# InterChange 2016

## April 1-2, 2016

**New England Chapter**

www.stcnewengland.org

# Friday, April 1, 2016

**7:30-8:30**

## REGISTRATION & BREAKFAST

**8:30-9:30**
**Room A**

## IMPLEMENTING DITA ON A SHOE STRING

*Stan Doherty and Deborah Femia*
STC New England members have heard about the multi-million dollar implementations of DITA at the big companies (IBM, EMC, Dell, HP, Cisco). Less visible to members would be all the DITA test runs, dry runs, pilot projects, and initial implementations that have been funded on a shoe string ($0-$800 per writer). In fact, a significant percentage of the technology required to set up a robust DITA implementation is open source (free) and relatively easy to implement for no-frills implementations. Whatever you might have heard about DITA, the cost of running your own tests to make up your own mind is pretty low.

**8:30-10:30**
**Room B**

**Note: This is a 2-hour session**

## TUTORIALS FOR THE YOUTUBE AGE: VIDEO EDITING WITH CAMTASIA

*Jeff Hanson*
Learn how to take the basic building blocks of a video screen capture, a narration track, and video special effects, and combine them into a completed video tutorial using Camtasia.

**9:45-10:45**
**Room A**

## PUT YOUR CONTENT ON MOBILE DEVICES USING RESPONSIVE HTML5

*Deb Sauer*
The reality: Information is available instantly... on our phone, tablet, and computer. Have a question? Look it up using your phone. Expectations have been set. Our users want to be able to access our information with equal ease. How do we meet this need? Delivering information in responsive HTML5 format allows you to make your content available to your users on multiple platforms. Using the responsive HTML5 output functionality built into FrameMaker, you can quickly and easily create output that users can access from a phone, tablet, or computer. Output is easily updateable so you can deliver the latest information without having to wait until the next software release. Responsive HTML5 is frameless, facilitating search engine optimization. And, you can customize the output to

*(Continued)* reflect your corporate identity. In this session, we'll explore creating responsive HTML5 output, improving search engine optimization, and customizing the output.

**11:00-12:00**
**Room A**

## MAKING AGILE WORK FOR YOU!

*John Garison*
Agile, scrums, backlogs, user stories, sprints...What's it all about? What do I need to know? And what's in it for me?

Attend this interactive session and get answers to these questions and more. In his 10+ years of experience with the Agile method, John has learned that no two Agile implementations are the same. Even within the same company, different groups practice Agile in slightly different ways. Regardless of the Agile realities at your organization, you can learn to navigate murky waters, get the information you need, and use the Agile method to iteratively produce better, stronger, more useful documentation to support your customers.

**11:00-12:00**
**Room B**

## CLIFFS NOTES FOR DOCUMENTATION? ABSOLUTELY!

*Todd DeLuca*
In this presentation, Todd will outline and describe how release documentation is like the Cliffs Notes of technical communication – a tool that people can study and learn from. You can get deeper content with traditional user guides or assistance, but release notes and similar materials hit the highlights and outline the big picture. For busy professionals who don't have time to read an entire manual (novel), there's a lot of value in short-format documentation – it's often the first and only material your colleagues and clients ever read. Learn how to extract and collect this type of important content and package it for the biggest impact with your audiences.

**12:00-1:00**

## LUNCH

**1:00-2:00
Room A**

## HOW DO I PICK THE RIGHT TOOL FOR ME?

*Liz Fraley*

You need to be able to evaluate tools from a balanced, objective point of view. In this session, Liz Fraley will share strategies, benchmarks, and questions that she's used (and seen used) over the years, so you will have something in your back pocket to help you choose the tool that's best for you, your company, and your situation.

**1:00-2:00
Room B**

## WHAT DO THEY REALLY THINK? SURVEYING USERS ABOUT YOUR HELP CONTENT

*Patty Gale*

You explore the product. You interview SMEs. You write until your fingers cramp. You polish. You publish. And...then what? Do users use your beautiful documentation? Do they like it? Do they find it useful? How do you know? Ask them!

