

SuperScript is the official newsletter of the Alberta Community of the Society for Technical Communication and is published 10 times a year. The editors welcome submissions and advertising that will be of interest to our members. If you have an idea for an article or if you have an advertising enquiry, please contact us.



## President's Message

*Jessie Channey, President*

The holiday season is upon us and surely this year we'll be getting a white Christmas all across Canada.

STC Alberta started December off with Mount Royal College's Portfolio Show at Art Central in downtown Calgary. On December 3, Carolyn Yates, Public Relations Coordinator, and I attended the show to check out the new talent and to spread the word on STC. We spoke with the students and handed out STC Alberta brochures and invitations for our annual Pub Night in January. Mark your calendars for January 21 at Brewster's and look for the official invitation in your inbox soon. [Read more ...](#)

## New Heights news

*Mellissa Ruryk, New Heights Coordinator*

New Heights will be held **Friday April 17, 2009** at the Sheraton Cavalier hotel (32nd Ave. NE & Barlow Trail in Calgary – free parking!!) and will be open to STC-AB members only. We have a cap on attendees of 25 people and are confident we will have no problem filling the seminar in advance of the early bird deadline, February 27, 2009. The seminar title is **Using Flare as a CMS to single source Help with DITA**. This will be a hands-on, practical session with Neil Perlin of Hyperword Services, from Tewksbury, Massachusetts presenting. [Read more ...](#)

## DITA users group off and running

*Mellissa Ruryk, New Heights Coordinator*

The Calgary DITA Users Group met for the first time on December 1 and has plans for our second meeting on Monday, January 12. Please contact Mellissa at [mellissa.ruryk@entero.com](mailto:mellissa.ruryk@entero.com) for more information.

## February program night – demonstration of 'Dr. Explain'

*Rosalinda Hernandez, Program Coordinator*

Dr.Explain is an automated help authoring tool for creating RTF files, CHM files, HTML help, on-line manuals, printable documentation, and help files for software applications (including Java and Flash applications) almost automatically. Come to program night, February 18 to see Craig Prichard demonstrate how to utilize this product for your help-ware needs. Come and check out

the tutorial. You may win a copy of the advanced license for a door prize. [Read more ...](#)

## Salary survey complete!

*Helen Landsell, Salary Survey Coordinator*

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Annual Salary Survey. We received over one hundred and twenty responses. The results of the survey will be issued in January, 2009. Watch for it!

## Free training webinars

*Sharon Burton, former STC Chapter President*

MadCap Software is offering free tool-independent webinars. In this economy, everyone needs to make sure their skills are up to date and they're current on the latest topics. [Read more ...](#)

## It's time to renew your membership!

*Susan Burton, CAE, STC Executive Director*

Use the convenience of the STC website to renew your membership for 2009 any time between now and the end of December. Renewing online with your credit card is easy and fast. (Or, if you prefer, you can download a PDF invoice from the website and pay by check through the mail.) As you renew, please take a moment to review your member record to update your address or to adjust your preferences.

If it's been a while since you visited our website ([www.stc.org](http://www.stc.org)), I invite you to stop by to learn more about the new benefits added this year and the numerous other advantages that come with membership, many of which are available only to members.

In tough economic times like these, it's good to know you can count on your association to continue to increase the value of your membership. We want you to consider STC your professional home.

## Newsletter news

Our Vice President, Serene Cheung has graciously offered to take the SuperScript reins beginning with our next issue, which will come out in February. Please welcome Serene in this new (additional) role!

There is no January issue, so the next SuperScript deadline is February 13. Please send your submissions to [newsletter@stc-alberta.org](mailto:newsletter@stc-alberta.org).

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The Alberta Chapter newsletter, *SuperScript*, is published ten times a year, with double issues in December/January and July/August. *SuperScript* presents feature articles from inside the Chapter and out, program and events calendar, profiles, tips and tricks to improve your skills, and important contact information. [Contact our SuperScript Editor](#), with any comments, stories, technical tips, book reviews, advertisements, or questions. [>> Previous editions.](#)

## December 2008

### President's Message

*Jessie Channey, President, STC Alberta*

The holiday season is upon us and surely this year we'll be getting a white Christmas all across Canada. STC Alberta started December off with Mount Royal College's Portfolio Show at Art Central in downtown Calgary. On December 3, Carolyn Yates, Public Relations Coordinator, and I attended the show to check out the new talent and to spread the word on STC. We spoke with the students and handed out STC Alberta brochures and invitations for our annual Pub Night in January. Mark your calendars for January 19 at Brewster's and look for the official invitation in your inbox soon.

In addition to [New Heights](#) in April, the new year will offer a variety of programs; we have a new member of STC Alberta, a Mount Royal College instructor, and a Calgary employer as presenters. See the [Programs page](#) for more information.

