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InfoPlus

Monthly newsletter from the Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators

April 2019

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The ISTC is the largest UK body representing scientific and technical communicators. If you are involved in technical writing, technical illustration, or communicating technical information in other ways, it's the professional association that can support your career. Interested in membership? Find out more [here](#).

This free newsletter is emailed to about 1500 people. As well as ISTC news, *InfoPlus* contains listings and articles of general interest to the profession. Subscribe [here](#).

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Welcome!

It might be the start of April, but we're not playing pranks on you. There really are lots of ways to get involved in ISTC-related activities at the moment.

If you'd like to give a presentation or host a workshop at our TCUK conference there's still time to submit your proposal – the deadline is 26 April. We're also inviting nominations for the annual Horace Hockley Award, holding a number of local area group meetings (which, as always, are free to attend) and seeking a volunteer campaign manager.

The ISTC is a non-profit-making organisation which is run by its members on behalf of its members. Your willingness to contribute is invaluable, and participation feels good. It's a win-win!

ISTC news

The latest from TCUK 2019

By Derek Cooper



Proposal submissions

The deadline for you to submit your proposal for a presentation or workshop idea for TCUK 2019 is **26 April**. There are some important details that you need to know about proposal submission...

- Because the conference occurs relatively early during September this year, and because we have committed to inviting presenters during May, our deadlines are tighter than usual. This means that unfortunately there can be no extensions to the proposal deadline this year – **26 April** is a hard deadline! Please read the information about submitting your proposal [here](#), and use the link near the bottom of that page to complete the proposal submission form.
- For technical reasons, the conference will have only two streams of workshops and presentations this year instead of three. Again, I am very sorry about this, but the Programme Committee will be reviewing the daily schedule to try to include more into each of those streams. Please make sure you submit your proposals by the deadline so we can develop a conference plan.

Competitions

We want to run more competitions this year, with some unique prizes on offer. Our ideas include (but are not limited to):

- A poster competition on the subject of technical communication, with a prize for the best submission. There are only a few rules to follow:
 - The poster must be your original work and must be on a technical communications-related subject.
 - The file must be submitted so it is suitable for printing at 800mm x 2,000mm in PDF set to 300dpi (portrait orientation). Any images included in the banner artwork will need to be high resolution.
 - Posters can be accepted only from those who are attending the conference.
 - Entries must be received by 9 August 2019 (please send them to claire.kelly@admin.co.uk).
- A prize for the proposal submission that demonstrates the most innovative and imaginative interpretation of this year's conference theme "10". Judging will be by the Programme Committee.

Other prizes will be awarded for conference events that we have yet to organise, and

we'll let you know about those during the next few months.

Website and social media

Please refer frequently to the [TCUK website](#) and the [TCUK Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#) pages for information and updates.

We will be posting details about sponsors and presentations as the conference planning continues, and the delegate booking pages will become available soon. As usual, we'll be offering reduced prices during the early-bird booking period.

Sponsorship

TCUK depends very heavily on the support of our sponsors and supporters. We invite companies and organisations to sponsor us, whether they are new to TCUK sponsorship or are familiar and loyal supporters of our largest UK conference on technical communication.

This year is the TCUK's tenth anniversary, and as such we are giving a much higher profile to the conference and its sponsors than ever before.

Supporter opportunities for individuals

This year, for the first time, we are inviting individual ISTC members (at any grade) to



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support the conference whether or not they plan to attend.

We also invite support from self-employed contractors and freelance technical communicators, either as named individuals or under their own name alongside the name of their company.

Note that we welcome all offers of support for the conference, but individuals who are not members of the ISTC must be conference attendees to support TCUK.

Please refer to the [Conference Sponsors' page](#) for details of who is sponsoring and supporting the conference, and to the [Sponsorship Opportunities page](#) for links to the sponsorship and supporters' booking forms.

We will be including articles in *InfoPlus* and *Communicator* to let you know what's happening, so please make sure you stay updated on TCUK 2019 news.

Horace Hockley Award 2019

By Carol Leahy

We are now accepting nominations for the Horace Hockley Award 2019.

This award is presented to someone who, in the opinion of the ISTC Council, has made a considerable contribution to the technical communications industry over a long period of time. The award is in recognition for promoting the industry across other industries and boundaries, and for promoting quality in the industry, whether it be in training or within the workplace.

Any member of the ISTC can nominate someone for the award, and an election is held by the ISTC Council to agree who the recipient will be.

If you would like to nominate someone please let us know the following:

- ▶ The name of the person.
- ▶ A bit about the person being nominated (a link to an online profile is OK, if that holds sufficient detail).
- ▶ Why you think they should receive the award.

