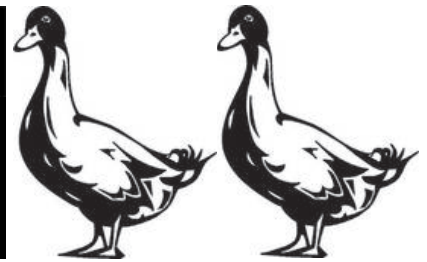


Monday

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WRITERS UA  
WinWriters, Inc.

# Daily Hot Sheet



## WritersUA @20 Heads East

by Chuck Martin

Of all the sentences in all the 15 years that I've been producing this newsletter out of the conference's 20 years, one that I never thought I'd be writing is this:

Welcome to Memphis!

Yes, Memphis. Not Seattle, Portland, Santa Clara, Hollywood, San Diego, Palm Springs, Long Beach, or Las Vegas, all cities where past conferences were held, and all (essentially) on the west coast.

Yes, you read that right. For the first time in WritersUA history, the annual Conference for Software User Assistance has fled the Left Coast and touched down in the eastern environs of Memphis, land of barbeque, Elvis, and ducks. Yes, ducks, because the Peabody Hotel, where the conference is being held, is best known for the ducks that are marched to and from the lobby every day.

This year's conference attracted more than 200 user assistance professionals from across the U.S. and from countries as far flung as Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Israel, New Zealand, Switzerland, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, and Uruguay.



Rhonda Bracey talks about editing in the Sunday afternoon User Assistance 101 session.



At the User Assistance 101 opening session on Sunday.

WritersUA founder and president Joe Welinske planted the seed of this conference 20 years ago with fellow technical writer Scott Boggan and University of Washington Technical Communication professor David Farkas. The conference has helped thousands of user assistance professionals learn to do their work more efficiently and more intelligently. The depth and breadth of knowledge available at the conference are nearly unmatched in the industry.

This year is no exception. A raft of experts are on hand to pass on their knowledge about user assistance tools, trends, and technologies. Conference sessions run throughout the day, this year on three distinct tracks: Content Strategy, Tools and Technologies, and Emerging Skills. The ProBooster program is offered again this year where you can earn a certificate by selecting to attend a minimum of four sessions in one of the three areas.

The conference actually got a head start yesterday with "User Assistance 101," a series of short sessions about fundamental user assistance development topics. The conference also offers ample opportunities to mix and mingle with your fellow user assistance professionals and to interact with a variety of industry tool vendors.

The Vendor Exhibition runs all day today and tomorrow in half of the Grand Ballroom. Representatives of all the vendors are on hand to give product demonstrations and answer questions.

The conference provides lunch for all attendees today and tomorrow, and Adobe sponsors a mixer tonight on the hotel roof.

Your conference folder contains evaluation forms. Please fill a small one out for each session you attend. Speakers receive this feedback, and random evaluations are drawn each day for valuable prizes.

The registration desk will be staffed all day to answer any conference questions.

## At-a-glance Agenda

- 7:30am-4:30pm:** Vendor Exhibitions, Grand Ballroom
- 7:30am-9:00am:** Breakfast, Grand Ballroom
- 9:00am-10:00am:** Opening Session, Grand Ballroom B
- 10:00am-10:30am:** Break
- 10:30am-11:30am:** Conference Sessions, Grand Ballrooms
- 11:30am-12:45pm:** Networking Lunch, Continental Ballroom
- 12:45pm-1:45pm:** Conference Sessions, Grand Ballrooms
- 1:45pm-2:05pm:** Break
- 2:05pm-3:05pm:** Conference Sessions, Grand Ballrooms
- 3:05pm-3:25pm:** Break
- 3:25pm-4:25pm:** Conference Sessions, Grand Ballrooms
- 4:25pm-4:45pm:** Break
- 4:45pm-5:45pm:** Exhibitor Demonstrations, Grand Ballrooms, Berk Parker Room
- 5:45pm-7:00pm:** Networking Mixer, Rooftop Terrace

## Today's Events

### Networking Lunch

Enjoy lunch from 11:30am to 12:45pm in the Continental Ballroom, sponsored by Adobe and WritersUA. Each table will have a topic to start conversation.

### Vendor Exhibition

Conference vendors demonstrating their products from 7:30am to 4:45pm in the Grand Ballroom.

### Product Demonstrations

Vendors will talk about their products in the Grand Ballroom meeting rooms.

