



The Printed Word

By *Ralph F. Rumpf*

Most of us spend our work days focused on the details of writing: interviewing, gathering facts, organizing, then preparing the copy. Then we shift to details of construction, presentation flow, paragraph organization, verb-tense agreement and a hundred other details that distinguish a quality document from most high-school essays.

Few of us, in the course of our day to day work, are involved with the details of what our words, diagrams and graphics will look like when they are printed. Sure, we follow some guidelines for format and style that conform to our employers expectations, but we don't do the detail work. More often than not, someone else or another department are responsible for that task. Often, the responsibility lies with another company so we are a little out of the loop.

Printed Text

Entering the world of print is almost like entering an entirely different universe. The jargon changes, the concerns are different; the work is totally different. Terms like lines per inch, registration, ascenders, bleeds, builds, four-color, setup and a host of others are real to the print world. The terms we use on a daily basis are mostly foreign as many of their terms are to us. Yet, one cannot exist without the other.

When I first started in the independent arena nine years ago, I thought I had a good idea of what it took to produce a manual. I quickly received a rush course in print basics and have never really stopped learning since.

The world of print is very involved and technical, yet there is a touch of the artistic as well. The primary function of print is to take the words we compose and prepare it in a cost effective and reproducible manner that is useful for wide spread dissemination in a format more enduring than a photocopy.

To accomplish this a wide number of methods are available. The actual method used depends as much on the desired audience as the format and costs.

In printing, cost is a direct relation to quantity. It is far cheaper for a press operator to run 10,000 copies of a book than to run 1000. Other factors such as inks, color usage and bindings will influence the final cost, but they are also related to the quantity printed.

Years ago, press operators spent vast quantities of time manually setting type and spaces for every page before they actually printed anything. The advent of the computer has allowed many of these steps to be automated. This in turn allows today's press operators to produce an entire master plate from a machine and reproduce these plates as they are

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St. Joseph Valley Chapter Information

President - Bethany Rusbasan

2710 Lake Pine Path, Apt 207
St. Joseph, MI 49085-9264
(616) 982-8927

President Elect - TBA

Treasurer - Gary Futoma

17409 Barryknoll Way
Granger, IN 46530
(219) 243-5819

Public Relations - Barbara Wellnitz

509 I St.
La Porte, IN 46350-4869
(219) 324-9244

WebMaster - Mark Stucky

54663 Holiday Dr.
Elkhart, IN 46514-4542
(219) 264-0614

Newsletter Editor - Ralph Rumpf

Documentation Specialists
6036 Legion Road
Stevensville, MI 49127-1110
(616) 429-5174

Region 4 Director Sponsor - Mike Bates

Mike Bates • Senior Member,
Northeast Ohio Chapter •
mpbates@software.rockwell.com

Editorial Information

Article Submissions

E-mail: ralph@parrett.com
Mail: Send to *Watermark* Editor

Submission Deadlines

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WEBSITE: www.stc-sjvc.org

Presidency Corner

By Bethany Rusbasan, Chapter President

Burn out. I have been trying to write my president's column on burn out. I do some research, I start writing, I stop. I think, "I need to get this to Ralph," I start writing, I stop. I have done three incomplete research attempts; I have started and stopped this article at least five times. What is my problem? Burn out. It is not the burn out that I am tired of my technical writing career and want to run off to the Bahamas to sit on the beach staring at a crab—although that doesn't sound too bad either—it is just the burn out of I just finished a large, two year project, and now I *get* to start all over again.

I am having a few false starts getting the juices flowing for anything at the moment. My main concern is what am I going to do about it? Well, I am actually getting up earlier so I am not so rushed in the morning. At work, I am taking the time to get up and make myself that cup of tea, which I didn't have time for when I was wrapping up that big project. I am taking the time to straighten out my files both virtual and paper to have some closure on that big project, then I will also be ready for my next project with clean organized folders. I am again taking those breaks that I was skipping. I am leaving at lunchtime to eat and relax. I have a week vacation planned for next month. I am attending our next meeting to get a booster shot of inspiration. And, most importantly (at least to Ralph), I am finally finishing this article, even if it doesn't match my original idea for it! Hope to see some of you on the 21st; I am really looking forward to it.



