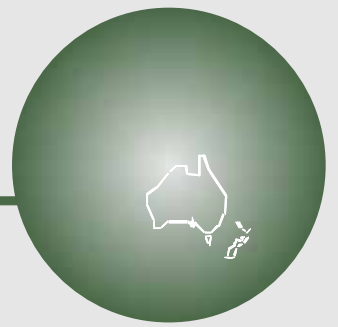


AODC 2008



11th Annual
Australasian

Online
Documentation and Content
Conference

Technical Writing

Gold Coast
May 14-16

Mantra Legends Hotel

Content Management

www.aodc.com.au

Online

Help

Presented by

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AODC 2008 Gold Coast Australia



11th Australasian Online Documentation and Content Conference

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HyperWrite Pty Ltd is pleased to present AODC 2008 - the Eleventh Annual Australasian Online Documentation and Content conference. Since the very first AODC in Melbourne in 1998, the conference has developed a reputation as the premier event for technical writers, Help developers, Web authors, and content and document developers from Australia and New Zealand. The Conference sessions cover a range of techniques, technologies and case studies, all of major significance to documentation professionals. AODC is also a great place to network with your peers!

AODC 2008 will feature a collection of expert speakers from around the world, including Jonathan Halls (UK), Joe Welinske (USA), Matthew Ellison (UK), and Dave Gash (USA), and accomplished Australian and New Zealand experts including Colin Dawson from Info Action, Matt Armstrong from Author-it, and Gareth Oakes from PTC/Arbortext.

Learn about DITA,
Single-Source, Estimating,
Content Management, and
new techniques!

Featuring:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| ◆ <u>Matt Armstrong</u> | Author-it | ◆ <u>Sarah Goodall</u> | TACTICS Consulting |
| ◆ <u>Rhonda Bracey</u> | Cybertext Consulting | ◆ <u>Jonathan Halls</u> | Talkshow Communication |
| ◆ <u>Rowdy Bristol</u> | Gemcom Software | ◆ <u>Frank 'Choco' Munday</u> | AFP |
| ◆ <u>Colin Dawson</u> | Info Action | ◆ <u>Gareth Oakes</u> | PTC/Arbortext |
| ◆ <u>Matthew Ellison</u> | Ellison Consulting | ◆ <u>Stewart Walker</u> | Helpful Technologies |
| ◆ <u>Dave Gash</u> | HyperTrain dot Com | ◆ <u>Joe Welinske</u> | WritersUA |

All new topics covering techniques, technologies and case studies

CSS: Table Styles

Tables represent one of the biggest formatting challenges for authors working on HTML-based content, with a single table potentially including up to 10 different HTML tags. There are also hundreds of table formatting property permutations. With all this complexity, how can it be possible to quickly apply a complete set of formatting properties to a table using a single "table style"? This session will show you how using CSS! And you'll discover a number of other table tips and tricks that you can apply whatever your authoring tool.

Case Study: DITA in Action

TACTICS Consulting had long seen the need to ensure consistency of its sales and marketing content across its three offices and its Web site. In the process they developed a proposal tool using a single-sourcing, DITA and XML solution. In this case study, Sarah Goodall, the project manager for the solution, will demonstrate the proposal tool, and describe the development of the tool, comment on the flexibility of DITA for this use in other forms of documentation, and discuss the lessons learnt and the benefits gained.

Web Technology Update

Open source technologies continue to grow in popularity. The many standards developed through the auspices of the World Wide Web Consortium are now integral components of today's software development. XML, XSLT, CSS, XHTML, WAI, and a host of other acronyms represent technologies that are constantly improving and evolving. This session briefs user assistance professionals on the latest updates to relevant efforts of the W3C.

Authoring Memory

Generating content takes time and money. And while there has been a recent focus on more efficient content reuse, this is still very dependent on knowing key words on which to search for specific information. However, in order to maximise the benefits of content reuse, and make this information available to the entire organisation, content management needs to take the next evolutionary leap to fully automate that process. In this session, we will discuss the latest content automation technologies, and how automated content reuse, or "authoring memory", can revolutionise technical communication.

