

## Manager's Report: News and Notes from the Conference

By Dawnell Claessen, SIG Manager



### Setting Goals for the New Year

It is hard to believe that more than six months have gone by since Lois Marsh and I became Co-Managers of the P&P SIG. I am pleased to say that Lois and I have met all our original goals we set when we assumed leadership.

This must mean that it is now time for us to set new goals for the coming year. Here are some of the ideas we are working on:

- Budgets and financial plan for 2007-2008 SIG year.
- Volunteer Conference Call to be held early July 2007.
- Recruit for volunteer vacancies.
- Submit two quality P&P proposals for 2008 STC Conference in Philadelphia.

- Invite a speaker and develop a tailored educational program for 2008 STC Conference in Philadelphia.
- Poll members regarding the election of SIG Leaders in 2008.

### Notes from Conference

The P&P SIG had a GREAT conference in May with more activities than ever before in Minneapolis. At the Welcome Reception, P&P SIG shared a table with Quality and Process Improvement SIG. Lots of people stopped by to say hello – and pick up some P&P SIG sticky notes and a SIG Brochure. At the SIG networking luncheon there were nearly 50 attendees, mostly P&P SIG members.

Our Progression session had 10 P&P specific Table Topics and we had approximately 60 attendees. New at conference this year was a meeting of all SIG leaders.

Led by our "SIG Advocate" Judith Herr, the message I took away from this meeting was that our SIG activities should be "...by and for the benefit of OUR SIG members." We can look to STC and other SIGs for ideas and inspiration, but look to our members for what they

want and need from this SIG.

### Notes from P&P SIG Business Meeting

On Monday, May 14 (at 7:00am!) the P&P SIG held its annual business meeting. There were 21 members in attendance. A lively round table discussion followed the conclusion of our business.

The message I took away from this meeting is that our members join and participate in the P&P SIG for education and information specific to the practice of Polices and Procedures. Interestingly enough, it seems that our members want this education and information to be either at the introductory level or at the advanced level, as opposed to intermediate.

### Budget News

The annual budget for the P&P SIG will increase significantly in the 2007-2008 fiscal year. So we want to hear from our members about how they want to spend their money! We would love to hear your ideas for programs.

Right now, we are plan-

Inside this issue:	
Effective & Judicious Use of Graphics in P&P	2
New Member Profile: Melissa Peyton	3
Raymond Urgo Wins Distinguished SIG Service Award!	4
Book Review Program: P&P SIG Pays for Books!	4
Volunteer News—Abena's Triathlon	5
Volunteer Opportunities	5

ning to use a significant portion of our budget to develop educational programs for the benefit of our members.

We want a program to present at Conference, with materials made available to all SIG members after the conference is over, maybe a Webinar and even some short topics made available in the form of Podcasts.

### ListServ News

Our list serv WILL get better this year. There are plans to migrate to new software and really get the discussions going!

## The Effective and Judicious Use of Graphic Elements in P&P Documents

*By Audrey Cielinski-Kessler. Reprinted from Steps & Specs, Vol. 7/ No. 1/ March 2001.*

My take on the use of graphic elements in policy and procedure documents is based on the premise that people are more likely to look at the pictures than read the text portion of a document—regardless of whether that document is a user guide, a policy manual, a newspaper or a magazine.

Because of this propensity to favor pictures over text—especially lengthy text—it’s important that graphic elements, from charts and graphs to tables and diagrams, be used both effectively and judiciously. So what is meant by “effectively” and “judiciously”?

“Judiciously” means using the type of graphic element that is best suited to the nature and purpose of the document and the composition of the audience. It does not mean adding graphic elements just to have them or to fill up space so the document is longer and perhaps (at least to some) more impressive because of its heft. It means using graphic elements to enhance the document user’s ability to perceive and comprehend the intended message. Even the most technically correct document is of little use if its message is not conveyed to the persons to whom the message is addressed.

“Effectively” means using graphics that are self-contained and can stand alone on their own merits without the reader having to plow through rows of text to find even basic information about the graphic, such as units of measure, the meaning of symbols or abbreviations, or a title other than just “Figure 3” or “Table 1” (see **Figure 1**).

It means using a descriptive, substantive and inclusive title with the graphic and presenting the information clearly and obviously (see **Figure 2**). The goal is to make it unnecessary for the reader to have to skim or read word for word the accompanying text. Chances are, the user won’t bother—which means your message, despite its importance or value to the user—may not be communicated. With an outcome like that, both you and the reader lose. You have wasted your time because your message failed to be conveyed; the user wasted his time because the information he was seeking remains elusive.

