CONTENT STRATEGY

Planning for Successful Website Content

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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?

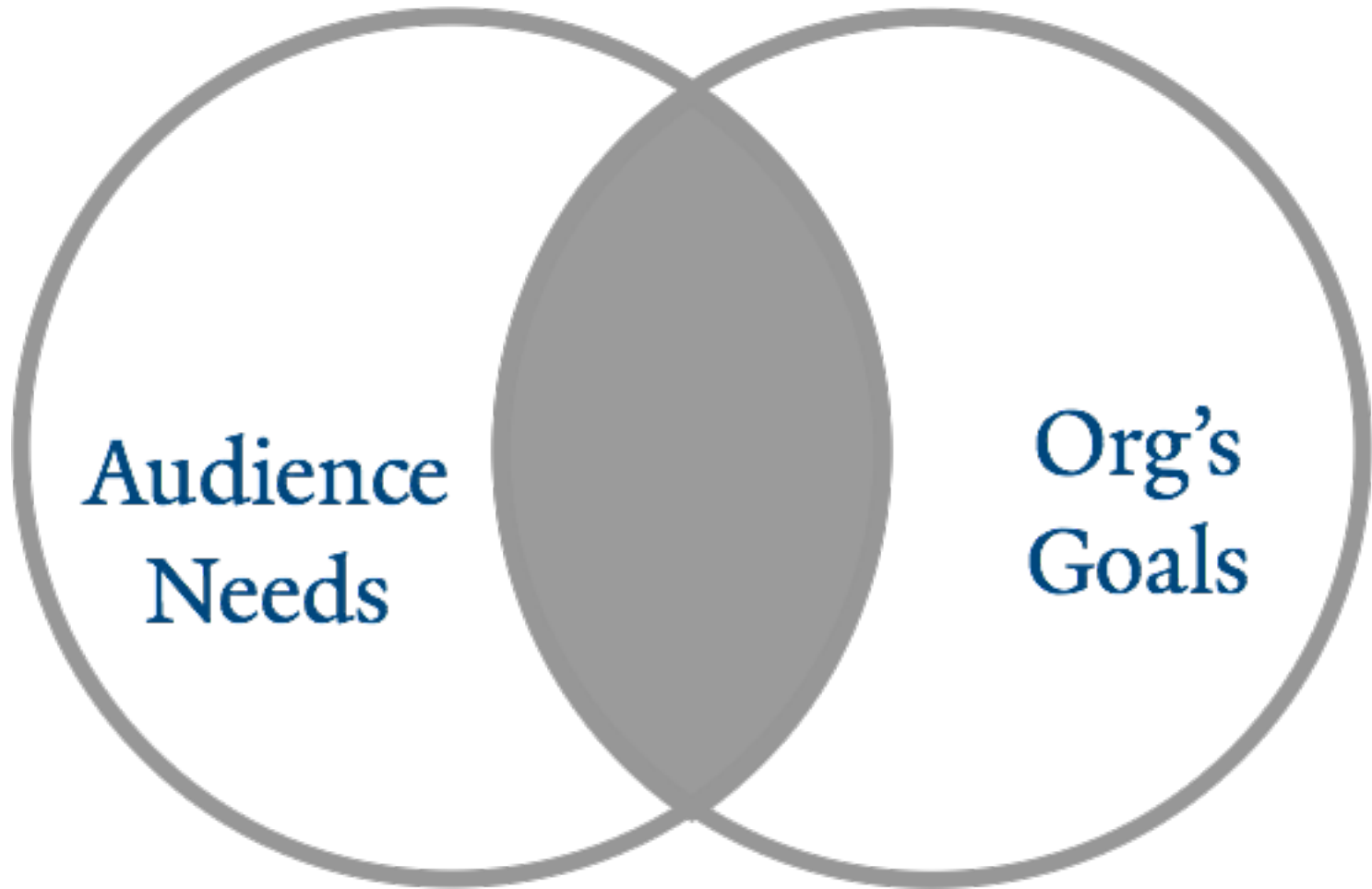*Join us at for a follow-up working session.*
3PM, Room 102

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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

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Audience Needs

Org's Goals

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Audience Needs are most important

The most important aspect of any website's success is the *value it provides to its intended audience*

