

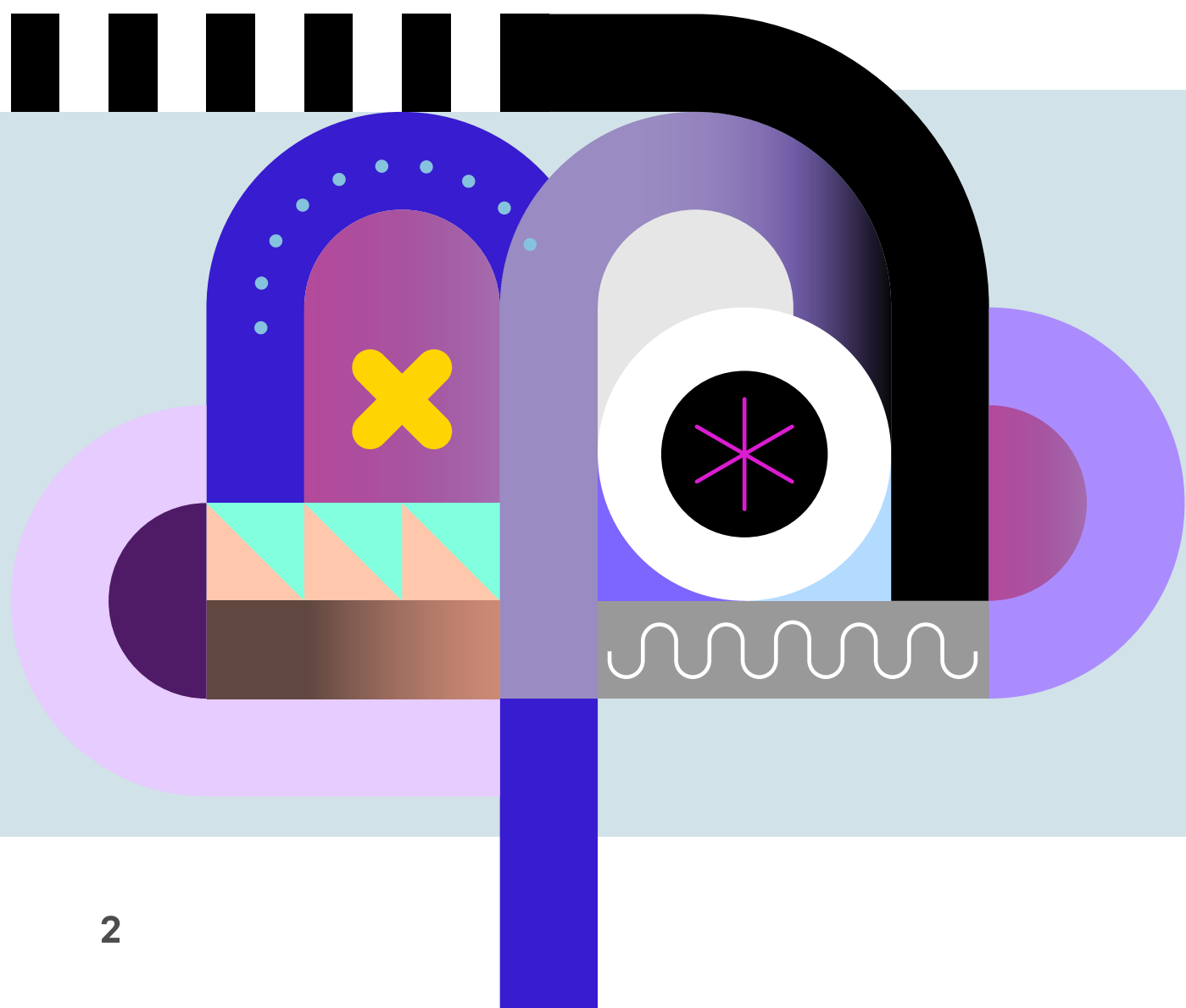
Content Strategy for the Modern Enterprise

- ▶ The Ultimate Guide to Designing an Effective Content Strategy

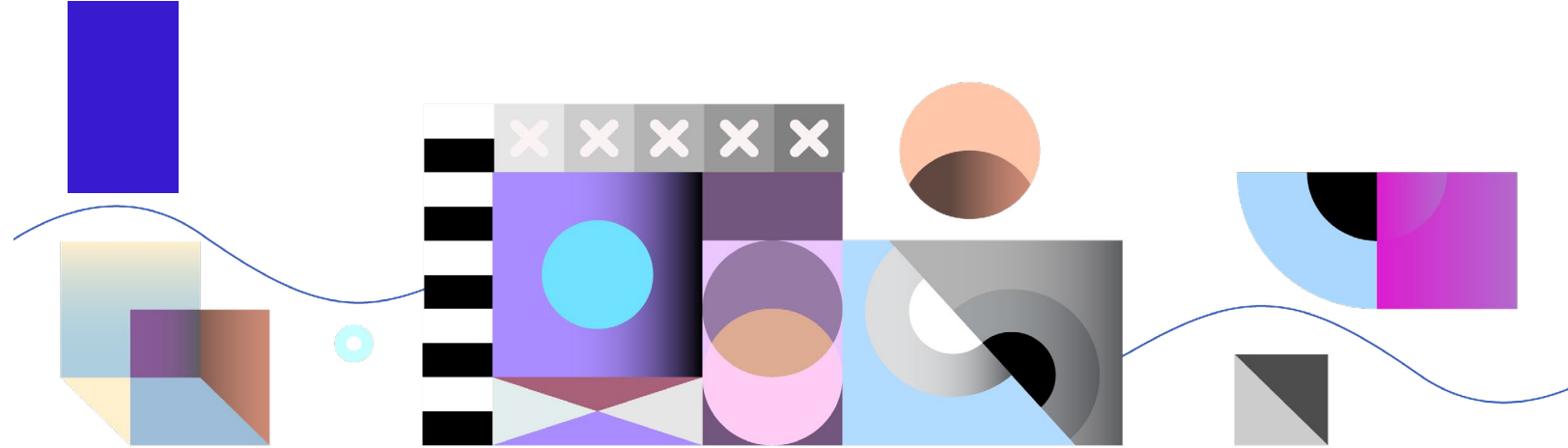


Enterprise content strategies conquer content chaos

As a business, you invest a lot of time and resources into creating content. 92% of marketers reported that their company views content as a business asset. And customers agree! 70% of customers feel closer to a business after engaging with its content. But does everyone in your company see content for the asset it is? And how can you know that every piece of content in the customer journey fulfills its purpose? After all, content that's doing its job well makes for a great customer experience – which your business then profits from.



Producing content that consistently delivers an incredible customer experience can be challenging in large, global enterprises. Key issues that many companies report often stem from issues in planning and executing an effective content strategy. If you're under the misconception that content strategies only belong in content marketing, this eBook is for you! It explores the concept of an **enterprise content strategy** that tackles some of the most common enterprise content challenges.



Common Enterprise Content Challenges

- Businesses generate and track a lot of data, but it often lacks actionable insights and needs a data specialist to interpret it.
- Global companies often have non-native speaking content developers across the business, all of whom contribute content.
- In a world of information overload, it's hard to compete with the billions of other sources of content out there.
- Businesses struggle to quantitatively report on the overall quality of enterprise content. An inability to track where resources are being spent and their impact, may limit future investment from business leaders.
- Writer volatility in companies can be high, with a constant need for training new hires.
- Your rules, standards, style, and brand terminology are constantly changing and therefore need regular updating.
- Subject matter experts don't care so much about style guides, they don't think it's their domain, and priorities like clarity for localization ease aren't on their radar.
- It's difficult to govern the quality of massive amounts of content that accompany fast deployments.

