Content Strategy:
The Key to Effective Web Content

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Hi, I’m Rick.
Hi, I’m Rick.  ePublishMedia
Hi, I’m Rick.
What I’m talking about

1. Why quality web content is so important
2. Elements that comprise a content strategy
3. How to maintain quality content
What I’m talking about

1. Why quality web content is so important

Elements that comprise a content strategy

How to maintain quality content
Why am I focusing on content?
Because I’m a publisher.
Just like you!
"The moment you launch a website, an email campaign, a mobile application, or content of any kind, you’re a publisher. Shouldn’t you start acting like one?"

Kristina Halvorson
Author, Content Strategy for the Web
Yes.
Content is why people visit your website.
Period.
View yourself more like a publisher delivering valuable editorial products than as a marketer selling products and services.

Joe Pulizzi

Co-Author, Get Content Get Customers
Why is content often neglected?
Content is massive
Content is political
Content is time-consuming
Real challenges.
Poor excuses.
People don’t forgive colleges for bad websites.
No more excuses.

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Content strategy is the practice of planning for the creation, delivery, and governance of useful, usable content.

Kristina Halvorson
Author, Content Strategy for the Web
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Kristina Halvorson
Author, Content Strategy for the Web
Also, effective.
Quality content

Users
Quality content

Users

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Quality content

Attracts

Users
Quality content

Attracts

Informs

Users
Quality content

Attracts

Informs

Engages

Users

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Quality content

Attracts  Informs

Users

Engages  Retains
Got content strategy?
Let’s take a look...
## Warning signs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Welcome &amp; Overview pages</th>
<th>Contain redundant, trivial content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAQs pages</td>
<td>Compensate for ineffective site content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDFs</td>
<td>Sidestep editorial process, compromising quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Related links”</td>
<td>List orphan pages or irrelevant content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Points of distinction pages</td>
<td>Lack points of distinction or effective brand messaging</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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And more...

- Broken or mislabeled links
- Contradictory descriptions
- Missing or inaccurate information
- Inconsistent page titles and metadata
- Unanswered user comments
Make content work

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Content strategy answers critical questions.
How do we decide what to communicate?
How do we decide what to communicate?

How do we decide what content to create and update?
How do we prioritize content requirements?
How do we prioritize content requirements?

How do we determine our users’ needs?
How do we align analytics, usability and SEO/SEM with content creation?
How do we align analytics, usability and SEO/SEM with content creation?

How do we maintain voice, tone, and branding with content across multiple channels?
Some good questions to answer, right?
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Why quality web content is so important

2. Elements that comprise a content strategy

How to maintain quality content
Elements of content strategy

- Message architecture
- Content audit
- Content analysis
- Planning & Implementation
Elements of content strategy

- Message architecture
- Content audit
- Content analysis
- Planning & Implementation

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Message architecture

- Ensures a consistent, clear brand message
- Identifies what your organization wants to convey and how it wants to be perceived
- Ensures clear, concise descriptions of organization concepts
- Aligns messaging across all communication channels
- Determines if content is appropriate for your users
"How can you measure if content is appropriate if you don’t have a metric against which to measure it?"

Margot Bloomstein
Appropriate, Inc

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Elements of content strategy

- Message architecture
  - Content audit
  - Content analysis

Planning & Implementation
Content audit

- Content inventory
- Quantitative audit
- Qualitative audit
Elements of content strategy

- Message architecture
- Content audit
  - Content analysis
- Planning & Implementation
Content analysis

‣ What is the purpose of each piece of web content?

‣ Does content meet our business objectives and users’ needs?

‣ How do we want our users to respond to our content?

‣ What content do users need, but not know to look for?
Content analysis heuristics

- Usefulness & Relevance
- Clarity & Accuracy
- Influence & Engagement
- Completeness
- Voice & Style
- Usability & Findability

The analysis is not just about the deliverable, but about the insights you gain and what you decide to do about them.

Colleen Jones
Principal, Content Science
Elements of content strategy

- Message architecture
- Content audit
- Content analysis

- Planning & Implementation
Planning & Implementation

- Roles & responsibilities
- Workflow
- Editorial calendar
- Messaging & style guide
- Information architecture
- Linking strategy
Planning & Implementation

- SEO & metadata strategy
- Page-level content structure
- Content formats
- Content channels
- Maintenance requirements
What I’m talking about

Why quality web content is so important

Elements that comprise a content strategy

3. How to maintain quality content

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Governance: keeping it going

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Governance

- Manage publishing process
- Measure content efficacy
- Evaluate goals & objectives
Governance

- Manage publishing process
- Measure content efficacy
- Evaluate goals & objectives
Understand content ecosystem
The ecosystem often reveals the ‘underlying principle’ of the content problem.
Have a plan.

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**Strategy**
- Determine topical ownership areas & taxonomy
- Establish content program & production process
- Content sourcing plan
- Voice & brand definition

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**Audit**
- Content stakeholder interviews
- Competitive analysis
- Objective analysis & evaluation of content environment:
  - site
  - partner content
  - sister/parent sites

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**Plan**
- Staffing recommendations
- CMS customization
- Metadata plan
- Marketing/Ad model
- Migration plan

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**Create**
- Asset production
- Copy production
- QA (compliance with brand / SEO)
- Create governance model

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**Maintain**
- Advisory role with client
- Create QC plan for periodic auditing/weeding of live content
- Use analytics to determine areas of success & failure

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Erin Scime
dopeData.com
Governance

Manage publishing process

- Measure content efficacy

Evaluate goals & objectives
Measure content efficacy
Qualitative analysis

‣ Is content redundant, outdated, trivial (ROT)?

‣ Is content still usable, useful, relevant, appropriate?

‣ Usability tests

‣ User feedback (surveys)
Quantitative analysis

- Are links still functional?
- Is content still findable?
- Are we reaching our audience?
- Is content accessible?
- Are users taking the actions we want?
Governance

- Manage publishing process
- Measure content efficacy
  - Evaluate goals & objectives
Is our strategy successful?

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Evaluate goals & objectives

- Have our website objectives changed?
- Have our users’ needs changed?
- Have our resources changed?
- Is our strategy still effective?
Memorize
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- Think more like a publisher and less like a marketer
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- Audit: know what content you have before determining what you need
Memorize

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- Strategize: create an achievable, actionable, and sustainable plan
Memorize

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- Audit: know what content you have before determining what you need
- Analyze: determine if content is useful, relevant, and effective
- Strategize: create an achievable, actionable, and sustainable plan
- Measure: adapt and make smart decisions
Questions?
Thanks.