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Audience Needs

Org's Goals

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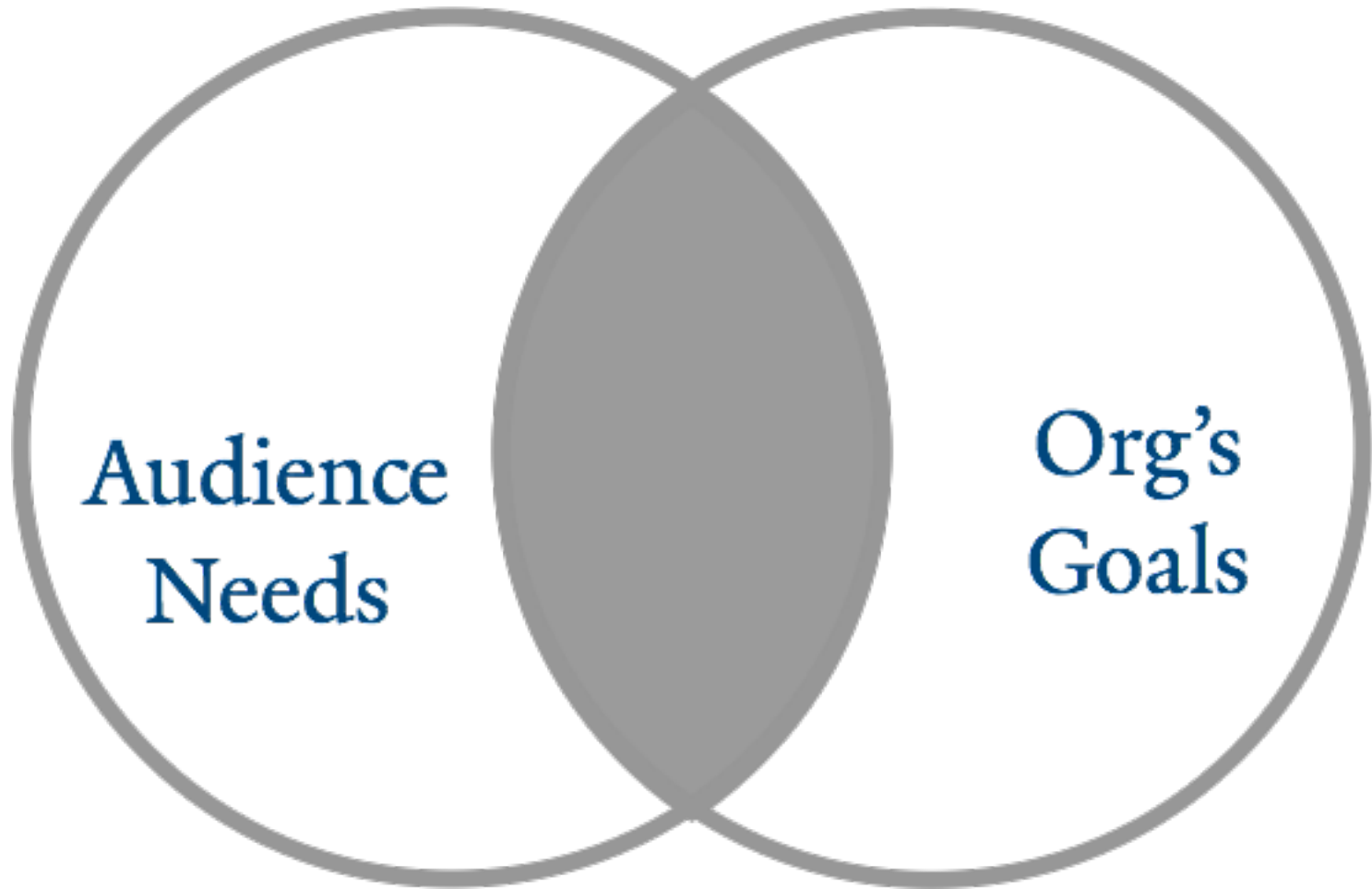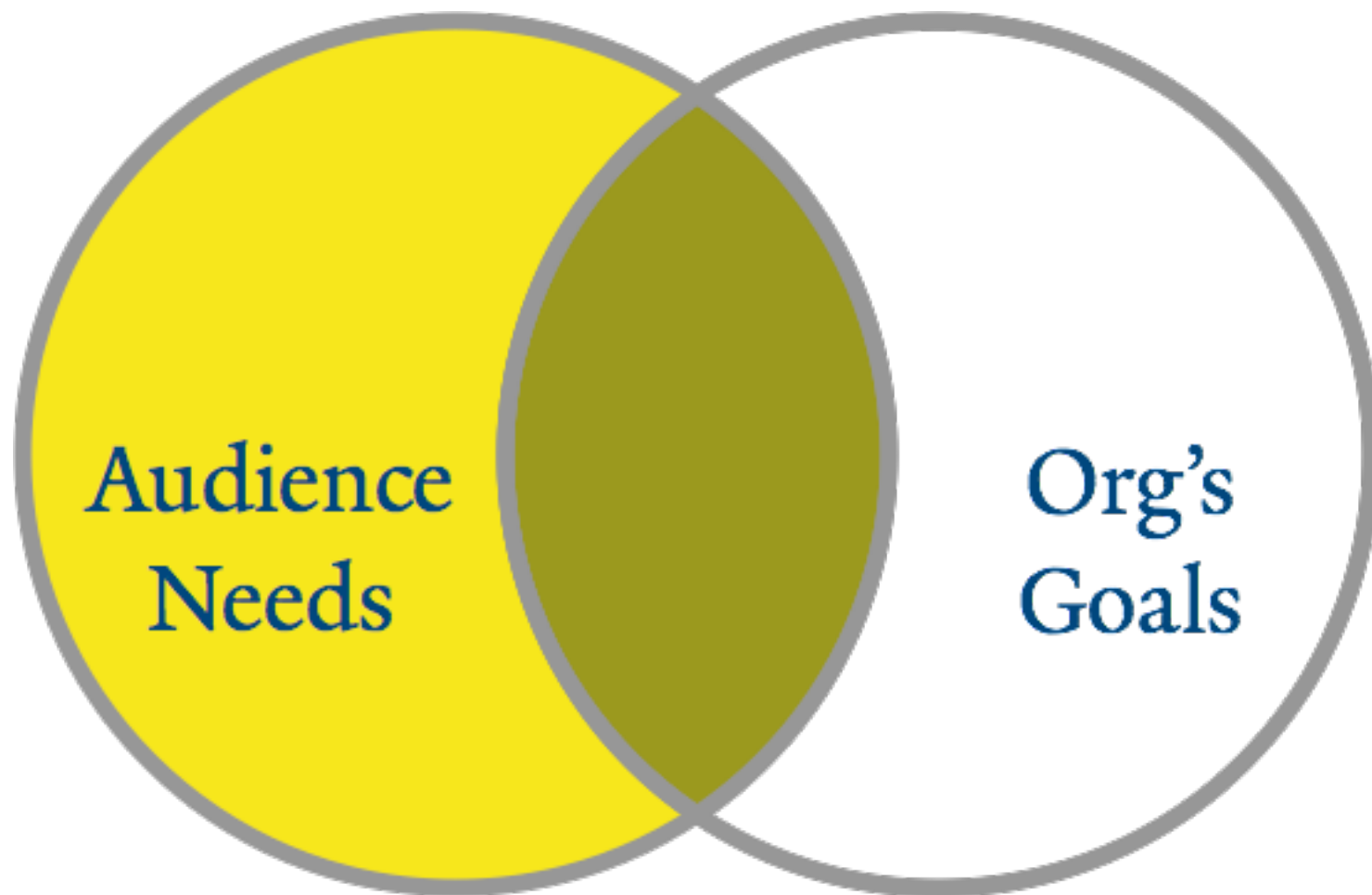
How to: discover goals

