

# Content Governance

Ensuring sustainable content success

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# About me



- Content strategist since 1999
- Work with content-rich organizations -- associations, nonprofits, intranets, higher education, government
- Practitioner, mentor, teacher, international speaker



# Today's agenda

- What content governance is, why you need it
- Content governance/team models
- Roles and responsibilities
- Processes



# How much do you know about content governance?

*(put your answer in the chat)*

1. I've never heard about it, but it sounds like something we need
2. I think I know what it is
3. I know the basics, but don't know how to implement it
4. I'm pretty well-versed but looking for some pointers



# What is content?

- Executive biographies
- Product details
- Marketing collateral
- Press releases
- Program information
- Membership details
- Journal articles
- Advocacy issue updates
- Support content
- Etc., etc., etc.



# Content takes different forms

- Web pages
- Blog posts
- Infographics
- Images
- PDFs
- Video
- Audio
- Articles
- Brochures
- Reports
- Social media posts
- Podcasts
- Courses
- Etc., etc., etc.



**Content is the way  
our work  
is manifested  
in the world**



# What is content strategy?

The right content  
To the right person  
At the right time  
For the right action





# Put another way....

Content strategy is the practice of planning for the creation, delivery, and governance of useful, usable, **effective** content.





# Goals of content strategy

- Make your content more effective (reach the intended audience, help them achieve their goal, therefore meet your goal)
- Publish content so its value and relevance are clear
- Ensure your content is findable, understandable, and usable
- Help your organization and the audience

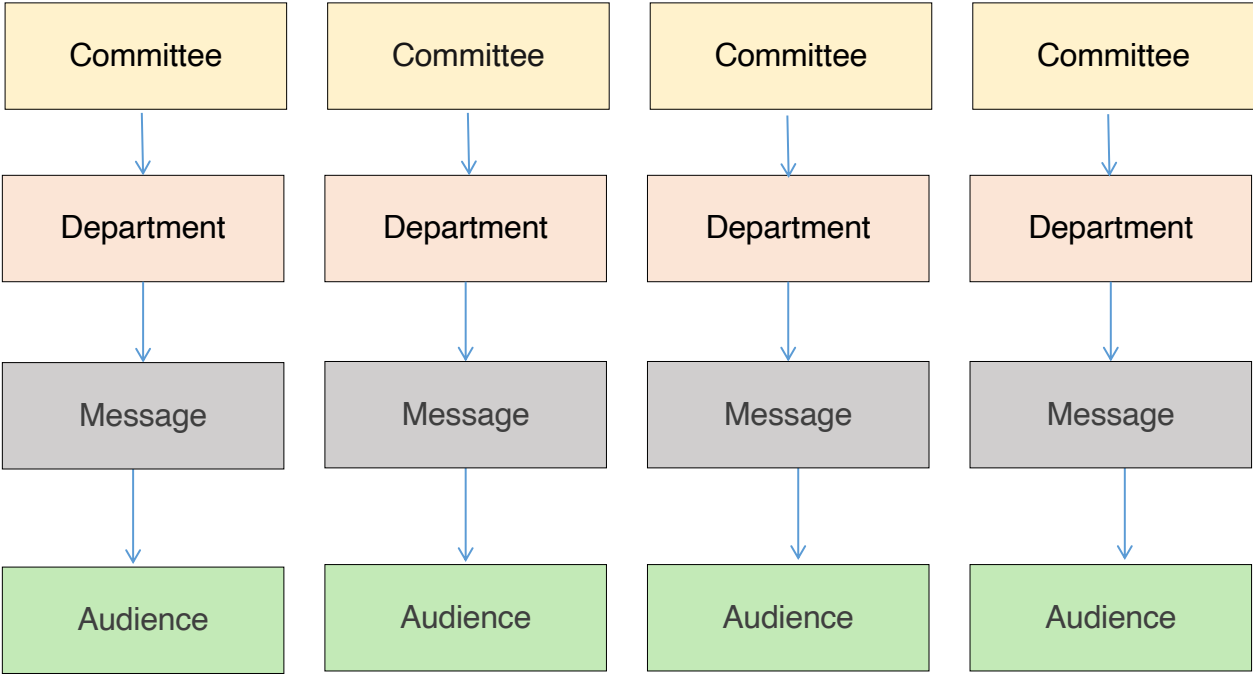


# Signs of no content strategy

- Outdated content
- Different voice for content from various sources
- Language/jargon
- Lack of context about what else exists
- Different content on different channels



# Old thinking



A photograph of two stylized, blocky figures in a boxing ring. The figure on the left is red and the one on the right is blue. They are positioned as if in a boxing stance, facing each other. The ring has yellow ropes and a yellow floor. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. A semi-transparent white box is overlaid on the center of the image, containing the text "Content is political" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font.

