



## Content Strategy Masterclass

*7 steps to a great content strategy*

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### Agenda

- ▶ 1. Business case
- 2. Research
- 3. Strategy statements
- 4. Audit your content
- 5. Identify required content
- 6. Develop governance
- 7. Next steps...



## What is content strategy?

Content Strategy - what content to produce and processes to support production

Editorial planning and Content Calendars – planning day-to-day development (using themes, formats and templates)

Content Marketing – promoting through Web, Mobile and Social Media...

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## Business case

- Is your content 100% perfect?
- If not welcome to the real world!



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## Business case



Challenges What gets in the way?	Costs Negative consequences

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## Three challenges

### Meat grinder

- Just churning out content
- More content = not always the solution
- Too much and too little = both problems!
- Better = is always a 'win'



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## Three challenges

### Fire-fighting

- Short-term pressures vs. 'bigger picture'
- Symptom-treating = temporary
- Diagnose and treat the 'disease'



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## Three challenges

### Too many cooks

- Everyone has an opinion
- Sign-off = almost impossible
- Effective collaboration with other stakeholders
- Clear, agreed process



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## Costs

- Stress
- User experience
  - Quality, availability, targeting, structure...
- Financial
  - Inefficiencies, wasted effort...
- Legal
  - Accuracy, usage rights...

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## Our role



Image: JD Hancock

- Challenges
  - Meat grinder
  - Fire fighting
  - Too many cooks...
- Costs
  - Stress
  - User experience
  - Financial
  - Legal...

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## Our role



Content strategy is not new

- We = digital editor-in-chief

Editor's responsibilities	Digital extra challenges

## Our role

Newspaper editor...

- Topic
- Brand
- Quality
- Accuracy
- Legal
- Consistency
- Efficiency
- Delivery
- Sales

Digital just makes this harder!

- Expectations
- Disintermediation
- Competition
- Channels
- Lifetime of content

## Content strategy can define...

### Content

- What do we need?
- Where, when and why?

### Governance

- How will content be produced and updated?
- Responsibilities, processes, support...

### Targets and measurement

- How will success be measured?
- Frequency, measures...

## Relationships

### We need to define our relationships with...

- SEO
- IA
- Copywriting
- User experience
- Branding
- Marketing...

## Relationships

Content strategy = high-level responsibility

- It doesn't have to deliver all content!

Exact role depends on organisation

- Relationships with other stakeholders
- Make today's ideas work for you!

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## Why research your audiences?

- It makes your life much, much easier!
- You don't know what you don't know  
...until you do the research
- Refresh your research (when you feel appropriate)

## Audiences

Segment = people with similar interests, needs and behaviours

Novice vs. expert...

- Domain
- Device
- Design

Lower-literacy and elderly...

- Slower pace
- 'Plowing' (reading every word)

## Goals

Nature and priority of...

- Audience segments'
- Organisation's

Common types

- Confirmation
- Research

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## Context of use

Environment

- Space, time, temperature, noise

Organisation

- Management pressures, work processes

Technical

- Connection speed, system configuration, device

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## Personae

One fictional customer per segment

- Empathy and internal communication
- Based on research
- Domain-specific psychology = focus
- Needs, wants, fears...
- Goals, topics, formats...
  - Percentages = possible!

Understandings will drive content development

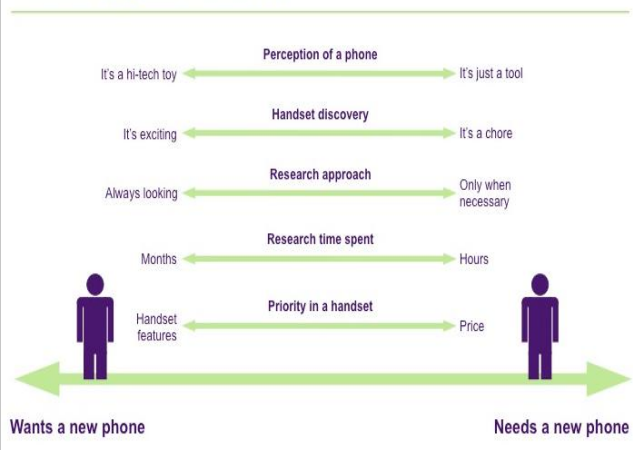
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## Personae

Common scales  
between segments

### Handset upgrade mindsets




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<http://asinthecity.com/2011/05/13/explaining-personas-used-in-ux-design-%E2%80%93-part-2/>

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### Toby – “Fashion Phone Upgrader”



*“One year in phones is a long time”*

Toby loves technology and has to be seen with the newest and coolest digital gadgets. His phone is not just about making calls; he loves using its wealth of features for everything he can: surfing the web, writing emails, social networking and using it as a personal organiser.

