

Transcript for the November 2012 #EFAChat
Topic: The Benefits of Conferences, Classes, and Seminars

[EFAFreelancers](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) The [#EFAChat](#) takes off in five minutes. Come join us and discuss the benefits of conferences and classes. -12:55 PM Nov 30th, 2012

[EFAFreelancers](#) Hello! Welcome [@EFAFreelancers](#) to Nov's [#EFAChat](#)! Our topic: Benefits of Conferences, Classes, and Seminars. Please introduce yourselves.

[WriterRuth](#) We're here to talk about the value of attending conferences of colleagues - and potential clients. Shall I get things started?

[BinderConnie](#) I am here - brand new to TweetChat, so I may mostly lurk.

[EFAFreelancers](#) Hosting [#EFAChat](#) today is Christine Hunt, Right Line Editing & Design and author of [@theOrchidMurder](#), here in balmy Wisconsin.

[EFAFreelancers](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) As you join the [#EFAChat](#), please introduce yourself. We'd love to know about all who have chosen to join us.

[BinderConnie](#) I'm Connie Binder, an indexer who loves to attend conferences!

[EFAFreelancers](#) Today's topic is conferences, classes, and seminars. Ruth Thaler-Carter and Jennifer Maybin will help us out in this discussion.

[WriterRuth](#) Ruth Thaler-Carter: editor, EFA's Freelancer NL; Rochester, NY, chapter coordinator; coordinator, 2005 EFA national conference.

[EFAFreelancers](#) [@WriterRuth](#) chaired EFA's 2005 national conference in NYC, which inspired her to launch the Communication Central conference.

[EFAFreelancers](#) Communication Central conference has been held 7x and avgs 30 attendees. Those who've attended stated they greatly benefited.

[EFAFreelancers](#) Aug. 2012, Jennifer begin her 2nd tour of duty as EFA Education Chair.

[EFAFreelancers](#) She is looking for feedback on what you'd like to see offered through the EFA.

[JenniferMaybin](#) Hello from your Education Chair. Glad to be here to provide a preview of Spring courses and answer your questions!

[WriterRuth](#) I'm also owner of Communication Central, which holds an annual conference 4 editorial freelancers w info on marketing, tools, etc.

[EFAFreelancers](#) Hello, Ruth! Hello, Jennifer!

[EFAFreelancers](#) Ruth, would you share about Communications Central: what needs did you see freelancers had that were met by this type conference?

[WriterRuth](#) Why attend? Learn/improve hands-on skills; follow trends; find out abt new tools, techniques; meet colleagues in person; have fun!

[WriterRuth](#) Colleagues wanted to have hands-on training in things like Word, Acrobat, etc.; become better at marketing themselves/their skills

[EInspirations](#) April Michelle Davis; editor, indexer, proofreader, Richmond, VA (Hi, Connie!)

[JenniferMaybin](#) Meeting colleagues in person is one of the most important parts of conference attendance, I think

[WriterRuth](#) People also enjoyed meeting each other in person & putting names to e-ddresses! There's something special about interacting live.

[MonocleEd](#) Barbie Halaby here: editor and proofreader in Woodbridge, VA. Just attended my first freelance conference with Ruth's [@CommCen](#)

[JenniferMaybin](#) The hands-on training is really valuable--something that's hard to get online or via the web.

[TessWittler](#) I am Tess Wittler, freelance copywriter specializing in the construction industry - builders, remodelers, engineers and the like

[EFAFreelancers](#) [@MonocleEd](#) Welcome! Can you tell us a little about your experience [@CommCen](#)?

[WriterRuth](#) It's easier to recommend or refer someone you've met in person, no matter how active we might be online.

[WriterRuth](#) People really seem to like having experts in Word, Acrobat, InDesign & their various aspects, such as macros, teaching in person.

[MonocleEd](#) Meeting colleagues and putting faces to names was big plus. Didn't learn what I thought I would. Not in a bad way, just different.

[EInspirations](#) So true! RT [@WriterRuth](#): Its easier to recommend or refer someone youve met in person, no matter how active we might be online.

[virtuallori](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) Hello, all. Lori Paximadis, Cleveland-ish, Ohio, freelance editor/proofreader/project manager.

[EInspirations](#) [@MonocleEd](#) What did you think you would have learned?

[WriterRuth](#) Conferences worth attending: Amer. Copy Editors Society, Assn. for Women in Communications, Society of Professional Journalists.

[JenniferMaybin](#) A live person who can answer a question as it pops up is important when mastering a software program or skill.

