

Three Suncoast Members Named As Associate Fellows



At the 50th Annual Conference in Dallas, the Society conferred the rank of associate fellow on three Suncoast chapter members. The members, pictured above with their awards are from left to right Martha Collins, Mark Hanigan, and Michelle Ratcliff.

Attaining the rank of associate fellow is a big honor. The rank of associate fellow is conferred only on a senior member who has attained distinction in the field of technical communication. Senior members may not apply for the rank of associate fellow; they must be nominated by a committee composed of fellows and associate fellows and conferred by a two-thirds vote of the entire board of directors.

The July/August 2003 issue of *Intercom* contains an article on page 33 about the 22 new associate fellows.

Martha, Mark, and Michelle have been very active at both the local and Society levels for many years. The Suncoast chapter is fortunate to have them as members. Congratulations to Martha, Mark, and Michelle. ❖

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WriteUp

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WriteUp communicates Suncoast chapter and Society news six times per year for the benefit of members and friends of the Suncoast chapter of the Society for Technical Communication (STC).

Submissions

WriteUp invites writers to submit articles to be considered for publication. Note: By submitting an article, you implicitly grant a license to this newsletter to run the article and for other STC publications to reprint it without permission. Copyright is held by the writer. In your cover letter or e-mail, please let the editor know if this article has run elsewhere and if it has been submitted for consideration to other publications.

Meeting write-ups, feature articles, and software/book reviews are encouraged (approximately 800 words). Preferred formats include MS Word e-mail attachment or text in the body of your e-mail message. All submissions are subject to editing. Deadline for submission is the 15th of the month preceding publication.

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From the Editor

Lou Martindale

The Suncoast chapter is blessed with many talented and dedicated technical communicators who have been or are leaders in the local chapter and at the Society level. At the conference in Dallas, three Suncoast members were recognized for their effort, dedication, hard work, and knowledge. See the story on page 1 regarding our newest associate fellows.

Not everyone has the time to work at the Society level, but everyone should be able to contribute something at the local level. It takes a lot of volunteer time to keep a chapter running smoothly and provide quality programs. I encourage you to share your time and knowledge. If you have a particular area of expertise, consider presenting at a chapter meeting. Contact Mark Lewis, Vice President—Programs (malewis@hyperwriters.com) to volunteer. Check out the Wanted: Volunteers column on page 6 to see how you can help. If you can't take on a full year of leadership, there is always a need for people to undertake short-term tasks such as volunteering to be a judge in FTCC. See the FTCC article on page 8.

As most everyone knows by now, this is the 50th anniversary of STC. But did you know it is the 20th anniversary of the Suncoast chapter? On page 4, Mark Hannigan begins a two-part article about the history of the Suncoast chapter and his predictions for the future of the chapter.

We all use it every day. Personally, I use it a lot every day and would be absolutely lost without it. It seems like it has been around forever. And we may have gotten so used to using it that we have forgotten there is an acceptable etiquette for it. What is it? The answer is e-mail. The *Tieline*, an electronic newsletter published for chapter leaders, recently published an article on e-mail etiquette. The article, reprinted on page 10, lists some guidelines to remind us to use care in communicating electronically and to "think before we send."

Happy reading everyone. ❖

Bravo!



At the annual conference in May, STC announced the winners of the chapter achievement awards. The awards are given to chapters that have distinguished themselves. The Suncoast chapter received the Chapter of Merit award.

The WriteUp earned an award of Merit in the 2002-2003 STC chapter newsletter competition. ❖

Sponsors

The following have sponsored the chapter during the current fiscal year:

Raymond James Financial
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Society News

At the opening session of STC's 50th Annual Conference in Dallas, the Society bade farewell to retiring executive director Bill Stolgitis. Referring to Bill as "the heart of the organization for twenty-one years," outgoing STC president Ed See presented him with a special president's award. During Bill's tenure, Society membership grew from about 5,000 and peaked at more than 25,000.

STC's new executive director, Peter Herbst, will take over in September 2003. Peter has worked in the STC office since 1984. He currently serves as deputy executive director, overseeing the day-to-day functions of the Society.

Congratulations to Russ Bombardieri, Webmaster; Maurice Martin, Editor, Intercom; and George Hayhoe, Editor, Technical Communication, for their achievements in the 15th annual APEX awards program.

