InfoPlus+

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ISTC news

Conference keynote speaker revealed

The ISTC is pleased to announce that Matthew Ellison of Ellison Consulting will be the Keynote Speaker at this year's Conference. Matthew has established a reputation as an expert communicator about how technical authoring, its approaches and tools, are changing.

As a technical author, trainer and online help consultant, he has spent the last 20 years working with large organisations to help them provide the most effective assistance possible for the users of their software and web-based applications.

Photo: Matthew Ellison

He has spoken at conferences all over the world and each year organises and delivers the European User Assistance (UA) Conference, formerly the European Online Help conference. He is a creative and engaging speaker, and we welcome him as our Keynote Speaker for ISTC Conference 2008.

The ISTC Council has also unanimously agreed to award the 2008 Horace Hockley Award to Matthew. ISTC president Simon Butler says we are presenting the award to Matthew "for his contribution to the global user assistance community, particularly as an organiser of the UA Conference in Europe. Matthew writes articles for *Communicator*, speaks at ISTC events (national and local) and lectures for Portsmouth University on the MA in Technical Communication. He is also a certified instructor for most popular Help authoring tools."

For more information, visit www.ellisonconsulting.com and www.uaconference.eu.

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

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ISTC announces new administration

By Peter Fountain FISTC, LCGI

The ISTC is in the final stage of appointing a new administrator following the announcement earlier this year that Carol Hewitt, the ISTC Administrator, was soon to retire.

After completing a detailed specification of our requirements, we approached several companies that provide association management services. We gave these organisations a fixed amount of time to seek further information and provide a detailed proposal with a breakdown of costs. We assessed the tenders received and felt that three of the companies were able to fulfil our requirements. We sought additional clarification from all three and then re-assessed their responses.

One company, Administration Services Limited (ASL), stood out from the group. It is a highly experienced association management company that has been in operation for over 20 years. We have since visited ASL's York and Croydon offices, and we have received detailed and glowing references from three of their existing clients.

The paperwork is in the hands of our solicitors who are ensuring that we have a robust contract in place with ASL, whose proposal covers all the core services we specified, including telephone cover every working day.

ASL can also provide other services if required, including conference organisation, publicity campaigns, governmental lobbying, international and UK travel and accommodation bookings. We expect that ASL's additional resources and expertise will make this a turning point in the development of the ISTC and enable us to actively pursue opportunities without the traditional limitations of available effort.

I expect to be able to confirm in mid-May that contracts have been signed and that we can move forward with this new method of the ISTC's administration. While our email addresses, web address and registered office address will all remain the same, the new postal address and telephone number for the ISTC will be:

Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators

Suite 111
Airport House
Purley Way
Croydon
CR0 0XZ

Tel: 020 8253 4506
Fax: 020 8253 4510

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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.

European associations gather in Italy

The international representative of the ISTC, Theresa Cameron, attended TCeurope's 8th European Colloquium for user-friendly product information on behalf of the ISTC this April.

This year, TCeurope, the umbrella organisation for technical communication associations in Europe, held its annual event outside Brussels for the first time. This year the Italian technical communications association COM&TEC hosted the event in Bologne, the city in which their association was founded.

Expert speakers from Austria, Finland, Germany, Holland and Italy presented a varied and interesting programme about trends in technical communication: standardised processes in a mass market versus customised documentation. Around 50 attendees, mainly from Italy, joined with representatives from most of the TCeurope member organisations, including the ISTC, to participate in a lively and stimulating day of presentations and networking.

It's free to attend the colloquium, which is highly recommended for its diversity, excellent speakers, and the opportunity to meet with fellow tchnical communicators in Europe.

You can find more about the 8th European Colloquium on the TCeurope website: www.tceurope.org/colloquium/aboutthecolloquium.htm.

Photo: Dr Martin Böecker from Siemens Industrial Solutions and Services addressing the audience at the TCeurope Colloquium

Still time to enter 2008 Awards

The closing date for entries of the UK Technical Communication Awards is 30 June. If you've produced a deliverable that you're proud of, enter it for an award. If you know someone else whose work you admire, tell them about the competition.