Because he gets bored quickly with his phones, Toby is always looking for the latest toy and pays attention to new releases. He frequently upgrades part way through his contract and is willing to pay the upgrade fee to get the best phone. To him, a contract is a mere inconvenience, but something he endures to get a bigger discount off his new phone

**Behaviours**

- Handset change reason: Want (green dot), Need (grey dot)
- Phone perception: High tech toy (green dot), It's a tool (grey dot)
- Handset discovery: Exciting (green dot), Chore (grey dot)
- Interest in new phone: Always looking (green dot), Only when needed (grey dot)


**Key Characteristics**

- Age 20-35
- Is tech savvy
- Loves showing off his new phone to friends
- Would find a way to get out of his current contract for the latest phone
- Keeps up to date with the latest phones online
- Gets bored with phones quickly

**Goals**

- Have the latest, coolest phone
- Be up to date with the newest phones on the market
- Use as many features on his phone as possible

### Shen – “The follower”



*“I never get ‘the’ phone, I’m always one or two steps behind”*

Shen uses his phone primarily to keep in contact with his family and enjoys using it to take photos of his children. Although he would like to own a smart phone so he can use it for emails and the internet, they are currently too expensive for his budget.

**Key Characteristics**

- Age 35-45
- Shops around before renewing his phone
- Is price conscious, thinks twice before buying
- Needs a good reason to spend money on a phone e.g. more megapixels on a camera
- Does not want to be embarrassed to pull out his phone in public

**Behaviours**


- Handset change reason: Want (grey dot), Need (green dot)
- Phone perception: High tech toy (grey dot), It's a tool (green dot)
- Handset discovery: Exciting (grey dot), Chore (green dot)
- Interest in new phone: Always looking (grey dot), Only when needed (green dot)

**Goals**

- Get the best deal that he can, taking into account the rate plan and the handset

CIM <http://asintechcity.com/2011/05/13/explaining-personas-used-in-ux-design-%E2%80%93-part-2/>

## Methods



Research method	Positive experiences	Negative experiences

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## Sources

### External data

- General research
- Search behaviours
- Competitor and influencer analysis

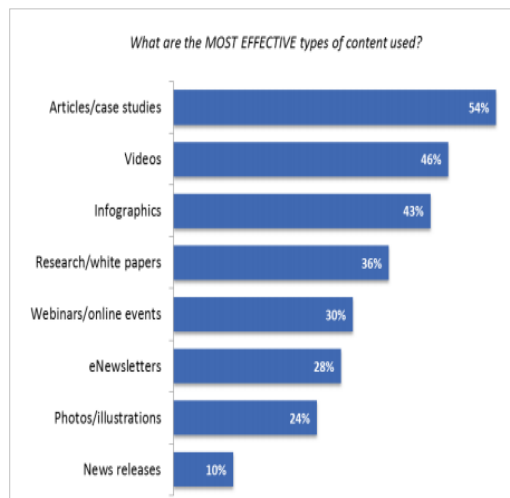
### Internal data

- Sales team
- Customer services
- Analytics

### Generate your own data

- Online tools
- Focus groups
- Interviews
- Card sorting
- Usability testing
- A/B testing

## Technical product sales



<http://ascend2.com/home/wp-content/uploads/Content-Marketing-Trends-Summary-Report-150310.pdf>

## B2B sales

Eccolo Media

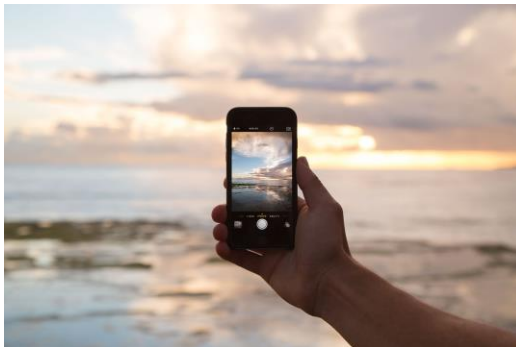
<http://eccolomedia.com/what-content-has-the-most-clout/>

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## Video

64% of all internet data traffic in 2014  
80% in 2019 (predicted)



[http://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/solutions/collateral/service-provider/ip-ngn-ip-next-generation-network/white\\_paper\\_c11-481360.html](http://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/solutions/collateral/service-provider/ip-ngn-ip-next-generation-network/white_paper_c11-481360.html)  
<http://www.ericsson.com/res/docs/2015/ericsson-mobility-report-june-2015.pdf>

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## Positive and emotional

Strongest predictor of sharing = positive emotional content

"Contagious: Why Things Catch On" (Berger, J.)



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## Apps

Users' time on their phone

- 86% = apps
- 14% = mobile sites

App usage

- 20% of apps = only used 1 time
- 40% of app launches = micro-sessions (15 seconds or less)

Repeat-tasks = popular

- 1-click order, shopping lists, previous orders...



