

Content Strategy 101: Start Here

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What is the most important skill
for a content strategist?

THE ART OF
LISTENING



The art of the interview

- Tell me about your role.
- What are your primary pain points with content?
(SYMPTOMS)
- Why do you think that's the case? (CAUSES)
- What do you think will make this project a success?

- **BE QUIET.**
- If you have to take notes, ask permission. Use body language to assure them you're listening.
- Don't finish their sentences.
- Don't try to relate.
- Don't offer solutions or insights on the spot.
- "Tell me more about that."

What is content strategy?

WHAT IS CONTENT STRATEGY?

CONTENT STRATEGY GUIDES
THE CREATION, DELIVERY AND
GOVERNANCE OF USEFUL,
USABLE CONTENT.

Kristina Halvorson
Content Strategy for the Web

ALPHABETIC

NEW DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The hope lies in the individuals

HERITAGE

EMPLOYMENT

Requires a New 'Story' for Humanity - Shared Vision



WORLD BRAIN

INTEGRATION THROUGH TEACHING

FEEL EACH STUDENT

WORKPLACE COMMENT

A FEW PLOS DISCREP WITH GUT BUILDING BACK BETTER



INDIVIDUAL = PERSONAL

FIND OUT

STUDENTS AS FACILITATORS

TWINKLED

B2B2C

- + 2 people
- 1 designer
- map of ch
- Distributor explained

DUSTINESS = ETHICS

WHERE CAN EXCLUSIVITY GIVE TO SOCIETY?

TRANSPARENCY ECONOMY PRESERVING IDENTITY

everybody is compassionate about their children



DOING FOR EVERYONE

STORY ZINE (CRAZZYING)

REALISTIC RESPONSIBILITY



IDENTITY

SMALL CAUSES

↓
BIG EFFECTS

ANYBODY

GUIDING PRINCIPLES
↓
BUSINESS DESIGN



GLOBAL PLAY



WORK PLACE

(CRITERIA, CHECK LISTS, REQUIREMENT SPECS.)

WHAT IF BUSINESS NEED IS ABLE COULD WORK?

WHAT'S MISSING?

CHANGE

DO WE HAVE TO WORK



Topics



Formats



Channels



Calendar

Content design



Systems design

- Define
- Prioritize
- Integrate
- Systematize
- Measure

Content design uses data and evidence
to give the audience what they need,
at the time they need it,
and in a way they expect.

Editorial

- What is our editorial mission?
- Who are our target audiences?
- What is our point of view?
- What brand and language standards do we need to comply with?
- What is our voice and tone?
- What is our publishing cadence?

Experience

- What are our users' needs and preferences?
- What does our content ecosystem look like?
- What are our customers' journeys?
- What formats will our content take?
- How will design patterns shape our content on mobile and beyond?
- What metrics will we use to measure performance?

Systems design is the process of defining the architecture, modules, and data for a system to satisfy specified requirements.

Structure

- How will we organize content for browse-and-find?
- What tags are most intuitive for users?
- How will we categorize content for efficient management?
- How will we structure our content for future reuse?
- What are the requirements for personalization, dynamic delivery, AI?

Process

- How will content move through its lifecycle?
- What tools will we use to create, deliver, and maintain content?
- How and when do we care for our existing content?
- Who gets to say “no”?

Content design



- Editorial mission
- Style guide
- Messaging architecture
- Publishing calendar

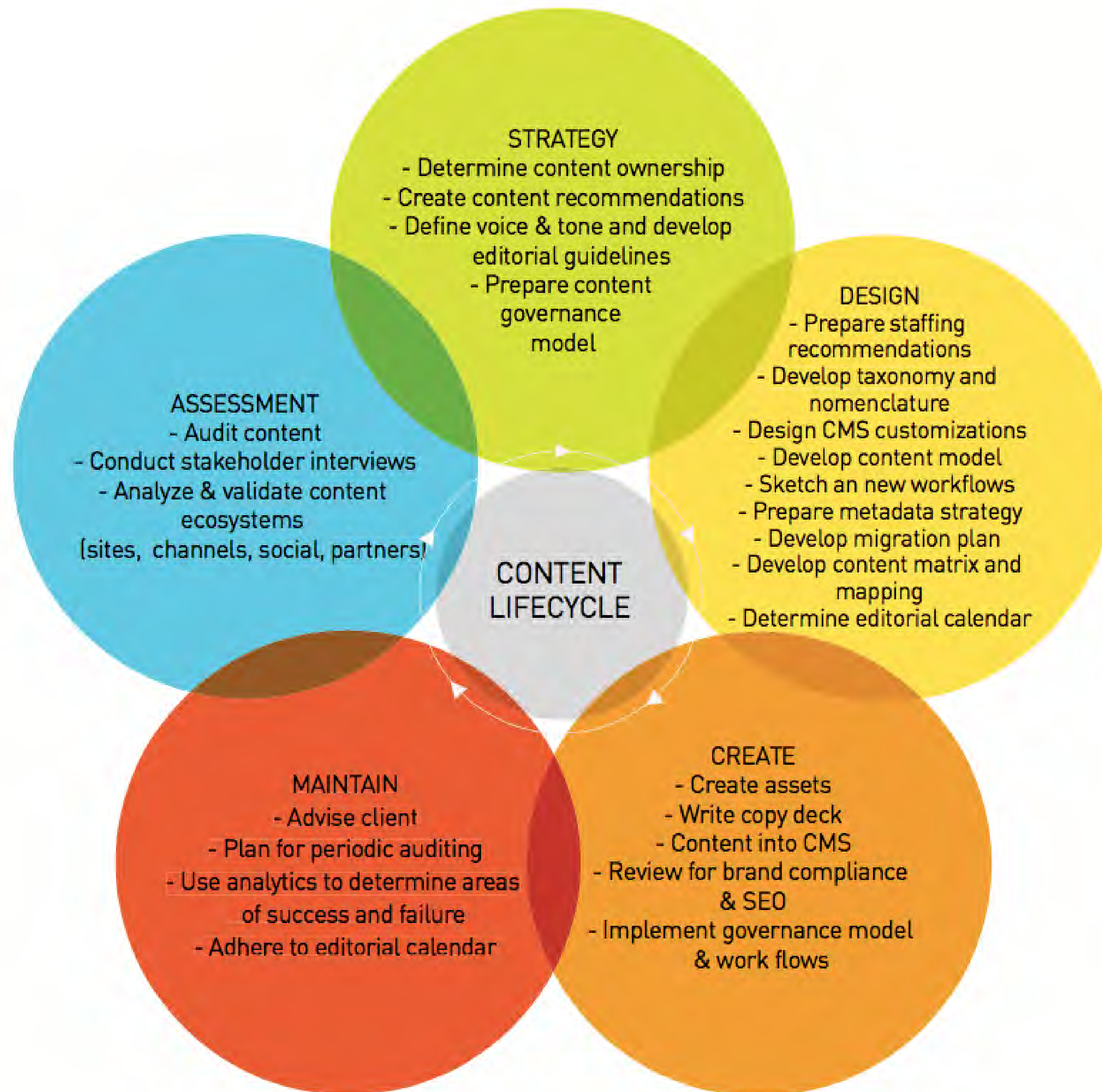
- Needs-based personas
- Page templates and tables
- Microcopy

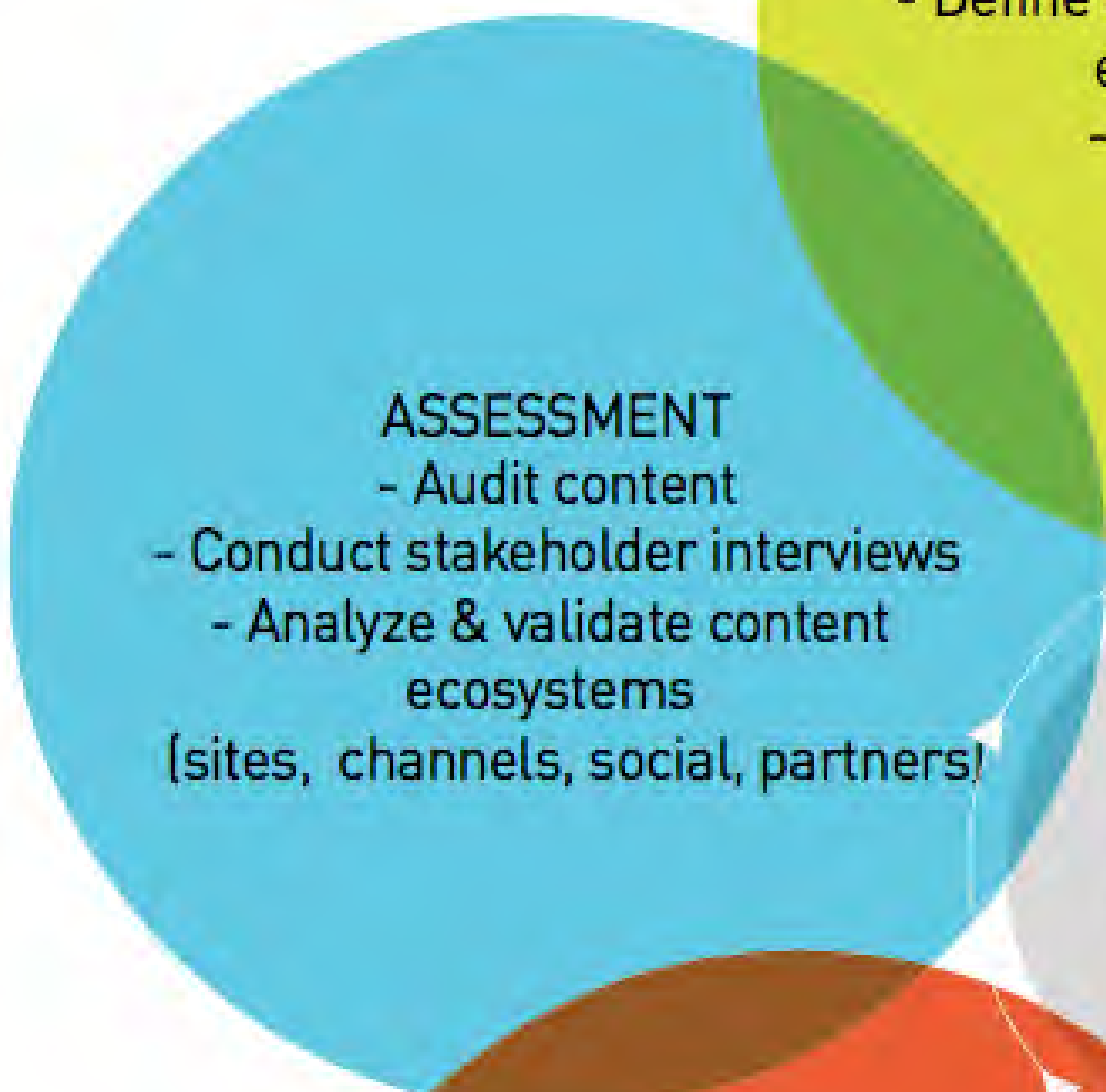
- Taxonomy
- Content models
- Authoring interface
- Content reuse

