentation QA process. It will significantly impact the cost and time it takes companies to produce quality assured documentation", said **Susan Warham**, Global Databases Director of Marketing.

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To obtain a free 30-day trial of CrossCheck today, visit www.doc3.com.

If you would like to try the product, perhaps you would be interested in writing a product review of CrossCheck for the ISTC *Newsletter*. If so, please contact **Kathryn Valdal Fourie** at newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk.

WebWorks Publisher 2003 product line discontinued

Quadralay, the creators of WebWorks, have announced that as of 1 July this year, WebWorks Publisher Professional 2003 and associated 2003 products were retired. With the successful launch of WebWorks ePublisher Pro more than a year ago and the recent release of WebWorks ePublisher Express in July, Quadralay decided to end the 2003 product line. Quadralay says this means that its development and support resources can more effectively serve the needs of its customers.

On 30 September 2006, standard technical support for the WebWorks Publisher 2003 product line will end. Existing support documents and content will continue to be available through the WebWorks Support Center website area, but support request processing will formally end on this date for this product line. Enterprise customers, under qualified conditions via consulting arrangements, will be eligible for continued 2003 product support.

Adobe releases FrameMaker 7.2 application packs for DITA and S1000D

Adobe has released the Adobe FrameMaker 7.2 Application Packs for Darwin Information Typing Architecture (DITA) and S1000D. The packs aim to enable developers to fully evaluate and enhance the XML authoring and publishing capabilities within FrameMaker using two leading open standards. Both application packs are companion pieces to the Adobe FrameMaker Developer Kit (FDK) that provides sample content, tools, applications and documentation.

Adobe says that current and future market trends are driving companies to re-evaluate their authoring and publishing requirements. Adobe identifies the following trends:

- There is a continuing need to publish large volumes of information.

- XML is used for multi-channel publishing and to reduce costs in authoring and translation.

- The majority of Adobe FrameMaker customers are already working with XML, so there is a demand for additional support for standards that support XML.

- XML is the fastest growing output among Adobe FrameMaker customers.

- XML is also key to integrating new media and personalisation/customisation.

- The implementation cost (training, consulting, etc) of a new XML authoring and publishing system can be cost-prohibitive. Therefore, customers want to take advantage of the high availability of qualified Adobe FrameMaker users and the wide variety of consulting resource.

You can download FrameMaker 7.2 Application Packs for DITA and S1000D from https://www.adobe.com/cfusion/entitlement/index.cfm?e=labs%5Fframemaker%5Fap.

To discuss the application in the Labs Forum, go to http://tinyurl.co.uk/era6.

If you would like to review these products for the *Newsletter*, please contact **Kathryn Valdal Fourie** at newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk.

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Training news

Three new courses from the Plain Language Commission

The Plain Language Commission has published three distance-learning courses on writing skills:

- Course 1 – *Be clear, be brief, be human* (by **Martin Cutts**)
- Course 2 – *Clearer letters and e-mails* (by **Sarah Carr**)
- Course 3 – *Perfect punctuation* (by **Judy Brown**)

For further details about the courses, a free sample download of a section of Course 2 and to purchase the courses, you can visit the Plain Language Commission's e-shop at www.clearest.co.uk.

Training courses

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 *Newsletter* readers, please contact the *Newsletter* Copy Editor (newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk).

General courses

A list of seminars from SDL is available at www.sdl.com/company/seminars-list.htm.

October

4–5   *Adobe InDesign basic/intermediate.* This is a two-day course on how to begin creating new, or modifying existing InDesign documents. (Also on 20–21 November.) Newbury, Berkshire. www.its-ideal.co.uk

4–5   *Authoring structured documents.* This two-day course will teach you to create and edit documents using structured FrameMaker templates. It aims to help you feel confident with the authoring environment and the steps required to produce a valid document instance prior to exporting to SGML or XML. Newbury, Berkshire. www.its-ideal.co.uk

5   *Brush up your proofreading.* Society for Editors and Proofreaders, London. www.sfep.org.uk/pages/current_schedule.asp

6   *Brush up your copy-editing.* Society for Editors and Proofreaders, London. www.sfep.org.uk/pages/current_schedule.asp

9–10   *Adobe FrameMaker basic/intermediate.* This two-day course is designed for complete beginners and new users to the software who wish to fully understand the text and page layout features of this publishing package and who want to begin creating and modifying FrameMaker documents. (Also on 6–7 November.) Newbury, Berkshire. www.its-ideal.co.uk

