

SuperScript

Volume 9, Issue 3



society for technical communication



To Print or Not to Print - as clear as mud!

- Mai Ann Sprung, President

At our Annual General Meeting in June, we asked members for initial feedback about how they'd prefer to have our SuperScript newsletter distributed: print, electronic, or web page. The response showed a 50/50 split between paper and electronic formats.

There is no clear choice.

Here's the case as your Executive Council sees it: the

newsletter is the most important communication medium for our members. It is also the largest single cost of running our chapter. Over half (that's right, 50%) of our annual dues rebate from membership goes toward the printing and mailing of the newsletter. The production and mailout of the newsletter also adds 5-10 hours per month for our

The newsletter is the most important communication medium for our members. It is also the largest single cost of running our chapter.

stalwart (volunteer) Newsletter Editors. These funds (nearly \$5000.00 of this year's budget) could be used to bring in some big name speakers or instructors (Joanne Hackos is one of the first to come to mind for most of us), to help

subsidize programs and workshops in other areas of the province, or to start representing our chapter at region and industry conferences.

The other side of the coin you ask? Preference. Most of us prefer to have a

physical document, something that looks professional and "real". Something that demands your attention on your desk, instead of being easily deleted from your email inbox. Something you can read on the C-Train on the way home. Something that you don't have to print off, retrieve from the printer, and staple together before it feels "real". So, we're putting

the issue to a real vote:

Do you want to receive the SuperScript newsletter electronically (PDF format)?



Please respond with a YES or NO email message to Mai-Ann Sprung (maianns@merak.com) NO LATER THAN OCTOBER 31, 2000.

The Executive Council has agreed not to move forward with this issue unless we receive responses from at least 50% of our membership, 2/3 of which must be YES responses. Results will be announced in the November issue of SuperScript.

Fall Board of Directors Meeting

- Ellen Fenwick, Region 7 Director-Sponsor

The fall STC Board of Directors meeting was held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, September 14-17. It's notably flat land there, which might explain why we covered so much ground! What I have reported below are only the specific items voted upon. Board meetings also include status reports on the chapters in all eight

regions and the on-going programs in the areas of research, academic affairs, Special Interest Groups, professional development, competitions, conferences, communications, and external affairs. If you have questions about or would like more information on these or any other aspects of STC operations, please feel free to contact me.

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INSIDE THE SUPERSCRIPT



A Word from our President

- Mai Ann Sprung

Putting the Alberta Chapter on the STC Map

Congratulations to our Smart 2000 Committee! Thanks to their persistence, the Alberta Chapter has received a \$3000US Merit Grant from STC International. The grant will be used to purchase our own portable display booth and the design of posters and signage to go with the booth. As well as being able to make a professional appearance at the upcoming Smart 2000 Conference in Calgary, we will now have a booth and artwork that can be used in trade shows, conferences, career fairs, and at our own chapter events. Along with their approval of the grant application, the STC Board of Directors has stated that the Alberta chapter is serving as a model for what other chapters may do in the future.

The STC Board of Directors has stated that the Alberta chapter is serving as a model for what other chapters may do in the future.

We also have another chance to make quite a splash within the STC organization. Our Director-Sponsor has asked us

to consider hosting a Region 7 conference within the next couple of years. Acting as hosts to our Region's yearly conference will offer our members some rare opportunities:

- Mix 'n' mingle with STC members from the rest of our region, including such desirable locations as Puget Sound and Willamette Valley (Seattle and Portland). The networking potential at a conference of this size is about as good as it gets.
- Attend presentations from experts in the field – a LOT of fields. Take a look at the program for the current joint Regions 7/8 Conference in Hawaii in October (www.pan-pacific.org).
- Impress your supervisors with your knowledge of directions and trends in your profession. Learn the newest tools and oldest pitfalls of the business – and all of it right here at home!
- Pick up some new skills and valuable experience in the conference organization field of expertise. With an event of this size, we'll need volunteers to help with everything from meal planning to

advertising/PR, and vetting paper/presentation submissions to setup and takedown of the conference site.

Your Executive Council is looking seriously at committing to the 2002 conference, so we want to do some homework with our members. Over the next couple of months, we'll be asking you for feedback on whether or not we can support a conference of this size, since the volunteer commitment will be substantial. But, when balanced with the great career opportunities that hosting the conference offers, we're confident that you'll be ready to get in on the ground floor.

