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WEST COAST EDITOR

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



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WEST COAST EDITOR

April 2011

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Do you speak Web?

“Looking for fish? Don’t climb a tree.”†

How would you rate your professional online presence? Do you blog? Vlog? Facebook? Tweet? Are you LinkedIn? Do you have a website?

While we all realize the central role the Web plays in helping people gather information for their buying (and hiring) decisions, many EAC-BC members don’t have an online presence. That’s what this issue is all about: encouraging us to think about taking our professional lives online and sharing tips on how to get started.

On pages 8–10, you’ll find an interview with Erin Potter, an editor who credits her online presence as one reason for her success (“The brave new world of e-marketing your editing business”); on pages 12–14, you’ll find a cautionary tale by Arlene Prunkl about protecting your website content from plagiarists (“Caveat editor: beware the e-plagiarist”). And on pages 5–7, you’ll find the results of *West Coast Editor*’s recent web-marketing survey. Thanks to those who took the time to share what you’re doing to promote yourself and your business on the website and social-media scene. We appreciate it.

One final note. With just over one month left until conference, we’re still looking for a few more volunteers: one more photographer and one more roving reporter. For more information about these two volunteer opportunities, please read “Priscilla P. Perfect and the Case of the Roving Reporter” on page 11 and “Are you a photographer?” on page 15. We hope you can help.

West coast editor

† Chinese proverb, as reported in “Social studies,” Michael Kesterton, *The Globe and Mail*, March 31, 2011

PERKS
PACKAGE
NO. 1

**CONFERENCE
VOLUNTEERS
WHO DON’T PLAN
TO ATTEND ANY
SESSIONS:** you can

attend one session of your choice (excluding Friday pre-conference sessions), and your name will be listed on the conference website (with a link to your business website).

PERKS
PACKAGE
NO. 2

**CONFERENCE
VOLUNTEERS WHO PLAN
TO ATTEND AT LEAST
ONE DAY OF SESSIONS:**

your name will be listed in the printed conference program, on the conference website (with a link to your business website), and on a sign in the conference registration area.

Contributors

Marlene Dong (“EAC conference menu,” page 4) is communications coordinator for the 2011 EAC national conference and owner of a consulting business that produces strategic communications for public and private sector clients. She recently rejoined the 9-to-5 workforce and sorely misses her work pyjamas and Muppet slippers. They were really comfortable.

Jennifer Getsinger (“Wearing two hats with style: author as editor” event review, page 17) is a writer, editor, and geologist. She loves dark chocolate and metamorphic pet rocks, and she cherishes the companionship of Kitty (a.k.a. “Raccoon-Slasher”) while she writes poetry and edits scientific journals.

After several years in the communications-training industry, **Cheryl Hannah** (“The brave new world of e-marketing your editing business” interview, pages 8–10, “Priscilla P. Perfect and the Case of the Roving Reporter,” page 11) returned to school to upgrade her editing skills. Currently, she is enrolled in the Editing Certificate and Publishing Certificate programs at SFU. She recently learned that she has been chosen to receive a 2011 British Columbia and Yukon Community Newspapers Association scholarship.

Arlene Prunkl (“Caveat editor: beware the e-plagiarist”, pages 12–14) has always been a communicator. She has a background in television broadcasting, the arts, and classical music and is a lifelong learner with an array of interests. In her time off, she loves travelling to exotic locales and learning about other cultures. Since 2002, Arlene has edited almost one hundred books. Her work includes biographies, memoirs, history, science, travel, self-help, books for teens and children, niche genres, and lots of fiction.

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plus: “Wearing two hats with style: author as editor” event review

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION IS STILL OPEN!

Visit EAC’s conference website at www.editors.ca/conference/conference2011/index.html for full details, including one-day registrations, combination EAC/ISC/PEAVI registration, and banquet and reception tickets.

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“If this year’s EAC national conference were a banquet, it would be a smorgasbord!”

Source: Marlene Dong, 2011 EAC national conference communications coordinator

EAC conference menu

If this year’s EAC national conference were a banquet, it would be a smorgasbord! With more than 50 EAC and ISC sessions, panels, workshops, and roundtables to choose from, it’s a veritable feast for even the pickiest of editors. So what’ll it be?

—MARLENE DONG

EAC CONFERENCE MENU

The Tasting Menu: One-day Conference Pass

Members: \$250

Student Members: \$250

If you only have a day to spare, consider purchasing a One-day Conference Pass. You can choose to attend the ISC conference on Friday, the joint EAC/ISC conference on Saturday, or the EAC conference on Sunday. It’s the most affordable way to sample the conference.

The Buffet: Two-day Conference Package

Members: \$430

Student Members: \$290

The Two-day Conference Package can be the most satisfying way to enjoy the conference. Pick and choose the sessions you want from any two days: Friday and Saturday, Saturday and Sunday, or Friday and Sunday. Fill up on all the professional development and networking you can digest.

The Full Meal Deal: Three-day Conference Combo

Members: \$575

Student Members: \$400

The Three-day Conference Combo is the ultimate supersize option if you have an insatiable appetite for all things editing and indexing.

Extra Value Tip

If you’re an in-house editor, ask your employer to help subsidize a portion of your conference fee. If you’re a freelance editor, you can write off your conference fee as a professional development expense.

Hungry for more?

Visit www.editors.ca/conference/conference2011/index.html for the full conference menu.



“If you’re mostly working for people in the publishing business, it may be enough to have a LinkedIn profile, where potential employers can see your qualifications, recommendations, and how many connections you have in common.”

Source: Eva van Emden, *West Coast Editor* web-marketing survey, March 2011

West Coast Editor web-marketing survey The results are in

Last month, *West Coast Editor* invited EAC-BC members to participate in a web-marketing survey. We wanted to know what EAC-BC members are doing to promote themselves on the website and social-media scene.

More specifically, we wanted to know how many members have websites; what web-hosting services they are using; what software or website-building providers they are using to create and maintain their websites; and what social-media tools they are using to promote themselves or their businesses.

We also took the opportunity to ask survey participants to share their best marketing- and web-related advice.

The results are in. Forty-three of our members responded to the survey: just under a 15% response rate.

Of those editors who responded, 52.4% said they have websites, and 32.6% said they “actively use” at least one social-media tool. (The breakdown of “active user” results is interesting: 14.3% of active users use 3 types of social-media tools; 7.1% use 2 types; and 78.6% use only 1 type of social-media tool.) Complete results appear on this and the following two pages.

