



February  
2002

the newsletter

## ISTC 2002 Conference . . .

The ISTC's **11<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference** will be held at **Burleigh Court**, at the **University of Loughborough** over the weekend of **27 to 29 September 2002**. We're no strangers to Burleigh Court – we used to be regular visitors – but unfortunately we outgrew the venue some years ago. Now they've expanded and we are extremely pleased to return.

This year's theme will be **Tools of the Trade: keeping pace with developments**

Keeping pace with tool developments is not an easy task, especially when faced with the all too familiar pressure to get the job done, and fast! In some ways, there is a parallel with doctors, who must find time during their hectic schedule to keep abreast of the latest drugs and treatments.

With this in mind, we thought it was time for a Tools conference. Things are now stirring into action and the Conference Committee will soon be sending out calls for presentations, workshops, papers, sponsors and exhibitors. If you would like to register your interest, please call or e-mail the ISTC Office for further information. Contact details appear on the last page of this newsletter.

Conference has always been a great place to learn what's new, to network, to make and renew friendships and, dare I say it, to renew faith in our profession. Please continue to support it.

*Martin Block, on behalf of the 2002 Conference Organising Committee*



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**introducing . . .**



**. . . the 2002**

**Professional Development Portfolio**

*from the*

**Institute of Scientific and Technical  
Communicators**

## key indexing skills for communicators

Peterborough

11 March 2002 • 16 September 2002

£224 + VAT / £98 + VAT (ISTC members)

Jan Ross BSc MSc

Registered Indexer and Indexing Consultant

INDEXES to user and technical publications are vital tools for retrieving the information they contain. Too often, the desire for speed and the additional costs of indexes serve as a deterrent to their compilation and inclusion. An *effective* index to a manual can lead to increased customer satisfaction, creating a favourable image for the product.

- indexes: purposes and types
- the indexing process & indexing skills
- index entry selection techniques
- ordering systems & cross-referencing
- layout & styles
- computer-assisted indexing
- indexing for electronic publications
- European indexing standards
- compiling *effective* indexes

This seminar will provide information and guidance on good practice in indexing, and is intended for *all* technical communicators who need to either **compile** or **commission** effective indexes. Teaching will be by a mix of short presentations, examples and exercises.

## using Microsoft Word more effectively

Peterborough

12 March 2002 • 17 September 2002

£224 + VAT / £98 + VAT (ISTC members)

Greg Daffern BSc IEng MISTC

Electronic publishing consultant

MICROSOFT's WORD is increasingly a standard tool in the field of technical documentation. Yet many of its features are still a mystery to technical authors. *Word* has the power to produce complex technical manuals. This seminar will show you how to unlock its capabilities and make it earn its keep for you.

- defining a page layout
- using styles & templates
- managing long documents
- running headers & footers
- table of contents creation
- automatic checking routines
- handling & managing graphics
- working with tables
- indexing across multiple sections
- sharing documents
- automating processes using macros

This seminar will demonstrate a range of techniques to make *Word* more productive. You'll learn how to produce **long technical documents** more **quickly** and more **reliably** using all current versions of *Word*.

## professional editing for impact & emphasis

Peterborough

13 March 2002 • 18 September 2002

£224 + VAT / £98 + VAT (ISTC members)

Don Hinson BSc MA FISTC

Professor of Technical Communication

EDITING is a creative process that involves a good understanding of both language and standards, plus a clear view of the user's needs and expectations. The increasing use of electronic documents creates new challenges for today's editors—who therefore need to have a good understanding of *information design*.

- establishing clear editing objectives
- types & levels of edit
- standards, specifications & styles
- info design—a new deal for users?
- electronic editing tools
- hypermedia presentations
- internationalisation & localisation
- legal & ethical responsibilities
- setting professional editing policies

Successful editing ensures that published material expresses the writer's meaning clearly and is presented in a form designed to engage the reader's attention. This *intensive* seminar provides the essential background for the demanding and changing role of the **professional editor**.

## law for the professional technical communicator

Peterborough

14 March 2002 • 19 September 2002

£224 + VAT / £98 + VAT (ISTC members)

Paul Bakker BA MBA MCIM

Peterborough Technical Communication

LEGISLATION continues to affect the work and responsibilities of the professional technical communicator. EU Directives on product liability and safety have major implications for support documentation. Courts have ruled that software may no longer be 'different'. Documentation for hardware *and* software products must be written with an awareness of the legal frameworks, so this seminar offers *practical rules for preparing instructions*.

- contract law
- negligence
- product safety & liability legislation
- law for software products
- contrast between EU and US law
- several practical case studies
- intellectual property law
- writing effective instructions
- form & style for documentation

This seminar is for *all* communicators involved in preparing support material and warnings for products that have *any* potential to cause **injury, damage, pollution** or **financial loss**.