The judicious and effective use of graphics also has to do with the placement of the graphics within the text and references to the graphics in the narrative portion of the docu-

ment. The existence of the graphic needs to be referenced in the text with the related graphic placed as close to that reference as possible. The reader should not have to flip several pages before finding the referenced graphic. That’s wasted time for the reader and disruptive of the thought process.

That’s not to say that a graphic must be on the same page as its text reference. It only means that the reference and the graphic need to be in close proximity to each other. But don’t assume that because the reference and the graphic are close together that you as the author can skimp on detail in the graphic itself, thus making it dependent of the information in the text. At the same time, you should not assume that just because the graphic is self-contained and includes a good amount of detail that nothing more needs to be said in the text portion of the document other than something like “Table 4 is on page 8.” The text area is where you can and should expand on

Table 3						
Software	P	U	C	S Con	Yr	Ex Dt
Acrobat	W, M	10	8	Y	1	12/1/00
PageMaker	W, M	5	3	Y	1	7/10/01
QuickSilver	W, U	50	50	Y	3	12/31/02
Word	W, M	100	100	Y	2	6/15/01

*Figure 1: This example shows a table without a descriptive title and with undefined abbreviations.*

Table 3. Software Holdings of XYZ Corp., 2000						
Software	P	U	C	SCon	Yr	ExDte
Acrobat	W, M	10	8	Y	1	12/1/00
PageMaker	W, M	5	3	Y	1	7/10/01
QuickSilver	W, U	50	50	Y	3	12/31/-02
Word	W, M	100	100	Y	2	6/15/01

*Note: P = platform; U = number of users; C = number of copies, Y = years; ExDte = expiration date; W = Windows; M = Macintosh; U = Unix; Yr = years.*

*Figure 2: This example shows a table with a descriptive title and explained abbreviations.*

## New Member Profile: Melissa Peyton

**Direction:** *Can you briefly describe your business background?*

**Melissa:** I have 19 years experience in the Banking and Credit Card industry in various areas of Operational Risk Management. I began my career as an Internal Auditor, and then served in other areas of Operational Risk Management including Business Continuity Planning, Insurance Administration, Internal Control, and Policies and Procedures.

**Direction:** *Tell us about your work – responsibilities, challenges.*

**Melissa:** I am the Corporate Policy Manager for a financial institution and my department coordinates the development, documentation, approval, and retention of corporate and business line policies and procedures. I am responsible for managing the Corporate Change Management Program, which includes implementing the Policy and Procedure Development Methodology and the Policy and Procedure Documentation Standards throughout the corporation. My team partners with business line management and staff members to write and maintain their policy and procedure manuals. We publish our policy and procedure manuals on the designated corporate Intranet sites, issue policy and procedure update bulletins, facilitate Board of Directors approval for all policies, and manage the retention process. Our department is part of the Risk Management Division, so we also serve as project managers or participants on various corporate committees, including the Privacy and Information Security Committee, Risk Management Committee, Corporate Credit Committee, and various business process re-engineering committees.

**Direction:** *Tell us about your audience.*

**Melissa:** We primarily support the operational business lines, for example, Bank Operations, Mortgage Lending Operations, Consumer Lending Operations, and Merchant Card Services, so our primary audience is all of the associates in these areas; however, our corporate policies and procedures are issued to all associates throughout the corporation. Examples of these corporate policies and procedures include, Privacy and Information Security, Information Technology, Corporate Security, Regulatory Compliance, Project Management, and Vendor Manage-

ment. For legal or contractual reasons, we cannot provide the same level of policy and procedure support to all of our affiliates and departments; however, we are responsible for ensuring that those affiliates and departments are adhering to the Corporate Change Management Program.

**Direction:** *What do you like most about your job?*

**Melissa:** There are many things I enjoy about my job, but what I enjoy most is working with associates in almost every area of the company, at various levels within the organization. Being able to interact with such a wide knowledge base helps me ensure that policy and procedure changes are appropriately coordinated within a business line, as well as across business lines. I also enjoy how excited our business partners are when they see the first draft of their policy and procedure manuals! They are so amazed at the way we take the bits and pieces of information they give us, and then turn those bits and pieces into a policy and procedure manual that they can actually use!

**Direction:** *What advice can you give to someone who wants to get into P&P documentation?*

**Melissa:** I think you have to enjoy writing in a somewhat structured manner. Procedures have to capture the logical progression of a task from its entry point through final disposition, and you have to effectively document that progression within a structure that your audience can use and understand. That doesn't mean that there is no room for creativity, you just have to work creatively within a structure. It also helps to be able to identify and document logical paths, even when they do not appear to exist! Sometimes tasks are very straightforward and can be easily documented in a simple step/action table. However, tasks that are situational in nature and contain multiple entry and exit points can be somewhat challenging to document. If you have the ability to recognize order within chaos and can record that information in a structured format, you will do very well in Policy and Procedure documentation.

