

Test Targets 3.1: an editorial perspective

by Edline M. Chun

Introduction

Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) has a “writing across the curriculum” policy to ensure that students have written communication skills before graduating (Section D16: Institute Writing Policy, 2002, May). This means that writing is not confined to writing courses, but is also an important element of technical and laboratory courses. The ability to write is thought of as an added-value feature of the RIT degree and assures employers that an RIT student, whether a new hire or on Co-op, possess a certain level of writing competency.

Test Target 3.1 (TT3.1) is the group project of a graduate course that strives to teach advanced color management techniques and process control principles by using digital technology and teamwork. Through the course work, students become familiar with the latest color management technology and graphic arts technology standards and trends; enhance their knowledge of scientific methodology in process control for repeatable color; and show their ability to work as a team by producing a color-managed publication (Chung, 2002, March). TT3.1 is a reflection of the competency and creativity of the students in Advanced Color Management, Spring Quarter of the 2002-2003 academic year at RIT.

As explained in the next section, in addition to dealing with process research and printing aspects of TT3.1, students used this opportunity to prepare themselves for the writing process of the Master’s degree project by using clear guidelines and holding group discussions to clarify issues and reach consensus. The different roles each person assumed to get TT3.1 to press, opened the window for everyone to the editorial side of preparing a document for publication under a set of conditions close to what would be required for a Master’s thesis or Master’s research paper.

Approach to editorial content

The Graduate Program of the School of Print Media requires that a Master’s thesis or Master’s research paper be appropriately formatted in structure and that it use the American Psychological Association (APA) style for internal citations and reference section (School of Print Media, 2002, December). The Advanced Color Management course stipulated that the format for TT3.1 articles would, in general, conform to *TAGA Proceedings: Guidelines for Copy Preparation* (TAGA, n.d.). Each article would include at least three internal citations and a reference section; internal citations and reference entries would follow APA style.

Early in the quarter, the team analyzed *Test Target 3.0* that had been printed the previous quarter, and decided that the format of TT3.1 needed to be standardized so all reports would have a similar look. Standardization would also give TT3.1 an organized appearance. The group further decided that each article, including visuals, would fit on four printed pages.

During Week Five of the course, the author met with the team to help members understand report structures in general, clarify any issues surrounding use of the APA style, and review the TAGA guidelines as applied to TT3.1.

At that meeting the group decided short abstracts would appear in the table of contents rather than the four pages allotted to each writer. The team also agreed to the article body containing: introduction, objective, procedure, results, conclusion, and references, with the exact wording of section heads left to the writer. A content template with style sheet would be available for the convenience of team members to reduce formatting issues for the person preparing the QuarkXPress files. From later meetings came the decision that keywords would be taken from a glossary compiled from many

sources. The glossary appearing in TT3.1 contains a selection of terms from the larger glossary that students use for the course. While some readers may take exception to an explanation given in Glossary of Terms, these definitions were originally written to help team members within the context of their work, readings, and discussions. The team is very aware of the differences in definitions existing in the Color World.

Review Process

To ensure clear, accurate content, each article would undergo a minimum of two reviews: a technical review by Professor Robert Chung or Senior Research Associate Franz Sigg and an editorial review by Adjunct Faculty Edline M. Chun. A final editorial check would occur when the QuarkXPress files were ready for proofs prior to platemaking.

Conclusion

As stated in the introduction, the Advanced Color Management course set out to provide students with a many-level learning experience. As TT3.1 goes to press, it can be said that students have become more familiar with emerging graphic arts technology standards, the necessity of standards, and practical application of standards. As the team has worked with and discussed various issues in process control for repeatable color, members have also had to consider what it means to have standards or guidelines for writing reports in a group endeavor.

The impact of this experience to help each team member cope successfully in the future with writing to standards and guidelines may be evident as early as the next report or article that a team member writes, or may not be acknowledged until after the team member has begun his or her career. In the short term, effectiveness

of the editorial process in producing *Test Target 3.1* will be known only after team members have had time to reflect on that aspect of taking this publication to print. Evaluation findings can then be considered for the next publication of *Test Targets*.

References

Chung, R (2003, March). Syllabus. Introduction to Advanced Color Management. Graduate course 2081-753-06: Advanced Color Management, offered Spring Quarter, 2003, by the School of Print Media, Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY.

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