# RoboHELP HTML . . . the 2-day programme from the ISTC

You've been asking for a two-day residential programme on *RoboHELP HTML Edition* — and here it is. Training is presented by Greg Daffern, the first *RoboHELP* trainer in Europe to be certified by eHelp. Venue is the quiet, historic Orton Hall Hotel on the outskirts of Peterborough — easy to get to from both within the UK and beyond. (If you're flying, we suggest using London Stansted airport, which has a direct rail link to Peterborough.) Classes are limited to 12 participants. If you plan to use *RoboHELP HTML*, go for Europe's finest training.

## Day 1 : Starting out with RoboHELP HTML

When Microsoft announced its change of help standard to an *HTML Help* format, eHelp (formerly Blue Sky Software) developed a help authoring tool dedicated to the new standard. This first day of the programme introduces users to the concepts behind *HTML Help* and teaches techniques to implement basic functions using the *HTML Edition* of *RoboHELP*.

- an overview of *HTML Help*
- planning a help system
- starting a project
- the *RoboHELP HTML* interface
- working with topics
- creating hyperlinks
- editing & formatting text
- building a contents list
- effective indexing
- working with images & multimedia
- compiling *HTML Help*
- linking modular help systems
- working with *RoboHELP Office* tools
- distributing *HTML Help*



## Day 2 : Advanced RoboHELP HTML techniques

The second day covers the application of more advanced *HTML Help* features. These range from the conversion of existing documentation to *HTML Help*, to applying industry-standard Cascading Style Sheets. Creation of on-screen help using alternative proprietary formats such as eHelp's *WebHelp* and Sun's *JavaHelp* is also described. The day covers the following topics.



- a review of basic procedures
- importing existing information
- using secondary windows
- building a glossary
- creating effects with Dynamic HTML
- making help context-sensitive
- using Cascading Style Sheets
- creating browse sequences (*RH2000*)
- working with information types
- building custom help systems
- implementing forms
- using ActiveX and Java
- alternative help formats
- improving productivity & shortcuts

## Dates in 2002, times, venue, booking & costs

- Day 1** 5 March or 7 May 2002 9:00 - 16:00
- Day 2** 6 March or 8 May 2002 9:00 - 16:00
- Orton Hall Hotel & Training Centre  
Orton Longueville Village, Peterborough, England
- booking form, conditions & contact details  
all appear overleaf
- provisional telephone bookings on **+44 1480 211550**
- provisional e-mail bookings on **istc @ istc.org.uk**
- such provisional bookings must be confirmed  
by booking form, purchase order or payment
- please call **+44 1480 211550** for special offers  
for groups or to arrange your in-company training
- Days 1 and 2  
£270 / € 470 + VAT (ISTC member)
- Days 1 and 2  
£540 / € 910 + VAT (non-member)
- Day 1 or Day 2  
£148 / € 275 + VAT (ISTC member)
- Day 1 or Day 2  
£296 / € 515 + VAT (non-member)
- all prices include expert tuition, full course notes,  
lunch, refreshments and a course certificate
- prices do not include overnight accommodation at  
the Orton Hall Hotel
- if you require overnight accommodation, please  
book direct with the hotel on **+44 1733 391111**

# *how to write and produce good computer helpware*



a training course presented by the  
Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators  
as part of its Professional Development Portfolio

*An intensive one-day course for people in software companies tasked with producing user support documentation—whether on paper, on screen or both. It is aimed particularly at those using Microsoft Word as a basis for documentation. Although our course is primarily intended for non-specialists, existing technical communicators may still find much of the content useful—particularly in keeping up-to-date with new tools.*

## *You will learn how to:*

- evaluate and meet your **users'** requirements
- structure** your documentation for maximum usability
- create page **designs** that attract readers
- address **copyright** and other legal issues
- write clear, logical and persuasive **instructions**
- apply the rules of **English** grammar and punctuation
- plan and execute **on-screen help** projects
- use *Word* to produce **long** and complex documents
- index** documents for effective navigability
- prepare **Word files** for PostScript printing
- commission** printing, binding and distribution
- create electronic paper manuals using **pdf**

Our courses are taught by leading **experts** in their fields. On this course, you will be taught by Paul Bakker, Professor Don Hinson and Greg Daffern, all **specialists** in their fields. Teaching is through a lively mixture of short talks, demonstrations and **practical exercises**. (However, you will *not* be asked to take part in any form of role-playing.) Each course is **limited to 12** participants, to allow individual attention and meaningful discussion. The fee includes teaching, **full course notes** and an excellent buffet lunch.

## *what past delegates have said . . .*

"The course was excellent and of real benefit. It was very informative. There was a nice mix of presenters and they were all very good"

"We packed a lot into the day . . . yet went into enough detail."

"I was impressed. I felt as if I was talking to the leading people in the field and that they were experts."

"It was one of the best courses I've been on, and very good value."

"There were three different speakers . . . able to provide an interesting view of different aspects . . . everything was very worthwhile."

# Open Course Registration Form

Please register the following delegates for the courses indicated below.

Title	First name	Surname	Job title	Course name / code?

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ course place(s) @ £ / € \_\_\_\_\_ each = total fee of £ / € \_\_\_\_\_ (including VAT at 17.5% for all clients).

