

# WriteUp

## Multiple Personality Documentation: A Generic Warning

By Bill Graham, Suncoast Chapter Treasurer

Have you ever bought a manual for your car? You can usually find a manual for your car at an auto parts store. I've been looking into buying one for my car because of a problem with my CV (constant velocity) joints. I bought a manual for my last car and used it a few times. When I bought the manual, I noticed that its layout was generic. The manual discussed principles of general maintenance and mechanics. It also discussed specific procedures for my car and for similar models. I'm sure that other manuals by the same company have the same layout and typically the same information. In fact, the most distinct feature of this manual was the greasy fingerprint graphics I added while using it.

In an article previously published in this newsletter (see July-Aug., and Sept.-Oct. 2000 editions), I discussed a few strategies for writing generic documentation to overcome the challenges of providing the same information to multiple distributors. In this article, I will identify some shortcomings of using generic model names and suggest some useful alternatives.

I don't like to use generic model names. Some people may feel that generic model names save effort. They require no change from one OEM (original equipment manufacturer) version to another. In the end, however, readers must learn a new vocabulary from the marketing catalog to the manual. The marketing catalog will provide the unique model name for the device,

which readers will try to find that model name in the manual.

Imagine a your readers searching your manual for a product called the 3-CVBM. Imagine also that you wrote CVBM throughout the manual instead of 3-CVBM. You wrote CVBM because your company decided to vary its OEM model names by prefix. One company wants to distribute your company's product as the M3-CVBM; another company would like to distribute it as the I-CVBM. Why not write CVBM and leave the prefix out?

Your reader may miss references to the CVBM because his/her eye is scanning for the 3- prefix. If the manual is distributed in PDF format or on a CD-ROM, your readers may attempt to use the search utility. What will they type into the search utility? Most likely, they will type 3-CVBM. In fact, your readers may never think to type CVBM.

Another potential shortcoming for generic model names is their impact on indexes. How will the writer or indexer handle readers who attempt to look up the 3-CVBM (third design of a Constant Velocity Boot Monitor) in the index? Should hidden index markers consist of generic model names or OEM-specific model names? Generic model names in the index markers will not require change from one OEM to the next, but the index will also contain generic model names.

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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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## From the Editor



By Diana Moran

The holidays are finally upon us, and so comes the hustle and bustle of making turkeys and last minute Christmas shopping! Unfortunately, I am guilty this year of procrastinating as Santa's helper. But I suppose in gest, that running around with only days to go is all a part of the excitement! Of course there always has to be that one gift that my child *has* to have and its always the one that I can't find!

As a new year approaches, I have been reflecting on things that I want to accomplish for the coming year, as well as things that I would have changed from this year. For starters, I will be applying to law school this year for entrance in January 2002. As of mother of two young children, this will be challenging, but I am motivated. What would I change? It was a great year, but I plan on making more personal time for myself.....and get my Christmas shopping done early!

Happy holidays everyone! I look forward to the upcoming issues. Remember, letters to the Editor are welcome!

**Correction:** The September/October issue of this newsletter included an incorrect byline for the August Meeting Recap. It read "Karin Carlan", but should have read "Karlene Robinson". The mistake was corrected on our website immediately.

Note: My email address has been changed to [dmoran@lightwaveusa.com](mailto:dmoran@lightwaveusa.com)

**ONLINE DOCUMENTATION**

**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

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# Leader's Message

By Lore Eargle, Suncoast Chapter Vice-President

The Florida Technical Communication Competition (FTCC) completed one of its major milestones in November. Consensus Judging Day was held on Saturday, November 11. Teams of judges gathered at the TECO Energy Center to compile their evaluations and arrive at determinations of the merits of the entries submitted in the competition. At this time the results are being mailed to the submitters of the entries. The next big FTCC event is the Awards Banquet on Saturday, January 20. We hope that you will attend and some of you will consider helping out that night. Contact Mary Greer (e-mail@address.com) or Lou Martindale (lmartin220@aol.com) if you can volunteer that night. The chapter owes a big thank you to everyone on the committee who pulled things together so well this year and especially to our co-chairs: Mary, Lou, and Bill Graham.

