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## Connecting with Peter Morville, STC's 2019 Summit Opening Keynote

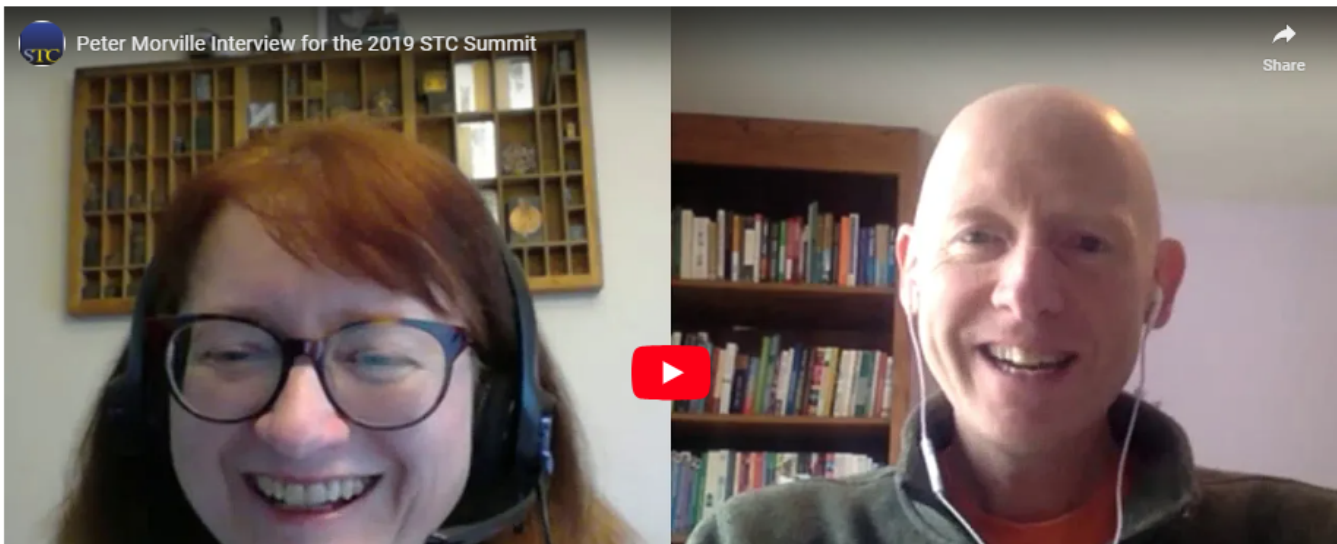
February 26, 2019 #stc19, conference, IA, information architecture, Nicky Bleiel, Peter Morville, STC Summit, user experience, UX

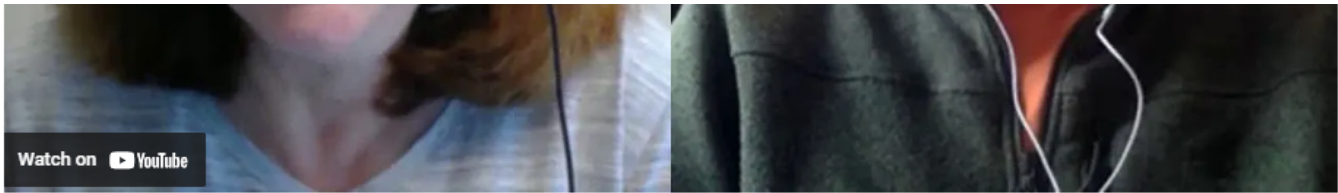


By Nicky Bleiel | STC Summit Conference Co-Chair

This year's STC Technical Communication Summit & Expo Opening Keynote is Peter Morville, founding father of information architecture, and expert on user experience and findability. The Summit is 5-8 May 2019 in Denver, Colorado.

Nicky Bleiel, Conference Co-Chair, chatted with Peter about his upcoming keynote, planning, and common threads.





**Nicky Bleiel:** I'm very happy and honored today to be talking with a pioneer of information architecture, and not only that—he's the opening keynote speaker for the Society for Technical Communication Summit this May in Denver, Colorado. Hello, Peter Morville!

**Peter Morville:** Good morning, happy to be talking to you.

**Nicky:** I'm very excited to be talking to you, because you're one of the co-authors of the book *Information Architecture*—which is also known as the “polar bear book”, if anyone can't recall it. Many technical communicators consider this book required reading.

You're also the author of more than half-dozen other books including *Ambient Findability*, which is one of my favorites. *Search Patterns*, *Intertwined*, and your latest book, *Planning for Everything*. Would it be fair to say that planning is a common thread among all of your books and maybe even your entire career?

**Peter:** Absolutely. It's interesting, each of my books since the “polar bear” book, I've thought of as a reframing of what I do. After 9 or 10 years of talking about information architecture, from the late '90s to the early 2000s, I was so tired of talking about information architecture, I wanted to talk about something else. That became *Findability*, that became *Search*, and then *Intertwined*, and then *Planning*. Interestingly as I looked back, I realized that planning had been a common thread through my career, and even earlier.

For instance, I remember as a kid I was always fixated on the future, thinking about the future. I remember one vacation we took to Maine where I was so excited that we were going to go canoeing, and for days I asked my parents every 15 minutes, “When are we going canoeing? When are we going canoeing?” Then we finally got out on the lake in a canoe, and after about 10 or 15 minutes, I started saying, “What's for lunch? When's lunch?”

That's sort of me. I'm always thinking about the future, and planning is a way of sort of coping with that affliction.

**Nicky:** That makes a lot of sense. Can you give us a brief—don't give away too much—but could you give us a brief preview of your keynote?

**Peter:** Sure. This notion of common threads, of threading things together is something that has been with me my whole career. One of my early columns I wrote back in the '90s was called “Strange Connections.”

That's what I love to do, to make strange connections. In one sense, my keynote will be about information architecture and planning. But, in another sense, I weave together all sorts of weird things from libraries to elephants, from will power to way power, talk about fear and ethics, and heroes from Gandhi and Mandela, to Joan of Arc and John Brown. Believe it or not, by the end of my talk I'm hoping that folks will see that all of these things are connected, and that everything is deeply intertwined.

**Nicky:** That sounds awesome, because everybody seems to gravitate towards the latest thing, and each of those things separately are great, but it all comes together, right?

**Peter:** It's all connected, yes.

**Nicky:** I'm really looking forward to it. I thank you so much for talking to me today, Peter. I'm very excited to meet you in Denver this May at the STC Summit and hear this keynote. Also, there's going to be a book signing in the exhibit hall afterwards, so folks can meet you one-on-one and get their book signed. I will see you soon in May.

**Peter:** Thank you, I look forward to seeing you in Denver.

The Opening General Session will be held 5 May 2019 at 5:00 PM, followed by the Welcome Reception in the Expo Hall. Learn more about Peter's keynote [here](#). See you in Denver!