

# Content2023

The Rubicon CX Approach to Content & Experience:  
A Comprehensive View for 2022 and Beyond

March 2022



# Agenda

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- 2 / Where We've Been
- 3 / Where We Are
- 4 / How We Think
- 4 / Content & Experience Strategy
- 5 / Putting it to Work
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# 1 / Introduction



# The content problem

Too often, companies look at content as the last river to cross for an experience, with little understanding of the content they have, or where that content will go. Many believe that it will take care of itself in a programmatic fashion.

Unfortunately that just replicates the problems that may lie with the existing content, and it doesn't take into account how content will fit within a design system, leading to a less-than-optimal experience for the audience. And ultimately, it will undermine the entire experience.





# Our values & mission

## Content & experience the Rubicon CX Way

We'll cross that river with you. Our mission is to help you **transform** your content into engaging conversations that lie at the heart of an experience. It's never as easy as you think it may be. So, we think big and work tirelessly with our counterparts and clients to uncover the best approaches and designs.

We ask questions. We listen. We don't rest until we've delivered an actionable content and experience design that will not only suit your audiences' needs, but also enable business users to easily maintain content to optimize it and keep it relevant.

# 2 / Where We've Been



# Content strategy is relatively new, right?

We're often asked how we became involved in such a new discipline.

This, however, is anything but the case. Content strategy has been around since the infancy of the web as a mature platform.

The term “content strategy” was coined independently at various digital agencies in 1998.

Various digital agencies coin the term content strategy and start to hire Content Strategists.

**1998**

First content strategy conference, CS Forum, takes place in Paris.

**2010**

Clients begin actively seeking content strategy services and the number of agencies or consultancies that offer it grows.

**2018**

**We always ask:  
“what’s next?”**

**2022**

**2009** “Content strategy” starts trending in search terms, rising from 880 results in 2000 to 286,000 searches in 2008, then suddenly jumps to 4,210,000 in 2009.

**2015** Kevin Nichols publishes *Enterprise Content Strategy: A Project Guide*, edited by Tim Truxell (Hi!).

**2020** Rubicon CX is founded with a view to providing content expertise as well as personalized, shoulder-to-consulting with companies seeking content and experience strategy



# 3 / Where We Are

# How content strategy has evolved

## We started with the basics that framed the discipline

- Content inventories
- Content audits or assessments
- Content analysis
- Content brief
- Content matrices
- Editorial guidelines
- Voice and tone
- Copywriting

## We evolved through new capabilities

- CMS content modeling and metadata specification
- Taxonomies & tagging strategies
- CMS workflows
- DAM metadata specifications
- Content migration plans
- Editorial processes
- Content calendars
- Globalization and localization plans

