

Perspectives STC-Central Iowa Community

A Central Iowa View on the Technical Communication Industry

August Meeting Highlights

by Arlene Manbeck

On Tuesday, August 25, 2009, fourteen members of STC-CI gathered at the beautiful West Des Moines Community Schools Learning Resource Center at 3550 Mills Civic Parkway in West Des Moines at 5:30 p.m.

While making new — or renewing — acquaintances, these professional technical communicators enjoyed delicious pasta and veggie delights provided by Gateway Market. Following dinner, Chris Thiessen and Scott McCallum, of Emerson Process Management, presented the exciting possibilities of simultaneous collaboration using Adobe Acrobat version 8 or 9 online. They showed visual slides created by Sabrina Darnowsky of MedPlus. While sharing amusing real-life experiences of document editing by their colleagues while retaining the colleagues' anonymity. Lively discussion ensued during a question and answer session.



Scott McCallum and Chris Thiessen of Emerson Process Management

Sincere thanks to all who attended and participated in this educational and social event.

Next Meeting September 15, 2009

When: Noon to 1 p.m.

Where: Principal Financial Group, Corporate 1 Building, Rom S-265, 711 High Street, Des Moines, Iowa

Topic: Building Business Intelligence With a Listening Strategy

Presenters: Nathan T. Wright and Hillary Brown of Lava Row

Cost: \$15 members; \$25 nonmembers; free for students

Fact: Your audience is talking about you online. This workshop teaches you and your team how to harness listening and monitoring technology (Google Reader, Technorati, Twitter Search, etc.) for the purpose of scanning conversations in blogs, social networks, user forums, message boards and online communities for mentions of your organization, competitors and other relevant topics.

During the session we walk you through set-up of your customized listening post and provide training on the various features and functionality. You'll also learn how to filter this river of information, and what to do with all of it.

Please join us!

September 2009



Creating and supporting a forum for communities of practice in the profession of technical communication

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Notes from the President

Welcome back

Welcome back to what will surely be another great year for STC-Central Iowa! We spent the summer getting some great programs lined up for the year, and we hope to see more members take advantage of these affordable learning opportunities.

Save the date for some great programs

We kicked things off in August with a great presentation from Chris Thiessen and Scott McCallum of Emerson Process Management. The duo discussed shared document review with Adobe Acrobat weighing the pros and cons of the technology within an organization.

In September, you'll learn how to harness listening and monitoring technology to see what others are saying about your organization

during "Building Business Intelligence With a Listening Strategy".

Be sure to check out all the upcoming programs at www.stc-centraliowa.org and get them marked on your calendar!

A recovering organization

As you have likely heard, STC is facing a \$1.2 million deficit, and the organization has been working to develop a recovery and regeneration plan. This deficit comes on the heels of the economic recession resulting most from the society experiencing a shortfall in projected revenue from the annual conference and providing members with services at a price well below the actual cost of the services.

This summer, the society requested that each community provide an 18-month budget projecting our costs and income. Any

funds not allocated to budget will be returned to the STC office to assist them with the financial crisis.

In August, we provided a budget to the society that allocated our projected resources and reserves to continuing to offer our community quality programs and services. Our community has been operating on a zero-based budget for some time, and as our projections show that we will use all funds we currently we currently have to cover our expenses.

We are holding tight to hear more information from the society to determine what steps will be next for our community and the society as a whole. Please let me know if you have any questions.

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Managing Editor: Arlene Manbeck, usaworld007@yahoo.com

This newsletter invites writers to submit articles that they wish to be considered for publication. Note: By submitting an article, you implicitly grant a license to this newsletter to run the article and for other STC publications to reprint it without permission. Copyright is held by the writer. In your cover letter, please let the editor know if this article has run elsewhere, and if it has been submitted for consideration to other publications.

The newsletter is published monthly for the months of September through May. We welcome your articles, book reviews, job opening notifications, letters to the editor, and other items of interest. Please email your submissions to the managing editor.

August Business Summary

During a brief business meeting, Jesse Strawn, President, described some strategic goals that members are trying to complete like the web site updates. She encouraged members to let Chris Thiessen know of any technical communications job openings so he can post them to the STC-CI's job board.

She would like this organization to perform a community service project, perhaps partnering with a school and asked for ideas and volunteers from members.

Michael Gernst, Treasurer, handed out and explained an interesting and informative budget projection.

Notes From the President

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Moving forward

Apart from the gloom and doom of the budget, we are excited about moving our community forward. We have set three important goals for this year:

1. Refresh the community web site.
2. Increase meeting attendance.
3. Expand job board postings and networking opportunities for

members.

