

Sensible API document management guide

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Agenda

01

API vs Products

02

Why is API documentation important?

03

Best practices for API content strategy

04

Building a Documentation Portal

05

Modern portal patterns in the industry

06

Time for Questions

Impact of API Economy



Battle between API vs Product



vs



DIGITAL PRODUCT

Why is API documentation important?



Why is API documentation important?

API Documentation is the Core Pillar of the Good Developer Experience!



Awareness

Smooth experience in
building apps

Self-sustainable
API adoption

Easier product
maintenance for
internal teams

Saves time & costs of
onboarding new
developers



But why so hard?

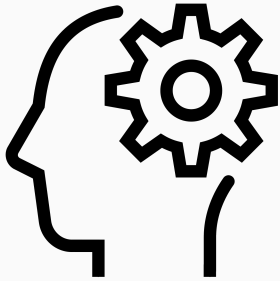
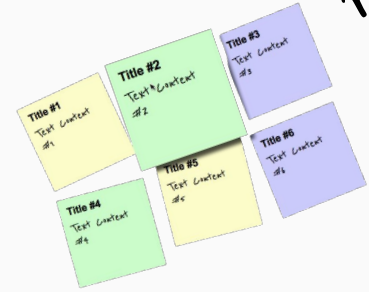
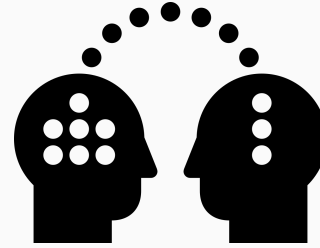


A unit of documentation. There are always three or more on a given item. One is on the shelf; someone has the others. The information you need is in the others.

— Raymond Simard —

Sharing is not consistent

Different users
business and
technical



Tacit
knowledge!

Documentation is
everywhere!



Poor
maintenance

Stored in
other places,
separate
PDFs

Ambiguous
documentation

The guy who knows about computers is the last person you want to have creating documentation for people who don't understand computers.

— Adam Osborne —

Personas



Best Practices



Understand their information interests



- Type of API
- Authentication
- How to accomplish what I need with your API
- Sample code for common use cases?
- Endpoint details & how-tos

Examples:

- Business use cases and examples
- Getting started guides, standards, Authentication guide
- Code samples & SDKs, API references

Know your stakeholders / audience



- API Providers
- API Consumers/ App Developers
- API Product Managers
- Documentarians
- Developer Evangelists
- Support Team

Determine their user journey



Figure out touchpoints with:

- Process
- People
- Information/ Artifacts

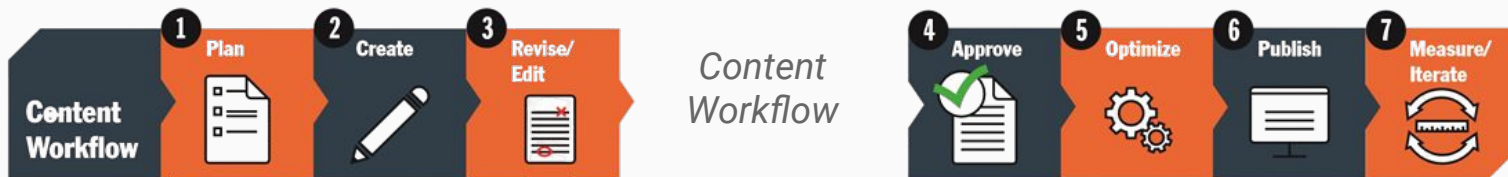
Design the onboarding experience



Merge the user journey with:

- API Portal Technology
- Identify complexities of artifacts
- Design content workflows

Determine the content workflow



- What is the lifecycle of the content? (create, edit, review, approve, publish, measure, retire etc)
- What is the nature of your docs? Is it per API or per use case?
- Where is the content stored (single/ multiple/ existing sources) and format of your content?
- How is it maintained? Is it versioned?

Modern Portal Should focus on

- **Use Case Driven** : Encourages specific applications & more details
- **Getting Started Guide**: General information on getting started with a specific API
- **API Mapping**: Explaining information given out from the API
- **Tools** : Try it tool/ API sandbox to try APIs
- **Audience**: Focused on relevant target audiences
- **Simpler and clear interfaces**:: Simple catalog to understand and consume the APIs
- **Engage** : with providers & community via resources, forums/ hackathons

Thanks!

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Question Time