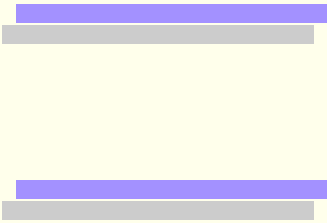


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# **Advanced Techniques for Online Documentation**



## **Society for Technical Communication**



**September 17, 1998**



**Larry Prado**

Summary

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# Summary

During this STC presentation, I showed examples of several online projects I created. My purpose is to show you some possibilities so that you might create something newer, something better. My two main points:

- Users turn away from online documentation primarily because they can't find what they are looking for (poor access to information). To me, access to information is not a screen full of hypertext links or hotspots on graphics – access is the way the *user* wants to find information.
- Online documentation should be visually appealing. Graphics can seduce the reader, help them learn and remember, and explain linear and nonlinear subjects. Use 'em (graphics) or lose 'em (readers)!

I have included small examples of some projects I created (some of the projects are quite large, one is still under construction) and showed during the presentation. Click the “See Example” buttons to see the examples.

For more information, you can contact me at [lprado@ecentral.com](mailto:lprado@ecentral.com) or 303-639-9525. Thank you!

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# Larry Prado

- Consultant, technical writer, online document designer
- STC awards in online and publications competitions
- FrameMaker, Acrobat, Microsoft Office products
- STC member 6 years, writer, 9 years



# Tonight:





Single-source concept

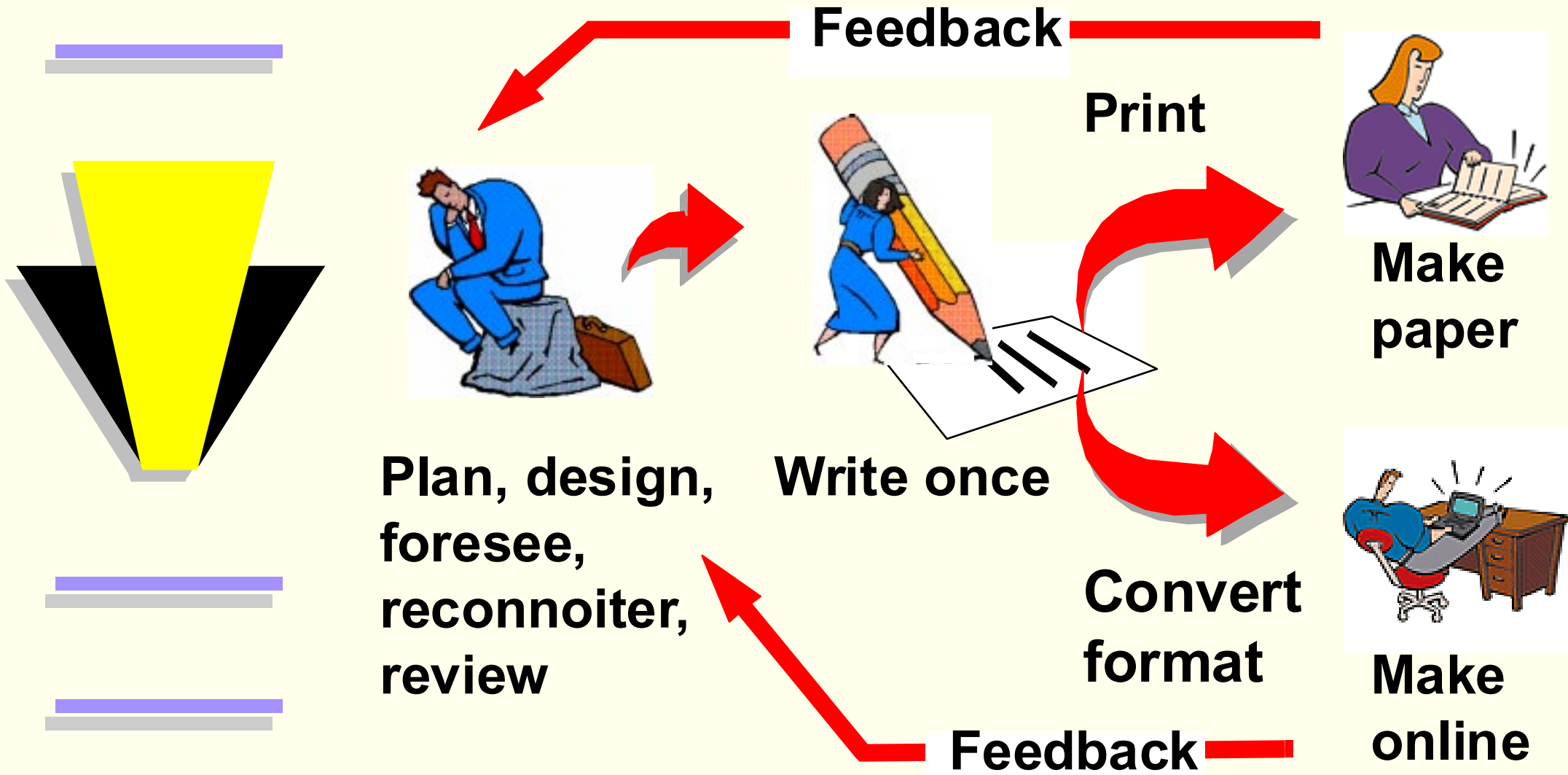
- Convert paper document to online format