If you have any feedback about either the Smart 2000 Conference or the possibility of hosting the 2002 Region 7 Conference, please contact me (maianns@merak.com). If you are interested in helping out at the Smart 2000 Conference, please contact Fei Min Lorente (lorente@telusplanet.net) or Grant Sorensen (wallis@telusplanet.net).



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Fall Board of Directors Meeting

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Of Particular Interest to Region 7

- Denver, Colorado, was approved as the location for the 52nd STC Annual Conference in 2006. (Note that the Annual Conference will be in Seattle in 2005). Way to go Rocky Mountain Chapter!
- A multichapter loan of \$6,000 USD was given to the Mid-Valley and Willamette Valley Chapters to host the Region 7 conference in Portland, Oregon, in October 2001.
- A merit grant of \$3,000 USD was awarded to the Alberta Chapter to construct a portable display to be used at the all-Canada Smart 2000 Conference and Exposition in November 2000, and at regional professional, educational, and community events.
- A merit grant of \$2,070 USD was awarded to the Alaska Chapter to construct a portable display for use at regional professional, educational, and community events across Alaska.

Committee and Program Updates

- The board gave the STC office go-ahead to conduct a membership drive in the United States using the services of a professional marketing company. The drive is expected to significantly increase awareness of STC.
- STC will become an affiliate member of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), which determines standards for Web-based communication. The annual membership fee is \$5,000 USD.
- The board acknowledged three new chapters approved by the Executive Council over the summer: San Luis Obispo Chapter (Region 8), Texas A&M Student Chapter (Region 5), Netherlands Chapter (Region 4).
- A new Instructional Design & Learning Special Interest Group (SIG) was approved with an initial budget of \$1,900.



- Minneapolis, Minnesota, will be the location of the 53rd STC Annual Conference in 2007.
- Appointments: Freya Winsberg (Phoenix Chapter)—program manager, 50th STC Annual Conference (Dallas, 2003); Edward Carbrey (Boston Chapter)—manager, Jay R. Gould Award Committee; Dale Erickson (Lone Star Chapter)—manager, New Media Delivery Systems Committee; Jon Baker (Boston Chapter)—manager, New Media Publications Committee; Jack Molisani (Los Angeles Chapter)—manager, Chapter and Regional Conferences Committee; Amy Burdan (Hoosier Chapter)—manager, Scientific Communication SIG; Roy Hartshorn (Toronto Chapter)—manager, Canadian Curricula in Professional Development Committee.

- The Conference registration fee for members for the 48th STC Annual Conference in Chicago in 2001 will be \$420 USD. The discounted rate for speakers will remain \$350 USD.

Other Merit Grants and Loans to Chapters

- A merit grant of \$3,000 USD was awarded to the Central New York Chapter to implement a comprehensive revitalization/growth plan.
- A merit grant of \$3,000 USD was awarded to the Mid-South Chapter to build its scholarship fund.
- A merit grant of \$3,000 USD was awarded to the Atlanta Chapter to build its scholarship fund.
- A merit grant of \$1,200 USD was awarded to the Hoosier Chapter to develop the Insight Award to recognize Indiana corporations and organizations that innovatively use the skills and capabilities of their technical communicators.
- A chapter loan of \$3,000 USD

was given to the Los Angeles Chapter to seed a multichapter, self-sustaining technical publications, online communication, and art competition in Southern California.

- A merit grant of \$1,500 USD was awarded to the East Bay Chapter to further develop its Technical Literacy Program.

Budget

STC follows a system of zero-based budgeting, which means that it cannot operate at a deficit. The board approved a budget for FY 2001 of income = \$4,725,250, expenses = \$4,711,849, and net surplus = \$13,401.

