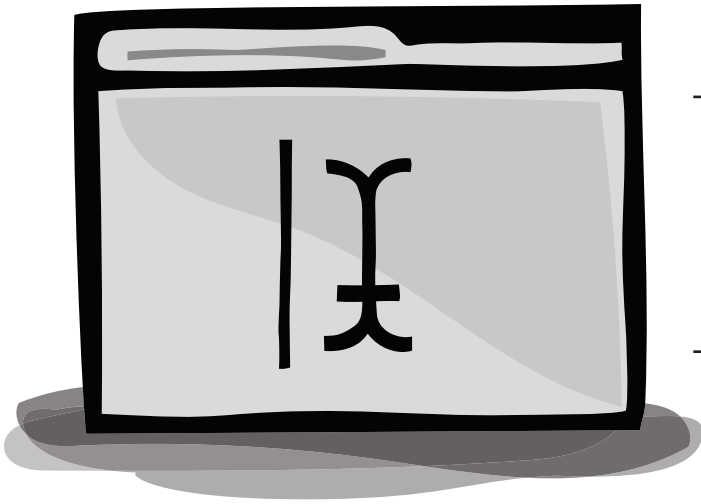


GYMNASIUM

WRITING FOR WEB AND MOBILE

Lesson 4 Handout

Using Data To Write A Language Board



ABOUT THIS HANDOUT

This handout includes the following:

- A list of the core concepts covered in this lesson.
- The assignment(s) for this lesson.
- A list of readings and resources for this lesson including books, articles and websites mentioned in the videos by the instructor, plus bonus readings and resources hand-picked by the instructor.
- A transcript of the lecture videos for this lesson

CORE CONCEPTS

1. After a content workbook has been filled out you should share 3-5 of the most prominent insights to discuss with both your team and client. Present these insights as content problems and potential opportunities.
2. Make 1-3 measurable content recommendations to address the problems and opportunities you have discovered. The goal here is not to present complete solutions, instead you are suggesting ways to test new content immediately.
3. A language board represents the core conversation that a company wants to have with its highest value target customers. It's built upon the existing research and content recommendations and is where "real" content starts to be written.
4. A key component of a language board is writing language that targets conversion points. A conversion point is any point where a (potential) customer could come into contact with your product (such as buying a product or service).
5. A fringe benefit of writing with conversion points in mind is that this also begins to shape the user interaction, information hierarchy and user flow of your website or mobile app. This effectively is the content roadmap and it is always based on real data and language suggested by your users.

ASSIGNMENTS

1. Quiz
2. Document 2-3 key takeaways from your Tougher.Me research
3. Make 1-2 Content Recommendations for each takeaway
4. Create a Language Board for the highest-value Tougher.Me customer
 - What 1-3 things does this customer want from Tougher.Me?
 - What 1-3 questions does she have, and what are our answers?
 - What is/are the conversion(s) we should capture?

RESOURCES

- “Content Strategy,” “Lean Startup,” and “Refresh” events (typically you can find these all on meetup.com (<http://www.meetup.com/>))
- UIE.com (<http://www.uie.com>) - Sign up for UIEtips (newsletter), listen to podcasts, and register for their virtual seminars and in-person conferences
- “The Digital Crown: Winning at Content on the Web” by Ahava Leibtag (<http://ahamediaigroup.com/thedigitalcrown/>)
- Content Strategy for Mobile” by Karen McGrane (<http://www.abookapart.com/products/content-strategy-for-mobile>)
- “Interviewing Users: How to Uncover Compelling Insights” by Steve Portigal (<http://rosenfeldmedia.com/books/interviewing-users/>)

INTRODUCTION

(Note: This is an edited transcript of the Writing for Web and Mobile lecture videos. Some students work better with written material than by watching videos alone, so we're offering this to you as an optional, helpful resource. Some elements of the instruction, like live coding, can't be recreated in a document like this one.)

Welcome back to Writing for Web and Mobile. We are going to dig into Lesson Four now, Using Data to Create a Language Board.

As a quick reminder, at the end of this lesson you are going to have an assignment and a brief quiz, and it's going to be great. You're going to love it. If you have any questions along the way, you can always add them to the forum, and I or one of your classmates will answer them.

