CHAPTER 13

DESIGN YOUR CONTENT

Organizations and practitioners tend to jump to designing content before defining a strategy that clarifies what content users need and how it should support business goals. What often happens then falls somewhere along the continuum from a disorganized mess of lots of content *no one cares about* to a very organized slew of lots of content *no one cares about*.

That's not going to happen here. Because you're doing content strategy first! In this chapter, I discuss how your content strategy guides how you determine what content to create or curate and how to organize and present it so users can easily find and use it.

WHAT I MEAN BY CONTENT DESIGN

The names, deliverables, and artifacts for this phase in digital projects vary. I'm sure you've heard terms such as information architecture (IA), sitemap, wireframe, template, content type, content model, structured content, page outline, component library, and so on. I like to wrap all these items and more into the umbrella term *content design*.

I like this term for a couple of reasons. First, it helps bridge the disciplines that contribute to awesome digital experiences. Content design. Visual design. Interaction design. Interface design. They all play a part in making useful, usable experiences.

Second, the word *design* really captures what you're doing at this phase. Synonyms of design include plan, blueprint, sketch, outline, scheme, and model. All these synonyms mean what something will contain or how it will look or function.

Another definition of design is something's purpose or intent. And content strategy is all about providing purposeful content for users with the intention of achieving defined goals and objectives.

So how do you design—or provide the blueprints—for content? I break down this work and the resulting artifacts into four main categories: prioritization, organization, presentation, and specifications. Separating the categories is hard because they work together as a cohesive system and sometimes overlap. But I've attempted to define each category here as they apply to websites.

Prioritization is how you determine your site's content and its relative importance to your users and your business. Common artifacts include topic maps and prioritization matrices.

Organization refers to the framework for grouping, labeling, and relating content so that users can easily find what matters to them. Common artifacts used to document organization are sitemaps and taxonomies.

Presentation refers to the ways in which pieces of content, such as a page headline, product overview, body text, or related resource, are assembled to form what a user sees on a page. There are usually several repeatable views (like a landing page, product page, or blog post) and perhaps some unique ones on every website. Common artifacts to document views include content models and wireframes.

Specifications take views to the next level by providing the content requirements for each content piece that makes up a view. Sometimes you can incorporate specifications into content models and wireframes. Other times, a companion artifact might be necessary. Examples include page tables and content matrices.

The rest of this chapter walks through examples in each category and provides some templates and tools you can use. Keep in mind that not every tool or template will be right for your project. Use them as they are or for inspiration to create your own... whatever makes sense for your situation. And finally, this book certainly doesn't include every awesome tool or template out there. A Google search will turn up many, many more.

PRIORITIZATION

I once had a conversation with an information architect who told me, "I can organize the @#*% out of whatever content my clients give me. And most of the time, they ask me to organize stuff I bet no one cares about." That's the sad but true reality for lots of websites.

I call it the Marjory the Trash Heap phenomenon. Remember *Fraggle Rock*? Marjory was like an oracle to the Fraggles. She is made up of all the garbage from all time, and from that garbage came history and wisdom. A lot of organizations dump all the content they have ever created on their website and dare people to find what they need. There's probably some great stuff in there, and it certainly provides a comprehensive corporate archive.

The problem is that only a percentage—usually a small percentage—is really important to website visitors. Once you whittle down to what's really necessary, your content becomes easier to manage, find, and use.

Prioritization helps you cull that content down to the truly useful and relevant bits and pieces. So how do you figure out what content is most important?

You probably already have a pretty good idea from your discovery work, and your content strategy should provide some guidance. In the end, you want to plot your content on two axes: business impact and user need.

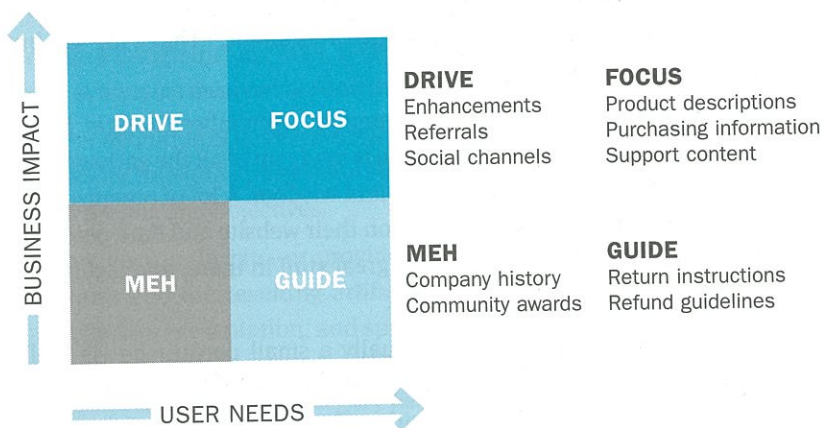
A method I like is Top Tasks Analysis developed by Gerry McGovern, president of Customer Carewords. (Visit www.customercarewords.com for all the details.) With this method, you use input from actual users to brainstorm and narrow what people come to your site to do.

If you're not able to go to the source (your users), you can probably make some pretty good assumptions about why they come to your site. Whatever way you arrive at users' top tasks, let that inform your top content and calls to action.

TIP
Don't get too hung up on the word tasks. Tasks can be transactional, like "Look up my account balance," or more informational, like "Find out the symptoms of Lyme disease."

With that information, you can layer in business goals to help you determine

- What content you should **focus** on because it's important to your business and your users
- What content you need to **guide** users to because it's important to them, but not all that beneficial to your business
- What content you want to **drive** people to because it wasn't what they were looking for, but it's beneficial for you
- What content you'll probably include (I call it "meh" content) because you feel like you have to, but it's really not beneficial or important to anyone



In this example image, the content most important to the business and the users is information about products, how to purchase products, and support content for their products. The company also wants to drive people toward content about product enhancements, making referrals, and social media channels. Users need information about returning products and getting refunds, which isn't great for the business but still necessary. And the company history and awards they've gotten from the community aren't really important to anyone and shouldn't be a priority.