SURVEY QUESTION: WHAT SOFTWARE OR WEBSITE-BUILDING PROVIDER DID YOU USE TO CREATE YOUR WEBSITE?

MOST-USED WEBSITE-BUILDING SOFTWARE:
WordPress
Adobe Dreamweaver

OTHER WEBSITE-BUILDING SOFTWARE LISTED IN RESPONSES:

Adobe GoLive
Joomla
Juniper Webcraft
Microsoft FrontPage
NetObjects Fusion
Shaw[†]
Web Dwarf by Virtual Mechanics^{††}
WebStarts
Yahoo Business Web
Yola

[†] The respondent noted: “I would like to upgrade. I might go with a WordPress blog format instead and just point my web address there.”

^{††} The respondent noted: “It’s free and doesn’t require learning HTML code.”

MORE RESPONSES:

“I am about to decide that as soon as I take a website for writers course next month.”
“All done by hand.”
“I had someone develop it for me.”
“Penny Weaver at FullTech.”
“Private design-consultant.”

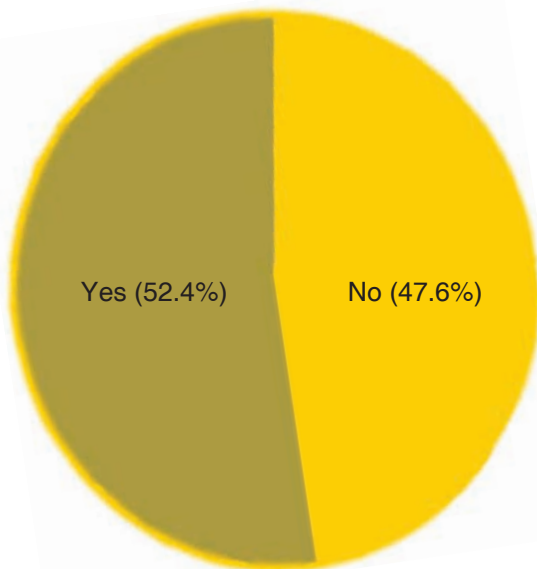
SURVEY QUESTION: DO YOU HAVE A WEBSITE?

RESULTS

Number of respondents who answered this question: 42

Yes: 22
number of respondents with websites

No: 20
number of respondents without websites



“I built and maintain my own sites and actively use LinkedIn and Twitter to raise/maintain my standing near the top of Google searches.”



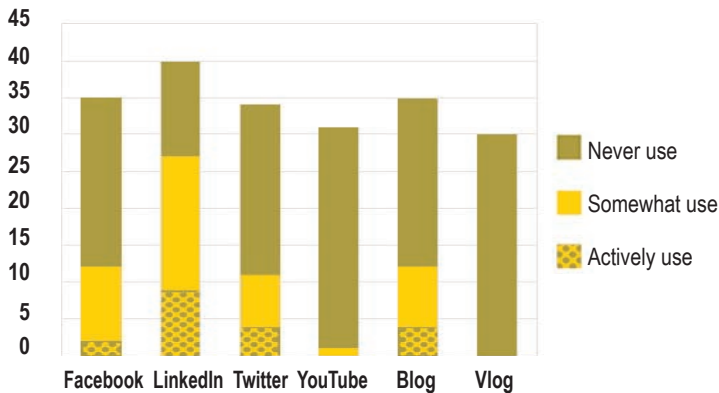
Source: Julie Andres, *West Coast Editor* web-marketing survey, March 2011

SURVEY QUESTION: WHAT SOCIAL-MEDIA TOOLS DO YOU USE TO PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS?

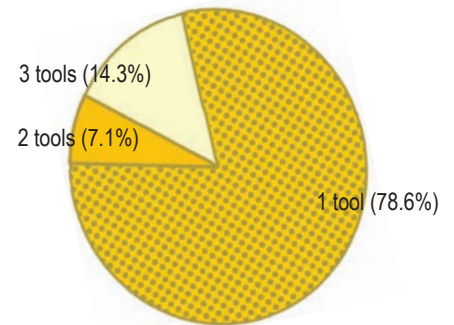
The bar graph below shows the number of EAC-BC editors who use one or more social-media tools to promote their business or professional brand: Facebook; LinkedIn; Twitter; YouTube; blogs; vlogs.

RESULTS

Number of respondents who answered this question: 41



FOURTEEN RESPONDENTS “ACTIVELY USE” SOCIAL-MEDIA TOOLS



THE NUMBERS BEHIND THE PIE CHART

11 respondents “actively use” 1 social-media tool
 1 respondent “actively uses” 2 social-media tools
 2 respondents “actively use” 3 social-media tools

MORE RESULTS

One respondent wrote of using a “translation association directory; in the past the EAC directory”; another wrote of being a current client of EAC’s Online Directory of Editors. On the low-tech (but time-tested) marketing front, one

respondent wrote about paying “personal attention to existing clients” and “incredible attention to new clients, i.e. non-technological medium”; another recommended the use of business cards.

SURVEY QUESTION: WHAT WEB-HOSTING SERVICE DO YOU USE?

TOP THREE WEB-HOSTING SERVICES USED BY RESPONDENTS:

- Go Daddy[†]
- WordPress
- Shaw Cable

[†] One Go Daddy respondent noted: “It’s failing me lately. I’m considering switching hosts.”

OTHER WEB-HOSTING SERVICES USED BY RESPONDENTS:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| Apis | Infinitive Web Services | NetNation |
| Blogger | Islandnet | Shuttlesites |
| Crosswinds ^{††} | IX Web Hosting | Webnames |
| Doteasy | Just Host | WebStarts |
| DreamHost | Myhosting | Yahoo |

^{††} The respondent noted: “I use Crosswinds because it is located in Canada, an important consideration if you collect any kind of personal data as part of a survey, research study, etc., and your clients are in the public sector, and they donate a portion of their profits to antipoverty organizations.”

“On the Internet, it’s survival of the easiest ... Only if a site is extremely easy to use will anybody bother staying around.”

Source: Jakob Nielsen, as quoted at www.u-cwebs.com/services/website-usability-analysis-evaluation/web-site-optimization-quotes, accessed March 30, 2011



SURVEY QUESTION: DO YOU HAVE ANY MARKETING-RELATED OR WEB-RELATED ADVICE YOU’D LIKE TO SHARE?