[EWSparber](#) I'm here too. I'm Elaine Will Sparber, an editor and writer who rejoined the EFA a few months ago. This is my first [#EFAChat](#)

[MonocleEd @EInspiratons](#) I think it was "you don't know what you don't know." I went to sessions expecting different level of education

[BinderConnie](#) For indexers, the American Society for Indexing's annual meeting is a must.

[EFAFreelancers](#) Welcome to all the First-Timers! Glad you've joined us. [@WriterRuth](#) is telling us about her conference, Communication Central.

[WriterRuth](#) ACES, AWC, SPJ, IABC all have freelancer or entrepreneur sections and tracks at conferences (Twitter not letting me post URLs).

[JenniferMaybin](#) For medical writers and editors: American Medical Writer Association and American Health Care Journalists.

[EFAFreelancers](#) Ruth, could you expand on the needs you saw at the EFA national conference that prompted you to begin your conference?

[WriterRuth](#) We've done 7 Communication Central conferences. Reactions have been very positive - people love the learning and the camaraderie!

[JenniferMaybin](#) Barbie, did you find what you didn't know at Ruth's conference?

[JenniferMaybin](#) Ruth, where are Communication Central conferences held?

[WriterRuth](#) Most associations nowadays have special interest groups for freelancers and entrepreneurs.

[WriterRuth](#) Society for Technical Communication (STC) also is worth attending for tech writers and editors.

[MonocleEd @EInspirations](#) E.g., the PDFs session was way over my head, not intro level. I learned more than expected at others, though.

[EFAFreelancers @WriterRuth](#) What types of things did people seem most interested in learning?

[EditorMark](#) Mark Allen, freelancer and member of EFA, SfEP, ACES. I would love to attend an EFA national conference.

[WriterRuth](#) The first 5 Communication Central confs were in Rochester, NY, where I live. Last 2 in Baltimore. 2013, probably Rochester again.

[EFAFreelancers](#) [@MonocleEd](#) What types of beneficial things did you learn?

[WriterRuth](#) Making better use of Word & Acrobat for editing & proofreadg is always top-of-mind. Using other programs also of interest. Macros!

[EFAFreelancers](#) [@WriterRuth](#) Do you have a date for the 2013 conference?

[MonocleEd](#) [@JenniferMaybin](#) Yes. I found out things I didn't want to pursue and some that I may in future. And plenty of surprise nuggets.

[WriterRuth](#) For now, Mark, you'll have to settle for Communication Central!

[EInspirations](#) [@MonocleEd](#) Would you have preferred more intro-level sessions?

[EFAFreelancers](#) [@MonocleEd](#) "Surprise nuggets?!" Do tell

[EditorMark](#) Well, don't say settle, [@WriterRuth](#). But why does EFA not do national conference?

[mackenziee11](#) Mark Allen, freelancer and member of EFA, SfEP, ACES. I would love to attend an EFA national conference.

[JenniferMaybin](#) Macros-yes. Looking for a macro instructor for an EFA course this spring or next fall.

[WriterRuth](#) 2013 Communication Central conference will be at the end of September. I'll decide on date and location in by February.

[virtuallori](#) [@MonocleEd](#) Mmmmm... nuggets!

[EInspirations](#) [@MonocleEd](#) I offer 2 editing courses and I have actually found more interest in 1on1 so I can alter the course to student's needs

[WriterRuth](#) Laura Poole & April Michelle Davis came through for us on macros when original speaker was ill & couldn't attend 2012 conference.

[MonocleEd](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) Word tools such as customizing ribbons, SMH resume advice from [@CFSaller](#), macros...and intro to fiction editing!

[WriterRuth](#) You'll have to ask EFA leadership why no national conference.

[EFAFreelancers](#) [@WriterRuth](#) How long has it been since a national EFA conference was held?

[EInspirations](#) [@WriterRuth](#) Teaching macros [@CommCen](#) was a lot of fun!

[JenniferMaybin](#) Intro to fiction editing-can anyone suggest an instructor?

[WriterRuth](#) The last EFA national conference was fall 2005. Nothing for 10 years before that or since. Far fewer attendees than expected.

[WriterRuth](#) Carolyn Haley and Amy Schneider did a great session on editing fiction; I know at least Carolyn is interested in doing more such.

[EWSparber](#) I'm coming back to work after 2-yr hiatus & used Ruth's conf to get up to speed on tools & methods. Also needed confidence boost.

[EFAFreelancers](#) What are some specific topics that [#freelancers](#) on today's [#EFAChat](#) would like to see covered in a conference or class?

[WriterRuth](#) One frequent attendee sed every conf "more than worth the price of admission in practical, implementable, income-bearing advice."

