



# Boston Broadside

The Boston Chapter Newsletter

November 2008

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## Message from the Boston Chapter President

By Pamela Sarantos  
STC-Boston Chapter President



### Thank You

In the spirit of the upcoming Thanksgiving holiday, I'd like to dedicate this message to the Council members, volunteers, and others who work

with the Chapter, and have served in the past, to help support our members.

I also thank our many sponsors, whose participation contributes to the success of our monthly meetings.

Thanks to Scott Abel (The Content Wrangler) for inviting Chapter members to DocTrain East class sessions and networking receptions.

### Programs

Thank you to our Program Committee. We started off our 2008–2009 year with a successful panel discussion about how

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## Let's Go "Windows" Shopping! The October Tools Round Tables

By Rebecca Hopkins

For our October program, STC-Boston gave us a peek into the windows of five diverse tool sets that can help you with everything from coder's text comments to 3D graphics — something for everybody.

After a little networking and a nice meal, the Boston area technical communicators got down to business, checking out the wares. At five tables were five SMEs (Subject Matter Experts); and with an hour to listen to three 20-minute talks, each attendee had to choose just three.

Our evening of window shopping ended with five attendees walking away with cool freebies. Caleb Stewart of Randolph Associates gave away four of their famous blinky-light messenger bags. The ticket to the upcoming DocTrain conference in Burlington went to one of STC-Boston's newest members, Regina DeAngelo.

### At Table One: Tad Staley for Acrobat.com Online Services

Web workers of the world, disperse! Acrobat.com offers a suite of free online services that will help you throw off the chains of the evil empire – free on-line word processing, storage and collaboration software: the Buzzword word processor, ConnectNow Web-conferencing, and Share file storage, access, and sharing software. Check them out at <http://www.adobe.com/acom/>.



Ted Staley talks about Acrobat.

### At Table Two: Peter Veilkin for PTC Arbortext



Peter Veilkin chats about Arbortext products.

Arbortext's content publishing system has something from every technical communicator's shopping list: XML authoring, technical illustration creation, content and process management, SCORM eLearning, DITA, Docbook, S1000D, etc. Their latest offering is Windchill ProductPoint for SharePoint to manage your CAD files the same way you manage other files, via SharePoint. For more tech bling, browse <http://www.ptc.com/>.

### At Table Three: Joel Howe on Web-oriented Tools

Joel focused on Adobe's Dreamweaver, Flash, and Acrobat, plus the cool new features in last month's CS4 release. Dreamweaver now has an integrated browser preview and Subversion source control integration. Joel is very impressed with the new nondestructive editing of Photoshop images through Smart Objects, and the 3D capabilities of

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to write a good resume. We all learned some very helpful techniques as well as tips on what may spoil a resume. The program was sponsored by DocTrain East 2008. Our October program was sponsored by Randolph Associates. It was a successful program that was presented in a progressive format. Read all about it in this issue of the Broadside.

To date, we presented three SIGs, on the topics of job searching, creating online demos/tutorials, and single sourcing. Bentley is partnering with us this month to host a Usability SIG.

We are thankful to be able to hold SIGs at different venues, so we can reach a wider audience. We plan to hold a SIG in the Cambridge area at the beginning of next year. If you have an idea or know a presenter for a SIG meeting in your area and can help us arrange the logistics, please contact the Program Manager, [Arun Jain](mailto:Arun.Jain).

### Student Outreach

Our new Student Outreach program is off to a good start. Since September, we have visited two high schools, informing students about the technical communication profession and STC.

We also visited Middlesex Community College and spoke to the students in the technical writing certificate program. We have plans to visit another 2 to 3 colleges this year.

We are also offering students practice interviews with documentation managers, to help them become more confident as they interview for jobs in their new profession.

Thank you to the Student Outreach Committee, and to Chuck Murray and Andrew Harrington, MCC's professors, for their continued support and collaboration with our Chapter in building a program for students.

### Society

Susan Burton, the Executive Director of STC, spoke at DocTrain East 2008 and presented "The Changing Face of TechComm and the Society for Technical

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*Windows Shopping, continued from Page 1*

Acrobat Extended. For more on Adobe Creative Suite 4, see <http://www.adobe.com/products/creativesuite/>; for more on Joel's work, see <http://www.frameworkmedia.com/>.



Joel Howe focuses on Web tools.

Merge and Beyond Compare dif tools. Talk to Ed at [ed.marshall@verison.net](mailto:ed.marshall@verison.net) or <http://www.marshalldocumentationservices.com/>.

### At Table Five: Andrew Harrington from Avid Technologies

Andrew's presentation was a little different from the others: if you're in the market for DITA and Structured Authoring, you have a lot of window shopping and list making to do before you buy into the whole idea. But it not a lonely path anymore: Avid Technologies is well on its way, and Andrew says, "Come on in, the water's fine!" See also: <http://www.avid.com/>.



