

Byline



Bi-Monthly Newsletter for STC Chicago Members

President's Message

by Elizabeth Gecas

Holiday season is here.

A time to spend money, and spread joy and cheer!

In case you're looking for a gift,

Look no further than a new membership, we insist!

STC is offering plenty of contests, competitions, and programs this upcoming year,

All you have to do is continue reading to see how STC can enhance your career.

The year 2017 is almost over,

But resolutions and changes are right around the corner.

Alas, this poem is done.

Now join us for our holiday party and have some fun! Ω



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Congratulations!

Please join us in congratulating our fellow technical communicators.

Copresco Recognized for 30 Years of Digital Printing Leadership

Copresco—a digital printing pioneer—was recognized for the 30th anniversary of its founding in 1987 by a Proclamation from the Village of Carol Stream, Illinois.

“We were looking for a much better, faster way of producing short-run projects,” Johnson says. “In those days, a copy shop might be able to get you 10 sets of a 20-page document in a day or so. Ask a commercial printer for 100 copies of a 1,000-page book with the same deadline, and you’d get a horrified look and a turnaround estimate of six weeks.”

Johnson came up with an entirely new approach for fast turnaround and founded a company originally known as Copies Overnight. “Long before the term was in vogue, we began printing on-demand and delivering documents—literally overnight. Along the way we changed our name to Copresco, but maintained our ‘Mission Impossible’ philosophy, constantly pushing the envelope by taking on

challenging printing projects that others dismissed,” Johnson explains.

“While Copresco’s core business is printing black and white books and publications that convey vital information, our award-winning color work competes with the best printing in the world,” Johnson adds.

“Copresco has earned dozens of awards for digital leadership and printing excellence.

These accolades are gratifying, but it is the respect, support, and trust of our clients that make the difference.”

Copresco is supported by a staff with long years of service, and by a cadre of dedicated printing brokers.

“We are proud to be recognized as the leader of the digital movement that has drastically changed the way books are manufactured. We will continue to lead the way with technology advancements and improvements in the continually changing communications industry,” Johnson concluded.



Is there something you or a fellow colleague is celebrating in a technical communication career? Share the news with us and we will include it in a future issue of Byline. Ω

Chinese to English Translation Certification

From our member Jim Jones: Chinese to English translation certification of the American Translators Association (atanet.org) is now available. English to Chinese, offered since 2006, with certification testing is given for 30 language pairs now. A practice version of the exam will be available soon. For details and further information, contact Jim Jones through atanet.org. Ω



So You Think You Can Design?

Enter STC Chicago's Design Contest

Are you a designer?

A graphic artist?

A photographer?

An artist?

Do you have a creative soul?

Have you secretly always wanted to share your creative talents?

If so, this contest is for you...

STC Chicago is looking for a great new design for the cover of the STC Chicago 46th Annual Recognition & Awards Banquet program. All art types are welcomed. Entries can be color or B&W. The winning design will be used on the 2018 banquet program cover, with designer credit. The winning designer will receive two complimentary tickets to the 2018 banquet.

There are just a few rules:

- ✦ All artwork must be original work; royalty free clip art and similar mediums acceptable, but nothing copyrighted.
- ✦ The design must include the words, *STC Chicago 46th Annual Recognition & Awards Banquet*, somewhere in or over the artwork.
- ✦ The design must include the banquet date, *March 15, 2018*.
- ✦ The artwork must be designed to fit a 4.25" x 8.5" cover and should be resizable, if necessary, to accommodate borders.

Please submit your entries as attachment via email to:

Program@stc-chicago.com

Subject: Banquet Cover Design Contest

All entries must be submitted by December 31, 2017. The winner will be selected and notified in January 2018. Ω

Final Days for Our Membership Drive Drawing

The 2018 STC membership registration is open. When you join or renew your STC membership and select STC Chicago as your chapter by December 31, 2017, you are automatically entered in a drawing to win a free Amazon Echo! Two winners will be selected.

