

april 2008

WEST COAST EDITOR

NEWSLETTER OF THE BC BRANCH OF THE EDITORS' ASSOCIATION OF CANADA



THE BUSINESS OF EDITING

amy and associates

systematize your business

how to cost an editing job

serial comma vote: final results and commentaries

EAC-BC is a proud supporter of the serial comma

WEST COAST EDITOR

April 2008

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EDITOR'S VIEW

Welcome to the April 2008 issue of West Coast Editor. This issue is all about how to better manage your freelance editing business. Whenever WCE staffers talk to editors at meetings, workshops, or trade shows, we're often asked, "When are you going to come out with an issue about the *business side* of managing an editing business?" We've put it off long enough. Now is the time.

In this issue you'll find "Systematize Your Business" (pages 8–9), an article in which Naomi Pauls shares the top 7 things she does to manage the administrative, sales, and financial aspects of her successful freelance editing business, and "How to Cost an Editing Job" (pages 12–13), Peter Moskos' 5-step system for calculating how much to quote for any editing job.

Finally, you'll find excerpts from an interview ("Amy and Associates") we recently conducted with Peter Moskos. In the interview, Peter shares his ideas on how to better manage your workflow and on how to avoid those dreaded "workflow spikes," where you're overburdened with work one month and on the hunt for new work the next. Turn to pages 10–11 to read more.

One last note. Don't forget to turn to pages 5–7 to read the final results—and remaining commentaries—of WCE's vote on the serial comma.

Enjoy.

FEATURE WRITERS

From 1995 to 2004, **Peter Moskos** ("How to Cost an Editing Job," pages 12–13) was the managing partner of The Gordon Writing Group. He co-founded the company and grew it from a small two-person operation to Ottawa's largest and best-known provider of writing and editing services.

Now based in Vancouver, Peter has returned to writing, editing, and training. He teaches business skills in Print Futures: Professional Writing at Douglas College and offers an online course on government reports for Ryerson University's Certificate in Publishing.

Naomi Pauls ("Systematize Your Business," pages 8–9) is a Vancouver writer and editor who relishes the challenges of the communication business. Her company, Paper Trail Publishing, provides editorial services to clients ranging from small museums to large corporations.

She was a member of the first class to graduate from the SFU Master of Publishing program.

One of her regular gigs is copy editing the Canadian Journal of Communication—now there's a challenge!

Words of Warning

“For the first time, Japan’s fiction bestseller list is dominated by books published, read and, in several cases, written on mobile telephones....

“The top three novels were all written for downloading, according to book distributor Tohan. Their stories are divided into chunks that can be read in three minutes, the typical time between two stops on the Japanese subway.

“The fact that young readers are being exposed to immature expressions and stunted vocabulary will accelerate illiteracy and damage their ability to express themselves,” one critic wrote.”

Source: “Social Studies,” Michael Kesterton, The Globe and Mail, December 7, 2007

Plays on Words

Is a book on voyeurism a peeping tome?

A pessimist’s blood type is always B-negative.

A Freudian slip is when you say one thing but mean your mother.

A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.

If you don’t pay your exorcist, you get repossessed.

The man who fell into an upholstery machine is now fully recovered.

A grenade thrown into a kitchen in France would result in Linoleum Blownapart.

A lot of money is tainted.’Tain’t yours and ’tain’t mine.

The short fortune teller who escaped from prison was a “small medium at large.”

Source: Unknown

More Words of Warning

“If you do not tolerate a certain level of anxiety over a considerable length of time (say, an entire career), then you are probably not constituted to be an editor.”

Source: *Editors on Editing: An Inside View of What Editors Really Do*, Gerald Gross, ed., 1985

Words of Hope

“More books are sold on the Internet than any other product, and the number is increasing.... Polling company Nielsen Online surveyed 26,312 people in 48 countries; 41 per cent of Internet users had bought books online. Two years ago, 34 per cent of Internet users had done so.”

Source: “Social Studies,” Michael Kesterton, The Globe and Mail, January 31, 2008



Drive-by Editing



Downtown Merritt BC, February 2008

EDITOR'S INBOX

Berry, plum, or tomato?

At a dinner with EAC's national executive at the Water Street Café in March 2007, several people at my table started discussing my dessert garnish.

The garnish was a small yellow fruit with papery-brown husks, 2–3 cm in diameter. Our server, Ben, said they were "Cape Gooseberries," while I suggested they were more closely related to tomatillos, and Frances Peck felt they were similar to a small yellow fruit from France called Mirabelle plums. We left the restaurant that night without any consensus about the mystery fruit.

So I did some research.

Could our mystery fruit have been some type of plum as Frances suggested? No. Inside the small yellow fruit, the tiny seeds in pulp were more numerous than in a tomato, and the taste was sweeter, with a lingering distinctive twist. Thus, plums and other *Prunus* sp.

fruits could be ruled out, as they are all drupes, that is, fruit with one hard pit (cherries, plums, apricots, peaches, almonds, and cherry laurel berries). Could our mystery fruit have been some type of gooseberry, as suggested by Ben? Again, no. Gooseberries and currants are tiny, tart, and don't have husks; and kiwi fruits, also known as "Chinese gooseberries," aren't at all related to gooseberries either.

