



Preliminary Program

**October 25–28, 2026
Charlotte, North Carolina**

Reducing Costs, Generating Revenue, and Improving the Customer Experience through Better Content

In addition to tracks on Content Strategy, Content Operations, and TechComm Management, the theme for this year's AI track is:

From Experimentation to Execution: Scaling AI in Content Ops

Pre-conference Workshops: Sunday, 25 October 2026					
7:00–	Registration in Grand Ballroom Foyer Coffee (breakfast on your own)				
	Optional Pre-conference Workshops				
8:00–Noon	How to Build a Content Governance Model <i>Daniel Schommer</i> <i>Content Strategist</i> <i>Intuitive Stack</i>	Effective Content Inventories and Analysis <i>David Hobbs, Early Digital Strategist</i> <i>David Hobbs Consulting</i>		From Notes to Knowledge: Learning Faster with Notebook LM (An Interactive Lab for Communicators) <i>Susan Kelley Senior</i> <i>Manager of Communications and Engagement</i>	Does Your Documentation Survive an AI Assistant? A Hands-On Docs Audit (Free) <i>Prithvi Ramakrishnan, Co-Founder and CEO & Manny Silva, Head of AI Docs Practice</i> <i>Promptless</i>
Noon–1:00	Lunch on your own				
1:00–5:00	Operationalizing the Content-First Framework: Diagnose Meaning Drift, Align Teams, and Scale Content with Confidence <i>Sarah Johnson</i> <i>Founder</i> <i>Content-first Design</i>	Effective Content Inventories and Analysis (continued) <i>David Hobbs, Early Digital Strategist</i> <i>David Hobbs Consulting</i>	They Already Sent a Poet, and It's You! (Free) <i>Carol Hatrup</i> <i>Knowledge Management and Training Lead</i> <i>T-Mobile</i>	MythBusters Lab: Let's Test What Really Works for Remote Content Teams <i>Leann Long and Nicole Edens</i> <i>Jack Henry</i>	Creating Taxonomies for Your Organization in the Age of AI <i>Rebecca Schneider</i> <i>Executive Director</i> <i>AvenueCX</i>
5:30–6:30	Welcome Reception in the Exhibit Area				

Conference Day 1: Monday, 26 October 2026					
7:30–	Registration, Continental Breakfast				
8:30–9:00	Welcome!				
9:00–10:00 Three back-to-back TED-like talks	More AI Doesn't Mean Less Human <i>Jessica Reed, Director of Customer Innovation, Adobe</i>				
	Carpe (the AI) Diem! <i>Alesia Harwood, Customer Success Manager to Cisco</i>				
	Your Operating Model is Broken: Revolutionizing Content in the Age of AI <i>Erik Bremer, Sr. Director, Global Content Engineering, Dell Technologies</i>				
Track	Strategy and Ops	Content Authoring	Main Stage *	Case Studies	Tools and Technology
10:15–11:00	Stuck in a PDF world? Unlock Next-Level Intelligence with Structured Content <i>Chris Kocher Sr. Solutions Architect MadCap Software</i>	The Docs Are Not Alright (And AI Alone Won't Fix Them) <i>Kayce Danna Vice President of Product Markup AI</i>	Impact Map: Getting Stakeholder Buy-In for Content Initiatives <i>Sara Feldman Director of Member Engagement, Consortium for Service Innovation</i>	How Netsmart Uses AI-Accelerated Learning to Onboard Teams Faster <i>Laura Ohlson and Lauren Pulino Netsmart</i>	Who Are We Writing For? Rethinking Technical Communication for an AI-First Future <i>Herb Toews, Xerox and Stefan Gentz, Adobe</i>
11:15–12:00	WYMIWYG: What You Model Is What You Get <i>Markus Schork Director of Technology Solutions Codal</i>	The Undocumented 80%: Processes Nobody Writes Down <i>Vishal Gupta Co-founder Trupeer AI</i>	Building Momentum: Structuring Small Steps to Achieve Big Wins <i>Trey Smith Sr. Engineering Program Supervisor Honeywell Technologies</i>	Orchestrating Content Workflow at Ellucian Using AI Skills <i>Pam Noreault Principal Information Architect Ellucian</i>	From 2 AM Failure to 8 AM Fix: Self-Healing Docs, Agent Instructions Included <i>Manny Silva, Head of AI Docs Practice Promptless</i>
12:00–1:15	Lunch and Vendor Demos in the Exhibit Area				
1:15–2:00	Stop Building Bots, Start Hiring AI Employees: How HR Thinking Makes AI Agents Safer and Smarter <i>Amanda Patterson Sr. Consultant Comtech Services</i>	Building an Enterprise Content Engine that Delivers Results <i>Kara Hughes and Kelly Dowling ASUG</i>	Dell's Content Transformation Journey <i>Erik Bremer, Sr. Director, and Andre Pellet, Director, Global Content Engineering Dell Technologies</i>	The Human and AI Handshake for Content Generation at Blackbaud <i>Zohra Mutabanna and Elizabeth Favre Senior Technical Writer Blackbaud</i>	Beyond the Bot: How Structured Content Drives an Agentic Ecosystem Across Your Entire Content Stack! <i>Patrick Bosek, Heretto and Megan Gilhooly, OneTrust</i>
2:15–3:00	Getting Content Right at the Source Saves Time and Localization Costs <i>Michael Mannhardt President Congree Language Technologies</i>	Ada Lovelace the Tech Writer: Her 183-Year-Old Principles for Content in the Age of AI <i>Sarah Dugan Doc Lead GitBook</i>	Hold On Loosely (But Don't Let Go): Doing Good Content Work in Uncertain Times <i>Melinda Belcher Executive Director JPMorganChase</i>	Thomson Reuters' Human-Guided Approach to AI Content <i>Emily Byrnes Holly Enneking, Mike Buoy</i>	Show Me the Agents! Decision Framework for Content Operations AI <i>Aman Goyal Agentic AI Product Manager T-Mobile</i>
3:00–4:00	Snack Break and vendor demos in the Exhibit Hall				
4:00–5:00	Not for Ages 3 and Under: Why AI in Content Creation Requires Organizational Maturity <i>Dawn Stevens, President, Comtech Services</i>				
	The Barbarians Are at the Gate <i>Sarah O'Keefe, CEO, Scriptorium</i>				
	The Human Layer: Designing Content for Humans, Machines, and Everything Between <i>Stefan Gentz, Principal Worldwide Evangelist, Adobe</i>				
5:00–6:30	Network Reception followed by the Microphone Monday Live Storytelling Event				

Conference Day 2: Tuesday, 27 October 2026					
7:30	Continental Breakfast				
8:30–9:30	AI Didn't Replace You—It Promoted You to Manager <i>Maria Romanovsky, Director Content Design and Strategy, TikTok</i>				
	Content is Still King: Thriving in the Era of AI <i>Keith Boyd, Senior Director, Microsoft Corporation</i>				
	When Truth Lags, Trust Dies: The Risk of Scaling Unverified Knowledge with AI <i>Jason Kaufman, CEO, Zaon Labs</i>				
Track	Strategy and Ops	Content Authoring	Main Stage	Case Studies	Tools and Technology
9:45–10:30	AI Translation in the Real World: Lessons from Building Scalable Global Content Workflows <i>Ben Cohen, Localize and Nick Wyatt, Aras</i>	From Long Topics to Microcontent: The Strategic Shift that Makes Your DITA AI-Ready <i>Rob Hanna, CEO Precision Content</i>	Maintaining Trust in the AI Era: The Enduring Value of Human Expertise in Content <i>Kay Conerly, Director of Content Strategy, McGraw Hill</i>	Technical Lessons from Enterprise Content Transformations <i>Shankar Krishnan, CEO, and Janine Trakhtenberg, Hashout Technologies</i>	AI is Your New Top Reader Are You Ready? <i>Fabrice Lacroix, CEO Fluid Topics</i>
10:45–11:30	Stop Reviewing Everything: A Smarter Model for Multilingual Content <i>Adam Goldman and Benoit Benatar, OTTO</i>	Oh, the Content Professionals and Information Architects Should Be Friends! <i>Craig Johnson, Founder & Chief Architect, Xemma</i>	Content Development: Stop Building Sheds, Start Building Skyscrapers <i>Suzanne Kelchner, Senior Manager, Technical Documentation, Procore</i>	How We Turned Award-Winning Content into AI-Powered Customer Experiences <i>Danny Capo and Patty Delgado, UKG</i>	You Can't Prompt Your Way to Trust — Why Trusted AI Answers Start with Structured, Governed Knowledge <i>Stefan Gentz, Adobe</i>
11:30–1:15	Lunch and Vendor Demos in the Exhibit Hall, Comfort Llamas in the Grand Ballroom Foyer				
1:15–2:00	Tech Stack Lift-and-Shift: A Tag-Team Approach to Success with Limited Resources <i>Mel Davis, Isabella Adornato, and Mike Hovan</i>	Content Design for AI: How Collaboration Makes AI Happen <i>Jessica Bjoeredahl and Olivia Carden, 6sense</i>	Before You Fund AI: What If You're Solving the Wrong Problem? <i>Lief Erickson, Principal Content Strategist, Intuitive Stack</i>	How ServiceNow Used Agentic AI to Reduce Costs and Improve Customer Experience <i>Theresa Daudier, Senior KM Engineer, ServiceNow</i>	Creating Content AI Agents That Actually Work <i>Emma Pindera, Content Strategist, PointClickCare</i>
2:15–3:00	How to Best Leverage Your Most Challenging Employee <i>Amber Swope, DITA Strategies and Dan Schommer, Intuitive Stack</i>	From Chaos to Clarity: Streamlining Regulated Global Content <i>Leah Catania, Sr Content Strategist, Insulet and Bill Swallow, Director of Operations, Scriptorium</i>	Biggest Bang For Your Buck: What We Learned From 99 AI Experiments <i>Tyrin Avery, Principle Technical Writer and Content Strategist, Salesforce</i>	How a Golden Question Set Helped Us Build Trust in Our AI Agent <i>Rashmi Ramaswamy, Technical Content Strategist, Guidewire</i>	Terminology: The Clever Cure for Hallucinations <i>Klaus Fleischmann, CEO Kaleidoscope GmbH</i>
3:00–3:45	Snacks, Vendor Demos in Exhibit Hall				
3:45–4:30	How to Establish a Governed Vocabulary and Ontology with the Tools You Already Have <i>Brendon Paucek, Senior Content Strategist, Teradata</i>	Delightful Documentation? Improving Documentation Quality with the Kano Model <i>Yoel Strimling, Senior Technical Editor, Ceva</i>	Inclusive Content in the AI Era: Bias, Culture, And Who Gets Left Behind <i>Dipo Ajose-Coker, Solutions Architect, RWS Group (Moderator)</i>	From Style Guides to Smart Assistants: How AI Supports In-House Content Experts at Red Hat <i>Katrina Kempne, Principal Content Strategist, Red Hat</i>	TBA
4:45–5:45	Balancing Brains and Bots: Accelerating a Responsible AI Workflow <i>Megan Gilhooly, Sr Director Global Content and Intelligence, OneTrust</i>				
	Leading the Shift: Building an AI-Ready Content Culture <i>Karen Brothers, Content Manager, Scott Safety</i>				
	What Still Matters? Technical Writing Skills That Survive and Thrive in an Agentic AI World <i>Scott Abel, Content Strategy Evangelist, Heretto</i>				
7:00–11:00	Annual Karaoke Night Sponsored by Heretto				

Conference Day 3: Wednesday, 28 October 2026					
7:30–	Continental Breakfast				
8:00–8:20	Love People and Use Things: What My Cancer Journey Taught Me about Using AI and Working with SMEs <i>Viqui Dill, Documentation Specialist, Navy Federal Credit Union</i>				
<i>Track</i>	<i>Strategy and Ops</i>	<i>Content Authoring</i>	<i>Main Stage</i>	<i>Case Studies</i>	<i>Tools and Technology</i>
8:30–9:15	Your CMS Isn't Broken, Your Content Model Is. AI Makes It Worse <i>Luis Fernandez Executive Director VML</i>	An Alchemist's Guide to Modern Tech Comms <i>Mark Kleinsmith Director of Technical Communications Appfire</i>	The Human-In-The-Loop Playbook: Cuing Costs Without Cutting People <i>Adlore "Addi" Casseus Founder & Principal Ascend Revenue Group</i>	Structured Content as the Best Investment in Certification, Scale, and Safety <i>Bernard Aschwanden, WritemoreAI and Ryan Chin, JetZero</i>	The Real Reason AI Fails in Operations (and the Systems That Fix It) <i>Ebony James Operations Consultant The Empire Effect Agency</i>
9:30–10:15	Structure Starts with Trust: Building Cultures That Support Content Systems <i>Sandie Markle Founder and CEO Blueberri</i>	Data Design is Content Design: Building a Scalable Taxonomy <i>Christi Guzik Lead Content Operations Manager, Rocket</i>	Zero to Hero—Flipping the Script on Content <i>Joe Gollner Content Solution Architect Gnostyx Research</i>	How to Resign from the "Cleanup Crew" and Become an Upstream Design Force <i>Amber Craig Lead Content Designer Salesforce</i>	DITA 201: How to Optimize Conditional Text and Reuse <i>Lael Butler, Technical Communication Specialist, Streamline Designs, LLC</i>
10:30–11:15	Findable, Readable, Unstoppable: Small Edits for Big Gains (No AI Required!) <i>Brit Van Blake Sr. Technical Writer NiCE Systems</i>	Reserved to Repeat <i>Standing Room Only Sessions</i>	Reserved to Repeat <i>Standing Room Only Sessions</i>	Reserved to Repeat <i>Standing Room Only Sessions</i>	From Shadow to Servant: Confronting the AI Beast <i>Rhyne Armstrong Director, Technical Writing Visa</i>
11:30–12:30	Closing Panel Discussion: The Future of Content <i>Jack Molisani (moderator)</i>				

Optional Post-conference Workshops					
1:30–4:30	Train Generative AI Bots to Rock Your Docs (How I Learned to Stop Falling Behind and Love the Bot) <i>Melanie Davis, President & CEO Dragonfly Diva Docs</i>	Build Your First AI Agent And Make then Make it Agentic: A Hands-On Workshop for Content Workers <i>Dipo Ajose-Coker Solutions Architect and Strategist RWS Group</i>		Be an Empowering Leader! <i>Rhyne Armstrong Director, Technical Writing Visa</i>	

Welcome to the 2026 LavaCon Conference

on Content Strategy and Technical Communication Management

LavaCon® is a gathering place for content strategists, user experience designers, documentation managers, and other content professionals.

Our Mission: To help organizations increase revenue and decrease costs by solving content-related business problems.

It's one thing to hear people talk about content strategy and usability; it's another to meet peers who are successfully doing it. Our speakers are practicing industry professionals who are eager to share their best practices and lessons learned—both what worked and what didn't.

Choose from more than 70 sessions and workshops on how to plan, execute, and manage enterprise content development projects.

Ready for three days of great sessions, amazing food, and plenty of opportunities to network with your peers? Welcome to Charlotte!

Jack Molisani

Executive Director

The LavaCon Conference



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Sponsors and Exhibitors

Many thanks to this year's sponsors and exhibitors!

Diamond

The Adobe logo, featuring the word "Adobe" in a bold, red, sans-serif font.

Sapphire

The HASHOUT logo, featuring the word "HASHOUT" in a bold, black, sans-serif font with a white diagonal slash through the "H".The madcap software logo, featuring a stylized grey icon of a person with a speech bubble and the text "madcap software" in a lowercase, sans-serif font.The Heretto logo, featuring a stylized grid icon followed by the word "Heretto" in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font.The OTTO logo, featuring the word "OTTO" in a bold, white, sans-serif font inside a black rectangular box.The markup ai logo, featuring a stylized red icon followed by the text "markup ai" in a lowercase, sans-serif font.The Promptless logo, featuring the word "Promptless" in a sans-serif font, with "Prompt" in grey and "less" in blue.

Platinum

The COMTech logo, featuring the text "WWW.COMTECH-SERV.COM" above "COMTech" in a stylized font, with "information design • content management" below it.The Fluid Topics logo, featuring a stylized blue "f" icon followed by the text "Fluid Topics" in a purple, sans-serif font.The congree logo, featuring the word "congree" in a bold, sans-serif font, with "Unique Corporate Content" below it.The GITBOOK logo, featuring a stylized black icon followed by the word "GITBOOK" in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

Platinum (continued)



Gold



Silver



Silver (continued)



Partners



Sessions and Workshops

Sunday, October 25

7:00–5:00 **Registration in Grand Ballroom Foyer and Coffee
(breakfast on your own)**

8:00–Noon **Pre-Conference Workshops**

How to Build a Content Governance Model

Daniel Schommer, Content Strategist, Intuitive Stack

As documentation and content teams mature, problems rarely stem from lack of skill or effort. Instead, they struggle with uncertain ownership and processes that depend on a few key people. Without governance, individual writers or managers become stopgaps, mediating disagreements and carrying institutional knowledge in their heads.

This workshop will share the benefits of effective governance, how to build a governance process, and demonstrate how to gain process alignment and acceptance among stakeholders. This will be done in three distinct sections:

1. Showing how to build a governance and RACI model from the ground up
2. How to branch out and gain acceptance, alignment and partnership with peers within the organization
3. How to enforce its rigor over time

This workshop is for any team looking to enhance any existing governance process, build a new governance process, or establish a responsibility matrix for internal process alignment. We will demonstrate the power a governance process, matrix, and board can have on improving, sustaining, and empowering existing processes.

Effective Content Inventories and Analysis

David Hobbs, Early Digital Strategist, David Hobbs Consulting

Whether you are making a major content transformation, a re-platforming, or doing routine and regular upkeep, content inventories and content analysis can help you understand the current situation and chart a course forward. Most people look at this work as boring and tedious, but there are ways of making it more interesting. We'll start by looking at identifying the goals of a content inventory and ways of conducting them to match the goals. Of course, we'll look at AI, but we'll also look at other ways of making content analysis work more effective.

In this workshop, you'll learn how to:

- Clearly define the goals of your content analysis.
- Define a plan for best achieving your content analysis goals.
- Define what parts of your digital presence to include in your analysis.
- Iterate on the analysis as you discover more questions.
- Identify the types of information that should be captured when evaluating content.
- Use either a traditional spreadsheet inventory or more sophisticated approaches.
- Effectively communicate your analysis for impact, such as summary charts, reports, and tables.

- Use special techniques for content transformation and migration planning.
- Apply AI to your content analysis.

From Notes to Knowledge: Learning Faster with Notebook LM (an Interactive Lab for Communicators)

Susan Kelley, Senior Manager of Communications and Engagement, Medidata

Notebook LM offers a powerful new way to turn scattered source material into structured understanding. But most people only scratch the surface.

In this interactive, learning-based workshop, you'll actively use Notebook LM to explore how AI can support thinking, learning, and sense-making—not just content generation. Instead of watching demos, you'll experiment, collaborate, and reflect on how Notebook LM can enhance your real-world communication workflows.