### Networking Mixer

Appetizers and meet 'n greet on the rooftop terrace from 5:45pm to 7:00pm sponsored by Adobe.

Please Silence  
Your Cell Phone



## Session Summaries: Sunday

From Sunday's pre-conference User Assistance 101 sessions.

### HTML and CSS

Char James-Tanny explained the basics of how CSS can be used in all sorts of presentation, including font, color, position, and more. She showed how CSS is controlled in various user assistance authoring tools.

### Editing

Rhonda Bracey explained the different types of editing. Rules-based editing ensures that your content follows the rules of your industry or of a style guide. Analysis editing makes sure the content flows and is understandable. Technical editing verifies the accuracy of the content.

Editing requires several passes, because you're looking for different things in each pass.

### User Interface Text

Even more that in user assistance content, Rhonda Bracey underscored the importance of the "three C's" in user interface text: clarity, consistency, and conciseness. All three lead to reduced confusion.

### Scripting

In the most technical session of the afternoon, Dave Gash gave an overview of scripting with JavaScript in 45 minutes. JavaScript--not Java!--like most any programming language, can accept input, process data, and produce output.

Dave's session was, as usual, filled with lots of code.



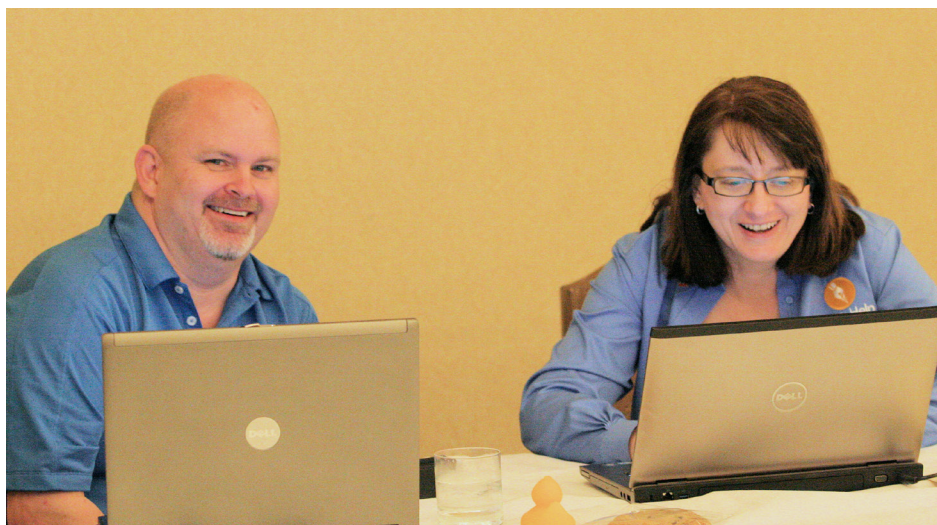
Several members of the user assistance trends panel at Adobe's Sunday morning session.

## Vendor Exhibition Today

This year's Vendor Exhibition features more than a dozen vendors of software user assistance products and services. Set up in booths in the Grand Ballroom and the foyer throughout the day today (and tomorrow), representatives will be available to demonstrate their products and answer questions.

This year's vendor list includes:

- Adobe (Technical Communication Suite, FrameMaker, RoboHelp, Acrobat)
- Author-It
- ComponentOne (Doc-To-Help)
- 4.ST (HelpServer)
- International Translation Resources
- JustSystems (XMetal)
- MadCap Software (Flare)
- Memphis STC
- Quadralay (WebWorks ePublisher)
- Scriptorium
- Tedopres
- ThirtySix Software (Smart-Docs)
- SDL
- Techwhirl
- Vasont



## Notes

### Early Start Tuesday

Sessions start early on Tuesday, at 8:30am, and breakfast is just 30 minutes, starting at 8:00am.

### Badges

Badges? Yes, you need your steenkin' badges. They are required to enter all conference sessions and events. Don't forget them!

### Message/Jobs Board

A board is set up in the Grand Ballroom foyer for your use. Post jobs, messages to fellow conference-goers, and information about events and activities.

### Short Breaks

Most breaks between sessions are just 20 minutes.

### Tweet! Tweet!

Feel free to post to Twitter, Facebook and other social sites about your conference experience. (But please keep your device in silent mode during sessions.) The conference hashtag is #writersua.

## Today's Forecast



Isolated thunderstorms a.m., partly cloudy late, winds SSW 10-20 MPH, chance of rain: 30%

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