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# Michael R. Ball

## Summary

Over 17 years as technical writer, editor, project leader and manager. Toolsmith and WWW technologies expert. Quick mastery of new software and technologies. Team player adept at working with developers and creating customer-oriented documents. Principal contributor with depth of management skills and experience. Efficient and energetic self-starter.

## Qualifications

### Product Areas

*Content filtering, Internet, firewall,  
and bandwidth-management software*

*SDKs*

*Windows, UNIX and proprietary APIs*

*VPN and networked remote-access servers*

*Network management software*

*Java Wizards and C++ APIs*

*SNMP and MIB-II*

*Software virtualization*

*Telecommunications software and hardware*

### Audiences

*Network administrators and IT professionals*

*OEMs*

*ISPs*

*Telcos*

*Small and medium business*

*Enterprise users*

*Individual hardware, software and modem customers*

*Beginner through installer through troubleshooter*

*Internal development, test, and training staff*

*Customer support*

*Corporate VPN implementers*

### Information Delivery Types

*HTML and PDF online documentation*

*CD-ROM design and development*

*Online Help for Windows and Java*

*Quick-start cards*

*Installation guides*

*Administrator manuals*

*User guides*

*Troubleshooting guides*

*Site logs*

*PowerPoint presentations for product and ISO training*

### Operating Environments

*Windows*

*UNIX & Linux*

*pSOS*

*TCP/IP*

*OpenView basic*

*NetWare*

### Development Tools

*FrameMaker HTML*

*HotDog Pro*

*ASCII editors*

*RoboHelp*

*WebWorks Pro*

*PageMaker FrontPage*

*Acrobat*

*Project*

*FullShot*

*HiJaak*

*Java MS Office*

*C++*

*Illustrator*

*Photoshop*

*DreamWeaver*

*FS Pro*

## Employment

*Contract Technical Writing and Documentation Management (May 2004 — present)*

Clients include Omgeo LLC, Softricity, V.i. Labs, Northern Light Group, and CrossCheck Networks. Projects include on-line Help and documentation, converting large, complex manuals from Word to FrameMaker, and adding indices to previously unstructured documents. Another was creating developer's guide from scratch, working with domestic and overseas programmers. These assignments involve project management, aligning multiple, disparate styles into a new corporate look and feel, and meeting deadlines crucial to bids and proposals to major target customers. Current projects include total rework of administrator guides, user manuals and Help system for a complex software-virtualization product.

*Zix Corporation (Elron Software) Burlington, MA, March 1999 — April 2004*

**SENIOR ENGINEERING MANAGER.** Managed two product lines, message filtering and firewall software. Oversaw development teams, created functional specifications and schedules, and led multiple projects. Built pubs department from sole contributor. Planned and executed paper and online documentation for six separate software products, using FrameMaker, RoboHELP, Acrobat, FullShot, Photoshop WebWorks Pro and HotDog. Managed permanent and contract writers in Burlington and Israel. Upgraded and added customer orientation to existing manuals and Help. Created, scheduled and implemented doc and Help sets for new software products. Added context-sensitive Help to each product. Formally recognized by president as most improved department.

*Compaq NAC (Microcom), Norwood, MA, May 1993 — March 1999*

**SENIOR TECHNICAL WRITER and PROJECT LEADER.** Lead in VPN system documentation, using FrameMaker, RoboHELP, FullShot, Photoshop and HotDog. Planned and directed 11-manual remote-access system doc set, including writing four manuals. Developed division's first CD and WWW docs. Documented C++ software and Java Wizards, hardware, systems and troubleshooting manuals and related materials. Developed docs for parallel-port telecommunications technologies. Designed internal and external WWW sites. Documented Windows, SNMP, IPX and pSOS interfaces to three remote-access systems and VPN products.

*Zoom Telephonics, Boston, MA, April 1992 — May 1993*

**DOCUMENTATION MANAGER.** Introduced quick-start guides to mass marketer, using Word and PageMaker. Overhauled outdated manuals. Developed WWW site and BBS docs and Help. Oversaw translation and homologation for Europe. Hired and directed contract writers. Developed documentation/support communication system.

**Additional Experience**

*Newspaper, Magazine, and Book Writing and Editing for:*

*EDN*

*McGraw-Hill*

*CIMWeek*

*Automation News*

*Smart Machines*

*Arthur D. Little*

*Technology Research Group*

*Palmetto Post*

*Electronic Business*

*Modern Materials Handling*

*INC. Magazine*

*AMACOM*

*Management Review Magazine*

*Convenience Store Merchandiser*

*Savannah Morning News*

*Boston Globe*

*Construction Equipment Magazine*

*InfoWeek*

**Education**

Lesley College School of Management, B.S.

**Additional Education**

Journalism, U. of South Carolina

FrameMaker, Beginning, Intermediate and Advanced

Introduction to Networking, the Learning Tree  
Networking in a Multi-Vendor Environment, the Learning Tree

Access Server Configuration and Management, Cisco

Information Mapping

Distributed Management Module Operations, 3Com

Time Management, SkillPath

Project Management, Fred Pryor

Usability Testing, Bentley College

Help Technology

Photoshop, CompuMaster

ClearCase Fundamentals, Rational Software

AccuRev

**Affiliations**

Active Senior Member of the Society for Technical Communication, including competition judging, technical presentations at conferences, competitions chairman, and president of Boston Chapter.