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The ActiveVOICE is published six times a year in February, April, June, August, October, and December by the Society for Technical Communication, San Francisco Chapter, PO Box 2708, San Francisco, CA 94126, [www.stc-sf.org](http://www.stc-sf.org). The editor is Marc Smircich ([newsletter@stc-sf.org](mailto:newsletter@stc-sf.org)). For information about copyrights, reprinting articles, and submitting articles, see page 7.

This printer-friendly version of the ActiveVOICE includes the same content as the online newsletter on the chapter web site (<http://www.stc-sf.org>). The text has been reformatted to reduce the number of pages required to print the newsletter.

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**August 2004 Meeting --  
Managing Stress for  
Health, Creativity,  
Effectiveness**

*Presented by Richard Pinneau*

The August meeting is on Wednesday, August 18, 2004, from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm at the London Wine Bar in San Francisco's financial district. For details about the meeting location and instructions for purchasing tickets, visit [www.stc-sf.org/stc-meetings.htm](http://www.stc-sf.org/stc-meetings.htm).

**About the Presentation**

Stress is inevitable; distress is optional -- tonight we choose a better option.

Stress is pandemic and is seriously damaging health, productivity, and creativity. The psychological and physiological responses of human beings under stress can be miraculously effective in the face of life-threatening physical threats, but are severely maladaptive for long-term psychologically stressful conditions. Health, performance, and creativity all benefit from learning simple skills for defusing the effects of modern occupational pressures and challenges.

**About the Speaker**

Dr. Richard Pinneau is a Berkeley alumnus with a Ph.D. in psychology from the University of Michigan who has been working in stress management, bio-feedback, and holistic wellness for over thirty years. Since retirement from his private practice, he consults for business nationwide through his company, WellPath Resources, LLC. He is co-author of *Job Demands and Worker Health*, published by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

**September 2004 Meeting  
-- Structured Authoring,  
XML, and Single Sourcing:  
An Update**

*Presented by David Knopf*

The September meeting is on Wednesday, September 15, 2004, from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm at the London Wine Bar in San Francisco's financial district. For details about the meeting location and instructions for purchasing tickets, visit [www.stc-sf.org/stc-meetings.htm](http://www.stc-sf.org/stc-meetings.htm).

**About the Presentation**

Publishing technologies are evolving rapidly. To a large degree, the workflow and tools you choose will determine how easily and effectively you can create, manage, publish, and maintain content. Structured authoring, XML, and single sourcing are spreading throughout large information development organizations. Technical content is an important asset and should be managed accordingly. In this presentation, David Knopf will address recent trends and suggest which approaches work best for today's technical publishing organizations.

**About the Speaker**

David Knopf is president and founder of Knopf Online, a San Francisco-based firm that provides development, training, and consulting services to the high-tech industry. David is a specialist in technical communications, online user assistance, structured authoring, single sourcing, and XML. As an Adobe® Certified Expert for FrameMaker®, a WebWorks® Publisher Certified Trainer and Consultant, and a charter member of RoboGurus, David has taught dozens of seminars on how to think about, design, create, produce, and distribute high-quality online information products.

## May 2004 Meeting -- Stay Motivated and Thrive!

Presented by Howard Miller  
Reviewed by Sara Greenwald

A motivating time was had by all at the May 19 San Francisco Chapter STC meeting, downstairs at the London Wine Bar. For those who haven't attended recently, the monthly gatherings are a chance for snacking, chatting, complaining, STC gossip, handing out resumes and sharing tips about contacts or jobs, as well as hearing presentations. The irrepressible Howard Miller, who evolved some time ago from instructor/designer and application designer to Business Coach, delivered the evening's presentation: Stay Motivated and Thrive!