You can take your topic lists a step further by combining them with user scenarios, calls to action, related content, and so on. **Content Strategy Tool 13.1** is a series of downloadable and editable templates you can use to document content priorities. Here's an example:

USER SCENARIO	SEGMENT	FOCUS	DRIVE	GUIDE
I'm researching products from various companies to find out which will be the best fit for my situation.	Prospect	▪ Product description and specifications ▪ Product reviews ▪ Pricing ▪ Comparisons to competitors' products	▪ Social media channels ▪ Product awards	
I've decided to buy a product from you and need to find out how to make a purchase.	Prospect	▪ Ordering instructions ▪ Shipping information and costs	▪ Add-ons and enhancements ▪ Referral program ▪ Social channels	▪ Returns and refunds information ▪ Warranty details
I'm thinking about upgrading my product and want to know how the newer model is different from what I have now.	Loyal Customer	▪ Product description and specifications ▪ Product reviews ▪ Pricing ▪ Side-by-side comparison		
I just got my product in the mail. It doesn't fit in my home, so I need to return it.	New Customer		▪ Troubleshooting and workarounds ▪ Information on exchanges	▪ Returns and refunds information

CONTENT STRATEGY TOOL 13.1

CONTENT PRIORITIZATION TEMPLATES

Download the templates to think through and communicate content priorities to your team.

TIPS

- You can use one template, multiple templates, or a combination of templates to document your content priorities and communicate them to your teams.
- Don't worry yet about how to organize the prioritized content. First, you need to know what content you need.

WHERE TO GET IT

Download the templates at www.peachpit.com/register.

WHERE IT CAME FROM

Brain Traffic (www.braintraffic.com)

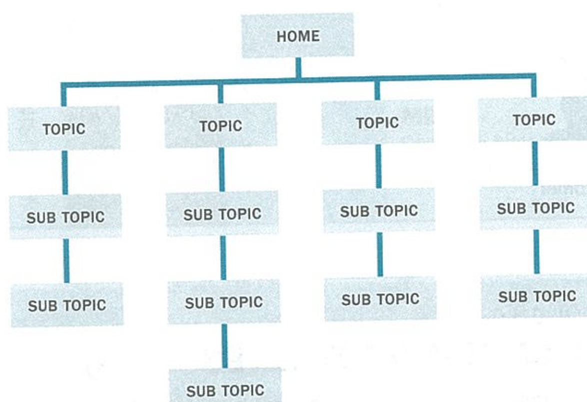
ORGANIZATION

You've figured out what content needs to be on your site to achieve your business goals and meet user needs. Now, you'll organize it so that users can easily find it.

Like everything discussed in this book, there's more to organization than the opinions, experiences, and tools I provide. That said, two fairly standard mechanisms for documenting how you'll group, label, and relate your content are sitemaps and taxonomies.

SITEMAPS

Sitemap diagrams are like organizational charts for your content. They are especially helpful for websites with traditional navigation, such as primary tabs that drill down into section landing pages that drill down into several sub-page levels.



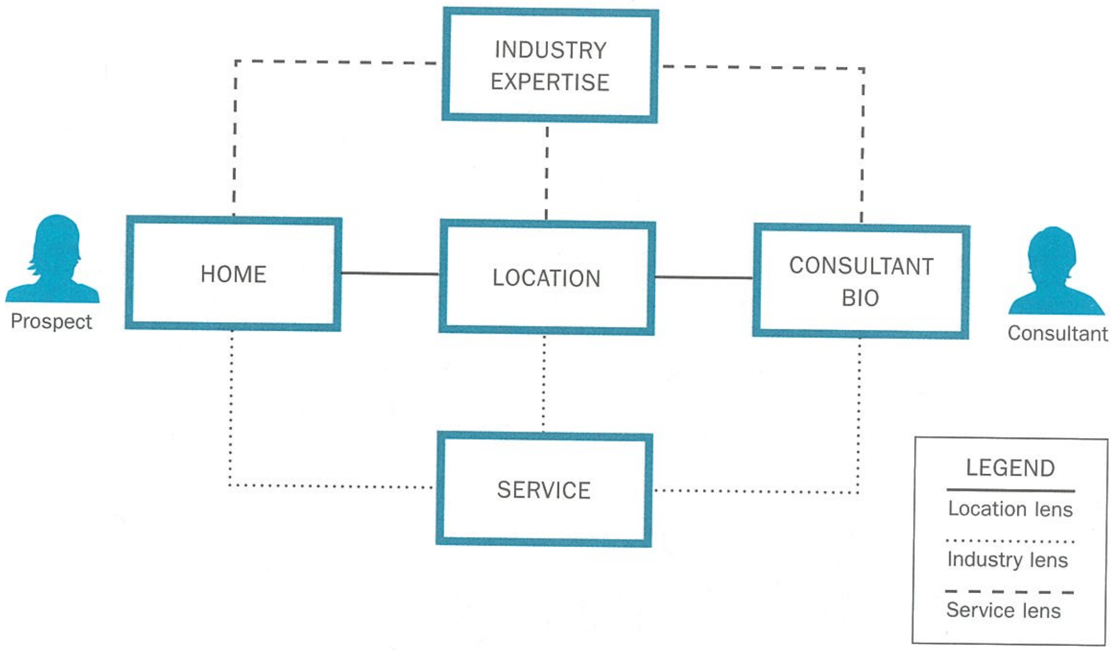
A sitemap visually demonstrates how the site is organized. You can organize your content in lots of different ways. It all depends on—you guessed it—business goals and user needs. Let's walk through a couple of examples.

In one scenario, I knew that users of the website came looking for my client's services through one of three lenses:

- **Location**—Does the company have an office in my area?
- **Industry**—Does the company have experience in my industry?
- **Service**—Does the company offer the service I need?

The website's purpose was to help visitors decide if the company fits their needs based on those three things. If the visitor liked the fit, we wanted to put them in touch with the most appropriate person who could help them.

So in addition to the sitemap (which looked much like every sitemap you've probably ever seen), we presented a representation of the pathways the user might take to get to the appropriate contact.