STC Mission Statement

The mission of the Society for Technical Communication is to improve the quality and effectiveness of technical communication for audiences worldwide.

Society for Technical Communication

901 N. Stuart Street, Suite 904

Arlington, Va 22203-1854

(703) 522-4114

www.stc.org

New In Print

A Road Map for Successful Content Management

DENVER, CO, February 5, 2002—Comtech Services, Inc. announces the release of information-development expert, Dr. JoAnn Hackos's latest book, *Content Management for Dynamic Web Delivery*. Published by John Wiley & Sons, this book walks readers through the stages of effective content management for enterprise and customer information.

Content Management for Dynamic Web Delivery offers practical examples and vignettes from companies such as SBC/Ameritech, Nortel Networks, Intuit, Autodesk, and Prosoft Training. Hackos leads readers through setting goals, establishing a vision, and most importantly, designing and implementing the foundation of content management, the Information Model.

"To be successful, a corporation's content-management solution must address the information-development life cycle, focusing both on the creation, review and approval, and dissemination of business critical and customer-focused information. The life cycle must extend to include dynamic Web delivery of customized and personalized information resources," said JoAnn Hackos.

Hackos shows how to establish a content-management strategy based on the information that users need, the platforms and media to which it should be delivered, and the information that is critical to the business of the organization. Readers will learn how to develop and incorporate an Information Model into their enterprise content management and their Web site design as well as how to transform their organization's processes to ensure dynamic content delivery.

"JoAnn is one of the few authors to recognize that the Information Model is at the heart of every content system that meets these goals. Her book breaks down the content-management challenge into its core issues and provides us insights to navigate

the pitfalls. This is a must read for managers and technologists alike who have the task of providing complex content-management systems from the creation processes through final delivery." Marc Gunning, Manager, IPS e-Business, Hewlett-Packard Company.

Content Management for Dynamic Web Delivery, ISBN 0-471-08586-3, is available for \$39.99. It can be ordered online through www.amazon.com or from Comtech Services, Inc., 710 Kipling Street, Suite 400, Denver, CO 80215; (303) 232-7586; fax (303) 232-0659.

JoAnn Hackos, PhD, is President of Comtech Services, a content-management and information-design firm based in Denver, which she founded in 1978. She directs the Center for Information-Development Management (CIDM), a membership organization focused on content-management and information-development best practices. She authored *Managing Your Documentation Projects* (Wiley 1994), co-authored *Standards for Online Communication* (Wiley 1997), and co-authored *User and Task Analysis for Interface Design* (Wiley 1998).

For more information, visit www.comtech-serv.com.

Coming Events

The following is a list of the proposed topics, dates and meeting locations for this year:

February 21, 2002

By: Kirsten Klassen (coordinator)

Topic: Tour of printers with graphic designer to talk about standards of quality

Time: 5:45 PM for tour, 6:30 for dinner

Place: Rink Riverside (tour) Empourium (dinner)

April 10, 2002

By: Mark Stucky (coordinator)

Topic: Rise and Fall of E-Commerce

Time: TBD

Place: TBD

June 4, 2002

By: Perry Ballard

Topic: Branding

Time: TBD

Place: Perry Ballard Offices (St. Joseph)

February Meeting

The February meeting, weather permitting, will include a tour of a printing operation followed by dinner and a general discussion about printing quality.

Dianne Schutz, Rink Riverside marketing manager, will give us a tour of the facility, highlighting printing and binding capabilities.

Meeting Details

Date: Thursday, February 21, 2002.

