Byline

President's Message

By Pete Wagner

I hope everyone has had a chance to enjoy the warm, sunny tastes of spring that have been teasing us with increased frequency these last few weeks. As I write this, we are less than two months out from the start of the 2022 STC Technical Communication Summit in Rosemont. The fact that this will be the first onsite, in-person conference in three years is another sign that the long pandemic winter is hopefully ending.

You'll find me at the conference both as a technical communicator learning about the latest trends, tools, etc. and as a volunteer representing the chapter. There still are all sorts of ways you can help out, and if you haven't done so already, please take a look at the Summit Volunteer page and sign up for an activity if you can.
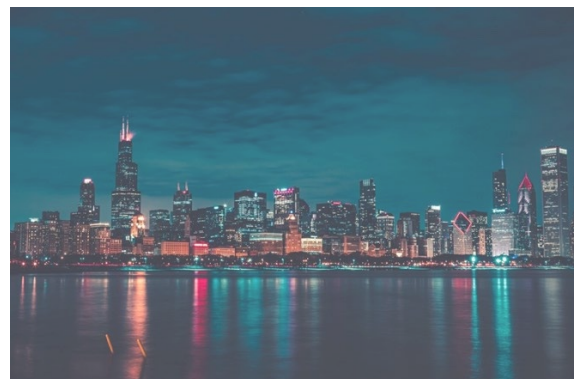
The chapter has some fantastic social events planned for all three days of the conference:

- On Monday, May 16, join fellow Summit attendees as we gather for food and drink at local restaurants, including Murray Bros. Caddyshack, Adobe Gila's, and Five Roses Pub.
- On Tuesday, May 17, come watch a baseball game at Impact Field to watch the Chicago Dogs minor league team. The field is walking distance from the summit hotel, and free transportation is available as well.
- On Wednesday, May 18, learn about Chicago's world-renown skyline while cruising down the Chicago River with fellow STC members. You'll learn all about Chicago's architectural gems in this scenic 90-minute river boat tour.

You don't have to attend the summit to participate in any of these events. More information and registration forms can be found at the Summit Tours and Events page. I'm really looking forward to finally getting together with chapter members once again in person – my presidency started last year at the height of the pandemic. See you soon! Ω

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2022 STC Technical Communication Summit

The anticipation for **STC's 2022 Technical Communication Summit** continues to build. Taking place **May 15-18** in Rosemont, STC's 2022 Summit will include **60+ education sessions**, including **6 preconference workshops** and **2 keynote speakers**. Topics will include content design, CPTC certification, writing and editing, teamwork and collaboration, trustworthiness, the courageous career, and more. You can find more information about registrations rates here. If you haven't already, be sure to register now!

For us, what is perhaps most exciting about this year's Summit is that we'll be learning from industry experts about the latest in our field with our fellow professionals **in-person**! And as the host chapter of this truly world-class city, we'll be playing an important role in helping STC greet technical communicators from all around. As such, we've organized some can't-miss excursions to network and teach Summit attendees all about Chicago.

On Monday, May 16 at 6:00 pm, we'll gather with Summit attendees for dinner at restaurants within walking distance of the conference hotel. Volunteer Restaurant Guides will coordinate group travel to some of Rosemont's finest eateries, including Murray Bros. Caddyshack, Adobe Gila's, and Five Roses Pub.

Attendees will pay for their own food and drinks, but the camaraderie is priceless! When paying for dinner, separate checks will be requested, so no advance payment is necessary. However, please RSVP to let us know you are joining the group. We will make reservations based on the number of responses we receive.

RSVP Here!

On Tuesday, May 17 at 7:00 pm, Summit attendees, STC members, and friends will join us to watch our very own minor league baseball team, the Chicago Dogs, at Impact Field. The baseball stadium is just steps away from the Summit hotel. Take a complimentary shuttle to the field or stroll (.8 mile or 17 minutes) to the stadium along with your guide, STC Chicago President Pete Wagner.

Tickets are $16 each. Food and drinks are available for purchase at Impact Field, including, of course, Chicago-style hotdogs. Attendees will also receive a complimentary Chicago Dogs baseball cap.

Tickets Available Here!

On Wednesday, May 18 at 12:30 pm, we'll take in the sights and sounds of Chicago with two iconic adventures in one afternoon, including travel on Chicago's Elevated Train (El) and a Chicago River boat tour. Together, we'll travel into the heart of the city on Chicago's famous "El," stroll along Michigan Avenue with our group to the boat dock, and board "Chicago's First Lady" to start a 90-minute tour.