APEX is an annual awards program recognizing excellence in publications work by professional communicators. The awards are based on graphic design, editorial content, and the ability to achieve overall communications excellence. This year, with about 5,000 entries, there were 100 Grand Awards (2%) and 1,541 Awards of Excellence (31%).

Russ Bombardieri earned a Grand Award for www.stc.org.

Maurice Martin and George Hayhoe earned Awards of Excellence for Intercom and Technical Communication, respectively.

Congratulations, also, to their support teams and contributors for their role in creating STC's award-winning publications.

For more information about the APEX awards and its sponsor, Communication Concepts, visit the competition Web site at http://www.apexawards.com ❖

Chapter News

Congratulations to Dina Stenz who received one of the 2003 USF Pinellas County Distinguished Alumni Awards on May 8, 2003. She received the Business Achievement Award from the USF Pinellas County Alumni Chapter. The awards recognize local USF alumni and friends of the University who have made significant contributions to their professions, the University, and the community. Dina, class of 1999, is the owner and president of Technology Documentation Services, Inc. ❖

STC Membership

As of May 30, 2003

Table with 2 columns: Category and Count. Rows include Suncoast chapter members (132), Total Region 3 members (1,489), Total STC members (18,701), Members residing in the U.S. (15,992), Members residing in Canada (1,682), Members residing elsewhere (1,027), Total number of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) (21), and Total number of chapters (153).

Twenty Years of STC, Past and Future

By Mark Hanigan, past president of the Society and Suncoast chapter

Hello, my fellow Suncoast chapter members. Ten years ago, when very few of you were members, I served as the chapter president. It was a fun time, and the chapter composition was a lively and active bunch. We were celebrating our 10th anniversary; STC as a society was celebrating its 40th anniversary ... in Dallas.

At the time, I thought it would be fun (at least for me; it was perhaps painful for the readers) to put predictions for what was to be the next ten years on paper. This was, of course, 1993-2003.

Here is the text of the original article.

I had a lot of fun putting together the series of articles that covers the first ten years of the Suncoast Chapter. Sorry, there is no installment in this issue of the *Write-Up*—next month, hopefully. It has been a trip down nostalgia lane: contacting old friends, some of whom literally scattered to all corners of the U.S., and reviewing just how far we have come as a chapter over the past ten years.

And in doing this, I just can't help but wonder what someone might be writing about in January 2003 when she or he reflects on the first 20 years of our chapter's existence. Of course, history's snapshot of Decade One has already developed. But what about the future headlines for Decade Two? For instance:

Chapter Membership Tops 400

Well, why not? As the Florida Employer's Directory marched toward publication, it continues to uncover pockets of technical communicators in areas that we did not give consideration to in years past. The old model of a technical communicator as a hardware or software writer in a computer-related industry is simply that—an old model.

The collective definition of a technical communicator is far more reaching. February's meeting topic on Technical Communication in the Legal Community is but one microexample. Yes, we are writers. But we are also illustrators, instructors, online specialists, and editors. Yes, we work in the high-tech industry, but we also work in finance, the medical field, and wholesale and retail marketing.

Which brings us to another Decade Two headline:

Chapter Membership Employment Near 100 Percent

Again, why not? Right now, the employment picture is not that great. But it will get better, I believe, and soon. I think that American business got caught with too many eggs—either directly or indirectly—in that basket that used to be referred to as the Military Industrial Complex. Further, the typecast roles of players have and continue to change.

Maybe the role definition that has changed as much or even more than any other is that of technical communicator. And with the Suncoast Chapter's having remained on the crest of these changes, perhaps even defining a few parameters, it finds our membership gainfully and happily at work in a wide array of technical communications-related professions.

Of course, this leads to the third Decade Two headline:

Educational Opportunities Abound for Chapter Membership

With a technical communications program and SSTC flourishing at USF, the coming of the first graduate-level technical writing program in the Tampa Bay area, and the technical illustration and online operation programs offered at area community colleges and technical institutes, formal educational opportunities are already well in place. Through seminars, workshops, and chapter meetings, informal and topical information opportunities continue to expand.