**2:15-3:15
Room A**

## THE EXPERIENCE COMES FIRST

*Deb Sauer*

Companies have several departments that create content...marketing, customer care, documentation, user experience...it seems like EVERYONE is communicating with the customer. BUT are they communicating with each other? Not so much. Silos. It's not a new problem, but it is a growing problem. Customers may hear a different tone or voice, depending on the source. Sometimes the information differs. Which is one correct? How do you know? Why put customers in that place? How can we get it together and communicate accurate information in one unified voice? And what is that voice? We'll talk about breaking down silos, creating a team, and getting the focus on the right place...doing what is right for the customers.

**2:15-3:15
Room B**

## FORTY YEARS A TECH WRITER: LESSONS LEARNED

*John Garison*

There's a lot of talk around these days about how technical communication is dead or dying ... but I don't believe it and you shouldn't either. Our profession IS changing - just as it's been changing since one caveman showed another how to chip flint into a sharp edge. While this presentation follows one individual's career through a changing landscape, the lessons learned are hard-won and valuable as they show how to listen, learn, adapt, survive, and even thrive. I promise you will both learn something and enjoy yourself at the same time ... and hopefully come away with a new sense of where you can go and how you can get there.

**3:30-4:30**

## NETWORKING & HAPPY HOUR

Don't fight the traffic. Stay after Friday evening for an informal dinner in Lowell. Location TBD.

# Saturday, April 2, 2016

**7:30-8:30**    **REGISTRATION & BREAKFAST**

**8:30-9:30**
**Room A**

## FROM FRED FLINTSTONE TO GEORGE JETSON: CREATING TENSION IN TRAINING INCREASES ADOPTION

*Viqui Dill*
The objectives of a good training program are adoption and excellent field execution. This presentation is about how to use a combination of traditional training deliverables and old-school psychology to gain user buy-in and achieve a successful launch. We'll talk about how my company uses cartoons and countdowns to ensure that users seek out training and have a stake in adoption and field execution excellence.

**8:30-9:30**
**Room B**

## THE BENEFITS OF WORKING EMBEDDED ON DEVELOPMENT TEAMS

*Jody Zolli*
Agile development can introduce new challenges to the information design process, but in the context of bringing technical writers into the development team and the development work itself, Agile can present unique opportunities for technical writers.

**9:45-10:45**
**Room A**

## THE JOB SEARCH SANDWICH: A COMPLETE STRATEGY FOR SECURING A JOB OFFER

*Karen Giventer*
Karen presents Part 2 of her Job Search seminar. Last year, Karen spoke about finding job opportunities, this program focuses on securing a job offer once you become a candidate.

The presentation includes concrete, specific tactics for turning job searches into job offers.

**9:45-10:45**
**Room B**

## LIFE WITH GURU D: ADOPTING A DITA MINDSET AND CONVERTING OTHERS

*Liz Fraley*
DITA methodology is often difficult for people to grasp. It does require a complete shift in how you view and author your content. You can't take a book and shove it over. It doesn't work like that. You need to deconstruct and then reconstruct

*(Continued)* in the new architecture. It doesn't always mean that all of the content you had before is scrapped. Some can be salvaged. But you need to look at it from the DITA viewpoint to pull content in rather than looking at it from the Book Brain and trying to shove it all in.

**11:00-12:00**
**Room A**

## LESSONS LEARNED FROM BEING A CAREER MENTOR

*Brett Peruzzi*
Being a technical communications career mentor can be as rewarding for the mentor as it is helpful for the mentee. Are you interested in being a mentor but not sure if you'd be good at it? This presentation will share the lessons learned in being a mentor for the first time and offer suggestions on how to deal with common challenges.

**11:00-12:00**
**Room B**

## FRENEMIES: TECH COMM, TECH SUPPORT, AND WORKING TOGETHER

*Rick Lippincott*
Technical communicators and technical support team members have the same goal: ensuring that the users get the information they need, and that it is correct. But at times, it seems as though the two organizations are working at cross-purposes. This presentation takes a look at the problem, and proposes some answers.

**12:00-1:00**    **LUNCH**

**1:00-2:00**
**Room A**

## ACCESSIBILITY MATTERS: MAKING YOUR PRODUCTS AVAILABLE TO EVERYONE

*Char James-Tanny*
Our job is to make sure that everyone can understand the content we create. And for the most part, we are successful—except when it comes to people with disabilities. (Or people using devices and websites in ways that we didn't plan on, such as a traveler trying to view a restaurant's website when hungry.)