- Workflow and roles
- Tools
- Governance plan

Systems design

Content strategy prioritizes and integrates the different activities that impact content quality.





- Define voice & tone and editorial guidelines
- Prepare content governance model



CONTENT LIFECYCLE

ASSESSMENT
- Audit content
- Conduct stakeholder interviews

STRATEGY

- Determine content ownership
- Create content recommendations
- Define voice & tone and develop editorial guidelines
- Prepare content governance model

DESIGN

- Prepare staffing recommendations
- Develop taxonomy and nomenclature
- Design CMS customizations
- Develop content model
- Create content workflow

AIN

client

dic auditing

determine areas

and failure

rial calendar

CREATE

- Create assets
- Write copy deck
- Content into CMS
- Review for brand compliance & SEO
- Implement governance model & work flows

MAINTAIN

- Advise client
- Plan for periodic auditing
- Use analytics to determine areas of success and failure
- Adhere to editorial calendar

CREATE

- Create as
- Write copy
- Content int
- Review for brand
- & SEO
- Implement govern
- & work f

The “strategy” in content.

Vision

Mission

Goal

Strategy

Objective

Tactic

Target

Vision	Ideal future state
Mission	What we exist to do
Goal	Long-term measurable outcome
Strategy	Key initiative to create meaningful change
Objective	Shorter-term measurable outcome
Tactic	Activity to achieve objectives
Target	Metric for success

A goal must be:

Specific

Measurable

Attainable

Relevant

Time-framed

Specific

Measurable

Attainable

Relevant

Time-framed

... endpoint for your organization, website, or product.

What's your VMGSOTT?

**Name these for
your organization,
team, or client.**

1. Vision
2. Mission
3. 2018 goals

You need to know.
And you get to ask for
clarification.

WHAT IS A STRATEGY?

A **STRATEGY** IS A DISTINCT PATH
YOU CHOOSE TO REACH A
GOAL.

Strategy is the path
you choose to move
you towards
achieving your goal.

Where we'll play: The first part of your strategy statement identifies where you'll focus your efforts (e.g. a platform, channel mix, product, service)

How we'll win: The second part defines what general activities you'll take within the constraints of “where to play” (e.g. redesign, build, consolidate, connect)

Is this a strategy?

Yep.

WHERE WE'LL PLAY

Our Help content will
deliver a consistently
delightful, always
satisfying experience.

HOW WE'LL WIN

This is a strategy
and a goal.

With our ^{WHERE WE'LL PLAY} new website
redesign, we will
^{HOW WE'LL WIN} deliver user-centered
^{GOAL #1} content that increases
^{GOAL #2} leads and improves
sitewide user
satisfaction.

Is this a ~~strategy~~?

This is half a strategy.

WHERE WE'LL PLAY

Our About Us section will tell our company story with engaging, compelling content.

THIS IS: 1) SUBJECTIVE, 2) FAR FROM A DIFFERENTIATOR, AND 3) LAME.

WHAT IS A STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE?

OBJECTIVES ARE A SERIES OF SMALLER TARGETS THAT MUST BE HIT IN ORDER TO REACH THE GOAL.

	Goals	Objectives
Definition	Something which you try to achieve	A specific result that a person or system aims to achieve <u>within a time frame and with available resources.</u>
Time Frame	Usually long-term.	A <u>series of smaller steps</u> , often along the way to achieving a long-term goal.
Outcome of immediate action	Actions tend to advance progress in a very general sense; there is often awareness that there are several ways to reach a goal, so <u>specific outcomes aren't necessary.</u>	<u>Very specific and measurable</u> , a target is established and victory is declared only when the target is hit.
Purpose of action	A goal is often characterized as a change of direction that will ultimately lead to a desired outcome.	Objectives tend to be actions aimed at <u>accomplishing a certain task.</u>

	Goals	Objectives
Example	“MN.gov will answer the top state-related questions for all Minnesota citizens.”	“We must prioritize and conduct research on our website audiences. We must create a website governance plan to ensure ongoing adherence to audience needs.”
Hierarchy	Goals tend to control objectives; a change in a goal could eliminate one or more objectives, or add new ones.	e.g. if the objective is to obtain research An <u>objective can modify a goal</u> , but will seldom change it in a fundamental way, even if the objective isn't reached.

WHAT IS A TACTIC?

A **TACTIC** IS AN ACTIVITY OR TOOL YOU USE TO ACHIEVE YOUR OBJECTIVE.

WHAT IS A SUCCESS METRIC?

A **SUCCESS METRIC** MEASURES
THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A
TACTIC.

Bringin' it back to content.

Here's where
content strategy
sits.

Articulate it. Then
own it.

Goal

This is *shared* with the larger organization—our work must ladder up to a common goal.

Content strategy

What direction the [website/product/marketing] content will *and will not* take to reach the goal.

Objectives

What measurable, content-related outcomes the team must work to achieve.

Tactics

Activities and tools the team will use to complete their objectives.

**NOW LET US DO THE
CONTENT STRATEGY**

Four steps to awesome-r content

1. **Kickoff:** Right information, right team.
2. **Situation analysis:** Where are you going, and where are you now?
3. **Strategy:** Where will you focus and integrate your efforts ... and why?
4. **Implementation:** The planning, execution, and evaluation of tools, tactics, and technology.

But first ... pre-kickoff.

Pre-kickoff meeting

1. Revisit project scope
2. Begin documentation dump
3. Review stakeholder participants

1. Revisit project scope

- informing goals, strategy
- objectives
- timeframe
- budget
- known risks and assumptions

2. Documentation dump

- Strategy decks
- Past redesign documentation
- Site analytics
- Market research
- Usability reports
- Process maps
- Org charts
- Job descriptions

3. Stakeholder participants

ROLES

- Project Owner
- Decision-maker
- Champion
- Influencer
- Derailer

TYPES

- Strategic
- Expert
- Implementer
- User Proxy

		ROLES							
		TYPES							

Name and Title	Project Owner	Decision maker	Influencer	Champion	Derailer	Strategic	Expert	Implementer	User Proxy
Jane Doe Director, Digital Marketing		X		X		X			

User Proxy	Interview	Workshop	<p>Topics</p> <p><i>What topics should we cover?</i></p>	<p>Concerns</p> <p><i>What will they be most concerned about?</i></p>
			<p><i>Expectations for this project:</i></p> <p><i>How will she know it's successful?</i></p> <p><i>Past content efforts: What worked; what were the challenges?</i></p>	<p><i>Past efforts didn't yield the kind of results she was hoping for.</i></p> <p><i>How her budget might be affected next year if the project isn't successful.</i></p>

<p><i>ould we cover?</i></p>	<p>Concerns</p> <p><i>What will they be most concerned about?</i></p>	<p>Project Pitch</p> <p><i>What will sell them on the project?</i></p>
<p><i>or this project: ow it's successful? efforts: What worked; challenges?</i></p>	<p><i>Past efforts didn't yield the kind of results she was hoping for.</i></p> <p><i>How her budget might be affected next year if the project isn't successful.</i></p>	<p><i>We'll be able to focus our content efforts on fewer things that will have a bigger impact.</i></p> <p><i>We may be able to reduce headcount.</i></p>

- How often should you update stakeholders?
- At what points do you anticipate needing their feedback?
- What's the bare minimum they need to know?
- Do different stakeholders need to know different things?
- Can you provide updates through existing methods of communication?
- Do different stakeholders need to be communicated with differently?

1. Kickoff

During kickoff

1. “I am ... my role is ... I expect this project will solve/benefit/etc...”
2. Review project scope.
3. Clear up lexicon questions (e.g. “when you say content ...”)
4. Explain document sharing system
5. Don't try to answer questions you don't have answers to!

2. Situation Analysis

WHAT IS A SITUATION ANALYSIS?

