

LavaConnection

LavaCon's Daily Newsletter



Noz Urbina presents at a Sunday workshop.

MONDAY AT-A-GLANCE SCHEDULE

8:30-10:00am: Welcome, keynotes, Grand Ballroom
10:15am-12:00pm: Conference sessions
12:00-1:30pm: Networking lunch in Exhibit Hall, therapy dogs in Grand Ballroom foyer
1:30-3:15pm: Conference sessions
3:15-4:15pm: Snack break, Exhibit Hall
4:15-5:15pm: Keynotes, Grand Ballroom
5:15-6:45pm: Networking reception, Exhibit Hall
8:00-10:00pm: Storytelling event, Kelly's Olympian

FILL YOUR BINGO CARDS!

In your conference bag is an Exhibitor Bingo card. Get a staffer from each exhibitor to initial your card in the appropriate space. Once you have every space filled, add your name and drop it off at the Registration/Information desk. One filled-out card will be selected at random after the conference ends and the winner will receive a \$200 Amazon gift card.

Note that the Exhibit Hall is open only on Monday (today) and Tuesday.



22ND LAVACon OPENS IN PORTLAND

by Chuck Martin

The LavaCon Content Strategy Conference returns to Portland today, opening with keynotes and a day filled with informational sessions over multiple subject tracks. LavaCon has been here twice before, celebrating its 10th anniversary in 2012, and again in 2019, the last big event before the Covid pandemic.

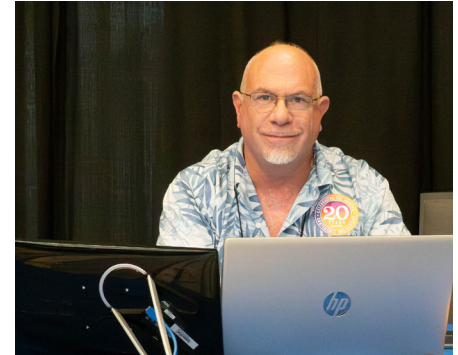
Nealy 400 content professionals will fill the Portland Hilton conference rooms over the next 2 1/2 days, interact with each other at meet-and-greet and other scheduled social events, and even relax by petting a therapy dog or alpaca.

While there is a virtual component offered by conference organizer Jack Molisani, the multiple tracks, the vendor booths, and the social events allow many opportunities for in-person learning, in-person networking, and in-person socializing.

AI (artificial intelligence) may be the current Kool-Aid, but the conference has tracks across the spectrum of content development, management, and strategy spectrum. Yes, there is a track dedicated to AI/ML (machine learning), but you can also go to sessions dedicated to tools and technology, to the business of content, and not one, but two tracks of content strategy and UX (user experience).

Conference sponsors will have representatives present in and around the Exhibit Hall all day today

to answer your product questions. Adobe, Heretto, RWS Tridion, Zoomin, GlobalLink, Quark, and Mad-Cap Software lead the dozens of companies here to



talk to you. In fact, you'll have a great opportunity at lunchtime today because there is a networking lunch in the exhibit hall from noon to 1:30pm.

That is, if you can take time away from the therapy dogs that will be in the Grand Ballroom foyer.

But if lunchtime wasn't enough for you, the Exhibit Hall will host a networking reception in the Exhibit Hall from 5:15-6:45pm, after the afternoon keynotes in the Grand Ballroom.



Sunday workshop attendees.

PROGRAM UPDATES

- The WiFi SSID you can use to get online at the conference is **LavaConPDX** (no space).
- Mark Johnson's session on Monday at 2:30pm in the *Content Strategy and UX* track has a new title: **Extensible Help: Scalable Content for an AI World.**

Updated Exhibitor Locations

Locations of exhibitors have changed. See the diagram to the right for updated locations.

1. Adobe TCS
2. Zoomin
3. Heretto
4. Job Board
5. Acrolinx
6. Morningside a Questel company
8. LanguageLine Solutions
9. Congee
12. Scriptorium
13. Kinetic Council
14. Enterprise Knowledge
15. MadCap Software
16. Bookstore
19. Bluestream
20. Quark
22. Precision Content
23. We Are Very
25. Smartling
26. STC
27. ProSpring Staffing
28. ComTech
- 29, 30. Chocolate Exchange
33. Ingeniux
34. DITA Strategies/Intuitive Stack
35. Fluid Topics
36. Stilo
38. Global Link
40. RWS
41. Coffee Station

SESSION SUMMARIES

A few highlights from some of yesterday's workshops.

Noz Urbina led a workshop on designing AI prompts and workflows. He noted that an LLM is a large language model, not a large database model. It can't do calculations.

He also introduced a concept of Content Value Design, an approach for analyzing audience journeys and stakeholder ecosystems. He delved into journey maps, explaining that journeys are questions over time. What are people trying to understand, learn, do? What are the questions that drive interactions? These are what drive journey maps.

Bridget O'Donnell led a workshop on user research for content teams. She spent time explaining what screener questions are and why they need to be designed to be unbiased.

When designing tests themselves, a maximum of 8-10 tasks is optimal, fewer if the tasks are complex.

