



## Pushing Buttons: Member Value & Service

By Suzanne Guess

Candidate, Director-at-Large

In December, I participated in an STC Board Director Orientation phone call after being nominated as a candidate for Director at Large. The candidates learned about face-to-face meetings, conference calls, and the time commitment we can expect (which is, incidentally, whatever you think it might be multiplied by three) if elected. As we talked about the campaign guidelines and how to craft our own individual messages, I started thinking about what about STC governance was important to me. What pushes my buttons is clear: value and service to our members.

Service delivery and member value are hot buttons with others, too. Since the beginning of the year, I've heard and read a lot of discussion about whether or not to renew membership. Many feel that they are not getting the value for the dues paid. As with many things in life, we often get out of something exactly what we put in. Do you go to meetings? Do you attend web seminars? Do you belong to listservs? If not, is it because you don't feel like your professional needs are being met? Have you told your chapter, SIG and Board leaders what you'd like to see? You have a say.

That's only part of the equation, though. STC's operations have not always reflected sound business practices. Even though many may disagree, STC is a business and it cannot survive if we continue to do things "like we've always done it." That's clear given declining membership, reduced revenue, and the resulting difficulties delivering service and providing member value in our global workplace. In order to improve service and value, we need to better align our business model with our objectives. This means we'll have to prioritize and spend strategically to get the most value and impact for our dollars.

As a business owner, I've learned how to prioritize, strategize, spend, and deliver service and value. This involves hard, unpopular choices that are often required for stability and for growth. I used these same skills during my term as president of STC-Central Iowa. During those two years, our community accomplished rechartering, revising our by-laws, implementing a strategic plan (where none existed before), implementing a new Web site using open source technology, and cutting unnecessary expenses to establish a scholarship program. I'm prepared to roll up my sleeves, look at what STC does, ask if should we stop doing it, continuing doing it, or do something else.

I'm running for Director at Large because I believe in the value of membership, the value of networking, and the value of professional development. I'm qualified for Director at Large because I have STC experience, industry experience, leadership experience, business experience, academic experience, and from my point of view, one of the most important prerequisites: a

sense of humor to keep it all in perspective. One of your STC member benefits is a vote in our annual election. I ask that you use it and elect me as Director at Large.