

Out On Our Own

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Editorial

Thanks for joining us at the EMWA Berlin Freelance Business Forum in November 2012. Meeting in person enables our medical writing community to thrive. As usual, we shared experiences, best practice, and useful tips.

The meeting minutes are posted on the EMWA website in the Freelance Resource Centre (FRC); print deadlines did not allow us to post a summary in Out On Our Own (OOOO) on this occasion.

We are currently collating the information that so many of you kindly shared by completing the 2012 Freelance Business Survey (FBS) that closed in September 2012. This survey provides information to allow appropriate fee setting for medical writing services and therefore maintains standards and

professionalism in our sector for the benefit of clients and service providers alike. We will share the 2012 FBS results with you in the March 2013 issue of OOOO.

Sam shares her experiences of migrating from the PC to Apple computing environment, from the perspective of a regulatory medical writer. Essential reading if you are thinking of making the switch!

Kath gives us some great tips for maximising the marketing potential of our websites – they are, after all, showcases for our business.

With the final quarter of 2012 in full swing and the holiday season upon us, we share Wordle.net with you – a fun tool to impress business contacts and friends alike with (seasonal) creative impact! Anu and Anders bring us another great jumble to continue that holiday mood.

Happy holidays to all and the best for a happy and successful 2013. Keep those articles coming.

Successful migration from the personal computing to Apple computing environment for regulatory medical writers

When renewing computer hardware, migration from one system to another, arguably, should not be overlooked. Some of the challenges that may be faced, by regulatory medical writers migrating from a personal computer (PC)-based system to an Apple (Mac) system, are described.

Keywords: PC, Apple, Mac, Switch, Regulatory medical writing

I had been considering and then investigated switching from the personal computing (PC) to Apple (Mac) environment over a 9-month period. It seemed natural given that I had an iPhone and the family had iPods. Incompatibilities between the calendar systems for the iPhone and the PC's Microsoft's Outlook calendar niggled enough for me to investigate a long-term solution that would allow all my devices to work optimally – together. I also wanted a quality system that would not run slower over time, and I wanted to make sure my

system was less vulnerable to external hazards such as circulating viruses – both of which had been issues with my PC.

What better way to find out if migrating was for me than to check out what Apple had to say about it (<http://www.apple.com/support/switch101/>), and then seek my own business community's advice via EMWA's LinkedIn page? So I posted my question:

'I have always used a PC for work, but am thinking of changing to a Mac, largely because all the

other hardware we have in our household is Apple – iPhone; iPods and soon, an iPad. I also hear great things from Mac desktop users. I would like to be aware of any pitfalls before I make a decision on whether to change or to stick with a PC, in terms of working in an industry of predominantly PC users. Does using a Mac create problems when sharing documents with PC-using clients? Are there functional differences in Mac & PC software that I should be aware of? I'd be glad if any medical writer out there could share their experiences so I can make an informed decision before I make my purchase.'

Before long, I was deluged with responses, mostly from Mac converts (http://www.linkedin.com/groupItem?view=&gid=2717752&type=member&item=96101656&qid=bc636391-730f-494c-9850-a977435a1fb0&trk=group_items_see_more-0-b-ttl). Overwhelmingly, it seemed that there were no insurmountable barriers to switching and that clients would see no difference. This for me was key. It seemed as though if I planned this properly, it could work for me. At this point, I should mention that I do not run any out-of-the-ordinary software programmes that others might in the medical writing world, perhaps in the medical communication or translation arena.

So, I cleared 2 weeks of calendar space and set to work cleaning my PC, and I visited the Apple store in my city. I booked a session with a business advisor, and made my purchases (Table 1, column 3). I signed up for a business package and had the Apple business team migrate as much archived material as possible from my PC to my iMac and onto the Mac platform. I bought a 3-year support package, AppleCare, that provides telephone and web support – invaluable, as one trip back to the

store with my very heavy 27-inch iMac taught me! After numerous calls to the store and AppleCare to fix issues that arose while I was fine tuning my system, I eventually found myself a senior AppleCare advisor with 10 previous years of Microsoft® experience. This individual proved my salvation where other advisors with purely Mac know-how had failed. In particular, knowledge of both systems and environments has been necessary to trouble shoot and fix issues that have arisen with migrating Outlook email and using Office on a Mac platform.

I have encountered challenges along the way that I've learned from. Mostly, I have attempted to solve these myself, but when it all becomes too much, my AppleCare advisor has been able to guide me. The lessons I've learned are described in Table 2.

