

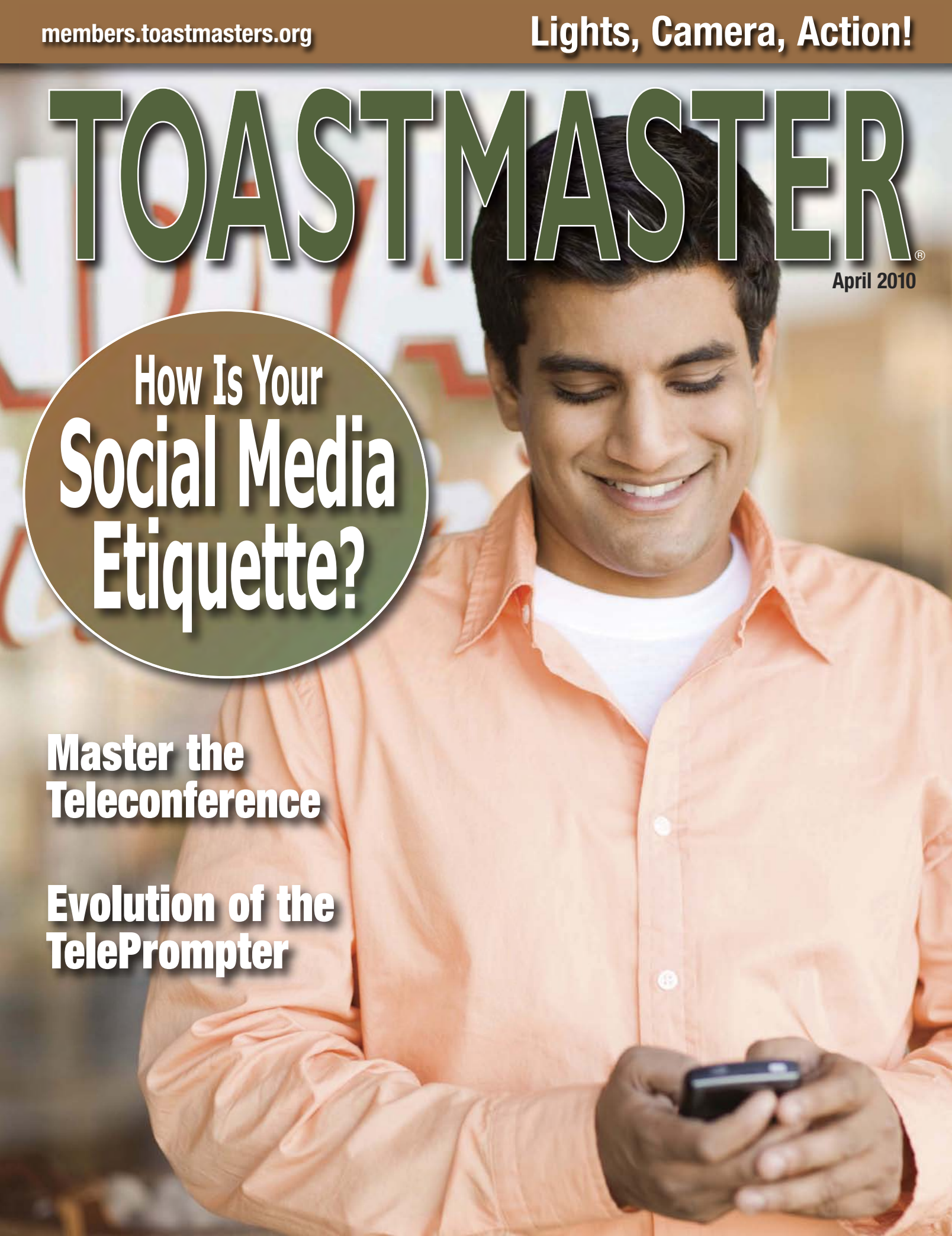
TOASTMASTER®

April 2010

How Is Your
**Social Media
Etiquette?**

**Master the
Teleconference**

**Evolution of the
TelePrompter**





Connecting in the 21st Century

✦ I wrote my first term paper using a computer instead of a typewriter when I was in college in 1990. I called home to my parents on a rotary telephone. I would communicate with a fellow student in class by passing a handwritten note on a piece of paper.

In 1997, when I was an area governor, I communicated with my club presidents by telephone. I did not have e-mail. In 2001, when I was a district governor, Toastmasters International distributed District Performance Reports once a month by mail.

Technology has changed the way the world, and Toastmasters, operates. We now can communicate instantaneously via text message or on social networks using handheld devices like smart phones. We can send messages around the world that will be read or viewed immediately.

Technology provides innovative and creative ways to communicate to vast audiences in a timely manner. How do you and your club use technology to enhance and improve communication? Do you give speeches using PowerPoint? Does your club have a Web site? Or a Facebook fan page? Do you tweet? These are all tools to help expand the Toastmasters message to our members and future members.

Yet technology is just one of the many tools in our communications collection. It is not the only tool. Sometimes it is easier or quicker to communicate electronically rather than face to face. I certainly have sent a quick e-mail when I should have picked up a telephone. Or I had a hurried phone call instead of a face-to-face conversation. Toastmasters can teach us all how to be effective communicators, using the correct communication vehicle.

What will technology, and Toastmasters, look like in 2020, 2050 or 2100? The future is unknown, but the power of Toastmasters is timeless. I believe that Toastmasters will train women and men in the arts of communication and leadership for years to come, no matter how electronic communications evolve. Someday we may all chuckle at how we survived communicating using "just computers" or "only e-mail."

Whether it's face to face, voice to voice or keyboard to keyboard, Toastmasters helps us all become better communicators. The ability to connect with others, using many methods, is an essential trait for success. Keep learning, growing and adapting. Your journey of connecting with others begins now! (And now I must return to my Facebook page...)

Gary Schmidt, DTM
International President

TOASTMASTER

Publisher Daniel Rex
Editor Suzanne Frey
Associate Editors Beth Black
Paul Sterman
Editorial Assistant Katie De Boer
Graphic Design Sue Campbell

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TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL

P.O. Box 9052 • Mission Viejo, CA 92690 U.S.A.
949-858-8255 • Fax: 949-858-1207
Voicemail: 949-835-1300
members.toastmasters.org

CONTACTING WORLD HEADQUARTERS

For information on joining
or building a club, visit: www.toastmasters.org
Article submission: submissions@toastmasters.org
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The Toastmasters Vision:

Toastmasters International empowers people to achieve their full potential and realize their dreams. Through our member clubs, people throughout the world can improve their communication and leadership skills, and find the courage to change.

The Toastmasters Mission:

Toastmasters International is the leading movement devoted to making effective oral communication a worldwide reality.

Through its member clubs, Toastmasters International helps men and women learn the arts of speaking, listening and thinking – vital skills that promote self-actualization, enhance leadership potential, foster human understanding, and contribute to the betterment of mankind.

It is basic to this mission that Toastmasters International continually expand its worldwide network of clubs thereby offering ever-greater numbers of people the opportunity to benefit from its programs.

Do you have something to say? Write it in 200 words or less, sign it with your name, address and club affiliation and send it to letters@toastmasters.org.

Medical Story Makes Healthy Contribution

As a fellow Toastmaster from Switzerland, I would like to thank and congratulate Florence Ferreira for her article "A Visit to the Doctor" (January). I was touched by her courage and spirit, and her good sense of humor too.

I think the information in the article is very valuable and also very much to the point. Moreover, it reveals a lot of warmth and understanding for both sides – patients and doctors!

Marianne Krampe, CC • Bern Toastmasters • Bern, Switzerland

Traveling Down Under

I applaud the article "Broadening Your Horizons" by Paul Sterman (October). I have been a Toastmaster for five years and love to travel, but last September was my first time attending a Toastmasters meeting in another nation. We were given a fine welcome by the Chatswood Communicators of Sydney, Australia, and enjoyed participating in Table Topics as well as hearing three fine prepared speeches.

We can learn from visiting other clubs anywhere, but visiting a club in another country adds a new dimension. Naturally, upon my return home I gave a speech about the experience and distributed copies of the battered meeting agenda that had traveled with me all those miles. I certainly hope to attend club meetings in other countries in the future.

Christina E. "Betsy" Chesney, CC, ATMB • Downtown Dazzlers Chattanooga, Tennessee

Turning Around Table Topics Fears

The article "Turning the Tables on Table Topics" by Craig Harrison (February) completely removed the fears I have endured since joining Toastmasters in early 2006. Undoubtedly, Table Topics is one of the most

valuable segments of Toastmasters meetings, although many of us are frightened by it.

At our club's last meeting, equipped with the valuable 12 strategies described in Craig's article, I faced the hitherto terrifying and frustrating Table Topics session with a profound confidence. I enjoyed this sense of achievement, even though I was still given suggestions for improvement.

At the end of the meeting, I requested that all my fellow members read Craig's article. I employed just one of his recommended strategies – "reframing" – and I am eagerly looking forward to using the other 11 in future Table Topics sessions.

Gamini Senanayake, CC, CL • Wayamba Toastmasters • Sri Lanka

The Good Work of Toastmasters

Our club believes in reaching out to our community to promote the benefits of Toastmasters, and recently we conducted a Toastmasters presentation to an English Language School in Indonesia.

One of my Toastmasters friends was unemployed at the time and offered to give his time to help in the presentation. As an unexpected result of that, the school saw his potential and offered him a job.

To me, this really speaks to the benefits of improving our communication skills through Toastmasters, and proves that the time we give in serving others is never wasted.

Matt Price, ACB • Club president, Jakarta Toastmasters Jakarta, Indonesia

In Favor of Evolving Language

In her article "The Link Between Language and Leaders" (February), Diana Booher makes a number of good points. However, I find some of her comments too rigid and displaying a measure of intellectual elitism.

In the article, she rails against "verbing" words and against invent-

ing new words. This is too rigid.

While I agree that one should try to verify if good words already exist, we should not be afraid of the invention of new words when it makes sense.

The richness of the English language has developed through the invention of new words and the incorporation of words from other languages. William Shakespeare, the reference point of our language, is said to by himself have invented some 2000 words.

Languages are constructed through the invention of new words. Languages that do not evolve, including the invention of new words, become dead. While we must be careful in our grammar and the correct use of the words, we must allow our language to develop and live.

Mark Louis Uhrich, ACB • Busy Professionals Toastmasters Paris, France

Wowed by Article on Writing

Philip Yaffe's article "The Better You Write It, The Better You Say It" (March) is the best article I have ever read on the why and how of writing a speech. I recommend that it be saved and used by every Toastmaster.

