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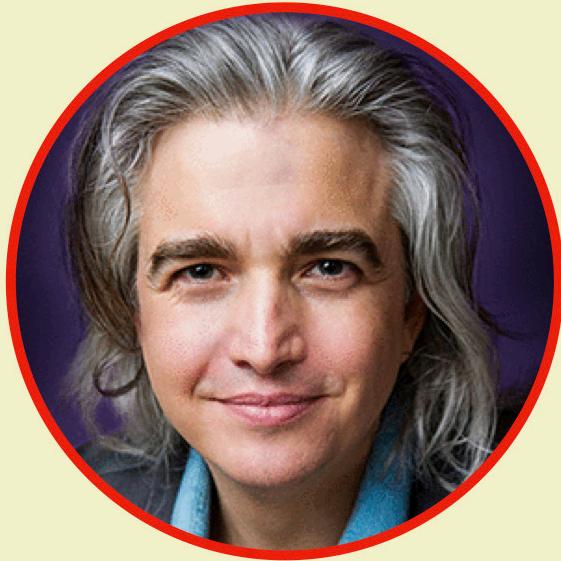
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7 Ways to Avoid the Biggest Failures in Content Operations



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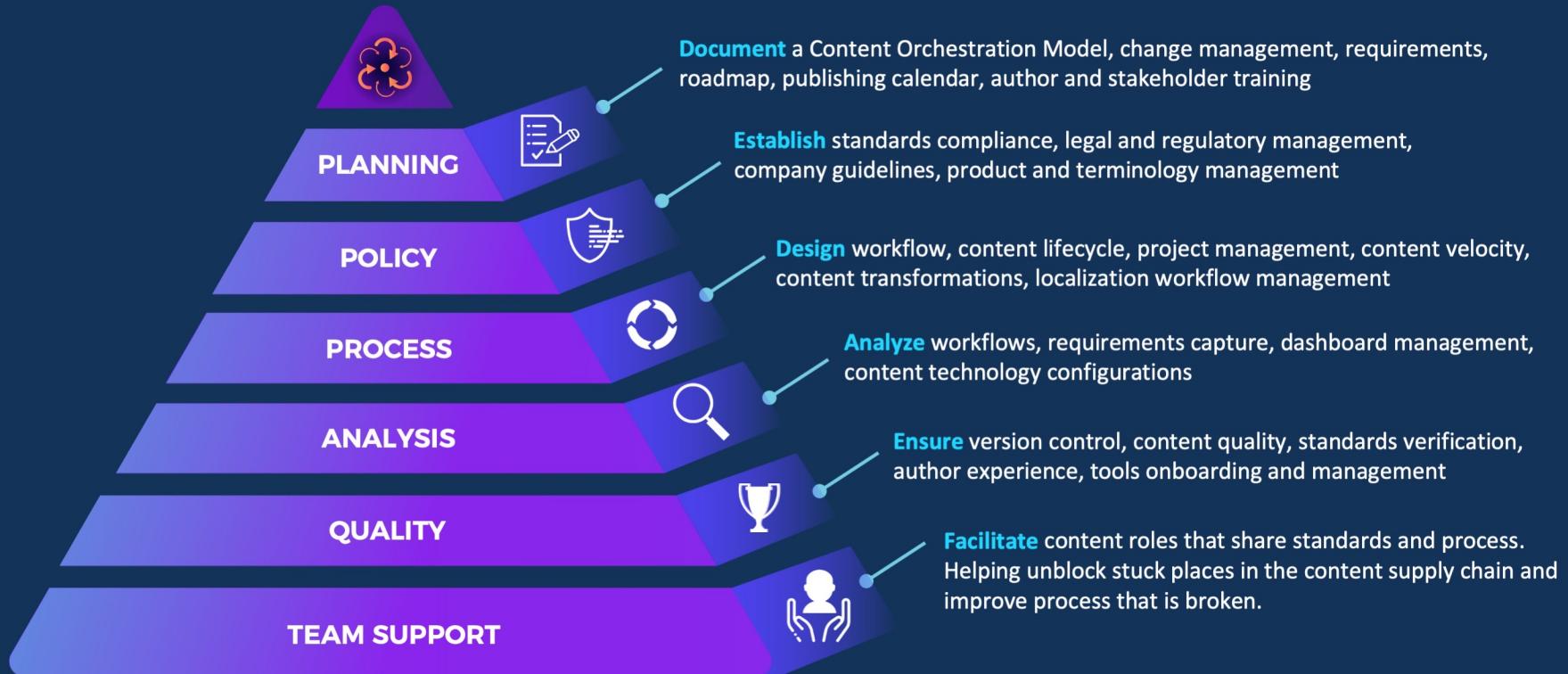
What is Content Operations?