11-12   *Adobe FrameMaker advanced.* This is a two-day course that will teach you to create template documents as well as to build and maintain multi-chapter books together with tables of contents and indexes. (Also on 8–9 November.) Newbury, Berkshire. www.its-ideal.co.uk

18   *Indexing beginners' workshop.* This workshop is suitable for those in the early stages of the training course and for those considering a career in indexing. Through group discussion and practical exercises this workshop aims to cover the basic elements of indexing and the day-to-day work of the professional indexer. The Society of Indexers, London. www.indexers.org.uk/trquals/workshop.htm

October *(continued)*

18   *Structured Adobe FrameMaker training*. With structured publishing, DITA and S1000D becoming increasingly adopted in the technical publishing world, Mekon is holding a free training session so that you can quickly learn structured XML documentation using Adobe FrameMaker 7.2. Mekon and Adobe, London. (Also on 28 November in Manchester.)
http://tinyurl.co.uk/zftt

25   *Microsoft Visual Studio 2005 Seminar with SyncFusion*. QBS is holding a one day FREE technical seminar with Microsoft and SyncFusion. Visual Studio 2005 Team System, .NET v3.0 and building engaging, interactive websites with ASP.NET, as well as how SyncFusion's software will integrate with the .NET Framework will be discussed. Microsoft, Reading.
www.qbssoftware.com/news.aspx?link=4143

25   *Professional copy-editing*. Society for Editors and Proofreaders, London. www.sfep.org.uk/pages/current_schedule.asp

November

21   *Editing the index workshop*. This half-day workshop is suitable for working indexers and advanced trainees. Working through a text and making entries is only the first stage in creating an index. It must then be edited to ensure that it is clear and concise, well-arranged and user-friendly. You must also consider which aspects of editing can be done as you go along and which are best left until the end. The Society of Indexers, Bristol.
www.indexers.org.uk/trquals/workshop.htm

23   *Copy-editing problems*. Society for Editors and Proofreaders, London. www.sfep.org.uk/pages/current_schedule.asp

Don't miss:
The event for anyone who wants to communicate successfully in global markets

Localization Forum
Profit from the experience of localization experts from around the globe
Management Focus | Quality Standards & Tools Cultural Focus

OASIS Open Standards Day
Learn from top speakers in the field of e-business an web services standards
DITA | UIML | DocBook | Open WebCGM OpenDocument | XML

User Assistance Forum
Benefit from the knowledge of specialists in website-usability and user-interface
Online Help | Usablity

tcworld
conference 2006
CONFERENCE FOR INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

The 'tcworld' conference is part of the annual tekom conference, the event with the highest attendance in the field of Technical Communication worldwide.

November 8 and 9, 2006 Rhein-Main-Hallen Wiesbaden, Germany
Further information: www.tekom.de/conference

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Events

This page introduces new listings and includes reminders of the most relevant events in the next two months. ISTC events are listed in bold.

You can view previous events listings on the ISTC website's *Newsletter* archive at www.istc.org.uk/Publications/Newsletter/newsletter.htm.
To include an event in the listings, please e-mail events@istc.org.uk.

October

1–4   *LavaCon 2006*. LavaCon offers three days of general sessions and hands-on workshops dealing with the dynamics of technical communication management, technical project management and how to juggle never-ending deadlines, budgets and quality standards. Hilton Hotel, Lihue, Hawaii. www.lavacon.org/the-program-2006.htm

2   *Seminar on electrotechnical standardisation and conformity assessment – CCC certification and energy efficiency labelling in China*. Brussels, Belgium. http://tinyurl.com/s8dt9

3–5   **ISTC Conference 2006: There is a better way**. What new techniques and ideas could help us to work more easily and efficiently? Europa Gatwick Hotel, West Sussex. www.istc.org.uk/Events/Conference/conference_2006.htm

3–5   *Doctrain '06: Solving the content puzzle...together!* Featuring keynote addresses by **Tom Davenport** and **JoAnn Hackos**. Boston, Massachussets. www.doctrain.com.