Making the switch was not quite as easy as it may seem because problems became apparent over time and resolution was not always immediate. Effective implemented solutions only are described in Table 2; multiple unsuccessful attempted solutions tried along the way are not. In courting PC users to make the switch, I firmly believe that Apple must better support this specific user community. There are plenty of dedicated Mac users who have never used anything but Macs; they are well supported by Apple who knows their own platforms and systems inside-out. It's the switchers who need tailored additional support, from the point of purchase and document transfer, and continuing beyond with effective remote support delivered by individuals with both Mac and PC system-platform know-how. As an end-user, I consider that a work in progress from Apple's perspective.

Now up and running, my system works like a dream. The iMac is faster and slicker than my old

Table 1: Personal migration from a PC to Mac computing environment

Variable	PC – out with the old	Mac – in with the new
Hardware	Mesh desktop PC, 14-inch screen, purchased July 2006, subsequently regularly serviced, and upgraded twice	27-inch iMac, purchased March 2012
Operating system	Windows XP,	OS X Lion
Software	MS Office 2003 (including Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and Office)	Office for Mac 2011 (including Word, PowerPoint, Excel, and Office)
Printer	HP colour LaserJet 2840	HP OfficeJet Pro 8600 Plus all-in-one printer with AirPrint capability
Backup system	2 GB external hard drive (A5 size) – requiring manual backup	Portable 500 GB firewire drive (mobile phone size) – automatic backup of entire desktop multiple times daily via 'Time Machine'
Antivirus and system protection	AVG free antivirus and Adaware free spyware	None required

Table 2: Solving challenges in migrating from a PC to Mac computing environment and platforms

Challenge	Problem	Solution	Outcome
<i>Pre-switch</i>			
To avoid importing 'rubbish' from an old PC to a new Mac. You need a fresh start!	The PC is full of old documents seldom if ever used and less likely to need going forward	Clean up the PC and remove outdated files. Streamline folders. Copy these to an external hard drive	A tidy PC desktop to migrate to a new Mac. If files are corrupted during transfer, a second back up on an external hard drive is available in addition to a cleaned PC hard drive
<i>Post-switch</i>			
<i>Ensuring continued compatibility with a largely PC-based industry</i>			
To continue to work in a familiar software environment recognised as the industry norm, i.e. for regulatory medical writers, MS Office	Mac comes pre-loaded with the Apple operating system that works with Apple pre-loaded software (Pages, iWork, Numbers, and AppleMail). You will not be able to work in Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook	Buy 'MS Office for Mac' software and install on the Mac	You replicate your industry's software environment and can continue to interface with colleagues and clients as you did previously
To migrate existing MS Office documents from PC to Mac, while maintaining them in their original Windows folder/file structure	The Mac platform is different to the PC platform unless you use virtualisation software to run Windows on the Mac. If you stay with the Mac platform, folders at higher levels of hierarchy may import from PC to Mac in a different location than expected	With the PC and Mac open side-by-side, review all folders/files on the Mac for positional inconsistencies and reinstate their intended position as visible on the PC	Your documents are in the same location as they were on your PC, but you operate on the Mac platform
To ensure your colleagues and clients see the same 'Word' documents, complete with mark-ups, as you see them	Everyone seems to be using different versions of Word within the industry, and 'Word 97 for Mac' is yet another version	Save your work as both docx and doc files, circulate both and remind team members to pick up and work with the version of the document compatible with their own system	All mark-ups including 'comments' and 'track changes' are visible to all. Top tip – add your initials (and have other stakeholders do the same) to any comments and tracks to avoid loss of authorship information between different versions of Word
Joining WebEx sessions	You may need to download software to enable WebEx. If the software is not optimised for Mac platforms, then this will corrupt your system. Joining WebEx using software not optimised for Mac corrupts printer drivers, removes random pieces of external hardware (e.g. external hard drive) and some software capability. All will require removal, reinstallation, and the Mac will need to be cleaned	If you are due to take part in a WebEx session, ask if the documentation (possibly a presentation) can be e-mailed to you and just navigate through it on your own screen rather than through the remote WebEx session	You avoid corrupting your entire system and can still take part in the session