Policy Regarding Chapters and Membership Outside of the United States

The following policy statement was adopted by the board:

1. At the Society level, STC does not actively initiate the formation of chapters. STC provides information from the Society office to any individual who inquires about formation of a chapter. The Director-Sponsor of record is copied as a point of contact for the requestor.
2. STC is a member of INTECOM, an international consortium of technical communication societies. As a courtesy to that membership, in response to a chapter formation inquiry from outside the United States, STC will, in the Society office's response, advise the requestor of existing organizations in the requestor's country. The contact person of record of the member INTECOM organization and the STC INTECOM representative will be copied, as applicable.
3. Chapters shall be admitted when 15 members of a given geographic area petition for chapter status in accordance with STC bylaws.
4. Once a chapter is formed, STC will provide an equal level of support with the following exception: In

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Fall Board of Directors Meeting

Continued from Page 3

terms of professional/government relations, STC shall focus on the United States, since the Society is incorporated in the United States.

5. In terms of membership, if there are extraneous costs associated solely with the residence of a member outside the United States, these costs may, as deemed necessary by the board of directors, be passed on to the affected member.

STC Brand

A "brand" is the voice and appearance of an organization that reflect its values. A meaningful brand creates a strong common culture and a shared focus and direction. STC is nearing the end of a year-long branding process. Last May at the STC Annual Conference in Orlando, Florida, then-President Mary Wise announced the new STC mission statement, *Designing the Future of Technical Communication*. This month, the board approved a logo and stationery program for the Society. The participating design firm and the STC office will now prepare the logo and design elements for chapters to use in their electronic and hardcopy materials. These will be introduced to chapters before the end of the year along with guidelines for their use. Another tool for

manifesting a brand is an organization's "story," which is a brief explanation of what the organization stands for, who its members are, and how it views its future. Also this month, the STC board approved the STC story. The story does


This month, the STC board approved the STC story, which serves as the "one-minute elevator message" we can use to briefly explain who and what we are.

not replace the more extensive literature we provide to prospective members and others, but serves as the "one-minute elevator message" we can use to briefly explain who and what we are.

STC Story

Through information sharing and industry leadership, STC helps professionals design effective communication for a technical world. Because technology touches everyone, STC promotes public welfare by encouraging the development of better-educated professionals whose jobs are to make complicated information usable by many.

The organization's growth has mirrored our growing dependence on technology. Initially, STC was primarily made up of engineers who, among other activities, wrote instructions and descriptions of how electrical and mechanical products worked. A profound change took place as the pervasiveness of technology and the need to understand it became an integral part of our everyday lives. With the emergence of the Internet and online communication, our members now focus on supporting all aspects of the rapidly evolving world of technology.

The organization began because those working in the field recognized themselves as professionals with unique training and career issues. Today, STC is nearly 50 years old, with 150 chapters and 25,000 members worldwide. It is the largest organization for technical communicators. STC offers industry leadership and the education, networking, and information required in a world where change is "the way it is." 

EDMONTON

V

October STC Meeting

E

Topic: Information Architecture

N

Presenter: Joanne McLernon, Pangaea Systems

Joanne McLernon is an information architect for Pangaea. Her keen interest in this topic has driven her to study information architecture and understand how it can be used to enhance various business solutions.

T

Date: Thursday, October 12, 2000

Time: 7:30 p.m.

Place: Pangaea Systems Inc.
4th Floor, Empire Building
10080 Jasper Avenue

The Empire Building is between the Baraka Cafe (on the corner) and Scotia Place.

PARKING: Along Jasper Avenue. Also, there's a parkade on Rice Howard Way (just east of Scotia Place) and an underground parkade for Scotia Place (enter from 101 Street).

S



- Angela Wiens, Edmonton Liason

2000 2001 Education Programs Update

- Ken Schatzke

Editorial Responsibilities: An Introduction

In November, the Alberta Chapter of the STC will hold the first of three educational programs for the 2000-2001 year.

Editorial Responsibilities: An Introduction will introduce participants to the basic roles and functions of an editor. Topics include:

- The editorial method
- The editorial voice
- The editorial eye
- Resources for editors
- The question of style
- Copyediting and proofreading

The course will be instructed by Mr. Walter Bruno. Walter is currently the chair of the Technical Writing, Freelance Writing, and Electronic Publishing Programs at Mount Royal College. He has taught several English and communication courses in the

college, including the senior editing course for Technical Writing Program students. Before joining the college, Walter worked as an editor in the publishing industry.




The course will be held on Saturday, November 18, from 9:00 to 1:00 pm in room E167 of Mount Royal College (located at 4825 Richard Road SW). Public parking is available in both the west and east lots of the college. Please remember to bring coins for the parking meters.