<http://flurrymobile.tumblr.com/post/115191864580/apps-solidify-leadership-six-years-into-the-mobile>  
<http://info.localytics.com/blog/app-retention-improves>  
<http://dl.acm.org/citation.cfm?doid=2628363.2628367>

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## Search behaviours



[adwords.google.com/KeywordPlanner](https://adwords.google.com/KeywordPlanner)  
[google.com/trends/](https://google.com/trends/)  
[answerthepublic.com/](https://answerthepublic.com/)

Popular phrases	Seasonal patterns	Long-term trends

## Influencers



Jealousy can be healthy!

Your audience - who else might they be listening to?



## Influencer analysis

- Competitors
  - Direct
  - Intermediaries
  - Alternatives
- Trade associations
- Reviews
- News
  - Mainstream
  - Industry
- Social media
- Blogs
- Existing customers

## Social behaviours



buzzsumo.com  
followerwonk.com  
hashtagify.me

Most followed	Hashtags	Topics and formats

## Content strategy can define...

- Listening – who to and how often?
- Measuring – what counts as significant?
- Reacting – when and how do we react?
  - Stealing ideas
  - Rebuttals
  - Legal

## Sources

### External data

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- Search behaviours
- Competitor and influencer analysis

### Internal data

- Sales team
- Customer services
- Analytics

### Generate your own data

- Online tools
- Focus groups
- Interviews
- Card sorting
- Usability testing
- A/B testing

## Internal = free insights!



Who would you contact and what would you ask?

Sales	Customer Services	Analytics

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## Generated data

### Top tips...

- You are not the audience
- Recruitment = vital
- Self-reporting = unreliable
- Observe directly = best
- Double-check your understanding

### Methods

- Online surveys
- Focus groups
- Interviews
- Card sorting
- Usability testing
- A/B testing

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## Strategy statements

Long-term goals for content

- Tactics = flexible
- Strategy = more stable

Aim to be...

- Clear and concise
- Flexible
- Inspiring and memorable

## Strategy statements

- Per persona
- Global statement

Useful formula...

- This <audience>
- ...want <type of content>
- ...to help them achieve <audience goal>
- ...and this helps us to achieve <business goal>

## Inc.com's strategy statement

"Inc.com is the place where entrepreneurs can find resources and inspiration to help run and grow your business."

Audience	Type of content	Audience goal	Business goal
Entrepreneurs	Resources and inspiration	Run and grow business	Subscriptions, events, advertising...

## Your (draft) strategy statements



Audience	Type of content	Audience goal	Business goal

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## Why do an audit?

We need to know our content's

- Amount
- Quality
- Interconnections
- Ownership
- Publish and update schedule

## Types of audit

- Inventory
- Best practice
- Strategy
- Governance

## Scope of audit

- Level of detail in evaluation = important!
- 100% coverage may not be possible...

### Sample audit

- Keep going until...
- Patterns emerge
- You = confident in findings

### Rolling audit

- Site-by-site
- Section-by-section

<http://contentstrategy.com/book.html>

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## Scope of audit

Choose method that's appropriate based on...

- Business value
- Traffic
- Politics
- Complexity
- Update rate

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## Types of audit

- Inventory
- Best practice
- Strategy
- Governance

## Inventory audit

Complete list of all content

- Automation = possible
- Google Analytics
- Your CMS (Content Management System)

## Best practices audit

Rate content vs. criteria

Essentials:

- Criteria: clear and comprehensive
- Ratings: examples for each criteria
- Train: all your assessors
- Monitor: to ensure consistency



Run a test mini-audit to evaluate everything!

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## Best practices audit

Collaborate with a domain expert!

- Criteria
- Example ratings and training
- Monitoring

Example issues...

- Search
- Copywriting
- Mobile
- Email
- Social
- Inter-connections

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## Strategy audit

Rate vs. strategy

Consider

- Criteria
- Example ratings and training
- Monitoring

Process audit - do we have clearly defined ...



Stage	Stakeholders (who does what?)	Process (when and how they do it)	Templates (forms to fill)
Request (BAU vs Urgent)			
Brief			
Creation			
Review/Edit			
Sign-off			
Publish			

## Support for content creators

Style guides, templates, training and ongoing support for...

- Consistency
- Quality
- Speed of creation
- Co-authoring

## Do we offer...



Issue	Style guide	Templates	Training	Ongoing support
Copywriting				
Tone of Voice				
Search				
Social				
Email				

## Measuring performance – do we have...



Issue	
Success metrics	
Frequency <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Measurement</li><li>• Report</li></ul>	
Alerts <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Positive</li><li>• Negative</li></ul>	
Responsibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collect</li><li>• Analyse</li><li>• Distribute</li></ul>	

## Reporting an audit's results

Provide summary information

- Detail = available on request
- Visual representations
- Provide examples and stories

Costs and benefits

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## Identify required content

Prioritise the content you need to develop...

