



We are looking for new ideas, suggestions and articles for future issues of Stimulus.

Please submit them to:
stimulus@stceo.org.

President's Message

Rick Lorenz

President, STCEO

The chapter is well on its way to meeting this year's goals. We surveyed the membership over the summer and held a few planning sessions. This allowed us to set policies for the year, and dates for the monthly meetings. The treasurer analyzed expenditures from previous years, took a hard look at our projected revenues, and achieved consensus on a balanced budget that will deliver considerable value to the membership.

We held the Wine & Cheese in September, and a presentation by Penny Lange on Marcom in October.

This month we will begin participating in STC phone seminars, will hold a day-long seminar on XML, and will have a presentation by Jennifer Bulman on Single-Sourcing.

The mentoring program has been initiated, but we require more volunteers. We approached other organizations (AMWA, EAC-NCR, OIW, and IABC) to collaborate in mentoring and cross-publicity, and their executive boards are discussing our proposal.

Inside

President's Message	1
Program	1
Single-Sourcing, XML	2
Writing for the Web	2
Arbortext – XML Publishing ...	3
Scoop	3
Planning an HTML Newsletter .	4
Estimating Tech Writing Jobs ..	5
Alternating Current	8

We distributed this year's membership directory at the Wine & Cheese, and mailed copies to members who weren't able to attend. The online membership directory will soon be available. Members concerned with privacy will always have the option to exclude their contact information.

The chapter is holding a competition this year, and judging will start soon. We look forward to awarding the Best of Show Cup in March! Active public relations resulted in Silicon Valley North mentioning the competition on their website.

This is the fourth monthly issue of Stimulus, so we are meeting our goal of monthly communications with the membership. As we refine our processes we will produce the newsletter in a more timely fashion. The website continues to be our main tool. Service was interrupted in October due to a clerical error but restored within a few days with no loss of data.

David Hitchcock is serving as Algonquin Student Representative. Diane Grant shared this responsibility, but has left the Technical Writing program to pursue other opportunities.

G.R. Baird Financial Group Inc. has been providing a benefits program to chapter members for a couple years. The benefits have always been available to all Canadian members of the STC, and the other chapters are now beginning to investigate and publicize the program.

Although the year is progressing fairly smoothly, there are still ways you can help. We need an archivist to organize storage of records and materials. The program manager is lining up presentations for the next few months. The newsletter editor needs an advertising salesperson to raise funds for printing, and requires original articles for Stimulus. The education manager would like more volunteers

for the mentoring program. Together we are making this a great year for the Eastern Ontario chapter.



Program

Barbara Jordan

Program Manager, STCEO

October Program Event

The last program event was a presentation by Penny Lange: "Adding Marcom Writing to to Your Skillset". Penny was both informative and entertaining as she described life in the Marcom world. Thank you Penny!

November Program Event

Our next program event is a presentation by Jennifer Bulman: "After the Barn Door is Closed: Conversion to Single-Sourcing for Print and the Web in an Established Documentation Environment."

Jennifer will discuss her experience converting a large documentation set at Citizenship and Immigration (CIC), using Framemaker and WebWorks to produce print and HTML versions of documents from a single source, resolving:

- How do you use Framemaker in single-sourcing?
- How much of HTML do you need to know to achieve the HTML conversion with WebWorks?
- How do you help process change occur?

The meeting will be "Upstairs" at Loblaws, College Square, Baseline and Woodroffe on Wednesday, November 19. Light refreshments will be served at 6:30 pm and the presentation will start at 7 pm. Make sure to RSVP on the website www.stceo.org.



Single-Sourcing, XML, Alphabet Soup – Help!

by **Kristine Hahn**

Technical Writer, STC San Francisco

Today, we're asked to pump large volumes of technical content into the information pipeline.

It's difficult to manage all this content without standards such as eXtensible Markup Language (XML), the eXtensible Stylesheet Language (XSL), Cascading Style Sheets (CSS), the Document Type Definition (DTD), and others.

"So many acronyms remind me of alphabet soup," says Ron Frankland, who spoke at our April meeting. Describing how XML solves the difficulties of publishing in multiple formats (e.g., print, Web, email, CD-ROM, etc.), Ron demystified the acronyms.