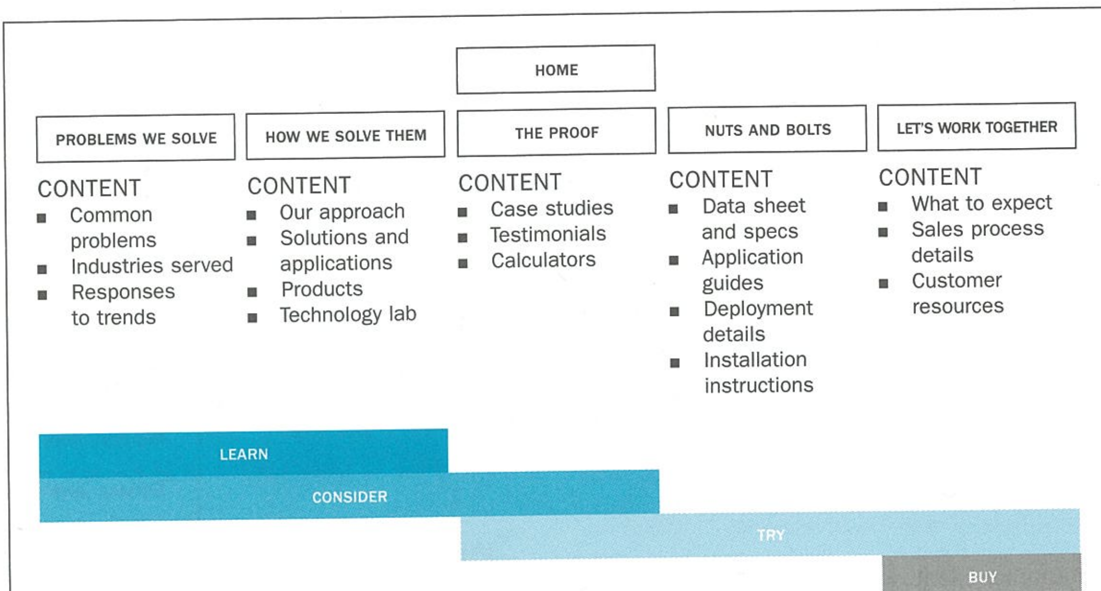


For another client, we organized the content in a way that matched the typical sales cycle. The premise was that no matter where the users were in the sales cycle, they could easily find information they needed and take the next step in the path.

Our high-level sitemap showed the main site navigation with the content topics it included. It also depicted how the navigation aligned with the sales cycle or purchase path.

HINT

Even if you're presenting a high-level sitemap like the one shown, you still have to document all the site's content somehow. You can do that with a detailed sitemap, or you could create a spreadsheet similar to the one shown in the section "Content Snapshots" in Chapter 8.



Note: The labels and content in this example are intended to represent the intent. They are not the actual labels used on the site.

TAXONOMY

Taxonomy means ways of classifying content. I'm going to focus on how you might use taxonomy to help people discover relevant content.

So Brain Traffic has a blog. When people visit our blog (blog.braintraffic.com), they see a list of categories on the left-hand side. That's taxonomy. It's how we've classified content so that people can click into topics they're interested in. Further down in that column is a list of authors. That's also taxonomy. It's a way for people to see blog posts by a specific person.

That kind of taxonomy is one in which a user consciously chooses to get content that's classified by whatever label they clicked. Taxonomy can also work "behind the scenes" so you can *automagically* (I like to think I coined that term, but I'm pretty sure I didn't) pull together related content.

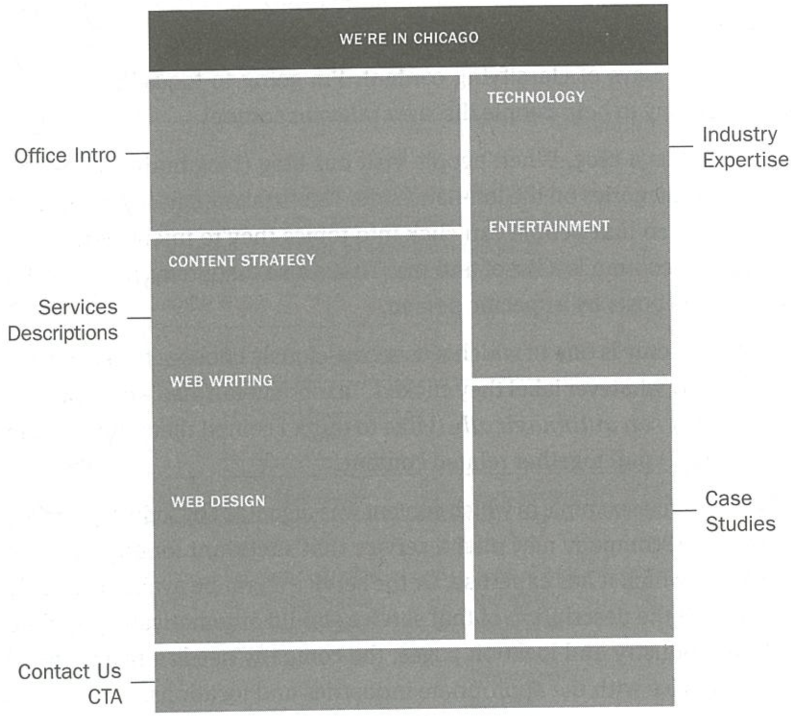
Let's look at the earlier example in which content was organized by industry, service, and location. That company may offer a service that's relevant for only some of the industries in which it has expertise. Or the service might be available in only some locations. If the description of that service should automatically populate to the relevant industry and location pages, the company needs a taxonomy to associate the service with the appropriate industries and locations.

Taxonomies can sometimes be set up directly in the CMS. But often you'll need to put together a table or spreadsheet to define the taxonomies and the terms that they comprise. **Table 13.1** is an example of how that might look.

