Contents

ISTC news

ISTC Conference 2008

Technical communication — part of the business?

By Marian Newell FISTC

I was surprised to realise that this was the fifth consecutive ISTC Conference I have attended: Oxford, Coventry, Gatwick, Liverpool and now Nottingham. The event benefited from the best venue during that period and also from an increased business focus in the presentations. It is the latter that I'd like to discuss here.

As technical communicators, we pride ourselves on understanding our users and meeting their needs. However, as I discovered when I researched the ISTC's Code of Professional Practice, we have another group of stakeholders who should be equally important to us: the people for whom we work. These may be employers or they may be clients. Either way, their focus is usually the company's core business.

Five of the speakers whose presentations I attended struck me strongly from a business perspective:

- Chris Clenton of Royal Bank of Scotland — Meaningful maps: do you understand your processes or are you on a road without a map?

- Audrey Philbrooks of Alliance and Leicester — Difficult topics and passive verbs: anyone can write a manual, can't they?

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1

- Andy Simpson of Raymarine — Developing a business case for investment in a content management system.
- Anthony Davey of the Rail Safety and Standards Board — Change management: challenges for the lone writer in a SME-rich environment.
- David Black of Symbian — Documenting for developers: the Symbian story.

Chris Clenton of RBS describes how the bank documents business processes

All five speakers related what they were doing directly to core business. They understood the motivations of the organisation for which they were communicating just as well as they understood the needs of the users to whom they were communicating.

Both of the speakers from financial institutions were acutely aware of the time-sensitive environments within which their customer advisers were working. In such a highly regulated environment, the information they deliver has to be correct and yet they can have as little as 90 seconds to locate and communicate an answer. Both, too, had been involved in justifying significant organisational change to fulfil the requirement and both had won or been finalists in several award schemes. Their sessions were an excellent opportunity to learn from the best.

Andy Simpson's presentation also focused on justification. Adopting a content management system is a major investment for any organisation, particularly a medium-sized company that has not previously invested heavily in documentation. Andy explored how you need to build relationships with senior management and understand their needs and motivations, so that you can translate the benefits of better documentation into terms that relate to the core business as a whole.

Anthony Davey took the relationship theme further with his examination of how one manages change that affects other people's working environments and challenges how they have previously been doing things. He drew on his Learning Tree certification

Anthony Davey

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2

in change management to summarise key psychological principles, learning theories and communication styles that should inform how we deal with our contacts.

Finally, the Symbian story drew one stream of presentations to a close at the end of the event. David Black gave an impassioned account of how this manufacturer of mobile phone handsets has built up its documentation function, both here and abroad. He manages a sizeable team and, like Chris Clenton, was speaking very much from a management perspective. He is now an old hand at justifying investment and recruiting large numbers of technical communicators.

I hope this short tour of a few of the presentations will give those who didn't attend a taste of what they missed. Conference always offers plenty on tools and techniques but there's so much more to it. Paul Ballard and his team put on a highly professional event and it's a great shame they weren't rewarded with a record attendance. If you value what you do, you owe it to yourself to keep your knowledge of the profession as up-to-date as you can. Perhaps the cost means that you can't attend every year but at least consider setting yourself an objective to attend every two or three years.

Welcome to the ISTC Conference

Joe Welinske, President of the WritersUA, discussing web technology updates in the conference closing session

Paul Ballard would like to thank all of you who emailed him with your specific reasons for not attending Conference this year. The feedback along with the comments received from the delegates will help with the planning for next year. Any additional contributions of comments or ideas would still be welcome.
email: marketing@istc.org.uk

Amanda Caley and John Fisher enjoying the Gala Dinner evening

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3

New copyeditor for *InfoPlus⁺*

Dr Andrew Marlow FISTC will be taking up the reins as copyeditor of *InfoPlus⁺* following on from Kathryn Valdal Fourie, who has worked on the newsletter since April 2006.

Andrew has been a member of the ISTC for many years and has more than 25 years experience in technical communication, authoring and publishing. He currently works in a variety of consulting and support roles in IT, scientific and educational circles within both the public and private sectors. In addition to writing and publishing books on technical communication and business development, Andrew helps organisations with tender documentation for public sector contracts.

Speaking about his role as copyeditor, Andrew says that he wants to build on the success of the newsletter. Although he is not looking to make any radical changes in the short-term, he believes there is ample opportunity to develop the content and distribution of *InfoPlus⁺* further.

'Obviously, I'd like to ensure that it delivers what members want, but I think there is scope for reaching a wider audience too and encouraging input from those working in the scientific community. As technologies and platforms for media and communication progress, perhaps we could also consider alternative means of distributing the ISTC's news'. He added: 'Kathryn has done a great job with the newsletter in her time as editor, so I am privileged to carry this work forward on behalf of the ISTC'.

Andrew will take over the copyediting of *InfoPlus⁺* from the December issue, so if you do have any news or ideas that you would like to share with him, please get in touch: newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk

Dr Andrew Marlow

Affiliate news

Competence² at the tcworld conference 2008

Competence² for Your Documentation is the theme at the mutual VAW-arvato and empolis booth at this year's tcworld conference and trade fair. The conference will take place at the Rhein-Main-Hallen in Wiesbaden, Germany from 5–7 November. The two strong technical documentation experts will jointly present their complementary solutions with demonstrations and are looking forward to exchanging ideas and providing consultation to professionals and executives, responsible for information about products and services.

