SIGDOC FY '19 Annual Report

Submitted by Emma Rose, SIGDOC Past Chair

Overview

SIGDOC's mission is to advance the state of knowledge, encourage the research, and support the interdisciplinary practice of the design of communication. The ACM Special Interest Group for Design of Communication (SIGDOC) provides a forum for researchers and practitioners of the design of communication, including information architecture, information design, user assistance, help, and documentation (traditional and user-contributed) as well as technology that supports and enhances communication, including blogs, forums, chat, and wikis.

Leadership

After several leadership changes in 2017-18, the past year was focused to create stability in the organization. The Executive Committee, led by Dr. Emma Rose, Chair and Dr. Kristen Moore as Secretary/Treasurer, and advised by Dr. Liza Potts, who stepped in to fill the role of Past Chair. The Vice Chair role remained vacant. Over the past year, we held elections, led by Dr. Michael Salvo as the Elections Chair. In July 2019, our newly elected Executive Committee transitioned into their leadership roles: Dr. Dan Richards, Chair, Dr. Sarah Read, Vice Chair and Dr. Susan Youngblood, Secretary/Treasurer. Dr, Emma Rose will transition to Past Chair.

The new Executive Committee is planning to invite existing board members to stay on and also look for ways to expand the larger SIGDOC Board. In addition, the new EC has several strategic priorities for the upcoming year and extending into their three-year term.

1. Update mission and bylaws: The organizations' mission and bylaws will be revisited to ensure they reflect the current focus of the organization. The bylaws were revised this past year and are currently under review with ACM. Once approved, SIGDOC members will vote to approve. Currently, we are collecting feedback from our members on the existing mission statement to assess if and how it should be updated.
2. Conference seating strategy: Over the past year, the board has had a variety of discussions on creating a more formal strategy for choosing conference venues. This work will continue this year so we can make conference planning sustainable and effective for our members.
3. Broadening participation and attendance: Over the past year, the EC has engaged in several efforts to broaden participation in our SIG and attendance at the conference. Several initiatives are linked to the priorities of our membership, which include ensuring a connection with industry, focusing on the publication of high-quality research in communication design, and focusing on inclusion, equity, and diversity within the organization.
4. Strategic planning: The new executive committee will continue to explore additional initiatives as part of their term.

SIGDOC Annual Conference 2018

Our flagship conference is our annual SIGDOC conference, which typically takes place in the summer or fall of each year. The SIGDOC 2018 conference took place in Milwaukee, WI on August 3-5, 2018

The conference committee included
- Conference Co-Chair — Tammy Rice-Bailey, Milwaukee School of Engineering
- Conference Co-Chair — Nadya Shalamova, Milwaukee School of Engineering
- Program Chair — Elizabeth L. Angeli, Marquette University
- Program Chair — T. Kenny Fountain, Case Western Reserve University
- Student Research Competition Chair — Jason Swarts, North Carolina State University
- SIGDOC Chair – Emma Rose, University of Washington, Tacoma
- Conference Treasurer — Kristen Moore, Texas Tech University
- Sponsorship Manager — Abigail Selzer King, Texas Tech University
- Social Media Manager — Jason Tham, University of Minnesota
- Communications Manager — Luke Thominet, Florida International University
- Website Manager – Adam Strantz, Miami University

We had 33 items that were peer reviewed and published in the proceedings, including 20 papers and 13 extended abstracts and 73 attendees registered for the conference.

We saw a robust engagement with graduate and undergraduate students who participated in our Microsoft Student Research Competition.

We awarded the 2018 Diana Award to the Center for Civic Design and featured well-known keynote speakers, including Dana Chisnell, who accepted the Diana Award winner on behalf of the Center for Civic Design and Ken Cook, President of Cook Company, a local technical communication firm. We saw robust attendance at our series of professional development workshops, Ignite talks, and the SIGDOC Research Network.

The 2018 conference closed with the following:
Total Revenue: **$17,551.00**
Total Expenses: **$9,517.79**
Allocation: **$1,522.85**
Surplus/Loss: **$6,510.36**
Attendance: **73**

The research that our members are presenting at our conference continues to address salient and cutting-edge issues and themes in the fields of communication design, user experience, and technical communication.

Awards and Grants

At the 2018 conference, SIGDOC awarded the Diana Award, which celebrates an organization's contribution to the field of communication design, to the Center of Civic Design for their work in improving design and access in voting.

