



Publishing Articles in *Intercom* or *Technical Communication*

by Melissa Clark, Silicon Valley Chapter SIGs Manager

So you want to publish your work in STC's *Technical Communication* journal or *Intercom* magazine. But do you know the information to succeed?

First, Research

Before writing an article, research where an article would be most appropriate based on your readers and publication-specific guidelines. Is the technically oriented *Technical Communication* or the more informal *Intercom* better for your article?

You can find information on *Intercom*, such as author guidelines and back issues, on the STC website (<http://www.stc-va.org/intercom.htm>). Writer guidelines and current *Technical Communication* issues also are available online (<http://www.techcomm-online.org/>).

As Always, Know Your Audience

An STC membership survey taken in summer, 1999 showed that about 64 percent of STC members are female and 36 percent are male. The median membership age is 41. The survey also found the primary motivation for joining the STC is to stay informed and current by reading articles in journals and newsletters. Members who took part in the survey rated *Intercom* as the most important service (36 percent) and *Technical Communication* as the second most important service (20 percent) of the STC.

Article Suggestions

According to *Intercom* Editor Maurice Martin, most of his magazine articles answer: "How can technical communicators do their jobs better?" These articles include information on:

- upcoming technologies
- educational opportunities
- management strategies
- other career-specific tips

The next area of interest answers: "How can I advance my career?"

These articles are usually on how to find a job, new industries in need of technical communicators, and technical communicator profiles. Some articles also focus on news or are humorous stories on technical communication.

Intercom looks for articles on current topics. "Technical communicators are part of newsmaking developments in areas like intellectual property and Internet publishing, and I'd like *Intercom* to reflect that more," Martin says.

Technical Communication Editor George Hayhoe says more articles written on "knowledge management, international issues in technical communication, publication processes and management, usability, and quality" would interest his readers.

PhD Required?

For *Intercom*, although authors need to have a useful idea or experience, according to Martin, they do not need to be experts to write an article on a subject. A more important quality trait to Martin is the writer's ability to trade places with the reader and ask, "What am I getting out of this article?"

For *Technical Communication*, according to Hayhoe, an author of a scholarly journal article "must by definition be an expert on the topic he or she is writing about, at least to some extent." Other important qualities in a writer for Hayhoe are:

- subject matter insight
- audience understanding
- clear and effective communication of the idea

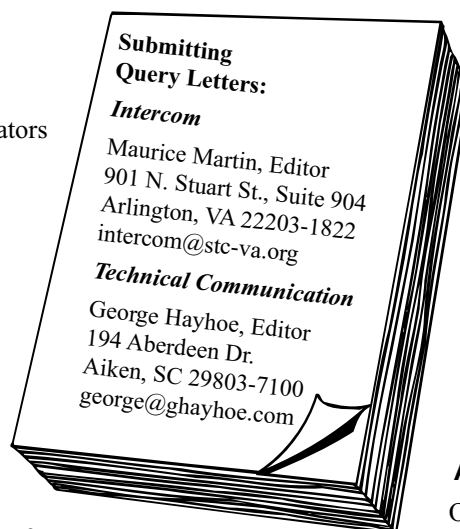
So What Now?

If you plan to write for *Intercom*, you should send a 100-word summary of your article idea via email. If you plan to write for *Technical Communication*, you should submit an electronic (preferably Microsoft Word) file, including a summary of the document, electronic figures, bios of all author(s), and all supporting source material.

Article preferred lengths and styles are also given in the author and writer guidelines.

Article Rights

Once the article is written, who owns the copyright? The STC retains the copyright for your written work for both *Intercom* and *Technical*



Silicon Valley STC February 2001 Chapter Meeting

Topic: *Moving Out of the Box: Shifting to HTML-based Help*

Speaker: Jason Gervich

Date: Thursday, Feb. 22, 2001

Abstract: Two areas are seriously affecting development tools used to design and maintain online Help system.

- The movement of applications from the desktop to the Web.
- The movement from proprietary tools and standards to open tools and standards.

Help authors are increasingly using standards- and HTML-based Help systems.

Jason's presentation will include a discussion of how open-standards authoring tools such as Dreamweaver are replacing proprietary tools such as RoboHELP and standards like Windows Help.