To learn more about the awards, you can read Marian Newell's detailed article about the categories and judging in the February ISTC newsletter at www.istc.org.uk/Publications/Newsletter/News_2008/istcFeb2008.pdf

To read full details and download an entry form, visit: www.istc.org.uk/About_istc/Awards/uk_tech_comm_awards.htm.

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10% off ISTC Conference

You can still get a 10% early bird discount off the cost of the ISTC Conference 2008 if you book before 30 June.

The ISTC Conference 2007 was certainly a memorable event and a highly successful one for the ISTC. Those of you who attended came away thoroughly pleased with what you learned, the fellow professionals you had a chance to meet as well as the products, services, exhibitors you could investigate.

This year, we are building on the success of Conference 2007 and incorporating several of the suggestions Liverpool attendees provided. We will continue with the now established midweek timing, which makes it easier for more delegates and exhibitors to attend. The first day of Conference (Tuesday) will give you the opportunity to attend various vendor workshops and gain valuable, certified training in a number of tools. The dinner on Tuesday will be a less formal affair, giving you the opportunity to meet old friends and make new ones. The keynote speaker will be part of a new opening session on Wednesday morning, with all awards being given at the Gala Dinner on Wednesday evening. We will also be extending the last day (Thursday) beyond lunch to give more time for presentations and to help you make the most of your time at Conference.

The 2008 ISTC Conference will be at Eastwood Hall, set in 26 acres of landscaped grounds in the Nottinghamshire countryside. Just five minutes from junction 26 of the M1, Eastwood Hall has been built to provide the very best in 21st century residential conference and training facilities.

The programme details will be revealed over the next few months, so keep an eye out for our call for presentations, workshops and training sessions at: www.istc.org.uk/Events/Conference/conference_2008.htm.

Win a free Web Content 2008 ticket

Do you want to learn more about Web 2.0 and its impact on web communication? If so, enter our lucky draw to win a free ticket to Web Content 2008 in Chicago. The event covers technology, content and marketing aspects involved in creating, organising, maintaining and delivering web content. Get the latest industry information from presenters and speakers who are leaders in their respective fields. For example, Dick Costolo, group product manager for AdSense at Google, and Charles Cooper, vice president of The Rockley Group.

One ticket to the event taking place from 17–18 June is worth as much as US$995 (the ticket does not include travel and accommodation).

To stand a chance of winning the ticket in our lucky draw, please email istc@istc.org.uk before 12 May. Type WEB CONTENT 2008 FREE TICKET DRAW as the subject line, and include your name and contact details in the email.

To learn more about the event go to www.webcontent2008.com.

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Affiliate news

ITR wins Jaguar Land Rover contract

Jaguar Land Rover has awarded a new contract for the provision of translation services to London-based ITR International Translation Resources Ltd.

The contract covers a wide variety of project types ranging from drivers' handbooks to service bulletins, workshop manuals and training materials. ITR's services will include:

- Translation into more than 25 languages
- Multilingual desktop publishing
- Software localisation
- Integration with Jaguar Land Rover's XML-based content management system
- Terminology management
- Linguistic quality assurance.

New tech authors club on Facebook

Technical communication company Cherryleaf has created a technical authors club on Facebook www.facebook.com/pages/Cherryleaf-Technical-Authors-Club/27787177632.

Sales and marketing director, Ellis Pratt, says "It was prompted by a request from a technical author, who wanted to set up a Facebook club for technical authors, but wasn't in a position to set this up herself. It will be a discussion area where technical authors on Facebook can discuss issues and news."

JustSystems powers electronic aircraft manuals

All Nippon Airways (ANA) has adopted JustSystems' dynamic document vision and the xfy document-centric composite application platform as the foundation of its new system for creating, editing and managing aircraft rulebooks and operation manuals.

ANA will use the dynamic document-driven system to edit rules and instructions, provided by Boeing as XML documents, into its own format and to manage the documents to be shared among people involved in the aircraft's operation. ANA's pilots will also use the system to view its manuals as part of the electronic flight bag ("EFB"), a standard device installed in the cockpit of the soon-to-be-launched Boeing 787, the state-of-the-art jet that ANA will be the first in the world to fly.