Examples of online documentation

- Help-format document using FrameMaker and Acrobat
  - Acrobat tutorial
  - Tutorial for medical therapy
- 
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# Single-source Documentation



# Single-source Documentation

- Not for all documentation: some is better online, some is better on paper
- Online-only topics may include procedures, buttons, or feature descriptions, etc.
- With FrameMaker, you can use conditional text to make online only or paper only, helps manage information bulk
- Can use Frame's import format feature to easily create online format

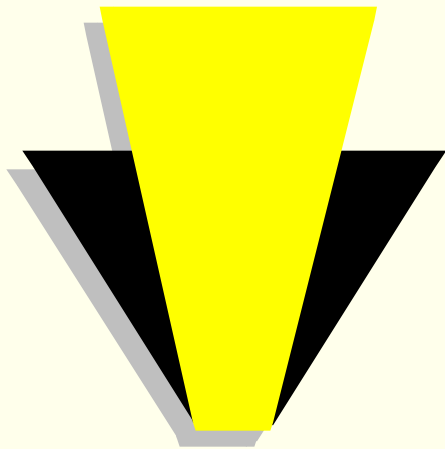
Example Not Available

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# Spectra SmartManual

Created for COBE Laboratories' customer engineers.



- Spectra: medical device, requires service manual, paper a must, online would be nice
- Instead of carrying paper manuals, they could use the online version of the manual on their laptop computers
- Write and approve once, convert directly to online format

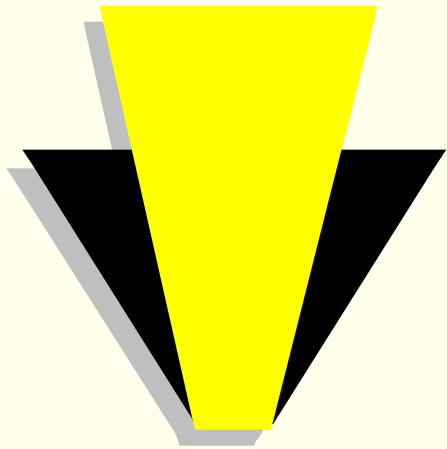
Example Not Available

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# Use Frame and Acrobat to Produce “Help” Files???????

Why?



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# Use Frame and Acrobat to Produce “Help” Files

- You use Frame to create paper documents
- You want to take advantage of flexible layout, graphics capabilities, hypertext, to produce more creative documents
- You want to open other applications or files
- You want to connect to a URL or use document on Web too
- Zoom

[See Example](#)

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# Acrobat Tutorial

Created for TRICARE (formerly OCHAMPUS)

- Users may have never seen Acrobat before
- Users may have never used Boolean search before
- Acrobat help not good enough
- Use graphics to aid understanding
- Use examples specific to TRICARE product

[See Example](#)

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# Veridus™ Online Style Guide

Customizable style guide for corporations

- Main menus for each section
- Hypertext linked TOC for each section
- Hypertext linked index
- Navigation buttons on each page

[See Example](#)

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# Medical Therapy Tutorial

Created for COBE Laboratories

- Users are physicians, mostly intensivists, internal medicine
- Refuse to read another paper or study
- Continuing education now required for many therapies
- Navigation buttons on each page, hypertext linked TOC, glossary, cross references

[See Example](#)

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# **EMERGE™ Electronic Mortgage Reference Guide**

Created for American Western Mortgage Co.

- Online mortgage reference information for loan officers, office staff
- Reduce phone support by office staff
- Frequent updates
- Electronically submit mortgage applications (Acrobat)

Example Not Available