However, the adage he cites is not that seven percent of a speech is verbal and 93 percent nonverbal. The adage is that an audience may get only seven percent from the verbal if the nonverbal detracts or distracts sufficiently from the verbal. A great piece of writing, one that follows both the principles and the tips of Mr Yaffe's article, can be lost with flat, nervous or agitated delivery.

A clear, concise and dense message becomes effective and memorable with good vocal variety and body language – which include appropriate tone, dress, grooming, posture and gestures.

Harvey Davey, ATM • Orléans Raconteurs Orléans, Ontario, Canada

Link by Link and Tweet by Tweet

During a 1996 speech about the Internet, then-U.S. President Bill Clinton famously remarked, “When I took office, only high-energy physicists had ever heard of...the Worldwide Web...Now even my cat has its own page.”

Now the Internet is an omnipresent and indispensable feature in the lives of millions. Used wisely, it can enhance our speaking skills and your Toastmasters experience.

Breaking Down Borders

I’m a member of the International Geneva Toastmasters in Switzerland. My district, No. 59, comprises clubs from 17 countries in continental Europe. I have met many Toastmasters friends at district conferences. We live all over Europe, and getting together for a regular cup of coffee is not feasible. Enter the Internet.

Tim May, a former engineer and chief scientist at Intel, once noted that national borders are not even speed bumps on the Internet. I can stay in touch with my friends and exchange advice on different public speaking matters.

For example, through Google Documents – a platform that allows people to collaborate on a single document – I and other District 59 members were able to help the district’s 2009 International Speech Contest winner, Peter Zinn. When Peter worked on drafts of his speech in preparation for last year’s Inter-District contest at the International Convention, we were able to give him valuable feedback.

You Too Can YouTube

While there’s no substitute for practice, watching videos of other speakers is a great way to pick up techniques and ideas. In this regard,

YouTube.com is a goldmine. Search “Toastmasters” or “speech” and you’ll have enough viewing material for weeks. You can also post your own videos. I put a few of my district contest speeches on YouTube and received great feedback. Another excellent site for speakers is **TED.com**, where you can watch fascinating speeches on a variety of topics.

Of Links and Tweets

The Internet is very much a two-way street. People no longer go online just to get information; they want to contribute. Two sites help with this.

LinkedIn.com has hundreds of public-speaking groups, including one run by Toastmasters International (with more than 10,000 members). As a member, you can participate in online discussions about speaking issues, ask questions or seek advice, post notices of public-speaking events, look for work or a speaking engagement, and much more.

With **Twitter.com**, you can follow (and be followed by) thousands of people around the world. Messages are exchanged in “tweets” – real-time, 140-character bursts. You can group the people you follow any way you like. Thus, I have a group for people who tweet about public speaking. Through Twitter, I share and receive public speaking tips and links to interesting articles.

Blah, Blah, Blog

A year ago, I decided to try blogging and created **mannerofspeaking.org** – a blog devoted to public speaking issues. The experience has been rewarding. I have readers from around the world and believe that


through my blog – a mix of serious and light articles on public speaking – I’m able to give something back to others. My blog is linked to my LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook accounts, so my posts appear there as well.

It has been said that a blog is like a shark – it has to keep moving or it will die. For those considering starting a blog (on any topic), you must be committed to (1) posting quality content that people will want to read and (2) posting regularly.

Pay It Forward

I have two pieces of advice for anyone about to embark on a social networking foray. First, do not spread yourself thin. There are thousands of social networking sites and new ones appear every day. It is virtually – pun partially intended – impossible to join them all and maintain a meaningful presence. There are not enough hours in the day and who wants to be anchored to a computer? Be selective and focus on a few sites.

Second, pay it forward. There is nothing wrong with using the Internet to improve yourself, personally or professionally. But look for ways in which to help others by, for example, responding to questions that they post. What goes around comes around.

Discover how social networking can enhance your Toastmasters experience. All this and much more is only a click away! 

John Zimmer, a member of the International Geneva Toastmasters in Geneva, Switzerland, is a four-time District 59 champion in Toastmasters speech contests. He can be reached at john.s.zimmer@gmail.com.

Past District 53 Governor is a poised presence on popular TV quiz show.

“I’ll Take Toastmasters for \$2,000!”

Deb Grehn enjoyed watching *Jeopardy!* as a girl, but she never aspired to be a contestant on the long-running game show. Yet there she was, coolly answering questions from iconic host Alex Trebek in an episode last year.

So what spurred Grehn to aim for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity?

“A few years ago, when my son Matthew was in ninth grade, he gave me a piece of advice that has stuck with me,” she says. “He told me to ‘face my fears.’ Whenever I come up against something that scares me or makes me nervous, I think of his comment, and it gives me the courage to step out of my comfort zone and reach for my dreams.”

A member of three Toastmasters clubs in Connecticut and a past governor of District 53, Grehn says her speaking experience was a big part of her *Jeopardy!* success. “In every new venture, I use the valuable communication skills I’ve learned as a Toastmaster,” she says.

Jeopardy! contestant producer Maggie Speak says Grehn presented herself in a confident, charming manner, particularly during the segment of the show when Trebek asks the contestants questions about themselves. “The audience laughed as she told a great story with a terrific punch line,” Speak notes. “She’s a classy lady whose presence is strong, visually and vocally.”

Grehn’s *Jeopardy!* journey began one night in early 2009. As she watched the program, which measures contestants’ knowledge in different subject areas, she learned

that *Jeopardy!* offered an online preliminary test. “I thought, I might as well take the test and see what happens,” says the West Hartford, Connecticut, resident, who has a competitive nature and loves trivia and learning new things. To her delight, she passed the 50-question exam and received a congratulatory e-mail inviting her to Boston for a second test and an interview.

“I was in seventh heaven,” says Grehn, who prepared for the test with the help of her fellow Toastmasters.

A Revealing Story

For the interview, *Jeopardy!* producers required that Grehn send in five potential questions about herself – the kind Trebek might ask were he to interview her. “It was really challenging to come up with those five questions, because I had to think of interesting and revealing things about myself,” she says. “The one they liked best was about my first date with my husband, Kim, and how we went to a Halloween costume party where I dressed as Lady Godiva.”

When Grehn finished that day, producers told her they would call if they wanted her to appear on an upcoming show. “I left there grinning from ear to ear,” she says.

For four months she didn’t hear anything. “One day I was out shopping and my son called to say that someone from *Jeopardy!* wanted to talk to me,” Grehn recalls. “When he gave me the number, I remember thinking, ‘If one of my friends is playing a cruel joke I’m going to be really mad!’” It was indeed someone

with *Jeopardy!*, who made arrangements for her to travel to Culver City, California, for a taping of the show in late September. The episode aired October 20, 2009.

Thanks to Toastmasters meetings, Grehn was prepared for the experience. “Even before I got that call, I’d been giving speeches about what I call ‘The *Jeopardy!* saga,’” she says. “Just the week before, I had talked to one of my clubs about how I was still waiting.”

Grehn’s fellow club member Jane Phillion says those speeches were amusing and informative. “Not only was the experience fun for Deb, it gave her a lot of really good speech material and a chance to practice her skills.”

It’s Show Time

When Grehn arrived at the studio early the morning of the show, she reviewed all the rules and regulations and enjoyed the pre-show make-up session. “I loved being pampered,” she says. “The only other time I looked that good was my wedding day.”

Grehn didn’t win, but she enjoyed the experience. “I had the misfortune of competing against a champion who had been on the program for a couple of days. I did the best I could, though, and really enjoyed myself.” Where Grehn believes she shined was during the interview portion with Trebek.

“When he asked about my first date as Lady Godiva, I wasn’t nervous at all, but felt very composed,” she says. “The audience and



◀ Past District 53 Governor Deb Grehn poses with *Jeopardy!* host Alex Trebek.

Alex laughed at my story, which really bolstered my confidence. I attribute that self-assurance to my Toastmasters training.”

“For a lot of contestants, the interview with Alex is the most nerve-racking part of the experience,” adds Speak, the contestant producer. “Deb’s interview was very natural.”


(Trebek, the suave Canadian who has been hosting the Emmy Award-winning program since 1984, would make a splendid grammarian at a Toastmasters meeting. Although he’s never been a member, he told the *Toastmaster* magazine in a 2003 profile, “I think that it is a sign of respect to our viewers that I make the effort to pronounce words correctly and to use grammar properly.”)

A Distinguished and Dedicated Toastmaster

Before joining Toastmasters, Grehn thought of herself as the shy, retiring type. Not anymore; during her 17 years as a member, she has held every office at the club level as well as served as a district governor. Grehn, a DTM, belongs to clubs in three different Connecticut cities: the Charter Oak Toastmasters in Glastonbury, the Central Connecticut Advanced club in Berlin and the West Hartford Toastmasters.

“Deb has been a really active member of Toastmasters, which has helped her develop confidence and poise,” says Roger Brown, DTM, a fellow member of the West Hartford club. She has also gained leadership skills, and as a result has held many positions throughout the community.”

Grehn volunteers at a variety of local nonprofits. She is also forming her own company in the field of diversity-management training and consulting.

“Every day, I work toward my dreams so that my future looks dynamic and exciting,” she says. “Looking to your dreams is important, because they are the key to your passion – and that’s one word I’ve kept close to my heart throughout my Toastmasters career. This organization has shaped my life and helped me become the person and communicator I was meant to be.” 

Julie Bawden Davis is a freelance writer based in Southern California and a longtime contributor to the *Toastmaster*. You can reach her at Julie@JulieBawdenDavis.com.

Talking Up Toastmasters on *Jeopardy!*

By Paul Sterman

Deb Grehn isn’t the first Toastmaster to have competed on *Jeopardy!* Darryl Tahirali, a quality assurance supervisor at Prescription Solutions in Irvine, California, was selected for the quiz show in 2008.

During the segment where host Alex Trebek asks the contestants about themselves, Tahirali talked about how his Toastmasters experience gave him the confidence to try out for the game show. A 10-year member who has competed in speech contests and served in a variety of officer roles, Tahirali said, “You get asked to do things in Toastmasters that you’ve never done before, and doing things like that helps you build the confidence to do things [in life] that you’ve never done before but that maybe you want to.”

He also touched on the value of Table Topics with Trebek.

The Toastmaster’s turn on *Jeopardy!* was a prosperous one: He won three games, reaping a total of \$86,000. Tahirali says being on the show was a great experience, and his fellow members of the Contrarians club in Irvine, California, were excited by it as well.

“One of them said to me, ‘Hey you got the Table Topics phrase out there on national TV.’”

Do you know any Toastmasters who have appeared on *Jeopardy!*? If so, tell us about it at submissions@toastmasters.org.

Paul Sterman is an associate editor for the *Toastmaster* magazine.