“I built and maintain my own sites and actively use LinkedIn and Twitter to raise/maintain my standing near the top of Google searches. This gives me complete control and updates are always timely.” —*Julie Andres*

“Network, network, network, and when you do, be sure to have a sleek website you can point people to.” —*anon.*

“I’m looking forward to the April issue so that I can get some advice myself. I know I need to have a web presence, but I haven’t done it yet.” —*anon.*

“Another thing that’s often overlooked is to develop good people skills, whether networking in person, or writing an e-mail. I’ve known very good editors who have not developed their people or social skills, and surprisingly do not know what tone is appropriate to take when writing business-related e-mails.” —*anon.*

“These tools don’t necessarily bring in ready clients, but I think a ‘presence’ on the web gives more visibility and credibility to my work.” —*anon.*

“Social media for business purposes seems only worthwhile if it is consistently refreshed (i.e., Facebook and LinkedIn at least 3 times per week; Twitter at least once per day). Sometimes, it is difficult to have something meaningful to say!” —*anon.*

“Pay attention to your website. It should be the hub of everything else. Make sure it looks good, navigates easily and perfectly, and contains only the information people actually need in order to decide if they want to use your services.” —*anon.*

“The EAC directory is great.” —*anon.*

“Web-based marketing must by its nature be ‘active’ and not ‘passive.’ A Facebook presence, for instance, is of little more benefit than a Yellow Pages ad if it is not properly exploited.” —*anon.*

“A website is an excellent marketing tool, particularly when you are beginning your career. LinkedIn and Workopolis are surveyed by head-hunting agencies so you’ll want to get set up there too.” —*anon.*

“E-newsletters are a good way for freelancers to keep in touch with clients.” —*anon.*

“Print your website URL on [business] cards, small giveaway items (pens, etc.) and advertising. If you order a name tag for a club (such as Chamber of Commerce) print your name and web URL on the name tag (especially if you are self-employed or starting your freelance business), then wear your badge proudly at networking meetings. Makes a great conversation starter. Also if you ever lose your name tag, the finder will know how to look you up to return it to you.” —*anon.*

“Join and use as many facilities of EAC as you can. Especially the Online Directory of Editors. I have obtained many new clients through this. Seven or eight years ago people told me I needed a website—I’ve never yet found the need. I have no time to spare ... messing with [social-media tools]. Ultimately I might consider Facebook, but mainly for family contact after tsunamis and quakes. Those cell phones are fallible in disasters.” —*anon.*

“My feeling is: don’t spend a lot of time and money on a social media campaign just because you think you have to. If you enjoy blogging and twittering, great: do it, and direct your efforts for the benefit of your business. But if it’s not going to be fun, then don’t bother unless you have a specific goal in mind and you’ve considered the costs and benefits. Consider the type of business you have and what you’re trying to achieve. If you’re looking for customers off the street, it might be worth having a snazzy webpage and an active blog. If you’re mostly working for people in the publishing business, it may be enough to have a LinkedIn profile, where potential employers can see your qualifications, recommendations, and how many connections you have in common. Look for the cheap options, and don’t spend a pile of money to have someone build a website for you unless you have reason to believe it’s going to do something for you that your ODE profile won’t.” —*Eva van Emden*

THE BRAVE NEW WORLD OF e-MARKETING YOUR EDITING BUSINESS

Recently West Coast Editor met with Erin Potter of Shamrock Editing Services. Since starting her home-based editing business two years ago, Erin's business has flourished. We wanted to talk to her about the role e-marketing has played in her success.

WCE: What made you decide to start your own editing business?

EP: After having worked in corporate and non-profit communications for many years, I decided to leave my full-time career after the birth of my youngest child.

I had ideas for starting a freelance business, but I hadn't taken the step yet when my editing business actually found me!

WCE: Your business found you?

EP: Yes! I'd always wanted to work in book publishing, but my career took me in a different direction. I'd worked 10 years in communications with various professional associations and had produced more manuals, annual reports, and newsletters than I'd ever dreamed I would.

WCE: So then what happened?

EP: After a few years of part-time work and the odd freelance opportunity, I started thinking about what to do next.

In early 2009, I started researching potential opportunities in the relatively new world of online publishing. My husband, Rob—who, when he's not working for the City of Burnaby, is a novelist—had started doing some volunteer work for a writers' network. And that's how Shamrock Editing got its start: other writers asked him who had edited his books, and he told them about me. They asked how much I might charge to do their books, and the next thing I knew, I had requests for quotes.

Then, the woman who ran the network allowed me to place a little business-card-sized ad on the group's website.

In one night my husband and I came up with my business name and logo and started throwing ideas around for how to promote it.

I received four clients from that little business-card-sized web ad. Those first clients turned into a few more, and through trial and error with each new project, I learned how to go through the one-on-one editing process, something I hadn't done much before. I received valuable testimonials, and my business started to grow.

WCE: You came up with your business name and logo in one night?

EP: Yes. My husband suggested the name because of my love for shamrocks, and it fit. I found a shamrock picture I liked, and that was it.

Interestingly enough, however, when I started advertising "Shamrock Editing"

on the Web, I had several people tell me that the name intrigued them.

One woman—she’s now a repeat client—told me that when her daughter was helping her look through a series of editor listings, my name really stood out ... There was no great marketing strategy behind it, though. I liked the look of it, and now I’m identified with it!

WCE: How many manuscripts have you worked on since you started your business?

EP: Since January 2009, I’ve completed work on 32 novels and a total of 11 memoirs and non-fiction books. On deck right now in my production schedule: seven novels and three non-fiction books.

WCE: How did you decide on your target market? Did you go through a formal process of determining your “unique value proposition,” as the marketing-types say?

EP: Initially, I didn’t define my target market. My target market found me. I work primarily with independently published fiction writers and self-published (or planning to self-publish) authors—the result, I suppose, of my husband’s work as a novelist.

I communicate with my clients often and throughout each project and stay available to them long after each project is complete. From the feedback I’ve received, this personal attention isn’t typical of most editing services, so this has become my unique value proposition. It wasn’t a plan; it’s just my nature. I get excited with them about their books; I admire their perseverance in accomplishing their publishing goals, and even if the project itself is not a subject or genre in which I’d normally be interested, I find something fascinating and valuable

from my relationship with each author and project.

WCE: What strategies do you use to promote your business?

