

## this issue

### Editors

Kiranmayee Pamarthy  
GopalKrishna Tharoor  
Gayathri Jaishankar  
Makarand Pandit

### Webmaster

Vimal Chuttani

### Editor of this issue

Kiranmayee Pamarthy

### Editorial Column

Knowledge shared is knowledge gained.

I recently read a book by Todd Henry known as "Die Empty". It is a fantastic read. The author was inspired and got this idea of writing this book while attending a business meeting. In this meeting, the Director asked which is the richest place in the world. Many gave answers as the Gulf states, diamond mines etc. The Director said, "No, the richest place is the cemetery. Yes, it is the richest land in the world, because millions of people have departed/died and they carried many valuable ideas that did not come to light nor benefit others. It is all in the cemetery where they are buried."

Inspired by this answer, Todd Henry wrote his book, "Die Empty" where he did his best to motivate people to pour out their ideas and knowledge in their communities.

The most beautiful of what he said in his book is: "Do not go to your grave and carry inside you the best that you have. Always choose to die empty."

If you have an idea, perform it.

If you have knowledge, give it out.

If you have a goal, achieve it.

If you have a dream, follow it.

Share and distribute, do not keep it inside.

Let's begin to give and share. Start the race, choose to "Die Empty"; you can start by contributing to the award winning newsletter, INDUS!!

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## President Speak

Mugdha Achalkar – 2020 President for STC India Chapter

Hello Fellow Communicators,

As I pen the introduction to our Indus Newsletter, I am like most of you, stuck in the house thanks to COVID-19. The lockdown/quarantine days seem endless as the days go by. Yet in all this chaos, I find reading, learning, and imbibing news skills to be therapeutic. The Indus Newsletter is doing just that. Each of us by now has understood the gravity of the situation and also recognizes the fact that to be motivated, we must keep learning and growing. What better way to do just that from the comfort of your space?

The Indus team is all set with a plethora of topics and learnings for you. The team plans to cover new and exciting topics along with the so-called perennial ones.

Things get interesting when we share our ideas, views, and in some cases coping mechanisms. The newsletter gives a peek into the world of communicators and the little things that mean a lot to them. For example, how to deal with the sudden infusion of AI, AR, Robotics. Does the way we write differ when we write for emerging technologies? The newsletter also addresses some pain points around career path, career growth, and the need and use of certifications.

The newsletter will touch base on the most commonly asked questions – what is the future of technical communication in India? What kind of outreach plan and marketing strategy should the organizations have for technical communicators.

So, overall, we have an excellent variety of topics that technical communicators talk about, hear about, and, to some extent, worried about.

Come, join us in this exciting journey towards learning and knowledge sharing as we step into an exciting 2020.

Feel free to reach out to the Indus Team, 2020 ([indus@stc-india.org](mailto:indus@stc-india.org)) with your ideas and suggestions. If you're interested to contribute to the newsletter, we welcome you to submit your articles to ([industeam@stc-india.org](mailto:industeam@stc-india.org)).

. Happy reading!!!

### Has telecommuting come to stay in Corporate India??

Many questions are arising in today's scenario. Corporate India is looking at flexible, remote working options in the future. Probably the effectiveness of this "lockdown working period" can be analyzed for performance and productivity. We insist that it is a global village without geographical boundaries yet hesitate to the idea of telecommuting. So, our question to you, our reader, is, "Has Telecommuting come to stay?".

Send your thoughts and musings to [indus@stc-india.org](mailto:indus@stc-india.org) with the **subject line as Telecommuting**.