Using xfy-based dynamic documents, ANA will deliver rapidly, constantly changing data to its pilots and maintenance crews, ensuring that only the most authoritative, up-to-date information reaches those users. ANA can also use the dynamic documents to render specific views of information based on criteria such as user, role, point in a workflow process or result of a web service query. In turn, dynamic documents display information that is the most relevant and appropriate to the context of its usage.

For a full list of the ISTC's current Business Affiliates, see www.istc.org.uk/Business_affiliates/ba_home.htm.

You can read more about the scheme at www.istc.org.uk/Membership/business_affiliates.htm.

Industry news

Working by email: do we need to meet?

By Kirstie Edwards BSc MA PhD FISTC

You may work by email with people who you have never met face-to-face and find this quite daunting. The reduced feedback (e.g. no facial gestures or voice intonation) and the misrepresentations and misinterpretations possible with text alone may add up to a recipe for disaster. Even if you do have excellent relations by email, problems can occur.

We depend on email to communicate, but still want to be understood and have good relations with our colleagues. So what can we do to address this in a world where not meeting each other face-to-face has become socially acceptable? Here are some practical tips that you might find helpful. The following pointers emerged from research at Sheffield Hallam University (Edwards et al. 2008) into emails written between members of writing teams.

▶ Get acquainted

Getting to know each other is important to working together. In a face-to-face situation, a lot of getting to know each other is informal. We bump into each other in the corridor or over lunch, swap stories about the weekend or a potential career move within the company. The key difference between meeting in the corridor and an email is that the corridor meeting is unplanned.

Usually, we have a good work-driven reason for writing an email, and sometimes it's hard to break away from the work-related content to discuss something more trivial, such as the weather or something more personal such as the writer's relationship with the reader (e.g. "Nice to be back in touch").

Of course, the best solution is to try to meet face-to-face, particularly at the beginning of projects, as face-to-face meetings seem to benefit performance. However, if this isn't possible, then reflecting on the following three aspects of email writing may help: social interactivity, content and style.

Kirstie is a scientific and technical editor (www.vcs-be.net). She teaches on the distance learning MA in Technical Communications at Sheffield Hallam University, and also tutors on the ISTC's Open Learning Course in Technical Communication Techniques.

Photo: Kirstie Edwards

To learn more about Kirstie's research, read her article *Reading sociability from numbers* in the Spring 2008 issue of *Communicator*.

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▶ Social Interactivity

Emails are like any other written communication: they require careful anticipation of the reader, purpose and context. To help build and maintain relationships, we need to write emails in a socially interactive way. This means that we need to take into account not only who we are writing to and why, but our relationship with that person, the timing and speed of our exchanges, the current situation and needs of the reader, etc.

Our research showed how writing teams adapt their emails in this way. They adapt how formal they are with each other, how they greet each other, whether they include personal information, statements of courtesy or apology, and how involved or sociable they are. For these kinds of adaptations, you need to consider both the style and content of your email.

▶ Content

Earlier, I mentioned the concept of informal unplanned exchanges helping us to get to know each other. Self disclosure contributes to the development of personal and intercultural relationships. Consider, then, whether there is something appropriate you can communicate, which is less formal, less work-related, more personal and which brings your relationship out into the context of the real world for the reader.

Don't be afraid to share appropriate personal information. This may help your reader to understand you and help to build your relationship, e.g. "I'm still catching up after a short period of absence; we've just had our first child" will help a recipient who knows nothing of you and was wondering why you hadn't responded to their proposal for three weeks. Make the effort to spend a few extra minutes doing this. It surely won't take as long as a chat over coffee in the corridor.

Remember that getting to know each other is important. Explicit statements of self disclosure, apology and courtesy can all contribute to building and maintaining relationships, and such sociability contributes to performance.

▶ Style

We also write sociability into our emails through the style we use. An emoticon (e.g. a smiley) can easily convey a feeling, which perhaps the reader could not interpret from the text alone. How we greet each other or how we close our emails (e.g. whether we include a formal signature), how involved we appear (by self-reference, e.g. "I", "my" etc.), our sense of team spirit (referring to "we" and "us") all contribute to our style and the level of formality, distance or closeness we communicate. Considering not only what we write in our emails, but how we write it, can help to build and maintain relationships.

▶ We've already met ☺

The message here is that there are no black and white rules. Improving email writing requires reflecting on them as social interactive written communications. Emails have a writer, reader, writer-reader relationship, purpose and context, and we need to adapt the style and content appropriately in our emails to support and sustain good relations.