EP: I have a website, and I have promoted my services through small Google ads. My husband is my marketing guy, and he’s worked hard to ensure that my company appears on the first page of search-engine results for “affordable editing.” He’s also posted information about me and my business on social networking sites and on a number of blogs and sites of interest to writers. I have a Facebook fan page and a Twitter account as well.

WCE: You mentioned before that you didn’t find your market—your market found you. But now that you’re spending money on Google ads, I would guess that you’ve got a pretty good idea just what your market is?

EP: You’re right. Now I have a much better sense of my target market.

I target people who are interested in self-publishing, and I target new writers who are looking for an affordable, high-quality option and want help to get their books out into the market—people who don’t have agents or don’t know where to go, or they’ve done a

few books, and they don’t know the next step. But while a lot of people who come to me are new to the publishing business, I also have several regular business clients who have me edit their sales newsletters or sales bulletins.

WCE: How did you decide on your pricing strategy?

EP: I researched other editors’ pricing and then came up with my own. I decided to promote my services as extremely affordable—but of good quality.

When working on books—fiction and non-fiction—I charge per page, with



Erin Potter combines work and family time during a recent trip to Vancouver Island. Photo courtesy of Erin Potter.

my price depending on the level of edit required. For smaller projects such as newsletters or reports, I charge per hour.

WCE: Who designed your website?

EP: Actually, I did it myself. I went to webs.com and used one of its free templates. I then spent a couple of days figuring out what I wanted to put on it. It's nothing fancy ... but I like that. I just want the information to be very clear and easy to navigate. All I pay for is the URL.

WCE: What made you decide to post your pricing on your website?

EP: There's a story behind this! I didn't really want to put my pricing on my website, but my husband—the writer—said to do it.

WCE: Why is that?

EP: He told me that when writers—both he and his friends in his writers' groups—are looking for pricing information, they don't want to be forced to submit all sorts of details just to get a quote. They just want to get an idea of what they're looking at price-wise.

So he recommended that I put some pricing on my site, and I decided to do it. It's not as if I'm saying this is my absolute price—that I'm not going to charge people anything more. I'm simply saying that this is my starting price, and then we'll need to review it once I've seen the actual manuscript. It seems to work. Nobody has ever come back to me and said, "I thought you were only going to charge me \$1.25 per page."

WCE: What's been your biggest marketing splurge to date?

EP: Google ads.

WCE: Are they worth the investment?

EP: Yes.

WCE: What's been your best marketing-on-the-cheap idea?

EP: I would have to say word-of-mouth marketing ... That's how most people have come to me. I've thought about getting business cards—they're cheap—but I just haven't found the need to have them yet.

WCE: What are your "must haves" for an editor's website?

EP: I think it's important for your website to show who you are, what you've done, and why you're the right editor for the client's project.

But the single most important and useful thing on my website is my testimonials page. Good testimonials are like gold.

WCE: Do you have a print portfolio or any other printed marketing materials?

EP: I have a *writing* portfolio in print, but not an *editing* portfolio. Instead of providing generic editing samples to potential clients, I do free sample edits of their work on request—usually three to five pages—accompanied by my quote.

I don't have brochures or anything like that. With an online business, I don't think brochures would be helpful to show my skills and value as an editor. All my business with clients—from initial contact through project completion—is done online or by phone. I think it's crucial to have a website. People want immediate information, and if they hear about you but can't find anything about you online, they will move on to someone else.

WCE: Would you say it's worth hiring someone to do your e-marketing if you're not tech savvy?

EP: I would ... but first, I would say educate yourself on how to do your own marketing. There is a lot of information out there on how to set up and market a freelance business. And if you don't feel you have the money to hire someone, there's a lot you can figure out on your own. Take courses, or use a website builder like the one I used to create my site. I'm always interested in learning more about how to market and maintain my business. I just happened to luck out by having my marketing help living in my house!

But if you really feel that you lack the technical know-how, I would recommend hiring someone to help with the marketing side of things. When I was just starting my business, my husband would spend a few hours each week writing and distributing SEO articles about my business through press releases and Ezine articles, while I worked on improving my website. Now, of course, I generate the majority of my business through word-of-mouth testimonials and social networking.

WCE: So, your shamrock really *has* brought you good luck, Erin.

EP: Yes, I guess it has! 🍀



*Priscilla P. Perfect
and the
Case of the Roving Reporter*
—BY CHERYL HANNAH

THE STORY SO FAR: Beth is on a mini-break in BC's scenic hinterlands when she suddenly remembers that the 2011 EAC national conference is approaching. Fast! She's been planning to volunteer to help for simply ages, but now has a sinking feeling that she's left it too late. Will all her good intentions be for naught? Can the conference go on as planned? She places an emergency call to editor-about-town Priscilla P. Perfect ...

The roles of Priscilla P. Perfect and Beth are played by Nancy Drew action figurines. The role of Priscilla's cat is played by Misha the Persian Cat.



OH NO!
I'M IN A PICKLE, PRISCILLA!
CONFERENCE IS ALMOST HERE, AND
I'M AFRAID I'VE LEFT IT TOO
LATE TO VOLUNTEER!



DON'T WORRY, BETH!
I'VE HEARD THAT THE
"WELCOME RECEPTION" PEOPLE
ARE LOOKING FOR SOMEONE
JUST LIKE YOU.



FAB!
BUT ... ER ... WHAT EXACTLY
WOULD I HAVE TO DO?



YOU'LL
HAVE TO TALK TO
CHERYL, THE
RECEPTION ORGANIZER.
BUT I THINK SHE NEEDS
A ROVING REPORTER TO
COVER THE WELCOME
RECEPTION.



BRILLIANT!
I'LL EMAIL CHERYL
RIGHT AWAY!

EPILOGUE: As soon as she rang off, Beth emailed Cheryl Hannah at channah@editors.ca to let her know that she wanted to help.

The Welcome Reception was a huge success, and everyone lived happily ever after. THE END.

CAVEAT EDITOR: BEWARE THE e-PLAGIARIST

BY ARLENE PRUNKL

I'm proud of my website. Other than my work itself, it's the best advertisement I have. My website is a reflection of my integrity, my work ethic, and my commitment to quality: it's a reflection of me. So you can imagine my reaction when I discovered that some of my work was being passed off as that of five different editors in three different countries. This is a cautionary tale of how I first discovered that my website was being plagiarized, and what I did in response.