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

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In Reality

Without "strategic 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?

Template: Audience & Org Goals

Content Strategy Worksheets

Created by User Experience & Digital Strategy, Yale ITS

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

AUDIENCE & ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS

Audiences ▼
(example) Prospective Students
(example) Alumni

Organizational Goals ▼
(example) Recruit more applications
(example) Increase donations by $

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Template: Content Plan

Content Strategy Worksheets

Created by User Experience & Digital Strategy, Yale ITS
http://uxdigitalstrategy.yale.edu   http://usability.yale.edu

CONTENT PLAN

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

Audiences
(example) Prospective Students
(example) Alumni

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In Reality

Audience Needs

Org's Goals
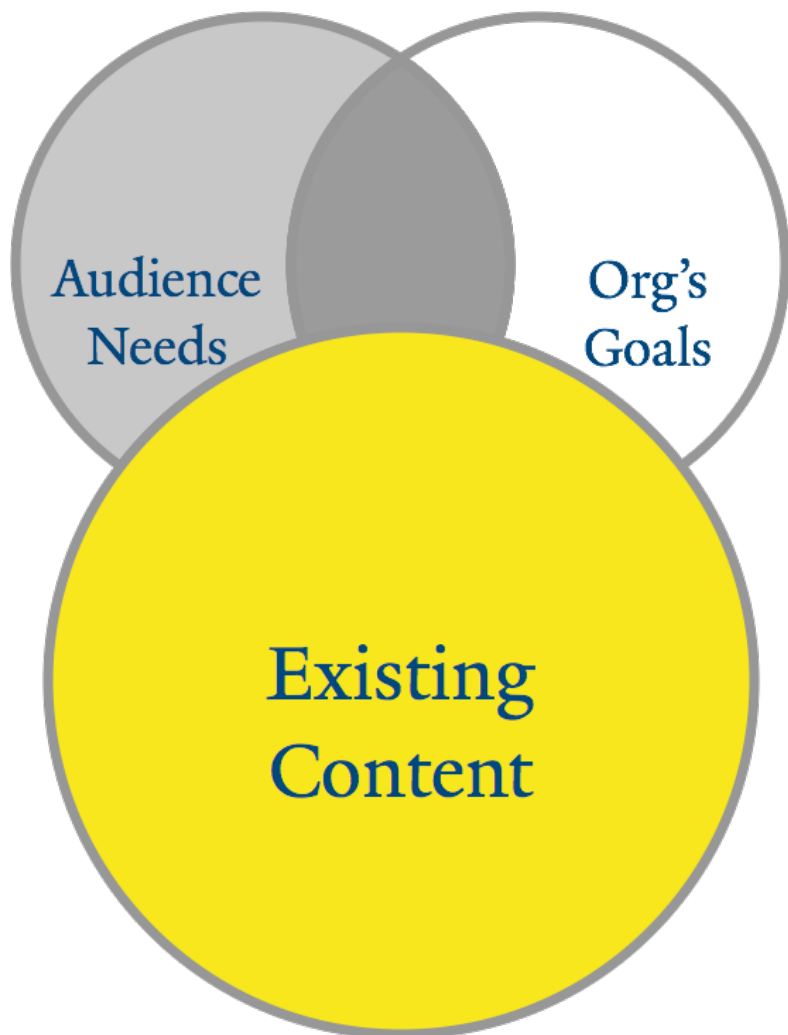
Existing Content
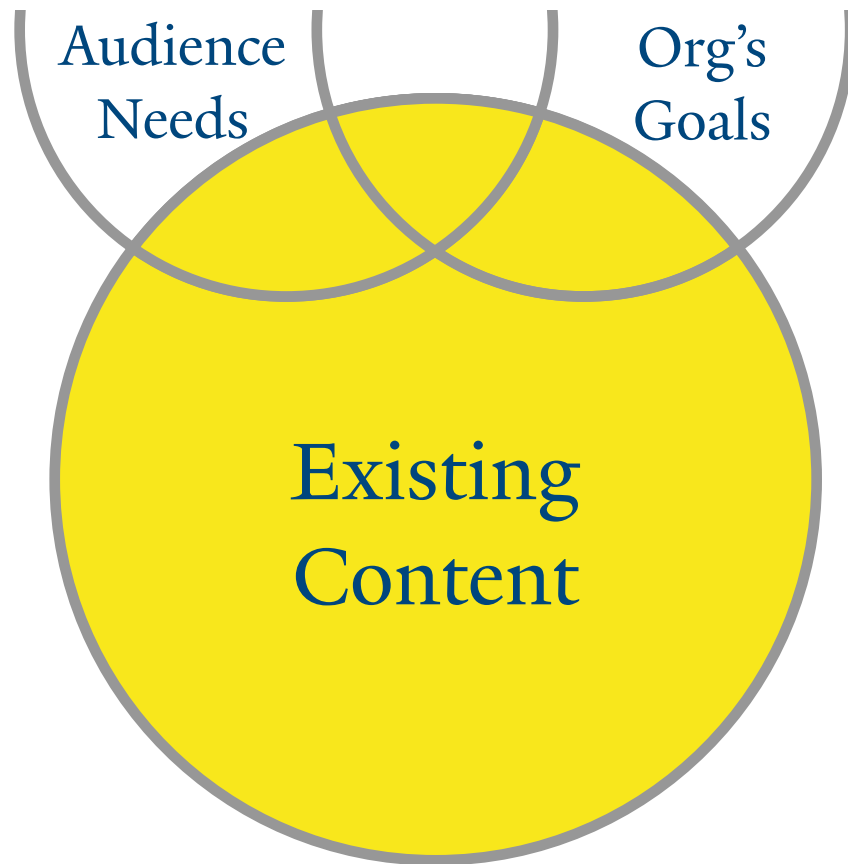
You already have a website