On behalf of the Executive Council, have a safe and happy holiday season and we'll see you in the new year!

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### Free training webinars

*Sharon Burton, former STC Chapter President*

MadCap Software is offering free tool-independent webinars. In this economy, everyone needs to make sure their skills are up to date and they're current on the latest topics.

Towards that end, MadCap software is running a series of free webinars in first quarter '09. All but one are tool-independent. No sales pitches, no product pitches, just free training to help people update themselves. If these are successful, we'll do more.

It's something we can give back to the community that makes us successful.

For more information and to sign up for one or more free webinar, go to <http://madcapsoftware.com/training/webinars.aspx>

If you're interested in presenting a topic in the future, contact [Sharon Burton](#).

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## Seminar Topic : Using Flare as a CMS to single source Help with DITA

[\[How to Register\]](#)



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The price is only \$200 before the early bird deadline and \$250 after that. But with attendance capped at 25, people should make a point of registering early! We will, as usual, offer a 10% discount for STC-AB members who come from out of town to attend. Registration is now open!

**About the Speaker:** Neil Perlin has 29 years of experience in technical communication, with 23 in training, consulting, and development for various online formats and tools including WinHelp, HTML Help, CE Help, JavaHelp, WebHelp, RoboHelp, ForeHelp, and Flare. Neil is a columnist and frequent speaker for STC, IEEE PCS, and other professional groups. He is a member of STC's Boston chapter, the creator and manager of the Beyond the Bleeding Edge stem at STC's annual conference, and an Associate Fellow of STC. Through his company Hyper/Word Services, Neil provides training, consulting, and development for online help and documentation, for various MadCap products, and for structured authoring.

<b>Topic</b>	Information Design
<b>Date</b>	Friday, April 17, 2009
<b>Registration Options</b>	<p><b>Register before February 27 and save \$50 off registration!</b></p> <p>Register early to take advantage of this special discount. After February 27, regular registration rates are in effect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Register and pay online via PayPal</a></li> </ul> <p><b>REGISTER ONLINE AND PAY BY PHONE OR CHEQUE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Fill out our online registration form</a></li> <li>• E-mail the <a href="#">Registration Coordinator</a> for payment instructions</li> </ul> <p><small>*To be eligible for member prices, you must have paid your 2009 STC membership dues and have chosen STC Alberta as your geographical community (chapter).</small></p>

The 2009 New Heights seminar will be held only in Calgary. STC members who live more than 100 km from Calgary will receive a 20% registration discount. Please pay the full amount and e-mail the [Registration Coordinator](#) to request a refund of the difference.

**Cancellation Policy**

- Cancellations received in writing before or on March 21 (three weeks before the seminar) will be refunded the registration fee paid less a \$25 administration fee.
- Cancellations received between March 22 and April 4 will be refunded the registration fee paid less a \$50 administration fee
- Cancellations will not be accepted after April 4.
- Substitutions are permitted, however, if the substitute is not the same membership and geographical category as the original registrant, the difference in cost must be paid

For more information contact [Mellissa Ruryk](#).

Our evening programs offer STC members the opportunity to learn the latest information regarding the theory and practice of technical communication. Take in seminars on topics such as communications theory, Web design, project management, and single-source documentation, led by technical communications experts from our own local community.

Programs are usually in a one to two -hour presentation format. We begin registration at 6:45 PM. Programs run from 7:00 to 8:00 or 9:00 PM.

**Confirmed** program dates are listed on our [Calendar](#). Please note that advance registration is required for our programs and workshops. To register for a program or workshop, use the [online registration form](#).

## February 18 Program: Dr.Explain Demonstration

Dr.Explain ([www.drexplain.com](http://www.drexplain.com)) is an automated help authoring tool for creating RTF files, CHM files, HTML help, on-line manuals, and printable documentation; help files for software applications, including Java and Flash applications, almost automatically. Craig Prichard will demonstrate how to utilize this product for your help ware needs. Come and check out the tutorial. You may win a copy of the advanced license for a door prize.

### Presenter: Craig Prichard

With 25 years' experience as a Developer, Business Analyst, Quality Assurance Specialist and Technical Communications Specialist, Craig Prichard is a Technical Communicator with a strong emphasis on "technical" and a unique communication style. He has worked in Calgary since the early '90's for companies including Jager Industries, The City of Calgary, and WorleyParsons Calgary as well as consulting for companies across North America, Europe and Australia. Craig provides ongoing software beta testing for several companies and has been working with the Dr.Explain development team for over three years.

<b>Date:</b>	Wednesday February 18, 2009
<b>Time:</b>	Doors open at 6:30, Program from 7:00-9:00 pm
<b>Location:</b>	Calgary Technologies Inc. (CTI) (aka Alastair Ross Technology Center), 3553- 31 Street NW Calgary Alberta
	<b>Directions:</b> CTI is located in University Research Park. Parking is free anytime after 5:00 p.m. and there are plenty of spots. Visitor parking is marked, and is close to the front door. If you're taking the LRT, get off at the Brentwood station; the CTI is across the parking lot.