Send your nominations to the ISTC office (istc@istc.org.uk) by **17 July 2019**.

More information about the award is available [here](#).

Volunteer needed – can you spare two hours per quarter?



We're looking for someone to run a **"Join the ISTC"** publicity campaign every quarter.

The role involves a little bit of copywriting (encouraging people to become members) and liaising with the ISTC office and editors.

Four times per year, you'll make sure the ISTC sends your email to the database and/or posts your advert in *InfoPlus* and *Communicator*.

If you could spare a couple of hours every quarter, and you're interested in volunteering for this role, contact Marketing@istc.org.uk.

Let's communicate

What would you like to see in our newsletter?

If you're reading this, it's likely that the desire to communicate is part of your genetic makeup so please let me know your thoughts! Feedback regarding content and ideas for new features are always welcome. Similarly, if you would like to submit an article I would love to hear from you.

Email me at any time: newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk.

Lisa



ISTC local area and special interest groups

The ISTC groups offer an opportunity for technical communicators to network and share knowledge and expertise. They are open to everyone (you don't need to be an ISTC member) and are free to attend. The groups meet at intervals during the year and hold talks, peer discussions, demonstrations and social evenings. Joining a group is an excellent way to meet like-minded people in your area and get to know fellow specialists.

Latest news

Cambridge Area Group

Next meeting

Meetings are currently scheduled for Wednesday 17 April and Tuesday 21 May at the [Robin Hood pub](#) in Cherry Hinton from 18:00 – 20:30.

If you need more information, have an idea for a future meet-up, or would like to

suggest a topic for discussion please email Zsuzsa Nagy: cambridge_areagroup@istc.org.uk.

East of Scotland Area Group

Next meeting

Our next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 25 April. Location and theme to be decided. Check the LinkedIn group – <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13536907/> – or contact Holli Hamilton via eastscotland_areagroup@istc.org.uk for more information.

North East England Area Group

Sadly, our meetup on Tuesday 5 March to discuss reusable content did not happen due to zero attendance. We hope to revisit this topic at some point in the future.

Next meeting

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 2 April

from 18:00 – 19:30. We will discuss the use of jargon in written communication. Venue: The Town Wall, Pink Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 5HX. Please register via [Eventbrite](#) or email Joanna Suau: northeastengland_areagroup@istc.org.uk.

Thames Valley Area Group

At our March meeting, Jen Lambourne, who works with .GOV.UK, was our special guest speaker and we discussed Docs As Code.

Her writers are no longer the tech writers in the corner as they work in parallel and closely with software developers. A common software is Markdown, which uses a markup language. The benefits of working more closely with software engineers are quite obvious, but be aware that Markdown is not great for tables and not recommended if you translate or require PDFs. Terms such as Git and GitHub, common in Docs as Code, were also explored.

We found it fascinating to have a glimpse into a parallel world. Just when you thought you knew most things about TechComm, you find out a whole new way of approaching docs.

Next meeting

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 2 April and we'll be discussing "our favourite things in TechComm" (based on the Sound of Music song).

Usual venue: Bird in Hand, Bath Road, Knowl Hill, Reading, RG10 9UP from 19:30.

For more information, email Darren Mitcham: thamesvalley_areagroup@istc.org.uk.

Hyperlinks disclaimer

The appearance of external hyperlinks does not constitute endorsement by the ISTC of the linked websites, or the information, products or services contained on those sites. All external hyperlinks were accurate and working at the time of writing. However, the ISTC does not exercise editorial control over the information you may find at these locations so cannot be responsible for changes to content. The ISTC disclaims any responsibility for the accuracy, completeness and availability of any linked site.

UK Technical Communication Awards

The UK Technical Communication Awards are open to all technical communicators in the UK and abroad, members and non-members.



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Current ISTC groups

If you'd like to attend one of the groups, please get in touch with the leader or email istc@istc.org.uk. If you're interested in setting up either a new area group or a special interest group, contact our Area Groups Manager, Tom Dumic, at areagroupsmanager@istc.org.uk.