[EInspirations](#) [@JenniferMaybin](#) I teach an opening pages class. Wrote about it: <http://t.co/qCDHbmq0>

[EFAFreelancers](#) [@EWSparber](#) And you found that confidence booster at Communications Central?

[EInspirations](#) [@JenniferMaybin](#) List many classes I teach on my website: <http://t.co/BZkUxSmL>

[WriterRuth](#) Comm Central conf also focuses on biz - marketing, promotions, websites, setting rates, etc. Not necessarily writing/editing/etc.

[EditorMark](#) I attended [@TheSfEP](#) in York, UK. It was great to get a different perspective while learning that many concerns are universal.

[EInspirations](#) Attending a conference is very inspiring and rejuvenating, increases the love for what I do

[EFAFreelancers](#) [@WriterRuth](#) That's a lot of material to cover. How long is the conference?

[MonocleEd](#) [@writerruth](#) also gave a great website session: how to build, what not to do, domain names, design, etc. Can't wait to put it to use

[WriterRuth](#) Some colleagues also have found they can make \$ by speaking at conferences - not all pay, but some cover expenses.

[EFAFreelancers](#) [@EditorMark](#) What type concerns did you see as being universal?

[WriterRuth](#) The Comm Central conf is two full days (Fri-Sat) - one for mainly tools & techniques, the other for marketing and other concepts.

[JenniferMaybin](#) [@Elnspirations-good](#) point-conference attendance seems to re-energize a person

[Rogers_Marian](#) A little late but jumping in from Ithaca NY! I've been to 2 CommCentral conferences! I go esp. for the face to face with eds.

[WriterRuth](#) Universal concerns = finding work, promoting yrself/business, using tools, reducing isolation, getting pd well, expanding the biz.

[EFAFreelancers](#) [@JenniferMaybin](#) It's interesting how just a day or two away from the usual can reinvigorate me. Learning something useful is a plus

[EditorMark](#) Universal concerns: Finding work, finances and taxes (British, of course), Word macros, networking.

[MonocleEd](#) [@commcen](#) for me was a kick in the pants to turn my work into a biz. Even making up biz cards to hand out was a big step for a WAHM

[EditorMark](#) Everything [@WriterRuth](#) said was true for the conference in York.

[WriterRuth](#) For me, seeing/meeting colleagues in person is the best part of a conference. I love bringing people together to learn & network

[EFAFreelancers](#) Ruth, would you share ways you've seen conferences NOT provide needed benefits? What should we watch out for when choosing one?

[EWSparber](#) Yes. I learned new things, learned what I still needed to learn, & verified I was doing certain things correctly, which was biggie.

[WriterRuth](#) Oh, yes, should have included SfEP conference in the UK!!!

[EFAFreelancers](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) The [#EFAChat](#) is half-way through. If you haven't joined us, yet, it's not too late!

[WriterRuth](#) Never been to a really bad conf, but ... look out 4 exorbitant fees, lack of networking time, too many commercial sessions.

[EFAFreelancers](#) Jennifer, tell us about EFA's next round of classes. What are they and how can they benefit [#freelancers](#)?

[JenniferMaybin](#) What's on tap for spring, you ask? Copyediting II and III, food editing, indexing, social media, ebook editing, and editing basics,

[JenniferMaybin](#) Important to set aside time to attend a conference and not take a lot of work with you to do while there. Defeats purpose

[EInspirations @JenniferMaybin](#) True! But sometimes it is so hard to do!

[WriterRuth](#) Finding good speakers can be a challenge - someone who's great online or in writing not always skilled in person. I've been lucky!

[MonocleEd](#) Agree RT [@JenniferMaybin](#): Important to set aside time to attend a conference and not take a lot of work with you to do while there

[WriterRuth](#) Agreed, Jen. We can keep up with work while at a conference, but it's a shame not to be able to enjoy the whole event

[JenniferMaybin](#) Still negotiating with instructors for courses on creating styles sheets, taxes for freelancers, AMA style

[TessWittler](#) Any conferences/course on tap for copywriting?

[MonocleEd](#) Sorry to cut out midway, but I have to pick up a kiddo from school. Thanks for the chat. I'll look forward to the transcript!

[EFAFreelancers @MonocleEd](#) Thanks for joining us!

[JenniferMaybin @TessWittler](#) No course on tap as yet for copywriting, but good idea. You want to teach?

[TessWittler @jennifermaybin](#) Thanks for the offer, but I'll politely decline for now :)

[EFAFreelancers @WriterRuth](#) How would a new attendee identify something like too many commercial sessions?

