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InfoPlus⁺

December 16

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ISTC news November, a recap

By Louise Fahey, InfoPlus⁺ editor

November has come and gone and we are into the final stretch of 2016. Highlights of November for me include good news at work (I'm going on a Certified ScrumMaster training course in January), a trip to IKEA (more on that later) and my first skiing lesson (indoor in Reading, not quite the Alps!). November was also a great month for receiving content and I hope the December edition of *InfoPlus⁺* reflects this. Particular highlights include a Q&A session with new ISTC Council member Carol Leahy, the dates for TCUK17 being announced, news about the University of Strasbourg's new Master's in Technical Communication and Localization, the reintroduction of some fun to the back page of *InfoPlus⁺*, and much more!

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

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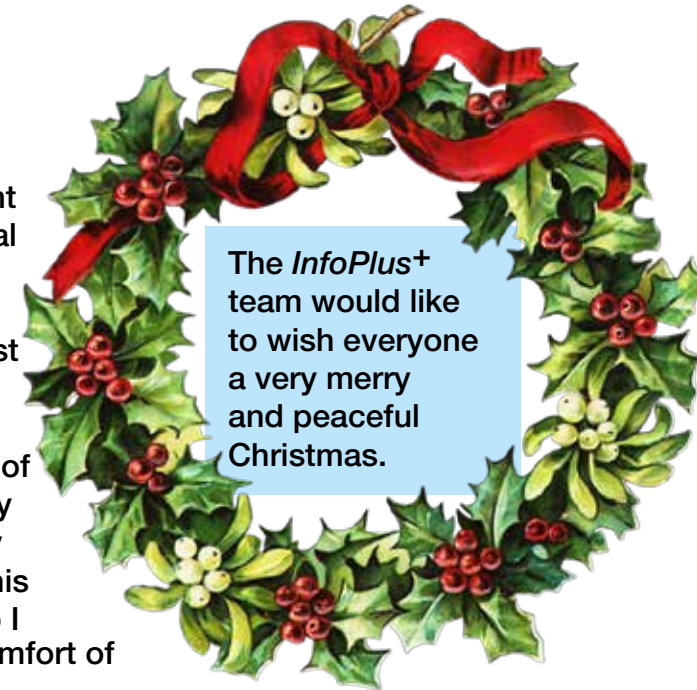
This monthly Newsletter is emailed to about 1500 people. As well as ISTC news, *InfoPlus⁺* aims to cover anything of interest to the profession. To subscribe, contact the office.

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If you're reading a printed copy of this newsletter, go to www.istc.org.uk/our-publications/infoplus-newsletter/ and open it online to explore the links mentioned.

Aside from the above, I'm also very excited for December and The Content Wrangler's three-day Virtual Summit on Advanced Practices in Technical Communication (see the list of Upcoming Webinars in *InfoPlus⁺*). First of all, it's free. Secondly, the line-up of speakers and topics is very good. And finally (arguably most important factor at this time of year!), it's online so I get to watch it from the comfort of my own home.

Speaking of my home, it's a lot fuller since IKEA recently opened in Reading (about five minutes away from my office as luck would have it). Last weekend my boyfriend and I saw a television stand on the IKEA website and decided to head in store to purchase it. As IKEA furniture is mainly flat pack, we were expecting some DIY to be involved.



The *InfoPlus⁺* team would like to wish everyone a very merry and peaceful Christmas.

However, once we were in the shop, we discovered that the television stand was made up of 18 different parts (legs, doors, shelves, hinges, and a lot more). At this point it was clear that my boyfriend wanted to avoid the hassle/fun of finding all the parts in the self-service warehouse and so he suggested that we order online and have the television stand delivered. But I quickly knocked that idea on the head and 18 boxes of parts and some Swedish meatballs later, we were home.

As with any new product I buy, I looked at the instructions with a critical eye. But as anyone who has ever assembled a piece of IKEA furniture knows, there was no text for me to inspect; only a picture of a man putting each part of our TV stand together. A lot of people struggle with these illustration-only instructions (see [If You've Ever Assembled Ikea Furniture, This One's For You](#)), and I was in that same camp initially. However, after successfully putting together the 18 boxes in a few hours, I was very impressed and so I decided to find out more about how IKEA creates instructions.

Although IKEA make PDF copies of their instructions extremely accessible online, there was little information out there on how their technical communicators create



the instructions. However, I did find this interesting article on [How IKEA Designs its \(In\)famous Instruction Manuals](#) which claims that there are two guiding principles behind every page of an IKEA instruction booklet: clarity and continuity. I also read online in various blogs that the main reason IKEA doesn't provide text in its instructions is because they are meant to be used around the globe. Considering that IKEA operates in almost 50 countries, I suspect localisation would be quite an overhead for them!

If you are like me and appreciate a good set of instructions, then get in touch! If you have seen any memorable instructions recently, whether good or bad, please email newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk and I will share them in the January newsletter.



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Contributions

This newsletter is for the benefit of both ISTC members and technical communicators in the wider community. We are always pleased to hear from readers with suggestions for content, improvement and the development of *InfoPlus*⁺. If you have something you'd like included or any ideas for features and regular sections, please email newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk.

Q&A with Carol Leahy, new ISTC Council member and Community team lead

This is the first in a series of Q&A sessions with ISTC Council members. We hope to give you a better insight into the activities of the ISTC Council and to introduce you to the different members.



