



## E-Marketing

What is it? How do you use it? Is it effective? How can I make it work for me?

All good questions to be sure. But I don't have a lot of answers. See, I thought that since I was not using a website, yet, it did not apply to me. Oops! Big mistake.

If you think E-Marketing only involves a website, or web pages, you need to step back a few thousand yards so you can get a look at the BIG picture. Websites only represent a small portion of what is involved in the modern concept of e-Marketing. Since I needed more information, I went to the web to start looking.

When I found my original search criteria turned up 192,000 hits, I had to surmise that I was a bit behind in my understanding of this marketing concept. In my search, I found the following article posted on the SBA (Small Business Administration) website

[http://www.sba.gov/starting\\_business/marketing/emarketing.html](http://www.sba.gov/starting_business/marketing/emarketing.html)

The article deals specifically with newsletters.

### eMarketing

E-mail marketing is one of the most effective ways to keep in touch with customers. It is generally cost-effective, and if done properly, can help build brand awareness and loyalty. At a typical cost of only a few cents per message, it's a bargain compared to traditional direct mail at \$1 or more per piece. In addition, response rates on e-mail marketing are strong, ranging from five to 35% depending on the industry and format. Response

rates for traditional mail averages in the 1-3% range.

One of the benefits of e-mail marketing is the demographic information that customers provide when signing up for your e-mail newsletter. Discovering who your customers really are – age, gender, income and special interests, for example – can help you target your products and services to their needs. Points to consider when creating your e-mail newsletter:

**HTML vs. Plain Text:** Response rates for HTML newsletters are generally far higher than plain text, and graphics and colors tend to make the publications look far more professional. The downside is that HTML e-mail is slower to download, and some e-mail providers may screen out HTML e-mail.

**Provide incentive to subscribe:** Advertise the benefits of receiving your newsletter to get customers to sign up for your newsletter, such as helpful tips, informative content or early notification of special offers or campaigns.

**Don't just sell:** Many studies suggest that e-mail newsletters are read far more carefully when they offer information that is useful to the customers' lives rather than merely

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## St. Joseph Valley Chapter Information

### President - Kirsten Klassen

MMA.  
PO Box 483  
Goshen, IN 46527  
(800) 348-7468 or 533-9511

### President Elect - Mark Stucky

54663 Holiday Dr.  
Elkhart, IN 46514-4542  
(574) 264-0614

### Treasurer - Gary Futoma

17409 Barryknoll Way  
Granger, IN 46530  
(574) 243-5819

### Public Relations - Bethany Rusbasan

Perry Ballard, Inc.  
St. Joseph, Mi 49085-9264  
(269) 983-0611

### Webmaster - Mark Stucky

54663 Holiday Dr.  
Elkhart, IN 46514-4542  
(574) 264-0614

### Newsletter Editor - Ralph Rumpf

Documentation Specialists  
6036 Legion Road  
Stevensville, MI 49127-1110  
(269) 429-5174

### Director Sponsor - Robert J. Dianetti

RADCom, Inc.  
1696 Georgetown Rd Ste A  
Hudson, OH 44236-4094  
rdianetti@neo.rr.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](http://www.stc-sjvc.org)

## President's Column

Many of the writers I've been talking to are very busy with their jobs these last couple of months. Work is crowding into evenings and weekends and early mornings, threatening to consume our every waking moment.

If you're better at protecting your down time, I'm happy for you. I've found myself either working or thinking about work far too often frequently. But I have an antidote: Scrabble. It's my favorite way to tune out the world and play. I even competed in a tournament in September and will do another all-day tournament in October. A tournament is seven games of Scrabble in a row, with an hour off for lunch. Could I be any happier?

In short, it's a valuable waste of time. And we all have them – what's more, we all need them. So, if you're working hard, don't forget to take the time to play just as hard. It'll help you keep your sense of humor, put things back in perspective, and give you a break from the tension of the deadlines that can overwhelm us.

– *Kirsten Klassen*

## Quotable Quotes

“If ye love wealth better than liberty, the tranquility of servitude than the animating contest of freedom, go from us in peace. We ask not your counsels or arms. Crouch down and lick the hands which feed you. May your chains sit lightly upon you, and may posterity forget that ye were our countrymen!”

Samuel Adams

## 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](http://www.stc.org)

## Editor's Corner

My turn again, already?

