Self-Help Guide

Content Strategy: Plan & Maintain Website Content

Content is one of the main components of a great user experience. This self-help guide walks you through the process of planning the right content to meet your website's goals. It also provides some considerations to help you maintain your website content.

Plan Your Content

KNOW YOUR GOALS

Establish Objectives

Identify Stakeholders
http://meetcontent.com/blog/planning-content-goals-web-stakeholder-interviews/
Setting Successful Website Goals and Objectives
https://www.blitzmediadesign.com/blog/2014/05/setting-successful-website-goals/

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

Identify Audience Members

Determine Audience, Outcomes, and User Needs
https://alistapart.com/article/audiences-outcomes-and-determining-user-needs
Develop Fact-based Personas
https://primo.lib.umn.edu/permalink/f/1q7ssba/UMN_ALMA51621866620001701
Understand Users' Needs

A Five-Step Process for Conducting User Research
http://www.smashingmagazine.com/2013/09/23/5-step-process-conducting-user-resea...
Complete Beginner's Guide to Design Research
http://www.uxbooth.com/articles/complete-beginners-guide-to-design-research/
User Research Basics
Conducting a Focus Group
http://www.tc.umn.edu/~rkrueger/focus.html

Define Audience Requirements

Illustrating the Long Tail
https://moz.com/blog/illustrating-the-long-tail
Web Analytics for Content Planning
http://meetcontent.com/blog/web-analytics-for-content-planning/

IDENTIFY CONTENT NEEDS

Inventory and Audit Your Content

How to conduct a content audit
https://uxmastery.com/how-to-conduct-a-content-audit/
A Complete Content Audit and Spreadsheet Template
https://blog.bufferapp.com/content-audit
6 Steps to a Comprehensive Ongoing Content Strategy Audit
https://www.searchenginejournal.com/content-audit-checklist/237731/
Automated Link-Checking Tool
http://validator.w3.org/checklink
(w3c.org)

Conduct a Gap Analysis

The Content Gap Analysis
https://community.sitecore.net/general/blogs/best_practice_blogs/b/beth_bader/p...
Super Quick Content Gap Analysis
https://www.screamingfrog.co.uk/content-gap-analysis/

Select an Appropriate Platform

COPE: Create Once, Publish Everywhere

DEVELOP A WORK PLAN

Define Roles and Responsibilities

Defining Roles and Responsibilities
http://contentstrategy101.com/contents/implement/implementation/methodology/defining-role...
Get Your Content Out of the Drawer with Governance
http://uxmag.com/articles/get-your-content-strategy-out-of-the-drawer-with-gove...
RACI Chart Template
http://racichart.org/raci-templates/
Project Team Roles and Responsibilities

Discuss Measures of Success

Web Analytics for Content Planning
http://meetcontent.com/blog/web-analytics-for-content-planning/
Choose a Web Analytics Tool
https://www.lifewire.com/top-blog-statistics-trackers-3476176
Understand and Use Google Analytics
https://it.umn.edu/technology/google-analytics?km=

Create Your Content

ORGANIZE YOUR CONTENT
Design Your Content Structure

Understanding Your Site Structure
http://webstyleguide.com/wsg3/3-information-architecture/3-site-structure.html

An Intro to Metadata and Taxonomies
https://www.braintraffic.com/blog/an-introduction-to-metadata-and-taxonomies

Card Sorting: A Definitive Guide
http://boxesandarrows.com/card-sorting-a-definitive-guide/

A Simple and Indispensable Template for Content Marketing Distribution
http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2012/05/content-marketing-distribution-tem...

How to Put Together an Editorial Calendar for Content Marketing
https://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2010/08/content-marketing-editorial-calen...

Building the Case for Taxonomy
http://boxesandarrows.com/building-the-business-case-for-taxonomy/

Planning a Taxonomy Project
http://boxesandarrows.com/planning-a-taxonomy-project/

Curate Sources

Considerations for Special Higher Ed Content Types
http://meetcontent.com/blog/considerations-for-special-higher-ed-content-types/

Make Page Tables

Creating Better Web Content with Page Tables
http://www.kendallcopywriting.co.uk/content-strategy-applied-creating-better-we...