### Motivators and Obstacles to Success

The presentation began with the question: what motivates us? Money, we guessed. Miller pulled out his wallet, reached into it, and held out some bills. "Do you want this? Come. Take it." Nobody moved for some time. "Why not?" he asked. Other motivators must be at work. Miller and the audience came up with:

- comfort
- recognition
- power
- autonomy
- fulfillment
- fear
- urgency
- sense of harmony
- order
- promoting social good

Any of these motivators can move us forward or hold us back, Miller stressed, depending on how we handle them. Next, Miller asked what obstacles keep us from our goals. The audience called out:

- boredom
- isolation
- fear of criticism
- lack of recognition
- lack of talent
- lack of control
- lack of connections
- lack of sleep

That last one got a laugh, but Miller said, "Be realistic. Find out whether

you're a morning person or an evening person, and use that time to do your best work." He listed many more stumbling blocks, from fear of failure and an equally paralyzing fear of success, through sense of inferiority or superiority, to discomfort with confrontation and defensiveness. All, he pointed out, are conditions inside our own minds.

### Solutions

What are the solutions? Be proactive, he urged. Determine:

- your goals
- what gets in the way of these goals
- the steps you can take to overcome these obstacles, and
- what the outcome of taking those steps will be.

Then take the first step, and make the outcome a habit. Don't be discouraged if you fail to follow through consistently; if you make a calendar and don't look at it for a week, that's still a week sooner than you would have if you never made the calendar at all.

### Examples of Applying Solutions

Four audience members boldly volunteered to share some elusive personal goals. The audience divided into groups to help them take steps toward:

- enough writing samples -- The group determined that the problem was really an unrealistic and self-imposed goal, "I told my agent I'd send a dozen samples by Friday." The writer decided to take control by calling her agent to change the deadline.
- bigger triceps -- The group found the athlete inflated her goal to a daily whole-body workout. Five minutes' light lifting a day made an achievable first step.
- patience when shopping with my girlfriend -- The group diagnosed a shop-ophobe, and suggested alternative favors, such as cooking dinner while she shops.
- starting a business in document cleanup -- The group recommended that the writer advertise his interest and expertise. Keep an eye on the field for new informational flyers and talks on how to clean up documentation.

The PowerPoint slides for this presentation are on the San Francisco Chapter STC web site at [www.stc-sf.org/docs/stay-motivated-thrive.ppt](http://www.stc-sf.org/docs/stay-motivated-thrive.ppt).

Sara Greenwald is technical writer in the Bay Area.

## June 2004 Meeting -- Project Management for Technical Communicators: An Introduction

Presented by Tim Bombosch  
Reviewed by Yolande Salyer

"How often have you been forced into making quality concessions late in a project -- dropping indices, shortening chapters, eliminating information, and so on? How often have you experienced delays, long nights. . . weight gain, grumpiness, and the 'We're adding five new features' syndrome?"

Tim Bombosch, who holds a doctorate from Stanford, a Project Management Professional (PMP) certification from the Project Management Institute, and who has managed projects for over 15 years, asked these questions of the June 14, 2004 San Francisco Chapter STC audience, and quickly assured them that project management techniques can help defend against these frustrations and more.

Further, Bombosch assured the audience that project management is an organic component of what technical communicators do.

"Our work is project-management oriented," said Bombosch, "we make things."

However, potential employers and others will not know about those unique skills unless technical communicators develop and advertise them. Bombosch asked the group how they commonly identify themselves and found that, like most TCs, the audience members identified themselves as writers and by the technology they use and write about.

"We talk this way because it's how job ads are written," explained Bombosch.

By enhancing these nascent skills through education and training, Bombosch said, TCs can earn more respect

and money, and add value to any organization they join.

Bombosch outlined the five stages of a properly-managed project: initiation, planning, execution, control, and closure. Project requirements in the initiation stage give rise to a plan or baseline that will be implemented in the execution stage, monitored in the control stage and finally, dissected during close.

But Bombosch pointed out that all projects are iterative, and stated that "movement between phases does not progress sequentially."

Each of the five phases is equally important. To illustrate, Bombosch shared the story of an internal tool he helped develop for a major IT corporation. He neglected to go through channels and, together with a programmer, wasted six weeks trying to rework the project only to learn that the changes he and the programmer made prevented certain data capture envisioned by the project's lead.