Master the Teleconference

10 Toastmasters tips for better long-distance meetings.

By Jason Kent, ACB

***A**s a Toastmaster, you have fine-tuned your communication, listening and leadership skills. You are comfortable speaking in front of small groups. You have applied these skills at your business or organization. But how are you at leading a telephone meeting?*

Remote meetings conducted by telephone are known as teleconferences or conference calls and are common in the workplace. Mere mention of a

teleconference can conjure up thoughts of long, boring, pointless calls that are less effective than they should be. In their book, *Boring Meetings Suck...the Time, Energy, Creativity and Money Out of Your Organization*, authors Jon Petz and Don Snyder contemplate the effectiveness of teleconferences. "With tight budgets and ad hoc meetings



being set up quickly,” they write, “conference calls are often thought to be the most efficient way to accomplish the objective while keeping people at their desks and

This helps them follow along and prepare their thoughts for when it's their turn to speak. It's always a good idea to create and send an agenda ahead of time.

Your agenda should also be time-realistic. Don't try to fit an hour's worth of topics into a 30-minute call.

“Using vocal variety when leading a teleconference call is as important as it is in a successful Toastmasters speech.”

squeezing the meeting into an already overpopulated schedule. So how can we do this effectively? Is it even possible?”

When you are the teleconference leader, your challenge is to make the meeting as productive as possible. You can do this by employing your Toastmasters communication and leadership skills. These additional tips will help you maximize the productivity and efficiency of the conference call:

1 Consider a videoconference.

Videoconferences are no longer the stuff of science-fiction. Also known as webinars, webcasts and Web conferences, video conferences allow your participants to interact using video and audio.

With Web sites such as Skype and WebEx, all you need is a Web camera and a microphone to be seen and heard by your participants. If you do not have the necessary computer equipment, businesses such as FedEx Office and Regus rent meeting rooms stocked with videoconferencing equipment. The videoconference gives you the benefit of being seen as well as heard – an advantage that will make your remote meeting more effective.

If your meeting doesn't require a service as advanced as videoconferencing, but you want to conduct your conference over the Internet, VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) and PBX (Private Branch Exchange) allow you to do just that. Dozens of applications exist for VoIP/PBX conferencing; many of them can save you and your company money over the cost of regular conference calls.

2 Have a realistic agenda. Teleconference participants should have a copy of the agenda in front of them.

Prioritize the topics, pick the most important ones to address and place those early in the agenda. It might be helpful to have an “optional topics” section in your agenda in case you are left with extra time.

3 Start positively. Just like a Toastmasters speech, a teleconference should have a clearly organized structure. It should have an introduction that clearly states the purpose and objectives of the meeting. Then the body should carry the bulk of the message and issues the call is intended to address. The conclusion should tie the teleconference together by summarizing the key points and action items.

If you choose to include a roll call after your introduction, you can ask all participants to describe their role in the organization or on the project team, or you may ask them an icebreaker question unrelated to the call topic – it's up to you. The roll call gives everyone a chance to speak and identify that they are there, listening and contributing.

If you lead a teleconference without video, and your participants can't see you, remember to smile anyway. Your grin comes through in your tone of voice and the participants will know you're smiling.

4 Be inclusive. Remember, this is a teleconference, not a tele-presentation. One person shouldn't dominate the conversation. Instead, actively encourage all participants to weigh in. Gathering input from everyone keeps the participants engaged and interested. You can also ask the speakers to identify themselves before each speaks – each time – so everyone can track who is speaking.

You might run into the situation where people speak at the same time – this is humorously called “stepping on” each other. As the moderator, your job is to keep the discussion flowing in an orderly manner. How you do that is up to you – you may choose to call on each participant individually, ask them to speak in some pre-defined order (geographically, by business unit, etc.), or let them figure it out themselves.

Shrinking Your World

How your computer can help you meet with others, anywhere, virtually.

By Jeff Bailey

In today's world there is a pressing need to collaborate and share information. Imagine your vice president membership has had a "Eureka!" moment like the ancient Greek thinker, Archimedes. She is developing a can't-miss program guaranteed to double the club's membership. She needs help developing her plan and wants to show it to someone, now! Unfortunately, no one is available until next week's meeting.

There is a solution to this problem and it's as close as a mouse click. Virtual-presentation environments are almost magical. You can deliver presentations, conduct effective meetings and collaborate with co-workers over the Web. Such programs allow you to share your computer screen with other people. You can share applications and documents, and since everyone is seeing a similar display (the presenter's view is slightly different than the attendee's view), the opportunity for confusion is greatly reduced.

It's easy to get started. You simply go online and sign up with a provider. Each vendor uses different technology. Some run everything on their servers (big computers running in a huge data center). Others require that the presenter and participants install special software on their machines. There may be other differences, too.

You can visit a few Web sites and find the one that best suits your needs.

I suggest that you start with **Dimdim.com**. Simply click the "Sign Up Now!" button for free access. Dimdim can handle the spoken communication in your meeting by using Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP). This is just a fancy way of saying you don't need to use an actual phone – an inexpensive microphone attached to each computer will work just fine.

Once you're ready, here are five ways that you can supercharge your next virtual presentation:

- **Understand your virtual-presentation environment.**

Once you have registered for the service, take time to play around with it. Don't forget to watch videos and read the online help. It's a lot of fun to discover how these things work. As you explore, imagine how you might use each feature in a real presentation.

- **Practice! Practice! Practice!** Make sure you can find the options without having to hunt for them. Use the recording feature and review your practice sessions. This is the most important tip.

5 Monitor your progress. When you develop your agenda, it's a good idea to indicate how long you expect each item to last. You can do that on the meeting agenda, or simply annotate your own copy.

As you move along in the teleconference, occasionally check the time. If you're running behind, step up the pace. Alternately, you can cut less-important sections from the schedule. If you choose to alter the agenda, be sure to communicate this to the participants.

6 Take notes. Don't forget to take your own notes during your call. You should assign the task of keeping the meeting minutes to someone else, because you, the moderator, must keep track of key points, decisions and action items as they happen. You'll depend on these notes at the end of the conference call when you summarize and conclude.

7 Use vocal variety. What's important with an audio/video combination becomes even more important if you're using audio alone. Those attention-grabbing

visuals that help when participants can see you will no longer be there; thus, the absence of vocal variety in your speaking style might put your listeners to sleep. Using vocal variety when leading a teleconference call is as important as it is in a successful Toastmasters speech.

Be sure to vary your volume, pitch and rate – as appropriate – to make your point. You want to be expressive enough to maintain the interest of your listeners without going overboard. Constructive pauses will help to emphasize your points. As with Toastmasters manual speeches, your presentation will improve if you rehearse in advance.

8 Create and distribute visual aids. If used correctly, visual aids can help engage your audience and enable them to better understand and retain your message. So make sure you have everyone's e-mail address. You can send photographs, charts or tables, or slideshow presentations. It's generally a good idea to e-mail the materials before the teleconference to allow participants time to review and print their own

■ **Find a friend.** Learning to present over the Web is much more effective, and fun, if you have a friend to help. Try setting up two computers in the same room. This allows you to explore a feature and instantly see what appears on the other person's screen. Then you can see what happens on your screen when he types something. It's also okay to try this with a friend who is set up elsewhere. Simply describe to each other what you see throughout the session.

Here's an idea: Take a laptop and a data projector to your club meeting and make an event out of it. People are often amazed when they first see Web conferencing (virtual presentations). Chances are, some of your fellow Toastmasters will want to participate in your learning adventure.

■ **Load documents into the tool.** If you need to display PowerPoint slides or a PDF as part of your presentation, make sure that you display each using the virtual-presentation tool. If you load your PowerPoint slides into Dimdim, you can draw or type on them to highlight a point. Do this before attempting a real presentation. Carefully test slide animations. Finding yourself in a panic because you "thought it would work" is no fun.

■ **Focus on your voice.** Your voice is your *human* connection to the audience. Think back to the virtual presentations or conference calls you have attended.

copies. However, Internet-based technology is evolving rapidly; there are now free and subscription data services that allow the participants to see your slideshow or computer programs in real time. These technologies make it easier to distribute and use teleconferencing visual aids.


9 Know when to quit. Teleconferences often don't end right on time. If the call finishes early, you won't get too many complaints. But when a call runs long, you have a decision to make: You can let the conference run overtime, or you can cut it short.

In many cases, it is best to pose the question to the participants and let the group decide. Some participants may have full schedules, so by extending the call you might lose those people. In this case, the best decision might be to stop the meeting on time.

10 Summarize and conclude. When your call is winding down, two final steps will wrap up your teleconference neatly. Using your notes taken during the




Did they seem monotone – and as a result, uninspiring and boring? It's important to make the most of your Toastmasters skills. You've practiced vocal variety in your speeches. Now, practice it online!

Effectively delivering virtual presentations is a great way to increase your influence and impact in the community. Distance will never again be an obstacle to meetings with your friends or business associates. You'll be able to meet with them, anywhere, anytime. Plus, it's fun! So find a friend and say hello virtually. You will be glad you did. 

Jeff Bailey is a computer consultant and trainer in Cary, North Carolina. He writes about presentation skills on his blog, *Wired Presentations*. Reach him at wiredpresentations.com.

call, summarize the key points. If you generated action items, clarify them in detail. List the action items, the person responsible for each item and the deadline. If you plan to have a follow-up call, remind the listeners of the time and date of the next teleconference. Conclude with a final remark, such as a challenge or an inspiring call to action.

Teleconferences are a necessary reality of business communications today. As a Toastmaster, you already have the skills to turn a potentially gloomy, boring conference call into a positive and productive experience for your participants. Pay attention to these Toastmasters-inspired tips, and you can transform a run-of-the-mill teleconference into an efficient, productive work session. Next time you lead a conference call – *Toastmaster* it! 

Jason Kent, ACB, is a civil engineering manager and a member of Electric Toasters in Portland, Oregon. Reach him at Jason.Kent@yahoo.com.



What Is Pecha Kucha?

Mesmerized, I wondered, “Is it the speaker, the unusual format he’s using...or both?” The speaker’s presentation consisted of 20 slides, and each slide lasted exactly 20 seconds. Something about this innovative presentation enthralled me. And I wasn’t the only one. The speech – with Twitter as the topic – drew a lot of attention at a speaker’s conference I was attending in Nashville, Tennessee.

I learned later what I had experienced was a presentation style, called Pecha Kucha. The name is difficult to pronounce, as attested to by the number of YouTube videos devoted entirely to its correct pronunciation. Phonetically, you should say: Paw-Chalk’-Ahh-Cha.’ Say it quickly and confidently and chances are you’ll be almost right – though not quite.

