



# Breaking the Silence

How to Build Influence as a Tech Writer

Jacob Moses | Host of The Not-Boring Tech Writer | Tech Writer at Rainmaker Digital

# Who's the Ginger? (My name is Jacob, thank you.)



- Tech Comm. graduate from the University of North Texas
- Host of The Not-Boring Tech Writer podcast
- Technical Writer at Rainmaker Digital





- THE -

**NOT - B  RING**

- TECH WRITER -

**INFLUENCE**

**CREATE  
CONTENT**

# Tom Johnson's *I'd Rather Be Writing*

The screenshot shows the homepage of the website **I'd Rather Be Writing**, which explores technical writing trends and innovations. The header features the site's logo and a navigation menu with links for About, Archives, Series, Jekyll, Categories, Other, Beginners, API doc, and Podcasts. A search bar is also present. A prominent advertisement for Adobe FrameMaker (2015 release) is displayed, highlighting a smoother import of Word files and offering a free trial. The main content area is titled "Latest Posts" and features two articles:

- Review of Andrew Etter's ebook on Modern Technical Writing**  
Jul 26, 2016 · [api-doc](#), [book-reviews](#), [podcasts](#)  
In "Modern Technical Writing: An Introduction to Software Documentation," which is an e-book you can read on your Kindle, Andrew Etter argues for a model of technical writing that involves lightweight markup languages (like AsciiDoc and Markdown), static site generators (such as Sphinx), distributed version control systems (like Git or Bitbucket), constantly iterating/updating doc content on your website based on analytics, and more. Etter's book resonated with me because it articulates so many of the principles I've felt about how documentation should be.
- Applying Tim Ferriss' 4-hour work week rules to tech comm projects**  
Jul 20, 2016 · [general](#), [innovation](#), [podcasts](#)  
Principles in Tim Ferriss' book *The 4-Hour Work Week* can be applied to tech comm projects. By focusing on the 20% of tasks that result in 80% of the results, limiting your focus to two mission critical tasks a day, empowering those around you to make decisions, and avoiding distractions from trivial tasks,

The left sidebar contains several promotional tiles for various tools and services, including FLARE 12, madcap, HyperSTE, HelpConsole, Xeditor, paligo, and a "Your ad here" placeholder.

# Sarah Maddox's *FFEATHERS*

The screenshot shows the homepage of the 'FFEATHERS' WordPress blog. The header features the site title 'FFEATHERS' and the tagline 'A technical writing and fiction blog by Sarah Maddox'. A navigation menu includes links for 'HOME', 'ABOUT ME', 'ABOUT MY BOOKS', 'FUNNY USER GUIDE', 'MAKING A HASH OF IT', and 'TECH COMM ON A MAP'. The main content area displays a post titled 'Eliminating the zombie vulnerability – removing passive voice from the docs', dated 'JUL 30' and posted by 'Sarah Maddox'. The post text discusses the use of 'by zombies' to identify passive voice and provides an example of a geographic request. A quote box contains the text: 'Geographic requests are indicated by zombies through use of the coordinates parameter, indicating the specific locations passed by zombies as latitude/longitude values.' To the right of the post, there is a search bar, a 'FOLLOW THIS BLOG VIA EMAIL' section with a 'Subscribe' button, a 'BLOG STATS' section showing '743,793 hits', and a 'RECENT COMMENTS' section with two comments. A 'Follow' button is visible in the bottom right corner.

**FFEATHERS** | A technical writing and fiction blog by Sarah Maddox

**HOME** ABOUT ME ABOUT MY BOOKS FUNNY USER GUIDE MAKING A HASH OF IT TECH COMM ON A MAP

## Eliminating the zombie vulnerability – removing passive voice from the docs

**JUL 30** Posted by Sarah Maddox

If you can insert the words “by zombies” into a sentence, then that sentence very likely uses the passive voice. A colleague recently reminded me of this tip. It made me laugh, and so I thought it's worth blogging about. If only to share the chuckle.

Here are some examples of zombie-infested sentences, and their equivalents using active voice.

Example 1

“Geographic requests are indicated **by zombies** through use of the `coordinates` parameter, indicating the specific locations passed **by zombies** as latitude/longitude values.

Converting passive voice to active:

SEARCH GO

**FOLLOW THIS BLOG VIA EMAIL**

Join 1,714 other followers

Subscribe

**BLOG STATS**

> 743,793 hits

**RECENT COMMENTS**

Sarah Maddox on Eliminating the zombie vulnera...

efnotes on Eliminating the zombie vulnera...

Follow ...

# Three Steps to Build Your Influence

There are three steps to building your influence:

1. Find what to share.
2. Learn how to share it.
3. Choose where to share it.



# Find What to Share

Think about your tech comm. skill or passion.