TABLE 13.1 **EXAMPLE TAXONOMY AND TERMS**

LOCATION	INDUSTRY	SERVICE
Chicago	Healthcare	Content Strategy
Barcelona	Finance	Web Design
Helsinki	Technology	Writing
Mexico City	Retail	User Experience
Hong Kong	Entertainment	Development

So let's say that Chicago is focused on the technology and entertainment industries and offers content strategy (duh), web writing, and web design services. Using taxonomy, you can ensure that only information about those industries and services will appear on the Chicago location page.



Pretty cool, right? Even cooler, some of the other stuff in that example could be pulled in via taxonomy. For example, you could tag every case study in the CMS with the appropriate location, industry, and service to automatically appear on relevant pages. Or maybe they have a few versions of the Contact Us CTA. You can associate the CTA with the locations, industries, and service pages on which it should appear.

In summary... taxonomy is magic.

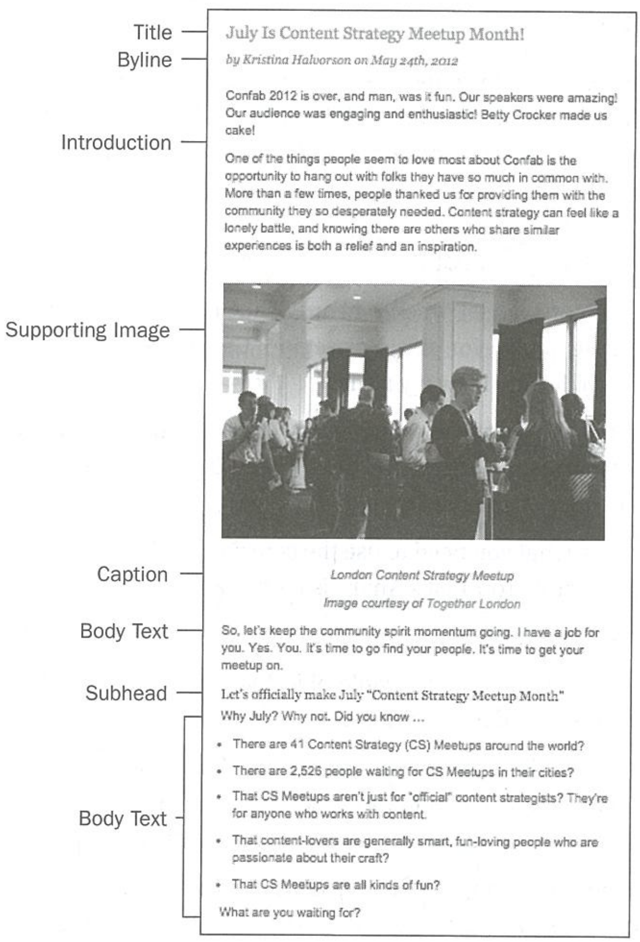
TIP

If you're able to use taxonomy to automagically pull in content on your site, make sure you can override it if you need to. For example, let's say that the CMS pulls in the top three blog posts on a given topic, but one of them isn't really the one you want to display because it's controversial. You'll want the ability to manually choose one to appear in its place.

PRESENTATION

I should start by saying that I'm not going to get super specific about structured content. Not that I don't think it's important. It is. It really, really is. But Sara Whacter-Boettcher wrote a whole book about it named *Content Everywhere: Strategy and Structure for Future-Ready Content*.

What I will say is that pretty much all content on a website has structure, even if your site doesn't use any templates and every page is coded individually in HTML. It may not be entered into the CMS (if you have one) in a very structured way, but it does have some structure. Let's look at a simple blog post to demonstrate.



OK. Let's dig into presentation. My analogy for thinking about this is kind of silly, but it seems to work. So restaurants had a trend where menus included items like deconstructed lasagna. To make deconstructed lasagna, you have to know what goes into regular lasagna, right?

When I think about how content is going to be presented, I think about how I want site visitors to experience it on each page or view. Then, I break down those pages into discrete content components. In doing so, I can start to identify components that are reused across pages and which ones might be unique to one view or page.

To walk through this process, I use a super rad methodology known as *the core model*. And then, I'll show you something known as *content modeling*. Ready?

THE CORE MODEL

Are Halland, of Netlife Research, developed the core model back in 2007 to take the focus off website homepages as the crown of digital experiences and design. That was smart because as search engines become the most popular way users find content, the homepage becomes less and less important.

CASE STUDY: CONTENT FOR CANCER

I first learned about the core model when I heard Ida Aalen, also of Netlife Research, present a case study for the Norwegian Cancer Society (NCS) (www.kreftforeningen.no). It truly blew my mind.

So instead of trying to tell the story, I'm going to use Ida's own words from her *A List Apart* (www.alistapart.com) article "The Core Model: Designing Inside Out for Better Results," which was published on January 6, 2015.

Ida starts off by describing what you need to use the core model. You'll note that they also use Gerry McGovern's Top Tasks Analysis methodology:

> To use the core model, you need:
>
> - Business objectives: Prioritized, measurable objectives and sub-objectives. What does the organization want to achieve?
> - User tasks: Actual, researched, prioritized user tasks. What is it that people want to get done? (We usually conduct top-task surveys to identify the user tasks, which is a great tool if you want to align the organization.)

She goes on to explain how analyzing business goals and user tasks helped identify the site's core pages. This piece is very similar to what I talked about back in the "Prioritization" section. I called them focus pages; Ida calls them cores. She explains how identifying your core pages can also help you create pathways to pages users might not be looking for initially, but you want to drive them toward:

> An example from the NCS is its page dedicated to information about lung cancer. Our user research identified a huge need for qualified and authoritative information on the many forms of cancer—and seeing that one of the objectives for the NCS is to educate Norwegians about cancer, this is a clear match of the users' needs with the organization's larger objective.
>
> But what happens with pages like "Donate"? Our research showed that users did not typically search the site for information related to fundraising, but being able to receive donations online is essential if the NCS is going to raise more money for cancer research. This is where the core model truly shines: If you create good cores, you'll also be able to create good pathways to other, less-requested pages on your website, regardless of where they are placed in the information architecture. A core page should never be a blind alley.