Increasingly growing demands in the field of technical documentation motivated the mutual solution spectrum. Keeping up with the growing requirements is challenging: a considerable amount of versions and variants, covering international markets with its respective languages, taking into account relevant laws and regulations, special needs for multiple media publications and a seamless integration of various IT systems. Meeting these requirements with conventional tools and methods is next to impossible.

VAW-arvato specialises in technical documentation ranging from research to the final product in a variety of languages. Complementing VAW-arvato's portfolio, empolis provides XML-based enterprise content and knowledge management solutions that meet the challenges and will mutually present at booth 966.

To book an appointment at the booth email info@empolis.com or info@vaw-arvato.com

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.

Hyperlinks disclaimer

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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.

Industry news

The use of automated translation more likely

Provider of global information management (GIM) solutions, SDL, has announced the results of a survey on trends in automated translation. Completed by more than 385 individuals in global businesses, the survey highlights a stark increase not just in the motivation of businesses to use automated translation compared to two years ago, but also in the actual deployment of the technology.

SDL conducted the research in conjunction with the International Association for Machine Translation (IAMT) and Association for Machine Translation Americas (AMTA).

Most respondents were familiar with the concept of automated translation, with nearly 25 per cent either using it or planning to use it. Forty per cent of companies said they were more likely now to use it. These two statistics alone point to a substantial industry shift in perception, as interest and trust in this technology and its uses increases.

It is also interesting to identify into which types of application organisations would consider incorporating the technology. Fifty five per cent of respondents wanted to use it for generally producing foreign language versions of company content. Reflecting modern business practices, particularly where instant communication is required, the other areas of potential usage were all fairly evenly distributed between integration with chat tools, in email, Microsoft Word documents, on wikis and blogs, integrated into a web page and for conducting research on foreign language documents.

'We conducted the survey on a global scale so that we could gain a worldwide perspective of automated translation in business, and to also identify its role within the current business climate,' said Laurie Gerber, President at IAMT. 'Expectations and demands concerning quality remain high, with a large number of participants requiring high-quality output from automated translation. This is understandable as the majority see it as part of a human translation process, to improve productivity and reduce costs without sacrificing quality.'

Technical documentation was the main anticipated usage of automated translation, with 62 per cent of respondents agreeing on this, while 49 per cent also cited support and knowledge-based content. Other types of content, which were highlighted, included

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5

website copy and virus alerts.

More than 70 per cent of respondents named French, Italian, German and Spanish (FIGS) as their main target for usage. Asian languages accounted for just over 50 per cent and Eastern European languages accrued 42 per cent.

The majority of respondents (59 per cent) were from North America and Europe (33 per cent), with a small number of respondents from Latin America, the Middle East, Africa, Asia Pacific and Japan. The results across Europe and North America were compared and showed similar results. Respondents came from across-industry, including manufacturing, life sciences, aerospace, finance, electronics and telecoms.

You can read the full details of the research at www.sdl.com/atsurvey.

Blog news

Pumpkins and punctuation

By Gordon McLean MISTC

Autumn has arrived. I know this, not because the trees are turning, nor because of the chill in the wind, rather because of the increase in the number of blog posts this past month. So, without further ado, let's crack on.

What skills do you need to be a technical writer and do you have the right ones? Robert Plamondon suggests that "The big secret in technical writing is that most of the harder documents aren't written by the technical writers at all. In fact, many "technical writers" never do any writing at all. Instead, the drafts are written by engineers or marketers." Read the rest of his post to discover why he may be right.

Next up is a post aimed at graduates which highlights the fact that Tech writers bridge the gap between IT and everyone else. Khan writes: 'We play videogames, run software programs, and depend on countless other electronic and technical devices, both at home and at work. Who teaches us to operate, maintain, and train others to operate this evolving technology? For the most part, we have technical writers to thank.' Sounds like a good summary of our profession to me.

You've thought about single sourcing your information, right? Well, over on the Sun blogs Eric Armstrong writes about Why You Want Modular, Topic-Oriented Documentation, outlining the main reasons and selling points of a single source solution. It's probably the cleanest summary I've seen for a while and well worth a quick look.

Creating online help is one thing. Analysing its effectiveness is another. Thankfully, Meghashri Dalvi has shared some of her techniques in using heuristic evaluation to provide an initial assessment of both quality and usability of an online help system. Her post, Evaluating Online Help, offers a simple set of criteria to help make your system good enough to satisfy the needs of your users.

Sticking with online help, Char James Tanny has published the results of the HATT Survey. The results are viewable to everyone, and Char offers us some of her thoughts including her surprise that 'It just amazes me that in the days of Web 2.0, PDF is still the most-published output.'

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6

Do you use Microsoft Word? If you do, then take a moment to read [Keith Soltys' review of Microsoft Word for Publishing Professionals](#).

I don't know about you but there are times when I think that my co-workers consider me a walking dictionary and grammar consultant. So it's good to find simple little websites that explain the basics so I can point my grammatically challenged colleagues towards them — websites like [It's not Its](#).

Of course, we all know what it takes to be a good technical writer, but just in case you'd forgotten Anindita Basu has some excellent advice in her post, [How to write badly](#). She outlines nine simple rules which she has seen broken, including: ignore the dots and curls, let others figure out the punctuation, ignore the style guide, add variety to life, and more.

And finally, in my continued efforts to promote the benefits of blogging, I bring you a stellar post by Steve Yegge, [You Should Write Blogs](#). It may be a few years old but it is still valid. If you have toyed with blogging, then I urge you to spend the time reading his thoughts.