Using XML you can create multiple documents, differing in content and format, from a single, definitive source of information. If you're writing a report you can reuse the information – print the short version and post the long(er) version on the Web. Using XML, you can provide users selective access to information.

Tools for Single-Sourcing

Some of us have tried combinations of Word and RoboHelp, or FrameMaker and WebWorks, for single-sourcing.

The bugs in Word and the steep learning curve associated with FrameMaker and WebWorks have limited their popularity. AuthorIt – specifically designed for single-sourcing – hasn't received wide acceptance, perhaps because it is based on Word and manifests many of the problems of Word.

XML-based tools have advantages over these systems and others, such as ArborText and content management systems (CMS), for single-sourcing. For example, XML separates the data from the presentation (formatting), making it possible to apply different formatting to the same data easily. XML also lends itself to program control.

For example, a program can limit access to information – by user role or by other variables – when there is just too much information for everybody to sort through. XML enforces a consistent document structure, so writing groups can adhere to a schema. You write the content, just once, and maintain a single copy.

The XML Process

The first step in the XML process is creating a namespace. An XML namespace is actually a collection of names, identified by a Uniform Resource Identifier (URI). Constructs of XML documents need universal names, which have a scope extending beyond the containing document. This XML namespace is such a mechanism. The next step in the process is to create a schema or use an existing DTD. Next, you create the XSL to apply a style to the XML content. You write content and then apply the XSL.

Rascal Software

Ron Frankland founded Rascal Software in the summer of 2002 to create Veredus, an XML-based tool for authoring Help. You write content, including API documentation, just once, and then you reuse it for multiple output targets including HTML, compiled help systems, and print. You produce document variants using rule based conditional text. Ron's company intends to be a leader in Help authoring by staying responsive to its customers and following up on their needs.



Writing for the Web

by **Ben Johnson**

Technical writer for IBM in San Jose

Use narrow columns for scanning and wide columns for in-depth reading, limit your sentence length to 20 words, and limit your vocabulary.

These were just a few of the guidelines that Ron Person outlined in his

presentation at the May 21st meeting.

As the founder of enMind, LLC, a Bay Area based consulting firm, Person offered industry research-supported guidelines for providing context for readers and for optimizing the structure and style of Webbased material. Person also listed the advantages of Web-based presentations, including the Web's cross-system compatibility, accommodation of multiple learning styles, accessibility, mobile assistance, as well as its ability to lend itself to worldwide team authoring.

Create Meaning by Providing Context

When writing for the Web, understanding your audience is critical. Two key elements of this understanding are knowing your readers' motives for reading and how the material fits into their mental schemas. This information enables you to provide a context.

Person suggests building personae for your readers – brief profiles of their education, professional experience, and personal interests. Once you understand who your readers are, it is much easier to understand how to appeal to them.

To provide a motive for your readers, show them how your material is relevant to them. Fit your new information into their mental schema by relating it to what they already know. Another way to maintain context is by keeping your readers oriented physically by repeating graphical elements across related pages.

Let the Medium Dictate Your Structure

Web-based presentations require a different structure than the printed page. Guidelines developed by Sun Microsystems (www.sun.com/980713/webwriting/) include using 50 percent less text, creating headlines that are scannable, breaking-up sections into several pages, and using only the most common words.

In addition, limit your use of graphics. When you do use graphics, always accompany them with a descriptive caption. Also, write descriptive text for your links. Without text, readers have to guess a link's purpose.

Use a Writing Style that Appeals to Reading Habits

For style guidelines, Person drew upon a study (www.poynterextra.org/et/i.htm) conducted by the Poynter Institute (www.poynter.org) that analyzed the eye movements of online “news junkies.” The study found that readers first skim text – scanning “shallow, but wide” – before looking at graphics. To appeal to this style of reading, write short, descriptive headlines over very brief summaries on your opening page and present them in narrow columns for faster scanning. After the reader clicks a headline, present the article in wide columns to allow faster in-depth reading.

