

WriteUp

FTCC Awards Ceremony: A Festive Occasion

By Barrie Waters, 2000-2001 Vice-President Palm Beaches Chapter

January 20, 2001 - George W. Bush became the 43rd U.S. president and the 2000 FTCC award winners were honored at the Feather Sound County Club in Clearwater, Florida.

I was pleasantly surprised to see the upstairs banquet hall at Feather Sound gaily decorated with red, white, and blue balloons. It reminded me that this day was an important day in the history of our nation. The view of the golf course was beautiful.

Attendees were greeted by Bill Graham and Laura McGrover at a reception table outside the Heron Room. Award winners were given name tags that represented the level of award earned.

Between 6:00 and 7:00 p.m. we enjoyed appetizers, a cash bar, and the opportunity to speak with fellow technical communicators. While we mingled, we viewed the award winning entries displayed at various locations in the Heron Room.



Sharon Goldner, Barrie Waters, Linda Dixon, Victoria Oakley-Sarro take home a stack of awards.

At 7:00 p.m. we enjoyed a delicious buffet dinner of Steak Bordelaise, fresh fish, assorted salads, vegetables, and tempting desserts.

I was one of four technical documentation team members that traveled from Boca Raton to attend the FTCC 2000 banquet. We accepted awards for the Mercator Software help and technical publications.

After dinner and dessert, the awards program opened with a warm welcome address by FTCC 2000 co-chair Mary Greer. The Online Communication awards were presented by FTCC 2000 co-chair Lou Martindale. Mary Greer presented the Technical Art awards and Lynnette Porter presented the Technical Publications awards. The awards presentations closed with Suncoast chapter president Eileen McPartland presenting the Best of Show award.

Participation in the FTCC provides our department with excellent internal public relations as well as industry recognition. Each award-winning technical communicator was also honored at a Mercator meeting and presented with a Handspring Visor Platinum! This handheld personal digital assistant was an unexpected reward that was made

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Write Up

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Write Up communicates chapter and Society news six times per year for the benefit of members and friends of the Suncoast Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication (STC).

Submissions

Meeting writeups, feature articles, and software/book reviews are encouraged (100-700 words). Preferred formats include MS Word e-mail attachment or text in the body of your e-mail message.

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By Diana Moran

From the Editor

With a new STC year already around the corner, it's time to think about nominating officers. In addition, it's time to think about whether you'd like to be the next Newsletter Editor for the Write Up. Please consider the position, as it has been a very rewarding experience.

I would like to suggest for the next term that there be a Layout Editor as well as a Content Editor. This would give more than one person the opportunity to participate as well as divide the work load up a bit.

With only two more issues to come, I would like to know what you think about the online format versus a traditional print newsletter. Please email me your thoughts to be published in the March/April issue.

For the next issue I am looking for the following submissions:

- Book/Technology Review
- February/March Meeting Recaps
- Feature Article
- Leadership Column
- Student Article/Upates
- Networking Information (other organizations' meeting times, etc)
- Letters to the Editor

Please email me if you'd like to submit to the Write Up (Rustyzen@hotmail.com)! The deadline for the next issue is March 25th.

ONLINE DOCUMENTATION

**NEIL PERLIN
HYPERWORD
SERVICES**

Tewksbury, MA 01876
978-657-5464
nperlin@concentric.net
www.hyperword.com

TRAINING

- Designing An Online Information System
- RoboHELP Classic
- RoboHELP HTML
- ForeHelp HTML
- Online Graphics and Paint Shop Pro
- WinHelp Design
- Windows CE Help
- Code-Level WinHelp, HTML Help, JavaHelp

CONSULTING & DEVELOPMENT

- Online information system design – format selection, file structure, interface design, documentation specs
- Evaluation and debugging
- Hard-copy or WinHelp conversion to HTML-based formats
- Prototyping and development

**FOREFRONT
AUTHORIZED TRAINER**

**CERTIFIED ROBOHELP
INSTRUCTOR**

Creating Online Documentation Since 1986

Leader's Message

By Martha Collins, Treasurer of the Society of Technical Communication

Participating in STC Can Enrich Your Professional Life

It's almost April and time to elect a new slate of officers. Give some serious thought to volunteering for one of the officer positions or one of the many other positions that support the smooth operation of a chapter—it can enrich your professional life as well as your personal life.