This workshop is designed to be practical, playful, and deeply relevant to how communicators learn, synthesize, and explain complex information. You'll work in small groups on a real learning challenge you present, followed by a guided exploration of NLM, and hands-on learning and experimentation with shallow vs. deep prompts and strategic questions within notebooks. We'll finish with a fun game-like round where you'll test unconventional prompts and share wins, failures, and overall results.

In this workshop, you'll learn how to:

- Use Notebook LM as a learning partner, not just a summarization and generic content-generating tool.
- Upload and organize multiple types of sources (documents, notes, transcripts, video, and more).
- Ask better questions and write better prompts to surface insights, gaps, and patterns in source material.
- Apply NLM to common communication tasks, such as:
 - Learning a new domain quickly and effectively.
 - Synthesizing research into clear narratives.
 - Creating and supporting onboarding, enablement, and regulatory content.
- Evaluate where NLM fits effectively and ethically into your professional workflow(s).

Free Workshop: Does Your Documentation Survive an AI Assistant? A Hands-On Docs Audit

Prithvi Ramakrishnan, Co-Founder and CEO, and Manny Silva, Head of AI Docs Practice, Promptless

Your customers are already asking AI assistants about your product. The assistants are answering from your documentation, and not always correctly.

This is a hands-on audit lab. Bring your own docs and find out what assistants actually say about your product. You'll run retrieval and answer-accuracy tests against your real content, see exactly where it breaks, figure out why, and leave with a written audit of your own documentation and a prioritized list of what to fix first.

In this half-day workshop, you'll learn how to:

- Test what an AI assistant actually tells your customers about your product.
- Spot the retrieval failures behind wrong answers (missing context, ambiguous headings, buried prerequisites).
- Tell content problems apart from structure problems, so you fix the right layer.
- Run a repeatable audit you can take back to your team and rerun each release.
- Use agents to remediate what you find, including in Flare and Oxygen toolchains.

Operationalizing the Content-First Framework: Diagnose Meaning Drift, Align Teams, and Scale Content with Confidence*Sarah Johnson, Founder, Content-first Design*

As organizations scale, content becomes harder to keep aligned. Product, UX, marketing, and documentation teams begin using different language to describe the same concepts. Content is rewritten repeatedly, execution slows, and customers encounter inconsistent experiences. The Content-First Framework provides a structured method for diagnosing meaning drift, aligning teams around shared meaning, and ensuring content remains coherent as organizations grow.

In this hands-on workshop, you'll complete a content foundation diagnostic assessment, build a messaging architecture, rewrite content using defined meaning, and test content for clarity and alignment. You'll leave with practical tools, completed framework components, and a clear roadmap you can use immediately to stabilize meaning, improve alignment, and scale content with confidence.

In this workshop, you'll learn how to:

- Diagnose meaning drift and assess the strength of your content foundation to identify the structural causes of misalignment across teams and systems.
- Operationalize shared meaning using messaging architecture.
- Rewrite content to improve clarity, consistency, and alignment.
- Test content to ensure it reflects shared meaning and intent.
- Implement the Content-First Framework within their organization.

Effective Content Inventories and Analysis (continued)*David Hobbs, Early Digital Strategist, David Hobbs Consulting*

Whether you are making a major content transformation, a re-platforming, or doing routine and regular upkeep, content inventories and content analysis can help you understand the current situation and chart a course forward. Most people look at this work as boring and tedious, but there are ways of making it more interesting. We'll start by looking at identifying the goals of a content inventory and ways of conducting them to match the goals. Of course, we'll look at AI, but we'll also look at other ways of making content analysis work more effective.

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Free Workshop: They Already Sent a Poet, and It's You

Carol Hattrup, Knowledge Management and Training Lead, T-Mobile

In the film *Contact*, astronomer and astronaut Ellie Arroway, awestruck by what she's witnessing as she arrives in a distant galaxy, realizes the workings of the cosmos would have been better described using poetry than scientific equations. She admits, "They should have sent a poet." So, it's very fortunate that as content professionals, we're all natural poets.

Our skills are directly transferable to poetry, but even better, this practical pairing means that when we practice the art of creating high-quality poems, we also sharpen our content skills to become better in our career roles. It's our attention to concrete details that allows us to feed better content and better prompts to AI so that AI, in turn, can share better content with the world.

In the age of the smart machine, the ability you already have to create good poetry is your secret weapon. Join other content professionals in this hands-on workshop as we learn how to create better technical documentation by writing poetry.

In this workshop, you'll receive:

- All the basic techniques you need to create solid, effective free-verse poems
- Knowledge of the surprising similarities between poetry and technical writing, including, but not limited to, structure, brevity, word choice, iteration, tone, and attention to detail
- Examples of two specific historical poetry structures you may not have realized you already know how to write
- (If you're in a hiring role) A new appreciation of creative writers who apply for technical content roles and the concrete skills they bring to your organization
- Information and resources for how to continue your journey as a poet after the conference

You'll also write your first draft of a poem about LavaCon 2026. You'll be invited to share your poem in the daily newsletter and at the annual

storytelling event during the conference. Sharing is optional, but in any case, you'll have a unique conference keepsake and memory you can't buy in a souvenir store.

MythBusters Lab: Let's Test What Really Works for Remote Content Teams

Heather Barbre Blades, Senior Technical Writer, Leann Long, Sr. Manager and Nicole Edens, Manager of Technical Writing, Jack Henry

Remote content teams are seen as harder to manage, scale, and keep engaged. We've heard the myth—and spent years dismantling it.

Since 2020, the Jack Henry Technical Writing team has been fully remote while scaling to 40 team members across 18 states and maintaining 99% annual associate retention. We're putting our success under the microscope in this hands-on lab.

We'll explore remote team challenges and apply proven principles to your organization. Through small-group activities and roundtables that connect you to leaders navigating the same complexities, you'll examine team structure, ownership models, leadership alignment, feedback loops, and engagement practices. You'll hear what's working, and what isn't, helping you anticipate issues, pressure-test ideas, and surface creative solutions.

You'll leave not only with a practical operating model, but also with new perspectives, shared language, and peer connections that extend well beyond the conference.

In this workshop, you'll learn how to:

- Map your current remote or distributed team operating model and identify friction points that limit trust, engagement, or scalability.
- Engage with peers in similar leadership roles to compare how different organizations address shared coordination and leadership realities.
- Apply tested design principles to adapt—or rethink—team structure, ownership models, and leadership practices.
- Anticipate future scaling pressures by examining what has helped or hindered teams as they grow.

- Build shared language and peer relationships that support continued learning and collaboration beyond this session.

Creating Taxonomies for Your Organization in the Age of AI

Rebecca Schneider, Executive Director, AvenueCX

As organizations focus on improving content experiences, taxonomies have become a key element in creating frictionless interactions on digital platforms. Taxonomies provide a common language that is relevant to customers by helping them to find, choose, use, buy, and get support for products or services.

This workshop will dig into the basics of taxonomy development. We'll discuss what taxonomies are and how they relate to metadata and tagging. The session will dive deep into the techniques used to build, test, and refine taxonomies.

Finally, we'll discuss the use of AI as some contend that AI negates the need for a taxonomy. The workshop will outline how taxonomies and

ontologies can inform AI systems and ensure the proper breadth, depth, and consistency of an AI application across content sets. It will also provide a recommended approach to leverage taxonomies as part of AI.

In this workshop, you'll learn:

- What taxonomies are and how to use them
- How to create taxonomies using best practices
- How to test and refine taxonomies
- How to plan a taxonomy development project, including socialization techniques
- How taxonomies fit within the realm of AI
- How taxonomies and ontologies can be used to improve training models as part of an overall AI application
- Practical approaches to use as you embark on AI-related projects—focusing on the use of taxonomies and ontologies to improve the performance of AI applications

5:30–6:30

Welcome Reception in the Exhibit Area

Monday, October 26

7:30–

Registration and Continental Breakfast

8:30–9:00

Welcome!

Jack Molisani, Executive Director, The LavaCon Conference

Join us as Jack welcomes you to the start of the 2026 LavaCon Conference.

Jessica Reed, Director of Customer Innovation, Adobe

We're in an era of AI that makes it possible for us to create more content than ever before—faster, cheaper, and at massive scale. We also have more data and channels than ever before to deliver personalized content. But there's a tension many of us are feeling—especially those of us whose professional and/or personal passion is rooted in language—that as creation and delivery become more automated, content is increasingly less human.

In this session, I'll share my own experiences balancing the growing use of emerging AI with the universal need for authentic human connection. I'll also look at the role data plays in personalization and why more data doesn't always translate to better experiences. And I'll share practical ways to lead with empathy while driving efficiency to deliver relevant and engaging content that make customers feel seen and understood, not just targeted.

More AI doesn't have to mean less human if we're intentional about how we use it!

Alesia Harwood, Customer Success Manager to Cisco

As AI reshapes how products are built and delivered, it's also redefining the role of the people who make those products understandable.

This inspiring keynote challenges the idea that AI reduces the need for technical writers and content experts—and instead shows why their expertise is becoming more strategic and influential than ever. With a motivational “Carpe Diem—seize the day” spirit, this session encourages technical communicators to recognize that this moment is not a disruption to fear, but an opportunity to claim.

Through practical insights and a forward-looking perspective, you'll see how your role is evolving into knowledge architects, trust builders, and interpreters among humans and intelligent systems. This is a call to step forward, not stand back—to seize the opportunity to shape how the future of AI is understood and trusted.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Recognize where human expertise remains irreplaceable in AI-driven content.
- Shift from “documenting features” to designing trusted knowledge.
- Contribute earlier and more strategically in product and AI development cycles.
- Create effective documentation for new and unfamiliar AI-powered products.
- Support responsible AI adoption through clarity, transparency, and context.
- Position yourself an essential partner in making emerging technology understandable and usable.
- Seize this moment of change as a career growth opportunity instead of a threat.

9:40–10:00

Your Operating Model is Broken: Revolutionizing Content in the Age of AI

Erik Bremer, Sr. Director, Global Content Engineering, Dell Technologies

For decades, enterprises assumed that cognitive output scaled linearly with human labor. Agentic AI has broken that assumption forever. But while the technology has changed, most content operating models have not. They were designed for a different era, and they are now fundamentally broken. This talk is a challenge to stop optimizing the old system and start building a new one.

In this session, you'll:

- Learn how AI is upending the content landscape by transforming the entire system of work, not just the tasks of content creation at scale.
- Hear real-world examples of the challenges Dell faced, from unrealistic expectations to unbridled chaos.
- Understand the limitations of current content operations and why simply evolving will not work.
- Learn how Dell has begun to focus its content transformation, placing us at the center of a content revolution.

10:15–11:00

Breakout Sessions

Stuck in a PDF world? Unlock Next-Level Intelligence with Structured Content

Chris Kocher, Sr. Solutions Architect, MadCap Software

If you think AI for tech docs stops at writing assistance, think again. You're missing out.

Want to understand your content at a deeper more actionable level? Want to use your proprietary content to securely power a chat bot? Want semantic-powered search across all of your content? And how useful would it be to identify semantic duplication across your library?

Come see how structured content and AI are the symbiotic relationship of the times. The world is rapidly moving from an access-focused economy to an answer-focused one. Are you ready to keep up?

In this session, you'll learn:

- Why structured content unlocks AI capabilities that go far beyond basic generation
- Why we need to move beyond the PDF mindset

- How structure opens your content to deeper, more actionable analysis and understanding
- How structure is the key to using proprietary content to securely power a chat bot

The Docs are not Alright (and AI Alone Won't Fix Them)

Kayce Danna, VP of Product, Markup AI

The mandate is clear: adopt AI, move faster, and do more with less. But for technical communication teams, the reality is often messier. We're already battling content rot, siloed information, and inconsistent terminology. Feeding these existing issues into an LLM doesn't solve the problem—it simply scales your chaos.

Generative AI is an incredibly powerful engine, but it lacks a steering wheel. Without strict control, fast becomes risky.

In this session, we'll explore why the most successful AI strategies aren't built on prompt engineering alone, but on a foundation of content guardrails. We'll discuss the critical role technical communicators play in defining the standards that keep AI honest, accurate, and on-brand.

In this session, you'll learn about:

- The “garbage in, garbage out” multiplier—How to assess if your current documentation is ready for AI integration (and what to do if it isn't)
- Guardrails vs. bottlenecks—How to automate style and compliance checks so you can enforce quality without slowing down the development lifecycle
- The human-in-the-loop—Redefining the role of the technical writer from “drafter” to “architect” of content control
- Scaling trust—Strategies for ensuring that as your content volume explodes, your consistency and accuracy remain rock solid

Impact Map: Getting Stakeholder Buy-In for Content Initiatives

Sara Feldman, Director of Member Engagement, Consortium for Service Innovation

It's an exciting time to be a content leader, whether you have direct authority or not! Dependency on trusted, reliable knowledge to fuel AI solutions has become widely recognized, but the rush to implement new tools is creating misaligned expectations across teams. Stakeholder buy-in is increasingly critical for adoption, ROI, and better customer experiences.

This session introduces a practical approach to securing buy-in for cross-functional initiatives using an Impact Map. This simple framework connects content to what stakeholders care about, helping you communicate value, align expectations, and create a shared understanding of why the work matters.

Beyond launching new initiatives, impact maps help teams maintain clarity during organizational shifts, such as mergers, leadership changes, or restructuring. The result is a resource that strengthens communication, builds confidence, and connects your program to measurable outcomes for the business, employees, and customers.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Identify common pitfalls of operating without clear stakeholder buy-in.

- Translate content and AI efforts into business value.
- Build buy-in and momentum with or without formal authority.
- Navigate resistance, fear, and competing priorities during change.
- Sustain momentum and communicate progress throughout long initiatives.

How Netsmart Uses AI-Accelerated Learning to Onboard Teams Faster

Laura Ohlson, Sr. Learning Experience Designer, and Lauren Pulino, Client Learning Leader, Netsmart

In this case study, we'll share how our small Learning Experience team is building a scalable, AI-supported learning ecosystem to improve onboarding consistency and speed across a complex healthcare technology organization. By developing our solution academy, we're standardizing internal onboarding, improving content quality, and creating a more cohesive learner experience while using AI to accelerate course development.

We'll highlight how we use AI for outlining, drafting, prototyping, and QA, along with early results showing how clearer, more consistent training is supporting internal teams. The session will also preview our work to adapt the academy for external clients, including design goals and initial feedback. You'll leave with practical insights on using AI responsibly, creating repeatable processes, and building a foundation for stronger readiness and future outcomes.

In this session, you'll learn:

- How a small learning services team is integrating AI into the course creation workflow to speed up development while maintaining instructional quality
- Practical examples of AI-supported tasks—storyboarding, drafting content, scripting demo videos, building visuals, and improving QA
- How standardized learning pathways can improve consistency and clarity in onboarding for internal teams

- Early observations about how improved training materials help internal teams gain confidence and reduce confusion during onboarding
- Lessons from building a solution academy for internal associates and extending it to external clients
- Practical frameworks and templates you can adapt for your own onboarding or client-education programs

Who Are We Writing For? Rethinking Technical Communication for an AI-First Future

Herb Toews, Senior Manager of Customer Enablement, Xerox, and Stefan Gentz, Principal Worldwide Evangelist, Adobe

AI is transforming more than content creation—it is reshaping how technical information is managed, discovered, delivered, and consumed. As users increasingly rely on AI assistants instead of search engines and documentation portals, a fundamental question emerges: Are we still writing for humans, or are we creating knowledge for AI?

Join Herb Toews and Stefan Gentz for a fireside chat exploring what an AI-first world means for technical communication. They discuss why structured, accurate, and trusted content is becoming the foundation for AI-driven experiences, and how AI is changing content assessment, migration, creation, and delivery. The

conversation also looks beyond technology to examine the evolving role of content professionals—from writers to architects and stewards of enterprise knowledge—and the skills organizations need to prepare for the future.

In this session, you'll learn about:

- Preparing content for AI—Understand why structured, accurate, consistent, and trustworthy source content is essential for reliable AI-powered experiences.
- Transforming content operations—Explore how AI can support content analysis, cleanup, consolidation, migration, creation, and delivery across the content lifecycle.
- Adapting to new consumption patterns—Learn how AI-mediated discovery is changing the way customers access information—and what that means for traditional content channels and customer journeys.
- Redefining the content professional—Consider how technical communicators can evolve from content creators into architects and orchestrators of knowledge and intelligent systems.
- Taking action today—Identify practical priorities that can help content teams prepare for the next generation of human and machine content consumers.

11:15–Noon

Breakout Sessions

WYMIWYG: What You Model is What You Get

Markus Schork, Director of Technology Solutions, Coda

Why is editing a website still so hard? Decades into the CMS era, content changes can still mean training sessions, tickets, or a developer. The reason is rarely the platform; it is the content model behind it. You will learn why front-end components should never dictate content structure, why so many CMS fields get set once and never touched again, and how the pursuit of

flexibility becomes an authoring nightmare. You will leave knowing why your project plan needs to lead with content to inform UX and design if you want to avoid content migrations every few years.

This session demonstrates a spectrum of modeling patterns and authoring options—from wide-open page builders to fully semantic structures. It will show how each of these patterns and options shapes the daily reality of the people working inside the system: authors, reviewers, translators, and now AI agents.

Here's what you'll learn in this session:

- The benefits of semantic content structures—Why modeling content by what it means instead of how it looks makes it reusable across channels, easier to govern, usable by AI agents as well as people, and unlocks capabilities like personalisation and targeted delivery
- The flexibility trap—How page builders and component-driven schemas promise editorial freedom but very often deliver complexity, inconsistency, and increased development efforts
- Authoring experience—Why the daily reality of editors is a direct result of the content model, and what changes for them when structure does the work instead of training, tickets, and workarounds
- Principles to apply—A short set of modeling principles you can take to your next project

The Undocumented 80%: Processes Nobody Writes Down

Vishal Gupta, Co-founder, Trupeer AI

In technical documentation, creating high-quality content is crucial for seamless product experiences. The challenge extends beyond creation—it's about effectively measuring content quality and impact. This session explores the importance of content quality and innovative evaluation tools and methodologies.

In this presentation, Vishal will share Cisco Tech Comms' journey in developing a comprehensive content quality score, integrating customer feedback and analyzing documentation defects. Discover how they addressed gaps in traditional methods with a customer listening program focused on technical content.

Learn about the value added by technical documentation using self-service and case deflection metrics. Explore the role of web analytics in prioritizing action plans to enhance content quality scores.

Join us to uncover strategies for measuring the unmeasurable, offering insights and practical takeaways for anyone involved in content creation and management within the technical domain.

Here's what you'll learn in this session:

The importance of high-quality content in technical documentation and its impact on user empowerment and product experience

Challenges in measuring content quality and the necessity of standardizing quality metrics across diverse product portfolios

How Cisco Tech Comms developed a comprehensive content quality score by integrating customer feedback and analyzing documentation defects

Innovative tools and methodologies for evaluating content quality, including the implementation of a customer listening program focused on technical content

The role of web analytics in prioritizing action plans to enhance content quality

The use of self-service and case deflection metrics to demonstrate the value added by technical documentation

Strategies for measuring the content performance, providing a holistic view that aligns with customer needs and drives meaningful results.