# Editorial Calendar

Send your articles to [industeam@stc-india.org](mailto:industeam@stc-india.org)

Issue	Month(s)	Theme	Submission Date	Publishing Date	Notes
1.	January/February	Introductory Issue	-	20-Mar-2020	President's Address, Regular Columns
2.	March/April	Domains and their nuances	10-May-2020	20-May-2020	BFSI, Healthcare, Pharmaceutical, Networking, Sciences, Legal etc. Is Domain knowledge necessary for working seamlessly?
3.	May	What Next? Writing for Emerging Technologies	25-May-2020	10-Jun-2020	AI, AR, Robotics, Cloud Computing, Quantum Computing, IoT, BlockChain etc. How to be ready for the future?
4.	June	Training and Professional Development	15-Jun-2020	10-Jul-2020	Instructional Design, Training material, career path, growth, certification etc, Sustaining in the ever-changing global space. Do we need continuous training and development to stay ahead in the field? How can we establish a handshake between these departments?
5.	July <sup>1</sup>	Graphics, Technical Illustrations, Videos	10-Jul-2020	10-Aug-2020	Importance of graphics and illustrations. Why do we need graphics and illustrations?
6.	August	Content Quality and Deliverables, Improving User Experience	10-Aug-2020	10-Sep-2020	Write on challenges with deliverables, reduced customer calls, enhanced user experience through innovative solutions. What are the Best Known Methods to enhance the quality of content, deliverables, and, user experience?
7.	September	Metrics – Quality, productivity, performance, data analytics, web analytics	10-Sep-2020	10-Oct-2020	Analysis of metrics and improving quality, why analytics, impact of metrics on end user documentation, appreciation and testimonials due to usage of metrics. Can documentation be measured with metrics? What metrics can be considered to evaluate doc efficiency?
8.	October	Future of Technical Communication	10-Oct-2020	10-Nov-2020	What is the future of technical communication in India? Is there an outreach plan and marketing strategy for technical communication in organizations?
9.	November	Automation in Technical Communication	10-Nov-2020	30-Nov-2020	Automating written content and processes. How has automation improved the final product?
10.	December <sup>2</sup>	Annual Conference Newsletter	-		

Send your articles to [industeam@stc-india.org](mailto:industeam@stc-india.org)

<sup>1</sup> Special Edition

<sup>2</sup> Annual Conference Newsletter

## Author Profile

Kiranmayee Pamarthy has 30+ years of experience in the IT industry; wherein 6 years have been dedicated to the Training Industry (she used to teach software languages in the late '80s and early '90s) and the rest to Documentation and Technical Writing. A person with a strong record of driving results through focus on customer satisfaction, team, organization goals, strategic implementation, and business priorities.

She is very passionate about mentoring, knowledge-transfer, continuous learning, and innovation. Her passion for sharing knowledge and teaching makes her a speaker in many forums. She is a sought after trainer in the field of technical communication. She has won numerous awards for her work and also as a speaker.

Old Desktop with floppy drives



Different sizes of Floppy drives and floppies



Beta Version of Windows 3.1



## How it all began...

**Worklife without Internet, email, and mobile phones?!! Bare minimum authoring tools; the era of technical communication in India...a trip down memory lane....**

"I came into this profession by accident" – This was a common refrain from many folks in the early '90s who made Technical Communication as a profession; reason, because it was an unknown quantity and very new in India. Very exciting times but also frustrating since all of us working in this profession in the early '90s were working in silos without any support system. The learning curve was very steep and I was very fortunate to travel to the USA in the early '90s to learn the trade and tools from the creators of the tools (I was trained by a creator of eHelp). The Operating System (OS) was Windows 3.1 and had a desktop, no laptop in those times. We also did not have the internet (The first publicly available internet service in India was launched by state-owned Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited (VSNL) on 14 August 1995.), obviously no email service and no mobile phones. User Manuals created by product companies were the benchmark, and I used the the 14<sup>th</sup> edition of Chicago Manual of Style.

This era of technical writers are often accused of being "perfectionists", but, we argue that committing mistakes were always costly and time consuming. Compiling a help file would take hours; uploading files to FTP servers even longer, hence we strived to stringently follow certain guidelines, checklists to complete the work. I have also mentioned this in many of my lectures and learning sessions that my first user manual was written after going through reams and reams of paper of C programs; no GUI effects nor a detailed functional specifications document, what they had was the code and I had to decipher the code to write the user manual. It helped that I knew the C language and had taught it in my teaching days. What I enjoyed most was the final writing and the result after all the research, content mining, and learning.