Time: 5:45 P.M. - Facilities tour (see below)
6:30 P.M. - Dinner at the Emporium

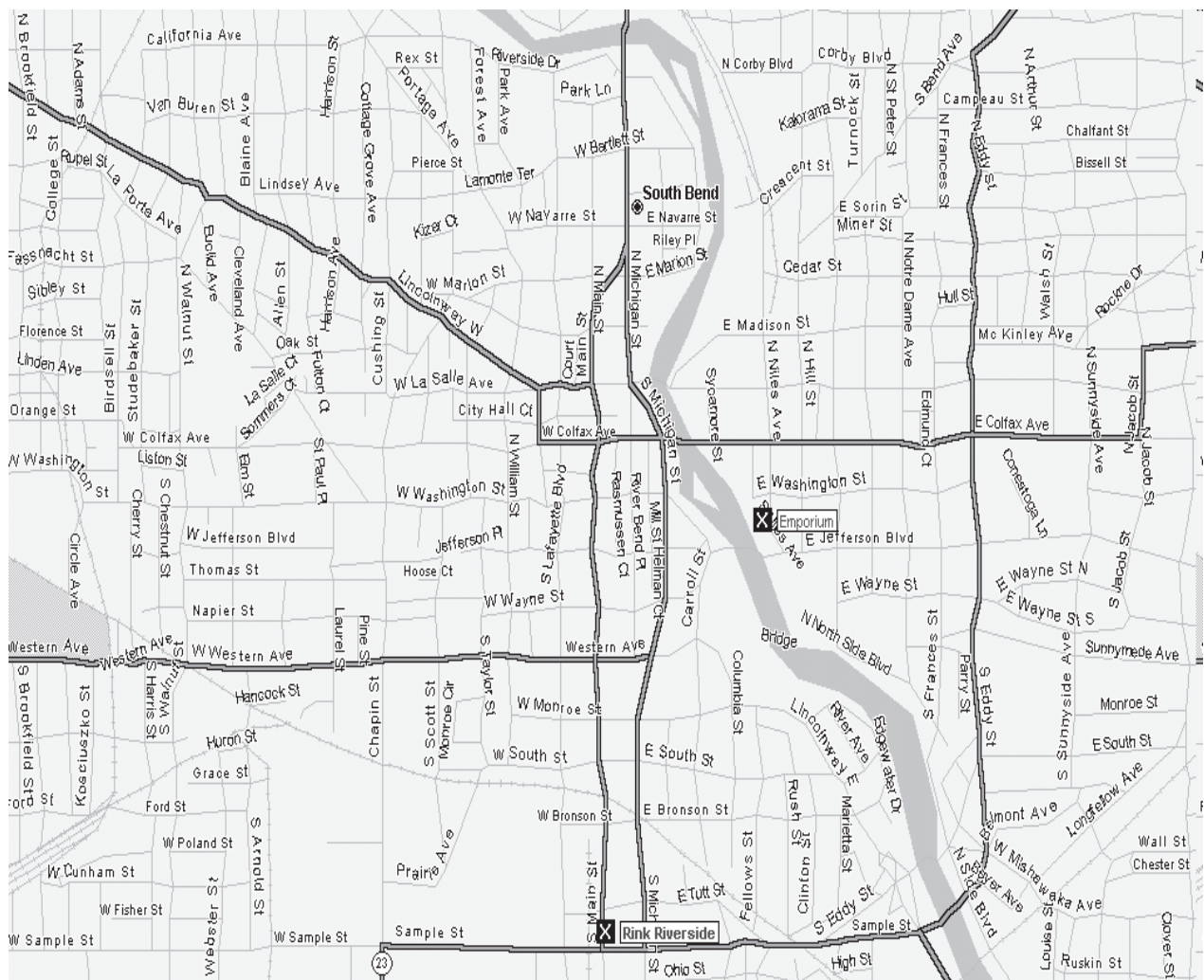
Presenter/Host: Kirsten Klassen

Place: 5:45 Tour of Rink Riverside, 814 S. Main St. (near corner of Main and Sample), South Bend. Please go to side entrance, on your right from the parking lot

6:30 Meet at Emporium (121 S. Niles Ave., South Bend) for dinner and further discussion. Janice Wiebe Ollenburger, art director at Menno nite Mutual Aid, will discuss what to look for in a printing job to ensure that quality is achieved.