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

Audience Needs

Org's Goals

Existing Content

Prioritize

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

Act

Unpublish, Revise, Keep, Create

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Content Audit

Audience Needs

Org's Goals

Existing Content
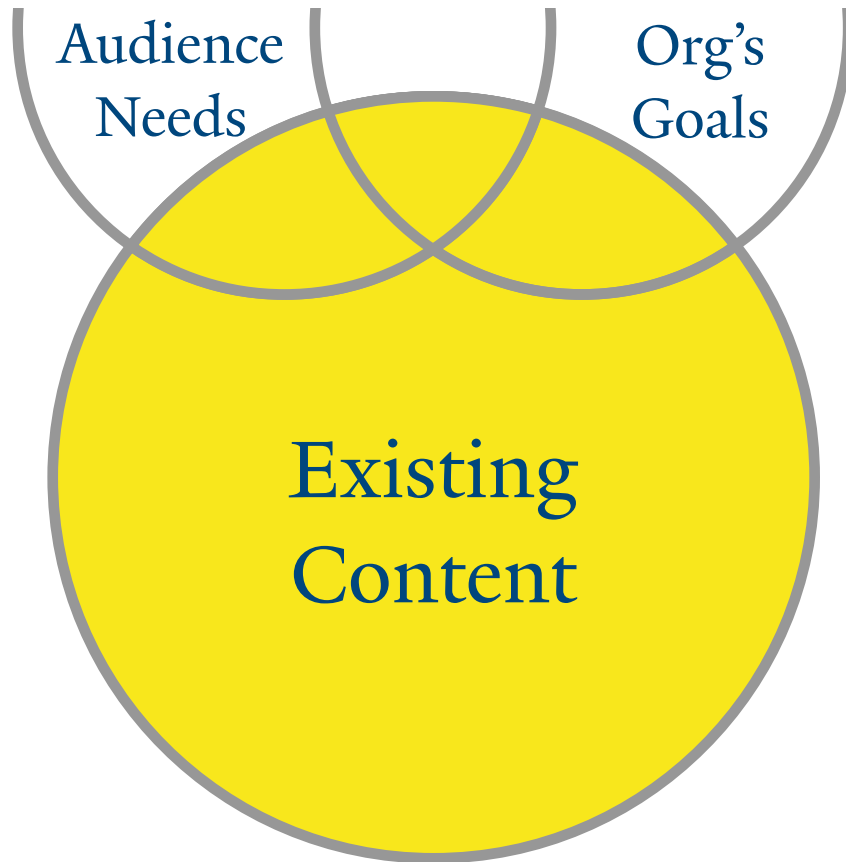
Quantitative

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

Qualitative

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

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Quantitative Content Audit

Content Strategy Worksheets

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CONTENT AUDIT

Quantitative

Action	Title/URL	Drupal Content Type	Author	Status	Updated Date	Edit/Delete Links	Owner	Views	Rank	Time on Page
	Admissions	Basic Page	Jane Doe	Published	7/1/13	edit / delete	Jane Doe	100	321	10s

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Qualitative Content Audit

	Qualitative					
	Time on Page	**Accuracy (Rank 1-**	**Image Quality (Rank 1-**	**Audience**	**Audience Need Met?**	**Org Goal**	**Org Goal Met?**
321 10s		4	3	(example) Prospective Students	Need NOT Met	(example) Recruit more applications	Goal NOT Met
10 1m02s	5-Accurate		4	(example) Prospective Students	Need Met	(example) Reduce barriers to apply	Goal Met

Goal Met
Goal NOT Met

Don't forget to Act

Content Strategy Worksheets

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

CONTENT AUDIT

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

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How to: Choose an Action

Unpublish

Audience Needs
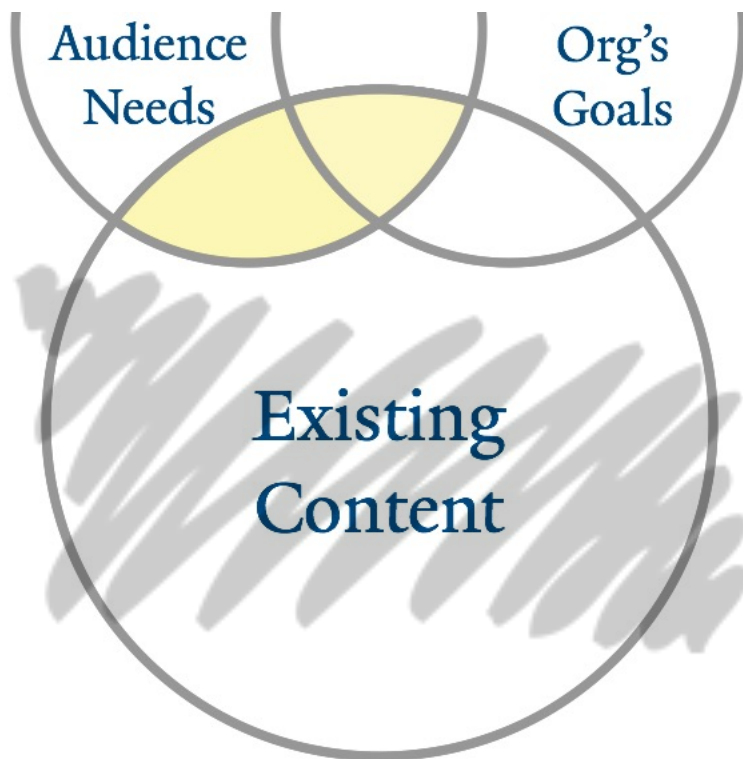
Org's Goals

Existing Content

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

Quantitative
- "Unpopular" content (Analytics rank)