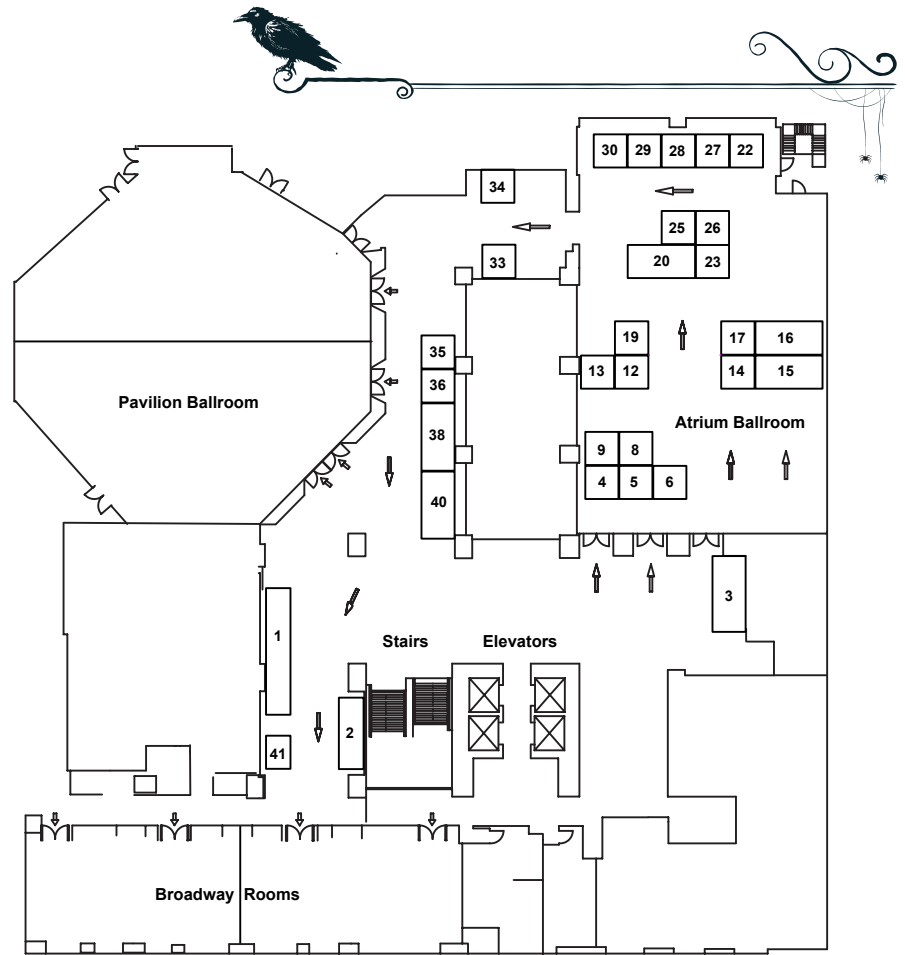
Often asking a question directly is the worst way to get information. Develop open-ended questions. A yes/no answer is an indicator of potential bias.

Heather Hedden held a workshop explained the importance of taxonomies in her workshop. Explaining that a taxonomy is a controlled vocabulary organized into a hierarchical structure, she added that taxonomies help control and organize content.

The catchphrase is "things, not strings." An example of this is results of a search can be extracted from concepts, not just the words.

Taxonomies provide consistent concepts for tagging and retrieval. They bring together synonyms for the same content. They organize concepts into hierarchies, which guide users to specific topics, and into facets for filtering and refining searches.

Jason Kaufman suggested during his afternoon



SPONSOR CORNER

LavaCon could not happen without the support of its sponsors. This section highlights their conference-related news and events.

Exclusive Diamond Sponsor

Adobe is a well-known company in the content development world. The Adobe Technical Communication Suite includes FrameMaker, RoboHelp, Captivate, and Acrobat. Adobe Experience Manager Guides is a cloud-native component content management system (CCMS)

Sapphire Sponsors

Sapphire sponsors in 2024 include:

- Heretto: A content operations stack, an advanced DITA-powered platform that unifies content development for enterprise-grade productivity.
- RWS Tridion: Intelligent content management that is an enterprise DITA Component Content Management System (CCMS).
- Zoomin: A unified knowledge product that delivers intuitive experiences to your customers, partners, and employees.
- GlobalLink: The world's most powerful AI-powered translation management system.
- Quark: Delivering advanced desktop publishing tools to creative teams and trusted enterprise content lifecycle management solutions to highly regulated industries.
- MadCap Software: The leading solutions for the creation of technical documentation and learning and development content.

Sponsor Events

- MadCap Software is having a daily raffle to give away some luxury Lego sets. To enter the raffle, attendees can either scan a QR code during Dipo Ajose-Coker's *Integrating Subject Matter Experts Into Structured Authoring Ecosystems* presentation at 11:15am today, or visit MadCap Software at booth 15 to sign up. Multiple sign ups are allowed.
- Heretto is hosting a special event tonight, a happy hour to enjoy bowling, brews, and bites, and you can still register to attend. It's from 7-9pm at Punch Bowl Social, just a 7 minute walk from the Lavacon venue. Stop by the Heretto booth today or go to go.heretto.com/lavacon-event-2024 to register.

workshop on building and maintaining a prompt library to challenge AI's own work, saying that once you get a response, you can then ask where it got its information.

Over time, models change. In your prompt library, the behavior of the prompts will change, known as

prompt drift. This is definitely a reason for curating your prompts.

Rahel Bailie talked about content operations. She said that you raise the value of content by reducing content debt.