

# ◆ Highlights of the 2000 Annual Meeting

## Finding the Balance: Print & Electronic Publishing in the 21st Century

**Tom Lang**  
President-Elect  
1999-2000 Program Chair

The 2000 CSE annual meeting did come to pass, despite the terrifying but baseless fears of the Program Committee. When the San Antonio dust had settled, 380 people had attended all or part of the meeting, including 126 first-time attendees. Even better, we welcomed almost 60 new members at the conference, boosting the total membership by 5%! Clearly, if the welcome reception at the Institute of Texan Cultures was any indication, the prospect of Tex-Mex food brings lots of people together. As near as I can tell, a good time was had by all.

The keynote speaker, Cliff Nass of Stanford University's Department of Communication, did exactly what a keynote speaker should do: blew everybody's socks off with a high-energy, fascinating, and almost unbelievable presentation on how we interact with computers as though they were people. He got everybody going and gave them lots to talk about for the rest of the meeting.

Judith Axler Turner of the Turner Consulting Group, Monday's plenary

speaker, gave an elegant and insightful talk on the issues of shifting from print to electronic publication. She described with great clarity the fundamental issue: the inherent conflict between scientists, who benefit from unlimited free access to information, and publishers, who benefit from controlling and selling access to this information.

Philippa Benson, a specialist in document design and Tuesday's plenary speaker, compared the human factors in reading printed texts with those of reading online texts. In a head-to-head and point-by-point comparison of the two media, she clarified beautifully the strengths and weaknesses of each. She introduced some intriguing research findings and new perspective on how to think about the issues, that of human factors.

The meeting also featured 29 open sessions on a wide array of topics. My guess is that everyone in the five major constituencies of CSE—journal editors in general, medical-journal editors, managing editors, manuscript editors, and printers and publishers—found more than one session to be of



**CSE President Tad Parker takes the ropes for the next year.**

great interest (and usually scheduled at the same time) and most to be of high quality. Remember that all session speakers donated their time and materials and that all paid their own way to the meeting. There is no doubt in my mind that the professional commitment of our speakers and the generally high quality of their presentations are what made the meeting the success that it was.

Special thanks to the 2000 Program Committee, to all our conference speakers, and to the Drohan Management crew: Kathy Hoskins, executive director of CSE; Beverly Throop, account administrator; Lauren Maimone, meeting director; and Becky Pope, administrative assistant, all of whom made the train run on time. Join us next year in Washington, DC, and we'll do it all again.

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