Rarely do we create .ini files (initialization files of the SW) these days but it was very common for us to create the content for .ini files and give it to the programmer to include it in the final version. This process helped when we had to include the map ids for context sensitive help. I remember writing a lot of macros in Visual Basic in those days to make life easier while authoring. And, the content was always small chunks of information or modules, again there was a valid reason for this modular structure. We could not upload huge files to the FTP server and we had to send these files to the editor for editing and reviewing; the editor used to sit in the USA office.

I remember working with FrameMaker from Frame Technology Corp. on the UNIX and AIX operating systems and eHelp from Blue Sky Software; both these products were later acquired by Adobe in the early '90s. We know them as Adobe FrameMaker and Adobe RoboHelp. I am probably one of the few people who has worked with all the releases of Adobe FrameMaker and Adobe RoboHelp after the acquisitions!!!

Access to the Internet was the next big event and it was like a kid in a toy store. So much to read, learn, imbibe, remember, and implement in the workplace. I used Netscape Navigator browser and Hotmail (account is still active) in 1996, both very popular in that era. I went on a spree of notes taking and learning about the profession in this period. Today when I see the advances in technology, tools, and the rapid development of various aspects in the industry, I always wonder what I would have achieved if these were available in the '90s. The reason I started sharing knowledge was because of the hardships and trials I faced while working in the early days in this profession. I enjoyed every bit of this long journey and am still enjoying it every day.



## Abstract

A paradigm shift from 'good to know' to 'must to know'; that's what Gen-Z is all about. According to Forbes (2015), Gen Z is the generation after millennials, who are born from mid-1900 to early 2000. Approximately 27% of the global population, is made up of Gen-Z, making them a larger cohort than the Baby Boomers or Millennials.

What makes Gen-Z unique and contrasting than the other generations is that they are truly the first digital generation.

## Author Profile

Ruchi Vohra, with a career spanning over 15 years, has over ten years of experience in technical communications. Currently, working as a Documentation and Delivery Manager with INNOVATIA, based in Bangalore, India, she has extensive experience in technical communication, content strategy, delivery, recruitment, and training. She is passionate about researching in the fields of user experience through UI, user-centric design, and information experience.

She is a hands-on personality with international working experience in fast-paced environments.

### Recent Professional Engagements

- Presentation at STC India 20th Annual Conference 2018. Topic- **Empowering Disability through AUI of Digital Transformation**
- Presentation at STC India 18th Annual conference 2016, TC World 2017. Topic- **How to eat an elephant?**
- Presentation at STC Bangalore Regional Conference 2017. Topic- **The Helms and Gears of AI virtual assistance**
- Written article on **"Designing Intelligent content for AI"**, for August 2018 edition of INDUS



# Shift gears from a cookie-cutter to Gen-Z approach

This article outlines how to curate and distill content for Gen-Z. Conventional, cookie-cutter approach, one-size-fits all doesn't stand right in today's digital age. The principal objective of this article is to capture the attention of the young, fast-growing generation, and to provide a content strategy for the future, while taking advantage of existing content investments. A paradigm shift from 'good to know' to 'must to know'; that's what Gen-Z is all about. According to Forbes (2015), Gen Z is the generation after millennials, who are born from mid-1900 to early 2000. Approximately 27% of the global population, is made up of Gen-Z, making them a larger cohort than the Baby Boomers or Millennials.

What makes Gen-Z unique and contrasting than the other generations is that they are truly the first digital generation. The content strategy is shifting into new realms, while putting demands on the existing delivery.

