

Linda Urban

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TECHNICAL WRITING AND EDITING • ONLINE HELP DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT USER INTERFACE DESIGN • USABILITY • INFORMATION DESIGN • TRAINING

Recent Highlights

- Currently developing classroom-based training module and materials for an enterprise-level software application.
- Developed content analysis and preliminary help design for user assistance that is integrated into the user interface of a web application. Worked closely with the product management team to provide a usability review of the product (2006-2007).
- Designed and developed series of documentation releases for AMCC 3ware RAID controllers. Deliverables have included Installation Guides, User Guide, CLI Guide, API Programmer's Guide, and online help for controller management software. Using single-sourcing methodologies, delivered both PDF and HTML outputs, and delivered separate deliverables for Mac and PC platforms. Tools: FrameMaker and WebWorks Publisher (2003 to 2007).
- Developed online help system for power quality software from Fluke Corporation.. Tools: RoboHelp, Dreamweaver, and MS Word (2006)
- Developed documentation suite for video network management product. Single-sourced to HTML and PDF using FrameMaker and WebWorks Publisher. Audiences include administrators, operators, and end-users. (2005)
- Developed a User Interface Style Guide for the software front-end of a medical device (2005)
- Contributed to usability and user interface design of medical device software. Participated in site visits and user observations, collaborated with lead designer on screen layout and interaction design, wrote sections of Form and Behavior Specification, participated in cross-functional design review meetings. (2004)
- Teach in the Technical Communication program at UC Berkeley Extension (since 1995). Received recognition as an Honored Instructor in Fall 2000. Also teach in the Technical Communications program at UC Santa Cruz Extension. Serve on the Advisory Committees for both programs.

Work Experience

Independent Contractor and Consultant, 1980 – Present

Summary: Expert information designer and technical communicator, specializing in developing solutions that meet client goals and audience needs.

- **Information Design, Technical Writing, and Online Help Systems:** Design and create online help, user guides, tutorials, reference manuals, and training materials for software, hardware, and web-based products, and for general business processes.

Develop content for range of audiences, from developers and other highly technical users to not-so-technical end users who may be experts in a domain, but not experts in computer use.

Received awards from the Society for Technical Communication for several projects.
- **User Interface Design and Usability:** Work closely with business analysts and programmers during product development to improve usability and fine-tune product interfaces. Set up and facilitate usability sessions and recommend product changes. Create user interface style guides and review products to insure consistency in screen design and interaction.
- **Instructional Design, Training, Coaching, and Developmental Editing:** Develop curriculum and supporting materials for instructors and students. Lead classroom training. Consult with and coach managers and writers on business and technical writing projects, documentation planning and design, usability, and improving individual writing skills. Provide developmental edits to writers at various stages of documentation development.

Clients range from small start-up companies to large corporations. Partial list of clients includes AMCC (3ware), Apple Computer, Charles Schwab & Co, Corrigo., eiStream ViewStar, Fluke Corporation, Health Systems Design, Hewlett-Packard, ILOG, Intuit, Lundeen and Associates, Polycom, Siebel Systems, and Varian Medical Systems.

A list of projects is provided at http://www.urbancreations.com/linda_urban_resume-a.htm#Projects.

Instructor in Technical Communication

UC Berkeley Extension, Technical Communication Program, 1995 – Present

UC Santa Cruz Extension, Technical Communication Program, Spring 2001 - Present

Teach topics in technical communications, typically one course per quarter (evenings or weekends). Develop curriculum, course outlines, materials, and handouts. Consistently receive excellent student evaluations.

Received Honored Instructor recognition from UCB Extension, Fall 2000.

Member of the Advisory Committee for the Certificate in Technical Communication, UCB Extension.