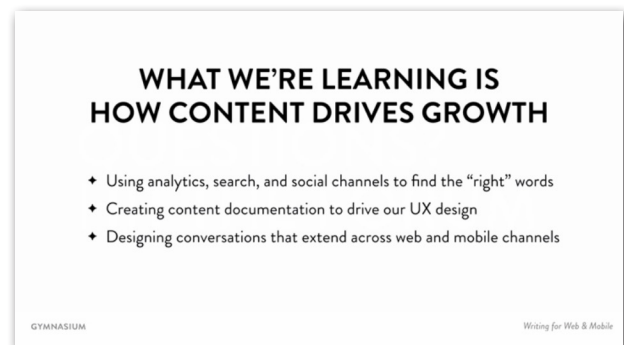
As a quick recap, what we're learning is how content drives growth. And part of that is using analytics to make those decisions. So we've dug into Google Analytics, we've looked at Google Search, we've looked at Google Keyword Planner, and we've also looked into social networks to find where audiences are and to find out what words they're using.

Now we've created the Content Workbook. That's the basic documentation that will drive our UX design and center our discussions with our stakeholders and our teams. The next step is going to be designing conversations from the work we've done so far in analytics and in documenting what we've learned, so that we can extend across web and mobile channels a really fantastic, cohesive user experience.

LOOKING FOR KEY THEMES

So now that we have documented what we've learned in our Content Workbook, it's time to go through all that and look for key themes. We want to think about these key themes in terms of data. What have we learned so far that's measurable or maybe should be measured?

So let's pull up that Content Workbook that we've been doing so far with Barbell Boosters. We see that we've captured all of our analytics research. Now, what I'm going to do is go through everything that I've got here in the Content Workbook, and I'm going to highlight the things that are measured or should be measured.



In this case, for example, we're going to highlight "Facebook" as the "top referrer." This is something that should absolutely inform how we design the conversation. We also want to highlight that the "site doesn't get enough traffic yet." We want to do more measurement here, right? We want more keywords to bring more people to the site.

Let's also highlight here that "jack" is definitely the "most competitive term." This is going to inform our content, the content we write, just like all of these key terms here will, too: "weight training," "strength training." This is all measurable keyword traffic.

Basically everything under here, Facebook, is measurable. These are the number of followers in various groups related to our space. We want to access these people. We want to "measure how active they would be" and "whether or not they would actually become paying customers." So let's highlight that.

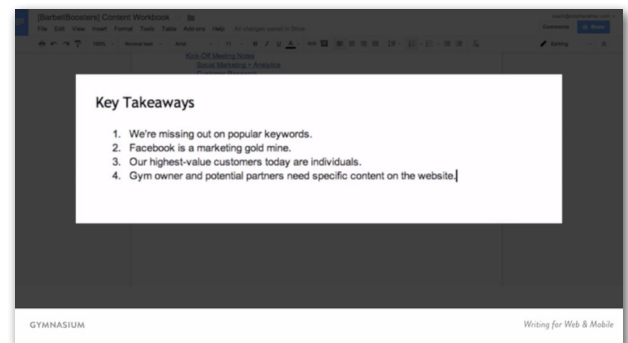
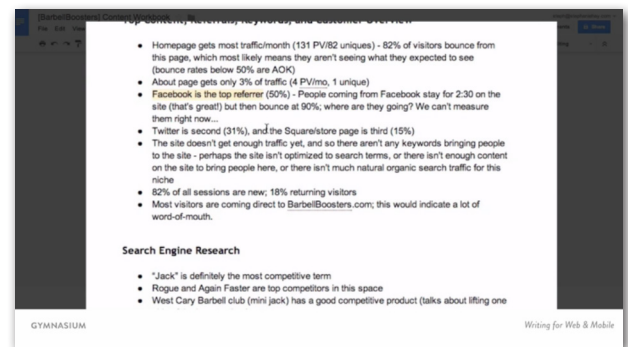
Let's go ahead and scroll down just quickly to the kick-off meeting notes to see if there's anything measurable in here. There certainly is here. We found out from Shay who the customer is: 1/3 of them are gyms; 2/3 of them are individuals and that's probably about it.

Everything here-- CrossFit, facility owners, gym members, even the secondary audiences, partners and manufacturers-- we want to measure whether or not they're making purchases or submitting contact forms. But at the end of the day, we don't need to actually highlight everything based on the customer research, just the most prominent insights that we could find.

Now we're going to go ahead and document what those insights are-- three to five most prominent customer insights that we can discuss with our team and client. Because what we don't want to do is have everyone form these high-level stereotypes about who our audience is-- like this giant dude lifting these giant weights. We want to get detailed about customer behavior.