## Today, we incorporate new models & channels

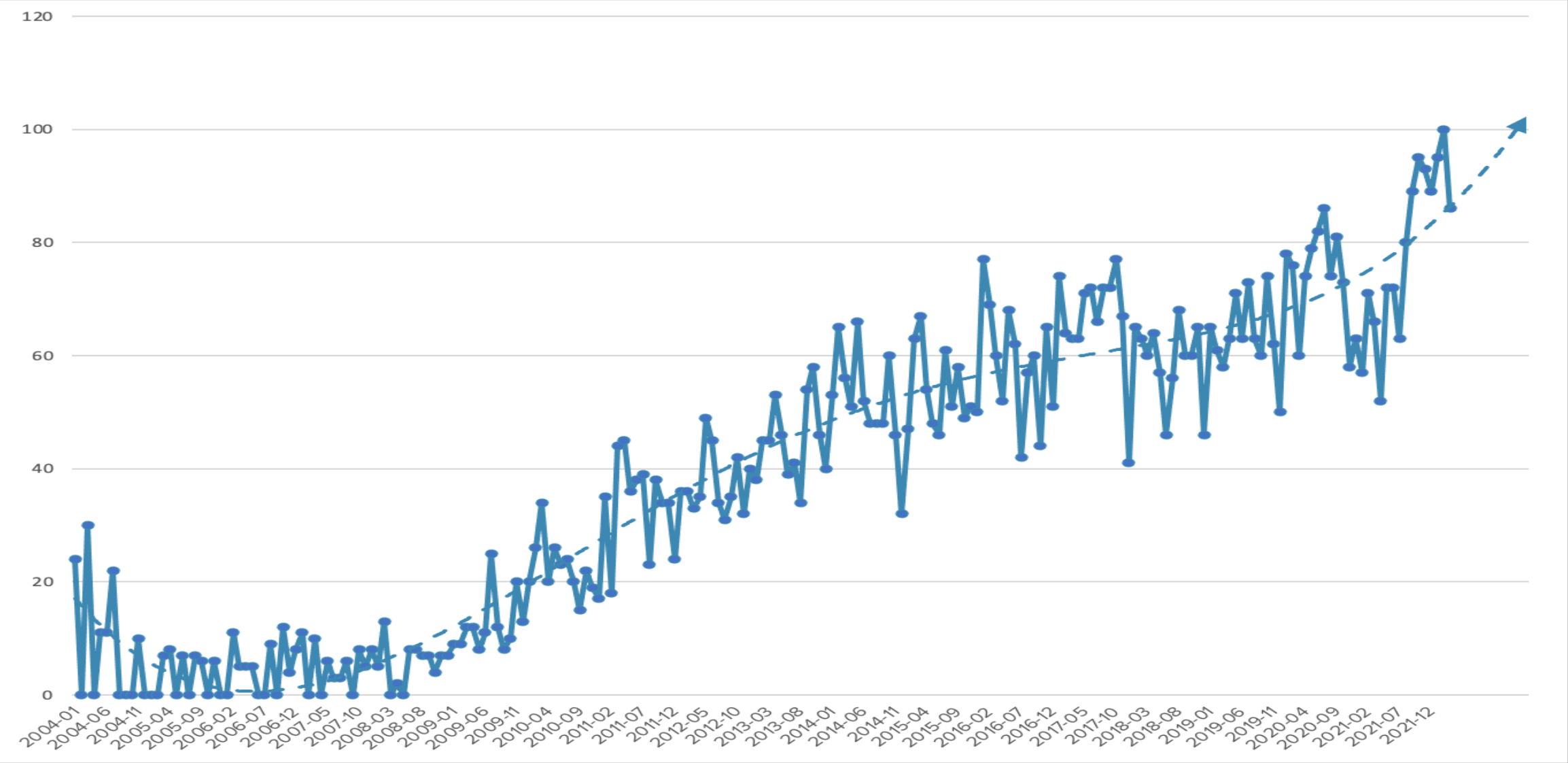
- Governance models
- Staffing plans
- Content marketing
- Social content
- UX Writing
- Mobile & responsive content
- Voice & spaces
- True omnichannel