Here, the STC audience debated Bombosch as to whether there was an actual need for PM in technical communication. Why had the changes made by Bombosch and the programmer been necessary in the first place? Because the original idea was flawed. The debate ebbed and flowed around this central theme: how can project management ensure that an idea is not flawed to begin with?

This led to further discussion of quality and the importance of thorough and thoughtful audience analysis, which will generate project requirements to produce a product that meets the audience's need.

Returning to his illustration, Bombosch reminded listeners that one never knows whose work we will affect when we institute change on our own without going through channels:

"Companies are complex, and projects are not islands. Loose cannons. . . cause a ripple effect," Bombosch said.

One thing everyone agreed on was that communication is the most important project-management skill of all, which is why TCs are so well suited to work in project management -- unlike develop-

ers, for example. To illustrate this, Bombosch told of one developer's project requirement document: it consisted of 50 lines of code.

## Resources

### Books

*Guide to the Project Management Body of Knowledge*, by Project Management Institute

*Managing Technical Documentation Projects*, by JoAnn Hackos

*Microsoft Project Version 2002 Step by Step*, by Carl Chatfield and Timothy Johnson

### Web Sites

Project Management Institute:  
[www.pmi.org/info/default.asp](http://www.pmi.org/info/default.asp)

UC Santa Cruz Certificate Program in Project and Program Management:  
[www.ucsc-extension.edu/main/business/projectcert.html](http://www.ucsc-extension.edu/main/business/projectcert.html)

Bombosch's June 14 STC-SF PowerPoint Presentation: [www.stc-sf.org/docs/prjmgmt.ppt](http://www.stc-sf.org/docs/prjmgmt.ppt)

### Groups

Microsoft Project Users Group San Francisco: [www.mpug.org/sanfrancisco.asp](http://www.mpug.org/sanfrancisco.asp)

*Yolande Salyer is a technical writing intern at a large information technology firm.*

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## President's Notes and News

By Susan Becker

### President's Challenge: Why are you a member of STC?

Why are you a member of the San Francisco Chapter of the STC? Don't get me wrong, I'm happy that you are. I'm just wondering why.

I'm a member of the STC for the networking (I get many of my contracts through STC contacts), the professional development (the little bits -- and the big ones, too -- that I learn from our chapter presentations and conferences keep me abreast of new developments),

and recurring bouts of temporary insanity (How did I end up president of this chapter again?).

I'm a member of the SF chapter because I live in The City and when I have contracts that I work on at home, I work here, too. And possibly most important, I enjoy spending time with my friends and colleagues in the STC.

But what about you? I'd like to hear an answer from 20 of you by email ([scbecker@codewords.com](mailto:scbecker@codewords.com)) sometime in the next month. That's the President's Challenge. Twenty responses would represent 10% of our membership of 201; if I'm the 1, that is.

Knowing why you are a member will help those of us who set directions for the chapter make better choices.

### Chapter Accomplishments too Numerous to Note

With the new chapter year starting on July 1, I'd like to point out some of our accomplishments in 2003-2004.

- Web site redesign. In February, we launched our new web site, designed by the web team: Janet Bran, Julia Cope, Gilbert Gonzalez, Carol Fager-Higgins, and Emily Wilksa.
- ActiveVOICE online. ActiveVOICE went totally online in April and sported a new design with the June edition thanks to editor Marc Smircich.
- Distinguished Chapter Service Awards. Ancilla Allsman and Janet Bran received DCS Awards to acknowledge their exemplary service to the Society through their dedication to the chapter.
- Associate Fellow. Dana Chisnell was confirmed as our chapter's first STC Associate Fellow, an honor that recognizes senior STC members who have attained distinction in the field of technical communication.
- Monthly chapter meetings. Over 300 people attended our monthly chapter meetings this year including 45 at our Holiday Party in December and 40 for Andrea Ames' talk in February on "Moving from Commodity to Strategic Contributor." Other highlights included our first

progression on job skills and presentations on white papers, error messages, and training simulations.