So now that we've gone through and highlighted everything, let's go ahead and scroll back up the top here and make a new section called "Key Takeaways." This is the information that we have learned from the data, and we're going to form three to five of them.

The top one is that we're missing out on popular keywords. The second one here is that Facebook is huge in terms of being a marketing goldmine-- of having great marketing potential. A third one is that our highest-value customer is the individual. This is something we definitely have to talk about with Shay. Finally, the gym owner and potential partners don't



have content specific to them on the existing website, but probably should have because that will help us measure how many people are actually coming to the site for them.

Now these are the key takeaways, but we're not quite done yet because we want to add some additional context. We're going to discuss these with the client and with the team. This is one of the areas where you just need to use the data at your disposal to substantiate your takeaways, not to sell them, right? So don't go into too much detail. Just use the data that's already at your disposal that informed these takeaways in the first place.

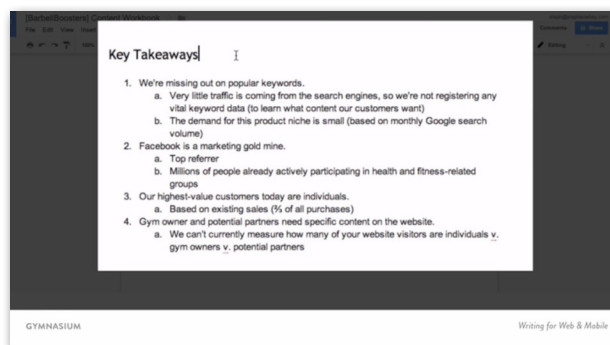
So for example, missing out on popular keywords. We know for sure that very little traffic is coming from the search engines because we just learned that in Google Analytics. We're not even registering any vital keyword data to learn what content is bringing our customers to the site.

Secondly, we learned in Google Keyword Planner that the demand for this particular product niche is pretty small based on monthly keyword search volume. So you know, again we're talking about the 15,000 mark rather than the million mark, right? So that's going to help set Shay's expectations.

When it comes to Facebook, we want to document that it is the top referrer. We already know that most people are coming to this website from Facebook, but secondly, that millions of people are already actively participating in health-and-fitness-related groups on Facebook. So again, just using the data we've already gathered to substantiate our takeaways.

Thirdly, the highest-value customer today are individuals. You can't argue with the fact that of existing sales, 2/3 of them are by individuals.

Finally, we can't measure how many of the website visitors are individuals versus gym owners or potential partners right now because there are only two pages: a home page and an about page. We want to document what potential opportunities there are to remedy this, to get more insight into how many gym owners and potential partners are coming to the site.



MAKING EARLY CONTENT RECOMMENDATIONS

So now that we have documented some key takeaways, what are we going to do with them? Well, we're going to make some content recommendations even though it's early in the process. We're going to do this because we want to make sure that we are addressing the problems or opportunities that we've just documented based on data.

We're going to try and get everyone on the same page about which content problems are worth solving and that's why we make these content recommendations early in the process. If we jump back into the Content Workbook, we're just going to add content recommendations as a secondary part to this existing heading here, "Key Takeaways Plus Content Recommendations".



Now let's go ahead and add another bullet point here called "Recommendations," and let's think about how we can get more people onto the site if we used more keywords. Let's go ahead and add that as a recommendation: "using keywords to boost SEO" (that's search engine optimization). We're going to do that through using keywords in title tags, meta descriptions, the body copy of the existing pages, and even blog posts. Let's say we go ahead and create a blog based on what Shay had suggested early in the kick-off meeting.

Those keywords would need to have some traffic, have some real volume behind them organically and we've already done that research, right? "Weightlifting," "weight training," "strength training," "CrossFit training"—these are all keywords we know have pretty good search, 15,000 or so per month.

So just as a sidebar, when it comes to SEO, the things that we're really paying attention to here are the title tags. This is the headline you see when you search for something. We want to make sure that's chock-full of good keywords.

We also want our meta description to be chock-full of good keywords. So this is an example of one that we would love to be, right? Of course, it's Wikipedia. They're great at this. But we're going to get better at it. So if we make sure that the pages on our website and all of the blog posts have great keywords, we will attract more users.

