

## CPTSC Honorary Distinguished Service Award, 2009

Awardee: Michaël Steehouder

Selection Committee: Debby Andrews, Mary Coney, Bruce Maylath

The 2009 Selection Committee nominates Michaël Steehouder for the Honorary Distinguished Service Award in recognition of his many substantial contributions to program development in technical communication in the Netherlands, in Europe, and throughout the world.

Few persons in Europe or even the world at large come close to contributing as much as Michaël has to fostering the development academic programming in technical communication. As the current head of the Department of Technical and Professional Communication (TPC) at the University of Twente, where he teaches such courses as User Support, Communication by Service Organizations, and Rhetoric and Argumentation, he has led the program there to world prominence and made it a model to emulate.

Seemingly tireless in his service to the field, Michaël was instrumental in establishing a place for academia in the conferences and operations of TCeurope, the European equivalent of STC. A frequent steering committee member for IEEE International Professional Communication Conferences, he chaired this year's IPCC in Honolulu. He has served as Vice President of INTECOM, a member of the Administrative Committee of the IEEE Professional Communication Society, an associate editor of *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*, and a member of the Editing Committee of *Tijdschrift voor Taalbeheersing* (Dutch Journal of Speech Communication). A participant in CPTSC's Roundtable series in Europe, he has also been a leader in STIC (Studiekring voor Technische Informatie en Communicatie), the Dutch equivalent of STC.

His contributions as a researcher are voluminous. At the University of Twente, he served as research director for studies titled "Design, Implementation and Use of Communication Means" and "Tekstgebruik en Tekstontwerp." His publications start in 1973. He is the co-editor of the books *Basisboek Technische Communicatie (The Technical Communication Primer)* and *Tekstanalyse (Text Analysis)*, and he has served as editor of the Dutch-language journals *Tekst[blad]* and *Communicatief* and guest editor of several journal special issues, including the *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication* and *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication* and *Communicatief*.

The topics of Michaël's research and publications reveal that he focuses on improving human lives and making them more livable through improvements in communication. Recent article and chapter titles include "Adding motivational elements to an instruction manual for seniors: Effects on usability and motivation"; "Evaluation of user support: Factors that affect user satisfaction with helpdesks and helplines"; and "Using role sets to

engage and persuade visitors of websites that promote safe sex." Michaël's deep sense of love and caring for humanity comes through even in short conversations with him. Perhaps it should come as no surprise, then, that he has an avocation as a prolific hymn writer, a modern Dutch counterpart to Charles Wesley.

In short, Michaël Steehouder puts the humane in the humanities and in particular in professional, technical, and scientific communication. He exemplifies the best that CPTSC can honor.