The years 1993 through 2003 will have brought continued expansion on this baseline of educational opportunity. By this time, an STC Annual Conference hosted by the Florida STC Chapters will have been successfully completed. There also will probably be multiple undergraduate and graduate-level programs from which to choose out of all the related technical communication fields. People will be educated and employed in the facets of technical communications that they enjoy most.

Well, there you have it. Just a few of my thoughts on what the next ten years might have in store for the Suncoast Chapter. What is really neat about all of this is that we collectively hold that quill and scroll that will

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(Twenty Years continued from page 4)

record the events, activities, and accomplishments of the next ten years.

With all of this said, I would like to close with a challenge to each of you for the coming year. Choose one program or project and get involved. Write one article. And invite one technical communications friend to find out more about the Suncoast Chapter of STC.

Yours in friendship and service,
Mark

Now, here it is 2003 already. I still served as the chapter president. It was still a fun time (even better – we get to embellish the truth about memories as we get older). We were celebrating our 20th anniversary; STC as a society is celebrating its 50th anniversary ... in Dallas!

As Yogi Berra said, “It’s *deja vous* all over again.”

I thought it would be fun to review my predictions for the past ten years to see how well I did. I guess I would have to say I passed but not with an “A.” But, I’ll let you be the judge...

We did not quite reach my Prediction #1 goal of **Chapter Membership tops 400 Members**. However, when this article was written, I think that membership was somewhere around 60. The Suncoast chapter has grown significantly since then. We are the largest chapter in Florida with membership around 200. This places the Suncoast chapter in the top quadrant of STC chapters, which worldwide is around 150 chapters.

I still believe that there are well over 400 people in the Tampa Bay area who would benefit from STC membership. The quality of meeting topics and workshops that our chapter continues to offer certainly substantiates this!

It is interesting to note that this latest economic downturn has resulted in a new phenomenon for STC (and most other professional organization) memberships. Historically, memberships actually swell during downtimes. The most popular rationale has been that people recognize that networking and people-to-people connections are the best way to make that next job-opportunity connection.

Initially, this time around, I think that people perceived the Internet job search functionalities as a suitable substitute for face-to-face self-marketing. Probably for a small period of time, this was a very viable alternative. I suspect this was especially true two to three years ago when demand for our services far exceeded the number of available technical communicators.

But now, the proverbial shoe is on the other foot. While there are well over 100 search engines out there for employment and placement of your resume and relevant information is a critical component to marketing yourself, it does not offer a high percentage of employment matches! The best way to land a job continues to be live networking.

There continues to be no better way to do this than to get involved with organizations of like-skilled individuals (translated – STC!) so that you get to know them and they get to know you. In this “employers’ market,” it is an edge that you cannot afford to be without.

Getting the word out and inviting others to join—even if you are unemployed and you invite someone else in the “same boat”—can only help YOU! Why do I say this? I am a firm believer in “what goes around comes around.” Even if you bring someone who happens to latch on to a position before you, do not think small—translated: “that person got the job I might have gotten.”

Instead, trust the “bigger picture.” Keep your spirits up, and take advantage of the time you might have to brush up on your existing skills, to add to your capabilities by learning a new skill or two.

But, I am getting ahead of myself a little bit. Let’s look at my second prediction of **Chapter Membership Employment Near 100 Percent**. I suppose it would be cheating for me to say, “Heck, we made that goal three years ago!” We did. In fact, the late 1990’s offered incredible times for those in the job market. Demand exceeded supply for technical communicators and salaries and bill rates soared!

But now, we are in a definite economic slump. Are we on our way out? See my predictions later in this article. What I want to address right now is one very bright silver lining to this cloud of job losses.

Layoffs in the technical communications sector have been on a par with the other technical sectors!

What does this mean? It means that when companies, say, lay off 15 percent of staff, they are laying off 15 percent of their technical communicators along with 15 percent of their engineers, designers, developers, and so forth.

So why, you might ask, is this a silver lining? Because this means that we have “arrived” within the overall realm of professional respectability. Those of us who have been around this profession for, say, two decades, can remember the down cycles of the 70’s, 80’s, and even into the early 90’s. Often in those days, management would, in response to an overall 15 percent layoff (to continue our example), “gut” the technical communications (and training and human resources) department and move their “key” technical people into these positions.