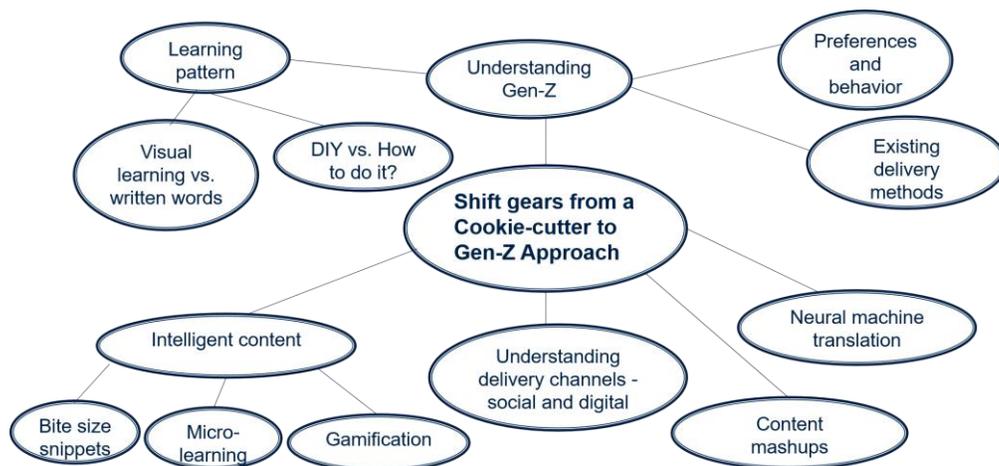
As Technical Communicator/Writer/ Instructional Designer, our constant effort is to translate the complexity of a product or a design in a format that is easily understood and performed by the end-user. The question is, how to distill learning? Taking your content and extracting it for easy and fast consumption. Should the content be curated the same way we do it on social media? Breaking it up into bite-sized pieces so that people can snack on it and it's relevant to their day. Just like how we GOOGLE. Why do we have a 300-page manual when that could be a minute short video that someone can quickly watch to either learn or to perform a task? Distilling it down to make it bite-sized and easy for the end-user. Gen-Z are not readers; they are the 24/7 digital users. Some actionable ideas on how to create engaging content for Gen-Z, while taking advantage of existing content investments; are as follows,

- Intelligent content that caters to shorter attention span
- Visual learning vs. written words
- DIY vs. How to do it
- New delivery channels -social and digital
- Neural machine translation
- Content mashups

**Gen-Z are not readers; they are the 24/7 digital users**

### The key points are

- Understand the Gen-Z behavior and learning pattern
- Walk-through a case study to understand the digital landscape
- Outline the content strategy for new delivery channels - social and digital
- Learn how to incorporate intelligent content using, micro-learning, bite-size content architecture and gamification
- Exploring ABCs of content mashups
- Introduction to neural machine translation
- Visual over the written word - use video and visual communications to connect with this audience.
- Open platform - stay engaged with the audience. Young consumers jump on and off trends really quick, and digital allows them to dump and move quicker than ever before.
- DIY vs. how to do it - Gen-Z doesn't like to take instructions. Design content to empower the young consumer to perform the task themselves, rather than the traditional approach of topic-based procedural writing.



## Next Issue

The next issue is all about Domains and domain knowledge.

- Is domain knowledge important? Will it help to know a domain to write effectively?
- What do I need to do if I have to learn a domain? Where do I start? How do I learn?
- As a writer, how do I learn how to proceed in writing in a particular domain?
- Are certifications important and helpful while working in a new domain?

