

# Author Guidelines

CROSSTALK publishes many types of articles that relate to software development. First consideration goes to articles that deal specifically with military efforts, but we also consider articles that deal with government software development or the software industry at large. Typical article categories include, but are not limited to:

- Technical papers.
- Overviews of an emerging or established field.
- Fresh information within a narrow field of interest.
- Opinion pieces for Open Forum.
- Articles from the perspective of people “in the trenches.”
- Tutorials about software engineering methods and concepts.
- Lessons learned.



Be sure to attach all the required elements with your submission and to put them in the proper format. This will speed up the process for potential publication.

## Submitting Your Article

Articles should be submitted electronically in WordPerfect or Microsoft Word. Do not submit articles in a page layout format such as .pdf, FrameMaker, or Ventura. You may send the article by e-mail to:

[nicole.kentta@hill.af.mil](mailto:nicole.kentta@hill.af.mil)

An e-mail will be sent to you to let you know that your article has been received.

Articles can be up to 3,000 words or the equivalent of four CROSSTALK pages, including tables and figures. Articles should have a working title of six words or less. Authors are encouraged to follow *The Associated Press StyleBook*, in keeping with the guide used by the staff when editing the journal. Include only essential formatting such as clear section headings and italics.

## Submissions Must Include the Following Elements:

### 1. Abstract

This two- to four-sentence paragraph summarizes key points in a way that hooks the reader into reading the article.

### 2. Photograph

CROSSTALK publishes a head-and-shoulder photograph of authors. The picture should be scannable or in a .tif or .eps format and be at least 360 dpi when measured at 1½ x 2 inches.

### 3. Author Biography

This should be no longer than 50 to 75 words outlining the author's job, background, professional accomplishments, and other pertinent accolades or areas of interest.

### 4. Copyrights, Releases

An author who submits an article previously published elsewhere must provide written permission from the publication holding the copyright before CROSSTALK will consider reprinting it. A credit line should be included, with the name and date of the previous publisher. Conversely, CROSSTALK asks that publications reprinting material from CROSSTALK give our journal a credit line.

If an author(s) requests that a copyright notation be included in his/her article, then he/she must provide a one-page documented letter signed by the author(s) declaring that the copyright note is indeed correct (no e-mails will be accepted). The author(s) is responsible for ensuring correctness of the copyright notation on his/her article. Any changes in the copyright notation from the time of article submittal must be provided in writing when the author(s) receives an edited copy of the final article to proof for accuracy.

If an article requires approval from a corporate or government public affairs office or security agency prior to publication, the author must do this before submitting to CROSSTALK.

The author is responsible for obtaining any required organizational clearances. Authors retain ownership of their articles printed in CROSSTALK.

### 5. Contact Information

The author must include his/her business address, phone number, fax number, and e-mail address in the following format:

Author's Business Organization  
Business Address  
Phone Number



The strongest submissions tend to come from authors who first ask their peers to review their articles for content and clarity.

Fax Number  
E-mail Address

## 6. Notes and References

Most articles require some references, and some contain incidental information best treated as notes. Use brackets for references and superscripts for notes, then list the two groups separately at the end of the article. These should be numbered in the order they appear in the article, not alphabetically by author's names.

Format references using the Modern Language Association's (MLA) citation style, which can be obtained at any bookstore or online. Here are a few examples:

1. Smith, Jane Lee. Computers in the New World. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. New York: Oxford UP, 1997.
2. Smith, Jane Lee. "Becoming a Computer Dependent Society, PC by PC." Computer News. Feb. 1998: 74-83.
3. "Computer Language Engineering." Jorgensen's Interactive Encyclopedia. Ver. 2.0. Apr. 1998 <<http://www.media.edu/jorgensens/567/22.html>> (5 May 2001).

## Figures and Tables

Consider which concepts require visual layout. Charts and figures should be publication-worthy upon submission (sharp, of good contrast, legible, free of clutter, e.g. shadows, lines at least 1 point thick). An embedded graphic within a word-processing document is often inadequate. If graphics are embedded, please send them as separate files. Additionally, screen captures and Microsoft PowerPoint slides are usually too low of resolution to reproduce at press quality. If you choose to use either, please ensure they are produced in high resolution or else they will not be published.

Number and name figures and tables appropriately, and indicate where they should be placed in the text. CROSSTALK reserves the right to reject graphics that are not production-ready, are redundant to the material, and/or do not add to the reader's understanding.

## Additional Reading

Our readers appreciate pointers to relevant books and articles. List these at the end of the article in the same format as references.