Next, she describes the purpose of the core model and what you get out of it in the end:

> It helps the graphic designer know which are the most important elements to emphasize in the design. It helps include clients or stakeholders who are less web-savvy in your project strategy. It helps the copywriters and editors leave silo thinking behind and create better content.
>
> ...
>
> With a prioritized list of what kind of content and modules needs to be on the most important pages, it's a lot easier for the team to get to work, regardless of whether they are user interface (UX) designers, graphic designers, or content strategists.

Then, the exciting part: She explains how to hold a core model workshop. **Content Strategy Tool 13.2** contains detailed instructions and the core model worksheets, so I won't include every detail here... just enough to give you an idea.

TIP

As I've mentioned throughout the book, you don't always have the opportunity to collaborate with your clients or others in your organization during your project. It's best if you can. But you can use the core model on your own or with a small team, if necessary.

CONTENT STRATEGY TOOL 13.2

CORE MODEL INSTRUCTIONS AND WORKSHEETS

Review the workshop instructions and download the worksheets to facilitate a core model workshop on your project.

TIPS

- Leave the homepage for last. Your core pages will influence what goes on the homepage.
- Give visual designers and writers copies of the core model worksheets, which give them lots of context for prioritizing content visually and verbally.
- Have fun. This is yet another way to keep stakeholders engaged and get them aligned.

WHERE TO GET IT

Download the templates at www.peachpit.com/register.

WHERE IT CAME FROM

Are Halland, Senior Information Architect, Netlife Research (www.netliferesearch.com)

TIP
One note of clarification on identifying the core pages: If you feel confident after your top-tasks analysis that you know which pages should be the core pages (and you think stakeholders will agree), you can come to the workshop with a list. Or, you can brainstorm and prioritize core pages with workshop participants.

1. Identify your cores.

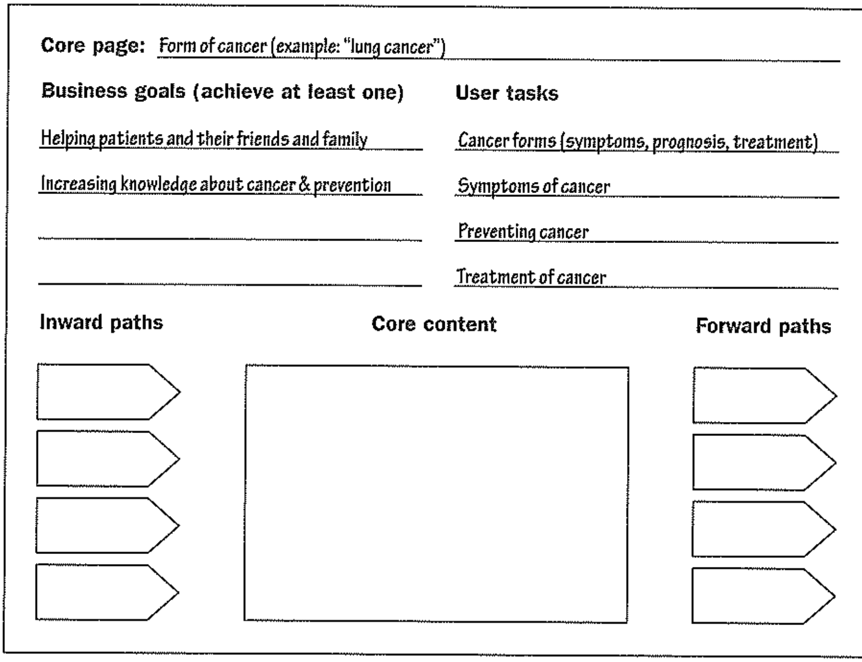
   Identify your core pages by matching the business objectives and the user tasks. You can do this in the workshop or beforehand. Let's use the example of the cancer type template, for example "lung cancer," where you matched the following tasks and objectives.

   Business objectives:

   - Helping patients and their friends and family
   - Increasing knowledge about cancer and prevention

   User tasks:

   - Learn about different forms of cancer.
   - Identify symptoms of cancer.
   - Get tips for preventing cancer.
   - Find information about treating cancer (therapies, adverse effects, risks, and prognosis).



2 Plan for inward paths.

Instead of jumping into content creation and detailing that page, map out the inward paths. This is where you'll look carefully at any user research findings to help inform decisions. How might people find this page? How did they get here?

This approach is a simple way to prompt your client to think about the page from a user's perspective. In the example of the lung cancer page, plausible inward paths include:

- Doing a browser search for lung cancer
- Doing a browser search for symptoms
- Clicking a link on the homepage
- Finding a link in a printed brochure

3 Determine core content.

Begin talking about the core content. What content do you need on this page for it to achieve the goals of both the organization and the users? What kind of modules or elements do you need?

In this task, the participants are using all the information they have on their worksheets: the user tasks, the business objectives, and the inward paths. In light of this information, what are the most important things that should go on that page—and in what order? Having a solid user research foundation at hand will make this process much simpler. In the case of the NCS workshop, the user research had identified cancer prevention as a top user concern, which made it clear that you needed to say something about prevention—sometimes even for cancer types that cannot be prevented.