Hard Skills/Passions:

- Single-source authoring
- Writing with a friendly, conversational tone.
- UX Design

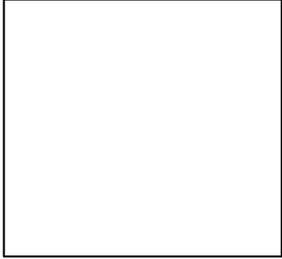
Soft Skills/Passions:

- Building community
- Communication between Docs and Support
- Collaboration

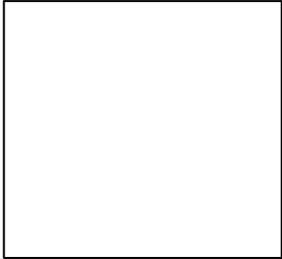




Find What to Share



Learn How to Share it



Choose Where to Share it

# Learn How to Share it

How are you going to differentiate yourself from other technical writers?





storage. storage. storage. storage.  
1 like 1 repin



Brenda Levick onto Hiren's Magical Adventures



storage. storage. storage. storage.



Lakesha Lowd onto howse



storage. storage. storage. storage.  
1 repin



Sabrina Golau onto food



storage. storage. storage. storage.



kassandra woodard onto awesomeness



Rolande Sahn onto Funny



storage. storage. storage. storage.  
2 likes



Catrina Gross onto Favs



storage. storage. storage. storage.



storage. storage. storage. storage.  
2 likes 3 repins



Ernest Walters onto The Archives



storage. storage. storage. storage.  
1 repin



Les Esparza onto howse



storage. storage. storage. storage.  
2 likes 1 comment 1 repin



Mattie Wilcox onto yummy recipes to try



Debbie Spicer Love this!!



Add a comment...



storage. storage. storage. storage.



Mathilde Dowers onto My Fav Pins



Scroll to Top

# Learn How to Share it

How are you going to differentiate yourself from other technical writers?



# Learn How to Share it

## Content Tilt:

“Your content tilt is what separates you from everyone else in your market.”

“It’s your unique perspective on your content niche, which creates an opportunity for you to attack, lead and, ultimately, own the category.”

<http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/content-inc/framework-content-tilt/>



-THE-  
**NOT-BORING**  
-TECH WRITER-

# Learn How to Share it

## How to find your unique perspective:

- Your experiences
- Your associations



# Learn How to Share it

## Your experiences:

- a strategy that worked well for you
- a story



# Learn How to Share it

## Your associations:

Connections you make that initially seem unrelated on the surface.

- Transitioned from Support to Documentation
- Your interests outside of technical communication



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**FFEATHERS**

A technical writing and fiction blog by Sarah Maddox

[ffeathers.wordpress.com](http://ffeathers.wordpress.com)

# Sarah Maddox's *FFEATHERS*

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### Example 1

*Geographic requests are indicated **by zombies** through use of the coordinates parameter, indicating the specific locations passed **by zombies** as latitude/longitude values.*

Converting passive voice to active:

*You can use the coordinates parameter to indicate geographic requests, passing the specific locations as latitude/longitude values.*

<https://ffeathers.wordpress.com/2016/07/30/eliminating-the-zombie-vulnerability-removing-passive-voice-from-the-docs/>

**TRUST YOUR  
ASSOCIATIONS**

# Learn How to Share it

## Anne Lammot in *Bird by Bird*:

“Take the attitude that what you are thinking is valuable stuff, and then be naïve enough to get it all down on paper.”

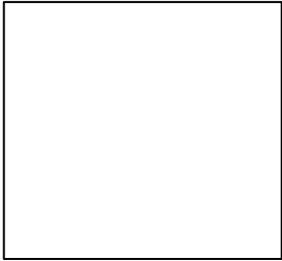




Find What to Share



Learn How to Share it



Choose Where to Share it

# Choose Where to Share it

Find the best medium to share your content.

- Blog
- Podcast
- Email newsletter



# Choose Where to Share it

## Blog:

- Wordpress.com
- Medium
- The Rainmaker Platform

You don't waste precious time setting up your site, when you could be creating content.



# Choose Where to Share it

## Wordpress.com (not Wordpress.org):

- Your site is free (excluding your domain).
- Quick onboarding.
- Automatic security updates.

# Choose Where to Share it

## Medium:

- The platform is free.
- Quick onboarding.
- Automatic updates.

## Two options:

- Create a profile
- Create a publication

[Medium.com](https://medium.com)



Profile: <https://medium.com/@jacobscottmoses>

## Jacob Moses

Technical Writer at Rainmaker Digital and Host of The Not-Boring Tech Writer podcast.

