

Stuart Conner | Technical Author/Writer

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Professional Profile

An accomplished and dedicated Technical Author/Writer with over 30 years' experience working on a wide variety of hardware and software documentation projects.

Possessing a technical knowledge of the Microsoft Office applications, able to develop solutions to automate and simplify aspects of the authoring process and related activities.

Shares knowledge and expertise with colleagues in the wider organisation to help them complete documentation tasks more efficiently.

Core Skills

- Quick to grasp new technology. Inquiring mind, keen to understand how systems work.
- 'Expert user' of Microsoft Office applications and Adobe Acrobat.
- Acts on opportunities to improve processes and procedures.
- A 'completer/finisher' with a keen eye for detail.
- Document types:
 - ◆ Instruction/user/operator manuals
 - ◆ Maintenance manuals
 - ◆ Hardware and software functional and detailed descriptions
 - ◆ Procedural documentation
 - ◆ Software user interface guides
 - ◆ Software interface (API) specifications
 - ◆ On-line help
 - ◆ Requirements documents
- Technologies:
 - ◆ Digital TV compression systems
 - ◆ Set-top box receivers/decoders
 - ◆ Military satellite transmission equipment and receivers
 - ◆ Military radar
 - ◆ Nuclear material handling facilities
 - ◆ General electronics hardware
 - ◆ Computer hardware
 - ◆ Computer networking
- Operating systems/applications:
 - ◆ Microsoft Windows 10 (and all earlier versions)
 - ◆ Some work with Unix/Linux
 - ◆ Microsoft Office Professional 2016 (and all earlier versions)
 - ◆ Microsoft Visio
 - ◆ Microsoft SharePoint
 - ◆ Adobe Acrobat
 - ◆ Corel Draw and Photo-Paint
 - ◆ Microsoft Expression Web
 - ◆ VMWare, Oracle VM VirtualBox
 - ◆ RoboHelp, RoboHTML
 - ◆ Confluence
 - ◆ Interwoven Worksite and Alfresco content management systems

- Programming:
 - ◆ Microsoft Visual Basic
 - ◆ Microsoft Visual Basic for Applications
 - ◆ C (mostly reading code rather than writing)
 - ◆ Adobe PDF API
 - ◆ HTML and CSS
 - ◆ DOORS DXL scripts
 - ◆ Some JavaScript, assembler and Python

Career Summary

Apr 1996 - Present **Cisco (previously NDS Ltd until acquisition in Jan 2013)**
Technical Author/Writer

During my time at Cisco/NDS, have worked in several different groups, working on many types of documentation.

System Manuals

- Wrote system manuals to support the digital TV compression systems manufactured by the company.
- Developed 'master' manual containing boilerplate text for the main variations of compression systems. This reduced the time taken to write the individual system manuals and improved consistency.

Instruction and Maintenance Manuals

- Wrote instruction and maintenance manuals for compression encoders and related broadcast equipment.
- Imported CAD drawings for use as the basis for illustrations.
- Wrote user interface guides for the software control systems.

On-line Help

- Introduced on-line help (including context-sensitive 'What's This?' help) for the compression system software control systems. Set up stylesheet and standards for on-line help, and assisted in integrating the help files with the software.

API Documentation

- Documented hardware driver interface API for early digital TV set-top boxes (STB). This is the interface between our STB middleware software and the hardware drivers written by the STB manufacturers. (STB software mostly written in C.)
- Documented the API between our STB middleware and the electronic programme guide (EPG) applications written/specified by the broadcasters. (Software mostly written in C, with interactive application components using HTML and JavaScript.)

- Took over as the single author responsible for the STB common driver interface ('CDI') document set (around 60 documents totalling over 5,000 pages) which documents the API between our STB middleware and the STB POSIX drivers written by the STB manufacturers. As well as authoring the documents in conjunction with the engineers, I:
 - ◆ Took on updating the XML specifications used to specify the API header files, building the header files using automated scripts, and uploading them to the Git and Gerrit servers.
 - ◆ Developed macros to validate the contents of the documents after update, and to validate the documents against the updated header files built from the XML specifications.
 - ◆ Developed and managed an automated system for the external controlled distribution of the document set.

Software Functional Specifications

- Wrote and maintained generic and broadcaster-specific STB software functional specifications and configuration documents (set up as Word forms).

Process Improvement

- Developed Microsoft Access database application for recording details of the manuals produced and maintained by the early Technical Publications group.
- Wrote Visual Basic utilities for creating Adobe Acrobat files into which were imported equipment schematic diagrams, and for converting web links in Acrobat files (for publishing on the Intranet) to file links (for publishing on CD).
- Produced local work instructions for the areas of work for which I was responsible.
- Set up and maintained the Division's first Intranet site, and the Tech Pubs Intranet site linked from this.
- Developed web page to enable easy access to project-specific documentation stored in new corporate document management system.

Requirements Management

- Wrote macros to generate requirements documents from requirements managed in IBM Rational RequisitePro.
- Implemented requirements database to hold detailed feature and navigation requirements to improve the consistency of our STB EPG screens. Initially implemented using Excel and then migrated to IBM Rational DOORS. Wrote/managed over 20,000 requirements covering multiple broadcasters and STB models. Wrote DOORS DXL script to provide flexible exporting of requirements and attributes to a Word document.
- Wrote Excel macro to pull the requirements and attributes from a Word document into Excel for import into DOORS.