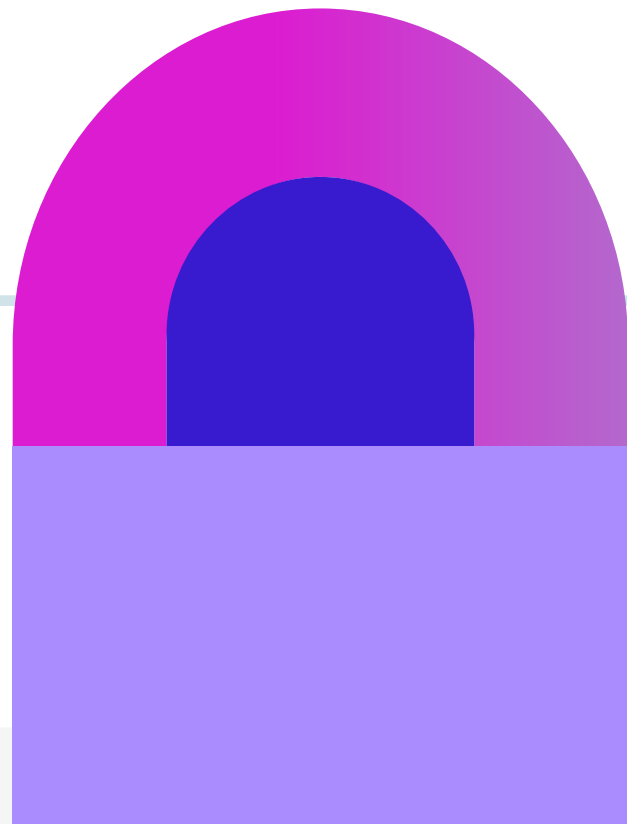
▼ Let's dive into what it means to have a content strategy at an enterprise level, and how that's different from the kind of content strategies that reside purely in content marketing. ▼



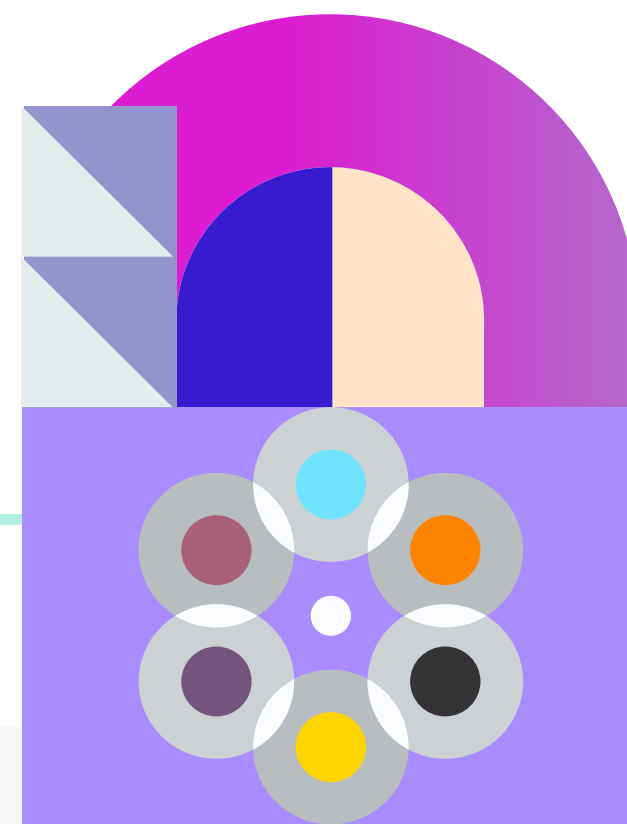
Content strategy versus content marketing strategy

Content strategies help your business identify what content exists, what new content it should create, and why. It helps you create what's going to be most impactful to your target audience, while achieving your business goals. Every business will define the concept of a content strategy a little differently. Here are some definitions of content strategies that all differ slightly and may resonate with your organization to varying degrees:

- ▶ Content strategy focuses on the planning, creation, delivery, and governance of content. (Source: [Usability.gov](#))
- ▶ Content strategy is the ongoing process of transforming business objectives into a plan using content as the means of achieving those goals. (Source: [MarketMuse](#))
- ▶ Content strategy is an integrated set of user-centered, goal-driven choices about content throughout its lifecycle. (Source: [Brain Traffic](#))
- ▶ Content strategy is a holistic approach to enterprise content. It delivers the right content, at the right time, in a resource-effective and scalable way, all while achieving an impeccable customer experience. (Source: [Acrolinx](#))



Understanding that content strategy is something that can exist at an enterprise level, means that you understand that all content is connected, and that large enterprises create content almost without realizing it – sometimes as a result of collaboration between very different business areas. This broader definition equips you to plan better strategies at the “micro” level. By that, we mean the strategic content efforts that revolve around a product, project, or team.



By contrast, content marketing strategies are something slightly different. Content strategy and content marketing are sometimes considered synonymous, probably because **60% of successful content marketers** have a content strategy. But as **Terakeet** suggests, your content strategy is what guides your content marketing efforts. If content strategy is the higher-level planning process, content marketing is the nuts-and-bolts process of ideating, creating, publishing, and promoting content across different channels.

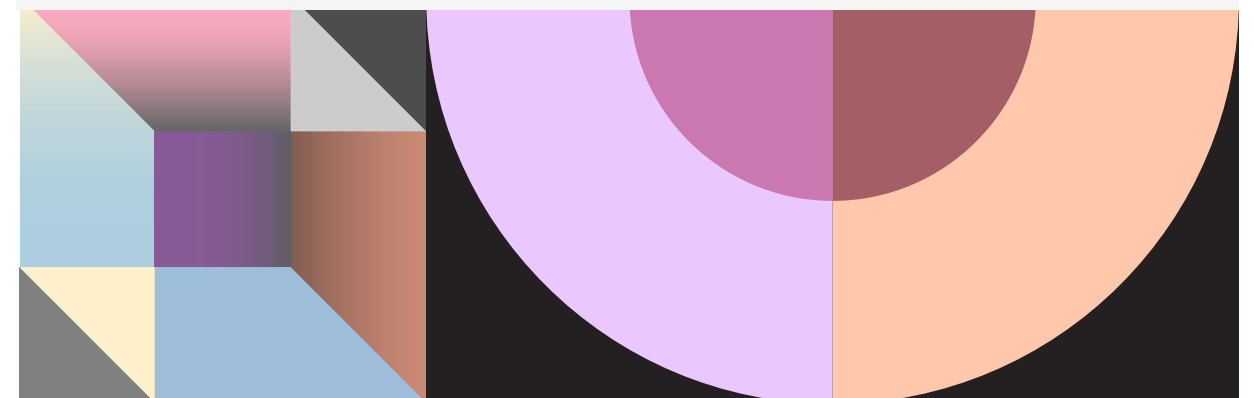
Marketing Content Strategy

- Defines a set of objectives that come under the umbrella of a larger strategy.
- Plans relevant topics for specific target personas.
- Identifies content distribution channels (owned, earned, and paid).
- Maps content to each channel.
- Outlines your brand's unique voice and value.
- Sets measurable goals for your content.
- Focuses heavily on SEO.
- Plans the editorial calendar and content design process.

It's important to understand how content marketing and content strategy differ from and complement each other, because as the [Content Marketing Institute](#) suggests, there are skill sets that are suited to one kind of strategy over another. Every enterprise should strategically manage content in a centralized way, and support targeted, subdivisions of content strategies for different projects, products, and departments.