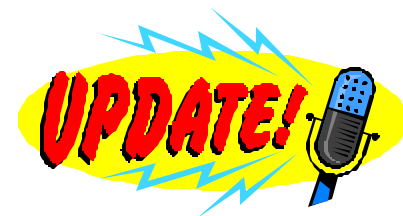
Be sure to mark your calendars for our January 4 chapter meeting when Quadralay presents a demo of WebWorks. It will be held in the St. Petersburg area. The location will be finalized soon and we'll probably send out the notices early since we don't want you to miss the event among your holiday activities.

## January Meeting

January 4: Title: Single-source publishing using FrameMaker 6.0 and WebWorks Publisher Professional 6.0

Single-source publishing is the only way to efficiently produce multiple formats. "Write once, publish anywhere" is a model that not only serves as a philosophy of efficiency, but also acts as a method to universally control content revisions and preserve look and feel. This presentation will focus on single-source publishing technical documentation from Adobe FrameMaker 6.0 to output Print, Internet and numerous online help formats including HTML, DHTML (CSS), Microsoft HTML Help, WinHelp, JavaHelp, WebWorks Help 2.0, XHTML and XML, using WebWorks Publisher Professional 6.0.

Presented by: RJ Jacquez is Vice President of Technology for Quadralay Corporation and Dean of the WebWorks University. A widely recognized expert in technical authoring, single-source publishing and ePublishing training, Mr. Jacquez draws on his extensive expertise to develop and deliver WebWorks University's highly effective training courses on the most advanced tools and techniques for ePublishing. During his many years as a trainer and courseware developer prior to joining the WebWorks Team, he provided classroom instruction in online publishing to countless writers and authored an extensive course library covering a variety of software packages, including MS Office, Adobe FrameMaker, Adobe Acrobat, and Adobe Photoshop. He has spoken at events around the world including Adobe's "Beyond Word Processing" seminar series, "Focus on FrameMaker and WebWorks Publisher Professional" programs, the "Help University", FrameUsers Conference, Single-Source Publishing conference, the TechComm Conference, and for many FrameMaker and WebWorks Publisher users groups.



## Membership Update

By Melissa Lamb,  
Suncoast Chapter  
Membership Manager

### New Members

Sarah Robin La Bruce  
Veronica Martin  
Barbara Muller  
Janese R. Bell  
Gina Carrillo  
Kimberly Nolder  
Kathleen M. Oliver  
Cynthia L. Wells

### Transferring Members

Denise Cardwell  
Bryan D. Douglas

### Membership Figures

Total STC Suncoast  
Membership: 192

**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



# RoboHELP Office Self-Study

By Jim Sands, Chicago Chapter

I have received several calls in the last few weeks from STC members who want to learn the fundamentals of RoboHELP but do not have the time to take a formal class. Luckily, writers now have a few options that make RoboHELP self-training easier than it has been in the past. However, I recommend that you eventually supplement any self-training with a class, as RoboHELP has many twists and turns that can be frustrating to learn on your own.

The latest version of RoboHELP Office is version 9.0, which like earlier versions, includes RoboHELP Classic (for WinHelp) and RoboHELP HTML (for HTML Help.) There is a brand new book available for version 9.0, but it appears to be a reference vs. a tutorial book. The book is titled *RoboHELP 2000 Bible*. I have not yet reviewed this book, but at 967 pages it might be arduous for a beginner.