The participant fees are as follows:

- Members: \$50
- Student members: \$30
- Non-members: \$85

Pre-registration for this program is mandatory.

Please pre-register through the telephone system (230-6072). We will accept payment of fees at the door. 

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

THE JOBLINE ACCESS CODE IS CHANGING!

Effective November 1, 2000 you will need to enter a new code to access the Jobline.

To get the new code, send an email with your full name (as it is registered with STC) to our Jobline coordinator, Lucinda Yaworski (yaworskl@cadvision.com).

HAVE YOU MOVED?

If your mailing address, phone number, or email address changes, please inform us so you will continue to receive STC communications. You can update your contact information with STC international online at http://www.stc-va.org/fmbr_menu.htm.

Also, please email Leila Meyer at leila.meyer@olantra.com to update your contact information for chapter communications.



Imperial Oil

Do You Have the Write Stuff?

Of course you do! And we want to meet you.

Imperial Oil Resources would like to meet skilled technical writers interested in contract opportunities with Canada's largest oil and gas company.

We're hosting an open house at the International Hotel (220 4th Ave. S.W.) on Tuesday, November 7 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Drop by, have a look at the kinds of work we do and show us the kinds of work YOU do.

Interested? Call Tünde Barraclough at (403) 237-3682 before November 1.

We're looking forward to meeting you.



WPO0220 00 09

Who Moved My Cheese?

- Robin Etherington



Who Moved My Cheese

By Spencer Johnson, M.D.

New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons;

1998

ISBN 0-399-14446-3

Change – we are all facing it – good, bad or ugly.

Who Moved My Cheese? is a brief, easy to read story about how to handle change in our professional and personal lives. It is written by Spencer Johnson, the co-author of *The One Minute Manager*. In fact, the foreword in the book is by his co-author, Kenneth Blanchard.


The story entails four characters – 2 mice and 2 little people-who live and

work in a maze (sound familiar) looking for cheese and once found, eating it. Cheese represents what each individual considers important in their lives and/or for their careers.

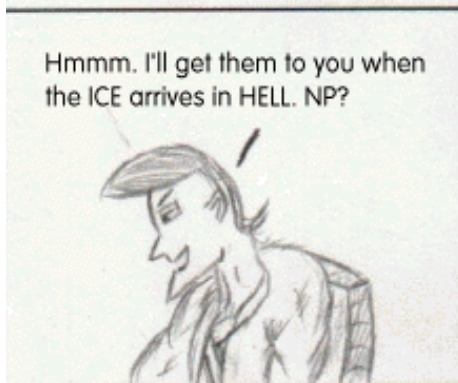
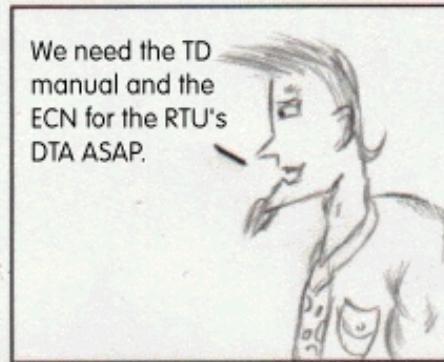
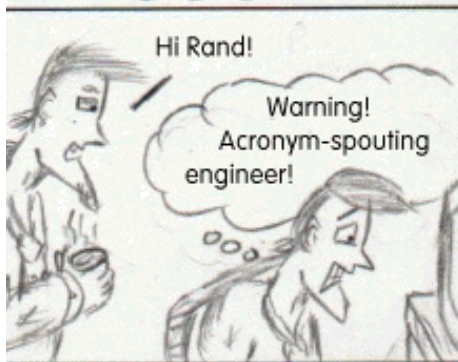
The four characters and how they dealt with change represent aspects of ourselves as we deal with change. One could 'sniff' out change, i.e. sense when change was going to occur and point in the right direction. One could 'scurry' in toward change, i.e. act upon changes. One hemmed about change but soon realized that change offered benefits and could envision enjoying those benefits. One expressed his fear of change with anger and held on to his belief that everything would revert to the way it was before.

The lessons are: change happens, anticipate change, monitor change (for more change), adapt to change quickly, change (yourself – behaviour and viewpoints), enjoy change (go for it and

have fun), and be ready to change (again and again).

