

November 2022 Release

MadCap Central

Enterprise user and password management just got easier.



Enterprise Single Sign-On (SSO) Streamlines User and Password Management and Improves Security Compliance

With SSO, administrators eliminate the need to manually manage users and passwords in MadCap Central.

- ✓ Easy to Set Up and Manage
- ✓ Supports Any Identity Provider Using Security Assertion Markup Language (SAML)
- ✓ Faster Onboarding Process for Multiple Users





InfoPlus

Monthly newsletter from the Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators

December 2022

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The ISTC is the largest UK body representing scientific and technical communicators. If you are involved in technical writing, technical illustration, or communicating technical information in other ways, it's the professional association that can support your career. Interested in membership? Find out more here.

This free newsletter is emailed to about 1500 people. As well as ISTC news, *InfoPlus* contains listings and articles of general interest to the profession. Subscribe here.

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From the editor

As the evenings darken and lengthen, the year draws to its close. With the darker



evenings, it is an opportunity to spend some time on CPD. What have you learned about technical writing in the year? Have you completed any CPD? Have you any recommendations for others? Please do let us know so we can highlight it in *InfoPlus* in the new year. You can email me at newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk.

Michaël

ISTC News

Communicator Awards 2022

Linda Robins FISTC, President

This year we ran the *Communicator Awards* for a second time. Awards will be presented for favourites as follows:

- ▶ *Communicator* article
- ▶ *Communicator* column

Voting closed on 15 November. The results will be publicised, and the winners will be announced in the Winter issue of *Communicator*.

When submitting their votes, readers were also invited to answer some general questions on *Communicator* content and to provide feedback on the journal.



Are you ready for an in-person TCUK next year?

The TCUK23 Team

We've missed you! So, we're working hard to get in-person conferences back on the table, and we hope to have our next in-person TCUK in 2023.

Sadly, the Covid-19 pandemic and financial uncertainty meant we haven't been able to hold in-person events since 2019. We're raring to go, but we need to tell you about some of the current difficulties. Just like everyone right now, the ISTC is feeling the pinch, so we're taking extra care with our members' money. As part of this, we're making sure that the conference is cost-effective and doesn't operate at a loss, and we've got some great ideas to make the conference the best it's ever been.

We're currently working on choosing a great venue from our shortlist. You've asked us to avoid central London but make it easy to get there by public transport, and we're listening. We will send out details as soon as we can.

Would you like to get involved?

When we have the venue and dates settled, we will tell you more about the plan and what needs to be done. You can then sign up for small tasks that will take a few hours, or you could take responsibility for an area of your own. You or your company could also sponsor TCUK.

What's the theme this year?

Our theme this year is to focus on you, the users of TCUK.

In previous years, the conference theme has been a common thread for workshops and presentations. This year we want to concentrate on presenting a program of talks and workshops of the highest quality and the most useful for our members, so we're changing it up a bit.

As well as the usual call for papers, we want to know what topics you want to hear about. For ISTC members, we've opened a new [TCUK forum area](#). You can use this area to discuss what you want to hear or learn about. We will also post talk topics requested in your feedback from previous TCUK conferences or received by email. If you want to speak, but you're unsure what about, why not pick a topic another member has asked for?

If you're not an ISTC member, please email any ideas to tcuk@istc.org.uk.

Do you have any questions?

We don't have many answers yet but feel free to get in touch on the forum or at tcuk@istc.org.uk and we will do our best to share the information we do have.

Thanks, we look forward to hearing all your ideas and requests.

ISTC Membership Renewals for 2023

Linda Robins FISTC, President

Renewals for ISTC Members open on 1 December and payment can be made via the website or by contacting the ISTC office. Members will receive an email with details and can check the [renewals page](#) of the ISTC website.



ISTC meets Paul Bakker

Wed 7 December, 1–2 pm GMT

<https://istc.org.uk/events/istc-meets/>.

Law for technical communicators

- Do communicators need to worry about the law?
- Law of torts - negligence
- Product safety & product liability
- Three brief case studies
- Liability of the professional communicator

This presentation would be suitable for any technical communicators who deal with products, systems or services that have the potential to harm.

About Paul

Paul has been a technical communicator, trainer and consultant for 30 years. He is a former Vice-President of the ISTC and was the visiting lecturer in Technical writing and editing at the University of Twente from 2003 to 2018. He has also taught at the Eindhoven University of Technology and within many commercial organisations. Paul has also acted as an expert witness in legal proceedings and arbitrations in several jurisdictions when the efficacy and accuracy of instructions have been relevant factors when an injury has been allegedly caused by products or processes.