- **Membership.** We started the year with 231 members, peaked in January with 255, and bottomed out in April (usually the lowest month) with 189. We're back up to 201 to start this year, with 95 senior members (those in the STC for 5 or more years), 93 regular members, 12 student members, and one associate fellow. (You know who.)
- **Chapter scholarship.** Each year our chapter sponsors a scholarship competition for students in the Technical and Professional Writing Program (TPW) at San Francisco State University. This year we awarded a \$1,000 scholarship to Nancy Weir.
- **Gordon Memorial Scholarship.** Our chapter also participates in the Gordon Memorial Scholarship, which is sponsored by the Northern California STC chapters to support local students preparing for careers in technical communication. Last year's winners, announced in September, were Laura Miller, Hillary Russak, Yolande Salyer, and Nancy Weir, all of whom are students in the TPW Program at San Francisco State.
- **SIGDOC Annual Conference.** Our chapter co-sponsored with the Silicon Valley chapter the opening night reception for the SIGDOC conference held in San Francisco in October. SIGDOC is the Special Interest Group for Documentation of the Association for Computing Machines. We participated to promote the STC and to encourage interaction with people with similar interests.

I compiled this list to show you how active our chapter has been, but actually, it's cheered me up considerably. I'm sure you have all had the experience as a volunteer in some organization wondering if all your efforts are worth it. Looking at this list and thinking of the hard work of all our volunteers this year, I think maybe mine are.

## Goals

As you might expect, when the leadership group met this summer, we discussed our hopes and plans for

2004-2005. We plan to continue our current activities including developing the ActiveVOICE, supporting our web site, and providing interesting chapter meetings and a holiday party. We are also working to find a meeting space that is wheelchair accessible, and we hope to improve our employment resources.

*Susan Becker is a technical communicator and online help developer. She has 16 years of experience working primarily as a contractor in software development for the financial services and human resources industries.*

## The Quest for Accessible Space for Meetings: Looking for Your Input

*By Dana Chisnell*

Do you have ideas about a meeting space for our chapter? Do you have a connection to that space that might smooth our way to meeting there? We're on the quest for a new space to meet in that is accessible to people with disabilities, is close to public transportation, and has the other amenities we've all come to cherish (some muchies and access to attitude-adjusting beverages).

Here's a checklist for you to use:

- Wheelchair accessible
- Near BART/MUNI (not more than 5 or 6 blocks in a neighborhood that is not scary)
- Easy parking available (also accessible)
- Supplies food or is easy to cater (catering is more of a hassle and may be more expensive)
- Preferably able to handle variable attendance (20-50, possibly 65) adjusting cost accordingly
- Preferably downtown
- Private meeting area (visual and sound space not shared with another group or restaurant)
- Alcoholic drinks available
- Cost to the chapter per person for space/food should be \$10-\$15.

Email your suggestions for specific meeting spaces, along with a contact name and phone number if possible, to Dana Chisnell at [dana@usabilityworks.net](mailto:dana@usabilityworks.net).

## New, Transferred, Reinstated, and Senior Members

Here is the membership activity for June and July. We welcome the following new, reinstated, and transfer members. The chapter membership was 201 on July 31.

### New Members

- Jeffrey Hornick
- Sean Scullion
- Jane M. Shahi

### Reinstated Members

- Gregory Patrick Coffey
- Joseph P. Gorin
- Nola J. Hague
- Manuel A. Martinez
- Daniel A. Weir

### Transferred into Chapter

- Louise Rehling

### Senior Members

- Bradd S. Graves
- Brenda E. Jordan
- William J. Keyworth

## My Thanks, and Charting a Different Course

*By Beau Cain, Region 8 Director*

In this, my first article to STC's Region 8 newsletters, I offer my thanks for your support, and I ask for your involvement for changing our Society at the chapter and SIG levels. Along with this, I'll offer a brief explanation of things that have happened, and how those happenings will affect your participation in the Society for the next three years.