Resources:

- Information Mapping: www.infomap.com
- National Cancer Institute: www.usability.gov/guidelines
- Usable Web: www.usableweb.com
- WinWrite: www.winwriters.com



Arbortext Webinar – Enterprise Access to XML Publishing

Jackie Connors

Technical Writer, STCEO

On August 28, 2003, Arbortext offered a Webinar (seminar in the Web) entitled “Enterprise Access to XML Publishing,” that focused on the products and services offered by Arbortext, including:

- Epic Editor
- Enterprise E-Content Engine (E3)
- Word 2003 with XML Support
- Contributor – Arbortext’s newest product

Stimulus

Epic Editor

This is a software application that allows you to create documents with XML and SGML content. The features of Epic Editor include: change tracker, graphic support, spell checker, table editor, and equation editor. Epic Editor is specific to XML/SGML by providing structure. It includes a Document Map, or a hierarchical view of your document. It also handles entities – a special character, a single unit, or an item that is used to represent a long passage of text, a technical word that is commonly-used but difficult to type, or text, such as a product name, that can change in the final document.

Epic Editor is ideal for authors and technical architects by providing such benefits as: inline editing for document components and content customization without programming.

Enterprise E-Content Engine (E3)

E-Content Engine (E3) supplements content management servers and Web application servers with a broad and powerful set of functions for capturing, storing, retrieving, assembling, transforming and distributing content. E3 publishes content from a single source, and converts your Word, Framemaker, or Interleaf document to XML, and allows contributors to participate in structured authoring.

Word 2003 with XML Support

On October 21, 2003, Microsoft Office 2003 will ship. Word 2003 will support XML. This support allows you to edit XML that complies with a user-defined schema. Word 2003 with XML Support will only be available in two Office editions: Enterprise and Professional, and can only be run on Windows 2000 and Windows XP operating systems. Packaged as an add-on to Word, there will be no Document Type Definition (DTD) support and heavy customization will be required.

Contributor

Contributor, Arbortext’s newest product, is a simple browser-based XML editor. This product works best for authors,

contributors, and subject matter experts (SMEs) who create short, simple documents, create components jointly, and need easy access across their organization. The features and benefits of Contributor include: low-cost editor, easy content contribution via the Web, secure technology (Javascript), standard stylesheets (XSL), reduced IT costs by eliminating desktop installation, reduced deployment, implementation and maintenance costs. In a nutshell, Contributor is easy to use and deploy.

For more information on this Webinar and others offered, visit:

www.arbortext.com, and click on Think Tank.



The Scoop

Penny Lange

Penny Lange and Associates

Welcome to Pearl Prevost, a member of the Southeastern Michigan chapter who recently moved to Ottawa. Pearl has fifteen years of experience and is pursuing career opportunities in technical writing as well as in training and instructional design. She attended the October STCEO event and will be switching her membership to our chapter.

The next monthly lunch of the **Wired Woman Society** will be on Tuesday, November 18th at 12:00 noon at Café Mezzalune, 180 Cooper Street. RSVP to: laurel@intraprisecoaching.com (or at 723-9018) by Monday, 20 October 2003. For more information about the Wired Woman Society, go to: www.wiredwoman.com/index.shtml.

Read Pen will host a seminar on Friday, Nov 28th, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the Travelodge Ottawa West. Ray Luoma and Ed Simon will speak on Maturing Technologies for Information Development and Delivery. Proceeds to benefit the Ottawa Snow suit Fund. To pre-register, visit www.readpen.ca/events.html.

Congratulations to STCEO Public Relations rep., Barbara Hodder, on her recent engagement to Robert Watt. The wedding will take place in October of 2004.



Planning an HTML Newsletter

Rebecca Taylor

*Director of Communications,
Houston Chapter STC*

Newsletter News is a regular feature of Tieline aimed at chapter newsletter editors, graphic designers, and writers. It provides a forum for those who have improved their publications and wish to help others do the same. If you have volunteered for your chapter newsletter and think your experiences would benefit others, contact the Tieline editor.

Switching your chapter newsletter from print to HTML delivery is an easy decision for most chapters. The cost benefits can be too significant to ignore! However, once the decision is made, you have some important implementation options to consider.