1998

2022+



# Content strategy searches over time



Source: Google Trends

# The two sides of content

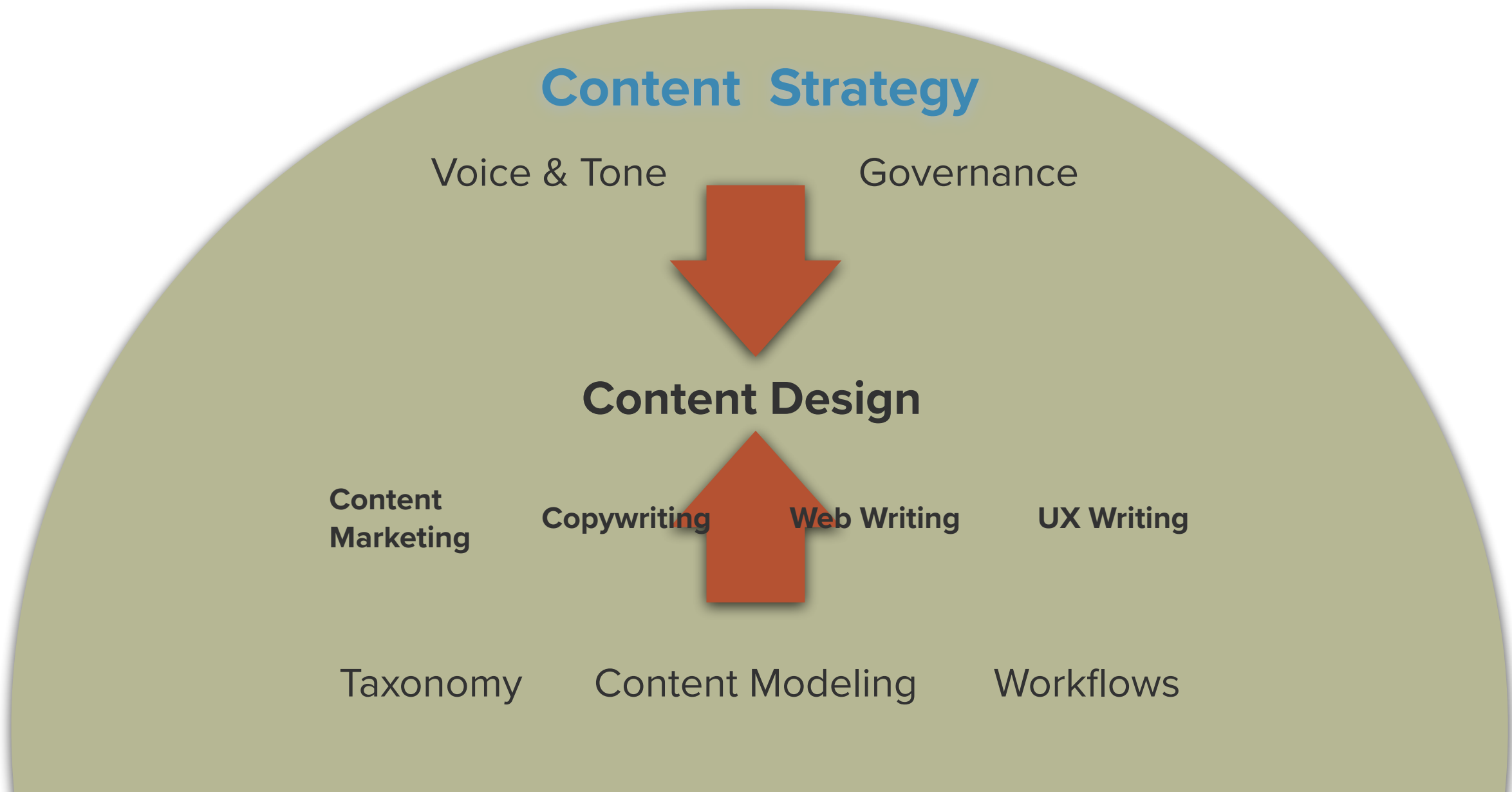
Client side	The wider world
Content Inventory	
Content Audit	
Content Strategy & Experience Brief	
Content Gap Analysis	Competitive and Audience Needs Assessment
Metadata & Tagging Strategy	Voice & Tone
Metadata Specifications	Messaging Framework
Content Strategy & Experience Playbook	
Taxonomy	Sitemap
Content Model	Editorial Guidelines
Governance Model	Content Matrix
Editorial Workflows	Content Marketing Strategy
Content Maintenance Strategy	Editorial Calendar
CMS Authoring Guidelines	UX Writing and Copydecks



# What we mean we say [insert term du jour]

- Content Strategy is the umbrella under which all other activities occur. These can all happen, but without an overarching strategy, they will will not be as effective
- Content Marketing is the approach for using content to convince your audiences of the relevance and timeliness of you offerings
- UX Writing is the editorial approach for building transactional experiences
- Copywriting is about storytelling and messaging. It's the actual nuts and bolts required to build a content marketing approach, including campaign, social and ad writing
- Content Design concerns the nuts and bolts of how content is managed in the back end, including UX Writing around functionality