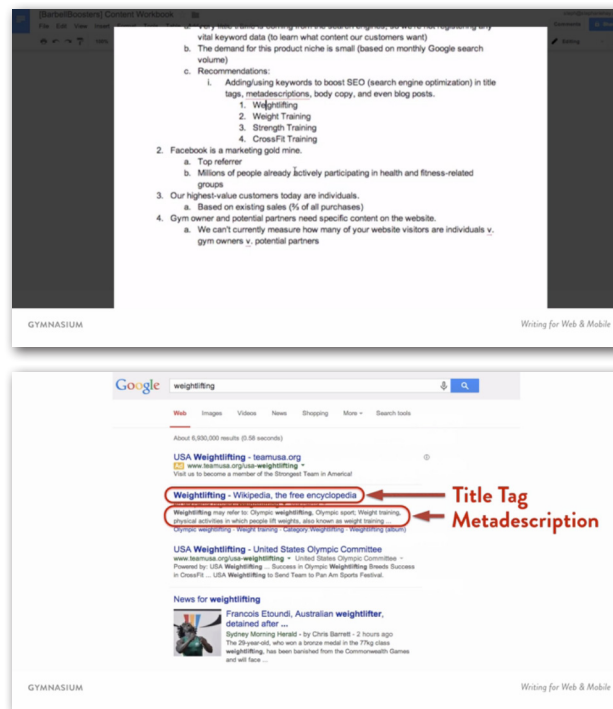
Another reason why we make these early content recommendations is because we're trying to save ourselves from unnecessary expenses. There might be some things that we can do to the existing website, or some existing content tests that we could run, that will help us start to make a difference—start to sell more Barbell Boosters for Shay without having to do a full redesign. Remember, we're trying to get everyone on the same page about what content problems we're trying to solve.

So let's think about that. What are some things that we could be doing right now? Well, Facebook is a perfect example. This is our second key takeaway here. Under Facebook, we could make a recommendation like this: Liking the groups that we've already found, and we've documented them below in the social research Facebook section below. These are the groups that have great followings, right?

Now what if we liked those groups, or Shay liked those groups, and then added content to the conversations already happening in those groups, like one post a day, for example, or a comment or a Like per day, right? Something that would be reasonable for her to start with.

I want to make this extra point here: Don't directly sell Barbell Boosters unless it's a natural part of the conversation.

Another reason why we make these content recommendations is so that we can suggest ways to test content, right? So this is another way of saving on unnecessary expense and trying to get the needle to move quicker, trying to affect that bottom line quicker.



Facebook-- this particular takeaway is another great opportunity for testing content-- so I'm going to make that as a note. As a potential test, what if we created a group on Facebook? This is just an idea, remember? This is the first week of the project here. Something like let's say "Proper Technique," right? A "Proper Technique" Facebook group or something, and Shay curated or shared articles that the target audience might find helpful. Something that could become a natural marketing channel for Barbell Boosters. Something that all those muscle and fitness groups might actually be interested in, because there are huge numbers there, right? So this might be something that could be a low-fidelity way of trying to create a marketing channel of qualified users.

Another potential test that we could run, or another way to save on unnecessary expense, is under this third takeaway. When it comes to individuals, what if we recommended writing the home page, the existing home page, to describe the problem that individuals have that Barbell Boosters solve? So for example, what if we included language on the home page around the lifetime guarantee, the time and energy savings that exists, the portability, all of the reasons that we know already individuals are buying Barbell Boosters?