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(*Twenty Years continued from page 5*)

Of course, those “posers” mostly were not productive as technical communicators; in fact, they often continued to work mostly in their previous capacities and just take care of the “bare minimum” technical communications-related requirements. The oft-gained upshot of this was that, when the better times started back around, the backlog of technical communications work made us among the first to be restaffed.

While it certainly is not across the board this time around, management has made moves to protect another precious business resource—the quality technical communicators. Of course, we are a “different breed of cat” today than we were 30, 20, or even 10 years ago. (This is a foreshadowing of another of my predictions for the next ten years!)

I hope you find solace in these words. For those of you who have been in our profession only since the mid 1990’s, take heart in knowing that “this too shall pass.” You just happened to come into our umbrella of professions during one of the longest growth periods of economic history. At some point, things will turn around (perhaps they are already). But I suspect that the growth slope this time will be much gentler than that of the mid-90’s.

My prediction #3 was that **Educational Opportunities Would Abound for Chapter Membership** I think that, of my three predictions, I probably did the best on this one. Of course, it probably was a “no brainer.” Educational opportunities of all sorts have abounded over the past ten years.

Regional conferences expanded dramatically; at one point, Region 3 (our region) offered four different conferences—*Practical Conference on Communication* (PCOC – in eastern Tennessee), *Currents* (in Atlanta), *Florida Technical Communication Conference* (in Orlando),

and the *Region 3 Student Conference* (moved around the region). Further, we did manage to bring the STC Annual Conference to Florida as the 2000 edition was held in Orlando.

The technical communications program at the University of South Florida continues to hold its own. Florida also offers two other solid programs at Florida Institute of Technology (Melbourne) and University of Central Florida (Orlando).

However, the biggest change over the past ten years has been the evolution of the Internet as an educational tool. It has brought the adage “If you can’t take Mohammed to the mountain, take the mountain to Mohammed (or something like that)” into the technical communication arena. Now, all of us have the opportunity to work on related bachelor’s, master’s, and even doctorate degrees in our areas of technical communication via colleges and universities from all over the world—and all via the Internet. Distance learning has become a viable alternative for formal education.

Interestingly, the Internet and computer-related multimedia educational offerings have posed a serious threat to the continued survival of some of the traditional learning channels. All organizations have experienced significant drop-off in attendance to their conference and workshop offerings. Some have even closed up or skipped years. STC’s Annual Conference has experienced an attendance downturn over the past three years.

How much of this can be attributed to the concurrent downturn in our economy and how much of it that can be attributed to the Internet alternatives remains to be seen. Regardless, the whole conference structure will be changing.

Read Mark’s predictions for the next ten years in the next issue. ❖

Wanted: Volunteers

The Florida Technical Communication Competition (FTCC) is now in the planning stages. There is a need for volunteers to help in all areas of the competition, but especially for judges. If you can help, contact Barbara Diorio at Barbara.O.Diorio@us.pwcglobal.com.

Working on *WriteUp* is an excellent way to add an extra dimension to your technical writing skills. The position of editor will be open in June 2004. Ideally, the new editor will begin working with the outgoing editor in mid-spring. It is not necessary to have previous editor experience. This is a great way to obtain editor experience. If you can’t take on the full responsibility of editor other positions such as graphic artist, layout editor, contributing author are immediately available. Contact Lou Martindale at LMartin220@aol.com if you can help.

There is always room for volunteers who want to get involved with the Suncoast chapter. If you are interested in a short-term position that will really help your fellow technical communicators, please contact any of the chapter officers listed on page 3. ❖

May Chapter Meeting Review

By Nermina Miller

Creating Interactive Content with Authorware 6.5

Presented by Dr. Kevin J. Brown, SunTech 3, Inc.

Leading educational material publishers have built online tutoring classes for students in grades 4—12 that can be accessed from libraries and homes. College students opt for online classrooms for the comfort and flexibility of attendance. An increasing number of companies use self-service, interactive pre-employment forms and in-service tools such as company policy and training materials. The idea is out—an easy and affordable education that cuts space and time—and so is an approachable product to help make it possible.