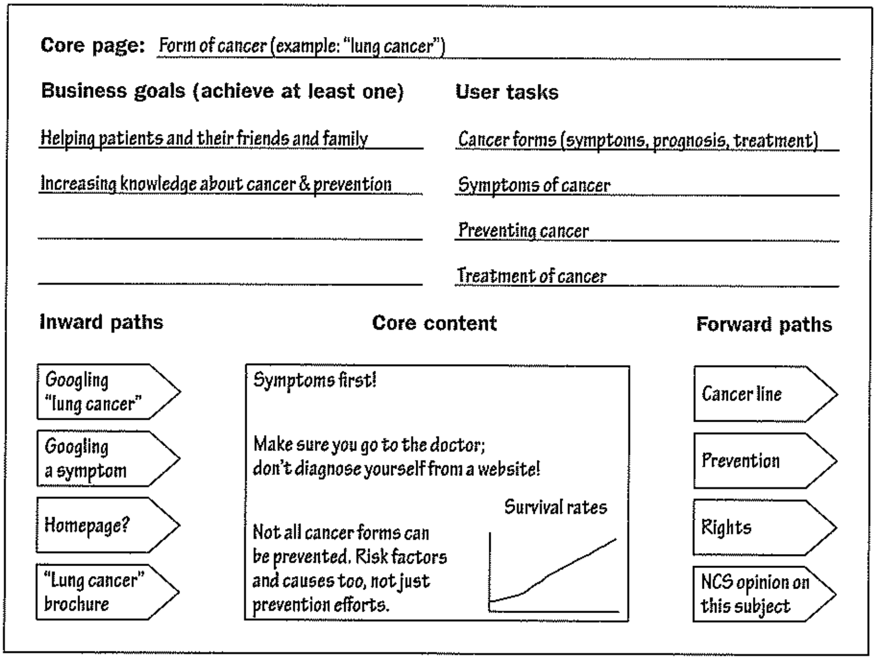
4 Set forward paths.

This is key to the core model's success. After visitors have their questions answered, where do you want to send them next? At this point, you can allow yourself to think more about business goals in a general sense.

For the lung cancer page, it could be forward paths like:

- Cancer help line (so they don't diagnose themselves)
- How to prevent all forms of cancer, not just this specific type of cancer
- Patient rights, if they are reading about treatment
- Information about the political work and lobby work NCS does (for example, trying to reduce treatment waiting times)

Do this in the context of user tasks. If someone is visiting the website in a fearful state, hoping to find solid information about melanoma, do you really want to conclude their journey with a flashy "Donate!" message? No—that would just be rude and insensitive and is unlikely to encourage donations anyway. However, many users do look for general information on cancer research, and in this context, you can frame it more specifically: "If you think cancer research is important, you can help us by donating." (And in fact, this more-considerate approach might end up increasing donations, as it did for the NCS.)

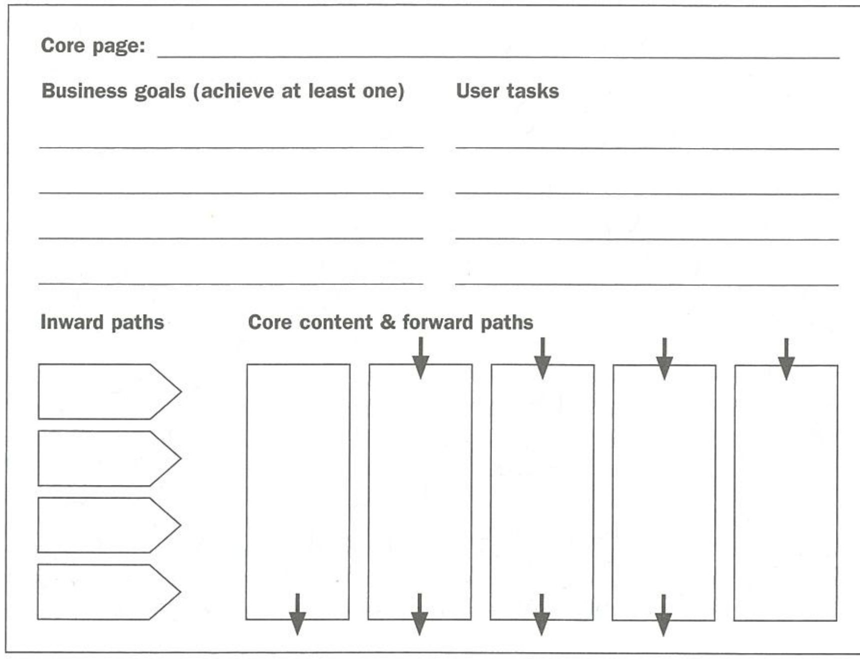


5 Think mobile to prioritize.

After all these steps, participants are usually excited. Their worksheets are full of ideas for content, modules, and all sorts of functionality.

The enthusiasm is great—that's something you want—but a worksheet full of discursive ideas is difficult to work with. Are all these things equally important?

That is why the final step in the workshop is to use mobile-first thinking to prioritize all the elements. Give the participants a new sheet, and ask them: If you had just a small screen available, in which order would you place the elements you've identified throughout the workshop? They'll also need to place those forward paths they've written down in the context of the main content.



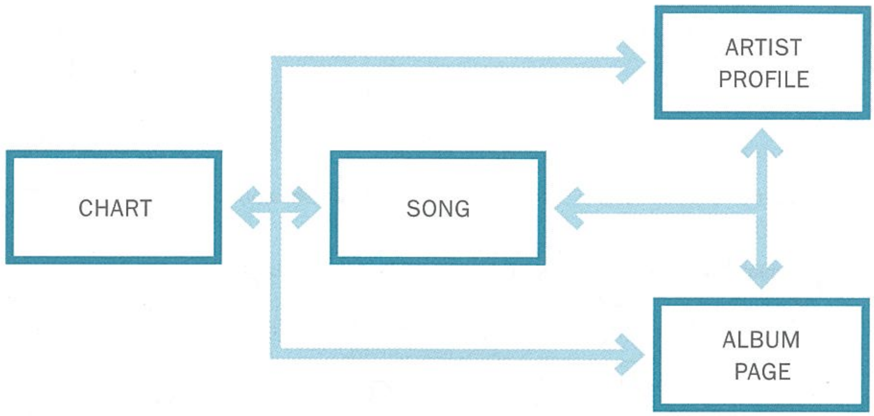
I told you it was rad. Keep in mind that you still have to figure out what content and components you need on your other pages, the ones you drive and guide people to (and even the "meh" pages because you'll probably have some).

CONTENT MODELS

On April 24, 2012, Rachel Lovinger of Razorfish published an article titled "Content Modelling: A Master Skill" on *A List Apart* (www.alistapart.com). The content folks cheered. And so did the developers. Finally, a common tool to help content strategists, information architects, and UX folks translate their content vision for the people who would be building the site.