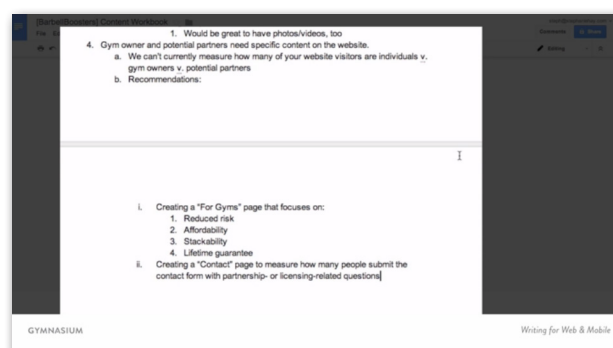
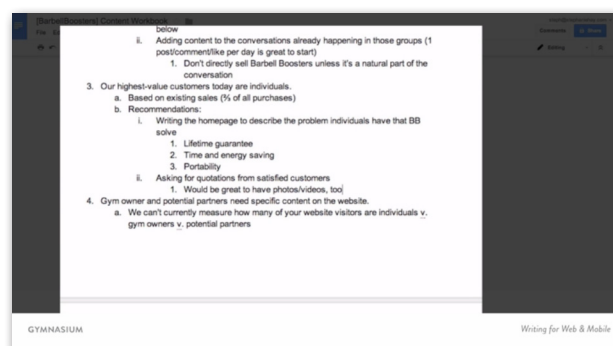
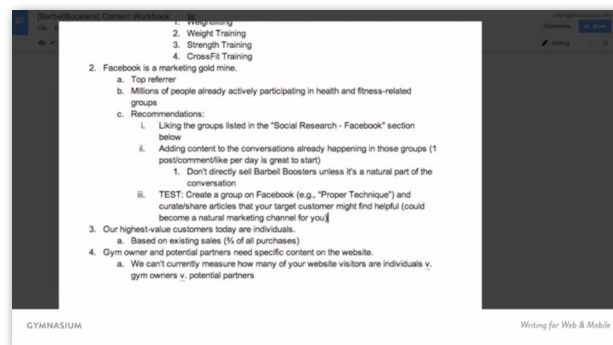
Secondly, what if we asked for quotes from satisfied customers? I mean, this would be great. To have photos and videos would be gravy-- additional ways to sell the Barbell Boosters.

Finally, we could do something similar for gym owners and potential partners, right? We could recommend creating a "For Gyms" page right now that focuses on the problems that we solve for those gyms, like reduced risk, affordability, stackability, lifetime guarantee-- all the things that we know are the reasons why they're buying from us already.

Secondly, we could create a "Contact" page to measure how many people are submitting a contact form. These would be people who might be partners or potential manufacturers, or licensing-related questions-- the sorts of visitors who are coming to the site that we're currently not measuring, but ultimately we want to try to convert.

So these are examples of content recommendations and we've made in the first week of the project that we could implement right now, or that we could put on some sort of marketing plan to start testing content.

This is so crucial because all of us involved are now starting to really wrap our heads around this project and we haven't even started talking about design. We haven't started talking about the look and the feel, or anything that



might distract us away from making sure that we're designing a conversation at this early stage of the game. These content recommendations-- maybe I don't need to remind you of this, but I can't help it because I'm so excited about it-- they're based on real customer data.

This is not just something that someone came up with and hope will become viral. They're actually qualified recommendations that will help companies grow. This is meant to help Shay sell more Barbell Boosters. It's not a creative endeavor in the way that it's just throwing something against the wall and hoping it sticks. It's driven by real customer data. We're feeling pretty excited about it. Maybe we could be like Arnold, and go out on the beach right now and have a nice drink.

Instead, we're going to go jump right into the Language Board. Because that's the next step. Now that we've made all the content recommendations, and everybody's on the same page that these are the problems that we want to solve for, it's time to start writing real content.

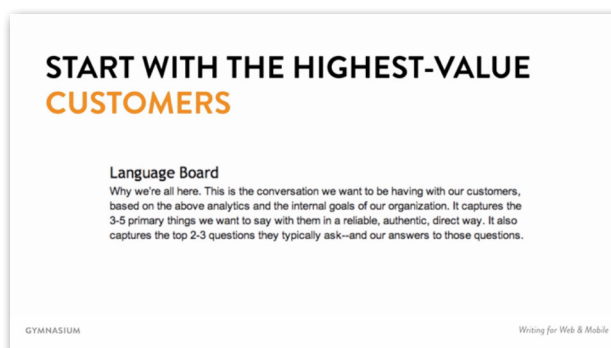
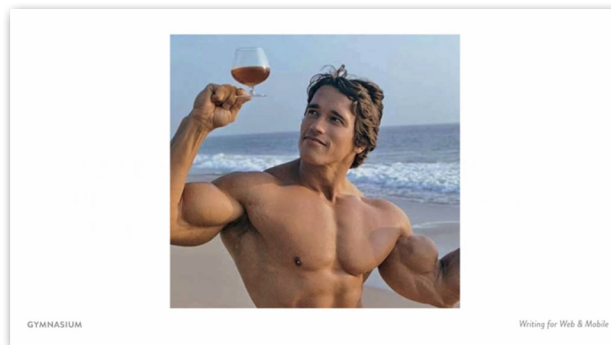
THE LANGUAGE BOARD, AND HOW TO MAKE ONE

The qualities of the Language Board are these: They outline the conversation we want to have with those target customers and they build on the existing research and content recommendations we've already made. They're where we start writing real content. So this starts getting into the actual messaging that we want to use whenever we're talking with our target customers. At the end of the day, it serves as a jumping-off point for our Conversation Map, which we'll go over in the next two lessons.