1. What motivated you to become an ISTC Council member?

I have Theresa Cameron to thank for convincing me to join the ISTC Council. She approached me at TCUK15 to see if I would be interested in joining. I had thought about joining the council in the past, but I believed that I was too inexperienced in the tech comms world to join. However, the more Theresa and I talked, the more I realised that there was a lot I could bring to the council and that I really needed to start believing in myself a bit more. My main motivation for becoming a council member is that I want to help the ISTC in spreading the word about the technical communication profession

in any way I can. I'm hoping that if more people know about the profession, that will reduce the number of people who look really puzzled when I tell people I work in technical communications!

2. What is your role as an ISTC Council member? And what would you like to achieve in future as part of this role?

My role in the ISTC Council is as the Community team lead. The aim of the Community is to bring technical writers together and create a network where we can interact with each other. There are a lot of technical writers out there who work on their own and so having a network like this can help them feel less alone in the profession. My main aim going forward is to successfully build a friendly, interactive community where members can ask one another for advice, learn something new, and generally just get to know each other a bit more. I am always looking for ideas on how to do this so please get in touch with me on community@istc.org.uk if you have any.

3. In your opinion, what is the best thing about the ISTC? Both for its members and you personally.

The best thing about the ISTC is the people. When I first joined the ISTC, I knew one other technical writer. I've

met so many over the last few years at TCUK and through attending area group meetings. I've even connected with some on LinkedIn after reading their articles in Communicator. Everyone I've met within the society has been really nice and you can feel the enthusiasm and passion they have for technical communications. It's really motivating and empowering to have that in a professional body.

4. Outside of work and your ISTC Council role, what do you get up to in your spare time?

I love to bake. It's a great way to relax and you feel like you have created something special when you have finished. I like to try new hobbies once and a while as I get a chance to learn something new. I've recently been introduced to crochet which is frustrating but really good fun. I've also purchased my first telescope. With the nights getting darker earlier now, it seemed like the perfect time to do it and see some of the night sky. Unfortunately, it was too cloudy to see the super moon. It was clearer the following night so we got to see the moon then. It still looked incredible.

“Ask Me Anything” sessions



Ask Me Anything

By Cecily Roberts

We had Dr. Mike Unwalla of TechScribe answering your questions in November’s “Ask Me Anything” session. Mike took questions on his favourite tools, the applicability of STE in different industries, translating content written in STE, and much more! You can read the full session here (if you’re an ISTC member and logged on): www.istc.org.uk/our-community/discussion-forums/topic/ama-mike-unwalla-of-techscribe/. Thank you very much to Mike and to everyone who contributed to the questions and discussion.

AMA December

We have Karen Mardahl of SimCorp joining us on Monday 12th December. Karen is one of our non-UK-based members. She is an American who has been living and working in Denmark since 1985. She is a senior technical writer at SimCorp, where she documents software for the financial investments management industry. Her techcomm passions are about accessibility

and usability, but agile is sneaking into that list due to her job in an enterprise agile environment! Knitting and reading provide breathing spaces.

If you would like to ask Karen a question, log on to the Discussion Forums section of the ISTC website on Monday 12th December. You will see a new post, introducing Karen and inviting questions. Our “Ask Me Anything” sessions are forum posts, rather than live sessions and over the course of the day or even week, Karen will respond to questions posed. There isn’t a closing date or time, but questions added days or weeks later may wait longer for a response.

Volunteers wanted

If you would like to volunteer for one of our “Ask Me Anything” sessions, we would love to hear from you! You can volunteer with a colleague and/or opt for “anything” to be limited to a particular field. Please email Cecily Roberts on cecily.techauthor@gmail.com for more details.

Content for the ISTC website

By Ellis Pratt, Head of Marketing on ISTC Council

We’d like to add some introductory primer articles to the ISTC website. These would be aimed at people unfamiliar with technical communication, and the value that it and a technical communicator can provide an organisation.

To start with, we need to come up with a list of topics. We also need some volunteers to write these primers.

What topics do you think we should cover?

- Why do we need technical communication?
- Do I need to provide a user guide for legal reasons?
- What is involved in translating content?
- What is a technical communicator?
- What do technical communicators do?
- How is a user manual created?
- What skills do you need to be a technical communicator?
- Do products need user guides these days?

continued on next page...

- What is the difference between technical communication and UX, UI, copywriting etc?
- What is scientific and technical communication?
- How is technical communication changing?
- Are there any standards for user guides?
- What training do you need to become a technical communicator?

Contact marketing@istc.org.uk if you have any other suggestions, or if you would like to volunteer to write a primer article on a technical communication topic.

Advance Notice - Annual CPD Record Review for ISTC Fellows

By David Farbey, ISTC Council Member for Professional Development and Recognition

In January 2017 we will be contacting a random sample of ISTC Fellows to review their CPD Records for 2016. If you are an ISTC Fellow you might like to make sure now that your CPD Record is up to date.

For more information about the ISTC's CPD Policy, and for guidance about keeping a CPD Record, please see CPD Guidance for Members (www.istc.org.uk/professional-development-and-recognition/cpd-information-for-members/) on the ISTC website.

If you have an individual question about CPD, you may contact David Farbey, ISTC Council Member for Professional Development and Recognition, by email: education@istc.org.uk.

Save the date for TCUK17



Technical Communication UK 2017 will be held on 26th to 28th September 2017 in the North of England at a venue to be announced.

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ISTC local area and special interest groups

The ISTC area groups offer an opportunity for technical communicators to network and share knowledge and expertise. The groups are open to everyone from all industries in the local area (you don't even need to be an ISTC member to attend), and it's free. The groups meet at intervals during the year and hold talks, peer discussions, demonstrations and social evenings. Special interest groups give you an opportunity to meet people in your own industry.