There are many benefits from being actively involved in the Suncoast chapter.

Leadership Skills

We all began our careers with few leadership skills. Many of the technical communication jobs do not provide an opportunity for the development of these skills, but technical communication managerial positions require them. STC can fill that void. I have seen many young leaders begin their term of office feeling very apprehensive. By the end of their terms in office, they were well on the way to displaying good leadership skills.

Friendship

The work we do together as chapter leaders makes us a close-knit group. Talk with any STC member who has served in a leadership capacity, and without fail, each will tell you of the strong friendships they have acquired in the process. These friendships go beyond our professional lives—these friendships are a part of our personal lives.

Peer Network

As a result of actively participating in STC, you form a network of peers who can help you solve work-related issues. There is usually someone who has had the same issue you have encountered and is glad to tell you how he or she handled the problem.

Continuing Education

Everything you learn from working and talking with your peers and from participating in the chapter programs, enhances your skills. Every new experience you have is an educational adventure.

Your professional life will suffer if you don't give yourself the opportunity to experience professional growth in the form of developing leadership skills, friendships, peer networks, and to enhancing your technical communication skills. Participating in chapter leadership affords you this opportunity.



Membership Update

By Melissa Lamb,
Suncoast Chapter
Membership Manager

New Members

James G. Hooper
Cheryl E. Jaeger
Michelle O'Neal
Mark A. Rentschlar
Donna Jean Smith
Donna Longwood
Barbara J. Wyman

Transferring Members

David Voss
Lynette B. Crane
Frank Kyper

Membership Figures

Total STC Suncoast
Membership: 202

Total STC Members: 23,8884

Don't Forget

Send change of address, phone number, and email address to Dave Lewis to update your membership information if it has changed!

dlewis@tvratings.com

(Multiple, continued from page 4)

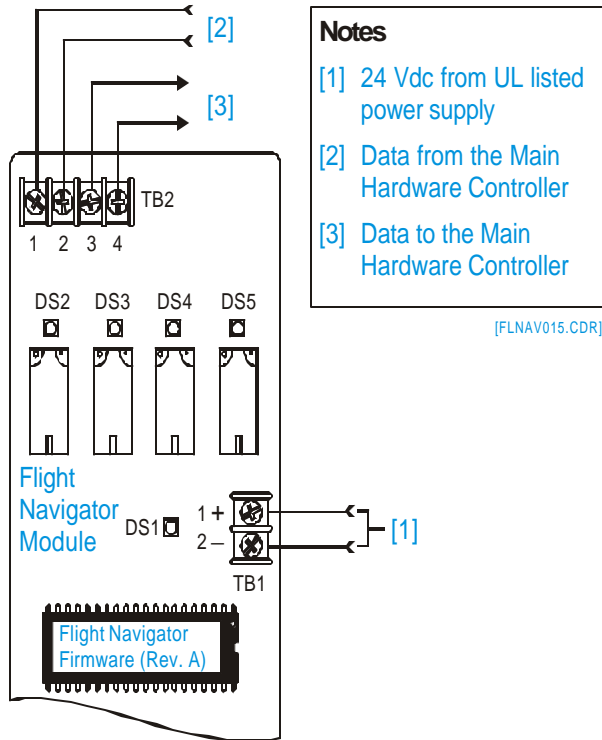


Figure 2—Generic Drawing

Figure 2 illustrates some ways to remove the OEM references from Figure 1. I replace model names with proper names and deleted the logos. You can relieve any concern about product confusion by associating the proper names with the model names in the body text. You can also use dynamic fields to reference model names in the body text. Mail merge in MSWord™ and conditional text in Frame-Maker™ are examples of dynamic fields. For example, you could write, “Wire the Flight Navigator Module (G-FLNAV) to the Main Hardware Controller (G-MHC) according to Figure 2. See the compatibility section for UL listed power supplies.” The shading behind the model names represents instances of dynamic fields.