The core point of all of this is that we are going to be doing some early writing work here to get into the habit of designing for a specific majority. We're not trying to document every possible customer here. We're not trying to design the world. We're trying to get at our highest-value customer and have a reliable, authentic, direct conversation with them.

So that's actually where we're going to start-- with the Language Board. This is another section of the Content Workbook, and the Language Board captures the three to five primary things we want to say to that highest-value customer in a reliable, authentic, direct way. The Language Board also captures the two to three questions that that particular customer typically asks, and our answers to those questions.

So we know when it comes to Barbell Boosters that individuals are our highest-value customer. So let's go ahead and create a section called "Language Board" and write "Individuals." But we also know we're going to want to do the same thing for "Gym Owners," and finally, for "Manufacturers"



slash “Potential Partners.” So we’re going to go ahead and document all three of those audiences and then start digging into the conversation we want to have with each of them.

So our highest-value customer we know based on sales, are these super-strong individuals, right? People who wear striped socks and have crazy awesome bodies and get yelled at by other people standing around them apparently. These are people we want to sell Barbell Boosters to, and they’re the people who want to buy them, too.

What do they want when they come to the site? Well, this is the kind of conversation we would expect to have with them when they arrive at our front door. Focus on weightlifting, not weight loading, with Barbell Boosters. What do they get when they buy them? Well, they can quickly slide weights on and off the bar without wasting time and energy. OK, cool.

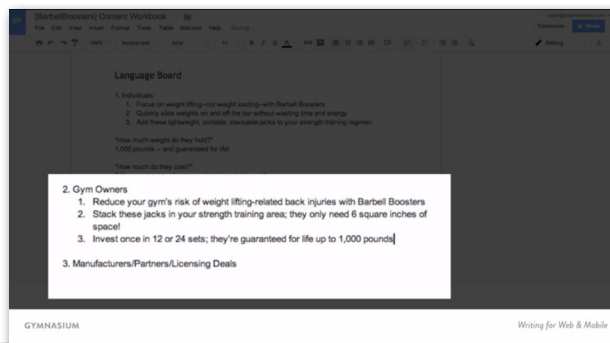
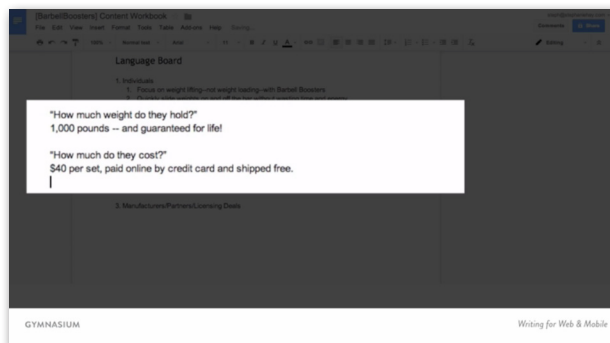
How do they buy them? Well, they can add these lightweight, portable, stackable-- you see we’re using key-words we’re using benefits here-- jacks to your strength-training regimen. And now just through those three statements here, we have effectively captured the entire conversation that we might need to have with someone in order to tell them what Barbell Boosters are, why they should care about them, and what to do in order to buy them.

So what are the questions that they have that we haven’t actually addressed yet, and how do we answer them? Well, individuals have asked these sorts of questions: “How much weight do they hold?” So we’re going to answer that: “1,000 pounds-- and guaranteed for life.” They might ask this: “How much do they cost?” Well, “\$40 per set, paid online by credit card and shipped for free.”

This Language Board now captures the core conversation we want to have with those individuals, including the questions and our answers to their questions that would help them to make a purchase. So that’s cool, right? The highest-value customer is totally baked. That awesome.

But we’re not quite done. Because we need to do the same thing for those secondary customers, and also for the non-customer visitors we want to make sure that we are having conversations with.