**Content  
is  
political**

# If content is...

Event

Product

Class

Program

Research



# All too often, it becomes...

*My* Event

*My* Product

*My* Class

*My* Program

*My* Research





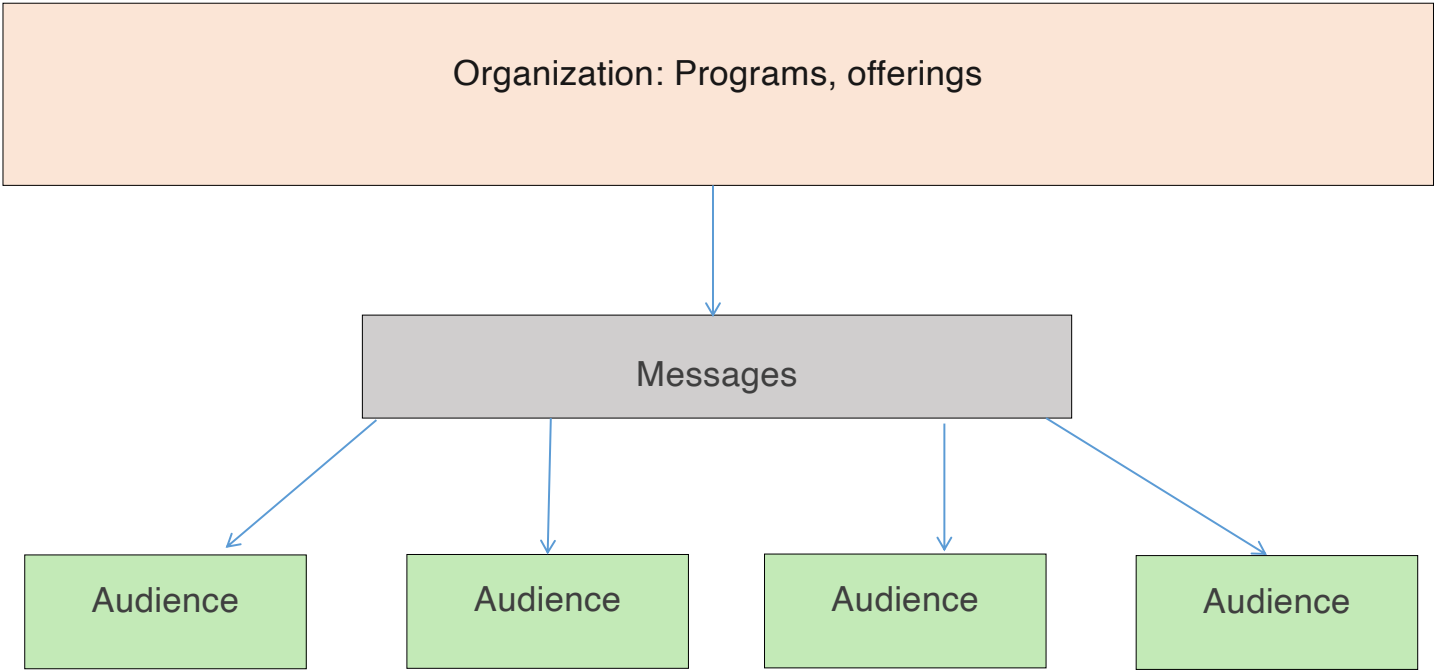


# Ideally, we should think...

- Our association's* Event
- Our association's* Product
- Our association's* Class
- Our association's* Program
- Our association's* Research



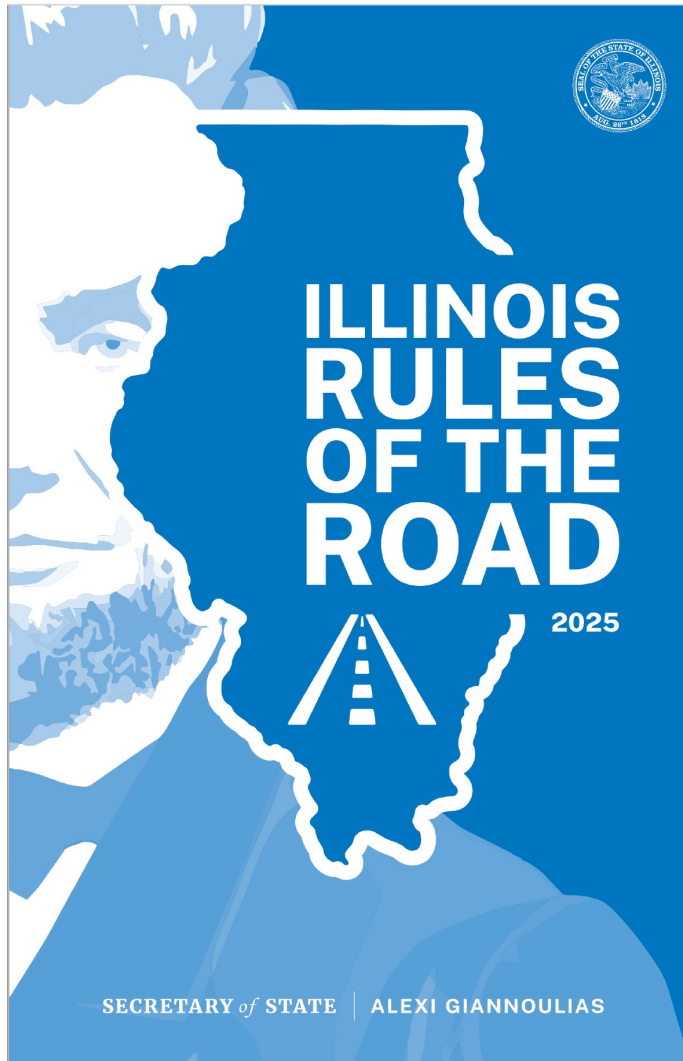
# New thinking



2  
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**Content governance  
is your website's  
“rules of the road”**





- Chapter 1: Illinois Driver's License
- Chapter 2: Driver's License Exams
- Chapter 3: Drivers Under Age 21
- Chapter 4: Traffic Laws
- Chapter 5: Sharing the Road
- Chapter 6: Driving Under the Influence (DUI)
- Chapter 7: Traffic Violations/Crashes
- Chapter 8: Driver's License Revocation, Suspension, Denial and Cancellation
- Chapter 9: Roadway Signs
- Chapter 10: Traffic Signals and Pavement Markings
- Chapter 11: Safe Driving Tips
- Chapter 12: Equipment for Safe Driving
- Chapter 13: Owning a Vehicle





