

STC's Conference Speakers Announced

In addition to the multitude of education sessions, networking opportunities, and vendor booths, conference attendees enjoy listening to keynote speakers whose speeches range from the entertaining and sublime to the informative and enlightening. This year's speakers are no exception.

If you were a technical communicator in the late 1980s and early 1990s, then chances are you read, or at least heard about, the book *Macs for Dummies*. *Macs for Dummies* became the #1 best-selling Macintosh book for seven years, until 1999, when the newly published *iMac for Dummies* took the lead. The brain behind both books was a young man named David Pogue—this year's Keynote Speaker at the Technical Communication Summit, 3–6 May 2009, in Atlanta, Georgia.

With a background in music, English, and computer science, David Pogue seems to be quite the Renaissance man. He began his career working at various musically oriented jobs on Broadway, but soon realized that becoming a successful composer was more difficult than he had imagined. Luckily, he had honed his computer skills and was in high demand to teach both the Broadway crowd and later the Hollywood community how to use their Macs. He taught such celebrities as Stephen Sondheim, Carly Simon, Gary Oldman, Harry Connick Jr., and more.

In 1988, Pogue began writing for *Macworld Magazine*, and in 2000, he became a columnist for the *New York Times* with his weekly column "State of the Art," which appears on the front page of the Circuits section.

After writing the wildly successful *Macs for Dummies* and *iMac for Dummies* books, Pogue stretched his creative muscle and explored other areas of interest. He wrote a novel entitled *Hard*

Drive which garnered the distinction of *New York Times* "notable book of the year." He also wrote *Opera for Dummies* and *Classical Music for Dummies*, both of which illustrated his knowledge of and passion for music. Currently, his book *Magic for Dummies* is the bestselling magic book in the country. He is a regular on "CBS News Sunday Morning," and in 2004 his segments on Google and spam earned him a 2004 Business Emmy.



David Pogue

An expert on Macs, opera, magic, and more, David Pogue promises to be a captivating keynote speaker at the annual conference.

To close out the conference this year, STC has asked Jared Spool to share his wisdom on usability. Jared Spool has been regarded as "probably the most effective, knowledgeable communicator on the subject [of usability] today." He founded User Interface Engineering in 1988 and has built it into the largest research organization focused on usability in the world. With more than 15 years of experience conducting usability evaluations on a variety of products, Spool has worked in the field before the term "usability" was even considered significant to computer technology. He spends a large portion of his time working with the research teams at User Interface Engineering, helps clients understand how to solve their design problems, and explains to reporters and industry analysts what the current state of design is all about. He is also an expert in low-fidelity prototyping techniques.



Jared Spool

As a faculty member of the Tufts University Gordon Institute and head of his company User Interface Engineering, Jared somehow still manages to find the time to speak at more than 20 conferences a year and is regarded as one of the most top-rated speakers at technology-related events. ❶

Early Bird Rates Expire 18 February

Register by **18 February 2009** to receive the early bird rates for the Technical Communication Summit, STC's 56th Annual Conference. Registration will be available online at <http://conference.stc.org/> as well as by fax and mail.

The Early Bird rates offer significant savings:

- Member early bird rate: \$795—a savings of \$300 off the on-site rate
- Nonmember early bird rate: \$1,095—a savings of \$200 off the on-site rate
- Student early bird rate: \$175—a savings of \$75 off the on-site rate*

- Student nonmember and retired member or retired nonmember early bird rate: \$325—a savings of \$30 off the on-site rate

For the best conference value, act fast: register by 18 February!

*Students—STC will be offering the same student work program as last year. Earn a free registration by helping the STC staff during the conference. For more information, contact Lloyd Tucker at lloyd.tucker@stc.org. ❶

Procedures for STC's 2009 Election

The annual STC election will be held in March 2009. Only members who have paid their dues by 28 February 2009 will be eligible to vote. Membership forms and payment *must* be received in the office by 29 February. There are no exceptions to this requirement. An option on the dues renewal forms and new membership applications for 2009 allows members to receive their election materials via email. In March, members who selected this option will be emailed the election slate, candidate biographies, and voting instructions. Members who did not select this option will receive these materials by first-class mail.

Be sure to renew your membership early to have a say in STC's future! 

STC's 2009 Election Preliminary Slate of Candidates for Society Office

Office	Candidate
President*	Cindy Currie
First Vice President*	Mike Hughes
Second Vice President*	Hillary Hart W.C. Wiese
Treasurer	Brian Lindgren Aiessa Moyna

Directors

(Two to be elected, each for a three-year term)


**Joaquim Baptista
Karen Baranich
Lori Corbett
Makarand Pandit**

Nominating Committee


*(Two to be elected, each for a two-year term)***

**Suzanne Guess
Sandra Harner
Garret Romaine**

* The *STC Bylaws* specify that the second vice president automatically becomes first vice president the following year and president the year after that. Thus, second vice president is the highest office to which a member is routinely elected.

** Members of this year's nominating committee are Suzanna Laurent (manager), Thea Teich, Carolyn Kelly Klinger, Jackie Damrau, and Rachel Houghton. 

"My Job" Calls

Do you have a unique job in the field of technical communication? Does each day bring forth new and exciting challenges, opportunities, and experiences? If so, consider writing an article for the My Job department in *Intercom*. We are always looking for members who want to share their interesting careers with the rest of STC. Send your article ideas to intercom@stc.org today! 

Marian Norby and Student Scholarship Applications Extended to 15 May

The deadline for receipt of applications for the Marian Norby and student scholarships has been extended to **15 May 2009**.