515.205.0974. ■

We are also working on a volunteer project that will allow us to use our talents as technical communicators to help an organization in need. We will have more details in the future, or if you have any ideas for a project please let us know.

If you would like to help out with any of these initiatives, we would love to hear from you. Contact me at jessestrawn@gmail.com or

STC – Central Iowa Board

Jessie Strawn, President

Sara Smith, Vice-President

Dr. Therese Judge, Secretary

Michael Gernes, Treasurer

Eden Picht, Membership Manager

Chris Thiessen—Employment Manager

Alisha Sauer, Communications Manager (Webmaster)

Perspectives is a monthly online publication of STC-Central Iowa at www.stc-centraliowa.org. This newsletter is published monthly from September through May and is produced by volunteers of the Central Iowa STC community.

If you are interested in volunteering as a copy editor, photographer, advertising manager, or for any other position, contact the Newsletter Managing Editor, Arlene Manbeck, at usa-world007@yahoo.com.

Lunch and Learn

The STC Central Iowa Community invites you to a lunch-hour meeting on September 15!

Program: Building Business Intelligence with a Listening Strategy

Presented by Nathan T. Wright and Hillary Brown of [Lava Row](#), this workshop teaches you and your team how to harness listening and monitoring technology (Google Reader, Technorati, Twitter Search, etc.) for the purpose of scanning conversations in blogs, social networks, user forums, message boards and online communities for mentions of your organization, competitors, and other relevant topics.

Date: Tuesday, September 15, 2009

Time: Noon - 1 p.m.

Location:

Principal Financial Group, Corporate 1 building ("The Square"), Room S-265
711 High Street
Des Moines, IA 50392

Non-Principal employees should meet in the skywalk entrance/lobby on the second floor of Corporate 1, where they'll check in at the security desk. Principal employees/STC members will escort them to the meeting room.

Attendees can either park on the street in metered parking spots or pay to park in public ramps. These two ramps are nearby and are connected to the skywalk system ([map](#)):

- 7th St. and Grand Ave.
- 9th St. and Locust

Food: Sandwich Bag Lunch (sandwich, fresh-cut fruit, bag of chips, and fresh-baked cookie)

You may select your sandwich when you register for the meeting.

Beverages will also be provided.

Cost:

- Members: \$15
 - Non-members: \$25
- Student members: Free

RSVP: Submit this [form](#) by the end of the day on Friday, September 11.

Questions: Contact Sara Smith (smith.sara@principal.com).

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The STC-CIC SIG is pleased to announce our first conference call for the 2009 - 2010 program year!

"An Introduction to SharePoint," presented by Bill Graham, is scheduled for Tuesday, September 15, 2009, at:

1 - 2 p.m. EST

12 - 1 p.m. CST

11 a.m. - 12 p.m. MST

10 - 11 a.m. PST

*NOTE: All U.S. time zones

Program Description

Have you wondered what all the buzz is about Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007? Perhaps you've been wondering how you can use it as a technical communicator or a manager of technical communicators. Maybe your client uses it and you haven't.

On September 15, Bill Graham will provide a brief, lunchtime presentation on what SharePoint is and how you can use it in your technical communication practice. He'll frame this discussion around the six major capabilities of SharePoint: collaboration, Web portal, search, content management, business processes and business intelligence.

After Bill's presentation, he'll spend some time answering your questions. If you want to explore some innovative ways to make SharePoint work for your technical communication projects, this presentation is for you.

Our Speaker

Bill Graham is a senior technical writer and consultant with Idea Integration, a division of MPS Group. With over thirteen years of experience, he has created a variety of information products, including manuals, online help, training materials and marketing materials. He is enthusiastic about Microsoft(r) Office SharePoint Server(r) 2007, and he has used it in his practice as a technical communicator.

His education includes several years of military technical training; a Bachelor of Sacred Music degree from the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, Illinois; and a Master of Science degree in Technical Communication Management from Mercer University's College of Engineering in Macon, Georgia.

Bill served for two years as a treasurer of the Suncoast STC, wrote articles for several chapter newsletters and edited the Upcoming Events column for Indexing SIG newsletter.

Sounds great! When is the Call? How do I sign up?

If you'd like to sign up for this call, please respond to KeaRea@aol.com no later than Monday, September 13, 2009. Handouts and dial in information will be sent to participants on Tuesday, September 14, 2009.

REALLY IMPORTANT NOTE: Although there are no fees to sign up for this call, **you will be responsible for the toll fees** incurred for the call. In other words, there's no registration fee but you'll be paying for a long-distance call.

Suzanne Guess

CIC SIG Mgr

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