Using STC Seminars as a Springboard for Programming

STC Southeastern Michigan Chapter
Pacesetter Award 2015

Presentation prepared by Alison Phillips and Maryann Bowen
Maryann Bowen is an STC Associate Fellow and long-time member of the STC Southeastern Michigan (STC/SM) chapter, the Instructional Design and Learning SIG, and the Consultants and Independent Contractors SIG. She has held multiple volunteer and elected positions on the STC/SM council and is currently serving as chapter Treasurer. She has also participated in multiple Society-level groups, including the Community Achievement Awards Evaluation Committee. Maryann is an independent technical communications professional, working primarily in the area of software user education and user experience.
What is the STC Pacesetter Award?

• STC’s Community Pacesetter Award recognizes innovative and successful community initiatives.

• The Pacesetter Award recognizes the successful implementation of a single beneficial innovation that may be implemented by other STC communities.

• More at: http://stc.org/membership/recognition/awards/1178-pacesetteraward
For successfully promoting STC webinars and sharing their benefits with your community through your creative “Choose Your Own Learning Adventure” program.
How did we get there?

• A challenge
• Some brainstorming
• An idea!
• A plan (details)
• Implementation
Michigan Winter
Michigan Winter: Another View
The Challenge

During the winter months, especially January and February, provide interesting programming and networking opportunities requiring minimum travel.

Consider:

• Virtual programs
• Multiple “local” networking events
• Venues/programs with no cancelation penalty
Use STC archived seminars!
The Plan: Details

• Provide a short list of webinars about usability.
• Invite members to watch one or more within a certain time period.
• Use the STC/SM blog to summarize and discuss the webinars.
• Schedule local networking events for members to discuss the webinars in person.
• Yes, only members could watch the webinars (extra incentive to join STC!), but anyone could read the blog or attend the networking event.
Implementation

• Announcement
• Shared links
• Blog posts (summary and discussion)
• EventBrite invitation
• In-person networking event
• Follow-up blog post
“And Now for Something Completely Different!”

...well, not completely, but a little different for us. After our program postponement due to weather in November and our holiday mixer with area usability folks in December, we will resume our chapter programs and networking in February. To prepare, we’d like those who can to view any of the following STC webinars in the comfort of their home or office. Then join us to discuss these and meet others at the February networking event. Check our [calendar](#) for the date, time and location.

The free webinars are only accessible to STC members, and we welcome members and nonmembers alike to attend our programs. So, between now and our February program, we’d like to encourage members to post webinar summaries on this blog so they’ll be viewable by all who want to join us in February.

The webinars can be accessed [here](#). They include:

- **10 Most Common Misconceptions About User Experience Design**, presented by Whitney Hess
- **Sketching User Experiences with the Design Studio Method**, presented by Brian Sullivan
- **Essential UX Skills for Technical Communicators**, presented by Will Sansbury, Rachel Peters, Yina Li
- **From TechComm to UX: Are You a Designer**, presented by Kristi Leach
Register Today for an Upcoming Event

TechComm 101 | Leah Guren | 14 June
11:00 AM - 12:30 PM EDT (GMT-4)

Power of FrameMaker | Matt Sullivan | 30 June
11:30 AM - 12:30 PM EDT (GMT-4)

Technical Editing Foundations | Li-At Rathbun
16 August | 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM EDT (GMT-4)
LIST OF FREE ARCHIVED SEMINARS

10 Most Common Misconceptions About User Experience Design, presented by Whitney Hess
10 Tips for a Better Survey, presented by Caroline Jarrett
11 Real World Insights for Template Based Writing, presented by Saul Carliner
A Pleasure Doing Business, presented by Stephen Anderson
Adapting Ourselves to Adaptive Content, presented by Karen McGrane
Advancing Web Accessibility, presented by Shawn Henry
Analytics for Web-Based User Docs, presented by Patricia Boswell
Architecting User Assistance for Reuse, presented by Michael Hughes
Beyond the Bleeding Edge 1, presented by Neil Perlin, Rahel Bailie, Brian Everett, and Katie Carver
Beyond the Bleeding Edge 2, presented by Janet Swisher, Rob Frankland, Neil Perlin, and Kyle Dozuki
Beyond the Bleeding Edge, presented by Neil Perlin
Body Work: Rebuilding Documentation Car Wrecks, presented by Karen Murri
Brave New World: Tapping Enterprise Communities, presented by Samantha Vashishtha and Marta Rauch
Bringing Experience to the Table, presented by Chris Hester
Building a Developer Documentation Wiki, presented by Sarah Maddox
Building an Empire from the Grassroots Up, presented by Lisa Dyer, Janet Swisher
Building Visual Explanations: Practical Advice for Writers, presented by Don Moyer
Calculating ROI for DITA, presented by Sarah O’Keefe
Change Management 101, presented by Ant Davey
Change, Trust, Collaboration: Adapting to Single Source Technologies, presented by Paula Toth
Chinese Website Usability Study, presented by Carol Barnum, Yina Li
Climbing the Levels of Collaboration, presented by Anne Gentle
Collaborating Around the World, presented by Kirsty Taylor
Content Management as a Practice, presented by Pamela Kostur
Content Management Technology Diffusion and Adoption Challenges, presented by Rebekka Andersen
Content Strategies: the Content Lifecycle, presented by Rahel Bailie
Content Strategy for Reaching Customers Anywhere, presented by Charles Cooper and Ann Rockley
Content Tactics: Putting Your Strategy into Action, presented by Pamela Kostur
Review of Essential User Experience Skills
Presented at the 2010 Summit by Will Sansbury, Rachel Peters, and Yina Li

