



You need content strategy.

If you're in health care, insurance, financial services or another highly regulated field, you don't need a copywriter. You don't need another marketer. You need professionals who understand the complex problems you face, and who can help you reach your customers with the information they need to make wise decisions. You need content strategy.

Content strategy is both a mindset and a toolbox. Together, they can make your content a business asset, not just an expense. Creek Content helps you define, find, organize and manage your content as a business asset — making your content work for you, instead of the other way around.

Do these problems sound familiar?

- Customers and prospects who can't find what they need on your website
- Complex content management systems that make your job more difficult
- Lack of knowledge about whether your content is working
- Reams of emails for every decision
- Uncertainty over whether you're protecting your customers and your business

If you're facing any of these challenges, we need to talk. Creek Content specializes in content strategy for highly regulated industries like health care, financial services and insurance. We help you define your strategy, cut the red tape inside your own organization, and most importantly, meet your customers' needs.

What We Do



Creek Content focuses on content strategy and information architecture for organizations in highly regulated fields like health care and financial services. We speak both tech and marketing, but we live in the no-man's-land between the two.

Recent Creek Content projects:

- Development and implementation of the content strategy for a private personal health improvement site.
- Content development and community engagement strategy for a software company's customer support community.
- Content inventory and qualitative audit for Peabody College at Vanderbilt University.
- Information architecture and content development for Vanderbilt Library's GIS Services Department.

Founded in 2009, Creek Content approaches content with a strategic mindset, as well as with tactics that give you the information you need to make wise decisions. We specialize in viewing your content from your audience's perspective, helping you see and remove the barriers that stall engagement. Above all, we help you treat your content as a business asset, so that it works harder for you.

Expertise



Industries

Our work includes service to clients in a number of industries, including financial services, government contracting, health care, higher education, mobile logistics, nonprofits and associations, pharmaceuticals, small business, and transportation.

Areas of Expertise

Whether you're designing the content strategy for a new project or seeking the perfect content to enhance an existing site, Creek Content can provide the solution you need. We specialize in understanding your business as well as you do — so the finished content for your project is as effective as it can be. Since 1999, Laura Creekmore's work has included research into the incentives that inspire people to act online, the content that fosters engagement, and the best ways to overcome barriers to participation.

We work on many types of projects:

- Content inventory and audit
- Information architecture
- Taxonomy and metadata
- Content modeling
- Search application optimization
- Governance and operations
- Content management system management
- Content creation
- Editorial calendars
- Managing staff, freelance contributors
- Licensing content
- Online community management
- Project management
- Social media
- Natural search engine optimization

Content Inventory and Audit



Many of our engagements start with a content inventory or audit, or both. In fact, if a client comes to us for another reason, this is still often our first recommendation. If you know there's a problem with your content, it's tempting just to throw it out and start over. We've found that it makes more sense to go ahead and figure out *why* your content isn't working, however. We want to make sure we don't repeat the same mistakes — and an inventory and audit are some of the best tools we have for revealing the issues.

What is an inventory?

Your content is a product, and if you're not keeping track of each piece, it's hard to say what you have. With a full content inventory, we click through your website [and evaluate other electronic and printed materials, too] and make a big list of everything you have, recording key information about each item.

What is an audit?

Where an inventory is quantitative [how much? what kind? where from? how often?], an audit is qualitative. We're interested in how good? For what purpose? What's missing? An inventory and audit together give you the fullest picture of what you've got, what it's doing, and what you're missing.

But we've got a lot of stuff.

Still, an inventory and audit are the way to go. Organizations hire Creek Content to do an inventory and audit for 3 primary reasons:

- We give you a third-person, expert perspective on your content.
- We've done a lot of these — we don't have to reinvent the wheel.
- Your own staff is heads-down at work and doesn't have time for a project like this — but they need the answers to do their work most effectively.

No, really. A lot.

Up to 20,000 items or so, we often still recommend a full inventory, depending on your goals. Once your content library exceeds that size, a sample inventory probably makes more sense. We can design an inventory and audit project to meet your specific needs — just let us know.

Information Architecture



The way you organize — or don't organize — information can be a huge challenge for customers. The discipline of information architecture gives us guidelines and practices to shape your information in ways that make sense to your customers. We work from a user-centered perspective.

Understanding the Conversation

We want to hear your business goals — but we also want to talk to your customers. We can work with you and your team to understand your customers' and prospects' needs, and we'll figure out how you can help them with better information design.

Taxonomy and Metadata Development

Once we're all speaking the same language, we'll help you make your content more effective. Well-designed taxonomy and metadata make your search application work better and your content management more efficient.

Content Management System Consulting

How do you represent taxonomy and metadata in your CMS? What should you expect your software to do? What's practical? We've worked with a wide variety of CMS applications, but the principles of information design are universal. We can help your day-to-day operational process work better for your team and your customers. We work with your internal technical and systems teams, or help you find the external support you need.

