Product Content Strategy Guide [DRAFT]

Created by AIUX Content Strategy Team

Table of Contents

About This Guide

This guide was created by the AIUX team to share guidance on creating product content strategy for AI-infused products. Content is in a unique position as it not only supports design and influences it, but it also needs to uphold any expectations that brand messaging has sent. This guide will cover the basics of creating a content strategy for AI-infused products, and provide sample documentation for starting work on creating a content strategy.

Purpose of Content Strategy

Good products are built according to knowledge of users: Their environments, tasks, and needs. Content, therefore, should support users. Based upon what is understood about users, content strategy can identify and define the following:

- Which channels do users look for and expect to find product information?
- What product information do users need to do their job?
- How should content be structured to best support users?
- How should content be structured to support
- Expected language use, such as jargon vs. plain English and tone

Who Should Use This Guide?

UX team members and their information engineering counterparts will gain the most benefit from this guide. Beyond that, product management leadership, such as Product Owners and Product Managers could also find value in the parts of this guide related to creating product strategy.

Developing Content Strategy

Content strategy involves more than identifying the necessary content for a product, though that is a key part of it. Creating a viable content strategy includes the following steps:

- Gain cross-departmental support.
- Acquire knowledge of user personas.

- Determine the channels needed content types.
- Develop a content style guide.
- Align content and design.

Gain Cross-Departmental Support

As mentioned earlier in this document, content supports, and is supported by, other groups. Product leadership and marketing all have a stake in content strategy as the content within a product needs to support the messages they share with clients and potential customers. If clients and potential customers receive a message different from the one conveyed by product content, then perceptions of the product and the company making it will suffer. Therefore, to ensure a consistent message that builds and consistently supports user expectations, content strategy should receive support from at least the following teams and roles:

- Product Management: Product Manager and Product Owner
- UX: UX Designer, UX Strategist
- Engineering: Front End Development

Acquire Knowledge of User Personas

Users will have needs varying upon their roles and the tasks they perform, and they will expect support and guidance that matches these factors. Without understanding the personas associated with a product, it becomes difficult to create content that can satisfy users. Content writers should have access to a product's user personas, and they should be able to consult with UX researchers, designers, and strategists whenever questions arise about content quality for users.

Determine the Channels and Needed Content Types

A product may require multiple content types across multiple channels to adequately support users. For instance, some CA products use in-application text tutorials, external help documentation, and YouTube video tutorials. Which content types to develop can be determined from activities such as:

- User research
- Competitor content analysis

- Content gap analysis

Once channels and content types have been identified, the link between the channels and content should be documented for future reference in case changes or additions need to be made to the content strategy as the product evolves.

Develop a Content Style Guide

Ensuring consistency in messaging is easily done when there is a content style guide that defines some key content points:

- Audience
- Messaging themes
- Message anatomy
- Style and tone
- Acceptable terminology, terminology to avoid
- Acceptable content formats

Align Content and Design

Content and design influence and support one another. Content writers should have open lines of communication with UX team members assigned to their products, and UX team members should always include content writers when they encounter opportunities for content creation.

Planning Content Strategy Activities

Creating a content strategy and maintaining its relevance requires conducting multiple activities. Each activity will be briefly covered below. Some of the activities build upon each other, like Competitor Content Analyses and Content Gap Analyses can both use Content Inventories to maximize their insights. Content style guide creation could use the results of a basic competitor content analysis to help shape it; however, style guide maintenance can use the output of content inventories, competitor content analyses, and content gap analyses.

Content Inventory

Content inventories provide an overview of the current state of content. The output of this activity can be used as a basis of

Competitor Content Analysis

Competitor content analysis is an activity that catalogs and reviews the available customer content created by competitors. Content can be a differentiating factor between products, particularly in terms of clarity, can users understand the content; utility, does content help users accomplish tasks; and support, can content help users learn the product or recover or troubleshoot the product. Evaluating competitor content provides a comparison point for the quality of existing product content so adjustments can be made as needed for improvements.

Content Gap Analysis

Content gap analysis allows product teams to determine the distance between the current state of content and the desired future state of content.

Style Guide Creation and Maintenance