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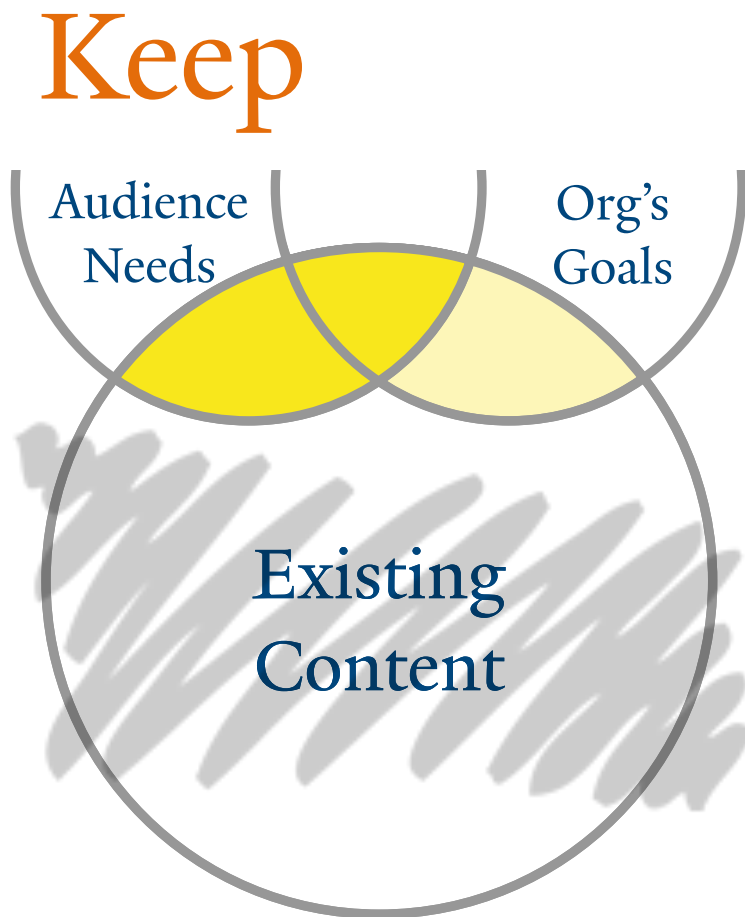
How to: Choose an Action

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)

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How to: Choose an Action

Keep

Audience Needs

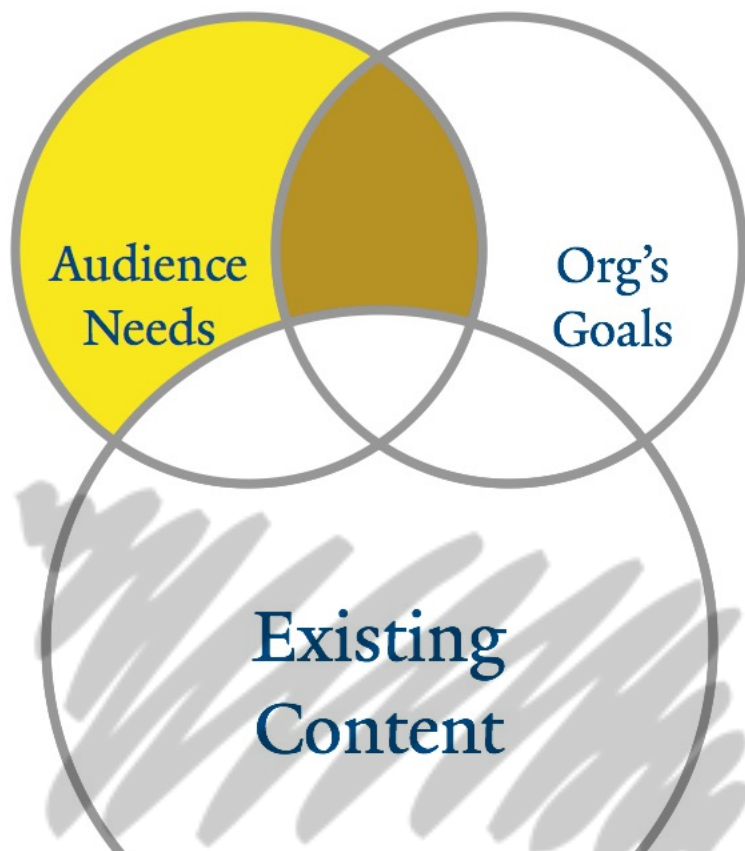Org's Goals

Existing Content

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)