<https://www.flickr.com/photos/lovestruck94/2607744709/>





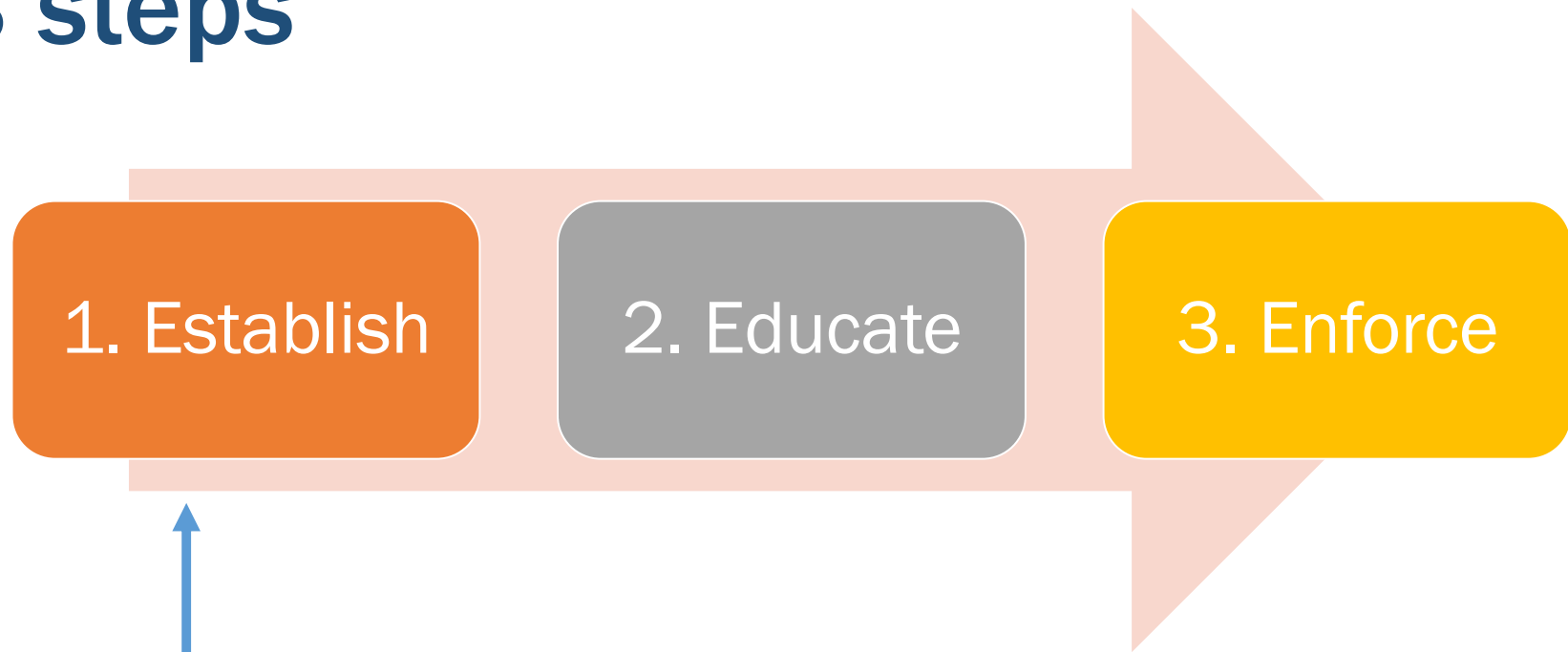


# Poll: Your biggest content governance challenges?

- Everyone creates content differently/in siloes
- Outdated content is still live
- Our content doesn't always have an explicit audience or defined goal
- Ad hoc or last-minute content requests
- No good way to push back on content requests



# 3 steps



What we are  
focusing on today

# Governance topics

1. Team structure and staffing
2. Oversight
3. Content lifecycle
4. Workflow/review processes
5. Governance for featured content, taxonomy
6. Plan for implementing & reviewing governance



# 1. Team structure and staffing

- What should the team structure be for content planning, creation, review, publishing, management, and promotion?
- What resources do you need for each of these steps?



## 2. Oversight

- What kind of overview team do you need? Who should be on it, and what will they do?
- What will be your escalation paths if you ever need them?



# 3. Content lifecycle

- What is the default amount of time for content to stay live?
- What content types, formats, or topics need a different timeframe?



# 4. Workflow/review processes

- What processes will we need to have for our content?
- Which processes will we use for which content?



# 5. Governance for featured content & taxonomy

- How often will we review featured content (e.g., Best Bets in our on-site search)?
- How often will we review our taxonomy – topics and other facets?
- Who will participate in the review, and in what capacity?





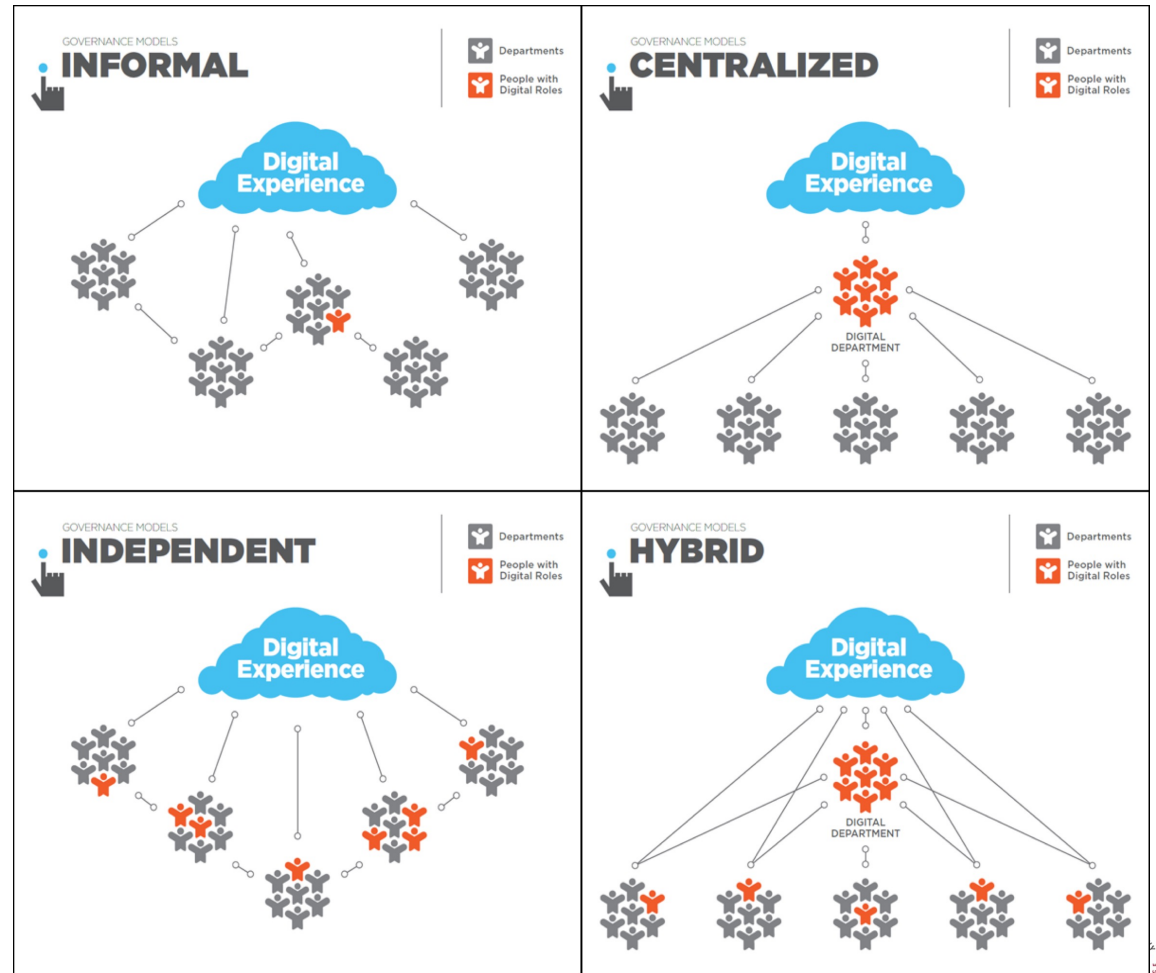
# 6. Plan for implementing & reviewing governance policies

- What can we do now, and what will we need to phase in over time?
- What is the timeline for implementing?
- How often will we review these policies?