How about tomatillos? Could I have been right in suspecting that our mystery fruit was some type of tomatillo? Tomatillos, familiar in southwestern cooking, look like green tomatoes in a husk, not unlike our mystery fruit; and both tomatoes and tomatillos belong to the alkaloid-rich plant family Solanaceae, along with potatoes, eggplant, deadly nightshade, hot peppers, and tobacco. *Sturtevant's Notes on Edible Plants* (1919) lists seven species of *Physalis*, including the tomatillo as well as *P. peruviana*—likely our subject—as common names, including Barbados

gooseberry, ground cherry, cherry tomato, and winter tomato. Literary references to "ground cherry" include *Little House on the Prairie* by Laura Ingalls Wilder.

To confirm my suspicion that these interesting fruits were related to tomatillos, I took a trip to Granville Island Market. There, I found a 500 mL basket of small yellow-husked fruit labelled "*Physalis* Cape Gooseberries" on sale for about \$4. Mystery solved!

Jennifer S. Getsinger,
Vancouver.

Maybe technology isn't so bad

For those of you who read Jeanne Ainslie's thought-provoking article "Long Live the Book" (West Coast Editor, February 2008) and have been obsessing ever since about the fate of the publishing industry, we recommend reading "The free-thinking reader is not dead, but found online." This article, written by UK publisher Stephen Page echoes Jeanne's assertion that "digital books are a boon for authors whose works are unpublished, out of print, or out of stock."

Says Stephen, "print technology has also been transformed by digital technology. It is possible now to keep books in print with no inventory, by printing a single copy of a book on demand. This has a transforming effect on the long tail of books, allowing for perpetual availability of books that would otherwise have died only due to print economics." Long live technology! Long live the book!

—Ed.

Source: "The free-thinking reader is not dead, but found online," Stephen Page, *The Guardian*, March 6, 2008, www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2008/mar/06/internet.gadgets, accessed March 24, 2008

Please send "Editor's Inbox" email to channah@editors.ca. Email may be edited for clarity or length.



Mystery fruit, *Physalis peruviana*, acting as garnish to a chocolate dessert at the Water Street Café. Photo by Jennifer S. Getsinger, March 2008.



Physalis peruviana and a cherry tomato. Photo by Jennifer S. Getsinger, February 2008.

MORE SERIAL COMMA COMMENTS

Here they are: the last of the commentaries and the final results....

From: Penelope Gray-Allan

Subject: For

I know that many style guides have chosen not to use serial commas, but I have found that, periodically, they do help to clarify an idea that a sentence is trying to convey.

From: Philip Sherwood

Subject: For

“I owe everything to my parents, Ayn Rand and God.”

“I owe everything to my parents, Ayn Rand, and God.”

From: Gary Lund

Subject: For

I support the serial comma because it avoids the confusion of whether the two items on either side of an “and” are separate or a unit.

From: Mary P. Brooke

Subject: Only As Required

Canadian Press Style standard does not promote the serial comma. Through newspapers, magazines and advertising non-serial comma usage has, by default, become conventional to the eye. There is better flow without the “last comma.” However, clarity of content prevails; the serial comma should be used to eliminate ambiguity as required.

From: Tracey D. Hooper

Subject: For!

The serial comma improves clarity—e.g.,

“Maintain a mix of vegetation layers, such as forbs, grasses, shrubs and trees, on your land.”

Does this refer to maintaining a shrub/tree layer, or a shrub layer and a tree layer? The latter was the intended meaning.

From: Judith Brand

Subject: For

My favourite example, even though facetious, of where a serial comma would provide clarity: “I’d like to thank my parents, the pope and Mother Teresa.”

From: Ramona Montagnes

Subject: For

May it live a long time!

From: Carol Boutin

Subject: For

In my mind, writing without serial commas is sloppy writing.

From: Susan Safyan

Subject: For, for, for

How does the apocryphal story go? “I introduced him to my parents, the pope and Mother Teresa.” vs. “I introduced him to my parents, the pope, and Mother Teresa.” The serial comma makes all the difference in clarifying meaning!

From: Larissa Buijs

Subject: Against

I find I only rarely need the serial comma to distinguish items in a list. I'm on the minimalist side of punctuation use anyway, so I usually opt for no serial commas. However, there are the odd times I find that items in the list are not easily distinguishable, therefore serial commas are important to set them apart.

So my vote is "generally against, occasionally for."

From: Mark Varley

Subject: For

For—it is the only logical solution to a series, has an obvious history, and should appear plain to people with eyes to see that after two items in a list it is essential vis-à-vis this simple sentence. Come on!

From: Dana Graham

Subject: FOR

I am for the serial comma!