Why do we need to read such books about change? One reason is that change is a de facto element or quality of our society and of our professions. We experience technological revolutions every six months that affect how we work and what we work at (e.g. XML and structured information/modularization). We witness social and political changes on a regular basis. Change management is becoming crucial for all businesses and organizations, and we can apply the principles of change management to our personal lives as well. *Who Moved My Cheese?* is a fun and easy to read book about change management. It is a great one to start with. If you are interested in change management, then you can pursue it via other vehicles (courses, workshops, and books). 

Bitter Ink.



Accepting Applications for IOCC Judges

STC has sent out an invitation for members to apply as judges for this year's International Online Communications Competition (IOCC) being held in Denver, CO.

They are looking for two types of judges; on-site judges and telephone conference judges. Judges will serve on a team with two others.

If you are interesting in apply for these positions, we have posted two PDF documents on the Alberta Chapter of STC's website. One document outlines the responsibilities and qualifications for potential judges and the other is an application form.

Our website is located at:
<http://www.stc.org/region7/alb/>

CONGRATULATIONS!

2000-2001 STC Scholarship Winner

Dean W. Allen
Mount Royal College

Dean is the recipient of a \$2500 Undergraduate Award from STC. Dean was one of fourteen recipients who received awards for exhibiting the potential for contributing to the profession. All recipients have strong academic records and have received high recommendations from their instructors.



Way to go Dean!

Smart 2000 Conference

Volunteering in the STC Booth

Dates: **October 23rd to 26th**

Exhibition Hours: **10:00 to 5:00**

- Each day will be divided into two shifts. Each shift requires two volunteers.
- Lunch will be supplied from 12:00 to 1:00.
- Before or after your shift, enjoy some of the other displays, including a smart home, an interactive classroom, and a high-tech truck.

If you would like to work in the STC display booth during the Smart 2000 Conference, please contact Fei Min Lorente at lorente@telusplanet.net or Grant Sorensen at wallis@telusplanet.net.

E-publishing with WebWorks Publisher

- *Caroline Kutschke*

Get a lead on e-publishing and online help development using WebWorks Publisher at the November 23rd Thursday Night Program from Alberta chapter member Ken Yasenchuk. WebWorks is rapidly becoming the premier tool for converting FrameMaker files to online formats (e.g., HTML, DHTML, Javahelp, Microsoft Help, and XML). A condensed version comes with FrameMaker 6 and a full-functioning version can be purchased separately. Ken, a Senior Technical Writer at Neles Automation, has been designing and maintaining WebWorks templates for more than a year now. The November 23 Thursday Program will include an introduction to Webworks Publisher and a demonstration of how it can be used to convert Framemaker files to an HTML-based online documentation system. Ken will also describe some of the problems he encountered while using this tool and how he solved them. He is currently researching the recently released WebWorks Publisher Professional Edition.

This program will be held at the MacDougall Centre, 5th Avenue and 6th Street SW, Calgary. The program starts at 7 p.m. and runs until 9 p.m., but please show from 6:30 p.m. on to sign in, get your receipt and mingle.

The deadline for advance registration is Monday, November 20. The advance fees are: \$7 for members, \$5 for student members and \$10 for non-members. Drop-in fees are: \$10 for members, \$8 for student members and \$13 for non-members.

To register in advance, please dial 230-6072 and then press 2. After the message, leave your name and number and specify for which program you are registering.

**Thursday
Night
Program**

Calling All Volunteers

The Alberta Chapter of STC currently needs the following volunteers:

- **Smart 2000** (October 23rd to 26th): Take a shift in the STC booth or volunteer for the conference itself. See the September newsletter for details.
- **Web site:** Help out in a small way, or take on the role of Webmaster.
- **Region 7 Conference:** Act as Publications Coordinator for the 2001 conference in Portland, Oregon. Help in the planning for the Alberta Chapter to potentially run the conference in 2002.
- **Newsletter Survey:** Compile the results of our newsletter survey.
- **Annual General Meeting and Workshops:** Join the AGM committee.
- **Mentors:** Act as a mentor to new technical writers. Create a survey (in January) for those who are participating in the program.

If you want to help out with any of these positions, contact Laurie Holtby at holtby@cadvision.com.



Mark Your Calendars!