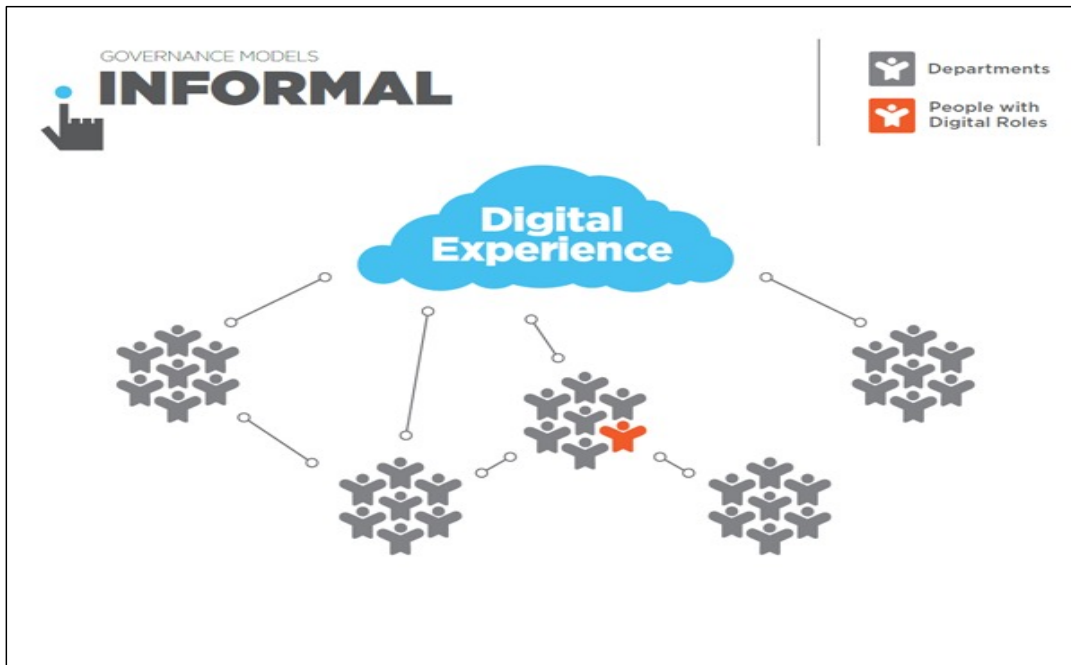


# Team structure

[https://ssir.org/articles/entry/four\\_models\\_for\\_organizing\\_digital\\_work\\_part\\_two](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/four_models_for_organizing_digital_work_part_two)

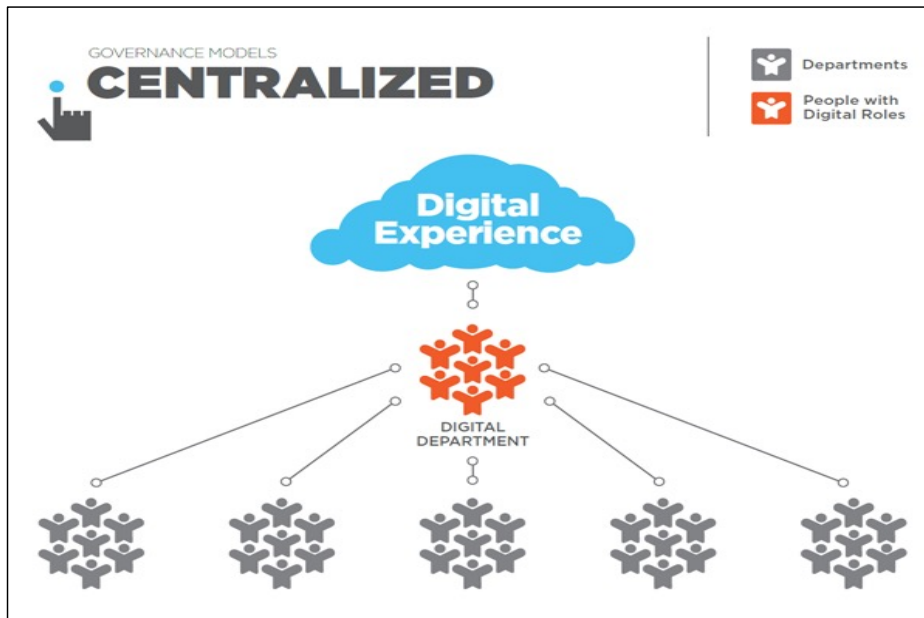


# Where most orgs start



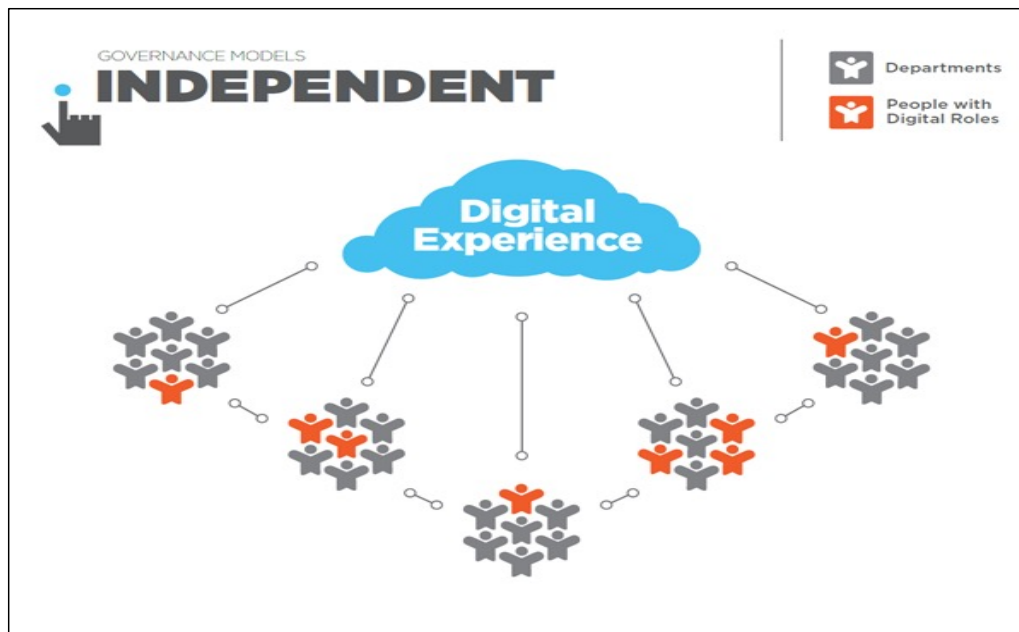
- No consistency
- No standards
- No organizational investment

# What often seems most logical



- In its own silo
- Expensive
- Slow to change
- Too much process
- Content owners remain passive and uneducated
- Too much work to do, preventing the ability to be a strategic leader