**RSVP:** [Register online](#) or e-mail [registration@stc-alberta.org](mailto:registration@stc-alberta.org)

## Program Fees:

- STC Alberta Members: \$10.00
- Student Members: Free
- Non-members: \$15.00

**Note:** When space is limited, preference is given to STC members.

## Contact

- For more information on programs, e-mail the program coordinator at [program@stc-alberta.org](mailto:program@stc-alberta.org)

## April 15 Program: So you want to be a contractor? Here are some things to consider...

Intrigued by the thought of going independent? In controlling your destiny and schedule? No more office politics, and no more commuting (maybe). It sounds good, and can be-- but what is involved in becoming a contractor? Do you have the psychology for it? The discipline and drive? This presentation discusses key attributes of deciding whether to go independent and how to make it work. Presented by a Technical Communications Entrepreneur with thirty years of experience, this presentation covers:

- Defining yourself - How to determine whether you have the qualities needed to work independently and your strategic definition.
- Selling yourself - How to market and brand yourself, and what not to do.
- Managing yourself - How to manage your operational direction when there is no one to talk to— issues such as sounding boards, family support, and goal setting.
- Psychologically preparing yourself - How becoming independent can eliminate the fear of losing your job.
- Extending yourself - How to keep up in a field that is constantly changing.
- Keeping yourself sane - How to not become overwhelmed by work.

### About the Presenter

Neil has 30 years experience in technical communication, which includes over 20 years in training, consulting, and development for various online formats and tools including WinHelp, JavaHelp, WebHelp, RoboHelp, Flare, and many more. He is a columnist and frequent speaker for the STC, IEEE PCS, and other groups. Neil is a member of the STC Boston chapter, the creator and manager of the Beyond the Bleeding Edge stem at STC's annual conference (1999 - 2006), and an Associate Fellow of the STC.

In addition, Neil is Madcap certified for Flare and Mimic and Adobe certified for RoboHelp and Captivate. He provides training, consulting, and development for online help and documentation, Flare, RoboHelp, Captivate, Mimic, XML, single-sourcing, and structured authoring through Hyper/Word Services of Tewksbury, MA. He can be reached at [nperlin@concentric.net](mailto:nperlin@concentric.net), or visit his website at [www.hyperword.com](http://www.hyperword.com).

[com](#)

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## STC Alberta Activities

Check out our [Programs](#), [Workshops](#), [Coffee Nights](#), [Administrative Meetings](#), and [Social Events](#) for an opportunity to meet & greet, learn a tool or skill, or further develop your technical and writing expertise.

The calendar shown below outlines upcoming Alberta Chapter events. These events, unless otherwise stated, are held in Calgary. Please see our [Edmonton](#) page for a listing of "Upcoming Events" in that city.

## 2009 Upcoming Events

<b>January 21</b>	The Society for Technical Communication Alberta Chapter invites you to come relax and join us in some fun at our <a href="#">pub night</a> . Expect door prizes, appetizers, and more!
<b>February 18</b>	<a href="#">Dr.Explain Demonstration</a> . Dr.Explain is an automated help authoring tool for creating RTF files, CHM files, HTML help, on-line manuals, and printable documentation; help files for software applications, including Java and Flash applications, almost automatically. Craig Prichard will demonstrate how to utilize this product for your help ware needs. <a href="#">Learn more ...</a>
<b>April 15</b>	<b>So you want to be a contractor? Here are some things to consider...</b> Intrigued by the thought of going independent? In controlling your destiny and schedule? No more office politics, and no more commuting (maybe). It sounds good, and can be-- but what is involved in becoming a contractor? Do you have the psychology for it? The discipline and drive? This presentation discusses key attributes of deciding whether to go independent and how to make it work. <a href="#">Learn more ...</a>
<b>April 17</b>	Using Madcap Flare as a Content Management test bed while learning about topic-based, structured writing for single sourcing. Speaker: <b>Neil Perlin</b> <a href="#">Learn more ...</a>

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Throughout the year, STC Alberta presents a wide variety of opportunities to learn, share and to become involved in the field of technical communication. Through workshops, social events and regular meetings we endeavour to:

- Present the latest information regarding theory and practice of

technical communication

- Provide opportunities to learn and experiment with new tools and techniques
- Open up opportunities to network by meeting and exchanging ideas with fellow STC members
- Provide on-the-job training and opportunities to share your skills through our mentoring program.

Register in advance for all Programs and Workshops through our [online registration page](#).

**Note:** When space is limited, preference is given to current STC members.



Last updated: February 01, 2009