2014–15
STC Community and International Competition Manager’s Handbook

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How to Use This Handbook

This handbook offers guidance, suggestions, and best practices for establishing and running competitions at both the international and community levels. It shares International Summit Awards committee best practices. Chapters and regional groups can adapt this handbook to meet community competition needs.

Suggestions for improvements and additions are welcome. Please send feedback to competitions@stc.org. We particularly want information from communities outside the U.S. and Canada, to help make this handbook more useful for international communities.

This handbook uses the following icons to identify items that are recommended for handling at the community or international level. Items with no obvious notation can be used for both levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Icon</th>
<th>Indicates...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="icon-community.png" alt="Community Icon" /> Community</td>
<td>Items specific to chapter and regional competitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="icon-international.png" alt="International Icon" /> International</td>
<td>Items specific to International Summit Awards, yet useful to community competition organizers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="icon-note.png" alt="Note Icon" /> Note</td>
<td>Helpful information offered for consideration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="icon-advice.png" alt="Advice Icon" /> Advice</td>
<td>Recommendations that follow a best practice from the International Summit Awards committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><img src="icon-important.png" alt="Important Icon" /> Important</td>
<td>Items that require attention to ensure that competitions run smoothly and follow International Summit Awards guidelines</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this handbook, the term “community” refers to competitions held by chapters, SIGs, or regional groups.
Introduction

This handbook is the primary resource for all STC community and international leaders who manage competitions. The purpose of this handbook is to familiarize competition managers with the guidelines for conducting a successful STC competition.

About the International Summit Awards

The Society for Technical Communication (STC) International Summit Awards (ISA) competition provides recognition and feedback to individual technical communication professionals for excellence in technical documentation. The competition is open to members and nonmembers.

Conducting a competition has the following benefits:

- Establishes professional standards for our work.
- Provides visibility for the profession.
- Recognizes outstanding efforts of technical communication professionals.
- Adds to STC and community revenues.
- Creates leadership and volunteer opportunities.
- Provides professional development, “free” educational experience for judges.

Community competitions can take four months to a year of a community’s time. The International Summit Awards require at least a full year of planning.

For the International Summit Awards, remote teams of judges evaluate the entries submitted from community competitions to determine awards, including Best of Show. Judging occurs before the annual STC International Summit. The Distinguished and Best of Show entries are exhibited at STC Central in the Expo Hall. All other award winners receive notification after the STC International Summit.

Competition Categories

Entries in the following categories are judged based on purpose, information design, usability, and writing:

- **Instructional Materials** trains a user or learner on a particular set of skills and knowledge.
- **Informational Materials** informs the reader of information without a specific call to action.
- **Promotional Materials** markets or promotes a product, company, individual, or event.
- **User Support Materials** provides information to support a user in performing specific tasks.

For detailed descriptions of the competition categories, see 2014-15 STC ISA General Information and Rules.
STC Website

The STC website and International Summit Awards Competition web page (http://www.stc.org/membership/recognition/competitions/) are the main resources for information regarding competitions. The following resources are available:

- Competition rules (a primary resource for competition managers)
- Chapter/Regional and ISA entry submission forms
- Chapter/Regional and ISA entry assessment forms
- List of communities holding competitions
- Contact information for International Summit Awards committee members
- Chapter/Regional and ISA judge application forms
- STC ISA Handbook for Judges
Selecting Competition Managers

Planning and running a competition is not a one-person job! The best way to ensure a successful competition is to attract other members to serve on the Competition committee. Working on competitions is tremendously rewarding.

General Information

The International Summit Awards committee structure relies on these key roles:

1. **Competition Manager** coordinates and manages the overall competition, including the finances, and reports to the Board of Directors through the Deputy Executive Director.

2. **Entries Manager** handles the Call for Entries, receives the entries from submitters, and distributes final judge assessments to submitters.

3. **Judging Manager** handles the Call for Judges, initiates the Judges Training session, and works with the STC Office and the Entries Manager to match entries with judge teams.

4. **Marketing/Communications Manager** handles all publicity and communications related to the competition.

Community competition committees include these additional roles:

1. **Finance Manager** handles budget oversight, monitors income and expenses (including reimbursements), and prepares the final financial report. (Note: The community Treasurer may fulfill this role.)

2. **Arrangements Manager** arranges the Judges Training and Consensus Judging sessions and assists with the Awards event.

3. **Recognitions Manager** plans the Awards event and program, finds a suitable site, orders and prepares the awards (plaques and certificates, for example), and finds recognition gifts for judges and volunteers.

The following sections describe each role and its responsibilities.
Competition Manager

The Competition Manager has the following responsibilities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International</th>
<th>Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Oversee all aspects of the competition.</td>
<td>1. Notify the STC Office of intent to hold a competition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Serve as liaison to the STC Office and the International Summit Awards committee.</td>
<td>2. Oversee all aspects of the competition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Select managers for Entries, Judging, Marketing/Communications, and a Community Competition Liaison.</td>
<td>3. Establish a competition budget.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Begin planning the schedule for the International Summit Awards.</td>
<td>4. Serve as liaison to the host community Administrative Council: provide regular updates to the council; work with the council on budget and schedule; and promote the competition within the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Assist managers in finding volunteers to help on the respective committees.</td>
<td>5. Obtain and disseminate competition information from the STC Office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Establish the competition budget, monitor income and expenses, and approve reimbursement requests in coordination with the Deputy Executive Director.</td>
<td>6. If applicable, find a judging exchange community and serve as liaison to the exchange community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Solicit corporate support.</td>
<td>7. Assign a manager for each competition function.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Guide and assist ISA committee managers.</td>
<td>8. Collaborate with the Programs committee on handling the awards and the award program for the competition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Schedule ISA committee meetings as required.</td>
<td>9. Chair the Competition committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Preside over judging and Awards events.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Involve ISA committee members in creating or revising competition guidelines to reflect current developments.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Resolve any issues that arise during the competition process.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Prepare a final activities report and a financial report for the records in coordination with the Deputy Executive Director.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Assemble and relay all pertinent information, records, and recommendations to the incoming ISA Competition Manager.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Conduct a lessons-learned session with the incoming ISA Competition Committee.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix A. Competition Manager Schedule provides an in-depth sample checklist and schedule of Competition Manager activities.
Entries Manager

Depending on the number of entries received, the Entries Manager might recruit a couple of people to assist with entries management. The Entries Manager has the following responsibilities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International</th>
<th>Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Develop a database or spreadsheet for entries information.</td>
<td>1. Develop a database or spreadsheet for entries information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Record the entry submission form information in the database or spreadsheet as it becomes available; provide appropriate reports when requested.</td>
<td>2. Record the entry submission form information in the database or spreadsheet as it becomes available; provide appropriate reports when requested.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Receive and log physical entries.</td>
<td>3. Receive and log physical entries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Inspect submissions for complete information, correct entry fees, and correct category designations.</td>
<td>4. Inspect submissions for complete information, correct entry fees, and correct category designations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Acknowledge receipt of entries.</td>
<td>5. Ensure that online entries can be opened before sending them to the judge teams. (Note: Consider delegating this task to the lead judges to validate that they and their team can open the online entries that they receive.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Work with the Judging Manager to distribute entries to judges.</td>
<td>6. Acknowledge receipt of entries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Prepare communication to all submitters to notify them of the results and provide the entry assessment forms.</td>
<td>7. Work with the Judging Manager to distribute entries to judges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Ship Distinguished and Best of Show award winners for display at the Summit. Handle disposition of remaining entries.</td>
<td>8. At Consensus Judging sessions, keep track of entries and retrieve them when judging is complete.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Notify all submitters of the results and provide the entry assessment forms. If your community website updates the entries page, share this URL with your submitters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. In a timely manner, notify submitters whose entries are eligible for International Summit Awards, and explain how to submit entries to the international competition. Community Excellence, Distinguished, and Best of Show entries are eligible for the International Summit Awards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. Handle disposition of remaining entries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. Provide award information for use in preparing the Awards event program.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13. Prepare a final report for the Competition Manager (see Appendix B. Final Competition Report).

Appendix E. Entries Manager Checklist provides an in-depth list of the activities that the Entries Manager is responsible for.

Entries Managers for exchange partners have the following additional responsibilities:

1. Coordinate the exchange schedule with the exchange community Competition Manager.
2. Receive entries from the exchange community.
3. Verify that the entries you received match what the exchange community sent.
4. Provide award information for the exchange community.
5. Return judged entries to the exchange community unless otherwise determined between the communities.
# Judging Manager

The Judging Manager has the following responsibilities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International</th>
<th>Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Develop a judging schedule for the overall competition.</td>
<td>1. Develop a judging schedule for the overall competition. <em>(Note: If exchanging entries with another community, coordinate the judging schedule with the exchange partner.)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Recruit judges.</td>
<td>2. Recruit judges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Follow up with the judges to confirm the schedule and their commitment.</td>
<td>3. Follow up with the judges to confirm the schedule and their commitment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Assign judge teams and lead judges.</td>
<td>4. Work with the Arrangements Manager to plan the Judges Training and Consensus Judging sessions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Assign entries to each judge team.</td>
<td>5. Assign judge teams and lead judges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Provide the Entries Manager with the judge team assignments.</td>
<td>6. Assign entries to each judge team.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Coordinate with the STC Office and the Entries Manager to distribute entries to the judges.</td>
<td>7. Provide the Entries Manager with the judge team assignments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Coordinate with lead judges to email their team’s entry assessment forms to you by a predetermined deadline.</td>
<td>8. Train judges.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Send thank you letters or other acknowledgments to the judges.</td>
<td>9. Coordinate with the Entries Manager to distribute entries to the judges following training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Evaluate judge performance, with input from the lead judges, regarding inviting judges to serve in a future competition.</td>
<td>10. Attend the Consensus Judging session and/or be on call for remote judge teams to resolve judging issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Provide feedback to each judge with input from the lead judge. Be honest with judges whom you feel are not a qualified fit for future competitions.</td>
<td>11. Coordinate with judge teams to collect entries after Consensus Judging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Prepare a final report for the ISA Competition Manager.</td>
<td>12. Coordinate with lead judges to email their team’s entry assessment forms to you by a predetermined deadline.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Send thank you letters or other acknowledgments to the judges (coordinate with the Recognition Manager).</td>
<td>13. Send thank you letters or other acknowledgments to the judges (coordinate with the Recognition Manager).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Evaluate judges with input from the lead judges and provide each judge with feedback. Be honest with judges whom you feel are not a qualified fit for future competitions.</td>
<td>14. Evaluate judges with input from the lead judges and provide each judge with feedback. Be honest with judges whom you feel are not a qualified fit for future competitions.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Marketing/Communication Manager

The Marketing/Communication Manager can be a member of the community’s Publicity committee or a volunteer who works with the community’s Publicity committee on behalf of the Competition committee.