# How each activity plays together



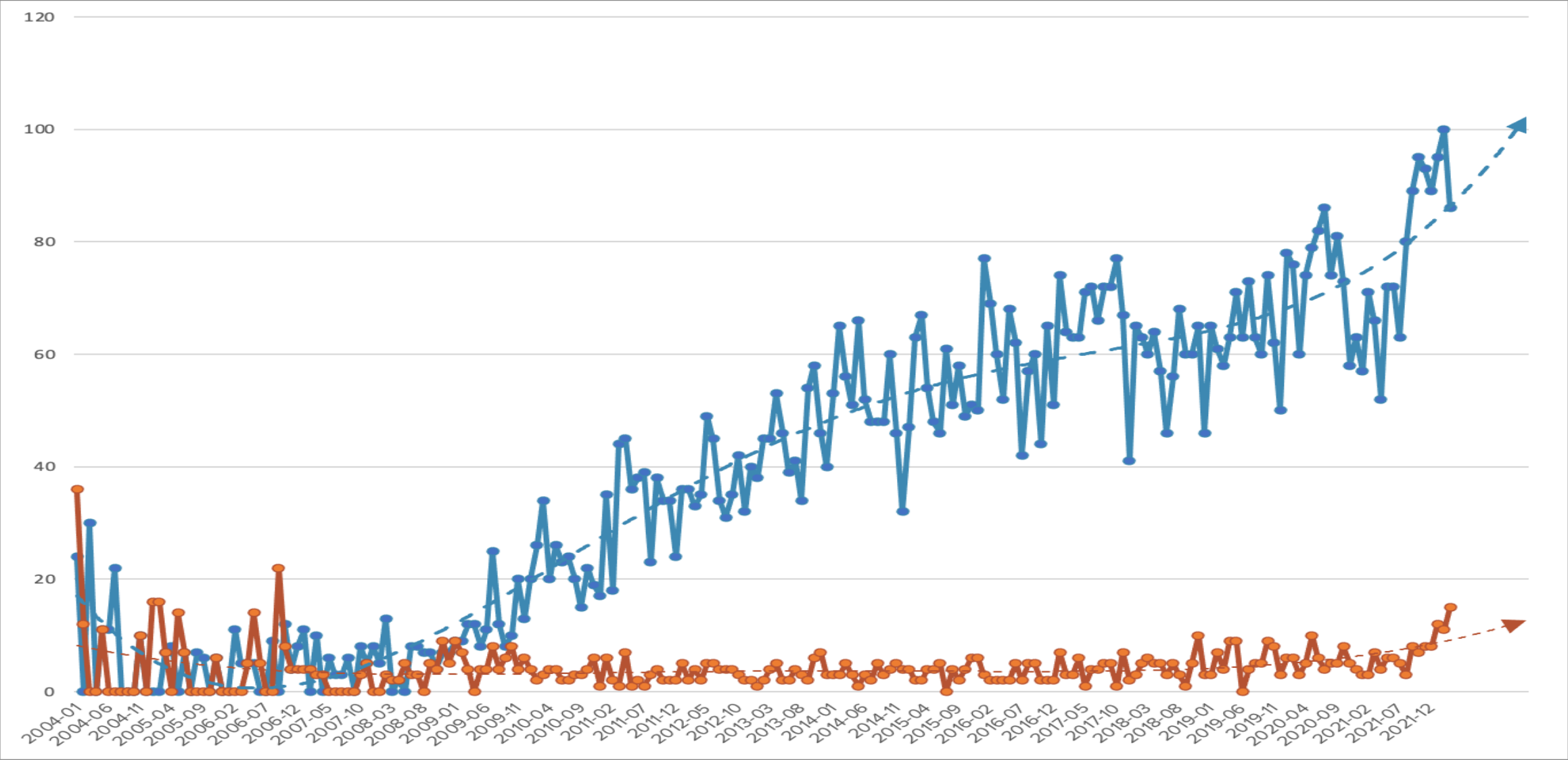
# Content design

Content design is concerned with the content delivery and governance mechanisms required to ensure a successful content experience.