Enterprise Content Strategy

- Has a holistic view of content creation.
- Views content as a business asset that requires strategic consideration at every point along the content lifecycle.
- Considers how content contributes to broader business objectives.
- Takes best practices from the department with the most successful content strategy and applies them to the entire enterprise.
- Solves cross-divisional content challenges (because solving content challenges within one silo or team or department doesn't improve the customer experience!).
- Governs the quality of content across the entire business.
- Leverages tools, systems, processes, and technology that integrates into every part of the content lifecycle.



Building an enterprise content strategy: A step by step guide

A content strategy usually consists of two main components: The content part, and the people part. This guide focuses solely on the content part and helps you hone what content you need to develop that aligns with your corporate goals and departmental initiatives tied to those goals. By the end of this eBook, you should have an idea about what kind of messaging you need, for what audience, and what characteristics of content you need to focus on most (for example, voice, tone, or terminology). You'll also get an idea of the tools and technologies you might need to successfully implement your content strategy.

After you've finished working through the steps we recommend, you'll be well prepared to focus on the people-oriented part of building your content strategy. That's the time for building out roles and workflows, and even policies that relate to your content strategy. As no two organizations are the same, we'll leave that part up to you! Let's start with mapping today's content ecosystem – that is, **where does content live, and what do you currently use it for?**



1. Map the current content ecosystem

The first step to defining or reviewing an enterprise content strategy is to get a visual representation of your current content ecosystem. Effective content strategies reduce duplicate content and simplify content channels. A great way to start visualizing if you have content chaos (and a need for a better enterprise content strategy) is to put this information in a mind map or a venn diagram. Venn diagrams are good for revealing if you have multiple sections of your website or departments producing the same content, which you'll see as overlapping areas in your diagram.

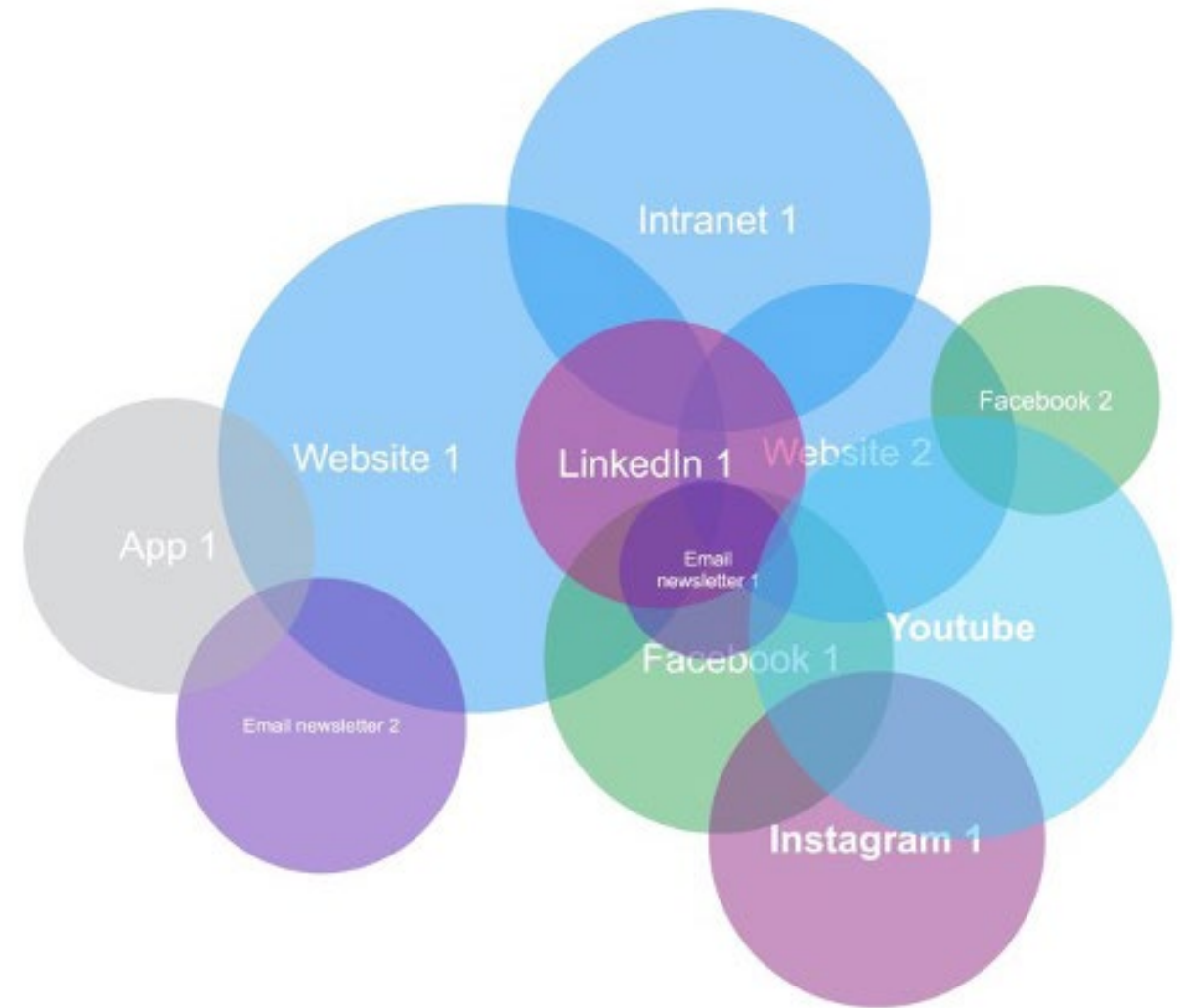
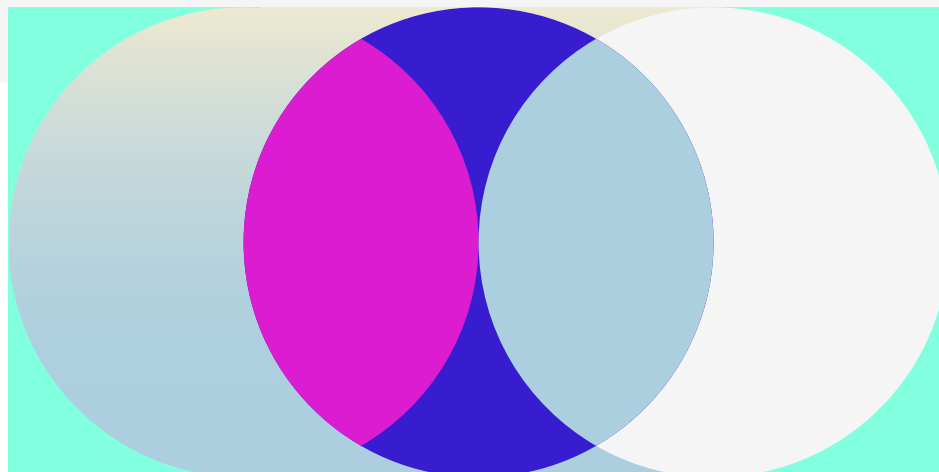


Image source: Australian Government, Digital Profession, Show the Content Ecosystem (Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia, 2022)