STC Student Scholarships

STC scholarships benefit students enrolled in technical communication programs at universities, colleges, junior colleges, and technical schools. Since the program's inception in 1971, the Society has awarded more than \$465,000 to deserving students.

Four scholarships of \$1,500 each will be awarded, two to graduate students and two to undergraduates. Application forms and additional information can be found on the STC website at www.stc.org/edu/scholarship/Info01_national.asp.

Marian Norby Scholarship

In 2003, the STC Board of Directors resolved to create a scholarship fund in the name of longtime member Marian O. Norby, who passed away in 2002 at age 85. In her will, Norby left almost \$200,000 to fund a scholarship program.


The Marian Norby Scholarship benefits female US federal government employees who are interested in obtaining training in technical communication to improve their employment opportunities.

One scholarship of \$2,500 will be awarded. Application forms and additional information can be found on the STC website at www.stc.org/edu/scholarship/Info01_norby.asp.

Additional Information

For more information about STC's scholarship programs, please contact Scott DeLoach, Manager, Scholarship Selection Committee, at scott@clickstart.net.

Completed applications for both scholarships should be sent to the following address:

Scott DeLoach
834 C Dekalb Avenue NE
Atlanta, GA 30307 

2009 Intercom Editorial Calendar and Call for Papers

Intercom's 2009 editorial calendar has been set. See something of interest? Send your proposals to editor Liz Pohland at liz.pohland@stc.org.

April 2009

Theme: Technical Communicators out in the World: The Global and Intercultural Issue
Copy Due: 10 January 2009

May 2009

Theme: A Move to the Side: Sustaining Career Longevity with Lateral Moves, Related Fields, and Applied Skills
Copy Due: 10 February 2009

June 2009

Theme: Instilling Passion in Our

Readers: How Can the Written Word Interact with Use and Usability?
Copy Due: 10 March 2009

July/August 2009

Theme: Technical Communication's Value Proposition: Providing Value and Return on Investment
Copy Due: 10 April 2009

September/October 2009

Theme: Revisiting Our Core: Foundation Fundamentals and Classic Knowledge
Copy Due: 10 June 2009

November 2009


Theme: Do You Know Who Your User Is? Audience Considerations
Copy Due: 10 August 2009

December 2009

Theme: The Lone Advantage: What Big Teams Can Learn from Small Shops
Copy Due: 10 September 2009

Client Usability Testing at University of Colorado-Denver

Starting 20 January 2009, the Technical Communication Program at the University of Colorado-Denver offers a semester-length course in Usability Testing. We invite public and private sector organizations to participate by providing us with documents, software, or other technology for which they would like usability-testing or comprehensibility tests performed in our testing lab or at clients' sites. Enrolled students design and execute end-user testing under faculty supervision. We offer this service in exchange for a one-time monetary contribution of \$1,500 to our scholarship fund, plus test expenses, at total costs far below industry rates. We test: websites; software documents; user interfaces; tutorials/instructions; all kinds of consumer-oriented technical documents, legal forms, and product labels (online and print). Interested? Contact:

Professor James F. Stratman
University of Colorado-Denver
James.Stratman@ucdenver.edu
Phone: (303) 556-2884
<http://communication.cudenver.edu> 

You don't need the biggest translator, just the best for your business.

Size doesn't translate into service. Skip the big box providers and work with a nice boutique like SH3. Our size means we're closer to our customers. Our service means clients stick with us year after year.

Proof points are everywhere. You'll find them in our client relationships, the way we manage projects, and how we operate as a company.



ph: (913) 747-0410

Get a free quote at sh3.com

Getting Support from Your Supervisor

Would your employer be willing to pay at least part of the expenses of attending the Technical Communication Summit in Atlanta, Georgia, 3–6 May 2009? It couldn't hurt to ask! Consider writing a memo to your supervisor that explains how you and your firm would benefit from your attendance. The following model is based on a memo that worked for its author. Feel free to modify it for use within your company.

Dear [your supervisor's name]:

To help provide [your company] with the most current professional methods and technological advances in editing/writing and report/publication management, I would like to attend the Society for Technical Communication's 56th Annual Conference—the Technical Communication Summit—in Atlanta, Georgia, 3–6 May 2009. The conference will offer sessions with topics covering

all aspects of technical writing, editing, project management, and publication production. There are four time slots per day for seminars and workshops, of which the following are of particular relevance to the company:

[List the sessions that you think will benefit your company most. Refer to the list of sessions in the conference *Preliminary Program*, which will be available on STC's website in January.]

Although I will try to attend these particular sessions, some of the most popular may be closed because of limited seating. In that case, I will choose alternates. Even if I cannot attend some of the sessions, our company can benefit from the conference *Proceedings*, which includes papers from many conference sessions and is provided free to all full-conference registrants.


Costs:

[List transportation costs, registration fee, cost of meals, and the price per night of the hotel room. These will be posted on the Society website.]

Summary of benefits for [your company]:

The sessions will provide me with more knowledge of report production, editing, writing, management concepts, and government contracting. This knowledge will enable me to handle [a particular project] with more professionalism and confidence, which will reflect favorably on [your company]. I will be able to pass on much of this information to coworkers, and my notes and copy of the *Proceedings* will be available for reference.

Sincerely,

[Your name] 

Not everyone knows...

STC members see new job postings listed in the Career Center 14 days ahead of everyone else.



The two-week advance look at job postings is an exclusive STC member benefit. Visit the STC website (www.stc.org) for more resources available to members during tough times.