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InfoPlus

Monthly newsletter from the Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators

May 2019

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!

Yes, it's May already.

Maybe this is the month you decide to take part in our mentorship program?

Maybe you want to find out where our local area group meetings are happening?

Maybe you'd like to volunteer as a campaign manager for us?

Maybe a TechComm anthem is about to be unveiled! (Unexpected, but true.)

May you enjoy browsing the newsletter and have a marvellous month.

ISTC news

Seeking new mentors for our mentoring scheme

By Mark Swaine FISTC, Mentoring Scheme Coordinator

The ISTC mentoring scheme is looking for new mentors to help our growing list of new ISTC Junior Members. Have you considered being a mentor?

Look how rewarding it can be. Here are some of the benefits of being a mentor:

- It helps you become a better leader.
- It's an opportunity to learn more (other industries, workflows, tools, people skills, etc.).
- Personal career gain.
- It contributes to your CPD (continuing professional development).
- It helps shape the future of TechComm professionals coming into the industry.
- You gain new perspectives and fresh ideas.
- **And, most of all, it's a chance to feel good about yourself!**

I am sure you can remember being positively affected in some way by a mentor in the past, whether that was a teacher, a football coach or a work colleague. Now it is your chance.

Our volunteer mentors are all Fellows or Members of the ISTC who are keen to share their knowledge and experience with new entrants to the profession.

To find out more, you can read details about the scheme on the **ISTC website** or contact me via **mentoring@istc.org.uk**.

MENTORING

TCUK 2019 update

By Derek Cooper and Claire Kelly

Proposal submissions

The call for proposals has now closed. Thank you for your entries. All those who submitted a proposal will be contacted by mid-May.

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 loyal supporters of the largest UK conference on technical communication.

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

Supporter opportunities for individuals

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

TCUK 2019

The Technical Communication UK 2019 conference takes place at Chesford Grange, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, from **10 to 12 September 2019**.

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.

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- 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 **delegate bookings will be opened soon**. As usual, we'll be offering reduced prices during the early-bird booking period.

Campaign manager needed – can you spare two hours per quarter?

VOLUNTEER

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 distributes your promotional material appropriately 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, please 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

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4

ISTC community

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

The next meeting is scheduled for 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 July. 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

The group met in Newcastle upon Tyne on Tuesday 2 April in the local pub, The Town Wall, to discuss the use of jargon in written communication. We all agreed that while technical jargon can be very precise to some people, it can vary from workplace to workplace, and as such it is imperative to consider the target audience, especially novice-level personas.

Next meeting

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 7 May from 18:00 – 19:30. We will focus on the notion of being a sole technical author vs working in a team. 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

During the April meeting of the Thames Valley local group we looked at our favourite TechComm things, and ended up creating four verses and two choruses to echo *The Sound of Music* song "My favourite things". Our song sheet can be found on the Back Page.

Next meeting

Our next meeting is on Tuesday 7 May, and the fact of the matter is that we will be

identifying obsolete phrases and what to do with them.

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.

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 June edition of *InfoPlus*, please email your copy to newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk by **21 May 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.

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6

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	Zsuza 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

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

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7

- 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

TCUK: @TCUK_conf

Our Instagram presence:

ISTC_org

Our YouTube channel:

www.youtube.com/user/istctechcomm

Business affiliate news

New releases from MadCap Software

New features and improvements to MadCap Flare and MadCap Central have been announced in the last month.

MadCap Flare 2019 has been released with major new features including:

- ▶ Micro content authoring for chatbots and AI.
- ▶ Featured snippets in search.
- ▶ Zendesk publishing.
- ▶ CSS variables.
- ▶ And more!

You can delve into all the exciting details here.

Meanwhile, the **MadCap Central April 2019 Release** includes significant updates to improve the way you manage your content in the cloud. MadCap Central is the only cloud-based solution that allows your team to easily track and manage tasks,

manage workflows, schedule and automate processes, and extend your authoring capabilities with integrated subject matter expert (SME) contribution and review.

There is a completely redesigned user interface, and several new enhancements have been added to Projects, Tasks and Widgets. Click here for more information about this release.