Currently, there are good books available for versions 7.0 and 8.0, which are both very similar in look and feel to the current 9.0 release:

- *RoboHELP 7 for Dummies* includes a trial version of RoboHELP 7.0 on CD-ROM, and the book covers both the WinHELP and HTMLHelp versions of RoboHELP. This is a good choice if you do not have a licensed copy of RoboHELP available.
- *Teach Yourself RoboHELP 2000 for HTML Help in 24 Hours* covers RoboHELP 8.0, but does not include a trial version of RoboHELP. However, if you are considering the purchase of RoboHELP, you can download a trial version of RoboHELP 9.0 at <http://www.ehelp.com/RoboHelp/products> and use the version 8.0 book as a learning guide. The differences between version 8.0 and 9.0 will be transparent to most beginners.

As a sidebar, Blue Sky Software, the makers of RoboHELP recently changed their name to ehelp. Their website is now located at <http://www.ehelp.com/RoboHelp>.

## Want more information?

*RoboHELP 7 for Dummies*. 1999. IDG Books. ISBN 0-7645-0560-2.  
*Teach Yourself RoboHELP 2000 for HTML Help in 24 Hours*. 2000. Sams Publishing. ISBN 0-672-31625-0.  
*RoboHELP 2000 Bible*. 2000. IDG Books. ISBN 0-7645-4644-9.

## 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](mailto: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.

## Featured Website

TechTales.com

<http://www.techtales.com/techroom.html>

Stories, jokes, and testimonials about everyday life in the tech world. Check out this site for a good laugh. Bring some humor into your day!



# Patrick Rules At FrameMaker Training

By Debra Mixon, Suncoast Chapter

The life of an Adobe Certified Expert (A.C.E.) isn't easy. After our FrameMaker training, Patrick Koster of Koster & Associates ([www.koster.net](http://www.koster.net)) was off to Dallas, then the Midwest--you get the picture. All this work benefits his students, however. Patrick's experience in front of the classroom showed, and thanks to the Suncoast Chapter's sponsorship of the training, seminar attendees benefited from an affordable, well presented and evenly paced FrameMaker training.

Attending the first day, Suncoast chapter member Mary Lauby commented, "It was a great benefit to have the trainer come to us." Judging from the full house of attendees each day, members appreciated and took advantage of the local convenience of the training. The TECO Technology Center on the Tampa campus of the University of South Florida offered excellent facilities for the training.

Patrick devoted the first day of training to FrameMaker 6.0 basics. We spent time getting familiarized with the interface and then moved into the weightier areas of the software. Only an hour into the seminar he began to detail the features that distinguish FrameMaker from less powerful tools.

On day one, we learned how to create paragraph and character formats using FrameMaker's "designers." The instruction also delved into the basics of autonumbering and tables. Wrapping up the first day, we covered the use of master pages and system variables to set things like page numbering.

On the second day, many of the original attendees returned. Our instructor mixed in a little review but spent most of the time discussing advanced features for using the paragraph designer, creating tables, and using book files. We also discussed the advanced use of FrameMaker's sophisticated autonumbering features.

Patrick ended the second day by showing attendees how FrameMaker files are saved to HTML and portable document format (.pdf). Both conversions roused the audience, but the biggest buzz of both days came when Patrick converted a FrameMaker file to .pdf format using Acrobat. He showed how multiple reviewers can take the converted .pdf file and use the Acrobat annotations feature to comment on the file. The author can then review comments separately or compile a summary.

We also got Patrick's tip of the day. Because FrameMaker comes with Acrobat Distiller, you can purchase the "Business Tools" version of Acrobat for much less than the full Acrobat software and receive all of the annotation tools that thrilled the seminar audience.

Attendees came away from the seminar not only with new knowledge, but also with an *Adobe FrameMaker Classroom in a Book*. Although the book was for FrameMaker 5.5, Patrick advised that the contents are, for the most part, applicable to version 6.0. He also prepared several handouts that included tips such as keyboard shortcuts.

Patrick used a memorable phrase when he replaced text to demonstrate FrameMaker 6.0 functions: "Patrick Rules!!!". Patrick did indeed rule and so does the Suncoast Chapter. Seminar attendee Nancy Armitage summed up her feelings after attending both days of the training: "I really appreciate the chapter's effort to set up this FrameMaker training--and the discount was nice too. This is a good example of how STC membership can benefit people in our field."



