

# Content strategy – maximising your content's impact

A content strategy considers both business goals and user needs, and lays out everything you need to develop and maintain effective content. It moves away from short-term planning on 'how to get this report out the door' to look at long-term content needs and processes.

## Developing a content strategy

If you think about different parts or types of your content as a separate project (such as a webpage, brochure or report), you may consider only the steps and resources needed to complete and publish that piece of content.

Content strategy involves thinking through what you are trying to achieve, who you want to reach and the best way to do that from a broader perspective. Taking this strategic view:

- increases the impact of your content by coordinating messages so that all content (web, print, etc) works towards the same goal
- saves time and money by reducing wasted and duplicated effort
- improves content quality by reducing development rush and keeping content up to date.

A content strategy should be evidence based. Developing a content strategy involves research and analysis to understand:

- your context – business needs, stakeholders, aims and processes
- your audience – key groups and their tasks, understanding and information needs
- your content – existing content including its quality and any gaps
- your context – sector and competitor content.

The process can include various types of research, such as interviews, workshops and surveys of product owners, stakeholders and audience members. A strategy can consider content for a whole organisation, or focus on specific content types, audiences or business needs. The result should be an evidence-based documented strategy that provides a framework for all content production to ensure that content is designed and produced in a way that meets the needs of your organisation and audiences.

A content strategy should be a living document that is updated as your business and content progresses, and as user needs change. It should also include key performance indicators to check if your content is performing as expected.

## Content strategy vs communication strategy

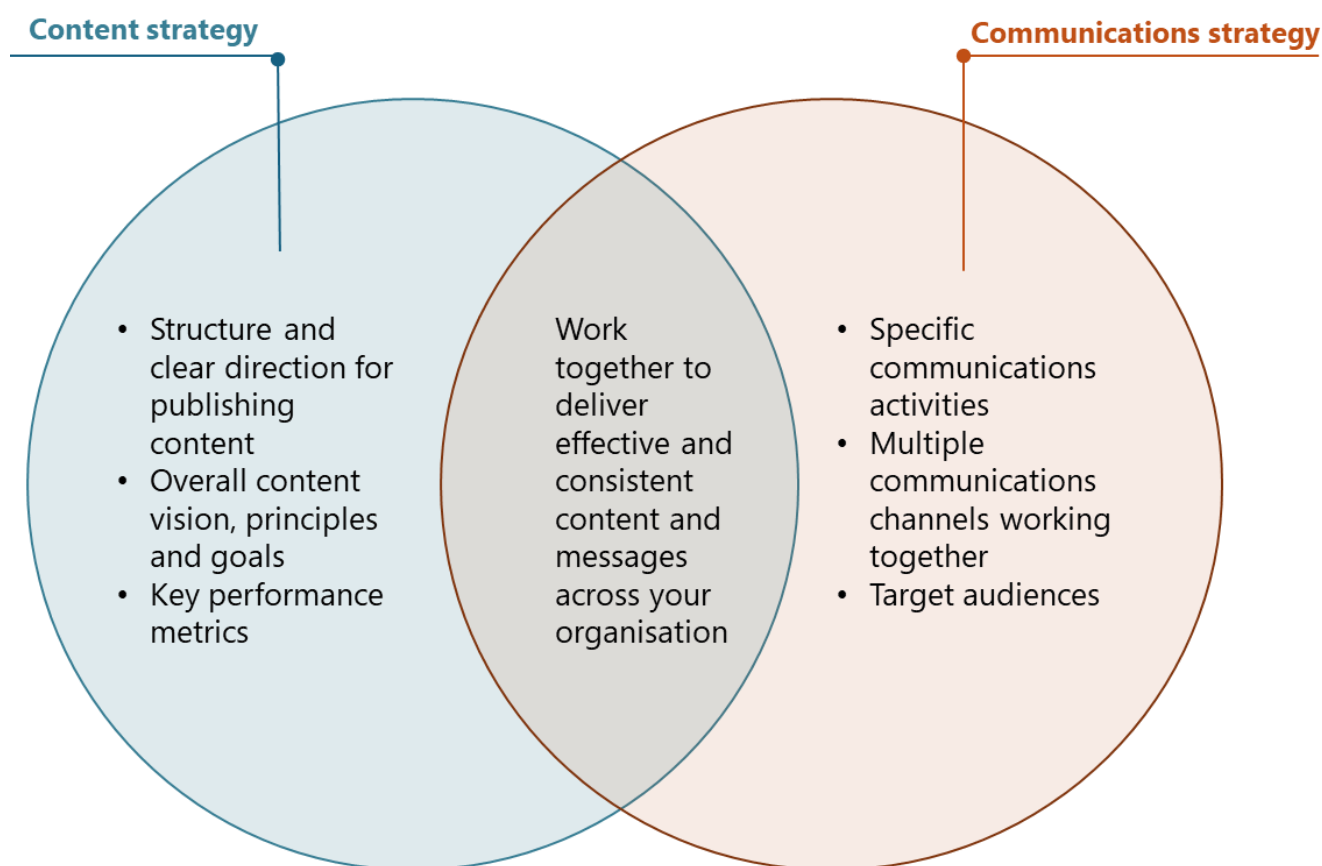
'Content strategy' and 'communication strategy' are sometimes used as interchangeable terms, but each has its own process and purpose.

A **content strategy** is a high-level strategic framework for publishing content. At a minimum, a content strategy should include:

- a content vision and principles
- high-level organisational communications goals and messages
- a description of your audience (and the ways you'll understand their needs)
- a review of your existing content, including gaps
- your content ecosystem (e.g. your web publishing platform and social media channels)
- content governance and plans for the most effective workflow and outcomes
- performance metrics, to determine if your content is performing as expected or if it can be further improved.

A **communications strategy** focuses on communications pathways and goals, promotional campaigns and product-specific communications. It works within the content strategy framework to develop specific activities and may include:

- how your communication goals support your content goals
- project-specific goals and messages
- target audiences
- channels and timelines for publishing information.



## Content vision and principles

A content strategy should include a content vision and principles. These provide benchmarks to use to check and align content to make sure you are achieving your goals.

The content vision is what you want the content to achieve. It's important to include not just what you want the content to do, but the outcome or impact you want. For example:

Our content will help patients to understand their options in cancer treatment so that they can make informed choices.

Our content will provide information about government programs so businesses can find appropriate support.

Content principles are the core things that content must address or achieve before it can be considered suitable for publication. For example:

### Content must be:

- user focused – it uses clear language and terminology that users recognise
- findable – it uses a simple structure based on user understanding
- clear, consistent and concise – it is easy to read and understand, and presents similar information the same way every time
- authoritative and trustworthy – it is underpinned by robust data and references
- in line with required standards – it complies with Level AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.1 (WCAG 2.1) and departmental reporting requirements.