Adobe RoboHelp 2019 release

RoboHelp, as many of you know, is a help authoring tool (HAT) developed and published by Adobe. The latest release includes both new and enhanced features.

New features:

- A reimagined, minimalist user interface.
- HTML5 and CSS3 authoring support to help you create highly immersive content experiences.
- Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG) support.
- Enhanced Object Properties dialog.

- Ability to switch between multiple views.
- Global style management control.
- Search autocorrect.

Enhanced features:

- Intelligent content reuse.
- Conditional content usage.
- Cleaner project structure.
- Powerful project management with the new Project Manager.
- Real-time CSS editor.
- Smoother import of Microsoft Word files.
- An all-new skin editor.
- Optimised search engine.

You can find more information about the release here.

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

Heads in the cloud

A future "Human Brain/Cloud Interface" will give people instant access to vast knowledge via thought alone, experts predict.

Imagine a future technology that would provide instant access to the world's knowledge and artificial intelligence, simply by thinking about a specific topic or question. Communications, education, work, and the world as we know it would be transformed.

Writing in *Frontiers in Neuroscience*, an international collaboration led by researchers at UC Berkeley and the US Institute for Molecular Manufacturing predicts that exponential progress in nanotechnology, nanomedicine, AI, and computation will lead this century to the development of a "Human Brain/Cloud Interface" (B/CI), that connects brain cells to vast cloud-computing networks in real time.

Nanobots on the brain

The B/CI concept was initially proposed by futurist-author-inventor Ray Kurzweil,

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9

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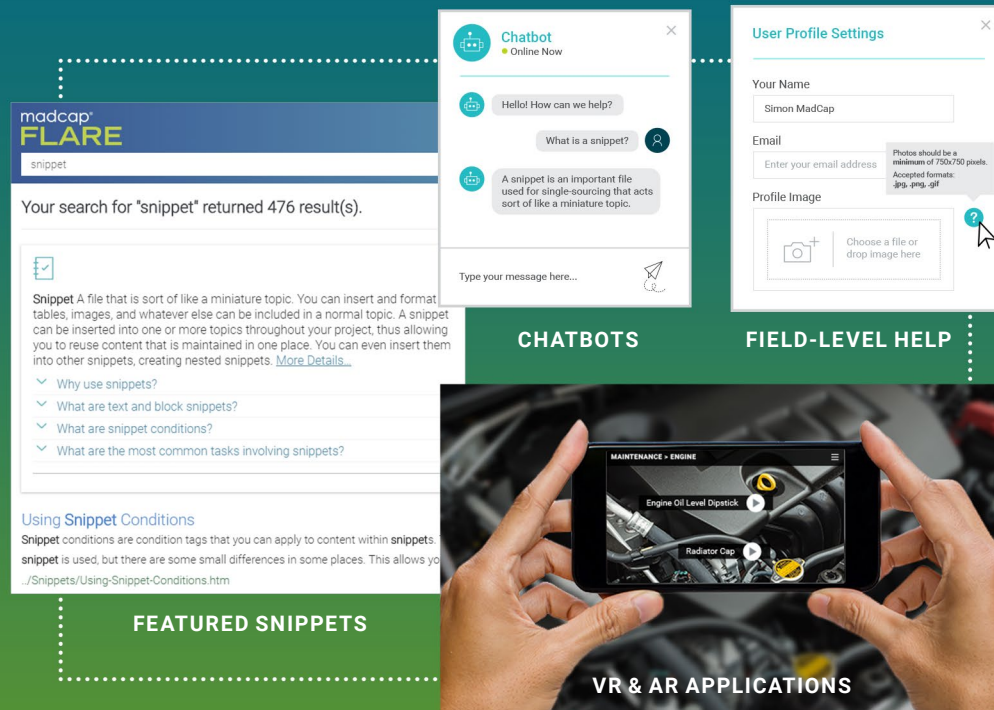## NEW 2019 RELEASE NOW AVAILABLE

• • • •

Micro Content Authoring for Chatbots and AI, Featured Snippets in Search, Zendesk Publishing, CSS Variables, and More

"

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 AUTHORING

Chatbot
● Online Now

Hello! How can we help?

What is a snippet?

