

How to Develop a User-Centered Content Strategy

November 18, 2010

Meet the Presenter



Wendy A F G Stengel

Senior Information Architect, TerpSys

wstengel@terpsys.com

Content includes all text, images, video, data, etc. used to construct meaning.

CONTENT: DEFINED

COMPELLING CONTENT DOESN'T JUST HAPPEN

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

--Kristina Halvorson

CONTENT STRATEGY: DEFINED

Content Strategy Ingredients

- Your users' goals
- Your organization's goals
- Your content



Who are your users?

What do they need?

What do they want?

USER-CENTERED

Know Your Users

Sometimes the people who you *think* visit your web site, are not the users who actually visit your web site!



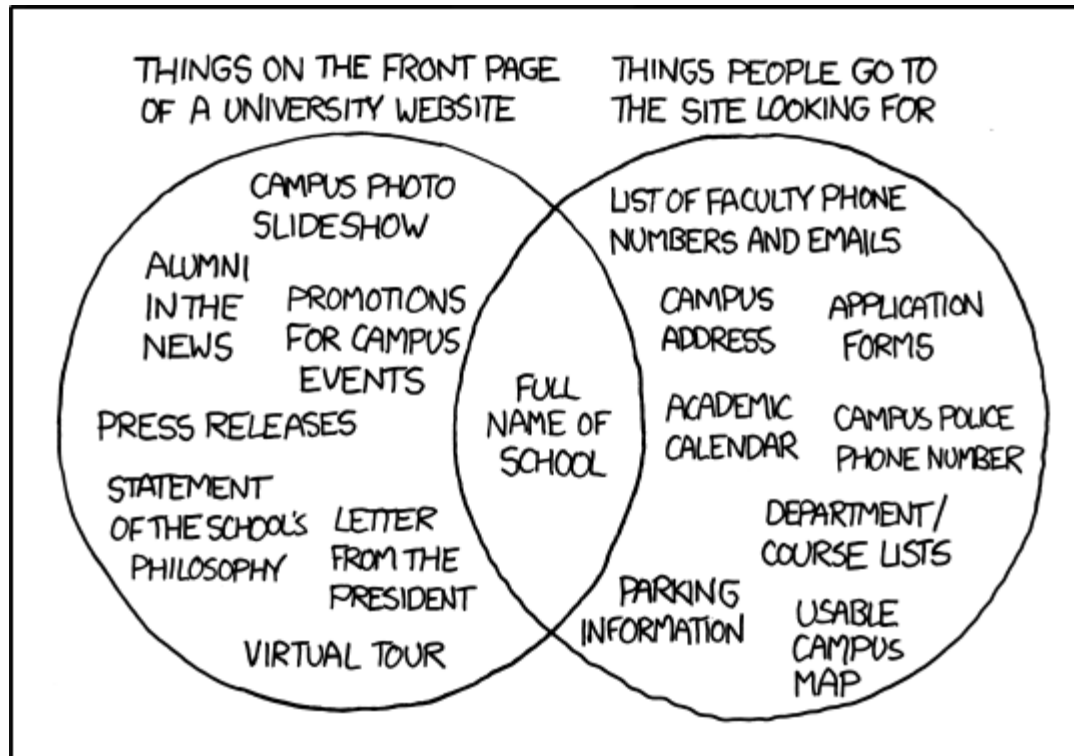
Know Your Users

Validate your understanding of who users are by reviewing:

- Member databases
- Registrations
- Google analytics data
- Market research
- Other relevant data



User Objectives



What are your objectives?

What do you want users to do?

ORGANIZATION-SUPPORTING



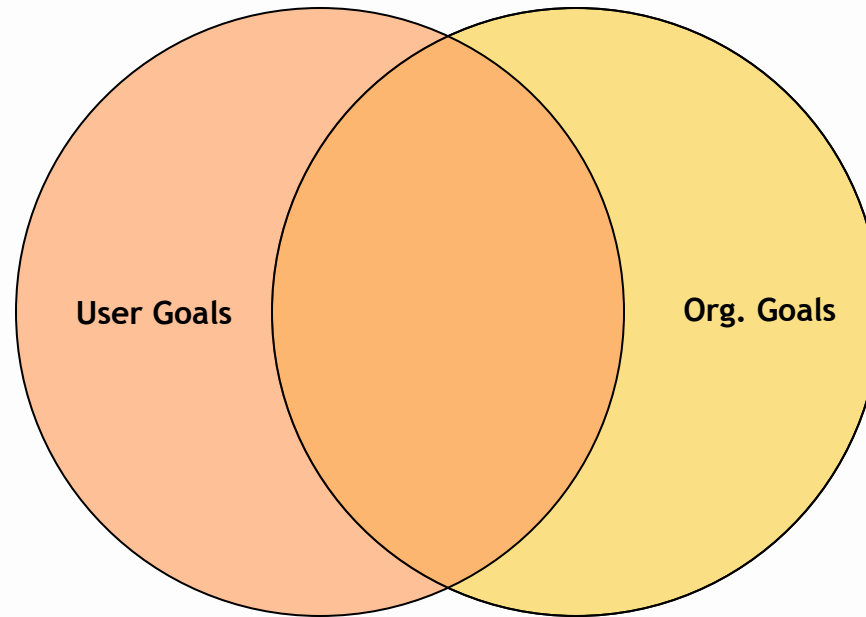
If you don't know where you're going, any road will get you there.

