

Presenting at ODTUG Kscope

In this three-part series, we take a closer look at how to create an ODTUG Kscope session abstract, how abstracts are selected, and how presenters bring those abstracts to life during a session.

Part I: Writing the Abstract

Ah, October 4th. The day folks can begin submitting ODTUG Kscope abstracts. If you've been lucky enough to present at ODTUG Kscope or any conference before, you understand that coming up with a solid session topic and then writing a sharp, award-winning abstract with a catchy title is the key to success. You also know that finding a solid topic can be challenging, and writing that award-winning abstract can become an unfortunate afterthought because of other work and family life commitments. And don't get me started on that darn catchy title!

Finding a topic

Finding a session topic can either be simple or the most grueling thing you'll do all week! For my first-ever ODTUG Kscope session, finding the topic was a breeze because I had just finished up a Planning Budgeting Cloud and Enterprise Performance Reporting Cloud implementation for a public sector client (gold, I know!). For my second year, the process was a little trickier, but I got some great ideas from the year before and settled on Enterprise Reporting Cloud. This year, however, I was at a loss. Not only is it now November and I am procrastinating like crazy, but I had to ask myself, do I continue speaking on the same comfortable topic or do I evolve, expand my horizons, and try something new? With so many possibilities in the world of EPM and BI, I decided to take the leap and try something new. The problem was, because of the vast possibilities, I did not know where to start! If you run into a similar situation, a great way to get your mental juices flowing is to start by looking at possible ideas shared by conference track/committee chairs, shifting through project notes, and scouring blogs. For me, I've been working a lot with OAC Essbase lately, so I decided to create a session on OAC Essbase. Once you nail down your idea, you're not quite finished; you need to figure out how that idea applies to a certain situation, which will ground the presentation and make it more relatable. For example, maybe you have a current issue which needs to be addressed or a case study that shows how a client used your idea successfully. Again, use those project notes, blogs, and your colleagues for ideas! Once you're ready, it's time to write the abstract.

Writing the abstract

This short-summarized piece of information is often the only sample of your work that conference organizers and selection committees will see, so it needs to be strong, concise, and able to stand alone. When your abstract is accepted, conference attendees will consider attending your presentation based on your abstract. No pressure, right? Once you have your topic and how to address it, it's time to give the abstract a go. There are some great blogs and videos out in "GoogleLand" that you can peruse for tips and pointers, such as Kristina Kasparian's blog post on "How to write a conference abstract

(or how NOT to write one)” or Danny Bryant and Natalie Delemar’s video on “How to Write a Winning Abstract” from ODTUG Kscope 17. Here are a few tips that I’ve collected:

- Follow ODTUG Kscope’s abstract guidelines—usually everything is fairly standard, but make sure to follow all instructions to the T.
- Find abstract examples—don’t be afraid to look at other abstracts from past conferences and try to figure out what made them successful.
- Don’t edit after a few glasses of wine—whereas writing after a few glasses of wine could be fun (or a disaster), you should always edit with a fresh (and sober) set of eyes. You’ll be more objective, especially when you must trim your abstract.
- Submit early—don’t wait until the last minute, or if you are a procrastinator like me, you have at least a few more weeks (also be sure to read Opal Alapat’s blog from ODTUG Kscope 18 “PROCRASTINATORS UNITE!”).

The last tip that is not commonly shared is to make time in your schedule to write. Every time I begin writing on a whim, I soon realize I have two phone meetings and a deadline. Then I think no big deal, I can do it in the after—oh wait, I have another meeting, then I have to pick up my son from school, drop my daughter off at practice, run to the store, help my son with his homework, pick up my daughter from practice, prepare dinner, do laundry, and have a glass of whiskey! Before I know it, I run out of time and decide to do it the next day, except I have blah, blah, blah—you get the picture.

Finally, you're done!

When the abstract is complete, and you’ve thought of a great title, it is time to submit. When it comes to the title, make sure it captures what your abstract is about and don’t be afraid to have a little fun with conference themes. However, don’t go overboard! A few of my ODTUG Kscope title classics include “Hakuna Matata: Means No Worries, Especially with Enterprise Performance Reporting Cloud” and “Public Sector Financial Planning is a Breeze as a Government Agency Takes a Walk in the Cloud with PBCS and EPRCS.” The first was from ODTUG Kscope18, notice the Disney theme. The last title was a little long but notice how I capture the topic as well as have fun with some of the words like “cloud” and “breeze.” When the title is all set, and you hit that final submit button, it’s time to celebrate and have a glass of wine for a job well done!

You Don’t Have to Do It Alone:

Let These Experts Help Guide You Through the Abstract Process

Jeff Smith offers some advice from behind the scenes in [“How to Get Your Conference Abstract Accepted”](#).

Kendra Little helps you break through writer’s block in [“How to Write a Presentation Abstract for a Tech Conference”](#).

Kellyn Pot’Vin-Gorman gives you the dos and don’ts in [“Abstracts, Reviews and Conferences, Oh My!”](#).

Kristina Kasparian tells you how to get under that word limit without losing your inspiration in ["How to Write a Conference Abstract \(or How NOT to Write One\)"](#).

Scott Berkun shows you how to put your best self forward in ["How to Write a Good Bio"](#).

Danny Bryant and Natalie Deleamar share their secrets to success in the ODTUG Kscope17 video ["How to Write a Winning Abstract"](#).

Opal Alapat gives you a nudge at the last minute in ["Kscope16 Abstract Submission: Procrastinators Unite!"](#).