

SIGDOC FY'07 Annual Report
July 2006 – June 2007
Submitted by: Brad Mehlenbacher, SIGDOC Chair

_SIGDOC Purpose

The Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) Special Interest Group (SIG) on the Design of Communication (DOC) — ACM SIGDOC — emphasizes the design of communication for computer-mediated information products and systems. SIGDOC fosters the study and publication of processes, methods, and technologies for communicating and designing communication artifacts such as printed and online information, documentation designs and applications, multimedia and Web-based environments.

_SIGDOC Mission Statement

Until 2003, SIGDOC focused on documentation for hardware and software. With the shift in focus from documentation to the “design of communication,” SIGDOC better positioned itself to emphasize the potentials, the practices, and the problems of multiple kinds of communication technologies, such as Web applications, user interfaces, and online and print documentation. SIGDOC focuses on the design of communication as it is taught, practiced, researched, and theorized in various fields, including technical communication, software engineering, information architecture, and usability.

The mission of SIGDOC includes

- Promoting the professional development of its members
- Encouraging interdisciplinary problem solving related to online and print documentation and communication technologies
- Providing avenues for publication and the exchange of professional information
- Supporting research that focuses on the needs and goals of humans in technological contexts, and
- Supporting the development and improvement of communication technologies, including applications, interfaces, and documentation.

_SIGDOC Officers

The SIGDOC officers, effective July 1st, 2007, are

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| • Brad Mehlenbacher, NC State University | Chair |
| • Rob Pierce, IBM Rational Software | Vice-Chair
Newsletter Editor |
| • Shaun Slattery, DePaul University | Secretary/Treasurer |
| • Ashley Williams, Bridgeline Software | Information Director
Webmaster |
| • Michael Albers, East Carolina University | Graduate Competition Chair |
| • Gloria Reece, Researcher, New Media & IT | INTECOM Representative |
| • Scott Tilley, Florida Institute of Technology | Past Chair |
| • Shihong Huang, Florida Atlantic University | 2006 Conference Program Chair |
| • David Novick, University of Texas at El Paso | 2007 General Conference Chair
2007 Local Arrangements |
| • Clay Spinuzzi, University of Texas at Austin | 2007 Conference Program Co-Chair |
| • Irene Frawley, ACM HQ | ACM Program Coordinator |

_SIGDOC Conference Updates

SIGDOC'06 was held in Myrtle Beach, SC, October 18th-20th, 2006. The conference made a small profit of \$5,143. Thirty-nine papers were submitted and 28 were accepted. The conference papers were published in the *Proceedings of the 24th International Conference on Design of Communication* (ACM P).

The Invited Keynote Speaker was Yuzuru Tanaka, Director of the Meme Media Laboratory, Hokkaido University Sapporo, and author of *Meme media and meme market architectures: Knowledge media for editing, distributing, and managing intellectual resources*. Additional Invited Speakers were Klaus P. Jantke, Professor of Multimedia Applications, Technical University Ilmenau, Institute for Media and Communication Science, and Nicolas Spyrtatos, Professor of Computer Science, University of Paris-South, Database Group Head, Laboratory for Research in Informatics (LRI). Since our first overseas conference in Coventry, UK, in 2005, we have noted a much stronger international presence at our conference (2006) and in our paper submissions this year (2007).

The recipients of the 2006 Rigo Award (named after Joseph Rigo, past President of SIGDOC, for lifetime achievement in the field of communication design) were Drs. Dixie Goswami and Carolyn R. Miller for their respective co-edited books (published during the 80s) on communication in scientific, technical, and nonacademic settings.

Plans and arrangements for our upcoming annual conference, SIGDOC'07, which will be held in El Paso, TX, from October 22nd-24th, 2007, are ahead of schedule. The conference Website is <http://www.sigdoc2007.org> and lists the conference theme, invited speakers, and recipient for the 2007 Diana Award. The University of Texas at El Paso will host the conference which should result in reduced costs. The proposal/paper reviews have just been completed.

The SIGDOC'08 conference is in the information-planning stages with the hope that it will be held in London, UK. Aristidis Protopsaltis, with the School of Computer Science at the University of Westminster, London, UK, is negotiating with his university about sponsoring the conference.

_SIGDOC Representative to INTECOM

Gloria Reece has replaced Stephanie Rosenbaum as SIGDOC's new representative to INTECOM, an international "umbrella" organization made up of numerous representatives from scientific and technical communication societies.

_SIGDOC Information Director

Ashley Williams has agreed to serve as Information Director for the SIG and, in addition to maintaining the Website (<http://www.sigdoc.org/>), plans to redesign parts to invite more interactive participation from the membership.

_Publications

SIGDOC's quarterly newsletter (<http://www.sigdoc.org/newsletter/current/>) is e-mailed to all SIGDOC members, and archived versions of past newsletters are also available (<http://www.sigdoc.org/newsletter/archives/>). The newsletter consists of news from members (notes from the chair and from the general conference chair), future conference information, interesting items, feature articles, and job market information. Our last three issues have featured articles focused on various definitions of communication design, given the SIGDOC name change, which has been a subject of lively debate among members.

_Partnerships

This year, SIGDOC committed to the following in cooperation agreements:

- CaSTA 06: Canadian Symposium on Text Analysis, date, 2006
- CNSR'06: Communications Networks and Services Research Conference, Moncton, NB, 2006
- DocEng 06: ACM Symposium on Document Engineering, date, 2006
- IWCMC'06: International Wireless Communications and Mobile Computing Conference, Vancouver, BC, 2006
- WWW 07: 10th International World Wide Web Conference, 2007
- UE+ 07: User Experience Plus Conference on Designing Pleasurable Products and Interfaces, 2007.

_Membership

SIGDOC currently has 316 members and this number has been consistent for the last several years. The SIGDOC Website now explicitly details the benefits of joining SIGDOC (<http://www.sigdoc.org/join/>) in addition to encouraging existing members to volunteer (<http://www.sigdoc.org/members>). Increasing membership is a SIG priority this year.

_Key Issues for 2007-2008

Key issues for SIGDOC in the coming year include the following:

- To maintain and/or increase the current membership numbers (through relationships with other SIG Chairs, word-of-mouth and advocacy at other conferences, inviting new board members, and distributing the newsletter to colleagues in related disciplines). Additional strategies for accomplishing this goal will be discussed at this year's annual SIG board meeting.
- To submit minor revisions of the SIGDOC Bylaws to reflect the 2003 renaming and orientation of the SIG.
- To develop a multidisciplinary research base that contributes significantly to applied efforts in communication design (in collaboration with groups such as SIGCHI and SIGGRAPH, SIGACCESS, SIGMM, SIGUCCS, SIGWEB, etc.), and
- To broaden the identity of SIGDOC to include, not only manual and documentation design, but emerging information genres such as EPSSs, intelligent tutors, query-based instruction, Web-based training, blogsheres, digital entertainment spaces.