Building Momentum: Structuring Small Steps to Achieve Big Wins

Trey Smith, Senior Engineering Program Supervisor, Honeywell Technologies

Content operations is shifting from nice to have to business critical, but how do you stay relevant when *everything* is critical? Gaining influence in your organization has never been harder, but there are small actions you can take to build momentum. Yes, even when everything is top priority, you can structure your strategy to gain attention. This session will give you the foundation to take those first small steps to your next big win.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Craft your business needs and requirements to point in the right direction.
- Gain insights to build positive influence within your organization.
- Build a long-term strategy to build forward momentum.

- Navigate through barriers to content operations, no matter the size.

Orchestrating Content Workflow at Ellucian Using AI Skills

Pam Noreault, Principal Information Architect, Ellucian

Most organizations are experimenting with AI chat tools to help writers draft content faster—but the real bottleneck in content production happens before writing begins. This interactive presentation is a case study that explores how Ellucian moved beyond AI chat to implement AI skills that initiate and orchestrate our content workflow. Using an AI gateway integrated with many of our enterprise tools, AI now receives content requests, assigns work, gathers release-specific research, and prepares writers with the context they need to start strong.

You'll see metrics comparing our old and new workflows, walk through the end-to-end process, and hear candid lessons learned, including the bumps, governance challenges, and change-management realities of putting AI to work in production.

In this session, you'll learn:

- How AI skills differ from AI chat and why that distinction matters for content operations
- How to use AI to start a content workflow, not just assist during writing
- Ways to automate request intakes, writer assignments, and release research using integrated tools
- Metrics comparing manual workflows to AI-orchestrated workflows (time, effort, and quality)
- What worked, what didn't, and what surprised us when deploying AI in a production environment
- Common bumps in the road, including governance, trust, and adoption challenges
- How to identify high-value "tedious tasks" in your own workflow that are ideal for AI skills

From 2 AM Failure to 8 AM Fix: Self-Healing Docs, Agent Instructions Included

Manny Silva, Head of AI Docs Practice, Promptless

A product release renames a button at 11:47 PM. Nobody told you. Nightly documentation tests catch it at 2 AM. At 8 AM the fix is waiting for approval, diagnosis attached. Review takes 3 minutes. It used to take 45.

This talk walks a failure through all five steps of the self-healing loop, then adapts it to common issues: changed APIs, broken links, stale screenshots, and conceptual pages that mislead without being wrong. We'll also climb a maturity ladder from "tests file a ticket" to "it merges its own trivial fixes" and discuss where to stop.

Another doc set belongs in that loop, and most teams don't consider it yet: AGENTS.md, skills, and agent definitions. Those docs make testable claims and drift too, but when they rot, your agents don't tell you. They confidently do the wrong thing, and tracing their errors can take days.

You'll leave with a self-healing system you can build in a day, the metrics that say it's working, and a list of what not to automate.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Trace a documentation failure through detect, diagnose, repair, verify, and report, naming what each step produces.
- Adapt the same five-step loop to API changes, broken links, stale screenshots, and conceptual drift.
- Place their team on the five-level self-healing maturity model and identify the next level worth targeting.
- Assemble a working detect-and-diagnose pipeline in about a day from a testing tool, CI, an issue tracker, and an AI agent.
- Treat an agent instruction as a testable document: extract its assertions and choose the right grader for each.
- Govern an instruction library so it stops accumulating duplicate, untriggerable, and stale entries.
- Monitor accuracy, rollback, over-generalization, and fix rate, and demote a

system's autonomy when those numbers slip.

Noon–1:15

Lunch and Vendor Demos in the Exhibit Hall and Therapy Dogs in the Grand Ballroom Foyer



1:15–2:00

Breakout Sessions

Stop Building Bots, Start Hiring AI Employees: How HR Thinking Makes AI Agents Safer and Smarter

Amanda Patterson, Sr. Consultant, Comtech Services

Many organizations treat AI agents as tools to deploy, rather than roles to manage. That mindset leads to unclear scope, uncontrolled access, inconsistent behavior, and avoidable risk.

This presentation reframes AI agents as employees who must be hired, onboarded, managed, reviewed, and eventually retired. We'll use familiar HR concepts, such as job descriptions, onboarding packets, escalation paths, performance reviews, and offboarding checklists, to describe a practical framework for designing AI agents that are accountable, governable, and aligned with real organizational goals.

The session focuses on decision-making and structure, rather than specific tools, making the approach applicable across content systems,

industries, and AI platforms. You'll leave with a clear mental model for building AI agent ecosystems that scale safely and predictably.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Reframe AI agents as organizational roles rather than generic tools, enabling clearer thinking about responsibility and risk.
- Define agent scope using "job description" thinking, including responsibilities, authority boundaries, and explicit exclusions.
- Understand onboarding prompts as behavior-shaping mechanisms, not just instructions, and recognize the risks of skipping this step.
- Apply basic governance concepts to AI agents, including least-privilege access, escalation paths, and human-in-the-loop decision points.
- Think in terms of lifecycle management to recognize when agents should be sandboxed, specialized, reviewed, or retired.

From Silos to Strategy: Building an Enterprise Content Engine that Delivers Results

Kara Hughes and Kelly Dowling, Director of Product Strategy, ASUG

At Americas' SAP Users' Group (ASUG), content is central to engaging more than 100,000 professionals and thousands of companies navigating complex SAP software landscapes. But scaling content across editorial, events, research, and communities required moving from siloed execution to an integrated enterprise strategy.

In 2025, ASUG evolved its strategy by introducing a structured Central Content Planning (CCP) process and revamping its Communities product, enabling the team to align content around strategic topics shaping the SAP ecosystem, improve content pipeline visibility, and integrate work across teams.

The results were more than 1,400 pieces of content across in-person, virtual, and digital platforms, and significant growth in engagement driven by community-led programming. By coordinating planning, improving reuse, and focusing on measurable outcomes, ASUG reduced duplicated effort, strengthened engagement, and delivered a more connected customer experience.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Build and operationalize an enterprise content strategy, including implementing a CCP framework.
- Focus content around strategic topics that align to audience needs and business priorities.
- Integrate communities, editorial, research, and events across teams.
- Measure and communicate results, including how ASUG's Communities product drove 81% growth in registrations and 74% growth in attendance for community conversations.
- Reduce costs and improve the customer experience through better content alignment and reuse.

Dell's Content Transformation Journey

Erik Bremer, Sr. Director, and André-Paul Pellet, Director, Global Content Engineering, Dell Technologies

In this session, André-Paul Pellet and Erik Bremer, leaders in Dell's Content Engineering team, share the story of Dell's content transformation: a deliberate shift from traditional technical writers to content engineers—professionals who architect the systems, schemas, templates, and quality gates that enable domain experts, AI, and structured processes to collaborate at scale. Dell is reimagining what content becomes. While PDFs and HTML remain essential for human consumption, the same structured content is being shaped into AI data products—machine-consumable assets designed to fuel AI agents, copilots, and automated support at enterprise scale.

We'll walk through concrete examples of creation and translation transformation, where engineers, product teams, and support contributors feed domain knowledge into AI-scaffolded workflows and content engineers ensure governance, structure, and accuracy.

In this session, you'll learn:

- For leaders facing the same crossroads, the message is clear: This transformation is happening whether you design it intentionally or not. Dell chose to lead it, and this is what they've learned. Expect a frank discussion of successes, failures—from “just have engineers write docs” to “just use ChatGPT”—and the hard organizational shifts required, including new skills, new team structures, and a genuine redefinition of what it means to lead a content organization.
- Dell's perspective on content for human consumption and data products
- Successes and failures
- Dell's approach to content data products
- Transition challenges with stakeholders and internally
- Opportunities for success as an AI-forward organization

The Human and AI Handshake for Content Generation at Blackbaud

Zohra Mutabanna and Elizabeth Favre, Senior Technical Writers, Blackbaud

This session is a practical case study and an open, hands-on conversation about how technical writers are using AI in real work. We'll share how we've integrated AI into content strategy, creation, and management without focusing on specific tools—what we're optimizing for, how we make decisions, and where human judgment still matters most. We'll talk through my own path as an AI champion: building an agent to support technical communicators, collaborating with peers on prompt refinement and iteration, and learning through experimentation what actually holds up in practice. We'll also reflect on what worked, what didn't, and the trade-offs we encountered along the way.

Central to this story is an organizational culture that intentionally invited technical writers into AI work—giving us room to participate, think strategically, and grow professionally as the work evolves.

In this session, you'll learn:

- How to align AI with content strategy, not just speed
- Practical patterns for AI-assisted content workflows that keep human judgment front and center
- What it takes to build and refine an agent for technical communicators
- Real lessons from hands-on experimentation, including trade-offs and missteps
- How to enable technical writers to participate and grow through AI work

Beyond the Bot: How Structured Content Drives an Agentic Ecosystem Across Your Entire Content Stack!

Patrick Bosek, CEO, Heretto, and Megan Gilhooly, Sr Director Global Content and Intelligence, OneTrust

Content teams are stretched thin. Information keeps flowing in, docs need to stay accurate, and the gap between “we have the info” and “it’s published and useful” keeps widening. What if AI agents could close that gap—handling repetitive, high-volume work so your team can focus on the judgment calls only humans can make? That’s an agentic content ecosystem, and structured content makes it possible.

This session walks through a real, production AI agent ecosystem spanning the content stack—from production and validation to delivery and intelligence. We'll show agent demos, then zoom out to the architecture connecting them and the decisions that made it work, plus which parts of the stack are ripe for automation now and where human judgment stays irreplaceable. Whether you're deploying your first agent or scaling from one to many, you'll leave with a clear model for AI as an ecosystem—not a single tool—built on the structured content foundation you already have.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Understand the direct relationship between how your content is structured and what your AI agents are actually capable of delivering—and what that means for how you invest in your content architecture today.
- Identify which repetitive tasks in your workflows are most ready for agentic automation, and which still need a human in the loop.
- Get practical design patterns for an agentic ecosystem versus deploying a standalone AI tool.

Getting Content Right at the Source Saves Time and Localization Costs

Michael Mannhardt, President, Congree Language Technologies

A hit record isn't fixed in the mix—it's nailed in the studio. The same goes for content. Too often, teams rely on endless reviews, rewrites, and alignment after creation—especially with AI, which doesn't know your content targets. The result: high costs, frustrated teams, and content that risks confusing customers or harming your brand.

This session shows you how to “record” content right from the start: crafting every piece to hit all targets on the first take. By building in quality during creation, you save time and costs, reduce revisions, protect your brand, and deliver content that's compelling, clear, and compliant. Learn how to make your content a #1 hit, keep customers loyal, and become a superstar in your organization.

In this session, Michael Mannhardt talks about how linguistic intelligence will be a benefit to your content studio—to hit all the right notes on the first take, requiring no fixes “in the mix” and creating content that is ready to perform from day one.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Build quality into content creation from the start, ensuring every piece meets brand, clarity, and compliance goals on the first take while reducing rework costs.
- Guide AI with clear content targets, avoiding expensive rewrites, team frustration, and customer confusion.
- Benefit from linguistic intelligence to produce compelling, ready-to-publish content that saves time, lowers review costs, and drives revenue from day one.

Ada Lovelace, the Tech Writer: Her 183-Year-Old Principles for Content in the Age of AI

Sarah Dugan, Doc Lead, GitBook

In 1843, Ada Lovelace was asked to translate a short paper about a computer that did not exist. Instead, she annotated it. Her notes ran nearly

three times longer than the paper, contained the first published computer program, and asked the first hard questions about what “thinking machines” can and cannot do. The machine was never built, but the documentation changed the world. The remarkable part is what still stands.

This session opens Ada's guide: five principles from her 1843 Notes for content work in the age of AI.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Recognize the pattern behind every “machines will replace writers” moment.
- Apply five principles from Ada Lovelace's 1843 Notes to your content work in the age of AI.
- Identify which parts of your work AI makes more valuable, not less.
- Make the case to leadership for the human layer in an AI content pipeline.

Hold On Loosely (But Don't Let Go): Doing Good Content Work in Uncertain Times

Melinda Belcher, Executive Director, JPMorgan Chase

Work today isn't just chaotic—it's precarious. Layoffs feel constant, career paths feel fragile, and AI has amplified the pressure to produce and the fear of being replaced. Many content leaders respond by “job-hugging”, clinging so tightly, they lose sight of what makes their work valuable.

Job-hugging isn't weakness. It's survival. But when the grip is too tight, it undermines what makes leaders effective: clear priorities, sound judgment, and the ability to say “this isn't ready.”

This session introduces a framework—hard center, soft edges—for deciding what to protect and what to release. Drawing on decision science, performance psychology, and burnout research, we'll explore why “optimal, not peak” matters, why strategic disappointment is a leadership skill, and why choosing what to neglect matters more than ever. It isn't about letting go. It's about loosening your grip just enough to do your real work well.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Apply the hard center, soft edges model to distinguish between work that defines your professional value and work that can tolerate imperfection, delays, or depolarization.
- Practice strategic disappointment—Choosing in advance who and what to underwhelm so that higher-stakes work gets your best judgment.
- Recognize the difference between optimal and peak performance, and why sustainable effectiveness under real conditions matters more than perfection under ideal ones.
- Identify when AI acceleration is improving your work versus deepening unsustainable patterns of overcommitment and chronic vigilance.

Writing at Scale, Intentionally: Thomson Reuters' Human-Guided Approach to AI Content

Emily Byrnes, Senior Manager of Content Strategy, Thomson Reuters, Holly Enneking, Vice President of Marketing, Markup AI, and Mike Buoy, Senior Solution Consultant, Adobe

A team of 10 writers and more than 200 products. And a mandate to do more with AI—without letting AI drive. In this session, Emily Byrnes, Senior Manager of Content Strategy at Thomson Reuters, joins Adobe and Markup AI to share how her Help & Support content team is navigating the reality of AI-assisted content creation:

- Where it earns a seat in the workflow
- Where it doesn't
- How writers are empowered to make that call themselves

You'll hear how the team uses LLMs to ideate and draft, AEM guides to manage the content publishing process, and Markup AI to ensure every piece of content that ships is fully on-brand—because they've learned that AI doesn't handle that part well on its own.

If you're leading a content team that's being asked to scale content publication without sacrificing quality, this is the session for you.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Use LLMs to ideate and draft content for more than 200 products as an enterprise content team.
- Streamline your content workflow from creation to publication in a digital experience platform.
- Implement a content control layer to keep high-quality human- and AI-generated content.
- Keep your existing published content fresh when products are updated and changed.

Show Me the Agents! Decision Framework for Content Operations AI

Aman Goyal, Agentic AI Product Manager, T-Mobile

Content leaders are drowning in agentic AI pitches promising to “revolutionize” operations—but which promises are real and which are expensive vaporware? This session explores practical approaches for evaluating when autonomous AI systems make sense for content operations versus when they're overkill.

Drawing from enterprise implementations, we'll examine the tension between AI hype and operational reality, discussing cost considerations, organizational impact, and strategic decision-making. You'll gain perspective on navigating vendor claims, identifying appropriate use cases, and making technology investments that strengthen rather than disrupt effective content teams.

In this session, you'll learn:

- Approaches for evaluating agentic AI technologies in content operations contexts
- Perspectives on distinguishing genuine transformation opportunities from expensive experiments
- Considerations for navigating vendor claims and assessing emerging AI capabilities
- Insights from enterprise implementations across regulated and complex content environments
- Strategies for framing AI initiatives as team augmentation, rather than replacement

- Frameworks for making informed technology decisions amid hype and executive pressure

3:00–4:00 Snack Break and Vendor Demos in the Exhibit Hall

4:00–4:20 Not for Ages 3 and Under: Why AI in Content Creation Requires Organizational Maturity

Dawn Stevens, President, Comtech Services

As organizations rush to adopt AI for content creation, many overlook the foundational capabilities needed for success. This talk uses LEGO® age recommendations to illustrate that just as complex sets require skill and judgment, AI demands organizational maturity.

By exploring process maturity, governance, workflow standardization, and content quality controls, this session shows how underprepared organizations risk inconsistent outputs, compliance failures, and brand erosion. AI does not create maturity—it exposes it. You’ll gain a clear framework for aligning AI adoption with readiness, ensuring responsible, scalable, and safe use.

In this session, you’ll learn how to:

- Explain why AI adoption is a maturity problem, not a tooling problem.
- Use the LEGO age-rating analogy to communicate AI readiness internally.
- Identify the process maturity signals required before scaling AI.
- Match AI use cases to maturity levels.
- Recognize the warning signs of premature AI adoption.
- Assess their organization’s current “AI age rating”.
- Define concrete next steps to increase AI readiness.

4:20–4:40 The Barbarians Are at the Gate

Sarah O’Keefe, CEO, Scriptorium

The arc of publishing is the slow destruction of gatekeepers. The invention of writing took away the voice of the author or storyteller. The printing press separated formatting and copying. And today, content consumers have broken through the last gate with AI. Instead of gratefully accepting a document from a benevolent publisher, the content consumer can repackage content into a different format and a different language. They can ask for more or less detail, additional examples, or targeted information. How do we respond to this new development in our role as content experts? What does it mean to lose control over content delivery?

In this session, you’ll learn how to:

- Consider AI as a content client.
- Manage risk in an AI-enabled world.
- Evolve the role of authors and publishers.

4:40–5:00

The Human Layer: Designing Content for Humans, Machines, and Everything Between

Stefan Gentz, Principal Worldwide Evangelist, Adobe

The role of technical communicators is undergoing a significant transformation. As AI systems increasingly generate, process, and deliver content, the question isn't whether your job will change—it's whether you'll lead that change. This session challenges conventional thinking about documentation, arguing that traditional content delivery channels are being replaced by conversational interfaces and LLM-powered chat applications that retrieve and synthesize your content. But here's the opportunity: someone must architect this new ecosystem.

Content now serves dual audiences—humans and machines. This demands new competencies: structured authoring, content APIs, and machine-consumable protocols. Yet the irreplaceable human layer remains: ethical judgment, user empathy, information architecture, and the strategic thinking that determines what content exists and why. This session equips you to thrive in this new landscape—not as a survivor, but as an architect of what comes next.

Here's what you'll learn in this session:

- Content must be designed for human readers and LLM consumption.
- Traditional delivery channels are shifting to conversational and voice interfaces.
- Structured content formats and APIs are essential new competencies.
- Human judgment, ethics, and empathy remain irreplaceable differentiators.
- Technical communicators are positioned to become content ecosystem architects.

5:00–6:30

Networking Reception in the Exhibit Hall

8:00–10:00

Microphone Monday Live Storytelling Event at CJ's Lounge

From poetry to stories and stand-up, grab your beverage of choice and hang out with your LavaCon peeps as we “talk story” (as they say in Hawaii).

There'll be a place to sign up if you want to participate (five minutes per person).

No speaking experience required!



Tuesday, October 27

7:30–8:30 **Continental Breakfast**

8:30–8:50 **AI Didn't Replace You—It Promoted You to Manager**

Maria Romanovsky, Director Content Design and Strategy, TikTok

For centuries, new technologies have reshaped the way we work. AI is no different. In a world of AI-generated content, the challenge isn't creating more—it's defining what good looks like and ensuring it stands out from the noise.