So what happened? How did I find out that my work was being stolen?

Several years ago, I was meeting with a colleague to discuss a project we were both working on when we began to talk about the difficulties of maintaining control over intellectual property. She mentioned that she had recently started to use a plagiarism-detection service called Copyscape to ensure that content from her website was not being pirated.

I decided to try it for myself. I went to www.copyscape.com, plugged in the URLs of the pages that I wanted to check, and Copyscape scanned the Internet for other pages with the same wording as mine.

That's when I discovered the theft.

The searches revealed that five editors—one in Canada, two in India, and two in the US—had plagiarized

different chunks of text from my website, in one case an entire 455-word page.

To add insult to injury, three of the five plagiarists claimed to write and edit website content as part of their services. And the one—let's call her "Polly Plagiarist"—who had copied my 455-word page had shamelessly stuck a "Protected by Copyscape—Do Not Copy" banner at the bottom of every page on her site, along with the tag, "copywritten [*sic*] 2010." I checked Polly's website further, and not only did basic writing errors abound—shocking for someone who calls herself an editor—but she claimed to have a master's degree in English.

I was horrified to be associated with such an appalling lack of ethics on top of such a dearth of editorial skills. If this were not so egregious, it would be laughably ironic. But I could hardly

laugh; I was furious. I felt violated, as if my home had been broken into and robbed.

I wrote to all five offenders, asking for an apology and for the removal of the copied content. So far, three of the five have complied, excusing themselves by saying that they were too busy to write their own website content. *Please!* Editors who can't write their own content? More irony.

Was the problem solved? Alas, it was only beginning. Only a few minutes after I contacted her, Polly Plagiarist had removed my page from her site, slapped up a new page of content, and written back to me professing remorse.

Suspicious of the speed with which she had replaced my words, I decided to check her new page on Copyscape as well. Sure enough, she'd turned right around and stolen the "new" content

from another site. By the time I had found that a third page on her site had also been plagiarized, I was beyond incredulous. I emailed the owners of the other pages, which eventually resulted in Polly removing all of her plagiarism.

Double theft

Polly and the other plagiarists, in their ignorance, must have thought that if they removed my pages from their sites, it would make the problem go away.

Unfortunately, what they failed to realize is that it is not simply a matter of illegally copying someone else's intellectual property. The plagiarized words remain in Google's caches (and in the caches of other search engines) for weeks, even after the stolen content has been removed from their sites.

Another infuriating aspect of these thefts is that the plagiarists not only stole my words, but they also stole my highly developed, painstakingly written, search-engine-optimized paragraphs. These pages took years to reach the top of Google rankings, and it takes ongoing work to keep them there. This is double theft: first the words, then piggy-backing on my well-researched optimization and taking advantage of my highly ranked website. And until Google's spiders stopped finding the cached words that were stolen from me, I continued to be associated with the plagiarists' shabby sites. This is like five crippled, corrupt pirate ships forcing a stronger vessel to tow them along because they can't function under their own steam.

Perhaps the most reprehensible aspect of this behaviour is that it came from people who call themselves editors.



Arlene Prunkl now regularly uses plagiarism-detection software to protect her website content. Photo courtesy of Arlene Prunkl.

Among most professional editors a silent code of ethics exists that states we will not tolerate plagiarism in any form, and we will uphold the laws of copyright to the highest standards. To violate this code is to damage the reputation of not only the plagiarists but of all editors, to demean the editing profession as a whole. How can a potential writer trust any editor when a few unethical ones have no qualms about lying, cheating, and stealing?

What you can do

If you discover yourself to be the victim of plagiarism, you have several options. First, you can consider legal action, but this can be expensive, and only you can decide if it is worth the money and trouble. Second, you can go to www.copyscape.com and read the tips in the "Responding to plagiarism" link. Suggestions there include: "send a polite message asking for the material to be removed"; "contact the web hosting company used by the site and inform them of their

PLAGIARISM-DETECTION SERVICES

HOW THEY WORK

Thousands of plagiarism-detection services are available to choose from: a cursory search on Google under "plagiarism detector" yields 747,000 hits. Some services detect website plagiarism, allowing you to plug in the URL of the page you want analyzed or to do batch searches of your entire site; others detect plagiarism in "offline documents," allowing you to upload individual documents for analysis. Still others do both.

WHAT THEY COST

Some plagiarism-detection companies offer no-frills free services (often as a gateway product for their for-fee services); others charge on a per-use basis; still others charge an annual subscription fee.

WHAT I PAID

I discovered Polly and my four other plagiarists using Copyscape's free service.

Now, however, I'm thinking about signing up for one of its for-fee services: Copyscape Premium or Copysentry Standard. Copyscape Premium will allow me to see a complete list of potential matches (unlike the free service, which restricts potential matches to 10 per search). It will cost me \$0.05 US per page. Copysentry Standard is an automated service that will scan the Web each week, looking for copies of my entire site. This will cost me \$4.95 US per month for up to 10 pages; each additional page will cost me \$0.25 US per month. —ARLENE PRUNKL

customer's abuse"; and "file a notice of Digital Millennium Copyright Act ... infringement with search engines such as Google and others to have the offending site removed from their search results."


If the plagiarism is not removed, you can send an invoice to the offender for whatever you deem suitable as damages, including stress and time spent trying to eradicate the plagiarism.

If no response is forthcoming, send the invoice by registered mail. If you still receive no response, your next step is to inform the offender that you will be taking the invoice to small claims court. By this time, the offender will probably be taking you seriously, and will have hopefully agreed to remove the plagiarized content. If not, follow up and pursue the claim in small claims court.

Your final—rather drastic—choice is to further take the issue public using the Internet. However, I would suggest talking to a lawyer long before things devolve to this stage. In these instances, the damages to the offender can be severe, as in the case of the recent Judith Griggs/Cooks Source copyright infringement violation that was exposed and went viral online when Griggs refused to pay a nominal amount for the material she plagiarized or to apologize to the original writer (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cooks_Source_infringement_controversy). In the aftermath of this scandal, Griggs' shady editing career was ruined—likely forever.

However, my best advice is to protect the content on your website with a plagiarism-detection service so that anybody who is even *thinking* about stealing your content thinks twice:

everyone with a website containing content they value should do this. Research the multitude of plagiarism-detection services available, find one you like, and place plagiarism-warning banners prominently throughout your site, alerting people that your content is being monitored. As the saying goes, the best defence is a good offence!