The Marketing/Communication Manager has the following responsibilities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International</th>
<th>Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Create a Marketing and Communications Plan for International Summit Awards, including templates for community use.</td>
<td>1. Create or update the distribution list for the Call for Entries to attract entries from outside the community. Consider including STC community presidents and SIG managers in your distribution list. (The Call for Entries is usually sent to the same media distribution list as the community’s monthly program meeting announcements.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Issue the Call for Entries.</td>
<td>2. Work with the other managers to design and prepare the Call for Entries, award certificates, Awards event program, and any other collateral needed. (Note: Consider using “green” resources, except where print collateral is necessary.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Publicize the International Summit Awards using press releases and other publicity-related materials to other professional associations (such as ASTD, AMWA, ISPI, PMI, UXPA) and organizations.</td>
<td>3. Publicize the competition within the community by email messages or social media channels to communicate with other association local chapters (such as ASTD, AMWA, ISPI, PMI, UXPA). (Note: If you have different entry fees for STC members, local community members, and non-members, consider offering the community discount to partnering groups, if they publicize your event on their website.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Recruit sponsorships to defray competition costs.</td>
<td>4. Recruit individuals and organizations for donated services or sponsorships (such as graphic design, printing, and shipping).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Prepare press releases regarding the winners of the International Summit Awards.</td>
<td>5. Publicize the awards event at least one month before the event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Send winners a press release template so that they can submit a press release to their local media.</td>
<td>6. Prepare press releases (see Appendix C, Publicity and Communications Materials).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Prepare a final report for the ISA Competition Manager.</td>
<td>7. Consider using social media as a communication method (see Appendix D, Social Media Communication Suggestions).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Verify that the Competition Manager has submitted the competition information to STC.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
International | Community
---|---
9. Bring attention and visibility to the community events to attract entries or new member interest in the community.
10. Prepare a final report for the Competition Manager (see Appendix B. Final Competition Report).

Other Community Competition Manager Roles

Planning is essential for a successful competition. Your Competition committee structure may have more managers than the International Summit Awards positions mentioned. You might want to create additional manager roles around these key roles:

- Finance
- Arrangements
- Recognition

Finance Manager
The Finance Manager is often the community treasurer. A volunteer can fulfill this role provided he or she works closely with the treasurer and the community admin council.

The Finance Manager has the following responsibilities.

1. Work with the Competition Manager to prepare a budget.
2. Monitor income and expenditures.
3. Review any contracts before they are signed.
4. Handle reimbursements to volunteers and payments to vendors.
5. Prepare a final financial report for the Competition Manager and the admin council.

Arrangements Manager
The Arrangements Manager is responsible for arranging the Judge Training and Consensus Judging sessions and assisting with the Awards event.

For Judge Training

1. Work with the Competition Manager, Marketing/Communication Manager, Entries Manager, and Judging Manager to set up judge a training session.
2. For on-site training, work with the site representative to ensure that security requirements are followed, which may include providing a list of attendees to the security staff for check-in.
3. Work with the site representative to ensure that the meeting location has a projector, screen, conference phone, and Internet access for conducting a web conference to accommodate remote attendees.
4. Arrange catering for a continental breakfast or lunch, if needed.
5. Work with the Judging Manager to communicate the mandatory Judge Training location and time to all judges.
6. Work with the exchange community manager on conducting their Judges Training session at the same time or share the same training materials. Consider setting up a virtual training session for the community and the exchange community using the site’s conference capabilities.

7. Prepare a final report for the Competition Manager (see Appendix B. Final Competition Report).

For Consensus Judging

1. For on-site judging, work with the Competition Manager, Marketing/Communication Manager, Entries Manager, and Judging Manager to identify the site requirements for the Consensus Judging session.

2. For on-site judging, work with the site representative to ensure that any security requirements are followed, including providing a list of attendees to the security staff for check-in.

3. For on-site judging, work with the site representative to ensure that the Consensus Judging session location has a projector, screen, conference phone, and Internet access for conducting a web conference to accommodate remote attendees.

4. For on-site judging, arrange catering for a continental breakfast or lunch, if needed.

5. Work with the Judging Manager to communicate Consensus Judging place, time, and deadline to all judges.

6. Prepare a final report for the Competition Manager (see Appendix B. Final Competition Report).

For Awards event

1. Work with the Competition Manager, Recognition Manager, and Marketing/Communication Manager to plan the Awards event.

2. Work with the community Programs committee on the site for the event and make all arrangements, including catering and audio equipment.

3. Receive and record the replies to the Awards event invitations.

4. Arrange to display the entries by ordering enough tables for submitters to showcase their entries.

Recognition Manager

The Recognition Manager has the following responsibilities:

1. Work with the Competition committee and Competition Manager in planning the Awards event.

2. Work with the Arrangements Manager in finding a suitable site.

3. Work with the Competition Manager in deciding what kinds of awards will be presented to winners (certificates, plaques, other).

4. Arrange for certificates, plaques.

5. Purchase gifts for judges and volunteers.

6. Prepare a final report for the General Manager (see Appendix B. Final Competition Report).
Running a Community Competition

Setting up and running a community competition requires patience and lots of coordinated work efforts. This section provides information for setting up and running community competitions. See Appendix F. Setting Up and Running a Competition for a checklist of the information in this section to use as you plan your competition.

The major events in running a community competition are:
1. Selecting Competition Managers and other committee members.
2. Promoting Competitions.
3. Preparing the initial Competition budget.
4. Preparing and distributing the Call for Entries.
5. Receiving and organizing entries.
6. Recruiting and training judges.
7. Distributing entries to judges for assessment.
8. Holding Consensus Judging session.
10. Holding an Awards event:
    a. Preparing programs and certificates.
    b. Ordering awards for the Distinguished and Best of Show recipients.
    c. Presenting the awards.
11. Submitting a final budget report to the Administrative Council stating the entry statistics, awards given, number of entries eligible for the International Summit Awards, and a financial review Appendix B. Final Competition Report.

Running a successful competition is not without its challenges:

- Creating new competition collateral each year.
- Developing or customizing the Call for Entries and distributing it.
- Recruiting and training judges.
- Handling submitters’ questions regarding judging comments.
- Ensuring that the competition schedule for Judges Training and Consensus Judging sessions are not held on civil or religious holidays.

Many of these items are repeatable, yet they require updating and editing each year. Keeping detailed files that you can pass on to the next manager is one way to ensure a successful succession of competition management.

You can save time and effort by reviewing lessons learned, best practices, and advice from an experienced manager.
Initial Activities

Making Preliminary Decisions
The Competition committee works together to discuss matters that affect the overall competition and to participate in making preliminary decisions.

Make the following decisions before any real activity begins:

1. Identify underlying competition goals, for example:
   - Increase awareness of STC in your community.
   - Increase revenue to fund the community treasury (for events like a scholarship fund, annual operating budget, or the Awards event).
   - Provide recognition and training for professional development.

2. Determine whether to conduct a single-community competition, participate in a regional competition, or find an exchange community to partner with.

3. (Optional) Determine a competition theme.
   Some communities design their competitions around a theme that reflects their underlying goal and unifies the materials that they produce to promote their competitions.

4. Determine disposition of profits.
   Competitions have the potential to generate a considerable profit. It is wise to decide with your Administrative Council how these profits will be handled to avoid later misunderstandings.

5. Determine how to best use International Summit Awards categories and competition materials.
   The International Summit Awards categories are appropriate for the entire technical communication industry and profession.

   Communities may use their own categories for their competitions. However, entries that are eligible for International Summit Awards consideration must be recategorized before they are submitted to the international competition.

Determining the Competition Schedule
Competitions, much like other events, work best when following a specific schedule. To establish a schedule, consider five key activities that occur during the competition and determine dates on which to hold these activities.

1. **Deadline for entries**
   Work backward from the deadline for receipt of entries for the International Summit Awards. (Check the STC website each year for this date.) All entries must be judged and eligible winners directed to send their entries to the International Summit Awards by this deadline. Decide how much time you need to accomplish the judging and plan your community entry deadline accordingly.

2. **Call for Entries distribution**
   Decide how much time (four to six weeks) you want to allow submitters to respond to your Call for Entries.
3. **Call for Entries preparation**

Estimate the time needed to design and distribute the Call for Entries by mail, email, social media, and so on. Then set your start date accordingly. Work backward from the entry deadline to determine when you will publicize your competition.

4. **Judge recruitment**

Recruit judges in time to train them, assign them to a judging team, and allow four weeks at a minimum for the judging teams to independently judge the competition materials before the scheduled Consensus Judging session.

5. **Awards event**

Plan to host an awards event and use local media to publicize the event in advance. Holding an Awards event brings visibility to your community, its members, and the local area by publicizing the importance of technical communication. When publicizing your Awards event in the local media, you are also telling STC’s powerful story of how important the field of technical communication is and you reflect the respect and honor you are bestowing upon those who have submitted entries to your competition.

**Appendix A. Competition Manager Schedule** contains a sample annual competition schedule.

### Selecting a Competition Exchange Community

Some communities choose to exchange entries with another STC community to provide their members with feedback from judges outside of the local area. The exchange partner should have about the same number of entries as your community to ensure that the number of entries for each judge remains equal. You can have a hybrid exchange if needed (sending and receiving the same number of entries, while retaining overload entries for judging within the community).

Selecting another STC community to exchange competition entries with has advantages and disadvantages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Entry exchange.</td>
<td>• Logging entries (yours and the exchange partner’s) and coordination between competition managers take more time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Allows a fresh look from unbiased outsiders because another community may not be familiar with a local company’s history.</td>
<td>• Preparing and shipping your entries to the exchange partner, then receiving, unpacking, and logging the exchange partner’s entries, followed by returning entries requires additional time and effort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Avoids the possibility that members will judge the works of members or others whom they know.</td>
<td>• Agreeing on judging criteria, schedule, and use of International Summit Awards forms versus community forms can prove difficult.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Making judging assignments is easier because you do not have to work around conflicts of interest or personal friendships.</td>
<td>• Receiving assessments from another community provides different perspectives from those of our peer group.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Advantages | Disadvantages
---|---
- Jointly publicizing events to other communities in your state or near your geographical location attracts more entries. | **Financial concerns:** There is no way to know if the number of entries will be equivalent or the costs for shipping entries.