Thames Valley Area Group meeting report

From Darren Mitcham

Some months we have discussions on informal topics; some months are much more formal. At the November meeting of the Thames Valley Group, we had our most

formal discussion to date. The hot topic was archiving. Our regular Gavin lead the discussion and had prepared plenty of material to stimulate us. We realised quite early on that none of the 12 attendees knew the legalities of what we should archive, how we should archive it, and how long for. Also the techniques of archiving varied wildly, but we did strongly establish that none of us use microfiche any more.

Thames Valley Area Group next meeting

Next month's meeting will be on 6th December at the Bird-in-Hand, Knowl Hill, nr Reading. Bring along a handwritten letter to Santa asking for all the things you want to make your professional life more pleasant.

All are welcome – you don't need to be an ISTC member. If you would like to attend, please register via Eventbrite using the following link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/istc-thames-valley-xmas-meeting-tickets-29402816616>.

The organiser for the event is Darren Mitcham who may be contacted by email: thamesvalley_areagroup@istc.org.uk.

Yorkshire Area Group Christmas meetup

From Emma Sheridan

ISTC Yorkshire Group Christmas Meetup with festive food and drinks and tech comm discussions. The group will meet at 19:00 on December 1st at Sheffield Water Works Company, Cambridge House, 2–12 Division Street, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S1 4GF.

All are welcome – you don't need to be an ISTC member. If you would like to attend, please register via Eventbrite using the following link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/yorkshire-area-group-christmas-meetup-tickets-28706093699>.

The organiser for the event is Emma Sheridan who may be contacted by email: yorkshire_areagroup@istc.org.uk.

London Group meetup

From Bridget Rooney

ISTC London Group meetup with David Farbey giving a short talk, based on his TCUK 2016 presentation on “How Agile Is Your Parachute?” The group will meet at 18:30 on December 15th at Free Word Centre, 60 Farringdon Road, London, EC1R 3GA (nearest underground station is Farringdon).

All are welcome – you don’t need to be an ISTC member. If you would like to attend, please register via Eventbrite using the following link: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/istc-london-group-7507298791>.

The organiser for the event is Bridget Rooney who may be contacted by email: london_areagroup@istc.org.uk.

Current ISTC local area groups

If you’re interested in attending please contact the local organiser or email istc@istc.org.uk. If you’re interested in setting up either an area group or a special interest group, please contact our area groups manager Tom Dunic at: areagroupsmanager@istc.org.uk.

Area groups:

Name	Leader	Email Contact Details
Cambridge	Derek Cooper or Jeff Bronks	cambridge_areagroup@istc.org.uk
East of Scotland	George Lewis	eastscotland_areagroup@istc.org.uk
Irish Technical Writers	Patrice Fanning Yvonne Cleary, Bridget Walsh	irishtechicalwriters@istc.org.uk
ISTC Irish Group	Adrian Rush	irishgroup@istc.org.uk
London	Bridget Rooney	london_areagroup@istc.org.uk

Name	Leader	Email Contact Details
Midlands	John Burns	midlands_areagroup@istc.org.uk
North East England	Janine Weightman	northeastengland_areagroup@istc.org.uk
North West England	David Jones	northwestengland_areagroup@istc.org.uk
Northern Ireland	Alex Mansell	nireland_areagroup@istc.org.uk
Southern	Marjorie Jones	southernengland_areagroup@istc.org.uk
South Wales	John Espirian	southwales_areagroup@istc.org.uk
Thames Valley	Darren Mitcham	thamesvalley_areagroup@istc.org.uk
West of Scotland	Charles Addison	westscotland_areagroup@istc.org.uk
Yorkshire	Emma Sheridan	yorkshire_areagroup@istc.org.uk

Special interest groups:

Name	Leader	Email Contact Details
MadSIG	Marjorie Jones, Tom Bridley Kai Weber	MadSIG@istc.org.uk

Using Eventbrite to register attendance at area group meetings

Some area group meetings are posted on Eventbrite and where this is the case, we asked 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, could you please contact the organiser, even if it is at short notice.

ISTC groups on LinkedIn

The ISTC has a number of LinkedIn groups for its members. Have you joined the relevant groups?



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

- ISTC Community www.linkedin.com/groups/8440733

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 – N/A
- 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 Community online

The ISTC Community has its own digital presence in social media networks including Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. Following these networks you'll be able to keep up to date with news, events, area group developments and other community activities.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/istccommunity.

Twitter: [@istc_community](https://twitter.com/istc_community).

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/8440733>.

Business affiliate news

MadCap Central (Beta) Now Available



We recently announced some big news: the release of MadCap Central (Beta) in conjunction with an update to MadCap Flare. MadCap Flare 2016 r2 adds new features and enhancements along with seamless integration with MadCap Central for cloud-based content management.

With MadCap Central, you can:

- Manage projects and content in a centralized hosted environment
- Host projects and content in the cloud safely and securely
- Track and manage tasks, assign user permissions and collaborate with teams
- Automate, manage and publish builds
- Use widgets to customize the dashboard
- And much more!

Get the latest details including how to get started with the MadCap Central (Beta) [here](#).

Watch the Webinar

Jennifer Morse, Product Evangelist, presents [this webinar](#) covering the new features and benefits of MadCap Central, along with the updates and integration added to MadCap Flare.

Learn how to create your own mobile apps with Firehead – no coding required

Ever had a killer idea for an app but come unstuck when it comes to making it actually happen?

Then we have just the course for you: a new rapid DIY mobile app development course for non-techies... You can do it without coding!

Until recently, mobile app development was a complicated task that called for programming skills – plus a lot of time and money. But now a new generation of rapid do-it-yourself mobile app creation tools is available which hides the code behind a friendly visual interface and lets non-programmers create some pretty serious apps.