Those secondary customers are those gym owners. Who are they? They’re the people with these big facilities. What do they care about? Well, we already know these things, right? We’ve got all that data already captured in the Content Workbook. Now it’s time to start writing content for them. So for gym owners, maybe the core conversations sound something like this: “Reduce your gym’s risk of weight lifting-related back injuries with Barbell Boosters,” sort of the opening line, so to



speak, right? Focuses on the benefit: “Stack these jacks in your strength-training area. They only need six square inches of space.” And maybe finally, “Invest once in 12 or 24 sets.” This is the amount that we want to sell them. “They’re guaranteed for life, up to 1,000 pounds.”

So again, now we’ve documented the core conversation. But what questions do they have? Well, they might ask, “How much does each cost?” We’re going to answer this question similarly to the individuals, “\$40.” Then we’re going to tell them what most gyms purchase, right? “12 sets at a discount, \$450, or 24 sets-- and this is at a bigger discount-- and that’s \$875.00.” Oh, “Shipping is free. And you can buy online by credit card, or contact us for larger purchases.”

We have now captured under gym owners the core conversation that focuses on the benefits, and also the question most likely to be asked, including our answer to that question. We are really understanding now what the core conversation is going to be that should drive our entire UX design. This is the kind of language that we would want to see throughout everything that we’re designing across channels.

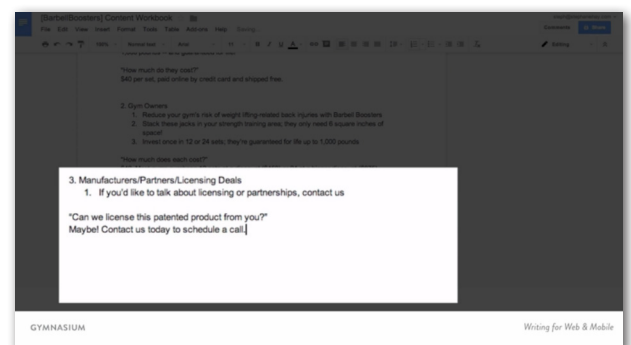
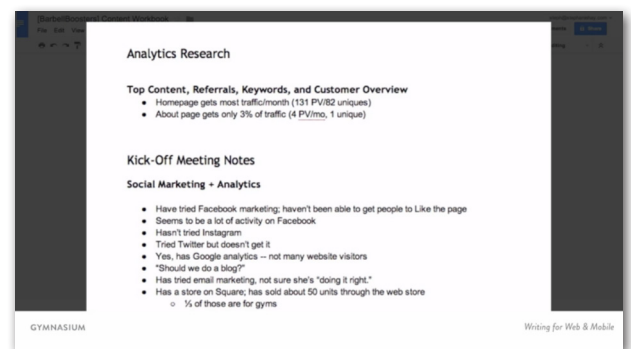
We want to do the same thing, even if the conversation isn’t very long. That might be the case with non-customers visitors. I mean, they’re people, too. OK. But they’re not our primary or secondary target customer. They are these manufacturers, partners, licensing deals. Essentially, we just want them to contact us, because we don’t know what they’re after.

So maybe the conversation only is this. “If you’d like to talk about licensing or partnerships, contact us,” right? That might be the full conversation. Maybe the question that they’ve asked us is, “Can we license this patented product from you?” Maybe the answer to that is, “Maybe. Contact us today to schedule a call.”

So effectively, we have captured the conversation with each of these target audiences and non-customer visitors, and also the questions that they ask in our answers to those questions. The only thing missing here to complete our Language Board is the conversion point. Now what? So we are going to go back through the Language Board and add conversion points.

ADDING CONVERSION POINTS TO YOUR LANGUAGE BOARD

When I bring up the Language Board here, I’m going to document conversion points like I did in the previous lesson by taking what is currently black text and making it blue text wherever there should be a conversion point. So we’re going to read through these things like this. “Lightweight, portable, stackable jacks”-- maybe we want that to go to a Features page. “Guaranteed for life”-- maybe we want that to go to a



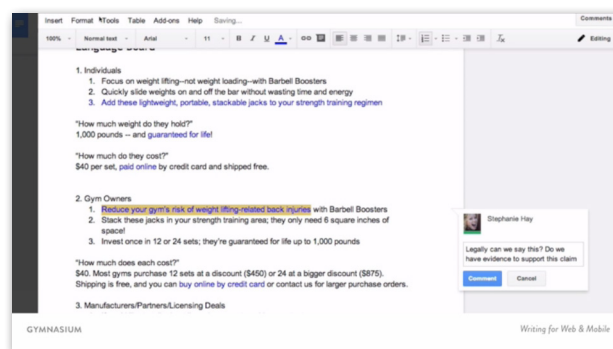
Lifetime Guarantee page. “Paid online”-- we probably want that to go to the Store.

