

Excerpts from:

The Truth About Content:

Broken Dreams and the Big Fix



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**Content strategy guides the
creation, delivery, and governance
of useful, usable content.**

Content design



Editorial

Experience

Content Strategy

Structure

Process

Systems design

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



- Define
- Prioritize
- Integrate
- Systematize
- Measure

Systems design

1. Reset.
2. Get aligned.
3. (Actually) know your audience.
4. Establish common systems and standards.
5. Beware the silver bullet.

2. Get aligned.

Vision	Ideal future state
Mission	What we exist to do
Goal	Long-term measurable outcomes
Strategy	Path to success
Objective	Shorter-term measurable outcomes
Tactic	Activities to achieve objectives
Target	Metrics for success

3. (Actually) know your audience.

- Phone interviews
- Onsite interviews
- Usability testing
- Website polls
- Social listening
- Keyword trends
- Website search analysis
- Customer service conversations

**4. Establish common
systems and standards.**

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

**THE TECHNOLOGY
IS NOT THE THING.**



Gord Roberts

@GordinaryWords

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Replying to @halvorson

I am **so tired** of trying to dissuade people from attacking basic content problems with [latest technology fad].

I can't even AI right now. I'm still recovering from "mindless pivot to video" and "cosmetic website redesign".

7:07 PM - 28 Feb 2018

- ✓ Reliable source of data and content
- ✓ Accurate information that's suited to the application
- ✓ Framework for organizing the information

1. Structure your content.

2. Write like a person.

3. Clean up your house.

“ There’s a deeply-held view within technology culture that people are the problem that technology is going to fix ...

– Gerry McGovern

“Quality Information Requires Quality People”

“ ... Technology can help, but without quality people, technology just helps you fill the garbage dump faster.

– Gerry McGovern
“Quality Information Requires Quality People”

Humans

~~Content~~ first.