Get started with a mobile app basics workshop

Our basic training will take you from novice to business app developer in just a few hours. You'll be able to respond to changing business needs and customer feedback by creating apps in days, rather than weeks or months. You'll do this with no big upfront investment and a low overall cost. All without being or needing a programmer, except in the most advanced situations.

You'll do this using an authoring tool called ViziApps, which hides complicated code details behind a friendly graphic user interface. Expert app-maker and certified ViziApps instructor Neil Perlin of Hyper/Word Services will be your instructor and the six-hour online workshop will cover everything you'll need to start making your own apps.

Register here

Our first workshop is called Creating mobile apps without coding – the basics and you can register now through Firehead for basic training.

We'll also be adding two further workshops, offering greater progression and more advanced features and learning (some tasks in these sessions can get complex, but nowhere near the programming once required to create an app).

Find out more about our basics course, what it covers and how to sign up on our course page.

Or please do get in touch today if you require any further help and information.

For more information on this course, see the [Firehead website](#).

The top emerging trends within the technical communication industry 2017

The ISTC asked its Business Affiliates what they thought were the top emerging trends within the technical communication industry at the moment, and why they thought they have come about. We also asked if they thought information development professionals are having to change the way they work (or train) due to the emerging trends.

Below are highlights from the response from Ellis Pratt, Director at Cherryleaf.

1. The growth of APIs has seen a corresponding growth in the need for API documentation and interactive document environments. Without the documentation, it's virtually impossible to use an API, as developers need to know what resources are available,

where they are, and what parameters they will accept.

2. Linked with this is a move towards treating documentation as code, and using developer tools such as GitHub, Markdown and Jira to create and manage documentation. This is part a reaction to more projects following the Agile methodology, with fast and frequent releases and a team-based approach to projects.
3. As technology becomes more part of our daily lives, we've seen a move towards a less formal tone in some types of documentation. This is a consequence of documentation being part of the pre-sales process, and there being less anxious users.
4. We're also seeing a move toward embedding user assistance into the application itself, without the need to go to the docs. We'll be seeing more developments with Conversational User Interfaces, on-boarding screens and micro-content. This is a consequence of users being reluctant to admit they're stuck and going to the Help.

Below are highlights from the response from James Bromley, Director at QoSL:

High Tech-High Touch (Megatrends, Naisbitt, 1982) – there is going to be a growing divide in consumer/customer loyalty between those organisations that understand this dynamic, and practice it, and those that don't.

Implications for ISTC members: a business opportunity to encourage and facilitate their employers and customers to 'cut the channels' and facilitate 'It's good to talk'.

Industry and general news

New to tech comms: life as a graduate information developer

By Rachael Smith

A case study written by Rachael Smith about what it's like to work as graduate information developer at ARM.

I joined ARM in April as a graduate information developer. My first couple of weeks were spent learning about ARM, the Tech Comms group, and specifically my new team. There were new tools (particularly DITA) to learn how to use, processes to understand, and sources of help and support to get familiar with.

My first main source of support was my buddy, a graduate from the previous year. ARM assigns a buddy to all new graduates. Having a buddy is a great way of learning how everything works from someone who has recently gone through the same thing. Alongside answering many questions, my buddy also introduced me to all the other forums for asking questions. At first it was quite daunting, the idea of posting questions somewhere that so many people would see. However I soon learned that everyone was very happy to help and give advice.

One of the reasons why I was hired was to help develop the documentation for the ARM Streamline Performance Analyzer. Learning is mainly carried out on the job here, and my first piece of work on Streamline was definitely a case of being thrown in at the deep end. I had just over a week to complete the work and the person who usually worked on it was going on sabbatical. However, being in this situation meant that I quickly got to know both the engineers who were providing me with the information, and the process for creating and releasing documents. This experience gave me much more confidence to do future releases with less assistance, and take on the project as my own.

Alongside my work on Streamline, I assist a colleague working on the Fast Models documentation and take on other short-term projects as required. My manager is keen to use the skills within the team, and so I have been given several projects that use my coding skills. I have also been working on creating documentation using reStructuredText.

While there is no formal training for my day-to-day work, ARM provides many opportunities for learning. I attended a pilot run of a new series of graduate training sessions for new starters from all areas of the company. Each class focused on a different aspect of the core beliefs at ARM, with the activities providing a mixture of self-reflection and working in groups. These sessions also provided an opportunity to start building that all important network with our peers.

For members of Tech Comms, regular knowledge sharing sessions are held in the form of donut sessions. These sessions provide the opportunity for people to share information that is useful or interesting for the group over donuts and other sweet treats. Getting involved in organizing these sessions has really helped me to get to know, and be known by, the wider group and feel a real part of it.

While donut sessions tend to be group-specific, lunch and learn sessions provide more general training for everyone. More structured training is also provided, such as the Writing for ARM course. This course is available to all employees, not just those employees with a technical writing role. I will also be attending a First Aid course so that I can be a First Aider for my office.

TCLoc: a New Master's Program in Technical Communication and Localization at the University of Strasbourg

A brand new online master's program in Technical Communication and Localization is starting up in France. The University of Strasbourg, already home to a very successful master's degree in Website Creation, Content Management, and Localization (CAWEB) is introducing yet another career-oriented program in January 2017. This new program, by the name of "TCLoc", combines technical communication and localization and is taught in English.

