

## Comparison Analysis of the 2000 Salary Survey

We have included a comparison analysis of the data collected in the 2000 Salary Survey of Technical Communicators in Huntsville/North Alabama with that found in the STC 2000 Technical Communicator Salary Survey. Only five areas of overlap could be used for comparison purposes due to the way results were published in the STC 2000 Technical Communicator Salary Survey and the questions posed on the 2000 Salary Survey of Technical Communicators in Huntsville/North Alabama.

### Mean Technical Communication Salaries

**Table 7. 1999 and 2000 Salaries (mean) Based on Experience**

(all figures in U.S. dollars, local data based on 87 responses)

<b>Years Experience</b>	<b>Huntsville 1999</b>	<b>National 1999</b>	<b>Huntsville 2000</b>	<b>National 2000</b>
<b>Less than 2 years</b>	37,500	37,800	34,078	45,050
<b>2-5 years</b>	40,000	40,410	41,000	44,230
<b>6-10 years</b>	36,000	49,100	43,033	53,490
<b>11+ years</b>	52,000	53,840	50,494	58,170

Source: National mean taken from the STC 1999 Technical Communicator Salary Survey

### Benefits Analysis

Benefits for technical communicators in the Huntsville area were very competitive with benefits received at the national level for the second year in a row. Although actual percentage rates for various individual benefits, listed below in Table 8, differed slightly from the 1999 survey results, benefit levels remained stable overall. The level of compensation given to technical communicators in the Huntsville area was roughly the same as what can be expected at the national level in the following:

- Health
- Dental
- Disability
- Tuition reimbursement

The only area that showed a wide margin of difference was the pension plan category. Only 37% of Huntsville area technical communicators receive pension plan benefits compared to 78% of technical communicators at the national level. However, 93% of technical communicators responding to this survey do receive 401K plans. There was no corresponding category listed in the STC 2000 Technical Communicator Salary Survey. Furthermore, whether 401K plans were included in the results given for pensions plans at the national level cannot be ascertained. When looking at the data provided from the local surveys for 1999 and 2000, one sees a 12% drop in tuition reimbursement from last year and a 9% decline in flexible hours and job sharing. There was also a 10% drop in bonus/profit sharing and an 8% decrease in paid sick leave locally compared to last year. Local benefits did improve in the stock purchase plan area by over 100%, however. There was no significant difference in national results for 1998 and 2000 other than a jump of well over 100% in the life insurance category. There were several areas that could not be compared either locally or nationally because there was no overlap in the categories.

**Table 8. 2000 Benefits Compared to Previous Years**

(local data based on 87 responses)

<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Huntsville 1999 (%)</b>	<b>National 1998 (%)</b>	<b>Huntsville 2000 (%)</b>	<b>National 2000 (%)</b>
<b>No Benefits</b>	---	---	3	---
<b>Health</b>	96	96	97	97
<b>Dental</b>	92	88	87	92
<b>Paid holiday and/or vacations</b>	96	---	95	---
<b>Disability</b>	88	---	85	84
<b>401K</b>	96	---	93	---
<b>Pension Plan</b>	32	77	37	78
<b>Bonus/profit sharing</b>	41	---	31	---
<b>Stock purchase plan</b>	25	---	53	---
<b>Flexible hours/job sharing</b>	45	---	36	---
<b>Child care</b>	2	---	3	---
<b>Paid sick leave</b>	88	---	80	---
<b>Tuition reimbursement</b>	81	75	69	74
<b>Life insurance</b>	---	38	---	89
<b>Vision</b>	---	17	---	---
<b>LTD</b>	---	20	---	---
<b>Internet</b>	---	---	---	78
<b>Seminar/conferences</b>	---	---	---	74
<b>Membership dues</b>	---	---	---	73

Source: National mean taken from the STC 1999 Technical Communicator Salary Survey

**Education Levels Held by Technical Communicators**

Education levels varied little at the local and national levels for the second year in a row as shown by Table 9 below. However, the national percentage of technical communicators holding a bachelors degree dropped from 67% in 1999 to 55% in 2000 despite the fact that those holding a masters degree at the national level differed by only 1%. Thirty-one percent had masters degrees in 1999 and 30% reported having them in 2000. In addition, doctorate degrees fell by 1.7% at the national level. At the local level, those with bachelors and masters degrees increased only slightly. Technical communicators falling into the "other" category dropped slightly from 1999 to 2000. Results were closer in all categories except bachelors degrees when comparing local and national 2000 results. The difference widened to a 9% in 2000 as opposed to only 2% in 1999.

**Table 9. 1999 and 2000 Educational Levels**

(local data based on 87 responses)

<b>Educational Level</b>	<b>Huntsville 1999 (%)</b>	<b>National 1999 (%)</b>	<b>Huntsville 2000 (%)</b>	<b>National 2000 (%)</b>
<b>Bachelors</b>	65	67	66	55
<b>Masters</b>	21	31	24	30
<b>Doctorate</b>	0	2	---	.03
<b>Other</b>	14	0	10	14

Source: National mean taken from the STC 1999 Technical Communicator Salary Survey

**Gender in the Technical Communication Field**

Local gender statistics are closer to the national level this year. There is only a 6% difference between the local and national levels in 2000 compared to a 9% difference in 1999. However, females still predominate the technical communication profession at both the local and national levels by a wide margin. Complete gender results are given below in Table 10.

**Table 10. 1999 Compared to 2000 by Gender**  
(local data based on 82 responses)

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Huntsville 1999</b> (%)	<b>National 1999</b> (%)	<b>Huntsville 2000</b> (%)	<b>National 2000</b> (%)
<b>Female</b>	79	70	74	68
<b>Male</b>	21	30	26	32

Source: National mean taken from the STC 1999 Technical Communicator Salary Survey

### Survey Response Rates

The number of salary survey respondents increased from 65 in 1999 to 92 in 2000 locally. The increase may be attributed to the increased membership; 83 additional surveys were mailed out. As a result, the overall percentage of returns dropped by 7% despite incentives to increase participation. When compared to the percentage of responses received at the national level, the 2000 Salary Survey of Technical Communicators in Huntsville/North Alabama fared well. Three percent more technical communicators responded to the local survey this year than did to the national survey this year. Details are shown below in Table 11.

**Table 11. Survey Responses from 1999 Compared to 2000**

<b>Survey Data</b>	<b>Huntsville 1999</b>	<b>Huntsville 2000</b>	<b>National 2000</b>
<b>Surveys mailed</b>	127	210	3,500
<b>Surveys returned</b>	65	92	1,350
<b>Percent returned</b>	51	44	38

Source: National mean taken from the STC 1999 Technical Communicator