**EXCHANGE PARTNERS:** Award decisions made by the partnering community are FINAL. No one is allowed to change awards.

**Providing Feedback**

Competition managers and competition committee managers should conclude the competition event by holding a Lessons Learned session. In this session, each community needs to share the following:

1. How well did the process work? What could have been improved?
2. Were the comments on the assessments of the quantity and quality that was expected?
3. Did the schedule allow enough time for each community to conduct its Competition in a timely manner? If not, what can be improved?
4. What is the overall impression of the exchange of entries?
5. Would each community consider exchanging entries in the future?
## Preparing the Budget

### Income Items

Income typically comes from two sources:

- Entry fees
- Charges for extra award plaques (optional)

### Expense Items

You can decrease expenses considerably if you find members, individuals, or organizations to sponsor or donate items such as:

- Graphic design work
- (Optional) Printing, copying, mailing the entry submission form
- Sites for Judges’ Training and Consensus Judging sessions, if you hold on-site judging events

Electronically handling some (or all) of the judging activities decreases the cost, yet remote judging reduces the relationship-building opportunities.

Be sure to recognize supporting members, individuals, and organizations in your newsletter and at the annual Awards event.

The following table lists possible competition expenses to consider in setting up your budget. Encourage committee members to submit reimbursement requests as purchases are made, so that you can monitor expenses. Many of the following items can be handled with no-cost alternatives. Some items might not be relevant to your competition.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense Item</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Awards</td>
<td>Plaques, certificates, or both</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Judge training and consensus sessions | Refreshments, lunch  
| | Site fees |
| International Summit Awards entry fees | International Summit Awards entry submission fees, if your community pays the fees for eligible entries.  
| | Some communities pay expenses for Best of Show winners to submit to the ISA. Otherwise, advise community winners who have entries eligible for the ISA (winners of Excellence and Distinguished awards) of the entry fee and deadline. |
| Miscellaneous | Telephone calls made on behalf of the competition  
| | Thank-you certificates or gifts for judges and volunteers |
### Expense Items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>Item</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Postage and Shipping</td>
<td>• Boxes and packing material for shipping entries to the judges and ISA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Postage to return entries to those eligible to submit to the ISA competition, depending on your return policies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Awards event invitations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Thank-you letters to judges, volunteers, and their employers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Certificates that are not picked up at the Awards event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage (exchanges only)</td>
<td>• Shipping entries to exchange partner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Return shipping of exchange community entries, if applicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing</td>
<td>• (Optional) Call for Entries (consider sending out the Call for Entries through your community email distribution list, discussion list, or community/regional website)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Paper and envelopes for letters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Award certificates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Awards event invitations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Awards event program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awards event</td>
<td>• Room fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Food/Catering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• AV equipment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Entry Fees

Community competitions set their own entry fees. Set fees high enough to cover costs and make a profit. Estimate the costs and number of entries, and then set your entry fee accordingly. Use income and expense figures from previous competitions. For a first-time competition, the number of expected entries is a guess.

Present entry fees in U.S. or local currency equivalent. Consider adjusting fees based on early-bird discounts, late fees, or discounts for community members or multiple entries.

**Consider your financial goals.** Some communities factor in costs to help pay for the awards and awards event activities. Accounting is easier and faster if you distribute the estimated costs and recover them in the original entry fees. If a community submits and pays for entries to the ISA, it is easier to get compensation from entrants up front than to ask for additional entry fees and shipping costs after presenting awards.

**General guidelines for establishing community entry fees**

- Set a base fee each for early, late, and multiple entries.
- Set a slightly higher fee for submitters who are STC members but not community members.
- Set a higher fee for submitters who are non-STC members. Encourage them to join STC so they can enter the competition at the STC member fee.
- Set a slightly lower fee for submitters who are full-time students.
Any fee increases or discounts should be put before the community Administrative Council for approval.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2014 International (U.S. currency only)</th>
<th>Suggested Community Fees (U.S. or local currency equivalent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• $75 STC Members</td>
<td>• $25 Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• $100 Non-members</td>
<td>• $50 STC Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• $25 fee for hard copy entries</td>
<td>• $75 Non-members</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The pricing structure is currently under review. Refer to the International Summit Awards Competition web page for the latest pricing information ([http://www.stc.org/membership/recognition/competitions/](http://www.stc.org/membership/recognition/competitions/)).
Promoting the Competition

The International Summit Awards committee developed a competition flyer that can help your community promote its competition. (For a sample flyer, see Appendix G. Call for Entries.) You can customize this flyer by adding your community or regional logo, competition name, and any other specific information related to your own competition. The content in this flyer outlines the benefits that submitters can receive:

- Provides visibility for the profession through the professional feedback and critique of entries unlike other competitions.
- Recognizes outstanding efforts of technical communication professionals.
- Establishes professional standards for our work.
- Creates leadership and volunteer opportunities.
- Provides professional development, “free” educational experience for judges.

Promoting the competition requires having a well-planned and well-executed publicity plan, which will benefit the competition immensely. Promote your competition:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In</th>
<th>By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community meetings, newsletter, and website</td>
<td>Using social media channels (Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsletters of local professional organizations</td>
<td>Sending email messages to target lists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Press releases to local newspapers</td>
<td>Contacting area university professional communication and technical communication programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free listings in calendar sections of local newspapers and local business groups, like the Chamber of Commerce</td>
<td>Sending flyers to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posters in strategic locations (libraries, universities, employer break rooms)</td>
<td>- Major companies in your area or nearby areas that are not covered by local communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Contact person for Corporate Value Program partners and to companies that have exhibited at the STC Annual Conference</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Distributing the Call for Entries

The Call for Entries is the primary means to publicize community competitions. It provides submitters with all the information, instructions, and rules for submitting entries to the community competition. Promote your competition locally and early.

Preparing the Call for Entries

The Call for Entries can take various forms, either as a self-contained piece or set of pieces. Create one piece that serves as a self-mailer, is attractive, and is easy to distribute electronically. Some communities report an increase in entries when they send out a printed Call for Entries.

Some communities design their Call for Entries using the text from the International Summit Awards sample (G. Call for Entries) and adding their own community competition information. Using this sample text ensures that you are following the International Summit Awards rules.

Because people might want to photocopy the Call for Entries for distribution to others, ensure that the design is appropriate for black-and-white and color printing.

If you use the Call for Entries as a self-mailer, be sure you know the postal regulations. These regulations may affect your design and cost. If you use a mailing service, they can advise you about these requirements.

Information for the Call for Entries

The Call for Entries should provide:

- **Competition rules**: At a minimum, include the number of copies to submit, deadline for entries, entry fees, date when the entry must have been produced, mailing or shipping instructions, size limitations for art, and technical limitations for electronic entries.

- **List of Categories**: Include the list of categories for the competition and the URL to the community competition web page where submitters can find full descriptions of each category.

- **Entry form**: Use the International Summit Awards Entry submission form and add the community logo and any other applicable information to the form.

Entry Deadline

The deadline for receipt of entries **must be included** on the Call for Entries. Allow for distribution at least a month before the entry deadline.

This date is your **advertised** deadline. Inevitably, most entries will arrive one or two days before or after this date. Keep in mind your **real** deadline date and set the advertised deadline a week earlier.

Fees

Base fees on projected expenses and income. (See the [Entry Fees](#) section for suggested community entry fees.)
Where to Send Entries

Determine the address where entries should be sent. This address can be the Entries Manager’s or other designated Competition committee member’s business or residential address (no P.O. boxes).

Considerations in choosing where to have entries sent:

- The person receiving the entries needs to be aware of the amount of mail to expect.
- If sending to a business address (or your apartment management):
  - Seek approval from your management and even your mailroom staff.
  - Ensure that someone will be available to take deliveries during business hours.
- Verify the availability of ample space:
  - For storing entries.
  - For volunteers to unpack and check the contents of boxes.
- Location should preferably be on the ground floor to minimize the work in carrying boxes.
- Have a convenient place to park a car or van to transport entries.
- Have a copy machine or portable printer and computer available when you unpack the entries in case a submitter did not send the proper number of forms.

For entries of technical artwork, consider the size you will accept, because these entries can be large and bulky. If exchanging with another community, ask if they have had entries of this type in the past so you can set your expectations. Technical artwork can be submitted into any of the four competition categories on page 1.

Reminder: The STC International Summit Awards no longer conducts a separate technical art competition.

Contact for Inquiries

The Competition Manager’s contact information should appear on all notices about the competition, such as the Call for Entries, community newsletter, website, press releases.

Policy About Returning Entries

Determine whether you will return entries following the competition. Be aware that some submitters may request this service, and if so, ensure that the submitters are aware that they must provide the applicable postage and a shipping label completely filled out.

Return to the submitters all entries that are eligible for submission to the International Summit Awards. You may choose to return these entries at community expense.

Entries not returned to the submitters should be destroyed responsibly by shredding or recycling in an appropriate manner. Some communities make the entries available to instructors of a local college or university technical writing program to use as examples for their students, with personal contact information removed.
**Number of Entry Copies to Submit**
Submitters **must** submit **four copies** of each entry and each entry submission form.

**If you are exchanging entries with another community, three** of the entries are sent to the exchange community for judging. The originating community retains the **fourth** copy for use in answering questions from the exchange community and judges.

**Poaching**
No official policy exists that says that communities cannot solicit entries from other communities in their own region. However, STC asks that competition committees avoid sending their Call for Entries to other communities that have their own competitions.

This practice is not meant to discourage advertising of competitions through Internet lists or news groups (which have the effect of spanning many communities). The more promotional avenues we as a collective professional body can leverage, the better for the competitions as a whole and STC name recognition.

Communities that use the exchange partner method generally do not encroach on other community competitions in the same or surrounding states.

You can send your community’s Call for Entries to the presidents of communities in the surrounding geographical area as “information only.” Smaller communities often do not hold their own competitions and are looking for a community nearby to which to submit their members’ entries.