As part of the May 1 meeting, Dr. Kevin J. Brown of SunTech 3, Inc., presented some of the ins and outs of Authorware 6.5, the latest update in the drag-and-drop tool for building e-learning applications by Macromedia (<http://www.macromedia.com>). Dr. Brown pointed out the stellar progress made in learning-applications development in recent years. He recalled Edix as being considered the “hottest thing for designing computer-training programs” in the eighties—a highly functional tool but one that required an extensive knowledge of programming. Today’s software minimizes the need for programmers and enables a content developer to integrate text, video, sound, animation, and graphics within minimal time frames. Dr. Brown emphasized that the only case in which graphic designers would be helpful was if a need existed for original graphics.

During the introduction, Dr. Brown told an interesting story of his first acquaintance with the computer-training domain. He had just been awarded a Ph.D. and was considering his options when he overheard a conversation between two men about difficulties in teaching workers to properly use automotive machinery. The company in question was General Motors (GM) and the costs of damaged equipment were enormous. Dr. Brown offered to help solve the problem. His idea was to simulate the process of equipment manipulation for the untrained GM workers. As a result of the consequent research, a simulation program was designed in ActionCode for Apple II computers.

Computer-based training has come a long way, bypassing the costly phase when the method of imprinting programs onto laser discs had a high, one-off-and-you’re-doomed error rate. Today, training application producers like SunTech 3 are able to deliver attractive educational content that is easy to use. In

the first of two featured examples of learning application development, Dr. Brown showcased creating a gardening class. “The process resembles creating a flowchart,” said Dr. Brown, adding that the features such as user identification, note taking, searching, importing and cropping video and audio are all innate to the software, making it a fully effective drag-and-drop tool. Furthermore, the software is almost completely interactive with other software packages from Macromedia, such as Flash and Director, which allows an easy integration of the developing program with externally produced graphics and animations.

The programming variables that interactive media developers were once required to know or research in manuals are referenced in the software, and it is a matter of copying and pasting or retyping the phrases to obtain the desired result when clicking on introduced objects and buttons.

Using Authorware 6.5 speeds up the process of training program development for SunTech 3. Dr. Brown described the process of developing training applications as being divided into the following phases:

- Requirement analysis
- Program design
- Content creation
- Quality control
- Software integration
- Media production

The new software makes interrelating the phases a much simpler process; and, in some cases, the content provided by the customer may be all that is needed. Authorware is capable of dividing the content into pages; and, from that point on, it is easy to enhance the text with illustrations from the available library or other applications.

According to Dr. Brown, the parts of the process that used to take several months now take only several hours, which allows a faster turnaround. The need for training large numbers of personnel is no longer a clause in a training application contract. The client company’s contact person is trained to use the program and thus becomes a trainer of his

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or her own personnel. Dr. Brown cited the case of a hospital in which a single nurse was trained how to use hospital practice software and afterwards was able to train other nurses. The hospital won an award in health industry education for the program. "Authoring interactive education applications is not a difficult process," Dr. Brown said. He stressed that the best way to acquire practical knowledge in Authorware is to attend an Authorware training course.

SunTech 3 is currently working on a major project producing a training application for a joint effort of the U.S.'s Uniform Code Council (<http://www.uc-council.org>) and Europe's EAN International (<http://www.ean-int.org>) to solidify the EAN.UCC System as a global trade barcode. The barcode system is based on Extensible Markup Language (XML) and the two standard organizations have officially dubbed it "the

global language of business" that will be "spoken" in over 140 countries worldwide. Calling this part of the presentation "A Quick Trip to Brussels," Dr. Brown said that thousands of workers from all over the world are able to log on to the EAN International Web site staged in Belgium and simultaneously take part in the barcode training program designed by SunTech 3.

SunTech 3, Inc., (<http://www.suntech3.com>), based in Altamonte Springs, has been developing interactive adult training programs for businesses since the early eighties. Some of the major points of its focus are project development and consulting services. SunTech 3 is also a Macromedia Authorized Training Provider in Florida and offers training classes in Flash MX, Dreamweaver MX, Fireworks MX, ColdFusion MX, Authorware, and Director at three locations—Orlando, Jacksonville, and Ft. Lauderdale. ❖

2003-2004 Florida Technical Communication Competition

By Martha Collins

The Florida Technical Communication Competition (FTCC), sponsored by the Suncoast Chapter, is a statewide competition that recognizes the best technical communication materials produced each year. The FTCC committee met Saturday, July 26, to plan this year's competition.