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Table 2: *Continued*

Challenge	Problem	Solution	Outcome
<i>Ensuring calendar compatibilities</i>			
To integrate appointments and meetings generated via the MS Outlook calendar into the Mac calendar, iCal	They won't automatically integrate, so you have to manually add them to iCal	Consider winding down your use of 'Outlook' and eventually move to exclusively using AppleMail. Appointments and meetings should load directly to iCal if you respond to or generate them through AppleMail	You'll need to run Outlook and AppleMail concurrently on the Mac for a while, with the eventual aim of migrating over exclusively to AppleMail (see below)
To streamline iCal entries on your iPhone and iMac so you don't have to do a manual synch between the two devices	You keep forgetting to do a manual synch, so calendar inconsistencies may occur between devices until you remember to synch	Enable iCloud – Apple's web storage solution that stores documents, music, photos, calendars and more, and wirelessly pushes them to all your devices (http://www.apple.com/uk/icloud/?cid=mc-features-uk-g-icd-clc-icloud)	iCal on your iPhone and Mac are auto synched via iCloud. You never have to do a manual synch again. However, if the synching seems to have 'gone off' just log into your iCloud account from your Mac and refresh – that should fix it
<i>Integrating email systems</i>			
To migrate email folder structure and contents from Outlook to AppleMail	Not possible – or rather, highly problematic	Consider winding down your use of 'Outlook' and eventually move to exclusive use of AppleMail. Don't remove Outlook from your Mac though	Run 2 email systems in parallel on the Mac when you first switch:
To view 'Outlook' archived emails in the original PC folder structure on your Mac	No problem as 'Outlook' should have copied onto the Mac and retained archived emails in the original folder structure	Simply view old emails using Outlook on the Mac	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Your main email system is AppleMail. Use this as your functional email from which to generate new emails 2. Use Outlook to view archived emails and to reply to old emails where you need to continue the string – remember the original content is archived here. cc yourself so that a copy goes to AppleMail and you can continue the mail string from there going forward 3. Eventually you'll use Outlook less and AppleMail more, thereby migrating fully to AppleMail over time
To keep track of your business emails while away from your desk	Potential for lost business and numerous emails waiting for you in your inbox after a spell away from your desk	Consider buying an iPhone (or indeed an android)	You keep an eye on your business wherever you are

Continued

Table 2: *Continued*

Challenge	Problem	Solution	Outcome
To streamline your work process so that emails dealt with on one piece of hardware (e.g. your iPhone while at the EMWA Conference) don't need to be dealt with again on your return to your desk (on the Mac)	Business emails archived on the Mac in AppleMail don't show up in the iPhone email folder structure	Check your business email account settings. It may have been set up as a POP account. This type of account just shows emails on the device from which you access your emails and doesn't allow them to be replicated on your other devices. Now migrate your POP business email account to an IMAP account. This type of account allows emails and their folder structure to show on all your devices. Make sure that within AppleMail, your business email archive folders are set up in your business email master folder, and not in the master folder called 'On my Mac'. Once they show in your business email master folder, they automatically show up on your iPhone	You are IMAPed! Keep your iPhone emails tidy, or your Applemail emails tidy on the Mac – but you'll never need to do both independently again! You may need to buy more webspace if you have a private email domain because your email folders now take up space on the server. Remember to clean out sent mails and deleted mails regularly to maximise use of available space
<i>Bookmarked internet pages</i> Migrating bookmarked 'Internet Explorer' pages to 'Safari' on the Mac	You forgot to mention that you need to retain bookmarked or favourite pages when the PC to Mac migration was done!	There's no shortcut that I could find! With the PC and Mac open side-by-side, review all your web browser bookmarks or favourites on the PC and find them again and bookmark them on 'Safari' on the Mac	You might well be able to include this in your migration, so remember to ask at the outset!
<i>Security</i> Choosing an antivirus for your Mac	You don't need to! Mac is designed in a different way to PC. In lay terms: the house is built with locked doors and windows, rather than open doors and windows, so fending off intruders is not an issue		No further expenditure on antivirus; no keeping antivirus updated
<i>Backing up</i> Keeping your entire system backed up		Use Apple's 'Time Machine' which captures a copy of your entire hard drive to an external hard drive	If you lose (a) document(s), you can search back through Time Machine to find and reinstate it. When you are away from your business, you can disconnect and store the tiny external hard drive that Time Machine backs up to in a safe place

PC; it has a beautiful user interface and the super-size screen makes working with multiple documents a breeze. It has some wonderful (and, so far, foolproof) pre-loaded software for film making and showcasing photos – a boon for the family.

So would I do it again? Yes, but I'd block out more work-free time (3–4 weeks) to make sure my system is working smoothly before resuming work. Compatibility is still an issue at times, but I am now aware of the danger of blindly implementing a suggested software download. I have support on the end of a phone with my personal Apple advisor who understands both the PC and Mac

worlds. There are also numerous Mac forums for ideas on how to approach a particular problem when my advisor is not immediately available. I feel more computer-savvy now and am more likely than the pre-switch me to attempt to solve problems before seeking help. In a regulatory medical writing arena, migrating from a PC to Mac computing environment, although initially labour intensive, has been overall successful in this freelance medical writer's opinion.