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How to: Choose an Action

Create

Content does not exist and:

Qualitative

- Audience defined
- Serves an audience need
- May serve an organizational goal

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Create purposeful content

Audience Needs

Org's Goals

Existing Content
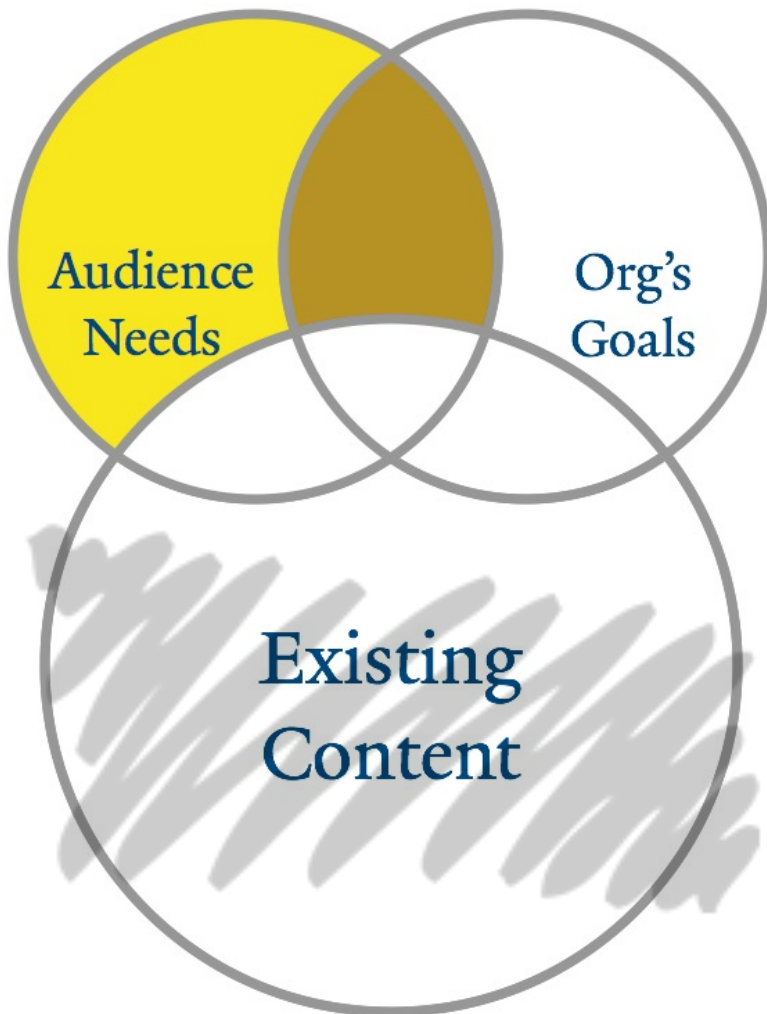
Every piece of content needs a job.

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

Preferably both!

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Start with Core Pages

Audience Needs

Org's Goals

Existing Content
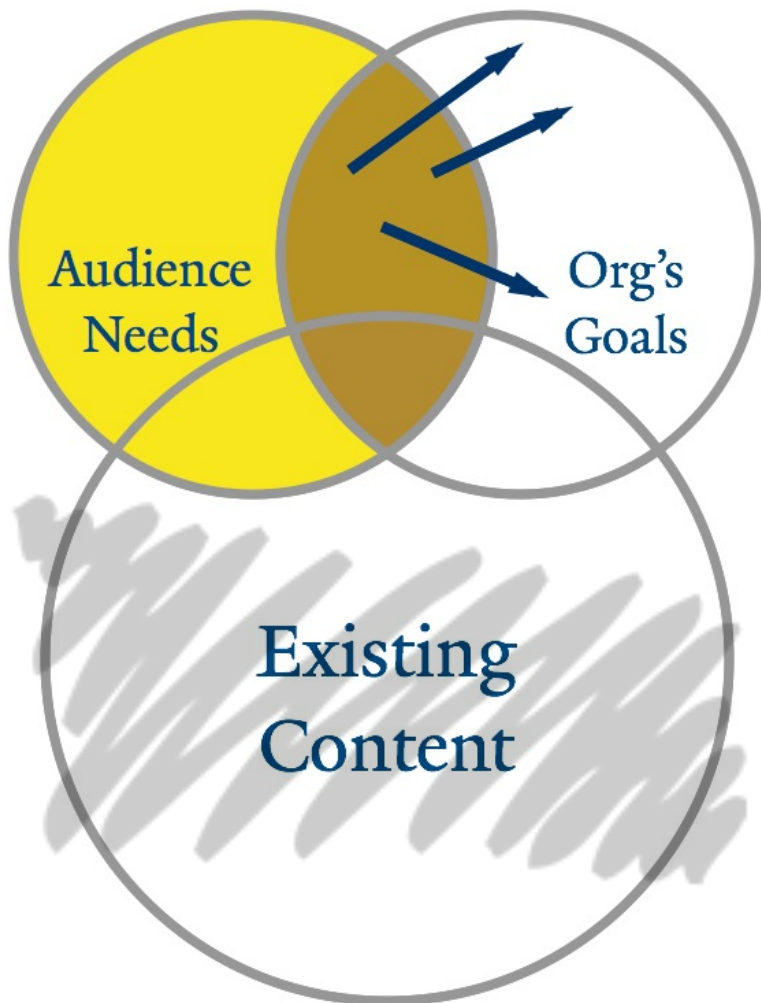
Core Pages fulfill multiple goals

