

# Getting a Grip on WORD Files: What Do MS Word, Styles, Section 508, and XML Have in Common?

**Though Microsoft Word is a program that most everyone uses, there are so many features within it that every audience member took away handouts and many notes.**

Many people know how to type within the word processing program, but so few people know how to use styles within it to make their files more user friendly for desktop publishers, web people, and XML coders. In addition, did you know that within Word, you can tag the file with keywords, which help search engine optimization and screen readers for the blind?

Bevi Chagnon, founder of PubCom ([www.Pub-Com.com](http://www.Pub-Com.com)), has worked in publishing since the early 1970s and with digital media since the early 1980s. Bevi fell into the publishing field while pursuing a degree in architecture. Her fingers, which typed 160 words per minute without errors, paid her way through school and landed her first job in publishing when she could not find work in architecture.

The goal of her class was to show attendees how to use Word to better use other technologies, and she began by showing the attendees her iPhone. On her iPhone, Bevi had many RSS feeds, which are all tagged with XML.

Bevi explained that writers are still writing, but now someone is needed to tag the content to allow it to move among the many forms of media. The audiences are now able to choose in what format they want to receive the content, but the content is all the same.

With this in mind, publishers are looking for how to make the technology work for them. And with Section 508 and XML both wanting content tagged, publishers just need to figure out how to do this and what to do with the content.

Though many freelancers work alone in their homes, Bevi said that we need to remember that we are part of teams. The writer creates a baby, and it is the job of the other people on the team to raise the baby. And one way is by using styles when the baby

is still living in Microsoft Word.

When people use the manual formatting tools at the top of their screens (under Home in Word 2007), they are creating muck for the designer and web person. Instead, they should be using the styles. Styles make laying out the file in InDesign much easier, and the designer no longer has to guess, "Is this a head 2 or a head 3?"

Bevi's rule number 1 is to show all hidden characters. No blanks returns are allowed. Bevi says that we can insert one paragraph return to move to the next line, but we cannot insert several more to create a larger white space. We have to use styles and adjust the space before and after the paragraph to give us the white space. Why? Each paragraph return is a character, and too much white space will lead to the bottom of the screen on her iPhone being blank. An average viewer will see this and think that is the end of the RSS feed and not scroll down to the rest of the content.

Rather, we should use styles and modify those styles to look the way our client wants it to look. When the designers receive the files, they can easily modify the styles to fit the new medium, and so can the web people. Using styles helps to separate the content from the medium and allows it to more easily adapt to the various technologies that people use to access content in our technology-savvy world.

To view styles in Word 2007, click the Office button, select Word Options, scroll down to Advanced, and set Style area pane width to 1 inch. To view the styles, our documents need to be in Outline View or Draft View. The styles will not appear in Print Layout.

To show a listing of possible styles, on the Home tab, in the Styles section, click the arrow in the bottom right corner. Now we are ready to prep the file.

Prepping the file includes what many editors already do: eliminating excessive space between sentences and periods. In addition, we now need to select all of the text (Ctrl + A) and select Clear

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Founded in 2001 by **April Michelle Davis**, Editorial Inspirations provides exceptional editing, indexing, and proof-reading services to both publishers and authors. Each task is approached with a greater understanding of the various aspects of the publishing process. The intent of the author and the publisher is always kept in mind—from the first word to well beyond the end.

## Taxonomy Tuesdays

**Taxonomy Tuesdays are a regular program in Washington, DC.** On April 19, 2011, **Heather Hedden**, author of the book *The Accidental Taxonomist*, will present several special topics in taxonomy or thesaurus management as described in Chapter 11 of her book, "Taxonomy Implementation and Evolution":

1. Taxonomy Updating – when one might update or revise a taxonomy, what to review, and what to change
2. Taxonomy Combining – the differences of merging, integrating, and mapping taxonomies and when and how to do each
3. Taxonomy Translating – the creation of multilingual taxonomies to serve different language or country users

Heather Hedden is a taxonomy consultant with Project Performance Corporation, in McLean, VA, although she works from home in Massachusetts. She also teaches online continuing education workshops in taxonomy creation through Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Science. Heather previously worked as a taxonomist at First Wind, Viziant Corporation, Earley & Associates, and Gale.

Heather is the founder and current manager of the Taxonomies & Controlled Vocabularies SIG of ASI, a past manager of the Web Indexing SIG of ASI, and past president of the New England Chapter of ASI. She often gives a pre-conference workshop on Taxonomy and Thesaurus Creations at ASI national conferences. In addition to the book, *The Accidental Taxonomist*, Heather is the editor of ASI books *Indexing Specialties: Web Sites*, a chapter in *Index It Right: Advice from the Experts, Volume 2*, and a chapter in the forthcoming book, *Indexing Names*.

Taxonomy Tuesdays are held at noon at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC.

RSVP is required—contact Kathleen Caggiano ([KCaggiano@bna.com](mailto:KCaggiano@bna.com)) and she will provide specifics about the meeting location. ●



## The Accidental Taxonomist

All from the style pane. Even if we can't figure out how to properly use styles, many designers would rather no styles than the manual styles that many of us insert into our documents.

After we have edited the content and are now looking at the big picture of the file, we can apply styles. Normal should be used for body text, and Heading 1 should be used for the title of the article or chapter—there should be only one Heading 1 per file. Strong is used for bold, and Emphasis is used for italics. Why the change in wording? Blind people don't know what bold and italics are, but they do know what strong and emphasis mean. Screen readers for the blind read this, and blind people can understand it, helping to implement Section 508.

If editors have regular clients who use the same styles, the editors can create style templates for each client. This will keep the styles saved so that each project will already have the formatted styles, saving time from having to remember what a Heading 3 is supposed to look like for a particular client.

Bevi also recommended that if the content will be repurposed we should insert spaces around em dashes. She said that many forms of technology don't know that they can make a line break around an em dash, and this leads to those excessive white spaces at the end of some lines.

Finally, Bevi showed how in Word, we can insert keywords for the file. She said that we editors and writers are the best people to do this because we know the content. These keywords can be used by the web people when putting the content online, but what if the file will only be turned into a PDF? Those keywords will be embedded into the PDF, and those keywords will help with search engine optimization.

So how do we add keywords? Click the Office button, go to Prepare, Properties. Type in the title of the article exactly as it appears. For subject, type a one-sentence ad blurb about the article, and then type in keywords, using commas to separate each one. Bevi even has a blog entry about this: [www.pubcom.com/newsletter/2009\\_08-22.html](http://www.pubcom.com/newsletter/2009_08-22.html).

Though using styles may sound like a lot of work at first, once we become used to them they will be easy and quick to use. Also, with the rapid increase in how many ways content can be repurposed, using styles will not only make the jobs of others who work on the same content easier, but it will also increase the skills you bring to a project. ●

## Society for Technical Communication

Are you attending the Society for Technical Communication conference this year? We are looking for evaluators for an Index Evaluation Workshop. Indexes would be submitted two weeks before the conference, which is May 15-18, and you would meet one-on-one with each of your assigned "clients" at the evaluation session. Each indexer will be assigned a maximum of two indexes to evaluate and will have 20-30 minutes to spend with each "client." STC is offering a 50% discount off the super early bird rate for people who contribute. Three evaluators have committed, so we need two to three more. If you are interested, please contact me at [clandes407@aol.com](mailto:clandes407@aol.com).

— Cheryl Landes, STC Fellow  
Member, ASI Board of Directors ●