(Reviewed by Mary Jo David, February 2015)

Will Sansbury, Rachel Peters, and Yina Li based their presentation on a workshop they put together for members of the Atlanta chapter of STC. A team of chapter members was interested in redesigning the Atlanta chapter's website, thus the need for the workshop. The Atlanta chapter website being used at that time was designed in approximately 1994.

The presentation overviews three essential user experience skills: card sorting, heuristic evaluation, and usability testing. Although the main focus of the presentation was how to put these skills into practice designing a website, references were also made to the importance of these same skills for designing user guides and online help as well.

INTRODUCING USER-CENTERED DESIGN
Will Sansbury begins the presentation by defining user-centered design as "an approach to design that grounds the process in information about the people who will use the product." He presents four phases of user-centered design, which are also common to most technical communication projects. These are analysis, design, evaluation, and deployment. He uses the simple example of going for a haircut to illustrate these phases.
Networking evening at Traffic Jam and Snug

by Alison Philips

February 17, 2015

Six of us braved the elements last week to gather for an informal evening of food, drinks, and conversation at Traffic Jam and Snug in midtown Detroit. We welcomed a couple of new faces, talked about current techcomm opportunities in the greater Detroit area, and returning members took the opportunity to catch up after the holidays.

Our goal for the evening was to discuss one (or more) of the free STC webinars suggested in January. Although some of us had technical difficulties accessing the webinars, Mary Jo David provided a very thorough write-up on Essential User Experience Skills for Technical Communicators, and Mark Lockwood led a discussion of one of the webinars he viewed, Sketching User Experiences with the Design Studio Method. Mark described several themes of the webinar, including the idea of sketching multiple solutions to business problems, and how this specific methodology can help work groups create innovative document design solutions. The idea of "saturating your design space" with many possible solutions and coming together to mash-up the possibilities was a thread we discussed as a group.
Can other communities do this? Yes!

1. Select a general topic for the webinars.

2. Create a list of possible webinars for viewing.

3. Post the list of webinars on your chapter blog or other social media.

4. Ask participants to write a couple of interesting points or questions to bring with them, or write a review to post on your blog that potential non-members can read beforehand.

5. Schedule a networking event at a local bar or restaurant or use your next chapter program to discuss the webinars.
Do even more!

Not just webinars! Consider Intercom articles, LinkedIn posts from other SIGs or chapters...other ideas?

Bonus effects might include:

• Member retention
• New members
• New volunteers!
Thank you!

Maryann Bowen
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STC Southeastern Michigan Chapter Treasurer
STC Associate Fellow
Welcome to **Room 2** of the #STC16 Virtual Leadership Program Breakout Sessions!

- **Room 1**
  - [Room 1](http://stc.adobeconnect.com/stccacroom1/)
    - 1:30-2:00: Bobbi Werner
      Using Targeted Contact Lists
    - 2:00-2:30: MK Grueneberg
      CAA Application
    - 2:30-3:00: Rick Lippincott
      Beginning Social Media
    - 3:00-3:30: Roger Renteria
      Adobe Connect

- **Room 2**
  - [Room 2](http://stc.adobeconnect.com/stccacroom2/)
    - 1:30-2:00: Maryann Bowen
      STC Webinars as a Springboard for Networking
    - 2:00-2:30: Betsy Maaks
      Taking Time to Celebrate!
    - 2:30-3:00: Viqui Dill
      Advanced Social Media
    - 3:00-3:30: Lori Meyer
      Succession Planning

Please give us your feedback [https://goo.gl/Pv9XzH](https://goo.gl/Pv9XzH)