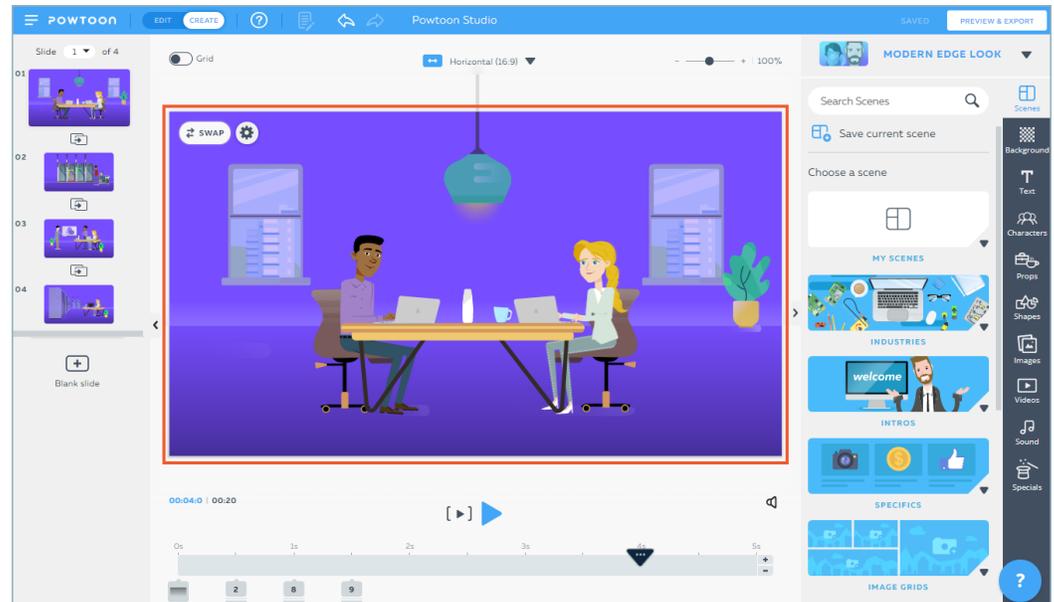
If you can answer these questions pertaining to a specific domain, go ahead and pen an article and send it to us at [industeam@stc-india.org](mailto:industeam@stc-india.org).

Please go through the Editorial Calendar and plan your contribution to the INDUS Newsletter. We look forward to receiving some awesome articles.

## Featured Tool – Powtoon

Animated videos in a jiffy!! Converting your plain text to eye catching videos!! This is what Powtoon ([www.powtoon.com](http://www.powtoon.com)) helps us do, creating awesome videos for any professional situation.

We explored the Powtoon tool; found it very easy to use and create. What catches the eye are the pre-defined templates in various categories. Presentations created are very engaging and creating videos don't take a lot of time. The powtoon studio is one of the best places to be if you want to create the animated video, it doesn't take more than 30 minutes to create one, very easy layout. The powtoon studio has 7 features to explore and use. You can see all these at <https://support.powtoon.com/en/article/introduction-to-the-powtoon-studio>



We created one using Powtoon, watch it here..

<https://www.powtoon.com/online-presentation/d0PzHqCV25V/?mode=movie#/> .

This animated video was created with the free account and hence we could not download it as a .MP4 file. You can choose the pricing option that suits your needs. The powtoon created can be published to various platforms.

### Interesting tools

If you have come across any tool which can make our life easy, please do send us an article on the tool, along with an author profile, to [industeam@stc-india.com](mailto:industeam@stc-india.com)

## Place your Company Ads in the INDUS Newsletter!!!

Either an ad for an issue or as a recurring ad for multiple issues. Choose between a half-page or a full page placement of the ad.

For pricing details and to place an ad, write to [admin.council@stc-india.org](mailto:admin.council@stc-india.org) with the subject line as "Advertisement in the INDUS".

## Tools – Tips and Tricks – MS-Word

### A TOC for each chapter or a part of a word document

We all know that a word doc can have a main TOC. What if you want your document to have a TOC for each chapter? That is, you want to create a TOC by location. You cannot accomplish this through the TOC dialog box; it needs a bit of manual intervention. So, how do we do this?

