To: Dr Jiaxin Zhang

From: Trista Acker, Mallory Guilstorf, Lilliana Hernandez, Eylandra Thomas

Date: March 21st, 2025

Subject: Content audit report

Introduction

This content audit will be going over our research evaluating the technical communications website in order to put together an examination that encourages user engagement. Additionally, we interviewed one of the many stakeholders connected to the technical communications department to further support our justifications.

We presented our knowledge of SEO and design to evaluate the website and how to implement these ideas to improve the website as a whole.

Some of the main topics covered will be our methods used to understand the department's content strategy. This encompasses the audience and its audience persona. Another topic discussed towards the end will be the findings used to support our recommendations. These include:

- Quantitative data
- Qualitative data
- Systemic data
- Patterns

Our recommendations will include any deficiencies involved in the website that potentially limit activity. Additionally, we will provide justifications to confirm that the changes would make a significant difference with the content strategy.

Currently, the techcomm.unt.edu website is not equipped with the right tools present techcomm students are asking for. The established audience the website is encouraging is students interested in technical communications, when there are many ways the website could benefit technical communications majors that are already invested.

There is a substantial lack of navigation and proper UX design ongoing as well. In order to encourage and keep users on the website, there should be significant differences made with the UI and format.

Methods

In preparation for the TECM website's content audit, our group utilized various research methods to understand the site's current target audience and content strategy. Our research included:

- Interviewing a stakeholder for the site
- Reviewing the site's analytical data
- Developing an audience persona for the site
- Conducting a competitor analysis

We used the findings from our research stage to craft a new and refined content strategy for the department's website. According to our interview with Dr. Cosgrove, the site's current strength is providing general information about the TECM program. However, it is not equipped with specific, precise information that may help current students (e.g., a course catalog). Analytical data told us that the majority of users were English speakers who already had an interest in technical communications.

Therefore, the site currently targets *prospective* students with a preexisting interest in technical communications. In our content strategy, we exert effort to focus on a different audience: *current* TECM students. As of right now, the department's site undermines current students looking for information on things like classes and advising.

Our content strategy would greatly benefit the department's site. Because current students are struggling to find certain information on the website, they are likely to look for it somewhere else. This drives traffic away from the TECM department's website and instead moves it to competitors' sites. Furthermore, if students are unsatisfied with their experience on the site,

they are less likely to return, again, driving away traffic. This dissatisfaction also harms the site's credibility.

Lower traffic is likely also harming the website's popularity and relevance in search engines. By including current students in their target audience, the TECM department's website would generate both organic and direct traffic, therefore leading to more people learning about the TECM department. In turn, the website ranks higher on search engines, making the site visible to an even wider audience.

In summary, targeting current students would increase the flow of traffic to the TECM department's website and help it to build credibility/reliability.

Findings

After doing the content audit, we're going to focus on these main key components:

- Visual Appeal and Design
- Content and Information
- SEO and Accessibility
- Usability and Navigation
- Specific Page Feedback

A lot of the content that we've looked at for the audit wasn't the most appealing. Many pages lacked images or any visual elements, which is not good for accessibility, or the images were outdated and needed to be updated. Even with the pages that included images, they were usually placed awkwardly or needed to be resized. For example, Paul Mireles page on the TECM website isn't visually appealing and would only be used if you were trying to find information, like his email and such.

On some pages the content was mainly bland; they could benefit more if they either had additional information or more engaging content. There are certain pages that lacked essential information like background details or more comprehensive descriptions and some grammatical errors as well.

The content we viewed could be more accessible. Several pages are lacking headings; for example, the TECM Department landing page lacks a lot of H1s and H2s, which hinders its findability. Some pages lack meta descriptions, which is something the TECM landing page also lacks. Keyword optimization could also improve the search engine rankings.

The usability aspect of it does its job, but it can be improved. Inconsistent spacing and formatting can make some pages hard to read. The TECM landing page format makes it feel like you're putting a lot of effort into finding something simple because you're constantly scrolling. Ensure that all links are functional and up-to-date. Some CTA buttons could be better designed to improve user interactions.

The specific page feedback could also use some improvements. The scholarship page works great and is well organized, but it could use more images to enhance user engagement. The ETC page feels bland and could use more images and benefit from descriptions. The Faculty page needs more updated photos, better formatting, and more engaging content. The homepage lacks sincerity and credibility due to the cluttered use of stock imagery and redundant links.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, it's clear that the Technical Communication Department website would benefit from some improvements to its SEO strategy, content, and navigation. SEO is vital, as currently the technical communication website was not a common result when searching up content that the website hosts. While the website is hindered by the university-mandated website template, there are some additions that can be made within the template.

1. Many of the pages that were not missing meta descriptions had either inaccurate or inefficient descriptions. Some pages of the faculty members were not described correctly, often naming other faculty members instead, and many pages of the site had meta descriptions of the exact content on the page, verbatim, which is not efficient for SEO. A meta description should describe the page content with relevant and descriptive keywords in order to be a top-rated search result. Adding in missing meta descriptions of high quality will boost the searchability of the site and its specific pages.

As an example, the Graduate Academic Certificate in Proposal Writing page's meta description is a direct quote from the page, and it is cut off with ellipses. Instead of "You'll learn essential skills for writing winning proposals, including how to conduct customer research, develop persuasive arguments, and manage the proposal development process from …", a description with more words that would fit the would-be search query and describe the page content would be "Discover essential tips and guidelines for writing successful Graduate Academic Certificate (GAC) proposals at UNT. Enhance your proposal writing skills with expert advice and resources."

2. Enhancing the content is vital. From the results of the audit, there was missing vital information, grammatical errors, and non-engaging content. To address these issues, a proofread is necessary for all pages before uploading new or recycled content to improve professionalism and readability. Much of the content is lacking, with entire pages consisting of only one or two sentences with no call-to-actions to inquire more, or there is a lack of direction for the user on where they can inquire more information. The inclusion of background information or external resources would improve the content. Additionally, the content is unengaging. It gives information, with non-descriptive and un-detailed information. Rewriting the tone in which the information is presented will help engage the audience more and encourage the user to follow through with their call to action.

3. The website has some navigational issues. There are some broken links, expired links, and some call-to-action buttons that were misaligned or hard to see. Many pages had large blocks of text and inconsistent spacing and formatting across all pages, so the user would have a hard time knowing instinctively where to begin their browsing of the content on a page. Creating an additional template or guideline for the pages to keep all content in similar formats would improve scalability and navigation of the website, as well as ensure that all links are functional and up-to-date.

Conclusion

UNT's Technical Communication Department website is an informational website that delivers exactly the information that it advertises to offer. While the content could be expanded upon and the searchability of the website improved with the recommendation previously stated, it has well-organized content that allows users to quickly find the information that they need with clear and concise content, effective usability with its interactive elements and clear navigation of primary pages, and does make an effort to provide some relevant information such as providing course information as-well.