CONTENT STRATEGY

Planning for Successful Website Content

Prepared by:
Adriana Corona YC ’07
Julienne R. Hadley

Yale ITS User Experience & Digital Strategy
First......Why bother?
Agenda

1. Set goals
2. Prioritize and take action
3. Create purposeful content
4. Measure performance
5. Plan for maintenance
6. Questions?

Join us at for a follow-up working session.
3PM, Room 102
Set Goals

YOU HAVE A MISSION AND IT IS NOT “TO HAVE A WEBSITE”

Successful content
• Fulfills your audience’s needs
• Supports a key organizational goal
Set Goals > Prioritize & Act > Create > Measure > Maintain

Audience Needs

Org’s Goals
Audience Needs are most important

The most important aspect of any website’s success is the *value it provides to its intended audience*. 
Set Goals > Prioritize & Act > Create > Measure > Maintain

![Venn Diagram]

- Audience Needs
- Org’s Goals

Yale Information Technology Services
Set Goals > Prioritize & Act > Create > Measure > Maintain

Audience Needs

Org’s Goals

Yale Information Technology Services
How to: discover goals

1. Review the Yale Imprint
2. Interview your stakeholders (leaders, goal-setters)
3. Interview your audience members
4. Focus on your audience
5. Start with “core content”
6. Validate with your audience (user research)

http://drupalcamp.yalesites.yale.edu/discovering-your-website-goals
In the absence of strategic goals, focus on your audience.

1. What do your users email you about?
2. What information is critical to serving their needs?
Content Strategy Worksheets

Created by User Experience & Digital Strategy, Yale ITS

http://uxdigitalstrategy.yale.edu   http://usability.yale.edu

AUDIENCE & ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audiences</th>
<th>Organizational Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(example) Prospective Students</td>
<td>(example) Recruit more applications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(example) Alumni</td>
<td>(example) Increase donations by $</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Template: Content Plan

### Content Strategy Worksheets

Created by User Experience & Digital Strategy, Yale ITS

http://uxdigitalstrategy.yale.edu  http://usability.yale.edu

### CONTENT PLAN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Page Type</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Audience Need(s)</th>
<th>Org Goal</th>
<th>Update Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree Program</td>
<td>(example) Prospective Students</td>
<td>What do graduates of this degree program pursue as a career?</td>
<td>(example) Recruit more applications</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giving</td>
<td>(example) Alumni</td>
<td>How will my gift to the school be used?</td>
<td>(example) Increase donations by $</td>
<td>Yearly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Audiences
(example) Prospective Students
(example) Alumni
You already have a website

Existing content is:
• More than you need
• Not enough

How do you plan for success?

*Based on John McCrory’s content audit template*
**Prioritize & Act**

**Prioritize**
- Meets an audience need?
- Meets an organizational goal?

**Act**
- Unpublish, Revise, Keep, Create

---

Set Goals > Prioritize & Act > Create > Measure > Maintain
Content Audit

Quantitative
- URLs
- Content Types
- Published Status
- Analytics (Rank, Views, etc)

Qualitative
- How good is the content?
- Based on strategic goals

Set Goals > Prioritize & Act > Create > Measure > Maintain
## Quantitative Content Audit

### Content Strategy Worksheets

*Created by User Experience & Digital Strategy, Yale ITS*

[http://uxdigitalstrategy.yale.edu](http://uxdigitalstrategy.yale.edu) [http://usability.yale.edu](http://usability.yale.edu)

### CONTENT AUDIT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Title/URL</th>
<th>Drupal Content Type</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Updated Date</th>
<th>Edit/Delete Links</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Views</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Time on Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Admissions</td>
<td>Basic Page</td>
<td>Jane Doe</td>
<td>Published</td>
<td>7/1/13</td>
<td>edit / delete</td>
<td>Jane Doe</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>10s</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Qualitative Content Audit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time on Page</th>
<th>Accuracy (Rank 1-5)</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Audience Need Met?</th>
<th>Org Goal</th>
<th>Org Goal Met?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>321 10s</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3 (example) Prospective Students</td>
<td>Need NOT Met</td>
<td>(example) Recruit more applications</td>
<td>Goal NOT Met</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 1m02s</td>
<td>5-Accurate</td>
<td>4 (example) Prospective Students</td>
<td>Need Met</td>
<td>(example) Reduce barriers to apply</td>
<td>Goal Met</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Content Strategy Worksheets