Well, the obvious topic is the pending elections. By the time most of you see this, they will be just days away. Hope everyone has made their decision. If not, we have the technology, we can look for the facts! Or can we?

You know, I have voted in every election I was eligible to vote in. I am ashamed to say that I have never been as aware of the issues as I am for this election; and I have never known more about the candidates positions than I do now. You would think that in this country of ours it would just be obvious.

The Internet is a great thing, I can find all kinds of information. My problem is there is no TRUTH filter on any of the search engines that I use. In looking for information to answer my questions I have come across some truly incredible web pages - chock full of gossip and rumors. Then I got to the partisan web pages. You know, where one group or another supports one candidate or another for some reason or other.

You know, I couldn't tell if what they said was the truth or not. Even the main candidates web pages were a bit vague in areas. So where is the truth? (Not unlike that burning question of old "Where's the beef?")

I mean, I tried. I even went to the official site of the U.S. Senate, [www.senate.gov](http://www.senate.gov). You can check on anybody's voting record for as far back as the records go. Do you know how HARD that is? You have to look by the individual, by the year, at each specific vote. Some of which are nothing more than word changes or some call of some type. GEEZ. They may as well have placed it under a cryptographic key code!

Somehow, I get the idea that waiting till the week before the election is not the way to do this. Perhaps we owe it to ourselves to be a bit more informed than most of us are. That seems to mean we need to participate more in the whole process. Especially in that part where we let our representatives know if we are happy with what they are doing or, if we are not happy.

We are all writers, so letters and e-mails should be a snap. Letters to the Editor are a good option. How about attending a town hall meeting?

Me? Well, let's just say that the e-mail server at [president@whitehouse.gov](mailto:president@whitehouse.gov) is not unfamiliar with my e-mail address. Unfortunately, I doubt that the President ever saw one of my e-mails. They probably screen them for kooks.

Letters, for some reason, seem to make a bigger impression. I don't know if it is the fact that you took the time, or you bought a stamp. Letters do occasionally get read.

Town Hall meetings are another matter. I haven't done that yet, but I think I am going to start.

IMHO we have all gotten a bit too lazy with our government and our politicians have taken advantage of that fact. After all, if nobody cares what you do and nobody votes, why bother? I wonder how many elected officials who are supposed to be serving us are actually working for some special interest group?

We are one of the few nations in the world that has the ability to police our own government. Yet it seems to me that we think that is too much work. Well, truth be told, if we don't do it, believe me, no one else will. And quite possibly, some day, we will wake up to discover that someone is policing us.

It finally dawned on me as this election approached that this whole process **IS** important. And as a citizen, I am doing my fellow citizens a disservice if I do not get the information I need so I can make the best choice I possibly can. I have the responsibility to make that decision so I have an obligation to get to know all I can about the candidates; so I can make a choice that will be good not just for me but the country as well.

Now all I have to do is find a source for accurate verifiable facts. It seems this is getting harder and harder. So if any of you have a good source you feel like sharing, drop me a line. I have already spent a lot of money on papers and magazines that just seem to be someone else's version of the facts. That's just not good enough for me anymore.

## November Meeting Details

**When:** Thursday, Nov. 4, 2004

**Where:** Perry Ballard Incorporated, 526 Upton Drive East, St. Joseph, Michigan 49085.

**Time:** 6:30 PM Pizza and Pop, Presentation at 7:00 PM, Q & A Session to follow (approximate time 7:30) Please Note: Indiana and Michigan will be on the same time.

**Reservations:** Contact Teresa at 800-800-9547 or 269-983-0611 or by e-mailing: pballard@perryballard.com Reservations will be accepted until Nov 3.

**Topic:** E-marketing – more than a web site.

E-marketing isn't just a web site or e-mail. It's marketing using the Internet. Every aspect of marketing – price, place, product and promotion – is being affected by these expanded electronic capabilities. If you aren't using those capabilities to the fullest

now, you will soon be playing catch-up to your competitors.

The Internet offers the ability to reach a market of millions across the globe, or your “undiscovered customer” across the street with pre-sale or post-sale information. It lets you establish a dialog with each customer or prospect individually, and it's just as effective in managing internal or external staff.

If you're looking for more value out of your e-marketing efforts (or want to get started on the right track), you'll find a number of ideas – and specific answers if you ask the questions – from this hour's exploration into e-marketing.