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Medical Writing Jumble # 5

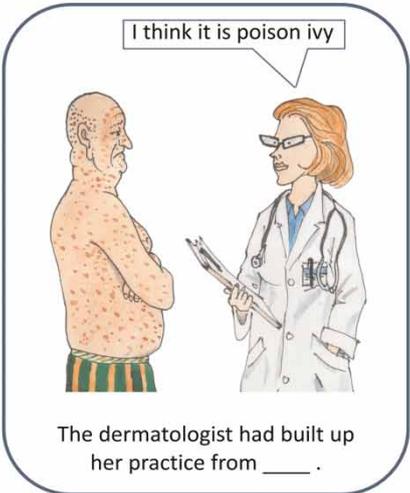
1. Rearrange the jumbled letters to get a meaningful word related to medical writing.
2. Next, take the circled letters from each word and make two new words that will answer the riddle in the cartoon. Hint: The answer is probably a pun.
3. Use British English.

INCICL ○ □ □ □ □ ○

OMRIN □ □ □ □ □ ○

ESTLCE ○ □ □ □ □ ○

UNAMH ○ □ □ □ ○ □



I think it is poison ivy

The dermatologist had built up her practice from ____.

Answer: □ □ □ □ □ □ □

The Toolbox: Wordle It

www.wordle.net/ is a great tool created by Jonathan Feinberg. With the seasonal holidays nearly upon us, you might like to try it out. It's great for those business Christmas cards, or even the personal variety.

Create 'word clouds' from text that you type in to the 'create' box. The generated clouds give prominence to words appearing more frequently in the source text. The clouds can be formatted with various fonts, layouts, and colour palettes. You can share them with your friends and colleagues, or save them to the Wordle.net gallery for public sharing.

Here are a few tips to get you started:

1. Create your source text in a Word document on your hard drive. Then, copy and paste it into Wordle. That way, if you want to tweak your word cloud, you won't need to start typing in the source text from scratch as you develop your cloud.
2. Once you have generated your word cloud, print the screen to your desktop, and crop the resulting image. You can paste this into emails, or any other type of document, and share it.
3. Scour the Wordle gallery for publicly shared word clouds. Picking up a readymade one

may be less fun than making one yourself, but can save time. Or just be inspired...and start creating!

Here are suggestions for uses:

1. Business or personal seasonal or holiday greetings cards.
2. Teaching - tried and tested for EMWA foundation workshop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): Processes and Authoring by Sam Hamilton and Tracy Farrow. We created clouds of words associated with poorly- and well-written SOPs.
3. Marketing your business - communicate effectively with your target audience using relevant words, perhaps translated into their language, to give a personal touch.

This is the word cloud I created to market my business. I chose the same colour palette as my logo for consistency and continuity.

So what are you waiting for? Get Wordling!

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Websites: Maximising Potential

Many freelancers now have their own websites. Designed correctly, websites are a great marketing tool for your business, attracting new clients and keeping in touch with your current client base. Here are some tips for maximising your website's potential.

1. Search engine optimisation is the term given to improving your website's visibility on the internet. Think of the key words that people might use when looking for a medical writer, and include these in your website text, including text relating to images on your site.
2. Websites are a form of advertising so consider your target audience with regard to your choice of images, visuals, and text. Ensure the text is accurate with respect to spelling and grammar and take time to align text and images so the overall picture is pleasing to the eye. If you can't get these simple things right, potential clients may wonder what else you may get wrong.

3. While you want to get information across, don't make your website too 'wordy'. Use pictures to create interest and white space to rest the eyes - reading from a screen, particularly on phones, can be tiring.
4. Make it easy to navigate around your site. Use clearly marked tabs and internal links to other pages on your website. Don't bombard your reader with highly detailed information all at once - enable them to 'drill down' or navigate to the detail as required.
5. To increase traffic to your website, see if you can persuade other related businesses to put a link to your site on their website, and return the favour.
6. Writing a blog can also increase traffic and your visibility through search engines because it gives you the opportunity to regularly update your site's content. It's also a fantastic way of keeping in touch with your clients.

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Answers to Medical Writing Jumble #5:
CLINIC, MINOR, SELECT, HUMAN
The dermatologist had built up her practice
from SCRATCH.