



SOCIETY FOR TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

Alberta Chapter STC Style Guide

***SuperScript* Template Formats**

About the Author

Times New Roman, 10 point, italics

Body (Paragraph Text)

Times New Roman, 10 point, left justified

Bulleted List

- 0.5 tab before bullet, 0.5 tab after bullet (use CTRL I to set tabs at 0.5 increments)
- Font: TNR, 10 point
- Hyphenation: must be done manually (hard return, insert dash)
- Initial caps, no period at the end of phrases, period at the end of full sentences
- Check that all lists use parallel structure

Byline

- Tahoma, 8 point, italics
- Style: space dash space name comma title space; it is important to add a space at the end of the byline as the last letter may get cut off without it. (- *Helen Schleedoorn, Editor*)
- If the person has no title, use “STC member”, “STC Senior Member”, or “STC Student Member”

Call Out Box

- Must be contained in a grey-shaded box with solid black outline
- Shape can be varied
- No quotation marks, no italics
- Tahoma, 14 point, bold, initial caps
- Use verbatim text from the article
- Avoid hyphenation

Chapter Name

Proper style is either Alberta Chapter STC or Society for Technical Communication, Alberta Chapter.

Colour

- Masthead background, dark blue
- Headings, dark blue
- Red for important/exceptional items (e.g., *New night this month!* on the *Mark Your Calendars* page)
- Use colours in ClipArt images
- Logos: use colour STC logo (yellow “C”), use colour Alberta Chapter

Comic

- Comic font, 10 point
- Place the text in text boxes as per text given. Send back to Jeremy for approval.
- Copyright: Arial, 8.5 point (© 2001 Jeremy Schroeder)

Continued Article Headline

- Use the same heading name, without the words initial capitalized
- Do not use “continued” or “(con’t)” in the title
- No grey (gradient) bar.

Continued Article Tag

- Times New Roman, 7 point, bold, italics, end with period
- Style: *Continued on page 6.*
- Starting with the November 2001 issue, move the Continued phrase closer to the title

E-mail Address

- Blue, underline
- Linked in PDF to open an e-mail message

Emphasis

Use italics, not bold

Executive Council Box (on bottom of page 2)

- Does not change from month to month
- Style if a position is not filled: Position Vacant
- Do not make these e-mail addresses linked

Front Page

Three columns to accommodate the Table of Contents (other pages use two-column layout)

Headline

- Tahoma, 14 point, bold, initial caps
- Grey title bar: gradient is light to dark

Mission Statement

- Arial Narrow, 10 point, centered, bold
- Starting with the December 2001 issue, the Mission Statement will be included at the bottom of the Executive Council box on page 2.

Notes from the Editors

- Times New Roman, 10 point, italics
- Style: *This e-mail came to us from New York...*

Numbered List

- 0 spaces/tabs before number, 1 space after number
- Font: TNR, 10 point
- Hyphenation: must be done manually (hard return, insert dash)
- Initial caps, no period at the end of phrases, period at the end of full sentences
- Check that all lists use parallel structure

Page Reference

Use italics (e.g., See the *Mark Your Calendars* page)

Pencil Icon

- Place at the end of articles, after About the Author, Notes from the Editors (or whatever text happens to be the last part of the article).
- Height should be the same as the text
- Should be aligned on the bottom

Sub-Heading

Tahoma, 12 point, bold, initial caps

Sub-Sub-Heading

- Tahoma, 10 point, bold, initial caps
- 0.6 space before heading
- 0.3 space after heading

Table of Contents

- List all articles in issue (shorten any lengthy headlines to fit)
- Use an appropriate amount of leader dots so that the text is not too loose or too tight
- Style: *INSIDE SUPERSCRIPT*

Text Box

- Size does not change; use previously published newsletter as a guide
- Varied styles of frames can be used around the text box

Volume/Issue

- Arial, 10 point, bold
- White

Web Address

- Linked, blue, underline
- Format: www.stc-alberta.org

Lexicon

Consult the Canadian Oxford Dictionary.

