

More thoughts on white papers

A previous issue of Lines and Letters covered a definition of white papers, examples, and writing tips — items I found while learning about white papers, as I recently had to write one for the first time. If you have any comments, please let me know at jeanette.evans@sbglobal.net. Here are some more thoughts from advice and ideas I found.

Ways to get started

Here are some questions to answer to get started in writing a white paper.

- ◆ Why should someone read this white paper?
- ◆ What is the message of the white paper?
- ◆ Who are the target readers?

White Paper Boot Camp at <http://www.whitepaperbootcamp.com/> provides ideas about how to approach writing with a 10-step process. Here are the first five steps.

- ◆ Clarify the topic.
- ◆ Identify the ideal reader.
- ◆ Decide on an objective.
- ◆ Develop an outline.
- ◆ Interview the experts.

Write as a team: pros and cons

Advantages and disadvantages exist when it comes to writing as a team.

Disadvantages include that the process can:

- ◆ take more time than individual writing
- ◆ lead to interpersonal conflict
- ◆ yield a disjointed document and inequitable workloads
- ◆ lead to thinking that promotes conformity and make an inferior document because no one wants to ask tough questions

Advantages include that the process:

- ◆ draws on a greater knowledge base
- ◆ benefits from a greater skills base
- ◆ can provide a better idea of how the audience will read the document

The primary author of the white paper should weigh the pros and cons and decide what is best (pros and cons adapted from Markel, *Technical Communication*, St. Martin's Press).

Talk of the town

When you vote for the national STC officers this year, be sure to check out information for our own **Tricia Spayer**, who is running to be a Director. Good luck, Tricia!

Congratulations to **Angela Dianetti**, Vice President and co-owner of Radcom, Inc., won a Distinguished Sales and Marketing Award® (DSMA®), sponsored by the Akron affiliate of Sales & Marketing Executives International (SMEI). This honor annually recognizes outstanding accomplishments of sales and marketing professionals in the Akron area.

Watch for the article by Sandy Moses and **Jeanette Evans** in the February issue of *Intercom*.