Reference

Edwards, K., Yates, S., Dujardin, A-F., Green, G. (2008). "Professional email communication: a perspective from writing research". In P. Zemliansky & K. St Amant (Eds.), Handbook of research on virtual workplaces and the new nature of business practices. Idea Group Inc., pp 366-383.

Could your website be a winner?

The Localization Industry Standards Association (LISA) has launched its third annual Best International Web Support Sites awards programme and is now accepting applications for sites to be considered this year.

LISA invites you to consider submitting your site for possible selection as one of the year's best international support sites.

In recent years, the winning sites have come from companies such as ATI, Cathay Pacific Airlines, Cisco Systems, Dell, HP, Intel, McAfee, Microsoft, Sony, ViaTraining and Xilinx.

Companies that enter the awards programme – held in conjunction with the Association of Support Professionals (ASP) – receive a valuable, detailed evaluation of their international support site in terms of 25 criteria, along with comments and feedback from expert judges.

LISA will also produce a volume profiling the winning sites. This volume is used as inspiration and guidance by companies looking to improve their own international support sites and is filled with guidelines and best practices for doing so.

The awards programme is open to any company providing web support in three or more languages and recognises companies with a commitment to supporting their international customers as equals with customers in their home markets. Applications are due by 15 May (30 May with a late fee).

For more information, visit www.lisa.org/awards/.

Blog news

Bloggers giving insightful advice

By Gordon McLean MISTC

A month is a long time on the internet, and as ever there has been plenty of discussion on a variety of topics, so let's dive straight in.

First up, Mike Hughes offers some sage advice with some business perspective applied to the resourcing issue many of us face, "good enough" documentation is a reality that many of us don't like to admit, but there are good reasons to understand when it is applicable to use that benchmark.

Charles Cooper reminds us how to think like a user, "the problem with being able to think like a user is that familiarity breeds … well, familiarity ... we're using (at least I hope we are) the applications that we document daily … building a store of information about the application [and] we can easily lose sight of what the new user, who comes to the application tabula rasa, may experience."

Thinking of single source? Pondering on Content Management Systems? Kyle Short offers a few pointers on the topic which is typically the most time-consuming part of the process, content migration.

If you are at all interested in fonts then go read, Pilcrow & Capitulum, a post for the font fanatics which discusses the evolution of that little symbol that is often used to mark the end of a paragraph.

Wikis are gaining increasing traction with some technical writers, and there are a few organisations that are starting to combine the benefits of a structured authoring environment with the benefits of using a Wiki. Anne Gentle, a Wiki evangelist, discusses a wiki sourced with DITA topics.

Working with technical editors can be a challenge for many writers. Will Kelly has pulled together some of his positive and negative experiences.

DITA or DocBook? DocBook or DITA? As ever there are two sides to every story so once you've read Richard Hamilton's excellent comparison of both schemas, you should read Eliot Kimber's response. If you spot a DocBook focussed response, please let me know.

And finally, with Sun announcing a formal blogging policy for employees, I think it's safe to say that blogs are here to stay.

As ever, if you spot anything of interest, let me know: blogs@istc.org.uk.

Quick links to the bloggers and their blogs

Mike Hughes: www.uxmatters.com/MT/archives/000263.php

Charles Cooper: rockley.com/blog/?p=55#more-55

Kyle Short: www.cmswire.com/cms/web-publishing/no-small-task-migrating-content-to-a-new-cms-002437.php

Pilcrow & Capitulum: www.typography.com/ask/showBlog.php?blogID=84

Anne Gentle: justwriteclick.com/2008/02/27/dita-and-wiki-hybrids-theyre-here/

Will Kelly: willkelly.typepad.com/will_kelly/2008/04/working-with-te.html

Richard Hamilton: www.thecontentwrangler.com/article_comments/choosing_an_xml_schema_docbook_or_dita/

Eliot Kimber: drmacros-xml-rants.blogspot.com/2008/04/choosing-xml-schema-docbook-or-dita.html

Sun: www.sun.com/aboutsun/media/blogs/policy.html

A technical writer for almost 14 years, Gordon has been blogging for more than eight. 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.