Courses include: (schedule determined by the UC Extensions)

- Developing Online Help
- Developing Technical Information from Plan to Completion (previously called Becoming a Technical Information Developer)
- Exploring Technical Communication: An Introduction to the Profession and Process
- Principles of Information Architecture
- Survey of Usability Analysis Techniques
- Technical Communication I (previously called Introduction to Technical Writing)
- Technical Communication II (previously called Advanced Technical Writing)
- Usability Testing for Technical Communicators

Manager of Usability and User Interface Design, May 2000 – July 2001

Corrigo, Inc

Managed the usability and user interface design process for Corrigo's product line of web-based and mobile device interfaces.

Developed the User Interface Style Guide for Corrigo's primary web-based application. Clarified and defined UI elements and behavior. Worked with visual designers to refine and include information on colors, spacing, dimensions, and other aesthetic considerations. Published regular updates as the UI design evolved.

Established regular usability testing of key features for quarterly product releases. Located participants, created test scenarios, facilitated usability sessions, and recommended changes to screens and interaction behavior.

Promoted user-centered design practices throughout the development process. Observed and interviewed users and coordinated feature validation sessions with users for product managers and engineers. Worked with professional services to understand user needs and requests.

Coordinated change control process. Coordinated and facilitated cross-functional work sessions between professional services, product development, engineering, and QA to insure user feedback and requirements were presented, understood, and prioritized.

Contributed to the design and development of web-based training and online help. Designed an html-based online help solution to work with the web application. Worked with the visual designers and content developers in designing the approach for web-based training. Reviewed training and help content and style. Co-authored a use case for embedded help.

Other Background

Formal Education

B.A. from University of California at Berkeley (English)

Graduate courses toward a Masters in Psychology at John F. Kennedy University, Orinda, CA

Continuing Education

- *Card-Sorting for Information Architecture Design*, Janice James, Carol Righi, and Larry Wood, UPA Conference, June 2006
- *Building Affinity Diagrams & Visioning Techniques*, Shelley Wood, UPA Conference, June 2006
- *Structured FrameMaker: Authoring*, MicroType, 2005
- *Structured FrameMaker: Developing EDDs*, MicroType, 2005

- *FrameMaker Template Design*, MicroType, 2005
- *Graying of Design, The Psychology of Aging: Improving Interaction through Understanding*, Katherine Straub, UPA Conference, 6/2004
- *Evaluating for Accessibility, Usability Testing in Diverse Situations*, Shawn Lawton Henry and Mary Martinson, UPA Conference, 6/2003
- *Model Driven Usage-Centered Design: Using Abstract Models for Better Visual and Interaction Design*, Larry Constantine, UPA Conference, 6/2003
- *Basic Metadata and Taxonomy Design*, Amy Warner, IA Summit, February 2004.
- *Intermediate/Advanced Metadata and Taxonomy Design*, Amy Warner, IA Summit, February 2004.
- *Using Goal-Directed Design*, Kim Goodwin of Cooper, UIE 7 seminar, 2003
- *Roadmap to Markup Success: Understanding Structure and Style*, Molly Holzschlag and Eric Meyer, UIE 7 seminar, 2003
- *Single-sourcing for Mere Mortals*, David Knopf, WinWriters seminar, 2003
- *Human Factors in Information Design*, Dr. William Gribbons, Bentley College, 10/02
- *From Construct to Structure: Information Architecture from Mental Models*, Peter Merholz and Indi Young of Adaptive Path, UIE 6 seminar, 2002
- *Simplicity in Information Architecture Design: How to Design a Simple Yet Robust Information Architecture*, Gerry McGovern, UIE 6 seminar, 2002
- *XML Fundamentals*, Joel Sklar, WinWriters tutorial, 2002
- *Instructor Development Workshop Series*, UC Berkeley Extension, Fall 2001.
- *Inventing the Future: User Interface Design, Prototyping, and Evaluation*, UC Berkeley Summer Engineering Institute, 6/2001
- *Conducting a Hands-on Usability Study: A Participative Tutorial*, UPA Conference, 8/2000
- *User-Centered Design in Your Organization*, UPA Conference Tutorial, 8/2000
- *Documentation Databases: Developing a Single Sourcing Strategy*, JoAnn Hackos & Ann Rockley, WinWriters tutorial, 1999
- *Developing Training*, UC Berkeley Extension, 1993

Tools

Primary tools include: FrameMaker, MS Word, WebWorks Publisher 2003, WebWorks ePublisher, RoboHelp, Adobe Acrobat, Paint Shop Pro, SnagIt, MS PowerPoint, MS Excel.