5   *The future of business meetings*. Amsterdam. http://tinyurl.com/qf5y8

6   *WriteMark Plain English Conference and Awards 2006*. The objectives of the conference are to raise public awareness of plain English, create a public preference for organisations that communicate clearly, help delegates to work towards plain English in their own organisations and promote the importance of writing to an agreed plain English standard. Wellington, New Zealand. http://tinyurl.com/h54ha

12–13   *Finnish Technical Communications Society Autumn Seminar 2006: Tools of the trade – different aspects of technical communication*. Paasitorni Conference Centre, Helsinki. www.dokumentoijat.net/english/seminar2006/index.php

13–14   *STC Region 2 Conference 2006: Making sense of making cents – business and technical communications*. This international STC Conference gives Board members and STC members from Europe a chance to meet and get to know each other at first hand. Hampstead, London. www.stcuk.org/R2conf/

18–19   *Documation UK*. Documation UK, in partnership with AIIM (the leading ECM Association), is the only dedicated event of its kind in the UK covering end-to-end enterprise content management. It will address all the latest issues in information management including web content management, e-mail management, document and records management, information capture, scanning, imaging and business processes. It also features a free-to-attend education programme addressing today's key information management issues. Olympia 2, London. www.documation-uk.com

27–28   *Mediterranean Editors' and Translators' Meeting 2006: International communication – promising practices*. The METM '06 programme blends communications theory and practice in a variety of specialised knowledge fields in which Euro-Mediterranean professionals and institutions must use English to communicate. Panel discussions, shorter workshops and presentations make up a complete program that also includes many opportunities for networking. Institut Europeu de la Mediterrània, Barcelona. www.metmeetings.org/pagines/metm06_program.htm

November

2–3   *DITA Europe Conference 2006*. DITA Europe has been expanded to two days to give you more opportunities to learn about DITA from people who are currently working with DITA. Come away from this conference with an understanding of what DITA is, how it can improve your technical information, and what tools you will need to bring all of this together. Frankfurt, Germany. www.infomanagementcenter.com/DITAeurope/agenda.htm

5–11   *User Experience 2006 Conference*. Strategies to enhance the user experience. Seven days of in-depth training. Industry leaders offer twenty-nine full-day tutorials on everything from must-know usability basics to advanced methods in testing and design. London. www.nngroup.com/events/

8–9   *tcworld Conference*. The conference will be hosted by tekom, the German society of Technical Communicators and the largest in Europe. tekom will also host the first OASIS Open Standards Day in Germany. Wiesbaden, Germany. (See also advert on page 11.) www.tceurope.org/conference/tcworld.htm

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The back page

Mysterious translation at Versailles

Versailles castle and its gardens are one of the most visited tourist attractions in France, but this year the translation of the brochure for the annual summer musical fountains in the palace gardens is not quite as elegant as the gardens themselves.

Here's an extract to make you smile:

A plunge into the new Grandes Eaux Musicales at Versailles

Stroll around the fountains and admire the water jets, explore the groves while enjoying live music concert performed in the royal garden… During the Grandes Eaux Sun-King' stroll, the fountain tenders were looking out Louis XIV's presence and a discreet whistling from one of them, let the water to release by opening the traps. Today, armed with their lyre key, admire theirs three century old *savoir faire*, transmitted from generation to generation to preserve their elder's heritage.

It seems that it is not only the gardens of Versailles that English-speaking visitors found mysterious this summer. It is also the strange translation explaining how the fountains work.

Not quite what was intended

Samuel Stoddard has collected hundreds of amusing yet unintended phrases in the English language on his site www.rinkworks.com/said/.

Here are some examples he has collected from classifieds:

- Man wanted to work in dynamite factory. Must be willing to travel.

- 2 female Boston Terrier puppies, 7 wks old, perfect markings, 555-1234. Leave.

- Snow blower for sale…only used on snowy days.

- Get rid of aunts: Zap does the job in 24 hours.

- Carpal Tunnel Syndrome – Free Sample!

- Christmas tag sale. Handmade gifts for the hard-to-find person.

- Mother's helper – peasant working conditions.

- Now is your chance to have your ears pierced and get an extra pair to take home, too.

- We'll move you worldwide throughout the country.

- We do not tear your clothing with machinery. We do it carefully by hand.

- Tired of cleaning yourself? Let me do it.

- Wanted to buy: fishing net, must have no holes.

- Man, honest. Will take anything.

- Wanted. Man to take care of cow that does not smoke or drink.

- Our bikinis are exciting. They are simply the tops.

- Mixing bowl set designed to please a cook with round bottom for efficient beating.

For more examples from the classifieds, visit www.rinkworks.com/said/ads.shtml.

It isn't only the classifieds that have drawn Samuel's attention; he has also collected some great examples from letters that tenants have written to their landlords. Here's a selection:

- This is to let you know that there is a smell coming from the man next door.

- The toilet seat is cracked. Where do I stand?

- I request your permission to remove my drawers in the kitchen.

- Our lavatory seat is broken in half and is now in three pieces.

- Will you please send someone to mend our broken path. Yesterday my wife tripped on it and is now pregnant.

For more examples from the tenant letters, visit www.rinkworks.com/said/complaints.shtml.

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