From: David Harrison

Subject: FOR

The serial comma is occasionally needed for clarity. So it's better to have a consistent rule than to vary within the manuscript. However, you must consider client needs (e.g. journal or publisher style guide). Generally, I use the serial comma for US and Canadian English, but not for UK English.

From: Patricia Anderson

Subject: For

The serial (or Oxford) comma ensures a level of clarity and consistency that can on occasion be compromised when it is routinely omitted.

From: Linda Desormeaux

Subject: Against

One reason: It can get convoluted when you have more than one list within a sentence.

From: Kathy Vanderlinden

Subject: For

I have been won over by the serial comma in recent years (I think since working on *Editing Canadian English, 2nd Edition*, when we laid out the arguments). Using it has been a dream. It is the easiest, fastest way to go (good in itself) and avoids possible confusion.

From: Angel Desjarlais

Subject: FOR!

I love the serial comma. It provides structure and parallelism and, to me, a nice repetitive visual element.

From: Kathleen Konrad

Subject: For

I think it's good to use it on a regular basis to be consistent with lists that require it for clarity.

From: Renate Preuss

Subject: Against!

I used to use the serial comma but now find a sentence looks much cleaner and therefore more reader-friendly without it. It's just not needed. And in the rare case where a list might be confusing without that serial comma, I just reorder the items.

From: Shelly Windover

Subject: Emphatically for!

Kill me with punctuation!

From: Sue Innes
Subject: FOR the comma

Although I was brought up without the serial comma, I now support its use. I find it much easier to read texts with the comma than those without.

From: Kate Britt
Subject: FOR

Consistency is more important than whether or not to use it. Always use it or never use it.

A serial comma prevents misreading when serial items are phrases or groupings rather than single words. I use it for clarity in those instances, so consistency requires that I use it everywhere.

From: Joan E. Templeton
Subject: For

I find that the serial comma imposes greater clarity in almost all situations—especially when the list includes compounds/complex concepts. I love it!

From: Shari Yore
Subject: FOR

In the clarity vs. ambiguity/doubt debate, use of the serial comma wins, hands down!

From: Sharon McInnis, ProofingQueen®
Subject: Against

Unless it's necessary for clarity, it's just plain annoying! Thanks for conducting this vote!

From: Hugh Macdonald
Subject: For

You can count my vote as definitely in favour right now, forever, and beyond the end of time. The best reason I can give you is the following sentence.

Mr. Bloggs disagrees with the “Kill All the Lawyers” legislation because of *u*, *v*, *w*, *x* and *y* and *z*.

If you put a comma after the *x*, then you are presenting *y* and *z* as being parts of a whole. If you put a comma after *y*, then you are suggesting *x* and *y* should be seen as parts of the whole.

The sentence, as it stands implies that *x*, *y*, and *z* are parts of a whole. This may seem picky, but why leave the reader guessing, which the reader must do if one abolishes the serial comma? I know there are ways to state Bloggs's opinion avoiding the structure, but, that means jumping through hoops the serial comma makes unnecessary.

From: Sue Ansell
Subject: Abstain

I enjoy using both forms in different circumstances. 

Serial Comma Vote: The Stats

Number of EAC-BC members
301

Number of votes cast
134

Percentage of EAC-BC members who voted
44.5%

Percentage of voting members who are “for” the serial comma
84.3%

(113 votes)

Percentage of voting members who are “against” the serial comma
12.7%

(17 votes)

Percentage of voting members who said “it doesn't matter”
1.5%

(2 votes)

Percentage of voting members who said “only as required”
<1%

(1 vote)

Percentage of voting members who said “I abstain”
<1%

(1 vote)



M/S Word 2002 clipart

SYSTEMATIZE YOUR BUSINESS

Seven low-tech ways to take control of your administrivia.

BY NAOMI PAULS

Consistency is the watchword of editing. By encouraging harmony and eliminating contradictions in communications of all kinds, editors function somewhat like fibre in a diet. In a word, with tongue in cheek, we promote *regularity* (sorry!).

In over a decade as a freelance editor, I have found that consistency is important not only in copy editing, proofreading, and indexing. It is also essential in running a business. It may go by other, longer names—standardization, systematization—but the key idea, again, is consistency.

So, as editors we know all about this, right? Truth is, when you're a sole proprietor it's all too easy to think of your seat-of-the-pants business methods as perfectly okay. But when you are an editor and also *in business*, being more systematic in the way you run your business will pay off. Establishing a few simple systems will save you time, increase your productivity, and also boost your professional profile.

Many software tools, from online calendars to bookkeeping programs, are available to make administrative tasks more efficient. By all means check them out. Being a bit low-tech, I must leave that discussion to others. Instead, I want to share seven low-tech ways to make your business activities more systematic and, well, businesslike.

1. Prepare a year-at-a-glance calendar

An annual calendar is helpful for scheduling regular jobs, such as work on periodicals.

