# BLUE PENCIL



# Start your engines, the competition is about to begin!

by Carol Zera Publications Competition Coordinator

This year's publications competition promises to be even bigger and better than ever before. Again this year:

- We are holding three competitions: technical publications, online communication, and technical art.
- There is a *flat fee* for each entry (rather than a fee based on the number of entrants for each submission).
- There are *three levels of recognition* in each competition category (in descending order of achievement): distinguished, excellence, and merit.

You can download the entry forms for each of the three competitions from our chapter web site: http://www.stcpgh.org. Our web

site also provides a link to the STC web page, where you can get a description of competition rules and guidelines for each category. (Use the "search" button and type in "competition.")

#### **Entry Fees**

The entry fees for the 2000 publications competition are:

#### **Technical publications**

- \$70 for each entry from an STC member\*
- \$80 for each entry from non-members
- \$60 for full-time students

#### Online communications

■ \$100 for each entry from an STC member\*

(Continued on page 6)

# STC Pittsburgh wins Chapter Pacesetter Award

The Pittsburgh chapter won a Pacesetter award for last spring's "Getting to the Point" seminar. STC noted that the seminar was "an innovative and educational seminar that will provide a model for all STC chapters." Congratulations to Joyce Swaney and the STC members who worked with her to develop and present this seminar!



# Pleased to meet you!

by Chris Benz, the tallest STC board member EVER

As you might know, I became Region 2's Director-Sponsor (D-S) during STC's Annual Conference this past May, replacing Tracey Chiricosta. It's already been a pretty wild ride, but I'm glad that I have this chance to stop and introduce myself, and I hope to meet many of you in person over the next three years.

For those of you who don't know what a D-S is and does, I'll discuss that in more detail in future articles, but for now, let me just say that I am *your* representative on STC's

international board of directors, so if you have any questions, comments, ideas, or concerns that need Society-level attention, please let me know, and I'll see what I can do for you:

Chris.Benz@e-pubcorp.com 919.226.0060 (w) 919.479.4891 (h)

One of my many roles as a D-S is to attend STC board of directors meetings three times a year. The board uses these meetings to discuss and vote on issues that affect our

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#### BLUE PENCIL

Blue Pencil is the official newsletter of the Society for Technical Communication (STC), Pitsburgh chapter. It is published monthly from September through June by the Pitsburgh chapter to inform and promote communication within the chapter and the Society. Material contained in this publication may be reprinted by other STC chapters, provided credit is given. Please send a copy of the reprint to the editor. Readers are invited to submit ads, short articles, news, reviews, and other material of interest to technical communicators by the 15th of the month prior to publication to:

Nancy Ott, STC Pittsburgh Newsletter Editor 117 West 8th St. Pittsburgh, PA 15215 Phone: 412-667-4985 (W), 412-784-0254 (H)

Email: nott@transarc.com

### President's Column

by Heather Lum

Before launching into a review of chapter goals and exhortations to return the member survey in this issue of the *Blue Pencil*, let me introduce myself. Prior to assuming the Pittsburgh chapter's presidency over the summer, I served as Marlene Miller's vice president for about two years. Professionally, my most recent job was founding and managing a department of information developers for Highmark.

Almost a year ago, I took a new, full-time job working for an unpredictable boss given to sudden temper tantrums, and a beatific smile and chortling laugh that make it all worthwhile. My close involvement with STC during this professional hiatus helps me remain professionally active and sane.

#### Goals for 2000-2002

I'd like to share the major goals that veep Mary Ecsedy and I have set for our twoyear terms:

 In members' minds, expand the scope of what it means to be a technical communicator. For example, consider that today, writing is just one core competency in a field that has changed dramatically, especially with the explosion of the web.

Technical communicators (both writers and visual communicators) need to be experts on, not just users of, the standard tools available to them to publish the content they create. Those who are also knowledgeable about relevant emerging technologies can advise their employers and clients on the best way to approach projects. For those of us involved in the software, hardware, and Internet industries, a thorough grounding in interface design and usability testing can be as important as top-notch research, writing, and editing skills.

Provide technical education to members through monthly meetings and other education and training opportunities. We are considering organizing training sessions and seminars like the popular XML tutorials that the PittMark organization held last spring. Many STC members attended and benefitted from the XML tutorials. It makes sense to provide similar education opportunities directly through the Pittsburgh STC chapter.

3. Increase attendance at monthly meetings. Our chapter always has a respectable turnout, but it would be nice to see more of our members at meetings.

#### **Member survey**

To achieve the third goal, we need to find out what each of you wants from your local STC chapter meetings. This issue of the *Blue Pencil* includes a brief survey designed to shed some light on that subject.