Some communities may receive entries from other STC members if the competition deadlines meet that submitter’s schedule. For example, an STC member in France once submitted an entry to the STC Lone Star Community’s 2008 Competition.
Preparing for Judging

Judge training and preparation activities are an important part of the competition schedule. Some factors to consider:

- Is your competition exchanging entries with another competition?
- How will your judging be structured?
- Will you distribute entries to judges before the Judge Training session?
- How much time will judges have to evaluate their assigned entries?
- Will judges be required to attend the Consensus Judging session or can they do remote judging and just drop off their entries and assessments (softcopy) at the Consensus Judging site?

Structuring the Judging

The following are possible approaches to structuring your judging process.

1. Hold several judging sessions, possibly at multiple sites.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Expands time available for examining each entry.</td>
<td>Requires coordination with several teams and competition volunteers, dates, and locations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment needs are reduced.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Distribute the entries for the judges to evaluate independently.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No site considerations.</td>
<td>May require the community to pay for shipping entries to and from judges or may require judges to pick up and return entries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judges can independently evaluate and thoroughly examine the entries on their own schedules. As a result, assessment comments are usually more thorough.</td>
<td>Requires an arrangement for judges to return their entries and assessment forms to the competition committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Limits judge training and may be problematic for first-time judges.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Distribute the entries ahead of time and then hold a Consensus Judging session.

   Most competitions use this approach. They typically distribute entries to all judges at the Judge Training session and ask judges to complete their individual assessments before the Consensus Judging session. During the Consensus Judging session, the teams meet to reach consensus, and you may require judges to return the entries and assessment forms at that time.
Advantages | Disadvantages
--- | ---
- All judges receive the same instructions during the Judge Training session. | - Requires arranging two events.
- Judges can independently evaluate and thoroughly examine the entries on their own schedules. Assessment comments are usually more thorough. | - Requires coordinating judges’ schedules for two events.
- Requires attention to equipment or other needs for judging.

Some competitions use a hybrid approach that combines approaches 2 and 3 to enable wider judging participation for on-site and remote judging teams.

**Recruiting Judges**

Judges do not have to be STC members. You are encouraged to recruit respected non-member professionals in your community to serve as judges. These professionals should be knowledgeable in the competition areas of Instructional Materials, Informational Materials, Promotional Materials, and User Support Materials.

Ways to recruit judges include:

1. Make specific invitations in person, by email, or by phone to contact:
   - Judges from past years and ask them for recommendations.
   - Past competition submitters and past award winners.
   - Teachers of communication-related disciplines in your area.
   - Affiliated professional associations, such as the American Medical Writers Association, American Society for Training and Development, International Society for Performance Improvement, International Interactive Communications Society, International Association of Business Communicators, and User Experience Professionals Association.

2. Prepare a formal, mailed or emailed Call for Judges.

3. Issue open invitations through avenues such as the community newsletter and website. Consult a database or spreadsheet of past judges.

4. Include the Call for Judges in the Call for Entries packet. Submitters make good judges of their peers’ work.

Whatever approach you use to recruit qualified judges, emphasize that it is an honor to be selected as a judge.

**STC recommends that you:**

- Allow anyone to apply. This might be a good way to recruit new members.
- Add new judges each year.
- Screen unqualified applicants through an established, published qualification process.
Follow these steps to effectively recruit judges:

1. Start recruiting early. Even if you do not have all the details worked out, start approaching people. Give them an idea of what they can expect. For example, “You will have three weeks to evaluate entries on your own, and then there will probably be an all-day meeting on a Saturday in October.”

2. Read the International Summit Awards Judge criteria for qualifying judges.

3. Download the Chapter/Regional Judge Application form and personalize it for your community’s competition.

4. Announce the Call for Judges as soon as possible. Consider announcing it two months before the entry deadline date during your program meetings, on your website, in your newsletter, through email distribution lists, and through social media channels.

5. Recruit more judges than you think you will need. Volunteers often have schedule conflicts, or emergencies may arise.

6. Add the judge applicants’ contact information (name, phone numbers, email address) to the master Competition spreadsheet. You will use this to assign your judging teams.

7. After you have established the judging teams:
   a. Assign a judge number to each person on the team.
   b. Assign a lead judge who has been involved in past competitions.
   c. Send a confirmation email message to team members announcing who is on the team, who the lead judge is, where to find the entry assessment forms, what their assigned judge numbers are, and how they will receive their assigned entries.

8. When the judging schedule is set, contact the people whom you have selected and confirm their availability. Ensure that you include important dates, such as the Judges Training and Consensus Judging sessions, in your communication.

9. Request that judges confirm that they can set aside time to review the entries between the distribution date and Consensus Judging session.

10. Treat your judges well so they will want to return. Ways to show that you value their contribution to the Society and their profession include:
    - Send letters to their management acknowledging their contributions to the profession.
    - Give gifts or certificates of appreciation.
    - Send all judges special invitations to the Awards event, prepare special nametags, list their names in the program, and publicly acknowledge their valuable help.

**Assigning Judges**

International Summit Awards guidelines call for teams of three judges to evaluate each entry, with one judge serving in the role of lead judge. The lead judge has usually participated in past competitions at the community or international level. Consider following a similar practice in your community competition.
When assigning entries, the Judging Manager should also be aware of obvious conflicts of interest. If a community exchanges competition entries with another community, then assigning entries to a judge from their own community is possible. However, it is best not to assign judges entries from their own community to avoid any conflict of interest or judging bias.

1. When you assign team member numbers, assign a team number (Team 1) followed by the judge numbering sequence, Team Lead = Judge 1, Member 1 = Judge 2, Member 2 = Judge 3.

2. Note the assignments in your spreadsheet.

3. Instruct the judging teams to use their Team Number and Member Number (1-1, 1-2, 1-3) combination on all their assessment forms.

Judges must never identify themselves by name on any assessment forms.

**Making Appropriate Judge Assignments**

Within a competition, entries in some categories take longer to judge than others. Judging certain printed publications may take longer to judge than others, such as a software guide versus a quick reference guide.

**Judges Training**

All judges (experienced and new) should be required to attend a Judges Training session. There are several reasons for this requirement:

- Ensures that all judges receive the same information.
- Ensures that all judges understand the expectations that your community has (and that of the exchange community).
- Ensures that critiques are professional and qualitative for the submitters.
- Identifies and fully describes any changes from the previous competition year.
- Provides professional development for judges. Consider advertising your Judges Training session this way.

The agenda for a Judges Training session should include reviews of the following:

- Competition schedule
- Competition process
- Judge’s role
- Lead Judge’s role
- Expectations of judges
- Explanation of assessment forms and how to complete them (include samples of good judging comments)
- Definition of award levels
- Recommended judging practices (address expectations for consensus judging)
Advice from experienced judges provided in a panel discussion or open dialog session.

In training, stress that disagreements among judges on how to judge an entry are not unusual and can usually be resolved with some discussion. Particularly important to emphasize is that these disagreements should not be viewed as personality clashes or personal agendas on the part of the other judges. If two judges evaluate an entry similarly and the third disagrees, the two judges are not “outvoting” the other judge by majority rule.

Training may also include:

- Assessment exercise
- Assessment review

Conducting a virtual training session with an exchange partner requires:

- Selecting a member from each community to share in leading the training.
- Scheduling a site that has a conference room large enough to accommodate everyone.
- Ensuring the site has a conference phone, Internet or wireless access, and a projector.
- Having training materials ready for the day.
- Coordinating with the exchange partner in advance to have exchange community entries ready for distribution to the judges following the training.

For communities that conduct a joint Judges Training session with their exchange partner, both competition teams and judges:

- Receive the same training
- Hear each other’s expectations
- Build a rapport to feel involved in the competition process.

Following the Judges Training session, email the judges a review of the key points covered during the session, to ensure that the training and the guidelines are followed as the judges evaluate their assigned entries.

**Judge Materials**

Whatever approach you use for judging, your judges will need the following materials and information:

- Instructions and training
- Entry assessment forms
- A copy of the *International Summit Awards Handbook for Judges*

How you provide these items depends on your judging structure.
Instructions
Whether delivered in a packet, during the Judges Training session or at a pick-up meeting, the instructions may include:

- Description of the competition process, rules, and schedule.
- List of team members with Team/Judge Numbers and contact information.
- Competition management contact numbers for questions.
- Copy of Call for Entries.
- Explanation of assessment forms and requirement for constructive comments.
- Explanation of award levels.
- Description of category or categories to be judged.
- List of entries each team will judge.
- Best of Show nomination form.

Current Year Assessment Forms
International Summit Awards entry assessment forms are available from the STC website.

- During the Judges Training session and in the judges’ packet, include instructions on where to find the entry assessment forms.
- Provide the forms that you have branded for your competition or instruct judges to download the International Summit Awards forms from the STC website.
- Remind judges to use their assigned team and judge numbers on the form. Note that the form may also use entry numbers, depending on whether the competition management team assigns numbers to entries for internal use.

Handbook for Judges
The ISA Handbook for Judges is updated each year and is available on the STC website.

Expectations and Results of Judging
For detailed information related to judge roles and responsibilities, refer to the ISA Handbook for Judges.

Lead Judge Responsibilities
A lead judge functions as an entry judge and as the team manager. It is the responsibility of the lead judge to oversee the team’s judging process, ensuring that it runs smoothly and on time. In some cases, the lead judge will function as a trainer for inexperienced judges and at other times as an adjudicator in cases of disagreement.

The lead judge oversees the judging process of the team in several ways:

- Contact team members to ensure that all materials have been received.
- Be available to consult or train team members.
- Check with judges regularly during individual judging to monitor their progress.
- Schedule consensus meeting time and location, if applicable.
- Lead the consensus meeting.
- Collect entry assessment forms and review them for appropriate assessment comments.
- Prepare Judging Summary Consensus form for each entry. The lead judge or a team member should summarize the main points from the three judges that give the submitter an overview of why the entry received or did not receive an award. (See Appendix H. Judging Consensus Summary Form for a sample form.)
- Prepare Best of Show recommendation, if any, or review recommendation written by another team member at the lead judge’s request.
- Submit assessment and recommendation forms to Judging Manager.