During this session, you'll see examples of what it means to be a person with a disability when using websites, mobile devices, and documents. And you'll learn some things that you can do now to make your information more accessible, using WCAG 2.0 as a reference.

# Saturday, April 2, 2016

**1:00-2:00**
**Room B**

## TECHNICAL DELIVERY: AN EXPANDED ROLE FOR TECHNICAL COMMUNICATORS

*Todd DeLuca*
Who doesn't like getting a package or letter in the mail? In this presentation, Todd will share the experience and show examples of how he expanded the role of his team beyond documentation to help others in the organization share the stories of their work. Based on a feature article in the October 2015 STC intercom magazine, Technical Delivery is an opportunity to bridge the gap between preparing material and making sure it gets into the hands of a busy audience that may not be aware of all the great content you're producing.

**2:15-3:15**
**Room A**

## WHAT TYPE OF LEADER ARE YOU?

*Cindy Currie*
This mini-workshop explores the topic of what makes a great leader, with help from workshop participants based on their own experiences. We'll discuss the attributes of great leadership, and examine various approaches to managing common business challenges from the perspective of a great leader. Participants will be encouraged to self-assess what type of leader they are now, and build an action plan for becoming GREAT! Takeaways include a template for a leadership action plan to help participants identify how to become a great leader themselves.

**2:15-3:15**
**Room B**

## EMBEDDED ASSISTANCE: THIRD RAIL OR THIRD WAY?

*Steve Jong*
It's challenging to provide technical documentation in an environment where people say "nobody reads the manual" (or even "nobody looks at the help") and instead demand "intuitive interfaces." Smartphones are now the most common web browser, and we face an audience with little patience for reading; we feel squeezed out of existence. But there's an opportunity for us to go from a supporting, or even superfluous, role to center stage: by providing embedded user assistance.

**3:30-4:30**

## CLOSING & RAFFLE

*Thank you to 36Software, Adobe, and TechSmith for donating items for the raffle.*



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*2015-2016*

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# InterChange 2016

**BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER OF THE STC**

| | Friday, April 1 | | Saturday, April 2 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 7:30-8:30 | **BREAKFAST** | | **BREAKFAST** | |
| 8:30-9:30 | Implementing DITA on a Shoe String | Tutorials for The YouTube Age: Video Editing with Camtasia | From Fred Flintstone to George Jetson: Creating Tension in Training Increases Adoption | The Benefits of Working Embedded on Development Teams |
| 9:45-10:45 | Put Your Content on Mobile Devices Using Responsive HTML5 | | The Job Search Sandwich - A Complete Strategy for Securing a Job Offer | Life with Guru D |
| 11:00-12:00 | Making Agile Work for YOU! | CliffsNotes for Documentation? Absolutely! | Lessons Learned From Being a Career Mentor | Frenemies: Tech Comm, Tech Support, and Working Together |
| 12:00-1:00 | **LUNCH** | | **LUNCH** | |
| 1:00-2:00 | How Do I Pick the Right Tool for Me? | What Do They Really Think? Surveying Users About Your Help Content | Accessibility Matters: Making Your Products Available to Everyone | Technical Delivery: An expanded role for Technical Communicators |
| 2:15-3:15 | The Experience Comes First | Forty Years a Tech Writer: Lessons Learned | What Type of Leader are YOU? | Embedded Assistance: Third Rail or Third Way? |
| 3:30-4:30 | **NETWORKING & HAPPY HOUR** | | **CLOSING & RAFFLE** | |

## SCRIBBLING TIPPLERS: EVERY 2ND WEDNESDAY

The second Wednesday of each month join the Scribbling Tipplers in Nashua or Lexington! Scribbling Tipplers is a social hour for friends and members of STC New England.

Come to Chili's in Nashua (just north of the Pheasant Lane Mall) or Waxy O'Connell's in Lexington after work to commiserate, socialize, imbibe, and otherwise relax with your fellow technical writers and other techy types.

All are welcome! No registration required. Just show up. Bring a friend!

*Program Design by Emily Alfson*