Please complete and mail the survey. Or, go to the chapter's web site at http://www.stcpgh.org and complete the survey online. There's free stuff for everyone who returns a completed survey by September 30, and a special incentive for the first 10 members who return completed surveys.

#### Thanks, Marlene Miller!

Finally, thank you, Marlene Miller, for doing an exemplary job as president of our chapter the past two years. As president, Marlene oversaw the continued development of the Pittsburgh chapter's web site, established and managed our chapter's electronic mailing list, and made sure that chapter contributors received recognition for their accomplishments and efforts.

While providing excellent leadership to those of us who held offices and committee positions during her term, Marlene found time to put on a second hat as a judge for the chapter's online publication competition both years. Thanks again, Marlene. Yours will be difficult footsteps to follow, but I'm counting on an energetic mix of dedicated new and experienced board members to make it possible.







PITTSBURGH CHAPTER HTTP://www.stcpgh.org

# Word Smith: Building books with Microsoft Word

by Bob Mohr

[Editor's note: Word Smith is a new column that focuses on working with Microsoft Word. Our Word Smith Bob Mohr (with the help of an occasional guest columnist) gives you practical tips on how to wring the most out of Word. Look for more Word Smith columns in upcoming issues of Blue Pencil.]

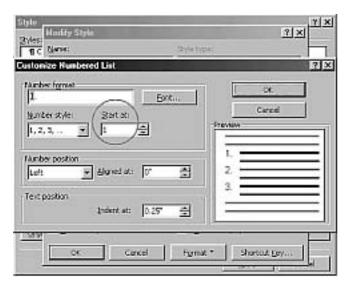
Despite what you may have heard, you *can* create books with Word, though it takes some planning, preparation, and a little help from the field codes. The RD (Referenced Document) field code is one of the simplest, yet most powerful, field codes in Word. With it you can create tables of contents, indexes, and tables of authorities from multiple files.



For example, you can use the RD code to create a table of contents for a book comprised of several independent chapter files. Here's how:

- Format each chapter's title text as Heading1. This is so the chapter numbers can be used in the next step. Subsequent headings in the chapter start with Heading2 (numbering them is optional).
- 2. Set the number of each chapter. Since Heading1 is used for the chapter name, its starting value can be set to accommodate the chapter's position in the book. For example, the first chapter will have a Heading1 value of one. For the second chapter, set the Heading1 starting value to two, the next chapter to three, and so on. You can let the chapter number remain visible or format it as hidden so it

doesn't show on the printed page. You can also color it white so it is invisible on screen. (See the screen shot of the Cus-



tomize Numbered List dialog box.)

- 3. Format the page numbers, figure and table captions to include the chapter numbers. The result will be similar to 1–1, 1–2, 2–4, 2–5, 3–2, 3–3, etc. (You can define the separation character in the Page Number dialog box.)
- 4. End each chapter on an even-numbered page. Since each chapter will begin on page one (an odd number) the previous page should be an even numbered page.
- 5. Store all of the chapter files in the same directory. This simplifies the entry of the file names used by the RD codes. You could also make a subdirectory to store all of the applicable graphic files for the book. This also simplifies the links to the graphics.
- 6. Create a separate document file for the table of contents (ToC) and another file for the index, if needed. These documents will contain the RD codes for the corresponding chapters and the TOC or INDEX codes. In addition to the table of contents entries, this front matter file could also contain boilerplate text such as the title page, disclaimers, and whatever else you want to

precede the first chapter.

#### Creating a table of contents

Steps for creating the ToC entries:

- 1. Create a new page in the front matter file. This serves as the first page of the ToC.
- 2. Type a heading for it and place the insertion point under the heading.
- 3. Select Tools > Options > View and make sure the View codes and Hidden text options are checked.
- 4. Select **Insert** > **Field** and highlight the **RD** field in the list on the right side of the dialog box. (See the

screen shot of the Field dialog box.)



- 5. Click in the open area below the two lists and type your first chapter file name. Use quotes if the file is in a directory different from the ToC file.
- 6. Click **OK**. The result will create a code link on your page that looks like this: {**RD** chap1.doc}.
- 7. Repeat steps 4 through 6 for each chapter file.

(Continued on page 7)

### STC honored in APEX 2000 awards

Five STC entries were honored in this year's APEX 2000 publications competition. *Intercom*, STC's magazine, won a Grand Award in the "Magazines and Journals" category. The STC office Web site earned an Award of Excellence in the "Web Sites" subcategory. *Technical Communication*, STC's journal, was a "triple winner" in three categories. *Technical Communication* won an Award of Excellence in the "Magazines and Journals—Online" subcategory.