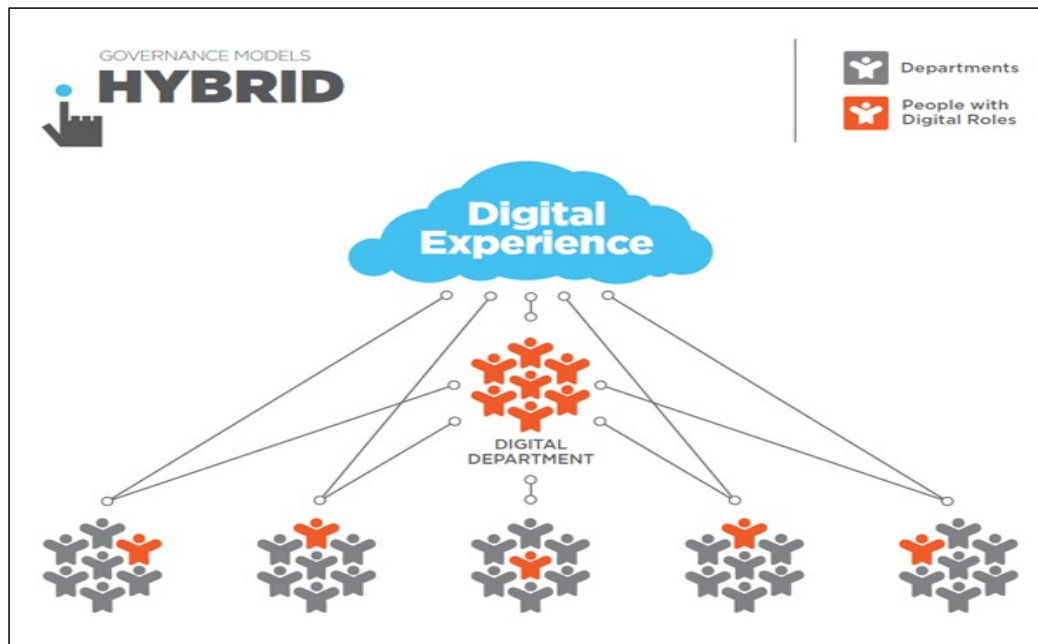
# What some orgs are trying



(Also called “decentralized”)

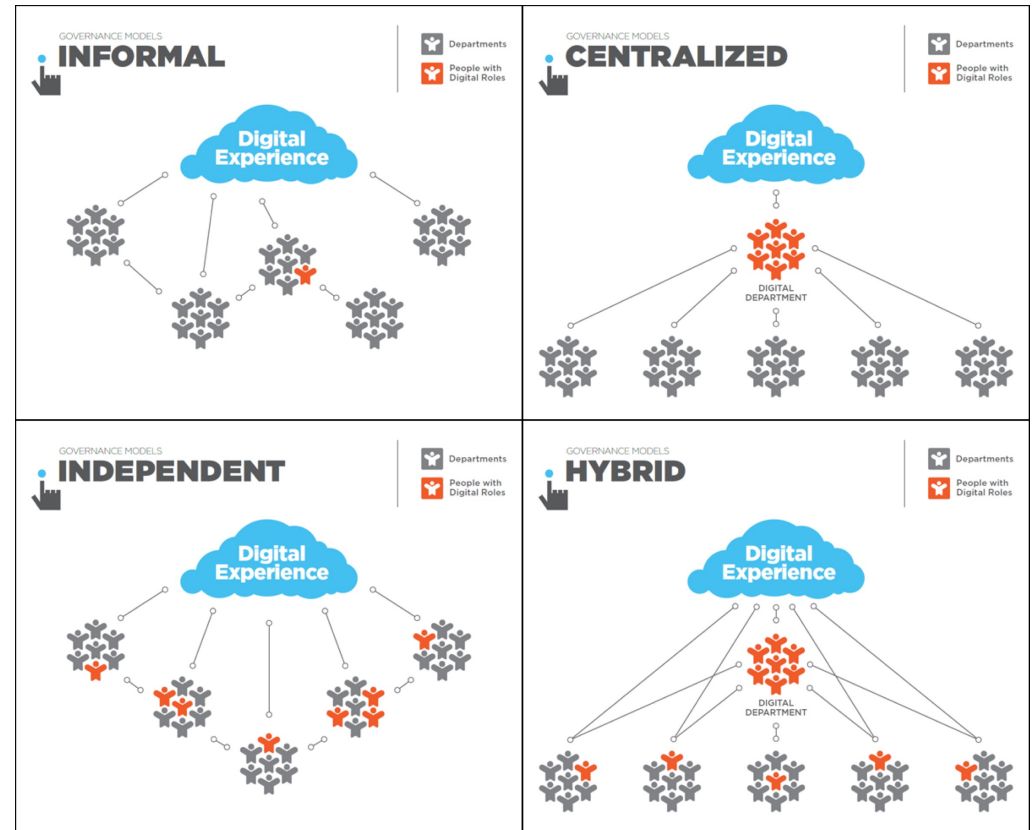
- Random, uneven quality, because skills differ
- Perpetuates fiefdoms
- Encourages competition rather than collaboration
- Can end up duplicating resources
- Produces a confusing user experience

# Where most orgs land



- Central vision
- Shared and distributed skills
- Requires buy-in from the top
- Strategic and responsive
- May not be able to succeed in an organization that is highly silo-ized, politicized, and competitive

# What is your current model, and how well is it working?



Handout: Content staffing calculator



# Roles



**Making  
sure the  
right people  
are doing the  
right work**





# Content & related roles

- Direction/overall strategy
- Content strategy
- Editorial quality
- Project management
- Visual design
- User experience
- Technical development
- Social media management
- Analytics collection/reporting
- Search optimization
- Subject-matter expertise
- Committee liaison
- Promotion



# What happens if roles are not clear?

- Concern over who makes decisions
- Unbalanced workloads
- “Not sure, so take no action” attitude
- Questions about who does what
- Blaming others
- A “we-they” attitude
- A reactive work environment
- Poor morale
- Don’t know where to go to get answers



	Stands for	Explanation	How many?	Considerations
<b>R</b>	Responsible	The person doing the work	1 or a small number	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If one person has many Rs, they may have more work than they can handle.</li> <li>• If one activity has many Rs, figure out whether tasks could be more streamlined so team members have more autonomy.</li> </ul>
<b>A</b>	Accountable	The person who approves the work	1	For complex situations, there may need to be more than one person accountable. Approvals will take longer.
<b>C</b>	Consulted	The people who need to weigh in – subject-matter experts, technical experts, member liaisons, etc. Two-way communication	Could be many	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too many Cs slow down the process.</li> <li>• Too few Cs can result in poor quality through lack of accuracy or strategic alignment.</li> </ul>
<b>I</b>	Informed	The people who are informed about the effort's decisions, progress, and results. One-way communication; FYI. Leaders, etc.	Could be many	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If there are a lot of Is, find ways to inform people in batches, at logical intervals.</li> <li>• Develop a system (preferably automated) to inform people.</li> </ul>

**How might this look for various size associations?**



Tasks to be done for this activity	People involved														How each person is involved in each task
Example activity: Newsletter	Direction/strategy (leadership)	Marketing director	Website director	Website content manager	Visual designer	User experience manager	Technical designer	Email producer	Social media manager	Analytics manager	Program/product leads	Committee volunteers (staff SMEs)	Customer service		
Authorizing a new newsletter															
Determining criteria for what types of content should go in the newsletter															
Designing the newsletter template															
Writing the content for an issue of a newsletter															
Editing the content for an issue of the newsletter															
Making sure the newsletter is sent out on schedule															
Measuring the performance of the newsletter overall															
Measuring the performance of individual newsletter items															
Reporting on newsletter performance															
Using analytics data to evolve the newsletter															
<b>R</b> <b>Responsible:</b> Who is actually doing the work (1 person, or small number)															
<b>A</b> <b>Accountable:</b> Whose job it is to make sure the work is done (only 1 person)															
<b>C</b> <b>Consulted:</b> Who can weigh in on decisions about the work (could be many, but not TOO many -- could also be none)															
<b>I</b> <b>Informed:</b> Who needs to know about decisions that have been made (could be many)															