A **SITUATION ANALYSIS** IS THE GATHERING, SYNTHESIS, AND REPORTING OF INFORMATION THAT IMPACTS CONTENT CHOICES.

First: Situation
(or, “What’s happening?”)

You have many questions to answer.

- **Mission, vision, related strategies**
- **Stakeholder interviews**
- **User research**
- **Competitor websites**
- **Content audit**
- **Technology audit**
- **Site analytics**
- **SEO activities**
- **Industry trends**

You have many questions to answer.

- Mission, vision, related strategies
- **Stakeholder interviews**
- **User research**
- Competitor websites
- **Content ecosystem**
- **Content inventory**
- Technology audit
- Site analytics
- SEO activities
- Industry trends
- Industry influencers

Audience (user) research

RISK TOLERANCE

I AM NOT VERY CONFIDENT IN OUR USER KNOWLEDGE, AND I'M NOT THAT WORRIED ABOUT WHAT WE DON'T KNOW.

I AM PRETTY CONFIDENT IN WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT USERS, AND I DON'T THINK THE GAPS ARE A BIG DEAL.

I'M NOT SURE WHETHER WE KNOW VERY MUCH ABOUT OUR USERS, AND I'M UNCOMFORTABLE NOT KNOWING MORE.

I FEEL PRETTY GOOD ABOUT WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT OUR USERS, BUT I'D FEEL BETTER IF WE VALIDATED IT.

CONFIDENCE LEVEL

How do you find them?

- **Individual interviews:** an interviewer talks with one user (typically by phone) for 30 minutes to an hour.
- **Focus groups:** moderated discussion (typically in person) that typically involves 5 to 10 participants.
- **Customer feedback form:** open-ended and/or close-ended information provided by a self-selected sample of users, often through a feedback link, button, form, or email.

How do you find them?

- **True-intent studies:** a method that asks random site visitors what their goal or intention is upon entering the site; measures their subsequent behavior; and asks whether they were successful in achieving their goal upon exiting the site. This requires behavioral analytics capabilities on a website.
- **Intercept surveys:** a survey that is triggered during the use of a site or application.
- **Email surveys:** a survey in which participants are recruited from an email message.

Designing the research

- **We wonder ...**This is the question you hope to answer through user research.
- **We care because ...** This is why the information is important to your project.
- **We assume ...** This is what you assume to be true based on your discovery work.
- **We know ...** This is anything you feel confident you actually know about users.

We wonder ...

Do prospective students graduating from high school care as much about money as their parents do?

We care because ...

It affects who we write financing and financial aid messages for and where we house that information.

We assume ...

Parents who are paying for college care more than their children.

We know ...

Kids who are paying their own way need this information to even consider our school.

Design your research

We wonder ...

We care because ...

We assume ...

We know ...

In this column, list the questions you'd like to answer through user research activities.

In this column describe how the answers to your research questions will inform the strategy and recommendations.

In this column, list the assumptions you've made related to each research question.

In this column, list any related data or conclusions you've drawn based on data and user research

 A BOOK APART
Brief books for people who make websites

9

Erika Hall

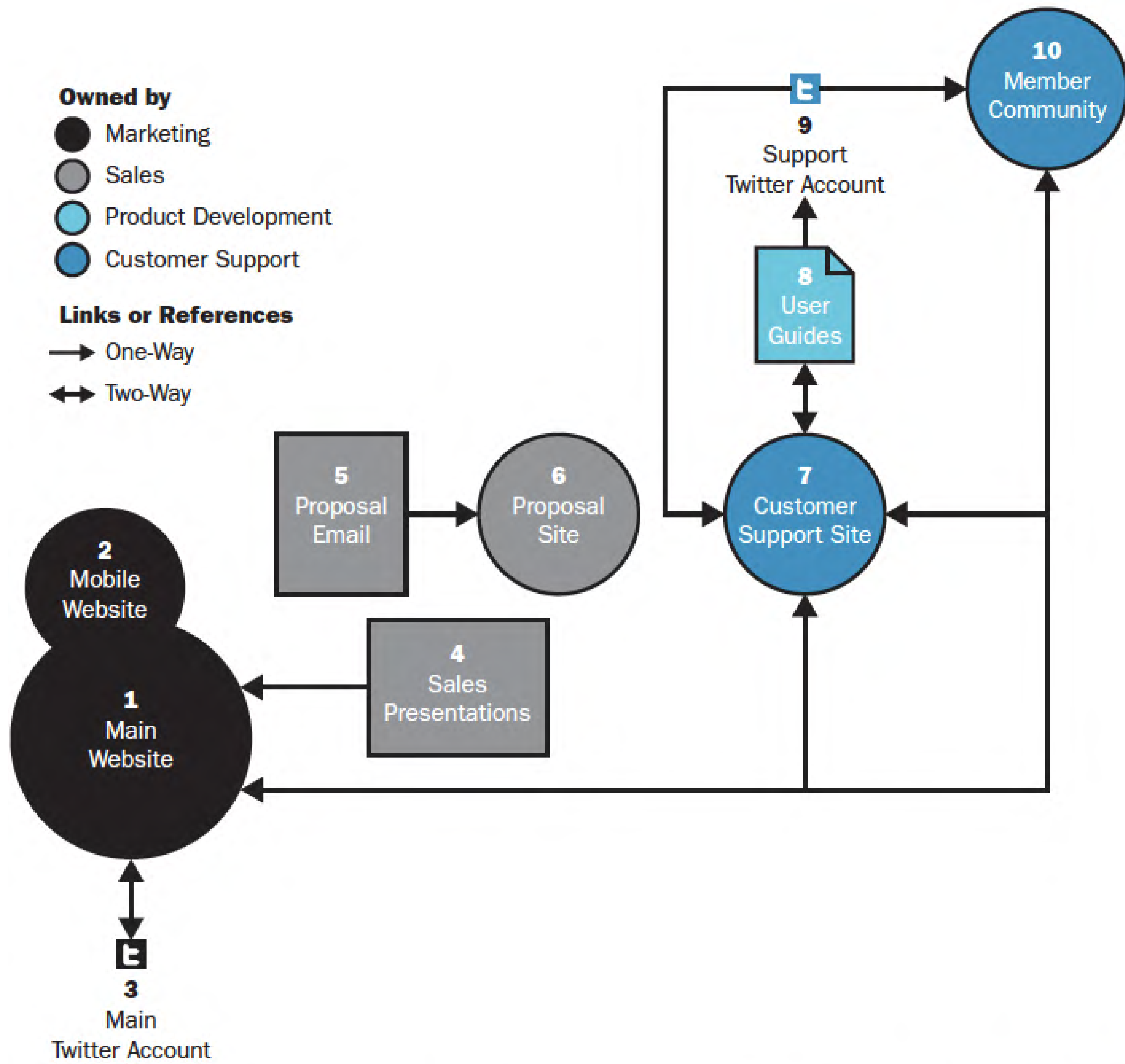
JUST ENOUGH RESEARCH

FOREWORD BY Jeffrey Zeldman

To make the best use of your time and truly do just enough research, try to identify your highest-priority questions—your assumptions that carry the biggest risk.

- Erika Hall

Content ecosystem map



Owned by

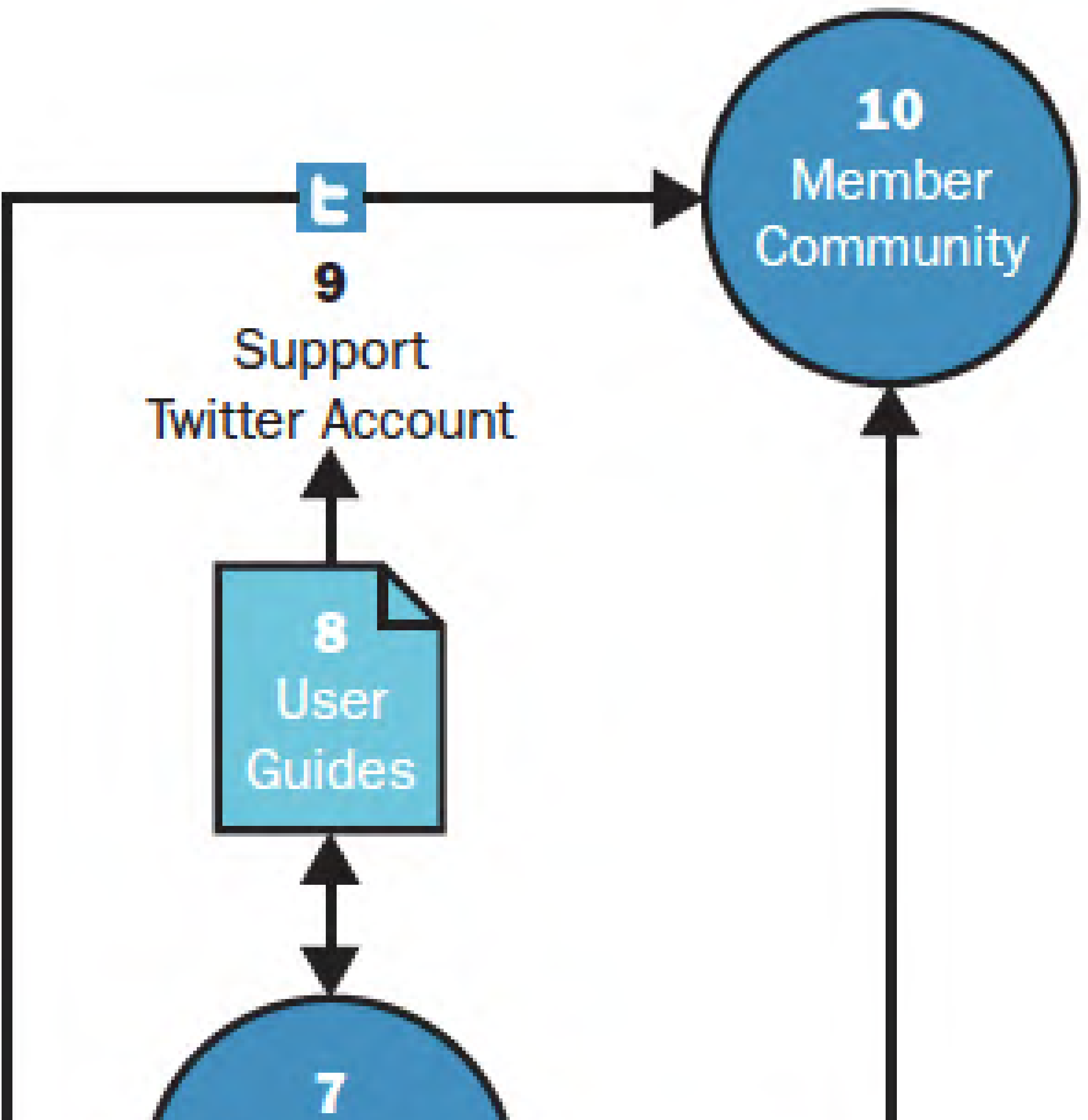
- Marketing
- Sales
- Product Development
- Customer Support