All of the blogs linked to have archives full of useful and interesting information, as well as links to other relevant blogs so do have a look around.

If you spot anything that may be of interest to others let me know: blogs@istc.org.uk.

Quick links to the bloggers and their blogs

Robert Plamondon:

http://www.hightechwriting.com/big_secret.html

Khan:

http://www.kelloggforum.org/tech-writers-bridge-the-gap-between-it-and-everyone-else/

Eric Armstrong:

http://blogs.sun.com/coolstuff/entry/modular_docs_part_1_why

Meghashri Dalvi:

http://www.stcsig.org/usability/newsletter/0805-Help.htm

Char James Tanny:

http://hatmatrix.com/2008/10/12/hatt-survey-results/

Keith Soltys:

http://www.soltys.ca/coredump/2008/10/microsoft-word-for-publishing.html

It's not Its:

http://www.its-not-its.info/

Anindita Basu:

http://writing-technical.blogspot.com/2008/10/how-to-write-badly.html

Steve Yegge:

http://steve.yegge.googlepages.com/you-should-write-blogs

Software news

MadCap launches Flare 4.0

The latest Flare version adds new features for single-source, multi-channel publishing.

Headlining the new features in Flare 4.0 are the extensive print functionality of MadCap Blaze, which debuted in September; the ability to single-source files across multiple projects; and tight integration with the new MadCap X-Edit tool — enabling streamlined document review and contribution workflow.

MadCap Flare 4.0 is the newest version of the industry's only native-XML content authoring software for single-source publishing. Flare also addresses the needs of global enterprises with full Unicode support for authoring content in any left-to-right language, including French, German, Italian, Spanish, Swedish, Chinese, Japanese and more. Because all MadCap products are built on the same XML-based architecture, Flare can be used both independently and as part of a complete, seamlessly integrated documentation workflow — from authoring to collaboration, analysis, translation and publishing.

Mike Hamilton

'In the wake of broad high-speed Internet access and a 24/7 global economy, a significant percentage of content traditionally associated with print publishing has moved to the web. However, enterprises relied on separate tools for print and online publishing to get robust functionality for each of these channels, adding unnecessary complexity to creating and updating content.

Flare 4.0 solves that dilemma because it is specifically designed to produce both online and print-based output equally well,' said Bjorn Backlund, MadCap Cofounder and CTO. 'With Flare 4.0, people have a single application for creating content once and then publishing it in as many channels and formats as needed — backed by best-in-class functionality to create the ultimate customer experience whether in print or online.'

In addition, 'web communications are transforming more subject experts into content contributors,' said Mike Hamilton, MadCap Vice President of Product Management. 'Flare 4.0 together with X-Edit Contribute and X-Edit Review are greatly lowering the barriers to tapping these rich resources of insight and knowledge. For the knowledge worker, adding copy or comments is as simple as working with a wiki or Word document, while Flare and the X-Edit tools automatically maintain the format defined by the documentation team. It's the best of both worlds.'

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8

Tools and resources

Special effects with FrameMaker cross-references

By Steve Thompson MISTC

If you're using FrameMaker to produce PDFs, you might be content with clicking hyperlinks in the Index and Table of Contents and the occasional cross-reference. But aren't you just a little envious of web pages with their dynamic displays and clickable graphics? This article explains how to add some sparkle to your tables and graphics using some unusual cross-reference formats.

Some essential basics

To insert a cross-reference such as "see Widgets on page 99", you need to click **Special > Cross Reference** on the menu, and then select a cross-reference format. For example:

See <Italics><$paratext> on page <$pagenum><Default ¶ Font>

It's important that you first define any character formats, such as italics, using **Format > Characters > Designer.**
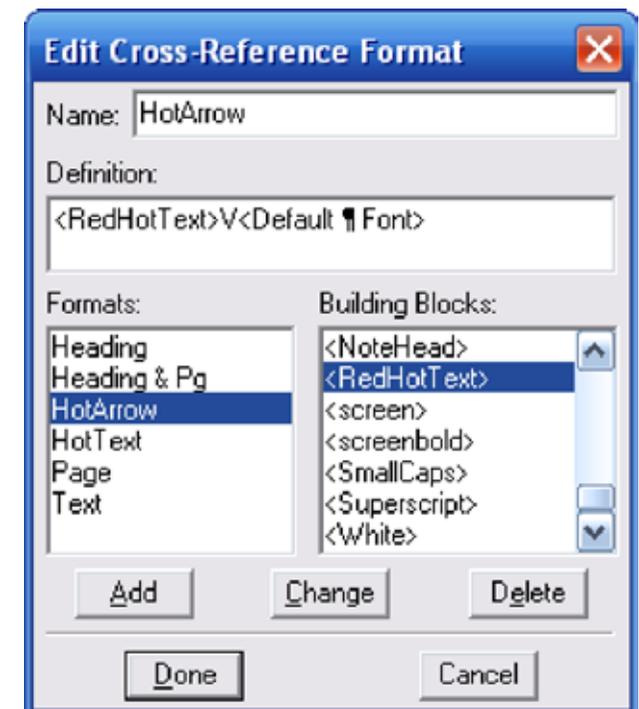
Character formats that you'll need