Handout: RACI sample spreadsheet



Tasks to be done for this activity

People involved

**Example activity: Newsletter**

	Direction/strategy (leadership)	Marketing director	Website director	Website content manager	Visual designer	User experience designer	Technical developer	Email producer	Social media manager	Analytics manager	Program/product leads	Committee volunteers (staff SMEs)	Customer service (member SMEs)
Authorizing a new newsletter	C	A, R	A, R	I	I	I	I	I	I	C	I	I	I
Determining criteria for what types of content should go in the newsletter	R	A	A	I				I	I		I	I	
Designing the newsletter template	I	C	A		R		I						
Writing the content for an issue of a newsletter		I	A							R		I	
Editing the content for an issue of the newsletter			A	R									
Making sure the newsletter is sent out on schedule		I	A	I			R	I	I	I	I		
Measuring the performance of the newsletter overall	I		A						R				
Measuring the performance of individual newsletter items	I			A			I		R				
Reporting on newsletter performance	I	I	I	I			I		R	I	I		
Using analytics data to evolve the newsletter	I	A, R	A, R	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I

How each person is involved in each task

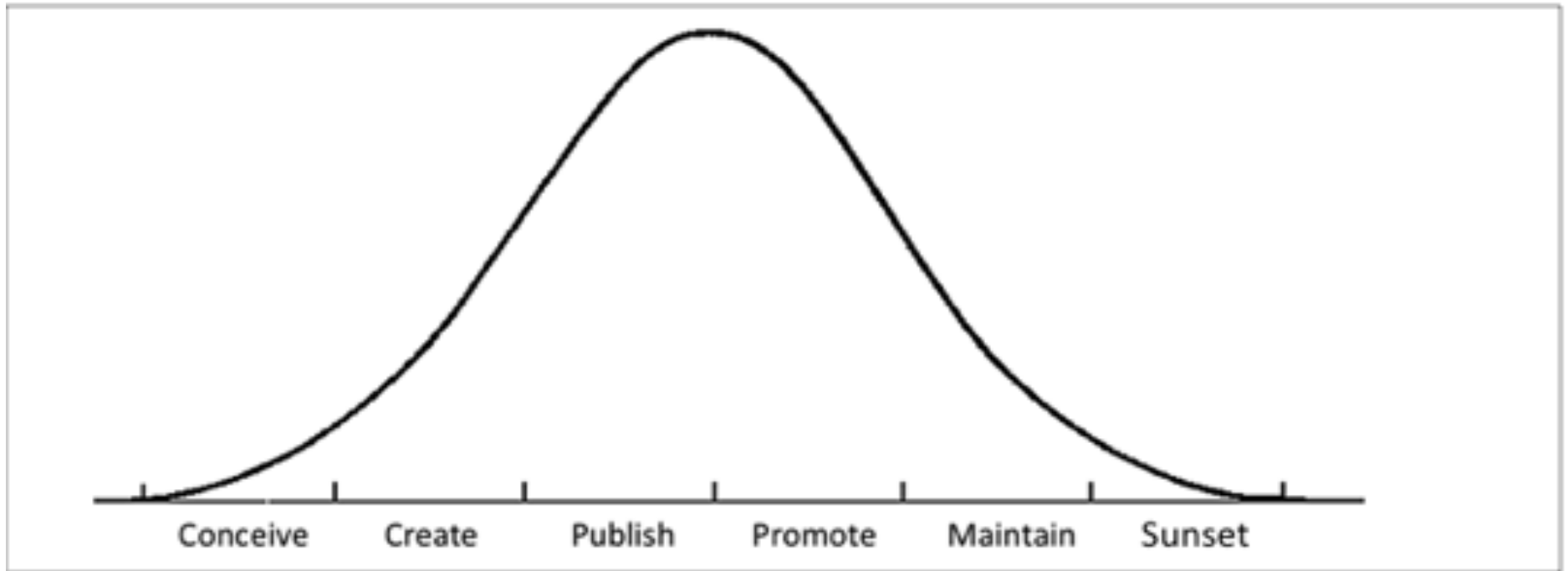
<b>R</b>	<b>Responsible:</b> Who is actually doing the work (1 person, or small number)
<b>A</b>	<b>Accountable:</b> Whose job it is to make sure the work is done (only 1 person)
<b>C</b>	<b>Consulted:</b> Who can weigh in on decisions about the work (could be many, but not TOO many -- could also be none)
<b>I</b>	<b>Informed:</b> Who needs to know about decisions that have been made (could be many)





# Process/workflow

# Content must follow a lifecycle



Handout: Content lifecycle template





# Process through the entire lifecycle

## Planning

- How do you decide whether to create content?  
(specific steps)
- How do you ensure that content is unique?
- How to document audience, purpose, and goals?



# Process through the entire lifecycle

## Publication

- What goes into creating a piece of content?
- What does the team need to do to make sure content is accurate? findable? understandable?
- Who needs to review before it is published? How does this vary for different types of content
- Also, address content updates and maintenance



# Process through the entire lifecycle

## Retirement

- When should a piece of content be retired?  
(define by content type or topic)
- What does the process of retiring a piece of content look like?
- Is content fully removed from your site, or is it archived?
  - Archived online or offline, where, and who can access it?
- Who's responsible for actually retiring the content?