The competition entry deadline is September 15, so begin making your plans to enter your materials. Talk with your managers about the benefits your company's technical communicators will receive from the judges' comments. Explain the recognition your writers will gain when you win an award.

The committee is looking for judges who can commit approximately six hours to evaluating the materials. The goal is to identify enough judges so that any one team will not have to judge more than three entries. The benefits of judging are immeasurable and include seeing how other companies present their technical communication materials and learning from your peers through the judging and consensus process. In addition, it is a bonus to be able to put on your resume that you were a competition judge.

Check the Suncoast Chapter Web site (<http://www.stc-southeast.org/suncoast/> and click **Competition**) for the Call for Entries, judges' application, and entry forms. The Call for Entries lists the technical publications and online communications categories in which you can enter material.

Committee members are

- Barbara Diorio, Manager
- Joan Baptist
- Tracey Bryant
- Martha Collins
- Karen Enthoven
- Rob McFarlin
- Michelle Ratcliffe
- Dina Stenz❖

June Chapter Meeting Review

By Nermina Miller

Mimeo Doc Center

Presented by Stephen Krupp, Mimeo National Account Manager

For the past three years, Mimeo has been fulfilling corporate and individual needs for printing, binding, and delivering documents at a quick turnaround rate. Mimeo's solution is based on an idea to enable anyone owning a computer to complete document production and distribution online. The Mimeo national account manager, Stephen Krupp, presented this innovative approach to on-demand printing at the STC meeting on June 5.

Mimeo has come a long way since it launched its interactive Web site in February 2000. The company's corporate headquarters is based in New York; however, in order to streamline the delivery, it decided to house its production where the action is guaranteed to be the fastest—Memphis, the heart of FedEx express delivery. As a result, Mimeo is able to give late deadlines to its customers. If processed before 10 p.m., complete projects can leave for the destination the same day.

According to Krupp, Mimeo boasts one of the largest digital facilities in the world. In approximately 100,000-foot space, of which roughly 15 percent is currently in use, Mimeo not only handles the production work but also warehouses customized binders, CDs, and other creative insignia unique to its customers to accelerate production.

Customers can start utilizing Mimeo's services with a simple download of free custom-made printing software. ExactPrint is encrypted and passworded via SSL encryption, which is the same type of security used by banks. "Hence, it is more secure than e-mail," said Krupp. The software also eliminates printing problems as it outputs exactly as the customer wants it, regardless of the original PC application, fonts, pagination, or imaging. The documents can be manipulated in several ways. The following options are available:

- Document options
 - File preview
 - Build document
 - Simultaneously manipulate several documents

- Paper, binding, and cover options
 - Zoom preview
 - Adjust binder cutoff to text
 - Insert tabs and titles
 - Set up coloring individually
- Shipping options
 - Add book to shopping cart
 - Set up address book
 - Upload Excel spreadsheet
 - Select shipping preferences
 - Include message using mail merge

For each shipment, customers receive e-mail confirmation along with the recipient signature information. Discussing Mimeo's invoicing procedure, Krupp said that, as in the case of many other online service providers, his company offers account credit for corporations with billing at the end of the month.

"... Krupp said that his company maintains less than 5 percent error rate in contrast with 10 to 20 percent of other doc centers."

When it comes to document-storage options, Mimeo allows a 30-day retention and provides permanent storage for a fee, which enables quick reorders. Comparing Mimeo with other competitors, Krupp said that his company maintains less than 5 percent error rate in contrast with 10 to 20 percent of other doc centers. Mimeo declares it saves companies up to 40 percent. Krupp said that most of Mimeo customers are Fortune 500 companies, such as financiers Bank of America, Wachovia, SunTrust, Raymond James, American Express, and airlines Delta, Jet-Blue, and Atlas Air.

Mimeo meets the needs of numerous corporate document areas such as training, marketing, conferences, human resources, sales, finance, and MIS, including unique needs like full-bleed PowerPoint, untraditional-size documents, and saddle-stitch binding.