If you don't already have one, design two useful character formats that will give you blue text and red text. Blue text is the standard when clicking text in any web page, so here's how that format might look in the Character Designer window.
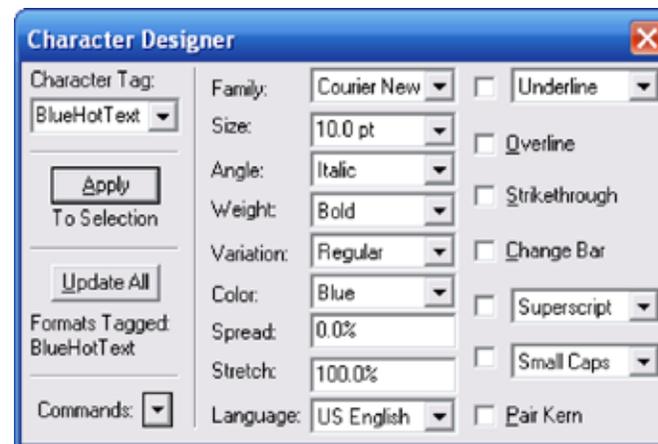
Cross-reference formats that you'll need

Select **Special > Cross Reference**, then click **Edit,** and begin to add each new format. The **Edit Cross Reference Format** window looks like this:

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Later in this article, you'll see how each of the cross-reference formats fits, but for now, just create them with these details.

Name	Format	Comment
HotArrow	<RedHotText>V<Default ¶ Font>	
HotBullet	<BlueHotText>o<Default ¶ Font>	
HotCaptionA	<BlueHotText>A<Default ¶ Font>	
HotSpot	\ \ \ \ \ \ \r\r\r\r	(backslash-space …. backslash r)

Hot tables

Imagine that your document describes a simple product that has three parts – top, middle and base. The product is available in several versions, for example, Version 1 has only the top and middle parts.

Product Version	Top assembly	Middle section	Base pod
Version 1	o	o	
Version 2		o	o
Version 3	o		o

You would probably follow the table with sections entitled something like "Top assembly". To make the table more dynamic, replace the bullets in the cells by cross-references to the section titles. Use the HotBullet cross-reference format.

Although this example uses a lower case letter "o", you can experiment with other characters, perhaps in DingBats font, or try

"\b" which gives a true bullet character.

Your readers will see the blue bullets in the table, inviting them to click and jump directly to each description.

Self-sorting tables

When displaying a table of information, the author decides which order the readers will see. Why not give the readers a choice instead? Consider these two simple example tables. You could display the information alphabetically or numerically.

Type Port	Type Port
FTP 21	FTP 21
HTTP 80	SSH 22
SMTP 25	SMTP 25
SSH 22	HTTP 80

Now imagine a much longer list that fills a whole page and is tucked away somewhere in an appendix. FrameMaker's powerful table sorter allows you to present two tables, sorted in both ways. So, construct both tables, starting each at the top of a page, below a heading title. I recommend putting the most preferable table earlier in the appendix.

The clever part is how you can link the two tables together. Place your cursor after the word **Port** in one column of a table. Then create the cross-reference to the title above the other table. Use the HotArrow cross-reference format. Do the equivalent on the second table.

Protocols and Port Numbers	
Type	Port (V)
FTP	21
HTTP	80
SMTP	25
HTTP	22

Protocols and Port Numbers	
Type (V)	Port
FTP	21
HTTP	80
SMTP	25
HTTP	80

Generate your PDF and open at the page containing your first table. When you click the red downward arrow (V) in the column heading, the other page jumps into view, and this gives the illusion that the table has magically sorted itself.

Graphics with callouts

In this next simple diagram, you would have probably typed some plain text like "Top" inside a text frame inside the anchored frame. Better still, you could replace the text by a cross-reference to a heading titled "Top".
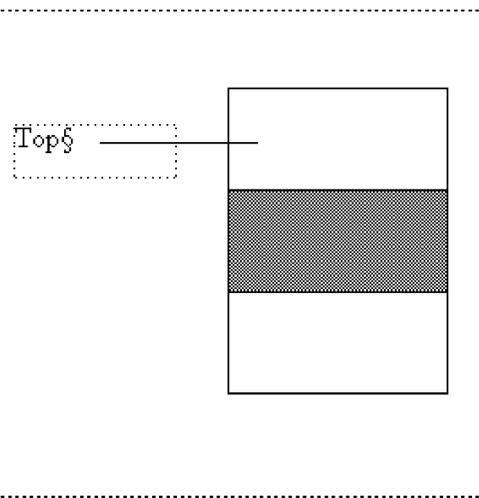
It's likely, however, that the descriptive section is called something longer, such as "The Top Assembly Section". The text is rather long, and your localisation department will complain because the localised text will be even longer, will probably wrap awkwardly, or just won't fit. Instead, you have to use the familiar method of letter callouts: A, B, C and so on, with a legend below the graphic.

So you dutifully replace your text, "Top" by the letter A. But now you can go one step further. Replace "A" by a cross-reference to title "The Top Assembly Section" with a cross-reference format of HotCaptionA.