Perry Ballard founded Perry Ballard Incorporated in 1977. Today, the firm of 26 professionals provides business communication services – including e-marketing tactics — for 20 clients competing in regional, national and global markets. Perry has presented seminars and talks on marketing topics for many educational, industry and service organizations including STC.



### Directions:

I-94 to Exit 23 (Stevensville)  
North on Red Arrow Highway (Lakeshore Drive)

Through traffic light at Glenlord Road  
Through traffic light at Hilltop Road

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## MEET A MEMBER

**Name:** Barbara Wellnitz

**Member since:** 1990

**Member status:** Senior

**Why technical writing?** With a business degree and over 10 years' experience as a legal secretary, where is the career path? I fell into tech writing while working as a temp for Holy Cross Health System when both their tech writers moved to opportunities elsewhere. A degree and a work background requiring excellent language skills, I was a good candidate to learn tech writing. My supervisor at the time was willing to give me the chance. I attended several STC International Conferences thanks to company funding and also earned a certificate in writing in 1993.

I've been a tech writer since 1989 and independent for 10 years. Most of my focus has been on software documentation but I also write newsletters and some marketing communications such as press releases and informative articles. My clients include a variety of northern Indiana companies in health care, manufacturing, and marketing communications.

Since 2002, I've been working in Indianapolis at Eli Lilly and Company so I live there during the week and at home in LaPorte on week-ends. My current project is writing Computer Software Validation (CSV) documents for a new Medicaid system. This is a whole new area for me and there was quite a learning curve but I enjoy learning new things to add to my resume. After all, they'll come in handy for another project down the road!

### Directions from page 4

North through St. Joseph (Lakeshore Dr. becomes Main St.

Over bridge north of town (Main St. becomes M-63)

First light past bridge turn left (Klock Rd)

Follow the road as it bears left and becomes Upton Dr. The Perry Ballard offices are the first building on right.

### **Been Here Before?**

If you are already familiar with St. Joseph and can get to Main St., take whatever route is convenient for you.

**IMPORTANT:** Niles Road is blocked at the Main St. end for road construction work. You will want to avoid that construction area.

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"They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety."

Benjamin Franklin

## 2004 - 2005 Meeting Schedule (Updated)

Updated meeting information is provided as follows:

### **March 2, 2005**

**Topic:** "Best of the Best—View the traveling STC Publication competition winners exhibit"

**When:** Wednesday, March 2, 2005.

**Where:** Exchange Bakery, 109 W. Lexington, Elkhart, IN 46516.

### **April 14, 2005**

**Topic:** "So You Want to be Independent—a look at the pros and cons of the independent tech writer"

**When:** Thursday, April 14, 2005.

**Where:** TBD.

### **May, 2005**

**Topic:** "Photo Critique 2"

**When:** May, 2005.

**Where:** TBD.

## My Not-So-Gentle Reminder

By: Carol Zollinger

Each time I go to the annual conference, I go with expectations. I'll learn a lot. I'll find at least one fabulous session that, by itself, was worth coming for. I'll stay up nearly all night, at least once, talking to friends that I only see once a year. (Which of course makes it exceedingly difficult to get up for the following morning's session, but is definitely worth it. I can even justify this professionally - read on.) I've never been disappointed in the past, and I wasn't this year, either.

This year, however, is the first year I noticed a theme that seemed to be directed specifically at me. Either all of the presenters have been spying on me and decided to teach me a lesson, or I was feeling guilty about something, because I got nailed to the wall. The guilt thing seems more likely, but it's just so much easier to maintain righteous indignation if it's someone else's fault, so I have decided that they were spying on me.

I went to a session about estimating time for projects. They talked about metrics, and project management techniques, and networking within client companies. Then I went to a session where a panel of experienced technical communicators dispensed advice, told us funny stories, and answered any nosy questions we came up with about their careers. And told us to network. Then I went to a progression for independent contractors and consultants. They talked about job boards and marketing and networking and contracts and networking. Oh, and networking. Then I looked at my schedule and I saw that I myself had conspired against me and scheduled me for a networking luncheon. What was I thinking?

Besides, I said to myself, I know I have to network! Everybody knows you have to network. This is not a new concept. And after I chewed on this for a while, I sat myself down and gave myself a good talking to. (If only my mother knew that I do this for myself, she could stop intervening. But I digress.)