As content creation becomes accessible to everyone, content strategists are more important than ever. The skills that matter most now look increasingly like managerial skills: aligning work to business goals, coordinating efforts across humans and AI tools, and establishing clear standards for quality. At the center of it all is communication. The ability to provide clear, strategic, actionable direction and feedback—to people and machines—is quickly becoming a non-negotiable professional skill. This talk explores why content strategists are uniquely positioned to lead in the age of AI.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Meet stakeholders where they are, in the age of AI.
- Work with (and not against) AI tools.
- Apply principles and develop systems to show the value of investing in a content strategy team.

Keith Boyd, Senior Director, Microsoft Corporation

Bill Gates first said, “Content is King,” back in January 1996 as he pondered the future of the Internet in an essay published on the official Microsoft website. Fast forward 30 years, and that axiom has never been truer.

While AI tools have made it infinitely easier to create, all generative AI systems were trained by human-generated content. Content professionals will continue to play an essential role in the next 30 years of the Internet and AI if we rapidly adapt to a changing technical landscape, just like we did back in 1996. In fact, content professionals will be one of the world’s greatest defenses against the proliferation of “work slop”, but it’s going to take a global village to ensure that content remains king for the next 30 years.

In this session, you’ll learn about:

- How the history of online content will inform the future
- How content professionals at Microsoft have adapted over the last 30 years
- How generative AI can augment and accelerate human creation
- The criticality of “humans in the loop” to prevent “work slop”
- Building skills to remain relevant in a constantly changing technology landscape
- The inevitability of artificial general intelligence and implications for content creators

Jason Kaufman, CEO, Zaon Labs

Structured content, taxonomies, and content models are widely seen as the foundation for AI-ready organizations. But structure alone does not create trust—and without trust, AI fails.

AI systems don’t understand truth. They reflect the content they are given. If that content is fragmented, outdated, or inconsistent, AI will confidently scale those issues across every interaction. This is why so many enterprise AI initiatives struggle to deliver value: not because of the technology, but because the underlying knowledge cannot be trusted.

In this session, you’ll learn:

- Why structured content does not guarantee accurate or reliable AI outputs
- How AI amplifies inconsistencies, contradictions, and outdated knowledge
- Where the “trust gap” exists in most content ecosystems
- How to evolve your content strategy from managing content to building trusted, AI-ready knowledge systems

AI Translation in the Real World: Lessons from the Team at Aras on Building Scalable Global Content Workflows

Ben Cohen, Head of Customer Growth, Localize and Nick Wyatt, Sr Dir, Marketing Ops and Digital Marketing, Aras

AI translation tools promise speed, but real efficiency gains only happen when quality is designed into the workflow. In this session, the team at Aras shares practical, case-based lessons from building scalable global content pipelines that balance automation with control.

You'll learn how to maintain the quality of translations, use automations for translation workflows, and see how AI and humans work together, so high-risk content maintains quality without expanding localization teams.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Identify which content is best suited for full automation vs. when human review is required.
- Manage translation quality.
- Design escalation paths for high-risk or high-visibility content.
- Reduce localization costs without increasing risk or operational complexity.

From Long Topics to Microcontent: The Strategic Shift that Makes Your DITA AI-Ready

Rob Hanna, CEO, Precision Content

Many organizations are trying to “AI-enable” their content by layering ontologies and knowledge graphs on top of content that was never designed for machine interpretation. It's expensive, complex, and often compensates for upstream authoring decisions. What if intelligence didn't need to be retrofitted?

This session explores how microcontent authoring, combined with rich semantic metadata and strategic linking, creates inherently interpretable, machine-ready content. By embedding meaning directly into content architecture, organizations can reduce—or even eliminate—the need for heavy ontological

overlays while improving search precision, AI retrieval accuracy, and human usability. Instead of adding intelligence after the fact, learn how to design it in from the start.

In this session, you'll learn about:

- Why many AI initiatives rely on overlays to compensate for weak content granularity
- How microcontent strategies create self-describing, contextually complete knowledge units
- The role of rich semantic metadata in:
 - Improving search precision
 - Enhancing AI retrieval accuracy
 - Supporting personalization without external mapping layers
- Governance strategies for embedding meaning at authoring time
- When ontology overlays are justified—and when they introduce unnecessary complexity

Maintaining Trust in the AI Era: The Enduring Value of Human Expertise in Content

Kay Conerly, Director of Content Strategy, McGraw Hill

Are AI tools elevating the value of human expertise? In medicine, where accuracy is paramount and hallucinations are unacceptable, human expertise remains irreplaceable. Yet, in this fast-evolving, data-driven field, AI offers powerful opportunities to augment the specialized content needs of medical learners and clinicians.

This session delves into strategies for demonstrating credibility through content nutrition labels, amplifying thought leadership, and leveraging AI tools while preserving content quality and authenticity.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Reestablish trust in the AI era with human-authored content. Goal: Reinforcing human expertise (and truth)
- Document credibility with content nutrition labels. Goal: Transparency for content users

- Preserve quality while simultaneously leveraging AI tools. Goal: Content integrity and asset protection

Beyond the Success Story: Technical Lessons from Enterprise Content Transformations at LinkedIn

Shankar Krishnan, Co-Founder and CEO, and Janine Marie Trakhtenberg, Enterprise Director, Hashout Technologies

Enterprise content transformation initiatives are often presented through business outcomes and success metrics, but the implementation journey behind those results is rarely discussed in detail. This session will explore multiple enterprise transformation programs, highlighting the technical architecture decisions, migration strategies, governance models, adoption challenges, and lessons learned behind large-scale content modernization efforts.

The format combines concise case study presentations with a moderated practitioner discussion featuring stakeholders who have led and supported these transformations. Rather than focusing solely on outcomes, the discussion will

examine the decisions, tradeoffs, implementation challenges, and best practices that shaped each program, providing you with practical insights you can apply in your own organizations.

AI is Your New Top Reader. Are You Ready?

Fabrice Lacroix, CEO, Fluid Topics

AI isn't just technology—it's your new audience. Agentic AI is reshaping business, powering everything from smart assistants to fully automated processes. In this AI-first era, your main reader will soon be a machine, not a person.

Here's the challenge: Most product content isn't ready for AI. The time has come to transform your technical documentation—the fuel (or weak link)—for tomorrow's business success. Technical communication teams must rethink their strategy to keep up.

In this session, you'll learn about the power of agentic AI and how the Model Context Protocol (MCP) makes it a reality. We'll then show you how to equip your team and evolve your workflows for the era of intelligent, content-based automation.

10:45–11:30

Breakout Sessions

Stop Reviewing Everything: A Smarter Model for Multilingual Content

Adam Goldman and Benoit Benatar, OTTO

Many multilingual content operations still apply the same workflow to every asset, regardless of audience, purpose, or risk. This creates unnecessary reviews, slows global publishing, and stretches specialist resources.

This session presents a more scalable, risk-based approach. Rather than focusing on AI as a translation engine, it explores how AI can support better decisions before and after multilingual content is produced—identifying which content needs greater oversight, assigning the right level of human involvement, and determining whether content is ready for publication or requires escalation.

You'll learn how targeted governance can replace blanket reviews. The goal is not to eliminate human expertise, but to apply it where judgment has the greatest impact. By using AI as a decision layer, organizations can reduce review effort, improve consistency, accelerate global publishing, and deliver better multilingual customer experiences.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Identify where one-size-fits-all multilingual workflows create unnecessary costs, delays, and review efforts.
- Assess content based on audience, business impact, sensitivity, and the consequences of an error.
- Match each content type to the appropriate level of automation, human review, or specialist oversight.

- Use AI as a decision layer before and after multilingual content production—not simply as a translation engine.
- Establish clearer acceptance and escalation criteria for more consistent publishing decisions.
- Focus human expertise where it creates the greatest value.
- Pilot a risk-based workflow that improves speed, scalability, cost control, and customer experience across languages.

Oh, the Content Professionals and Information Architects Should be Friends!

Craig Johnson, Founder & Chief Architect, Xemma

While this reprise of the famous Oklahoma song may be a mouthful, the message is simple: Content and structure were never meant to live in separate silos.

With AI becoming ubiquitous, the need for content professionals to have a “take-it-to-the-bank” semantic layer that is clear, coherent, accurate, and governed is greater than ever. Taxonomies, classification systems, ontologies, and knowledge graphs are now among an organization’s most prized assets.

Before AI, the tools used to manage these models were built primarily for information architects well-versed in semantic web protocols and terminology. At Xemma, we’ve heard the same story from content professionals, data managers, developers, and information architects alike: There’s a “tools gap” that makes collaboration harder than it should be, even though everyone wants to work together.

In this session, we’ll show techniques and strategies to bridge that gap so teams can sing from the same semantic songbook.

In this session, you’ll learn how to:

- Involve all stakeholders to participate in concept modeling and knowledge sharing.
- Integrate “friendly models”, such as concept and mind maps, into more formal taxonomies and ontologies.

- Visualize complex knowledge structures in clear, easy-to-understand formats for a wide range of audiences.
- Turn existing content structures into governed, AI-ready knowledge assets.
- Move from siloed tools to a collaborative, end-to-end knowledge platform.

Content Development: Stop Building Sheds, Start Building Skyscrapers.

Suzanne Kelchner Senior Manager, Technical Documentation, Procore

Let’s be real: Your content is probably a mess of DIY sheds held together with duct tape. We’ll show you how we grew from apprentice to journeyman, and created an Enterprise Content Forum that actually gets the job done. We’ll move beyond architectural drawings to show you the real market value, focusing on the three pillars of a successful development:

- Lowering build costs
- Increasing property values
- Ensuring homeowner satisfaction through a unified community plan

Here’s what you’ll learn in this session:

- Your Dream Team (minus the drama)—Sick of your crews building their own ugly silos? We’ll show you how to get them on one master plan and stop doing the same job twice.
- Show me the money—No fluff, just facts. We’re bringing receipts that show how we stopped burning cash and made content that actually works instead of collecting dust.
- Steal our playbook—We’re giving you the cheat codes. Get plug-and-play strategies, learn how to consolidate vendors, and use those new AI toys without looking foolish.
- Herding cats? Got a manual—The real reason projects die? People. We’ll give you the dirt on budget battles and resistant crews, plus the tactics to shut down the drama for good.

How We Turned Award Winning Content into AI-Powered Customer Experiences

*Danny Capo, Sr. Manager, Technical Writing, and
Patty Delgado, (TITLE), UKG*

Last year, we won the Content Impact Awards for Excellence and Best in Show for unifying release notes (RNs) across two merged companies, many products, and a fast-moving CI/CD release model while improving consistency, clarity, and customer trust. By aligning tools and redefining strategy, we transformed RNs into a reusable source of truth that powers customer deliverables.

This session picks up where the award-winning project left off. We have intentionally authored structured, semantically rich content designed for reuse for over a decade. By combining structured content with AI-assisted creation and curation, we now deliver AI-assisted RNs, generated from Jira inputs and refined by technical writers, PowerPoint slides, derived directly from RNs, and used for customer webinars, webinar voiceovers, presenting new features at scale. The results are faster delivery, reduced manual effort, and more time for content creators to focus on work that truly requires human judgment.

In this session, you'll learn:

- Concrete, practical ideas for turning “just release notes” into a scalable, AI-ready content engine
- How to design release notes as a reusable content asset, not a one-off deliverable, even in high-velocity release environments
- Practical strategies for unifying tools and content, including change-management considerations across multiple teams
- How structured, semantically rich content enables responsible and effective AI use for downstream deliverables
- A real-world case study of using AI to generate release notes, PowerPoint slides, and webinar voiceovers, including what worked, what didn't, and what we refined
- How to balance automation with trust and quality, so customers feel the content was written for them—not just generated by a machine

You Can't Prompt Your Way to Trust—Why Trusted AI Answers Start with Structured, Governed Knowledge

*Stefan Gentz, Principal Worldwide Evangelist,
Adobe*

Generative AI can produce convincing answers, but no prompt can fix outdated sources, restore missing context, or resolve conflicts. As people and AI agents increasingly rely on conversational answers, trust must come from a governed knowledge foundation—especially when incorrect content can lead to costly decisions. Building on DITA, metadata, taxonomies, knowledge graphs, and guardrails, Stefan Gentz explores how structured content becomes an operational knowledge system and discusses the anatomy of a trusted answer from governed source content through retrieval and reasoning to evidence, attribution, and controlled access. A trustworthy system must recognize when evidence is insufficient and refuses to invent answers.

In this session, Stefan shows how unanswered questions, content-quality signals, human feedback, analytics, and evaluations create a continuous improvement loop—and why technical communication plays a critical role in building reliable knowledge for humans and AI agents.

Here's what you'll learn in this session:

- Trust starts below the prompt—Understand why prompting alone cannot compensate for missing structure, context, provenance, or governance.
- Structure becomes knowledge—Explore how metadata, versions, taxonomies, and relationships enable contextual and multi-step reasoning.
- Trust by design—Learn how evidence, attribution, filtering, access control, and refusal reduce the risk of plausible but incorrect answers.
- One foundation, two audiences—See how governed knowledge can serve both humans and AI agents through conversational experiences, APIs, and MCP.
- Content gets a feedback loop—Discover how unanswered questions, analytics, feedback, and evaluations can expose

knowledge gaps and drive continuous content improvement.

11:30–1:15

Lunch and Vendor Demos in the Exhibit Hall and Comfort Llamas in the Grand Ballroom Foyer



1:15–2:00

Breakout Sessions

Tech Stack Lift-and-Shift: A Tag-Team Approach to Success with Limited Resources

Melanie Davis, Founder & CEO, Dragonfly Diva Docs, Isabella Adornato, Documentation Director, Distech Controls Inc., and Mike Hovan, Sales Engineer, Fluid Topics

Your small documentation team needs to adopt or replace a component content delivery platform (CCMS) or content delivery platform (CDP)? Working against the clock for an absolute (or arbitrary!) launch deadline while holding the line on your regular product doc releases?

This case study shows how one organization successfully met an unanticipated need to replace their CDP while completing a planned replacement of their CCMS and continuing to

meet their release obligations by embedding the tool vendor and a consultant in their small documentation team.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Review and revise your content value proposition for your organization and customers.
- Create a content competence council that enables you to play to your strengths.
- Design, develop, and deliver your technology implementation on time and to great effect.
- Streamline and document content operations processes underpinned by your new tools.
- Communicate your progress and celebrate your successes.
- Build before-and-after metrics to strengthen your credibility for future projects.

Content Design for AI: How Collaboration Makes AI Happen

Jessica Bjoeredahl, UX Content Design Manager and Olivia Carden, Senior Product Manager, 6sense

How do you teach AI to talk? How do you teach it to do more than just respond? To really answer your users' questions? How do you apply good UX content principles when you're not in full control of the content being shown to the user?

In this talk, we'll discuss how we created a collaborative environment between ourselves, data scientists, and developers to take our company's sales copilot from a generic large-language model (LLM) to a specialized assistant.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Understand how UX content design can contribute to an LLM project.
- Advocate for your own participation in these projects.
- Do research to understand what users might ask an LLM.
- Partner with project managers, developers, and data scientists during LLM-based projects.
- Think about and write system prompts.

Before You Fund AI: What if You're Solving the Wrong Problem?

Lief Erickson, Principal Content Strategist, Intuitive Stack

Leadership pressure to "do something, anything" AI is here. Most documentation teams aren't fundamentally prepared for reliable generative AI.

This session uses the Semantic Content Maturity Model and a five-capability diagnostic that clarifies your true readiness for intent-based AI-enabled knowledge systems. You'll leave with a 30-minute assessment that helps you figure out what to do next and how to justify spending money on it.

In this session, you'll learn that it's still very early in the days for generative AI. AI is moving from pilot programs to the default working style. Teams that were a cost center are being asked how quickly AI-enabled search, chat, personalization, or

automation can be deployed—and what the return will be. Most documentation teams are working from processes designed for publishing efficiency, not machine interpretation.

How ServiceNow Used Agentic AI to Reduce Costs and Improve Customer Experience

Theresa Daudier, Senior KM Engineer, ServiceNow

So you've invested in AI—now what? In this session, I share a real-world case study from my work at ServiceNow, where we approached AI not as a replacement for people, but as an AI control tower—connecting AI, data, workflows, and people to remove redundant work and shift writers toward higher value tasks. Our challenge was to implement AI in our 2,000+ global engineering organization—not professional writers—while influencing change without authority. The goal was to reduce publishing costs, improve the user experience, and make it easier for people to do the right thing.

You'll learn how we moved beyond AI proofs of concept by grounding AI in strong knowledge and content management practices, embedding guidance directly into workflows, and introducing agentic AI to proactively support contributors—before human review ever begins. The result was a shift from reactive content management to more autonomous interactions, less rework, and lower costs, which enhanced trust.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Identify real organizational pain points AI can solve—and avoid expensive hype.
- Prep knowledge and content management foundations for safe, effective AI use.
- Use AI to reduce manual review and rework by performing quality checks before human review.
- Use agentic AI to guide contributors in real-time.
- Identify what AI can—and cannot—fix when it comes to UI and content experience.
- Implement practical strategies for influencing change without authority in large, distributed teams.

Creating Content AI Agents That Actually Work

Emma Pindera, Content Strategist, PointClickCare

As AI becomes an integral part of content workflows, the challenge isn't replacing human expertise—it's amplifying it. This session explores how to design and deploy AI-powered content assistants that truly add value for technical writers, UX writers, and content strategists. Learn practical strategies for building AI agents that support help files, style guides, in-app assistance, release newsletters, and more—without compromising quality or creativity. Discover how to position AI as a collaborative partner, not a competitor.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Understand the role of AI in content strategy—Explain why AI should

complement—not replace—human writers and how this impacts workflow design.

- Identify key use cases for AI content agents—Learn where AI can add value in creating help files, style guides, in-app assistance, and release communications.
- Apply principles for context-aware AI design—Gain practical knowledge on building AI systems that respect tone, terminology, and brand voice.
- Implement human-in-the-loop processes—Discover frameworks for integrating AI outputs with editorial reviews to maintain quality and trust.
- Evaluate success metrics for AI-assisted content—Learn how to measure effectiveness, adoption, and user satisfaction when deploying AI content assistants.

2:15–3:00

Breakout Sessions

How to Best Leverage Your Most Challenging Employee

Amber Swope, DITA Strategies and Dan Schommer, Intuitive Stack

Leadership comes with challenges, and few are more persistent than managing the willful team member who resists every change, questions every decision, or undermines team dynamics. Whether you have inherited an established team, grown one within your organization, or stepped into a new role with unfamiliar faces, these employees are part of your reality. Rather than avoid or dismiss them, successful leaders learn to understand and leverage what drives resistance.

In this presentation, Amber Swope and Dan Schommer share practical strategies for managing difficult employees on your own team. Drawing on years of building and leading teams through transformation, they will equip you with approaches to assess talent, understand motivation, and turn resistance into constructive engagement.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Recognize the difference between valuable skepticism and destructive resistance.
- Understand what drives difficult behavior in team members.
- Develop strategies for engaging resistant employees toward productive collaboration.

From Chaos to Clarity: Streamlining Regulated Global Content

Leah Catania, Sr Content Strategist, Insulet, and Bill Swallow, Director of Operations, Scriptorium

By early 2026, Insulet expanded sales of its Omnipod insulin pumps to more than 20 countries and almost as many languages. The rapidly growing customer base, continually expanding product lines, and increasing number of regulatory requirements significantly outpaced the inefficient desktop publishing processes left over from the early days of medical device manufacturing.