If we get under Gym Owners, we see “reduce your risk.” Maybe this should go to a section about-- that’s specific to gym owners-- maybe liability language. “Buy online by credit card” should go to the Store. For manufacturers, partners, licensing deals, we want them to contact us. So there should be a Contact page. Let’s go ahead and make this “contact us” also a conversion point.

Essentially, this process gets us thinking about where customers should “go,” what other content they might need along the way. So it’s not just the core conversation, but how that core conversation starts to move. What else should we say to them to help them make a purchase?

Now I want to add a note here because I’m going to be working with my team. We’re going to be looking at this Content Workbook on a regular basis. So my team might have questions. They’re not in my brain, right? They might say, “Steph, what is it that you actually are thinking here could be a conversion point?” So I’m going to go ahead and make some notes using comments.

If I go up to Insert Comment, I’m going to say here that “reduce your gym’s risk of weight lifting related back injuries” could be a legal issue,” right? “Can we say this? Do we have edit evidence to support this claim that we could actually link to?” Something that would help to support this language? Maybe “guaranteed for life” here, I’m going to insert a comment, say “Maybe this should go to some sort of page that has our lifetime guarantee language,” which probably also requires a lawyer to review.

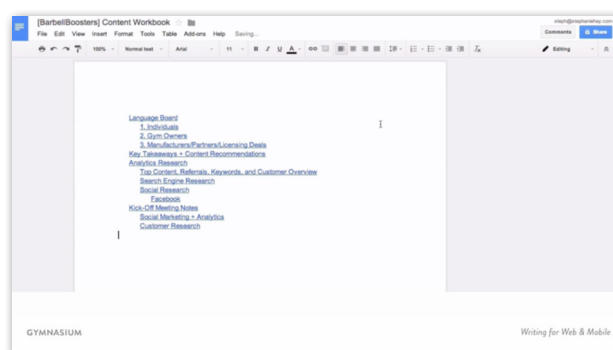


So by adding these comments, I am now creating a Content Workbook that has some additional context that can serve for my team to be able to understand my thinking beyond the conversation here that I’ve captured in plain text. So this process, in addition, also gets us talking about interactions, hierarchy, flow, things like a page don’t exist yet. But I’ve just added it as a comment, “Could this be a page?”

These are the extensions of the Content Workbook when you start designing content first. You start thinking about how the conversation grows and changes over time. It’s just like magic. So our Content Workbook is really starting to fill out. Let’s go back through, make sure that everything is a heading, because we are going to update the Table of Contents to make it easy to get into these sections later.

So each of these audiences is now a heading. I’m going to click this little button and it automatically updates my Content Workbook to show my Language Board. Each of the numbered sections below it are the audience we’re going after.

This is really starting to become a strategic document now. Everyone has access to it. Everyone sees the data that we’re using to make our content decisions. Now people are starting to see real content that they can design around. It’s becoming our Content Roadmap.



Now it's time for an exercise. You're going to document two to three key takeaways from your Tougher.Me research, the stuff you've already been doing. Then you're going to go ahead and make one to two Content Recommendations for each of those takeaways. What have you learned about the audience? And where are the opportunities to solve problems with content?

Next you're also going to create a Language Board for the highest-value Tougher.Me customer, whoever you determine that might be. With that Language Board, be sure to document the one to three things your customer wants from Tougher.Me, and the one to three questions that she has, plus the answers to those questions. Finally, think about other conversations that we should capture-- anything that you think will help to create a better user experience for the Tougher.Me customer. Go ahead and document that in your Content Workbook.

Once you've updated your Content Workbook, be sure to drop the link in the forum so that we can take a look, and others can provide feedback as well.

Next lesson is going to be taking that Language Board and extending it to become a Conversation Map. This is where we're really going to start doing Content-First UX design. Looking forward to it. See you soon.

EXERCISE TIME!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

- ♦ Document 2-3 key takeaways from your Tougher.Me research
- ♦ Make 1-2 Content Recommendations for each takeaway
- ♦ Create a Language Board for the highest-value Tougher.Me customer
 - What 1-3 things does this customer want from Tougher.Me?
 - What 1-3 questions does she have, and what are our answers?
 - What is/are the conversation(s) we should capture?

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Writing for Web & Mobile