

“Technical Communication: Journal of the Society for Technical Communication.” Edited by Dr. Frank R. Smith. Published quarterly by the Society for Technical Communication, 815 Fifteenth St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005. Subscription included in STC membership or available to nonmembers for \$30 per year. Individual issues, \$7.50.

Technical Communication publishes articles of professional interest to writers, editors, artists, teachers, managers, consultants, and others involved in preparing technical documents.

The journal is usually 84 pages plus cover, 8-1/2 × 11 inches, and saddle stitched. All articles are refereed. Each issue also features such regular departments as:

Recent and Relevant—One-paragraph abstracts of literature in audiovisuals, communication, education, graphics, information, science, language, management, the profession, proposals, publishing, readability, reports, teaching and writing.

Technology Reviews—Readers who have experience with new products (hardware or software) are invited to submit reviews.

Among the Professions—Careful comparisons examine the place of technical communication among the professions.

Current Research in Technical Communication—Reports on in-progress research.

A Teaching Tip—Drawn from experience in classrooms, workshops, seminars, and inservice training courses.

Models for Technical Communication—Readers present a philosophical statement or an outstanding example of craftsmanship they have used as a guide, consolation or inspiration and tell why it proved valuable.

Other sections are more self-explanatory—book reviews—5-7 per issue, *Computer and Communication*, and *Slaying the English Jargon*—grammar.

An issue may develop a theme. For example, the November, 1988 issue devoted 38 pages and 11 articles to desktop publishing. A listing of the desktop publishing articles (excluding the introduction) and a brief synopsis of each follow:

“Reconceiving the Page: A Short History of Desktop Publishing”—Examines the history of the various tools of desktop publishing, from the pens of the copyists, to the typewriter and finally to the laser printer.

“The Quality Trap: Is Desktop Publishing Necessarily Better Communication”—Outlines the dangers that desktop publishing introduces into the publishing process and suggests ways to avoid them.

“Under the Desk: The Other Things You Need for Desktop Publishing”—Compiles a list of things needed to avoid experiencing distress in using desktop publishing, not all of them intuitively obvious.

“Redefining Corporate Design Standards for Desktop Publishing”—Recommends that revised design standards be established, communicated, followed, and carefully policed to prevent multitudes of poorly designed but official-looking publications from flowing out the door.

“New Opportunities from Desktop Publishing: A Case History”—Explains how opportunities to develop new expertise, new working relationships and new services were created through desktop publishing when it appeared in one office.

“Desktop Publishing: Technology and the Technical Communicator”—Explores the major issues related to the introduction of desktop or electronic publishing in the process of technical communication.

“Desktop Publishing: Issues for the Technical Publications Manager”—Offers guidance for analyzing the rationale for adopting desktop publishing, the criteria for selecting an appropriate system, and the problems of document design and operator training.

“Desktop Publishing in a Unix Environment”—Gives a brief overview of Unix, discusses the publishing software available for it, shows examples of its text-formatting capabilities, and dispels some myths.

“Maximizing Desktop Publishing Software: High Resolution at Low Cost”—Explains how to use a desktop publishing system to attain high-end phototypeset quality at greatly reduced costs.

“Help with Help: A Selected Bibliography of Desktop Publishing Resources”—Presents a descriptive list of over 50 sources of relevant, useful information on using desktop publishing hardware and software.

Special Sections Included

Or, issues may contain special sections—three articles were devoted to interactive video in the third quarter issue. One introduced the section. Another described an interactive videodisk system, defined the terms used in interactive videodisk production, assessed the advantages of the medium, and offered some guidelines for its use together with a forecast of its future. The last article outlined a 10-step process for developing an interactive

videodisk program, from choosing the medium to debugging the course.

Technical Communication also covers international issues:

In "Guidelines for Identification and Formatting of Technical Periodicals," Dietrich E. Hasag probes the identification and formatting of publications—the same typographical elements librarians use to catalog, index, and store periodicals and publications.

Since 1947 the International Organization of Standardization (ISO), composed of representatives of 90 countries, has been concerned with making publication identification, handling, and use as user-friendly as possible.

Hasag outlines the more important ISO guidelines. They cover the following: (a) Titles—Numbering and dating issues, volumes, and supplements; (b) Title changes, splits and mergers; (c) Publication and business details; (d) Consistent presentation; (e) International standard serial numbers (ISSN); (f) Contents list—Running title; (g) Spine Title of Issue; (h) Pagination; (i) Periodical Size.

ACE members may find these three of their 13 title guidelines especially useful:

The title—The title should express the content, field of knowledge or the activity of the periodical. The title should not indicate frequency; i.e., *Farmer's Weekly* because if the frequency changes, the title will have to be changed. The title should not begin with an article because some sources may list the title under the article while others may not.

ISO numbering and dating guidelines include—The publication year should coincide with the calendar year; i.e., the January issue is always No. 1 when the volume covers January to December. The seasons should not be used to indicate sequence since these vary according to hemisphere. The first issue should always be No. 1 and the numbers should run in unbroken sequence. The correct sequence of the numbering elements on the cover and the contents is volume, issue number, month, and year.

Graphics are used widely to illustrate guidelines which are reviewed at least once every five years.

With the wide dissemination of Extension publications and periodicals (including newsletters) and computerized access to publications, editors and designers should be aware of ISO guidelines so information retrieval can be as complete and easy as possible.

Most authors have at least one advanced degree. The authors include members of academia as well as private industry. The journal is one of the best ways for keeping up-to-date across the broad spectrum of communications.

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