Your graphic now has a blue "A" callout, inviting your readers to click and jump directly to the description. I've described only the HotCaptionA cross-reference format here. You will, of course, also need a HotCaptionB, HotCaptionC and so on, depending on how complex your graphics need to be.
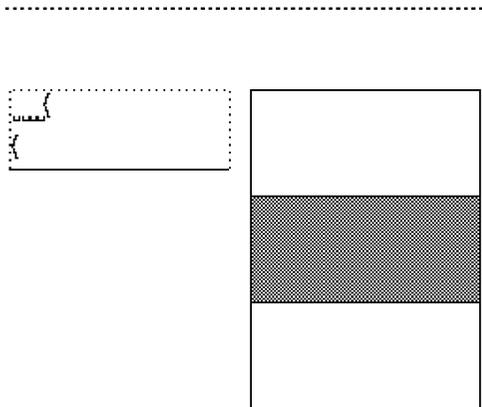
Hotspot graphics

You can take the technique of clickable graphics much further. In HTML, the <map> and <img … usemap> elements allow readers to click on an area of a graphic or "hotspot", rather than click on a callout letter that's floating nearby.

To create this effect in your PDF, select the caption you created
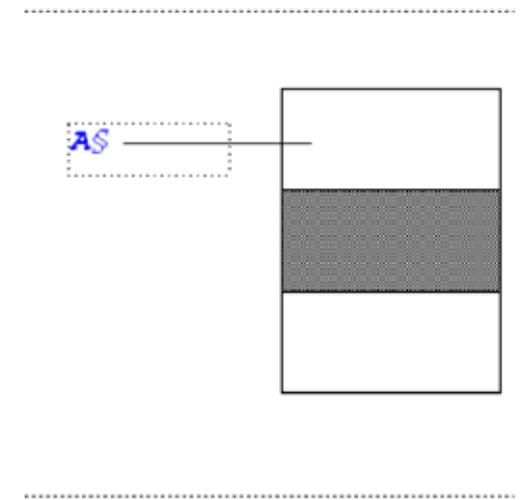
earlier, and replace the HotCaptionA cross-reference format by HotSpot.

This format creates no text, just a few spaces followed by a few forced returns. In other words, it creates an empty rectangle. You might need to experiment with the amount of spaces and returns but it's best to have too many.

Stretch out the text frame, so you can see the contents created by the new cross-reference format, and then move the text frame over the section of your graphic.
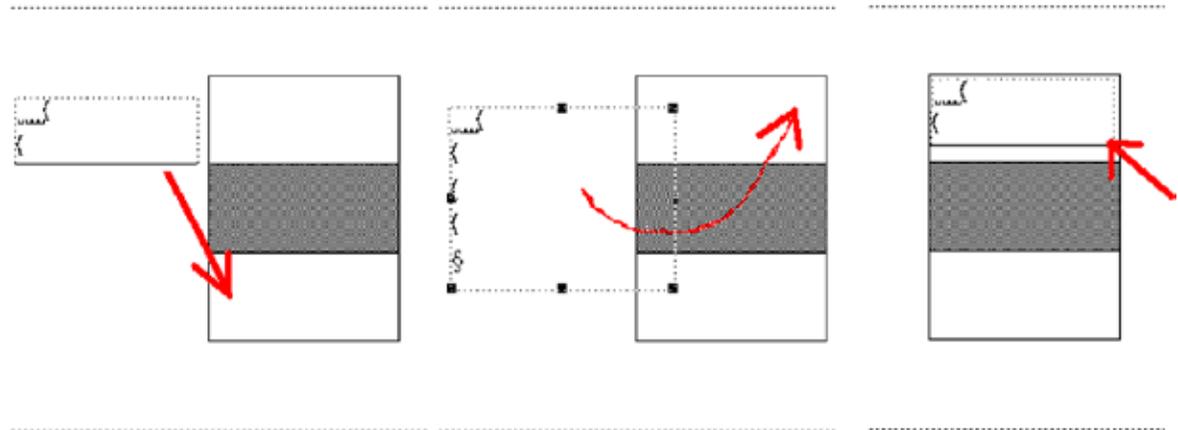
Resize the text frame to fit. If you press Alt, Ctrl and click, you can see the hotspot area highlighted in black.

Further possibilities

Using the techniques described here you can create other powerful effects such as slideshows. Arrange a series of graphics, one per page. Add drawings of left and right arrows at the foot of each graphic. Apply the hotspot to each arrow, cross-referencing them to the next and previous page titles.

For a zoom-in or drill-down effect, put hotspots on a general view of a hardware or software system, then cross-reference to further pages which have more detailed graphics of the system's internals.

For FrameMaker files with which to experiment and demonstrate these techniques, please contact me. email: authorst@googlemail.com.

Steve Thompson has been a software technical author for over 20 years. He has used FrameMaker for ten years, and currently works for a computer security company.

Training news

Writing for people who do not read easily

People struggle to read for many reasons, for example, cognitive impairment, physical disability, and low literacy skills. A workshop at HCI2008 — *Culture, Creativity and Interaction* in September explored what writers can do to help people who do not read easily. The event was organised by the Human Computer Interaction (HCI) group of the British Computer Society. For a review of the workshop by Dr Mike Unwalla FISTC, visit www.techscribe.co.uk/ta/read-easily-hci-2008.htm.

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

If you hear of any training courses that you think might be of interest to *InfoPlus+* readers, please contact the Newsletter copyeditor (newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk).