These are but a few issues in the conversion of OEM-specific drawings to generic drawings. Use the text-finding features of your graphics application if you have one. Use the zoom tool to examine notes, captions, and headings. Save the file under a generic file name. Finally, look for every instance of the OEM logo and the company name. With this approach, you should be able to make many of your drawings generic enough for several OEM-distributor manuals.

(FTCC, continued from page 1)

possible by the recognition we received in the FTCC 2000.

By 9:30, the awards banquet was over, but the good feelings were not. I was glad to speak with many Suncoast chapter members and express my thanks for their volunteer efforts that made the FTCC possible.

Thanks to all the Suncoast chapter members who made the FTCC possible. I enjoyed my trip to the west coast and look forward to continuing the new friendships I made during my visit.



Sharon Goldner, Barrie Waters, Victoria Oakley-Sarro and Linda Dixon in the Feather Sound Country Club Heron Room.



Embedded Help

By Jim Sands, Chicago Chapter

I was in a discussion last week with several software developers regarding Web-based Help technologies, and the concept of embedded help arose. Cheryl Lockett Zubak recently published an article on embedded help in Intercom, and I thought it might be worthwhile to follow up with a few highlights of this relatively new help technology.

The older Windows and HTML Help paradigm:

If you're a veteran Windows or HTML Help developer, you're well aware of the challenges of designing and writing a help system that compliments an application. The help that you develop is really not part of the application, but instead, is a separate component with context-sensitive linkages to the application program. You're accustomed to help systems that are developed using a process that is basically separate from the process of developing the application program. Your contact with the application developers may be minimal, and is probably toward the end of the product development cycle. Thankfully, there are exceptions to this scenario, but many of us have come to expect this strategy.

Embedded help (from the user's view): Embedded help changes the old help paradigm. Stationary embedded help (the most common embedded help today) is designed as a live component of the application program, and is always visible as part of the user interface, usually in a standard box, or frame. Since the help is always visible on the screen, it works seamlessly with the application, so the user doesn't have to constantly request help, identify topics using an index, move the help viewer, etc.

Embedded help (from our view): As a help developer, you'll find your workflow changes considerably. For starters, you'll work almost daily with the application developers to develop an embedded help system. You'll be involved from the beginning of the design cycle, instead of appearing at the end of it. You may need to beef up your programming knowledge to communicate effectively with developers, and the time required to develop your help system may double, or even triple. The way you chunk your help information may also change considerably. Embedded help is a simple concept for the user, but requires considerably more involvement from the help author.

Is it worth it? If you have the opportunity to create an embedded help system, it can be very rewarding. Most of the challenges are not unlike those that Windows Help developers faced ten years ago, and we all lived through those times. Just remember that you will need more clock time, more involvement with developers, and enough systems knowledge to work closely with the average programmer.

Want more information?

- *What is Embedded Help?* March, 2000. Intercom.
- <http://www.helpmatters.com>. Select Help Matters Webzine, Embedded help tour from the menu at the left.

Have a question about Help?

Jim Sands is an independent on-line Help consultant and welcomes your questions and comments. Send questions to ohlp@msn.com, 847-918-8761, or to Sands & Associates, 650 Whitney Court, Suite 404, Gurnee, IL 60031. All questions will be answered in *Help 101* rather than individually.

Help 101 offers practical tips and educational resources for online Help developers. This column is a regular feature of both WriteUp and Byline, the newsletter of the Chicago chapter.



Currents 2001: The Odyssey Continues

March 16 & 17, 2001

Plan now to attend the Atlanta Chapter's annual conference, Currents, on March 16 and 17, 2001, at the Atlanta campus of Mercer University. Register by February 26 for the best rates.

Our theme for Currents 2001, "The Odyssey Continues," embraces the ongoing evolution of our profession and implies the need to keep abreast of changes. A feature of Currents 2001 is the inclusion of the Region 3 Student Conference.

Currents begins on Friday, March 16, with James Conklin's full-day workshop, "Knowledge Management - From Assessment to Strategy to Action."

The conference on Saturday, March 17 begins with Scott Draughon's keynote address, "Managing Disruptive Applications of Technology in a dot.com World." You can then choose any four presentations from our topic stems:

- Consulting
- Management
- Getting Started
- Writing/Editing
- Tools and Technology
- Usability

Access our website, <http://www.pobox.com/~stc-atlanta>, for complete conference information, fees (early registration ends 2/26), and registration form.