Content Reuse, Project Management, DITA, Guided Help, CSS, XML and more

The New Grammar

We're seeing more change in our generation than any other generation before us. And it's not just technology that is changing. People's values, expectations and lifestyles are transforming as the world becomes faster, more global and radically demanding. The change is challenging for professional communicators. No longer are traditional communication methods the best way of getting our messages across and conveying content. In the world of learning and technical communication, our audiences now expect content in radically different formats, using multiple methods and transmitted on different platforms. In this session, we will look at what is causing the changes, and focus on practical advice on how to integrate audio, video and text in communication.

Usability of Embedded Help

In this session, we examine how users respond to embedded Help in a Web application, based on user testing. The application concerned incorporates many of the latest Web technologies, and uses embedded Help, context sensitive menu Help, roles-based "typing" of help topics, and a detailed tutorial where users experiment with a fully-functional account. The Web application will be used throughout the presentation to demonstrate the various user support mechanisms.

Case Study: Managing Complex Documentation Projects and Teams

Gemcom Software is one of the world's leading providers of software and services for the mining industry. The company aims to provide customers and employees with accurate and easy-to-navigate documentation and training materials. The challenges for their documentation team include working from different locations, "single-sourcing" content for different applications, providing embedded demos and tutorials, managing programmer contributions to the documentation, developing and applying a style guide to give several different legacy Help systems a consistent "look and feel", and ensuring user needs are met through collection of feedback. In this case study, you will discover how these challenges were met with innovative ideas and solutions.

Techniques for Reviewing a User Interface

"Can you just look over these new screens for us? Oh, and can you check the error messages too? It won't take long!" If you've been asked to review a Web or standalone application's user interface but don't know what to look for other than checking the text, then this session is for you. As technical communicators, we are often in a position to identify usability problems related to the logical flow, layout, and structure of the interface; inconsistencies in the design; ambiguous wording on labels, error messages, dialogs, and onscreen user assistance; and the like. In this session, you will see practical checklists of things to look for when reviewing an interface, as well as tools to assist you.

Managing Modular Documentation

Modern best practice for documentation systems is to store content as reusable XML fragments, rather than monolithic, proprietary documents. The content fragments may then be assembled and published to a variety of formats. Working with compound documents presents many challenges when compared to traditional documentation systems. How do you keep track of all the content fragments? How do you find the fragments you want? How do you know what will be affected when a content fragment is changed? How do you control access and changes to the content fragments? This session will explore many facets of a compound documentation system: authoring, reviewing, publishing, versioning, workflow and more.

Estimating Documentation Projects

Want to know how long a piece of string is? This session won't give you the answer, but it will give you some practical guidelines for making a fair stab at estimating one! Along the way you'll learn about different approaches to estimation, scope management, rules of thumb, and closing the loop. The session will include an estimation case study from an online Help project. There will be some number crunching involved, but it won't be anything too taxing - promise!

Write More, Write Less: Embracing the Value of Crafted Words and Images

While the word "content" is good shorthand for words, audio, and images, it unfortunately can move us farther away from the core competency of developing good information. The theme of this presentation is that documentation teams are often spending too little time writing well; and at the same time spending too much time writing little-used information. Research and professional observation suggest that not enough time is being put into crafting text to be exactly the right text for a particular context. And writing resources for doing "agile" user assistance would be more readily available if writers would prioritise topic writing based on user need. "Writing More" while "Writing Less" can result in better utility for users and can reduce the need and load on the overall documentation development process and content management. Technical Communicators of all backgrounds will benefit from this thought-provoking presentation.