Plagiarism has been going on for millennia, since humans first developed systems of writing. And despite the high moral esteem in which we can hold most editors, there will always be lazy, unscrupulous people in our profession, as in every field of work. But while the Internet makes plagiarism so much easier for intellectual property thieves, it also makes plagiarism detection so much easier. *Caveat emptor and caveat editor!* 

What's that you're reading?

You there. On the Skytrain. Reading that interesting-looking book. What would you say to sharing a shortlist of your favourite books with your EAC-BC colleagues?

In February 2011, *West Coast Editor* launched a new column: *The Bookshelf*. The column has been designed to showcase the reading-related opinions, passions, and peeves of guest columnists. To read the inaugural column, featuring *WCE* staffer Christine Dudgeon, go to www.editors.ca/node/892 and download a PDF of the February 2011 issue.

Why have we started this new column?

It's simple. EAC-BCers are notoriously voracious readers: literary fiction; historical fiction; pulp fiction; science fiction; fantasy; military history; biography; romance; manga; self-help; how-to; humour; high-brow magazines; low-brow magazines; catalogues; the backs of cereal boxes; you name it. We want to know what you're reading so we can read it too!

If you care to share with your fellow editors what you're reading, email us at westcoasteditor@editors.ca for more details. We'd love to feature you in a future issue.

poetic fibs contest winner

Jessica Klassen submits winning fib!

Full disclosure: *West Coast Editor's* attempt to morph EAC-BCers into fib-writing fans was doomed from the start. We did, however, receive one submission! So without further ado, we're pleased to announce the winner of our fib-writing contest: Jessica Klassen. Jessica has received an **I love serial commas** limited-edition coffee mug. We may be biased (Jessica is a *WCE* staffer and member of EAC-BC's branch executive), but we love her poem:

Lament of the office serf

by Jessica Klassen

Work

Long

Hours stretch

To meet ends

Be the office serf

A zombie gobbles dreams, not brains.

What's a fib?

A fib, explains Ben Macintyre in *The Last Word*, "is a six-line, twenty-syllable poem in which the number of syllables in each line is the sum of the syllables in the two preceding lines. This corresponds to the Fibonacci sequence, one of the most elegant patterns in mathematics, in which each successive number is the sum of the two previous numbers: 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8 . . ." (Technically, a fib can continue indefinitely, although Macintyre calculates that by the time you'd reached the 20th line, you'd have to compose a line containing 6,765 syllables.)

Macintyre variously refers to fibs as the "ultimate form of geek poetry," "an enjoyable parlour game, a way to force words into a pattern," and as "a cross between a haiku and an equation, at once free and regulated."

2011 EAC national conference

ARE YOU A PHOTOGRAPHER?

We are looking for an EAC-BC member with some serious photography skills to join our team of conference volunteers.

As one of three **event photographers**, you will be responsible for creating a visual history of the 2011 EAC national conference on Saturday, May 28. Please note that you must provide your own high-resolution camera and professional-grade flash.

INTERESTED?

Contact volunteer coordinator Chantal Moore (conference@editors.ca).

etcetera

Station. Parking is available across the street for \$8.00 after 6:00 pm. Street parking is also available.

Information: www.editors.ca/node/904 or bcprograms@editors.ca

EAC-BC SEMINAR: ALWAYS PITY THE POOR READER: COPY EDITING 101

May 14, 2011

Instructor: Rob Dykstra

A good editor can be the writer's best friend—and the reader's. If a sentence is poorly constructed, unclear, or riddled with mysterious jargon that only an insider can understand, the message will not be conveyed. If the entire piece is sloppily written, with errors in grammar, spelling, or punctuation, its credibility will suffer: how can the reader be sure the information itself is correct? The copy editor is a vital link between writer and reader.

This seminar, led by Rob Dykstra, will provide you with an overview of the copy editing function, the process, and a hands-on editing experience involving common problems and pitfalls.

Topics to be covered include: an overview of the editing process; the role of the copy editor; the importance of spelling, punctuation, grammar, and usage; accuracy of facts, names, and numbers; eliminating redundancies; and plain language.

Rob Dykstra has been an instructor in the journalism department at Langara College for more than 20 years; he has taught a copy editing course there for much of that time. He also oversees the editing and production of the annual *Langara Journalism Review*.

He is currently working on a handbook for editors.

Time: 10:00 am–4:00 pm

Cost: \$100 for EAC members who register by April 22, 2011 (after: \$120); \$160 for non-members who register by April 22, 2011 (after: \$180)

UPCOMING EVENTS EAC-BC SPEAKER SESSION: E-BOOKS ARE CHANGING THE WORLD (OR ARE THEY?)

April 20, 2011

Guest panellists: Kathleen Fraser,
Robert Mackwood, Susan Safyan

What is the impact of e-books on the publishing industry? Join us at our April meeting for a discussion with Kathleen Fraser, Robert Mackwood, and Susan Safyan about how new technologies are changing the publishing landscape.

Kathleen Fraser is a Master of Publishing student whose research has focused on the intersection of technological development and editorial practices. She is an enthusiast of agile methodologies, a tech evangelist, and a print-book lover. Kathleen is the editor at Hur Publishing and also works at Caitlin Press.

Robert Mackwood has spent almost 30 years in the book industry. As the owner and principal agent of Seventh Avenue Literary Agency—one of Canada's only non-fiction agencies—he represents more than 40 authors. In 2009, he created Mackwood

Publishing Consultants to work with self-published authors early in the publishing process, providing guidance for their projects.

Susan Safyan is associate editor at Arsenal Pulp Press in Vancouver. Arsenal publishes between 14 and 20 new titles each year in the areas of literary fiction and non-fiction, cultural and gender studies, LGBT and multicultural literature, cookbooks, and guidebooks. Arsenal has now released more than 200 of their titles as e-books.

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

Time: 7:30 pm

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

Place: YWCA
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

EDITING IN THE AGE OF  **LA RÉVISION**
e-EVERYTHING **À L'ÈRE DU**
TOUT-ÉLECTRONIQUE

www.editors.ca/conference/conference2011/index.html

May 27–29, 2011

SFU Vancouver

515 West Hastings Street
Vancouver

Place: SFU Vancouver
515 West Hastings Street
Vancouver

Registration: www.gifttool.com/registrar/ShowEventDetails?ID=1262&EID=8929

MAY 2011 EAC-BC MEETING: POSTPONED UNTIL JUNE 2011

Since many EAC-BC executives and committee members will be involved in preparations for the 2011 EAC national conference, the May 18 meeting has been postponed to June 15. See page 19 for details about the June 15 meeting (“EAC-BC book swap and 2011–2012 elections”).

