

Jesica Davis

Senior Staff Technical Writer
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Summary

Jesica Davis has been writing technical documentation for various software companies since 2000: user guides, release notes, API updates/guides, context-sensitive help, UX strings, reference manuals, and other types of user assistance. She designs and implements help systems across multiple countries and languages, creates and maintains documentation process and standards, and trains internal teams on them. She works primarily in DITA and is employed as a Technical Writing Team Lead, working full-time remotely since 2013.

Skills

Writing, research, and analysis:

- Extensive experience creating end-user guides, reference manuals, release notes, technical bulletins, white papers, and context-sensitive help for browser-based, desktop, and mainframe applications
- Expert with information mapping: structuring content into reusable, easily absorbed information types (concept, task, reference) to maximize single-sourcing of multiple document outputs with Darwin Information Type Architecture (DITA)
- Working seamlessly on large-scope projects with team members in other countries/departments to coordinate versioning, consistent application of styles, reviews, information distribution, and knowledge sharing
- Ability to identify, create, and train coworkers on best practices for using DITA, including consolidated build scenarios, use of conditional text, metadata, and custom attributes for targeted output
- Work with UX and Product teams to write and review UX strings, content, and workflows
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, including the ability to work closely and easily with Engineering, Product Development, Training, and Marketing teams from a remote office
- Comfortable working in a fast-paced Agile development environment, involved at all phases to ensure that user assistance meets the clients' needs, with quick and efficient turnaround
- Working with developers to create and maintain documentation of APIs
- Research and implement localization and extensibility of user interface design and text using bundles
- Mastered creating global and localized documentation sets, ready for translation and deployment, including heavy use of conditional text
- Ability to generate complete documentation suites from scratch, as well as updating outdated and outmoded documentation to reflect current production usability standards and best practices

Software:

- Document creation and editing in DITA 1.2, including editing XSLT and XSL-FO
- Knowledge and use of MS Office, oXygen, FrameMaker, RoboHelp, Confluence, Captivate, Photoshop, Visio, Subversion, Snagit, Acrobat, and Eclipse
- Manage deploys using QuickBuild
- Comfortable working on Windows, Mac, and UNIX platforms
- Use of .csv and .tsv bundles to update and distribute UI labels using SVN and Git
- Website maintenance using HTML and CSS
- Editing in LaTeX, Emacs, Vi, and Adept

Work experience

November 2021 – Present

Sr. Staff Technical Writer
ServiceNow

- Write and maintain documentation for App Engine Studio, Workspace Builder, ERP Integration, and ERP Customization Mining products.
- Ongoing project to create a doc quality measurement dashboard to assess help using metrics.
- Coordinates with a11y team to make help topics accessible for screen readers and neurodivergence; requests Schematron updates to support a11y projects, such as infographic descriptions.
- Regular meetings with client-facing PMs to gather user feedback and improve help.
- Coordinates with Content Architecture team to implement content framework for products.
- Working with Multimedia team to create mini training videos to embed in help tasks.
- Trained teammates when moving to keys for DITA across repos.
- Led Fix-It Week Q3 2022 for Creator Workflow Product Content to incorporate doc feedback.
- Led cross-functional effort to restructure doc site content based on workflows.
- Promoted to Sr. Staff after one year, nominated for Heart & Hustle award 2023.

July 2011 – October 2021

Team Lead, Technical Writing

Mediaocean (formerly Donovan Data Systems), New York City, NY, USA; remote worker August 2013-present

- Promotions: Technical Writer to Senior Technical Writer to Principal Technical Writer to Team Lead.
- Write and update over two dozen user guides, context-sensitive help sets, reference PDFs, data dictionaries, and multiple release note sets using a single-sourced set of DITA files with heavy use of conditional text.
- Produce rapid-turnaround documentation to meet the shifting needs of an Agile SDLC.
- Work with bundles and the UX team to create and maintain standardized UX text, labels, and messaging using SVN and Git.
- Work closely with Developers, Product, Training, and Marketing teams in other cities and countries to turn specs and user stories into intuitive user assistance.
- Oversee the development, testing, and distribution of numerous deliverable deploys for 12 countries.
- Run team meetings, create and run internal training on help systems and tools, maintain style guides to ensure consistent voice, and represent the Technical Writing team in inter-departmental meetings.
- Plan and implement user interface updates and standards for multiple applications.
- Create and maintain documentation (in Confluence) of internal processes and best practices for efficient collaboration, leading training for London, NYC, and other geographically dispersed technical writing team members remotely.
- Received the Brand Value Award for Client Focus, 2019