The river boat tour is led by a knowledgeable and entertaining guide who will share information about Chicago's architectural gems. You'll learn about the work of Mies van der Rohe, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, Helmut Jahn, and Jeanne Gang.

Tickets are $60 each, including transportation. Don't miss the opportunity to network with Summit attendees and experience the best of what Chicago has to offer!

Purchase Your Ticket Here!

Well, there you have it! We hope you'll join us for these memorable experiences. If you have questions about any of these events, please reach out to the Host Committee at stc2022@stc-chicago.com. You can also learn more at the Summit Tours and Events page. Ω

April 2022 Chapter Meeting: STC Summit Preview

Please join us at 7 p.m. CDT on Thursday, April 21 for an online preview of the upcoming STC Summit in May, which will be the first in-person STC Summit since 2019 and the first in the Chicago area since 2012.

A team of dedicated volunteers from our chapter has been busy planning on-site activities to make this historic gathering worthwhile and enjoyable for everyone who attends, and we will hear from them about the plans and how we can join in. In addition, several presenters of educational sessions at the Summit have agreed to talk about the highlights of their presentations and who they think would benefit the most from attending them.

This event is free to all, but you must register in advance to get the direct link to the event.

Register here. Ω

Thursday Virtual Meetup Schedule

Please join us for the Thursday *Virtual* Meetup on the fourth Thursday each month. We will meet online from Noon – 12:55 PM (CDT). NO agendas, NO presentations, NO speakers, just networking, talking, and socializing. So, grab your lunch or a snack and a drink and join STC Chicago members and non-members alike!

Here are upcoming meetups in 2022:
- April 14
- May 12
- June 9

Check out our *Thursday Meetups* page for the registration link (it's free, of course, but you need to register to receive the GoTo Meeting link for the current month). Ω

March 2022 Chapter Meeting Recap
By Dan Dornbrook

The Chicago Chapter joined forces with the Michigan Great Lakes Chapter on Tuesday, March 8 for an online presentation by Matt Reiner, customer advocate for K15t Software, titled "Yes, You Can Make High Quality Instructional Videos Quickly."

Matt noted that technical communicators sometimes have reservations about instructional videos. Some question the practical value of videos in presenting technical information for business purposes, as opposed to entertainment. Others are intimidated by the technical requirements of video production and the time needed to meet those requirements.

Matt's team at K15t has produced a series of short-form videos about Confluence best practices, a wiki-based platform commonly used by software development teams. He said the company's customer support team has found major time savings by sending video links to customers instead of repeating explanations for common support solutions in real time.

He also said videos distributed through YouTube, because it is owned by Google, can reach people searching the web for answers to their questions far more efficiently than many other forms of informational content, including web-based help sites.

Matt said that tasks documented in existing procedures provide a ready-made structure for short-form videos, and he emphasized the value of conversational speech directed by an outline structure as opposed to narration from a word-for-word script. He stressed the importance of introducing topics as quickly and directly

as possible to get the viewer's attention, as well as making transitions between parts of each video as quickly as possible.

Audio quality is essential in video, Matt said, because clear communication of information depends on clear audio, and audio equipment has become much more affordable than in the past, just as video capture and editing tools – and cameras – have become more affordable. Choosing the right location to minimize noise, he said, is also critical to making videos with suitable audio.

Matt said that the most important visual elements are consistent backgrounds, lighting, and visual structure so that the viewer's attention remains on the content.

For more information, Matt can be reached at mreiner@k15t.com. Ω

February 2022 Chapter Meeting Recap
By Dan Dornbrook

The Chicago Chapter gathered online on Tuesday, February 22 for a presentation by Nenad Furtula, partner and vice president of sales and marketing at Bluestream Database Software, titled "Information Flow -- a Game Changer in Selling Structured Content to the C-Suite."

Nenad reviewed the use of Extensible Markup Language (XML), metadata, and the Darwin Information Typing Architecture (DITA) standard in structuring information used by corporations and other institutions to be managed by a component content management system (CCMS).

Nenad, whose Canada-based company offers a DITA-based CCMS called XDocs, noted the limitations of the traditional justifications for adopting structured content: reuse of information, automation of repetitive processes, and improved efficiency in localization and translation. All these justifications focus on cost

reduction, which has only a limited appeal to executives with decision authority over adoption of a CCMS and the associated process changes.