Templates and Authoring Tools

- With a couple of Israeli colleagues, developed a set of corporate Word document templates and macro automation tools (the 'NDS Authoring Toolkit') used across the organisation. Updated these over 10 years with branding updates and new functionality (to eventually become the 'Cisco Authoring Toolkit'). Templates and tools currently in use by over 750 people in 25 countries.
- Wrote macros to assist with assembly and publication of monthly Divisional board reports.

- Developed VB utilities for assembling multi-chapter Word documents into a single file PDF publication.
- Developed flexible tool to format a document exported from Confluence or a SharePoint wiki page into the corporate document style.

Feb 1994 - Mar 1996 Matra Marconi Space Ltd
Technical Author/Writer

Responsible for editing, formatting and presenting technical and commercial information included in bids produced by the Marketing Department. Work involved liaising with design and project engineers, editing and formatting source material, and producing supporting material such as scanned/drawn colour illustrations and front covers.

Set up bid documentation style guide and templates (Microsoft Word and PowerPoint). Advised on choices of software and hardware for use within the Department, and set up PCs and documentation to make full use of the facilities available (such as colour scanning and printing).

Also responsible for obtaining other author work during periods of low bid activity. Produced documentation such as equipment system descriptions for other departments, and wrote a Microsoft Access database application for storing and retrieving connectivity information between satellite terminals, modems, multiplexers and cryptos.

May 1985 - Jan 1994 Howard Engineers Ltd
Technical Author/Writer

Responsible for writing documentation for a wide range of hardware and software systems and products.

Types of documentation produced includes system and circuit descriptions, operating procedures, maintenance procedures (including removal/replacement, testing and calibration), and functional and detailed software descriptions.

Equipment documented includes a broadcast TV camera, aircraft infra-red scanner, interference measuring receiver, mobile radar control/display unit, ship-borne radar, satellite baseband subsystem, computer-assisted target acquisition system, and a nuclear material processing complex.

Documentation was produced under a BS-accredited Quality Assurance system, and to a variety of military and commercial specifications.

Also undertook the installation of the local area networks (Novell) in the five regional offices, and provided follow-on hardware and software support.

Awards

Six Cisco Connected Recognition Awards for teamwork, customer focus and innovation.

NDS CEO Award winner 2004 and News Corporation Global Excellence Award nominee 2004 for work on document templates and supporting macros.

NDS Outstanding Contribution Award 2001 for work on accessing documentation stored in the new document management system through the Intranet.

Professional Training

Date	Course	Run By / Source
Sep 1996	Programming in ANSI C	Sun Microsystems
May 1997	TV Technology for Engineers	James Brice Associates
Jun 1997	Digital TV	James Brice Associates
Sep 1997	Basic RoboHelp Advanced RoboHelp	Peterborough Technical Communications
Apr 1998	Advanced Word 97 Visual Basic for Word	Working With People
Aug 1999	Practical Guide to Understanding TCP/IP	Zentrics
Nov 1999	Recruitment and Selection	NDS internal
Apr 2000	Law for Technical Communications	Peterborough Technical Communications
Jun 2000, Nov 2000	Performance Management Workshop 1 and 2	NDS internal and ASK Europe
Jun 2000	Introduction to Conditional Access	NDS internal
Oct 2000	Managing People - Core Skills	Parity Training
Jul 2003	Fundamentals of Software Testing	NDS internal
Various	Working with Israelis, Working with Indians	NDS internal
Various	Various mandated Cisco internal courses, such as Inclusion and Diversity, Code of Business Conduct	Cisco internal
Sep 2015	Cisco Security Ninja White Belt Foundational and Advanced	Cisco internal
Oct 2015 Jan 2017	Cisco Security Ninja Green Belt for the Software Engineer, Hardware Engineer, Manager and Test Engineer roles, including all required and elective modules.	Cisco internal
Jul 2016	Introduction to Python Programming and Developing GUI Applications with pyQT	Book, Safari Books Online (via Cisco)
Jul 2016	Networking for People Who Hate Networking: A Field Guide for Introverts, the Overwhelmed, and the Underconnected Success Skills for Introverts: Cultivating Quiet Strengths Software Architecture Fundamentals Part 4: Soft Skills: Leadership, Negotiation, Meetings, Working with People & Building a Tech Radar (Learning Path: Being a Better Introvert series)	Video, Safari Books Online (via Cisco)
Jul 2016	McCullough and Berglund on Mastering Git	Video, Safari Books Online (via Cisco)
Jul/Aug 2016	Python Epiphanies Mastering Python - Networking and Security Working with Algorithms in Python (Learning Path: Become Fluent in Python series)	Video, Safari Books Online (via Cisco)
Jan/Feb 2017	Linux under the Hood	Video, Safari Books Online (via Cisco)
Feb 2017	Data Science and Machine Learning: Intro & Use Cases, Practical Machine Learning with Python	Cisco internal

Education

1982 - 1984	Richard Taunton Sixth Form College, Southampton
1978 - 1982	Bitterne Park Comprehensive School, Southampton
A-Levels	Physics Pure Mathematics and Theoretical Mechanics Computer Studies
AO-Level	Electronics

Interests

Vintage computers: collecting and developing computers using the Texas Instruments TMS 9900 family of processors (software and hardware development, PCB design).

Modern computers: investigating problems experienced at work, investigating software packages and shareware tools for use at work, ad-hoc jobs such as Word macros, and general tinkering with hardware and software.

Steam engines, history and archaeology, cycling, walking, running, Geocaching and reading.

References

References are available on request.