Insulet made a strategic move to DITA in late 2025 to centralize content, eliminate manual work, and streamline production through intelligent content reuse, rich metadata, release management, and automated publishing.

In this session, we'll discuss the factors that led to the transition to DITA and explore the benefits of such a move in a highly regulated industry. We'll break down the challenges faced, efficiencies gained, and lessons learned along the way, including:

- Navigating the maze of Good "X" Practice (GxP) requirements for the content itself and the tools involved
- Mapping completely unstructured content and inconsistent formatting to structured content with templated outputs
- Consolidating dozens of different baseline guides into a handful of "global" English baselines through content reuse and conditional filtering
- Adapting content written for printed guides to be used in a mobile-first HTML output for in-app help, while still maintaining as much content reuse as possible

Biggest Bang For Your Buck: What We Learned From 99 AI Experiments

Tyrin Avery, Principle Technical Writer and Content Strategist, Salesforce

After a year of experimenting with AI and tracking the results, my team has built our skills, found our path, and learned a lot about AI. Skip the trial-and-error; I'm here to share the data. Join me for a metrics-based analysis of integrating AI into the workflows of writers, editors, and content strategists.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Identify the easiest AI tools for your team to adopt.
- Target workflows where AI makes your team more productive.
- Avoid costly time-sinks where AI won't help
- Track and report on AI productivity gains to stakeholders.

How a Golden Question Set Helped Us Build Trust in Our AI Agent

Rashmi Ramaswamy, Technical Content Strategist, Guidewire

Most teams wait until after launch to ask whether their chatbot or AI agent is actually working, relying on CSAT, case deflection, or anecdotal feedback. We took a different approach: We focused on building trust in the AI before real users ever touched it.

In this case study, I'll share how we used search data to farm intents and create a "golden set" of user questions. This golden question set became the foundation for early baseline accuracy, structured human evaluation, internal rollout testing, and continuous automated self-evaluation after each update.

I'll also show how a zero-cost chatbot data analysis agent helped surface key intents and actionable insights, improving accuracy by 30% in three months and enabling a confident production rollout in less than six months.

This session focuses on building confidence in AI through intent, human judgment, and scalable evaluation—not just metrics.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Use search data to create a golden set of user questions before launching an AI agent.
- Apply AI-assisted intent analysis to identify query patterns.
- Involve writers in human-in-the-loop evaluation to build shared ownership and trust.
- Design a structured evaluation scale that goes beyond "good and bad" answers.
- Move from manual testing to AI-based self-evaluation for rapid iteration.
- Define meaningful performance indicators tied to user intent—not just CSAT.

You'll also learn how the continuous evaluation enabled measurable accuracy gains and confident production rollout.

Terminology: The Clever Cure for Hallucinations

Klaus Fleischmann, CEO, Kaleidoscope GmbH

AI is the answer to everything, or so the common (mis)perception goes. But what about all the LLM hallucinations? What about the fact that generative AI does not adhere to your corporate language and produces inconsistent or simply wrong output?

One potential cure may come as a surprise: your very own terminology! With terminology-augmented generation (TAG), AI can leverage the structured, human-grade, and multilingual data, which is (often) available in a terminology database. TAG saves costs, improves precision, and reduces labor-intensive reworking of AI output. It is a game-changer for tech doc, content, and localization teams because it makes their terminology work essential for corporate AI projects and increases the value for the entire company.

If you want to learn how to reposition your terminology as part of your company's AI strategy and cure AI shortcomings, do not miss this presentation!

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Save time and money by making LLM output more correct, consistent, and in line with the brand voice.
- Prep the terminology data for use in LLMs or AI apps using TAG.
- Easily connect the termbase to any LLM or AI tool using the Model Context Protocol (MCP).
- Get a seat at the corporate AI strategy table by positioning yourself and your terminology data.
- Stay valuable as information architects in the age of AI.
- Present the case for TAG to the CIO or whoever is in charge of the AI strategy.

3:00–3:45

Snacks and Vendor Demos in the Exhibit Hall

3:45–4:30

Breakout Sessions

One Product, Many Names: How to Establish a Governed Vocabulary and Ontology with the Tools You Already Have

Brendon Paucek, Senior Content Strategist, Teradata

In software companies, it's not uncommon to ask 10 employees from different departments what the names of their products and features are and get 10 different answers. Whose job is it to create consensus between these competing realities? This session describes how I used Teradata's existing content delivery platform (Fluid Topics) as a source of truth to build an authoritative graphical ontology explorer and AI-ready data source. Together, these provide context, constraints, and confidence for humans and AI systems across the product ecosystem.

Here's what you'll learn in this session:

- Tech content pros are uniquely positioned to govern overlapping realities—especially when marketing brands a product by one name, the development team calls it by a secret code name, and the UX team lands somewhere in between.
- How a CDP like Fluid Topics includes vocabulary tools that reconcile these differences in metadata, and how the same infrastructure principles can serve as the foundation for a simple ontology explorer that looks polished and credible. The result is a human- and machine-readable presentation of your company's ecosystem that helps onboard and ground colleagues and customers. While other tools exist specifically for ontologies and knowledge graphs, it's possible to govern product

terminology with tools you already have. By keeping it simple and staying in the driver's seat, rather than letting generative AI produce a graph out of the gate from live data, you can align terminology across teams without additional tooling spend.

Delightful Documentation? Improving Documentation Quality with the Kano Model

Yoel Strimling, Senior Technical Editor, Ceva

You know what your readers really want from the documentation you send them? You might think you are giving them high-quality documentation, but do your readers agree with you? Have you asked them?

The Kano Model is used in many industries during the product/service development and design phases to determine which proposed features will have the greatest effect on customer satisfaction. This talk presents the results of two applied research studies, and proposes a focused, clearly defined, and reader-derived definition of documentation quality based on empirically tested information quality categories and dimensions. It will provide you with a sound theoretical basis for focusing on certain dimensions of documentation quality in your writing to increase reader satisfaction.

This talk is intended for people who want to write docs that make their readers happy. And who doesn't want happy readers?

In this session, you'll get some clear, research-based takeaways that can be used to:

- Collect meaningful and actionable feedback.
- Create clear and reliable methods and metrics for measuring documentation quality.
- Provide guidelines for use in academic technical communication courses to teach students about real-life, reader-oriented documentation quality measures.
- Improve the customer experience through better content!

Inclusive Content in the AI Era: Bias, Culture, And Who Gets Left Behind

Dipo Ajose-Coker Solutions Architect RWS Group (Moderator)

Bias is inherent in our everyday lives. But when AI becomes part of the content toolchain, it can scale clarity, or it can scale confusion, exclusion, and risk.

The difference is rarely the model. It is the choices we make about data, labels, objectives, review, and what we consider "good enough" when customers live in different cultures, languages, and contexts.

This panel makes inclusive content practical for content leaders adopting AI. We will unpack the "bias supply chain" from authoring and training data through summarization, translation, and delivery. We will share examples of how cultural expectations differ, why that matters for customer experience, and what governance and review patterns reduce harm without slowing everything to a crawl. You will leave with a simple checklist you can apply in real workflows, plus a clear sense of where human review is non-negotiable (bias points to test, cross-cultural QA prompts, "red flag" outputs, mitigation options).

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Spot the "bias supply chain" in content operations—authoring, training data, retrieval, summarization, translation, and delivery.
- Run a lightweight "inclusive content risk assessment" that fits real deadlines.
- Handle cross-cultural variation without creating 200 versions of everything (and without pretending one global tone fits all).
- Put human review where it reduces risk the most, not where it feels comforting.
- Set governance that supports teams instead of policing them.

From Style Guides to Smart Assistants: How AI Supports In-House Content Experts at Red Hat

Katrina Kempney, Principal Content Strategist, Red Hat

While not everyone can work at a technology company developing AI tools and services, the benefits of integrating AI to augment—not replace—content writers and strategists can be achieved at any organization. In this session, I'll share how adopting AI tools trained on standard and custom style guides, as well as brand voice and tone, is helping technology company Red Hat move work from external agencies to in-house experts.

With tools like a plain language Gemini Gem, style guide assistants for marketing and technical content, and more, Red Hat helps our subject-matter experts write (and even translate!) more effectively and efficiently.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Adopt Gemini and custom style assistants to help even experienced writers gut-check their work.
- Supplement routine manual editing with AI assistants to save time—and, as a result, money—for teams addressing different audiences and mediums.
- Make a case for incorporating a similar approach at your own organization.

4:45–5:05 Balancing Brains and Bots: Accelerating a Responsible AI Workflow

Megan Gilhooly, Sr Director Global Content and Intelligence, OneTrust

What happens when AI stops being a tool and starts becoming a teammate? In this fast-paced, thought-provoking keynote, Megan explores how to integrate agentic AI into content workflows in a way that's both wildly efficient and deeply human. Learn how to delegate the dull to machines so your team can focus on the meaningful—and why “working yourself out of a job” might be the smartest career move you can make.

In this session, you'll walk away with:

- A fresh framework for dividing labor between humans and AI
- Real-world insights on building scalable, responsible AI content pipelines
- A mindset shift for personal growth in an AI-first organization

Let's talk about how to make AI work with us, not just for us.

5:05–5:25 Leading the Shift: Building an AI-Ready Content Culture

Karen Brothers, Content Manager, Scott Safety

At its heart, digital transformation isn't a story about systems implementation or AI adoption—it's a story about people navigating a culture change. Blending her work leading structured content initiatives with human-centered change leadership, Karen shares how shared purpose and collaboration can shift content modernization from a top-down mandate to a participatory process.

In this session, you'll gain practical tips for using co-creation workshops, storytelling, and prototype cycles to help teams align on why transformation matters and translate that “why” into collaborative implementations that yield better content, support business goals, and shape an AI-ready content culture.

5:25–5:45

What Still Matters? Technical Writing Skills That Survive and Thrive in an Agentic AI World

Scott Abel, Content Strategy Evangelist, Heretto

As agentic AI begins to reshape documentation workflows, many technical writers are asking the same question: which of our traditional skills still matter?

In this session, Scott Abel explores the enduring value of the core technical communication skills that go far beyond drafting and editing. From style mastery and information gathering to content reuse, conditional processing, and editorial judgment, he shows why these capabilities remain essential in AI-augmented environments. Rather than positioning AI as a replacement for technical writers, Scott examines how AI can strengthen the work of professionals who know how to structure information, manage complexity, and govern content for accuracy, consistency, and trust.

You'll gain a clearer understanding of the human skills that matter most, how those skills fit into emerging AI-enabled workflows, and why technical writers who can orchestrate knowledge, not just produce text, will continue to deliver strategic value.

7:00–11:00

Annual Karaoke Night, sponsored by Heretto, at CJ's Lounge (includes light appetizers)



Wednesday, October 28

7:00–8:00

Continental Breakfast

8:00–8:20

Love People and Use Things: What My Cancer Journey Taught Me about Using AI and Working with SMEs

Viqui Dill, Documentation Specialist, Navy Federal Credit Union

This case study explores the intersection of AI and my own personal cancer journey. In 2025, I was diagnosed with triple-negative breast cancer. My hair fell out. Chemo took away short-term memory. My hemoglobin levels plummeted, and I had no energy.

When AI became available, I used Copilot, ChatGPT, and Culture Cloud to overcome these challenges. Combined with the support of my community, I was able to continue to work full-time, play with my band, the Dill Pickers, and even attend the 2025 LavaCon conference. And out of 3,200+ employees, I was given my company's Culture Champion award, consistently fostering collaboration, appreciation, and clarity in every interaction.

You'll discover practical ways to leverage AI tools to overcome obstacles, celebrate achievements, and foster a supportive culture. Together, we'll learn how to set ambitious goals, seek help when needed, and embrace the joy of collaboration.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Build a culture of trust and inclusion by using existing regulatory content to highlight the contributions of your SME team in a way that's visible to their upper management.
- Use AI to make up for personal challenges and track the progress of project milestones.
- Rely on the love and support of your community to accomplish stretch goals in your personal and professional life.
- Make friends with AI to have fun and engage your audience.

8:30–9:15

Breakout Sessions

Your CMS isn't Broken. Your Content Model is. AI Makes it Worse.

Luis Fernandez, Executive Director, VML

Content teams suffer common pains across industries—duplication, inconsistency, and slow time-to-market. In many cases, it's not because of the lack of tooling or talent, but because they lack a systematic approach. Over time, content debt grows: content is created, copied, forgotten, and adapted across channels with little or no structure.

Software engineers faced similar challenges decades ago and solved many of them with approaches like DRY, KISS, separation of concerns, modular design, and encapsulation, to name a few.

In this session, we'll bring those proven engineering ideas into practical content strategy and operations. We'll see how concepts originally designed to manage complex software systems can be applied to content modeling, reuse, governance, and delivery. We'll see how treating content as a system, rather than a collection of

documents, helps reduce duplication, improve consistency, accelerate updates across channels, and reduce maintenance effort.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Identify and measure content debt using concepts borrowed from technical debt.
- Apply DRY, KISS, and separation of concerns to content models and workflows.
- Design reusable content components using polymorphism and encapsulation.
- Understand how Conway's Law explains fragmented customer experiences.
- Build a scalable "create once, publish everywhere" content foundation.
- Translate engineering thinking into actionable content strategy decisions.

An Alchemist's Guide to Modern Tech Comms

Mark Kleinsmith, Director of Technical Communications, Appfire

In *The Alchemist*, Paulo Coelho writes that "alchemy is about bringing spiritual perfection into contact with the material plane." Modern technical communications faces a similar challenge: transforming content from a perceived cost center into a strategic driver of customer experience, revenue, and business impact.

In this session, I'll share how my team of 14 technical communicators embraced content alchemy by using video, AI, structured delivery platforms, and cross-functional collaboration to turn everyday documentation into something far more valuable. By drawing inspiration from select quotes in *The Alchemist*, this talk reframes familiar technical communication challenges through a narrative lens that emphasizes action, transformation, and purpose. Grounded in real metrics, practical examples, and a love of storytelling, this session invites you to pursue your own "personal legend" and turn lead into gold by improving content, teams, and the customer experience.

In this session, you'll learn:

- How to transform technical communications from a cost center into a strategic function.

"To realize one's Personal Legend is a person's only real obligation."

- Meet customers where they learn, and don't force them down a path they don't want to take. "The sheep don't even realize they are walking a new road."
- Simple, well-executed content delivers the most value. "It's the simple things in life that are the most extraordinary."
- How to put AI to work now. "There is only one way to learn. It's through action."
- How to use a CDP to create a shared language with customers. "There was a language in the world that everyone understood, the language of enthusiasm, of things accomplished with love and purpose."
- How to partner with marketing to foster success. "Life attracts life."
- How small, intentional improvements compound into meaningful business impact. "When we strive to become better than we are, everything around us becomes better, too."

Beyond Proof of Concept: The Human-in-the-Loop Playbook for AI that Cuts Content Costs Without Cutting People

Adlore "Addi" Casseus, Founder and Principal, Ascend Revenue Group

Most AI-in-content efforts stall after a pilot because teams skip the hard part: operational design. In this session, you'll learn a practical, "no-layoffs" operating model for integrating AI into enterprise content work without compromising quality, voice, compliance, or team morale. We'll walk through a repeatable workflow that clarifies where AI helps (and where it hurts), how to build human checks that scale, and how to tie the work to metrics leaders actually fund (cost-to-publish, time-to-update, support deflection, translation savings, and content reuse). You'll leave with templates to assess readiness, design governance, train SMEs, and prove ROI beyond a proof of concept—so AI becomes a sustainable capability instead of a risky experiment.

In this session, you'll learn about:

- How to identify high-ROI “AI-assist” moments in the content lifecycle (intake, authoring, review, publish, maintain) without turning AI into a quality risk
- A Human-in-the-Loop QA model (roles, checkpoints, escalation rules) that protects accuracy, compliance, and brand voice
- A lightweight governance blueprint—Prompt library + style/terminology guardrails + decision rights (so work doesn't die in stakeholder gridlock)
- The KPI tree that wins budget—Cost-to-publish, time-to-update, reuse rate, translation leverage, support call deflection, and customer experience indicators
- A rollout plan that avoids “AI panic”—Change management steps to keep teams engaged, upskilled, and indispensable while still reducing costs

Ladies and Gentlemen, This is Your Content Speaking: Structured Content as the Best Investment in Certification, Scale, and Safety

Bernard Aschwanden, CEO, WritemoreAI, and Ryan Chin, Supply Chain Manager, JetZero

Choosing a component content management system for an aerospace startup requires more than comparing vendor features. The decision must account for evolving aircraft designs, certification, configuration control, limited resources, aggressive schedules, and documentation that will eventually support production, operations, maintenance, training, and continued airworthiness.

Drawing on a real aerospace startup, we'll explain how to define requirements, determine where DITA and structured content add value, evaluate essential capabilities, and avoid choices that create costly limitations later. You'll leave with a practical, brand-agnostic framework for selecting a CCMS that can scale from prototype and certification through production and long-term operations.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Define CCMS requirements around business, engineering, certification,

operational, and publishing needs rather than vendor feature lists.

- Determine where DITA, reusable topics, maps, metadata, conditional processing, and structured content provide measurable value to an aerospace program.
- Evaluate support for traceability, configuration control, aircraft effectivity, review and approval, regulatory evidence, and controlled publishing.
- Distinguish essential startup capabilities from features that can be deferred until the aircraft program and documentation organization mature.
- Identify attractive demonstration features that may become operational, integration, performance, or governance problems several years after implementation.
- Avoid common mistakes involving premature customization, weak information architecture, unmanaged metadata, uncontrolled reuse, and dependence on proprietary processes.
- Evaluate migration, integration, implementation, validation, training, administration, and long-term operating costs—not simply software licensing.
- Build a brand-agnostic selection and proof-of-concept process that tests realistic aerospace content, users, workflows, and outputs.
- Select an approach that can grow from a small certification team into a governed enterprise content operation supporting production and continued airworthiness.

The Real Reason AI Fails in Operations (and the Systems That Fix It)

Ebony James, Operations Consultant, The Empire Effect Agency

Companies adopt AI, hoping for efficiency, only to end up with the same bottlenecks they had before. The issue is rarely the platform. It's the lack of operational clarity, missing decision pathways, and content processes that aren't structured for AI to assist effectively.

This session breaks down why AI fails inside content and operations teams, and what needs to be in place before AI can actually save time, support workflows, and strengthen team performance. Through real examples from service providers, consultants, and nonprofits, you'll see how clarity-driven systems turn AI into a dependable part of daily operations.

The focus is practical, simple to apply, and built for small teams that want to improve accuracy, reduce rework, and produce consistent content without increasing headcount.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Design clarity-first systems that prepare content and operations teams to use AI effectively.
- Pair AI with human reviews to maintain accuracy and reduce production time.
- Use AI-supported SOPs, templates, and decision maps to eliminate repetitive micro-decisions.
- Measure operational ROI through before-and-after metrics tied to AI-assisted processes.

You'll also learn why AI adoption breaks down when teams lack defined workflows, documented decisions, or consistent content structures.