Executive Meetings

Mon. Oct 16, 2000
Mon, Nov 20, 2000
5:30pm - 7:30pm

All members are welcome

Coffee Nights

7pm - 9pm

October 10, 2000

Tech Writing Horror Stories:
Part 2

November 14, 2000

Incorporation and other
Minor Miracles

Workshops

Sat. November 18, 2000

9am - 1pm

Editorial Responsibilities: An
Introduction
by Walter Bruno

Programs

October 19, 2000

6:30pm - 9pm

Learning Styles
by Dr. Barbara Schneider

November 23, 2000

6:30pm - 9pm

E-Publishing with WebWorks
Publisher
by Ken Yasenchuk

Alberta Chapter's Year-At-A-Glance

Dates and locations subject to change.)

OCTOBER 2000

10 (Tues) Coffee Night¹
16 (Mon) Executive Meeting²
19 (Thurs) Program³

NOVEMBER 2000

14 (Tues) Coffee Night¹
18 (Sat) Workshop⁴
20 (Mon) Executive Meeting²
23 (Thurs) Program³

DECEMBER 2000

12 (Tues) Coffee Night¹
18 (Mon) Executive Meeting²
21 (Thurs) Program³

JANUARY 2001

13 (Sat) Workshop⁵
15 (Mon) Executive Meeting²
18 (Thurs) Program³
25 (Thurs) Pub Night -TBA

Thursday Program Fees

Advance Registration

Members: \$7
Student Members: \$5
Non-Member: \$10

Drop In

Members: \$10
Student Members: \$8
Non-Member: \$13

Location and Details

1. **7pm at Annie's Books.** 912 -16th Ave NW in the Literary Salon. Parking behind Tim Horton's. Free for both STC members and non-members.

2. **5:30pm at the Merak Building.** #600, 322 11 Ave SW. Free parking available in the lot on the west side of the building. Open to all STC members.

3. **6:30pm at the MacDougall Centre.** 455 - 6th St SW. Discounted rates for advance registration.

4. **9am to 1pm at Mount Royal College.** Main Campus, East Wing Lecture Hall E167. **Advance Registration is required.** Pay Lot Parking only - bring LOTS of change.

5. **9am to 4pm at Mount Royal College.** Main Campus, Computer Lab E141. **Advance Registration is required.** Pay Lot Parking only - bring LOTS of change.

To register in advance:

Phone **403-230-6072**, press **2**, leave your name and phone number after the message and indicate which event you wish to attend. The Hospitality Coordinator will call back to confirm. The advance registration deadline is always the Monday the week of the event.



STC Alberta would like to welcome the following new members to our growing chapter

Andrea Hogg, Calgary
Angela Jensen, Calgary
Catherine Peggy Jubien, Calgary
Curtis Andrew, Calgary
Heather Hansen, Calgary

Holly Quan, Calgary
Jeanne Wood, Edmonton
Lyn Sigurdson, Calgary
Philip Eckhart, Edmonton
Phillip Lawrence, England

Rita Stenzel, Medicine Hat
Robert Dunn, Calgary
Roger Baumgarten, Calgary
Sandy Gough, Edmonton
Tracey Stewart, Edmonton

SuperScript

SuperScript is the official newsletter of the Alberta Chapter of STC, the Society for Technical Communication, and is published 10 times annually, including double issues in July-August, and December-January.

Submissions: the Editors invite readers to submit articles, news, reviews, and other items of interest. Articles may be edited for size.

Reprints: Original articles appearing in *SuperScript* may be freely reprinted, provided that the author and source are acknowledged, and a copy of the reprint is promptly sent to the Editors. Reprints may not be edited for content, or used for commercial or morally repugnant purposes.

Distribution: *SuperScript* is distributed to members in Alberta and Northwest Territories, to all Canadian chapters and Region 7 chapters of the STC, and to interested companies an individuals upon request. Circulation is 275.

Advertising: *SuperScript* accepts advertising of interest to our readership, and which furthers professional development. We reserve the right to limit or refuse advertising.

Rates:

Full page \$160.00 Quarter page \$50.00
Half page \$100.00 Business card \$20.00

To place an advertisement: send your cheque, payable in advance to Society for Technical Communication, Alberta Chapter, Attn: Treasurer, at:

STC Alberta Chapter

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