Area groups:

Name	Leader	Email Contact Details
Cambridge	Zsuzsanna Nagy	cambridge_areagroup@istc.org.uk
Irish Technical Writers	Yvonne Cleary, Bridget Walsh	irishtechnicalwriters@istc.org.uk
ISTC Irish Group	Adrian Rush	irishgroup@istc.org.uk
London	Bridget Rooney	london_areagroup@istc.org.uk
Midlands	John Burns	midlands_areagroup@istc.org.uk
North East England	Joanna Suau	northeastengland_areagroup@istc.org.uk
North West England	David Jones	northwestengland_areagroup@istc.org.uk
Southern	Group leader required	istc@istc.org.uk
South Wales	John Espirian	southwales_areagroup@istc.org.uk
Thames Valley	Darren Mitcham	thamesvalley_areagroup@istc.org.uk
West of Scotland	Group leader required	istc@istc.org.uk
East of Scotland	Holli Hamilton	eastscotland_areagroup@istc.org.uk
Yorkshire	Dee Vincent-Day	yorkshire_areagroup@istc.org.uk

Special interest groups:

Name	Leader	Email Contact Details
MadSIG	Group leader required	istc@istc.org.uk

Using Eventbrite to register attendance at area group meetings

Some area group meetings are posted on Eventbrite. Where this is the case, we ask anyone expecting to attend to register online using this event management service. You can see a list of ISTC related events by visiting: www.eventbrite.com/org/495786380.

A plea: if you know you're not going to be able to attend a meeting that you've registered for, please contact the organiser, even if it is at short notice.

ISTC online groups

ISTC on LinkedIn

There are a number of LinkedIn groups for ISTC members, and we invite you to join the relevant ones.



- Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators www.linkedin.com/groups/1858546

England

- Cambridge Technical Communicators www.linkedin.com/groups/1805651
- London – N/A
- ISTC Midlands Area Group www.linkedin.com/groups/4835591
- North East England – N/A
- ISTC NW England www.linkedin.com/groups/2445779

- Southern Area Group www.linkedin.com/groups/4795279
- ISTC South West England www.linkedin.com/groups/8269000
- Thames Valley Area Group www.linkedin.com/groups/4805266
- Yorkshire www.linkedin.com/groups/4662452

Wales

- South Wales Group www.linkedin.com/groups/5161265

Scotland

- East of Scotland www.linkedin.com/groups/13536907
- West of Scotland Area Group www.linkedin.com/groups/5081412

Ireland

- ISTC Irish Group – N/A
- Irish Technical Writers – An ISTC Area Group www.linkedin.com/groups/3369559

Special interest group

- MadCap UK and Europe Users Group www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=5081593

ISTC on social media

Like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and Instagram, and watch us on YouTube to keep up to date with news, events and activities, and to chat with your TechComm colleagues.

If you're new to the ISTC and are wondering what TCUK is, it's our excellent (yes, we're biased, but it is) annual conference.

Our Facebook presence:

The ISTC page: www.facebook.com/istccommunity

The ISTC group: www.facebook.com/groups/490570891153888

The TCUK page: www.facebook.com/techcommuk/

Our Twitter presence:

ISTC: [@ISTC_org](https://twitter.com/ISTC_org)

TCUK: [@TCUK_conf](https://twitter.com/TCUK_conf)

Our Instagram presence:

[ISTC_org](https://www.instagram.com/ISTC_org)

Our YouTube channel:

www.youtube.com/user/istctechcomm



Business affiliate news



Interview with a chatbot conversation designer

Firehead's digital communications job insight series has returned with a fascinating behind-the-scenes interview with Toni Ressaire.

Toni has worked in technical communication and software development for many years and is now also a trainer and consultant. As many of you will recall, she was a keynote speaker at our TCUK 2018 conference last September.

In this [interview](#) she talks about her work in the new field of chatbot conversation design and discusses why it is a growth area, how you can break into the field and why robots are more fun than you might think.

Localization to drive growth in new markets: when and how?

That's the title of the [latest 3di blog post](#), written by James Letts.

James states that “if your business, or the company you work for, is planning to export more, having to think seriously about translation and localization is just a matter of time – it's not if, but when (and, by extension, how).”

The article continues by making an important distinction between translation and localization, and explains why localization is a more sophisticated and effective strategy. Some interesting examples are included to help illustrate this further.

The article concludes with a discussion about when you should localize, rather than relying on straight translations, and how you can get started with localizing.



About the ISTC's Business Affiliates

Our Business Affiliate programme has been in place for over 15 years. It enables organisations to take advantage of a range of benefits, and to contribute to promoting technical communication as a profession. Find out more [here](#).

A full list of our current Business Affiliates is found [here](#).

Industry and general news



Introducing Season of Docs

Season of Docs is a new annual programme from Google that aims to foster collaboration between open source projects and technical writers.

The programme aims to pair technical writers with open source mentors to introduce the technical writer to an open source community and provide guidance

while the writer works on a real-world open source project. The technical writer in turn provides documentation expertise to the open source organisation.

Projects can cover a wide range of fields including Cloud computing, operating systems, graphics, medicine, programming languages, robotics, science, security and many more. Season of Docs is not a recruiting program or an internship, but it will provide invaluable experience.

From 30 April 2019 you'll be able to access the list of participating open source organisations on the [Season of Docs website](#). The application period for technical writers runs from 29 May until 28 June 2019.