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

Training courses

November

5   Engaging with the Environment: Finding Quality eInformation Resources
This course will help you find authoritative sources of environmental information. It will cover government departments and committees, influential groups and bodies, news sources, and research.
UK eInformation Group, London
www.ukeig.org.uk/training/2008/November/EnvironmentalInformation.html

11   Introduction to Adobe Acrobat
You will learn Acrobat's core functionality, including creating PDF files from various sources, adding bookmarks and thumbnails, adjusting output quality, and security.
10% discount for ISTC members.
Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands.
www.armadaonline.co.uk/adobetraining

12-13   Basic/Intermediate Adobe FrameMaker 8
Build a thorough grounding in FrameMaker. Starting from first principles, delegates learn how to create new documents, modify existing ones and use FrameMaker's most popular features.
10% discount for ISTC members.
Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands.
www.armadaonline.co.uk/adobetraining

14   Advanced Adobe FrameMaker 8
This course teaches FrameMaker's advanced features when working in unstructured mode. It covers variables, books, contents, index and cross-references.
10% discount for ISTC members.
Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands.
www.armadaonline.co.uk/adobetraining

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13

...November

19–20 Mental Models: Aligning Web Design Strategy with Human Behaviour
During this two-day intensive master class, Indi Young (USA) will give you a deep understanding of people's motivations and thought-processes, along with the emotional and philosophical landscape in which they are operating. Indi is an applications and navigation guru whose work spans a number of decades, from the mid-80s. Her mental models have helped an impressive collection of clients from both start-ups and large corporations to align their design strategy with how people work.
Key Forums, Sydney.
www.keyforums.com.au

24 Introduction to Technical Authoring
Intensive one day course ideal for people who are not career technical authors, but who need to carry out such work. Covers project planning, writing from a design, structuring documents, good writing practice, punctuation and grammar, navigation techniques, proofreading and standards.
10% discount for ISTC members.
Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands.
www.armadaonline.co.uk/techauthortraining

25 Introduction to Adobe Captivate 3
This course for beginners teaches you how to create software simulations, demos and tutorials for your application.
10% discount for ISTC members.
Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands.
www.armadaonline.co.uk/adobetraining

26-28 Advanced Technical Authoring Techniques
This is an intensive course for career technical authors who want to improve their skill set and the quality and effectiveness of the documentation they produce.
10% discount for ISTC members.
Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands.
www.armadaonline.co.uk/techauthortraining

December

3–5 Effective Writing for Biomedical Professionals
Suitable for professionals working in the pharmaceutical and biotech industries, in healthcare or in scientific research and development.
University of Oxford, UK
http://tinyurl.com/4jsvqc

4-5 Introduction to Adobe RoboHelp 7
This course teaches beginners how to use RoboHelp to create online help in most popular formats, and produce hard copy guides in Word and PDF format from the same project. It covers the use of advanced features including templates, style sheets, skins and conditional tags.
10% discount for ISTC members.
Armada, Bromsgrove, Midlands.
www.armadaonline.co.uk/adobetraining

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14

...December

8   Buying and Implementing Content Management and Global Translation Management Systems
This workshop helps you to understand the individual challenges of your organisation, to identify the technology needed to address them, and to effectively implement your solution.
LISA Forum Europe 2008, Dublin, Ireland.
www.lisa.org/ Workshops.828.0.html#c2318

8   How to Assess Your Company's Business Processes for Globalization Readiness
Join Rebecca Ray, Managing Editor of the Globalization Insider and Silicon Valley veteran, to learn how to implement globalisation as 'just another business process' through performing a globalisation audit of your existing organisation.
LISA Forum Europe 2008, Dublin, Ireland.
http://www.lisa.org/ Workshops.828.0.html#c2319

8   Developing High Performing Localisation Teams
If you answer 'yes' to one or more of the following questions, this workshop is for you. Tired of dealing with a different project manager every four months? Got beaten up by your country offices over poor translation quality? Cannot deliver on time to meet the next release date?
LISA Forum Europe 2008, Dublin, Ireland.
www.lisa.org/ Workshops.828.0.html#c2454

11   Globalisation Testing – with an Emphasis on Translatability Testing and Pseudo Translation
This workshop will provide an overview of an efficient approach to the globalisation testing of software. The why, what, when and who of globalisation testing will be explained and best practices suggested.
LISA Forum Europe 2008, Dublin, Ireland.
www.lisa.org/ Workshops.828.0.html#c2317

11   Automated Translation Technology: Review, Business Applications and Implementation
In this full-day workshop instructors provide a clear overview of the underlying theory of SMT and other approaches, determine where it makes most sense, point to best practices and also show some examples of major successes in global corporate applications.
LISA Forum Europe 2008, Dublin, Ireland.
/www.lisa.org/ Workshops.828.0.html#c2349

11   Understanding How to Use Globalization Industry Standards
The workshop concentrates on how the various standards can be made to inter operate between each other, providing for a 'Lego' approach to putting together fast and efficient localisation architectures.
LISA Forum Europe 2008, Dublin, Ireland.
www.lisa.org/ Workshops.828.0.html#c2425

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15

...December

11-12 Managing Enterprise Terminology – Principles, Methods and Business Objectives
Learn the fundamentals of terminology management that can help your company avoid errors, save time, and improve customer satisfaction and brand image.
LISA Forum Europe 2008, Dublin, Ireland.
www.lisa.org/ Workshops.828.0.html#c2347

11-12 Project Management for Globalisation Professionals
This workshop provides practical helps to equip the project manager how to not just survive, but to productively assume greater control over projects.
LISA Forum Europe 2008, Dublin, Ireland.
www.lisa.org/ Workshops.828.0.html#c2348

Events listings

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

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

November

3–4 The Future of Web Design
A line-up of designers explores the future of web design, web application interface design and web typography.
New York.
futureofwebdesign.com/2008/ newyork/