*Created by User Experience & Digital Strategy, Yale ITS*

http://uxdigitalstrategy.yale.edu http://usability.yale.edu

---

### CONTENT AUDIT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Title/URL</th>
<th>Drupal Content Type</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Updated Date</th>
<th>Edit/Delete Links</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Views</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Time on Page</th>
<th>Accuracy (Rank 1-5)</th>
<th>Image Quality (Rank 1-5)</th>
<th>Audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unpublish</td>
<td>Admissions</td>
<td>Basic Page</td>
<td>Jane Doe</td>
<td>Published</td>
<td>7/1/13 edit / delete</td>
<td>Jane Doe</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>321 10s</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3 (example) Pros</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep</td>
<td>Financial Aid</td>
<td>Basic Page</td>
<td>Jane Doe</td>
<td>Published</td>
<td>5/5/15 edit / delete</td>
<td>Jack Smith</td>
<td>1230</td>
<td>10 1m02s</td>
<td>5-Accurate</td>
<td>4 (example) Pros</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Set Goals > Prioritize & Act > Create > Maintain > Measure**
How to: Choose an Action

**Unpublish**

**Qualitative**
- No audience defined
- Possibly inaccurate/out of date
- Poor quality (images, text)
- Does not meet an organizational goal

**Quantitative**
- “Unpopular” content (Analytics rank)

Audience Needs

Org’s Goals

Existing Content

Set Goals > Prioritize & Act > Create > Measure > Maintain

Yale Information Technology Services
How to: Choose an Action

Set Goals > Prioritize & Act > Create > Measure > Maintain

Revise

Qualitative
• Audience defined
• Serves an audience need
• Possibly inaccurate/out of date
• Poor quality (images, text)
• May meet an organizational goal

Quantitative
• Possibly popular content (analytics rank)
How to: Choose an Action

Set Goals > Prioritize & Act > Create > Measure > Maintain

Qualitative
- Audience defined
- Serves an audience need
- Accurate & up to date
- Good quality (images, text)
- Meets an organizational goal

Quantitative
- Possibly popular content (analytics rank)

Keep

Audience Needs
Org’s Goals
Existing Content

Yale Information Technology Services
Create

Content does not exist and:

**Qualitative**
- Audience defined
- Serves an audience need
- May serve an organizational goal
Create purposeful content

Every piece of content needs a job.

Either it serves an audience need or it fulfills an organizational goal

Preferably both!
Start with Core Pages

Core Pages fulfill multiple goals

1. Identify a page/page type that is vital to your audience
2. *Meet their needs first*
3. Look for opportunities to meet organizational goals

Set Goals > Prioritize & Act > Create > Measure > Maintain
How-to: The Core Model

Core Page: Kitchen Tips

Business Goals:
What are the organization’s goals? What does the organization want to convey to its users? What services do you offer to your clients?
Example: “Increasing knowledge about global politics”

Share/blog about cooking and traveling experiences
Provide healthy and flavorful recipes
Promote recipe book

User Tasks:
What is the user supposed to do on this page? Describe the activities they can do on this page. Examples include: Registering an account, checking the events calendar, post a comment, etc.

Learn how to make vanilla extract
Read about how to properly toast hazelnuts
Learn how to make vegetable puree

Inward Paths:
How does a user get to this page? List some goals that a user would have for reaching this page. Examples include: Googling academic topic, clicking a link on the homepage, etc.

Googling “how to make vanilla extract”
Googling “smitten kitchen tips”
Clicking on relevant recipe link

Core Content
What content does this page need to satisfy the goals of the organization and the users?

Recipes
• Homemade vanilla extract
• Toasted hazelnuts
• Veggie puree

Photos
• Process: vanilla bean pod, unprocessed hazelnuts, fresh veggies and kitchenware
• Final product: bottled vanilla extract, toasted hazelnuts, puree as soup or in a drinking cup

Forward Paths:
After a user has answered their question/need through the core content, what additional information/resources would be useful to them?

Chocolate Chip Recipe
Spring salad with toasted hazelnuts
Blog post about farmer’s market and why you should buy in-season produce
How-to: The Core Model

Mobile Content Exercise
Try to map out the content from the ‘Content Goals’ block to fit a mobile device screen.

Inward Paths:
How does a user get to this page? List some goals that a user would have for reaching this page. Examples include:
- Googling academic topic
- Clicking a link on the homepage
- Etc.