In addition, the joint issue of *Technical Communication* and the *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication* received an Award of Excellence in the "One-of-a-Kind Publications—Printed" subcategory, and George Hayhoe's editorial "Technical Communication: A Trivial Pursuit?," published in the February 1999 issue of *Technical Communication*, won an Award of Excellence in the "Columns and Editorials" subcategory.

The APEX 2000 awards were based on excellence in graphic design, editorial content, and success in achieving overall com-

munication effectiveness and excellence. APEX 2000 received 4,932 total entries in eleven major categories; of these, 66 (slightly more than 1 percent) won Grand Awards and 1,274 (26 percent) won Excellence Awards. Of 689 entries in the "Magazines and Journals" category, seven (1 percent) received Grand Awards and 183 (26 percent) received Excellence Awards. Of 341 entries in the "Web and Intranet Sites" category, five (slightly more than 1 percent) won Grand Awards and 85 (25 percent) won Excellence Awards.

The APEX competition has been conducted annually since 1989 by Communications Concepts, Inc., the Springfield, Virginia, publisher of *Writing That Works: The Business Communications Report*. The judges for APEX 2000 were John De Lellis, Communications Concepts editor and publisher, Nancy Rathbun Scott, contributing editor of *Writing That Works*, and Dr. Paul Fisher, Communications Concepts senior evaluator and former professor of journalism at the University of Missouri.



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# Financial industry Special Interest Group launched

Would you like to become a member of a special interest group (SIG) devoted to the issues unique to technical writers and instructional designers connected to the financial industry? STC is currently in the process of forming such a SIG, and is seeking members to get it started.

Technical communicators should consider joining the SIG if they work for the following types of organizations:

- Accountancy Firm
- Business or Economic Analysis Company
- Commercial Bank
- Credit Union
- Investment Firm

- Loan Broker
- Loan Servicer
- Mortgage Broker/Banker
- Private Mortgage Lender
- Real Estate-related Company
- REIT
- Stock Brokerage Firm
- Thrift
- Or any other company related to the financial industry.

If you're interested and you're an active STC member, please e-mail your expressed interest (or questions) to Steven Marshall at steven\_marshall@indymac.com. Please include your name and e-mail address.

PITTSBURGH CHAPTER HTTP://www.stcpgh.org

### **Editorial Calendar**

October, 2000 — Employment. Dead-line 9/15/00.

**November, 2000** — Usability. *Deadline* 10/15/00.

**December, 2000** — Holiday issue

**January, 2001** — Presenting your portfolio. Deadline 12/15/00.

**February, 2001** — Java technology, part 1 (Java programming language). *Deadline* 1/15/01.

**March, 2001** — Java technology, part 2 (Components). *Deadline 2/15/01*.

**April, 2001** — Indexing. *Deadline* 3/15/01.

**May, 2001** — Writing for the World Wide Web. Deadline 4/15/01.

**Summer, 2001** — Annual conference wrap-up. *Deadline 6/15/01*.

#### **Advertisements**

STC Pittsburgh members may place a free business card-sized (2 1/4 inch x 3 1/2 inch) ad for their products or services in each issue; non-member cost is \$25 per ad, per issue. For larger ads, please contact the editor. Ads received by the deadline will be included in the next month's issue.

#### **Guidelines**

Send your submissions to:

Nancy Ott Editor, Blue Pencil 117 West 8th Street Pittsburgh, PA 15215 412-667-4985 (W), 412-784-0254 (H) nott@transarc.com

Electronic submissions (email or diskette) are preferred. I can accept most word processing and graphics file formats and can scan hard copy artwork. Contact me if you have any special requirements.



#### **NEW MEMBERS**

Donna H. Broderick
Ann. C. Choate
Laura R. Gallagher
Pamela A. Lougheed
Betty Pascuzzi
Lisa M. Price
Amanda C. Rooker
James J. Szyslowski

#### REINSTATED MEMBERS

Colette J. Blair Wendy A. Horning Judith M. Metzger Pamela E. Parmley Richard J. Schulte

#### TRANSFERRING IN

Tammy L. Hudson-Crouthamel

PITTSBURGH CHAPTER
MEMBERSHIP

203

TOTAL STC MEMBERSHIP
21,605

# High School Writing Competition Coordinator Needed

The Pittsburgh chapter needs a volunteer to take over managing our involvement in the Pittsburgh Regional Science & Engineering Fair, held each spring. Responsibilities include attending the fair, reading all the technical papers, interviewing students, and selecting a winner for the Excellence in Technical Writing Award.

