



ACHIEVE!

Don't Be Up Accessibility Creek in Seattle...

Cruise the Accessibility Stream!

By Dan Voss, Orlando Chapter, Past Manager AccessAbility SIG

In the past few years, the accessibility of information products to end users with disabilities has emerged as a major new challenge within our profession, requiring a whole new skill set. Whatever your specialty, this fast-emerging and exciting new area is likely to affect you in some way.

The 52nd annual conference offers an ideal opportunity to expand your awareness and knowledge of accessibility as it relates to technical communication. Listed on the back side of this special conference edition are the major activities and technical sessions that will be dedicated to this subject.

If you are not able to attend the conference, take heart—multiple presentations, handouts, and papers from the sessions listed below will be available both on the conference web site at www.stc.org/52ndConf/sesMaterials.asp and in the AccessAbility SIG's online archives: www.stcsig.org/sn/conference_session_mater.shtml

Speaking of the "A-SIG," if information product accessibility is becoming a regular part of your job, or if you would like to lend your support to the cause of universal accessibility, consider joining STC's newest and fast-growing SIG. You'll have numerous opportunities to meet many of our active members here in Seattle. In addition, we encourage you to tap into our valuable information resources and forums:

- **Web site** – This comprehensive online resource provides an efficient system for keyword searches on products, services, and literature on accessibility needs and offers access to searchable databases and archived conference materials. Access it at www.stcsig.org/sn/.
- **Achieve! Newsletter** – This data-rich and beautifully designed publication presents both the technical side and the human side of accessibility. www.stcsig.org/sn/newsletter.shtml
- **LISTSERV™** – This robust and dynamic real-time forum provides the latest information on accessibility and assistive technologies, helping technical communicators and people with special needs.



Chart the Course for Your Seattle “Cruise”

Sun, 1-2 p.m., Rm 604. Panel discussion on a wide range of accessibility-related topics (same as PD20, below).

Sun, 3:30-5 p.m., Rm 604. A-SIG business and planning meeting. The A-SIG meets to chart its course for 2005-6 and beyond.

Mon, PD20. 11 a.m.-Noon, Rm 617, “Making Products—and the World—More Accessible.” A-SIG members give an overview of how various disabilities affect the ability of technical communicators to practice our profession, as well as the ability of end users to access information products we create. Topics: vision, hearing, mobility restrictions, aging, fibromyalgia/pain, secondary disabilities.

Mon, Networking Lunch, Noon-2 p.m. Check out the subject of accessibility over lunch.

Mon, TE40, 4-5 p.m., Rm 308, “Same Methods, Different Disciplines.” The topic is not accessibility-related, but the session moderator, who is legally blind and deaf, illustrates the use of assistive technologies in a co-presentation with an abled colleague.

Tue, UID5A, 8:30-10 a.m., Rm 6B, “Section 508 for Dummies (Redux).” Workshop. A new group of accessibility superheroes has been called forth to help you conquer Section 508 and give you practical advice for implementing the law in your workplace.

Tue, UID6G, 11 a.m.-Noon, Rm 610, “Aging Eyes Meet Shrinking Screens.” After we turn 40, age-related physical changes affect our computer use. Mobile device screens keep shrinking, and low-resolution laptops replace desktops. Learn research-based design tips to maximize online usability.

Tue, SIG Networking Lunch, Noon-2 p.m. Join A-SIG leaders in an informal working lunch to share issues and ideas.

Tue, UID7T, 2-3:30 p.m., Rm 307, “Quantum Leaps: Electronic Access Technology.” The presenter, who is blind and deaf, demonstrates how assistive technologies, including the Optacon, Tactical Communicator, and SuperBraille laptop running JAWS for Windows, has allowed her to build a highly

successful career in technical communication. **Don’t miss this amazing demo!**

Wed, UID9L, 8-9:30 a.m., Rm 614, “Working to 508. Hands-on Techie Tips!” Get hands-on experience with Section 508, the federal regulation to computer accessibility. This workshop examines universal accessibility issues for people with diverse needs. Come unravel myths associated with the implementation guidelines in the W3C’s WCAG (Web Content Authoring Guidelines) from the WAI (Web Accessibility Initiative).

Wed, UID10P, 11 a.m.-Noon, Rm 618, “Making Federal Web Applications Usable, Useful, and Accessible.” Panel. U.S. government mandates direct that electronic products/services be “citizen-centric.” Come hear federal e-gov managers share their successes and challenges in developing electronic services that are usable, useful, and accessible, and discuss federal resources and tools you can use to improve your online applications.

Wed, UID11L, 2-3:30 p.m., Rm 605, “Creating Accessible Documents.” Learn about process models for accessible documents; hear a study of text legibility for people with low vision, and look at OCR scanners as an “audience” for the blind.

Note: Session and event information is based on preliminary online program and should be double-checked against the final printed program.



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Achieve! is published for members of the STC AccessAbility Special Interest Group. Comments, suggestions, and questions are welcome and should be sent to the editor. *Achieve!* is also available online at www.stcsig.org/sn/index.shtml. Select the “Newsletter” link.

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