Googling “how to make vanilla extract”
Googling “smitten kitchen tips”
Clicking on relevant recipe link

Before you begin:
1. Buy vanilla beans
   LINK: David Lebovitz’s article on vanilla beans and the industry >>
   Buy your beans by weight, not number because if the beans are smaller than average, you don’t want to feel shorted.
   LINK: Penzey’s Spices
   LINK: Store recommendations
2. Get a bottle to store your extract
   An old, well-sterilized vinegar or oil bottle will work. A wine bottle or an old glass vanilla bottle will work as well. An amber bottle will protect the extract from light and heat. Either way, make sure you store it in a dark cabinet.
3. Buy alcohol
   I prefer vodka because it won’t interfere with the vanilla flavor, unlike bourbon, or other alcohols. You can mix vodka and other alcohols if you want, but vodka allows the vanilla
How-to: The Core Model

Set Goals > Prioritize & Act > Create > Measure > Maintain

Google “A List Apart Core Model”

The Core Model: Designing Inside Out for Better Results

by Ida Aalen · January 06, 2015
Published in Content Strategy, Workflow & Tools, Information Architecture

If you’ve worked on a website design with a large team or client, chances are good you’ve encountered challenges (or even flails) with everybody having at the base a completely different understanding of the project. How do you make sure everyone is on the same wavelength and that everyone is speaking the same language? This is generally where we introduce the Core Model, a technique that the team at A List Apart uses to structure the design process.
How-to: Write for the Web

Writing for the Web

Concision is crucial
For the page summary, condense the main point of the page in 140 characters or less. When users browse site content, they usually read in a non-linear fashion, looking for keywords and phrases to answer their questions. Site usability can increase by 58% when half the words on a webpage are cut.

The Five Principles of Concision

Delete words that mean little or nothing

Before
Productivity actually depends on certain factors that basically involve psychology more than any particular technology.

After
Productivity depends on psychology more than technology.

Delete words that repeat the meaning of other words

Redundant pairings
full and complete
each and every
hope and trust
basic and fundamental
any and all
first and foremost
ture and accurate
various and sundry

Delete words implied by other words

Before
The county manages the educational system and public recreational activities.

After
The county manages education and public recreation.

Before
In the event that you finish early, contact this office.

After
If you finish early, contact this office.

Before
Except when you have failed to submit applications without documentation, benefits will not be denied.

After
You will receive benefits only if you submit your documents.

Before
Productivity actually depends on certain factors that basically involve psychology more than any particular technology.
For each Organizational Goal:
1. What action do you want a user to take?
2. How do you rate success?

For each Audience Need:
1. What does it mean for your user to be successful?
2. How do you measure this?
Example: How to define success

Organizational Goal: Have more alumni attend events

1. What action do you want a user to take?
   - Visit your website

2. How do you rate success?
   - Page views on your website

Organizational Goal: Have more alumni attend events

1. Action: Attend one event per year
2. Metrics:
   - Page views on your site
   - RSVPs to events
   - Attendance at events
Example: How to define success

Audience Need: Student asks “What is today’s dining hall menu?”

1. What does it mean for your user to be successful?
   - Student finds today’s menu

2. How do you measure this?
   - In-page feedback; Usability Testing

http://usability.yale.edu/usability/5-steps-usability-testing
So far..

1. Identified Audience
2. Set Organizational Goals
3. Created a content plan
4. Conducted a content audit
5. Unpublished, Revised, Kept & Created content
6. Measured Performance

Next: Keep up the content hygiene!
Launching a New Site?

– Congratulations! You are now a publisher.
– Launch is just the beginning.
– Don’t suffer from Launch and Forget Syndrome (LAFS)

Already have a site?

– Don’t let this happen again
React to new evidence

Based on your measures of success...

Content Plans

• Add or modify your understanding audience needs
• Update organization goals

Priorities and Actions

• Revise continuously
• Don’t be afraid to unpublish content that doesn’t work
## How to: Hold Yourself Accountable

**Set Goals** > **Prioritize & Act** > **Create** > **Measure** > **Maintain**

### Content Strategy Worksheets

*Created by User Experience & Digital Strategy, Yale ITS*

[http://uxdigitalstrategy.yale.edu](http://uxdigitalstrategy.yale.edu)  [http://usability.yale.edu](http://usability.yale.edu)

### Editorial Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY 2016-17</th>
<th>Title/Description</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Draft Due</th>
<th>Post Date</th>
<th>Editor</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
<th>Content Type</th>
<th>URL</th>
<th>Links</th>
<th>Images</th>
<th>Other Distribution Channels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>July</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>August</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>September</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Monday Morning News, Social Media, etc.
How to: Plan for maintenance

- Template: Content Strategy Worksheets
  - Audience and Org Goals
  - Content Plan
  - Content Audit
- Template: Editorial calendar
- Tactics: Assign roles, identify editors
Questions?

Contact us:
ux@yale.edu
uxdigitalstrategy.yale.edu
usability.yale.edu