

User Information Plan

STC Houston Database User Guide

Overview This document serves as George Slaughter's information plan for the *STC Houston Database User Guide*. Both this plan and the revised book that is produced according to this plan are for STC Houston and Slaughter's Technical Manuals class, English 5373, with Dr. Thomas Barker at Texas Tech University.

Date This information plan was first created October 8, 2001, and was revised November 18, 2001.

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Introduction

Overview This section provides a documentation project description, STC Houston database application product description, and an audience analysis of the target audience for whom a revised *STC Houston Database User Guide* is intended.

Project Description The Society for Technical Communication, Houston Chapter (STC Houston) has a membership of approximately 530 members. In addition to the Society headquarters keeping a database of all STC members, STC Houston has a database administrator who updates a customized chapter database to ensure accuracy in member listings.

John Reynolds, who has served STC Houston in a number of roles, created the database and remains its administrator. However, he will not remain in this role permanently. Thus, the need exists for documentation describing the database and how it works.

Product Description The STC Houston database is maintained in a Microsoft Access 97/2000 application. A forms-driven user interface is a primary component of that application, and it facilitates data entry, searching, and reporting of the STC Houston membership contact data that is used to produce address mailing labels.

The STC Houston database application is used to perform the following tasks:

- Perform batch updates of STC Houston member contact information
- Add new STC Houston member contact information
- Delete STC Houston member contact information
- Update individual STC Houston contact information
- Search for STC Houston member contact information
- Print STC Houston member mailing labels

Audience Analysis The STC Houston database administrator uses the STC Houston database application.

STC Houston Database Administrator

The administrator is a volunteer, appointed by either the STC Houston president or membership director. The administrator also works closely with the membership committee manager and other chapter officials as necessary.

Administrator Qualifications

The administrator should have an understanding of databases and how they work.

The administrator should have a knowledge of the Greater Houston area, along with a knowledge of STC and STC Houston, to ensure accuracy in member information. Because the membership roster is constantly being updated, the administrator should make time to keep the database current on a regular basis.

Documentation Description and Analysis

Overview	This section describes and analyzes the current version of the <i>STC Houston Database User Guide</i> .
Description	<p>John Reynolds has created documentation for the STC Houston database application. The current <i>STC Houston Chapter Database User Guide</i> is a 44-page document prepared in Microsoft Word that is, by John's admission, incomplete. The book features screen shots of all the screens and menus that a user will use in order to successfully perform the necessary tasks.</p> <p>The book has the basic elements described in our graduate class that one would expect of a printed book of this type: table of contents, running headers and footers, chapter and section headings, headers with progress indicators (1.2.1, 1.2.2, etc.). The book also includes elements such as checkmark icons for notes (such as those marked "important").</p> <p>The chapters cover the product overview (chapter 1), screen details (2), shortcuts and tips for data entry and records navigation (3), and instructions for updating member contact information per reports from Society headquarters (4).</p>
Analysis	<p>Three concerns become apparent when reviewing the documentation.</p> <p>First, the progress indicators can be a mixed blessing. They come across here as being unnecessary for a manual of this size (44 pages, no index). On the other hand, a more novice user with less computer experience might find progress indicators to be quite useful.</p> <p>Second, the screen details chapter could be simplified by putting field descriptions into tables, and the chapter itself could be moved to the end of the book (with a list of figures in the front matter). It seems that it would be easier for a reader, novice or experience, to focus on the tasks first (thus the chapters) and the screens second (thus the final chapter would serve more as a reference).</p> <p>Third, the chapter titles could be made more consistent. For instance, chapter 3 could be called "How to Perform Data Entry and Navigate Records" to be consistent with chapter 4, "How to Update Contact Information per HQ Reports." Or chapter 4's title could be changed to "Updating Contact Information per HQ Reports" to assure consistency in verbiage.</p>

Project Team and Resources

Overview This section provides information on the project team and resources that will be used to produce and deliver a revised *STC Houston Database User Guide*.

Project Team The following table lists the *STC Houston Database User Guide* product team members by name and role.