Don't miss this "Amazon" opportunity to grow professionally and expand your network. When you join or renew for 2018, you must select STC Chicago as your chapter to enter the contest. Ω



Now Accepting Candidates for Officer and Committee Manager Positions

The STC Chicago administrative council is looking for a few good people who would like to help manage the Chapter. Each April, STC Chicago holds elections for the following officer positions:

- ✦ Vice president, *the current vice president automatically moves to president and the current president moves to Immediate Past President*
- ✦ Secretary
- ✦ Treasurer
- ✦ Nominating committee

If interested in running on the 2018-19 ballot, please send an email to nominating@stc-chicago.com.

In addition, we are always looking for new help with our various committees, both committee managers and committee members. See the full list of the [STC Chicago committees](#) to explore where you would like to help! Ω

STC Program Meeting Recaps



October: Hello World! RIP Traditional Content Strategies and Methodologies

By Pete Wagner

“Life begins at the end of your comfort zone.” This tagline from Pam Noreault, Principal Consultant

and Team Manager at SDL Inc. and presenter at the STC Chicago October chapter meeting, nicely sums up the journey that many technical communicators are embarking on as they move from traditional content strategies to strategies focused on customer-driven deliverables.

Traditional content development focused on release-cycle content. Driven by sales and marketing, new product features and fixes equal new content to be published to PDF and maybe HTML; start all over again, and then hope that you are meeting your user’s needs.

The reality is, while technical communicators agree that knowing their audience is paramount, very few of us spend time with customers. FACT: You cannot know anybody without spending time with them.

Fortunately, technical communicators are getting out of their comfort zone and are jumping the gap from release-cycle driven content by talking to their users and delivering what users want, when they need it. Both traditional and newer tools and methodologies are at our disposal, and you can get creative as well with:

- ✦ UX strategies
- ✦ Marketing strategies (SUS, NPS scores)
- ✦ Calls, site visits, shadowing customers
- ✦ Twitter following, LinkedIn groups
- ✦ YouTube videos, JIT content, gamification , crowdsourcing

Engaging regularly with your audience and using this feedback, you can develop your content strategy around a customer-engagement cycle: determine deliverables based on need, create a deliverable schedule and knock it out, report the results to management, rinse, and repeat.

Pam also noted that while SDL does have customers whose sole focus is customer-centric deliverables, they still have customers who deliver just PDFs. Ω

November: We learned how to handle our SMEs

On November 16th, STC members and non-members met for dinner and a program at Rodity's in Greek Town. The evening started with an incredible 5-course meal and some great networking. Then, Jennifer DeVries taught us how to get the information we need from our subject matter experts. Jennifer gave us some tips on how to handle a SME interview, but more importantly, she showed us how to prepare for the interview. Using interview templates, meeting attendees did practice interviews with each other. Overall, everyone had a great time and came away with some great tips on getting the information they need when they need it! Ω



Upcoming STC Programs



December: Holiday Party and Lightning Talks

The 2016-17 program year was a huge year for STC Chicago. We earned the 2017 Platinum Community Achievement Award, 2017 Pacesetter Award, and we were named 2017 STC Community of the Year! And...the 2017-18 program year is well under way and has had a wonderful start.

We think these accomplishments deserve a little celebration!

Please join us on December 14, 2017, at our annual STC Chicago Holiday Party. We will have a dinner buffet in a nice, large, private room at one of Schaumburg's newest restaurants: Bar Louie.

Back by popular demand will be Lightning Talks. Lightning talks are mini-presentations of 20 slides in 5 minutes on either serious or light topics. The tricky part is that the slides advance automatically, whether the speaker is ready or not! Lightning talks are an exercise in speaker brevity, concentration, and often a lot of laughter ensues. We will have six presenters doing lightning talks and we will have one brave speaker who will do a lightning talk to a slide deck he will not see until he starts to speak!

Join us for some fun and networking before the craziness of the holiday season begins. And, who knows...Santa may have even left a present or two for you!

For details and registration, see the [December meeting announcement on our website](#). Ω

January: Creating Micro-Learning in Micro-Time

In this modern age of learning, how people choose to gather their knowledge and consume it has changed. They are not waiting for learning professionals to catch up. They are finding ways around learning and development and creating their own knowledge banks. Micro-learning as a performance support tool may be the answer.

Shannon Tipton will give you important information and tools to build an effective, sustainable micro-learning element, rapidly.