189 Following 114 Followers · 

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[Profile](#) [Latest](#) [Recommends](#)

**Latest**



**Jacob Moses**  
Dec 10, 2014 · 2 min read

### Why You Should Stop Setting Goals



Publication: <https://parksify.com/>

The screenshot shows the Parksify website interface. At the top is a green navigation bar with the Parksify logo and menu items: PLANNING, EDITORIAL, FEATURES, and ABOUT. On the right side of the bar are icons for search, Twitter, Facebook, and a 'Follow' button. The main content area is split into two columns. The left column features a large background image of Central Park in New York City with a dense urban skyline in the background. Overlaid on this image is the article title 'Master Park Planner: Fredrick Law Olmsted's Legacy' and a short introductory paragraph. Below the text is a small circular profile picture and the author's name and date. The right column features a background image of a busy city street with people and buses. Overlaid on this image is the article title 'Tech and Cities: A Messy Merger' and a short introductory paragraph. Below the text is a small circular profile picture and the author's name and date.

**Master Park Planner: Fredrick Law Olmsted's Legacy**  
The designer of New York's Central Park sent a strong message — people need spaces in which to escape the hustle and noise of the city

 Ash Blenkinship  
Jul 26

**Tech and Cities: A Messy Merger**  
Technology is great. I mean it is POSITIVELY, FANTASTICALLY MIND BOGGLING AMAZING! I can rarely be found without my phone, DSLR and laptop...

 Liam Rolfe  
Jul 25



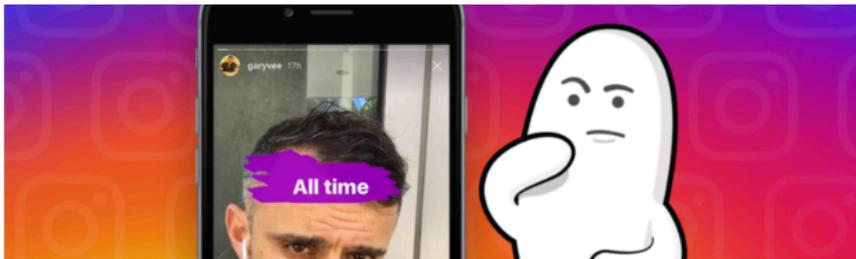
Write here...

Recommended by The Wild Detectives and 1,132 others



Gary Vaynerchuk in [The Mission](#)

4 days ago · 4 min read



## My Two Cents on Instagram Stories and the Evolution of Social Platform

Yesterday, Instagram, the...

Read more...

### Editors' picks

Stories worth talking about.



Events I Submit to be Considered for the Olympics

Lauren Parker



Why Don't Your Friends Like You?

Alex Balk



Poem: Nobody Cares About Skeeter

Joanna C. Valente

### Not just a game

When it comes to protecting gay athletes, the sports world still has a way to go.



Lust, guilt, and double standards — a gay guide to sport.

Gareth Johnson



The 'Gay Jesse Owens'

Cyd Zeigler

# Choose Where to Share it

## The Rainmaker Platform:

- Built on the WordPress framework.
- Advanced content tools – podcasting, Learning Management System (LMS) courses, membership sites, built-in email marketing service.
- \$125/month

# Choose Where to Share it

Find the best medium to share your content.

- Blog
- Podcast
- Email newsletter



# Choose Where to Share it

## Podcast:

Three tools:

- Microphone
- Recording and editing software
- Place to host podcast



# Choose Where to Share it

## Microphone:

- Built-in microphone
- [Blue Snowball Mic](#) (\$49.00)
- [Blue Yeti Mic](#) (\$128.94)



# Choose Where to Share it

## Recording and Editing Software:

- [GarageBand](#) (free for Mac users)
- [Audacity](#) (free for Mac and PC users)
- [Skype](#)
  - Paired with [Call Recorder](#)



# Choose Where to Share it

## Place to Host the Podcast:

- [SoundCloud](#)
- [Buzzsprout](#)
- [PodBean](#)



# Choose Where to Share it

Find the best medium to share your content.

- Blog
- Podcast
- Email newsletter



# Choose Where to Share it

## Email Newsletter:

- [MailChimp](#) (free up to 2,000 subscribers and/or 12,000 emails a month).
- [TinyLetter](#)



**MAKE YOUR PLATFORM  
YOUR COLLEAGUES  
PLATFORM.**

# Choose Where to Share it

## Find Your Colleagues:

- [Write the Docs Meetups](#)
- [Write the Docs Slack Channel](#)
- [Write the Docs Hashtag](#)
- [Tech Comm Hashtag](#)





Find What to Share



Learn How to Share it



Choose Where to Share it

## Anne Lammot in *Bird by Bird*:

“Take the attitude that what you are thinking is valuable stuff, and then be naïve enough to get it all down on paper.”



# Contact Me



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LinkedIn: [Jacob Scott Moses](https://www.linkedin.com/in/Jacob Scott Moses)

[The Not-Boring Tech Writer](#)



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