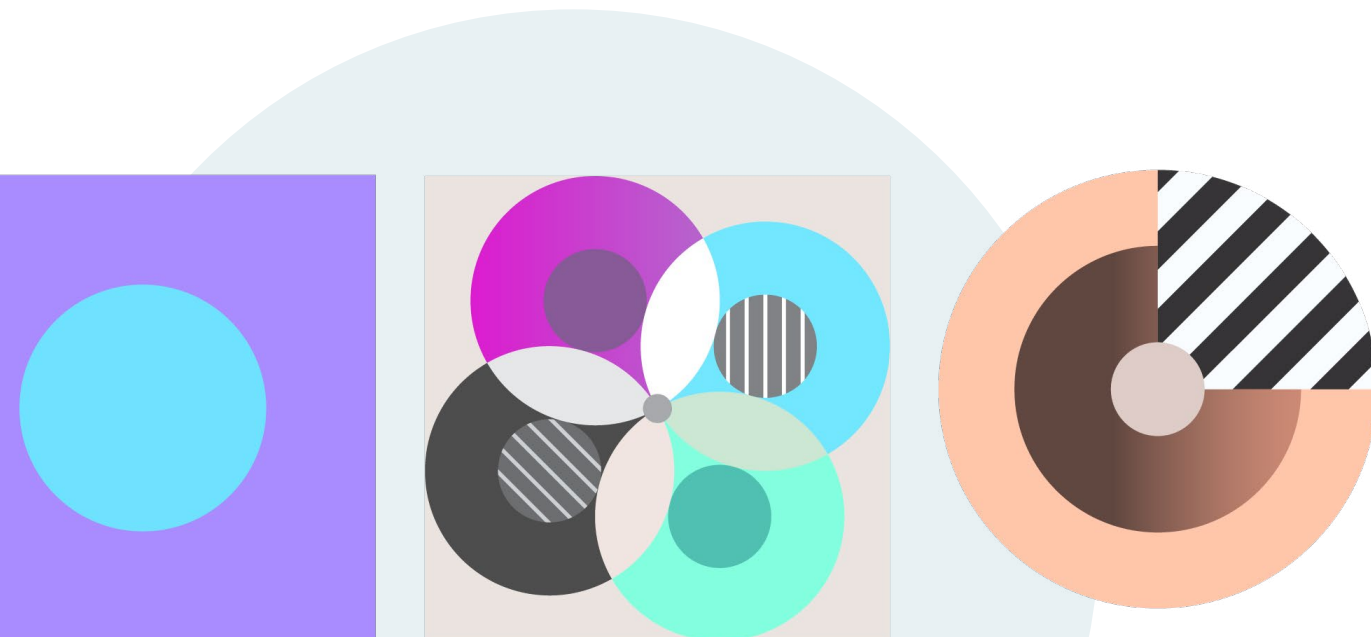
<https://digitalprofession.gov.au/content-strategy/understand-content-ecosystem/show-content-ecosystem>

2. Capture your business goals

Your business has a core mission, vision, and set of values that it wants to bring to fruition. Your job is to capture that, break it into goals as it relates to your content, and build out a strategy and tactics for your enterprise content supply chain. Make sure you're also taking note of industry regulations and compliance requirements, current messaging, how investors measure success, and any challenges the business is facing. Starting with the big picture means your content strategy will speak from the heart of your brand in its entirety, not just a division of it.

Content-related business goals you might want to consider include:

- ☐ Lessening content waste by reducing duplicate creation of content.
- ☐ Maximizing the customer experience across the entire customer journey.
- ☐ Reducing the cost of content creation.
- ☐ Reducing the amount of content that needs editing and preventing bottlenecks.
- ☐ Creating content that keeps up with the pace of feature and product release cycles.
- ☐ Improving conversion rates, and lowering bounce rates for web content.
- ☐ Reducing the risk of improper use of regulated terminology with more compliant content.
- ☐ Aligning content to one coherent brand voice.
- ☐ Improving the clarity and consistency of your enterprise content.





3. Research your target audience's content habits

Your prospects and customers will interact with multiple digital touchpoints across your enterprise. It's important to remember that your content strategy should focus on your target audience's goals.

Customer-centric content from all departments is defined as content that can help:

- Give readers the independence to complete their goals.
- Make content easier to find and access.
- Reduce the time and costs associated with resolving problems.

But first, you're going to need to learn who your audience is, what their goals and challenges are, and what channels they're accessing to solve them. The end goal is that once you've captured this information, you can start creating stories that'll become starting points for future content creation. This type of **user research** is usually a separate business activity that involves more people than the content strategist alone. It includes interviewing consumers, testing products and different types of messaging, and analyzing current content metrics to uncover more about demographics and search intent.

4. Conduct a content audit

Before you can whip up a shiny new content strategy, you're going to need to do a bit of a "spring clean" to retire content that's no longer serving its purpose. A content audit helps you prove your content strategy is worthy of investment. For example, at the end of your audit, you might be able to say that "53% of our content is outdated," which means it's no longer contributing to the business the way it should! After your audit, you should be able to answer:

- How much content is my organization creating and maintaining?
- What's the standard of that content?
- How can we improve our content to get more out of our investment?

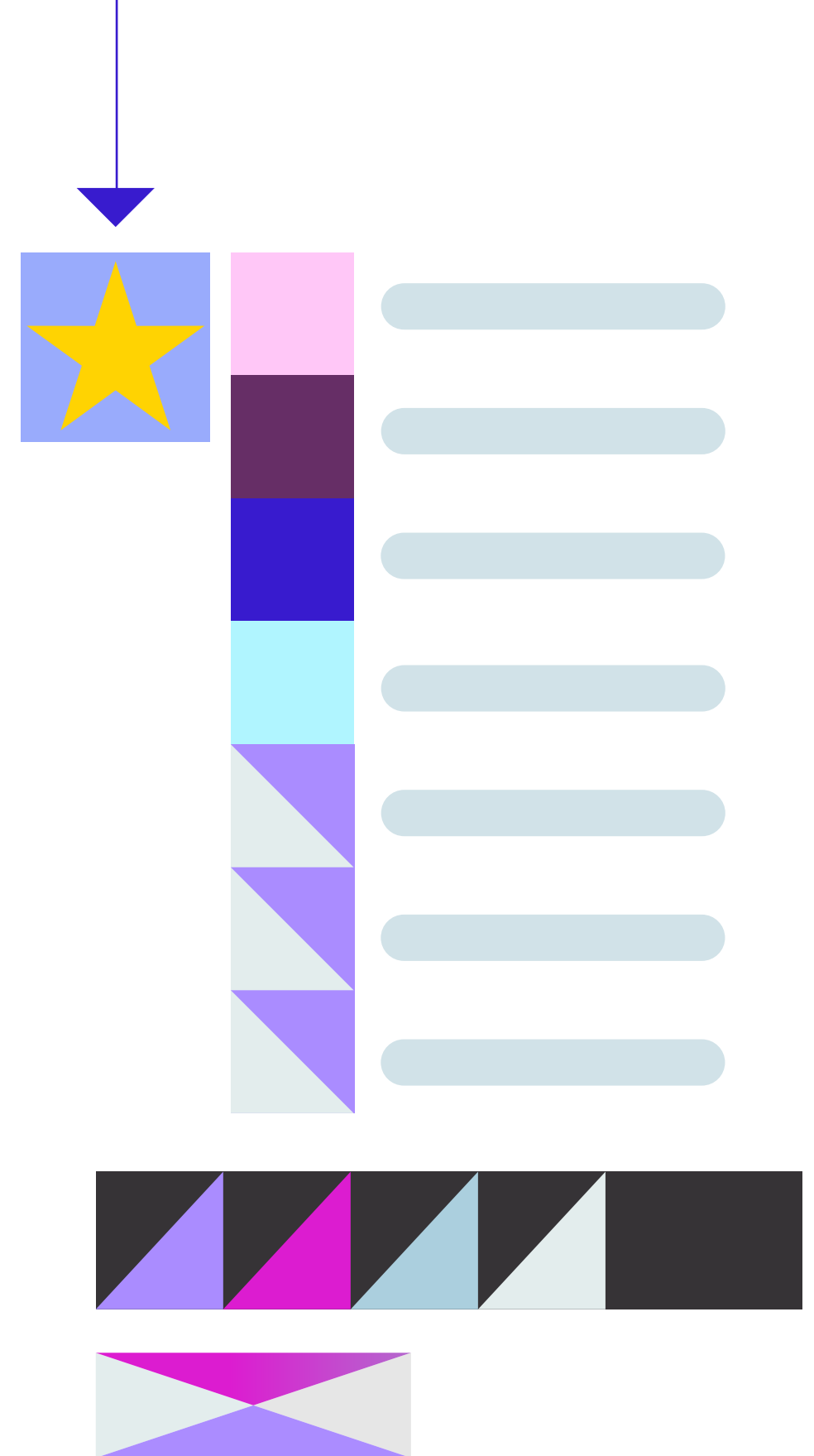
Collect a list of content (or export the data to a spreadsheet) and label each page or asset in need of either:

- Rewriting
- Deleting
- Archiving

Make notes about how to rework the content that's due for a refresh. Is it still aligned with current brand style, tone, and voice? Does it use the most current terminology for your products or services? Could it be written in plain language to make it more cognitively accessible? Sometimes, it's as easy as rewriting content using active voice or refreshing the call to action. If it sounds simple, know that a content audit is a massive amount of work. Some companies have tens of thousands of web pages and content pieces! To reduce the workload try to:

- Split the content audit into spreadsheets by persona, business unit, or content type.
- Review the most popular content first.
- Prioritize content for a rewrite that's going to deliver the most business value.
- Delete content that's older than four years old, unless it's proven evergreen content.
- Dedicate some resources solely to auditing your content.
- Insert automated content quality checks at different stages of creation.

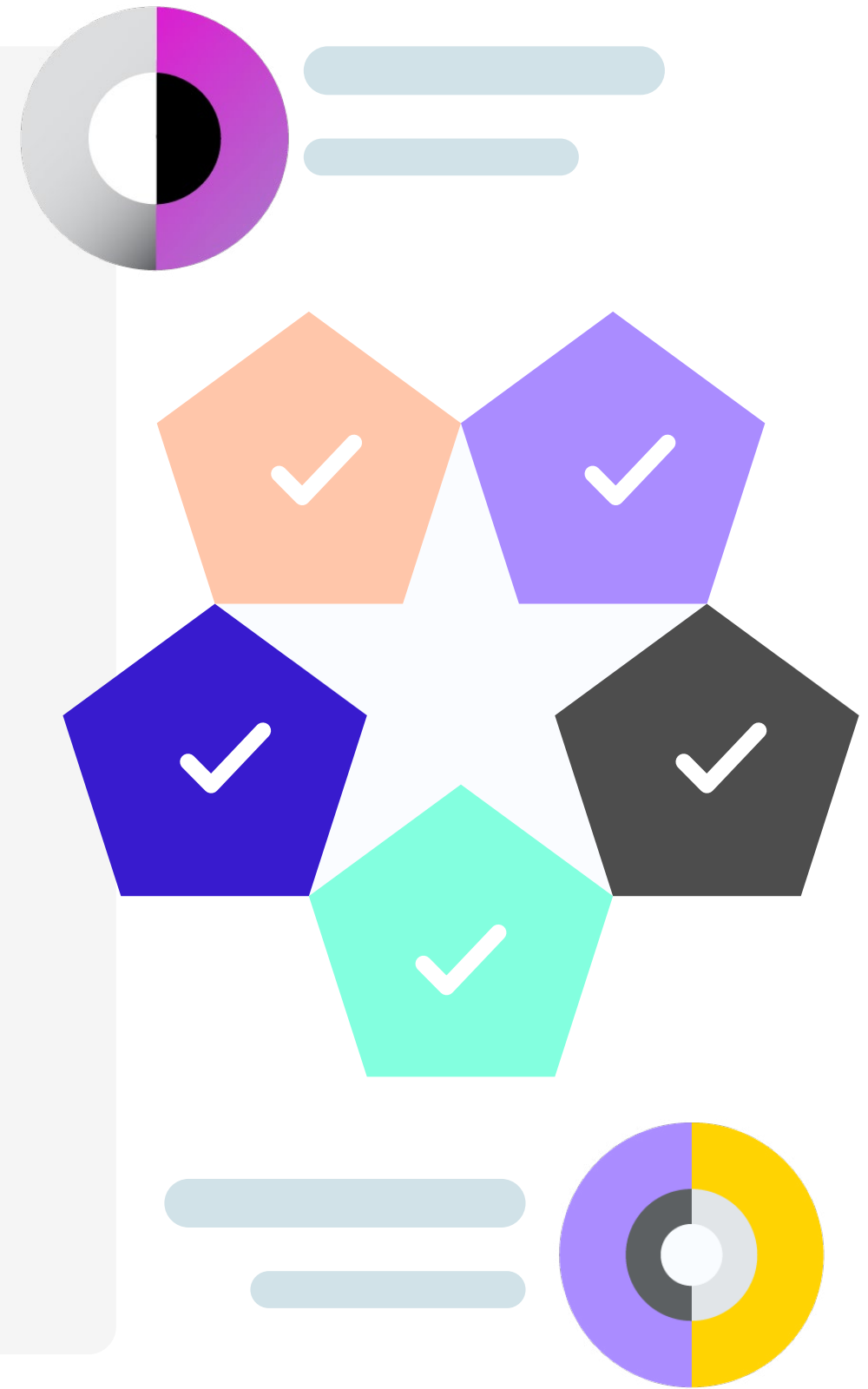
To help you decide what's worth renewing and what content you can retire, it's worth checking your analytics for more insights. That data will also help you strengthen your content strategy with clear metrics for measurable results.




5. Define performance markers to track your progress

It might seem obvious, but it's worth noting that content metrics that make for robust content marketing might also be useful outside of marketing, too. A great content strategy aligns its goals with the broader company's business goals. KPIs are targets you set that will demonstrate high-performing, impactful content. While documenting your business goals, review how today's content currently performs – and look for opportunities to align your content KPIs to your business goals. You might source them from:

- Web analytics
- Marketing automation
- Search engine marketing tools
- Percentage of keyword coverage
- Scores for clarity and reading ease
- Views, read through rates, activity
- Open to click comparisons
- Cluster traffic
- SERP ranking
- Cost per lead
- Lead volume
- Conversion rate
- CSAT scores





Believe it or not these metrics are valuable for technical content, support content, definitely marketing content, and even legal content. So, how can your content strategy bring the value of these metrics to the point of content creation? How do you write content that's designed to improve customer experience?

The answer: You need to make it easy for writers to create quality content that's aligned with your customers. And in doing so, create a more efficient and cost effective enterprise content engine.