(Are you noticing a trend? Yep, check out *A List Apart* for so much good content about content.)

Rachel's definition is that "a content model documents all the different types of content you will have for a given project. It contains detailed definitions of each content type's elements and their relationship to each other." And she provides this diagram to show a high-level example.



Rachel's example shows what content elements make up a chart list on a music website. Some of those components, like the artist profile, can be broken down into even smaller components. A user might view a chart page that contains a list of song entries that include the song name, album title, and artist. Clicking the song name on the site likely plays the song. Clicking the artist or album title opens detail pages. And those detail pages likely contain additional components. For example, an artist page might include an overview of the artist, a list of the artist's albums, and details about any awards the artist has been nominated for or won. You would need to account for all those things in your model.

MAKING A LIST

To develop a content model, I usually start by making a list of all the smaller components that could make up a page on the website. Your core model worksheets are a great place to look to make your list. I then document the content types in some sort of diagram or spreadsheet. **Content Strategy Tool 13.3** is a content model spreadsheet template you can use to make your list.

I've shown a couple of examples of how you might document your content types. It's the same information documented two ways. The types are the components that might appear on a page, such as a hero image or a tout (which in this case meant a component that could be used to highlight a product or service). The related vocabularies document what taxonomy lists the content will be tagged with to ensure it shows up in the right places. And the "Templates Used In" section details what templates the content type will appear in. (I'll talk more about that in just a bit.)

A

Type
Hero

Components
Headline
Teaser Text
Linked CTA

Related Vocabularies
Audience

Templates Used In
Audience Home
Corporate Home

B

Type
Tout

Components
Icon
Teaser Text
Linked CTA

Related Vocabularies
Audience

Templates Used In
Audience Home
Corporate Home

C

Type
Interactive/
Infographic

Components
Headline
Linked CTA

Related Vocabularies
Audience
Product/Service
Topic

Templates Used In
Audience Home

D

Type
Find a Consultant
Widget

Components
Headline
Search Field
Go Button

Related Vocabularies
Audience
Product/Service
Topic

Templates Used In
Audience Home
Product Overview
Product Detail

ID	TYPE	COMPONENTS	TEMPLATES USED IN	RELATED VOCABULARIES	NOTES
A	Hero	Headline Teaser Text CTA (with link)	Audience Home Comporate Home	Audience	
B	Tout	Icon Teaser Text CTA (with link)	Audience Home Corporate Home	Audience	3 touts will be used on the audience homepage.
C	Interactive/Infographic	Headline CTA (with link)	Audience Home	Audience Product/Service Topic	
D	Find a Consultant Widget	Headline Search Field Go Button	Audience Home Product Overview Product Detail	Audience Product/Service Topic	

CONTENT STRATEGY TOOL 13.3

CONTENT MODEL SPREADSHEET

Download the template to make your list of content components and assemble them into pages or views.

TIPS

- You can add or delete columns depending on what you need to communicate to your teams.
- If developers are going to be using your content model spreadsheet, work with them to create it to make sure they get the information they need. (They'll also probably have some great ideas for how to streamline your content.)
- Sometimes you're better off over-brainstorming and scaling back rather than missing something and having to account for it later.

WHERE TO GET IT

Download the templates at www.peachpit.com/register.

WHERE IT CAME FROM

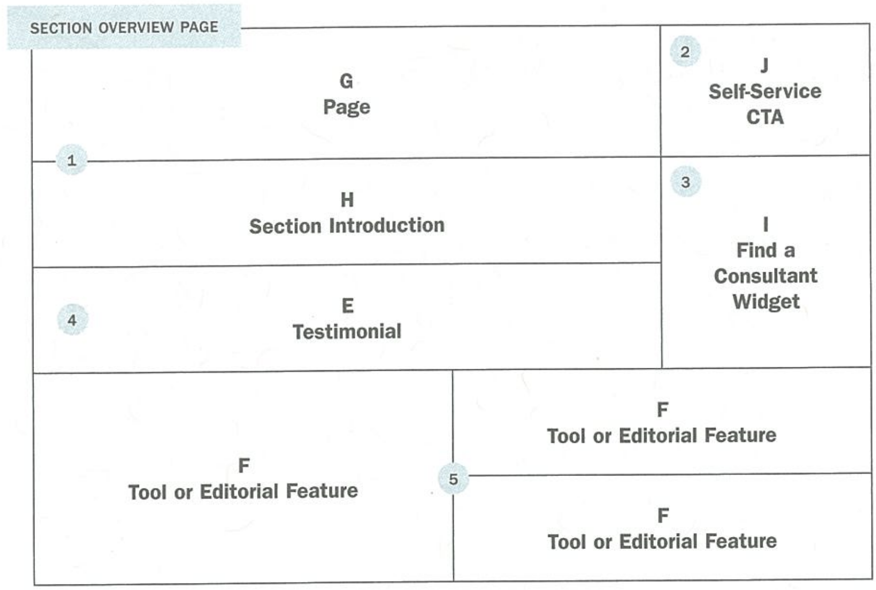
Eileen Webb, Director of Strategy & Lifestock, Webmeadow (www.webmeadow.com)

RECONSTRUCTING THE VIEWS

After I have my list, I create very basic wireframe sketches of the key page types that make up the site. The sketches outline the content components from my list and their relative order of importance for each view.

In the image on the next page, the letters and text (for example, G-Page Introduction) indicate what content types make up the page. The numbers in circles suggest the priority of the content type or types on the page.

These sketches serve a few purposes. They let the visual designer know what components are most important on each page or view, so they can design accordingly. They (along with the component list) tell developers what needs to be built in the CMS. And they also provide a starting point for the content specifications (which I discuss in the section that follows).



SPECIFICATIONS

Now that you've identified what pages will be on your site, what content components make up those pages, and what pages and content are most important, you can start being super specific about what goes on each page. I use two types of specifications documents depending on what I need to communicate: content overlays and page tables. **Content Strategy Tool 13.4** includes templates for each.