- Content design is a subset of a larger content strategy
- It focuses on the delivery mechanisms such as a content model to ensure the easy maintenance of content required for an evolving experience
- It also focuses on the review cycles and migrations required for a successful experience
- Finally, it establishes an underlying taxonomy that can be used both by end users and business user to make the content transparent



# Content design & content strategy searches over time



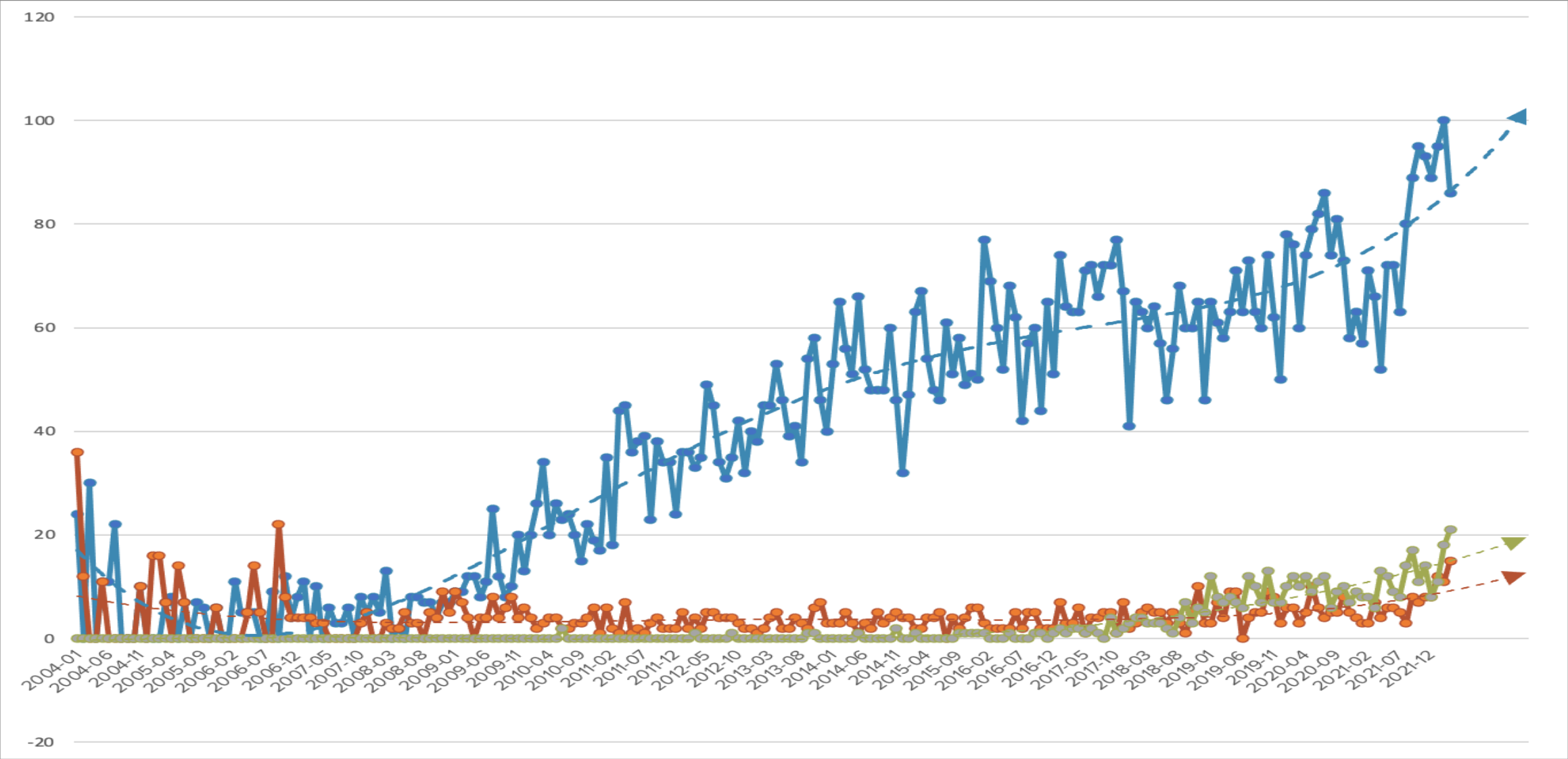
Source: Google Trends

# UX Writing

UX Writing is content creation to support interaction within a design. It encompasses all the copy that isn't usually seen as copy, and if done right, fades into the background so that users rarely notice it.

- To do this, it uses many of the same tools as a larger content strategy