- Topic
- Audience
- Goals
- Channel
- Format
- Owner
- Cost
- Benefit
- Deadline
- Priority

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1											
2	Content planning matrix										
3											
4											
5											
6	ID	Topic	Audience	Goals	Channel	Format	Owner	Cost	Benefit	Deadline	Priority
7											
8											
9											
10											
11											
12											
13											
14											
15											
16											
17											
..											

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## Process design – clearly defined...

- Stages
- Start
- Check-points
- End
- Sign-off
- Stakeholders
- Responsibilities
- Notifications
- Timeframes

Simplify, simplify, simplify!

## Sign-off

Clear, agreed and enforced...

- Responsibilities
  - Creator = message, positioning and tone of voice
  - Product owner = fact-checker
- Timelines
  - Specific time and date

Reiterate within your communication!

## Documentation

- Ownership = clear
  - Updates, questions...
- Launch and evolve
  - Don't wait for it to be perfect!
- Online
- Concise
- Examples
- Exploit existing conventions, if you can
  - [www.bbc.co.uk/academy/journalism/news-style-guide](http://www.bbc.co.uk/academy/journalism/news-style-guide)



## Content requests

Stakeholders should justify content requests

<http://contentmarketinginstitute.com/2013/04/questions-help-prioritize-content-creation-template/>



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## Content briefs

- Name and PO
- Sign-off
- Value proposition
- Objectives
- Audience
- Topic
- Format
- Sources/experts
- Tone of voice
- Calls to action
- Keywords
- Connections/  
related content
- Deadline



<http://www.brainrider.com/b2b-content-marketing/b2b-content-brief-template/>

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## Templates

### Mobile Usability and UX Training

#### Overview

Phones, tablets and wearables are everywhere. Our training course will present best practice guidelines and real world examples to help you design a great mobile experience. We also have lots of interactive exercises to make sure that you're getting the most out of the day!

Leap ahead of your competition by taking the next step towards mobile greatness.

#### Programme

Our one-day course will give you existing mobile presence.

#### About the course

Programme  
Who should attend?  
How will I benefit?  
What will I learn?  
Trainer  
Enquiries

### Online Copywriting Training

#### Overview

Boost your online copy's effectiveness (across all types of device) with our practical and hands-on training course.

Including lots of real-world examples and exercises, the course will help you to write online copy to communicate, persuade and sell more effectively. These best practices have been shown to boost web pages' performance by up to 100%.

No laptop is required. For convenience, all exercises will be paper-based.

#### Programme

Our 1-day course will enable you to start making immediate, practical improvements to your online copy (across all devices). The value-packed day will help you to understand and apply all the main principles of online copywriting best practice.

#### About the course

Programme  
Who should attend?  
How will I benefit?  
What will I learn?  
Trainer  
Enquiries

#### About the course

Programme

Who should attend?

How will I benefit?

What will I learn?

Trainer

Enquiries

## Templates

Include guidelines and examples...

Section	Purpose	Rules
Overview	Main aims and benefits of course	4 lines of text in a single paragraph. No bullets or bold.
Programme	Scope of subjects to be covered and extent of exercises/interaction	8-12 lines of text. No bullets or bold.
Who should attend?	Who would be interested in your course? Required experience/qualifications?	6 - 10 lines of text. No bullets or bold.
How will I benefit?	Things the participants will know or be able to do by the end of the day	6-12 bullets. Each bullet should start with bold 'signpost' (no more than 3 words) – additional detail appears on new line.

## Opportunities for templates



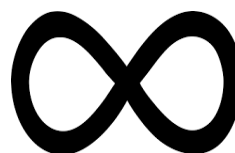
### Page type

Page type

## Managing governance

### Responsibilities and process:

- Update, archive, delete
    - Triggers, regular schedule...
  - Audience comment/questions
    - Monitoring and response policies
  - Notifications when content owners exit the organisation
- Manage and update all your policies!



## International issues

- Localise, do not translate
- HQ creates 'Master Content' and defines intended:
  - Goal
  - Tone



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## Next steps...

- Give yourself something to shout about!
- Mini-projects to develop success stories
  - Enthusiastic stakeholder
  - Low profile content
  - High potential
- Examples: FAQs, Customer services...



## Stakeholder engagement

### Education / Business case

- User experience
- Brand
- Costs
- Efficiency
- Sales
- Profits

“I will make you look like a rock star.”

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## Learning objectives

- Explain the business case for content strategy
- Audit and analyse your existing content
- Identify your content needs
- Develop governance policies for your content strategy
- Identify the 'next steps' for your content strategy efforts



If you have any questions arising from  
this course, please email me at this  
address:

[askthecoursedirector@cim.co.uk](mailto:askthecoursedirector@cim.co.uk)

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