Andrew Harrington discusses DITA with attendees.

## New Members Reception

*By Kara Le Treize*



Boston STC welcomed newly joined members: Trish Robertson, Regina de Angelo, and Haidee LeClair, at a reception on October 15. The reception featured an informal panel of Chapter leaders who discussed membership benefits and ways to participate in the Boston-STC. Speakers included: Pres. Pam Sarantos, First VP Arun Jain, council members Ellen Lidington and Katie Lesesne, and Council member Mark Decker.

## Free Acrobat.com Services

*By Kara Le Treize*

Adobe Acrobat is offering a group of free Web applications that can really simplify your life — and all at an unbeatable price!

*Free Acrobat, continued on page 3*

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Communication.” She also was able to join the Council for a short visit.

Susan informed us that Society is working with the Board of Labor Statistics to change the title of our profession to Technical Communicator, and to revise the definition of the job to be more realistic with the trends that have occurred and anticipated new trends. The goal is to expose greater recognition to the profession and have salaries judged at a different level.

Go to the Adobe site at [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com) and choose the Solutions, Technical Communication link. STC is listed on this site, and there is a link to an article “You May Already Be a Technical Communicator!” written by Susan Burton.

### Membership Campaign

All chapters are involved in a membership campaign. Remember to renew your membership soon and bring in a new member! There are campaign incentives, and more benefits have been added for members in 2009. Read more about the campaign in this Broadside edition, and go to the Society Web site for detailed information.

Thank you, to all our members who continue to support the Chapter.

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## STC Refreshes Logo to Coincide with Strategic Plan

STC President Mark Clifford announced the debut of a 2009 version of the STC logo this week calling it a “positive update combining the traditional elements of the logo with a modernized look.”



The updated version was developed by the Public Relations Task Force, led by Char James-Tanny and Rich Maggiani, with the creative expertise of Patrick . Maggiani also revised the logo guidelines to aid in the use of the refreshed logo.

*Free Acrobat, continued from page 2*

**Buzzword** is an online word processor that allows you to write a document and store it for review, comments, or editing. You set the viewer's access level from simply reading the document up to co-authoring. Buzzword handles various text formats. Import or export to .txt, .rtf, .doc/.docx, and Word 2003 .xml files. Other export formats are: .pdf, Open Office .odt, or html.

With gas prices still high, you may want to cut down meeting time and expenses with Adobe.com's online meeting service: **ConnectNow**. ConnectNow is a free Web-conferencing tool for up to three people. It features text, video, or audio conferencing, as well as desktop sharing. If your group is small, ConnectNow can save you time and effort without any long-term subscription fees.

Sharing documents just got easier with Adobe's **Share**. Share is a free online file-sharing service with a generous five GB of storage. When you need to share files, you can post them online and avoid headaches like mailbox size limitations or remote access difficulties when on the road. It's as easy as 1-2-3: upload your file, list the recipients, and send the readers a link. Your readers can view the document online or download the file to access it.

For more information, go to: <http://www.adobe.com/acom>.

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## STC-Boston Chapter: Student Outreach

*By Kristen Rountree*

To promote technical communication as a career and the STC as a resource to help potential communicators break into the field, STC-Boston has kicked off its Student Outreach Program.

Over the summer, the group spoke at Fenway High and at Boston College's Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) program. The committee's next engagement will be speaking to students at Middlesex Community College in Bedford, Mass. which offers a Writing Technical Information certificate program. They hope to speak at several more events before the school year ends and ramp up their efforts in 2009, according to Katie Lesesne, a contractor at Cartiza Networks in Littleton, Mass., who is leading the STC's student outreach efforts.

The first challenge, the group said, will be to raise awareness of technical communication among high school students who have not yet decided on a course of study in college and science and technology college students who are trying to choose a specific career path.

"A lot of students are unaware of technical writing as a career option," said Taryn Light, Technical Publications & Training Manager at Airvana in Chelmsford, Mass. "Every product in the world needs product documentation to go with it." Ed Marshall, principal at Marshall Documentation Consulting in Shirley, Mass., agreed. "How many people have tried to program a VCR that's constantly blinking midnight?" he noted.

So far, the group has focused on science and technology students, but it hopes to eventually branch out to a wider audience, including English and writing majors, Lesesne said. It aims to reach both high school and university students, as well as those looking to transfer current career skills to a new line of work, she said, adding that regional career centers are another potential target in the future.

Another possible target, according to the group, are parents looking to reduce their working hours or go part-time; this possibility could mean meeting with student/parent groups at colleges.

The group aims not only to promote technical communication as a career path, but also to promote the STC as a vehicle for making connections in the industry. Light said she has found jobs for about seven or eight people through STC networking alone.

If you are interested in volunteering with the Student Outreach Program Team, contact Katie Lesesne at [klesesne@hotmail.com](mailto:klesesne@hotmail.com) or at (781) 510-1406.

