

Stirred but not Shaken

Introduction

What are the ingredients of the successful popular novels that were licensed to thrill.

Ian Fleming's James Bond novels were successful, in part, because the plot followed a formula, in part because of the characters and their interactions and in part because he gave his audience what they wanted.

So how does this relate to the world of technical communications?

The formula

Good project management requires a set formula or process. Adhering to the process and monitoring progress are vital.

A technical communications project should at the very least go through the following stages:

- Needs analysis, plan and prototype
- Research and development
- Delivery
- Project evaluation.

The characters

The characters that interact in a technical communications project can be many and varied.

- Clients - equivalent of M and Q
- Contractors or writing team - equivalent of James Bond
- Consumers - equivalent of readers / viewers.

The interaction between the various stakeholders are a key factor in a project's success.

The audience

Giving the audience what they want is not always simple. Differentiating between wants and needs is important. Understanding both the business's needs as well as the users' needs is another factor in the success of a project.

What can possibly go wrong

For James Bond, things go wrong when the villain enters the scene.

Unfortunately for us, things go wrong too, and it's generally when a 'villain' makes an appearance.

This presentation describes some of the 'villains' that sent, or could have sent our projects off track and identifies what we have learned since we have been in business.

Key take-aways

The key take-ways from this presentation are:

- Establish a process for developing technical communications. Follow it, and monitor and report on progress.
- Collaborate and communicate regularly with your clients, consumers and contractors.