Advantages – and Disadvantages

If your chapter is still contemplating the move to HTML delivery, consider some of the benefits:

Cost reduction (or cost elimination!) for production. The Houston Chapter STC eliminated over \$10,000 in printing and mailing costs per year by moving to online delivery. Plus, our chapter has started generating income through advertising. Decreased production time (especially if relying solely on HTML delivery). Once you have a template,

online layout is often less time-consuming than print layout.

Less storage space required for HTML than for PDF. A print-quality PDF can occupy over 1 MB per issue if you offer archives on your chapter Web site. Typical HTML content for the Houston chapter Web site requires less than 150 KB (including photos!).

There are some disadvantages to HTML delivery:

Open access. Once you post the HTML on your Web site, the content is accessible to everyone who can access your site. Some members perceive that open access to the newsletter reduces the value of STC membership. However, if you have experienced Web programmers, you can create a password-protected portion of your Web site to host the newsletter only for your chapter members.

Less portability. One benefit of a PDF or print document is its portability—it's easy to share the whole thing with colleagues. An HTML newsletter is less portable for sharing, printing, and saving, which is one reason the Houston chapter still offers our "traditional" newsletter layout in PDF. This allows our members to save the newsletter to their computer and print it out in the layout of their choice. We also offer an HTML "printer-friendly" version that provides all newsletter content on one page for easy printing.

Hosting vs. E-mailing

With HTML newsletters, you have two delivery options: Host your newsletter on a Web site or send it to your membership. Sending an HTML newsletter (particularly if it's rich in graphics) to an e-mail inbox can be

challenging. You're not guaranteed that it will display properly, because every user and e-mail program employs different settings. And because users tend to be more wary of viruses these days, their filters might affect your HTML-based message, or their program might not even accept it.

The Houston chapter opted for a blended approach to delivery: we host an HTML newsletter on our Web site and e-mail plain text availability notices to our membership.

Newsletter Design

The design of your HTML newsletter is perhaps the most open and subjective consideration. Generally, good Web design principles apply just the same in a newsletter as with a Web site. Some newsletters use a unique design that is launched and maintained independently of the organization's Web site. This option allows your newsletter designers complete liberty in the design. The Houston chapter chose to integrate the newsletter's design into that of our existing chapter Web site. This approach can present some challenges because it somewhat limits design and layout options. The benefit, however, is that there is one "face" to the chapter's online presence, a factor which our chapter officials decided was very important. A consistent online appearance helps readers stay oriented in your site. Abrupt changes in color or design could present usability problems.

Tools for Creating an HTML Newsletter

Deciding which tools to use is also highly subjective and is influenced by your chapter's ability and willingness to

Stimulus

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Submissions

Stimulus welcomes submissions on topics relevant to technical communicators in the Eastern Ontario area. We reserve the right to edit articles for length, clarity, and suitability.

Please e-mail articles and advertising copy to jackie_connors@yahoo.com or mail to the address below. Articles and media will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. Most major electronic formats are supported for both Mac and PC.

Submission Deadlines

All materials are due in the first week of the month prior to publication.

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fund the project. You'll want to strike a balance between tool functionality, cost, and ease of use. You may find that your chapter's Web committee already has the expertise and toolset you need. However, if they don't, or if you want to keep production of the newsletter in a newsletter committee (as the Houston chapter does), you will need an HTML editor, photo editor, and FTP (file transfer protocol) program.

My personal preference is to use Macromedia Dreamweaver for HTML coding. It's more expensive than Microsoft FrontPage but results in much better source code. Dreamweaver also has a fairly robust WYSIWYG editor for novice users. There are some free HTML editors on the Internet, but I find that most of them just don't compare in ease of use to Dreamweaver (especially for novice users, whose needs are always a consideration in a volunteer organization). Jasc Paint Shop Pro is a relatively cheap photo editing package that is more robust than basics such as Microsoft Photo Editor but more cost-effective than professional packages such as Adobe Photoshop. Any FTP program will do. I use WS_FTP LE, which can be downloaded and used as freeware for nonprofit organizations.