- Lewis Carroll

Know Where You're Going

- Determine goals
 - Broad organizational goals
 - Communication goals
 - Website goals
- Prioritize goals





The intersection of users' goals & organization's goals.

SWEET SPOT: DEFINED



YOUR CONTENT

Content Inventory: What Do You Have?

- Catalog your content assets
 - What do you have?
 - Where is it?
 - What do you know about it?

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	Link ID	Link Title	Document Type	Keywords	Description	Content Owner	Date Created	Date Updated
2	1.0.0	Widgets	HTML	widgets, history, widget	Widgets & Co. brings you the	H. Tuckerman	2/12/2009	11/15/2010
3	1.1.0	Transportation-related Widgets	HTML	widgets, history, transit, tra	Widgets & Co. brings you the	H. Tuckerman	2/12/2009	
4	1.1.1	Automotive Widgets	HTML	widgets, history, transit, tra	Widgets & Co. brings you the	H. Tuckerman	3/27/2009	
5	1.1.2	Airplane Widgets	HTML	widgets, history, transit, tra	Widgets & Co. brings you the	H. Tuckerman	3/27/2009	
6	1.1.3	Bicycle Widgets	PDF	widgets, history, transit, tra	Widgets & Co. brings you the	H. Tuckerman	3/27/2009	6/2/2010
7	1.2.0	Time Keeping Widgets	HTML	widgets, history, time, wat	Widgets & Co. brings you the	A. Powers	8/9/2010	6/2/2010
8	1.3.0	Nutrition Widgets	HTML	widgets, history, nutrition,	Widgets & Co. brings you the	A. Powers	8/9/2010	
9	1.3.1	Food Processing Widgets	PDF	widgets, history, nutrition,	Widgets & Co. brings you the	A. Powers	8/9/2010	
10	2.0.0	Gizmos	HTML	gizmos, history, widgets	Widgets & Co. brings you the	H. Tuckerman	2/12/2009	5/9/2010
11	2.1.0	Matte Gizmos	HTML	gizmos, history, matte	Widgets & Co. brings you the	J. Rickards	3/27/2009	5/9/2010
12	2.2.0	Shiny Gizmos	HTML	gizmos, history, shiny	Widgets & Co. brings you the	J. Rickards	3/27/2009	5/9/2010
13	2.2.1	Glitter and Your Gizmos	PDF	gizmos, history, shiny, glitt	Widgets & Co. brings you the	J. Rickards	10/14/2010	
14	2.2.2	The Use of Lamé in Modern Gizmos	PDF	gizmos, history, shiny, lame	Widgets & Co. brings you the	J. Rickards	10/14/2010	
15	2.3.0	Why Use A Gizmo?	HTML	gizmos, uses, history	Widgets & Co. brings you the	H. Tuckerman	2/12/2009	
16	3.0.0	About Widgets & Co.	HTML	widgets, gizmos, geegaws,	Widgets & Co. brings you the	H. Tuckerman	2/12/2009	
17								

Content Audit: What Do You Have, Part 2

- Evaluate your content assets
 - What audiences does it serve?
 - What objectives does it support?
 - More information to capture:
 - ROT (is it Redundant, Outdated, Trivial?)
 - Page visits over time
 - Notes & impressions

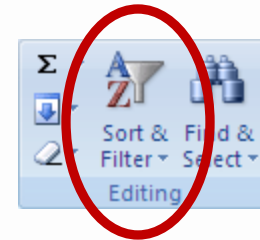
1	Link ID	1 ^o Audience	2 ^o Audience	1 ^o Objective	2 ^o Objective	ROT	Notes
2	1.0.0	1	2	U1			
3	1.1.0	1	2	U2	O2		
4	1.1.1	2	1	U3	O2		Uses old CSS
5	1.1.2	3	2	O4		O	No longer carry these
6	1.1.3	2		U3			
7	1.2.0	4		O2	U5		
8	1.3.0	5		O5			Needs reworking
9	1.3.1	5	1	O5			Needs reworking
10	2.0.0	1	2	O1			
11	2.1.0			O1		T	Check web stats; is this used?
12	2.2.0			O1		T	Check web stats; is this used?
13	2.2.1			O1		O	
14	2.2.2			O1		R	
15	2.3.0	1	2	U1	O1		
16	3.0.0	1	5	U1	O1		

Determine what you *don't* have, but need.