From Page Tables to Content Templates
https://marketeer.kapost.com/from-page-tables-to-content-templates/

Example Page Table
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1KCOL-uSsL4ywHkILBucx7YNxTNINzwHOH_zc5QJwyU...
(Google doc with template)

WRITE FOR THE WEB

Establish Voice and Tone
Choose Your Voice and Tone  
https://content-guide.18f.gov/voice-and-tone/
Finding Your Voice and Tone  
http://www.smashingmagazine.com/2012/08/21/finding-tone-voice/
The Impact of Voice and Tone on Users' Brand Perception  
https://www.nngroup.com/articles/tone-voice-users/

**Use Plain Language**

Plain Language Checklist  
http://centerforplainlanguage.org/5-steps-to-plain-language/
A Process for Using Plain Language  
http://www.usabilityinciviclife.org/plain-language-is-a-process/
US Government Standards for Plain Language  
http://www.plainlanguage.gov/  
(plainlanguage.gov)
Outlaw the Phrase "Social Media" at Work  
Write Actionable Content  
https://health.gov/healthliteracyonline/write/
Using Appropriate Words  
http://www.kingcounty.gov/help/editorial-style-guide/plainwriting/appropriatewo...

**Create Usable Content**

Creating Valuable Content: An Essential Checklist  
Hemingway Editor  
http://www.hemingwayapp.com/
Write the Best Titles for Content Marketing  
http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2012/12/checklist-content-marketing-titles/
5 Reasons Why No One Is Reading Your Email Newsletter  
https://www.copyblogger.com/email-newsletter-response/
Testing the Usability of Text  
https://gathercontent.com/blog/testing-the-usability-of-text
Federal Government Content Guide  
https://pages.18f.gov/content-guide  
(developed for the government but useful for everyone)
APPLY STANDARDS

**Make Your Content Accessible**

Accessible U  
[http://accessibility.umn.edu](http://accessibility.umn.edu)
University of Minnesota Accessibility website

Accessibility Basics  

Government-wide Section 508 Accessibility Program  
[https://www.section508.gov/](https://www.section508.gov/)

Accessibility Evaluation Resources  
[http://www.w3.org/WAI/eval/Overview.html](http://www.w3.org/WAI/eval/Overview.html)

Free Accessibility Tools Roundup  

Accessibility Quick-Reference  

Experiencing Dyslexia: An Example  
[http://geon.github.io/programming/2016/03/03/dsxyliea](http://geon.github.io/programming/2016/03/03/dsxyliea)

**Adhere to Regulatory Compliance**

Copyright Information and Resources  
[https://www.lib.umn.edu/copyright](https://www.lib.umn.edu/copyright)

**Adhere to Brand Standards**

University of Minnesota Web Standards and Best Practices  

University of Minnesota Brand Standards  
[http://university-relations.umn.edu/our-brand](http://university-relations.umn.edu/our-brand)

**LAUNCH YOUR CONTENT**

Test with a Soft Launch
Soft Launch - Defined
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soft_launch#Website

Go Live

Site Launch Timeline and Checklist
https://www.dtelepathy.com/blog/business/the-ultimate-website-launch-checklist

Sustain Your Content

ASSESS YOUR PROGRESS

Do a Project Debrief

10 Things to Include in a Project Post-Mortem
https://www.business2community.com/strategy/10-things-include-project-post-mort...

Measure Your Results

Content strategy in UX design
https://uxdesign.cc/content-strategy-in-ux-design-c2e41d19d447
6 Metrics Every Website Needs to Track
https://www.square2marketing.com/blog/6-metrics-every-successful-website-needs...

IMPLEMENT ONGOING WORKFLOW

Create a Maintenance Plan

Content Calendar Tools, Templates, Tips
https://blog.bufferapp.com/all-about-content-calendar
Establish a Content Maintenance Routine
http://uxmag.com/articles/content-maintenance

Apply Your Content Lifecycle
Content Lifecycle: Closing the Loop in Content Strategy
http://johnnyholland.org/2010/10/content-lifecycle-closing-the-loop-in-content-

**Maintain Quality Control**

Content Quality Checklist
http://content-science.com/products/content-quality-checklist/
Social Media Templates for Realtime Content
https://blog.bufferapp.com/social-media-templates