## *Preemptive Project Planning: An STC Telephone Seminar*

No one likes surprises, especially if those surprises mean more work. This presentation will teach you how to spot upcoming projects before they sneak up on you. You'll learn to prepare for these projects, avoid those nerve-wracking schedule crunches, and look like a hero in the process!

This presentation will show you how to

- Gather information on projects that are just beginning to coalesce, track them on your scheduling radar, and raise the warning signs to your coworkers;
- Tracking ongoing projects using a simple spreadsheet;
- Identify projects that aren't yet official (but will be soon...);
- Share information within your group;
- Plan for upcoming projects; and
- Check your results.

As you master this new skill set, you'll also learn how to use your knowledge and to expand your ability to make accurate long-range forecasts.

*The cost of the telephone seminar is per participating site, not per person. Train as many people as your conference room can hold -- for one flat rate!*

### **When?**

Wednesday, February 7, 2001  
1:00–2:30 PM Eastern Standard Time

### **What Is a Telephone Seminar?**

A telephone seminar is much like a large conference call—but in a more controlled, radio-like environment. You simply dial the 800 number from your phone, enter your personal identification number, and you're connected! You then sit back and listen to the presentations, follow along with the handout material, and join in the lively Q&A sessions.

### **Benefits**

- ✓ No travel time
- ✓ Pay per site and not per person
- ✓ Opportunity to train all your people without their leaving the office

### **Cost**

*With a telephone seminar, the cost is per site, not per person.*

U.S. sites:           \$125.00  
Canadian sites:    \$140.00

*(Seminar, continued on page 7)*

# Qualified Judges Sought To Admire and Evaluate Distinguished Publications and Artwork

By Kit Brown, ITPCC Judging Coordinator

The leaves are changing, the air is crisp with anticipation of the holiday season, and our thoughts have turned to the Society for Technical Communications (STC) International Publication and Arts Competitions. January is just around the corner, and we need experienced technical communicators and visual design experts who would like to participate in the international judging for the competitions.

Judging in the competitions is a great way to get a sneak preview on what your colleagues are doing and to network with interesting people in a relaxed, fun atmosphere. You might even learn something new!

After we receive the winners from the local and regional competitions, we will process them and assign judging teams to evaluate each set of entries. The judges for each team are responsible for evaluating the entries before the judges meeting and providing each participant with constructive feedback. Awards are given, based on the consensus of the judging team. The judges meeting will be held in San Diego, CA on March 3, 2001.

We are recruiting 1/3 new international judges and 1/3 experienced international judges. In addition, we want to have at least one judge from each region.

To be considered for a judge position, you must meet at least two of the following criteria:

- Master's degree or higher in technical communication, graphic arts or design, or related field

- Teaching experience in technical communication, graphic arts or design, or related field (five years full-time or seven years adjunct or part-time)
- Seven years experience in the technical communication, graphic arts or design, or related field (art judges must have experience in the visual aspects of technical communication)
- Certification by a communication-related professional organization (for art, certification by or association with a graphic arts or design organization)
- Strong publishing background (for publication and online, 5 articles or 1 book; for art, published graphic art or document design work)
- Winner of an STC or other communication, graphic arts or design competition award
- Senior membership or higher in STC

You will be notified of your judging status in January, and will have approximately one month to complete your evaluations before the meeting.

To apply as an international judge, please fill out the attached application and return it to Kit Brown (Publications Competition) or Patricia Clark McDaniels (Art Competition) by December 20, 2000.