[WriterRuth](#) If sessions all seem oriented to selling rather than showing how 2 use tools, or spkrs all fr big companies, mite be a bad sign

[EFAFreelancers #freelancers](#) -- What needs would you like to see addressed in EFA classes?

[WriterRuth](#) Attendee said: "I learned how to create and use macros, I revamped my rather dreary-looking website, I got my first cell phone ..."

[JenniferMaybin](#) Exciting new course this spring--Editors and Ebooks, Corina Koch MacLeod, Online April 17-May 8

[EFAFreelancers @WriterRuth](#) How would a newbie recognize a session as more sales oriented, just from the conference's advance write-ups?

[JenniferMaybin](#) Corina to teach how to work with self-publishing authors to edit and format ebooks. Experiment with open-source tools

[EInspirations @EFAFreelancers](#) A course on grammar, not grammar basics, but harder stuff, like some of the grammar discussions on the list

[JenniferMaybin @tesswittler](#) drop me a line to tell me more about what you'd like to see jennifer@jmaybin.com

[WriterRuth](#) E-/Self-publishing seems to be what more & more of us need or want 2 know abt. I've helped w 2 such projects & could use more info!

[JenniferMaybin](#) April Michelle Davis will teach Indexing online. Get a copy of her Freelancer's Guide to Indexing

[WriterRuth](#) Conf write-ups should give a good sense of what will be offered and who is speaking; that's one reason to look at speaker bios.

[EditorMark](#) Self-publishing is such a big unknown for editors. There are some good sources of information for writers; editing is uncharted.

[JenniferMaybin](#) Kris Fulsuus expanding her Copyediting courses to include level 3, Feb 27-Mar 27

[EditorMark](#) But even for writers, it seems to be changing weekly.

[EWSparber](#) The course on editors and ebooks is exactly the type of class I'm interested in. Classes that teach how to fill a new need

[JenniferMaybin](#) Copyediting III will cover number style, quotations, diction, usage, bias-free writing, nontext elements

[EInspirations @EFAFreelancers](#) Attended 1day conf for \$25 and included breakfast and lunch. Taught how run a biz but tried to sell its biz 4 \$3000

[WriterRuth @EInspirations](#) Yikes! I guess "ridiculously low fees" could also be a warning sign! Also important to look at event sponsor.

[WriterRuth](#) Two aspects of self-/e-publishing 4 us: how to do it, & how 2 find authors who will use & pay us to edit/lay out/proofread, etc

[JenniferMaybin](#) Rescheduled Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn Webinar, led by Kathy O'Moore-Klopf, March 7, 1:30-3:00 pm ET

[EFAFreelancers @JenniferMaybin](#) What is the average class size? Or are most of EFA's classes on-line?

[WriterRuth](#) 2013 Comm Central conf will include self-/e-publishing session(s). Haven't decided on speaker(s) yet.

[JenniferMaybin](#) What's your preference for EFA classes? In person? Online? Webinar

[JenniferMaybin](#) Most EFA classes are online. Size ranges from 5-25 for online.

[EditorMark](#) Webinars are easiest. It's nice to get together in a room with fellow editors, but that's often impractical. [@JenniferMaybin](#)

[EInspirations](#) [@WriterRuth](#) Many of my clients are now self/e-pub authors/companies. Great new set of clients.

[EWSparber](#) I prefer online classes because I don't need to travel to them and can read the lessons and do the work when I have the time.

[WriterRuth](#) I love doing/attending classes in person, but am also fond of webinars. So efficient, and more flexible than many realize.

[EInspirations](#) [@WriterRuth](#) Thankfully, I saw the signs and new what to expect, so I got what I wanted from the conf...ideas to improve MY biz

[EFAFreelancers](#) [@JenniferMaybin](#) Webinar classes sound like a great idea! Provide interaction, visual guidance, direct instructor interaction.

[JenniferMaybin](#) Two classes this fall have had great success--CMS 16 and E-editing. Great feedback. Will offer again.

[EFAFreelancers](#) [@EInspirations](#) How did you help those self/e-pub clients to find you?

[EInspirations](#) [@EFAFreelancers](#) Word of mouth, Google search successes, networking, conferences, trying to meet every author I can

[EditorMark](#) ACES did a bunch of one-day regional workshops last year, and more are planned for 2013. I participated in the St. Louis workshop.

[EditorMark](#) Dates and locations haven't been set. I'm rooting for Columbus.

[WriterRuth](#) Webinars can include seeing instructor/participants via webcam, as well as following along with PDF versions of handouts, Q&As.