This year's Season of Docs is a pilot and only a limited number of applications will be accepted, so don't wait to the last minute to apply!

If you have questions about the program email season-of-docs-support@googlegroups.com.

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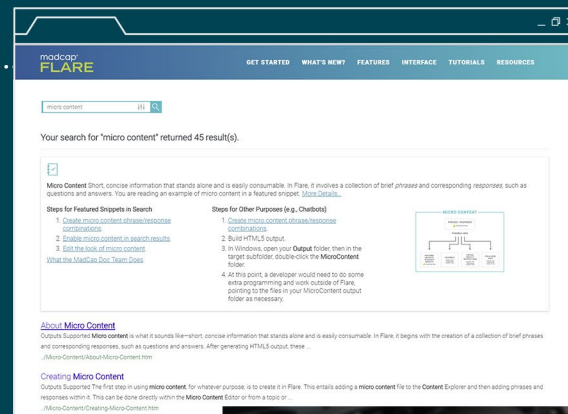


With the new Micro Content Editor in MadCap Flare, I can easily create and leverage existing topics and snippets to improve the user's search experience. I look forward to applying this feature with other technologies such as chatbots, embedded help, augmented reality, and virtual reality applications.

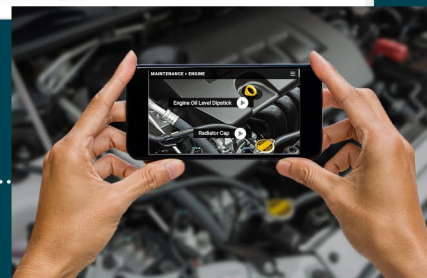
THOMAS BRO-RASMUSSEN | Technical Writer

MICRO CONTENT AUTHORIZING

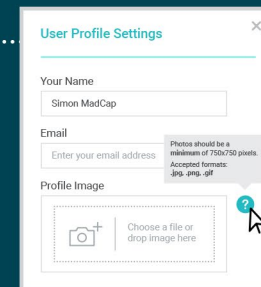
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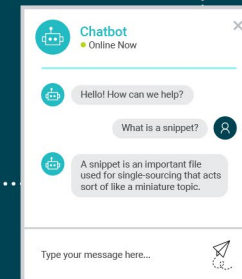
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Graphic designer declutters London Underground map



A graphic designer has spent three years redesigning the famous Tube map which was originally created by Harry Beck.

As this [Evening Standard article](#) describes, Luke Carvill has rearranged the stations, redrawn the lines and revised the colour scheme in an attempt to create a more user-friendly visual and draw the eye towards the most regular services. It's a work in progress with Mr Carvill wanting to "implement disabled access, the riverboat services and maybe the cycle superhighways" too.

He doesn't dispute that "Beck's original is one of the best pieces of graphic design in

history" but thinks that as "the network has expanded greatly since then and it's getting a bit cramped, maybe it's time for a rethink?"

What do you think?

BSI issues position paper on the emergence of AI solutions in healthcare

BSI, the business standards company, has undertaken research in collaboration with the US standards organisation for medical devices, the Association for the Advancement of Medical Instrumentation (AAMI), to analyse the role that standardisation can play in assisting the deployment of artificial intelligence (AI) solutions in healthcare. This research has been undertaken with support from UK medical device regulator, MHRA.

Novel medical software can offer earlier diagnosis and targeted treatments for patients while ensuring efficiency in healthcare services. However, the emergence of AI and machine learning algorithms in what is already a highly regulated sector is posing a challenge to

future governance and regulation in terms of safety and effectiveness.

The research, therefore, explored specific challenges relating to the deployment of AI in healthcare including the ability of an algorithm to change its output in response to new data, and the level of autonomy introduced by the use of such software.

Anne Hayes, Head of Governance and Resilience at BSI, said: "The healthcare sector is embracing AI with the expectation it can revolutionise patient care in the future, yet this must be balanced with the need to ensure consistency of safety, effectiveness, scalability and fitness for purpose.

The recommendations offered in this position paper will ensure that we have a robust standardisation framework to support the effective deployment of these innovative solutions."

Mark Birse, Group Manager, Device Safety and Surveillance at the MHRA, said: "We live in an increasingly digital world, both healthcare professionals, patients and the public are using software and stand-alone apps to aid diagnosis and monitor health. Making sure these new software devices

MACHINE LEARNING

including those using artificial intelligence, are safe and effective is a challenge for developers as well as users.

“Making sure the introduction and deployment of these tools into everyday healthcare is done safely is a priority for us as regulators. Standards will be a critical element of this.

“We were pleased to be able to initiate this important work and will continue to support both the emerging challenges, and the solutions.”