A snippet is an important file used for single-sourcing that acts sort of like a miniature topic.

Type your message here...

User Profile Settings

Your Name
Simon MadCap

Email
Enter your email address

Photos should be a minimum of 750x750 pixels. Accepted formats: .jpg, .png, .gif

Profile Image
Choose a file or drop image here

CHATBOTS   **FIELD-LEVEL HELP**

madcap® FLARE
snippet

Your search for "snippet" returned 476 result(s).

Snippet A file that is sort of like a miniature topic. You can insert and format tables, images, and whatever else can be included in a normal topic. A snippet can be inserted into one or more topics throughout your project, thus allowing you to reuse content that is maintained in one place. You can even insert them into other snippets, creating nested snippets. More Details...

∨ Why use snippets?
∨ What are text and block snippets?
∨ What are snippet conditions?
∨ What are the most common tasks involving snippets?

Using Snippet Conditions
Snippet conditions are condition tags that you can apply to content within snippets. snippet is used, but there are some small differences in some places. This allows you
.../Snippets/Using-Snippet-Conditions.htm

FEATURED SNIPPETS

MAINTENANCE > ENGINE
Engine Oil Level Dipstick
Radiator Cap

VR & AR APPLICATIONS

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THIS NEW RELEASE, INCLUDING VIDEOS AND WEBINARS, VISIT

››› madcapsoftware.com

madcap® software

zendesk

who suggested that neural nanorobots – brainchild of Robert Freitas, Jr., senior author of the research – could be used to connect the neocortex of the human brain to a "synthetic neocortex" in the cloud. Our wrinkled neocortex is the newest, smartest, "conscious" part of the brain.

Freitas' proposed neural nanorobots would provide direct, real-time monitoring and control of signals to and from brain cells.

"These devices would navigate the human vasculature, cross the blood-brain barrier, and precisely auto position themselves among, or even within brain cells," explains Freitas. "They would then wirelessly transmit encoded information to and from a cloud-based supercomputer network for real-time brain-state monitoring and data extraction."

The internet of thoughts

This cortex in the cloud would allow "*Matrix*"-style downloading of information to the brain, the group claims.

"A human B/CI system mediated by neural nanorobotics could empower individuals with instantaneous access to all cumulative human knowledge available in the cloud, while significantly improving human learning capacities and intelligence," says lead author Dr Nuno Martins.

B/CI technology might also allow us to create a future "global superbrain" that would connect networks of individual human brains and AIs to enable collective thought.

"While not yet particularly sophisticated, an experimental human 'BrainNet' system has already been tested, enabling thought-driven information exchange via the cloud between individual brains," explains Martins. "It used electrical signals recorded through the skull of 'senders' and magnetic stimulation through the skull of 'receivers,' allowing for performing cooperative tasks.

"With the advance of neural nanorobotics, we envisage the future creation of 'superbrains' that can harness the thoughts and thinking power of any number of humans and machines in real time. This shared cognition could revolutionise democracy, enhance empathy, and ultimately unite culturally diverse groups into a truly global society."

When can we connect?

According to the group's estimates, even existing supercomputers have processing speeds capable of handling the necessary volumes of neural data for B/CI – and they're getting faster, fast.

Rather, transferring neural data to and from supercomputers in the cloud is likely to be the ultimate bottleneck in B/CI development.

"This challenge includes not only finding the bandwidth for global data transmission," cautions Martins, "but also, how to enable data exchange with neurons via tiny devices embedded deep in the brain."

One solution proposed by the authors is the use of "magnetoelectric nanoparticles" to effectively amplify communication between neurons and the cloud.

"These nanoparticles have been used already in living mice to couple external magnetic fields to neuronal electric fields – that is, to detect and locally amplify these magnetic signals and so allow them to alter the electrical activity of neurons," explains

Martins. "This could work in reverse, too: electrical signals produced by neurons and nanorobots could be amplified via magnetoelectric nanoparticles, to allow their detection outside of the skull."

Getting these nanoparticles – and nanorobots – safely into the brain via the circulation, would be perhaps the greatest challenge of all in B/CI.