Links or References

- One-Way
- ↔ Two-Way

5

6

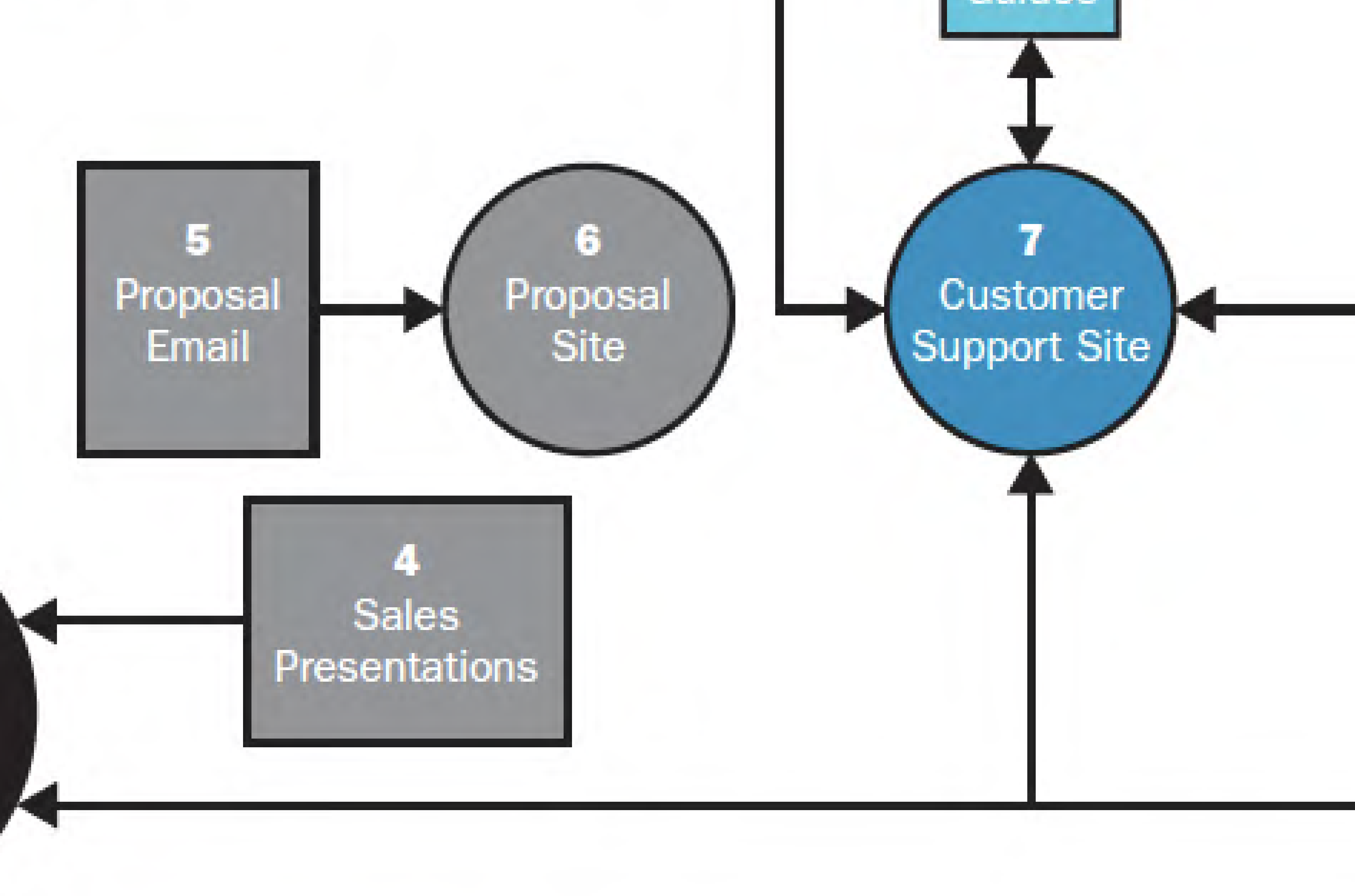
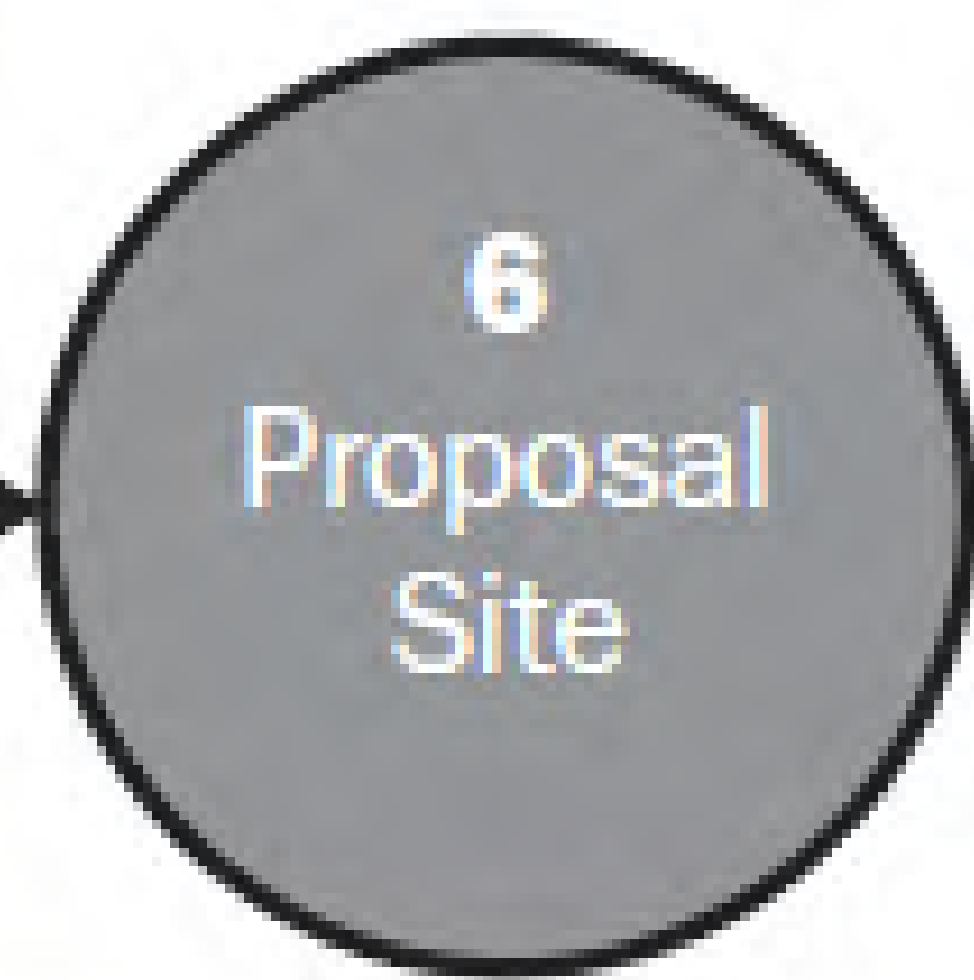
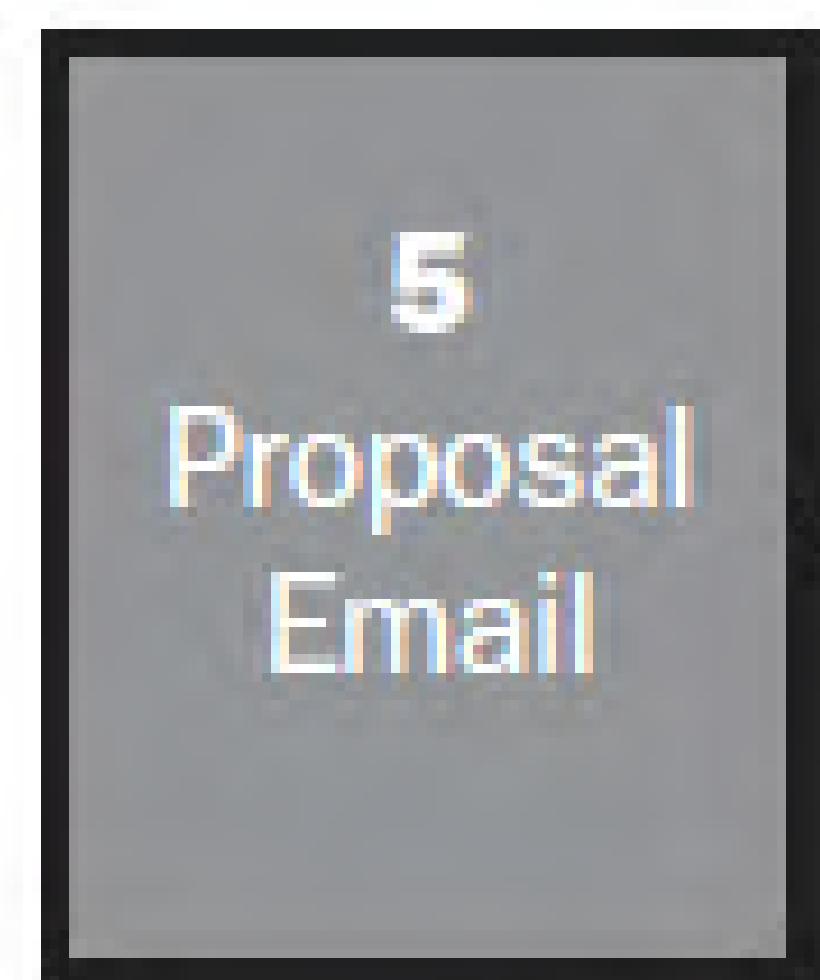