[The position paper](#) recommends a phased programme of standardisation activities, including development of guidelines to cover AI terminologies and validation approaches.

Tricks of the trade

Section breaks in Microsoft Word. Does that statement make you shudder? If so, you could find the tip that **Martin Ley** recently sent in very helpful. Martin is a freelance technical author based near Cambridge, and here is his “trick of the trade”.

After years of shying away from Word in favour of FrameMaker, InDesign, Flare and so on, I’ve been dragged kicking and screaming into the Wordyverse by a couple of clients who insist on using it.

Word has many irritations, but one in particular has been causing me grief recently: namely, section breaks. Today’s issue occurred in an 80-page user guide that called for mixed portrait and landscape sections.

The problem: every time I updated the document (Ctrl-A followed by Ctrl-F9), every cross reference turned into a page break (because I had mistakenly created the section break by placing the cursor at the start of a heading paragraph) and applied my new page orientation to everything *before* the new section break.

My solution:

1. Place the cursor at the end of the body paragraph preceding the heading that you want to start the new section/page orientation. Don’t place the cursor at the start of the heading.
2. Press “return” three times. For super safety, select the resulting empty paragraphs and apply either Normal (ugh) or your preferred body text style.
3. Click in the middle empty paragraph and insert a break, (Layout > Breaks > Section Breaks > Next Page). This will force the heading onto a new page, but it will have a couple of empty paragraphs above it.

4. Press “backspace” twice to delete the empty paragraphs. The heading now starts at the top of a page, but the section break is on the previous page.

5. Click in some text below the heading and change the page orientation for the section (Layout > Orientation). Every page up until the next section break will take on the new orientation.

As I say, it works for me in the documents I’m writing. Other people’s mileage may vary.

Do you have a TechComm trick or tip to share? Have you recently come across something that made you exclaim, “If only I’d know that sooner!”? It might be software-related, a grammar tip, the discovery of a particularly useful YouTube tutorial...

Please send an overview of your insight, and a short description of who you are, to newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk and I will publish it in a future edition. Let’s put our heads together and help each other out.



Blog news

By Ginny Critcher

Hello again! Here's the latest blog round up from the popular blogs on technical communication.

Tom Johnson on his blog I'd Rather be Writing, posts on XML Documentation for Adobe Experience Manager (AEM) and how it is used to integrate documentation and marketing content:

<https://idratherbewriting.com/2019/03/10/introducing-xml-documentation-for-adobe-experience-manager/>.

Sarah Maddox on her FFeathers blog looks at Google's new programme – Season of Docs. The programme provides a framework for technical writers and open source organisations to work together on a specific documentation project chosen by the open source organisation and the tech writer concerned:

<https://ffeathers.wordpress.com/>.

Chris Becker on the UX Collective blog discusses using the UI ontology:

<https://uxdesign.cc/user-interface-ontology-ui-jargon-1258025447f5>.

Bart Leahy at Heroic Technical Writing offers some insights into handling multiple clients and deadlines as a freelancer:

<https://heroictechwriting.com/2019/03/04/handling-multiple-customers-deadlines-as-a-freelancer/>.

From the Feedspot blog the top 20 technical writing blogs to follow in 2019:

https://blog.feedspot.com/technical_writing_blogs/.

The Cherryleaf blog has a podcast on the pros and cons of using PDFs:

<https://www.cherryleaf.com/blog/>.

Do you have a blog? Seen an interesting post? Let me know so I can include it in my monthly review. Email ginny@cherryleaf.com.

Ginny has a background as a skilled trainer and information designer, and is responsible for the development of Cherryleaf's training courses. In addition to her skills in information design, she has over twenty years' experience in teaching and training throughout the world. She is Cherryleaf's representative to the ISTC.



Training courses

Do you know of a training course that will be of interest to readers? If so, please send details to newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk. If you would like to promote your course or event, 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. Please note that listings are a service to members; a listing does not imply ISTC endorsement.



Courses run by ISTC Business Affiliates* that are notified to us by the copy deadline will be listed. For others, we cannot guarantee listing if space is limited and details may be abridged.

*Armada, Cherryleaf, ESTON Training, Firehead, and MadCap Software.

Armada

Armada is offering a 10% discount for ISTC members on all the following courses.

April

- 11-12 Introduction to Adobe InDesign**
Provides a comprehensive introduction to the powerful capabilities of InDesign, including setting up new documents, shapes, frames and using InDesign's most popular features.
Armada, Reading.
www.armada.co.uk/course/indesign-training.

...Armada
...April

11-12 Introduction to Adobe Photoshop

Learn how to create and edit images using the de facto standard in the graphics industry. Techniques covered include colour correction, working with layers, compositing images and preparing images for use on the Web.