- It requires and maps to an overarching content strategy.
- It is a blend of different services and capabilities, such as user experience, analytics, and copy

# Content design, strategy & UX Writing searches over time



Source: Google Trends



# Copywriting

The traditional half of art and copy. Copywriting focuses on branded, bought, owned, and earned content and uses it to meet users' needs at every part of their journey.

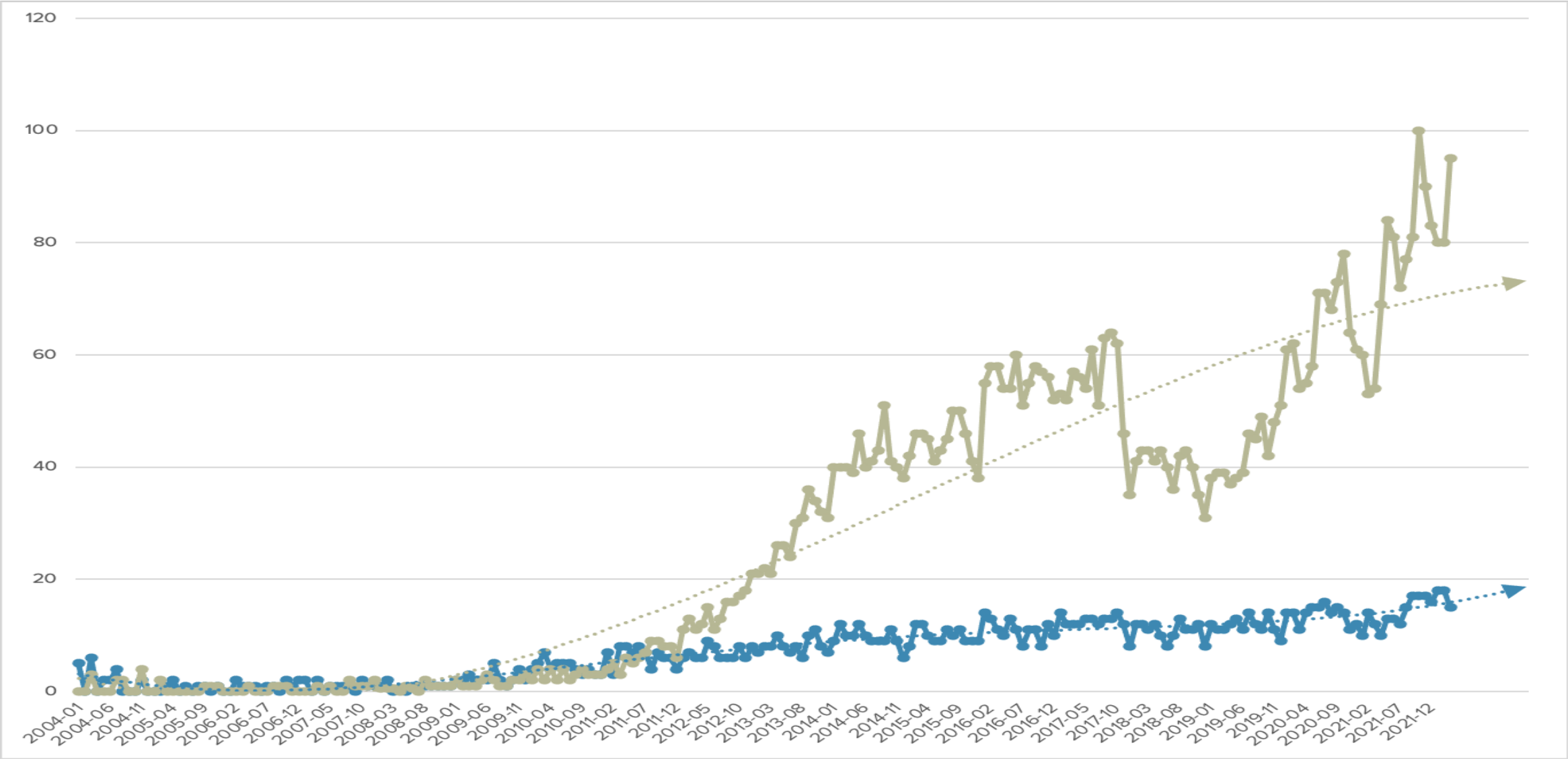
- Campaign copy creation using the voice and tone and messaging approach delineated by the overall content strategy
- Content marketing copy, such as blog posts and articles, to establish a user's affinity with the brand and provide needed information
- Information that isn't always based on selling for conversion, but above the line qualities such as brand lift
- Social posts and email messaging to activate site content

