

Online Resources

- Many links to resources of interest to independent technical communicators.
- ***Getting Started in Consulting & Independent Contracting***, our online book covering all aspects of working as an independent.
- Support for chapter-level CIC SIGs

Join our Electronic Mailing List!

Members of our mailing list, **CICSIG-L**, share information about our profession and jobs on a daily basis. Some of the topics include:

- Confidentiality agreements
- Charging for travel time and commuting
- Business plans
- Health insurance
- Marketing
- Getting clients
- What are clients looking for?
- Concurrent clients
- Contracts
- Changing scopes & difficult clients
- Hourly rates & discounts
- Promoting your business
- Documenting APIs & SDKs
- Effective use of graphics
- Microsoft Word tips
- Screen capture tools
- Wiki

You can join our list from our [Web site](#).



The Society for Technical Communication (STC) is an individual membership organization dedicated to advancing the arts and sciences of technical communication. It is the largest organization of its type in the world. Its 18,000 members include technical writers and editors, content developers, documentation specialists, technical illustrators, instructional designers, academics, information architects, usability and human factors professionals, visual designers, Web designers and developers, and translators—anyone whose work makes technical information available to those who need it.

Society membership provides opportunities for ongoing learning and professional networking.

Sign up now! Become a dues-paying member of STC and take advantage of all the Members Only resources, including the Jobs Database, Membership Directory, Intercom, Conference Proceedings, Publications Search, Salary Survey.

You can join our Society [online](#).



Reaching for the Top?

*You're not alone!
We help
each other
get there*

Consulting and
Independent Contracting
Special Interest Group

Who – and What – Are We?

Many experienced technical communicators are consultants or independent contractors. The STC Consulting and Independent Contracting Special Interest Group (CIC SIG) is devoted to consulting and independent contracting.

The CIC SIG serves as a focal point for information about practicing technical communication as an independent contractor or consultant. We help both new and seasoned independent professionals practice their craft more effectively.

Our members include seasoned consultants—some with decades of experience—and those who are investigating the possibilities of independent technical communication. *How can your participation help you?*

Networking

Through the SIG, you'll come to know other independents in your area. When you have more work than you can handle, your CIC colleagues can be potential subcontractors. And after you've sent work their way, they tend to return the favor.

Publishing Opportunities

You have professional knowledge that others will find useful. Perhaps you're an entrepreneur and will author a new chapter for our online book, ***Getting Started in Consulting & Independent Contracting***. You'll help your peers, boost your reputation, and enhance your portfolio.

Learn New Skills

A great way to learn new skills is to volunteer to work with our newsletter editor or Webmaster. This is a chance to try out a new role and add to your

I get more ideas and help from the CIC SIG than I ever did as a captive employee in a department of 30 technical writers. Collectively, CIC SIG members have vast experience with the tools we use and the technical communications problems we face. Someone is always willing to help.

– Andi Dunn

Technical Communications Consulting, Inc.

résumé. You can also learn new techniques and about tools by participating in our electronic mailing list, [CICSIG-L](#).

CICSIG-L...

- Is open to all SIG members
- Is our primary communication vehicle
- Is often cited as ***the most valuable CIC SIG resource*** because of the targeted answers members post in

response to the variety of inquiries

- Offers summaries of recent threads posted to the list

To join, go to [CICSIG-L](#).

Webinars

You can learn online through the Webinars we offer! For us, this is a new aspect of our service to our members.

Develop Management Experience

Management? You're an independent contractor!

Your independence, flexibility, and experience provide you with more and better management skills than many of your colleagues who are employees. Yet, you may need something more tangible when facing a hiring manager.

Your work leading a committee or serving as an officer in our SIG gives you that tangible “something.” There are always opportunities available for you, regardless of your location. After all, ours is a Virtual Community.

Check the statistics in STC's Salary Survey, particularly the comparison of salaries for technical communicators in supervisory and nonsupervisory positions. Where do you stand?

The CIC SIG is an indispensable online community for my business. My unbillable hours have been reduced. When I asked for advice about how to handle a difficult customer, other CIC SIG members shared how they handled their difficult customers. These members gave me invaluable tips for handling the difficult project with tact and finesse, saving me much time and emotional energy.

– Becky Lash

Make an Impact

The time you are able to spend working with others, either as a SIG leader or manager or within the CICSIG-L community, affects your colleagues and your profession. By sharing knowledge, networking, and referrals, CIC SIG members help their businesses grow while building the independent professional community.

Find Opportunities

This year, the CIC SIG will unveil our new ***consultant database***. You'll be able to create your searchable online résumé that will be searched by prospective clients.

Contacts

Manager: cicsig@stc.org

Web site: [Consulting and Independent Contracting Special Interest Group](#)

The members of the CIC SIG are my colleagues and advisors. They are always ready to provide support and answer questions—making me feel that I never work alone!

– Angela Wiens

Meridian Communications Inc.