EAC-BC PRE-CONFERENCE SEMINAR: GRAMMAR BOOT CAMP May 27, 2011

Instructor: Frances Peck

Grammar by instinct—we’re all guilty. Good instincts can get us far, but they can also lead us into traps if we’re not careful. This half-day session, led by Frances Peck, will run through the top 10 grammar and punctuation errors in published material, meaning they’ve made it past the sharp eyes of editors and proofreaders. Using a host of real-life examples, we’ll discuss (and practise) how to spot the top gaffes and banish them from publications.

Frances Peck, a partner with West Coast Editorial Associates, is an editing instructor at Douglas College and Simon Fraser University and teaches popular workshops for editors, writers, and translators across Canada. She co-authored the HyperGrammar website and in 2010 published *Peck’s English Pointers*, an e-book of articles and quizzes available on the Language Portal of Canada.

Coffee, tea, and muffins will be served at the start of the seminar.

Time: 9:00 am–12:00 pm

Cost: \$75 for EAC/ISC/PEAVI members;
\$115 for non-members

EVENT REVIEW **WEARING TWO HATS WITH STYLE: AUTHOR AS EDITOR** March 16, 2011

Guest speaker: Rhea Tregebov
Reviewer: Jennifer S. Getsinger, PhD

On Wednesday, March 16, 2011, EAC’s meeting presentation featured Dr. Rhea Tregebov, assistant professor in the creative writing program at UBC since 2005, poet, novelist, anthologist, and former technical writer and freelance editor for more than two decades in Toronto. Hugh Macdonald introduced the friendly speaker: “Rhea has worked with authors at the substantive level on numerous projects in a variety of genres, from YA novels to cookbooks, and from academic articles to literary fiction. As an author, she’s also been edited by some of the best, and is grateful for it.”

Her recent novel, *The Knife-Sharpener’s Bell*, about the Jewish experience in WWII Europe, was available after the presentation for \$20.

Rhea’s presentation concentrated on the editor–author relationship, and the necessity of sensitivity and tact. She gave examples from her own experience as author as well as editor, from the worst treatments to the best.

Although not all of the best editors are authors, many are, as substantive editing is improved by the “double vision” perspective provided by the author–editor. One of her favourites is Warren Cariou (a writer and associate professor of English at the University of Manitoba), who helped guide Rhea through her novel. She also commended “delicate” Charis Wahl (an editor at Kids Can Press, where the publishers had once been condescending to Rhea). Charis led her to pay special attention to editing literary authors—who risk profound emotions in a labyrinthine journey—with “a gentle hand, not iron boots.”

Practical advice followed on how to approach authors, not all of whom can write well, and empower the authors to do their best as the editor helps to “excavate the truth of the manuscript” and discover where the heart of the work lies. At the end of a thoughtful question period, Rhea Tregebov said, “I am the velvet glove; I always take a very gentle approach.”

Place: SFU Vancouver
515 West Hastings Street
Vancouver

Registration: www.gifttool.com/registrar/ShowEventDetails?ID=28&EID=9031

EAC-BC PRE-CONFERENCE SEMINAR: NETWORKING FOR EDITORS: WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO May 27, 2011

Instructor: Andrew Tzembelicos

Editors are frequently misunderstood, both in terms of who we are and what we do.

Networking can help clients understand why editing and editors matter. Whether you’re looking for new business or working with existing clients, networking is the key.

This informative and wide-ranging session—led by Andrew Tzembelicos—will touch on some networking basics, giving you the opportunity to engage in some practical exercises to flex your networking muscles. It will also provide you with an overview of LinkedIn, a social media tool all editors should be dialed into.

An accomplished communications professional with 13+ years’ experience, Andrew Tzembelicos has enjoyed a unique career that includes writing for a former prime minister and managing editorial services for

**EDITING
IN THE AGE OF
e-EVERYTHING**  **LA RÉVISION
À L'ÈRE DU
TOUT-ÉLECTRONIQUE**

EAC CONFERENCE: EDITING IN THE AGE OF E-EVERYTHING
May 27–29, 2011

Registration for the 2011 EAC national conference is now open. EAC has joined forces with the Indexing Society of Canada (ISC) and the Professional Editors Association of Vancouver Island (PEAVI) to present a “super conference,” allowing members of all three associations to enjoy an expanded program of panel discussions and sessions.

The conference will feature sessions about business and government web publishing, digital publishing and the future, e-books, editing in the media, educational publishing, social media, web writing and editing, multicultural media, and indexing. It is a must-attend event for anybody who wants to explore the challenges—and opportunities—editors face in an increasingly digital world.

Selected costs for EAC members

Three-day conference combo: \$575
Any two conference days: \$430
One-day option: \$250

Selected costs for EAC student members

Three-day conference combo: \$400
Any two conference days: \$290
One-day option: \$250

Selected costs for non-members

Three-day conference combo: \$750
Any two conference days: \$600
One-day option: \$360

Place: SFU Vancouver
515 West Hastings Street
Vancouver

Information and Registration: www.editors.ca/conference/conference2011/index.html

EAC Contract Collective members have bid on and landed contracts with federal and provincial governments since 2009. Want to learn more? Come to this session and find out how the Collective operates and how to become involved, how to read and respond to government RFPs and RFSOs, and how to follow up as a vendor of record to elicit work orders and call-ups. The session will include a review of Contract Collective guidelines and the anatomy of a government RFP/RFSO.

This session will be facilitated by Carolyn Burke, Greg Ioannou, and Peter Moskos. For 10 years, Peter Moskos was a partner in an Ottawa communications company where he wrote and managed hundreds of proposals to federal clients. Now based in Vancouver, Peter teaches an online course on government reports for Ryerson University and takes on occasional writing and editing contracts.

Greg Ioannou, a freelancer since 1977, was a founding member of (F)EAC and has held many positions on the national executive council, including president twice and treasurer six times. Greg owns the writing and editing company Colborne Communications.

Carolyn Burke, EAC’s executive director, is a successful serial entrepreneur. She advises corporate and NGO clients on organizational improvement and strategic long-term growth, focusing on financial success and leadership.