[JenniferMaybin](#) Webinars can be great idea if executed well. Two this fall were successful. Webinar school and No Portfolio No Problem

[EFAFreelancers](#) Any further feedback for Jennifer on EFA's course offerings? She'd love to know druthers and preferences.

[EWSparber](#) The e-editing class was wonderful.

[WriterRuth](#) I'd like to hold Communication Central conf in NYC, but expensive 4 space & attendee travel. Wd need assurance of high attendance.

[JenniferMaybin](#) All suggestions for EFA classes welcome. We all have different specialties and needs.

[WriterRuth](#) Bevi Chagnon's Comm Central sessions on Acrobat and InDesign have been very popular - she might be up for online versions.

[JenniferMaybin](#) Yes Bevi taught an InDesign a few years ago. Will dial her up again!

[JenniferMaybin](#) @ [WriterRuth](#) What about Communication Central in NJ? Less expensive and just over the bridge or tunnel.

[EFAFreelancers](#) @ [WriterRuth](#) How did you come up with the Communication Central name?

[WriterRuth](#) Yrs ago, I had a NL called Communication Central - I was going to a lot of conferences & wanted a way to share info w colleagues.

[virtuallori](#) @ [WriterRuth](#) InDesign session was very much focused on accessibility concerns rather than how publishers actually use it, though.

[EFAFreelancers](#) @ [JenniferMaybin](#) NJ is a good idea, Jen.

[EInspirations](#) @ [EFAFreelancers](#) Yes, it is definitely hard work, but it is a lot of fun! And I get to read some great books!

[WriterRuth](#) NJ a possibility. Has to be somewhere I can get to quickly and easily, due to spouse and mom health concerns.

[TessWittler](#) @ [jennifermaybin](#) I am still learning about EFA; not a member (yet). Just seeing if there is a fit there for me.

[EFAFreelancers](#) @ [JenniferMaybin](#) InDesign would be a good subject for a webinar.

[JenniferMaybin](#) @ [virtuallori](#) what do you want in an InDesign course? What meant by "How publishers use it"?

[virtuallori](#) @ [JenniferMaybin](#) There was lots of focus on standardizing tags, but most publishers require you use their own special tags

[EFAFreelancers @EFAFreelancers](#) November's [#EFAChat](#) will close in 5 minutes. Any last questions or observations?

[EFAFreelancers @TessWittler](#) Well, we're glad you checked us out today. I hope this has been an encouraging hour.

[WriterRuth](#) How publishers use InDesign - copy flow, layout, editing, finalizing ... we could make sure focus stays on those aspects

[virtuallori @JenniferMaybin](#) I would have liked to see more focus on how editors can use InDesign to expand offerings. Basics, maybe.

[virtuallori @EFAFreelancers](#) I use it for layout, but other editors unfamiliar with it could benefit from knowing how it works to avoid problems

[EFAFreelancers @virtuallori](#) And how designers, editors, and publishers work -- facilitate them working better together.

[WriterRuth](#) I should relaunch my Communication Central NL with own and other conference highlights. Just have to find/make time!

[EWSparber](#) Remember that EFA's booklets are excellent too--both for learning and for sharing your skill by writing one.

[JenniferMaybin](#) Thanks to all who tweeted today.

[WriterRuth](#) Loved doing this - thank you!

[EFAFreelancers @JenniferMaybin](#) Did you have anything else you'd like to share?

[EFAFreelancers @WriterRuth](#) Any last thoughts you'd like to share?

[JenniferMaybin](#) Watch for the education catalog in the next week or so. Finalizing it now!

[EditorMark](#) RT [@JenniferMaybin](#): Watch for the education catalog in the next week or so. Finalizing it now!

[WriterRuth](#) Nothing else comes 2 mind, but colleagues are always welcome to contact me directly w questions about conferences, startg out, etc

[EFAFreelancers](#) Thank you to everyone who participated in today's chat!! And may we each continue to learn, to improve, and to encourage each other

[EFAFreelancers @EFAFreelancers](#) Thank you all for joining in today's [#EFAChat](#). It's been an interesting and needed discussion. Hope to see you next time

[EFAFreelancers](#) It's time for today's [#EFAChat](#) to formally close. Thank you, Ruth! Thank you, Jennifer! for your insights and information!

[TessWittler @efafreelancers](#) Thanks for allowing me to "tune in." I look forward to learning more about EFA through [#EFAChat](#) Have a great weekend!

[EFAFreelancers @EWSparber](#) Glad you joined us today, Elaine! Be sure to let Jennifer know any ideas or suggestions you may have re classes.

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