Jason Gervich, B.S., has worked extensively with Windows Help and HTML-based Help systems. As a consultant, he has developed hypertext and Help systems for Sun Microsystems, 3Com, Oracle, the state of Idaho and others.

Schedule: 6:00 p.m.: Networking/Jobs Corner, beverages
 7:00 p.m.: Announcements
 7:15 p.m.: Presentation

Menu: Mixed Green Salad, Cucumber, Tomato, Feta Cheese Salad, Grilled Lemon Chicken, Penne Pasta with Portobello Mushroom Sauce, Garlic Roasted Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetables, Bakery Fresh Rolls and Butter, Fruit Pies. Beverages are Brewed Coffee, Decaf, and Tea.

To guarantee your space for the Feb. 22 meeting, mail your reservation, paid in full, on or before Feb. 12. Your reservation is guaranteed only if payment is received by Feb. 15. A \$5 late fee will be charged for any reservation received after Feb 15. The late fee also applies to walk-ins. We regret that scheduled speakers occasionally cancel. If that happens, we make every effort to find a suitable substitute program.

Reservation for the February 22, 2001 Chapter Meeting

Name and e-mail address: _____

<input type="checkbox"/> \$20.00 member food	<input type="checkbox"/> \$12.00 member no food
<input type="checkbox"/> \$30.00 non-member food	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00 non-member no food
<input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00 student food	<input type="checkbox"/> \$8.00 student no food

Mail form and check to: **STC Meeting Reservations**
PO Box 3709
Saratoga, CA 95070-1709

Location: Four Points Hotel by Sheraton (formerly the Sunnyvale Hilton), 1250 Lakeside Drive, Sunnyvale, CA

Directions:

From 101, going south:

1. Exit at Lawrence Expressway.
2. Get into the left lane immediately, as Oakmead is just one block and comes up quite soon.
3. Turn left onto Oakmead.
4. Go one block to Lakeside Drive.
5. Turn left on Lakeside Drive.
6. Ignore the first driveway — it leads to the Faultline Brewing Company.
7. Enter the hotel parking lot by turning right into the second driveway (across from the Toscana Apartments) or the third driveway (past the Toscana).
8. Park. Go to the main lobby. Look for a sign.

From 101, going north:

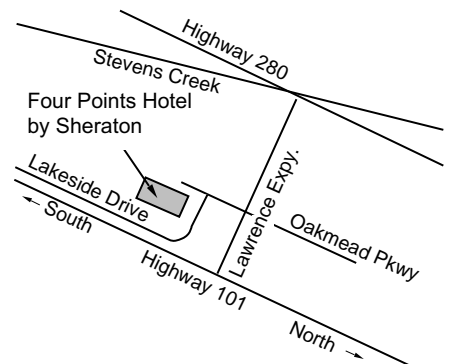
1. Exit at Bowers/Great America Parkway.
2. Turn left at the end of the offramp.
3. Cross over 101 and make the first right at Augustine Drive.
4. Turn right at the next corner, which is Lakeside Drive.
5. Follow around (paralleling 101) to the Sheraton.
6. Turn left into the parking lot just before the Toscana Apartments.
7. Park. Go to the main lobby. Look for a sign.

Extra parking:

If the hotel parking lot is full, additional parking is available behind the hotel.

1. Take Lakeside Drive to Oakmead and turn left.
2. Go down three or four buildings.
3. You will see a big sign on the left: Oakmead Village Office Park 1255 - 1263.
4. Turn left into the parking lot.

The entrance to the Sheraton is between Buildings 1259 (Widata) and 1261 (Digital Market). The walk to the Ballroom is very short and takes about two minutes. Cross over the bridge onto the Sheraton property. Turn left and walk to the last building by the pool. Turn right to enter the building and walk to the front of the lobby. The Ballroom is on the corridor on your left just before the front entrance of the lobby.