Writer John Gendall calls Pecha Kucha “PowerPoint’s hip, younger cousin” and communication coach Andrew Thorp (Manchester, United Kingdom) says, “Pecha Kucha is a great antidote to bad PowerPoint.”

Some call it “Death by PowerPoint,” while others think of it as the death of PowerPoint. Yet Gendall says, “Few things – except,

By Sunny Marie Hackman, ACB, CL

A new presentation style captures the imagination.

perhaps, Apple computer products and Moleskine notebooks – have been embraced by designers of all stripes so quickly and universally as Pecha Kucha has.”

There are only two rules for Pecha Kucha: An entire show consists of precisely 20 slides, and each slide is allotted exactly 20 seconds. The form is often referred to as 20x20.

Pecha Kucha originates from the word “chitchat,” a Japanese term describing the sound of conversation. The birth of this presentation style was as informal as its name implies. Yet despite a casual start, it has grown into a worldwide phenomenon. Two European architects, Mark Dytham and Astrid Klein, devised Pecha Kucha as a way to use multiple attention-grabbing presentations at their Tokyo architectural business to foster social networking and education, or in the words of Dytham, “a physical social network” – an adult show and tell. They didn’t expect it to expand beyond their initial plan. What began in 2003 as a happy accident in Tokyo has morphed exponentially into organized Pecha Kucha events now held in 251 cities across the globe.

Growing in Global Popularity

Pecha Kucha migrated from Tokyo in 2004 to its first European locale in Bern, Switzerland, and then surfaced in London in the summer of 2005. It crossed the ocean in 2006 and turned up in San Francisco. Now it has seized the imagination of speakers around the globe, and some corporations, like Autodesk, the world’s largest 2D and 3D design software company with more than 9 million users worldwide, are adopting Pecha Kucha as their preferred method for presenting oral reports.

Back home in Denver, Colorado, I noticed a Pecha Kucha advertisement in the local newspaper and, of course, attended the event. It was held at a community theater and was packed to capacity. Many attendees sat on the floor or stood in the back to enjoy the variety of presentations. The 10 presenters spanned a range of professions: landscape designer, architect, world traveler, photographer, bicyclist, writer, sustainable-living enthusiast, fashion designer, foodie and urban chicken farmer.

It was a fascinating evening. The Pecha Kucha format worked for every topic and every presenter. The fast-paced, timed format prevented the speakers from hiding behind their slides, and any extemporaneous material had to be edited mercilessly. Because the format was so tightly structured, it required extensive preparation and practice. The audience was focused and engaged throughout. We all left wanting more.

After the division contest, I delivered “The Hazard of Harvest” at a Pecha Kucha event in Denver.

Drew Bixby, author of *Denver’s Best Dive Bars* and fellow Pecha Kucha presenter, says, “Dynamic is the absolute best way to describe the type of communication that happens via Pecha Kucha.”

The best compliment I received was from a fellow Toastmaster who said, “You transcended the tech-

**“There are only two rules for Pecha Kucha:
An entire show consists of precisely 20 slides,
and each slide is allotted exactly 20 seconds.
The form is often referred to as 20x20.”**

Pecha Kucha looked challenging but resonated with the mission and values I embrace as a Toastmaster: effective public speaking, global communication and social networking. The length of a Pecha Kucha presentation is six minutes and 40 seconds – the perfect length for many 5-7-minute Toastmasters manual and contest speeches. I decided I would develop a Pecha Kucha for my Toastmasters club, the Thunderbolt Orators.

Trying It Out For The Club

In addition to improving my speaking, presentation, editing and computer skills, I discovered the benefits of belonging to a Toastmasters club when experimenting with a new speaking technique. My fellow Toastmasters embraced the project and learned along with me. As I exchanged one slide for another, coordinating speech and slides, members guided me to a polished presentation through round robin and individual evaluations. One member lent me an LCD projector to help me practice. “The Hazard of Harvest,” my Pecha Kucha presentation, was a team effort, and it became a winning humorous speech at the club and area level last fall.

nique and used it to transport the message of your speech.” That comment reminded me that communicating a message, effectively and with skill, is the goal for every Toastmaster. Techniques and technology will always offer new tools for the speaker to use, but they should never overshadow the speaker or their message.

Pecha Kucha is a fun and engaging way to present ideas and interact with an audience. I will use it again. My experience with the form put me on a path of continued growth as a speaker, because it taught me that experimenting with different techniques and technologies increases my skill and enlarges my territory as an effective oral communicator. **T**

Sunny Marie Hackman, ACB, CL, is a member of the Thunderbolt Orators club in Lakewood, Colorado. To reach her and view her Pecha Kucha presentation, “The Hazard of Harvest,” visit **www.sunnymariehackman.com**.

Editor’s Note: To learn more about Pecha Kucha, visit **<http://www.pecha-kucha.org/>**.

When to use PowerPoint and when not to.

Tactical PowerPoint

You might think that with a book titled *Real Leaders Don't Do PowerPoint*, I would be opposed to using it in each and every presentation. But I'm not. At least half of my clients use – and need to use – PowerPoint or a similar type of software. And I happily help them do it, because I believe it can be a useful tool when used for the right reason and when used properly.



Please notice my two caveats: *when used for the right reason* and *when used properly*. They're major caveats.

When Used for the Right Reason

The common assumption these days, especially in the corporate environment, is that presenters *should* use PowerPoint. It's a bad assumption.

PowerPoint is a useful way – not the only way, sometimes not the best way, but *one* way – of visually displaying information. With relative ease, it lets you project charts, graphs, photographs, illustrations, videos and computer-generated animations for audiences to see. So if your primary goal is to communicate information – if you are conducting a training session, giving a project update or a report, or making a proposal or a sale pitch – feel free to use PowerPoint.

But not all presentations, even at work, are about communicating information.

The higher you rise in an organization, the less frequently you'll be concerned about communicating profuse amounts of facts and figures. Instead, you'll increasingly find yourself speaking to motivate people to take action, or to inspire them to achieve a goal or

to better their lot in life. Perhaps you'll want them to change the way they think about an issue.

In such cases, PowerPoint can be more a hindrance than a tool. Don't use it just because it's available. In most cases, it's better to take center stage and demand your audience's attention, earning their trust as you speak. Remember, you have fantastic tools to accomplish this: Tell stories. Use the evocative power of the spoken word and the beauty of well-crafted sentences. Rouse people's emotions and plant pictures in their imagination.

Don't use PowerPoint because people expect you to. Don't even use it because everyone else is. Use it, instead, when – and only when – your objective is to present information. Use it well, but use it as the result of an informed choice.

When Used Properly

Much of PowerPoint's bad press is richly deserved. When was the last time you walked into a meeting and said, "Oh joy, another PowerPoint presentation"? There's a reason the phrase "Death by PowerPoint" has gained currency. And the deficiencies of far too many PowerPoint presentations – too many slides, incomprehensible charts and graphs, unreadable text, annoying animations, a lack of any coherent message – are too well known to require explanation.

To be fair, most of the problems associated with PowerPoint stem

from its misuse by presenters. There's nothing in the program that forces you to create more slides than you can explain in the allotted time. You're not required to copy graphics from other programs that look small or blurred in your slides. Nowhere does it say you must choose font styles, sizes or colors that render all text illegible.

Search for "PowerPoint mistakes" on Google, and you'll find more than a million Web pages suggesting how to avoid the most common misuses. The *Toastmaster* magazine regularly offers valuable tips that can help you avoid a slideshow disaster.

I offer two suggestions to help you use PowerPoint appropriately:

1 Begin by creating your strategy and your message. Don't even turn on your computer without first determining what you want to accomplish. What do you want your

audience to do as a result of listening to you? Why would they want to do it? How will your presentation help them solve a problem or achieve a goal that's important to them? What do they need to know in order to accomplish that task? What is the clearest and most persuasive way of organizing your material so that it accomplishes your goal?

2 Use as few slides as possible. Traditionally, most people will advise you to use no more than one slide every minute or two of your presentation. I suggest using only as many slides as *necessary*, and not a single slide more. Skip the cover slide, the one with your company name and logo and the title of your talk. Remove the "Agenda" slide. (The agenda should be short enough – maybe three items – that you can simply tell people what you're going to talk about.) Also, be sure

to delete any slide that has more than 15 words on it. (If you want people to read something, send them an e-mail beforehand or give them a handout.) When you're done talking about what's on the slide, black out the screen (by pressing the "b" key on the laptop) and do what presenters have been doing for centuries: talk to people face-to-face.

PowerPoint presentations don't have to kill an audience's attention, interest and goodwill. They can, when used for the right reasons and in the right way, be exactly the right tool to help you achieve your goals. ■

Christopher Witt, a former Toastmaster, is the founder and president of Witt Communications in San Diego. He is the author of *Real Leaders Don't Do Power Point: How to Sell Yourself and Your Ideas*. Reach him at chris@wittcom.com.

Wish You Were FUNNIER?

Dear Fellow Toastmaster:

Do you wish you were **funnier**? Do you believe that "funny people" **think differently**?

The truth is... funny people *do* think differently. Truer still; **you will never be funnier unless you change the way you think**. That is exactly what *Get More Laughs By Next Week™* will do for you. I Darrentee it.

Would a step-by-step process for getting laughs be helpful?

I never got laughs. I was quiet and shy and had severe stage fright. It was quite an epiphany for me when I discovered the simple exercises comedians use to develop material. A whole new world opened up for me when I was shown that humor was a *learned skill*, as opposed to a trait one must be born with.

Naturally, I did things the hard way, so it took me years of struggle and tens of thousands of dollars to uncover the steps that would take me from bumbling amateur to sought-after professional. This is a *proven* system. I've been teaching this process for more than ten years.

Stage time,

Darren

Darren LaCroix
2001 World Champion of Public Speaking

**P.S. Don't take my word for it...
see what my graduates say!**
Go to: www.GetMoreLaughsByNextWeek.com



Get Darren's secrets now: www.GetMoreLaughsByNextWeek.com or call (888) 528-4451

How Is Your Social Media Etiquette?

By Tamar Weinberg

Try this checklist on netiquette no-nos.

Social media mimics real relationships in many cases. Would you do the following in real face-to-face relationships?

- Jump on the friendship bandwagon without properly introducing yourself?
- Consistently talk about yourself and promote only yourself without regard for those around you?
- Randomly approach a friend you barely talk to and simply ask for favors – repeatedly?
- Introduce yourself to another person as “Pink House Gardening”?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, you may need a refresher course on social media etiquette – and perhaps real-life etiquette too. Here are some egregious sins that you must not perform on social media sites. Avoid these violations and learn how to manage and maintain online relationships on a variety of popular sites.