Content Operations is how an organization performs the day-to-day business of acquiring, managing, and leveraging content.

It is a management activity that monitors, evaluates, and guides the content lifecycle, and the resulting content experience, to ensure the goals set by Content Strategy are realized.



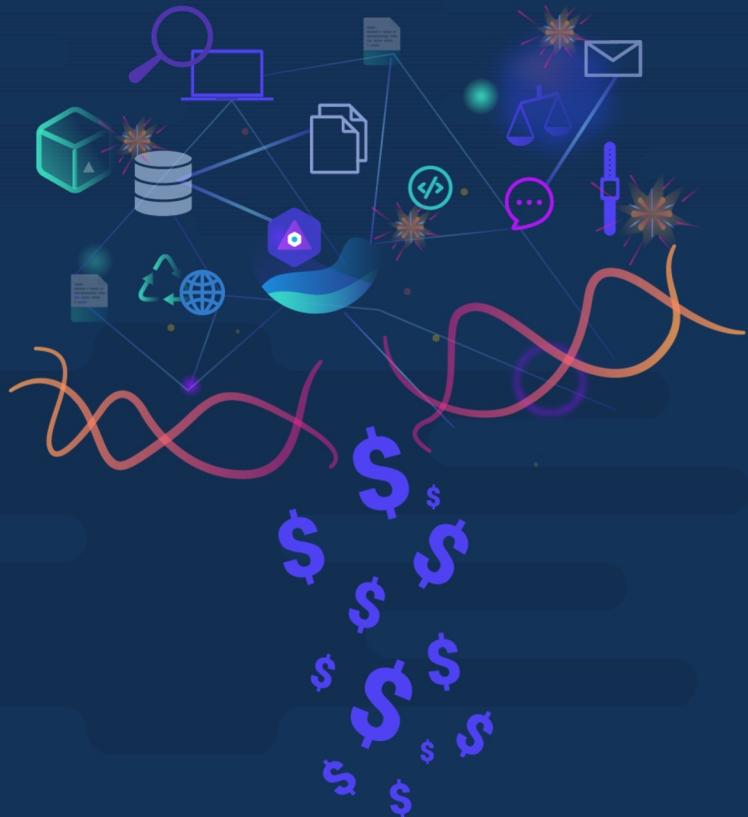
Content Operation Functions



Words for the wise

- **Adjust.** If the process isn't working, change the process.
- **Make it flow.** Process is intended to facilitate the work, not hinder the work.
- **Optimize.** It's normal for processes to constantly need improvement.
- **Look at the big picture.** We need perspective to find systemic issues and solutions.





The 7 Biggest Failures



How mature are Content Operations within your organization?



The 7 Biggest Failures in Content Operations

- 1 Not solving the problem far enough upstream
- 2 Forgetting the law of unintended consequences
- 3 Expecting technology alone to solve the people or process problems
- 4 Underestimating the problem
- 5 Forgetting to train the people
- 6 Beginning without establishing a baseline
- 7 Neglecting governance or process



1. Not solving the problem far enough upstream

The cost of doing it wrong

- Lack of alignment
- Trouble entering markets
- Absence of standardized processes

Complex

Ineffective

Inconsistent

The infographic is contained within a rounded rectangular frame with a purple-to-teal gradient background. At the top is a circular icon with a stylized gear and hexagon. Below it is a pink bar with the word "TRANSLATION" in white. The main text area is white with a teal border. It features a bold teal heading "60% cost reduction in localization cost." followed by the text "International Defense Alliance". Below this is a horizontal bar chart. The "BEFORE" bar is teal and the "AFTER" bar is purple, with a small hexagon icon containing the letter "A" at the end of the "AFTER" bar. The "AFTER" bar is significantly shorter than the "BEFORE" bar, visually representing the cost reduction.

TRANSLATION

60% cost reduction in localization cost.

International Defense Alliance

BEFORE

AFTER

[A]

How to do it right?



Are we solving the right problem? What is causing the problem?

Ask the right questions



Before enabling new tools the existing process should be semi-functional

Analyze the infrastructure



Recognize the issue first, then implement new systems and make training adjustments

Get to the core problem

2. Forgetting the law of unintended consequences

The cost of doing it wrong

- Fixes one thing but breaking 6 other things.
- Decreased velocity throughout the supply chain
- Increase of time and money spent repairing problems

Customizing vs. Configuring

Creating custom exceptions within software that needs to be addressed continually rather than configuring capabilities to streamline processes for specific identified needs.



How to do it right?