9:30–10:15

Breakout Sessions

Structure Starts with Trust: Building Cultures That Support Content Systems

Sandie Markle, Founder and CEO, Blueberri

No amount of structure can save a team that doesn't trust each other. This session explores why structured-content initiatives succeed or fail, not because of tools or taxonomies, but because of people. You'll learn how to build a culture that supports structure: one grounded in shared ownership, transparent communication, and genuine collaboration. Using examples from enterprise and content-ops work, we'll connect the dots between trust, adoption, and scalability, showing how the strongest systems start with the humans who run them.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Spot cultural blockers that sabotage structured-content initiatives.
- Build trust and shared ownership across content, design, and engineering.
- Reframe governance as collaboration, not control.
- Make structure "stick" by aligning systems with team culture.

Data Design is Content Design. Building a Scalable Taxonomy

Christi Guzik, Lead Content Operations Manager, Rocket

In today's highly competitive industry landscape, user and customer data becomes even more important. But, many times, that data ends up an ever-growing, inconsistent mess. It's built by individual data analysts or engineers who don't start with a cohesive, consistent strategy for their data.

It's time for content practitioners to get a seat at the data design table and use our innate ability to create and build structured language systems.

Come to this session to learn how I began this process to centralize the taxonomy design for our data needs and built a content discipline superpower as part of the regular data design and implementation process.

In this session, you'll learn:

- What a taxonomy is
- Why a taxonomy is important for data analytics
- How to build a data taxonomy
- How to develop a process that enables all content designers to design taxonomies

Zero to Hero: Flipping the Script on Content

Joe Gollner, Content Solution Architect, Gnostyx Research

We have tried many different stories in the past—each one trying to explain the value of good content in ways that will resonate with executives. Most haven't worked. A couple almost worked but quickly ran out of steam.

We can learn something from these past attempts so that this time, we can hit the bullseye. And AI has created an opportunity for us to do this. It is an opportunity if we frame the right story, in the right way, for the right audience, at the right time.

This brings us to the title of this talk: How do we take content from being the zero that management does not value to the hero that even the chief financial officer loves? The answer is clear. We do this by flipping the script and telling a radically new story about what content is, what role it plays in the modern enterprise, what benefits it delivers, and how it provides the one thing that AI needs and can find nowhere else. This talk is about learning to tell this new story.

In this session, you'll learn how to:

- Engage executives with a new way to see content and its value.
- Frame a business case that hits all the right buttons.
- Establish the kind of support that will allow you to assemble the team you need.
- Articulate a vision that attracts the right kind of attention.
- Realize a content solution that delivers real benefits.

How to Resign from the “Cleanup Crew” and Become an Upstream Design Force

Amber Craig, Lead Content Designer, Salesforce

If you've ever written a tooltip that turned into a “short novel” to duct-tape a confusing UI, you weren't just writing—you were performing uncredited product design. Technical writers and content strategists are the detective agencies of the enterprise, finding the logic gaps everyone

else missed. Yet, too often, we are cast as the “cleanup crew,” brought in at the final hour to sweep up the mess of shaky product logic.

Drawing on 14 years at IBM and Salesforce, Amber Craig shares how to resign from the cleanup crew and become an upstream design force. This isn't about changing your title; it's about using your technical rigor as a strategic bridge to embed logic into the design phase before confusion is ever coded.

Learn how to pivot your strengths into high-impact tools by moving upstream—where you can fix product logic instead of just symptoms—ensuring tooltips stay tiny, users stay sane, and AI scales clarity instead of confusion.

In this session, you'll learn about:

- The Skill Translation Matrix—Learn to reframe existing content strategy and technical writing skills as design logic to gain a seat at the table.
- The Upstream Playbook—Apply tactical methods for inserting yourself into the discovery phase before the product logic is locked.
- Logic as influence—Use “content logic” to identify and fix product gaps during wireframing rather than compensating later.
- The AI sanity layer—Position yourself as the critical “logic layer” to prevent AI from scaling user confusion.

DITA 201: How to Optimize Conditional Text and Reuse

Lael Butler, Technical Communication Specialist, Streamline Designs, LLC

If learning how to write for topic-based authoring in a structured format is the first hurdle of using DITA, then mastering conditional text and reuse is the next. Conditional text and reuse are powerful tools and one of the biggest advantages of DITA, but learning how and when to use them effectively can be a challenge. Words and phrases like “conditional processing”, “variables”, “attributes”, and “conref” can feel like a foreign language to the new DITA user.

Being able to understand those terms and then implement conditional text effectively will make reuse an even more powerful tool. This session will introduce some of the ways to set up conditional text in DITA and how to use them in conjunction with reuse. It will also address how to develop a strategy for conditional content while remaining software agnostic. You'll learn how to take a document and add conditional text to allow for two or more variants of the document.

In this session, you'll learn:

- How to introduce conditional text and the different tools in DITA.
- How to select which tools to use when and the basics of taxonomies and information architecture
- Best practices for using conditional text without going crazy
- How to set up a document for more than one variant

10:30–11:15 Breakout Sessions

Findable, Readable, Unstoppable: Small Edits for Big Gains (No AI Required!)

Brit Van Blake, Sr. Technical Writer, NiCE Systems

Say it with me: “AI.” But this talk isn’t about *using* AI; it’s about writing now that AI tools reshape how people find our content. For technical writers and doc teams with limited resources, this creates a challenge: making content work for humans and machines without adopting expensive tools or overhauling workflows.

In this session, I’ll share a case study where simple metrics and an optional Python script made documentation quality measurable. By focusing on consistent editorial changes, we achieved a 23% improvement in scores that affect usability, SEO, and AI discovery. No generative AI. No black boxes. Just small adjustments that made a big difference.

You’ll leave with a practical framework for defining quality metrics, identifying high-impact edits, and measuring improvement. This approach works for public or internal docs, and AI-forward or AI-skeptical teams. Writing for machines *is* writing for people because clarity is universal.

In this session, you’ll learn how to:

- Define content quality metrics.
- Spot which small changes produce the biggest gains.
- Apply these ideas (with or without automation).

- Measure improvement without relying on generative AI.

From Shadow to Servant: Confronting the AI Beast

Rhyne Armstrong, Director, Technical Writing, Visa

AI often feels like a monster hiding in the dark: vast, powerful, and poorly understood. We hear its heavy footsteps in headlines about automation, disruption, and machines that can replace us. We see its snapping jaws in stories about algorithms shaping our choices, predicting our behavior, and transforming entire industries overnight. In the shadows of uncertainty, imagination fills in the gaps, and the creature grows larger, more intimidating, more uncontrollable.

This session explains how Visa/Pismo went through a year-long journey with AI, starting from a place of fear and confusion to a position of strength and admiration. We now understand that AI is only terrifying when it remains unseen, unnamed, and unexplored. Don’t fear the creature lurking in the dark. Seek it out, tame it, and put it to work for you!

In this session, you’ll learn how to:

- See past AI fear and misunderstanding.
- Match your content needs with AI benefits.
- Stay competitive in a world driven by AI.
- Go beyond what is possible with AI to what is practical.

- Put AI to work for you!

11:30–12:30 Closing Panel Discussion: The Future of Content

Jack Molisani, The LavaCon Conference (Moderator)

1:30–4:30 Post-Conference Workshops

Train Generative AI Bots to Rock Your Docs (How I Learned to Stop Falling Behind and Love the Bot)

Melanie Davis, President & CEO, Dragonfly Diva Docs LLC

“How will I ever find enough to keep these hordes of writers occupied?” asked no technical documentation manager ever.

“How am I supposed to do more with less, and keep doing it well (enough)?!” is our familiar refrain.

It’s certainly not a new question, but there are definitely some new answers! Like the advent of word processors and desktop publishing in the 80s, HTML-based help authoring tools and DITA/XML structured authoring in the 90s, cell phones and social media platforms in the 00s, and responsive design and headless CMS in the 10s, we’re leaning into AI to work smarter rather than harder in the 20s.

In this workshop, we won’t talk about how to use generative AI to write more efficiently or elegantly. Instead, we’ll look at how to augment existing technical writing LLMs with data models for specific niche writing tasks that are time-consuming but low-return. With pertinent prompts, you’ll be able to hand over mundane writing tasks to new team members—Earl Error Messages, Aaron API References, and Rhonda Release Notes—and free up your few real writers to focus on the expertise machines can’t emulate.

Build Your First AI Agent And Then Make it Agentic: A Hands-On Workshop for Content Workers

Dipo Ajose-Coker, Solutions Architect and Strategist, RWS Group

AI agents are announced at every product launch, agentic AI dominates roadmaps, and you feel left behind. This hands-on workshop cuts through the confusion by building working examples together. You’ll create a simple AI agent for a content workflow task, build an agentic AI prototype using accessible tools, and see firsthand what each approach can and cannot do. We’ll define the technical distinctions that matter, evaluate your own content operations to determine which automation makes sense, and assess whether your organization is ready for autonomous intelligent systems without breaking your governance model or budget.

You’ll leave with working prototypes you’ve built, a decision framework applied to your workflows, and a completed readiness assessment for your organization. Whether you’re pushing back on a half-baked vendor pitch or building the case to leadership, you’ll have artifacts and examples to make your argument.

In this workshop, you’ll learn how to:

- Build simple working examples of AI agents and agentic AI systems using accessible tools during the workshop.
- Distinguish between AI agents, agentic AI, and intelligent assistants through hands-on experimentation.
- Apply a decision framework to your own content workflow scenarios and determine which automation approach fits.

- Complete a readiness assessment for your organization that identifies gaps before deploying autonomous AI capabilities.
- Map your existing content operations to identify high-value automation opportunities versus low-return complexity.
- Understand the first steps in scaling what you've built using internal enterprise models or foundation models.
- Create an incremental adoption roadmap that protects governance while enabling intelligent automation.

Be an Empowering Leader!

Rhyne Armstrong, Director, Technical Writing, Visa

Stick around after the last general session to attend this fun and interactive post-conference workshop. Designed for leaders and aspiring leaders of all levels, we'll talk about what works, what doesn't work, and mistakes I and others have made trying to lead and influence folks around us.

This session is interactive but inclusive. If you just want to sit and observe, that's fine! If you want to lead us in an interpretive dance...well, okay. If you want to watch Netflix in the back of the room and pay half-attention to what's going on, that's up to you, but you can't use my account.

Whether you're leading a small team or managing a large organization, this workshop will equip you with the skills to create an environment where everyone feels valued, motivated, and empowered to succeed and grow. Join us and take the first step toward becoming the leader you aspire to be!

In this workshop, you'll learn how to:

- Know yourself—What kind of leader do you want to be? What values do you want to show and try and instill in others?
- Understand empowerment—Learn what it means to empower others and the impact it has on team dynamics and organizational success.
- Build trust and communication—Discover strategies for fostering open communication and trust within your team, enabling a culture of collaboration and innovation.
- Encourage growth and development—Learn how to identify and nurture the strengths of your team, providing them with the resources and opportunities to thrive.
- Lead by example—Explore the importance of modeling the behaviors and values you wish to instill in your team, creating a ripple effect of empowerment.
- Telling your story—Explore ways you can craft your team's story and how best to make sure others hear it effectively.

Speakers



Scott Abel

Scott Abel is Content Strategy Evangelist at Heretto, founder of The Content Wrangler, and an expert in technical documentation management. He hosts a webinar series, writes for industry pubs, authors books, and speaks at events worldwide.



Isabella Adornato

Isabella leads the global documentation team at Distech Controls. With more than 20 years of experience in the writing and technical communication industry, she has a proven ability to take responsibility, organize, and complete complicated projects for sophisticated products and services. She easily acquires new technical skills and has a strong sense of aesthetics and attention to detail. Isabella possesses excellent verbal and written communication skills in English and French.



Dipo Ajose-Coker

Dipo Ajose-Coker is a Solutions Architect and Strategist at RWS, helping regulated organizations modernize content operations through structured content management and AI-ready governance. With nearly two decades of experience across structured authoring, DITA, and regulated workflows, he bridges business, regulatory, and technical teams to implement scalable content operating models. His work focuses on lifecycle integrity: reducing duplication, strengthening traceability, and building explainable evidence frameworks that hold up under audit and support safe automation. Dipo advises organizations on connecting content to the systems that define product intent and control, enabling faster change response and more consistent delivery across channels and markets. He is a frequent speaker at global industry conferences on structured content strategy, governance, and the practical realities of preparing enterprise knowledge for AI.



Rhyne Armstrong

Rhyne Armstrong leads the Developer Experience Content team at Pismo/Visa, managing the talented writers who make sure customer-developers are successful on the Pismo platform. During his nearly 30 years in the content world, Rhyne has been everything from a technical writer in software development, to a communications director, product evangelist, and user experience manager. In his spare time, he raises kids, collects cats, and attempts to act on stage and screen.



Bernard Aschwanden

Bernard Aschwanden is CEO and Co-Founder of Writemore AI, where he leads product strategy and enterprise engagements focused on modernizing enterprise documentation. He works with regulated and complex industries to convert legacy content into governed ecosystems integrated with CCMS environments. His background includes structured authoring, CCMS implementation, content architecture, and compliance-driven documentation. He helps organizations reduce documentation risk, improve release readiness, and treat content as a strategic business asset.



Tyrin Avery

Tyrin Avery has created leading-edge documentation tool chain solutions and help systems for more than years. Among the first to build a DITA toolchain in 2004, she has continued to innovate new solutions for organizations of every size. These solutions grew out of the challenges of a working writer for complex applications and diverse audiences. She is currently a principal technical writer and content strategist at Salesforce.



Heather Barbre Blades

Heather Barbre Blades is a Senior Technical Writer at Jack Henry with a career spanning technical communication, conflict management, training, and facilitation. She brings more than a decade of experience from Missouri State University, where her work focused on communication and conflict management, into her current role supporting large, distributed content teams. Heather designs and delivers training, facilitation, and coaching within and outside her organization, with a focus on influencing others without formal authority. Her work centers on building strong interpersonal connections, collaborating effectively across roles, and developing communication skills that support productive feedback, thoughtful responses to resistance, and healthy disagreement. Heather is also the co-founder of Communication and Conflict Management Associates, where she provides training, mediation, and conflict coaching services.



Melinda Belcher

Melinda Belcher has a knack for simplifying the complex and optimizing for efficiency. With more than two decades of experience in brand strategy, sales enablement, and product design, Melinda has worked with esteemed organizations such as Salesforce, IBM, AT&T, and Mastercard.

Currently, Melinda heads up content across all payments portals for the Corporate & Investment Bank at JPMorgan Chase. In 2018, Melinda co-founded the UX Content Design NYC Meetup and regularly speaks at conferences such as Confab, Enterprise Experience, and LavaCon.



Benoît Benatar

Benoît Benatar is Director of Product Innovation at TRSB and a key contributor to the development of OTTO Research Labs' multilingual content technology. With extensive experience in localization, language technology, and global content operations, he focuses on turning emerging AI capabilities into practical, scalable solutions for enterprise content teams. Benoît works at the intersection of product strategy, workflow design, and linguistic quality, helping organizations balance automation, governance, and human expertise. He is particularly interested in applying AI beyond machine translation to improve content risk assessment, workflow decision-making, and multilingual quality evaluation across complex global content environments.



Jessica Bjoeredahl

Jessica Bjoeredahl has been in UX content for nearly a decade, working with major players in finance, cybersecurity, revenue technology, insurance, and more. She has spent her career bridging the gaps across products, projects, and disciplines to make comprehensive, inclusive experiences for all users. She has worked on in-app content, information architecture, design thinking, AI/LLMs, design systems, and much more. She's always eager to share her knowledge and learn from others, which has helped her grow into a well-rounded UX content designer from both granular and strategic perspectives.



Patrick Bosek

Patrick is a believer and thought leader in structured content and content operations. His purpose is to advance the content and information development industry with new technology, thinking, and approaches that improve our experiences with the organizations we work with and for. At Heretto, he is a co-founder and CEO. He and his team work on a wide range of projects, all focused on improving authoring, production, and distribution of content.



Keith Boyd

Keith Boyd is a Senior Director in Microsoft Digital (IT), who has been with Microsoft for 25 years in a variety of content, engineering, business, and IT roles. He currently manages Microsoft Digital's customer advocacy program, where he shares insights with strategic customers about how Microsoft is using AI to accelerate its own digital transformation.

In recognition of that work, he was awarded the Distinguished Speaker award at the Executive Briefing Center in 2025, one of only four recipients globally. He is the Executive Editor of Microsoft Inside Track, where Microsoft chronicles its IT journey with customers. He was previously Editor in Chief of *Microsoft Developer Network (MSDN) Magazine*, and has managed the content teams in the Windows and Cloud & Enterprise divisions of the company.



Erik Bremer

Erik Bremer leads Content Engineering for Dell Technologies, driving the transformation of enterprise content and language operations at global scale. With a background in business transformation, he is redefining how technical documentation is created, managed, and delivered—shifting from traditional publishing models to AI-powered, data-driven ecosystems. He champions a strategic vision to standardize, automate, and intelligently orchestrate Dell’s content supply chain, including the 3B+ words localized across the enterprise. His work centers on applying generative AI and emerging agentic AI capabilities to enable scalable content creation, adaptive localization, and continuous optimization. Erik is advancing Dell toward a future where content is modular, intelligent, and self-optimizing. He strives to place Dell at the forefront of highly automated content operations—setting a best-in-industry benchmark while helping lead the AI-driven revolution in content development.



Karen Brothers

With a career spanning engineering, project management, and healthcare, Karen brings a unique mix of technical and creative skills to her content roles in software, consulting, and manufacturing. Known for her ability to translate complex information into engaging content, she uses storytelling and visualization to make ideas accessible and impactful. Karen thrives on working with teams navigating change, guiding them to cut through the noise, connect, and engage so they can adapt confidently to new technologies and ways of working.

At Scott Safety, Karen leads initiatives advancing the company’s transition to structured authoring and component content management, building systems that optimize content reuse, refine publication workflows, and elevate the customer experience. In her projects, she explores how to employ AI to streamline content development and operations, adding to a body of work rooted in making communication clearer, teams stronger, and experiences more meaningful.



Patty Brown

Patty leads the content team at ASUG, overseeing editorial, podcasts, research, webcasts, communities, and the organization’s ASUG Executive Exchange programming. Prior to ASUG, she spent 10 years as Head of Global Content Strategy at DXC Technology, where she designed, built, and led the enterprise-wide Content Hub for the multinational technology services firm. Patty began her career as a technology journalist, spending more than a decade reporting and editing from New York, Washington, DC, and San Francisco.



Mike Buoy

Mike Buoy is a Senior Solutions Consultant at Adobe, where he helps organizations design and scale intelligent content operations. With more than two decades of experience spanning instructional design, technical documentation, and content architecture, he specializes in modular, structured authoring strategies that break down silos and help teams get more value from the content they already create. Mike partners with cross-functional teams to accelerate delivery, improve consistency, and lay the foundation for AI-ready content reuse without adding complexity or chaos. Outside of work, Mike channels his energy, curiosity, and love of a good challenge into racing and coaching competitive mountain biking. He's always up for a great conversation about content, strategy or the best trails to ride.