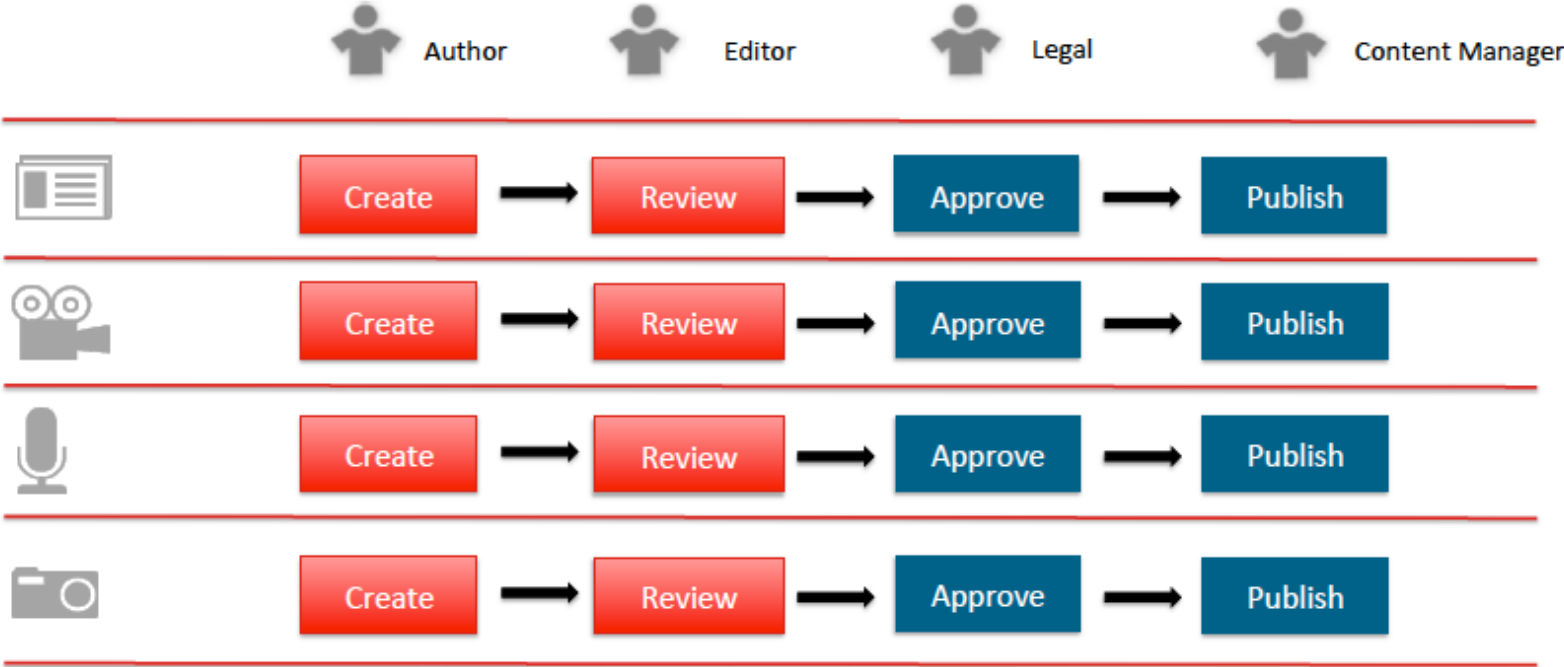
# Helpful tool: Intake form/ project brief

- Content description
- Purpose/org strategic context
- Content goals, success metrics
- Audience needs
- Uniqueness

