YALE DIGITAL CONFERENCE 2019

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Does Your Content 'Spark Joy?' A Guide to Content Audits

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YaleSites, ITS

Overview

What is a content audit?

What does it mean to 'Spark Joy?'

How can content 'Spark Joy?'

When should we do a content audit?

Why should we do a content audit?

Tidying up: Content audit methodology

Putting things back together: Content audit analysis

What is a content audit?

What is a content audit?

"An accounting of all currently published web content, with all of the details recorded in a spreadsheet."

-Kristina Halvorson

Content Strategy for the Web

What is a content inventory?

"…a spreadsheet that captures information (such as page title or URL) for each web page or content module you're responsible for creating, reviewing, or caring for."

- Kristina Halvorson

Content Strategy for the Web

What is a content audit *really?*

Performing a content audit has been called "tedious," "boring," and "intimidating, time-consuming, and chaotic".

- "Content Audit," Wikipedia

The KonMari method: What does it mean to 'Spark Joy?"

The KonMari Method of Tidying

A tidying methodology done by category, rather than by room or location in the home.

The basis for Netflix's series *Tidying Up with Marie Kondo*

"Keep only those things that speak to the heart, and discard items that no longer spark joy. Thank them for their service – then let them go."

guybrush tweetgood
@ICELEVEL

Did you know there's an anti-Marie Kondo, who constantly sends you stuff despite you having no place to store it? Did you know it's my mom?

♡ 1,250   7:27 PM - Jan 7, 2019

💬 372 people are talking about this

What does it mean to Spark Joy?

Hard to describe, but you know it when you feel it!

Does an object or possession excite you?
Make you happy?
Does it inspire any positive regard at all?

That's what it means to "Spark Joy!"

How can content 'Spark Joy?'

'Spark Joy' & Content Audits

Performing a content audit is similar to decluttering your living space:

In the KonMari method, all objects in a category are placed in a large pile, then assessed one-by-one.

When performing an audit, list all pages to view content holistically, then assess each page individually.

How can content "Spark Joy?"

Is the content...

Clear?

Meaningful?

Purposeful?

Valuable?

Louis Virtel ✔
@louisvirtel

I'm not kidding, there should be a Marie Kondo-like show about how people have conversations in groups. "Do we need that longwinded anecdote? Could it have been one sentence? Have we repeated that joke before? Let's cut that story into thirds."

♡ 7,120   9:02 PM - Jan 5, 2019   ⓘ

💬 **702 people are talking about this**   >

How can content 'Spark Joy?'

Clearly supports communication and organizational goals of your website.

Serves the user.

Serves a purpose and doesn't add clutter.

Let's see it in action

Yale Sustainability

Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS)

When do we do a content audit?

When do we do a content audit?

"Many people only think of audits when they are redesigning [or migrating] a website, but audits are valuable at any time during the life of your content."

Kristina Halvorson, *Content Strategy For the Web*

Why do we do a content audit?

Why do we do a content audit?

Defines the scope and direction of the work.

Improves clarity of content goals.

Improves content quality.

Determine action for each piece of content. (remove, revise, migrate, etc.)

Why do we do a content audit?

To make sense of content performance.

To help prioritize content.

To create a foundation for better future content.

To inform better editorial decisions.

Tidying up: content audit processes

Creating your inventory

Tools to crawl each page of your website:

SiteImprove - Yale-owned. Includes analytics.

Screaming Frog - limited free version

Site Spider - free chrome extension

Break it down by category

KonMari Method

    Clothes

    Books

    Papers

    Misc.

    Sentimental items

Content audit

    Content type

    Navigation menu

    Imagery / Videos

    Landing pages

    Audience

Trimming your inventory

Remove Items from spreadsheet that will not be included in the audit.

Content types: i.e. news, people

Any other sections that you've determined not to include

Quantitative audit

An inventory of all pages on the site. May include:

Page name

Page URL

Page level

Analytics

Content type

PDFs, forms, videos, etc.

Qualitative audit

Allows for a deep dive into content.

Assess content against certain criteria.

Rate on a scale of 1-5.

Does content 'Spark Joy' for your users and your organization?

Content criteria

Useful

Readable

Accurate

Findable

Consistent

Clear

Professional

User-friendly

Accessible

Sustainable

Content criteria checklist

Determine which criteria are applicable to your content.

Obtain group consensus on the meaning of those criteria.

Allows you to consistently assess content across people, categories, and time.

Content criteria checklist

Is the content clear?

❏ Is the content written in active voice?

❏ Are headings and link text descriptive?

❏ Is the language easy to understand? (simple language over overly complex language)

Complete the audit

Assign an action to each area

Major revisions

Minor revisions

Remove!

Consolidate

Migrate

Or you can just use our template :)

[Content audit template](#)

Putting things back together: Content audit analysis

What does the data tell us?

How many items fall within each category?

How does content stack against each of our criteria?

Sample analysis

Of 100 total pages:

- Major revisions: **32%**
- Minor revisions: **28%**
- Keep as is: **5%**
- Consolidate: **15%**
- Remove (unpublish): **20%**

Sample analysis

Is the content clear?

- Unclear (1-3) **60%**

- Clear (4-5) **40%**

Is the content concise?

- Not Concise (1-3) **80%**

- Concise (4-5) **20%**

Content that is not clear or concise does not Spark Joy!

Looking beyond the data

Read all comments and notes.

Look for patterns, potential challenges, and problems.

Look for content that needs to be prioritized.

Look for easy wins.

Remember...

You don't need to audit your content all at once.

Have alignment on organizational and content goals.

Always keep the user in mind.

Try not to hoard! Letting go of content can be hard.

Let content 'Spark Joy' for your users

Letting go of your content

When a possession no longer "sparks joy," take a moment to appreciate the joy it once gave you before letting it go

Do the same for your content before you discard it:

-It may not "spark joy" now, but it did once

-What value did it once have?

-What lessons can it grant about creating new content?

That content's value can be recycled into new content!

Thank you for joining :)