A better approach, he said, is to look at the types of information businesses need for order fulfillment, for customer service and support, and especially for the Configure-Price-Quote (CPQ) process, which generates quotes for potential sales based on requested system configurations. All these processes generate revenue, turning the improvement of information flow into a revenue opportunity, especially when that flow can support the growing range of delivery channels.

For more information, Nenad can be reached at nenadf@bluestream.com. Ω

April Webinar: Practical Advice for Cross-Cultural Communication

Speaker: Leticia Barroso

In this presentation, Leticia Barroso plans to share some considerations and tips for writing with a cross-cultural audience in mind. Topics will include defining the target audience, having the cultural awareness to reach different cultures with unique references and sensibilities, and using multimedia solutions (i.e., graphics, interpretation, Voice-Over recording, subtitles, etc.).

Speaker Bio: Leticia Barroso is a Project Manager at Interpro Translation Solutions, having worked on hundreds of multi-lingual projects of different scopes and subject matter. Her background in publishing, a field she worked in for almost a decade before moving to the US, provides her a broad perspective on the

different requirements and needs for publications for a domestic or international audience.

Date: Wednesday, April 20, 2022
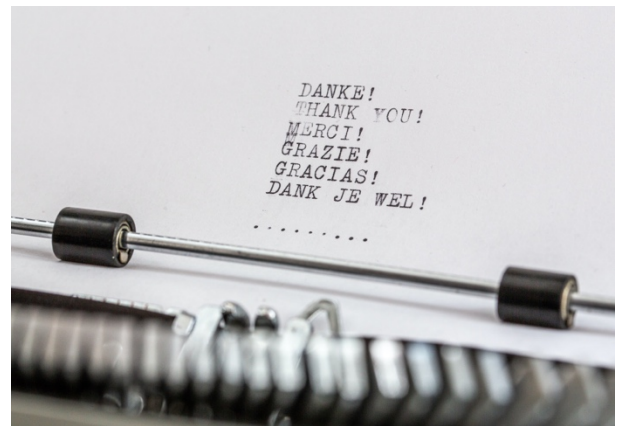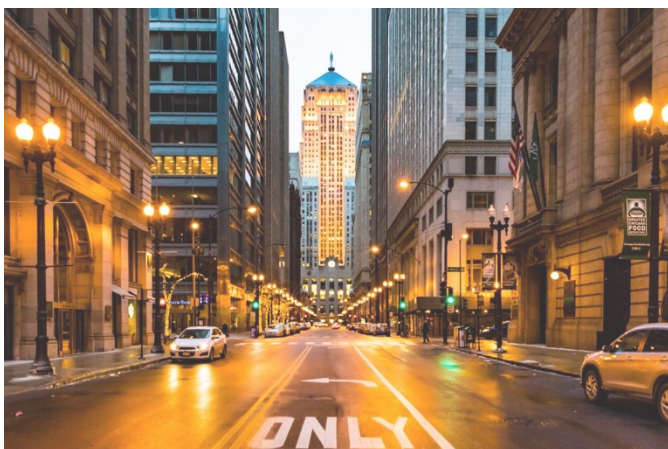Time: 12 PM CDT
Register here! Ω

STC 2022 Summit Volunteers

As the host chapter of STC's 2022 Summit, STC Chicago is excited to be welcoming technical communicators from the world over to our great Chicagoland area. Chapter members will operate a Hospitality Desk at the STC Summit this May 15-18. Join volunteers as they greet attendees, provide helpful information about Chicago and its surrounds, conduct prize giveaways, and manage "Chicago Trivia" contests. Enjoy your time at the Summit by networking with members and helping represent STC Chicago at the desk.

To those who have already volunteered to help with Hospitality, thank you! If you'd like to schedule your time to volunteer, contact Bill Leavitt, manager of the 2022 Hospitality Desk, at stc2022@stc-chicago.com.