**Judge Team Responsibilities**

The required results of all judges include the following:

- All judges review each entry assigned to them, record comments on the assessment forms, and return the completed forms by email to the lead judge (or submit online if applicable).
- Teams achieve award-level consensus. (See Reaching Consensus.)
- Teams decide upon Best of Show candidates from the team’s entries. (See Judging Best of Show for possible approaches for this process.)
- Record all results.
- Return all copies of the entries in the condition received unless No Award is recommended. In this case, discard the entries as directed by the Competition Manager. If working with an exchange community, return all entries, unless you have made other arrangements.
Consensus Judging

Consensus is the process by which a judging team arrives at decisions to confer awards on entries. Many people misunderstand the process of reaching consensus, so it is best to include consensus guidance in judging instructions.

Reaching Consensus

Individual judges’ comments and assessments do not have to be in complete accord. A difference of experience, viewpoint, or even preference will account for some of the differences in judging results. Nonetheless, the judging team must conclude its deliberations about each entry by assigning it an award level or no award.

Each judge has the opportunity during the consensus meeting to weigh in on the considerations that the judge feels are relevant to assigning a particular award. After a discussion among the judges, the lead judge will poll the members of the team. If they do not agree, more discussion can ensue from which the judges reach agreement. In some cases, consensus is more difficult to achieve and the team will need to appeal to the Judging Manager for assistance. In that case, the Judging Manager will review the entry in consultation with the lead judge.

The consensus is an agreement among all three judges that the entry merits a particular designation. In the end, a dissenting judge may be won over by the arguments of the other two or the lone judge may carry the argument by force of evidence and persuasion. Either outcome is possible. The most successful consensus processes are those that are conducted with civility and good grace among the participants.

Agreement of all three judges is the preferred outcome (and literal definition) of consensus. However, in the event that the three judges on a team cannot reach full consensus, the majority opinion rules.

It is not unusual for judges to have singled out different aspects of an entry to mention in the assessments, so the team may appoint one member to write a summary for each entry, describing the gist of the judges’ assessments and indicating the entry’s overall strengths and weaknesses. Submitters appreciate helpful criticism, which means that suggestions for improvement as well as praise serve as appropriate feedback.

After an entry has been discussed and consensus reached on an award, the team needs to reach consensus on whether to recommend any of its entries for Best of Show. Only Distinguished entries are eligible for nomination as Best of Show. Part of the consensus process for Best of Show involves crafting the written recommendation, with wording agreed on by the whole team.

Consensus by Teleconference

Remote judging teams can reach consensus about award levels by telephone. Conference calls are a viable alternative if geographical distance, weather, schedules, time, cost, or illness prevents team members from meeting physically. Appendix D. Social Media Communication Suggestions provides sample conference call options.

Consider the following aspects of conducting a consensus meeting by conference call.
Advantages | Disadvantages
--- | ---
- Provides greater flexibility for judges in arranging a time for the consensus meeting. | - Judges must receive entries in a timely manner.
- Opens up opportunities for people to judge who might not otherwise have the opportunity. | - Competition Manager is not immediately available for problem resolution when questions arise during the conference call. (Consider inviting the Competition Manager to attend your teleconference session to resolve any concerns.)
- Avoids weather-related concerns. | - Discussion about an entry’s visual aspects is more difficult.
- Saves time. | - Cost of conference call can be an issue (unless one of the team members’ companies underwrites the cost or the competition budget allows reimbursement for these expenses).
- Eliminates costs associated with travel. | 

For teleconference consensus judging sessions, Competition Managers and judges have the following tasks:

**Competition Manager**

- Assign a number of entries that can be handled comfortably.
- Appoint a lead judge who has experience in judging, understands the consensus process, and has good organizational and leadership skills.
- Ensure that all judges receive training.
- Consult Appendix D, Social Media Communication Suggestions for tool options to conduct conference calls.

**Judging Team Members**

For detailed information related to judge responsibilities, refer to the *ISA Handbook for Judges*.

- Get to know each other before the consensus call.
- **Make sure you have completed your assessments before the call** and have award recommendations in mind.
- Begin the conference call with a plan, such as eliminate obvious non-winners first and have each judge in turn lead the discussion of the next entry.
- Do not set an arbitrary time limit for assessments. This creates pressure, which might rush your decisions.
- Do not force an award decision when there is indecision; come back to the entry later. (You might have a tendency to think that you must decide the fate of an entry at the time you discuss it, because you won’t have time to come back or it will be too confusing to do so.)
- Take a break after a certain period, especially if callers do not have speaker phones.
Judging Best of Show

For the latest information related to judging Best of Show, refer to the current ISA Handbook for Judges.

Definition of Best of Show

Best of Show candidates exhibit the ideal for their category. They are not judged against each other; they are judged solely against established standards for their respective documentation type. For example, how do you compare the best annual report with the best software guide?

In STC competitions, the best annual report is compared with the ideal annual report, and the best software guide with the ideal software guide. Thus, Best of Show judges must determine how close each candidate comes to realizing the ideal for its category. The entry that comes closest to the ideal for its category is the Best of Show.

Best of Show Procedure

Some community competitions select the Best of Show by a consensus or majority vote of all the judges. However, the competition manager can appoint a panel to perform a second-level consensus judging to determine Best of Show from the entries recommended by the judging teams. Best-of-Show judge qualifications:

- Best-of-Show judges are experienced professionals with previous experience in judging.
- They have broad expertise in the competition categories so that they are capable of evaluating entries in any category.

The list of Best of Show candidates should consist of entries that are receiving a Distinguished award. Judging teams should complete the Best of Show Recommendation form (Appendix I. Best of Show Recommendation Form) for any Best of Show candidate, including comments from the entry assessment forms and a specific description as to how close the entry comes to realizing the ideal for its category. The statement should be detailed enough to guide the Best of Show judges in their assessment of the candidate.

Consider including the judging team’s assessment forms with the recommendation form to make it easier for the Best of Show judging team to see why this entry should be selected as a Best of Show winner.

Have the Best-of-Show judging team write a citation for the winner that describes why the entry achieved this distinction. This citation is used for the award plaque, as well as in remarks about the winner at the Awards event.
After Judging

Notifying Submitters of Results

Submitters are intensely interested to know how they did. It is important to notify submitters of the results as soon as possible.

After the entries have been judged, send email notification to entry submitters with the following information:

- A thank you for their participation.
- Whether the entry won an award; if so, the award decision for their entry. (However, some communities choose not to reveal the specific award until the Awards event. The rationale is that there is greater incentive to attend the Awards event.)
- Soft copies of the assessment forms for their entry and the judging team summary form (see Appendix J. Email Notification of Awards).
- Invitation to and information about the Awards event. Tell submitters that all winning entries will be on display (if this is the case). Some communities offer submitters the opportunity to prepare a brief presentation about their entries that they can share during or before and after the Awards event.
- Information about how entries will be returned (if you have a return policy).

Because the submitter of the entry is the only one who receives this email, include a statement such as, “Please forward this email and the assessment forms to each contributor.”

- Consider including an “Award Verification” form to confirm that the information you put on the award certificates or plaques is correct. Suggested wording:
  “We want to ensure that your award is printed correctly. As the submitter of the entry, you are the only recipient of this email and we ask that you do the following:
  - Check the information for accuracy.
  - Make necessary revisions.
  - Verify the award detail information against what you have for the entry title and contributor names in the entry form.

  No later than date, return this form to name and email address.”

- Consider providing statistics about the competition in your notification email to help submitters and their companies understand the significance of the award received. Consider including the following information in your notification email:
  - Total number of entries in the competition
  - Distribution of total awards by award level
  - Number of entries in each category
  - Distribution of awards in each category

- The submitter is responsible to inform the individual contributors of the results. Sometimes complications occur in this process. For example:
• The submitter no longer works for the same company. Your email bounces or is sent to the submitter at an old address and is never read.

• The submitter gets your email but fails to inform the contributors.

Expect to be contacted by a few submitters and contributors asking about results, even though you know you sent out all email notifications.

Keep copies of your notification emails and all assessment forms. If necessary, you can forward or resend the notification email and assessment forms.

Create two generic email messages: one message for entries that won an award and one for entries that did not. Appendix J, Email Notification of Awards provides a sample for each type of email.

Handling Entries

Entries Eligible for the International Summit Awards
Submitters need to send four copies of their Distinguished or Excellence award winning entry to the International Summit Awards. Entries submitted to the International Summit Awards are not returned.

Entries Not Eligible for the International Summit Awards
Consider displaying all winning entries at the Awards event. Submitters may take their entries with them after the event. Any entries that remain may be donated to educational programs for use as samples of technical documentation or properly recycled.

Non-winners—No Return
Some communities display all entries at their Awards event. Submitters are free to take their entries with them following the event. Any entries that remain are donated to educational programs for use as samples of technical documentation or properly recycled.

International Summit Awards Entries Displayed at STC Summit
Distinguished and Best of Show entries will be on display during the STC Annual Conference. The Best of Show winner will be announced at the STC Annual Conference.

Sending Eligible Entries to the International Summit Awards

• Remind your ISA-eligible submitters of the deadline for submitting entries to the International Summit Awards.

The deadline is the arrive-by date. Late entries are not accepted.

• Remove any labels that were used to identify the entries in a community competition.
• The International Summit Awards submission package must contain:
  • **Four** complete copies of an entry
  • Online International Summit Awards entry submission form completed by individual or community with a copy securely attached to each entry copy
  • Payment for the total entry fee, if paying by check, made payable and sent to STC

For International Summit Awards, after completion of the online Competition submission form:
  • **Communities** may provide payment in the form of one check or individual checks from submitters made payable to STC, or by using a community debit card or PayPal account. If the community provides payment, it also submits the entries and forms.
  • **Individual submitters** may pay by check, credit card, or PayPal account.
  • **All payments must be in US funds.**

• The International Summit Awards committee retains **one** copy during the judging event and distributes the remaining **three** copies to the judging teams.

• Following the end of the International Summit Awards, entries are placed on display at the STC Annual Summit, in the traveling exhibit, recycled or destroyed.

**Releasing Information about Winners**

Private companies sometimes approach the STC Office or Competition Manager for a list of award winners. Often this is for job recruitment purposes. The STC Office does not formally release information about its International Summit Awards winners to companies and recommends the same policy at the community level. Your local companies will not appreciate having their award winners approached for jobs elsewhere based on information supplied to them by STC!