# Content marketing

Content marketing is content creation and planning in which an organization invests to develop the customer relationship; and, to acquire new customers. Content marketing is an end goal that requires a solid content strategy to attempt.

- Content marketing is not content strategy, but a tactic that requires a content strategy to support it
- Effective content marketing requires an overarching content strategy.
- It is a blend of different services and capabilities, much of what we have including: content strategists, SEO, Analytics teams, and Social teams, copywriters

# Content marketing & content strategy searches over time



Source: Google Trends



# 3 / How We Think

A long time ago...

**It was all about having a great ad campaign and robust media plan. Consumers watched a commercial and did what they were told. Brand story was king.**

**A push-driven brand ecosystem...  
or “story yelling”**

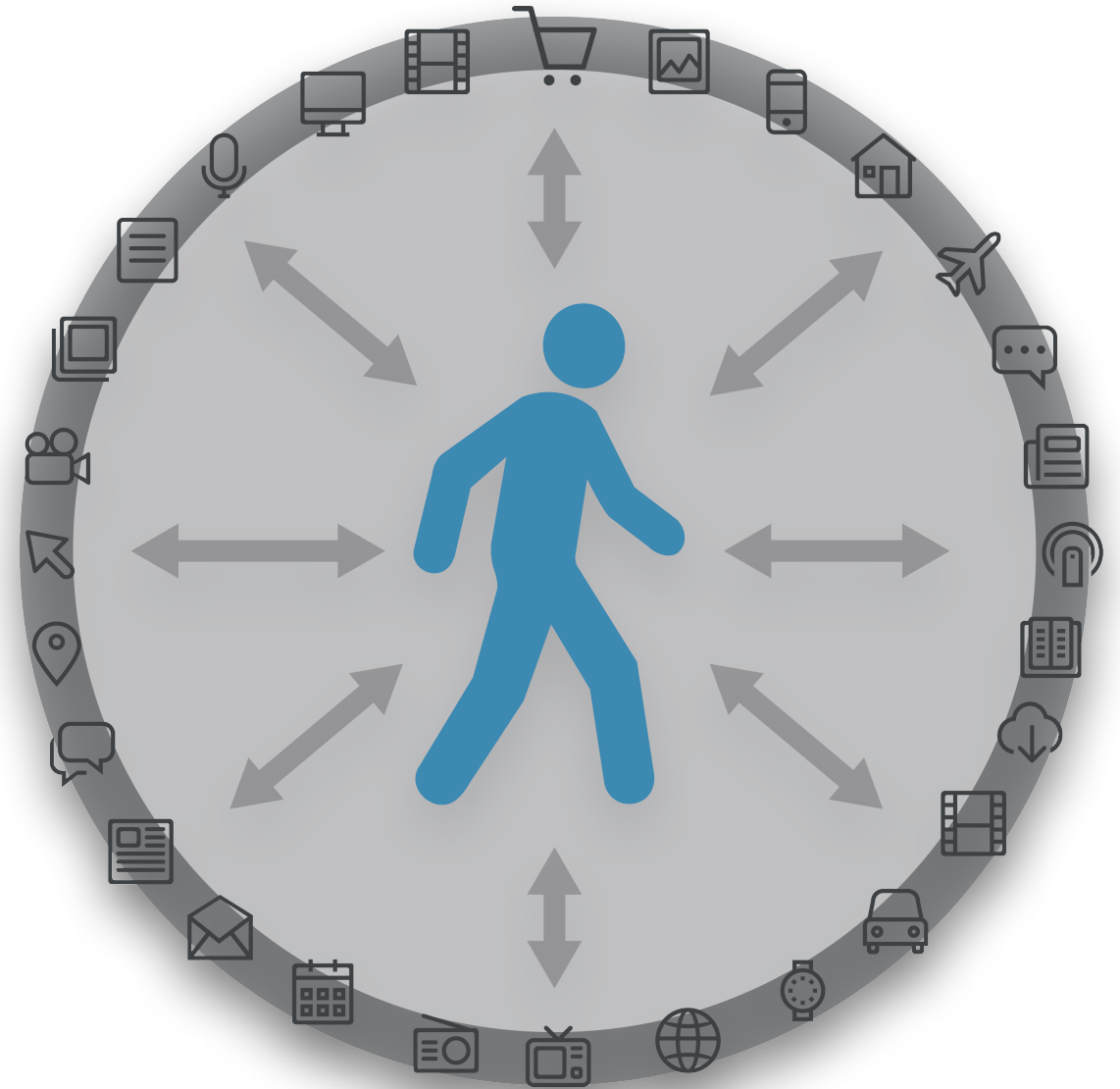


# Today...

Connected consumers have changed everything. They're a fast-moving target with:

- always-on technology
- multiple devices
- channel blur
- changed shopping behavior