Armada, Sheffield.

www.armada.co.uk/course/photoshop-training.

17-18 Advanced Adobe FrameMaker

Teaches everything you need to be able to:

- Create and maintain FrameMaker templates.
- Build and maintain multi-chapter books with cross-references, table of contents and an index.

Armada, Newbury.

www.armada.co.uk/course/advanced-framemaker-training.

24-25 Introduction to Adobe InDesign

Provides a comprehensive introduction to the powerful capabilities of InDesign, including setting up new documents, shapes, frames and using InDesign's most popular features.

Armada, Bromsgrove.

www.armada.co.uk/course/indesign-training.

25-26 Introduction to Adobe Captivate

This course teaches everything you need to create professional standard e-learning tutorials and high-quality demos.

Armada, Bristol.

www.armada.co.uk/course/captivate-training.

May

20-21 Introduction to Adobe InDesign

Provides a comprehensive introduction to the powerful capabilities of InDesign, including setting up new documents, shapes, frames and using InDesign's most popular features.

Armada, Sheffield.

www.armada.co.uk/course/indesign-training.

20-21 Authoring structured FrameMaker documents

Covers the fundamentals of using of FrameMaker in structured mode, teaching how to create and edit documents using structured FrameMaker templates.

Armada, Newbury.

www.armada.co.uk/course/authoring-structured-framemaker-documents-training.

Training and event reviews

Have you recently attended a training course or event that you think would be of interest to our community of readers? Why not submit a short review? Email newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk.

...Armada
...May

- 22 Advanced Adobe InDesign**
Ideal for existing InDesign users who want to take their use of the application to the next level. The techniques you will learn include:
- Handling colour with confidence.
 - Harnessing the power of stylesheets.
 - Streamlining your workflow and improving productivity, to get a greater return on investment.
- Armada, Sheffield.
www.armada.co.uk/course/advanced-adobe-indesign-training.

- 23-24 Introduction to Adobe InDesign**
Provides a comprehensive introduction to the powerful capabilities of InDesign, including setting up new documents, shapes, frames and using InDesign's most popular features.
- Armada, Milton Keynes.
www.armada.co.uk/course/indesign-training.

- 23-24 Introduction to Adobe Captivate**
This course teaches everything you need to create professional standard e-learning tutorials and high-quality demos.
- Armada, Bromsgrove.
www.armada.co.uk/course/captivate-training.

- 28-29 Introduction to Adobe Photoshop**
Learn how to create and edit images using the de facto standard in the graphics industry. Techniques covered include colour correction, working with layers, compositing images and preparing images for use on the Web.
- Armada, Milton Keynes.
www.armada.co.uk/course/photoshop-training.

- 30-31 Creating Element Definition Documents (EDDs)**
Teaches how to:
- Build an Element Definition Document.
 - Link elements using formatting rules to a FrameMaker template.
 - Convert legacy data to a Structured FrameMaker file using a conversion table.
- Armada, Newbury.
www.armada.co.uk/course/creating-element-definition-documents-edds-training.

Cherryleaf

We offer online training courses in:



Technical Author/Technical Writing:

<https://www.cherryleaf.com/training/technical-author-basicinduction-training-course/>. Cherryleaf is offering a 10% discount to ISTC members for this course.

Technical Copywriting:

<https://www.cherryleaf.com/training/technical-copywriting-training-course/>. This online technical copywriting training course teaches you how to write clear

...Cherryleaf

and effective marketing copy, in a straightforward and efficient way. Let us share with you the best practices we've developed for writing copy for software (SaaS and desktop) and other technical products.

Advanced Technical Communication:
<https://cherryleaf.teachable.com/p/advanced-technical-communication>.

Cherryleaf's advanced technical communication skills course provides you with access to a collection of online modules in technical communication, under a low-cost monthly subscription plan. Each module is self-contained, so you can choose to take just a single module, if you wish.

It contains:

- DITA Fundamentals
- Single Sourcing and Content Reuse
- Introduction to Content Strategy
- Documenting REST APIs
- Managing Software Documentation

- Projects
- Writing and Designing Embedded Help
 - Markdown
 - Revising and Editing Content
 - Trends in Technical Communication



ESTON Training

Technical/Commercial Authorship (Former ISTC Syllabus Parts 1 & 2):

<http://www.estontrg.com/technicalcommercial-authorship/>.

A £50 discount is offered to ISTC members for this course.

Simplified English:

<http://www.estontrg.com/english-language-courses/>.

Standard Generalised Mark-up Language (SGML):

<http://www.estontrg.com/standard-generalised-mark-language-sgml-course/>.