Software news

Latest MadCap Lingo released

MadCap Lingo streamlines the authoring, translation and publishing processes and eliminates the need for file transfers to complete translation. With MadCap Lingo, document components, such as tables of contents, topics, index keywords, concepts, glossaries and variables all remain intact (and easily available to the translator) throughout the translation and localisation process.

For product details, a free demo and a free trial, visit: www.madcapsoftware.com/products/lingo.

Tools and resources

Free technical illustration topic sheet

Download this free topic sheet that discusses some of the most frequently asked questions around the technical illustration process, such as:

■ How many illustrations do I need in my manuals? Can I replace descriptions of processes with illustrations? Can this be used to save translations costs? Isn't it time-consuming and expensive to create illustrations?

■ What do I need to consider if I want to reuse my engineering data for technical documentation purposes? Doesn't this mean a lot of extra work for my engineers to prepare the models for the illustrators?

To download our free Topic Sheet, *Technical Illustrations – Bridging the Gap between 3D CAD and Product Documentation*, visit www.ptc.com/company/whitepapers/index.htm (registration required).

Training news

Helping you choose the right creative application

By Kathryn Valdal Fourie, MISTC

Changes in communication trends and the job market are pushing a growing number of technical authors to become more involved in page layout and design, reports Ed Wills director of operations at Mekon Creatives. This means that more technical writers and designers are taking creative application courses to remain competitive in the work place.

"In today's world of communications, copywriters, technical writers and even traditional print designers need to design for the online experience." The web experience is growing even richer from a media perspective; it is becoming increasingly standard to have print options, documents for download, online video and online presentations with audio scripts. "This is why 60% of the students now taking our web courses come from traditional print media backgrounds. Many of these previously print-only designers are taking Adobe Dreamweaver and Flash courses to move into web design, as well as to gain web skills such as writing for the web and

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Search Engine optimisation (SEO)," reports Ed.

Designers and writers often know that they need to gain more software skills and become more adept in the programs they use every day. Yet, they are constantly bombarded by course and software advertisements, which can make choosing the right course difficult.

Mekon gives us the low-down on some of the key creative application packages in the market to help you choose the most appropriate one for your needs. These are:

- Adobe InDesign: application for page layout and design

- Adobe FrameMaker: powerful application for authoring longer documents, including manuals and technical documents

- Adobe Illustrator: a vector-based drawing application, useful for a broad range of projects, such as creating logos, clothes design and cartography

- Adobe Photoshop: a graphics editing application for commercial bitmap and image manipulation, graphical layout and web image manipulation

- QuarkXPress: application for page layout and design

So if you are interested in getting into layout, which application would be the better choice – Adobe InDesign or QuarkXPress which are direct competitors? Mekon Creatives tells us a bit about the two applications' history and strengths to help you make the right decision.

QuarkXPress has been around for 21 years, whereas Adobe InDesign has only been on the market for about nine. "In the past, Adobe PageMaker competed with QuarkXPress, and Quark was the market leader," explains Carol Edwards, creative print design application specialist and Adobe Certified Expert and Instructor at Mekon Creatives. But since "Adobe bundled InDesign with Photoshop, Illustrator and Acrobat in its Creative Suite, InDesign has become a strong player – the application is now running neck and neck with QuarkXPress in terms of training requirements," she says.

"While QuarkXPress is more expensive to purchase than InDesign, InDesign comes in a variety of suites, ranging from the all encompassing Master Collection, which integrates the ex-Macromedia products and covers all design disciplines including print and web design, motion graphics and video editing to the Design Standard and Design

Photo: Ed Wills and Carol Edwards

Premium Suites. Overall, the various suites cost more but contain more applications," explains Carol. For this reason, Adobe's Creative Suites appeal to a broad range of designers, including independent ones.

"QuarkXPress is still an industry standard with a strong loyal user base and can work very well with products such as Photoshop

and Illustrator, but we are experiencing a high demand for InDesign training courses from QuarkXPress users," comments Ed. This is partly due to the job market demanding designers versed in both packages. "Ten years ago, job ads asked for QuarkXPress, but now they are asking for both: Quark and InDesign."