This position could be expanded depending on the volunteer's time and availability.





# Start your engines, the competition is about to begin!

(Continued from page 1)

- \$110 for each entry from non-members
- \$90 for full-time students

#### Technical art

- \$70 for each entry from an STC member\*
- \$80 for each entry from non-members
- \$60 for full-time students

\*This fee applies if any submitter is an STC member. Other names on the same entry do not have to be STC members.

#### What is the deadline?

The deadline for entries is **OCTOBER 16**, **2000**.

#### Who is eligible?

Anyone is eligible to submit entries. You do not have to be a member of STC. If you know a writer, graphic artist, or online expert who may want to submit an entry, please encourage their participation.

You may enter work as an individual or on behalf of a company, although there can be only three award certificates for each entry. Entries in all categories must, in general, contain sufficient technical, scientific, medical, or similar content to quality as technical communication. Moreover, entries must have been produced or substantially revised after September 1, 1998, and must not have been entered in any previous STC competition. Entries must have been originally prepared for and accepted for publication by a client, employer, or publisher.

Whether you win an award or not, you will receive the local judges' evaluations of your entry. Top local winners will be submitted to STC's international competition. All entries will be displayed at the STC annual conference.

#### Where do I send my entries?

Please send entries for all competitions to:

Chris Keefer P.O. Box 337 4590 Finleyville-Elrama Road Elrama, PA 15038-0337 412-384-1811

Be sure to mark on the package which competition you are entering.

If you have questions about the competition, please contact Carol Zera (724-837-9033 or czera@msn.com).

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## Pleased to meet you!

(Continued from page 1)

Society in both the short and long term. This year's Spring meeting took place on May 20 in Orlando, Florida, the day before the start of STC's Annual Conference. Here are the items the board approved (all dollar amounts are USD):

#### **Merit Grants**

- To the Michigan Tech University student chapter, \$3,000 in seed money for a scholarship fund to send selected students to STC international and regional conferences.
- To the Northeast Ohio chapter, \$500 to support and expand its mentoring program.
- To the Northeast Ohio chapter, \$1,000 to enhance its publicity program.

- To the Central Ohio chapter, \$1,500 for a Region 4 leadership training workshop and conference for leaders of both student and professional chapters.
- To the Singapore chapter, up to \$1,000 to ship the International Technical Publications Competition winning entries.

#### Loans

■ To multiple chapters, \$2,500 for the Region 6 Conference.

#### **Research Grants**

- To Saul Carliner, \$9,960 for "What Do We Manage? A Survey of the Management Portfolios of Large Technical Communications Departments."
- To Michael Albers and Loel Kim, \$10,000 for "User Web Browsing Characteristics using Palm Handheld for Information Retrieval."

#### **Brand Tools**

Several tools presented by the Brand Development Team to help focus and strengthen STC's brand. (More details on this as we start rolling out these tools.)

#### **Interim Executive Council Actions**

- Dissolved the Illinois State University student chapter.
- Dissolved the Montana student chapter and from it formed the Montana chapter with a \$200 start-up grant.
- Formed the Long Island chapter with a \$350 start-up grant.

#### **Industry Fellowship for Faculty**

To Dwedor Morais Ford, a \$2,000 Industry Fellowship for Faculty, contingent on her obtaining an industry internship position.

PITTSBURGH CHAPTER HTTP://www.stcpgh.org

# Word Smith: Building books with Microsoft Word

(Contined from page 3)

- Position the insertion point below the last RD entry and click Insert > Index and Tables.
- 9. Choose the ToC format and appropriate heading levels, etc. and click **OK**. The RD codes are followed by another code that looks something like this, {TOC\O "1-3"}. Your ToC is now complete even though you can't see it.
- 10. To show the list of ToC entries, click **Tools > Options** and select the **View codes** option. (Pressing ALT+F9 also switches between field codes and their results.) This displays the ToC entries instead of the ToC code. Here's a partial *before* and *after* example.

#### Table of Contents

{ RD chap1 doc }{ RD chap2 doc }{ RD chap3 doc }{ TOC vo "1-3" }

#### Table of Contents

# An alternate method for creating a book

Another method for creating a book eliminates the need for RD, INDEX, and TOC field codes and requires fewer steps:

- 1. Create separate chapter files as before, including a front section for the ToC, but it is not necessary to set and use chapter numbers. If you want the page numbers to number sequentially from chapter to chapter, be sure they are formatted using **Continue from previous section**.
- 2. End each chapter file with an even-numbered page.
- 3. Pull the sections together into a single book file:

- a) Open the first file of the book, and go to the last page.
- b) Insert an odd page section break (Insert > Break > Odd page).
- c) Insert the next chapter file (Insert > File).
- d) Go to the last page of that chapter.
- e) Repeat steps b through d until all chapters have been inserted.
- Return to the beginning of the book and insert the ToC (Insert > Index and tables > Table of Contents).