July 2008 – January 2011

Technical Writer

Donovan Data Systems (now Mediaocean), New York City, NY, USA

- Created and updated user guides, web pages, and release notes for over fifteen programs, including security, mainframe facilities, VB, C++, and Java applications
- Restructured multiple outdated (20+ years) documentation suites to include business conversations, provide context, and improve clarity and usability
- Captured and documented internal processes and procedures that had never before been codified to ensure a more thorough and standardized development lifecycle
- Wrote and reviewed functional specifications, training materials, user interface text, and external communications for editorial content, technical accuracy, and clarity
- Managed large-scale projects across departments, including reviews and versioning, ensuring standardization across a team of writers
- Created project-based documentation plans with detailed steps, assignees, document/help updates, and milestones

February 2006 – 2009

Freelance writing assignments for software companies, strategic marketing firms, Heidrick & Struggles, American Express, and various magazines while living abroad and traveling independently throughout Germany, France, the Netherlands, England, Argentina, Bolivia, Uruguay, and Chile.

July 2007 – June 2008

Documentation Engineer

Iptivia, New York City, NY, USA

- Wrote and maintained a complete set of documentation for RouteDynamics software: user guide, administration manual, installation guide, reporting manual, API guides (for JAVA RMI and SOAP), and release notes
- Generated and regularly updated online help for multiple applications using WebWorks, RoboHelp 7, and the Adobe Technical Communication Suite
- Documented APIs (Java RMI and SOAP), and wrote an API Guide for developers
- In an ongoing OEM partnership with Cisco, rebranded the documentation suite and online help to conform to Cisco standards
- Maintained the company wiki/CMS (Confluence) as a centralized documentation repository and knowledgebase
- Indexed the 900-page user guide
- Maintained consultancy to update documentation after leaving the company until it closed in 2009

May 2006 – July 2006

Consultant

Heidrick & Struggles, Chicago, IL, USA

- Recruited to research and advise Heidrick & Struggles on the design of a help system for their flagship application
- Tested and compared a number of help authoring tool and content management system applications, created a report summarizing the pros and cons of each option, and made a recommendation that was accepted and implemented
- Compiled a list of best practices for context-sensitive help generation and authoring
- Designed project plans, created style guides, wrote job descriptions, and compiled a selection of additional resources for Heidrick & Struggles to use as they implemented the help system

May 2002 – February 2006

Documentation Specialist

BrassRing, LLC., Chicago, IL, USA

- Responsible for the maintenance of a complete set of documentation for the Enterprise, Talent Gateways, Workbench, and Agency Manager software applications
- Generated a complete set of online and screen-level HTML help. Documents produced included user guides and operations manuals, an installation guide, release notes, white papers, and more
- Responsible for internationalization and localization of documentation into multi-byte languages.
- Received the Above and Beyond the Call of Duty Award, 2003
- Worked remotely (home office) from Chicago for the Boston-based company, November 2002-February 2006

October 2000 – April 2002 (company shut down)

Technical Writer

Curious Networks, Inc., Chicago, IL, USA

- Solely responsible for the creation and maintenance of a complete set of documentation for the Continuum (multi-channel application deployment software) product line
- Worked with project managers to generate 1500+ pages, including administration and operations manuals, reference guides, FAQs, white papers, marketing materials, tutorials and more
- Learned to read Java to document the API

April 2000 – October 2000

Electronic Publishing Coordinator

University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, USA

- Translated manuscripts and prepared publication for the *Astrophysical Journal*, the *Astronomical Journal*, *Journal of Infectious Diseases*, *Clinical Infectious Diseases*, and 16 other journals
- Responsible for typesetting all of the above journals on the Penta system

Education

- **University of Illinois**, Champaign-Urbana, USA, Bachelor of Arts, Rhetoric/Creative Writing; Concentration in Poetry; additional coursework in Ecology/Women's Studies; James Scholar; Cohen Scholarship; Dean's List
- **University of Sydney**, Sydney Australia (semester abroad)
- **Continued self-study**, taking classes in sailing, poetry, and bookbinding
- **Lighthouse Writers Workshop**, member, volunteer, 2013-present, Alice Maxine Bowie fellow, 2016-2017

References, samples, and publication history

Available upon request

May 2023