Presentation synopses, the speakers and their bios are provided. You can also contact conference manager Cheri Pullar at pullarcc@cs.com.

The Society for Technical Communication (STC) is an individual membership organization dedicated to advancing the arts and sciences of technical communication. Its membership includes individuals whose work involves making technical information available to those who need it.

STC is the world's largest professional organization serving the technical communication profession. It has more than 25,000 members and 150 chapters representing 39 countries. The Atlanta Chapter has over 700 members.

For information about STC Atlanta and directions to our meetings, point your browser to <http://www.pobox.com/~stc-atlanta>.

Featured Face: Meet Wayne Lewis

Background: Wayne Lewis is employed by PricewaterhouseCoopers for approximately four years and is a Senior member of STC. Mr. Lewis has more than 10 years of experience in training design, implementation and delivery and four years experience in Information Systems administration. He has designed, developed and delivered end-user and project team training programs for public and private organizations as well as a wide range of audiences, including financial, technical and sales. He has delivered training for the Japanese Ministry of Education (Mombusho), the State of Florida Department of Human Resources, Raymond James Financial, Inc., Adaptec, Inc., Ashland, Inc., the AMR Corporation, the County of Sacramento, California, and the United States Navy. He has also facilitated training sessions for the American Society for Training and Development and judged entries for the Florida Technical Communications Competition and the International Online Communications Competition. Mr. Lewis is certified in SAP R/3.

How did you get into technical communication? I never really got into technical writing as much as technical training. Training includes some writing, but writing doesn't always include training. I started technical training after I returned from Japan. I started working for HRS, who I had done some temporary work with while I was in college. They were implementing a new computer system, had no documentation and less knowledge of what the system could do, so they challenged me with the task of learning the system, documenting it and teaching everyone what I learned. I knew the people pretty well, so I had a lot of fun, learned a lot and started along my career path.

What are your main work responsibilities? I'm a road warrior – traveling 49 weeks a year designing, developing and delivering technical training programs.

What do you see is the biggest challenge in the field of technical communication? Using the newest technologies to help people do their jobs – combining the roles of the different types of technical communicators effectively. The divisions between our jobs are becoming more and more blurred, and those doing online help development are mixing in software documentation, who are mixing in technical training and e-Learning. After that, the hardest part is validation – making sure that the products we are creating are effective and appropriate for the need and the audience. How do you measure that appropriately?

What have been the highlights of your career? The coolest thing I ever did was the CINCPACFLT project -- developing a training program while living aboard an aircraft carrier for six months. I designed, developed and conducted technical application training to enhance the understanding of application/ technology capability and apply the capability to specific business processes.

At Raymond James and Associates, Inc., I designed, developed and delivered all internal productivity tool training, marketed the first Raymond James University training program and targeted audiences for specialized training. I determined computer training needs for over 2500 associates as well as evaluated assessments and course materials. I created and managed the budget for the new computer training department and monitored the billing and GL accounts. I also evaluated and procured all classroom materials and equipment, as well as coordinated facility usage. I was also responsible for maintaining training resources developing a data system to track, monitor and record all corporate training.

Finally, I lived and worked in Japan developing training for the Japanese government. I was selected by the Japanese Ministry of Education to intensify English education in the middle school environment, and plan and take part in cultural exchange activities. I was also selected to train new instructors upon arrival their arrival in Tokyo, as well as being designated as a national model for training and course development. I guess I've always been a little bit of a free spirit. Drives my mom and dad crazy.

What are your personal interests or hobbies? Being a road warrior, it's nice to be at home working on my house (built in 1925) – everything from landscaping to rebuilding walls. It's a great diversion from work, totally different. I spend a lot of time at the gym working out frustrations. I also like road trips, exploring parts of Florida not many people frequent.

The Funny Zone

By Mary Lauby, Suncoast Chapter

Biggest Lies Tech Writers Hear

Reprinted from The Official TECHWR-L Web site.

