Some closing thoughts from Rick Lebsack

Review a Book Contest

Have you ever seen a book that you really thought would be interesting and the sticker price prevented the consummation of the reading experience? If this has happened to you we may have a way to help. MeasureIT is holding a Book Review contest. All you have to do is enter. We want readers to submit an entry to the contest for a book that is relevant to you and our readers.

The Entry Format is simple:
- Your Name and email
- The book you want to read and review
- Why it is valuable to MeasureIT readers
- Send the above information to cmgjournal@cmg.org with the subject line Book Review Contest

The Rules are even simpler
- Book must cost $50 or less
- You commit to delivering MIT a minimum of 2 page review of the book in 30 days of receipt
- You get to keep the book

Entries will be taken up to August 21st.

This should be fun and please think outside the box – there are lots of interesting books out there that can interest and help MeasureIT readers. We would like the review finished to publish in the September issue.

Also, while this contest is a bit of fun, I know that our readers are always finding and reading new books. You don’t have to win a contest to have a book review published in MeasureIT. All you have to do is write up what you read, what it said, and what you thought of it. Not a dissertation, not a full blown paper, just some musings. Submit them at anytime to MeasureIT and share.

Call for submissions to MeasureIT

MeasureIT is always on the look out for interesting new material from our 10,000 readers. It does not have to be a full paper or presentation. A few paragraphs or a one to two page article is always welcome and does not have to be entirely technical. Longer ‘feature’ articles are more typically 5-8 pages long and could be the basis for a later paper or submission to the Journal.

This is not a formal call for papers and presentations such as that issued for the annual conference. It is more a plea for you to put down some thoughts based on recent experiences that may interest others in CMG; it is even better if you can develop a theme that enables a series of short articles.

In order to keep things simple, there is a minimum of standards or templates for submissions to MeasureIT. Any simple Word document or similar is appreciated. However, in response to queries from a number of potential authors, we have drafted ‘MeasureIT Submission Guidelines’ which indicates the sort of format that is preferred along with a few light-hearted ‘Grumblerules’ from Adam Grummit, which suggest typical errors to avoid.
MeasureIT Submission Guidelines

These guidelines are intended to provide a framework for the submission of articles. It discusses the format of the submission, optional bios and pictures and offers some ‘grumblerules’ (defined below). It is laid out in a manner that reflects the guidelines. Every article will be submitted to the editorial team for review. Such review is more in the nature of suggesting any necessary edits (and mentoring as necessary) rather than a formal peer review.

Format

MeasureIT drafts should be submitted using any word processing software (preferably Word) with the simplest of layouts. There should be a single column with one (or two) spaces between sentences. Paragraphs should be separated by one (or two) carriage returns. The normal font used should be sans serif (preferably Arial) and in a smallish size (preferably 10 point). Major headings should be 12 point and bold, minor headings 10 point and bold. Do not use styles. Use single line spacing throughout. The page size should be letter size with 1" margins all round. Do not make use of headers, footnotes etc. It is intended to be an easy-to-read article, although more technical than journalistic. Avoid hyperlinks (but by all means show the URL http://www.cmg.org in brackets). Avoid underlines as people will expect them to be hyperlinks. Show any references by a simple bracket reference in the text [MeasureIT’11 #3, Grummitt, Grumblerules].

The material will be converted into a protected .pdf file in the publishing process.

Leading articles are expected to be some 5-8 pages long. These can be more ambitious in their use of layout techniques. Other articles may be any size from say half a page to a couple of pages and should be kept as simple as possible in format.

Each issue is expected to have at least a couple of leading articles and a handful of other articles. These are usually followed by house notices, chapter conference and meeting reports etc.

Bio & Picture

Append a short bio if you would like it incorporated with your article. Please keep it to just a couple of short paragraphs. Put in the URL for your company site and references to linked-in etc at will. It does not need to be a full CV. Emphasize your relevant experience in MeasureIT disciplines, so that readers will be encouraged to read the article. Append a small thumbnail .jpg photograph of you for incorporation with the article if you like.

Grumblerules

Grumblerules are offered with apologies for plagiarism to William Safire and his ‘Fumblerules’ [Safire, William (1979-11-04) ‘On Language’ New York Times: p. SM4.]. Safire in turn, apologized to all the English teachers who have long taught all this stuff. Grumblerules/ Fumblerules are perverse rules of grammar, exemplified below by self-contradictory examples. These examples say what to do but tend to avoid doing it. This whole section is not meant to be taken too seriously. Suggestions of other examples pertinent to CMG would be very welcome.

Punctuation: Use the semicolon properly, always use it where it is appropriate for additional information; and never where it isn't. Use the colon properly to precede a list or for explanatory information: not too often. Reserve the apostrophe for it's proper use and omit it when its not needed. Avoid commas, that are not necessary. Writers should always hyphenate between syllables and avoid un-necessary hyph-ens. Don't use contractions in formal writing. “Avoid overuse of ‘quotation “marks.”” Don't overuse exclamation marks!!!
Negatives: Don't use no double negatives. It is difficult not to underestimate the impact of CMG on ITSM. Do not put statements in the negative form.

Verbs: Verbs has to agree with their subjects. Remember to never split an infinitive; now is not the time to boldly go. The adverb always follows the verb. Write all adverbial forms correct. If any word is improper at the end of a sentence, a linking verb is. The passive voice should never be used. Steer clear of incorrect forms of verbs that have snuck in the language.

Participles: Writing carefully, dangling participles must be avoided.

Nouns: Don't verb nouns (unless you speak Latin, German or possibly American?).

Pronouns: Place pronouns as close as possible, especially in long sentences, as of ten or more words, to their antecedents. Everyone should be careful to use a singular pronoun with singular nouns in their writing.

Conjunctions: Avoid run-on sentences they are hard to read. MeasureIT is read by many it is so well written. And don't start a sentence with a conjunction.

Prepositions: A preposition is something never to end a sentence with. Don't string too many prepositional phrases together unless you are walking through the valley of the shadow of death.

Checking: Proofread carefully to see if you any words out. No sentence fragments. If you reread your work, you will find on rereading that a great deal of repetition can be avoided by rereading and editing. Take all comments and corrections from the editors as destructive.

Content: A writer must not shift your point of view or introduce any new ideas.

Style: Eschew dialect, irregardless. Eschew obfuscation. It is incumbent on us to avoid archaisms. Never use a long word when a diminutive one will do. Also, avoid awkward or affected alliteration. Capitalize every sentence and remember always end it with a full stop. Take the bull by the hand and avoid mixed metaphors. Keep similes for similar examples like 'as sharp as a blunt thing'. Use metaphors for comparisons that are yet unalike, such as 'pie is food for him'. Avoid trendy locutions that sound flaky. Be more or less specific. Never, ever use repetitive redundancies. Always pick on the correct idiom. If I've told you once, I've told you a thousand times, resist hyperbole. Last but not least, avoid clichés like the plague; seek viable alternatives.