So if you are looking to add a new application to your repertoire of skills, how long will it really take you to master an application? If you are a newbie to an application, taking the plunge and getting started with it can be daunting. But Carol says that it is possible to "absorb the key features of an application within as little as one to three days. In a short course, we impart enough skills so that users can feel confident with the interface and familiar enough with the main features to produce any type of document."

"Even users who have been working with an application regularly often learn short cuts, tips and tricks on training days which enable them to become more efficient at their jobs. The best way to learn the features of an application is to refer to sample projects in the training," explains Carol. "Using clients own projects during the course makes the learning experience more relevant, which aids the transfer of skills."

Most students leave a couple of weeks between an introductory, intermediate and advanced course. This gives them enough time to practice the tips and skills they learnt in the training course. "But how long you need between courses depends on how often you will be using the application. If you use it in your job everyday then you might feel ready to move to a higher level more quickly. If you don't use the application daily at work, we recommend that you do practical exercises at home. You can then expect that achieving proficiency will take a little longer," she adds.

So learning a new application will take some effort, but will adding a new creative package to your CV really give you the edge in the job market? "We have found that companies are looking for writers and designers with a mix of cross-media skills and this is often hard to find. Businesses want to staff up with trained people but are often concerned about the risk of staff churn. This coupled with high recruitment agency fees of around 25% can make some companies hesitant to hire, especially when it is in the agency's best interest, but not the client's, to negotiate a higher salary for a candidate," explains Ed.

"Traditionally, our business has focused on creative application training courses, and

we have consistently been approached by businesses wanting to train up their new recruits in various applications," he says. To address the concerns of industry, Mekon Creatives started a new recruitment arm 10 months ago. "We put prospective employers into contact with designers who have a strong portfolio of work and then put them through three Mekon Creatives courses. We work on a fixed-fee approach as opposed to traditional recruitment agencies who charge a percentage of successful candidates' salary, and the training element is included in this fee. We believe this puts us firmly on the client's side and produces a fantastic return on the recruitment budget investment."

It's not only the employers who benefit. Successful Mekon Creatives trained candidates who stay with the client company for more than 24 months get a 10% discount on Mekon Creatives courses for life. "This is a win-win situation for both the companies who approach us and the designers enhancing their skill sets through our courses. The bottom line is that competitive businesses are always looking for experienced staff with the skills to match, so if you enhance your skills you have got a much stronger chance of getting the job you want."

Training courses

May

20 **Webcast Phototracing**
Learn how to create an illustration by tracing a photo, and get answers to these questions:
• Can I use any photo for a template?
• What do I need to consider when using this technique?
• How can I work more efficiently when phototracing?
PTC
www.ptc.com/appserver/wcms/events/series.jsp?im_dbkey=66552&icg_dbkey=141

20-22 **MadCap Software Training**
Matthew Ellison, MadCap Software Certified Instructor, will be conducting this three-day hands-on training seminar on MadCap Flare. On the course, you'll quickly learn all of the powerful features of Flare, and take your documentation to the next level.
In Tuition, a training center in London.

www.intuition.co.uk/site/Trning%20Center/map.asp

Course details: www.madcapsoftware.com/assets/FlareTrainingOutline.pdf

Contact: Jennifer Morse jmorse@madcapsoftware.com

21-22 **The "DITA: Getting Started" workshop**
This two-day workshop explores what DITA is and how it can be implemented in your organisation. The training will help you build your business case, network and create your own DITA topics in an XML editor while learning how DITA is processed.
Hartley Wintney, Hampshire
PTC & Comtech.
www.comtech-serv.com/workshops/index.shtml

22 **Introduction to technical authoring**
This is an intensive one-day course ideal for people who are not career technical authors, but who need to carry out such work. The day covers project planning, writing from a design, structuring documents, good writing practice, punctuation and grammar, navigation techniques, proofreading and standards.
Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands.
www.armadaonline.co.uk/techauthortraining

June

17-19 Advanced technical authoring techniques

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

Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands. www.armadaonline.co.uk/ techauthortraining

Imperial College
London

The Department of Humanities is happy to announce five translation technology courses:

31 May	Beginners' Wordfast
21 June	Designing Your Own Web Pages
28 June	Searching the Invisible Web
5 July	Beginners' Déjà Vu X
12 July	Computer Skills for Translators

Courses take place in South Kensington, from 10am till 4.30pm and cost £95 including lunch.