Facebook

If you value your Facebook friendships, **please do not:**

- Add users as friends without proper introductions. If you're looking to make friends, tell people who you are. Don't assume they know you – especially if they, well, don't.
- Abuse application invites and consistently invite friends to participate in vampire or other games.
- Abuse group invites. If your friends are interested, they'll likely join without your encouragement. And if they don't accept, don't send the group request more than once by asking them to join via e-mail, wall post or Facebook message.
- Turn your Facebook profile photo into a pitch so that you can gather leads through your Facebook connections. Thanks, but no thanks. Facebook is about real friendships – not business.
- Use a fake Facebook name. I can't tell you how many people have added me whose last name is “Com” or “Seo” – who is that? I'm not adding you unless you



can be honest about who you are. Once upon a time, Facebook deleted all accounts that portrayed people as business entities or things. I wish they'd employ the same tactics again.

- Publicize a private conversation on a wall post. In case it isn't obvious, Facebook wall posts are

completely public to all your friends (unless you tweak your privacy settings). Private matters should be handled more privately: via e-mail or even in Facebook private messages.

- Tag individuals in unflattering pictures that may even cost your friends their jobs. Never portray anyone in a negative light, period. Further, if your friends request to be untagged, honor the request.

You should remember that some individuals won't network with you on a *personal* site like Facebook without knowing who you are, even with the proper introduction. If you're looking to establish a professional relationship with someone, consider **LinkedIn.com**. Otherwise, consider building up rapport with people before randomly adding them as your friends.

Some people require face-to-face meetings before they invite you into their private online lives. After all, Facebook was a tool that college students used before it was open to the public, and some still use it purely as a personal communication tool. LinkedIn is still seen as the more professional of the two.

Considering the above, here's a question on Facebook etiquette: *Is it appropriate to let these requests sit in "pending" mode or to reject them outright?* In many instances, these requests are probably better off sitting indefinitely (and it's healthier than the rejection). Plus, in the future, you may want to end up responding to that friend request positively.

LinkedIn

If you value your professional networking opportunities on LinkedIn, **please do not:**

- Gather the e-mail addresses of users. Some spammers go so far as to locate e-mail addresses of LinkedIn Group managers and use this mailing list to promote their own company or service off-site.
- Ask for endorsements from individuals you don't know or who didn't do a good job in your employ. Why would you want to be endorsed by someone who might be considered a bad choice by others?
- Write a recommendation for someone a few days before firing that person. If anything, it may tip him off that he's about to get the axe. Worse yet, it makes your word unreliable.

Twitter

If your cell phone friends help you feel connected moment-to-moment and bring joy to your day, **please do not:**

- Follow a user and then unfollow her before she has a chance to follow back, or as soon as she follows you.

- Mass-follow everyone so that you can artificially inflate your numbers. Some clods then use that number as a success metric for influence. And worse yet, they submit a news release about it.
- Consistently use your Twitter stream for nothing but self-promotion and ego.



“Think about the consequences of your engagement on any social site.”

- Abuse Twitter during a crisis. It's a shame when large-scale tragedy strikes, but this is not an appropriate opportunity to use viral marketing techniques.

YouTube

If you want to make the most of your video connections with friends and acquaintances, **please do not:**

- Ask someone repeatedly to watch your low-quality video or subscribe to your channel and give you a five-star rating. Instead, you should post only your best videos and allow your viewers to form their own opinions.
- Force people to subscribe to your YouTube channel by any nefarious means, such as viruses or other malware that signs people up before they even know who you are.

- Request that your friends retweet your tweets on a consistent basis. This is much more bothersome when the request comes via IM or e-mail and not on Twitter itself. The bottom line: If your content is good enough to stand on its own, it will be retweeted.
- Miss the chance to humanize your profile. Twitter is also about real relationships. Add an avatar and a bio at the minimum. Let people know who you are. To take it a step further, make it easy for people to contact you outside Twitter if necessary. This is especially important if someone on Twitter needs to reach you but can't direct message you since you're not following them.
- Use Twitter to repeat personal and confidential correspondence. If you're not happy with the way an e-mail communication progressed about a private matter, take it up with that person. Broadcasting your dissatisfaction with a private conversation makes you look unprofessional and untrustworthy.
- Use your Twitter feed as a chat room for conversations that are exclusive in nature and not as a broadcast medium. It's nice that Twitter empowers you to use the @ symbol to talk directly to individuals, and that's fine in moderation. As a friend recently said to me, “I'm tired of my Twitter feed being a venue for a private conversation between person X, person Y and person Z.”
- Leverage your Twitter connections to send spam via direct messages to those who follow you. Two days later, you may wonder why they don't follow you anymore.

Blogging and Commenting

If you want your blog posts to be read and valued, **please do not:**

- Comment on other articles using names, such as “Yellow Brick Plumbing.” Isn't your name actually Alan? There's no SEO value to these comments (they're not followed by default) and this approach only makes you lose credibility in the eyes of the blogger. This isn't the way to *network*!
- Use content from another blog without attribution. Sometimes a specific blog will get an exclusive. Then, another blog will write on the story using the original blog post as its “source” without attribution. Even popular blogs will rip off stories from lesser-known blogs in their space. Don't let greed get in the way of your own blogging habits, and be sure to link out where appropriate.
- Send a pitch to a blogger requesting a link exchange even though your site has no relevancy to the blogger's content. I write about *social media*, people, not about skateboarding. And, well, they say that social media is the new link exchange, so instead of asking for an old-fashioned link (which might have worked in 2002), consider using a more viable strategy for this modern time period.
- Turn a blog into a flame war against someone you don't like. If you are in the wrong, acknowledge the wrongdoing and don't use other blogs to tarnish someone else's image.

Other Social Sites

As new social networking sites appear, you'll want to join in the fun and share the excitement of your new discovery, but **please do not:**


- Allow a new social network's automated system to invite everyone you've ever e-mailed. Your friends and you pay a price when you submit your entire e-mail address book just because the service requests it. Read the fine print on the page, and you'll see that you don't have to do what is asked. Besides, you should *never* volunteer your e-mail account password to any social site. And for good measure, your e-mail account password should not be the same as the password for your social networking account.

Social Media Etiquette in General

You're leaving your digital signature on the Internet right now. Think about the consequences of your engagement on any social site. Racial slurs, criticisms without warrant and blatant abuse don't work in real life, and they have no place in the social media channels simply because you can be more anonymous on these sites. If you were living in New York and you walked up to a stranger

with the same foul-mouthed comments that are rampant on many social media sites, you might never make it home. Consider how your comments could be perceived before you actually post them, and think about logic above emotion at all times.

Above all, think about maintaining a certain level of professionalism, since people can use whatever you make "permanent" on these sites against you. Not all blogs will remove a comment after you've requested that they do so simply because you were angry when you wrote the comment. Before you hit "post," realize that this will be a permanent reflection of your identity and that it may never be erased. It may even be used to judge you.

Remember that social media communities are real relationships, real conversations, and as such, they should be treated as if they are real. It's not about a mentality of *me, myself and I*. It's about the collective, the community and the common good. 

Tamar Weinberg is the author of *The New Community Rules: Marketing on the Social Web* (www.newcommunityrules.com) and blogs about social media marketing at www.techipedia.com.

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Former pro basketball player Mark Eaton scores slam dunk as a speaker.

By Paul Sterman

Reaching Rare Heights

When Toastmaster Mark Eaton speaks, audiences look up at a man who stands 7 feet 4 inches – or 223.5 centimeters. His towering presence gives weight to his equally commanding messages of teamwork and how to achieve success.

Eaton, a member of Park City Toastmasters in Park City, Utah, is a former professional basketball player in the National Basketball Association (NBA), made up of the greatest players in the world. His journey to All-Star status with the Utah Jazz defied all odds, and is an inspiration to everyone who thinks their goals are unattainable.

“When Mark gives a speech,” says Julio Garreaud, president of the Park City club and Eaton’s close friend, “you see his stature, but at the same time you see the spirit of the man. I call him ‘The Gentle Giant.’”

“Mark’s speaking is compelling,” he adds, “because the events from his life are remarkable.”

As a teenager, Eaton was the *anti*-LeBron James. Uncomfortable in his oversized body, he barely made a ripple on the high school basketball team, spending most of his time on the bench. At one point, he gave up on the sport and trained to be an auto mechanic. At 21, Eaton was working full time at a Southern California auto and tire shop – with no intention of ever picking up a basketball again.

Then an amazing turnaround took place. With the mentoring of a kind college basketball coach

(who just happened to spot the 7-footer one day in the auto shop), a great deal of hard work and a late-blooming belief in himself, Eaton eventually flourished in the sport. He played 12 seasons in the NBA, was twice named Defensive Player of the Year, led the league in blocked shots for four seasons, and still owns the NBA record for most blocked shots in a season. Eaton did all this by being a team player who knew his role on the court. He did the things that are unsung and overlooked – blocking players’ shots, snagging rebounds off the backboard, using his big body to set screens for teammates – but that are essential to a team’s success.

The lessons he learned in basketball are equally applicable to the business world, Eaton says.

“What I did is, I helped my team win,” he explains in a keynote speech to a group of meeting planners. “I became invaluable to my teammates by the very fact that I learned what I could be excellent at and I focused on it, so everybody else could do their jobs.”

To win in *your* field, he tells the group, concentrate on what you do best and “put other people first.”

Joining New Teammates

How did Eaton go from professional athlete to professional speaker? He made Toastmasters part of his team.

He’s been a member of the Park City club since 2005. Before joining Toastmasters, he often gave speeches to youth groups and community organizations (Eaton played his entire NBA career for the Utah Jazz and is well-known in Utah). However, he wanted to become a professional speaker

who could deliver his message to a wider audience. The ex-Jazz man sings the praises of the Park City club, saying Toastmasters helped take his speaking skills to a new level.



Mark Eaton



◀ **Demonstrating the defensive skills he was renowned for, Mark Eaton blocks the shot of NBA player Otis Thorpe, in a 1984 game between the Utah Jazz and Houston Rockets.**

evaluation process, the awareness of *ums* and *ahs*. So he joined, eager to improve his own speaking.

Words from Wilt

In his motivational speeches, Eaton mentions a turning point in his basketball career that came courtesy of Wilt Chamberlain – arguably the greatest player in NBA history.

After watching Eaton run around the court one day, frantically and futilely chasing a much smaller player, Chamberlain pulled him aside. He told Eaton he wasn't taking advantage of his greatest asset: his 7-foot-4, 290-pound frame. Eaton's job wasn't to run after speedier players, said Chamberlain, but to stay close to his team's basket, protect it by playing defense, block shots, rebound the ball and get it to his teammates.