<http://www.raycomm.com/techwhirl/>

Original author: John David Hickey <http://www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/Hills/7829/>



I'll have the review and redlines to you by close of business today.
I'll take it along and read it on the plane.
I'll read it over the weekend.
I'll return this to you, with my comments, by the end of the week?
Code will be frozen 12 weeks before your document is due.
There's plenty of time in the schedule for these changes.
I don't really have an opinion on how you labeled those controls.
One space, two spaces. It doesn't matter to me.
Our company takes great pride in its technical documentation.
We've never had any complaints about our documentation.
You'll have the full support of upper management.
We're very committed here to producing top of the line documentation.
Our technical writers are respected members of the development team.
You'll have the opportunity to learn the latest tools here.
We're going to be moving to online documentation within the next six months.
Nobody expects you to take notes or write up the minutes if you attend our development meetings.
The style guide covers every possible situation.
Your pay is within close range of the developer's.
You'll never perform a non-writing task.
Designers and developers will ask for and respect your opinion on GUI design, layout, and functionality.
You should have a fully-functional product in your hands in plenty of time to complete your document.
Don't worry. Your document probably will not need to be translated.
Nobody here is going to offer anything but constructive criticism about your work. There are no ego problems. We're a team.
Your computer and software is every bit up-to-date as the ones they have in Engineering.
You won't be thought of as a nuisance by the SMEs. They accept that you're a peer and respect that you have a job to do.
Oh, there's just one major feature change and some bug fixes.
It's still in review...
We're going to make the deadline...
This is the latest copy of the software.
All the information you need is in the specs.
Don't worry. You'll get my comments on your manual tomorrow. I swear.
No rush.
We have no lawsuits pending.
As the tech writer at our company, you will have full, unrestricted access to the development team's time and resources.

Upcoming Events

Nominations Sought

The nominating committee of the Suncoast Chapter is calling for nominations for the 2001-2002 chapter officers. We are looking for volunteers who are interested in sharing their time, energy, and great ideas with the chapter. Nominees must be professional members of the Suncoast Chapter interested in serving the chapter for a one-year term starting in May 2001. The following are the chapter's elected positions and the major responsibilities for each:



President: overseeing chapter activities and functions

Vice President: coordinating the speaker at each monthly meeting

Secretary: recording chapter business and handling any chapter correspondence

Treasurer: managing chapter funds

Area Program Coordinator: coordinating the meeting and meals for each monthly meeting.

If you would like more details about these positions, please contact Beth Hollenberger Darrell at bdarrel@us.ibm.com or Karen Bachmann at karenlynn@mindspring.com. If you want to recommend someone for an elected office, please send the nominees names and contact information to Beth or Karen by mail to 11813 Sweetpea Court, Tampa, FL 33635, or by email. (Your identity will be kept confidential.) The deadline for nominations is Monday, February 19.

February

This is our annual student-oriented meeting to support SSTC. It is slated to take place near or on the USF South Campus in St. Pete. The format will be a forum covering such topics as interviewing from the employee's perspective and from the employer's perspective, interviewing SMEs, and usability considerations in new jobs. It occurs Thursday, February 1, at 6:30.

March (John Hedke)

Meeting

John Hedtke, the award-winning author of 21 books, presents "Preemptive Project Planning" at the Suncoast STC Chapter meeting on Thursday, March 1, at 6 p.m. at VeriFone.

Traditional project planning assumes that you know what you're planning. However, what causes real headaches is a project that comes out of nowhere and requires immediate attention. This presentation by international award-winning author John Hedtke shows you how to avoid the typical (and not very useful) project management tools by creating a simple but effective tracking spreadsheet. Learn how to enlist the aid of your team and peers to gather information and how to use this information to make mid-range and long-range resource estimates. Finally, see how to anticipate scheduling crunches and how to make you and your team look like heroes in the process.

Cost: \$7 (includes a Mexican buffet with soft and hard tacos of beef and chicken, cheese enchiladas, rice beans, chips, salsa, lettuce, and tomatoes)

Reservations: RSVP to Dina at DStenz1@tampabay.rr.com by Tuesday, February 27 (Please contact Dina again if you reserve and then cannot come. The chapter must pay for the food whether or not you do. We are starting to bill those who reserve and are no-shows.)

