I trust that everyone is doing well as we have embarked upon this New Year, 2011. I would like to personally thank everyone that attended our 2010 technical meeting in San Francisco!

Some of you have been involved in our newsletters for years; some have had awareness, but perhaps little direct involvement; and some may be surprised to learn that we actually put a lot of effort into making this newsletter interesting for our members. 😊

It occurred to me that it might be better if I tried to describe some of the common foundations that are shared by all of our TG’s because, to a large degree, it is those common foundations that we will draw from each other as we continue the evolution of our TG’s.

So what are these common foundations?

■ Understanding the end user, their goals, needs and expectations
■ Identification of the user’s critical tasks, translating those to “work products”
■ Processes and approaches that help to maximize user success and prevent user failure or frustration

It is these common foundations that we will use to bring members of our TG together to collaborate on key challenges.

My goals for our technical group this year are as follows, (1) improve communication between our members, (2) showcase the diverse talent in our TG (as well as recruit more diverse individuals) and (3) establish meaningful relationships with students.

Improve communication between our members

Each year, we develop newsletters to share important research or projects that people are working on and to keep our members up to date with what others are doing in the field. Theses topics are of great importance to our members, but we’re attempting to increase the breadth of our knowledge to other segments and demographics. To date, we tend to rely on our internal network to drive the agenda for these newsletters. However, this year we’re going to grow that network by reaching out to you...OUR MEMBERS, as well as solicit emails from other TGs, faculty members and their students.
Showcase the diverse talent in our TG (as well as recruit more diverse individuals)

My plans around showcasing the diversity of our technical group are quite simple. I plan to showcase individuals each month on the website and select one “ordinary individual doing extraORDINARY” things, as it relates to our TG in our quarterly newsletter. It is my belief that this will allow our TG to be more engaging to new members and cause readership/interest to increase. Along those same lines, I think it will allow us to build our own network once we see and understand what others are doing. Each showcase will require a picture with the person being highlighted.

Establish meaningful relationships with students

Whenever this TG mention ‘students’ we tend to think of college. However, to keep the momentum of our TG moving in an upward fashion, we must expand our reach and start communicating to middle/high school students about our TG. This is essential in order for our TG to grow, as well as the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society. With all the smartphones and video games on the market, I’m sure we can relate our area of interest to students. For the past five years, I’ve been an active participant in E-Week and each year I leave thinking, “Wow, that’s a good idea” or “That was a good question”. So, if you can volunteer at your local middle/high school, please share that experience with us. We’d enjoy hearing how you were able to generate interest in our field. Mentoring and writing an article in the schools newsletter is another alternative route you can take to reach out to younger students. Besides, they are the future of this profession.

Going forward, we’ll continue to leverage the varied knowledge and experience of the members of our TG to drive the initiatives and the priorities that we’ll attack in 2011. During our annual technical meeting at HFES in October, I plan to highlight the activities we were able to accomplish this year. We will have an interesting and challenging year full of new opportunities and ideas. I look forward to working with all of you as we deliver on our commitment to our technical group and profession as a whole!
As you all are aware, the 2011 call for proposals is open until February 17. The Systems Development Technical Group has sent out several calls for proposals this year. Most notably we are seeking greater involvement from students this year. As such, a call for proposals was sent to select faculty members for them to pass to their students. The note described SDTG, topics of interest to SDTG, and suggested students submit papers, posters, and proposals for mixed student/practitioner discussion panels and debates moderated by students.

In addition, the following list of proposed topics for HFES submissions (discussion panels, debates, papers, alternative formats) was posted on the SDTG LinkedIn discussion board:

- HF and Requirements.
- Role of T&E in System Development
- Bridging the Gap: Applying academic research to system development.
- Closing the Loop: Incorporating real world needs into Academic research
- But I am a human: Working with reluctant engineers
- ROI of HF: Real world tales and sources for defending the value of HF
- What Lies Ahead: Technologies or problems that will impact SD in the future

Of course, these are only suggestions to get the juices flowing. The number of sessions we have is based on the percentage of papers directed to SDTG. So, if you have interesting new research or a conundrum that isn’t covered in this list, submit that as well. If you aren’t sure how to go forward with your idea or if you want to do a panel but need more people, feel free to reach out; I am happy to answer questions or provide insight to anyone who is interested. Papers are due February 17! Reviews will be completed by mid-March. I look forward to reading your proposals and having some great discussions in Las Vegas this fall!

Message from the Newsletter Editor
By: Steve Merriman

Welcome to 2011!!! I would like to encourage EVERYONE in the Technical Group to send me information on interesting events, happenings, breaking news, job openings or anything else related to Systems Development. These are “interesting times” with prospects on the horizon for large budget cuts! That makes it all the more important to be networking with our colleagues! Just email me with your interesting news at: scmerriman@tx.rr.com. Thanks!

On another note, Dr. Mary Hornsby and I (under the auspices of the TechAmerica G45 Human Systems Integration Committee), have been busy updating and authoring DOD Data Item Descriptions (DID) in the Human Systems Integration arena. I am glad to report some progress has been made! The existing DID for the Human Systems Integration Program Plan (DI-HFAC-81743) has been revised and submitted to the DOD for comments. All comments have been addressed at this time and the DOD has been requested to release the revised DID. Mary and I have also authored a new DID for a “Human Systems Integration Report.” This DID, which is to be used for reporting HSI status at major program milestones, has been reviewed by the DOD and we are currently in the process of addressing comments. We expect this new DID to be released for use on Government contracts by mid-2011. More in the future!
Message from the Webmaster
By: Teresa K. Alley

We now have 70 members in our LinkedIn Group: http://www.linkedin.com/groups?mostPopular=&gid=1770218
The group is open to everyone. Any member of the LinkedIn Group can post a question, start a discussion, or post a job. Join in!!!

HFES 55th Annual Meeting, Red Rock Casino, Las Vegas, NV
It’s early, but it will sneak up on us – save the dates September 19-23. The room block is open now!

SDTG MEMBER PROFILE

Name: Ms. Charneta Samms
Job Title: Industrial Engineer
Company: Army Research Labs

What do you like the most about your job? My job allows me to do different things from managerial work, such as leading my team and managing contracts and projects, to technical work such as conducting HSI analyses on military systems and developing concepts for new features in HSI tools.

What is your area of expertise or interest? HSI tool development and analysis...I love the challenge of determining the types of analytical questions we need to answer in order to improve system design and then developing that capability within a tool or analysis technique.

What is the most challenging aspect of your job? TIME MANAGEMENT!!! Though I like wearing different hats everyday, it tends to pull you in different directions too. There are days when I really wish I could clone myself, although not sure if the world could handle multiple versions of me.

If you were not in your current discipline, what else would you do? Event planning. I love hosting parties and I have also planned technical conferences and meetings. I am currently planning my family's reunion, so I do have the best of both worlds right now.

Where do you get your creative inspiration from? Soldiers. They are some of the most innovative people I have met. They will make a way out of no way and not even complain. Not to mention they tend to have a lot more common sense then some of the more technical people I have met (including myself)!

What is the most recent thing you've read (preferably non-work related)? Teach Yourself iPhone Application Development

What are your hobbies? I can’t say I have a real hobby like stamp collecting or bird watching but I do have a thing for word puzzles. I love those variety puzzle books!