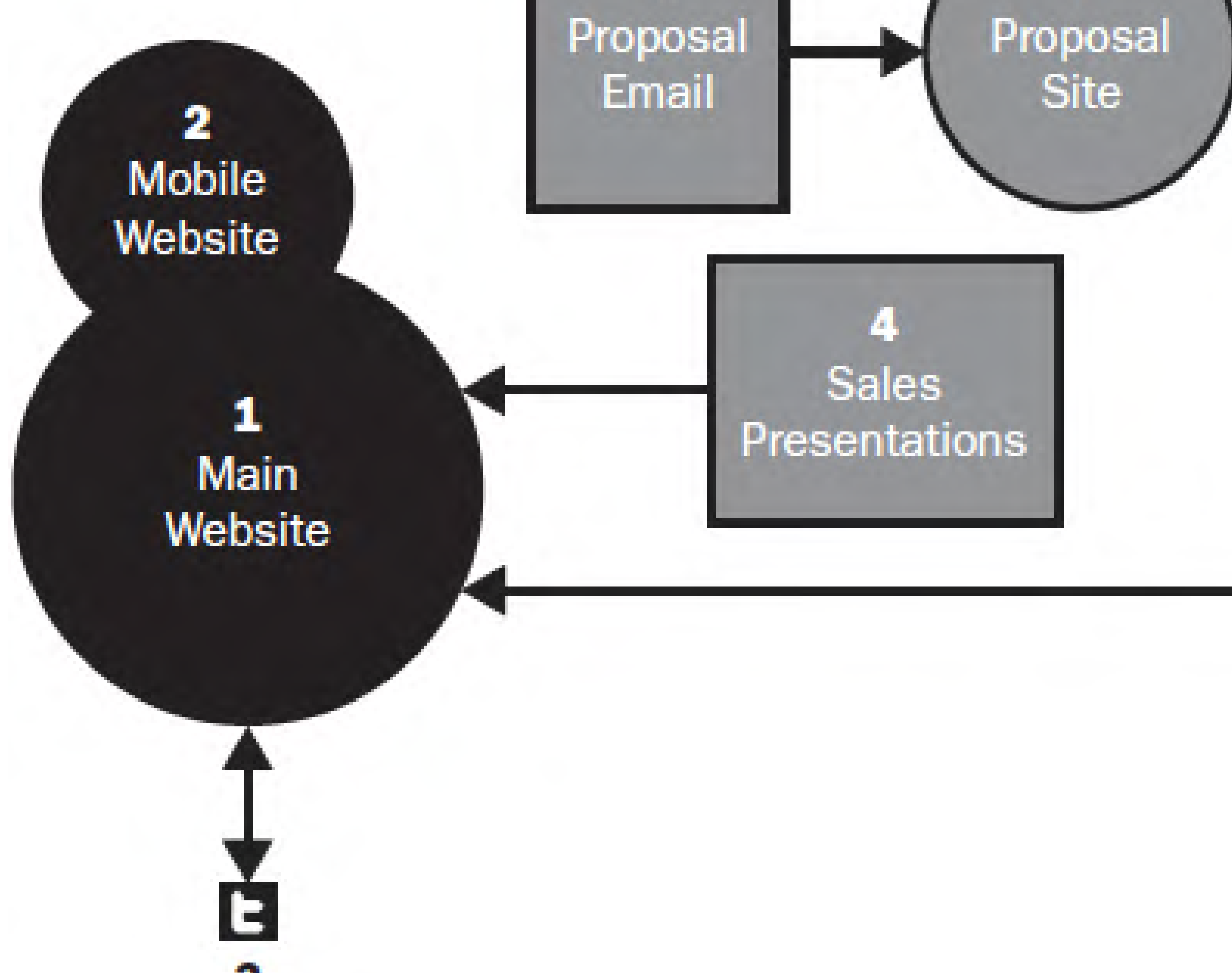
One-Way

Two-Way

2
Mobile
Website

1
Main
Website





Sketch your ecosystem

Content inventory

Reasons to do an inventory

- Build a business case for content strategy
- Prepare for re-architecting the website
- Prepare for content migration
- Determine content ownership
- ROT analysis

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Primary tab	PE-2	http://www.pearsoned.com/404-2/	Admin	29,875	47.7%	0:01:17	1	Keep	404 Page Not Found Pearson	Humor may
Primary tab	PE-3	http://www.pearsoned.com/about-us/	Admin	29,494	40.0%	0:01:13	1	Keep	About Us Pearson	Strong emp
Primary tab	PE-4	http://www.pearsoned.com/accessibility/	Admin	2,348	60.7%	0:01:43	1	Keep	Commitment to Accessibility	Needs to b
Primary tab	PE-5	http://www.pearsoned.com/careers/	Admin	85,971	53.9%	0:02:09	1	Keep	Careers at Pearson	CTA is a lin
Primary tab	PE-6	http://www.pearsoned.com/careers/sales-representative/	Admin	6,584	25.2%	0:01:12	1	Keep	Become a Pearson Higher Education	Lofty job de
Primary tab	PE-7	http://www.pearsoned.com/careers/sales-representative/core-	Admin	2,268	39.9%	0:01:23	1	Keep	Pearson Higher Ed Sales	Nowhere to
Primary tab	PE-8	http://www.pearsoned.com/careers/sales-representative/job-description/	Admin	261	66.7%	0:01:12	1	Keep	Pearson Higher Ed Sales	Generic de
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Primary tab	PE-10	http://www.pearsoned.com/careers/sales-representative/videos/	Admin	1,428	40.3%	0:02:16	1	Keep	Pearson Higher Ed Sales	Video conte
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	PE-18	http://www.pearsoned.com/higher-education/our-customers/	Admin	13	0.0%	0:01:37	2	Kill		
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	PE-18	http://www.pearsoned.com/insights/customer-success	Admin

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2,348	60.7%	0:01:43	1	Keep	Commitment to Accessibility	Need
85,971	53.9%	0:02:09	1	Keep	Careers at Pearson	CTA
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2,310	40.3%	0:01:34	1	Keep	Pearson Higher Ed Sales	dupli
1,428	40.3%	0:02:16	1	Keep	Pearson Higher Ed Sales	Vide
110,697	52.9%	0:01:49	1	Keep	Contact Us Pearson North America	Links
4,492	35.3%	0:01:10	1	Keep	Efficacy & Research Pearson North	Need
835	57.4%	0:02:35	1	Keep	Higher Education Efficacy Studies	Need
637	34.0%	0:02:01	1	Keep	PreK-12 Education Efficacy Studies	Need
473	58.9%	0:02:05	1	Keep	Research in Higher Education	Need
454	28.6%	0:02:17	1	Keep	Research in PreK-12 Education	Need
150,627	30.8%	0:00:43	1	Keep	Pearson Higher Education	
13	0.0%	0:01:33	1	Keep		

Time on	SEO	Keep/Kill	Title 1	Notes from BT
N/A	1	Keep	Pearson Education United States	Needs to be re-examined for
0:01:17	1	Keep	404 Page Not Found Pearson	Humor may not be appropriate for
0:01:13	1	Keep	About Us Pearson	Strong emphasis on marketing
0:01:43	1	Keep	Commitment to Accessibility	Needs to be re-examined for
0:02:09	1	Keep	Careers at Pearson	CTA is a link to an external Pearson
0:01:12	1	Keep	Become a Pearson Higher Education	Lofty job description, but nowhere to
0:01:23	1	Keep	Pearson Higher Ed Sales	Nowhere to apply, difficult to scan
0:01:12	1	Keep	Pearson Higher Ed Sales	Generic description, nowhere to
0:01:34	1	Keep	Pearson Higher Ed Sales	duplicate link
0:02:16	1	Keep	Pearson Higher Ed Sales	Video content without context or
0:01:49	1	Keep	Contact Us Pearson North America	Links out to other contact sites;
0:01:10	1	Keep	Efficacy & Research Pearson North	Needs to be re-examined for
0:02:35	1	Keep	Higher Education Efficacy Studies	Needs to be re-examined for
0:02:01	1	Keep	PreK-12 Education Efficacy Studies	Needs to be re-examined for
0:02:05	1	Keep	Research in Higher Education	Needs to be re-examined for
0:02:17	1	Keep	Research in PreK-12 Education	Needs to be re-examined for
0:00:43	1	Keep	Pearson Higher Education	
0:01:33	1	Keep		

ANALYSIS

(or, “What does it all MEAN?”)