CSS: Image Maps Using Backgrounds

In the "Olden Days of Help" (four or five years ago!), image maps were all the rage for putting multiple hotspots on one graphic. They did the trick, but you had to code them by hand or use a separate image slicing utility. Then, image rollovers came into vogue; they worked great, but ate up bandwidth and required complicated scripting. Today, CSS can do all that and more with one background image, a few simple rules, no extra downloading, and absolutely no scripting. This session explores an easy and elegant technique for creating multiple-hotspot, "shiftable" CSS backgrounds that look great, work fast, and travel light.

Keen to Learn More?

If you are ready to delve more deeply into some of the topics covered at AODC, why not also register for a pre-Conference workshop. Two half-day workshops will be conducted on the day before the Conference: Introduction to DITA, and Adobe Captivate.

See the AODC Web Site (www.aodc.com.au) for details.

The World's Worst Error Messages

What is a "bad error message"? Simply put, a bad error message is a dialog box or alert that doesn't make sense to anyone but the person who wrote the software code. A good error message should be immediately visible, but the underlying software should also be clever enough to avoid catastrophe. That means preserving as much of the user's work as possible. This presentation describes the worst error messages in the world and why they are bad. Having bad error messages does not mean that the software is faulty, or bad, but it does give technical communicators and UI specialists the ammunition required to convince project managers to include an Error Message Quality Assurance phase in their projects.

Guided Help: A Revolution for Software Help and Support?

Most of us are now familiar with the principles of software demonstration tools such as Captivate, Camtasia and Mimic. These enable us to supplement our user assistance with "Show Me" demos and interactive tutorials. However, all these solutions are based on animated simulations of applications, which means that the user does not complete any real tasks while learning. How much more useful and powerful would it be if the users were guided step-by-step through the completion of real tasks within the live application interface itself? Sounds like the future? Well it's actually already available through a range of technologies, most of them currently used with the support sector by PC manufacturers. This session examines this technology in detail and describes a set of tools and techniques that can be used to achieve a combined "learning and doing" experience.

Product Demonstrations and Vendor Exhibition

At AODC, you can see the latest tools in action with product demonstrations and within our Thursday vendor exhibition.

Register online today on our secure site at www.aodc.com.au

Matt Armstrong **Author-it**

Matt Armstrong is Author-it's Sales Director for Asia Pacific. Matt works with international organisations to re-structure and manage their documentation, content management and localisation projects using the Author-it toolset. With a background in online learning, Matt has helped companies gain improvements in their internal processes to reduce risk, cost and redundancy.

Rhonda Bracey **Cybertext Consulting**

Rhonda Bracey runs her own technical communication and consultancy business from her home in rural Western Australia. Since 1992, Rhonda has worked for numerous software companies. She is pedantic about "unfriendly" user interfaces and passionate about improving them. That passion has seen her take on the mantle of "user interface expert" in the small software companies where she has been the lone writer and often the only user advocate.

Rowdy Bristol **Gemcom Software**

Rowdy Bristol has worked in the mining industry around the world for over 20 years. He holds degrees in Engineering, Surveying, and a Masters degree in Geostatistics. He has held positions as a mining engineer, geologist, and surveyor on mine sites in North America, as well as a mining engineering consultant at many mines around the world. Rowdy has been with Gemcom (previously Surpac Minex Group) for 13 years, and has worked in technical support, software testing, and most recently, documentation.

Colin Dawson **Info Assist**

Colin Dawson has over 20 years experience as a technical communicator, including roles as a team member, team leader, and business owner. He won the STC 2005 "International Best in Show" award in the category of technical art, as well as local awards in all three categories of competition. He has prior experience as a technical journalist and avionics technician. In recent years he has been developing business software and help authoring processes.

Matthew Ellison **Matthew Ellison Consulting**

Matthew Ellison has 19 years experience as a user assistance professional in the software industry. He has been a popular speaker at online documentation conferences since 1997, and now runs his own independent UK-based training and consulting company specialising in online Help design and technology. Matthew holds a BSc in Electronic Engineering and a Post-Graduate Certificate of Education. He is also a Certified RoboHelp Instructor and a MadCap Flare Certified Instructor.

