

Society for Technical Communication
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We're on the Web!

HTTP://WWW.STCSGV.ORG

San Gabriel

STC

Valley Chapter

(SIGs, continued from page 1)

communicators.

- Encourages member-to-member dialogue as well as dialogue with other professional organizations in order to broaden the range of members' technical knowledge.
- Offers its members a platform from which to demonstrate and share information, especially with a view to educating novices.
- Keeps members abreast of new developments in the special interest area.

Some of the SIGs that are currently operating include:

- Management
- Consulting and Independent Contracting
- Usability
- Online Information
- Marketing Communication

The SIG program is active at both the Society level and chapter

level. For more information about SIGs, links to SIG-related resources, or to download a sign-up form, go to the SIG information page on the National STC Web site at: http://www.stc.org/sig_info.html

New Advanced Adobe FrameMaker 7 Book

A new Adobe FrameMaker 7 book for advance users is slated for release in June, and STC members can order their copy now and save almost \$18 off the cover price.

"Advanced FrameMaker 7" by provides readers with techniques, tips, and tricks to help casual users to FrameMaker guru. Coverage includes new FrameMaker 7 features such as Automated Master Pages, WebDAV, and XML round-trip.

The book, normally \$49.99, is \$32.49 if ordered through TechnicalPublishing.com. For more information, go to <http://www.technicalpublishing.com> (click the link at bottom-left). Or, send an email to frame7@technicalpublishing.com.



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Going to Nashville for STC National?

The final program is now available online:

http://www.stc.org/49thConf/PDF_Files/final_prog.pdf

Upcoming Meeting Dates:

- May 20
- June 24
- No July Meeting

Meetings are held at Sheraton Four Points Hotel, 700 W. Huntington Drive, Monrovia, CA.

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SOCIETY FOR TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION
SAN GABRIEL VALLEY CHAPTER

Job Hunting in Difficult Times

The STC San Gabriel Valley Chapter welcomes business and technology consultant Tom Lenzo as speaker for its May 20 meeting.

Background

Hunting for a job is a difficult task for which schools do not prepare us. It is an effort we all must undertake several times in our lives. This is the worst employment situation in memory, and it makes the task of job hunting much more difficult.

About The Presentation

Tom's presentation prom-

ises to give technical writers practical ideas, suggestions, skills, resources and tools to help them in their job hunt and career development.

About the Speaker

With almost 30 years of experience in the world of employee training and organizational development, Tom is now a consultant specializing in instructional design projects for high-technology environments. He is also a Senior STC member and a founding member of the San Gabriel Valley chapter—even serving as its employment co-

ordinator. Tom is very active in many other professional, civic, and religious organizations. He received the 2001 Torch Award from the American Society for Training and Development Los Angeles chapter.

Meeting Information

Meetings are at the Sheraton Four Points Hotel, 700 W. Huntington Drive, Monrovia. Doors open at 6 p.m. The cost for STC members is \$14; non-members are \$16, and includes dinner. Please email your reservation to maispeco@aol.com by Wednesday, May 15.

Getting SIGgy With It: STC Special Interest Groups

STC offers its member countless opportunities and resources, and one of the ways to take full advantage of the organization's networking and knowledge-sharing offerings is by joining a Special Interest Group (SIG).

What are SIGs?

You may have heard of SIGs already — they're usually

listed on your STC membership renewal application. SIGs are composed of STC members with common experiences and interests who share their skills and knowledge with each other and with other STC members. Some of these interests are based on the type of work members do. In other cases, the interests pertain to the nature of members'

employment situation.

Each SIG fosters an environment that:

- Offers its members a basic understanding of the special interest area and its effect on their role as technical

(See SIGs, continued on page 4)

STC Participation: A Great Addition to Your Resume by Kathy Broman, SGV STC President

Two years ago, I sat interviewing at a large entertainment company in Burbank where I dearly wanted to work. A contract position was open, and I was very interested. The manager politely asked all the usual questions about my background and skills. Towards the end of the interview he asked if I had ever heard of STC.

Heard of it? I giggled that I had not only heard of it, but I was president of the San Gabriel Valley chapter. Blushing, the hiring manager quickly glanced at my resume to confirm, and then turned to his computer to check the Contacts page at <http://www.stcsgv.org>.

"Well, so you are!" he smiled. When the agency that had sent me there later called to offer me the job, I was told that the manager was really impressed with my skill set – and

especially impressed with my STC title!

Moral of the story (you guessed it): it pays to volunteer! Volunteering not only benefits the chapter, it benefits you! The rewards can be very great: networking opportunities, the chance to make friends, and the good feeling that comes when you know you've done your part to help. The time commitment is easy to work into your schedule; generally just a few hours a month.

And did I mention that it looks great on a resume?