Thank you in advance for helping make the first STC in-person conference since the pandemic outbreak a great one! Ω

STC Chicago Honors Volunteers

Stc Chicago cannot survive without the people who donate their time and talents with us. That's why every Spring we celebrate special volunteers who have gone above what was asked during the previous calendar year. Normally, we would celebrate these special volunteers at our annual Competition and Awards Banquet, but once again we were unable to hold an in-person banquet this year. So our president, Pete Wagner, sent personalized email to the winners, followed by their awards arriving to their homes by mail. Please help us honor these serving volunteers. Below are the award winners' list and the citation each received on their award:

President's Award – *Rita Hovorka*
In appreciation of your efforts and willingness to do what it takes to keep the chapter running smoothly

Volunteer of the Year – *MK Grueneberg*
In recognition of your efforts with student outreach, the annual competition, and the overall wealth of knowledge you bring every day to every aspect of STC Chapter life

Chapter Star – *Nancy Shanahan*
In recognition of your efforts in volunteering and co-managing the annual chapter competition

Above and Beyond – *Sian Mehl*
In recognition of your efforts as editor of the bi-monthly Byline newsletter

To see the full list of Chapter Awards and all previous winners, see our People page. Ω

Society News 20·22

STC 2020-2021 Salary Database

If you are a technical communicator or an employer looking to hire a technical communicator, then you need **STC's 2020-2021 *Salary Database***! STC produces the *Salary Database* based upon data from the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, with exhaustive additional research ensuring that the salary data is accurate, reflects regional realities, and is useful to technical communicators. **Renew your STC membership** NOW to get access to this resource for FREE!

Download the database today. Ω

TechComm KnowledgeXchange

Join STC for the monthly We Are TC: KnowledgeXChange and participate in a moderated panel with seasoned TechComm professionals who will answer the most common questions we get asked about the industry and what you need to know to start your career as a TechComm professional. Each month will cover a different topic of interest. After the live presentation, there will be time reserved for audience Q&A with our panelists. Registration is not required, attendance is free, and these sessions are open to all. KnowledgeXchange will be held the **last Monday of each month at 1PM ET.**

This month's panel discussion, "**Content Strategy: What Should a Technical Communicator Know?**", will occur on Monday, April 25. A link to the live panel discussion will be posted here on the day of the program.

2022 Election Results

STC, the nominating committee, and the Board of Directors recently announced the results of the 2022 STC election. A hearty congratulations goes out to those elected and all candidates who were dedicated to improving the Society by running for office.

President
(automatically succeeds from the office of VP)
Aiessa Moyna

Vice-President
Timothy Esposito

Secretary
Li-At Rathbun

Secretary
Paula Robertson

Director
Lori Meyer
Danielle Villegas

Nominating Committee
Shayla Corprew
Kylie Jacobsen
Mirhonda Studevant

2022 STC Scholarship Awardees

ANNOUNCING THE 2022 STC SCHOLARSHIP AWARDEES!

Akshata Balghare

Joana Donovan

STC Chicago 2021-22 Officers

President –Pete Wagner, *president@stc-chicago.com*
Vice President – Phil Hayak, *vp@stc-chicago.com*
Secretary – Dan Dornbrook, *secretary@stc-chicago.com*
Treasurer – Francis Bao, *treasurer@stc-chicago.com*
Immediate Past President – Rita Hovorka, *ipp@stc-chicago.com*

2021-22 Committee Managers

Alliance – Linda Jansak
Bylaws – Becky Hall
Competition – MK Grueneberg and Nancy Shanahan, *competition@stc-chicago.com*
eLearning & Technology Showcase – Linda Jansak
Historian – Bill Leavitt
Byline Newsletter – Sian Mehl, Mauricio Dominguez
Nominating – Dan Dornbrook, *nominating@stc-chicago.com*
Get Real! Professional Interview Program – *2021-22 manager wanted*, *interview@stc-chicago.com*
Membership Drive – *2021-22 manager wanted*, *membership@stc-chicago.com*
Programs – Dan Dornbrook, *program@stc-chicago.com*
Social Media – Dan Dornbrook
Scholarships – Rita Hovorka, *scholarships@stc-chicago.com*
Sponsorship – *2021-22 manager wanted*, *sponsorship@stc-chicago.com*
Student Outreach – MK Grueneberg
Summit 2022 – Linda Jansak, Adam Evans, Francis Bao, *stc2022@stc-chicago.com*
Webinar Series – MK Grueneberg, *webinars@stc-chicago.com*
Web/Online – Linda Kelley, *web@stc-chicago.com*

Byline

Byline is a bi-monthly publication of the STC Chicago chapter of the Society for Technical Communication (STC), a non- profit membership organization serving the needs of technical communication professionals.

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For membership information, contact: STC at Society for Technical Communication, 3251 Old Lee Highway, Suite 406, Fairfax, VA 22030 Phone: +1 (703) 522-4114 | Fax: +1 (703) 522-2075 Email: *stc@stc.com*