"There is no denying that a gap exists between industry and academia. However, I tend to disagree with professionals at conferences like GALA, tekomp or LocWorld,

who criticize universities' supposed inability to prepare students for the labour market. In fact, several European universities provide excellent education to their students, who graduate with a mastery of the most relevant tools and processes in the field. With the CAWEB and TCLoc Master's programs, the University of Strasbourg is definitely among the top universities in this respect." According to Dr. Renate de la Paix, Director of the CAWEB and TCLoc master's programs, the key to a successful master's program is to include the industry in the learning process from the very beginning. Designing and teaching the course materials must always be done with the business world in mind, and integrating work-study options into the program is equally important. "If graduates don't have the relevant skills for jobs in technical writing and localisation, then let's work together to change that!"

This is why the Master in Technical Communication and Localization (TCLoc) not only leads to a master's degree but also to the "Technical Communicator" certification offered by tekomp, Europe's largest association for technical communication. "tekomp has been cooperating with universities for many years," explains de la

Paix, "so why not become more concretely involved by combining tekomp's TCTrainNet Professional with a university degree? It took us a year to get both the accreditation and the agreement with tekomp, but we are now very proud to announce this very unique program." (TCTrain Professional is an English-language international online training and certification program for technical communication.) The TCLoc curriculum and learning materials were developed by leading professionals and experts from both realms of industry and academia.

The TCLoc Master's has been designed for the international market. All courses are taught in English and the fully online program is ideal for part-time learning. Course content focuses on developing the main skills involved in technical communication, such as analyzing, conceptualizing and editing technical content, as well as information development, organization and standardization. In addition, students learn about visual communication, basic website development and, of course, the processes and tools used in localization and project management. The master's program also includes modules in technical English and professional writing.

Master's programs in France generally span two years, but it is possible to register directly into the second year of a master's. TCLoc is equivalent to the second year of a master's as it targets two categories of students :

- Students with a degree equivalent to four years of higher education (240 ECTS in the European system), eager to evolve in the professional world of technical communication
- Professionals working in the fields of technical communication, technical writing, multimedia, IT, localization or languages who wish to further their skills and obtain a master's degree

TCLoc aims to provide professionals with the opportunity to continue their education and obtain a higher level of academic qualification, even if they don't have the degree or years of study generally required to enter the program. This can be achieved through an 'Accreditation Process of Acquired Experience' ('VAPP' or 'Validation des Acquis Professionnels' in French), which can qualify professionals to register for an academic validation of any prior studies, professional experience and/or personal track record performance. Exemption from pre-requisites is based on professional knowledge and must be evaluated by an

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authorized jury. “We value the formative function of professional experience and strongly encourage interested students to consider this process.”

The program does not cover any translation practicals and only solid English language skills are necessary to register for the master’s. According to Françoise Bajon, President of Elia (European Language Industry Association): “The TCLoc Master’s is very interesting in that it focuses on methodology, on the tools and processes involved in technical communication and localization. These elements are independent of each student’s working language.”

TCLoc classes are conducted entirely online, however, three on-campus meetings in Strasbourg are scheduled in March, October and January. These will range in length from 1 to 2 weeks and are designed to build relationships among the students, to allow them to discover France and to give them the opportunity to participate in conferences led by professional contributors.

Although attending all three meetings is recommended, students are only required to attend the last of them to take their final exams.

Lectures are delivered online via a Moodle e-learning platform and Adobe Connect. Class records and resources will be accessible to students at all times. Marie Lanéry, pedagogic Coordinator of the program, underlines the importance of interaction among learners and open communication between learners and instructors. TCLoc wishes to foster a dynamic and interactive learning environment for an optimal educational experience.

TCLoc graduates will be well prepared to join the workforce and distinguish themselves in their respective professional fields. Applications are now open and the program will begin at the end of January.

For more information about the Master in Technical Communication and Localization (TCLoc), please visit www.mastertcloc.unistra.fr/.

The Content Wrangler hosting Virtual Summit on Advanced Practices in Technical Communication

The Content Wrangler will host a free three-day Virtual Summit on Advanced Technical Communication Practices between December 6 and 8.

Hosted on BrightTALK, the free virtual summit features 12 one-hour presentations by leading content and technical communications experts. Topics covered include XML authoring, content strategy, content management, plain language, customer experience, Agile development, and more.

You can register for any of the scheduled sessions that interest you and attend live. If you can’t attend live, then you can receive access to the recordings later.

To see the full schedule for the 2016 Virtual Summit and to register, see [here](#).

Call for Papers: TCeurope Colloquium 2017 - Technical Communication at a Crossroads: New tools, career paths and changes

The Colloquium theme is Technical Communication at a Crossroads. In many ways, the technical communication field is at a crossroads, facing new requirements and asking questions about reinventing and surviving. The issues range from career paths and competencies to user engagement and documentation technologies and methodologies.

We are inviting presentations on topics such as:

- Technical communication professionals today: work roles and profiles, challenges, competencies and career paths
- Technologies and methodologies impacting technical communication
- Designing for user experience: possibilities and opportunities
- New delivery channels and information outputs

If you are interested in speaking at the Colloquium, please use this Google form to submit a proposal by no later than 31 December 2016. We will get back to you before 1 February 2017. Accepted proposals will be posted on the web prior to the Colloquium. Final presentations must be delivered to the Colloquium cloud storage by 31 March 2017 and they will be made available on the web after the Colloquium. We hope to record presentations.

We ask you to forward this Call for Papers to others who might be interested in presenting at the Colloquium.

Information on registration, accommodation and other practicalities will be posted on the web later.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at tceurope.colloquium@gmail.com.

For more information on TCEurope Colloquium 2017, see [here](#).

