

Mission and Purpose



The mission of the Special Needs SIG is threefold:

- ★ Provide resources, information, and support to technical communicators with special needs.
- ★ Provide resources that will help technical communicators design information products that are accessible to end users with special needs.
- ★ Provide strategic leadership in both areas through positive initiatives and open communication, both inside and outside the Society for Technical Communication.

“New laws and regulations are requiring technical communicators to know how to create accessible products for end-users, especially in the area of Web site development.”

Kim McConnell
Central Ohio Chapter

Activities and Initiatives



Numerous activities and initiatives are a part of the Special Needs SIG:

- ★ Survey the STC membership to identify special needs in our population.
- ★ Provide information to match people with products, services, and relevant literature that will help them accommodate their special needs.
- ★ Research and report on technologies and methodologies that help technical communicators design products that are accessible to users with disabilities.
- ★ Research and report on the use of telecommuting in the field of technical communication.
- ★ Promote ethical practices among professionals when they are working with individuals with special needs.
- ★ Publish guidelines for and provide orientation to attendees with special needs at STC-sponsored conferences.
- ★ Publish in internal and external forums and present at conferences.
- ★ Develop a turnkey presentation on special needs for chapters.

Information Exchange



The Special Needs SIG provides information through its:

- ★ **Web site:** A comprehensive source of information about products, services, and literature relating to specific diagnoses and other topics related to special needs. Visit the Web site at: www.stcsig.org/sn/.
- ★ **Newsletter:** *Achieve!* is the official newsletter of the Special Needs SIG and is published quarterly.
- ★ **Listserve.** SIG members can discuss topics related to special needs and accessibility with other SIG members on the SN SIG list serve.

“As a communicator with disabilities, I know first-hand the importance of technology and community services.”

Judy Skinner
Lone Star Chapter

What are Special Needs?



For purposes of the Special Needs SIG, special needs are defined as physical or mental disabilities that impair a technical communicator's ability to practice the profession or impair an end user's ability to receive the information in technical communication products.

Examples of disabilities include visual, hearing, or speech impairment; mobility restrictions; traumatic brain injury; osteoarthritis and fibromyalgia; epilepsy; learning disabilities; mental health issues; and physical/cognitive deficits that accompany aging.

"Sometimes a 'need' can be as simple as a drafting table or an ergonomically correct platform for a computer."

Jodie Gilmore
Willamette Valley Chapter

Questions? Feel Free to Contact Us!

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The Special Needs SIG does not diagnose, prescribe, or endorse. The SIG simply provides information to those who want it.

Special Needs

Special Interest Group (SIG)



*Keeping pace with new assistive technologies,
evolving government policies concerning
accessibility, industry approaches to
accommodating special needs, and cutting-edge
academic research.*