"A detailed analysis of the biodistribution and biocompatibility of nanoparticles is required before they can be considered for human development. Nevertheless, with these and other promising technologies for B/CI developing at an ever-increasing rate, an 'internet of thoughts' could become a reality before the turn of the century," Martins concludes.

Microsoft Paint lives on

In 2017, Microsoft said that Paint was to be deprecated, meaning it was no longer in active development and could be removed from future releases of Windows. However, fans of the application can breathe easy as it has been confirmed that the program will be included in the next Windows 10 update, due this month.

It may be old, and it may be basic, but many people remain fond of the program. So much so that news of its survival made the headlines on the BBC News website recently.

Pint of Science festival

Pint of Science is a worldwide science festival that takes place from 20 to 22 May and brings researchers to your local pub to present their scientific discoveries.

With nearly 600 events in more than 40 UK cities it's likely that there's something happening near you. As the festival's tag line states, it could be the perfect way to "quench your thirst for knowledge."

You can peruse the events and also listen to a number of Pint of Science podcasts on their website.

Tricks of the trade

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.
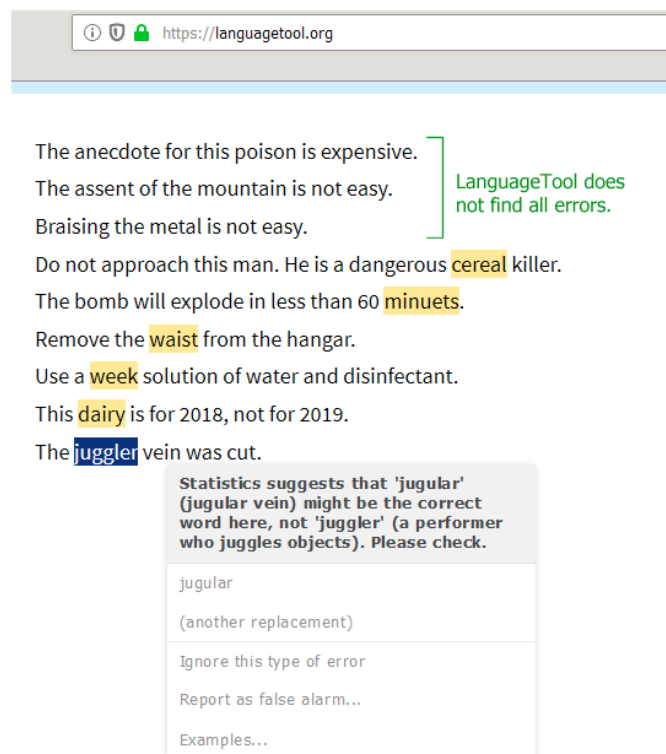
Check the semantics of a document with LanguageTool

By Dr Mike Unwalla FISTC

When editors proofread documents, they make sure that the document makes sense. In addition to spelling and grammar, they check the semantics of a document.

LanguageTool uses "big data" to find possible semantic problems. The screenshot

shows some examples. For all the sentences the grammar is correct. LanguageTool finds many semantic errors, which are highlighted in yellow. To see a suggested correction, click the highlighted text. For the sentence, "The juggler vein was cut," LanguageTool suggests "jugular" and gives a short explanation of the meaning of the words "jugular" and "juggler".

A screenshot from LanguageTool

This screenshot (left) shows the online version of LanguageTool. You can use statistics with the desktop version of LanguageTool, but you must download more than eight gigabytes of data (http://wiki.languagetool.org/finding-errors-using-n-gram-data).

Blog news

By Ginny Critcher

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.

Hello again! Here's the latest blog round up.

Jennifer Morse on the Madcap Flare blog describes the new features in the latest Flare release, including a micro content editor:

https://www.madcapsoftware.com/blog/.

Ben Carter at the Government Digital Service blog posts on understanding all the barriers service users might face and how the GDS is working to reduce these barriers as much as possible:

https://gds.blog.gov.uk/2019/03/26/understanding-all-the-barriers-service-users-might-face/.

Jake Campbell posts on the Scriptorium blog about the benefits of smart content:

https://www.scriptorium.com/2019/04/smart-content-for-marketing/.

Angus Edwardson from GatherContent tells us about ContentOps – the infrastructure and processes that are required to create content across an organisation:

https://gathercontent.com/blog/what-is-contentops.