RSVP: Kirsten.Klassen@mma-online.org or call (574) 264-0614. In the event of another ice storm or power outage, send RSVPs to MStucky@utilimaster.com, (574) 862-7659. PLEASE RSVP by Feb 19.

Directions: Just get to Main Street by the route you know best. Rink Riverside is about 8 blocks south of W. Washington St., where Tippecanoe Place is located. We will probably follow one another over to the Emporium. Printable maps are available from the Chapter Web Site meeting links.



Northeast Ohio Chapter STC meeting announcement:

Tri-C's "Meeting of the Minds" Symposium

featuring JoAnn Hackos, Gloria Gery, and special guest Judy Glick-Smith

To promote its technical communication certificate program, the Professional Development Institute at Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C) is gathering nationally recognized experts to share their insights into our rapidly expanding field.

Dr. JoAnn Hackos is president of Comtech in Denver, Colo. For over 20 years she has conducted seminars on subjects like project management, usability testing, and the information design process. Her books include *Managing Documentation Projects*, *Standards for Online Communication*, and the newly published *Content Management for Dynamic Web Delivery*. Dr. Hackos is a fellow and past president of STC.

Gloria Gery is the founder of Gery Associates in Tolland, Mass. She is an expert in performance-centered software design and in developing and implementing interactive training and performance support systems. Ms. Gery wrote the books *Electronic Performance Support Systems* and *Making CBT Happen*. In 2000, she received the Distinguished Contribution Award from the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD).

Judy Glick-Smith, STC president, will review the Society's current activities and future direction. Dr. Janet Schriver, director of the Tri-C technical communication program, will moderate.

Date: Saturday, March 16, 2002

Place: Cuyahoga Community College

Eastern Campus, Building E-2

4250 Richmond Rd., Highland Heights

Time: 8:45 a.m. Light breakfast

9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m. Symposium (a light lunch will be provided)

3 p.m. Informal reception

Cost: The symposium is **FREE**, but you must reserve a seat by contacting Michael Landini at michael.landini@tri-c.cc.oh.us or 216-987-3078.

Directions:

- 1) I-271 (local lanes) to the Harvard Rd. exit.
- 2) West on Harvard Rd. to Richmond Rd. Tri-C is near the southwest corner of Harvard and Richmond. Park next to the building, and bring two quarters in case they are charging for parking that weekend.

For directions and maps, go to www.tri-c.cc.oh.us/maps/

Printed Word (continued from page 1)

needed. Today disposable masters are often created for short runs of 5000 copies or less. These are far less expensive than traditional metal plates and far easier to produce.

Once print masters are created, the printer sets the presses for the setup required for the publication. The setup involves how many pages are printed per press sheet. The number can vary from 4 to 32 pages per sheet for the most common layouts. The finished sheet is folded to create a signature. The signatures are trimmed, gathered and bound according to the binding method specified by the client.

Naturally, the process has glitches and a printer will normally run some number of copies to ensure the final product is up to expectations. This is part of what constitutes the printer's setup costs and is also part of the quantity versus cost issue.

That is a very simplified description of the printing process. It takes years for a printer to gain the experience and knowledge to be considered an expert.

That is why you should attend the February meeting. You may not become an expert, but a basic knowledge of what goes on when those words leave your desk can be an asset

Editor's Corner

Good GRIEF! A new year? Already? Where does the time go? (As I get the second issue of *Watermark* ready.)

Have you ever noticed that? It seems like the older you get - the clocks run faster or something.

Do you recall Christmas when you were about 8 or 9? I bet December seemed to last for a year and every day before Christmas had to be at least a week long. I remember lying in bed listening to the clock tick. Boy, did those nights drag on.

Then, sometime in my twenties, I got a vague impression that time wasn't infinite after all. Yeah, late papers in college were a reminder. But I could usually find some reason why I didn't really apply myself.

