

Linda Urban

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Summary

Award-winning technical communicator with 25 years' experience, specializing in designing and developing user assistance, including documentation, online help, and training solutions.

- Expert in multiple roles and tasks, including project management, content analysis, information architecture, instructional design and development, and content design and development.
- Focus on developing useful and usable information
- Work with teams to develop their skills and improve the quality of their work through workshops and coaching
- Expert in topic-based authoring and single-sourcing solutions.
- Honored instructor with 15 years' experience teaching technical communication courses. As an instructor, consistently receive excellent evaluations from students.

Work Experience

Note: Work indicated below as “consultant” or “contractor” was performed through Linda Urban Communications, LLC (2005 to present) and Linda Urban Communication Services (prior to 2005).

Instructor in Technical Communication, UC Berkeley Extensions

Fall 1995 – Present

Teach topics in technical communications, typically one course per semester, (evenings or weekends). Design and develop instruction, including course outlines, materials, and handouts. Receive excellent student evaluations.

Courses have included:

- Technical Communication I and Technical Communication II
- Developing Online Help
- Principles of Information Architecture
- Usability Testing for Technical Communicators

Have also taught occasional courses at UC Santa Cruz Extension

Course Developer, IBM WebSphere ILOG

October 2009 – December 2010 (contractor to IBM, through ICS)

Designed and developed classroom-based training, virtual training, and self-paced training for enterprise-level business rules software (IBM WebSphere ILOG JRules BRMS and IBM WebSphere ILOG Rule Team Server).

Audiences: Business analysts and business domain specialists.

Tools: FrameMaker, PowerPoint, and Captivate; Wiki for internal team work

Deliverables: PDF (workbook) and PowerPoint presentation for instructor led courses; Captivate files and PDF workbooks for self-paced training.

- Adapted classroom-based training for use in virtual training environments.
- Developed self-paced version from classroom-based content, adapting as required. Scripted and recorded lectures in Captivate.
- Collaborated with education, documentation, and elearning teams.

**Training Consultant and Course Developer, ILOG (now part of IBM)
February 2007 – September 2009 (consultant/contractor to ILOG)**

Designed and developed training for enterprise-level business rules software
(ILOG JRules and ILOG Rule Team Server).

Audiences: Business analysts and business domain specialists.

Tools: FrameMaker and PowerPoint; Wiki for internal team work

Deliverables: PDF (workbook) and PowerPoint presentation for instructor led courses.

- Worked closely with developers in R&D, professional services consultants (developers and business policy analysts), and product marketing, to identify and develop appropriate instructional design and content.
- Developed and presented train-the-trainer sessions for instructors.
- Developing modular approach and architecture for training content to allow easier customization for different audiences, and to allow reuse of content across trainings.
- Coordinated training alignment effort across product lines, to identify similarities and differences in approach, and work toward greater consistency.

**Documentation Specialist (Consultant), 3ware (now part of LSI)
January 2003 – October 2009**

Wrote and maintained software and hardware documentation for 3ware RAID controllers. Designed and developed required documentation as it evolved over a series of releases. Identified areas for improvement and implemented them in a phased approach across releases.

Used single-sourcing techniques to produce manuals for different platforms (Mac and PC), and for online and print deliverables. Created FrameMaker and WebWorks templates to support this process.

Documents included Software User Guides, API Developer Guide, CLI (Command Line Interface) Reference Manual, Hardware Installation Guides, and online help.

Audiences: Administrators, programmers, and technicians on Mac, Windows, and Linux platforms.

Tools: FrameMaker, WebWorks Publisher 2003, WebWorks ePublisher, Acrobat Professional

Deliverables: PDF, web-based online help (context-sensitive), CHM

**User Assistance Designer (Consultant), Corrigo, Inc.
April 2006 – March 2007**

Developed content analysis and preliminary online help design for user assistance that was integrated into the user interface of a web application.

Worked closely with the product development team to provide a usability review of the product.

Audience: Commercial field service, technicians, managers (3 distinct personas)

Tools: RoboHelp, Excel

Deliverables: Content analysis, prototype of help system

Online Help Specialist (Consultant), Fluke Corporation

November 2003 – June 2006

Designed and developed online Help for power quality product. Worked closely with engineering, product development, and project management throughout development of this Windows application. Developed content and design of help system (compiled help), reviewed user interface, contributed to refinement of UI.

Audience: Power quality specialists.

Tools: RoboHelp and DreamWeaver.

Deliverables: Compiled Help (CHM), context-sensitive

Usability Specialist (Consultant), Varian Medical Systems

Dec 2003 – June 2004, November 2004 to March 2005

Developed a User Interface Style Guide. Worked with the usability team to develop a User Interface Style Guide for a series of products.

Usability Specialist. Assisted in the user interface development for software that integrates with a medical device and contributed to form and behavior specification document. (Contractor working in the usability group, while internal usability person was on maternity leave.)

Audiences: Developers and usability team

Tools: FrameMaker and MS Word

Deliverables: PDF

Documentation Lead (Consultant), Polycom, Inc.