**Direction:** *What's the biggest P&P challenge that you face in your current environment?*

**Melissa:** Banking is a highly regulated industry, and one of our biggest challenges is maintaining an awareness of the

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regulatory environment and taking steps to react quickly to those changes. As a result, the Policy and Procedure Department works closely with our Legal and Compliance staff and our business partners to maintain an awareness of applicable regulatory changes. The Policy and Procedure Department facilitates meetings between the Legal and Compliance team and affected business partners to discuss potential operational changes and to begin drafting policy and procedure changes as necessary.

**Direction:** Tell us a bit of personal information about you – e.g., hobbies, where you live, your family, or other information to help us get to know you.

**Melissa:** I live in Alpharetta, Georgia with my husband, two collies, and our cat. I enjoy being outdoors whenever possible. My husband and I enjoy doing our own landscaping and we usually have several projects in process or in the planning stages. I also enjoy sports, reading, and cooking for my family.

You can contact Melissa at [melissa.payton@comcast.net](mailto:melissa.payton@comcast.net).

## Announcements

### Raymond Urgo Wins Distinguished SIG Service Award!



Raymond Urgo is a founding member of the Policies and Procedures SIG of STC and he has led and served in virtually every volunteer position in the SIG. He served as SIG Manager for much of the SIG's history and has always worked hard with a positive attitude to foster and empower the P&P SIG.

When Audrey Cielinski (past SIG Manager) resigned after serving for several years, no one stepped forward to fill the vacancy, so Raymond again took on the SIG Manager role. During that time, membership rose to 1,000+. Over the past 3 years, Ray developed a solid volunteer base for the SIG Executive, ensuring that he could step down again this year knowing there would be someone to take the reins.

Last year Ray was made a Fellow of the STC. Now STC has again recognized Raymond's contribution by awarding him the Distinguished SIG Service Award with the following citation:

"In recognition of your dedicated leadership and service to the P&P SIG, beginning with your role as founding member then longtime SIG manager and now cheerful sponsor and mentor to SIG members and volunteers."

### Book Reviews Wanted—And We'll Pay for the Book!

Is there a book about technical communication you'd like to buy? The P&P SIG will pay for your copy if you qualify for our book review program. How does it work? Up to four times a year, the editors of *Direction* will refund the cost of a qualified book on receipt of a book review and a purchase receipt.

How does a book qualify? Book selections must be approved in advance by the SIG Co-Managers based on applicability for our readers and to some extent, price. The book must also be available for purchase by other members (i.e., still in print).

Email your proposal to [lois.marsh@bmo.com](mailto:lois.marsh@bmo.com) including the title, author, price and ISBN number.

## VOLUNTEER NEWS

### Our Editor Steps Up (and Down)



**Abena Edugyan** has served as a member of the editorial team for *Direction* since February 2005. She recently stepped down as Managing Editor due to a punishing work and training schedule. Wonder why? Could have something to do with her participation in the **Rage in the Sage Triathlon** in Nevada in April!

This race benefits The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, the world's largest voluntary health organization dedicated to funding blood cancer research education and patient services.

Over the years, the Society has provided more than \$424 million for research specifically targeting blood cancers. Abena raised **\$4,400** for the Society. She says "The race was great, although they cancelled the swim because of the wind. It was a lot of fun!"

We'll miss you on the editorial team, Abena — but thanks for your contribution to both the P&P SIG and this inspiring event!

— *The Editorial Team: Leigh Cordiner & Lois Marsh*

**Breaking news.** Abena is now officially a tri-athlete; she completed the San Diego International Triathlon on June 24, swim included!

Want to get more involved in our SIG? Learn new skills? There are always opportunities for new volunteers.

### Volunteer Opportunities

#### Managing Editor, *Direction*

In this role, you will lead the editorial team in producing 4 newsletter issues a year. Your primary role is to solicit articles and suggest editorial policies and practices, but you may also need to assist in producing the newsletter and/or editing it.

The minimum term for this position is one year. Time commitment is about 5-10 hours per issue. You will need Microsoft Office for Windows, including Publisher.

To learn more, email [lois.marsh@bmo.com](mailto:lois.marsh@bmo.com).

#### Proofreader, *Direction*

This role requires about 2 hours every 3 months, and Microsoft Office for Windows, including Publisher. Your job will be to do a copy edit of all newsletter content and email a summary of corrections/suggestions to the Managing Editor, preferably within 5 days of receipt.

To learn more, email [LarLei@hotmail.com](mailto:LarLei@hotmail.com).