- Use Canadian spelling; “z” not “s” (e.g., customize); “our” not “or” (e.g., colour)
- % (not percent, not per cent)
- \$50.00 (not \$50)
- a.m./p.m. with a space after the time (e.g., 9:00 a.m., 12 noon)
- e.g., use parentheses, no italics, lower case, or use “for example” in text (e.g., phrase)
- i.e.,: use parentheses, no italics, or use “that is” in text (i.e., phrase)
- etc.: do not use; if it is part of a list, use “such as” or “includes”
- bylaw (not by-law)
- cooperate, cooperation
- coordinate, coordinator (such as STC Membership Coordinator)
- database (not data base)
- e-mail (not email), E-mail at the beginning of a sentence
- FAQ
- information about (not information on) (a topic)

- Jobline (not Job line, not Job-line)
- online (not on-line)
- *SuperScript* (all references of *SuperScript* should be in italics)
- Web
- Web page
- Webmaster
- Web site
- Vice President (not Vice-President)

Writing Style

Agreement

- Check that pronouns agree in number, person, and gender with their antecedents (for example, *somebody* is having problems with *their* computer, or the *company* moved *their* head office—both of these are wrong). A crowd of sailors comes into the bar every night, *not* A crowd of sailors come into the bar every night, as the verb agrees with “crowd”, not the modifying prepositional phrase “of sailors”.
- Check that there is always logical agreement in number. For example, “many Executives wear a suit” is logically wrong. Executives wear suits: they don’t all wear the same suit.

Articles

Use *an* (not *a*) before an abbreviation or acronym that starts with a vowel or an initial consonant that has a vowel sound. For example, an object, an M.D., an elevator, an STC member.

Capitalization

- Capitalize *Chapter* whenever referring to the Alberta Chapter, or another specific chapter. Use a lower-case chapter when referring to chapters in general. (For example, when referring to the Alberta Chapter: the Chapter Executive, the STC Alberta Chapter, the Chapter members, etc. But, when making a generic reference: the chapter executives in North America, other STC chapters, etc.)
- Capitalize the position titles of Executive members.
- Capitalize references to the names of STC Alberta committees.
- Capitalize title case in a headline (unless the headline contains a proper noun or a colon, after which you need to capitalize the first word).
- Capitalize the first word after a colon if that word begins a complete sentence.

Grammar

- Make sure that *that* is only used with restrictive clauses, and *which* is only used with non-restrictive clauses. (A restrictive clause defines its antecedent. Commas always set off a non-restrictive clause.)
- Avoid using split infinitives, but not to the point of creating an awkward sentence.
- Make sure that adjectives have not been used as adverbs. For example, This point is *real* important.
- Rewrite to edit out gender bias. Make sure that you don’t create any pronoun agreement errors when you remove the gender bias.

Numbers

Spell out numbers from one to nine and use numerals from 10 on when using numbers in body text. Numbered lists are the exception.

Punctuation

- Use the serial comma before *and* and *or* in a list to avoid ambiguity. Most Canadian publishing houses subscribe to this rule.
- Re-write and/or properly punctuate run-on sentences. Remember that you can use parentheses and/or instead of commas in long sentences that contain several commas. This helps to keep everything clear.
- Review the rules about hyphenation and apply them correctly. Watch out for noun strings that need hyphens. Most people don't hyphenate enough to avoid ambiguity.
- Check all apostrophes for correctness. People make many errors with them.
- Use em dashes (not hyphens or en dashes) where a dash is called for.
- Use the semicolon appropriately (e.g., clause; however, clause.). For a long list, use a bulleted list instead.
- Use double (not single) quotation marks, and place punctuation (periods and commas) outside the quotation marks. Place colons, semicolons, question marks, and exclamation marks outside of the quotation marks (unless they belong to the quoted material, in which case they belong inside the quotation marks).
- Use typesetting quotation marks (that is, [“] instead of straight quotation marks ["]), to give the publication a more professional look.
- Use only one space after colons and semi-colons, as well as to separate sentences in a paragraph. This is a space-saving technique used by newspapers, etc.

Voice

Rewrite passive voice to active voice where appropriate.

References

- CP Style Guide
- Editing Canadian English
- Canadian Oxford Dictionary

Style

- Use italics for emphasis, or for foreign words or derivations (that is, not quotation marks, bold, or underlining). Also use italics for book titles, etc.
- Do not allow widows (syllable, word, or less than one-third of a line isolated at the bottom of a column, paragraph, or page) or orphans (same as widow, but at the top).
- Use one space after a period, colon, and semi-colon—this is CP Style—because it saves space.
- Beware of fashionable misuse of words. For example, if the word “actionable” is being used to mean “useful” or “usable”. (Actionable actually means “capable of being grounds for an action at law”.)

Updating the Style Guide

This style guide is used for all Alberta Chapter STC communications. Updates to the style guide are the responsibility of the *SuperScript* editors. The editors should feel free to extend the style guide in areas that are not currently covered. However, as one purpose of the style guide is to keep usages consistent for all Chapter communications, the editors should use caution when changing existing sections.

Depending on the severity of the changes, they should be discussed with the Chapter President, and possibly the other members of the Executive Council.

A current copy of the style guide should always be posted on the Chapter Web site.