A **findings report** is a record of all the information you learned during discovery.

A **situation analysis** summarizes your thinking about your findings, highlighting *what's important* and *why*.

**Now you must
confirm,
decide, and/or
align on ...**

1. Goals that will inform the strategy
2. Prioritized audiences
3. Which inputs will inform strategy
(and which will not)

Let's try this framework!

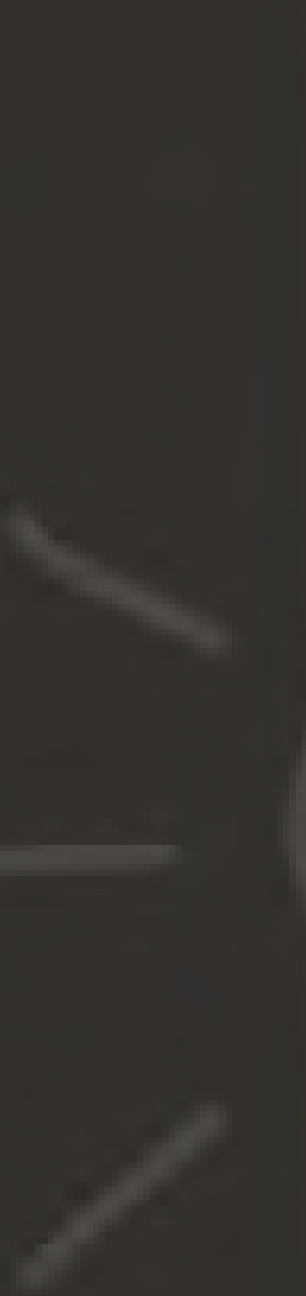
Strengths provides an area to list everything done right either individually or as an organization. This section contains both strengths within the organization and external strengths, such as client relationships.

Weaknesses are aspects of your business that detract from the value you offer or place you at a competitive disadvantage. You need to enhance these areas in order to compete with your best competitor.

Opportunities are factors that represent reasons your business is likely to prosper. Such as being able to expand a franchise into a new city, while some may fall into your lap such as another country opening up its market to foreign business.

Threats include external factors beyond your control that could place your strategy, or the business itself, at risk. You have no control over these, but you may benefit by having contingency plans to address them if they should occur.





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WEAKNESS

You are creating half as much content for your primary audience as you are for less important audiences.

THREAT (or, risks)

- Misuse of writing resources
- Perception that you don't care about the primary audience
- Primary audience unable to find content that is relevant to them

OPPORTUNITY

Do user research to better understand users' needs along the customer journey so you can spend your writing time and budget on fixing or creating the content most likely to lead to conversions.

3 weaknesses = many opportunities

- What content is currently performing well (analytics, user feedback, competition)? Why?
- Where are things optimized for the current environment (content, tools, workflow)? How do you know?
- Where is the organization aligned on content purpose and priority?

STRENGTHS

- What content is underperforming or ROTting? Why?
- How is the content failing to meet user needs or business/team objectives?
- Where are there disconnects among stakeholders? Why?

WEAKNESSES

OPPORTUNITIES

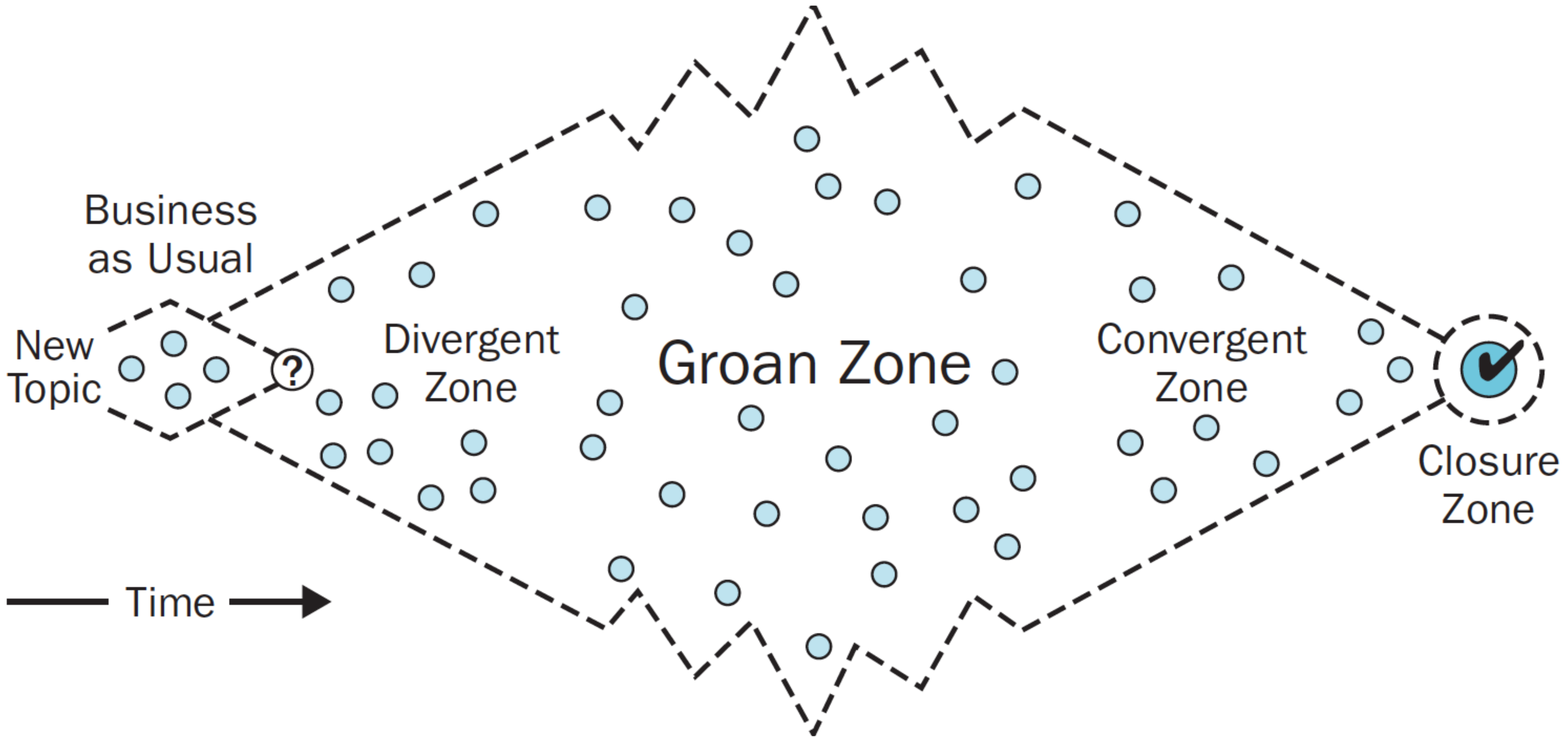
- Where are the *key areas* of content-focused efforts you see providing the most value to your **users**? Why?
- Where are the *key areas* of content-focused efforts you see providing the most value to your **business**? Why?

THREATS

- If you don't take action on these key opportunities, what are the risks?
- What information are you missing that you should have prior to making decisions on strategy?

Here is your analysis outline!

1. Project scope and purpose
2. Business/team goals
3. Priority audience needs
4. Themes (e.g. outdated CMS, lack of resources, no user research, competing priorities), to include:
 - S, W, O or T
 - Proof points
 - Risk of not addressing
5. Recommended next steps (e.g. get research, complete full content audit, move forward with setting strategy)
6. Sign off



3. Setting Strategy

Here's where content strategy sits.

Goal

This is *shared* with the larger organization—our work must ladder up to a common goal.

Content strategy

What direction the [website/product/marketing] content will *and will not* take to reach the goal.

Objectives

What measurable, content-related outcomes the team must work to achieve.

Tactics

Activities and tools the team will use to complete their objectives.

WHAT IS AN OBJECTIVE?

OBJECTIVES ARE A SERIES OF SMALLER TARGETS THAT MUST BE HIT IN ORDER TO REACH THE GOAL.*

*And they **MUST** align with strategy. BOOM.

Objectives are **milestones** in your strategy that mark progress towards your goal.

Example:

Strategy: We will build a new website from the ground up, putting user satisfaction at the center of our efforts.

Objective #1: Conduct rigorous user research.

Objective #2: Audit content across all properties.

Objective #3: Define CMS business requirements.

First:

**Create your
strategy
statement.**

In x timeframe, we'll:

- a. [address weakness *or* pursue opportunity
- b. by following this path, so that
- c. we'll achieve this (or these) goals

Then:

**Create your
strategy
objectives.**

**Based on strategy, priority projects and/
or activity outcomes during x timeframe
will be:**

- a. project/activity
- b. project/activity
- c. project/activity

Example

Goal: By 2020, we will rank in the top 3 of car insurance companies as rated by [whatever institution does that].