Then I got married and had a family, the die was cast then let me tell you! Suddenly, there wasn't enough time to get everything done before Christmas! Or I just got over one holiday and another one was looming before me. I forget whose birthday was when because I could no longer keep them in order. (This is a major marketing strength of day planners - sure wish I had thought of them.)

If you haven't experienced this phenomenon yet, wait. You will. I do not think that any of us can escape it. It appears to be a fundamental law of time.

Whether this is a by product of our biological clocks, or a function of nature, or a universal constant, I can't tell. But the sad truth is that it gets worse. Soon you are not losing just hours or days but weeks and years! It can become a little frightening. Kids who once seemed tiny now are taller than you and your parents have turned into...old people. (When did that happen? I don't remember.)

Hmmm...Perhaps I should check the government grants library to see if anyone has done a study of this. Considering the types of things the government has been known to give money to study, this has to be a shoe in. If the Pentagon can lose three trillion, surely a measly grant won't amount to much. Who knows, maybe I can find an answer.

The point of this discourse being? Oh, nothing in particular and yet... something.

Has it really been nearly half a year since September 11? Have you begun to forget? I have friends who think we should. I have a mixed reaction to that. Someone once said that those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it. I wonder if that applies here.

Time is not a commodity we have a lot of control over. It marches on, seemingly oblivious to us and our attempts to change it. And yet we march on oblivious to changes we could make to make things a little better.

I, for one, refuse to accept the idea that the way the world is, is just the way it will be and there is nothing we can do about it. My mom was one of those who accepted that belief and she fought tooth and nail for her right not to make a difference; right up to the day she died. I sometimes wonder if the irony would strike her that she made a difference just by being here.

But when kids can organize campaigns to clean up neighborhoods, or collect food for homeless families; who says we can't change? We live in a country that has thrived on the idea of change.

Sure, perhaps we have come a long way on the wrong road. But that is the wonderful thing about roads, you can follow them back to the point where you got lost and get back on the right path. Will it be easy, no, probably just the opposite. But since when does that mean that we just give up trying?

The thing we need to remember about change is we need to be the ones to direct it. Some things are right, some are wrong and the difference is often hard to discern. We have allowed the car to run for too long with no one at the wheel. For some reason we thought we could sit in the back and enjoy the view. Clearly, that hasn't worked so well. Perhaps it's time to get back in the drivers seat and face the consequences of our decisions.

Yes, it might be painful. I know it will be hard. But you know, I always enjoyed turning that wheel, just to see where the road would go.

Director Sponsor Notes

By Mike Bates, STC Region 4 Director-Sponsor

STC January 2002 Board Report

The Society's board of directors held their third meeting for the 2001-2002 year January 25-26 in Las Vegas, Nevada. The board considered many initiatives and approved these actions:

Chapters

The new Central Pennsylvania chapter was approved by interim action on January 22, 2002, given a \$350 startup grant, and assigned to Region 4.

In Region 1, the Clarkson University Student chapter and the Region 7 Tri-Cities chapter were dissolved because of continued inactivity and regardless of the attempts to reactivate them.

Grants and Loans

A Special Opportunities Grant of \$7,580 USD was approved for Dan Jones and Dan Voss for a study entitled "Marketing Technical Communication to High School Audiences: Creating a Tutorial for Teachers and Promoting a Writing Contest for Students." When the study is complete, a report will be published in *Technical Communication*.

A loan of \$3,000 USD was approved for the Oklahoma chapter to host the Region 5 Conference scheduled October 4-6, 2002 in Oklahoma City, OK.

New Award Program

A new Society-level award program was approved to recognize Special Interest Group (SIG) members for their outstanding work and dedication. This new program will be known as the Distinguished SIG Service Award (DSSA). The first awards will be selected by the board of directors and awarded next May at the annual conference in Nashville.