Did you know you could advertise in this space?



■ Reach an engaged, specialist audience of content professionals!

■ Join MadCap, 3di and many others who advertise in this e-newsletter!

■ Ideal for product releases, news, courses/events, brand awareness, and recruitment!

Contact istc@istc.org.uk for further details!

ISTC Social Media

ISTC on LinkedIn

There are ISTC groups on LinkedIn for ISTC members which include:

- Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators
www.linkedin.com/groups/1858546

England

- Cambridge Technical Communicators
www.linkedin.com/groups/1805651
- ISTC Midlands Area Group
www.linkedin.com/groups/4835591
- Thames Valley Area Group
www.linkedin.com/groups/4805266
- ISTC Yorkshire Area Group for Communication Professionals
www.linkedin.com/groups/4662452

Scotland

- Technical Writers (East Scotland ISTC)
www.linkedin.com/groups/13536907

Ireland

- Irish Technical Writers – An ISTC Area Group
www.linkedin.com/groups/3369559



ISTC on Facebook

Our main Facebook page is at www.facebook.com/ISTC.org.uk

® You can join the ISTC Community group at www.facebook.com/groups/490570891153888 for discussion with fellow professionals.

The TCUK Facebook page is at www.facebook.com/techcommuk/

ISTC on Twitter

Follow us on Twitter at [@ISTC_org](https://twitter.com/ISTC_org) for everything ISTC, and specifically, [@TCUK_conf](https://twitter.com/TCUK_conf) for everything to do with our annual conference TCUK.

ISTC on Instagram

If you use Instagram, you can follow us there too www.instagram.com/istc_org/.

ISTC on YouTube

You can subscribe to our videos at <https://www.youtube.com/user/istctechcomm>.



ISTC Local Area Groups

The ISTC groups offer opportunities for technical communicators to network and share knowledge and expertise. They are open to everyone (you don't need to be an ISTC member) and are free to attend. The groups meet at intervals during the year and hold talks, peer discussions, demonstrations and social evenings. Joining a group is an excellent way to meet like-minded people in your area and get to know fellow specialists.

Current ISTC groups

Name	Leader	Email
Cambridge	Deb Stevens	cambridge_areagroup@istc.org.uk
Thames Valley	Darren Mitcham	thamesvalley_areagroup@istc.org.uk
East of Scotland	Holli Hamilton	eastscotland_areagroup@istc.org.uk
Yorkshire	Dee Vincent-Day	yorkshire_areagroup@istc.org.uk

If you would like to attend one of the groups, please contact the leader.

If you're interested in setting up a new group, contact the ISTC Area Groups Manager, Tom Dunic, at areagroupsmanager@istc.org.uk.

Training courses

Armada

December 2022

12-13 Introduction to Adobe Photoshop

Learn how to create and edit images using the de facto standard in the graphics industry. Techniques covered include colour correction, working with layers, compositing images and preparing images for use on the Web.

10% discount for ISTC members (coupon code ISTC10).

£295 + VAT. Live online participation

£345 + VAT. In-class at Bristol training centre

www.armada.co.uk/course/ps.

14-15 Introduction to Adobe After Effects

Teaches all the key skills needed to use the leading professional software for motion graphics, video compositing and visual effects. Used across all forms of video and screen-based media, After Effects offers a powerful set of tools to deliver stunning visual results.

10% discount for ISTC members (coupon code ISTC10).

£345 + VAT. Live Online course

£395 + VAT. In-class at our Bristol training centre

www.armada.co.uk/course/after-effects-training/.

...December 2022

15-16 Introduction to Adobe Illustrator

Learn how to create and edit vector graphics quickly and effectively, in the leading application for vector graphics. The comprehensive toolset and features available provide everything you need to produce extraordinary graphics for print, video, the web and mobile devices.

10% discount for ISTC members (coupon code ISTC10).
£295 + VAT. Live online participation
£345 + VAT. In-class at Bromsgrove training centre
www.armada.co.uk/course/ai.

20-21 Introduction to Adobe Photoshop

Learn how to create and edit images using the de facto standard in the graphics industry.

10% discount for ISTC members (coupon code ISTC10).
£295 + VAT. Live online participation
£345 + VAT. In-class at Bromsgrove training centre
www.armada.co.uk/course/ps.

January 2023

3-4 Introduction to Adobe InDesign

Provides a comprehensive introduction to the powerful capabilities of InDesign, including setting up new documents, shapes, frames and using InDesign's most popular features.

10% discount for ISTC members (coupon code ISTC10).
£295 + VAT. Live online participation
£345 + VAT. In-class at Bristol training centre
www.armada.co.uk/course/id.