Recruiting Volunteers

Chances are you'll need to recruit new volunteers to keep up with the changes in your newsletter production. You'll still need your managing editor and copy editors, but you'll also need to find volunteers to do the HTML work. The tendency, especially with a new effort, is to under-recruit. It's easy to say "I'll do everything" without understanding just how much "everything" is! At the very least, try to recruit at least two Web developers who can alternate the responsibility of creating the Web pages. If you're creating a unique newsletter design, you'll want a graphic designer and template creator as well.

There are many ways to create a professional, easy-to-use HTML newsletter. The best solution is almost always a blend of what works well for other publications. As you embark on your HTML newsletter effort, be sure to ask questions of other editors. The best way to do this is to subscribe to the STC Newsletter Editors mailing list.

Estimating Tech Writing Jobs Overview

Robert H. Foose

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Tne of the more challenging parts of being a contractor or managing a writing project is developing an estimate of the fee or costs. Sure, there are various techniques out there, some more accurate than others, but generally no hard and fast rules applicable across the spectrum of potential assignments.

Therein rest at least part of the key to doing a viable estimate, *i.e.*, what kind of document development are you doing. I look at more than that, including the following:

- Assessment of the firm and task performance/requirements
- Type of documentation:
 - Technical Reference
 - User-oriented
- Standards
- Environment and external resources required (editors, graphics staff, management, etc.)
- Graphics required (number, detail, original art)
- Production/printing costs if not internal to client firm
- Edit & review process (client and writer)

Estimating Keys:

Assessment of Firm Environment and Requirements

Permanent employees (managers) have the advantage of knowing the pros and cons of their work situation, issues likely to slow or impede the work, resources available, and whether there will be relatively easy access to developers and managers. Generally, there will be more than one task for the documentation team at any given time, so loss time/wait time need not be there – given adequate planning and scheduling – but usually sneaks in along the way.

If the task is to develop technical reference material, access to developers is a key issue in the majority of tasks and must be factored into any document development process. Another factor that directly impacts development of technical documentation is the extent to which the developers have commented their code. If automated development tools have been used (*e.g.*, CASE) this may prove less a factor. It may be diminished somewhat, but developers tend to have very little demonstrable interest in documentation.

The next thing to look at is trying to get a reasonable understanding of the size of the project, system, and the documentation component involved in the task. Clearly, an application with a million lines of code requires much more documentation than one with 250K lines. Ask the questions:

- What document is involved in the specific task?
- What documentation or material exists to support development of the new document?
- How much of the existing documentation need will require changed/revision if being used or the subject?
- Is there an electronic version of the existing documentation?

This is all part of what I call the "intelligence collection process" that allows a better scope of the task and, of course, ultimately, a better estimate. When I go into a firm (*as a contractor*) I begin this information collection during the interview process, not after I accept the job. Why? First, I gain insights to the task right from the start by asking some pointed questions. Second, it allows me to assess whether I even want to take the assignment. If I discern genuine management interest in documentation is lacking, I may refuse the job entirely. Who needs that problem? Naturally, a staff position allows direct insights to the whole process internally and makes the estimating process that much easier.

Type of Document

Documentation is generally classified by content:

- Technical reference, and
- User (or tutorial and help)

Continued on page 6

Where and how it is to be used environment) is a factor, so we have *external* and *internal*. Understanding these differences provides a guide to what is included.

External documentation is intended for audiences outside the corporate or organizational environment in which it was created. Generally, it is more expensive to produce, and is a marketing tool as well as an operations tool. This type of documentation is highlighted by the use of high-end graphics and attractive packaging.

Internal documentation makes up the bulk of all documentation, but usually is the poor cousin of external material. It frequently fails to get the necessary time, money, management support—and thus attention—because it is only used within the organization and has a murky relationship with profit.

Documentation Standards

What do documentation standards have to do with costs? Standards do the following:

- Insure early interaction and detailed coordination between management, analysts/managers, and the documentation staff.
- Establish a focal point for each document project.
- Reduce problems implicit to multi-author / multi-source input scenario.
- Integrate detailed review, validation, and edit in production process.
- Reduce production costs by establishing a standard format for overall documentation and specialized input materials.
- Promote the effective coordination of the people and other resources implicit to documentation production process.