Time: 9:00 am–12:00 pm

Cost: free; open to EAC members only

Registration deadline: registrations will be accepted until all seats are filled

Place: SFU Vancouver
515 West Hastings Street
Vancouver

Registration: www.gifttool.com/registrar/ShowEventDetails?ID=28&EID=9031

**EAC-BC PRE-CONFERENCE
SEMINAR: BROADLY SPEAKING**
May 27, 2011

Instructors: “The Book Broads”

Part technical class, part strategy lecture, and part Q&A session, this seminar—led by

an Olympic and Paralympic Games. Today, he is chief wordsmith, principal, and founder of WERDNA Communications.

Coffee, tea, and muffins will be served at the start of the seminar.

Time: 9:00 am–12:00 pm

Cost: \$75 for EAC/ISC/PEAVI members;
\$115 for non-members

Place: SFU Vancouver
515 West Hastings Street
Vancouver

Registration: www.gifttool.com/registrar/ShowEventDetails?ID=28&EID=9031

**EAC-BC PRE-CONFERENCE
SEMINAR: BIDDING ON
GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS
THROUGH EAC’S CONTRACT
COLLECTIVE**
May 27, 2011

Presenters: Carolyn Burke, Greg Ioannou,
Peter Moskos

The Book Broads—will help broaden your vision of what you can offer as an editor, strategist, and co-creator of content for blogs, social media, and podcasting.

Who are The Book Broads? Angela Crocker, Kim Plumley, and Peggy Richardson are three self-described “sassy chicks” who know books, words, social media, and podcasting and who know how to connect creators with their inner content.

Coffee, tea, and muffins will be served at the start of the seminar.

Time: 10:00 am–4:00 pm

Cost: \$125 for EAC/ISC/PEAVI members; \$160 for non-members

Place: SFU Vancouver
515 West Hastings Street
Vancouver

Registration: www.gifttool.com/registrar/ShowEventDetails?ID=28&EID=9031

EAC-BC PRE-CONFERENCE SEMINAR: MAKE YOUR EDITING BUSINESS MORE PROFITABLE
May 27, 2011

Instructor: Cerina Wheatland

Want to take your business to the next level? Join Cerina Wheatland and explore strategies to manage your business more effectively, including how to market yourself, increase your sales, and improve your profitability. Learn how to better position your business—and yourself—to survive and thrive in the writing and editing industry.

Cerina Wheatland is an engaging business advisor, writer, speaker, and editor who guides entrepreneurs through the exciting and challenging process of creating, growing, and succeeding in business.

Coffee, tea, and muffins will be served at the start of the seminar.

Time: 1:00 pm–4:00 pm

Cost: \$75 for EAC/ISC/PEAVI members; \$115 for non-members

Place: SFU Vancouver
515 West Hastings Street
Vancouver

Registration: www.gifttool.com/registrar/ShowEventDetails?ID=28&EID=9031

EAC-BC PRE-CONFERENCE SEMINAR: ONLINE EDITING, SOCIAL MEDIA, AND HOW TO AVOID SELLING YOUR SOUL IN AGE 2.0

May 27, 2011

Instructor: Karen Pinchin

As if editors weren't busy enough, now we're being asked to upload stories directly to the Web, use Creative Commons when in-house images aren't available, and keep up with online news (all the while, tweeting as we go).

The seminar will be led by Karen Pinchin. Karen will share her experiences working online as part of a collaborative, community-based news start-up, including shortcuts and tips on dealing with off-site freelancers, building a cohesive web community that can do the work for you, and keeping your head clear while making ends meet. An overview of new online editing, social media, and communications tools will be provided, as will solutions to common online conundrums.

Karen Pinchin has worked as a reporter, researcher, and editor, both in print and online, for *Maclean's*, *The Canadian Press*, and *Newsweek International*. Currently the city editor of OpenFile Vancouver, Karen is on the vanguard of old-media methods used in a Web 2.0 world. With as much interest in ethics and fact-checking as in Twitter and Facebook, she still occasionally freelances for publications such as *The Walrus*.

Coffee, tea, and muffins will be served at the start of the seminar.

Time: 1:00 pm–4:00 pm

Cost: \$75 for EAC/ISC/PEAVI members; \$115 for non-members

Place: SFU Vancouver
515 West Hastings Street
Vancouver

Registration: www.gifttool.com/registrar/ShowEventDetails?ID=28&EID=9031

EAC CONFERENCE: EDITING IN THE AGE OF E-EVERYTHING
May 27–29, 2011

See the advertisement on page 18 for details.

EAC-BC BOOK SWAP AND 2011–2012 ELECTIONS
June 15, 2011

Free books, light refreshments, and a bit of networking. Mark your calendars now for EAC-BC's book swap and 2011–2012 elections.

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

Time: 7:30 pm

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

Place: YWCA Hotel
733 Beatty Street
Vancouver

The YWCA Hotel is located on the west side of Beatty Street (between Georgia and Robson), two blocks southwest of the Stadium SkyTrain Station.

Street parking is available. (The hotel's underground parking lot is accessible to hotel guests only.)

Information: www.editors.ca/node/904 or bcprograms@editors.ca

PRESENTING EAC'S MAY 27th **PRE-CONFERENCE** SPEAKERS*

01 Cerina Wheatland will lead “Make your editing business more profitable.”

May 27, 2011; 1:00 pm–4:00 pm



Courtesy of Cerina Wheatland

01

02 Frances Peck will lead “Grammar boot camp.”

May 27, 2011; 9:00 am–12:00 pm



Courtesy of Frances Peck

02

03 Andrew Tzembelicos will lead “Networking for editors: who we are and what we do.”

May 27, 2011; 9:00 am–12:00 pm



Courtesy of Andrew Tzembelicos

03

04 Karen Pinchin will lead “Online editing, social media, and how to avoid selling your soul in Age 2.0.”

May 27, 2011;
1:00 pm–4:00 pm



Courtesy of Karen Pinchin

04

05 Angela Crocker, Kim Plumley, and Peggy Richardson will lead “Broadly speaking.”

May 27, 2011;
10:00 am–4:00 pm



05

Not pictured:
Carolyn Burke, Greg Ioannou, and Peter Moskos. They will discuss “Bidding on government contracts through EAC’s Contract Collective.”
May 27, 2011;
9:00 am–12:00 pm

***See the **etcetera listings** for complete pricing & registration details.**