Different teams across your enterprise will have the answers for each of the questions below. But it's important to realize that an efficient, effective content strategy provides knowledge to all content creators, so that everyone can answer the following:

- **What are the topics/subject matter we want to be known for?**
- **What's the demand for the topics we write about?**
- **What are the related topics to ours? (Based off research into semantic and user intent)**
- **What are the “must have” and “prominent” keywords we should include in our content?**
- **Aside from keywords, what other important words and phrases do we need to include to be findable, consistent, compliant, and on-brand?**
- **What kinds of questions do customers ask about what I/we're writing about?**
- **Who do we compete with in this specific market/niche? (and how can we be different?)**
- **How can I/we measure my content performance against the company's expectations?**

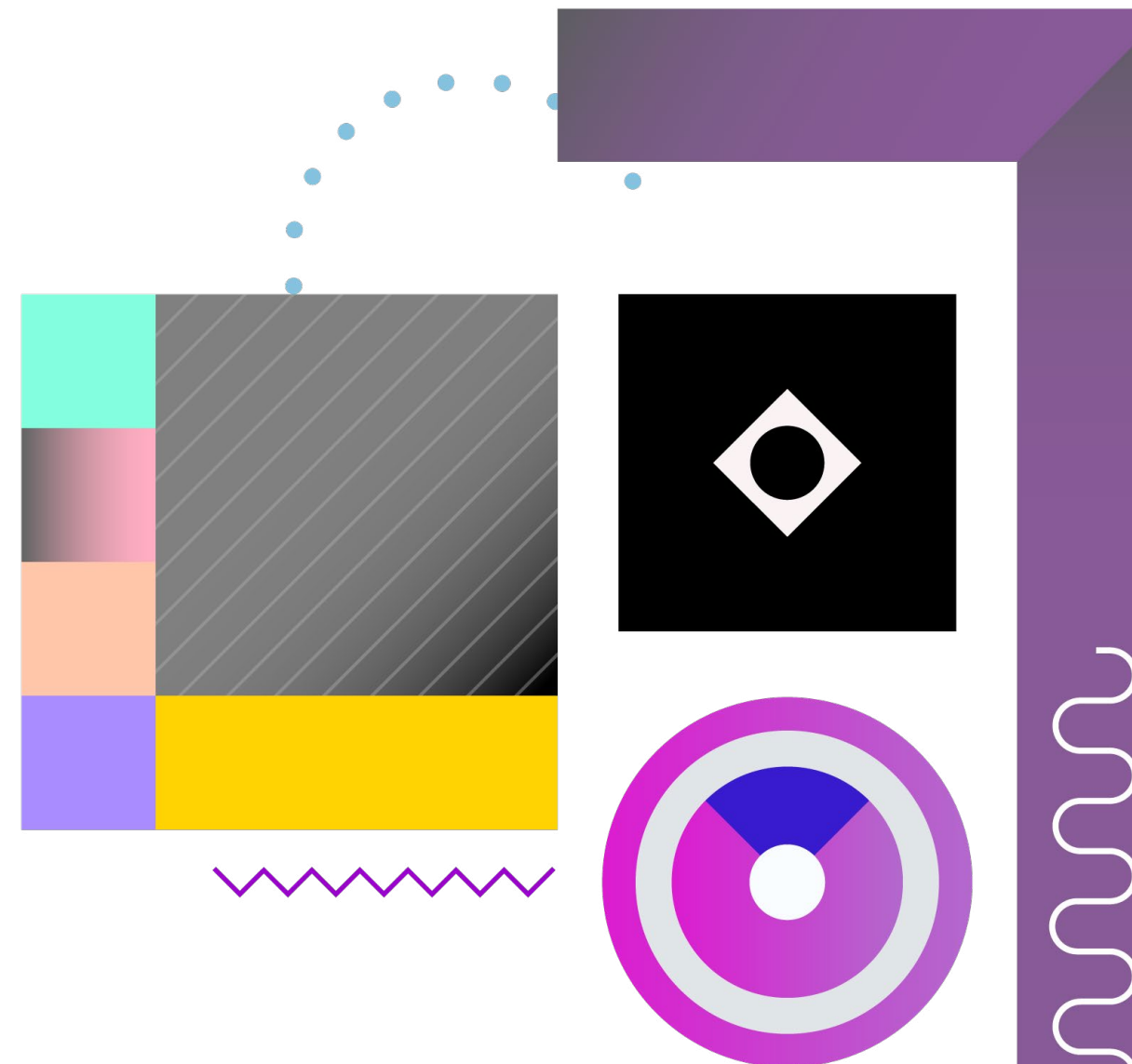
The value in this is huge for your business. By increasing the value of your content as a corporate asset, you give your enterprise a real and sustainable competitive advantage.

6. Update your content guidelines and corporate style guide

You'll document the answers to the questions in the previous section in your corporate style guide. Part of developing or reviewing a content strategy is updating your corporate style guide, including the format and where it lives in your organization. How do you ensure everyone actually uses your corporate style guide? For example, if it's locked in a PDF, there's no way of knowing if it's actually being used.

Measuring content impact: An essential ingredient for every strategy

Do your content guidelines measure content quality? Or do they include information about how to create content with the best chance of delivering a delightful customer experience? At Acrolinx, we take the concept of content quality a step further. It's not enough to measure if content is grammatically correct and uses the right terminology. You also need to know that content is fit for purpose – with the highest chance of doing its intended job. And ideally, you want that information before you're even close to publishing it.



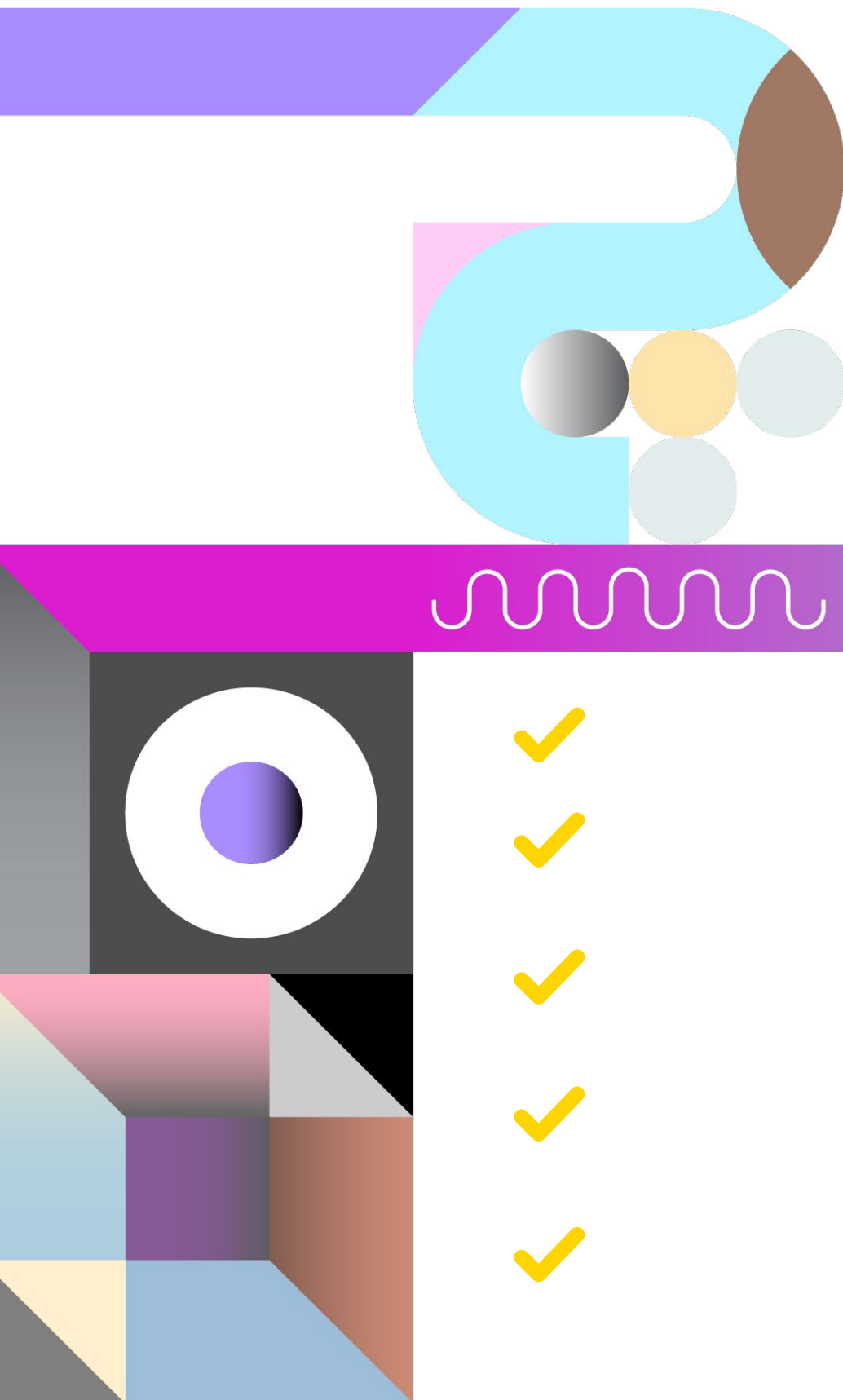
Content with impact serves your customers **and** meets business objectives. It usually has the following characteristics:

| | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p>Correctness</p> <p>Accurate and correct language builds credibility.</p> | <p>Clarity</p> <p>Easy-to-read content improves engagement.</p> | <p>Accurate terminology</p> <p>Consistent use of brand terms fuels brand recognition and trust.</p> | <p>Scannable text</p> <p>Structured content is easier for readers to skim.</p> |
| <p>Consistency</p> <p>Reliable use of language avoids confusion.</p> | <p>Relatable tone and emotion</p> <p>Tone of voice and emotive language foster a connection with readers.</p> | <p>Inclusive language</p> <p>Respectful and accessible content increases your total addressable market.</p> | <p>Findability</p> <p>Easy to find content creates a better customer experience.</p> |

To consistently deliver brand-aligned content with impact, your content strategy requires one more element.

And that's content governance.





7. Set up content governance

Content governance is the process of managing, analyzing, and continually improving your enterprise content in a way that offers valuable insights to executives, writers, and everyone in between! It allows you to solve complex content challenges cross-departmentally, providing the information and tools content contributors need to produce impactful content that delivers an exceptional customer experience. It also helps you deliver on the goals you documented in your content strategy.

Your chosen content governance solution should give you:

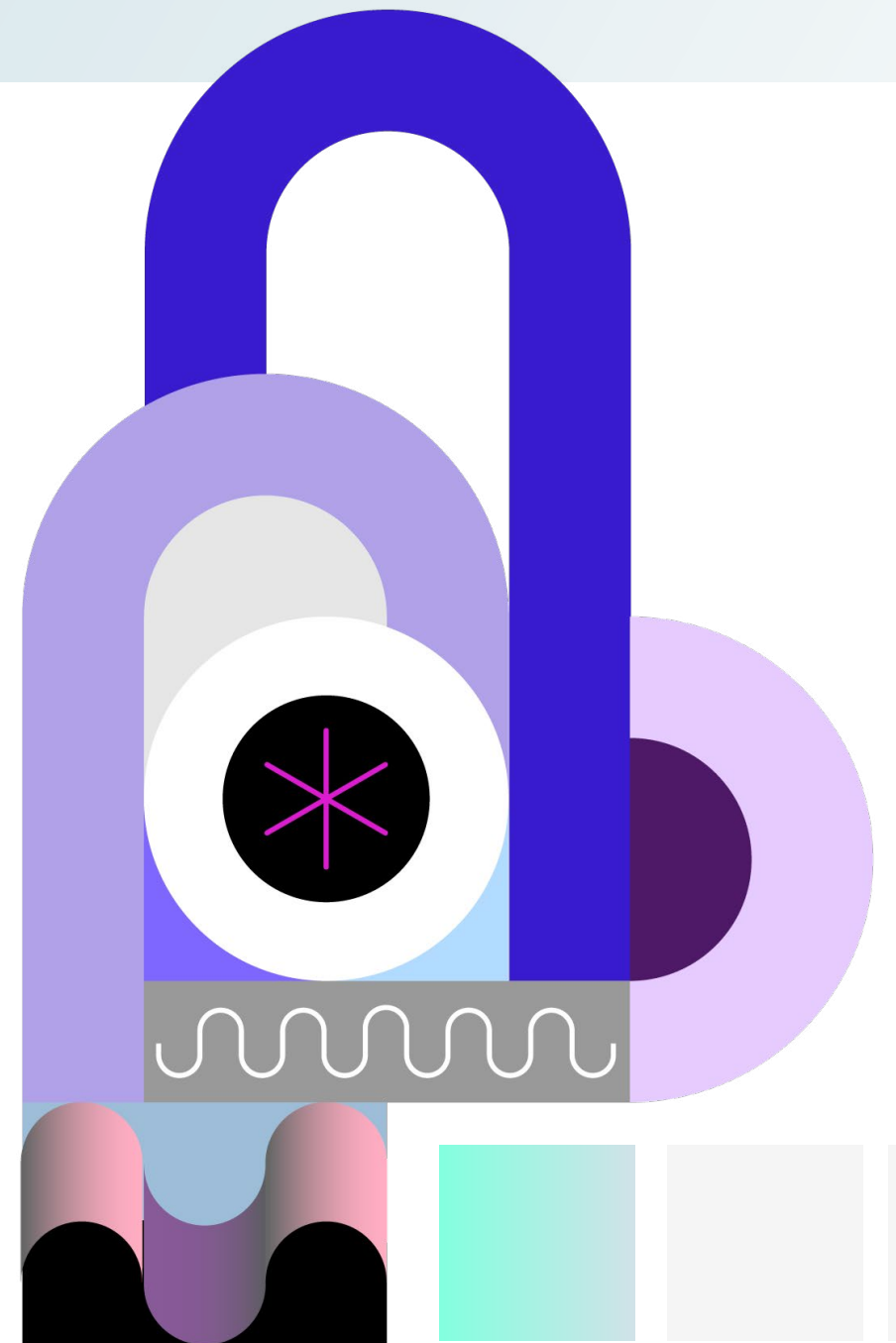
- An overview of your entire content operation to see (at a glance) where content needs improvement.
- Insights that align with your content goals, and measure what “quality” means for your enterprise.
- In-depth analytics that prove there’s real business value in your content asset.
- An ability to set benchmarks for different content types (such as blog posts, eBooks, long-form content, and web content) and see where they’re under-performing.
- Options for automatic alignment to your standards, to give you more time for high-value business activities.


Automate for total confidence in your content

It's true that automation at any stage of the content review process leads to more output and increased productivity. Automation is the key to ultimate scalability in large enterprises; however, it's worth more than simply improved workflow efficiency. These days, it's about giving teams back the time spent on tedious tasks (like proofreading content) so they can focus on higher value business activities. And, being totally confident that every piece of content in your repository will achieve what it set out to do. It's less about the efficiency – more how you use those efficiencies to build a stronger brand with content. Take it from Velocity Partners and ask yourself:


“Am I building a great content brand, or am I just building an efficient content machine?”

