DITAProject1

Contents

Chapter 1. Content strategy and business goals

The issues to consider are:

- The real cost of low-cost documentation
- How to create an efficient content development process
- Whether high-quality documentation can lower the cost of technical support
- The most cost-effective way to share technical content across the enterprise

> ✏️ **Note:**
> Ignoring content can have cost implications across the organization.

To implement your project and improve your chances of success, we recommend following this sequence:

1. Identify and interview stakeholders.

2. Define roles and responsibilities.

3. Establish timelines and milestones.

4. Build the content creation system.

5. Convert legacy content.

6. Deliver content.

7. Capture project knowledge.

8. Ensure long-term success.

Creating a business case for your content strategy

Thoroughly assess your content and content development process so that you can understand the gap between the strategy you need and the strategy currently in place.

These instructions will show you how to develop a business case that you can use to show that your company needs a new content strategy.

You may find that your company could save money on content production in the following areas:

1. Automation
2. Reuse
3. Localization

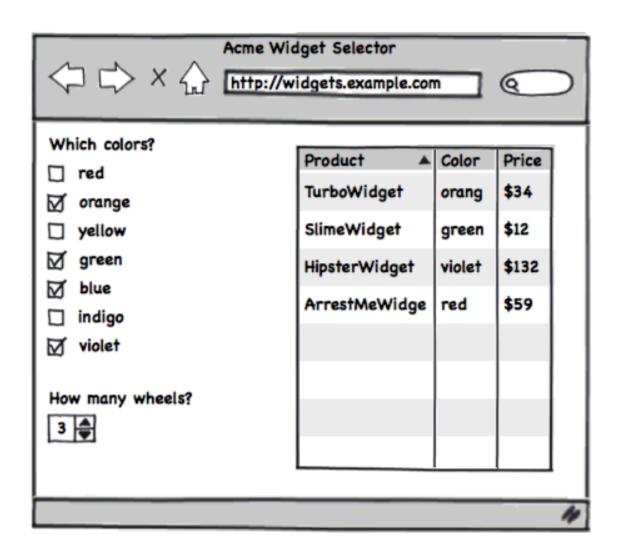# Chapter 2. Supporting marketing with technical content

Tech comm and marcom have long occupied opposite ends of the content spectrum. The stereotype is that tech comm is text-heavy, dense, and badly formatted whereas marcom is shiny, beautiful, and content-free. From there, the debate just intensifies:

Table 1. Marcom versus tech comm: the stereotypes

	Marcom	**Tech comm**
Design or automation?	Design	Automation
How much detail?	As little as possible	As much as possible
Assumed impact on revenue	A lot	None
Primary purpose	Persuade people to buy	Inform people

Give people a friendly interface that lets them quickly narrow down their options and choose the one they want. You don't have to expose all of the fields in the database—just the ones that help people narrow down their choices.

The product list on the right updates as you make selections on the left

Acme Widget Selector

http://widgets.example.com

Which colors?

☐ red

☑ orange

☐ yellow

☑ green

☑ blue

☐ indigo

☑ violet

How many wheels?

3

Product ▲	Color	Price
TurboWidget	orang	$34
SlimeWidget	green	$12
HipsterWidget	violet	$132
ArrestMeWidge	red	$59

Chapter 3. Increasing product visibility

Technical content can help organizations increase the visibility of their products in the marketplace. Officially, technical content is intended for *product customers*—people who buy a product and then look at the documentation.

But one opinion poll indicates that about one-third of buyers [1] look at the documentation before buying a product, and the quality of the documentation will affect their purchasing decision

To reel in new prospects, your content must perform in three different ways: be searchable, findable, and discoverable.

Searchable

Information must be available via an internet search.

Findable

Information must perform well for relevant keywords.

Discoverable

Information must increase the likelihood that people will link to your information.

To read more, go to **Content > Business Goals > Marketing and product visibility > Increasing product visibility**.

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1. Consumer Feelings about Product Documentation," an opinion poll conducted online by Sharon Burton

Chapter 4. Developing a technical content strategy

After reviewing the existing information products, you should have a list of content challenges and ideas for improvement. Here are some common scenarios.

Reuse between technical documentation and training materials

The training department uses reference and task information created by the technical documentation team, but the instructional designers copy and paste instead of linking because the two groups use different, incompatible content creation tools.

HTML output is needed in addition to PDF

Your content may look like this in HTML:

```
<div class="p">You may produce high-value content, such as the following:

<ul class="ul"> <li class="li"><p class="p">Training materials</p></li> <li class="li"><p class="p">White
 papers</p></li>

<li class="li"><p class="p">Knowledge base articles</p></li> </ul> </div>
```

The `<div>` contains the unordered list.

Content is not appropriate for the target audience

> "The information is targeted at the wrong audience. For example, a document intended for patients in a hospital uses complex medical terminology that only medical professionals would understand."

Developing and implementing a content strategy

Create a content strategy.

1. Identify and interview stakeholders.
2. Establish implementation goals and metrics.
3. Define roles and responsibilities
    - Education
    - Development
    - Review
    - Approval
4. Establish timeline and milestones.

Implement your content strategy.

5. Build the content creation system.
6. Convert legacy content.
    ◦ Convert everything into the new system
    ◦ Identify high-priority content and convert it
    ◦ Just-in-time conversion
    ◦ Assess for conversion
    ◦ Convert nothing
7. Deliver Content.

Delivery Methods	Benefits
PDF	Visual design, option to print
HTML	Accessibility, interactivity, responsive design
EPUB	Electronic content when Internet access is unavailable

8. Capture Project Knowledge.
    a. Document your content model, specifications, and best practices.
    b. Provide training to authors on writing in the new environment.
    c. Provide training to staff on maintaining the new system.
9. Ensure long-term success.
    You can tick off the items you listed at the beginning of the project as accomplishments now.

Chapter 5. Managing change

1. Demonstrate value to upper management and those in the trenches.
2. Offer training and knowledge transfer.
    ◦ Classroom training
    ◦ Live web-based training
    ◦ Train the trainer
3. Differentiate between legitimate issues with the new workflow and reflexive recalcitrance.
4. Enlist participants in a pilot project to explain process change.

Good management is critical when a company changes workflow; without it, the implementation of new processes will likely fail. Bad management kills implementations, and things can get ugly for everyone involved.

Without good change management, a percentage of staff who will be dead set against changes on general principle could gain the support of other team members, until almost everyone refuses to use the new system.

When you have managed change successfully, you can start creating useful content in the new system.

Chapter 6. addEntry

The addEntry command is used to enter a new documentation release into the content analysis database.

-addEntry {nLanguage | nVersion | nOutput}

Required?	Parameter	Description
Yes	nLanguage	The language displayed by default
	nVersion	The version of the content displayed by default
	nOutput	The required delivery format