Lael Butler

As the Technical Communication Specialist at Streamline Designs, Lael works with client and in-house SMEs to develop, implement, and maintain a host of technical documentation, including manuals, operating handbooks, checklists, and more. After receiving her BA in Public Relations, Advertising, and Communication, Lael worked with a Fortune 50 company, first in Marketing and later in Operations. Lael joined Streamline Designs in 2014 as an Executive Assistant but was given the opportunity to begin learning technical communication early on and was promoted to Technical Communication Specialist in 2020.



Emily Byrnes

Emily Byrnes has more than a decade of experience developing enterprise help content for B2B software products. She leads a team that partners closely with customer-facing teams, developers, and product managers to build intuitive self-service experiences that scale. Emily holds a BA from the University of Michigan and an MLIS from Wayne State University. Outside of work, she enjoys reading and sewing, and connecting marketing professionals across Indianapolis.



Danny Capo

Danny Capo is a seasoned leader in the learning industry with more than 25 years of experience driving learning design, workforce enablement, and people-centered strategies. Currently a Senior Manager of CX Learning at UKG, a global leader in workforce and HR technology, Danny has spent his career shaping how professionals learn, grow, and succeed in dynamic work environments. Danny is passionate about innovation, creating scalable business practices, and using AI to empower workers to create impactful customer experiences.



Olivia Carden

Olivia Carden is a Senior Product Manager at 6sense, where she leads Chrome Extension and GenAI experiences for Sales Intelligence. With a background in customer-facing roles before moving into product, she brings a strong focus on real user needs and measurable impact to her work. Most recently, she led the development of AI-powered chat experiences for sales teams, partnering closely with UX Content to shape prompt design, define quality standards for model outputs, and ensure responses were clear, useful, and aligned to real-world workflows. She is particularly interested in how thoughtful collaboration between product and content can improve AI behavior and turn emerging technology into practical, trustworthy experiences.



Adlore "Addi" Casseus

Adlore "Addi" Casseus is the Founder & Principal of Ascend Revenue Group, where she helps teams improve customer experience and revenue outcomes through clear messaging, performance systems, and ethical, human-centered operating models. A seasoned educator and trainer with more than seven years teaching and facilitating adult learning, she blends change leadership, communication strategy, and practical workflow design to help organizations implement new capabilities without burning out their people. She is also a PhD candidate in Leadership & Change, with research grounded in ethics, systems, and cultural intelligence—supporting leaders who need results and integrity as they adopt emerging tools like AI.



Leah Catania

Leah Catania is a technical content strategist and communicator who focuses on user needs. She deliberately makes content decisions to achieve clarity, concision, and comprehensive information. Specializing in healthcare and supply chain industries, she has extensive experience explaining complex systems to less technical users, particularly in heavily regulated environments.



Ryan Chin

Ryan Chin is an accomplished supply chain professional with more than 20 years of leadership experience. He's known for spearheading critical supplier initiatives, including technical qualification endeavors, delivery optimization strategies, and quality compliance initiatives within program development and certification settings. Ryan is also adept at cultivating strong partnerships with internal stakeholders and external entities to advance organizational objectives and enhance overall performance.



Ben Cohen

Ben Cohen is the Head of Customer Retention and Growth at Localize, where he helps companies amplify their content globally without losing clarity, quality, or trust. With more than 12 years of experience across high-growth SaaS companies, Ben specializes in building systems that turn content into scalable growth drivers. Earlier in his career, Ben helped scale Customer Success and Support at WordStream through hypergrowth to acquisition, supporting thousands of customers while maintaining clarity at scale. He further honed his craft while working at OutSystems, a low-code software development platform, and CorralData, an AI-first data visualization company, giving him experience across complex technical products and content-heavy environments. At Localize, Ben leads retention and growth strategy across the customer lifecycle, focusing on operationalizing content as infrastructure.



Kay Conerly

Kay Conerly is Director of Content Strategy at McGraw Hill Professional. With more than 25 years of experience in medical content development for print and digital delivery, she has had the privilege of working with some of the best minds in medicine. At McGraw Hill, her focus is on driving impact by aligning workflows, tools, and strategies for content with product goals and user needs. She loves the challenge of curating current content for global clinical users with specialized requirements and time-sensitive use cases. Kay began her career working on the launch of *Fast Company* magazine, holds an MBA, and is a Certified Product Manager. Originally from northern Vermont, she approaches her work with the guiding credo: “Be Bold, Be Brief, Be Gone.”



Amber Craig

Amber Craig is a Lead Content Designer at Salesforce who believes when a feature needs a lot of explanation, it’s a signal that clarity arrived too late. With 16 years of experience spanning technical writing, broadcast journalism, content strategy, and content design, she specializes in “logic-fixing” over “adjective-polishing.” Amber spent more than a decade at IBM and Salesforce writing documentation before realizing her most impactful work happened upstream—collaborating with product teams to design clarity into the interface itself, rather than explaining it after the fact. Today, she focuses on solving complex user problems at the source, keeping tooltips short and users sane.



Kayce Danna

Kayce Danna is VP of Product at Markup AI, where she leads product vision, strategy, and execution. Markup AI delivers solutions that help organizations ensure their content is high-quality, on brand, and compliant across every workflow. With experience spanning product management, software development, and business strategy, Kayce focuses on creating practical tools that empower customers.



Theresa Daudier

Theresa Daudier is a Senior Staff Knowledge Management Engineer at ServiceNow, working at the intersection of AI, content strategy, and UI development to enable large-scale organizational change. They focus on applying (AI) tools, knowledge, and process improvements to help engineering teams create, manage, and share their expertise as high-quality content more effectively. Theresa has led the design and rollout of a self-service content management strategy for ServiceNow's 2,000+ global engineering organization, integrating product design improvements, UI research, and agentic AI to reduce friction, improve content quality, and support consistent knowledge sharing at scale.



Melanie Davis

Even after years of experience designing, developing, implementing, and leading content strategy and operations projects for multinational enterprises, governmental agencies, startups, and individuals, Melanie Davis is still wildly curious about new technology. There's always a way to do things better, faster, smarter. Melanie earned a reputation for her passion-filled approach to building global teams that deliver beyond their capacity, deepen their professional mastery, and thrive in an environment of high expectations and tight deadlines. She now guides clients of her own concierge-level content strategy and operations consultancy, Dragonfly Diva Docs, LLC.



Patty Delgado

Patty Delgado is the Manager of Technical Writing in CX Learning at UKG, where she leads a global team supporting product experiences across international markets. With more than 15 years of experience in the learning space, Patty began her career in instructional design and technical training in higher education before moving to UKG, where she leads a global team of technical writers. Today, she combines her background in learning strategy and technical communication to deliver clear, impactful content that supports customers worldwide.



Viqui Dill

Viqui Dill has been a practicing technical communicator for 28 years. Her projects ensure excellent field execution so that clients perform their jobs smoothly without having to worry about the tools and systems they use.

In 2025, Viqui Dill faced a personal challenge—a diagnosis of triple-negative breast cancer—which reinforced the value of resilience and the power of community support.

Viqui is an unashamed advocate for diversity, inclusion, and belonging in every area of her life.

Active in her local area, Viqui serves as Worship Arts Pastor for her church, the exchange. She organized the Winchester Pride Worship celebration, does service work within the 12 Step community and advocates for neurodiversity.

Viqui describes herself as “Technical writer, wife and mom, bass player, worship leader. I’m happiest when folks sing along with me.”



Kelly Dowling

Kelly Dowling is Director of Product Strategy at ASUG, where she leads the strategy and development of ASUG's Communities and educational programming. With more than 10 years at ASUG, Kelly focuses on bringing SAP customers together to share experiences, solve challenges collaboratively, and stay ahead of evolving technology priorities. She oversees the strategy for ASUG's community experiences that stretch across digital, virtual, and in-person platforms, working across teams and with SAP to deliver relevant, high-value programming.



Sarah Dugan

Sarah is the Docs Lead at GitBook, where she works on what information platforms become next. Of her 10-plus years in tech content, she has spent the last seven as a content engineer in AI—first at Amazon Alexa, then at Google, writing documentation for Gemini and PaLM. In other words, she has spent most of her career explaining "thinking machines." She is thrilled to be at LavaCon this year!



Nicole Edens

Nicole Edens is a Technical Writing Manager at Jack Henry with nearly 20 years of experience in technical communication and people leadership. She currently leads a large team of technical writers and has mentored dozens of writers and apprentices throughout her career. She brings deep expertise in content governance and is skilled at leading documentation teams through change. Her leadership style emphasizes collaboration, transparency, and trust, and she is known for navigating conflict and difficult conversations with empathy and care. Colleagues often describe her as a "mama bear" leader for her strong advocacy, steady presence, and commitment to her team. Nicole brings a practical, people-centered approach to content governance, grounded in real-world leadership experience and a deep understanding of how standards, relationships, and trust intersect in complex organizations.



Holly Enneking

Holly is a senior marketing leader with nearly two decades of experience helping innovative technology companies find their voice and accelerate growth. As Vice President of Marketing at Markup AI, she is focused on building an AI-native go-to-market strategy that redefines how the company connects with its audience.

Before joining Markup AI, Holly held marketing leadership roles at Bolster, Lev, and Return Path, where she built teams and programs that generated hundreds of millions in pipeline. She is also a co-author of *Startup CXO* (Wiley, 2021) and the co-founder of Indy Marketers, a 501(c)(3) connecting marketing professionals across Indianapolis.



Lief Erickson

Lief is co-founder of Intuitive Stack, a content strategy consultancy for businesses with outdated technical documentation practices. He holds a master's degree in Content Strategy from FH Joanneum (Austria), where he also teaches information architecture. With expertise in taxonomies, search optimization, and ContentOps, Lief has held roles as a technical writer and information architect. At Intuitive Stack, he helps organizations modernize their content strategy so they can focus on their next innovation.



Elizabeth Favre

Elizabeth Favre is a senior technical writer with extensive experience translating complex software, hardware, security, and policy requirements into clear, user-focused documentation. At Blackbaud, she creates customer-facing help content, API documentation, blogs, and community resources for fundraising software, and maintains large-scale online help centers. She also contributes as a member of the Strategic Content Development Statistics and Analytics group, supporting KPI development and demonstrating the business value of content. Her background includes documenting Risk Management Framework policies for military customers, writing operator manuals for battle control systems, supporting agile software development, and managing complex research and database operations. She combines technical depth with strong analytical and communication skills, with expertise in tools such as MadCap Flare, FrameMaker, SharePoint, and DITA/XML.



Sara Feldman

Sara is the Director of Member Engagement at the Consortium for Service Innovation, a nonprofit think tank dedicated to improving customer engagement. She frequently explores cross-functional customer experience through her conference presentations and LinkedIn newsletter.

With a deep curiosity about all things content, Sara has built her career around effective communication—spanning technical writing, knowledge management, customer success enablement, and product management liaison roles. She has collaborated with nearly every type of team in SaaS environments, always seeking ways to bridge gaps and enhance customer experience. When not thinking about content strategy, Sara is attempting to improve her success rate with keeping houseplants alive while working from home in Las Vegas.



Luis Fernandez

With a multidisciplinary background spanning software development, architecture, product ownership, and marketing, Luis Fernandez is a technology leader working at the intersection of systems, content, commerce, and CX. In the last 20 years, Fernandez has led 250+ projects in 25 countries. Much of this work has focused on designing and delivering digital ecosystems, including CMSs, DAMs, commerce platforms, digital experience platforms, CDPs, and marketing technologies. He has led multicultural teams of content specialists, marketers, engineers, architects, and product leaders, working fluently in Spanish, Portuguese, and English across industries such as media, retail, banking, hospitality, and telcos.

Currently serving as Executive Director of Technology at VML, Fernandez focuses on the future of AI, content, marketing, and automation platforms, exploring how structured content, composable commerce, and data-driven systems enable continuous learning, performance, and growth.



Klaus Fleischmann

Klaus Fleischmann studied translation and interpreting in Vienna, holds an M.A. in Conference Interpreting from Monterey, California, and an MAS in Technical Communication from the Danube University in Austria. He started his career in the translation industry in a start-up agency in Monterey, California. After moving back to Austria, he decided to switch perspective and founded Kaleidoscope GmbH as software and process consulting company for Global Content. In 2007, he became managing director of Austria's leading LSP, Eurocom Translation Services GmbH. Over the years, his focus narrowed more and more on enterprise terminology management. Together with his team, he now develops and implements Kaleidoscope's Quickterm, an enterprise-level terminology management platform. Klaus served on the Boards of Directors of GALA, ELIA, Termnet, and LTI, teaches at different Austrian universities, and gives numerous presentations and workshops on terminology at international conferences.



Stephan Gentz

Stefan's mission is to inspire enterprises and technical writers around the world and show how to create compelling technical communication content with the Adobe Technical Communication solutions. Stefan is a certified Quality Management Professional (TÜV), ISO 9001/EN 15038 auditor, ISO 31000 Risk Management expert, and Six Sigma Champion. As a sought-after keynote speaker and moderator at conferences around the world, he has lived technical communication for more than 25 years.

Besides that, he has been the European Ambassador for GALA for many years, a member of the tekomp Conference Advisory Board, and is a founding member of the iIRDS working group and the OASIS DITA Adoption Committee. Stefan is also the mastermind behind Adobe DITAWORLD, the world's largest annual virtual event for technical communication. He was awarded by MindTouch as one of the Top 25 Leading Content Strategist Influencers in the world and one of the Top 25 Content Experience Influencers.



Megan Gilhooly

As Sr. Director Global Content & Intelligence for OneTrust, Megan Gilhooly drives content strategy and operations for GRC and privacy content in the OneTrust platform, technical documentation, localization, and research. Previously, she launched a new self-help and content experience at Reltio, covering technical product content and user experience-including AI-for a data platform that unifies data across enterprise systems. Before that, as VP Customer Experience at Zoomin Software-a content delivery platform-Megan made it her mission to change how organizations think about product content. She spent two decades managing content teams, driving content strategy, and delivering stellar information experiences at companies like Amazon, Ping Identity, and INVIDI Technologies. She has a BA in Speech Communication, an MS in Journalism, an MS in Strategic Management, and a Masters Certificate in Technical Communication.



Adam Goldman

Adam Goldman is the head of partnerships at OTTO, where he focuses on helping organizations improve how they govern, localize, and evaluate multilingual content. He has extensive experience in localization technology and language services, with a particular focus on strategic partnerships, go-to-market development, and scalable content operations. Adam works with enterprises and technology providers to design risk-aware multilingual workflows that balance automation with human expertise. He is especially interested in how AI can support better workflow decisions, reduce operational friction, and improve content quality and customer experience across languages.



Joe Gollner

Joe is the Managing Director of Gnostyx Research Inc., where he specializes in providing objective and research-based guidance on the development, management, and strategic use of content technologies as part of enterprise content solutions. As an entrepreneur with more than 35 years of experience, he has worked with Silicon Valley start-ups, global enterprises, and government agencies to pull together the tools, talent, and funding needed to realize genuinely transformative content solutions. Instructively, this experience goes well beyond the design and promotion phases (the comparatively easy parts) to include the deployment, operationalization, evolution, and expansion activities (the hard parts). He has Masters degrees from the University of Oxford (Literature) and McGill University (Management), and he is currently a doctoral researcher at Lancaster University Management School, where he is studying the role of AI-enabled text analytics in the management of organizations.



Aman Goyal

Aman Goyal is an Agentic AI Product Manager working at the intersection of AI systems, content, and enterprise-scale user experience. He currently builds AI-driven decision and automation platforms at T-Mobile, where his work spans agentic systems, knowledge orchestration, and applied AI for high-impact business workflows. Previously, Aman worked at The Trade Desk on trust, policy, and compliance platforms, where he helped design systems that translate complex regulatory and policy requirements into scalable, user-friendly product experiences. His background also includes AI research at Intel, CMU, and IIIT-Hyderabad, where he contributed to published research and holds a U.S. patent. Aman regularly writes and speaks about AI, documentation strategy, and product clarity—especially how teams can design content and knowledge systems that remain usable as AI becomes more autonomous.



Vishal Gupta

Vishal is a Content Designer with the Cisco Tech Comms team, where he leads the Customer Listening, Analytics, and Content Quality programs. With more 19 years of experience in content strategy, financial analysis, and value management, he brings a wealth of expertise to his role.

Previously, Vishal worked in Value Analysis and Investment Banking roles, where he honed the art of building compelling and credible business cases through innovative financial analysis.

Holding a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science & Engineering and a Master's degree in Business Administration and Finance, Vishal's educational background and professional experience have equipped him with a unique skill set that helps him excel in his current role.



Christi Guzik

Christi Guzik works as a Lead Content Operations Manager at Rocket. Prior to Rocket, she held a Content Strategist position at DocuSign focusing on content quality initiatives and improving processes across Content Design and Technical Writing. Additionally, she worked at Boomi, where she established the content design discipline, and as a Technical Writer at IBM's Silicon Valley Lab, focusing on DITA migrations and developing effective UX content to modernize a mainframe database. She holds a bachelor's degree in Technical Writing and Communication and a master's degree in Professional Writing from Carnegie Mellon University.

In her spare time, Christi serves as a facilitator and volunteer manager for Delta Delta Delta fraternity and enjoys reading, baking, watching Broadway musicals on trips to New York City, and exploring the museums and historical sites in and around Philadelphia.



Rob Hanna

Rob Hanna has dedicated his professional life to improving outcomes for teams embarking on structured authoring projects. During the past 30 years, he has worked with many large corporations on DITA and CCMS projects to bring their teams into structure and drive operational efficiencies. He has taught metadata and taxonomies at the University of Toronto and private courses on structured authoring, DITA, and information architecture. In 2013, Rob founded Precision Content in Toronto, Canada, to build a team of writers, developers, and IAs to continue his mission to raise the bar in technical communication.



Alesia Harwood

With more than 20 years in the content industry, Alesia Harwood brings a uniquely broad perspective that spans technical writing, learning and development, change management, consulting, sales, and customer success. Her career reflects a consistent focus on helping organizations and professionals translate complex ideas into clear, actionable knowledge.

Alesia has been with Cisco for more than a decade in roles across customer success and learning and development, where she supported global teams in driving adoption, capability building, and customer value.

Today, she is an AI transformation strategist, partnering with sales organizations to harness AI in practical, human-centered ways. Her work focuses on helping professionals elevate the caliber of their contributions, move up the value chain, and engage more deeply in the intellectual and strategic side of their roles. She is passionate about positioning content professionals as key enablers of clarity, trust, and adoption in the age of AI.



Carol Hattrup

Carol has always worked at the intersection of technical documentation, quality assurance, and instructional design. She celebrated her first poetry publication in a national journal many years ago at the same time she was converting docs to DITA. This sudden confluence woke her to the realization that poetry and tech comm have a surprising number of techniques in common, and that skills in each always improve performance in the other. Since then, she's had poems published in *Boston Accent Lit*, *California Quarterly*, *Hawaii Pacific Review*, *The MacGuffin*, *Midwest Quarterly*, *The New York Quarterly*, *Pudding Magazine*, *South Dakota Review*, *The Virginia Normal*, and dozens of others. Her essays have appeared in *The International Journal of Ethics and Information Technology*, *The Journal of Philosophy in the Contemporary World*, and an anthology by Potomac Press. She's now teaching poetry workshops around the world to help others experience a new way to grow as communicators and connectors.