Establishing a “standard” format for documents reduces cost by streamlining the production process and, consequently, directly impacts the estimate process. If the client has a standard or style guide, it speeds the process by eliminating some of the pre-writing steps.

Estimate Implications

Technical reference material is generally less costly to develop because the higher

end graphics, quality paper and printing, etc., are not required. On the other hand, difficulty gaining access to the developers and less than ideal management support increases costs.

User documentation, e.g., Users Guide, is more expensive to produce because more upscale graphics are required and usually a more expensive printing. Graphics take time, whether screen captures with annotations or more complex system diagramming, and may require specialized software (Photo-Shop, Paint Shop Pro, Visio), adding to costs. Some firms acquire a contract/permanent graphics/design person to develop this portion of the documentation. These factors increase development time and thus overall production costs.

Document Cost Estimating:

Much of the process of estimating the cost for documents naturally depends on the corporate environment, overhead costs, process, and corporate structure. There are many variables so the approach here is to attempt to identify as many of the basics with some of the subtleties and work from there.

Rules from Another Time

Documentation development has transitioned dramatically with the availability of wordprocessing and graphics software for the PC and Mac. Prior to this, documents were developed by a team, consisting of:

- Writers,
- Graphic Artists (for “art”)
- Typists (also “formatted” document somewhat)
- Editors
- Production (Printing)

Today, as we know, the Technical Writer usually wears more than one hat, meaning they do document design and formatting, interviewing, graphics, indexing, and a variety of other tasks involved in the process.

An old “rule of thumb” for documentation was to project a total of about 8 hours for each page to take it from the first word to final product. This allocation included time from other parts of the documentation process and thus different costs. Style Guides were frequently used to establish the

format, content, and usage for these documents, and roughly correspond to what we call standards today.

Estimating Costs Today

Before discussion of techniques for estimating documentation development costs it should be clear that the information presented earlier in this chapter directly impacts any estimation effort. In addition, documentation has taken on some newer forms, including online Help and Web-based materials.

Standards remain important to cost reduction and should not be ignored.

The majority of the available software packages have features to develop “canned” formats (templates) for documents. My approach, as a consultant, has been to develop templates with formatting and outline for each of the individual documents in a “library” of typical system and user documentation. Experience has shown this is not only responsive to the standardization requirements and results in cost reduction, but dramatically expedites my development effort by reducing lead time. Clients really appreciate this. Granted, there were development costs I had to bear initially (primarily time which = \$\$\$, even for a consultant), but they have long since been recovered.

Costing Details

There are two classes of documents I consider here:

- Technical Reference
- User

1. Technical Reference

Technical reference material (system-oriented documentation) usually requires the writer to access the developers/programmers for interviews, in-process discussions, and review.

We also need to consider which document in the library of system documentation is in question since some require more time than others. In addition, software is frequently still in some phase of development or modification, and there is implications on the writing project from this. The “size” of the system is another factor, as I mention earlier. Developing a document for a system with a million lines of code is quite different than for a system a quarter of that size.

Continued on page 8



G.R. BAIRD FINANCIAL GROUP INC.
Insurance and Investment Services

Critical Illness Coverage

The differences between income protection and critical illness coverage can be confusing. Many people wonder if they need both coverages, or any at all.

Why have both?

Income protection insurance protects you if you are sick or injured and unable to work. It can help ensure an individual's or family's financial security by providing a substantial portion of income that can be used for normal daily expenses. On the other hand, critical illness coverage provides a lump sum benefit in the event you are diagnosed with a covered condition such as a heart attack, bypass surgery or cancer.

This financial benefit can be used at your discretion for any special needs you may have, such as specialized medical treatments or modifications to your home and automobile. You might choose to use these funds to hire a home health care provider during your recover, or this benefit may enable a family member to take a leave of absence to assist you. This flexibility provides the best coverage for the high costs and treatments associated with a critical illness.

Are you and your family well protected? The risks of critical illness are higher than you may think.

For example,

- ◆ 1 in 3 Canadians will contract some form of a life threatening cancer¹ and 125,000 new cases are diagnosed annually;
- ◆ 50,000 Canadians suffer a stroke each year², and 1 in 4 Canadians will be diagnosed with heart disease.