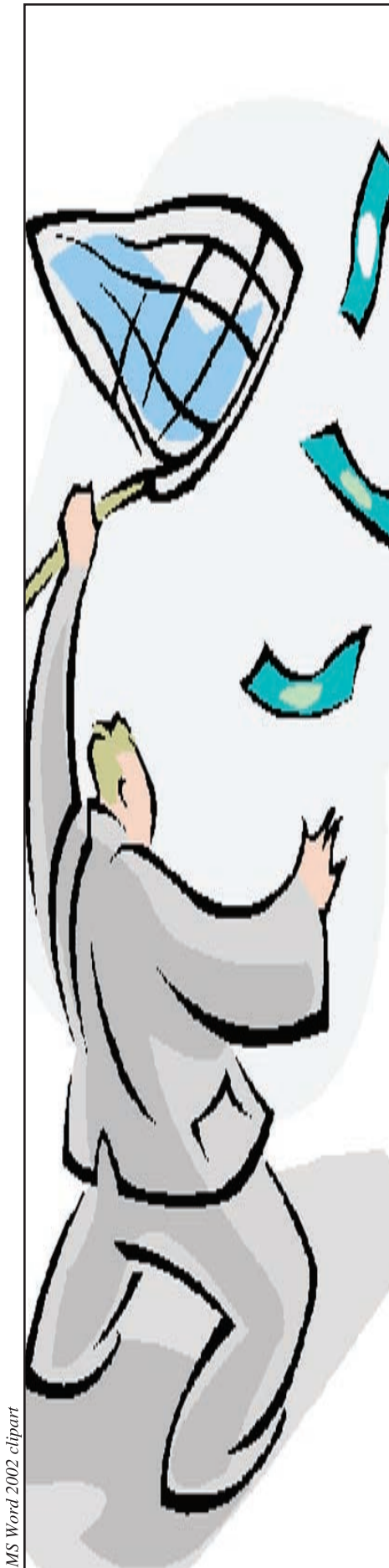
Mine is a one-page document that lists recurring contracts by month and the anticipated number of hours. It lets me see how busy I will be at any given time and whether I can (or should) take on more work.

2. Create client contact sheets

When I hear from potential new clients, I record the following basic information on a client contact sheet:

- their name and title,
- their contact information,
- who referred them,
- the services they are requesting,
- the rates I quoted,
- the date they contacted me,
- what follow-up is required.

I keep a contact sheet at the front of each client file, where it is easy to find.



MS Word 2002 clipart

3. Use checklists

A single critical oversight quickly proves the value of checklists, which are especially helpful for copy editing, proofreading, and indexing jobs.

Look for them in editing texts such as Editorial Experts' *Substance and Style* and modify as needed. They can be developed for internal use or shared with clients.

EAC's Professional Editorial Standards provide a starting place; find them at www.editors.ca/resources/eac_publications/pes/index.html.

4. Adhere to proper file naming conventions

Ever have trouble transferring or backing up digital files because the names are too long or non-standard?

I use this simple—but effective—protocol: use only alphanumeric characters and hyphens; use a period only before the file extension; and keep file names a manageable length (25 characters or fewer).

5. Invoice regularly

Your service suppliers send monthly invoices, so why shouldn't you?

With your head down on a big project, it's easy to forget about "collecting the rent." Bill promptly to keep cash flowing through your business. Always schedule time at mid-month and month-end to attend to accounts receivable.

6. Track your financials

How do your quarterly revenue and expenses compare with last year's or those of the year before?


You may have a gut feeling as to how business is going (or growing), but tracking the numbers will give you a concrete picture—and not just at tax time. Total your income from different sectors (for me, book publishers, self-publishers, and corporate clients) or types of work (e.g., writing, proofreading, indexing).

Some numbers to crunch and compare: invoices per quarter, average billing, average revenue per month or week.

7. Create a strategic plan

Business planning is like the proverbial elephant in the room—so big it's hard to get your head around, yet difficult to ignore forever.

Long-term thinking requires dedicated time and a certain amount of objectivity, which a consultant may be able to provide. (Check out the Canadian Association of Management Consultants.)

Stay aware of trends in your field, analyze the kinds of work you prefer, and be proactive when it comes to building your client list. 

Marketing Tips from A to J

Attend select networking events prepared to have fun and make contacts. Investigate Business Network International (www.bni.com), the eWomen Network (www.ewomennetwork.com), or SOHO (www.soho.ca).

Brand your business to set yourself apart from your competitors.

Collect marketing materials you find effective and let them inspire your own.

Develop professional marketing materials to sell your services to a targeted clientele.

Evaluate the effectiveness of your marketing efforts and make changes as needed.

Follow the business press and online media to find new clients or business opportunities.

Generate positive associations for your business by generously donating your services.

Help others starting out, as you never know when such efforts will come back to you.

Identify areas of your business you want to develop, then focus your marketing efforts where they will have the most impact.

Join an e-newsletter list. Subscribe to eProfit\$ (www.bdc.ca), Small Business Source (www.smallbusinessbc.ca), or Fearless Freelancing (www.fearlessfreelancing.com).