January 2003 – August 2005

Led a team of three writers in developing the documentation suite for ReadiManager SE200, a video network management product. Designed and implemented single-sourcing solution.

Tools: FrameMaker and WebWorks Publisher.

Deliverables: PDF and context-sensitive web-based help.

Audiences: Administrators, operators, and end-users.

Wrote Polycom Conference Suite Administrator's Guide and related end-user documents for video conference scheduling in MS Outlook, Lotus Notes, and a web-based scheduling application. This application provides video conference scheduling and management features through a web application. Created PDFs and HTML-based help through single-sourcing.

Tools: MS Word and RoboHelp HTML (1st release), FrameMaker and WebWorks Publisher (2nd release).

Deliverables: PDF and HTML version of Admin guide; PDF and CHM of end-user guide.

Audiences: Administrators and end-users.

Information Designer and Architect (Consultant), Charles Schwab, & Co

March 2002 – Dec 2002

Developed the information architecture and design of web-based online help for an internal application. This project was part of an initiative within the eLearning group to further development of performance support and just-in-time training. Interviewed users, analyzed user input and survey results, developed design and structure for online help, conducted preliminary usability tests, and trained in-house writer to create online help topics, use help-authoring tools, and continue user-centered approach for developing help system.

Documentation Specialist (Consultant), Siebel Systems

August 2001 – July 2002

Wrote *Siebel Order Management Guide, 7.5 Release*, a guide for administrators implementing a new order processing module with their Siebel applications. Worked closely with product managers to understand the audience, determine appropriate content, and create this manual.

Contributed to *Complex Order Management Guide for Industry Solutions, 7.0 Release*.

Worked with a team of 3 other writers to create and release this in-depth guide for administrators and developers in 10 weeks. Worked closely with product development and engineering teams.

Coordinated multi-author section of *Siebel Applications Administration Guide, 7.0 Release*. Coordinated writing, review, and approval process for Part 1 of this guide, to make sure it was ready to be published on schedule. Wrote several short sections, provided editorial comments to writers, worked with product managers, editors, and technical publications managers as required.

Tools: FrameMaker. Optimized material for online and PDF presentation; documentation converted to web-based help using WebWorks Publisher.

Audiences: Administrators

Manager of Usability and UI, Corrigo, Inc

May 2000 – July 2001

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

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.

Provided usability and UI review of all use cases that included customer-facing user interfaces. Reviewed business scenarios, task flows, UI behavior, and screens. Worked with product managers to clarify use cases before implementation.

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.

Developed the User Interface Style Guide for Corrigo's primary web-based application. Clarified and defined desired 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.

Documentation, Training, and User Interface Specialist (Consultant)

Prior to 2000

Designed and developed print documentation, training materials, and online help, and contributed to user interface design for a range of companies.

Partial list of clients includes:

- Reliable Power Meters (later acquired by Fluke), 1992 to 2000
- Hewlett Packard
 - Corporate Training Systems Group, 1996 to 1999
 - Corporate Staffing Group, 1993 to 1995
 - Software division, through Lasselle-Ramsay, 1989 to 1990
- Lundeen & Associates, 1991 to 1992
- Intuit, 1988 to 1989

Professional Presentations

Present regularly at international and local professional conferences and STC meetings. A list of presentations and workshops is available at http://urbancreations.com/classes/classes_and_talks.html.

Education

- B.A. from University of California at Berkeley (English)
- Graduate courses in Psychology at John F. Kennedy University
- Graduate courses toward an MS in Instructional and Performance Technology at Boise State University. (Degree expected in 2013)

Additional Coursework and Professional Development

Continue to take workshops and courses to develop technical and professional skills, ranging from Structured FrameMaker, to Taxonomy Design, to Usability Techniques and Skills.

Regularly attend professional conferences, including ASTD, WritersUA, UPA (Usability Professionals Association), ISPI, and STC.

Tools

Primary tools include: Adobe Technical Communication Suite (FrameMaker, RoboHelp, Captivate, Acrobat), WebWorks ePublisher, SnagIt, Microsoft Office Suite (Word, PowerPoint, Excel). Familiar with HTML and CSS (range of editors). Comfortable working in wikis.

Other tools used as needed: Adobe Dreamweaver, PhotoShop, Microsoft Visio, others as appropriate to the project.

Professional Associations

- Society for Technical Communication (STC), Senior Member
- American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), Member
- International Society for Performance Improvement (ISPI), Member
- Usability Professionals Association (UPA), Member
- Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), Member
- ACM SIGCHI (Special Interest Group on Computer-Human Interaction), Member
- Institute for Information Architecture, Member

Awards

Distinguished Chapter Service Award from Berkeley Chapter of Society for Technical Communication (STC) in 2009. Recognized “for sustained and exceptional contributions to the Berkeley Chapter’s leadership and programs, and for furthering the technical communication profession in the Bay Area and beyond.”

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

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

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

Excellence 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 *HP NewWave Online Documentation* in 1990. (Wrote NewWave Write, Textnote, and Dictionaries Tool portions of help system)

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