Sarah Maddox posts on her FFeathers blog about the keynote speech at the Collaborations Workshop 2019 – *Transporting data more easily with Frictionless Data*:

https://ffeathers.wordpress.com/2019/04/01/open-data-reduces-friction-in-sharing-and-use-of-data/.

Ellis Pratt on the Cherryleaf blog starts a series of posts on policies and procedures starting with why they are needed:

https://www.cherryleaf.com/2019/04/why-do-organisations-need-to-write-policies-and-procedures/.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

...Armada

...May

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.

June

3-4 **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, Bromsgrove.

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

3-4 **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.

Armada, Newbury.

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

10-11 **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, Bristol.

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

...Armada

...June

13-14 **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.

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, Reading.

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

24-25 **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, Bristol.

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

24-25 **Introduction to Adobe Captivate**
This course teaches everything you need to create professional standard e-learning tutorials and high-quality demos.

Armada, Reading.

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

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.

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you can to 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/.

MadCap Software

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

Events listings

May

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

7 **ISTC North East England Area Group Meeting**
During this month's meeting we will focus on the notion of being a sole technical author vs working in a team. Please register via Eventbrite or email Joanna Suau: northeastengland_areagroup@istc.org.uk.
The Town Wall, Pink Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 5HX from 18:00 – 19:30.

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17

...May

7   ISTC Thames Valley Area Group Meeting
The fact of the matter is that we will be identifying obsolete phrases and what to do with them this month. For more information email Darren Mitcham: thamesvalley_areagroup@istc.org.uk.

Bird in Hand Hotel, Bath Road, Knowl Hill, Reading, RG10 9UP at 19:30.

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   Adobe Summit – The Digital Experience Conference
See the future of customer experience management. Get inspired to become an exceptional experience maker.

London, UK.

https://summit-emea.adobe.com/emea/.

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.

19-21   Write the Docs Portland
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.

Portland, Oregon, USA.

www.writethedocs.org/conf/portland/2019/.

21   ISTC Cambridge Area Group Meeting
For more information email Zsuzsa Nagy: cambridge_areagroup@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/.

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18

June

2-3 **Write the Docs Vilnius**
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.

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.

July

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

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.

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19

...September

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.

Upcoming webinars

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

May

8 **MadCap Flare and MadCap Central April 2019 Releases: Micro Content and More**
Join Jennifer Morse, Director of Product Evangelism, for a comprehensive look at the latest releases from MadCap Software.
https://www.madcapsoftware.com/demos/signup.aspx?id=1155493845559056752.

15 **Creating a Dynamic Learning Experience with MadCap Flare: A Case Study with Team Software**
Chris Jones, Product Content Manager of TEAM Software, describes how MadCap Flare was used to replace their external Learning Management System to provide an exceptional learning experience for users.
https://www.madcapsoftware.com/demos/signup.aspx?id=1155353888008624635.

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.

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.

Back page

My favourite (TechComm) things

By the ISTC Thames Valley Local Area Group

Warm up your vocal chords and get ready to channel your inner Julie – or Julian – Andrews.

The following should be sung to the tune of "My favourite things" from *The Sound of Music*:

Rewriting change notes, updating the website
Writing instructions and getting them just right
Building some text from reusable strings
These are a few of my favourite things

Writing a sentence with crisp Oxford commas
Winning awards and professional honours
Collaborating with good SMEs
Correctly placing my apostrophes

(Chorus)

Software crashing
Rigid deadlines
When reviews are due
I simply remember my favourite things
And I wouldn't swap with you!

Crafting a topic with snippets and headings
Knowing the difference 'twixt kerning and leadings
Thinking that somebody read what I wrote
Helping new users to work gets my vote!

Getting involved in the software designing
Making sure pictures and text are aligning
Feeling the weight of an old-fashioned guide
Cutting it down so the facts cannot hide

(Chorus)

Could you just do…
Last min redo
Oh the name is new
I simply remember my favourite things
And I wouldn't swap with you!

(Chorus reprieve)

If you want to
Meet new authors
Join ISTC
We're just a gaggle of disparate souls
Who like to explain, simply!

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21