*Logo, continued from page 3*

"I think our members will find the new version an attractive symbol of the strategic direction in which STC is heading and the new energy among the leadership," explained Clifford. He noted it has "a cleaner, brighter look, and gives greater definition to STC's branding." The refreshed logo keeps the basic look of the STC traditional logo, adding graduated blue color plus a hint of curvature and dimension. The letters remain inside the "box" low to emphasize technical communication. The updated version also includes slight changes to the choice of typeface.

The new version has already begun appearing on the STC Web site and in documents because existing supplies of letterhead and envelopes are exhausted. "With the current economic condition it makes sense that we get the most use of our supplies and signage," explained STC Executive Director Susan Burton, who indicated the logo project was undertaken without the expenditure of any additional funds. "I am especially thankful to Patrick Hofmann for his work on this project," said Burton. Senior Member Patrick Hofmann, of Teeswater, Ontario, created the new design as a contribution to the Society. "Given the time and investment that went into the STC rebranding back in 2001, I wanted to maintain the overall look and feel of the original STC logo, yet give it a good dusting, polishing, and sprucing up," explained Hofmann.

The refreshed logo will be posted shortly on the STC Web site in various formats with guidelines for its use. Chapters and SIGs that have independent logos are encouraged to consider updating their logos and may use elements of the STC logo in their design. The refreshed logos, both colored and B&W versions, can be used in a variety of new and innovative ways; for example, in conjunction with community logos and specific event logos.

**Editor's Note:** *Source:* [STC Refreshes Logo to Coincide with Strategic Plan](#)

## Upcoming STC-Boston Chapter Competitions

[http://www.stcboston.org/competitions/calendar\\_index.shtml](http://www.stcboston.org/competitions/calendar_index.shtml)



### November 2008

- 15th Consensus judging for Technical Publications Competition
- 19th Orientation and consensus judging for Technical Art Competition; multimedia entries must be set up on-site
- TBD Technical Publications Competition "Best of Show" judging

### December 2008

- 11th Judging results mailed to all Technical Publication Competition entrants

### February 2009

- 25th STACIES Awards Banquet at the Hilton Garden Inn (Burlington, MA)

### April 2009

STC International Competitions results via mail from International contacts

### May 2009

- TBD STACIES/Online Showcase

**STC Reach for the Stars!**

**Member-Get-A-Member!**  
Invite a colleague to join STC and enter to win great prizes.  
**Tip: Invite a prospect to the next monthly meeting.**

Prospects:

- Technical writers
- Usability specialists
- Documentation managers
- Technical editors
- Information developers
- Documentation specialists
- Technical communicators
- Technical illustrators
- Managers of technical communications
- Web designers
- Technical translators

**Contest runs to 12/31**

More info at: [www.stc.org/membership/mgam-about.asp](http://www.stc.org/membership/mgam-about.asp)

## The Broadside Staff

The *Boston Broadside* is published six times throughout the calendar year and would not be possible without the hard work of dedicated volunteers. Many thanks to the following people for their contributions:

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This Issue's Contributors:

Rebecca Hopkins

Kara Le Treize

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Thank you, everyone!

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### Write for the Broadside

The *Boston Broadside* encourages Chapter members to share their skills, thoughts, and ideas with other professionals in the Chapter.

If you would like to write for an upcoming issue of the *Boston Broadside*, send email to: [boston.broadside@gmail.com](mailto:boston.broadside@gmail.com)

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## STC to Record Entire Conference in Atlanta!

We have exciting news about the [2009 Technical Communication Summit](#) to be held May 3–6, 2009 in Atlanta, Georgia. The STC Board of Directors has just approved the purchase of [conference management software](#) that will give STC the capability to record the entire conference. The audio recording will be synchronized with the PowerPoint presentation and be available to each conference attendee as part of their registration package. This will give attendees the opportunity to “attend” all sessions they could not attend on-site, virtually, and at their leisure.



STC will also make the package available, at a significant fee, after the conference to those who did not attend. This will mean that speakers will be asked to grant STC the copyright on the session you present. While the exact wording is still with our attorney, STC would request that speakers grant to STC a royalty-free license to use, reproduce, and distribute presentations, with appropriate attribution to the speaker. This license would not change the fact that the speaker retains copyright ownership of the presentation, and is not prohibited from using the presentation in any way or from allowing others to use it.

STC looks forward to this addition to our conference capability and feels that it will greatly enhance the value of the Technical Communication Summit to all. Questions about this may be directed to [Lloyd Tucker](#), Director of Education, STC.

**Editor's Note:** Source: <http://www.stcwc.org/wdcblog/2008/10/24/stc-to-record-entire-conference-in-atlanta>

### About the Society for Technical Communication

**Mission:** *Creating and supporting a forum for communities of practice in the profession of technical communication.*

For more information, visit us online at:

Society for Technical Communication

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

Boston Chapter

[www.stcboston.org](http://www.stcboston.org)