Workshop

John Hedtke is also presenting a workshop for the Suncoast STC chapter:

Captive vs. Freelance: Making an Informed Decision

Ever thought that you might be cut out for the glamorous, high-paying, and rather bohemian lifestyle possible with a freelance existence? Not everyone is suited for freelance work... nor is everyone suited for captivity. This day-long workshop will identify the pros and cons for captivity (AKA "fulltime" or "permanent" employment) and freelance work, then show the how to identify personal employment goals and fit these into the pros for each career path.

The entire presentation will be relevant regardless of your career choice. Specific topics will include:

- Captive vs. Freelance: The specifics on choosing one path or the other.
- Finances, Taxes, and Insurance: Some background on the things you need to know to be financially secure.
- Setting Up a Home Office: What you need in your home office, whether captive or freelance.
- "Hey, Kids! Become an Author at Home in Your Spare Time and Earn Big Bucks!": The best things you can do for your captive or freelance career is to become an author. Here's how.

In addition, the presentation will address a variety of other topics such as documentation plans, project management, and tips on finding work. (There will be some variance on topics presented from session to session depending on the time available and the preferences of the audience.)

Date: Saturday, March 3

Time: 10:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m. (lunch provided)

Location: VeriFone, 300 S. Park Place Blvd, Clearwater (directions below)

Cost: \$35

Send RSVP to leargle@microd.com or 1-727-372-0346. To reserve a seat, send check or money order payable to *Suncoast STC* before Feb. 23 to Lore Eargle, 4984 Wellbrook Dr., New Port Richey, FL 34653. Walk-ins welcome but if you want lunch, please RSVP.

Directions to VeriFone:

From Tampa, take exit 20 from I-275. Follow the signs to SR-60 (Clearwater). Take the Courtney-Campbell Causeway across the bay. Turn right (north) at the light at S. Park Place Blvd, across the street from the Clearwater Mall.

From St. Petersburg, go north on US-19, then right (east) on SR-60. Go left (north) at the light at S. Park Place Blvd, across the street from the Clearwater Mall.

VeriFone is located one block ahead on your left in a two-story, cream-colored building. Go around to the north side of the building (the same side as the duck pond). Enter by the clear glass door on that side.



Thea Teich, Senior Member, Southwestern Ohio Chapter Candidate for STC 2nd Vice President

Hello. Please let me introduce myself. I'm Thea Teich, and I'm running for 2nd vice president of STC. That means a four-year commitment to Society leadership, which is something I look forward to, should I win your votes.

Who Am I?

Just a quick overview of my background: I was brought up in northern New Jersey. For those of you in the area, my high school overlooked the back side of the Statue of Liberty. Really.

I left NJ to attend the University of Michigan. Then I took a master's degree at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. I spent several summers as a park ranger in Oklahoma during this period. Yes, really.

I continued to spend my young adulthood on Big Ten campuses by working for the Ohio State University School of Natural Resources for three years. Then, I became the environmental education coordinator for the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pittsburgh. There I developed cooperative programs mainly for adults, trying to make complicated environmental subjects understandable and interesting so that people would be willing to take action. I didn't call it technical communication at the time, but that's what was going on.

In 1980, I moved back to Ohio, to Cincinnati, and have worked here for government agencies, private industry, and as an independent, in technical communications concerning everything from water pollution control to plastic processing methods, from pharmaceutical market research to ERP software. I also teach technical marketing communications in a local technical college program. My decision to "go independent" was a long time in the making, but my being downsized in late 1995 was a significant shove in that direction.

I've been a member of STC since 1988. I've been director-sponsor of Region 4, public relations manager for the 1999 annual conference, and a member of the academe-industry committee. I've presented at many annual and regional conferences on starting your own business, professional development, and marketing communications. For the Southwestern Ohio chapter (SWO), I was president, vice president, and competitions manager (for three years). I also served on the 1997 Region 4 conference committee and the SWO professional development committee. I regularly judge local STC competitions, have judged international competitions, and have won publications awards. I'm also a member and past officer of some other local communications organizations.

What Do I Bring To the Table?