## Publication Process

Check the editorial calendar for theme article dead-

lines to ensure timely review by the CROSSTALK Editorial Board (CEB). The following is the process for an article considered for publication in CROSSTALK:

1. The article, containing all required elements previously mentioned, arrives at CROSSTALK.
2. The article is reviewed by the CEB comprised of engineers with expertise in the topic area.
3. Within two weeks after the CEB, the author is contacted regarding the article's status:
  - **Edit and Publish.** The article is ready for editing by the staff.
  - **Revise and Publish.** The editorial staff will receive it only after the author makes specific changes or additions requested by the CEB.
  - **Rework and Resubmit.** Major revisions are needed, and the author must resubmit the article to the CEB.
  - **Reject.**
4. CROSSTALK staff edits for style and clarity. The author may be asked to make additional changes or to perform small amounts of additional writing.
5. The author is notified that his/her article has been placed on a preliminary publishing line-up.
6. The author receives an edited and laid out copy of the article in the form of a .pdf file to proof for accuracy. It is too late, at this point, for authors to make major additions or revisions.

## Letters to the Editor, Open Forum, BackTalk

Limit Letters to the Editor to 250 words and include your name, phone number, and e-mail address. In certain cases, names can be withheld from publication upon request when circumstances warrant such action. We reserve the right to edit for style, length, and content in all cases.

Open Forum is reserved for opinion pieces with non-technical slants but relating to software engineering. These should be limited to 1,500 words and may be supplemented with graphic and/or visual elements. These are subjected to a CEB review as mentioned above.

BACKTALK articles should provide a concise, humorous or satirical, yet insightful article on the software engineering profession or industry, or a portion of it. BACKTALK articles should be entertaining and clever or original in concept, design, or delivery. The length should not exceed 750 words.



**First make your article useful to your target audience, then make it accessible to people less familiar with the subject's terms and concepts.**

# Mission Statement

CROSSTALK, *The Journal of Defense Software Engineering*, is an approved Department of Defense journal. Its mission is to encourage the engineering development of software in order to improve the reliability, maintainability, and responsiveness of our warfighting capability and to inform and educate readers on up-to-date policy decisions and new software engineering technologies.

Published by the Software Technology Support Center, CROSSTALK is circulated monthly to more than 20,000 members of the defense software community, industry, and the academic world. Additionally, each month more than 120,000 readers access both current and past issues on the journal's searchable database via the World Wide Web.

In its 15-year history, CROSSTALK has become a respected and trusted resource within the defense software community. Thanks to the support of its authors, the journal has consistently provided useful and valuable information to its readership. The journal typically provides features that cover a variety of important software-related areas.

For a current list of upcoming themes, please visit our Web site at [www.stsc.hill.af.mil/crosstalk/theme.html](http://www.stsc.hill.af.mil/crosstalk/theme.html).

## Topics Often Found in CROSSTALK:

- **Software Engineering Technology** articles addressing software technology adoption, application, and new developments.
- **Policy and Management** articles reflecting the latest Department of Defense policies, decisions, and management directives.
- **Open Forum** articles providing readers a chance to express their opinions on software engineering technologies and trends.
- **Best Practices** or lessons learned from individuals making practical use of software technologies.



CROSSTALK has been informing and educating readers since 1988. Today, CROSSTALK is read by more than 20,000 subscribers and 120,000 online readers.



## Contacting CROSSTALK Staff:

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# Submission Checklist

Please review before submitting your article:



**Abstract:** Two- to four-sentence article summary that hooks the reader and encourages them to read the article in its entirety.

**Figures and Tables:** Send these as separate file; do not embed them in the article.

**Author Photograph:** A photograph at least 1½ by 2 inches; see Guidelines for electronic requirements.

**Author Biography:** A 50- to 75-word outline providing background, accolades, and professional interests of the author.

**Contact Information:** Information for contacting the author must be provided, including mailing address, phone number, fax number, and e-mail address.

**Notes and References:** Make sure to include all notes and references and that these are numbered in the order they appear, not alphabetically, and are in Modern Language Association (MLA) format.

**Copyrights:** Written permission from original publication must accompany all reprints. Authors requesting copyright must submit a signed letter of authenticity.

**Releases:** Corporate, government, or security approval must be obtained before submission.

## How to Contact CROSSTALK:

### U.S. Postal Service:

CROSSTALK  
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6022 Fir Avenue, Building 1238  
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(801) 777-8069  
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### World Wide Web:

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### Electronic Mail:

[nicole.kentta@hill.af.mil](mailto:nicole.kentta@hill.af.mil)



This checklist ensures that your submission meets CROSSTALK's basic requirements. Please review completely for your records (reference).