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

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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
- Homemadevanilla 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"
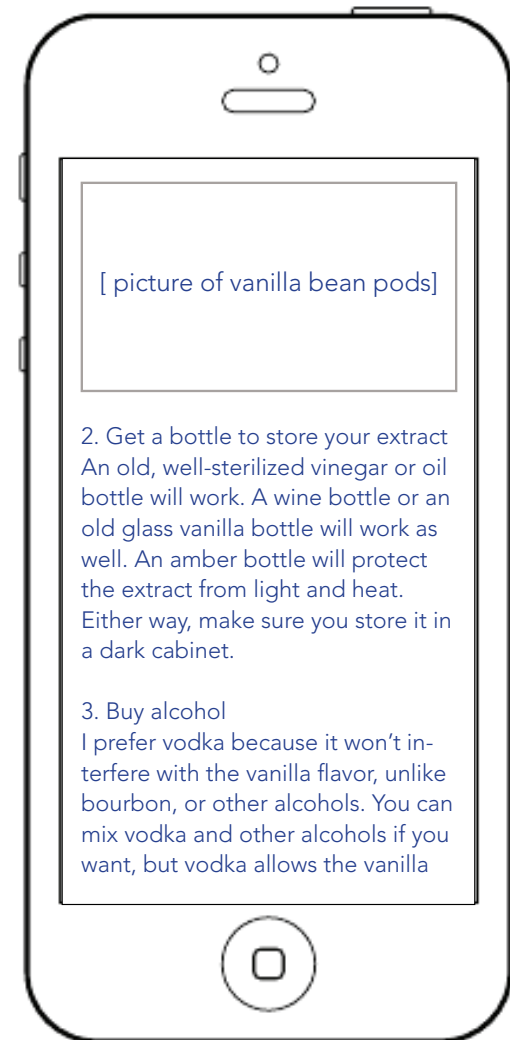
Clicking on relevant recipe link

_____

_____

First Screen (p.1)

Kitchen Tips

» Homemade Vanilla Extract
» Toast your own Hazelnuts
» Yummy Vegetable Puree

(sample recipe page)
Homemade Vanilla Extract

[picture of final product]

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

Continued Scroll (p.2)

[picture of vanilla bean pods]

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

A LIST APART

Google "A List Apart Core Model"

Issue № 411

Illustration by Kate Bingaman-Burt

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

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

Delete words that repeat the meaning of other words

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

Delete words implied by other words

Before	After
The county manages the educational system	The county manages education and public

Measure Performance

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?

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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

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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

   This content must

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

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

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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
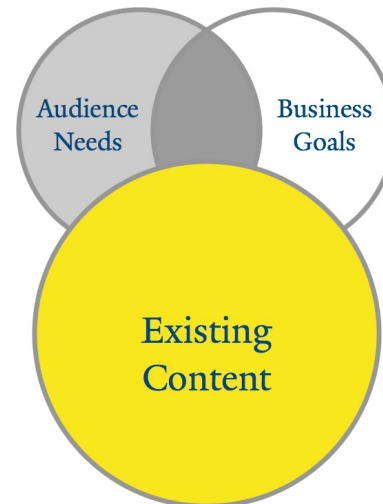6. Measured Performance

Next: Keep up the content hygiene!

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Plan for maintenance

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

Audience Needs

Business Goals

Existing Content

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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

Content Strategy Worksheets

Created by User Experience & Digital Strategy, Yale ITS
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EDITORIAL CALENDAR

FY 2016-17	Title/Description	Status	Draft Due	Post Date	Editor	Publisher	Content Type	URL	Links	Images	Other Distribution Channels
July											
											Monday Morning News, Social Media, etc.
August											
September											

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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

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Questions?

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usability.yale.edu