### Thanks!

First, I thank each of you who voted for me in the Society's election. I expected my remarkably accomplished opponent, Alison Reynolds of Christchurch Polytechnic in Wellington, New Zealand, to win the election. The best I was hoping for was that the vote might be close, and that her supporters

wouldn't trounce me! The vote was very close, but in my favor. I thank Alison for being an affable opponent, and particularly I thank her for the help she's already given me in office. Thanks, Alison!

As well, I thank Paul Sinasohn for asking me to run for office. One never knows what might happen at the Society's annual conference! Thanks, Paul!

### Charting a Different Course

Now for the business part of my message.

Our Society is undergoing a deliberate transformation in order to better serve our members and the profession. This was prompted by a large drop in Society membership, the consequent decrease in income, and subsequent surveys that revealed that members were not renewing their membership because they didn't perceive **value** for their money. The Transformation Initiatives are all aimed at making Society membership more **valuable**, and the Transformation Team has done an admirable job of allaying members' fears about the changes, while deftly designing the transformation as it happens.

Now this need to re-assess the **value** of what we offer to our colleagues has hit home. This year's Region 8 conference, Charting a Bold Course, cancelled just a week before the opening keynote speakers presentations. One week after this expensive cancellation, the 2005 Region 8 conference team withdrew from producing the conference also.

An admittedly small survey of a tightly targeted group revealed that they didn't register for the conference because their employer didn't pay for it, and they didn't see the **value** of paying for it themselves.

There's that word "**value**" again. The Universe is trying to tell us something.

I believe that in order to find **value** at the local level, we should question the efficacy of our chapters' and SIGs' operations, and imagine ways to make them more attractive to a wider audience.

With reduced dues rebates returning to our chapters' coffers this year, it may prove important to examine all chapter expenses and imagine ways to reduce

them, while trying to improve the service to our members and colleagues. Does the chapter subsidize dinners at monthly meetings? Might that be changed? Does the chapter lose money on seminars and workshops? Can we adopt a more profitable model? Does the chapter buy services that might be donated instead?

The same frugal perspective can help us avoid planning events that cost more than they earn. It seems that the old model of conferences -- a big welcoming event with famous speakers, followed by a day or two of educational sessions, all laced with dedicated networking events and corporate promotional events -- may not be the draw that it used to be. Attendance at COMDEX is down, and the Content World conference was, euphemistically, "postponed indefinitely." And our own Region 8 conference has become an object lesson for future conference management teams.

Further, I've received reports from colleagues that their employers aren't spending money to send them to conferences. And if the colleagues themselves don't see enough **value** in the event to pay for it themselves, then the problem is clear: we're not offering **value** to our colleagues.

So, I encourage everyone in Region 8 to rethink how your chapter and SIGs offer **value**, both to our Society's members and to our non-member colleagues. Are you getting the best return you can for what you spend? Are you getting a return at all?

Please join me in imagining ways to offer more of what we join STC for. Think about the resources we enjoy in our Society, and think of how they might be improved to serve you better. I invite you to e-mail me with your ideas, which are likely the most valuable resource we share.

*Beau Cain is the recently elected Region 8 Director. Region 8 includes 20 STC chapters in California, Nevada, Hawaii, New Zealand, and Australia. For more information about Region 8, see [www.stcregion.org/region8/](http://www.stcregion.org/region8/).*

## Transformation Update...or Introduction?

By Andrea Ames, STC President

Are you a chapter or SIG leader? If so, chances are you've heard of the STC transformation. If not, there's a good chance you haven't heard of the transformation. The following few paragraphs will provide a very brief introduction to the transformation work, and the following resources will provide you with more details, updates, etc.:

- [transform@stc.org](mailto:transform@stc.org) -- Get answers to questions or provide suggestions, comments, etc., and you will get an answer or a response within 2 business days
- Transformation News listserv ([transform@lists.stc.org](mailto:transform@lists.stc.org)) -- Opt in and receive updates and news about the transformation, status/progress updates, notifications of Web site updates, etc. (sign up via the transformation Web page, below, beginning Thursday, July 15)
- [www.stc.org/transformation](http://www.stc.org/transformation) -- Visit often to see the main repository of transformation information, and sign up for the Transformation News listserv (above) for update information