Young lady, I said, you have not attended one chapter meeting since you relocated from the

Hoosier chapter in September. That's eight months! I don't care that it takes awhile to get to the meetings, or that you were too busy, that you were too tired, or that you just didn't feel like facing a crowd of people that night. There is just no excuse! No, don't even try to argue with me. No excuse! (Do you see how my mother is with me even when she's not? I'm digressing again, aren't I?)

And ultimately, there is no excuse. We all know why. You build relationships. Those relationships lead to more relationships. These relationships lead to new ideas, new jobs, new ways to handle the stressors of your job, and new information about software and other tools. The list goes on and on.

My new resolve after the annual conference got me to the May meeting of the Northeast Ohio Chapter, though the gentle reminders from some very excellent chapter leaders may have helped. And do you know, networking isn't even so bad? I actually enjoyed myself! It's kind of like exercising. Takes me forever to drag my lazy self out to do it, and when I'm doing it I think, "Well, you know, this is kind of nice. Why did I wait so long?" (Please note that running is an exception to this rule. Running has always been at least as bad as I thought it would be.)

The problem, of course, is that the metaphor keeps working. Like exercising, no one can do your networking for you. STC can help by provide great program meetings, networking luncheons, an annual conference every year, and, if you are very lucky, your own personal reminder system via friends in the chapter. But nobody can actually show up for you. We all have to show up ourselves. And again, like exercising, it's not enough to just show up. We have to talk to people, listen, and share information. We all have to make new acquaintances, and stay up all night talking to the ones we already have. (See? I told you I could justify that. I can justify anything. Next time you are explaining an expensive new kitchen gadget or another power tool to your significant other, you call me. I can help.) We all have experiences or information that somebody else can use. Chances are, somebody else at this very moment has the information that

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## Reminder from page 6

you could use.

I don't really like to think of myself as thick, but I had to be hit over the head with the intellectual equivalent of a two by four to remember what I needed to be doing. Hopefully, by sharing my own reminder, I'll prevent some of you from needing your own. So, I hope to be meeting all of you, or seeing you again, at chapter events in the upcoming months. And if I myself am not there like I said I would be, you have my permission to drag out the two by four again, and apply it liberally.

See you soon!

*Carol Zollinger is a Senoir member of the North East Ohio chapter of the STC. This article is reprinted with Carol's permission from the July/August 2003 on-line issue of "Lines & Letters", the newsletter of the North East Ohio chapter.*



## **SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE**

Each year, STC offers scholarships to full-time graduate and undergraduate students pursuing careers in technical communications,

Four awards of \$1,000 each will be granted for academic year 2005 - 2006.

**Application deadline is February 15, 2005.**

Application forms and instructions are available from the STC office.

901 N. Stuart Street, Suite 904  
Arlington VA 22203-1822  
(703)522-4114  
[www.stc.org](http://www.stc.org)

## e-Marketing from page 1

selling products and services. Helpful tips, engaging content and humor are often expected to accompany e-mail newsletters.

**Limit questions:** As each demographic question you ask may reduce the number of customers signing up, it's best to limit the amount of information you solicit or give customers the option of skipping the questionnaire.

### Establishing a Web Presence

Even if you choose not to sell your goods or services online, a business web site can be a virtual marketing brochure that you can update on demand with little or no cost. Your presence on the Internet can be a useful marketing tool by providing richer pre-sale information or post-sale support and service. This might temporarily differentiate your product or service from your competitors'. E-marketing has lessened the disadvantage that small businesses have faced for years when competing with larger businesses.

E-Commerce has redefined the marketplace, altered business strategies, and allowed global competition between local businesses. The term "electronic commerce" has evolved from meaning simply electronic shopping to representing all aspects of business and market processes enabled by the Internet and other digital technologies. SBA is preparing to help this new generation of Internet-enabled or eSmall Businesses.

Today's business emphasis is on e-commerce - rapid electronic interactions enabled by the Internet and other connected computer and telephone networks. Rapidly business transactions and unparalleled access to information is changing consumer behavior and expectations. The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is reshaping its programs to better serve small businesses that taking advantage of the Internet and other emerging technologies.

Many small businesses assume that the Internet has little value to them because they feel that their product or service cannot be easily sold online. But inexpensive information processing and electronic media can help most small businesses provide better, faster customer service and communication.