AMY AND ASSOCIATES

A freelance editor learns how to better manage her workflow.

WCE wants to help “Amy” better manage her workflow. Who is Amy? Amy is an amalgam of freelance editors who have been managing their own editing businesses for several years but are frustrated by the unpredictability of their workloads. Some months they have so much work that they are forced to turn much of it away. Other months, they have none.

WCE met with Peter Moskos, former partner of The Gordon Writing Group, to ask what Amy should do to better manage her workflow. Here is an edited transcript of their conversation.

WCE: What should Amy do to better manage her workflow?

PM: Amy should look for a partner with complementary skills. If, for example, Amy is a good stylistic and structural editor, she might want to team up with someone who’s a good copy editor. Then, during times of riches, she can farm out her copy editing overload to that person.

She will need, of course, to know her potential partner well and to trust his—or her—editing. She’ll also have to think carefully about how she’s going to present herself to her long-standing clients because they will probably be offended if she fobs off their work to someone else. One way of getting around this is to involve her partner in client meetings.

WCE: How should Amy structure the partnership?

PM: She should structure it very loosely, stating that she

and her partner agree to pass work back and forth. She should also detail the fee structure, stating, perhaps, that if she farms out a copy editing assignment, she’ll give her partner the whole copy editing fee, minus a 10–20% finder’s fee.

WCE: But in her clients’ eyes, she should continue to represent herself as “Amy the freelance editor”?

PM: Yes. Although I would prefer “Amy and Associates.” She can then introduce her partner by saying something along the lines of, “This is my associate. I work with her all the time and give her all of my copy editing because she’s a better copy editor than I am. I do the substantive editing.”

WCE: And the invoicing?

PM: When it’s Amy’s client, she invoices, she gets the money, and then she pays her partner.

Of course, there are issues of what happens when clients don’t pay on time. That happens a lot. That’s why I always recommend that people who are considering making the jump into

freelance editing should get a line of credit before leaving their full-time jobs. Otherwise, they’ll end up putting everything on high-interest credit cards. When working with subcontractors, you want to be able to pay them within 30 days.

WCE: How should Amy go about finding a partner? Should she place an advertisement in a trade magazine or on an editing website?

PM: I wouldn’t. I would work through the editing community. That’s why being a member of EAC is so good. You can go to the monthly meetings, talk to people, and if you spy someone you think might be interesting, you can have coffee with that person. You don’t even have to broach the idea of partnership; you can just say, “Let’s go out for coffee someday and chat about the business.” It’s the old networking thing.

WCE: What about cold calling? Is it worth Amy’s time to try to find work this way?

PM: Yes. And here’s how. First, she needs to target businesses that interest her or areas in which she has knowledge or work experience. Then she needs to pick out the prospects she’s going to call.

I would suggest that she start by calling or emailing each prospect to introduce herself; then she should send her resumé and work samples. But she shouldn’t send huge reports or other long documents. People don’t have the time to look at that stuff.



Peter Moskos, former partner of Ottawa-based The Gordon Writing Group

A few pages of a long report will do.

She should also send a covering letter in which she says something like, “I would like to meet with you to find out more about your company and talk to you about possibilities.” Then, since the prospect almost certainly won’t call her back, she will have to follow up by phone and say something like, “Do you have 15 minutes to meet or go for coffee? I’d like to introduce myself and find out more about your business.” As you know, people buy from people they know, people they like, and people they trust.

WCE: And they can’t know or trust you if they haven’t met you!

PM: That’s right. Getting that face-to-face time is crucial. Even though the rest of her relationship may be completely online, Amy has to put her face in front of each prospect at least once.

Then, once Amy’s identified several prospective clients, researched their businesses, and managed to get in and present herself, she must keep those connections up.

WCE: How should she maintain these connections?

PM: Well, every couple of months she could send her prospects postcards or short emails saying, “I’ve just finished such and such a job for Client XYZ and I thought you’d like to know.” She could also leave quick phone messages for them at night saying, “It’s Amy, following up from our conversation in March. I have some time coming up. Do you have projects coming up that need a good editor?” And sometimes, if she sees a really interesting article that she thinks her prospects might be interested in, she should scan it and send it. They might read it and they might not; but they will see her name, and that’s what’s important.

Amy should aim to be the last person

that her prospects talk to so that she is top of mind when they are prepared to try out a new editor. If all she does is send her resumé and portfolio samples and make one phone call and one visit, in six months to a year, they will forget her. She has to keep up a little campaign, being careful not to become a bother.

WCE: How soon can Amy expect to see results from her cold-calling campaign?

PM: She certainly shouldn’t expect anyone to hire her within the month. It’s probably going to be a year or so before anyone hires her...and it’s going to be by virtue of keeping up the connections.

As well, Amy should learn how to write good proposals and how to find RFP opportunities. She should track the editing and writing projects on BC Bid—there is usually one every four to six weeks—and she should watch the Olympic contracting website.