Please send a cheque for the total course fees in advance, or provide an Official Purchase Order Number.

Cheque enclosed to: ISTC Limited  Please invoice my Company: Order Number \_\_\_\_\_

Outside the UK? Your full VAT number, please: \_\_\_\_\_

## After completing this registration form, please:

- fax it to: 01480 211560 (+44 1480 211560 from outside the UK) or . . .
- post it to: ISTC, First floor, 17 Church Walk, ST NEOTS, PE19 1JH, England

### ISTC's terms and conditions for training courses

- 1 General** These Terms & Conditions form the basis of any training contract between the Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators (A Company Limited by Guarantee) ('ISTC') and a training client. ISTC is registered in England, number 1061923 and its registered office is Hinton House, Hinton Road, Bournemouth, Dorset, BH1 2EN. These conditions may only be varied in writing by the ISTC.
- 2 Price** Prices of courses are as stated on the printed course literature or in signed quotations from ISTC. Prices do not include accommodation unless stated. Payment is due immediately before the start of a course, unless an official Purchase Order is received by ISTC. In this case, payment in full will be due within fourteen days of the invoice date. Value Added Tax will be chargeable at the rate prevailing at the date of invoicing. ISTC's VAT registration number is GB 750 7065 40
- 3 Acceptance** Acceptance of any potential course delegate or course delegates is at the absolute discretion of ISTC.
- 4 Presenters** If an advertised course presenter or tutor is unable to teach a course in whole or in part, a person of similar experience and expertise will be substituted. If this proves impossible, ISTC will cancel the course.
- 5 Substitution** Delegates may be substituted at any time up to the start of a course, provided the client informs ISTC in writing or by fax.
- 6 Syllabus** Although each published course syllabus gives a good guide to course content, the presenters may vary the course content to suit the delegates on a particular course.
- 7 Cancellation by client** Once confirmation of a booking is sent, the booking is considered firm. If written notice of cancellation is received by ISTC at least ten working days prior to a course beginning there will be no charge, and any fees paid in respect of that course will be refunded. Cancellation within ten working days of the course starting will result in the full course fee being payable. Likewise, if a delegate fails to show for all or any part of a course, the full fee will remain payable.
- 8 Cancellation by ISTC** Inclusion of a course in our programme is no guarantee that it will actually run. If numbers for a particular course are such that delegates would not derive the proper benefit from it, it will be cancelled with normally at least five working days' notice. ISTC will not be liable for failure to provide any particular course. If a course is cancelled, any fees paid will be refunded in full.
- 9 Applicable law** These Terms & Conditions and all other terms of any training contract shall be construed in accordance with English law. All disputes arising will be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Huntingdon County Court.

All our training courses are also run 'in-company'  
Please call ISTC on 01480 211550 or go to [www.istc.org.uk](http://www.istc.org.uk)

# Professional Development

As announced in the last newsletter, Council has decided to launch a new **Professional Development Portfolio** of one-day courses in both communication skills and tools training. These are open to both members and non-members, but the former will receive substantial discounts and may even be offered free places on certain courses and at certain times.

Most of this newsletter introduces the new **PDP**. Extra courses will be added during the year and the ISTC office is interested in hearing from **members** who feel they could present training courses of interest to others. The **PDP** is very much a programme to bring high-quality, value-for-money professional development training to both members and non-members.

## WHAT'S IN THE NEXT COMMUNICATOR?

- FrameMaker vs FrameMaker+SGML
- Building Your Own DMS (Part 2)
- Synergy between Training & Documentation
- Jargon-free Guide to M-business
- Risk Communication
- Copyright
- It's the Law (Post September 11th)
- Review - *Damned Lies and Statistics*
- How Good Documentation Cuts Development Costs
- Communication between Satellites
- Typography and the Internet
- Adobe *InDesign 2* - a review

### join the Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators . . .

If this newsletter has appealed to you, then you may like to consider joining the ISTC. Both individual and business affiliate memberships are available. ISTC is **the** professional association for technical and scientific communicators in the UK. Benefits include a quarterly journal, monthly newsletter, annual conference and several active member-only discussion lists. Interested? Please call the ISTC office on 01480 211550 or e-mail to [membership@istc.org.uk](mailto:membership@istc.org.uk)

### . . . or just sign up for further editions of this e-newsletter

We'll be happy to keep sending you the free Adobe Acrobat version of our newsletter each month. Please send an e-mail to [newsletter@istc.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@istc.org.uk) or sign up on the homepage of our website at [www.istc.org.uk](http://www.istc.org.uk).

### ISTC - the natural home for all technical communicators

#### Publications:

The ISTC's journal *Communicator* is published quarterly. the newsletter is distributed only by e-mail to both ISTC members and interested non-members each month. Current issues are available on our website.

#### Advertising:

Reach a clearly defined target audience of professional technical communicators via *Communicator* and the newsletter. Call the ISTC's Carol Battson 01480 211550 for rates, dates and other details.



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