The counseling changed Eaton's whole way of thinking. He carved out a specific niche in basketball and excelled at it.

His message to others: "What's your greatest strength? There's probably one asset or strength about you that causes those clients to call you up again and again and again. That's what you should be spending 80 percent of your time doing. In this world of multi-tasking, it's hard – but get back to what you're excellent at."

As he was developing and refining a keynote speech about himself, the ex-basketball player also worked with a speech coach, New York City-based Lisa Yakobi. She says audiences have responded powerfully to Eaton's story.

"People are really surprised to see a professional athlete be such a good speaker," says Yakobi, noting that many former athletes are content to recount their past glories in the sports arena while Eaton wants

"When I started in Toastmasters, I was developing a signature speech about my life and career," he says. "What Toastmasters enabled me to do was dig deeper into my [speech] ...to add physical gestures, learn how to have a back-and-forth dialogue when you're onstage, how to deal with your placement on stage, where you should move – the various performance tips that really make a story come alive. Toastmasters was a real stepping-stone for my career."

Big Mark, as he's affectionately known, remains a regular and active

participant in the club. Club president Garreud says Eaton is a down-to-earth guy who always tries to improve himself and generously offers feedback to other members.

"When Mark's your evaluator, he evaluates you with dignity and respect," says Garreud. "You're going to benefit from his comments."

Eaton's involvement with the club began when a Toastmaster friend asked him to be a guest speaker at a meeting. The former athlete was captivated with what he saw – the timed speeches, the

to give audiences practical advice for their own lives.

When he touts the values of teamwork, she adds, he has instant credibility. “There are many, many people who speak about teamwork, but very few of those people have actually been on a *team*,” says the speech coach. “Mark was on the Utah Jazz for 12 years, when the average time for an NBA player is

with his story. While most people can’t relate to being over 7 feet tall, they *can* relate to feeling different and vulnerable in some way.

“They get it,” Eaton says.

Learning to move comfortably onstage has also been a challenge. Because of his size, Eaton says, he’s always felt somewhat inhibited with movement – as if not wanting to take up even more space or call

from professional sports, Eaton became a successful entrepreneur. Among his ventures: operating two acclaimed restaurants – Tuscany and Franck’s – in Salt Lake City, Utah. In the restaurant business, he says, communication is key to practically everything: obtaining financing, marketing your restaurant, addressing the City Council or a government agency, chatting with customers, and talking to the people who work for you.

“You can have a vision and idea of where your business needs to go,” notes Eaton, “but if you can’t effectively communicate it in a way that employees can buy into it, it’s going to be a one-man show.”

“The ex-Jazz man sings the praises of the Park City club, saying Toastmasters helped take his speaking skills to the next level.”

[less than] four years, because he knows teamwork.”

Eaton’s journey – from basketball dropout and auto mechanic to NBA All-Star and professional speaker – has a certain cinematic arc to it, and his story may indeed hit the big screen one day. A Park City-based filmmaker has written a script about Eaton’s life and hopes to turn it into a feature film.

World’s Tallest Car Salesman

Eaton’s presentation style is conversational. He jokes about his height, sharing one story about his days as a college student working selling cars at a Datsun dealership: “Perhaps you can picture me, behind the wheel of a B-210 Honey Bee, explaining to the customer that this was actually a roomy vehicle.”

But he didn’t always have such a playful perspective about himself. As a teenager, he was extremely self-conscious about his size, wishing he could shrink away from all the gawking. Painful as it was to revisit those times, Eaton says he was determined to share those feelings and experiences so that all audiences – sports fans and non-sports fans alike – could find common ground

more attention to his size. But he knew that to be a successful speaker, he had to have a more confident, assertive presence.

“I realized I have to learn how to let go of that self-consciousness and really learn to be comfortable with who I am,” he says.

Eaton says the act of sharing personal aspects about himself has been liberating – and made him feel freer and more comfortable in his body language and movements.

Blending In

Eaton is just one of the group in the Park City club – not a celebrity, just another member there to learn and help others. The club is a thriving one, with more than 60 members. It meets at 7 a.m. every Tuesday, and Eaton and fellow members typically go for coffee afterward, to socialize or talk more about Toastmasters. Park City is a skiing paradise, and Eaton says some members attend club meetings dressed in their ski gear and head straight for the slopes after the meeting.

Eaton also credits the communication and leadership skills he’s honed in Toastmasters with helping him as a businessman. After retiring

Passing It Forward

When a basketball player passes the ball to a teammate so he can score, that pass is called an assist. Mark Eaton played with the greatest assist man in NBA history: the Utah Jazz’s John Stockton, who dished out nearly 16,000 of them. Big Mark was on the receiving end of some of those passes. Now Toastmasters is delivering an assist to Eaton’s speaking career.

“It has been a place where on a weekly basis I can practice,” says Eaton, “where I can stand in front of an audience and not just give a speech but have a conversation with an audience.” **T**

*For more information about Mark Eaton visit his Web site: **www.7ft4.com**.*

Mark Eaton was interviewed last October in a Toastmasters Podcast. To listen to the episode, visit **www.toastmasterspodcast.com** and type Mark Eaton in the site Search box.

Paul Sterman is an associate editor at the *Toastmaster* magazine and member of a Toastmasters club in Orange, California.



Turning on the TV is not
as easy as it used to be.

The Chances are Remote

I don't know the children of my 84-year-old neighbor, but they must be among the cruelest people on the planet. They came from New Jersey to visit her for Christmas and gave her a 40-inch, high-definition television. Then they went back to New Jersey without telling her how to program the remote so she could use it. Oh, the heartlessness! The malice aforethought! This is like saying to a 2-year-old, "You can have a nice, big hot-fudge sundae with nuts and whipped cream and a cherry on top as soon as you tell me how to use quantum superpositions to speed up solving N by N system calculations."

That's why they call it a remote – because you haven't the *remotest* chance of figuring it out. Not me, not you and certainly not an 84-year-old, retired kindergarten teacher with three cats, two goldfish and a cockatoo. I had my teenage son program mine and write it all down, which was no small thing, since it included my having to endure his unabashed reveling in my ineptitude. And you know what? I didn't care. I'd rather have a live person make me feel stupid than a piece of plastic.

So when my neighbor, Cora, called to ask if I would help, I said "Sure," grabbing my son's instructions with the calm confidence of a poker player holding four aces.

Then tragedy struck. I had assumed that her remote would be just like mine. It was not. Not even – I can't help it – remotely. And there was Cora, looking at me like

her knight in shining armor. What could I do?

One Step at a Time

"Okay, Cora," I said, "the first thing is to turn on the power." I pressed the button. Nothing. I pressed it again. Nothing. "Oh, that's right," I said, "you have to select 'TV' first." Nothing. The cockatoo looked at me funny.

"Would these help? They came with the box." Cora held out two double-A batteries. "They might," I said, trying to hide my utter mortification. I inserted the batteries, pressed "Power" again, and the set turned on. Unfortunately, there was no picture, just the words "**Select cable input now.**" I pressed every button on the remote, to no avail. "Would this help?" Cora said. She was holding another remote, the one that came with the TV. The one I had was for the cable box. Isn't that great? You have to *use one remote to use another*.

I pressed "Menu" and, lo and behold, there were a number of selections, including one for cable. I pressed it and the cable box turned on. Still no picture – just a screen that said, "**Set up for viewing.**" I thought it *was* set up for viewing. It's a *television!*

I found the Set Up button, pressed it, and then was looking at a screen that said, "**Select four-digit code for your electronic device.**" I looked in the manual under Set Up and here's what it said: "To view the code for the first time, press 1 once. Count the number of times

the TV key blinks and write down the number in the leftmost TV code box on Page 11. Repeat Step 3 for the remaining digits." This is when I thought I might be part of a secret government experiment to see what it takes to drive people insane.

That feeling increased when I saw that before I could input the code, I had to *find* it, which meant cycling through 17 possibilities by repeating the Byzantine process above every time. I looked at the cockatoo, he looked at me funny again, and I began to get the meaning of his look: He thought he could program this thing better than I could. It's one thing being mocked by your own progeny; it's even worse when it crosses species.

I actually went through all 17 codes. Nothing worked. This meant I would have to search for the code in the TV's database by executing a series of steps even more convoluted than the last. It was getting dark, Cora had fallen asleep, and if cockatoos can laugh, this one was laughing at me. I called my son.

"Can you program Cora's remote? I'll give you 20 bucks."

"Dad, I'm at my girlfriend's. Make it \$40."

"Deal."

Say what you want. At least I didn't have to pay the cockatoo. **T**

John Cadley is an advertising copywriter in Syracuse, New York. Reach him at jcadley@mower.com.