5 Sign Design Society November Talk: Signing the Border
Kasper De Graaf of Applied Information Design will give a talk on the Applied Information Group's (AIG) project to make the UK's passport control operation more "visible". He looks at the whole experience of people passing through the border controls.
Farringdon, London.
www.signdesignsociety.co.uk/ content.php?folder_id=21

5–7 tcworld Conference and tekom Trade Fair 2008
The 5th tcworld conference offers seven tracks covering the entire chain of information development from the original creation of documents to the preparation of product-specific information for multiple markets and languages.
Wiesbaden, Germany.
www.tekom.de/tagung/tagung.jsp

...November

6–8 **LavaCon 2008: Advancing the Art and Science of Technical Communication and Project Management**
The sixth annual LavaCon will present proven best practices in the fields of technical communication and project management, including strategies for choosing technology platforms, reducing training and translation costs, getting the most out of your development team, and more. Honolulu, Hawaii.
http://www.lavacon.org/

10 **Getting started with DITA – For Managers, Decision Makers, and Technical Authors**
On this half-day workshop (morning), you will explore the business benefits of DITA, the challenges, the workflow, and what's required of a DITA authoring team.
London, UK.
www.cherryleaf.com/dita098workshop.htm

10 **Implementing DITA – What's Actually Involved in Moving to a DITA Authoring Workflow?**
This half-day workshop (afternoon) addresses this question by reviewing the types of authoring and publishing tools available and what training is needed. The workshop will also examine the resources that are available, and strategies for building specific skills.
London, UK.
www.cherryleaf.com/dita098workshop.htm

16–19 **Adobe MAX 2008 North America**
Connect with thousands of designers, developers, partners, executives, and Adobe staff for education, inspiration, and community.
San Francisco, California
max.adobe.com/

17–20 **Localization Latin America**
This is a new, cutting-edge international conference dedicated to the business of localisation in and for Latin America and other Spanish and Portuguese speaking markets. Buenos Aires, Argentina.
www.localizationlatinamerica.com/

18 **PTC World 2008**
The conference will give you the opportunity to learn more about PTC's latest solutions for optimising the product development process and improving electronic content management. Attendees will also gain insight into techniques for streamlining the development cycle, stimulating new product innovation and improving competitive advantage.
Gaydon, Warwickshire (UK).
www.ptcworld.org/UKI

December

20–21 ReLIVE08: Virtual Dreams in Milton Keynes
Virtual worlds such as Second Life, CyberTown, Twinity are increasingly popular environments for immersive business, educational, artistic and leisure activities. ReLIVE08 conference, hosted by The Open University, is one of the first international conferences to bring together educators and technology specialists to explore the potential of such virtual world environments in relation to learning and teaching.
Milton Keynes, UK.
www.open.ac.uk/relive08

3–5 Tactile Graphics 2008
This is the fourth international conference on tactile diagrams, maps and pictures for blind and partially sighted children and adults in education, work and daily life.
Birmingham, UK.
www.nctd.org.uk/conference/

4 Skills Framework for the Information Age (SFIA) Conference
The conference will present a range of speakers from industry and government, and launch version 4 of SFIA, the framework that underpins so much work in the area of capability management in IT. The management and implementation streams will address strategic and tactical issues concerning the management of improving IT capability.
London, UK.
www.sfia.org.uk

8–12 LISA Forum Europe
The topic of this forum will be 'the business impact of not operating with standards'. The forum will focus attention on the executive issues, skill sets and business challenges associated with implementing standards to meet worldwide customer requirements. LISA invites you to submit proposals.
Dublin, Ireland.
www.lisa.org/
SpeakerProposal.812.0.html

January

28–29 The Retail Business Show
The conference will provide insight into how to assess the business cases and return on investment (ROI) models available in the emerging digital signage market.
Olympia, London.
www.retailevents.co.uk/trbs2009/index.html

30 The IPCC 2009
The IEEE Professional Communication Society Conference (IPCC) 2009 to be held from 19-22July in Honolulu, Hawaii is calling for proposals. Please submit proposals of less than 350 words before the end of January.
ewh.ieee.org/soc/pcs/?q=node/377

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18

Back pages

New anti-social Facebook application

To promote the new movie *How to Lose Friends and Alienate People* from Paramount Pictures International, PPC Interactive – part of Picture Production Company Group – has created an Anti-Social Networking application. The new application provides the perfect tool for anyone suffering from "Facebook fatigue". Application features allow users to cheat at Scrabble, insult a friend and send a bad gift, all mocking the traditional use of Facebook.

How to Lose Friends and Alienate People stars Simon Pegg and Kirsten Dunst and the film chronicles Sidney Young's descent from a promising journalist in London to dismal failure at Sharps, New York's most prestigious magazine. Cutting a swathe through Manhattan for all the wrong reasons, his bad manners and vulgar pranks lead to monumental mishaps until he finally and improbably wins the heart of his true love.

PPC came up with idea for the anti-social platform following the brief from Paramount to incorporate social media into the film's campaign. They also created a widget (www.howtolosefriendswidget.com) to allow users to keep up-to-date with the latest movie news and content from watching the film's trailer and viewing images.

'Paramount Pictures International wanted to integrate Facebook into the How to Lose Friends publicity campaign, but we wanted to do more than simply advertise the movie,' said Dan Light, Head of Interactive at PPC. 'With Anti-Social Networking we've tried to envisage how the film's protagonist, Sidney Young, would use Facebook – insulting the false friends he encounters and mocking the way the masses use Facebook, but also provide an engaging application for anyone to enjoy.'