WCE: What about other marketing strategies? Because her work comes through word of mouth, Amy hasn’t felt the need to have a website, brochures, or even business cards. Should she put any money into marketing?

PM: First of all, Amy has to have a business card. Nobody should be five minutes in business without having one. Second of all, she should have a website. It doesn’t have to be elaborate, but it can’t look homemade: an editor’s website is her portfolio. Basically, it should contain her resumé, editing samples, an introduction, and maybe some testimonials.

By the way, if Amy has a family, she absolutely must have a separate phone line and a professional message on her answering machine. Home-based editors don’t want their kids answering the phone and they don’t want their voicemail to say,

“You’ve reached the Smith family; to speak to Amy, press 1; to speak to Doug, press 2; to speak to Fido the dog, press 3”.

WCE: So you’re saying that Amy shouldn’t design her own website?


PM: No. She should not design her own website or *any* of her own marketing materials: she should have a good designer do it. I am uneasy about editors who claim they are editors but also designers and layout artists. Editing and graphic design are two very different crafts. They call for very different skills.

WCE: How much will Amy have to spend to create a professional website, brochure, and business card?

PM: I think she should be able to get her website up and running, and print her brochures and business cards for less than a thousand dollars. It doesn’t have to be an elaborate website: it just has to look good. And be well edited! I don’t know if Amy needs brochures, though if they are good, they do add a professional touch.

WCE: One final question. How much time should Amy devote to marketing and going after new business?

PM: Somebody once gave me this advice and I think it’s true: of your total work hours per year, spend two-thirds working and one-third doing marketing and business management. So she should spend approximately one day per week going after new business. She also needs a half day per week to send out invoices, manage records and other office tasks. Don’t delay sending out invoices. You need to get revenues in as quickly as possible.

But Amy has to recognize that there are only a certain number of billable hours in the week that she can work. And beyond that lies exhaustion. 

HOW TO COST AN EDITING JOB

Five steps to prepare an editing quote.

BY PETER MOSKOS

New to the freelance editing business? Unsure of how to cost an editing job? Don't worry. Here's a simple, five-step way to calculate and prepare an editing quote.

1. Read randomly selected sections of the document and determine the type (or types) of editing it requires

Remember: a document that you substantively edit should then be copy edited, preferably by someone other than you. You can find definitions of the types of editing at www.editors.ca/hire/definitions.html.

2. Convert the total number of words in the document into a standard-sized page to use for all estimates

The standard that I use is 350 words per page—about 1 page of 12-point Times New Roman font at 1.5 spaces. You may prefer to use a different standard.

Example: You receive a 38-page report for editing. It's in Arial 12-point, single spaced with some additional white space, and has several tables and charts. Using the word-counting feature on your word processor, you determine the total word count to be 15,404. You then divide 15,404 (total word count) by 350 (words per page) to get a result of 44 pages. You now use 44 pages to estimate your editing costs.

3. Establish the number of 350-word pages you can edit in an hour

The number of pages you can edit in an hour will depend, of course, on the type of editing you determined that the document needed in Step 1.

Here are the editing rates that I use:

Writing	1–2 pages per hour
Substantive editing	1–2 pages per hour
Stylistic editing	2–4 pages per hour
Copy editing	4–6 pages per hour
Proofreading	6–10 pages per hour

Since these rates involve ranges, you must make a judgment call as to the difficulty of the editing required.

Example: You determine that the report looks to be in good shape and you estimate that you can copy edit it at the rate of six pages per hour. Thus, you estimate your time at 7.3 hours (44 total pages divided by 6 pages per hour). For simplicity's sake, you round up your calculation to 7.5 hours.

4. Add time for editing graphics, footnotes, and bibliographies

Don't forget to allow time for editing charts, tables, diagrams, photos, footnotes, and bibliographies.

Example: The report has eight tables and one organizational chart. You estimate that you'll need 10 minutes to edit each of these elements. Therefore, you add an additional 1.5 hours to your editing time.

5. Add time for revisions and project management

All editing requires a certain amount of project-management time. You will spend time printing copies, preparing files to send back to your client, and talking to your client on the phone. Don't forget to charge for it!

Example: You add 2 hours of project-management time and 3 hours of revision time to your estimate. (Your client has told you that she wants to revise the report before it goes to the designer. This means that you will need to look at it again to check the changes.)

Sample Quote

Task	Number of Hours	Rate per Hour	Cost
Project management	2	\$50.00	\$100.00
Copy editing complete text	7.5	\$50.00	\$375.00
Copy editing tables, graphs, and charts	1.5	\$50.00	\$75.00
Revisions	3	\$50.00	\$150.00
Subtotal			\$700.00
5% GST			\$35.00
Grand Total			\$735.00

Payments and Completion of Work

- My GST number is 845367345RT.
- I will invoice monthly for work completed within the past 30-day period. I reserve the right to withhold completion or delivery of work until appropriate fees are paid.
- Any work not described in this proposal—such as graphic design, writing, or inputting of text and changes to the client-approved manuscript—will be billed at \$50.00 per hour.
- Writing and editing revisions, after the round of changes specified in this estimate, will be billed as author's alterations at \$50.00 per hour.
- I require that you sign-off final approval forms. I will not be held responsible for errors and cannot be made accountable for costs involved with changes once you have signed-off on the materials.