Editing and Publishing Magazines:

<http://www.estontrg.com/editing-publishing-magazine-course/>.

Report Writing:

<http://www.estontrg.com/report-writing-course/>.

Business English:

<http://www.estontrg.com/business-english-course/>.

Firehead

Learn FrameMaker 2019:

<https://firehead.net/course/framemaker-2019-training-technical-authors/>.

Learn Adaptive Content Modelling:

<http://firehead.net/training/learn-adaptive-content-modelling/>.

Creating Mobile Apps without Coding:

<http://firehead.net/training/creating-mobile-apps-without-coding/>.

Customer Journey Mapping:

<http://firehead.net/training/customer-journey-mapping/>.

Training and events – discounts for ISTC members

To see all the discounts currently available to our members, log on to the Discussion Forum on the ISTC website – www.istc.org.uk/our-community/discussion-forums (you **must** be logged on to see the forums) – and go to the “Training and Events - Membership Discounts” thread in The Lobby.

MadCap Software

For details of the latest MadCap Software training schedule (both on-site and online) visit: www.madcapsoftware.com/services/training/.

Events listings

If you know of an event that will be of interest to readers, please email newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk.

ISTC events are highlighted.

April

2 ISTC North East England Area Group Meeting
The theme this month is jargon in written communication. Please register via [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com) or email Joanna Suau: northeastenglandareagroup@istc.org.uk.
The Town Wall, Pink Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 5HX from 18:00 – 19:30.

2 ISTC Thames Valley Area Group Meeting
We'll be discussing "our favourite things in TechComm" (based on the Sound of Music song). For more information email Darren Mitcham: thamesvalleyareagroup@istc.org.uk.
Bird in Hand Hotel, Bath Road, Knowl Hill, Reading, RG10 9UP at 19:30.

3-5 Agile in the City
Returning for its fifth year, the conference has a strong practical focus and attracts industry practitioners and decision-makers who want to improve their success with agile and lean methods.
London, UK.
<https://2019.london.agileinthecity.net>.

11-12 Information Energy 2019
Information Energy 2019 focuses on how we empower emerging technologies with information.
Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
<https://www.informationenergy.org/>.

17 ISTC Cambridge Area Group Meeting
For more information email Zsuzsa Nagy: cambridgeareagroup@istc.org.uk.
Robin Hood pub, 1 Fulbourn Road, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 9JL from 18:00 – 20:30.

25 ISTC East of Scotland Area Group Meeting
Topic and location to be confirmed nearer the time. For more information email Holli Hamilton: eastscotlandareagroup@istc.org.uk.

May

5-8 STC's Technical Communication Summit
The STC Summit, which celebrates its 66th anniversary in 2019, features top-notch presenters to discuss key trends, issues, and cutting-edge solutions in technical communication.
Denver, CO, USA.
<https://summit.stc.org/conference/>.

...May

7-8 COMtecnica Conference 19
This two-day conference brings experts together to discuss current and new trends in the field of technical communication. The focus of the conference will be on processes and technologies in TC and Intelligent Information, with a particular focus on the latest trends and fast-evolving and pressing needs.
Rimini, Italy.
<https://comtecnica.it>.

15-16 UA Reloaded
Break through to the other side of user assistance. The topics go beyond the classic portfolio of technical communication. International experts unveil the newest options: from video documentation to service design to virtual reality.
St. Leon-Rot, Germany.
<https://ua-reloaded.de>.

21 ISTC Cambridge Area Group Meeting
For more information email Zsuzsa Nagy: cambridgeareagroup@istc.org.uk.
Robin Hood pub, 1 Fulbourn Road, Cherry Hinton, Cambridge CB1 9JL from 18:00 – 20:30.

21-23 Technical Documentation Roundup
The Content Wrangler hosts a new conference, Technical Documentation Roundup 2019. An intimate gathering of technical communication professionals interested in learning how modern TechComm shops create, manage, and deliver technical content.
Menlo Park, CA, USA.
www.technicaldocumentationroundup.com/.

June

2-3 Write the Docs Vilnius 2019
Write the Docs brings everyone who writes the docs together: programmers, tech writers, support, designers, developer advocates, and more. We all have things to learn from each other, and there's no better way than sitting together and talking.
Vilnius, Lithuania.
www.writethedocs.org/conf/vilnius/2019/.

4-5 Evolution of TC
Evolution of TC is an annual gathering for all technical communicators with a focus on innovations in software documentation.
Sofia, Bulgaria.
<https://evolution-of-tc.com>.

...June

11-13 **LocWorld40**

If you're involved in the creation, management, translation, or delivery of multilingual content, LocWorld is the conference for you. Each LocWorld event features case studies, lessons learned, best practices presentations, industry panel discussions and more.