Teaching Fellowship

The first Teaching Fellowship for Practicing Professionals for \$4,000 USD was approved for Stewart Whittemore. The goal of the STC

teaching fellowship program is to promote positive academe and industry connections and to make it possible for practitioners to help in the education and training of future technical communicators.

Standards Organizations

The board of directors strongly supports a greater role for STC standards organizations such as IEEE, ISO, and W3C. As a result, they approved membership and will support delegate participation in the US Technical Advisory Group (an organization that plays a supportive advisory role for the creation of ISO standards). The board also approved delegate participation in the W3C (STC already is a member of that group).

Several Chapters Change Names

It was announced that several chapters have changed their names since the last board meeting: Sweden chapter changed to the Nordic chapter, the South Carolina chapter changed to the South Carolina Midlands chapter, and the Central New Jersey chapter changed to New Jersey chapter.



Mike is the Manager of Information Architecture at Rockwell Automation and Region 4 Director-Sponsor. He can be reached at mpbates@software.rockwell.com.

Member Advisory

If you will, or have, changed your address, please drop a note or e-mail me so I can update the Membership Rolls. The national office usually lags a month or two behind and you may miss an issue or two of the newsletter, or any notices that go out to the general membership.

I appreciate your cooperation.

Ralph F. Rumpf

The Dollar Bill

Take out a one dollar bill, and look at it. The design you are looking at first came off the government presses in 1957.

This so-called paper money is in fact a cotton and linen blend, with minute red and blue silk fibers running through it. A special blend of ink is used, the contents we will never know. It is overprinted with symbols and then starched to make it water resistant and pressed to give it that nice crisp look.

If you look on the front of the bill, you will see the United States Treasury Seal. On the top you will see the scales for a balanced budget. In the center you have a carpenter's square, a tool used for an even cut.



Underneath is the Key to the United States Treasury. That's all pretty easy to figure out, but what is on the back of that dollar bill is something we should all know.

If you turn the bill over, you will see two circles. Both circles, together, comprise the Great Seal of the United States. The First Continental Congress requested that Benjamin Franklin and a group of men come up with a Seal. It took them four years to accomplish this task and another two years to get it approved.



If you look at the left-hand circle, you will see a Pyramid. Notice the face is lighted, and the western side is dark. This country was just

beginning. We had not begun to explore the West or decided what we could do for Western Civilization. The Pyramid is un-capped, again signifying that we were not even close to being finished. Inside the capstone you have the all-seeing eye, an ancient symbol for divinity. It was Franklin's belief that one man couldn't do it alone, but a group of men, with the help of God, could do anything. "IN GOD WE TRUST" is on this currency. The Latin above the pyramid, ANNUIT COEPTIS, means, "God has favored our undertaking." The Latin below the pyramid, NOVUS ORDO SECLORUM, means, "a new order has begun."

At the base of the pyramid is the Roman Numeral for 1776. If you look at the right-hand circle, and check it carefully, you will learn that it is on every National Cemetery in the United States. It is also on the Parade of Flags Walkway at the Bushnell, Florida National Cemetery, and is the centerpiece of most hero's monuments. Slightly modified, it is the seal of the President of the United States, and it is always visible whenever he speaks, yet very few people know what the symbols mean.

The Bald Eagle was selected as a victory symbol for two reasons: First, he is not afraid of a storm; he is strong, and smart enough to soar above it. Secondly, he wears no material crown. We had just broken from the King of England. Also, notice the shield is unsupported. This country can now stand on its own. At the top of that shield you have a white bar signifying congress, a unifying factor. We were coming together as one nation. In the Eagle's beak you will read, "E PLURIBUS UNUM", meaning, "one nation from many people".

Above the Eagle, you have thirteen stars, representing the thirteen original colonies, and any clouds of misunderstanding rolling away. Again, we were coming together as one. Notice what the Eagle holds in his talons. He holds an olive branch and arrows. This country wants peace, but we will never be afraid to fight to preserve peace. The Eagle always wants to face the olive branch, but in time of war, his gaze turns toward the arrows.

So the next time you use one, pause to think about the history you hold in your hand.