Strategy: In 2018, we will improve brand perception by rebuilding our website, putting user satisfaction at the center of our efforts.

Objective #1: Conduct rigorous user research.

Objective #2: Audit content across all properties.

Objective #3: Define new platform business requirements.

Now you.

4. Implementation and evaluation

Project prioritization scorecard

WHAT IS A TACTIC?

A **TACTIC** IS AN ACTIVITY OR TOOL YOU USE TO ACHIEVE YOUR OBJECTIVE.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION**BUSINESS
IMPACT****USER
BENEFIT****TOTAL**

Rewrite About Us section.

1

1

2

Develop a taxonomy for thought leadership content (blog posts, expert videos, white papers, and so on), and tag it all so it can be surfaced in relevant places throughout the site.

2

3

5

Create a single source for product details for use wherever that information is published.

3

2

5

Develop an interactive timeline of the company's history.

1

1

2

Messaging framework

First Impression

Value Statement

Proof

What first impression do we want our audiences to have when they interact with our content?

“Oh good. This will be easy.”

What do we want our audience to know or believe about the value we provide?

“I know I can be confident installing a Company X system I haven’t worked with before. They make it easy.”

What will demonstrate that what we want them to know or believe is true?

“They get how I think about my work, so there’s no trial and error when I’m looking for information.”

“People like me contribute to their support content, so I trust the information is accurate.”

“I don’t have to read through long articles to get just the bit of information I need.”

“They’ve thought through the ways I might use their products that weren’t the original purpose and help me configure them in new ways.”

Desired Impression	I want to be a part of this.			
Primary Message	Code for America helps governments do technology better so that they can succeed in a digital world by connecting people with problems to solve, making solutions available for others to use and evolve, and curating government technology best practices and resources to support the work.			
	Convert	Connect	Empower	
Key Concepts	Code for America focuses its efforts on projects with government partners in four key areas that present significant opportunities for technology improvements that can help governments serve citizens more effectively and efficiently.	Code for America connects people with problems, from developers contributing a bit of code, to digital experts solving a specific problem where they live or committing to a Code for America focus area fellowship engagement, to private sector employees making the shift to working for government.	Code for America believes that sharing what we and our partners produce to solve important problems so that other government entities can use and evolve it is one of the most important ways to help governments do better with technology.	Code for America pulls together best practices, playbooks, and toolkits and other resources for government technology projects to help all government organizations, whether official partners or not, improve technology to serve citizens more effectively and efficiently.
Proof	<p>For our government to truly serve the people, it needs to do two things well: create policy (decide what to do and who to do it for), and deliver services (bring the policy to life).</p> <p>Code for America pairs government organizations with technology and digital experts in four key areas with high potential to help governments serve its citizens better with technology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health • Safety and Justice • Communications and engagement • Economic Development 	<p>If you have the time, skills governments need, and desire to help make the government work for its citizens by improving technology, there's something you can do.</p> <p>You can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Join a brigade • Find a civic tech issue • Apply for a fellowship • Work in government 	<p>If we've solved the problem already, that work is yours to use and evolve, whether you're a fellow, brigade member, government employee, or anyone else working on a civic tech issue.</p> <p>We know what works because we test it with end users. Some of our most successful projects have been spun off as independent companies and re-used and evolved by multiple government organizations.</p> <p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fire hydrant app • <spin-off> 	<p>We've pulled together proven best practices that all government organizations can take advantage of in their work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User Centered Design • Community Participation • Iterative Development • Data-Driven Decision Making • Open Government • Team Building • Technology Choices <p>In addition, our teams and partners have created toolkits and playbooks, and other resources that save time and money in your work to do government technology better.</p>
Related Content	High impact example for each area with outcomes	Examples of problems solved by people and teams who believe in the call	Additional examples of successful products and work available for re-use.	Examples of toolkits, playbooks, etc. (e.g., Boulder)
Calls to Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Become a government partner → Find out how to get involved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Join a brigade of people → Find a civic tech issue on git.hub → Apply for a fellowship → Work in government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Find out if we've solved a problem like yours before 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Learn about best practices to build 21st Century Government → Find a resource for your project or problem

Voice and tone

BRAND PERSONALITY SPECTRUM

Personable and friendly	Corporate, professional
Spontaneous, high energy	Careful thinking, planning
Modern or high tech	Classic and traditional
Cutting edge	Established
Fun	Serious
Accessible to all	Upscale

Your voice is...

Empowering

Write like this...

"When posting your advertisements, ask yourself if you've selected newspapers, journals, websites and mailing lists that reach a diverse pool of applicants."

- Sample text

Not like this...

"Warning: you must select the appropriate media to reach a diverse pool of applicants. Failing to do so will jeopardize your hunt for talent."

- Text from current site

Why?

Your mandate is to assist applicants in achieving their goals. The process should feel inviting, not threatening.

INNOVATIVE

We offer specialized solutions that adapt to your needs, backed by the technological advancements we make first.

STRAIGHTFORWARD

We communicate clearly, even when the message is complicated.

RELIABLE

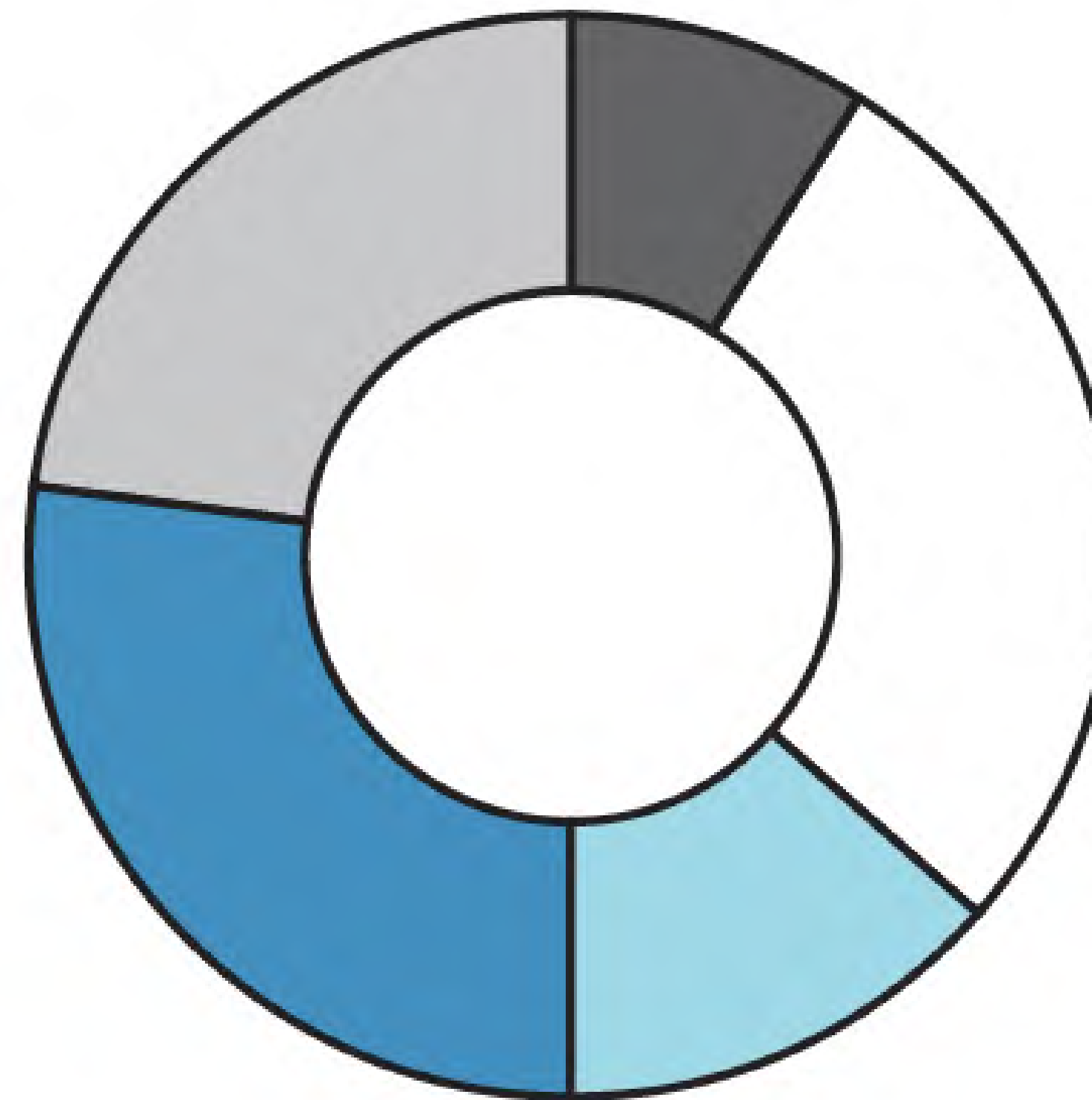
We don't jump onto the latest trends, unless we set them. Our approach is rooted in deep research and strong, proven processes.

EXPERIENCED

We've been doing this a long time, and we've always done it well.

SMART

We are your trusted resource for industry knowledge and trends, whether you're a client, prospect, or casual visitor.



- Innovative
- Straightforward
- Reliable
- Experienced
- Smart

Voice & Tone

CONTENT TYPES

Success Message

App Copy

Company Newsletter

Blog

App Copy 2

Public Site

Video Tutorial

Guide

Twitter, Facebook

Knowledge Base

Guide 2

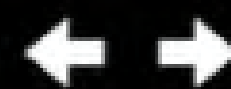
Blog 2

Create Account Form

Before you write for MailChimp, it's important to think about our readers. Though our voice doesn't change much, our tone adapts to our users' feelings. This guide will show you how that works.