Careful planning and attention to detail during execution

Look at the problem at 360°



Check cross functionally before making major changes

Identify if something is broken



Things that worked perfectly in the past may not work the same now

Implement newly-designed process

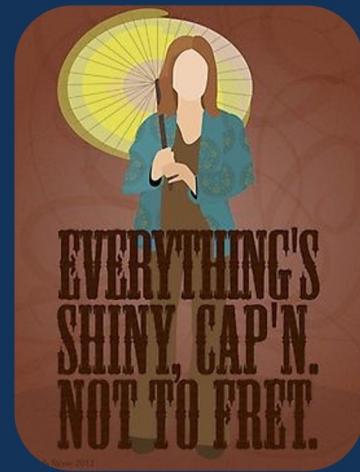
3. Expecting Tech alone to solve the people or process problems

The cost of doing it wrong

- Systematic loss of time
- Risk of adopting incompatible technologies and tools
- Day to day confusion
- Tools are intended to facilitate the work, not hinder the work

Looking at the shiny

Don't expect technology to solve your people problems



How to do it right?



Take the time to characterize the problem to come up with potential solutions before acquiring new tools

Make a diagnosis

Set up tools to bring your teams together, not separate them into silos with content creators working in different platforms

Implement supportive technology

Partners need to get involved and take business driven decisions around the use of the content assets.

IT and Stakeholders should work in hand

4. Underestimating the problem

The cost of doing it wrong

- Not driving business outcomes
- Increasing in operations costs
- Deteriorating standards and systems

Maine Dairy Company

\$10 million lawsuit

over a missing Oxford comma

"...the canning, processing, preserving, freezing, drying, marketing, storing, packing for shipment - *no Oxford comma here* - or distribution of perishable foods..."



How to do it right?



**Set standards and goals and
pay closer attention to
detail**

Attitude of excellence

**Do not assume you know it
all. Resisting change won't
help you to improve**

Learn and adjust

**Measure the success of teams
and processes to decrease
mistakes**

Dedicate time to QA processes

5. Forgetting to train the people

The cost of doing it wrong

- Lack of motivation and reduced productivity
- Absence of knowledge of standards and policies
- Unsafe work environment
- Increase in expenses due to high employee turnover

Boeing 737 Max issues

347 lives lost
\$19 billion lost
and counting because of documentation and training issues



How to do it right?



Make style guides and governance material accessible to everyone who needs them

Make it sticky



Give people the tools and job aid they need to be successful

Provide tools



Let people do the valuable things that machines are not good at

Machines do not replace people

6. Beginning without establishing a baseline

The cost of doing it wrong

- If we can't measure, we can't improve
- Focus and prioritization
- C-level does not often budget what cannot be measured
- Measures are not always 1:1 with reality
- Measurement requires creativity and effort
- Measurement costs some money to do well

What is the cost to perform content requirements?

Efforts can be put into "deep-freeze" because of a lack of a clear business case and ownership.



How to do it right?



Keep metrics understandable to recognize the story behind the numbers

Define clear metrics



Share successes and discuss problems

Share the results



Review metrics periodically to identify areas of opportunity

Strive for continuous improvement

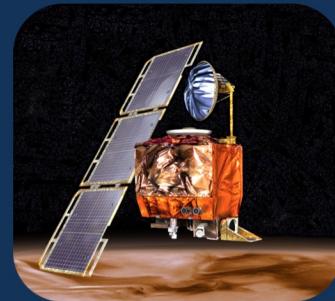
7. Neglecting governance or process

The cost of doing it wrong

- Regulatory risk and exposure
- Team frustrations and lack of motivation
- Unclear responsibilities and process
- Regulatory compliance and fines
- Brand dilution
- Duplication of effort
- Lack of reuse
- Inconsistencies across quality

Mars Climate Orbiter –
1 engineer was coding with
Imperial, 1 with metrics;
because of the incorrect
conversion:

\$327.6 million lost



How to do it right?



Executives must help the organization to engage with stakeholders and employees

Engagement matters



Ensure all resources enable you to align your goals and set priorities for success

Organizational alignment



Clarify individual responsibilities and organizational expectations of executives

Transparency and accountability

What is the biggest cause of failure in your organization?



Recap and First Steps Toward Content Operations



Define how content operations supports the value of content and CX

Define and Value



Assess the content supply chain and organizational structure, with metrics

Map and Survey



Begin to envision the Content Orchestration Model and the supply chain architecture

Envision and Architect



A Path Through Chaos:

Introducing the Content Orchestration Model



For more on Content Operations, dive deep into the roles of Ops and the value it brings to any organization



Available on simplea.com



simplea.com



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