There is plenty to do to keep the chapter afloat: Lining up guest speakers for our monthly meeting. Announcing our meetings to other chapters. Making sure that our members hear about employment and

educational opportunities. Updating the Web site. Writing the newsletter. Keeping track of the chapter's email list. Depositing funds into the bank account. Organizing the Holiday Party. One person can't do it alone.

Can you help? We are looking for those who are willing to serve, dependable, and creative. Plenty of support is available, including the STC Chapter Handbook and the input of the other council members.

If you can volunteer, please contact me at (818) 951-7301, or drop me a line at kabroman@aol.com.

Our June elections are just around the corner. We'd like to fill up our slate – and we'd like your resume to look GREAT!

STC Membership Q & A by Christopher M. Ruck, STC National Membership Director

Q: Nationwide, what is the net change in membership of the STC over the last year?

A: We anticipate a decline in STC membership for this fiscal year, which ends June 3. This would be the first decline in 21 years. Note: our membership numbers depend on both new members and renewals. New membership is down significantly (about 25 percent) while renewals are down slightly.

Q: Which regions have largely contributed to this change?

A: STC's region 8 has probably suffered most, due to the concentration of tech companies in Silicon Valley. Note that the Silicon Valley chapter is also STC's largest.

Q: What events in these regions do you feel were responsible?

A: We attribute this drop to the dot com crash, corporate reductions in their technical communication staff, less corporate support for participation in professional societies, and the effects of September 11.

Q: If we are experiencing a nationwide membership decrease, what are your thoughts about whether and when there will be a rebound in membership? What indications do

you have that signal a positive change in membership numbers?

A: We expect a rebound in membership. Our membership's rise and fall closely tracks the economy in general and the tech sector in particular. As you know from newspapers and broadcast news, the economy is already recovering from the recession. Anecdotally, we've already heard about increases in job announcements on STC employment Web sites. STC's membership department has also been hearing from ex-members who had been unemployed, but who have now been rehired and are re-joining STC.

Q: What trend do you predict for the STC membership in the future? Which regions will play a key role in that trend?

A: We expect that, after this interruption, STC membership will continue to increase. Tech-rich areas like Silicon Valley will no doubt play a key role in this--especially when the tech sector fully recovers as the media is predicting.



Notices

Spread the Word

About STC!

Do you know of any technical writers who haven't heard of STC? Have you encouraged a co-worker to join?

Our chapter would love to include the many technical communicators in the San Gabriel Valley that we know are out there working hard. Feel free to pick up a brochure or chapter newsletter at one of our meetings, and pass it along!

Looking to Hire?

Looking to Be Hired?

The San Gabriel Valley chapter STC Web site has a job postings board for use by job hunters, employers, and STC members. Check out the listings at

<http://www.stcsgv.org/employment.html>.

You can also send job postings directly to Webmaster Patti Sweetman at psweetman@earthlink.net. Please make sure to read the posting guidelines on the Web site before sending your submission.

No budget for training? Don't want to fly?

Gordon & Gordon books allow you to learn at your own pace with a workbook, informative slides, exercises and reference materials distributed at the company's workshops. Some sample titles include:

- Documenting APIs and SDKs: A Guide for Non-Programmers
- System Design for Technical Writers
- Writing Marketing Materials for High-Tech Firms
- Good Enough Documentation
- Technical Writing 101: The Basic Skills

For more information or to order a workbook today, visit the company Web site at: <http://www.gordonandgordon.com/wkb-fs.html>.



Classes

Using RoboHTML

UC Riverside Extension's is offering the following course:

Time: 1-4 p.m. Saturdays

Dates: July 13-Aug. 10

Location: Riverside, California

Fee: \$310

Info: <http://www.ucrextension.net>

or call (909) 787-4111

Learn how to use RoboHTML to create Microsoft HTMLHelp. The class focuses on how to put codes inside text tiles, which can be located on a local computer or a remote server to be read by browsing software.

Advanced FrameMaker

Date: Saturday, June 8

Time: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Cost: STC members: \$75, Non-members: \$140

Info: <http://www.lastc.org/>

Deadline to Register: May 25

Classes are held at New Horizons Learning Center, 100 Corporate Pointe, Suite 195, Culver City, CA.



Sites to See

April Meeting Presentation Now On The Web

The San Gabriel Valley chapter's May meeting was a rousing success with Jack Moli-sani's enlightening presentation: "Why Customers Call Tech Support and What Tech Writers Can Do About It."

A summary of Jack's presentation can now be found on the ProSpring Web site at:

http://www.prospring.net/Resource/Why_Customers_Call_Tech_Support/why_customers_call_tech_support.html

"Members Only"

IABC Job Board

The job posting board on the International Association of Business Communicators (IABC) Web site will only be accessible to IABC members after June 2002.

To view the most current postings while they are still accessible, go to:

http://www.iabc.com/messages/job_postings/1.html.

For membership information, go to:

<http://www.iabc.com/members/Joining/index.htm#Join>

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