Capita TI integrates SmartMATE with IBM Globalization Pipeline

Capita Translation & Interpreting (Capita TI) has partnered with multinational technology and consulting corporation, IBM, to offer developers an enhanced translation solution for cloud and mobile applications.

The integration of Capita TI's SmartMATE Machine Translation (MT) and human post editing services with IBM's Globalization Pipeline, will help developers focus on core development activities, avoiding the other timely and resource-intensive tasks that are traditionally associated with software localization.

IBM's Globalization Pipeline is a Bluemix service that enables developers to translate their application content into different languages and open new global markets for their apps rapidly and inexpensively, without having to step outside of their Bluemix Continuous Delivery infrastructure.

Capita TI is the first company to work together with IBM to facilitate the integration of additional Machine Translation services into Globalization Pipeline. IBM customers can now use Capita TI's secure MT engines, in addition to the existing IBM Watson engines, to translate their software strings, thus benefitting from access to more domains, more languages, and services such as translation confidence scores and human post editing.

Antonio Tejada, Language Solutions Director at Capita TI said "Capita TI has carried out a significant investment over the past 2 years to mature subject specific Machine Translation engines, with the objective of making them available through our RESTful API. The close collaboration with IBM to integrate these engines and related workflows into Globalization Pipeline has been a priority project since early 2015, and it is great to see it coming to fruition."

If you would like more information on this MT integration, please visit Capita TI's dedicated partner webpage [here](#).

Blog news

By Ginny Critcher

Hello everyone. Here is this month's blog round up for you.

Tom Johnson explores how to avoid becoming extinct in your writing career:

http://idratherbewriting.com/2016/11/06/how-to-avoid-extinction-in-your-technical-writing-career/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3ATomJohnson+%28I%27d+Rather+Be+Wri+ting%29.

Char James Tanny writes about understanding accessibility in her post on the Content Wrangler blog:

<http://thecontentwrangler.com/2016/09/26/understanding-accessibility/>.

Also on the Content Wrangler blog Erik Martin talks us through understanding Markdown:

<http://thecontentwrangler.com/2016/10/27/markdown-markup-thats-downright-simple/>.

Sarah O'Keefe at Scriptorium looks at the highlights of the 2016 TEKOM conference:

<http://www.scriptorium.com/2016/11/tekem-2016-gotterdamrung/>.

As does this post on the Firehead blog:

<http://firehead.net/2016/11/highlights-of-tekem-tcworld-2016/>.

Sarah Maddox on the ffeathers blog, posts on a talk by Andrew Etter about his book Modern Technical Writing – An Introduction to Software Documentation:

<https://ffeathers.wordpress.com/2016/11/19/modern-technical-writing/>.

Ulrike Parson of Parson AG provided a detailed overview of iIRDS, a new delivery standard for technical documentation:

<https://www.parson-europe.com/en/knowledge-base/427-iirds-new-delivery-standard-technical-documentation.html>.

Cherryleaf's Ellis Pratt poses the question can a Technical Author be a master of more than one trade?

<https://www.cherryleaf.com/blog/2016/11/can-a-technical-author-be-a-master-of-more-than-one-trade/>.

Do you have a blog? Let Ginny know so she can include it in her monthly review. Simply 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 Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators (ISTC).



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 any editorial control over the information you may find at these locations, so the ISTC cannot be responsible for changes to content found at these locations or any material on those sites that may be inaccurate, misleading or offensive to you. All links are provided with the intent of meeting the mission of the ISTC and its Newsletter, and the ISTC disclaims any responsibility for the accuracy, completeness and availability of any linked site. 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.

Training courses

If you know of a training course that will be of interest to readers, please let us know. You can send details by email to newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk. Please try to give us plenty of notice. The deadline for receiving information for *InfoPlus*⁺ is 24th of the month preceding publication. 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. 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.



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

Armada, MadCap and Cherryleaf are ISTC Business Affiliates.

MadCap training

For details of the latest MadCap Software Training Schedule (Web- and On-site): www.madcapsoftware.com/services/training/.

Upcoming Webinars

www.madcapsoftware.com/resources/livewebinars.aspx.

Flare 12 Reviews and Customer Reaction

www.madcapsoftware.com/flare12/reviews-testimonials.aspx.

December

1-2 Introduction to Adobe Captivate

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

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Reading.

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

8-9 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.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Milton Keynes.

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

12-13 Introduction to Adobe Illustrator

Provides you with the essential knowledge you need to create shapes, work with type and layers and apply effects and styles, giving you the basics to build on.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Milton Keynes.

armada.co.uk/illustrator-training-course.

14-15 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.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Milton Keynes.

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

January 2017

5-6 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.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Reading.

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

12-13 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.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Bromsgrove.

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

12-13 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.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Reading.

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

12-13 Introduction to Adobe FrameMaker

Provides a thorough grounding in standard FrameMaker (unstructured mode), covering the essential techniques for generating high standard printed documents. Includes master pages, graphics, tables and FrameMaker's document revision features.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Newbury.

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

14-15 FrameMaker Template Creation

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.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Newbury.

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

17-18 Introduction to Adobe Captivate

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

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Bromsgrove.

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

...January 2017

19-20 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.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Bromsgrove.

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

19-20 Introduction to Adobe Captivate

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

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Milton Keynes.

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

23-27 Technical Authoring Training Programme



ISTC-accredited programme comprising:

- Introduction to technical authoring (1 day)
- Intermediate technical authoring (2 days)
- Advanced technical authoring (2 days)

Training in core technical authoring skills for new and experienced technical authors.

Attend the complete programme, or just the module(s) relevant to your experience.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Milton Keynes.

armada.co.uk/technical-author-training-course.