**Kit Brown:** PO Box 140092/Boise, ID 83714  
208-321-4483 (w), 208-321-4490 (fax), 208-376-0224 (h)  
silverwnd1@aol.com

**Patricia Clark, Publications Editor:** Tennessee Agricultural Experiment Station, 104 Morgan Hall/ P.O. Box 1071, Knoxville, TN 37901-1071, 865-974-7362, 865-974-9433 (fax), pclark@utk.edu

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(Seminar, *continued* from page 6)

Overseas sites: Please contact the STC office

*An additional \$8.00 will be charged for registrations received less than five days before the seminar.*

## About the Speaker

John Hedtke is the award-winning author of twenty-one books. He has more than twenty years in the software business, seventeen years writing, and seven years in technical publications management. John has developed and written documentation and books for many leading software products and has received nineteen regional and international writing awards to date. A complete list of his books, articles, projects, and awards can be found at his Web site, <http://www.hedtke.com>.

John does numerous radio interviews and frequently travels to lecture and make guest appearances at conferences and seminars. John is past president of the Puget Sound chapter of STC. When not otherwise occupied writing books and consulting, John writes magazine articles, plays the banjo, and sleeps late as much as possible. He lives in Seattle with his two cats. (See form on page 12).

# Director-Sponsor Report

## The Most Valuable Investment Tip You Will Ever Get: Invest In You

By Rob Houser, Region 3 Director-Sponsor

It's time to start planning your professional development for the year 2001. Do you know what you will have to learn to remain competitive in the marketplace? Here are three questions you need to answer to create learning goals for the upcoming year.

Question 1: Is there ONE skill I could improve to do my job more effectively?

You probably have a good idea of what skill needs to be strengthened. Often the part of our jobs we avoid or save until last are the ones we need to improve. Even if you think you know what needs improvement, ask somebody else to help you answer this question (or at least verify your assumption) if at all possible.

If you're a full-time employee, ask your boss during your performance review for ONE suggestion of how you can improve or add a skill to enhance your performance. Knowing what the boss values helps you decide where to concentrate your effort and allows you to show progress by the time of your next review. If that's too uncomfortable or your boss refuses to make a suggestion, go to a trusted colleague who works with you.

If you're a contractor working for an agency, ask the agency to find out from the client what one skill you could improve to be more effective. Or, ask the client yourself when the contract is over (or now if you plan to be there 6 months or more). If you're self-employed, ask someone who works closely with you for one suggestion of what you could improve to make yourself a better technical communicator.

Skills determine performance. If the response you get is a tool, save that for the next question. Probe for a more skill-oriented suggestion by asking what you already do that you could do better. You might also try making the question less personal by asking what one skill is most important to succeeding in this department/company.

Keep in mind that the skill may fall outside your formal education. For instance, you might be a great help author but need to learn more about telecommunications so you can work more effectively with your subject matter experts. Industry knowledge or more in-depth technical abilities can improve your job performance significantly.

Question 2: Is there ONE tool that would increase my value?

For better or worse, the business world is tools-oriented. Although we know that there are underlying skills required to use any tool effectively, many employers assume that if you don't have the tool knowledge you don't have the ability to do the work. For example, most job ads list a tool like RoboHELP or Fore-Help rather than the ability to design online help. Managers want people who can hit the ground running, not someone who won't be ready for a few weeks or months. If you don't know the required tool, you might not get a chance to take on a desirable project.

If you're a full-time employee, ask your boss what ONE tool you could learn to benefit the department/company. Sometimes managers know of upcoming projects that you haven't heard about yet, so you might get the jump by learning the tool ahead of time.

And it's often easier to get funding to attend training that was suggested by your manager.

If you're a contractor or self-employed, talk with the agencies and look at the job ads to see what tools command the best pay. In the Atlanta chapter, a survey conducted two years ago showed that the top three tools in demand for the Atlanta contract market were FrameMaker, RoboHELP, and Visio. Knowing the most common tools can translate into more job opportunities. Don't overlook niche tools, though. Knowing a tool that few people know can command the highest rates (such as SAP, Visual Basic, or Oracle).

You'll probably generate a list of tools. Prioritize them (or ask your boss to do so) and pick one for the year.