David Hobbs

David works with organizations in early planning for big transformations of complex suites of websites, applications, and systems. David helps companies set their vision, make key systems architecture decisions, and define how to make these major changes happen. Clients include Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Central Bank of Belize; Mideast Broadcasting Corporation; National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine; and Novartis. David is the author of *Website Migration Handbook v2* and developed the content analysis platform Content Chimera.



Mike Hovan

Mike worked as a content strategist and technical writer in banking and insurance before joining Paligo as a solutions engineer. After working in structured authoring for several years, he moved to Fluid Topics, where he helps teams implement efficient and elegant content delivery systems.



Kara Hughes

Kara Hughes is a content and event leader at ASUG, where she helps create engaging learning experiences for the SAP community. She works closely with customers, partners, and industry experts to develop programs that make complex technology topics practical and accessible. With a passion for bringing people together, Kara focuses on creating events and content that foster learning, connection, and professional growth.



Ebony James

Ebony D. James is the CEO and Lead Operations Consultant & Manager at The Empire Effect Agency, a boutique operations firm that helps service providers, consultants, and nonprofits get clear and get things done. With 13 years of experience in executive operations and systems design, Ebony specializes in clarity-first workflows that reduce bottlenecks, improve accuracy, and support team performance. She builds AI-supported frameworks, decision pathways, and operations systems that help leaders save time, simplify their workload, and strengthen delivery without increasing headcount. Ebony is also the creator of the Client Lifecycle Map, a foundational operational framework used across consulting, creative, nonprofit, and service-based organizations.



Craig Johnson

Craig Johnson is the President and Chief Architect of Xemma, which focuses on neurosymbolic AI platform architecture, formal knowledge representation, and programming language research. In addition to leading research efforts, Craig specializes in enterprise software architecture, with large systems in operation throughout the world.



Sarah Johnson

Sarah Johnson is a content-first strategic advisor, author, and creator of the Content-First Framework. She helps organizations diagnose meaning drift, align teams, and build content foundations that scale across product, UX, marketing, and documentation. Her work focuses on operationalizing content to improve clarity, execution speed, and organizational alignment. She is the author of “Content-First Design” in the forthcoming *Meaning at Scale* and advises teams on scaling content with confidence.



Jason Kaufman

Jason Kaufman is a 20+-year veteran of knowledge management, content strategy, and enterprise AI integration. As CEO of Zoon Labs and President of Irrevo, Jason has helped Fortune 500 and global enterprises transform their content operations into scalable, AI-augmented ecosystems of trusted knowledge.

A longtime advocate for ethical, effective AI adoption, Jason is the architect behind Truth Curation™—a new approach to enterprise knowledge that empowers content professionals to move beyond static documentation and become curators of clarity in an AI-driven world.

Jason’s career spans leadership roles at Disney, Expedia, T-Mobile, and SafeHarbor, where he led groundbreaking initiatives in knowledge architecture, content automation, and customer experience transformation. His work bridges the gap between generative AI’s promise and real-world knowledge governance—with a focus on insight integrity, knowledge drift prevention, and Human Verified™ oversight.



Suzanne Kelchner

With more than 20 years of experience in technical documentation, Suzanne Kelchner leads a global team at Procore. We create the product content our customers need to finish their work, translating the technical jargon into common language for the construction industry. Tech docs is often the first creator of product content within a software company, and our support site leads Procore’s web properties in customer visits. Suzanne seeks out like-minded content creators and collaborators across the organization to elevate content as a business asset, because aligned content satisfies customers and elevates our strategic goals.



Susan Kelley

Susan is a visionary leader in AI for communications. She has published several articles in resources like the *Journal of Professional and Technical Writing* (JPTW) about the applications and ethics of generative AI. She has proven expertise in prompt engineering and tuning, emerging AI technologies, AI scaling at the enterprise level, and the discourses of ethical AI use for comms teams globally. She is a sought-after speaker on the topics of women in technology, effective workplace communication, and AI learning strategies and pedagogies in the college classroom.

She lives in Baltimore with her two fantastic dogs and one fantastic partner. When she's not busy communicating, she is a triathlete, marathoner, and avid hiker.



Katrina Kempney

Katrina Kempney is a Principal Content Strategist at Red Hat. From writing training to style guide maintenance to template management, she focuses on ensuring Red Hat's message is consistent, accurate, and compelling. During her career, she has written and edited academic research papers, software patch release notes, executive keynotes, phone help documents, blogs, customer case studies—you name it. Before working at Red Hat, she was a Community Content Analyst at Republic Wireless. In her free time, she writes fan fiction, plays video games, and serves as butler to a small cat colony.



Mark Kleinsmith

Mark is an experienced leader in documentation and content strategy with a proven record of building and leading global technical communications teams. As Director of Technical Communications at Appfire, he oversees the development of scalable documentation frameworks, implement modern authoring tools and content pipelines, and foster cross-functional collaboration. He's passionate about connecting people, process, and technology to deliver clear, consistent information that accelerates customer success and reduces support overhead. His focus areas include content operations, knowledge management, team development, and continuous improvement through metrics and user feedback.



Chris Kocher

Chris Kocher is a dynamic solutions strategist who masterfully bridges the worlds of documentation, education, and enterprise technology. As a Senior Solutions Architect at MadCap Software, he leverages more than two decades of experience as a professional educator and instructional coach to transform complex technical concepts into actionable, relatable solutions for organizations seeking to revolutionize their content ecosystems.



Shankar Krishnan

Shankar Krishnan is a co-founder and the CEO of Hashout Technologies, which specializes in building digital experiences for enterprises worldwide. Since the company began in November 2017, Hashout has grown its client base steadily across North America, Europe, and Asia by successfully delivering digital transformational projects across the healthcare, technology, logistics, and retail domains.



Fabrice Lacroix

Fabrice Lacroix is a serial entrepreneur and web pioneer. He has been working for 25 years on the development of innovative solutions around search technology, content enrichment, and AI. He is the founder of Fluid Topics, the leading content delivery platform that reinvents how users search, read, and interact with technical documentation.



Leann Long

Leann Long is a Senior Technical Writing Manager with 15 years of experience leading documentation teams. In her current role, she has optimized and scaled enterprise content strategy and operations, growing her organization from 20 to 40 associates who support a broad portfolio of software products. Her work aligns people, processes, and practices to deliver high-quality documentation at scale.

As a senior leader within Jack Henry's Knowledge Enablement organization, Leann oversees engagement and communication efforts that help teams navigate governance, workflows, and cross-functional collaboration. Her approach emphasizes clarity, trust, and sustainability, positioning content teams to do their best work as the organization and technology evolve.

Leann brings a people-centered leadership approach. She is known for creating environments that balance strong business results with meaningful work, where associates feel supported and choose to stay and grow with the organization.



Michael Mannhardt

Michael Mannhardt is Head of International Business at Congree and President & CEO of Congree's U.S. subsidiary, Congree Language Technologies Inc. He holds a degree in Business Management and brings nearly 20 years of experience in the language technology industry. At Congree, Michael champions the value of content optimization worldwide, working closely with global partners and customers to improve content quality and efficiency. Before joining Congree in 2019, he held roles at Acrolinx and Across Systems.

Outside of work, Michael is a passionate bass player and active musician. He regularly performs with various bands and spends much of his free time in the studio—still in pursuit of that elusive #1 hit.



Sandie Markle

Sandie Markle is the Founder of Blueberri, where she helps food tech companies and creator platforms design structured, human-centered content ecosystems ready for what's next. With more than 10 years of experience leading content strategy, recipe optimization, and metadata initiatives, Sandie's work blends systems thinking with empathy, bridging people, process, and platforms. She's known for transforming the way teams collaborate across product, marketing, and engineering, making content more discoverable, maintainable, and meaningful. Through her writing, talks, and consulting, Sandie champions a future where structure supports creativity, and technology amplifies the people behind the content.



Jack Molisani

Jack Molisani is the President of ProSpring Technical Staffing, an employment agency specializing in technical writers and other content professionals. He's the author of *Be the Captain of Your Career: A New Approach to Career Planning and Advancement*, which hit #5 on Amazon's Career and Resume Best Seller list. Jack also produces the LavaCon Conference on Content Strategy and Technical Communication Management (lavacon.org).



Zohra Mutabanna

Zohra Mutabanna is a senior technical writer and content strategist with a background in media and tech, with a long-standing focus on clarity, structure, and user-centered documentation. At work, she serves as an AI champion, collaborating with peers and cross-functional teams to explore how AI can support content strategy, authoring, and management in responsible, practical ways. She is also the host of the Inside Tech Comm podcast, where she speaks with practitioners and leaders about the evolving role of technical communicators.



Pamela Noreault

Pam Noreault is a Principal Information Architect at Ellucian. She has more than 25 years of experience in technical communications, education, and management. She specializes in content strategy, customer engagement, content conversions, social networking strategies, and figuring out solutions to complex problems. Pam has an undergraduate degree in education from The Ohio State University and a master's degree in English and Professional Writing from Wright State University. Pam moonlights as a web developer for a dog rescue, combining tech skills with heart.



Laura Ohlson

Laura Ohlson is a Team Lead and Senior Learning Experience Designer at Netsmart. She specializes in translating complex systems into structured, user-friendly learning through a blend of instructional strategy, multimedia experience, and disciplined project execution. With an MFA in Film/Television Production, Laura brings clear communication, thoughtful organization, and a solutions-oriented mindset to every initiative she leads.



Sarah O'Keefe

Sarah O'Keefe is the founder and CEO of Scriptorium. Driven by learning and exploration, she takes pride in providing a meaningful contribution to the world of customer-facing content and beyond. As a pioneer in the content industry, she is a globally recognized author and speaker.



Amanda Patterson

Dr. Amanda Patterson is an AI enthusiast and accomplished technical communicator specializing in developing technical communication strategies for the manufacturing sector. She is a Sr. Consultant at Comtech Services, where she focuses on information modeling, information architecture, and GenAI instruction. Her expertise encompasses leading technical writing teams, enhancing process efficiencies, and implementing advanced software solutions.



Brendon Paucek

Brendon is a seasoned content strategist, architect, and operations professional who has specialized in building and steering DITA-XML implementations toward successful business outcomes. Brendon began his career with Jamf Software as a Technical Writer and Information Architect and currently is a Senior Content Strategist at Teradata, where he leads the effort to bring content strategy to the forefront of the product experience and agentic AI experiences.



André-Paul Pellet

André-Paul Pellet is the Director, Global Content Engineering, at Dell Technologies. He's a dynamic global leader driving unified technical content experiences with customer insight, strategy, innovative solutions, and effective technology applications.

He has more than 30 years of content strategy, localization, and customer-focused solutions experience, including planning, managing, and delivering across industries and content types. He's proficient in providing customers with effective content solutions, including team leadership, change management, vendor management, process improvement, and applied metrics to drive faster time to market, reduce costs, and improve quality.

André-Paul is a frequent speaker at industry events and webinars, author of several published articles.



Emma Pindera

Emma Pindera is a seasoned Content Strategist at PointClickCare, where she leads initiatives to create impactful, user-focused content that drives engagement and supports product adoption. With a Master's in Educational Technology from the University of British Columbia, Emma brings a unique blend of technical expertise and creative storytelling to the world of digital content. Over the years, Emma has held roles in technical writing, instructional design, and learning strategy, contributing to projects that span help documentation, in-app guidance, and release communications. Beyond professional work, Emma holds certifications in accessibility design, project management (CAPM), coding, and is an active Toastmaster reflecting a commitment to continuous learning, innovation, and communication. When not shaping content experiences, Emma enjoys hiking, kayaking, riding roller coasters, and traveling, bringing curiosity and creativity to every endeavor.



Lauren Pulino

Lauren Pulino, MSHI, RHIA, is a healthcare technology leader specializing in EHR optimization, clinician experience, and data-driven workflow improvements. She currently serves as a Client Learning Leader at Netsmart, where she drives user-focused learning strategies that improve satisfaction and operational efficiency.

Before joining Netsmart, Lauren spent nearly six years at The University of Kansas Health System as a Provider Experience Program Manager, using research and analytics to streamline clinician workflows. She has also served as a Clinical Associate Professor and EHR Instructional Designer, supporting thousands of clinicians across multiple specialties. Lauren holds an MS in Health Informatics from the University of Kansas Medical Center and a BS in Health Information Management from Temple University.



Prithvi Ramakrishnan

Prithvi Ramakrishnan is the co-founder and CEO of Promptless (YC W25), which builds AI agents that keep technical documentation current as software ships, updating docs from feature releases, support tickets, and engineering conversations.

Before Promptless, he was VP of Product and Engineering at Bond, a fintech infrastructure company acquired by FIS. He holds a BS in Computer Science from Stanford.



Rashmi Ramaswamy

Rashmi is a content strategy, information architecture, and data science practitioner with deep experience in technical documentation, content operations, and AI-assisted systems. She works at the intersection of content, IA, analytics, and AI, focusing on making complex information easier to find, use, and trust—for both people and AI. Over the past year, she has led the evaluation and production readiness of an AI-powered documentation chatbot, combining human review with automated analysis to understand performance, build confidence, and continuously improve the system.



Jessica Reed

Jess Reed (they/them) is Director of Customer Innovation & Strategy at Adobe, leading enterprise strategy and storytelling within the Digital Strategy Group. They partner with Adobe teams and global customers to translate complex business and technology challenges into clear, actionable strategies that drive innovation, efficiency, and growth.

Jess is a product marketing and go-to-market leader with more than 10 years of experience launching and scaling media, advertising, and eCommerce solutions, specializing in strategic storytelling and cross-functional collaboration that drives engagement, adoption, and long-term partnership. Before Adobe, Jess led product marketing at NBCUniversal and held roles spanning product marketing, technical communications, and product management across various SaaS companies.

They hold an MFA in poetry from the City College of New York and are a published poet. They live in the NYC area with their wife, cat, and houseplants.



Maria Romanovsky

Maria Romanovsky is a content strategist who focuses on making complex product experiences feel simple, intuitive, and human. At TikTok, she was part of the original content design team that launched TikTok Shop in the U.S. and helped scale it to more than 15 markets globally. Her work sits across product, marketing, and support, with a focus on creating cohesive end-to-end user experiences.



Rebecca Schneider

Rebecca is co-founder of AvenueCX, an enterprise content strategy consultancy. Her areas of expertise include content strategy, taxonomy development, and structured content. She has guided content strategy in a variety of industries: automotive, semiconductors, telecommunications, retail, and financial services.



Daniel Schommer

Dan has over two decades of project and program management experience working for a Fortune 50 company. A leader of large teams, operations, and cross-functional stakeholders, he now consults for content teams globally. Dan has experience navigating organizations across multiple disciplines developing governance models, evaluating existing processes, and building robust process metrics.



Markus Schork

Markus Schork is Director of Technology Solutions at Codal, a global digital consultancy. With more than 20 years in digital transformation and technology, including roles at Sanity.io and Unilever, he is a Certified MACH Architect specialising in structured content modelling, headless CMS ecosystems, and decoupled architecture. Markus has led content discovery and replatforming engagements for global consumer and B2B brands, and helps enterprise teams turn content into a strategic business asset by building content operations as long-term infrastructure rather than one-off website builds.



Manny Silva

Manny Silva is Head of AI Docs Practice at Promptless, where he helps teams optimize their documentation workflows. He has built documentation for Apple, Google, and startups of various sizes. He codified the Docs as Tests strategy and created Doc Detective, an open-source tool for testing documentation. He wrote *Docs as Tests: A Strategy for Resilient Technical Documentation* and its follow-up, *Docs as Tests & AI: A Strategy for Self-Healing Technical Documentation*. He likes diving into the deep end as the zeroth user.



Trey Smith

Trey Smith is a technical communication and content strategy innovator. After graduating from Mercer University with a degree in Technical Communication, he joined NCR Corp. as a tech writer and grew to become a thought leader in the tech comm space. Trey is an advocate for content operations in enterprise-level environments. He currently leads the technical content developers in Honeywell's Building Automation division and is driving the digital transformation of technical content. Outside of work, Trey enjoys traveling and spending time with his wife and daughter.



Dawn Stevens

Dawn Stevens is a content creation and delivery aficionado who believes that building great content is a lot like building with LEGO® bricks: with the right pieces, structure, and a little creativity, anything is possible. With years of experience designing and delivering compelling content strategies, Dawn has presented multiple talks drawing fun and insightful parallels between content creation and the colorful world of LEGO bricks. When she's not helping organizations piece together their content puzzles, she's experimenting with new LEGO builds or finding inspiration in the tiniest of blocks.



Yoel Strimling

Yoel Strimling has been spinning straw into gold for more than 25 years and currently works as the Senior Technical Editor/Documentation Quality SME for Ceva Inc. in Ra'anana, Israel. Throughout his career, he has successfully improved the content, writing style, and look and feel of his employers' most important and most used customer-facing documentation by researching and applying the principles of reader-oriented documentation quality. Yoel is an STC Associate Fellow and a member of tekem Israel. He can be contacted at yoel.strimling@ceva-ip.com.



Bill Swallow

Bill Swallow is the Director of Operations at Scriptorium and has been a key player in the content industry since the beginning of his career. With a range of experience from localization production to online help development, technical writing, documentation management, and consulting, he has established himself as a respected content strategist.



Amber Swope

Amber Swope is an internationally recognized DITA expert and information architecture consultant. With more than 20 years of experience in information development and DITA, Amber aids organizations in creating opportunities through IA. She helps teams build scalable IA solutions to future-enable their content and mentors team members to advance the IA as it evolves to meet new business needs.



Herb Toews

Herb Toews is the Senior Manager of Customer Enablement at Xerox. His primary focus is on the strategy, technology, and business alignment necessary to deliver a seamless user journey to access technical content for Lexmark's customers and partners. Herb is passionate about integrating web experiences with structured content to create a simple, intuitive user journey. He embodies the Lexmark vision: "We help customers make a lasting impression on their world."



Janine Marie Trakhtenberg

Janine Marie Trakhtenberg is the Enterprise Developer of North America and Europe at Hashout Technologies. A creative and inventive thinker, she craves a challenge and is not afraid to work outside her comfort zone. She's a motivated team player who consistently aims to push revenue expectations and exceed goals. Janine loves to meet and work with people from all corners of the world to make their businesses the best they can be by listening and offering solutions and expertise.



Brit Van Blake

Brit Van Blake has been a solo technical writer managing SaaS documentation for eight years, working with teams where efficiency and clarity matter most. As a "team of one," her focus is on low-effort, high-impact methods for improving documentation quality with limited resources. Brit's experience straddles human empathy and machine logic, and she's using it to help people write docs that perform well in both worlds.

**Nick Wyatt**

Nick Wyatt is a marketing operations and digital marketing executive with more than 17 years of experience driving global transformation across enterprise organizations. At Aras, he focuses on connecting people, process, and technology to modernize marketing platforms, scale global content operations, and improve marketing performance. His work spans MarTech strategy, AI and automation, demand generation, digital channels, and cross-functional enablement. Nick is passionate about applying AI in practical, human-centered ways to help teams work more efficiently, deliver consistent global experiences, and create measurable business impact.



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