First, I bring a "can-do," implementation-focused orientation. Moving ideas and plans from "ought" to "action" is one of my strengths. Determining the optimal way, which may not necessarily be the fastest or the cheapest way, to transform projects from plans to production—and then doing it—is how I've earned my living for many years.

Second, I believe that to make good decisions, input from people who don't think exactly as I do or who have different priorities is necessary. I listen. I believe consensus leads to decisions that respond best to the issues.

Third, I bring a breadth of experience to the office. Technical communicators work in varied situations—and I've been through most of them. Independent, corporate, nonprofit, educational, downsized, upsized, overwhelmed—I've been there. As a result, I think I have more than an inkling of what many STC members face every day.

Fourth, and perhaps most important, my aim is to use the talent and capabilities we have as an organization to foresee the trends in our profession so we can plan for them and better help STC members meet the needs and opportunities

(Teich, continued on page 13)

January Meeting Recap

By Diana Moran, Suncoast Chapter

With the increasing demand of online documentation, there is finally an answer in publishing solutions. R.J. Vasquez of Quadralay Corp, demonstrated to us a new and exciting application that converts FrameMaker files into online masterpieces with ease! WebWorks Publisher Professional Edition 6.0 allows a user to convert FrameMaker files into XML, XHTML, Standard HTML and online Help systems.

How does WebWorks Publisher Professional work? By mapping styles in FrameMaker to counterpart styles in WebWorks, conversion is simple and seamless. Not only can you map styles, but you can customize them just like you would in FrameMaker using a style designer. Graphics and cross-references are also converted with integrity.

Another feature of WebWorks Publisher Professional is the availability of macros to glob-

ally change styles. Templates can be customized and reused to ensure consistency. This application literally eliminates any need to do any type of post conversion editing. That alone makes this tool extremely valuable.

For more information about Quadralay and WebWorks Publisher Professional Edition 6.0, visit their website at <http://www.webworks.com>.



R.J. Vasquez demonstrates WebWorks Publisher Professional Edition 6.0

(Teich, continued from page 12)

presented by those trends.

Our profession's value to the world at large is being increasingly recognized. Part of the reason for that is the times we live in. But another part of the reason is that we have a professional organization that represents us as a body; we are no longer an amorphous conglomeration of easily replaced "support services." Over much of the past almost 50 years of STC's existence, the focus has been on promoting our professionalism, supporting educational programs and research, improving, and—let's face it—helping to stabilize—our places and value in corporate and other entities.

Now that we've determined "to design the future of technical communications (our new mission statement), my goals involve focusing our efforts on the professional development of our members so they can answer the classic job interview question, "where do you want to be in five years?" By exploring trends and possibilities now and helping members prepare for them, we can work toward—instead of merely respond to—what will happen five years from now. We can truly "design the future of technical communication." In other words, we can design, draw, paint, and frame *our own futures*.

I also want to promote both the profession and the organization so that that technical communicators view STC the way medical doctors view their associations and engineers view their societies--as essential elements of their professions. Our branding effort was a springboard: Let's put what we learned about ourselves to work.

In the meantime, please remember to vote in the upcoming STC elections. You can do so either on the traditional paper ballot or electronically at the STC Web site this year. I hope you'll vote for me for 2nd vice president. But the important thing is to vote. You're a member of this group. Here's your chance to help design STC—as well as the future of technical communication.

WriteUp
12034 Kay Drive
Seminole, Florida 33772



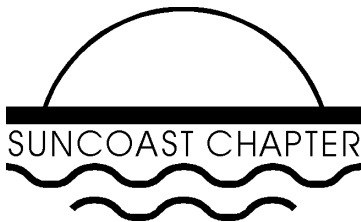
Mission Statement

Designing the future of technical communication.

WriteUp

<http://www.stc.org/region3/sun/www>

Address Correction Requested
First Class Mail



Calendar of Events

Subject to Change

**Copy Deadline for
Next Issue:
March 25**

March 1

Suncoast Chapter Meeting

John Hedtke presents Preemptive Project Planning
Verifone, 6:30 p.m.

April 5

Suncoast Chapter Meeting

Melissa Lamb and Mark Lewis present the Region 3 website
TECO Energy Center (USF's North Campus)