Question 3: Is there ONE tool or skill that I would like to learn?

This tool or skill is for you. You may envision yourself doing something else or working someplace else in another year or two, and undoubtedly you will have to learn some new tools/skills. Or maybe you just have a strong interest in a topic and want to pursue it more seriously. Pick something that motivates you and moves you towards your long-term goals.

You might identify that you want to move closer to training, so you identify a skill like instructional design or a tool like Authorware. You might want to move into a job that focuses more on web-based solutions so you identify a tool like DreamWeaver or Flash. Maybe you have an interest in foreign languages, photography, or graphic design. Even if the skill you pick doesn't benefit your immediate job, you may be surprised how it can move you in a positive direction.

**CONCLUSION:** Create a written plan and execute it

After you have answered these three questions, you need to identify ways you can achieve these learning goals. Don't just think in terms of corporate classes, although those are often effective. Also consider conferences, books, web-based training, certificate programs, graduate programs, and community schools. Identify all of the possibilities for each learning goal, making sure to note cost and availability.

Next, make choices based on your budget and schedule. Your company should be providing some support for your training. If not or if you are self-employed, consider it a business expense and pay for it yourself. Take your training early in the year while the budget is still available and you still have time to apply your new knowledge to projects during the year.

Once you have a plan, formalize it by writing a brief memo to your boss or yourself. State your learning goals, detail your strategies for achieving them during the next year (including dates and costs), and get the memo signed to show commitment to the plan. If you work for someone else, get him or her to sign the memo to indicate his or her approval for your plan. If you work for yourself, sign it to indicate your personal commitment to the plan.

Training is an investment in you. Don't short-change your career by putting it off. Force yourself to take the time to learn three new things this year.

If you execute this modest training plan, you will have the best kind of job security available - you will be excellent at what you do.

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(Multiple, continued from page 1)

A generic index marker produces an awkward problem. The index author is now forced to insert a marker that will render the OEM-specific model name as a cross-reference to the generic name. For example, the index entry for the 3-CVBM will appear as a See cross-reference.

3-CVBM. See CVBM (*Constant Velocity Boot Monitor*)

Until now, your readers have called the Constant Velocity Boot Monitor the 3-CVBM. The manual just imposed its terminology of convenience on them. Now, your readers must think twice before they attempt to look for the 3-CVBM.

If we are to avoid generic model names, how can we write topics that will fit into several OEM documents? Several automated solutions exist. In MS Word™, you can use the mailmerge utility. In FrameMaker™, you can use conditional text. You can even run a search/replace program on an entire set of files simultaneously. A better strategy, however, is to design modular components and structures for your documentation. You may even be fortunate enough to work for a company that has bought into data warehousing. Stay tuned in future newsletters for more in-depth discussions on automated solutions. No solution provides a perfect way of dealing with OEM documents. Yet, these solutions provide powerful alternatives to the maintenance nightmare of multi-personality documen-





# Book Review: E- What? A Guide To The Quirks Of New Media Style and Usage

2000 EEI Press: A Division of EEI Communications \$29.95

By Mary Lauby, Suncoast Chapter

The editors of EEI Press (creators of The Editorial Eye newsletter) have spoken. The group has released its guidelines for consistency and correct grammar in the computer age. The book is broken into three sections: Keeping up with Style, Quick Reference List of Troublesome Terms, and Planning Your Online Style Guide.

It starts out covering the basics of how to capitalize and spell various words like *Internet*, *intranet*, *Web page*, *webmaster*, and *webzine*. And they even give you guidelines for capitalization, for example, "When you use *Web* as a modifier, retain the capital. When you use *web* as a prefix, lowercase it."

Some of these suggestions or rules conflict with what many websites and companies are doing. For example, the editors suggest we spell *email* as *e-mail*. I disagree, but only based on the fact that just about every Web site I see spells it *email*. I want to fit in, so I spell it that way, too. Also included is a partial list of nouns that can be verbs. *Chunk*, *email* (or *e-mail*, as they spell it), *fax*, and *post* are all nouns we commonly see as verbs.