List award winners in your Awards event program, in your newsletter, and on your website following the Awards event to recognize them. This is a good time to begin your calls for entries and judges for the next year’s competition.
Preparing for the Awards Event

Communities celebrate their competition winners in different ways. Some hold an Awards event along with New Officer Inductions or announce awards at a community meeting. Celebrations like this are an opportunity to be creative, publicly recognize the achievements of the winners, and gain professional credibility. For example, encourage winners to invite their managers to attend the event.

Plan your date to avoid civil and religious holidays, popular vacation periods, and major sports, cultural, or other local area events. If you must schedule it during a time when bad weather is common, publish the telephone number for a “bad weather” recorded message in case the event is canceled at the last minute.

Creating Certificates and Ordering Plaques

Awards can take many forms: certificates, trophies, plaques, gifts. What you decide to do likely depends on how much money you want to spend.

Decisions about awards include:

- Plaque design – artwork and wording
- Will plaque designs be the same for all levels?
- Will you present awards to each individual contributor per winning entry? (Limit awards to three for any one entry.)
- Will you give plaques AND certificates to top winners?
- Will you allow submitters to order additional plaques? This can be a good source of income. Establish cost and a deadline for accepting requests. Include this offer in the notification emails to submitters and again at the Awards event.
- How will you get their awards to winners who do not attend the Awards event?

Logistical Considerations

- Will any special guests be invited, such as STC Officers, directors, corporate sponsor representatives, previous Best of Show winners?
- Will there be a head table and who should sit at it?
- Have a table to display STC and community materials (such as your community newsletter and STC brochures), because you will probably have people attend who are not STC members.
Creating Program Brochure and List of Award Winners

List winners, judges, and volunteers
A printed program for the event recognizes everyone involved in the competition and fits nicely into an individual’s sample set or portfolio as evidence of recognition or participation. Typical contents include:

- Agenda for the event
- Names of the competition volunteers
- Names of the judges
- Best of Show winner (name, category, entry title)
- List of all other winners (name, category, entry title) by award level
- Recognition of individuals and organizations who donated services, equipment, or other help

Provide the newsletter editor with information about the Awards event. Name all the winners and then send a copy of this newsletter to all submitters.

Announce your celebration with all of the fanfare it deserves! Send formal invitations to winners and judges. Send announcements about the awards and Awards event to local newspapers. Start talking about the celebration at community meetings leading up to the event.

Publish a list of award winners, including title, category, and contributor names, as soon as possible after the conclusion of your Competition or Awards event.

Invitations
Include date, time, place, cost, deadline for response, and contact for response.

Mail invitations at least three weeks before the reply deadline, especially if prepayment is required. Many communities have seen increased attendance by including the Awards event invitation with the notification of judging results.

Presenting Awards
An awards presentation is a special occasion. Speaking or presenting in public can be fun, or it can be scary. The main objectives when presenting an award are to:

- Present the award with dignity and grace.
- Acknowledge the recipient’s contributions.

Toastmasters International provides advice on presenting an award that can help you prepare. See Tips for Special Occasions on the Toastmasters website.

You might choose to prepare a speech that has all the highlights of the evening. See Appendix K, Competition Speech for Awards Event for a sample speech.
**Recognition**

Expressing your appreciation for donated time and hard work is well worth the effort—you want your volunteers and judges to come back next year!

Official tokens of appreciation are always welcome. Certificates are often sufficient and can be produced inexpensively. You can also recognize volunteers and judges in your newsletter and in the program for the Awards event. Consider also sending out press releases.

Send appreciation letters to the employers (supervisors, managers) of all volunteers and judges. For those who may be unemployed or are independent contractors/consultants, write a letter of recommendation or testimonial letter for these individuals to use for their own purposes.
Submitting a Final Financial Report

The final task of the Competition committee is to submit a final financial report to the community Administrative Council outlining the following information:

- Expenses
- Revenue
- Revenue – Expenses
- Number of entries by category with total amount of fees received
- Number of entries eligible for the International Summit Awards


Community competitions are required to provide a report to the STC Office as part of their fiscal report.

The community treasurer will incorporate the report into the year-end financial report sent to STC.

Appendices

The following appendices provide sample documents and other reference material as described throughout this handbook.
## A. Competition Manager Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>June</strong></td>
<td>Assemble committee, make initial decisions (including entry fees)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prepare initial budget and submit to Administrative Council for approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Receive email from STC Office regarding Competition materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Send STC Office your community’s competition contact info</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Find exchange community (optional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Determine competition dates (get agreement with exchange community)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Schedule Judges Training and Consensus Judging sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create and distribute Call for Entries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Update community website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>July</strong></td>
<td>Recruit judges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>August</strong></td>
<td>Submit competition article to newsletter (Call for Entries, Call for Judges)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>September</strong></td>
<td>Announce Call for Entries and Call for Judges at community meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Submit competition article to newsletter (Call for Judges)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Call for Entries deadline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>October</strong></td>
<td>Ship entries to exchange community with a spreadsheet of all entries sent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Receive entries from exchange community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sort and catalog entries received from exchange community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create packets for Judges Training session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conduct judges training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distribute entries to judges during training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Email judges to review key points from Judges Training session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Email judges with reminder about deadline and how to return entries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>November</strong></td>
<td>Complete judging of entries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assemble Best of Show judges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conduct Consensus Judging session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Catalog award level for exchange community entries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Judges’ entry assessment forms deadline (soft copy only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ship entries back to exchange community with a copy of awards spreadsheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Send judges’ entry assessment forms electronically to exchange community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Receive entries from exchange community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Receive entry assessment forms electronically from exchange community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>December</strong></td>
<td>Notify all submitters of results (include entry assessment forms)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create certificates of appreciation for judges and corporate sponsors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create certificates for winners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Order awards for award winners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>January</strong></td>
<td>Prepare for Awards event to recognize submitters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prepare financial summary and submit to community Administrative Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>February</strong></td>
<td>Conduct a lessons-learned meeting with the Competition committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>March-May</strong></td>
<td>Update competition manual and all collateral documents for next Competition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B. Final Competition Report

DATE: February 10, 2010
TO: LSC Administrative Council
FROM: Jackie Damrak, Competitions Chair
SUBJECT: 2009-2010 Competitions FINAL Summary Report

The STC Lone Star Community (LSC) continues its tradition of exchanging our competition entries. This year, we exchanged entries with the Twin Cities STC (TC) chapter in Minnesota.

Entry Statistics
Both chapters had a lighter-than-normal submission rate this year with LSC receiving a total of 17 entries and TC receiving 8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competition</th>
<th>LSC</th>
<th>TC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online Communications</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Publications</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Art</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Awards Given
Awards this were equally distributed by both chapters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># of Awards</th>
<th>No Award</th>
<th>Merit</th>
<th>Excellence</th>
<th>Distinguished</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LSC to TC</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC to LSC</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Awards by competition category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competition</th>
<th>LSC to TC</th>
<th>TC to LSC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online Communications</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Publications</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Art</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LSC Entries sent to STC International Competitions
LSC sent its four Excellence entries (1 Online Communication, 3 Technical Publications) to the STC International Competitions at a total cost of $600 ($150 per entry).

Financial Review
We collected a total of $1,650.00 with expenditures of $935.69, leaving a profit of $714.31. Full financial details are provided are shown here.
C. Publicity and Communications Materials

Press Release: Community Awards

Lone Star Community Announces Technical Communications Awards

Annual Society Event Honors Local Technical Communications Professionals

Dallas, Texas—January 16, 2009 — The Fire Protections Publications (FPP) Team from Oklahoma State University accepted the "Best in Show" award at Annual Awards Banquet of the Lone Star Community (LSC) of the Society of Technical Communications (STC) in Dallas, Texas. The name of the FPP entry is the "Emergency Management Handbook."

Ms. Kathryn Poe, Associate Fellow and Past President of the LSC was named the 2009 recipient of the Binion Amerson Leadership Award—an annual citation that recognizes enthusiastic dedication, willingness to accept challenging goals, and inspiring leadership in service to the Lone Star Community.

The Lone Star Community honored the achievements of local technical communications professionals in three categories: Technical Art, Technical Publications and Online Publications. Of the 34 entries received, 52% received an award with the breakdown as follows:

- 20% (seven) received an award of Merit
- 17% (six) received an award of Excellence
- 14% (five) received an award of Distinguished

The entries are judged by professional peers in another community and this year, the LSC exchanged entries with the Twin Cities Community in Minnesota. All entries are judged on criteria defined by the Society for Technical Communication for the International Competition and any entry receiving an award of Excellence of Distinguished is forward to the International Competition.

Jeff Portney, Senior Editor for the FPP said, "We're really honored to be recognized for the hard work that we poured into this labor of love." His sentiments were echoed by another Senior Editor, Clint Clausing, "We're moving forward—we completely redid it, making it more modern. It should become a better flagship book for us."

Additionally, attendees had an opportunity to visit with and view the work of the award-winning Competitions entries, as well as meet the 2008 Winter Scholarship recipient and the 2009 Binion Amerson Leadership Award (BALA) recipient.

Our 2008 Winter Scholarship recipient, Wendy Sparks from Austin Community College, will receive a $500 scholarship for each of the next two. LSC also recognized Tyler Evans, an Art Institute of Dallas graduate, who designed the chapter's new logo.
The Lone Star Community professional competition is held annually and is open to any technical communication professional or team. There are twelve categories for technical art entries, six for technical publications and four for online communications. Each entry is judged by at least three judges using consistent criteria. For many entries, the real reward is the feedback from the judges which can aid a group or team in improving their work.

One of the winners of an award of Distinguished, Karen Mulholland, noted that she “always checks the judges criteria first to make sure that she is not missing anything when she creates her work.” It seems to pay off for her, as she just won her third award. “I’m deeply honored that the judges found my work of such high quality.”

Winners of the Distinguished Awards are:

**Technical Publications**

**Category:** Books
The Emergency Management Handbook
Fire Protection Publications
Oklahoma State University

**Category:** Reference Materials
Essentials of Fire Fighter Learning Pocket
Fire Protection Publications
Oklahoma State University

Utopia Product Documentation for Version3.5
Karen Mulholland

**Online Communications**

**Category:** Tutorials / Training
Nokia N95 Learning
Julie Jeffery, Nokia
Mlink Technologies

Product Training Management System
Thomson Reuter’s Tax & Accounting Research
Thomson Reuters

A complete list of all of the winners is attached.