Handout: Content intake form template



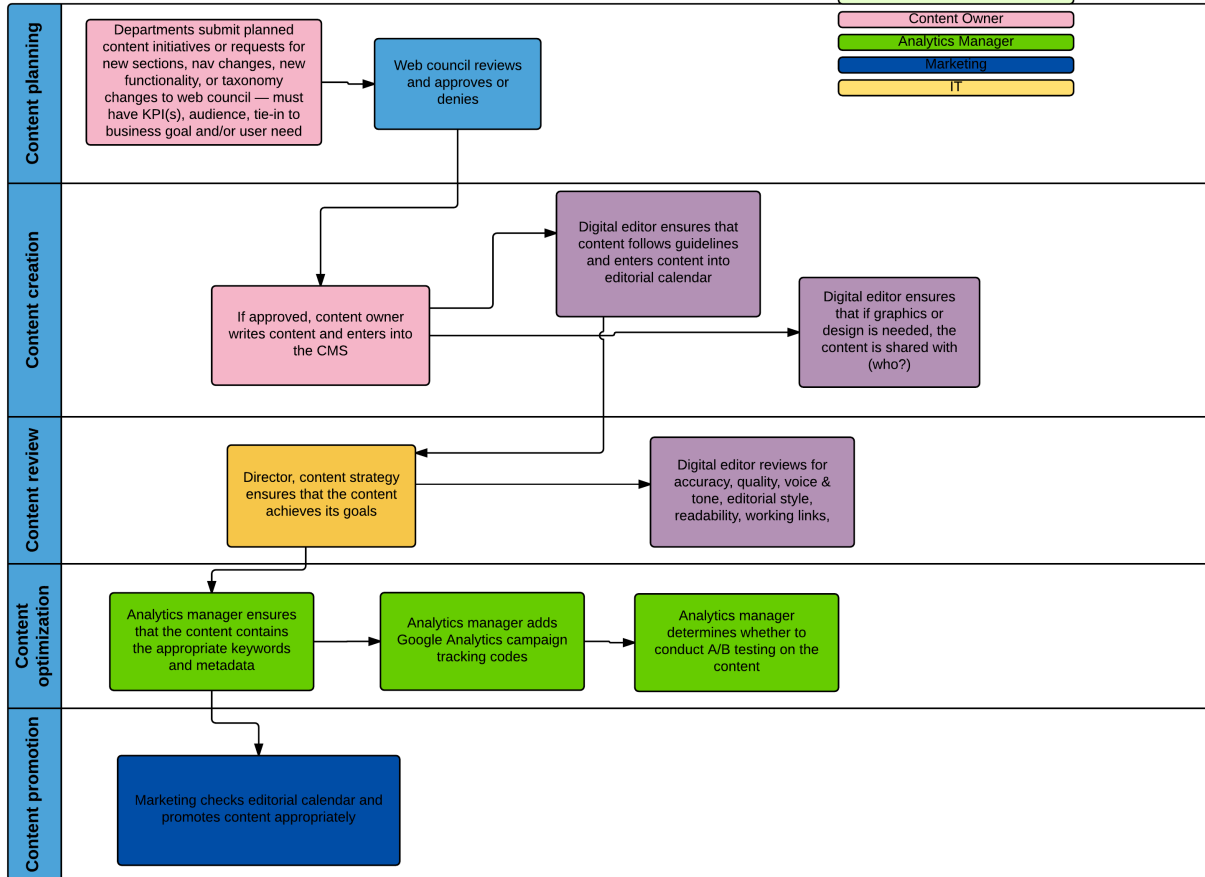
# Basic content process diagram



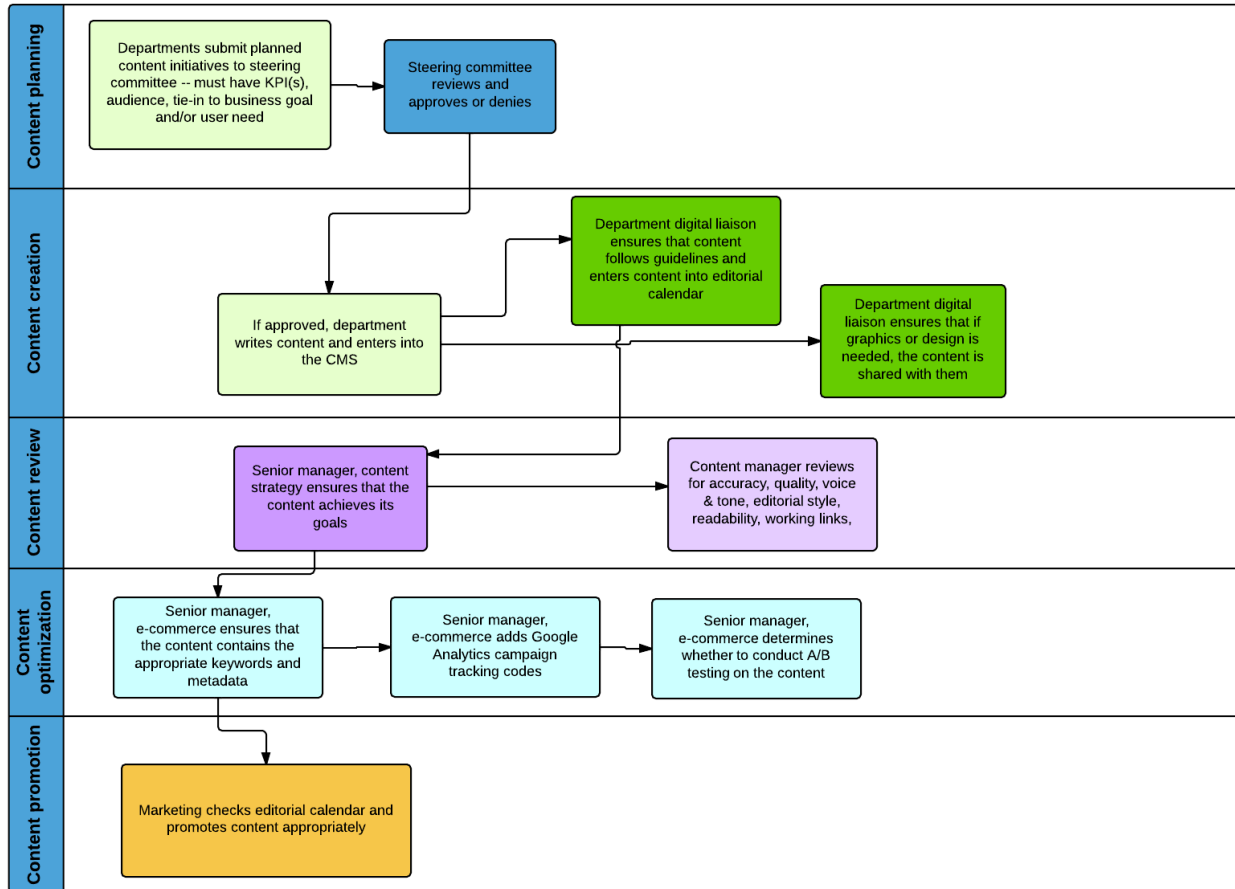


# Content Workflow

- Web Council
- Digital Director
- Director, Content Strategy
- Digital Editor
- Content Team
- Content Owner
- Analytics Manager
- Marketing
- IT

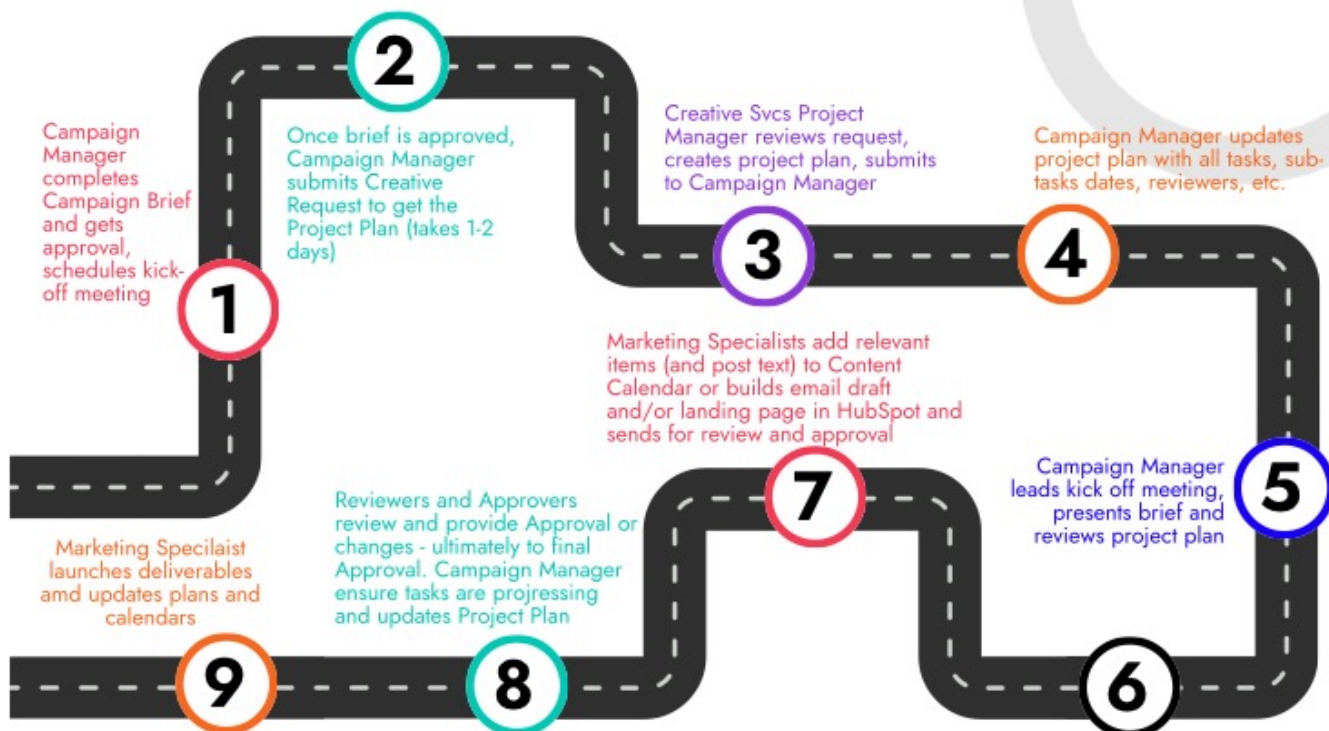


# Content Workflow



# MCI USA Campaign Workflow

Follow this path for successful campaign implementation





# How might this look in your organization?

- Planning
- Creation
- Review
- Optimization
- Promotion



# 3 steps

1. Establish

2. Educate

3. Enforce

## Endocrine Society Content Governance Handbook

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# Effective digital properties...

## Have senior-level oversight

- Prioritize efforts strategically, in the context of the organization's priorities
- Make sure the right people & budget exist
- Require that goals for initiatives be measurable and measured

## Have considered the HR aspects

- Make sure digital is an official part of people's job descriptions, and that it's included in what they are measured on



# Effective digital properties...

## Plan for change

- Internal communication – before, during, ongoing
- Introducing change gradually
- Reinforce/reward new behaviors
- Share successes



**Working  
together for  
audience  
satisfaction**



**What is one thing you'll  
take away from this talk?**

*(put your answer in the chat)*



# Do you want more?

**If you liked this webinar, what would you like to see next?** (*put your answer in the chat*)

- Implementing and enforcing content governance
- Measuring the results/impact of your content
- How to audit content: what to look for, how to use what you find
- Creating a content-first culture
- How to make content strategy stick
- *Other ideas?*







# Thank you!

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