Estoril, Portugal.

<https://locworld.com/events/locworld40-portugal-2019/>.

20 **National Freelancers Day**

Join IPSE, the Association of Independent Professionals and the Self-Employed, for their annual flagship event.

London, UK.

<https://www.nationalfreelancersday.com>.

25-27 **Content Connections 2019**

Come and learn the very latest ideas and methods for producing and delivering strategy-aligned content.

Berlin, Germany.

<https://acrolinxcc.com>.

September

2-6 **Information Design Summer School**

A week-long intensive focus on information design, with lectures, group work, critiquing and discussion.

University of Bath, UK.

<https://www.simplificationcentre.org.uk/events/summer-school>.

10-12 **Technical Communication UK (TCUK) Conference**

The ISTC's annual conference for everyone involved in writing, editing, illustrating, delivering and publishing technical information.

Kenilworth, Warwickshire, UK.

<http://technicalcommunicationuk.com>.

25-26 **NORDIC TechKomm**

International experts convene in Copenhagen to share best practices or present current ideas on the main conference topic "Intelligent Information for Users".

Copenhagen, Denmark.

<https://nordic-techkomm.com>.

October

8-11 **MadWorld 2019 Dublin**

The premier technical communication and content strategy conference for the MadCap Software user community.

Dublin, Ireland.

<https://www.madcapsoftware.com/conference/madworld-2019-dublin/#content>.

9-11 **Adobe DITA World 2019**

The world's biggest DITA online conference for marketing and TechComm professionals.

Online.

<https://2019-adobe-dita-world.meetus.adobeevents.com>.

Upcoming webinars

If you know of a webinar that will be of interest to readers, please email newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk.

April

9 **Streamlining Your Release Notes Process**

Release notes are a crucial part of customer communication for product companies. Too many organisations either do the bare minimum or accept an inefficient and expensive process. Jorsek LLC, makers of easyDITA, have been working on their release notes process and have made some big improvements. Join Paul Perrotta, The Technical Communication Wrangler, and his special guest, Jarod Sickler, Customer Success Manager for Jorsek LLC, for this free, one-hour webinar.

<https://www.brighttalk.com/webcast/9273/349653>.

10 **The Value of Visual Content and a Simplified User Interface**

Join Scott Abel, The Content Wrangler, and his special guest, Daniel Foster, Strategy Lead for TechSmith, for this free one-hour webinar. Daniel will show you how a Simplified User Interface helps you create powerful and useful images to help your users better understand your content, while extending its shelf life and often eliminating the need for localization.

<https://www.brighttalk.com/webcast/9273/353595>.

17 **RoboHelp 2019 Advanced Techniques**

Once you've mastered the basics of RoboHelp 2019, you'll want to be able to customise your output, and make that content more navigable by your audience. Learn how in this free webinar.

<https://2019-05-16-robohelp-2019.meetus.adobeevents.com>.

May

16 **RoboHelp 2019 Quick Start**

In this free webinar you will learn the best practices for creating a RoboHelp project from scratch, why RoboHelp 2019 is the most intuitive RoboHelp version ever, basic techniques for placing graphics and links, and where Adobe has provided free resources for learning RoboHelp 2019.

<https://2019-05-16-robohelp-2019.meetus.adobeevents.com>.

Back page

How to write good

Noted by **William Waddilove FISTC** on another newsletter:

- ▶ Avoid alliteration. Always.
- ▶ Prepositions are not words to end sentences with.
- ▶ Avoid clichés like the plague. (They're old hat.)
- ▶ Eschew ampersands & abbreviations, etc.
- ▶ One should never generalise.
- ▶ Comparisons are as bad as clichés.
- ▶ Be more or less specific.
- ▶ Sentence fragments? Eliminate.
- ▶ Exaggeration is a billion times worse than understatement.
- ▶ Parenthetical remarks (however relevant) are unnecessary.
- ▶ Who needs rhetorical questions?

Seeking light-hearted content



Help keep our Back Page healthy by sending in:

- Amusing signs.
- Unfortunate translations.
- Awkward instructions.
- Funny layouts.
- Anything else that made you chuckle and is vaguely TechComm-related.

Guest editors are always welcome too if you fancy creating a whole page.

Email newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk.

InfoPlus copy deadline

Submissions to the newsletter are always welcome. If you have an article or other content you would like to see included in the May edition of *InfoPlus*, please email your copy to newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk by **20 April 2019**.

Every effort is made to ensure that *InfoPlus* is published and distributed as early as possible in the month to which it relates, generally on the first working day. However, occasionally it may not be distributed up to a week into that month. Please bear this in mind when submitting time-sensitive information.