Wireframes and Navigation

Finally — the back end is complete. Now, what do we want the customer to see? Creek Content helps you provide a customer-focused experience. We work with you to design information environments and navigation that your customers find easy to use. Great information architecture reveals your message in a way that makes sense to your audience, and we can help.

Content Governance



Noted content strategist Jeffrey MacIntyre calls it “the Day 2 problem.” We spend months planning, designing and executing a new digital project. We devote far less time to planning how we’ll create and manage the content that defines the product for customers.

Your operational processes are the long-term key to making your product successful. Creek Content can help you create the governance model that works for your needs.

Editorial Planning

Great content doesn’t happen by accident. We work with you to envision your customers’ needs in advance, and we help you develop a plan to meet them. Your team will know what needs to be done when, and you get the tools to track your work and evaluate your results.

Workflow and Managing Approvals

We see two typical flaws in content workflow: Too simple [no reviews or editing] and too complex [nothing happens easily or on time]. It’s hard to hit the happy medium that gives you confidence your content is right, legal and appropriate, yet still timely and relevant. We help you figure out how to get work done, protect your organization, and meet your customers’ needs.

Designing Review Cycles

Long-term content planning is often the last thing on anyone’s list — but how do you know the content you posted 2 years ago is still relevant? Accurate? What if you have old pages that still get lots of search traffic but don’t promote your current products? We help clients plan review, update and retirement cycles for content so that you make the most of your digital presence and protect your organization from liability.

Long-Term Content Management

Some organizations need long-term content management staff, not just a one-shot project. We serve clients in both short-term strategic and long-term operational roles. When your organization’s core competency lies elsewhere, a long-term content partner can make a lot of sense.

Training



Most of our clients have at least some content staff in house, and many organizations have multiple people and departments with some responsibility for creating content. It can be hard to keep everyone on message, but Creek Content can help with custom training programs to meet your needs.

Style Guide

When you have more than one person creating content, you need a style guide. Using the same terminology and formatting makes your organization look professional — and creating and adhering to a style guide is the first step. Creek Content can create a style guide for your organization and manage the rollout and training process to get all content creators on the same page.

Writing Workshop

For years, we've been talking about "web writing," as it differs from print — and it does. But today, content modeling allows us to completely separate our message from the medium, using the same content across multiple media. Whether you're using a sophisticated COPE [create once, publish everywhere] system or just trying to get your mobile copy right, we can help. Learn best practices from the pros at Creek Content. Custom workshops include guides for your team and feedback on your current work.

Content Strategy Training

Whether your team is new to the practice of content strategy or ready to evaluate your existing work for feedback, Creek Content can design content strategy training to meet your needs. Learn about inventories and audits, taxonomies, metadata, editorial planning, governance and more.

The Team

Laura Creekmore loves helping clients with content strategy, search application optimization, taxonomy and information architecture, and online communities. Her work focuses on helping clients achieve their business goals by engaging their customers in a collaborative relationship. Creekmore developed, and her team now implements, the content strategy for a private personal health improvement site. Creekmore's work includes defining content needs, licensing content, managing the team creating original content, building taxonomy and business rules to surface content to members, defining requirements and selecting a CMS, and interfacing directly with application developers, database administrators, instructional designers and subject-matter experts. She also manages the content development and community engagement strategy for a software company's private customer community, working to improve service and drive down costs.

Creekmore is the recipient of many industry awards, including recognition from the Custom Publishing Council, the Web Marketing Association, the Webby Awards, the Association for Publication Excellence Awards and the Publications Management Magnum Opus Awards. She is a graduate of Vanderbilt University and is studying for a master's in information science at the University of Tennessee.

Summer Huggins has nearly 15 years of experience in online content and loves staying on top of the trends, tools and techniques that make web content dynamic and fruitful for clients. An experienced community manager and content editor, she's been part of award-winning teams that have earned recognition from groups such as the Custom Content Council, the Web Marketing Association, and the American Society of Business Publication Editors. Huggins has a B.A. in English from Southwest Texas State University, and she's worked in health care, publishing and association marketing, in addition to a stint at a television shopping network.

Megan Pacella has a knack for stringing words together and a ginormous red pen collection. She writes, edits and manages content for our clients in print and online. Pacella is a captivating storyteller, and she spends much of her free time writing her own stories and exploring new things to write about. A graduate of Lipscomb University, she's had her work honored by the Custom Content Council, the Society of National Association Publications and the Web Marketing Association.



Lesley Lassiter is Creek Content's project manager. With the rest of us focusing on creativity and innovative content strategy, we depend on Lesley to keep our trains [and our clients' trains] running on time — and she does! In the past, Lesley served as a marketer and strategic planner at Ingram Book Group and at several travel and tourism companies. She holds an MBA in marketing and a BBA from the University of Memphis.

Selected Clients



Bid-Designs

FiledBy.com

Hammock Inc.

HealthStream

Healthways

Leading Edge Communications

MyFitU

Vanderbilt's Peabody College

Stratasan

Troy Waugh

Turfgrass Council of North Carolina

United Way of Nashville/Middle TN

Vanderbilt Orthopaedic Institute

XLMC