The Evolution of the Teleprompter

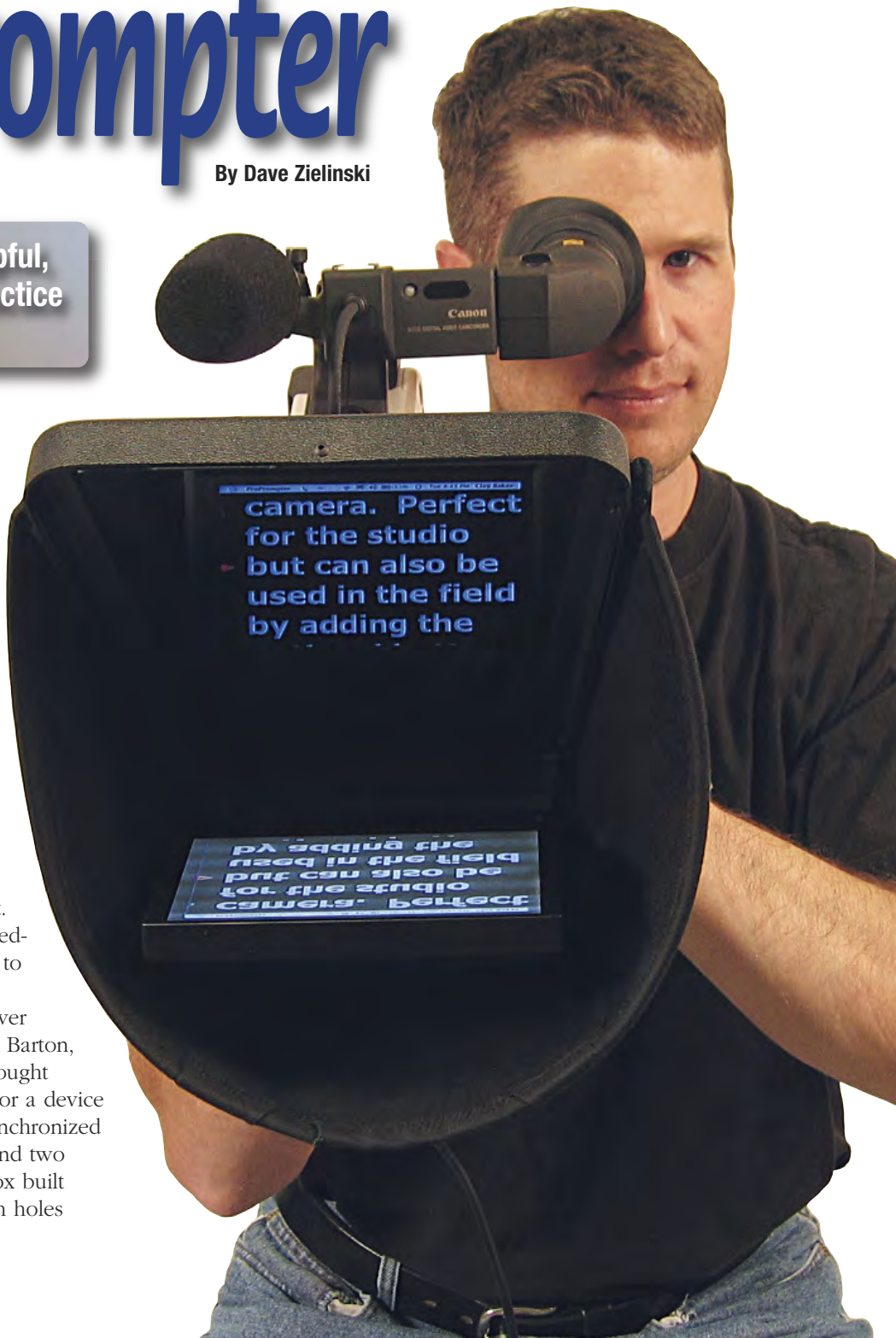
By Dave Zielinski

Cuing devices can be helpful, but they require more practice than you might expect.

The year was 1950 and well-known Broadway actor Fred Barton Jr. had just been hired to perform in an exciting new medium

known as “television.” But the opportunity also caused Barton concern. In theater, he could memorize his lines and simply repeat them for the same show every night. But on TV, which was largely performed live at the time, each episode required a new script. With his demanding Broadway schedule, where would Barton find time to learn his lines?

Using cue cards or a radio receiver placed in his ear were options, but Barton, who had an inventor’s mentality, sought something better. He had an idea for a device featuring multiple outlets with a synchronized display of actor’s lines. The actor and two higher-ups at Twentieth Century Fox built what was essentially a suitcase with holes



cut into the sides, with the actor's lines appearing on a motorized "roman scroll" visible through one of the holes. Paper scripts for the device had to be typed on a special typewriter.

Described as a "40-pound monster," the primitive creation is credited as being one of the first teleprompters ever used, and its successors would forever change life for speakers around the globe.

The Technology Evolves

It's a long way from Barton's crude teleprompter, detailed in Laurie Brown's book, *The Teleprompter Manual*, to today's ultra-light, portable devices that Toastmasters can use to turn laptop computers, iPhones or pocket PCs into temporary teleprompters.

Businesspeople use these new tools to read presentation text for video podcasts, to narrate Web-based training courses or as outlines when delivering project updates to far-flung teammates via webcam.

While the technology has evolved in leaps and bounds, its basic function and purpose remain the same: Teleprompters can be a speaker's best friend because they create the illusion of spontaneity. The copy is projected in front of a camera lens, enabling the speaker to read the script without losing eye contact – and without audiences seeing the scrolling words.

In recent years, teleprompters have become an invaluable tool for politicians and leaders. They use such devices for all kinds of addresses. United States President Barack Obama is particularly nimble at using a teleprompter, which contributes to his eloquence as an orator.

However, without the proper practice or skill, using teleprompters can backfire, making speakers look stilted, overly choreographed and even phony.

Most people greatly underestimate how difficult teleprompters are to master. Novices see how adept Obama or their local TV news anchors are with the technology and think reading from a screen will be a breeze. But experts say nothing is further from the truth: "It takes a lot of practice to read a script, sound natural and not look like a deer caught in the headlights," says author Brown, a presentations-skills trainer. She reminds her clients that President Obama and TV anchors look so natural because they often use teleprompters many times *each day*, rather than once every few weeks or months. When most of us think of teleprompters, we envision the studio variety used by TV news anchors,

or the type used by politicians and executives for live speeches. These work by using computers to scroll electronic text on monitors placed just above or below the camera lens. A special one-way mirror is angled to reflect the monitor text to the speaker. Because the reflected image of the text is reversed, the original text must also be reversed to compensate.

Depending on the features and specifications of studio-based teleprompters (such as monitor size), and whether prompting software is included, costs can run anywhere from \$2,000 to \$6,000 (U.S.).

With the so-called "presidential" version of a teleprompter, speakers addressing a live audience read from a glass plate that reflects text scrolling from a nearby

"Once you become experienced at using a teleprompter, you'll likely find it a freeing experience."

monitor. Audiences can look through the glass plate without seeing the script.

Although most teleprompters still require a human operator to scroll the script, that time-honored practice is under siege. As a cost-cutting move, more TV stations are implementing self-operated teleprompters that enable on-air talent to control the speed and pace of their copy using foot pedals. Although some might see this as the equivalent of patting yourself on the head while rubbing your tummy, most anchors say the systems are easy to master.

Teleprompters Find New Uses

Fred Barton would likely look on in wonderment at the variety, size and portability of the teleprompter technology in use today.

If he were to sit with a marketing specialist who was creating a video podcast in her home office or a sales manager giving a motivational pep talk to her field staff via webcam, he might see them reading from large-font text scrolling on a nearby laptop computer – a set-up that mimics a professional teleprompter. Instead of reading verbatim from a script, these Toastmasters might instead be speaking from a bullet-point outline along with some written-out quotes. The text is scrolled using a mouse or a special wireless remote plugged into a USB port.

The availability of affordable teleprompter software has made such laptop adaptations more popular, with prices ranging from free to under \$500. Two such

applications are Visual Communicator from Adobe (www.adobe.com/products/visualcommunicator) and Prompt! software (www.movieclip.biz/prompt.html). The software enables you to import speech copy, set scrolling pace, adjust text font sizes and more.

The challenge in using a laptop as a teleprompter is ensuring that you look directly into the lens when speaking, not up or down. This requires positioning the laptop screen within the diameter of the camera lens, whether below or to the left or right, as well as using



a long-enough camera lens and ensuring that speakers are standing far enough back from the camera.

Many of today's teleprompters are compatible with hand-held devices such as the iPhone or iTouch, which can be used in home offices as well as outdoor locations. While some might balk at the prospect of reading copy from a smart-phone screen, the all-capital-letters, 60-point

“Without the proper practice or skill, prompters also can backfire for speakers, making them look stilted, overly choreographed and even phony.”

text proves surprisingly easy to see when standing the required five to 10 feet away.

These systems work by loading the script into an iPhone or pocket PC, then attaching the hand-held device to a mounting “wing” just to the side or below mini-DV cameras (some vendors allow you to use a small LCD monitor as an option). The text is easily scrolled using another hand-held device, and the teleprompter software is built into the system.

For a look at how an iPhone-based prompter works, visit www.bodelin.com/proprompter.

Becoming a Natural

Regardless of the size or shape of the teleprompter, there is one constant in a speaker's use of the technology: It takes considerable time to make reading from a screen look natural.

To truly gain control of the teleprompter and transform it from a slightly awkward convenience to a tool of power, Brown says it requires “understanding enough small points to fill a book.” Point No. 1: If you're new to teleprompters, avoid thinking you can just show up and read from a screen without looking stiff or inauthentic, says Tom Mucciolo, president of MediaNet, a New York presentation-skills coaching firm. It's common for many of the executives he coaches to not even glance at their prompter text until the night before they speak. “When speakers don't ‘own’ their content or are discovering it for the first time when reading it, their ability to look believable becomes a big problem.”

Knowing your content cold allows you to focus on a more natural delivery style, keep energy high and even go off-script to do things like tell stories, says Carmine Gallo, a former TV news anchor [and author of an article in this issue about video in presentations] who recommends speakers “commit as much of your content to memory as possible. That seems counterintuitive, but the more you internalize it, the less tied you are to the prompter, and the less it will look like you are reading and more like you are speaking from memory.”

Speakers new to teleprompters must practice “far more than they usually think is necessary,” Gallo says, if they want to become accomplished with the technology: “Until you get really good with prompters, I suggest practicing as much as two hours a day for a

week in advance of a big presentation.”

Repeated rehearsal helps you hone things like speaking pace. “When people are just beginning to

use teleprompters, they often slow down their speaking pace considerably, because they are focused on reading the words,” Gallo says. “Your audience will likely pick up on that and wonder why your pace is so methodical.”

Working with Operators

If you're using a human teleprompter operator, which is often the case when speaking live to a large conference group or using a studio prompter to record video, it's


important to rehearse with them so they get a sense of your speaking rhythms and pace. If you intend to ad-lib or go off-script, even if momentarily, let them know. “You don’t want to throw your prompter operator under the bus,” Brown says, “because they ultimately control your speaking fate.”

Getting your script to the operators with ample time before a presentation enables them to help you make changes that can improve readability. It might include inserting double lines between completed ideas to remind you to occasionally pause; changing formal language to more conversational language (using “it’s” rather than “it is”); and inserting directions in brackets or all capital letters, such as “TURN TO CAMERA 2” or “[tell story of making sale to difficult customer here].” If you’re more comfortable reading numbers that are spelled out, the operator might suggest changing “1,450” to “one thousand, four hundred and fifty.”

Finally, have a copy of your speech or note cards handy in case of a technology breakdown, unless you

believe you have the content command of former U.S. president Bill Clinton. When his teleprompter famously malfunctioned during prepared remarks, Clinton continued speaking from memory – seamlessly, it appeared to the audience – until the prompter could get back on track.

A Freeing Experience

Once you become adept at using a teleprompter, you’ll likely find it a freeing experience. Those who have worked with the devices for years comfortably stray from their scripts, adding personal stories, ad-libs and their own turns of phrase. Whether used in the field, home office or in the studio, the teleprompter then becomes an invaluable ally. 

Dave Zielinski is a freelance writer and frequent contributor to the *Toastmaster*.

