ISSUE NO. 1

LavaConnection

The Daily Newsletter of the LavaCon Content Strategy Conference



Several people at work on exercises in the "MythBusters Lab: Let's Test What Really Works for Remote Content Teams" pre-conference workshop.

24th LavaCon Opens in Charlotte

By Chuck Martin

In this new disruptive world of artificial intelligence (AI), the ability to develop content well, to manage content well, and to publish content well is still important. And in this new AI-driven world, the 24th LavaCon Conference on Content Strategy and Technical Communication Management opens today at the Le Meridien Hotel in Charlotte, NC.

More than 400 practitioners from around the world are gathering here to learn about the latest on these topics, in expert sessions along multiple breakout tracks over 2½ days. And AI will once again be a recurring theme; you will see "AI" in the titles of close to half of the conference presentations, including this morning's opening talk, "More AI Doesn't Mean Les Human."

But there is plenty more to content development and content strategy than AI, as you will also see. Themes that will run through the more than 70 sessions available to you will include structured content, content governance, content development principles, practices, and processes, and not a few case studies showcasing content successes.

Today is the first of two days when conference sponsors and vendors will be available in the Exhibit Hall, which is the Symphony Ballroom and the foyer in front of the Symphony Ballroom. In your conference bag in a exhibitor bingo card. Visit every vendor and have them initial your card, then turn your card in at the registration desk. You don't need a bingo card to stop by and talk with any of them; they are all eager to share their knowledge and their tools.

Today is also when therapy dogs will be available at lunchtime in the foyer outside the Symphony Ballroom.

The very full day will end with a Network Reception and then an always popular Live Storytelling event, both providing ample opportunity to meet your fellow attendees, the latter in a rarely used private space ready-made for LavaCon, a space you will not want to miss.

This daily newsletter is intended to help you navigate LavaCon, along with the official program and the sponsor book. It'll contain daily wrap-ups, fun and interesting photos, event reminders, and late-breaking news. We hope it enhances your LavaCon experience.

Therapy Dogs

12:00–1:15, Comfort dogs in the Symphony Ballroom foyer

Network Reception

5:00–6:30, with BBQ Pig Pick'n, Crudites, and Slider and Mac & Cheese bars, Symphony Ballroom

Storytelling Event

7:00–9:00, CJ's Lounge

Notes & Tips

Conference WiFi

LavaCon offers complimentary WiFi to all attendees.

SSID: LavaCon26

Password: lava-nc256

We're on Slack!

LavaCon has it's own workspace on Slack. The URL is lavacon.slack.com. Be sure to join #announcements, #general, and #random. There is also a #job_ board and many more channels.

Chocolate Exchange

The chocolate exchange table—y'all brought some to share, right?—is table #30, along the back wall of the Symphony Ballroom.

Speaker Feedback

Feedback on speakers and session content helps LavaCon improve. Scan the QR code on the last slide of each presentation to send immediate feedback to Jack and the staff.



Folks from the Kinetic Information Association demonstrating how they can create links.

Schedule Changes: Monday

The following changes occurred to today's schedule after it was printed.

- 11:15, Mecklenburg 2: Session Canceled
- 1:15, Governors 1, 2, 3, 4: Instead of Megan Gilhooly, Shai Chaudhary, Principal Program Manager, Content & AI Innovation, OneTrust will be presenting with Patrick Bosek

Monday At-a-Glance

A view of today's breakout schedule, with late changes in **bold.**

	Mecklenburg 1	Meckenburg 2	Carolina Ballroom	Mecklenburg 3	Governors 1, 2, 3, 4
10:15	Stuck in a PDF world? Unlock Next-Level Intelligence with Structured Content	The Docs Are Not Alright (And AI Alone Won't Fix Them)	Impact Map: Getting Stakeholder Buy-In for Content Initiatives	How Netsmart Uses AI-Accelerated Learning to Onboard Teams Faster	Who Are We Writing For? Rethinking Technical Communication for an AI-First Future
11:15	Past the Pilot: Why Your Content Model Decides Whether AI Scales	~~The Undocumented 80%: Processes Nobody Writes Down~~ *(Session canceled)*	Dell's Content Transformation Journey	Orchestrating Content Workflow at Ellucian Using AI Skills	From 2 AM Failure to 8 AM Fix: Self-Healing Docs, Agent Instructions Included
1:15	Stop Building Bots, Start Hiring AI Employees: How HR Thinking Makes AI Agents Safer and Smarter	Building an Enterprise Content Engine that Delivers Results	Doing Good Content Work in Uncertain Times	The Human and AI Handshake for Content Generation at Blackbaud	Beyond the Bot: How Structured Content Drives an Agentic Ecosystem Across Your Entire Content Stack!
2:15	Getting Content Right at the Source Saves Time and Localization Costs	Ada Lovelace the Tech Writer: Her 183-Year-Old Principles for Content in the Age of AI	Structured Content as the Best Investment in Certification, Scale, and Safety	Thomson Reuters' Human-Guided Approach to AI Content	AI Won't Transform Your Enterprise Until You Transform Your Content

Session Summaries

Brief summaries from yesterday's sessions.

Effective Content Inventories and Analysis

David Hobbs began by asking about and describing the kinds of changes that an organization is likely to want to make. The dimensions of change include how broad is the change and how disruptive is the change.

Traditionally, a content inventory in quantitative and a content audit is qualitative. AI lets us do some qualitative analysis that is not manual, especially in evaluation. LLMs are better at evaluation than in writing something new.

Creating Taxonomies for Your Organization in the Age of AI

A taxonomy is not the same as navigation. A taxonomy represents content's ideas. It describes and organizes content.

A facet is housed inside a taxonomy and represents an aspect of an object.

A taxonomy helps you find things. It provides consistency of language. It helps content integrations, especially across silos. It creates opportunity for content reuse. It can be used to personalize user experiences. And it's used in AI applications, providing context to reduce guessing.



LavaCon is where good friends meet.

Sponsor Spotlight

Exclusive Diamond Sponsor

Adobe is once again the Exclusive Diamond Sponsor for LavaCon.

Sapphire Sponsors

Madcap Software brings its Flare and Central products to showcase.

Heretto is sponsoring two events: therapy dogs today and karaoke tomorrow.

Markup AI is once again supporting the conference and has patches.

Otto is here to tell you about delivering multilingual content.

Hashout is supporting LavaCon and is an Adobe Solution Partner.

Promptless is offering three months of Promptless free to LavaCon attendees.

Sponsor Events

Heretto sponsors the therapy dogs that you can spend time with at lunchtime today.

Vendor Change

Trupeer was not able to attend LavaCon this year. At their table, #21, is now Zaon Labs.

More sponsors tomorrow.

Having a good time at LavaCon