### What Started All This? And What's It Really All About?

Frankly, the economy started all this. In short, STC income -- both membership dues income and conference income that underwrites the cost of memberships (you might not realize that your dues don't cover the actual costs of your membership) -- began to drop a few years ago, and the STC Board of Directors' efforts to cut costs did not solve our problem. When we dug into the cause of our drop in income, we found that many former members, for example, were unwilling to renew, because it meant paying for memberships that their companies had formerly covered. In short, although the economy moved the Board to act, what we found was that finances were merely a symptom of a greater problem -- perceived member value. That's what the transformation is really about: Providing value that members want and need to develop professionally.

During our research, we confirmed something we already knew: Our

industry and our members are incredibly diverse, with interests ranging from usability to editing, with skills and experience ranging from entry-level to senior, working in industries from financial to scientific, etc. We asked ourselves, "Can one Society really meet the needs and provide significant professional-development value in all of these areas and industries, to this entire range of people?" In answering this question, we confirmed something else we already knew: Our strength is in our "communities" -- what we currently call "chapters" and "SIGs." The Society does not provide direct value to members in any or all of these areas; instead, the Society provides infrastructure, mentoring, financial and administrative support, policy, etc., for those communities exist and flourish, providing member value indirectly through those communities. Unfortunately, the Society support for and representation of communities today -- and the members' experience across communities -- is inconsistent.

### The Bottom Line

Members want value, and value means something different to each of us. For the Society to rebuild -- and increase -- its membership ranks, we need to provide (among other things):

- Consistent, equitably supported and represented communities from which members will derive their personalized professional development value (through the Communities, Finance, and Governance initiatives)
- A flexible membership model (through the Membership initiative), enabling members to opt in and out of various services and community memberships to customize their professional development experience
- Rich content -- education (through the Education initiative), knowledge base, research, intellectual property of all types -- that provides depth of practice in member-identified practice areas (through the Communities initiative by supporting practice-based communities) and is readily accessed (through the Technology initiative)
- Richer opportunities to network, within and beyond geographies (through the Communities initiative

by supporting geographic communities and brand new kinds of communities)

And we need to communicate information (through the Communication initiative) about the transformation, its initiatives, the changes and status of those, as well as solicit feedback from members and leaders around the Society, to ensure that we all understand our options, make informed choices and decisions, and implement the appropriate changes during the transformation process.

### What We're Doing about It: The Transformation

Some of these needs are met through today's community success stories -- of which there are many! In our efforts to improve consistency and equality of support and experiences across communities, we're not losing sight of those that are working; instead, we're building on the foundation of their successes...and planning to go a step further to provide even more to those communities to enhance their successes. For communities that are struggling, the support we will provide is designed to help, not hinder, their progress toward providing as much member value as possible.

The work to meet all of these needs is complex... As we change our community support model to be more consistent, many changes are required -- in the financial, governance, and technology (infrastructure) areas, as well as the expected community policy changes.

We have a high-level roadmap that we're following, outlining what we need to do at a very high level similar to the bulleted items, above. We don't have all the answers. We still need your input and your help. Contact us at [transform@stc.org](mailto:transform@stc.org) to contribute to the transformation.

### Myths and Misinformation Abound!

If you have heard of the transformation, you might be concerned about some misinformation circulating. Here are a few of the most tenacious myths...debunked. For answers to frequently asked questions and more corrections to misinformation, sign up for the Transformation News listserv (via

the Transformation Web page, starting Thursday, July 15) to get notification when we add the FAQs to the Web site!