23-24 Introduction to Adobe Illustrator

Provides you with the essential knowledge you need to create shapes, work with type and layers and apply effects and styles, giving you the basics to build on.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Bromsgrove.

armada.co.uk/illustrator-training-course.

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.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Sheffield.

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

...January 2017

25-26 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.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Sheffield.

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

26-27 Introduction to Adobe Illustrator

Provides you with the essential knowledge you need to create shapes, work with type and layers and apply effects and styles, giving you the basics to build on.

10% discount for ISTC members.

Armada, Reading.

armada.co.uk/illustrator-training-course.

Online training courses

Cherryleaf

WriteLessons, our new training product, provides you with access to a range of online courses in technical communication <http://cherryleaf.teachable.com/>.

We also offer online training courses in:

Technical Author/Technical Writing online training course <https://www.cherryleaf.com/training/technical-author-basicinduction-training-course/>.

DITA fundamentals

<https://www.cherryleaf.com/training/dita-training-courses-in-london/>.

Single sourcing and content re-use training course

<https://www.cherryleaf.com/training/cherryleafs-single-sourcing-and-content-reuse-training-course/>.

Introduction to Content Strategy course

<https://www.cherryleaf.com/training/introduction-to-content-strategy-1-day-training-course/>.

Firehead

Learn FrameMaker 2015

<http://firehead.net/training/learn-framemaker-2015/>.

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/>.

ESTON Training

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

www.estontrg.com/technicalcommercial-authorship/.

Events listings

If you know of an event that will be of interest to readers, please let us know. You can send details by email to events@istc.org.uk. Please try to give us plenty of notice. The deadline for receiving information for *InfoPlus*⁺ is 24th of the month preceding publication.

You can also find information using the online event calendar at: www.istc.org.uk/calendar/

December

- 1** **Yorkshire Group Meeting**
ISTC Yorkshire Group Christmas Meetup with festive food and drinks and tech comm discussions.
Sheffield Water Works Company, Cambridge House, 2-12 Division Street, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S1 4GF
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/yorkshire-area-group-christmas-meetup-tickets-28706093699>.

- 3-9** **Las Vegas UX Conference**
NN/g's UX Conference helps you get up to speed on user experience best practices so you can create successful interfaces.
Vdara Hotel & Spa, Las Vegas, NV (USA) USA
https://www.nngroup.com/training/las-vegas/?utm_source=keycontent.org&utm_medium=calendar#location.

- 6** **Thames Valley Area Group Meeting**
The Xmas meeting of the Thames Valley Group will be held in the restaurant area of the Bird-in-Hand.
The Bird in Hand Country Inn, Knowl Hill, Reading at 19.30.
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/istc-thames-valley-xmas-meeting-tickets-29402816616>.

- 7** **Our Christmas TalkFest**
This festive season we're joining forces with the Sign Design Society (SDS) for a selection of short talks covering information design, typography, sign design and wayfinding.
Typography & Graphic Communication, Whiteknights Campus (Earley Gate entrance), University of Reading, RG6 6BZ
www.signdesignsociety.co.uk/index.php/events/sds-talks-and-events/450-our-christmas-talkfest.
- 7-9** **India HCI 2016**
The next episode of India's leading conference on human-computer interaction, IndiaHCI will be hosted in IIT Bombay, Mumbai
Mumbai, India
http://indiahci2016.org/?utm_source=keycontent.org&utm_medium=calendar.

...December

- 8 Part-of-the-speech Disambiguation Using Patterns in Text**
The controlled language ASD-STE100 (www.asd-ste100.org) is used for safety-critical maintenance documentation. To make text as clear as possible, each approved term in ASD-STE100 usually has only one part of speech. Mike Umwalla shows how sets of patterns in text can be used to identify the part of speech that a term has (noun or verb).
Room 7140, Stoddart Building, City Campus, Sheffield Hallam University
<http://tinyurl.com/zsue355>.

- 15 London Group Meeting**
David Farbey will give a short talk, based on his TCUK 2016 presentation on "How Agile Is Your Parachute?"
Free Word Centre, 60 Farringdon Road, London, EC1R 3GA
<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/istc-london-group-7507298791>.

January 2017

- 21 TC Camp**
The purpose of TC Camp is to provide a local conference for technical communicators that is driven by the members of that community—writers, editors, designers, and the people who support them.
Mission College, Santa Clara, CA (USA)
<http://www.tccamp.org/>.
- 30-31 agile content conf**
Go beyond arguments about content to find an approach that works for everyone at the third annual agile content conf. Case studies from Facebook, American Express, GOV.UK, Breast Cancer Care.
Sadler's Wells Theatre, London
<https://2017.agilecontentconf.com/>.

February 2017

- 1-3 UX+DEV SUMMIT**
Learn cutting edge practices in User Experience and Development and being part of the creative movement as this conference places you in its immersive experience.
Nova South Eastern University
De Santis Building, 3301 College Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, FL (USA)
www.uxds Summit.com/.
- 4-8 Interaction 17**
Interaction 17 asks: how does environment shape interaction, and how should we, as designers, respond? Join us at IxDA's 10th annual gathering, as 1,000 design leaders, professionals, and students converge for an active program of workshops, talks, and awards.
The Redbury, 29 E 29th St, New York, NY 10016 (USA)
<http://interaction17.ixda.org/>.

...February 2017

9-11 XML Prague

A conference on markup languages and data on the web. Topics include: Markup and the Extensible Web, semantic visions and the reality, publishing for the 21st century, XML databases and Big Data, and state of the XML Union.

University of Economics (UoE) campus at nam. W. Churchilla 4, Prague, The Czech Republic

www.xmlprague.cz/.