Dave Gash **HyperTrain dot Com**

"Uncle Dave" Gash is the owner of HyperTrain dot Com, a Californian firm specialising in hypertext training for Help system developers. A veteran software professional with over twenty years of development, documentation, and training experience, Dave holds degrees in Business and Computer Science, and is well known in the technical publications community as an interesting and animated technical instructor with an astounding wardrobe of colourful shirts.

Sarah Goodall **TACTICS Consulting**

Sarah Goodall joined TACTICS Consulting in April 2005 as the National Marketing Manager. Sarah manages all areas of corporate marketing and communications, including branding, strategic planning, the website, media liaison, advertising and public relations. As the TACTICS product manager for Information Mapping, she maintains a close relationship with Information Mapping Inc in the USA and affiliate global partners.

Jonathon Halls **Talkshow Communication**

Jonathan Halls is Chairman of Talkshow Communication Ltd (London & New York) and specialist advisor to Ifra Newsplex (International association of newspapers). He specialises in leadership, innovation and media production. Formerly a BBC learning executive, Jonathan ran the corporation's TV, radio ops and new media training department. Passionate about the future, he works with organisations to help them create a more exciting tomorrow and better next week.

Frank 'Choco' Munday **Australian Federal Police**

Frank Munday has an adventure-filled background, having spent 20 years in the Royal Australian Navy as an Electronic Technician. After a short period in the computer industry, his work life evolved into Technical Publishing. Frank worked Internet and intranet documentation for a variety of organisations. He is currently a permanent member of the Australian Federal Police, for whom he has developed a wide range of online documentation and training projects. Frank has also written a number of books on Hot Rod electronics.

Gareth Oakes **PTC/Arbortext**

Gareth Oakes is a technical consultant who has been working in the field of enterprise publishing for 7 years for companies such as Advent3B2, Arbortext and PTC. Gareth's history in programming and multimedia has allowed his career to cover many roles from software development and systems architecture through to training and sales.

Stewart Walker **Helpful Technologies**

Stewart Walker is a former technical writer who has since moved on to other adventures such as usability, intranet management and information architecture. During his 15-year technical writing career, Stewart was involved in a range of online documentation projects, including some innovative projects that he has showcased at previous AODC and WritersUA conferences. Stewart's other claims to fame include being a member of the infamous AODC band in 2002.

Joe Welinske **WritersUA**

Joe Welinske is the president of Seattle-based WritersUA. The annual WritersUA Conference in the US draws hundreds of attendees from around the world to share the latest in user assistance design and implementation. Joe has been involved with software documentation development since 1984. Together with Scott Boggan and David Farkas, Joe authored two editions of the popular and pioneering book Developing Online Help for Windows. He has also taught online Help courses at the University of Washington and UC Santa Cruz. Joe is a member of the DITA Technical Committee.

Registration Form

Mail to address below or fax to **+61 (0)3 9445 9363**

Name		E-mail	
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Cheque enclosed. Payable to 'HyperWrite' Visa
 Please charge my credit card. Amount: A\$1,199.00 inc GST Mastercard
American Express

Credit Card Number

Card Holder's Name

Expiry Date Signature

<p>Registration</p> <p>Attention Penny Bradley Tel +61 (0)3 9803-8291 Fax +61 (0)3 9445-9363 E-mail pbradley@aodc.com.au Address PO Box 4266 Mulgrave VIC 3170 Australia</p>	<p>Conference Cancellation</p> <p>Full refunds will be available until 25 April, 2008. Bookings are non refundable after this date. Substitutions accepted until 8 May 2008.</p> <p>AODC hosted by HyperWrite Pty Ltd ABN 44 007 347 462</p>	<p>Hotel Reservations</p> <p>Mantra Legends Hotel Gold Coast Cnr Surfers Paradise Blvd and Laycock St Surfers Paradise QLD 4217 Australia Tel: +61 (0)7 5588-7888</p> <p>Special room rates – See www.aodc.com.au</p>
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