The Quick Reference List of Troublesome Terms section includes common online terms and answers questions such as, 'Is *inhouse* one word or is it hyphenated?' In addressing *spam*, they provided the definition for the term that refers to Internet junk mail. For the pink, spongy, meat-like food product *SPAM*, they quoted straight from the Hormel Foods web site, giving an interesting history of *spam* (not *SPAM*). Did you know it came from a Monty Python skit?

The interesting topic of trends and patterns is covered in the Keeping Up with Style section. It states that the rapid rate of online communication is pushing trends such as the tendency of terms to evolve from two words, to a hyphenated term, to one word.

Some of the information seemed obvious, as in: "When a sentence ends with a URL, it's pretty safe to use terminal punctuation." I did learn an interesting rule: when an acronym is accepted as a word, it loses its capitals. But who accepts it and how you know when it has been accepted is something no book can answer.

The Planning Your Online Style Guide section provides thorough information, even if, like me, you're not preparing to create an online style guide any time soon. Subsections of this are What's our Style, Creating a Guide, Making Intranet Content Easy to Use, and Making It Work. It also includes a list of style guides from all types of business. And most importantly, it reminds us that "Style isn't the same as grammar and usage. You won't find the 'right' answers in any single reference. Style is always a matter of choice."

This book is filled with information and guidelines valuable to writers. It touches on many important subjects, from confusing domain name categories to how to cite Web sites to copyright issues. I recommend this book to anyone who wants to know what the writing rules for new media are—at the moment.



# October Meeting Recap

Submitted by Mary Lauby, Suncoast Chapter

The annual chapter membership drive was held on October 5, at the Feather Sound Country Club. The meeting attracted numerous members and guests alike. Many prizes were given away, including half-price memberships (for new members only), STC conference t-shirts, and gift certificates to local stores and restaurants. Honorita Capell and Melissa Lamb were the grand prize winners, taking home a copy of Adobe Acrobat and FrameMaker 6.0, respectively, compliments of Koster Associates.



**Eileen McPartland—Suncoast STC President and Patric Koster - Koster Associates, Inc.**

The guest speaker, Patrick Koster of Koster Associates, Inc., gave a lively presentation on Adobe FrameMaker. Patrick offered an interesting peek into the layout of the application and a preview of the workshop. He also briefly covered creating documents and the differences between Microsoft Word and FrameMaker. Patrick's presentation was thorough and interesting; however, at one point my attention was diverted by a large piece of Chocolate cake.

Patrick, a Certified Adobe Expert (ACE), conducted both days of the FrameMaker 6.0 workshop at the Energy Technology Resource Center at the University of South Florida on October 26th and 27th. For a synopsis of the FrameMaker workshop, see Debra Mixon's article in this issue.

# November Meeting Recap

Submitted by Kathy D'Adamo, Suncoast Chapter

This month's meeting was a joint meeting of the Suncoast STC and Tampa Bay Webgrlrs groups. Marji McNeely, Tampa Bay Webgrlrs Chapter Leader, told us that the Webgrlrs include over 300 members who share an interest in anything related to the World Wide Web - Internet sites, multimedia, and so on. Their region includes most of the surrounding counties and they generally meet at a location near the Tampa Airport on the 2nd Thursday of each month (6 - 8+/- pm). Visit their web site at [www.webgrlrs.com](http://www.webgrlrs.com). Lots of interesting information on a wide range of topics.

The presentation this month, given by Karen Bachman, was entitled "Getting to Know You: Techniques for Conducting User Analysis". Starting with an explanation of what user analysis is, what it is not, and what it is for, she continued with methods for gathering information about users and their tasks. Detailed information about what type of information to gather, and what to do with it once you have it, should prove useful to any writer trying to become familiar with an audience. The presentation ended with ways to incorporate user analysis into the product development cycle, and included a list of benefits for the writer. Although Karen stated her presentation was an overview only, she provided a great deal of useful information all along the way, answering questions as they arose.