[Get Started](#)

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USER

I love reading news from the MailChimp office, and I always look forward to the experiments and stories they share in their newsletters.

USER'S FEELINGS

Admiration

Curiosity

Trust

Interest

Surprise

TIPS

- ✓ Our most loyal users read the company newsletter. Treat them like friends.
- ✓ Be casual but helpful.

MAILCHIMP

Leave it to a slightly weird, independent record label to transform an antiquated idea. Asthmatic Kitty's taken their street teams beyond telephone-pole flyers—they send rewarding emails that deliver exclusive content to superfans.

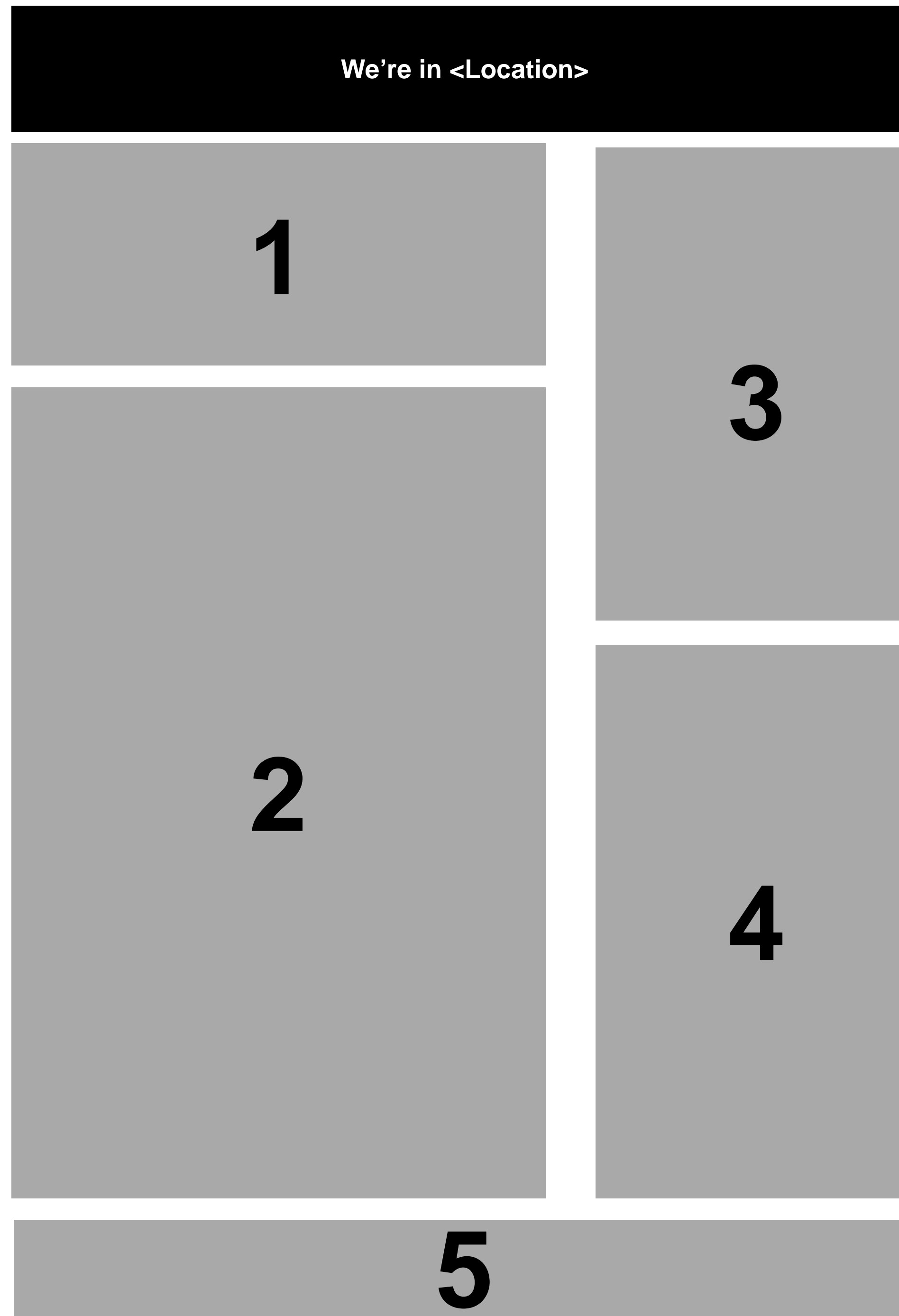
Documenting content requirements

Page table

- Extension of the content wireframe to provide more specific details for SMEs, stakeholders, and writers.
- In addition to directional content and messaging, can include any items that are helpful to your writers, stakeholders and SMEs, publishers, etc.
- Use to get alignment on page contents from stakeholders and SMEs before writing begins.
- Gives writers the context they need to create on-strategy content.
- Lets stakeholders let go of the words and focus on completeness, accuracy, and overarching messages.
- Can be built to fit your process — from a Word document, to a tool like Gather Content, to right there in the CMS.

Page Title	
Template	
Meta Description	
Primary User Story	
User Questions	
Proof Points	
Priority 1 Component:	
Priority 2 Component:	
Priority 3 Component:	
Content Owner/SME	
Maintenance Schedule	
Questions/Considerations	

Annotated wireframe



We're in <Location>

Location landing page

Objective: Introduce prospective clients in the <location> area to the services offered, industries served and give them confidence we can help them with their needs.

1 - Short introduction to the **location** that's focused on how we help companies attract and retain clients for long-term engagements.

2 - Overview of the **services** offered through the location. Each service includes a straightforward headline and a one-to-two sentence client benefit-focused summary of the service. Headings are linked to the service detail pages.

Only services available through the location should appear.

3 - Listing of the **industries** this location has specific expertise in. Each industry item includes a straightforward name like Healthcare and a one-sentence description of our expertise. Items are linked to the industry expertise pages.

Only industries for which this location has expertise should appear.

4 - Up to two **case study** teasers for clients who do business with this location. Each teaser should contain the company name and logo and a short value-proposition-focused description of the results we helped them achieve.

Only case studies for this location should appear.

5 - **CTA** to get in touch with the solutions manager to discuss their specific needs and determine whether it makes sense to partner.

Content review tools

ATTRIBUTE	CELL VALUES	RESEARCH QUESTION	WHAT YOU'LL LOOK FOR
Audience	C-Level Manager Media Unclear	Who does the content appear to be written for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Call to action (CTA) that suggests a role Level of complexity Nature of the content
Voice and tone	Yes Somewhat No	Does the content portray the desired voice and tone?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content that clearly embodies our defined voice and tone attributes of x, x, and x.
Clarity	Yes Somewhat No	Is the message conveyed clearly and effectively?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Descriptive title and headings Logical information hierarchy Plain language Persuasive CTAs
Readability	Yes Somewhat No	Does the content employ writing, style, and formatting best practices?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simple, short sentences Little to no jargon Headings and lists Active voice

REVIEWER INSTRUCTIONS

- Before reviewing the content itself, please take a moment to read the page objective and primary use cases the content is meant to address.
- As you're reviewing, please make notes about whether the information is accurate and complete. It's not necessary to edit the content. We'll incorporate changes based on your feedback as appropriate in the next draft.
- Provide the feedback using the comment functionality in Word or in the comments sections of this form.
- Please do not modify the text in the Word document.
- You don't have to worry about grammar or typos; the proofer will take care of that.

QUESTION	YES	NO
Does the content accurately reflect the features and benefits of the product?		
Comments:		
QUESTION	YES	NO
Is any important information missing?		
Comments:		

FOR WRITERS AND EDITORS

X	REVIEW ATTRIBUTES
	The content supports our strategy to <do this> for <these people> so that <this happens>.
	The content demonstrates one or more proof points from our messaging framework.
	The content addresses users' likely tasks or information.
	It is clear what action(s) the user can or should take next.
	The call to action is prominent and appropriate.

Measuring success

WHAT IS A TARGET?

TARGETS ARE QUANTITATIVE OR QUALITATIVE DATA THAT MEASURE WHETHER OR NOT AN OBJECTIVE IS ACHIEVED.

BUSINESS KPI

Member Acquisition

CONTENT PRIORITIES

- Demonstrate the value the association provides for professionals just entering the profession or industry.
- Describe the benefits of becoming an association member.

METRIC**QUANTITATIVE OR QUALITATIVE****METHOD(S)****FREQUENCY**

Number of new member sign-ups from website

Quantitative

Analytics

Monthly

Top paths to sign-up page

Quantitative

Analytics

Monthly

Clear membership-related CTAs when appropriate

Qualitative

Heuristic Assessment

Annually

Messages about the value for early-career professionals

Qualitative

Heuristic Assessment

Annually

User satisfaction with website content

Quantitative

User Feedback (survey)

Quarterly

User comprehension of membership benefits

Qualitative

User Feedback (in-person)

Biannually

Business KPI

Content Objectives

List a KPI or business goal you can influence with content:

List up to three content objectives that will help you influence the goal or KPI you listed:

-
-
-

Metric

Type

Method(s)

Frequency

List things you can measure to determine whether content is influencing the KPI.

Indicate whether this is a quantitative or qualitative measurement?

List the method(s) you'll use to gather data on this metric.

Note how often you'll collect this data.

Congratulations!

You can do content
strategy now.

GO DO IT!



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