Silicon Valley STC March 2001 Chapter Meeting

Topic: *Managing Your Job Search*

Speaker: Meryl Natchez, CEO of TechProse **Date:** Thursday, March 22, 2001

Abstract: The presentation focuses on how to manage the process of looking for a job, which is a job in itself. It includes how to:

- Clarify your personal and professional objectives
- Research prospects
- Determine whether agency representation would be valuable for you
- Understand the contracting process and whether this is an avenue that fits for you
- Develop realistic expectations and schedules
- Make your resume shine
- Handle the interview process

Meryl Natchez has been in the technology field since 1978. She is CEO of TechProse, a technology consulting firm in Lafayette, CA. TechProse was on Inc magazine's Top 500 list of fastest growing privately held businesses in the United States in 1998. TechProse was No. 17 on a list of the fastest growing Bay Area companies in 2000. The company recently received the Arthur Andersen Best Practices award for Exceeding Customer Expectations. TechProse places contractors on writing, training, and IT development projects and also does entire writing and training projects in-house.

Schedule: 4:00 p.m.: Vendor setup in Champagne Room
 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.: Job Fair, Networking
 6:45 - 8:00 p.m.: Dinner Buffet available
 7:45 - 8:45 p.m.: Presentation by Meryl Natchez

Menu: South-of-the-Border Buffet includes Bean and Corn Salad, Taco Salad, Chicken Fajitas with Sour Cream, Guacomole, Cheese and Salsa, Chili Relleno Casserole, Soft Corn and Flour Tortillas, Refried Beans. Dessert includes Flan, Churros, and Fruit Pies. Beverages are Brewed Coffee, Decaf, and Tea.

To guarantee your space for the March 22 meeting, mail your reservation, paid in full, on or before March 12. Your reservation is guaranteed only if payment is received by March 15. A \$5 late fee will be charged for any reservation received after March 15. The late fee also applies to walk-ins. We regret that scheduled speakers occasionally cancel. If that happens, we make every effort to find a suitable substitute program.

Reservation for the March 22, 2001 Chapter Meeting

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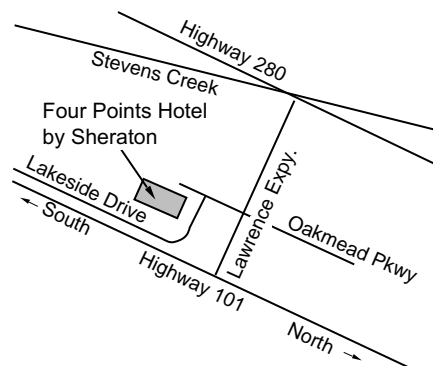
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Connecting Online

The STC SV Administrative Council is planning to publish the *Connection* online this spring. So far, we've had virtually 100 percent support from members.

The move would save more than \$20,000 annually in printing costs and bring the Silicon Valley chapter into the electronic publishing era, albeit belatedly.

We'd like to hear your thoughts on what we can do with the \$20,000 that we would no longer spend on printing. We're looking at giving scholarships to schools in our chapter area that offer tech writing certificates and degrees. We're also considering offering training classes to members at reduced prices. What do you suggest?

Email your suggestions to Managing Editor Joe Lowell at jdlowell@yahoo.com.

We will devote much of the content in the upcoming March-April *Connection* to stories about the job and tool trends that recruiters are seeing. Look for your next *Connection* in mailboxes in early March!

Mark Your Calendar! Polish Your Resume!

The annual SVC Job Fair and dinner meeting is Thursday, March 22, from 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.



Dozens of job recruiters and companies will attend.

The Four Points Hotel by Sheraton (formerly the Sunnyvale Hilton Hotel) will open its doors once again to our annual and overwhelmingly popular event.

This year, Meryl Natchez, founder and CEO of TechProse, will present "Managing Your Job Search."

Stay tuned to our chapter Web site and newsletters for details.

Join a SIG Today!

To expand their professional horizons, members of the Silicon Valley chapter of the STC meet in special groups.

Visit <http://stc.org/region8/svc/www> for groups, meeting times and places. Or, contact SIGs Manager Melissa Clark at lissa_1978@yahoo.com for info.

PUBLISHING,
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Communication. In both cases, the STC grants republication rights to authors on request.

Publishing Has Its Privileges

While you may not perish in your career if you don't publish, publishing an article in either *Technical Communication* or *Intercom* allows you to share your research and experiences in technical communication with your colleagues.

Melissa Clark is a technical writer for e-Publishing Corp. in Santa Clara.

Your best source for career advancement in Silicon Valley

stc.org/region8/svc/www

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