Next month is the December Social. January's meeting will include a presentation by Quadralay on their WebWorks products. See you there.



**Eileen McPartland - Suncoast STC President, Karen Bachmann - Presenter Suncoast STC, Marji McNeely - Tampa Bay Webgrlrs Chapter Leader, and Lucy Martin - Tampa Bay Webgrlrs Public Relations Co-Chair, get ready for the joint meeting.**

# Preemptive Project Planning

Wednesday, February 7, 2001, 1:00-2:30 EST #STC5963-0

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

(No PO Boxes)

City, State/Province: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip/Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Will you be able to receive seminar handouts via the **Web**?  Yes  No

Will you be able to receive seminar handouts via **e-mail**?  Yes  No

## Method of payment (check one):

*Payment must accompany registration*

Check encloses payable to KRM

MasterCard  Visa  Discover  American Express

Card#: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Charged: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax completed form with credit card information to (800) 676-0734

-OR-

Phone (800) 775-7654 (please have credit card ready)

-OR-

## Mail completed forms with payment to:

KRM Information Services

PO Box 1187

Eau Claire, WI 54702

Coordinating services provided by KRM Information Services, Inc. KRM will send registration confirmation, participation instructions and handout materials to all registrants.

# STC Global

## Annual STC Conference Information

(from <http://www.stc.org> )

48th Annual Conference May 13 through 16, 2001,  
Chicago, Illinois

## Future Conference Dates

- 49th Annual Conference May 5 through 8, 2002, Nashville, Tennessee
- 50th Annual Conference May 18 through 21, 2003, Dallas, Texas
- 51st Annual Conference May 9 through 12, 2004, Baltimore, Maryland
- 52nd Annual Conference May 8 through 11, 2005, Seattle, Washington

## Upcoming Region Conference

### Region 5

Region 5 Conference, Oct. 11 through Oct. 13, 2001.



# Florida Events

## National Writers' Workshops

April 19-20, 2001, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Focus: Autobiography/memoir, Business/technical, Fiction, Humor, Journalism, Marketing, Nonfiction, and Poetry

<http://poynter.org/2001/NWW.htm>

## Interactive Design—Poynter Institute

April 16-21, 2001, St. Petersburg, FL

Learn how to create interactive websites using the latest tools.

Deadline for application: February 15, 2001

<http://www.poynter.org/2001/G419.htm>

# Non-STC Events

**WinWriters Ninth Annual Online Help Conference**, March 4-8, 2001, Santa Clara, CA. Five days and 85 sessions dedicated to software user assistance. Get the latest on new technologies, information design, content development, and authoring tools.

<http://www.winwriters.com/ohc/>

**Writer's Roundtable Conference**, March 9-11, 2001, Dallas, TX. Authors, editors, screenwriters, songwriters, playwrights, journalists and other writing professionals will be attending. Professional and Standard tracks including speakers, panel, personal consultations, and author's showcase.

<http://www.wrc-online.com/>



**WriteUp**  
12034 Kay Drive  
Seminole, Florida 33772



### **Mission Statement**

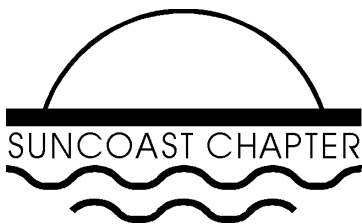
Designing the future of technical communication.

# **WriteUp**

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

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**First Class Mail**



## **Calendar of Events**

*Subject to Change*

**Copy Deadline for  
Next Issue:  
January 5**

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>January 4</b>  | <b>Suncoast Chapter Meeting</b><br>Single-source publishing using FrameMaker 6.0 and WebWorks<br>Location and time to be determined |
| <b>January 20</b> | <b>FTCC Banquet</b><br>Location and time to be determined   |