**About STC and the Lone Star Community**

The Society for Technical Communication (STC) is an individual membership organization dedicated to advancing the arts and sciences of technical communication. It is the largest organization of its type in the world. Its 18,000 members include technical writers and editors, content developers, documentation specialists, technical illustrators, instructional designers, academics, information architects, usability and human factors professionals, visual designers, Web designers and developers, and translators–anyone whose work makes technical information available to those who need it.
(used with permission)

The Lone Star Community (LSC), one of the larger STC communities in the U.S., received the Award of Distinction in the international STC Community Achievement competition for 2006-2007. The Lone Star Community received the Distinguished Community Achievement Award in 2008, 2007, 2006, 2004, and 2003. Drawing over 275 members from all over the Dallas-Fort Worth area, the LSC promotes professional growth through meetings, workshops, seminars, conferences, mentoring, and networking. For more information about the STC Lone Star Community, visit their website at www.stc-dfw.org.

For more information:
Louellen Coker
PR Manager, STC Lone Star Community
P.O. Box 515065
Dallas, Texas 75251-5065
Phone: 972-965-1574
Email: PublicRelations@stc-dfw.org
Website: www.stc-dfw.org

###

continued
2008-2009 Competition Award Winners

Awards of Merit

* Nokia E71 Demo Guide
  Julie Jeffery, Nokia
* MLink Technologies

* From the Ground Up
  Libby Mazur, Sarah McDonald, Sam Iannuzzi, John Jones, Mike Cantu, Leah
  Schooling
* Southwest Airlines

* Reducing Crime with Wireless Video Surveillance Systems
  Kristin Kirkham
* BearCom Wireless

* Lennox Commercial Stategos Rooftop Unit
  * Product Line Marketing Presentation
  Bobby DiFulgentiz, Lennox Commercial
  * MLink Technologies

* www.thebrickhouse.com
* Content Solutions

* Thomson Reuters Research and Guidence Billing Support Website
  Scott Henley, Ron Shockley, Lisa Holmes
* Thomson Reuters

* Livin’ In a Lineman’s World CD Package
  * Content Solutions

Awards of Excellence

“Opportunity Knocks: Selling our Services to the World” Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas 2007 Annual Report
* Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas
Press Release: Individual Awards

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Content Solutions News Release

For Immediate Release

For Details, Contact:
Louellen S. Coker
Publications Architect, Owner
840-394-9407, x 327
lcoker@yourcontentsolutions.com

Content Solutions receive three Awards of Excellence

Denton, Texas—January 16, 2007: Content Solutions received three Awards of Excellence from the Lone Star Community of the Society for Technical Communication (LSC-STA) at their January 13 Awards Ceremony. Louellen S. Coker, owner of Content Solutions, was on hand to accept the following awards:

- Award of Excellence in Technical Publications - Magazine for Bryan Texas Utilities Texas Co-op Power Magazine Local Pages Insert

When asked about her win, Mrs. Coker responded, “I was pleased to learn that I received these awards. It is an honor to have my work recognized by my professional peers who have held my work up against rigorous standards. I’ve participated in STC competitions since 2001 as both an entrant and a judge. While I am very proud of the awards I’ve won, I am most appreciative of the critiques I have received from the judges’ thorough evaluations of my entries. Their input allows me to improve the quality of the product I create as I help my clients find the perfect solutions to their content needs.”

LSC President, Malt Haughton stated, “We had some wonderful entries this year, and I am extremely impressed with the winners. The LSC Competitions are a great way to learn about and appreciate what other technical communications professionals are doing in the areas of technical art, technical publications, and online documentation.”

The LSC’s annual competition for technical communication and online publications rates entries on four factors: writing, graphics, copyediting, and overall integration. All factors are judged in the context of the purpose, content, and organization of the document.

About Content Solutions

Content Solutions is a full service publications business that meets the content needs of clients by using technical, creative, and communication skills to create award-winning publications that are innovative, engaging, and purposeful. Just a few of the publications we create include annual reports, newsletters, presentations, training materials and web content. Content Solutions is a certified Woman-Owned Business Enterprise (certified by the Women’s Business Council-Southwest), a certifying affiliate of Women’s Business Enterprise National Council and Historically Underutilized Business (certified by the Texas Building and Procurement Commission). For more information about Content Solutions, visit their website at www.yourcontentsolutions.com.

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Denton, TX 76209
lcoker@yourcontentsolutions.com
www.yourcontentsolutions.com
voice: 840-394-9407
text: 840-394-9407

continued
Content Solutions

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About Society for Technical Communication and the Lone Star Community

The Society for Technical Communication (STC) is the world’s largest professional organization dedicated to advancing the arts and sciences of technical communication. Its 35,000 members include technical writers, editors, graphic designers, videographers, multimedia artists, web and Intranet information designers, and translators. Members make technical information understandable and available to those who need it.

The Lone Star Community (LSC), one of the largest and most active STC communities in the U.S., received the Distinguished Chapter of the Year award for 2003-2004. Drawing over 400 members from all over the Dallas-Fort Worth, the LSC promotes professional growth through meetings, workshops, seminars, conferences, mentoring, and networking. For more information about the STC Lone Star Community, visit their website at www.stc-dfw.org

###
D. Social Media Communication Suggestions

This appendix provides social media communication tools and suggestions to consider during Competition activities. Using social media is another way of communicating events and activities, such as your community Competition and the International Summit Awards, to your members, potential supporters, and entrants.

Conference call options

- http://www.accuconference.com/
- http://www.freeconference.com/
- http://www.freeconferencecall.com
- http://www.skype.com

File-sharing options (to distribute large online files)

- http://www.hightail.com/
- http://www.sendspace.com/
- https://www.dropbox.com/

Twitter

Consider using Twitter (http://twitter.com) for your Call for Entries with links to your community website. Twitter is a great social media tool to use for quick communications. Besides the twitter tags mentioned below, you may want to consider creating year-specific hashtags for your community competition.

Existing twitter tags that you may find useful include:

1. STC Twitter hashtags
   - #stc (STC hashtag)
   - #stccomp (STC competition hashtag)

2. STC Community hashtag
   - #stcpmc (STC Philadelphia Metro community)

3. Other hashtags
   - #techcomm
   - #techwriter
   - #awards
**Twitter applications**

Consider using a Twitter application to schedule tweets, save searches, and follow other competitions. Free Twitter applications that provide this functionality include TweetDeck ([http://www.tweetdeck.com](http://www.tweetdeck.com)) and HootSuite ([http://hootsuite.com](http://hootsuite.com)).

Work with your Publicity/Communication Manager to ensure a logical and strategic Twitter strategy and schedule.

**Blogs**

Create a community Competition blog and link it to your community website. Tweet the URL for your blog entries.

**LinkedIn groups**

Use LinkedIn to publicize your local or regional community competition.

Encourage your Competition committee members to update their profile status with Competition communication. For example, “... is announcing that the STC Philadelphia Metro Community Call for Entries in the 2014 Technical Communication Competition is open. [www.stcpmc.org](http://www.stcpmc.org)” when the Call for Entries is open.

In addition, the Competition Managers can update their LinkedIn status to “is preparing for the STC Philadelphia Metro Judging Training session on Oct 12. Do you want to enter the competition or serve as a judge?”

Members of LinkedIn groups can post discussions and create events, so encourage your Publicity/Communication Manager to join the appropriate and related groups. Post discussions and create events (for example, Awards event) to LinkedIn groups as appropriate, including:

- Local community or region
- Society for Technical Communication
- Related technical communication venues
- Usability
- Related professional organizations

Be sure to follow the discussions and promptly respond to comments. Send messages to LinkedIn members that reply to discussions. Also, consider using LinkedIn to see what companies on LinkedIn hire technical communicators (who is hiring, who might be interested in entering competitions, or sponsoring competitions).
## E. Entries Manager Checklist

### Working with Community Competition Entries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Create a master Competition spreadsheet (Excel) to record all required entry information by tracking:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Entry number</strong> if desired (assign sequentially starting with initials for each category, for example, INF-01f or Informational Entry #1, INSTR-01 for Instructional Entry #1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Category Name</strong> (Informational Materials, Instructional Materials, Promotional Materials, User Support Materials)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Entry Title</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o For online entries: operating system, minimum configuration, any required software, for Web entries login name and password, if required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>o For hardcopy entries: number of pages or number of books</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Submitter's name and address</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Email</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Phone and Fax numbers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Contributor names and Member Status</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Comments</strong> (for example, Check number and amount)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Receive the entries by validating that you have received:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- <strong>Four copies</strong> of the entry and the entry submission form (Note: If only one submission form was provided, make copies to attach to the other entries.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- A completed Entry Form (no missing information)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Correct entry fee made payable to “Your Community name Competition” (for checks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Log entries:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- In your spreadsheet: Assign the entry an entry number.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- On the entry form: Write the entry number in the correct place.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- On the entry: Attach a completed entry form with entry number.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Acknowledge receipt of entries by emailing the submitter that the entry has been received.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. <strong>Exchange Communities only.</strong> Prepare entries for shipment to exchange community. Include a copy of your master Competition spreadsheet or a Packing List for the exchange community to use. (Note: Retain the remaining copies as your master copy.)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Working with Exchange Community Entries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Receive entries from the exchange community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Verify that the entries received match what the exchange community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Catalog exchange community entries in your Competition spreadsheet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(helpful for tracking award levels)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Distribute three copies of each entry to the Judging Manager</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Helping During Judges Training and Consensus Judging Sessions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>Judges Training Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Help Judging Manager distribute entries to judges (as needed)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Consensus Judging Task

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Collect completely judged entries from the Judging Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Enter award level into the master Competition spreadsheet on the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>appropriate Competition worksheet for the exchange community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Pack entries for shipping back to the exchange community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Email the master Competition spreadsheet to the Judging Manager to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>verify the award level for each entry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. After each Judging Manager verifies the award levels, email a copy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of the master Competition spreadsheet and return judged entries to the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>exchange community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Handling Award Notifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Enter award levels into the master Competition spreadsheet on the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>appropriate competition worksheet, if not done by the exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>community. If the exchange community entered award levels in the master</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Competition spreadsheet, verify that each entry sent received an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>award level assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Prepare an email notifying all submitters of their individual results,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>include the PDF of the entry assessment forms (PDF is preferred for</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>data integrity reasons) and the guidelines for sending their entry, if</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>qualified, on to the STC International Summit Awards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Provide award information for use in preparing the Awards event</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Handle disposition of remaining entries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Prepare a final report for the Competition Manager (see Appendix L,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Final Financial Report)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
F. Setting Up and Running a Competition

Setting up and running a Competition requires patience and lots of up-front work.