You may have to insert a page here and there to ensure that each chapter starts on an odd-numbered page. Changing the display view to 25% or smaller will display several pages at once, giving a good bird's-eye view of your book.

I use this method when the total page count of the book is less than 200. Factors to consider before using this method are the number of graphics, page count, and the amount of memory in your system. (At least 64MB of RAM is highly recommended.) Experiment to see which method works best for you.

#### **Printing the Book**

If your printer accepts PDF files, then all you have to do is create a PDF for each file in the book. Using Adobe Acrobat, you could append one file at a time until all files have been collected into a single PDF file. This is the file you send to the printer. How-

# Society for Technical Communication

#### Pittsburgh Chapter

P.O. Box 133 Pittsburgh, PA 15230 Contact: Heather Lum Phone: 412-243-3151 hlum@pobox.com

#### **National Office**

901 North Stuart Street Suite 904 Arlington, VA 22203-1822 Phone: 703-522-4114

Fax: 703-522-2075

ever, if your printer wants the Word files instead, you'll have to take a few more steps:

- 1. Duplicate the book's chapter files. The following steps are done to the copies.
- 2. Break the link to each graphic and save the graphic in the document:
  - a) Click on a graphic in the file.
  - b) Choose **Edit** > **Links**. The Links dialog box is displayed.
  - c) Click the Break Link button.
  - d) Click the **Save picture in document** checkbox. Refer to the Links dialog box on page 16.
  - e) Click OK.

Repeat the process for every linked graphic in the book's files. By doing this, the duplicated files will become larger, but you can satisfy the printer's request while leaving your original Word document files intact. After printing they can be deleted.

This article is an excerpt from the e-book, *The Elements of Word*, available at http://www.writemohr.com.



Call for information about our new, state-of-the-art digital equipment and how it can help make your technical projects shine.



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**STC Member** 

# September meeting: Documentation project strategies

Have you ever wondered how other technical writers handle the same work problems that you do? How do you deal with project directories, deadlines, and engineers? Would you like to share some good working strategies? Or maybe a story about how you saved the day? Whether you're a lone tech writer or a member of a big documentation department, a newbie or a seasoned veteran, we invite you to join us in a discussion about how we do our jobs.

The September meeting consists of roundtable discussions that will start upon your arrival and continue through dinner. This meeting will provide a chance to collect some of our experience-based knowledge into one place for the benefit of all. The roundtable discussions will focus on our various working practices, strategies, and solutions. The purpose of the discussions is to generate and exchange practical ideas that we can all benefit from, whether we're documenting hardware or software.

After dinner, the participants at each table will summarize their discussion for the entire group. The results will be published in a later issue of Blue Pencil.

September's meeting will be held at Duranti's Restaurant in Oakland. You must RSVP to Darlene Mullenix to attend; there is no "meeting only" option this month. Please indicate your menu selections when you RSVP. Choose one from each category:

Salad: Tossed Garden Salad; Fresh Spinach Salad.

Entree: Honey Glazed Ham with Fruit Sauce; Roast Tenderloin of Beef Au jus; \*Eggplant Parmigianna; \*Stir Fried Vegetables with Oriental Glaze. (\* Does not come with a vegetable selection.)

Vegetable: Green Beans Almondine; Marinated Summer Squash.

**Dessert:** Ice Cream or Sherbet; Apple Pie; Raspberry fudge cake.

Date: Tuesday, Sept. 19, 2000

Time: 5:30-8:00 p.m.

Location: Duranti's Restaurant, 128 North Craig Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15213 (Oakland). Free parking is available behind the restaurant on North Neville street.

Cost: \$15 STC members, \$7 students and unemployed; \$18 all others.

RSVP: By Wednesday, Sept. 13 with menu selections to Darlene Mullenix, Meeting Coordinator, 412-288-8676 or dmullenix@federatedinv.com

Pay at the door or mail to: Darlene Mullenix, c/o STC Pittsburgh P.O. Box 133 Pittsburgh, PA 15230

Make checks out to STC Pittsburgh. If you do not cancel your reservation by Friday, Sept. 15, you will be charged for dinner.



rociety for technical communication

P.O. Box 133 Pittsburgh, PA 15230

# September, 2000



# Publications competition deadline October 16th Complete your member survey and get free stuff!