Adapted from: [Velocity Partners](#)





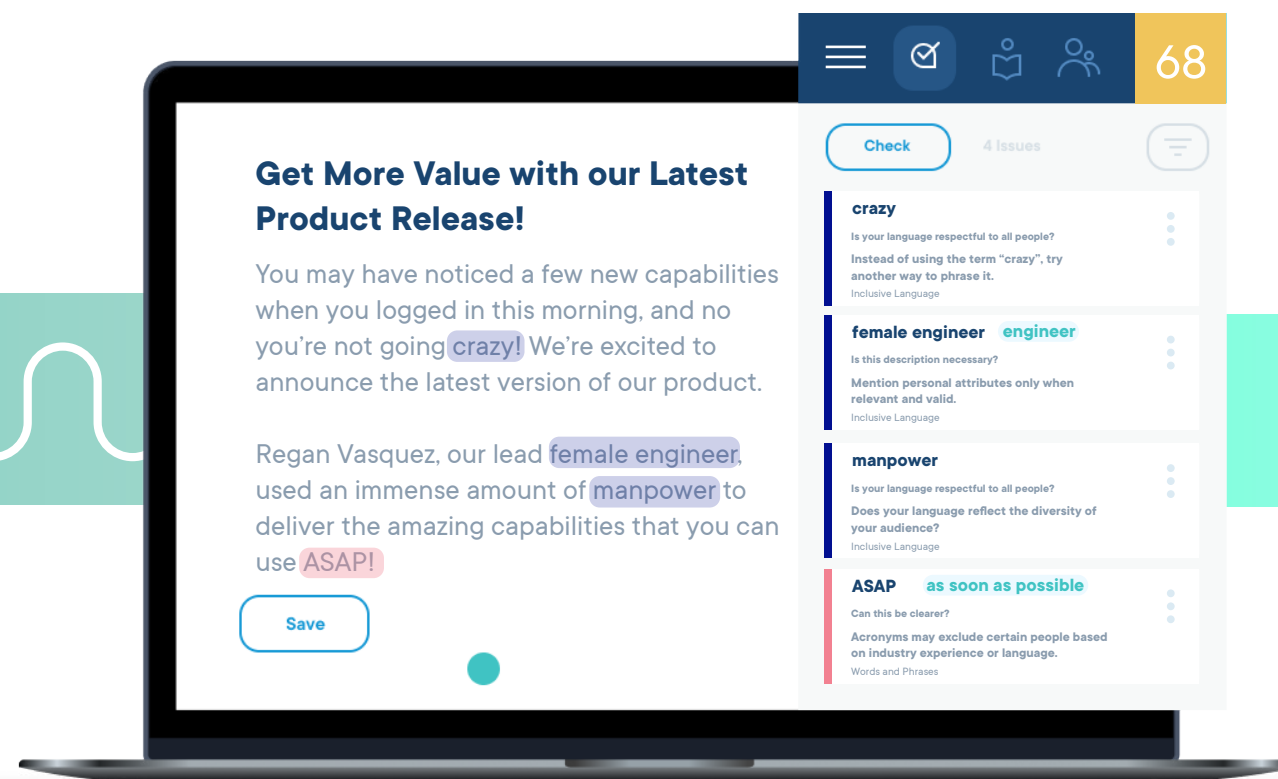
Wouldn't it be great to know that every piece of content is on-brand, compliant, and primed to deliver a great customer experience before you publish it? The reality is, without automation, it's impossible to check 100% of your content, 100% of the time without an enormous amount of resources. When the right technologies work together to automate content lifecycle management, you can:

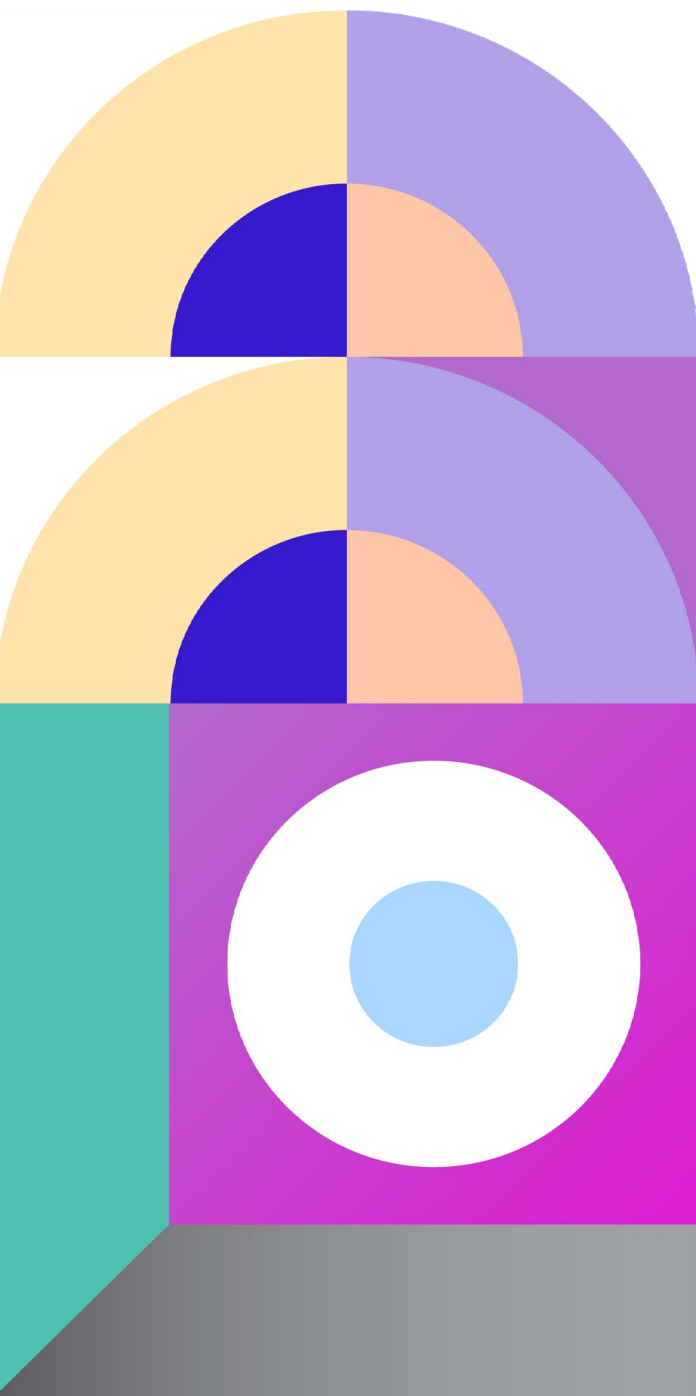
- ✓ **Check 100% of your content for possible non-compliance.**
 - ✓ **Prepare content to drive revenue by boosting content impact.**
 - ✓ **Create more content with less resources.**
 - ✓ **Establish leaner content workflows.**
 - ✓ **Deliver content to your audience more quickly.**
 - ✓ **Maximize the value of content over its lifetime.**
 - ✓ **Reinforce your brand's tone of voice over the entire enterprise.**
 - ✓ **Improve customer experience through content.**
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Centralized content excellence with Acrolinx

Good content strategies transcend individual departments to become enterprise-wide models for content success. That's because enterprise content strategists know that every piece of content your company produces, whether that's your website, blog, email campaigns, knowledge articles, product packaging, UI strings, technical documentation, or social media posts — all of it has to deliver a seamless, unified customer experience. But to deliver unified content experiences, you need a unified enterprise content strategy.

Acrolinx is AI-powered software that improves the quality and impact of enterprise content. We help some of the world's most valuable brands meet complex content challenges at immense scale — across writers, languages, and cultures. Acrolinx delivers a unified content experience across all digital touchpoints, all while avoiding editorial bottlenecks, quality issues, budget overruns, and compliance risk.





Acrolinx helps content creation teams focus on what customers value most. It also helps managers prioritize content improvements for the highest impact on the business, with analytics to help you decide how best to use the resources you have to meet your goals. Acrolinx automation options mean you can check that content aligns with your brand, tone, style, terminology, and is inclusive of a wide audience – all before it reaches your editorial team. Insert automated checks at any stage of the content lifecycle for complete content governance, and be sure you reach your desired level of content quality before you publish.

The best part? Acrolinx has the potential to positively impact business outcomes. By integrating your performance data from your web analytics, you can finally understand which content improvements will have the greatest impact. Now that's a content strategy!



acrolinx

Better Content. Faster.

Let's Talk

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