Use this checklist to gain an understanding of how to begin the competition year so that by the end of the year you are enjoying the success of your competition with as little stress as possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Select Competition Managers and other committee members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Promote the Competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Prepare initial Competition budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Prepare and distribute Call for Entries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. Receive and organize entries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. Recruit and train judges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. Distribute entries to judges for independent assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. Notify submitters of results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. Hold Awards event, which includes:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Prepare programs and certificates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Order awards for recipients</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Present awards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. Submit final budget report to Administrative Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11. Conduct a lessons-learned session with all the competition managers and make notes of what worked well, what needs improvement, and identify the steps for improvement. (Note: Consider including past Competition Managers to provide best practices and advice.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. Keep detailed files or store in a Google/Yahoo group to share with future Competition managers to ensure successful future competitions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
G. Call for Entries

2010 Competitions
Call for Entries

Have you or your company produced technical communication products that you think are worthy of awards? Would you like your work to be recognized by your peers? This call for entries is your invitation to participate in the following 2010 Society for Technical Communication (STC) competition in any of four categories:

- Informational Materials
- Instructional Materials
- Promotional Materials
- User Support Materials

Who is eligible?
Anyone is eligible to submit entries. You do not have to be a member of STC. You may enter work as an individual or on behalf of a colleague or subordinate.

What can be entered?
- Entries in all categories must contain sufficient technical, scientific, medical, or similar content to quality as technical communication.
- Entries must have been produced or substantially revised within 24 months preceding September 1 of the current year.
- Entries must have been originally prepared for and accepted for publication by a client, employer, or publisher.
- Entries are subject to all restrictions listed in the “General Information and Competition Rules” document.

What awards are given?
At the local level, three levels of recognition are awarded in each competition category. These awards, in descending order, are:

- Distinguished Technical Communication (DTC)
- Excellence
- Merit

One Best of Show award is presented for each competition.

Excellence, DTC and Best of Show entries are eligible for submission to the STC’s international competitions.

IMPORTANT: Winners will need to complete the online international Competition Entry Form and make payment to STC by mail by check or online using credit card or PayPal.

Deadlines, Fees, and Where to Submit
Deadline: September XX, 2010
(No late entries accepted)

Download Entry Form: <INSERT URL>

Entry fee:
- $100 for STC members
- $150 for non-STC members
- $25 for students

IMPORTANT:
1. Late entries WILL NOT be accepted.
2. Entry fee must be paid for each entry submitted. If you enter more than one competition, you must pay a separate fee for each entry.
3. Submissions with incomplete entry forms will be disqualified from the competition.

Submit entries to:
FIRST NAME LAST NAME
Competitions Manager
ADDRESS
CITY, STATE 75267
Email:
Cell: XXX-XXX-XXXX (7 a.m. – 9 p.m., M-F)
H. Judging Consensus Summary

Judge Numbers:

To the Entrant: This form presents the final opinions of the FTCC judging team that evaluated your entry. It was completed following the consensus judging discussion on the publication; therefore, the opinions expressed here may differ from those contained in the evaluation forms prepared by individual judges prior to consensus judging.

We hope that this summary, together with the three individual sets of comments, will be helpful in pointing out both the strengths of and suggestions for improvement for your entry.

The significant strengths of this entry are as follows:

Suggestions for improvement for this entry include the following:

The judging team makes the following recommendation with respect to this entry (Place an X to the left of the applicable description):

- Distinction
- Excellence
- Merit
- No Award
I. Best of Show Recommendation

STC Community of the Stars
2014 Competition
Best of Show Recommendation

Team # ____

Entry: ________________________________________________________________

Strengths: ____________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
J. Email Notification of Awards

Award Winner

---

From: Jackie Damrau [damrau3@tmail.net]
To: diana.beebe@convergys.com
Cc: 
Subject: Award Winner - LSC Competitions


All entries that received an Excellence or Distinguished will be sent on to the International Competitions.

Awards Banquet. Join us at the Lone Star Community’s Annual Awards Banquet to celebrate your award with all the other Competition winners. You’ll find the judging evaluations for your entry in the attached Zip file.

Details:
- Date: January 15, 2009
- Location: Crowne-Plaza North
- Time: 6:15-9:00pm

All entries will be available after the Awards Banquet for you to collect. Entries not picked up will be donated to a local university technical writing program or will be properly recycled.

Participate in a Poster Session. We are inviting all Competition entrants to showcase their entry by displaying it in a poster session before the Awards Banquet festivities begin. We feel that this will give you an opportunity to share your entry with others so that they can learn about your submission.

Respond by January 10th to competitions@stc-dfw.org if you wish to participate in the Poster Session so we can ensure that you have an area to set up your display.

Again, congratulations! We look forward to celebrating with you at the 2009 Annual Awards Banquet.

Dr. Jackie Damrau, STC Fellow
Manager, LSC Competitions
cell: 214-505-0100
e-mail: competitions@stc-dfw.org
Non-Winner

From: Jackie Damrau damrau3@aol.com
To: cwest@themosaiccompany.com
Cc: 
Subject: Results from LSC Competitions

Attachments: CC 002.zip (351KB)

Thank you for entering the 2008 Lone Star Community Competitions. Your entry, NXT Energy CARE Help, did not win an award.

You will find the judging comments for your entry are in the attached Zip file. We know that you will want to use this feedback to improve your entry. Consider entering this entry or a different one in the 2009 Lone Star Community Competitions!

Awards Banquet. We invite you to join us at the Lone Star Community's Annual Awards Banquet to celebrate with the Competition winners.

Details:
Date: January 15, 2009
Location: Crowne-Plaza North
Time: 6:15-9:03pm

All entries will be available at the Awards Banquet for you to collect. Entries not picked up will be donated to a local university technical writing program or will be properly recycled.

Participate in a Poster Session. We are inviting all Competition entrants to showcase their entry by displaying it in a poster session before the Awards Banquet festivities begin. We feel that this will give you an opportunity to share your entry with others so that they can learn about your submission.

Respond by January 10th to competitions@stc-dfw.org if you wish to participate in the Poster Session so we can ensure that you have an area to set up your display.

Again, thank you for entering this year's Competition! We look forward to seeing you at the 2009 Annual Awards Banquet.

Dr. Jackie Damrau, STC Fellow
Manager, LSC Competitions
cell: 214-505-0100
e-mail: competitions@stc-dfw.org
WELCOME...

Tonight, we honor our Competition entrants, judges, and award recipients for the 20-20 competition. Each year technical communication professionals in the area gather the best samples of their work and submit them for assessment and judging by their peers.

The continues its tradition of exchanging our entries with another community. This year, we exchanged entries with the community in .

This year we had 34 entries from our community:

- 11 Informational Materials
- 22 User Support Materials
- 1 Promotional Materials
- **Total** – 18 or 52% of total entries are receiving awards.
- **Merit** – 7 or 20% received an award of Merit
- **Excellence** – 6 or 17% received an award of Excellence
- **Distinguished** – 5 or 14% received awards of Distinction

Accordingly, we judged 37 entries for . Of these,

- **Total** - 26 or 70% of total entries are receiving awards.
- **Merit** – 14 or 37% received an award of Merit
- **Excellence** – 5 or 13% received an award of Excellence
- **Distinguished** – 7 or 18% received awards of Distinction

Thank Yous

It is with pleasure that I acknowledge those who worked to make this year’s competition a success. I was very fortunate to work with an excellent team this year.

- **, Online Communications**
- **CORPORATE SPONSORS:**
  - and for hosting Judges’ Training Day
  - and for hosting Consensus Day
- **JUDGES (please stand)**
- **All of our participants**

Now, for the awards. After all, that’s why we’re here tonight.
EVERYONE’S A WINNER
Not everyone who submitted an entry is going to receive an award tonight, but this is important—everybody who entered this year is a winner, a real winner.

Submitting your best work to be inspected by your peers is one of the more intense pressure moments we face. Yet, just entering speaks volumes about your professionalism and you commitment to improving your work.

Everybody who entered this year, please stand up.
Let’s give them all a big hand.

PARADE OF STARS
Before we get to the awards, I’d like to start with our Parade of Stars.
The last few years we have selected Distinguished award recipients to step up and give a five-minute overview of their entry. This year we’re doing the same thing, but we’ve selected from all the award recipients. Tonight, we have two presentations for you:
First is of with an overview of her team’s winning entry,
Next to speak is of , to share with us her team’s winning entry,

AWARDS
Promotional Materials Awards – In the Promotional Materials category, we had a single entry, which won an award. ’s entry, _______________, received an Award of ____________, please join me to receive your award!

User Support Materials – could not be here this evening to celebrate with us. I’d like to invite , our First Vice President, to present the awards for User Support Materials on ‘s behalf.

Informational Materials – I’ll be presenting these awards with ‘s assistance.

BEST OF SHOW AWARD
We have one last award—the Best of Show award. This will be presented by Lone Star’s newest Fellow or Associate Fellow, ”.
## L. Final Financial Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Expense</th>
<th>Revenue</th>
<th>Rev-Exp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AV Equipment &amp; PC Rental</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Competition Fees</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$1,430.00</td>
<td>-1,430.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awards, gifts, prizes</td>
<td>$500.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food</td>
<td>$200.00</td>
<td>$143.74</td>
<td>-143.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supplies</td>
<td>$300.00</td>
<td>$132.49</td>
<td>-132.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage &amp; Shipping</td>
<td>$900.00</td>
<td>$21.59</td>
<td>-21.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing</td>
<td>$1,250.00</td>
<td>$31.96</td>
<td>-31.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel, Meals &amp; Tip</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
<td>$776.75</td>
<td>-$776.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue – Banquet</td>
<td>$3,500.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenue – Competition Fees</td>
<td></td>
<td>$2,525.00</td>
<td>2,525.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>3,400.00</td>
<td>3,500.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th># of Entries</th>
<th>Fees Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>$3,200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tech Alias</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>$2,125.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tech Art</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>TOTAL $3,525.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### International Competition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>780 Excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>600 Distinguished 1430</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Special Thanks

1. 46.75 46.75 Best of Show
2. 40.5 243 Distinguished
3. 5 25 Imaging fee 206.75 Grand Total