Project Team Roster

Name	Role
Dr. Thomas Barker	Instructor
Melanie G. Flanders	FrameMaker 6, templates advisor
Jim Hunt	Editor, advisor
Linda Oestreich	Editor, advisor
John Reynolds, III	Database administrator, subject matter expert
George Slaughter	Writer

Resources Resources that may be used to produce and deliver a revised *STC Houston Database User Guide* include the following:

- access to the STC Houston database itself
 - access to the STC Houston database documentation
 - access to the STC Houston database creator/administrator, John Reynolds
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Assumptions and Issues

Overview	This section provides information on assumptions and issues that may affect production and delivery of a revised <i>STC Houston Database User Guide</i> .
Assumptions	Assumptions that may affect production and delivery of a revised <i>STC Houston Database User Guide</i> include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The book will serve as a model for similar procedure manuals for STC Houston and George Slaughter's academic work at Texas Tech University.
Issues	Issues that may affect production and delivery of a revised <i>STC Houston Database User Guide</i> include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• John Reynolds is involved with another STC Houston project that might affect his schedule for this particular project.• Dr. Thomas Barker's feedback will be solicited throughout the production and delivery of a revised <i>STC Houston Database User Guide</i>.• Melanie G. Flanders, a senior-level STC Houston member, has provided advice on FrameMaker 6 and templates for previous documentation projects, and will provide advice on these topics for this project.• Jim Hunt and Linda Oestreich, both senior-level STC Houston members, have offered to serve as editor/advisors for this project. (It was at Linda's suggestion that documentation for this database was created in the first place. It was at Jim's suggestion that this documentation serve as a model for other chapter procedure manuals.) However, their actual participation in this project depends in part on their personal schedules.

Documentation Deliverables

Overview

This section provides information on the documentation deliverables for a revised *STC Houston Database User Guide*.

Overview for a Revised Book

We propose to streamline and revise the *STC Houston Database User Guide* to incorporate the changes described in the Documentation Description and Analysis section of this information plan, along with new instructions for adding additional tags to STC Houston member database entries.

The following table provides a chapter-by-chapter overview for a revised *STC Houston Database User Guide*.

Chapter-by-Chapter Overview for Revised Book

Title	Description
Front matter	Title page, table of contents, and list of figures
Chapter 1, Getting Started	This chapter provides introduction, installation, and data backup information for the STC Houston database application.
Chapter 2, Entering and Updating Data	This chapter provides procedures for performing tasks with the STC Houston database application.
Chapter 3, Window Details	This chapter describes the windows, and the fields in each window, in the STC Houston database application.

Specifications for a Revised Book

The following table provides specifications for a revised *STC Houston Database User Guide*.

Specifications for Revised Book

Item	Specification
Size of book	Approximately 35-40 pages.
Distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hard copy (paper) and web (PDF)• PDF version will be posted on the STC Houston web site, www.stc-houston.org, on George Slaughter's web site, www.georgeslaughter.com, and wherever else John Reynolds, as database administrator, wishes to have it posted.
Format	FrameMaker 6 (George Slaughter, Jim Hunt, and Melanie G. Flanders all have access to this tool; draft copies will be in hard copy or PDF).
Online help	Not for this release.

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Documentation Deliverables, Continued

**Resolved Issues
in a Revised
Book**

The following table provides a list of issues raised in the Documentation Description and Analysis section of this information plan and how those issues will be resolved in a revised *STC Houston Database User Guide*.

Resolved Issues in Revised Book

Issue	Resolution
Progress indicators	Remove progress indicators for easier readability.
Screen details chapter	Move chapter to end of book, focusing on tasks first, reference materials second.
Chapter titles	Rename chapters to ensure consistency.

Documentation Project Schedule

Overview

This section provides information for an estimated production and delivery schedule for a revised *STC Houston Database User Guide*.

Estimated Project Schedule

The following table provides an estimated production and delivery schedule for a revised *STC Houston Database User Guide*. Milestones for deliverables are in **boldface**.

Documentation Project Schedule

Date	Milestone
October 8	Module 1 Information Plan Due
October 15	(prepare first draft)
October 22	(prepare first draft)
October 29	Submit first draft for review; reviews due October 31
November 5	(incorporate edits)
November 12	Submit final copy for signoff; signoffs due November 14
November 19	Submit final copy for grade