She will answer the important questions: What is micro-learning? How would micro-learning be applied in your organization? When would a micro-learning element be appropriate? What tools do I need to make micro-learning happen?

At the end of this session, you will be able to

Develop a strategy applying the what, how, when, and why of micro-learning

Use and customize the provided tools to meet your needs

Begin your own micro-learning design that includes templates.

Shannon Tipton is owner of Learning Rebels performance consultancy and author of Disruptive Learning. As Chief Learning Rebel, Shannon has over 15 years' experience developing strategies for learning and development departments, effectively closing the gap between capabilities and achieving business strategic goals. She also speaks on the topic of learning disruption at conferences, webinars, and workshops.

The meeting will take place in Oakbrook or Downers Grove and full details and registration information will be posted on our website in the next few weeks. [Ω](#)

February: Making an Impact Using Animated Videos

The more educated the team, the healthier the bottom line. The challenge lies in keeping teams informed and wanting to learn more about their roles in the industry. With dry content centered on policies and procedures, how do you create eLearning that engages a learner? By using relatable and fun animated videos! At our meeting on February 15, **Karen Kostrinsky** will show you how she turned a learning challenge into an eLearning design template for use internally and externally. You will learn how she worked with internal and external subject matter experts to create engaging storyboards and scripts that focus on critical factors affecting the mortgage industry.

At the end of this session, you will be able to

- Understand the importance of storytelling in developing eLearning
- Capture the importance of using good audio techniques
- Use GoAnimate to create fun and engaging eLearning videos, even with dry boring content

Karen Kostrinsky is a manager of eLearning development at Ellie Mae, an all-in-one fully integrated mortgage solution. Her team creates eLearning courses designed to make life easier for employees, clients, and partners. At Ellie Mae headquarters, Karen built a recording studio for podcasts, demo recordings, and voice-overs. Previously, she taught college and worked as a learning consultant for 25 years.

The meeting will take place in Schaumburg and full details and registration information will be posted on our website by early January. [Ω](#)

Wednesday Webinar Series

STC Chicago provides FREE webinars to its chapter members on the first or second Wednesday of every month. These online events exist as a supplement to our monthly in-person chapter meetings. See the information below for upcoming webinars.

January: From Paperweight to Conversation Piece: Building a Portfolio You Love (and Love to Talk About)

Presented by Chris Hester

Wed, Jan 10 @ 12:00 – 1:00 pm CST

On the one hand, it's a great time to be a tech comm professional: throughout the ranks of senior management, there is a growing understanding that good technical content is integral to a good customer experience. The technology needed to create useful, dynamic content is cheaper and easier to use than ever before. And, we have scads of data to guide us: in theory, we now have access to the insights and feedback needed to create literally the Best Content Ever.

Visit our website to [REGISTER](#)

December Recap: Finding Your Groove in this Brave New World

For those who did not have a chance to attend the December Webinar “Finding Your Groove in this Brave New World,” we wanted to share with you one key takeaway. Kate Walton, from Steyer Associates, Inc., shared some great tips for Tech Comm professionals to find their footing on the shifting sands of the profession and the job market. One key takeaway was her slide showing the key hard skills, soft skills, and tools that are prevalent in today's MarkComm and TechComm job force. Ω



STEYER CONTENT		Hard/Soft Skills
Marketing and Content Strategy Pros		
Hard Skills	Tools	Soft Skills
Agency experience	HTML markup	Collaboration
Blogging	Salesforce	Communication
Brand strategy and product marketing	Marketo	Deadline-conscious
Case studies & whitepapers	HubSpot	Details-oriented
Content and email marketing		Entrepreneurial mindset
Demand generation		Flexibility
Relationship management		Can juggle competing priorities
SEO & social media		Ability to self-direct and quickly ramp up
		Project management
		Storytelling

STC Chicago 2016-17 Officers

President

Elizabeth Gecas, president@stc-chicago.com

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MaryKay Grueneberg, vp@stc-chicago.com

Secretary

Dan Dornbrook, secretary@stc-chicago.com

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Byline

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Subscriptions: The current issue of Byline and all archived editions are available on the [STC Chicago Website](#).



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