More Time Estimates

Translation: 2000 words per day
Parallel Reading: 4–6 pages per hour
Design: 2–3 days for concepts
Layout: 20–30 pages per day
Printing: 2–3 weeks

etcetera

UPCOMING EAC-BC EVENTS

MONTHLY EVENT: BOOK SWAP April 16, 2008

Bargain books, chat, refreshments, and the opportunity to network. Who wouldn't want to attend EAC-BC's annual book swap?

Start looking through your library for books you know you'll never read again, and bring them with you to the YWCA. There, you can unburden yourself of your unwanted books and find rare gems and cool cast-offs provided by your fellow editors.

As this will be a fundraiser, we suggest a modest donation of \$0.50 per paperback and \$1.00 per hardcover. All proceeds will go to EAC-BC.

We will draw for a door prize at the end of the evening. The winner will receive free admission to one EAC-BC workshop.

Time: 7:30 pm

Cost: Free for EAC members; \$10 for non-members; \$5 for students with valid ID.

Where: YWCA Health and Wellness Centre
535 Hornby Street
Welch Room, 4th floor
Vancouver

YWCA is located on the west side of Hornby Street between Dunsmuir

and Pender, one block northeast of the Burrard SkyTrain Station. Parking for the evening is available across the street for \$4.00 after 6:00 pm. Street parking is also available although it is metered until 8:00 pm.

Information: www.editors.ca/branches/bc/meetings.html or bcprograms@editors.ca

WORKSHOP: RESEARCH SKILLS FOR EDITORS

May 3, 2008

Instructor: Susan Safyan

See the notice on page 16 for more details.

Where: SFU Harbour Centre Campus
515 West Hastings Street, Room 7000
Vancouver

Information: www.editors.ca/branches/bc/workshops or contact Christine McPhee or Ricki Ewings at bcworkshops@editors.ca

NATIONAL CONFERENCE: EDITING IN THE GLOBAL VILLAGE

June 6–8, 2008

Have you registered for this year's national conference? Don't delay: early registration closes on April 30.

Here's an overview of what will be on offer:

- Pre-conference workshops:
Instructional Design for Editors;
Web 2.0 for Writers and Editors:
Getting the word out in the social media networks
- Conference workshops (English):
Beyond Words: Editing comic books and computer games;
Certification: Next Steps;
Cross-Cultural Editing: Plain language it ain't; Deal with Your Stuff: Fresh thinking about wrangling office clutter; Editing at the Crossroads; Editing Corporate Canada; Ethics and the Professional Editor: How to make ethical decisions; Interactive Editing: The dynamics of editorial projects; Introduction to Web Content Management Systems; Revising Research: Preparing academics for publication; Senior Editors' Roundtable on substantive editing; Swinging Both Ways: Editors who write; What Flavour of English Do You Want?; Writing and Editing in Exile
- Conference workshops (French):
Outils Internet: le monde s'ouvre à nous!; Réviseurs indépendants: secrets de la réussite professionnelle
- Closing plenary: "Editing in the Global Village: Whither—or Wither?—Canadian Editing"

Registration Fee: \$315 for EAC members who register on or before April 30, 2008; \$390 for EAC members who register after April 30, 2008

Where: Shaw Conference Centre
9797 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, AB

Information: www.editors.ca/conference

NEW EAC-BC MEMBERS

A WARM WELCOME TO ALL

Steven Faraher-Amidon, Surrey
Katharine Hamer, Vancouver
Gail Johnson, North Vancouver
Olivia Kienzel, Vancouver
Sarah Maitland, Vancouver
Craig McLuckie, Vernon
Sally Mercer, Vancouver
Sharon Mowat, Vancouver
Susan Sanford Blades, Victoria
Joanne White, Victoria

HIGHLIGHTS FROM PAST EAC EVENTS MARCH 1, 2008 WORKSHOP: EDITING FICTION FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Speaker: Lois Peterson
Reviewer: Jeanne Ainslie

Plot revolves around conflict, rising tension, and resolution. Setting, openings, and endings are critical. The opening sets the tone, introduces the characters and story problem. Endings must resolve the story question and reflect the theme.

This is just part of what we learned at the March 1 workshop given by Lois Peterson, award-winning writer, editor, and recently retired librarian. Lois's engaging style and expertise clarified for us the daunting task of editing fiction.

The key to editing fiction, said Lois, is to understand how "story" works. Then, using the first 10 pages of works in progress that we had brought with us to class, she guided us through a 12-step story structure, based on *The Writer's Journey* by Christopher Vogel. She reminded us that the role of the editor is to read, identify, and fix. Most good fiction is character driven, and when a story doesn't work, it's because something is missing.