- STC is not a chapter-based organization; it is a member-based organization, according to our Bylaws.
- The transformation is not about finances; it's about member value. Although the economic environment and STC's financial situation in that environment was a symptom that alerted us to the problem, the real issue was members' perception of the value of STC membership.
- The transformation is not about marginalizing, de-emphasizing, or eliminating chapters -- large or small. Chapters are communities, just as SIGs are. The goal of the transformation is to equally support and represent all communities -- chapters, SIGs, and new, currently undefined communities.
- We are not taking away any chapters' money. At a Transformation Q&A session on Leadership Day at the STC conference in May, John Nardone, our Transformation Consultant, mentioned the well-known fact that STC's chapters have a greater net worth than the Society, and he suggested that chapters with large reserves might want to volunteer to donate some of those reserves to the transformation effort. (Interesting tidbit: Some chapters have contacted me to volunteer to support the transformation financially.)
- The transformation was not instigated by STC's Washington, D.C.-based organization. STC's decision-making, policy-setting body is the Board of Directors, your elected representatives, who are volunteers and live and work around the world. STC's implementation and operations body is the paid staff at the STC Office, located in northern Virginia. Your elected Board of Directors voted to engage the transformation consultant (in May 2003) and to adopt the the transformation roadmap (in January 2004) that the consultant and the initial transformation team proposed. The STC Office in northern VA does not determine how

money is spent; they implement disbursements based on STC Board decisions.

- The current dues rebates that fund chapters are not part of the transformed financial model. The new financial model has not yet been developed. Until it is, the Board of Directors will continue with the chapter dues rebate process: According to STC Bylaws, each year the Board analyzes the current financial situation -- including the budget, membership renewals, conference income, etc. -- and determines an amount to rebate to chapters.

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## ActiveVOICE Article Submission Policies

The ActiveVOICE welcomes articles from STC members and others in the technical writing community. Having a published article is a good addition to your portfolio. This document describes the guidelines for submitting an article to this newsletter. If you have any questions, you can email the editor at [newsletter@stc-sf.org](mailto:newsletter@stc-sf.org).

### Publication Information

The ActiveVOICE is published six times a year in February, April, June, August, October, and December by the Society for Technical Communication, San Francisco Chapter, PO Box 2708, San Francisco, CA 94126, [www.stc-sf.org](http://www.stc-sf.org). The editor is Marc Smircich ([newsletter@stc-sf.org](mailto:newsletter@stc-sf.org)).

### Submission Guidelines

Submit all articles via email to the newsletter editor ([newsletter@stc-sf.org](mailto:newsletter@stc-sf.org)) in either of the following ways:

- Microsoft Word format as an attachment.
- Plain ASCII text in the message body or as an attachment.

If your article contains copyrighted materials, you are responsible for obtaining permission for the ActiveVOICE to publish the copyrighted materials.

Please include the following with your article:

- Your name. Please spell it exactly as you want it published.
- The title of the article. If you get to choose the title, make it descriptive and inviting. When readers are looking at the front page of the online newsletter, the title is the only basis they have for deciding whether to click on the link to your article.

NOTE: For recurring monthly articles, such as reviews of meetings, you do not get to choose the title.

- Headings. Please include headings so that it is easy for busy readers to scan your article (just as you do when reading technical publications). Headings are especially important when people are reading online. If your article does not have headings, the editor may add them.
- A brief bio (no more than 50 to 75 words). This bio is a chance for you to say a little bit about yourself that you want to share with the world.

### Articles Published

The ActiveVOICE publishes the following kinds of articles:

- Reviews of previous meetings. Each edition contains reviews of previous meetings. These articles should be 500 to 750 words long. The purpose of these articles to provide a summary of the meeting for those who did not attend.
- Columns by STC officials. To keep our audience informed what is happening with the STC, the newsletter accepts articles from STC officers at the chapter, regional, and international level.
- Publicity for STC events and other professional organizations. The newsletter accepts publicity articles for conferences, seminars, and other events sponsored by the STC, an STC chapter, an STC SIG, and closely related non-profit organizations.
- Articles related to technical communication. The newsletter accepts software reviews, book reviews, information about industry trends, tips on how to use popular software packages, and other such articles.

Normally, the maximum length is 1,000 words. To be accepted for publication, the primary purpose of the article must be to inform and educate, rather than to market a particular product or service. If you have an idea for an article, please contact the newsletter editor at [newsletter@stc-sf.org](mailto:newsletter@stc-sf.org).

### Editorial Discretion

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