GAP ANALYSIS: DEFINED

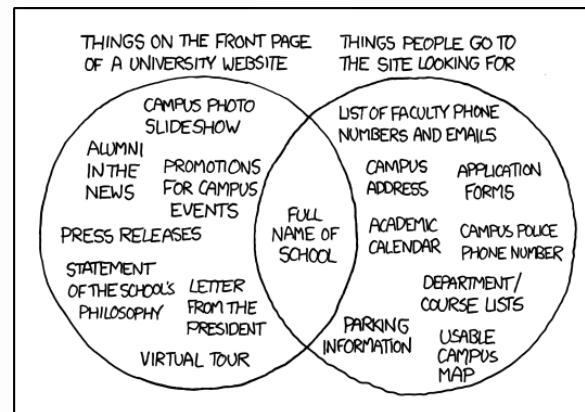
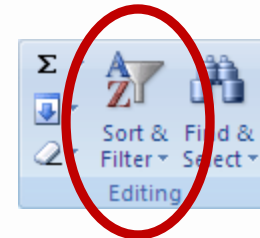
Gap Analysis: Getting to Actionable

- Sort the spreadsheet of doom
- Discover content gaps
 - Unmet & underserved user objectives
 - Unmet & underserved organization objectives



Content Audit Becomes Actionable

- Sort the spreadsheet of doom
- Discover content gaps
 - Unmet & underserved user objectives
 - Unmet & underserved organization objectives



PRIORITIZE GAP FIXES



Content Creation

- Choose messages
 - At least one message per prioritized goal
- Prioritize messages
- Select distribution channels
 - Web site, email, print, social sites, etc.
 - Different channels support different objectives & messages
- Ask “Why?”



ARCHIVE RUTHLESSLY

Content Governance: Who's On First?

- Editorial
- Membership
- Communications
- Marketing
- IT
- Subject Matter Experts (SMEs)

Keep it Going: Content Governance

- Relevant
 - What objective does it meet?
- On-message
 - What message does it advance?
- Timely
 - Editorial calendar
 - Scheduled “freshness” reviews
 - Archiving policy
- Revisit

Keep it Going: Tools

ektron



Joomla!™

...because open source matters



- Determine & prioritize user goals
- Determine & prioritize organization goals
- Catalog & evaluate existing content
- Identify content gaps
- Archive ruthlessly
- Create & disseminate needed content
- Keep it going

PROCESS: RECAP

Questions



Things We've Not Covered

- Taxonomy
- Curation
- Planning meta data
- Defining content types
- Reuse/repurposing content
- Who will do this work? Who should?
- How does this fit in with Information Architecture?
- Which channels support what kind of messages?
- Are you saying we *shouldn't* be on Facebook?
- How does user-generated content fit?
- How can we develop a consistent voice & tone?
- What if we're starting from scratch?
- How can we map audiences, goals, & messages to content?
- How do we build a content inventory for our site?
- What software do we need?
- Isn't this tactical, not strategic?
- How is content strategy like a rutabaga?



THANK YOU.

TERPSYS Overview

We Delight Our Customers!

We Help Organizations Use Technology to Achieve their Mission.

- Over 150 Web Sites Delivered for Associations, Non Profits, Government and Non-Governmental Organizations
- We Offer Networked and Web Based Solutions Including:
 - Custom Website Development
 - Interactive & Visual Design
 - CMS/AMS Integration
 - SEO / Web Analytics Consulting
 - SharePoint Services
 - Application Development
 - Visual Design
 - User-Centered Design
- Founded in 2000

References & Resources

- Kristina Halvorson, *Content Strategy for the Web*, New Riders Press, 2009.
- Rachel Lovinger, “Content Strategy: The Philosophy of Data,” boxesandarrows.com/view/content-strategy-the, 2007.
- Richard Sheffield, *The Web Content Strategist’s Bible*, CreateSpace, 2009.
- Suze Ward, “User-centered Analysis & Design” webinar, www.terpsys.com/webinars/archives.html, 2010.
- Card Catalog photo, Megan Amaral, flickr.com/people/mamsy, Creative Commons license: Attribution. 
- Cheshire Cat engraving, by John Tenniel. Public domain.
- Hoover Dam Bypass Bridge photo, Alan Stark, flickr.com/people/squeaks2569, Creative Commons license: Attribution Share-alike. 
- Map of Winnipeg detail, Manitoba Historical Maps, flickr.com/people/manitobamaps, Creative Commons license: Attribution. 
- Mis en Place photo, FotoosVanRobin, flickr.com/people/FotoosVanRobin, Creative Commons license: Attribution Share-alike. 
- Shakespeare & Co. photo, Alexandre Duret-Lutz, flickr.com/people/gadl, Creative Commons license: Attribution Share-alike. 
- Quotation Slips photo, Owen Massey McKnight, flickr.com/people/addedentry, Creative Commons license: Attribution Share-alike. 
- Rutabaga photo, wiktoticslan, flickr.com/people/51004712@N08, Creative Commons license: Attribution Share-alike. 
- University Website, from xkcd.com, which graciously allows use of images in presentations.