13-17 Webstock

Webstock is an annual celebration of the web and what lies beneath, and of its makers. It is a celebration of the creativity, the culture, the challenges, the craft, and everything in between.

St James Theatre, 77/87 Courtenay Place, Wellington, New Zealand

www.webstock.org.nz/17/.

16-17 19th International Conference on Information and Computer Technology

The ICICT 2017: 19th International Conference on Information and Computer Technology aims to bring together leading academic scientists, researchers and research scholars to exchange and share their experiences and research results on all aspects of Information and Computer Technology

Holiday Inn London – Wembley, Empire Way, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 8DS, London

<https://www.waset.org/conference/2017/02/london/ICICT>.

25-26 tcworld India 2016

tcworld India is an international learning platform for Indian technical communicators and language professionals. It is the best platform in India for showcasing products and services to the Indian market.

ITC Gardenia, Bangalore, India

<http://conferences.tekom.de/tcworld-india-2017/home/>.

26-02 San Diego UX Conference

NN/g's UX Conference helps you get up to speed on user experience best practices so you can create successful interfaces. Attend up to 5 days, or just 1.

Omni San Diego, 675 L Street, San Diego, CA (USA)

<https://www.nngroup.com/training/san-diego/>.

27-28 6th Annual Symposium on Communicating Complex Information

SCCI explores how the design and presentation of complex information affects how humans use it. This year SCCI includes a special half-day session focused on the complexities of healthcare information.

East Carolina Heart Institute, 115 Heart Dr, Greenville, NC (USA)

<http://workshop.design4complexity.com/SCCI-home.php>.

...February 2017

28-02 ConveyUX

ConveyUX is a Seattle-based event designed for practitioners of interaction and visual design, user research, and content strategy. The upcoming program will feature 30 great speakers presenting over 40 educational sessions through three full days.

The Motif, 1415 Fifth Avenue,
Seattle, WA (USA)

<http://conveyux.com/>.

Upcoming webinars

If you know of an event that will be of interest to readers, please let us know. You can send details by email to events@istc.org.uk. Please try to give us plenty of notice. The deadline for receiving information for *InfoPlus*⁺ is 24th of the month preceding publication.

December

6-8 Virtual Summit on Advanced Practices in Technical Communication

The Virtual Summit on Advanced Practices in Technical Communication is a free, three-

day event designed especially for technical communication professionals. The event features 12 free one-hour sessions from some of the industry's best and brightest talents — experts in XML authoring, content strategy, content management, translation and localization, intelligent content, plain language, customer experience, and more.

The Content Wrangler

<https://www.brighttalk.com/summit/virtual-summit-on-advanced-practices-in-technical-communication>.

6

Making Agile serious fun

Agile offers many benefits for organisations of all shapes and sizes. But with so much information to take on board, instilling an understanding of the approach throughout your team can be a challenge. Our webinar “Making Agile serious fun” shows how game-play can support this process
Box UK

<https://www.boxuk.com/landing/webinar-making-agile-serious-fun-registration>.

7

Navigation Essentials in Your Print and Web-based Content - TOCs, Indexes, and Glossaries in MadCap Flare

Join Justin Bondoc, Product Specialist, for this one hour presentation covering TOCs, indexes, and glossaries and how the organizational features in Flare can enhance your print and web-based content.

MadCap Software

<https://www.madcapsoftware.com/demos/signup.aspx?id=1147932789050344630>.

7

FrameMaker 2015 & FrameSLT – The Most Powerful Toolkit for Structured Content on the Market

The FrameSLT plugin for Adobe FrameMaker from West Street Consulting is a heavyweight tool for the management of structural markup and content. In this webinar, Russ Ward will demo these capabilities and give you a full taste of what this tool can do.

Adobe and West Street Consulting
<https://2016-12-07-frameslt.meetup.adobeevents.com/>.

...December

- 7 XML Publishing made Fast & Easy with XMetaL & tekReader**
Whether you're starting from scratch and looking to reap the rewards of using XML or have XML now and are scratching your head because it all got too complicated, this webinar will show you how fast and easy it should be.
XMetaL and tekReader
<http://tinyurl.com/zesotxm>.

- 13 Make the move! Migrating Unstructured Content to DITA with FrameMaker 2015**
In this webinar, Markus Wiedenmaier will guide you through the process of migrating "unstructured" content from Word or classic FrameMaker to DITA XML with Adobe FrameMaker (2015 release).
Adobe
<https://2016-12-13-go-dita-with-framemaker.meetus.adobeevents.com/>.

The back (half) page

Krampus has turned these popular Christmas songs into an over complicated mess! Can you decipher which songs he is referring to? Answers are below the carol singers.

1. One might wonder whether or not they are aware of the current holiday.
2. No noise between 8.00pm and 6.00am.
3. Folkloric fantasy of the relatively recent Eboracum.
4. Summon the entirety of believers.
5. The previous occurrence of the holiday season which is upon us at present.
6. It can not be anyone other than Kris Kringle.
7. Homo Sapiens Made of Crystallized Water Vapour.
8. The Christmas preceding all others
9. It would be my sincere request that this holiday was to become a quotidian affair.



- Answers:**
1. 'Do They Know It's Christmas?' – Band Aid
 2. Silent Night
 3. 'Fairytale of New York' – The Pogues and Kirsty MacColl
 4. O Come All Ye Faithful
 5. Last Christmas – Wham!
 6. 'Must Be Santa' – Bob Dylan
 7. Frosty the Snowman
 8. The First Noel
 9. 'I Wish It Could Be Christmas Everyday' – Wizzard