

# GOOD CONTENT IS CONCISE

## *Omit needless content*

Some organizations love to publish lots of content. Perhaps because they believe that having an org chart, a mission statement, a vision declaration, and a corporate inspirational video on the About Us page will retroactively validate the hours and days of time spent producing that content. Perhaps because they believe Google will only bless their work if they churn out dozens of blog posts per week. In most cases, I think entropy deserves the blame: the web offers the space to publish everything, and it's much easier to treat it like a hall closet with infinite stuffing-space than to impose constraints.

So what does it matter if we have too much content? For one thing, more content makes everything more difficult to find. For another, spreading finite resources ever more thinly results in a decline in quality. It also often indicates a deeper problem—publishing *everything* often means “publishing everything we can,” rather than “publishing everything we’ve learned that our users really need.”

There are many ways to discover which content is in fact needless; traffic analysis, user research, and editorial judgment should all play a role. You may also wish to begin with a hit list of common stowaways:

- **Mission statements, vision statements, and core values.** If the people within your organization are genuinely committed to abstract principles, it will show in what they do. The exception is the small number of organizations for whom the mission is the product, as is the case with many charities. Even then, this kind of content should be supplemented with plentiful evidence of follow-through.
  - **Press releases.** These may work for their very narrow intended audience, but putting them undigested onto a website is a perfect example of the how-we’ve-always-done-it mistake.
  - **Long, unreadable legal pages.** Some legal awkwardness is acceptable, but if you want to demonstrate that you respect
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