Email sonia.cutler@imperial.ac.uk to enrol. For more details see http://tinyurl.com/2p5b3t.

24 Webcast: Magnifiers

In this webcast you'll learn valuable information about magnifiers, including:
- Different forms of this stylistic device
- Working with layers
- Tips & Tricks for working more efficiently
- Q&A—and more

PTC

www.ptc.com/appserver/ wcms/events/series.jsp?im_ dbkey=66552&icg_dbkey=141

Events page

X-PUBS 2008: Delivering on the XML promise

The X-Pubs 2008 Conference and Workshop Series to be held in London on June 22-24 will focus on how Web 2.0, DITA, CMS and S1000D can re-invent your customer's content experience.

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"If you're going to invest in XML-related technologies such as the Darwin Information Typing Architecture (DITA), Component Content Management (CCMS), S1000D, the customer experience should be high on the initiatives priority list," says Noz Urbina, XML Content Management Consultant and member of the topic-review board for X-Pubs. "X-Pubs 2008 and the free pre-Conference Workshops provide education on how to create effective changes to content delivery so that content consumers feel a real difference. Considering the training value of the free Workshops with trainers from the Rockley Group, EMC, PTC and JustSystems, the conference really is of unprecedented value."

X-Pubs (www.x-pubs.com) focuses on the business and conceptual aspects of content solutions. It is aimed at team leaders, technical communicators, CIOs, CTOs and product management professionals who want to streamline information flow between teams, increase collaboration and take advantage of the cutting edge of Web 2.0 and information technologies for competitive and efficiency gains.

Speaker highlights:

▶ Rockley Group's Charles Cooper illuminates the black art of Taxonomy and Metadata

▶ Chris Woods, British Aerospace Engineering (BAE)'s technology manager and S1000D expert

▶ Amber Swope, JustSystems educates on the DITA Maturity Model

▶ John Hunt, IBM, DITA Subcommittee chairperson trains on delivering dynamic training with DITA and Web 2.0

▶ Specification manager Gunnar Krause shares Qimonda's research used to choose Content Reuse methodology

▶ Matthew Ellison, DITA Learning and Training Materials Subcommittee Member

▶ JoAnn Hackos, president of Comtech Services and Mekon Ltd's Noz Urbina return with their own 'how-to' presentations

▶ Amanda Bucklow, information management and strategy expert

▶ Many more…

Register now on www.x-pubs.com

Europe's Largest XML & CMS Conference

Events listings

May

7   **This is how to get there**
A talk by Paul Stiff of Reading University about everyday wayfinding.
London, UK.
www.signdesignsociety.co.uk

8   **Cambridge ISTC group event: Involving usability in technical authoring**
It's well known among technical authors that the quality of a document can only be assessed in the context of its target audience. This seminar looks at techniques for understanding users and assessing the usability of documentation. This seminar is free, but numbers are limited. Contact Rachel Potts to reserve your place:
rachel.potts@red-gate.com.
Cambridge, UK.

12–13 Technical communication: Basics & Beyond.
The annual conference of the Finnish Technical Communication Society will be held at the University of Tampere. For more information, contact nicholas.hill@dokumentoijat.net.
Tampere, Finland.

21 Tour of London Transport Museum at Acton
The Sign Design Society is pleased to announce an organised tour of London Transport Museum's Depot at Acton. The Depot holds the majority of the historic collections which are not on display in the main Museum in Covent Garden, including many stages of the drawings and designs of the world-famous tube map by Frank Pick and others.
London, UK.

www.signdesignsociety.co.uk

21-23 NZATD 2008 conference: Accelerating Growth Through Learning
The conference has three themes of
– Personal development: growing the individual, business acumen
– Growing the organisation and professional expertise
– Growing the industry.
Auckland, New Zealand.

www.nzatd.org.nz/index.php?entityType=HTML&id=36

22-23 CiB Conference
The British Association of Communicators in Business conference will focus on change management and developing strategies for engagement.
Brighton, UK.