Other tools used as needed on projects include: Dreamweaver, Visio, PhotoShop, Doc-To-Help, and others. Familiar with basic HTML and CSS, and with coding WinHelp “under the hood.”

Adept at learning new tools quickly.

Professional Associations

- UC Berkeley Extension Technical Communications Program, member of the Advisory Committee
- Usability Professionals Association, Member
- Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), Member
- ACM SIGCHI (Special Interest Group on Computer-Human Interaction), Member
- BAYCHI, Member
- ACM SIGDOC (Special Interest Group on Documentation), Member
- AIFIA (Asilomar Institute for Information Architecture), Member
- Society for Technical Communications, Senior Member

Awards

UC Berkeley Extension Honored Instructor award in 2000 for teaching and involvement in the Technical Communications Program.

Merit Award in the STC International Online Competition in 2000 for *Scenario Help* (Reliable Power Meters). (Designed and developed HTML Help system.)

Distinguished Award in the Northern California STC Online Competition in 1999 for *Scenario Help* (Reliable Power Meters). (Designed and developed HTML Help system.)

Merit Award in the Northern California STC Competition in 1997 for *Polling/Annunciation User Manual* (Reliable Power Meters). (Designed and wrote manual.)

Distinguished Award in a regional STC competition and Excellence Award in the STC International Competition was given to *Macintosh Playhouse*, Hayden Books, 1994. (Wrote chapter "Playing in the Game Room.")

Award of Distinction from the Northern California STC for *NewWave Online Documentation* in 1990. (Wrote NewWave Write, Textnote, and Dictionaries Tool portions of help system)

Best of Software Combination User and Reference Manuals, from the Northern California STC for NewWave User and Reference Guides, 1989. (Wrote "Chapter 2, Paperwork" in the *NewWave User Guide*.)

Recent Presentations

"Integrating User Assistance Into the User Interface: A Case Study," presented at the [Documentation and Training Conference](#), April, 2007 and October 2006.

"Sharing Your Expertise: Putting Together a Presentation or Workshop," presented at the [STC France Chapter Annual Conference](#), February, 2007.

"Paths to Success: Networking and Contributing (It's all about relationships)," presented at the [STC France Chapter Annual Conference](#), February, 2007

Avoiding Pitfalls When Single-Sourcing Print and Online, presented at [WritersUA Conference](#), April 2006.

Meeting the Needs of More Users: Making Information Accessible, presented at the [North Bay Chapter of the STC](#) meeting, November 17, 2005, and at the [SF Chapter of the STC](#) meeting, May 17, 2006.

Usability for Writers, Editors, and Managers, a workshop presented at the [New Mexico Kachina chapter of the STC](#), October 15, 2005

What's New in Online Help, presented at the [East Bay STC](#) chapter meeting, May 2005.

Starting Documentation Early in the Product Development Cycle, presented at the [Sonoma State Computer Science Colloquium](#), December 2004

Information Architecture for Technical Communicators, presented at the [East Bay STC](#) chapter meeting, May 2004, and at the [San Francisco STC](#) chapter meeting, November 2004.

Developing Accessible Information, presented at [WritersUA Conference](#), March 2004

HTML Help "Under the Hood," presented at [Berkeley STC](#) monthly meeting, July 2003

Visual Design of Help Topics: An Introduction a guest speaker presentation at Mick Renner's UCB Extension course, *Visual Design for Technical Communication*, May, 2003

Usability Techniques for Technical Communicators, presented at [Sacramento STC](#) monthly meeting, April 2003.

Getting a Fresh Perspective on Your Help Design, presented at [WinWriters Online Help Conference](#), February 2003.

Designing Usable Help Topics: Editorial and Visual Considerations, presented at [WinWriters Online Help Conference](#), February 2002.