Critical illness coverage can protect you financially, but a disease involves much more than a diagnosis and financial considerations. A critical illness can affect you physically, mentally and emotionally. There are many obstacles to overcome in the healing process, and you will need support along the way. That support is available through many **Critical Illness** policies. When a critical illness strikes, a critical illness policy can offer you the financial protection you need, and assistance services that help you focus on getting well.

These services can include:

- ◆ **Best Doctors®** – Access to the best specialists worldwide, providing you with expert medical evaluations, customized referrals based on peer-review and access to top experts and treatment centers in the United States.
- ◆ **Daily Living Assistance** – Information and resources to help you manage day to day activities such as arranging child care or elder care, transportation and household tasks like grocery shopping.
- ◆ **Healing the Whole Person** – Support to help you deal with the fear and anxiety associated with a critical illness. This program offers emotional and psychological support to enhance your recovery.

Source: ¹ Canadian Cancer Society; ² Heart and Stroke Foundation
Best Doctors is a trademark of TMBest Doctors, Inc. in the United States and other countries.

By offering these assistance services, a critical illness policy can provide you with more than a claim cheque. These comprehensive services give you the resources and support you need when facing a critical illness, allowing you to fully focus on your recovery.

- ◆ For more information on this or other products offered exclusively to **STC members**, please visit www.grbairdfinancial.com and click on **BairdBenefitsPlus**. New offerings such as office contents and business liability are now available. More information will be posted soon or contact us at **(613) 792-3385 ext. 103**.

executive

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Eastern Ontario
Chapter

SOCIETY FOR
TECHNICAL
COMMUNICATION

Mission Statement

Our chapter's mission is to work together in a spirit of community to promote and develop professional technical communication.

STCEO Website

<http://www.stceo.org>

Address

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Nepean, Ontario K2E 1B1

Alternating Current

One clue (in each set of 3) defines a word of 5 or more letters. The other two clues define smaller words created using alternate letters starting at either the first or second letter of the larger word. Try for three letter words in two of the answers.

Example: *eloquent, merriment, allow = fluent, fun let*

The clues below are in a less convenient (*random*) order. The results are the words defined by the clues, not built from the letters in the clues. The first two words in the answer have the same first letter.



- thwarted, interjection showing disapproval, antediluvian,
- un-even, compete, declared invalid
- regret, theatrical group, acme
- hurt, common conjunction, bakery treat
- Adam's wife, belonging to us, writer's output
- joined by treaty or agreement, heavy beer, hinged cover
- broadcast, bee house, remuneration
- succulent plant, light-haired, became inflated
- aged, act in unison, evidence that helps solve a problem,
- written records, raised platform, anger

Answers to the October Anagram

- staling
- languid
- pealike
- handouts
- amigo
- captious
- shover
- clothier
- corniest
- lefty
- w rasse
- feigned
- fendered
- spouter
- suctioned
- surfiest
- titfer
- topline
- prattles
- innovate

Continued from page 6

So, we get into some fuzzy areas. How big will the document actually be?

No all part of estimation in this respect is based on experience. There's no clear cut answer. On the other hand, we can look at the time generally required to develop a single page:

ACTION

Time Required	Page (hrs)
Interview/Discussions	0.5 – 1.0
Draft	1.0
Graphics (1 every 2-3 pgs min.)	1.5 – 2.0
Edit/Review	0.5
Index	0.25
TOTAL	3.75 – 4.75

These estimates assume a standard or established format and outline for the

document. There are other variables too, such as the experience of the writer, technical background, time involved with system or project.

2) User Documentation

User documentation is another story, essentially dealing with factors different from the technical material. There must be a focus on the audience needs and background, use of graphics ("A picture's worth a thousand words!"), and keeping it simple. Familiarity with the user interface for the software is beneficial, but access to a knowledgeable user is important too.

Exploitation of screen captures significantly enhances the document and reduces graphics time.

ACTION

Time Required	Page (hrs)
Interview/Discussions	0.25 – 0.5
Draft	0.5 – 1.0
Graphics (1 every 2-3 pages min.)	0.5 – 1.0
Edit/Review	0.25 – 0.5
Index	0.25
TOTAL	1.75 – 3.25