In addition to teaching us how to edit for "story," Lois taught us how to edit for style (voice and language) and content (characters and plot). When editing for characters, she said, we need to consider visible desire, what's at stake, motivation, weakness and strength, dialogue, physical presence, and backstory. She then reminded us to always question whether or not the author has chosen the most important point of view.

Lois' parting words? Review, revise, and edit all these again when you think the work is finished!

NOW YOU KNOW YOUR HELP KEY CAN BE DANGEROUS!

Eight years ago, engineer David Deckert felt like wasting a bit of time. So what did he decide to do? Says David, "I wasted ten minutes and cut-and-pasted together an image showing some of the other ways that Microsoft's Clippy might like to help you. By giving completely inappropriate advice. I figured this thing cost the world quite a bit of

productivity as it wandered through various corporate email systems. And I admit to taking some pride in that."

According to David, "Clippy is actually a direct descendent of Microsoft Bob," one of Microsoft's more storied product failures. You can see David's creation below.

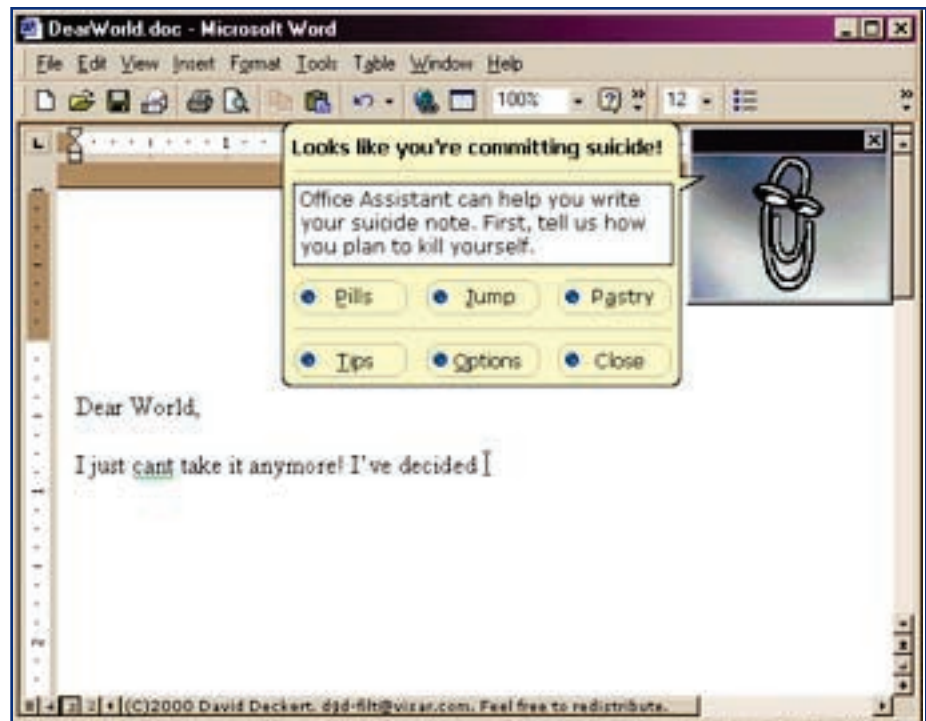
Source: "My 15KB of fame," www.vaxer.net/~jeeves/AssistedSuicide.html, accessed March 23, 2008 and "Microsoft Bob," http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Microsoft_Bob, accessed March 23, 2008

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS WEST COAST EDITOR SEEKS STORIES

Ideas for articles? Contact Cheryl Hannah at channah@editors.ca.

May 2008: Editing Fiction
Deadline for submissions:
April 16, 2008

September 2008: The Queen's English
Deadline for submissions:
August 6, 2008



David Deckert's infamous "Clippy," offering his oh-so-inappropriate advice.

Research Skills for Editors

May 3, 2008

Can you find everything you need on the Web? Can you trust the information you find there? In this introductory session, Susan Safyan will discuss the research tools and resources you can access, both in print and online. By the end of the workshop, you'll know the difference between search engines and subject directories, what the "deep Web" contains, and the five attributes you should always look for in a trustworthy website.

Bring your wireless laptop with you so that you can put your new knowledge to immediate use.



MS Word 2002 clipart

Date

Saturday, May 3, 2008, 11:00 am to 5:00 pm

Location

SFU Harbour Centre Campus
515 West Hastings Street, Room 7000
Vancouver

Cost

\$100 for members who register by April 19
\$120 for members who register after April 19

\$160 for non-members who register by April 19
\$180 for non-members who register after April 19

Information

Contact Christine McPhee or Ricki Ewings at
bcworkshops@editors.ca

Registration

Find details about online registration and registration by mail at www.editors.ca/branches/bc/workshops

About the workshop facilitator

Susan Safyan, BA, MLS, worked as an academic librarian for a dozen years, teaching research skills to students and faculty, before turning her skills to freelance research, writing, and editing in 2002.

From 2004 to 2008 she was also an in-house editor for Alive Publishing.