The full features of Anti-Social Networking include:

- ■ Insult-a-friend: A series of pull-down menus enabling you to create an insult for one of your friends and share it in your news feed

- ■ Doodle-on-a-friend: Deface a friend's profile picture and then send it to them

- ■ People You May Know (But Don't Really Like): Send a notification to a friend letting them know you are thinking about removing them as a friend

- ■ Cheat at Scrabble: Looking like a retro calculator, key in your letters and this

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19

tool calculates all the words available to you

- Give a Bad Gift: Well-known existing Facebook gifts with a twist including 'I Hate You' balloons and empty pint glasses
- Quiz: Invite your friends to take part in the most pointless, annoying and unfulfilling quiz ever created on Facebook
- Bad Friends: Essentially the opposite of the popular Top Friends application, create a list of your worst friends and let them know they have made the list
- Lost Your Friends?: Keeps track of the number of friends you have gained or lost since you began anti-social networking

'There's a sense of public fatigue with Facebook at present which we hope to capitalise on by creating something fun and engaging that pokes fun at the way people use Facebook everyday and the functionality they're accustomed to,' continued Light.

The Anti-Social Networking site is live at http://apps.facebook.com/antisocialnetworking/index.php.

How to Lose Friends and Alienate People has been in UK cinemas from 3 October.

The books people leave in hotels

The literary works of John Prescott, Cherie Blair and Russell Brand are the most readily discarded reads in UK hotel rooms said a new report.

A review of Travelodge's "books left behind index" leaves John Prescott's *Prezza: My Story*: Pulling No Punches in which he reveals his remarkable journey as an 11-plus failure to becoming Britain's longest-serving deputy Prime Minister – topping the charts.
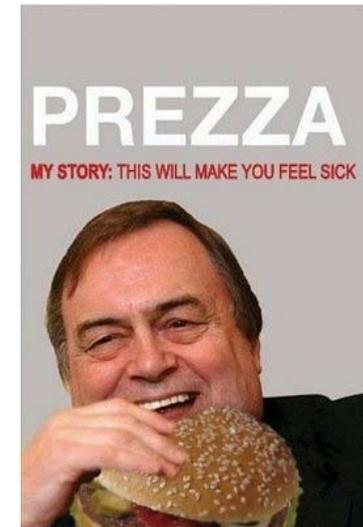
In second place is *My Booky Wook*, the controversial and hilarious life story of Britain's hottest comedian, Russell Brand.
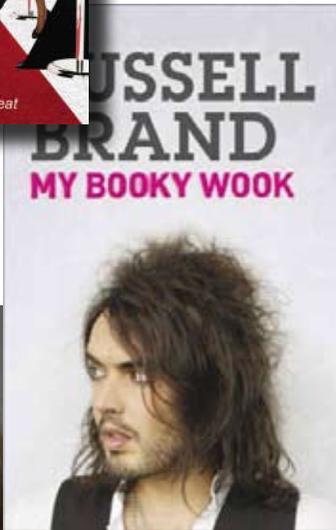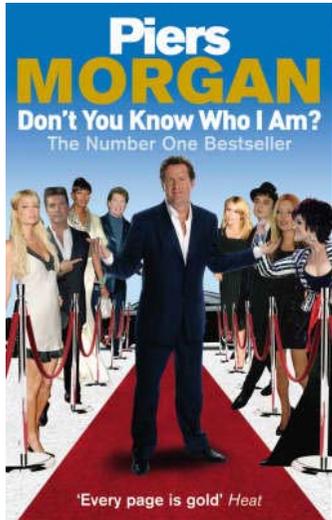
Cherie Blair, the wife of former British Prime Minster Tony Blair, has made third place with her autobiography *Speaking for Myself* in which she frankly reveals her life story from a childhood in working-class Liverpool, to the heart of the British legal system and then, as the wife of the Prime Minister.

For two years on the trot, ex-national newspaper editor Piers Morgan's scandalous, brutally firsthand account of one man's desperate struggle for survival; on the inside of the modern celebrity obsessed world we all now live in – *Don't You Know Who I Am* – has featured in Travelodge's 'books left behind index'.

Listed below are the rest of the top ten reads left behind in Travelodge hotels this summer:

1. *Prezza – Pulling no punches* John Prescott
2. *My Booky Wook* Russell Brand
3. *Speaking for Myself* Cherie Blair
4. *Don't You Know Who I Am* Piers Morgan
5. *Angel Uncovered & Crystal* Katie Price
6. *You & Your Money* Alvin Hall
7. *Lessons in Heartbreak* Cathy Kelly
8. *Blind Faith* Ben Elton
9. *On Chesil Beach* Ian McEwan
10. *The Secret* Rhonda Bryne

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Paul Anstey, Travelodge Operations Director said: 'Annually 7,000 books are left behind in Travelodge hotels, the most popular being autobiographies, chick lit and thriller books. This summer we have found a number of money saving books, revealing just how much the credit crunch is taking hold.'

Other key findings from the survey of 336 Travelodge Hotel Managers revealed:

- Southend on Sea Travelodge was the only hotel to have 12 copies of *The Cell* by Stephen King left behind. Also left behind was a copy of *The best 50 love making positions for the over 50s*.

- Southampton Eastleigh Travelodge had one customer who left behind two books titled – *How to be a gentleman in seven days* and *The Karma Sutra for Dummies*.

- Peterborough Travelodge had ten copies of the *Karma Sutra* left behind.

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

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21