Tips for Taming the Teleprompter

Mastering the teleprompter is rarely as simple as it looks, and it’s easy to look stilted or insincere without applying the proper technique. Presentations-skill coach Laurie Brown offers these tips to skillfully use the teleprompter:

- **Lead the pace of the prompter.** Your reading speed should control the pace of the scroll. If the prompter operator is leading, pause to allow them to slow down or speed up.
- **Don’t move your head from side to side as you read.** If you find yourself doing this, most likely the font size of the script on the prompter is wrong and sentences are too lengthy.
- **Speak naturally.** Don’t just read the scrolling content. Add small interjections or ad-libs where it feels natural, and inform your operator beforehand that you’ll be doing so. If you want to use personal stories, tell them from memory – don’t read them verbatim from the script.
- **Check your eye contact on a monitor.** Make sure you’re reading off the center of the screen. If you read too high, it may make you look condescending to an audience, with your nose up in the air. If you read too low or look down, it may make you look angry.
- **Don’t stare.** Breathe and blink naturally. Don’t be afraid to glance away from the prompter at times – it helps you look like you’re thinking instead of reading.
- **See the teleprompter as a person.** Envision a person you really like just behind the words. This will help you humanize your voice and facial expressions.
- **Work on being still.** “Stillness on camera is essential,” says Brown. “It doesn’t mean you are stiff or not emotive, but that your upper body remains static.” Speakers have a tendency to move in and out toward the camera, which “looks like a bad 3-D movie,” she says.
- **Above all, rehearse rigorously and internalize your content.** Many speakers think they can master prompter use with little or no practice. Trying to wing it usually means disaster. Also, make sure to rehearse out loud, because words sound different in your head than they do when spoken. Rehearse with your operator so he or she gets to know your speaking pace.

How leaders use video to inspire their teams and enhance their brands.

Lights! Camera! Action!

New social-media video tools have changed the way business leaders and experts communicate with their employees, partners and customers. These tools can help you extend *your* brand as well. In March 2009, Zurich Financial Services Chief Executive Officer (CEO) James Schiro embarked on an employee “road show” to reassure the company’s 60,000 employees that, despite all the bad news surrounding the insurance industry at the time, Zurich’s balance sheet

remained strong, the business was growing and it was prepared to meet the challenges ahead. Road shows were not new to Schiro, but his means of communication changed significantly. Schiro carried along an inexpensive tool to record and upload video to YouTube – a Flip video camcorder.

The Catalyst of Change

“A leader has to be the catalyst of change, has to champion it passionately and epitomize it personally,”

Schiro said. One of the changes he noticed was in the way people communicate with each other on social networking sites, such as YouTube and Facebook. He decided to connect with his employees and customers in the same way. After he visited Zurich offices around the world, Schiro uploaded one- and two-minute updates to YouTube. The video clips were publicly accessible but primarily aimed at employees and customers who could view the video from any browser. Why didn’t he simply send an e-mail or post an update to the internal blog? “Many people are more interested in watching a video than reading another e-mail,” he said.

You’d expect a company as large as this to produce highly stylized (and expensive) corporate video. Schiro believes that inexpensive tools available to large- and small-business owners alike are just as powerful, if not more so, because they offer a degree of informality and immediacy. They “humanize” people and provides a deeper level of emotional engagement, he says. With a Flip camera, all Schiro has to do is record a message, plug it into his computer via a USB port and upload the video clip to **YouTube.com** or the Zurich Web site.

A Killer App Available to Everyone

Another well-known CEO making frequent use of video is Cisco’s John Chambers, who uses it in his internal blog – or Vblog. Chambers is such a big believer in the power of informal



Gary Vaynerchuk films his video blog, WineLibraryTV, at his studio in Springfield, New Jersey.

social-media tools, his company purchased Pure Digital, the maker of the Flip. Now Chambers “Flips” wherever he goes. On a trip to South Korea, where he met with country leaders, customers and employees, he turned the camera on himself, recorded a short update, plugged it into his PC and uploaded a video briefing to his employees before he boarded the plane to return home. Chambers believes video is “the next killer application” on the Internet.

“When employees see that video blog, they know it’s a casual conversation with John,” says Mike Mitchell, Cisco’s senior director of Collaboration Business Services. C-Vision, Cisco’s internal employee-video-sharing platform is the Cisco version of YouTube. Any employee who wants to upload a video is welcome to do so. Employees upload 300 to 400 videos every month. Thirty-eight percent of these videos are team and organization

updates, lasting under 10 minutes. The second most popular use of the medium – 24 percent – is for product and sales updates.

Although Cisco has a multi-million-dollar studio for high-profile communications and it sells the high-end TelePresence video conferencing system, team leaders often prefer to use the cheaper, faster and more informal video tools. For example, if a competitor makes a move, a product manager can

The TI Podcast and You

By Bo Bennett

Have you listened to the Toastmasters Podcast yet? Last August, Ryan Levesque and I launched the program – the official podcast of Toastmasters International. We’ve produced more than 20 episodes featuring interviews with fascinating Toastmasters from around the world.

To listen to a podcast, visit www.toastmasters.org/podcast. Each episode, free and available to anyone with a computer and an Internet connection, complements the *Toastmaster* magazine. Authors of recent articles frequently serve as guests on the podcast, allowing the authors and hosts to delve deeper into the topic at hand, bringing each article to life.

All podcast episodes are also listed at www.ToastmastersPodcast.com. This is the hosting site for the podcast, providing an interactive platform for listeners. Log in for free, create a unique log-in ID and benefit from additional features such as:

- **Comments.** Share your comments and feedback on each podcast episode.
- **Open discussions.** Communicate with other Toastmasters from around the world.
- **Notifications.** When you create a log-in ID, you receive e-mail notifications each time a new podcast is posted.

If you are already familiar with podcasting and have an iPod or other MP3 player, visit iTunes and search for “Toastmasters.” If you subscribe to the show, new episodes will be automatically downloaded to your computer.



The Show Is For You

The Toastmasters Podcast is *your* podcast. You can simply sit back and listen, or you can be a part of the show. Here are a few ways you can participate:

- **Suggest ideas.** We are always looking for topics and guests that will both educate and entertain our listeners.
- **Share your advice.** Do you have any tips for other Toastmasters?
- **Ask your questions.** Do you have any questions about public speaking, leadership and/or Toastmasters as an organization?
- **Provide feedback.** As a Toastmaster, you can evaluate the podcast and provide valuable feedback that will help us improve the show.

If you want to be on the podcast, you can participate by calling the listener feedback voice mailbox at 1-888-451-8862. You will have up to two minutes to leave your feedback and/or suggestions. You can also e-mail podcast@toastmasters.org or contact us via Twitter at [@TheTMPodcast](https://twitter.com/TheTMPodcast).

immediately send information to his team to discuss a response.

Keeping it Real

James Schiro's YouTube road show experiment met with such enthusiasm, he instructed Zurich's top leaders around the world to shoot short video messages in their own language and post them on the Internet. Schiro's one recommendation: Keep the video clips informal, because online viewers want authentic communication. Schiro records just one take, even if it's not perfect. "If I spoke to a group of people, I wouldn't get a second chance," he says. "Do the same with video. If your video comes across as canned and rehearsed, the message will lose its sincerity."

Gary Vaynerchuk would agree. He's better known on the Web as "The Wine Guy." He has created a one-man brand by hosting "The Internet's most passionate wine program." His www.winelibrary.com hosts 80,000 viewers a day; he has a popular blog, GaryVaynerchuk.com;

and he has inked a deal with HarperCollins for a series of books. His first book, *Crush It*, has become a *New York Times* bestseller. Vaynerchuk says he loses 12 percent of his audience right out of the gate when they see his animated style, but believes that if he were to tone things down, he wouldn't be real. Audiences on the Web can smell an act. Like Schiro and Chambers, Vaynerchuk also uses an inexpensive Flip camera and doesn't worry about perfection as he is recording. If Vaynerchuk makes mistakes as he's speaking, all the better: It looks like someone having a real conversation and not like a video that has been professionally produced. People like him because he's being true to himself.

Video Builds Trust

Distributing video on social networks can help you stand out as a leader, entrepreneur or business owner. Video builds trust, according to a 2006 internal Cisco research report. Cisco's research found that

"trust, a critical factor in influencing group effectiveness, is readily generated in richer media experiences... Relational cues are normally conveyed nonverbally; the absence of nonverbal cues in e-mail and instant messaging can therefore be a barrier to the expression of interpersonal dynamics." Inspiring leaders are using video as a tool to enhance relationships with customers, employees, partners and investors, and they're not paying a fortune to do it. Anyone with access to an inexpensive video camera and the Internet can begin speaking directly to his or her audiences, offering a more authentic and immediate communication experience than is available via simple text in e-mail or blogs. ■

Carmine Gallo is a communications coach, public speaking expert and author of several books, including his latest bestseller, *The Presentation Secrets of Steve Jobs: How to Be Insanely Great in Front of Any Audience*. Visit him online at www.carminegallo.com.

Announcement:

Special Notice to Club Officers

Please help your club members prepare for single sign-on at toastmasters.org.

In July 2010, the Toastmasters Web site will change the way club members log in. A unique e-mail address registered with World Headquarters will be required from any Toastmaster who wants to conduct business, purchase products or enjoy new online membership benefits. As a result, it is vital that every Toastmaster registers a unique e-mail address with World Headquarters by June 30.

Shared e-mail accounts will no longer work at the Toastmasters Web site. So if your club or other group is sharing an e-mail account, it's time for each person to contact World Headquarters with a unique e-mail address. Until June 30, 2010, you may do this by going online at toastmasters.org or calling World Headquarters at 949-858-8255 and asking for Member Services.

A Golden Speaking Opportunity

This is an opportunity for a technical presentation! Anyone in your club who is Web savvy can present an informational speech on how to sign up for a free e-mail account. Take it a step further and demonstrate how to register a new e-mail address at the Toastmasters Web site. A presentation of this nature will provide an important service to your club as well as tech-talk practice for the presenter. Preparing your club is only a speech away. Take the time, now, because the TI Web site update is coming in July!

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Featured iGrOOps: The Toastmasters Podcast Website <http://www.ToastmastersPodcast.com>

"Using iGrOOps, we can easily upload our weekly podcast episodes while making the episodes available via iTunes. Users can listen to podcasts online, leave comments and feedback, and discuss the episodes with other listeners. We make use of the photo gallery, the video library, discussion boards, and more."

The membership aspect of the site allows Toastmasters to join the site and network with other Toastmasters Podcast listeners."

- Bo Bennett, Co-Host of the Toastmasters Podcast and CEO of iGrOOps

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- Jody England, Buzzen @ <http://hive.buzzen.us>

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- Hall of Fame Ceremony
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- World Championship of Public Speaking
- President's Dinner Dance
- Networking with Toastmasters from all over the world

Early-bird registration starts April 1, so make your plans today! To register, view the schedule of events and learn more, go to www.toastmasters.org/InternationalConvention.



See you in Palm Desert!

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