1. Open an existing document or create a new document.
2. Enter the content in the document. Logically separate the document into chapters.
3. Create the various levels of headings (1-9) in the document.
4. Create the main TOC at beginning of the document. References → Table of Contents → Insert Table of Contents.
5. Insert bookmarks for each chapter. How to do this? Select the entire chapter, then Click Insert → Bookmark.
6. Displays the Bookmark dialog box. Type a bookmark name. Click the Add button to confirm your entry.  
**Note: You can't use "Sample 1", but you can use "Sample1" or "Sample\_1" for the bookmark name. No spaces in the bookmark name.**
7. Place the cursor at the start of the first chapter 1.
8. Press Ctrl+F9. You will see these braces { }.
9. Enter these details in the braces { TOC \b chapter1 \o "1-3" \h}. \b is the bookmark switch, chapter1 is the bookmark name for the first chapter (change the bookmark name for each chapter as you proceed), \o is the switch that asks for an input only once,
10. "1-3" represents the first three levels of headings and \h represents the hyperlink for the headings in the created TOC. Try not to include the \h switch and create a PDF, the TOC links in each chapter will not function when viewing the document as a PDF.
11. Place the cursor inside the braces, click the right mouse button, and then click the Toggle Field Codes.
12. Don't panic if you don't see anything in your document after the previous operation. Press the function key F9 immediately. Skip step 10 and press F9 (ensure that the cursor is within the braces) to see the result.
13. The TOC for this chapter is created. Continue steps 7 to 11 for the rest of the chapters.

## Quick Tips & Tricks Creating Tables

Use the "+" sign and the Tab key to create tables. First add the + sign followed by a single tab key usage. Do this as many times as the number of columns needed. Always end with a + sign. Press the enter key for the table to appear.

If you want to create a table with different widths in columns, use the "+" and "-" to create tables. First type the "+" sign followed by the "-"; the hyphen represents the width, so, if one column has 3 another column can have 5. (+----+-----+----+) is an example. Press the enter key for the table to appear.

## Random text

There are occasions when you want to check the formatting, font or filler text for testing or other purposes. Create random texts using these two cool tips.

Position the cursor in the document and type =lorem(2,5) and press the enter key, where 2 represents the number of paragraphs and 5 represents the total number of lines. You can increase the numbers as per your requirement.

Similarly, type =rand(2,5) and press the enter key, creates random text. Here 2 represents the total number of paragraphs, and 5 represents the total number of lines in each paragraph.

## Create lines

1. ---- and press enter key
2. \_\_\_\_ and press enter key
3. ==== and press enter key
4. ~~~~ and press enter key
5. \*\*\*\* and press enter key
6. ##### and press enter key

## Create arrow marks

1. Type two hyphens followed by the > symbol, press the enter key.
2. Similarly, two equal signs followed by the > symbol and enter key.
3. < symbol followed by either two hyphens or two equal signs.

## Announcement

Community Achievement Award is awarded for chapters who satisfy the criteria for each section in the application. The application has to be filled with details of the chapter activities for an entire year. The application was submitted for the year 2019 and the STC India Chapter has won the Platinum Award, the highest level. Congratulations!!

The citation on the certificate will read as follows,

"For finding diverse ways to ensure strong member participation and engagement through program initiatives and for creating a mentoring program for first time conference presenters."



StOP program – The student outreach program is a unique way to reach the students of various colleges across India to create awareness of technical communication as a career choice. This year the plan is to visit 3 colleges in each metro cities. We have already kick started this year with a college in Bengaluru. Look out for further announcements on this in the forthcoming issues of the newsletter.

## Did you know?

### Et

“Et” was the 27<sup>th</sup> letter of the alphabet. Now it is famously known as “ampersand” or simply “and”, but this character was actually considered a letter!

Et - & - & - & - &



If you write down the numbers, the letter B does not appear till you reach 1 billion!!

The letter J was the last one to be added to the alphabet. This is one of the two letters that do not appear on the periodic table. (Q is the other.)

The letter N was originally associated with water—In fact, the capital N got its shape because it was a pictorial representation of a crashing wave.

The letter P is the only consonant that needs no help in forming a word “sandwich” with any vowel: pap, pep, pip, pop, pup.

V is the only letter in the English language that is never silent.

Ever wondered why we call it a “double-u” instead of “double-v”? The Latin alphabet did not have a letter to represent the sound /w/ in Old English, 7<sup>th</sup>-century scribes just wrote it as ‘uu.’

The letter X always represents the unknown. René Descartes, a mathematician, used the last three letters of the alphabet to represent unknown quantities and the first three letters to represent known quantities.

The letter Z was not always the last, it had the 7<sup>th</sup> place in ancient Greek alphabet.

## Interesting Facts.....

