

1. Creating a Centralised Adobe Experience Manager User Guide

I was recently tasked with creating a user guide for AEM authors, with the goal of centralising the existing content into a single, accessible resource. Content authors were relying on scattered information in different channels, including Slack conversations and PDFs, leading to regular support requests.

The revamped guide needed to:

- Be easy to maintain.
- Support different types of media types, including images and MP4 files.
- Provide a central landing page.

This blog post walks through my design process, from content audit to publication.

2. The Tools: Google Sites and Google Docs

Google Workspace apps were the approved platform for internal publishing. Previously, the majority of instructional content was hosted on a Google Site but this was posing several challenges. The content was difficult to search, updates were time consuming, and Google Sites also had technical limitations for file hosting.

To work around these issues, I decided to use a combination of tools, hosting the landing page on Google Sites, while moving the user guide itself to Google Docs. This hybrid approach provided several benefits:

- The Document Tabs and Table of Contents features help provide users with an accessible hierarchy, and makes the content easy to maintain.
- Video files could be hosted in Google Drive and linked to within the guide.
- Keeping the landing page on the existing site ensured authors would start their search in a familiar place, hopefully helping adoption of the new user guide.

3. Audit of Existing Content

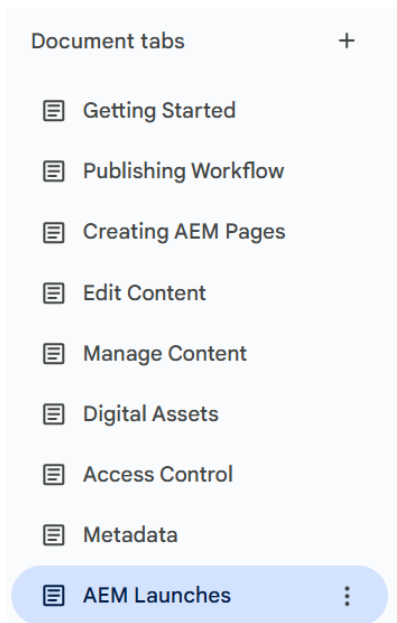
Before I could begin designing, I needed to know what materials already existed and where they lived, and what content gaps needed to be filled. I carried out an audit of any instructional content posted on the internal site, author training notes, and support channels. Once I had the full picture, I sorted content to these key categories:

- Publishing Workflow
- Creating Pages
- Editing and Managing Content
- Digital Assets
- Access Controls and Metadata
- AEM Launch Functionality

These categories became the foundation for my landing page and the user guide hierarchy.

4. Building the User Guide

One unexpected benefit of moving content from a Google Site to a Google doc was that the formatting copied over seamlessly, making this a very efficient process. I built out the user guide using my predefined categories.



The document tabs provide users with a familiar user guide interface.

I chose to keep conceptual and process-oriented content on the Google Site, moving only step-by-step instructions to the Google Docs. This approach meant the internal site remained a source of truth for high-level guidance, while keeping the user guide streamlined and focused.

Check Status of Submitted Workflows

You might want to see your submitted workflow items before they've been reviewed by the content team.

Steps

1. Log in to AEM.
2. From the main Navigation page, select the **hammer** icon in the left panel.
3. Go to **Workflow > Instances**. Your current Workflow items will be listed here.

Demo Video

 [View Your Workflow Instances.mp4](#)

Demos and screenshots help optimise instructions for different learning styles.

5. The Landing Page

The landing page on the Google Site acts as a central hub for all AEM documentation, providing a starting point for both conceptual information and step-by-step instructions.

To keep the page easy to scan, I used collapsible menus to group content by topic. This design allows authors to drill down on their intended category for more information.

Publishing Workflow ▼	Create AEM Pages ▼	Edit and Manage Content ▼
Digital Assets ▼	Access Control & Tags ▼	AEM Launches ^ <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Find Your Launch Page▪ Update Launch Pages

Clear, organised, and all in one place.

6. What I Learned

This project was a great learning experience in content strategy, tool limitations, and user needs. My key takeaways from this process are:

- It's much easier to build documentation alongside processes, rather than after the fact.
- A comprehensive content audit can save you time when planning your content structure.
- Tool limitations can work in your favour, keeping the focus on delivering simple, easy-to-navigate content.

More than anything, this project confirmed that documentation isn't just about capturing information, but about making sure people can easily access it.