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(Mimeo continued from page 9)

The documents they are able to print, bind, and ship are as follows:

- Manuals
- Facilitator and Participant Guides
- Handouts
- Laminated Cards
- Presentation Binders
- Research Reports
- Peripherals (badges, etc.)
- Proposals/RFPs
- Sales Training Manuals
- User Manuals
- System Requirements
- Technical Guides
- Marketing Plans
- Press Releases
- Product Training Manuals
- Media Kits

- Employee Policy Manuals
- Business Plans
- Financial Reports
- Market Analysis

Mimeo also offers perfect color and black and white digital printing. Their printers can print up to 600 dpi. They print files from multiple PC applications such as Microsoft Word, QuarkXPress, and Acrobat. The technology they use includes HP, Xerox, Xerox, and Microsoft. Mimeo states it has successfully printed tens of millions of pages and delivered hundreds of thousands high-quality documents to destinations all over the world. According to Krupp, Mimeo uses only top-grade materials and implements rigid quality-control procedures. Confidentiality is secured by 24-hour closed-circuit surveillance in the warehouse as well as multiple security checkpoints and document shredding.

To access more information and research full-service options, go to <http://www.mimeo.com> or call 1-800-GO-MIMEO. ❖

E-mail Etiquette

Reprinted from the *Tieline*, July/August 2003

When using e-mail to communicate with members and volunteers, please take care to avoid misunderstanding and confusion by adhering to the following guidelines.

Be brief and relevant. Rambling e-mails can tax readers already pressed for time by work or other commitments. Show courtesy by keeping your e-mails short and to the point. When replying to a message, paste relevant quotations from the original message before your response. Quoting provides context for your remarks and can help keep e-mail discussions on topic.

Keep attachments small. Remember that many people have slow Internet connections. If you have to send an attachment, use compression utilities to minimize download time.

Prioritize recipients. If you're sending a message to several people, place the addresses of those who need to act on the information in the To field. In the Cc field, place the addresses of recipients whom you'd like to keep informed but who aren't required to take action. When sending to a huge list of people, protect recipients' privacy by placing all addresses in the Bcc field. When using Bcc for large groups, the text of your message should mention which categories of people are receiving the e-mail. (For example, if you're

sending the message to everyone in your STC chapter, mention that fact in the e-mail. This practice will help eliminate redundant forwarding.)

Be positive. E-mail is a great tool for giving positive or constructive feedback but a very poor one for reprimanding, criticizing, or communicating negative emotion. Even well-meaning criticism can be easily misinterpreted. Remember that emoticons are poor substitutes for the verbal and physical cues that provide context to spoken communication. A good rule of thumb is not to use e-mail when you have to say "no"—instead, consider a phone call or, if possible, a face-to-face meeting.

Think before you send. You do yourself a disservice by sending messages composed in the heat of the moment. To minimize the possibility of sending a message you'll come to regret, leave the address field blank when composing your message and let someone else read it before you click Send. Remember that e-mail is permanent: Every sent message resides on someone's server, so assume that everything you say can be retrieved by anyone, for any purpose. Remember also that your correspondents may someday become your co-workers or even your managers. Courteous communication is in your own interests. ❖



Mission statement:

To promote and advance the technical communication profession in the Suncoast area and support the professional development of technical communicators, current and future.

Meeting Information

Subject to Change

Obtain meeting updates at our Web site:

<http://www.stc-southeast.org/suncoast/>

Next Meeting:

August 7, 2003 Knowledge Management by Dr. Dan Jones

Upcoming Meetings:

September 4, 2003 Object Oriented Methodologies by Mark Lewis

October 2, 2003 e-Learning by Karen Rice

November 6, 2003 Networking Tips and Job Searching by Marc Granet, president, IDC Executive Search

December 4, 2003 TBA by Ginny Redish. Topic will be either ROI or CEO Speak.

January 8, 2004 Avoiding 10 Common Indexing Mistakes by Jean Gabriel

February 5, 2004 TBA

March 4, 2004 TBA

April 1, 2004 Your STC Membership by Beth Tanner

May 6, 2004 TBA

June 3, 2004 TBA

Location:

Holiday Inn Express, 3025 N. Rocky Point Drive, Tampa, 813-287-8585

Time:

6:30 p.m. Network and light dinner

7:00—9:00 p.m. Meeting

Cost:

\$10 for members and guests

\$5 for students

Administrative Council Meetings

You can be a part of our chapter at work by attending the Administrative Council meetings, which are held via teleconference at 8:15 p.m. on the Tuesday preceding the regular chapter meetings. Phone (toll free) 1-888-650-9063, room 6301.❖