In addition in 2018, SIGDOC awarded its second Best Paper award to Alisha Karabinus and Rachel Atherton for their paper "Games, UX, and the Gaps: Technical Communication Practices in an Amateur Game Design Community." We plan to continue to present a best paper award at future conferences to highlight the rigorous and impactful work being done in the field.

In 2018-2019, we also awarded two Career Advancement Research Grants each for $1200. Awardees were:

- Participatory Communication Design of Mapping Borderlands: Decolonizing Cartographic Information Design and Creating a Participatory Mapping Interface by Eda Ozyesilpinar, Ph.D. and Victor Del Hierro, Ph.D.
- Improving the Design of Visual Risk Communication through a Content Analysis of a Crowdsourced Public Health App's Existing User Comments by Kristin Bivens, Ph.D. and Candice A. Welhausen, Ph.D.

Communication Design Quarterly

Our publication, *Communication Design Quarterly,* continues to contribute valuable, peer-reviewed articles that are shared broadly. 2018-2019 marks the first full year of the journal's new editor Derek Ross. Under his leadership, Derek has increased *CDQ*'s editorial board from 9 to 47, located internationally, all of whom are experts in some facet of communication design. This increases both our reach, and our ability to thoroughly and professionally address article reviews. He has also made various changes to editorial policies including special issues and length, which are available through our website, which is maintained and updated regularly by Website Manager, Adam Strantz.

In Fall 2018, *CDQ* moved to an Online First model of publication which allowed us to ensure that cutting-edge research is made available in a timely fashion. Non-special issue articles will be published individually on our website as they are edited and processed, then collected into quarterly journals for archival. We currently have a steady pipeline of submitted articles that are under review.

The current editor and the previous editor have repeatedly raised the issue of the need for funding to support *CDQ*. SIGDOC is committed to supporting the editors and their work in producing this publication. For this year, we provided additional funding for the editor to support technology purchases and will consider how to continue to support the work of making *CDQ* a high-quality publication.

Here are the top five downloaded articles for the last 12 months

1. "Data visualization" (381 Downloads)
   By Manuela Aparicio and Carolos J. Costa
   Volume 3 Issue 1, November 2014

2. "Journey mapping: a brief overview" (337 Downloads)
   By Tharon Howard
   Volume 2, Issue 3, May 2014

3. "The communication design of WeChat: ideological as well as technical aspects of social media" (318 Downloads)
   Xiaobo Wang, Baotong Gu
   Volume 4, Issue 1, Nov 2015

4. "The past, present, and future of UX empirical research" (201 Downloads)
   By Joy Robinson, Candice Lanius, Ryan Weber
   Volume 5 Issue 3, November 2017

5. "Big data visualization: promises & pitfalls" (191 Downloads)
   By Katherine Hepworth
   Volume 4 Issue 4, December 2016

Social Media

Our social media reach continues to expand, we have a total of 858 followers on Twitter, which 101 more than the previous year, and 60 more Facebook followers, for a total of 486.

Membership

As SIGDOC continues to rebuild, the leadership team is developing strategic plans for reviving membership in SIGDOC. Currently, our membership is 157, which is an increase of 30 from last year at this time. Our strategic plan is to increase membership to 200 by 2021.

Upcoming Conference

Our 2019 conference will be held on Oct 3-5, 2019 at Portland State University in Portland, Oregon and will feature three days of conference activities, including a meet up event the evening before the conference that is co-hosted with industry partners, four workshops, and a variety of panels and paper presentations, and a community based outreach event hosted by Women in Technical Communication.

Future Plans

Although the strategic plan will be more fully developed in Spring of 2019 as the new officers are onboarded, see our current plans under the future goals section.

- Developing a long-term slate of conference locations, including collocation with other influential organizations in the field.
- Offering webinar versions of conference workshops that require membership;
- Sponsoring SIGDOC panels at other conferences to increase visibility of the organization.
- Creating community-based partnerships with organizations invested in the Design of Communication to deepen the slate of Diana Award nominees and increase membership from the community.

- Committing to industry partnerships through the development of an Industry Liaison position on the board, whose responsibility would be to do outreach for industry partners and solicit and program at least one industry-driven panel.
- Committing to community partnerships through the development of a Community Liaison position on the board, whose responsibility would be to do outreach for community partners and solicit and program at least one community-driven panel.

In addition to these new strategies, we will continue working with Women in Technical Communication and supporting the Microsoft Student Research Competition.