I use the content overlay to provide specifications about a repeatable content type. A good example is a product or location page. Let's use the example from the "Organization" section of this chapter.

In this example, I've included the basic wireframe sketch with narrative explaining the page-type objective, details about the content priorities and what content to include, and action items the company will need to take to create and publish the content. Those items were the most important to communicate to my client at that point in time. You may want to add additional details for your project. For example, you could combine your view documentation with content specifications for the repeatable pages or templates on your site.

CONTENT STRATEGY TOOL 13.4

CONTENT OVERLAY AND PAGE TABLE TEMPLATES

Download the templates to get started with content specifications.

TIPS

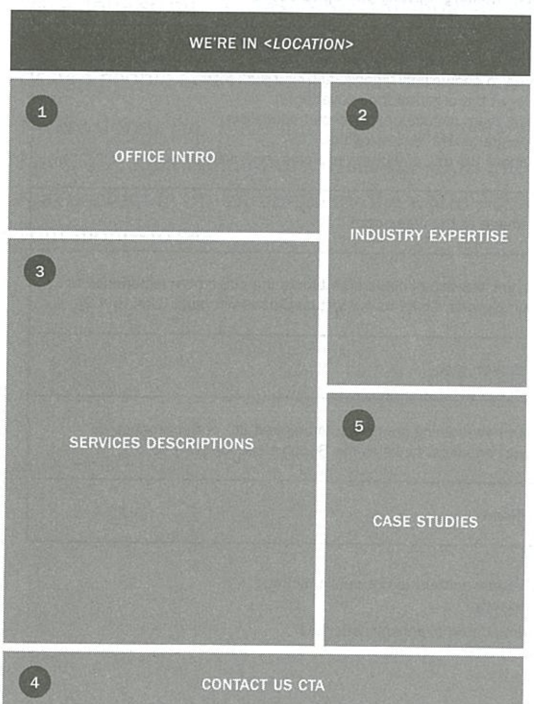
- Include just what's necessary for who will be using the document, or risk confusing your stakeholders, developers, and content creators.
- Avoid deliverables with overlap and redundancies, which would cause you to update two or more documents when something changes.
- Validate with the people who will be creating the content that what you're putting together will make their work easier.

WHERE TO GET IT

Download the templates at www.peachpit.com/register.

WHERE IT CAME FROM

Brain Traffic (www.braintraffic.com)



OBJECTIVE

Demonstrate the capabilities and expertise of the location, and provide contract information for the sales lead.

Content Priorities

1. Highlight the key differentiator of the location selected.
2. List the name of the service and a short description about our approach to providing it and the results a customer can expect.
3. List the industries the location specializes in and why that expertise matters. (Industry descriptions will prepopulate based on the taxonomy.)
4. Include the key contact for the office with a short bio and contact information.
5. Provide short teasers for case studies (up to three), focusing on the results of the work.

PREPARING FOR LAUNCH

- Create the taxonomy and map service descriptions, industry experience, and case studies to the appropriate locations if you'd like to auto-populate that content.
- Each office will need to choose a key contact to include on this page.

The second specifications document is called a page table, which I use when a blanket content overlay applied to a set of similar pages won't provide enough detail or guidance.

One scenario in which such a detailed specification is needed is for unique pages, like the About Us page. You may want to be pretty prescriptive about what these unique pages should include.

Another common scenario is when you don't have a lot of source content for the writer to use, so you need to provide a fair amount of direction on the content. Or perhaps the writer creates the page outlines after interviewing a subject matter expert (SME) to make sure she's on the right track before she starts writing.

In this example, 4.1 refers to the Page ID that depicts where the page falls in the site hierarchy. This page table is for a landing page under a section named "Training Options."

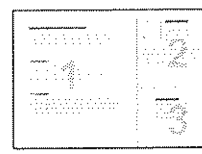
4.1 CLASSROOM TRAINING

Page objective: Familiarize prospective clients with our classroom training offering, and help existing clients choose between training options.

Source content: Training handbook

Phase: 1 (Launch)

SME/Content owner: Jane Fisher, training manager



Page Title	**Classroom Training: Getting you up to speed**
Priority 1 content Main content	Present an overview of the classroom training program and its benefits: ■ Tailored to each client organization and audience. ■ On-site at the organization's location(s). ■ Training team includes experienced educators and programmers/technologists. ■ Talk about the mix of lecture, exercise, and activities.
	Assets: Image of the classroom
Priority 2 content Virtual classroom	Discuss how the virtual classroom brings the classroom experience to remote employees. Links to the Virtual Classroom page [Link to 4.2]
	Assets: Screen grab
Priority 3 content Ongoing support	Talk about how training continues throughout life of the product via our support services. Links to the Support section [Link to 5.1]
	Assets: None

- **Content creation implementation:** The source content is not public facing. The content will need to be edited significantly.
- **Maintenance frequency:** May need to be updated bi-annually after our corporate retreats.
- **Outstanding questions/risks:** None

Page tables can include lots of different information, depending on who is using them. The example shown here (from *Content Strategy for the Web, Second Edition*, by Kristina Halvorson and Melissa Rach) is pretty bare-bones. I often include SEO (search engine optimization) details as well, such as page description, keywords, friendly URL, and browser title. And I usually include the template name and the names of the components that each content priority will be created in.

HINT

I'm not an expert on SEO. I know enough to determine when I need an expert and to make baseline recommendations to ensure content has a good chance of showing up in search. My favorite resource on SEO is "The Beginner's Guide to SEO from Moz" *(www.moz.com/beginners-guide-to-seo).*

THE BEST-LAID PLANS

You probably thought I was going to say that even the best-laid plans have been known to fail, or something like that. You know, that is true. But seriously. You have done so much work. Your stakeholders know it. Your development team is thankful for you. And the collaboration going on between content people and design people and UX people is downright awesome.

Nicely done. You have laid the groundwork for amazing content. Really, you have. The next chapter discusses the tools and processes that will help you get that content in tip-top shape for the world—or at least your target audiences and your mom—to see.