23-27 Technical Authoring Training Programme

ACCREDITED
TRAINING
COURSE



ISTC-accredited programme comprising:
Introduction (1 day)
Intermediate (2 days)
Advanced (2 days)
Training in core technical authoring skills for new and experienced technical authors.
Attend the complete programme, or just the module(s) relevant to your experience.

10% discount for ISTC members (coupon code ISTC10).

£1,195 + VAT. Live Online Training
£1,495 + VAT at Reading training centre
www.armada.co.uk/course/technical-author-training.

23-24 Introduction to Adobe InDesign

Provides a comprehensive introduction to the powerful capabilities of InDesign, including setting up new documents, shapes, frames and using InDesign's most popular features.

10% discount for ISTC members (coupon code ISTC10).
£295 + VAT. Live online participation
£345 + VAT. In-class at Milton Keynes training centre
www.armada.co.uk/course/id.

...January 2023

25-26 Introduction to Adobe Photoshop

Learn how to create and edit images using the de facto standard in the graphics industry. Techniques covered include colour correction, working with layers, compositing images and preparing images for use on the Web.

10% discount for ISTC members (coupon code ISTC10).

£295 + VAT. Live online participation
£345 + VAT. In-class at Milton Keynes training centre

www.armada.co.uk/course/ps.

Follow us: [@ArmadaTraining](https://twitter.com/ArmadaTraining)



Cherryleaf

ACCREDITED
TRAINING
COURSE



Technical Author/Technical Writer/
technical writing e-learning course

<https://www.cherryleaf.com/training/technical-author-basicinduction-training-course/>.

Learn to write like a professional technical communicator. This course teaches you the fundamentals of technical writing, and helps you understand your role as a Technical Author (or similar position).

This technical communication course is accredited by the Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators.

New two course bundles

We offer five bundle options that contain two courses at a discounted price:

- [Technical Writing & Screenshots Course Bundle](#)
- [Technical Writing & UI Text Course Bundle](#)
- [Technical Writing & User Onboarding Course Bundle](#)
- [Technical Writing & Copywriting Course Bundle](#)

ESTON Training

Technical/Commercial Authorship
(Former ISTC Syllabus

Parts 1 & 2):

<http://www.estontrg.com/technicalcommercial-authorship/>. A £50 discount is offered to ISTC members for this course.

Simplified English:

<http://www.estontrg.com/english-language-courses/>.

Standard Generalised Mark-up Language (SGML):

<http://www.estontrg.com/standard-generalised-mark-language-sgml-course/>.

Editing and Publishing Magazines:

<http://www.estontrg.com/editing-publishing-magazine-course/>.

Report Writing:

<http://www.estontrg.com/report-writing-course/>.

Business English:

<http://www.estontrg.com/business-english-course/>.

Firehead

Learn FrameMaker 2019:

<https://firehead.net/course/framemaker-2019-training-technical-authors/>.

Learn Adaptive Content Modelling:

<http://firehead.net/training/learn-adaptive-content-modelling/>.

Creating Mobile Apps without Coding:

<http://firehead.net/training/creating-mobile-apps-without-coding/>.

Customer Journey Mapping:

<http://firehead.net/training/customer-journey-mapping/>.

MadCap Software

For details of the latest MadCap Software training schedule (both on-site and online) visit: www.madcapsoftware.com/services/training/.

Free technical writing courses

Some free technical writing courses submitted by Mike Mee

<https://developers.google.com/tech-writing/overview>.

<https://www.udemy.com/course/technical-writing-a-quick-start-to-software-documentation/>.

<https://github.com/wise4rmgod/TechnicalWriterResources>.

<https://iimskills.com/a-guide-on-technical-writing-and-technical-writing-training/>.

<https://iimskills.com/a-guide-on-technical-writing-and-technical-writing-training/>.

ISTC annual Survey covering employment

Linda Robins FISTC, President

You can make a difference!

The ISTC Annual Employment Survey is now available, and all technical communicators in the UK can take part. The survey is to collect data about qualifications, experience, and remuneration.

We hope a good number of you can take part, so we get a good representation of our profession. The survey is open to both ISTC members and non-members.

The results will be made available to ISTC members through the ISTC's publications. If you are not an ISTC member and would like to receive a copy of the survey results, please send an email to istc@istc.org.uk.

Please click on the link to get started.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/RVVJGK5>.

Don't hesitate or delay. It will take you 10 minutes at most (guaranteed). The deadline is 28th February 2023.