www.cib.uk.com/cibconference2008.shtml

June

1–4 2008 Technical Communication Summit
The Technical Communication Summit is the primary source of learning and expanding your knowledge about technical communication. The certificate programs, education sessions, keynote speakers and networking opportunities make the Summit the place you should be.
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

www.stc.org/55thConf/index.asp

9–11 Localization World Eleventh Conference
Localisation World is a conference and networking organisation dedicated to the language and localisation industries. The people responsible for communicating across the boundaries of language and culture in the global marketplace.
Berlin, Germany.

www.localizationworld.com

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16-18 **Localization Certification Program**
Includes 45 hours of self-paced online coursework, three days of intensive hands-on workshops and a certification exam.
St. Louis, MO USA.

rce.csuchico.edu/localize/

19-20 **Localization Project Management Program**
When it comes to developing localised web sites, well-executed project management makes all the difference. St. Louis, MO USA.

rce.csuchico.edu/localize/

23-26 **DocTrain Life Sciences 2008: The Right Prescription For Life Sciences Content**
Documentation & Training Life Sciences 2008 Conference. Indianapolis, USA.

www.doctrain.com/life/

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.
To include an event in the listings, please email events@istc.org.uk.

Innovating Localization Business Models

LOCALIZATION WORLD
CONFERENCE & EXHIBITS

Leading conference for multilingual content

Berlin, 9-11 June 2008, Hotel Maritim proArte

- Introductory sessions and workshops
- Large exhibit with tools and services from around the world
- Excellent speakers and keynote addresses
- Three days full of sessions for beginners and experts
- Special one-day sessions for translation automation, internationalization, and roundtables for medical companies and games developers
- Social events for networking – in the heart of Berlin
- Participants from 36+ countries
- Organized by Localization Institute and *Multilingual* Magazine

www.localizationworld.com
info@localizationworld.com

Sponsored by:

July

17-18   Web 2.0 & Enterprise Foundations: Building Competitive Advantage in the 21st Century
This two-day masterclass provides business leaders with the insight they need to understand the impact that Web 2.0 and Enterprise 2.0 will have on their organisations. Singapore.
www.tcanz.org.nz/events/Web2.htm

September

18-19   UA Conference - Europe 2008
Call for case studies and peer showcase items is open. This annual event provides user-assistance professionals with the very latest Help technology news, design trends and skills updates. Registration opens on 1st May 2008. Edinburgh, Scotland.
www.uaconference.eu/

23–25   ISTC Conference 2008.
Eastwood Hall, Nottingham.

www.istc.org.uk/Events/Conference/conference_2008.htm.

Back page

New meaning in translation

Many English speakers applying for their visas at World Bridge in Paris are having a good laugh during the long wait. World Bridge, which processes visa applications for The British Consulate in Paris, has had the following sign specially produced and mounted on a door which is secured by an alarm. The sign on the door says:

> 'This door is alarmed'

And now so are all the visa applicants.

If you start getting bored when trawling the net for a building cleaning service in Mallorca, you're sure to feel refreshed by this unfortunate translation:

> Service of cleaning in General:

> Cleaning of lots, housings, facads and others. We have a wide human team to carry out these works.

A French multinational company has just announced a new system using Oracle and they have decided to use the acronym TOAD to name the new system.

The irony of spam

Not only are spam messages annoying but they often contain messages that try and scam you too. Some of these emails are written so badly that we can only laugh at the unfortunate turns of phrase. This one is a prime example:

I have an obscured business suggestion for you. There is the sum of $19,500,000.00 in my bank "Hang Seng Bank" Hong kong. There were no beneficiaries stated concerning these funds which means no one would ever come forward to claim it. That is why I ask that we work together so as to have the sum transferred out of my bank into your account.

The cryptic meaning of signs

France has developed 20 new road signs, but the meaning of most of these signs is not immediately obvious.

We particularly like the sign of what appears to be two pregnant tummies facing each other. We would never have guessed what the icons were really intended to stand for.

Read Charles Bremner's Paris blog to find out what the sign actually means and have a good chuckle: *France puzzled by new road signs* (05 April 2008): timescorrespondents. typepad.com/charles_bremner/2008/04/ post-1.html#more.

Rapscallion?

Each week, the website of the National Year of Reading publishes its word of the week. During the last week of April, its favourite word was 'rapscallion'. Visit their site to learn what the word means and also to see what you can do to promote reading this year: www.yearofreading.org.uk.

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