Email Etiquette ready reference

Linda Robins FISTC

I struggled with crafting a sensitive email the other day—where the tone was particularly important. Fortunately, I was reminded of an acronym to guide the email writer. This is something I use when coaching IT Support staff in writing effective emails. I thought it was worth sharing here as a useful reminder.

The unattributed sales pitch states, "Here is a tried and tested formula that helps you craft your message in under a minute: SCRAP."

SCRAP stands for:

Situation — where we're at right now

Complication — the problem that needs to be dealt with

Resolution — your proposed way of solving the problem

Action — the action you want your reader to take to fix the problem

Politeness — this is where you finish on a friendly note

SCRAP works for any business email. But it works particularly well if you've got a tricky message to convey—for example, if you need to take a supplier to task for inadequate service.

In such situations, it can be tempting to use too many words because you don't want to be too direct for fear of offending or being seen as too blunt. Then your email loses all impact because your message isn't clear.

SCRAP helps you avoid that pitfall—and at the same time keeps things civilised.

Blogs and Podcasts Roundup

Michael McFarland Campbell MISTC

Ellis Pratt, in the Cherryleaf Podcast 129 follows up on the question, “Someone joins as/ becomes a manager of a technical writing team. What would you advise they do in their first 90-100 days?” Among the suggestions included was to use the five pillars of content strategy that Rahal Anne Bailie developed when she was at Scroll. Pillar 1: that you have a way of measuring. Pillar 2: user needs. Pillar 3: Content needs. Pillar 4: Operational needs. And Pillar 5: Technology needs. You can hear more at <https://cherryleaf.podbean.com/e/129-your-first-90-days-as-a-documentation-manager/>.

Tanya Marwaha of Championing Youth Minds says that properly teaching young people about the key attributes of mental wellbeing would set them up to be effective future leaders, over on the Institute of Leadership & Management blog. Read the full article at: <https://www.institutelm.com/resourceLibrary/why-better-mental-health-education-would-prepare-young-people-to-lead.html>.

Tom Johnson asks “how do you pull a reader through a long doc when the payoff isn't a completed task, but merely greater understanding?” over on his idratherbewriting.com blog. Read more at <https://idratherbewriting.com/trends/reading-long-documents.html>.

Bart Leahy outlines his methods of communicating technology with his parents on his Heroic Tech Writing blog. “You've likely got one or two older relatives who are challenged by some aspect of the internet or other high technology and ask for your help. This process can be exhausting or rewarding, depending on how patient you are, but it likely will require most or all of your technical communication skills, from audience analysis to careful attention to word choice and editing. Are you up for the challenge?”

Find out at <https://heroictechwriting.com/2022/11/04/communicating-technology-with-seniors-back-to-basics/>.

Sir Humphrey Appleby of *Yes Prime Minister* fame is quoted on TechWhirl in an article *Crafting winning proposals* on the TechWhirl blog. “There are four words in a proposal if you want it thrown out. Complicated. Lengthy. Expensive. Controversial. There are four words you have to work into a proposal for a minister to accept it. Quick. Simple. Popular. Cheap.” Geoff Hart explores how relevant this quote is when writing proposals as a technical writer. Read the article at <https://www.techwhirl.com/crafting-winning-proposals/>.

If you know of a podcast or a blog about technical writing that we should highlight, please get in touch with me at michael@scholastica.org.uk.



Let 1500 other technical communicators know your news

Michaël McFarland Campbell MISTC, InfoPlus editor

InfoPlus is here to help technical communicators hear the news about our profession including—but not solely—news from the Institute of Scientific and Technical Communicators. If you have information to broadcast to the tech comm community, please do send it to me, so we can make sure as many people hear about it as soon as possible. My email is newsletter.editor@istc.org.uk.

InfoPlus is published and distributed usually on the first working day of each month. Occasionally, there may be a delay until the first week of the month. Please bear this in mind when submitting time-sensitive information.

The deadlines for the 2023 editions are:

Edition	Deadline
January 2023	Fri 16 December 2022 at 12 noon GMT
February 2023	Fri 20 January 2023 at 12 noon GMT
March 2023	Fri 17 February 2023 at 12 noon GMT
April 2023	Fri 24 March 2023 at 12 noon GMT
May 2023	Fri 21 April 2023 at 12 noon BST
June 2023	Fri 19 May 2023 at 12 noon BST
July 2023	Fri 23 June 2023 at 12 noon BST
August 2023	Fri 21 July 2023 at 12 noon BST
September 2023	Fri 18 August 2023 at 12 noon BST
October 2023	Fri 22 September 2023 at 12 noon BST
November 2023	Fri 20 October 2023 at 12 noon BST
December 2023	Fri 17 November 2023 at 12 noon GMT