- collapsed transaction times

It's a user-driven experience with storytelling and sharing.





# But let's change the conversation... by starting one.

- Content is about creating conversations
- It's not brand-driven. It's not user-driven. It's **engagement driven**. Users are looking to engage with...
  - Every tap
  - Every scroll
  - Every interaction
- All build on a conversation in response to our content



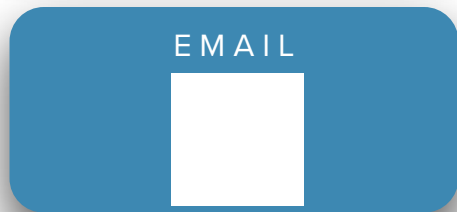
Content is...

Any recorded information that conveys meaning. And that lies at the heart of every experience.



It's all the things you see...

and a lot you don't



- Content and asset metadata (CMS & DAM)
- Taxonomy/topics
- Search metadata
- User-profile data
- Thesaurus
- Content display logic
- Data model

Good content...

It's an ongoing **conversation** that comes in many forms.





# So, how do you create good content?

Like in any conversation you:

- Gain an understanding of the user
- Communicate appropriately
- Then, they respond
- And you respond appropriately



# 4 / Enter Content & Experience Strategy

# Cliche alert!

## Content strategy focuses on getting...

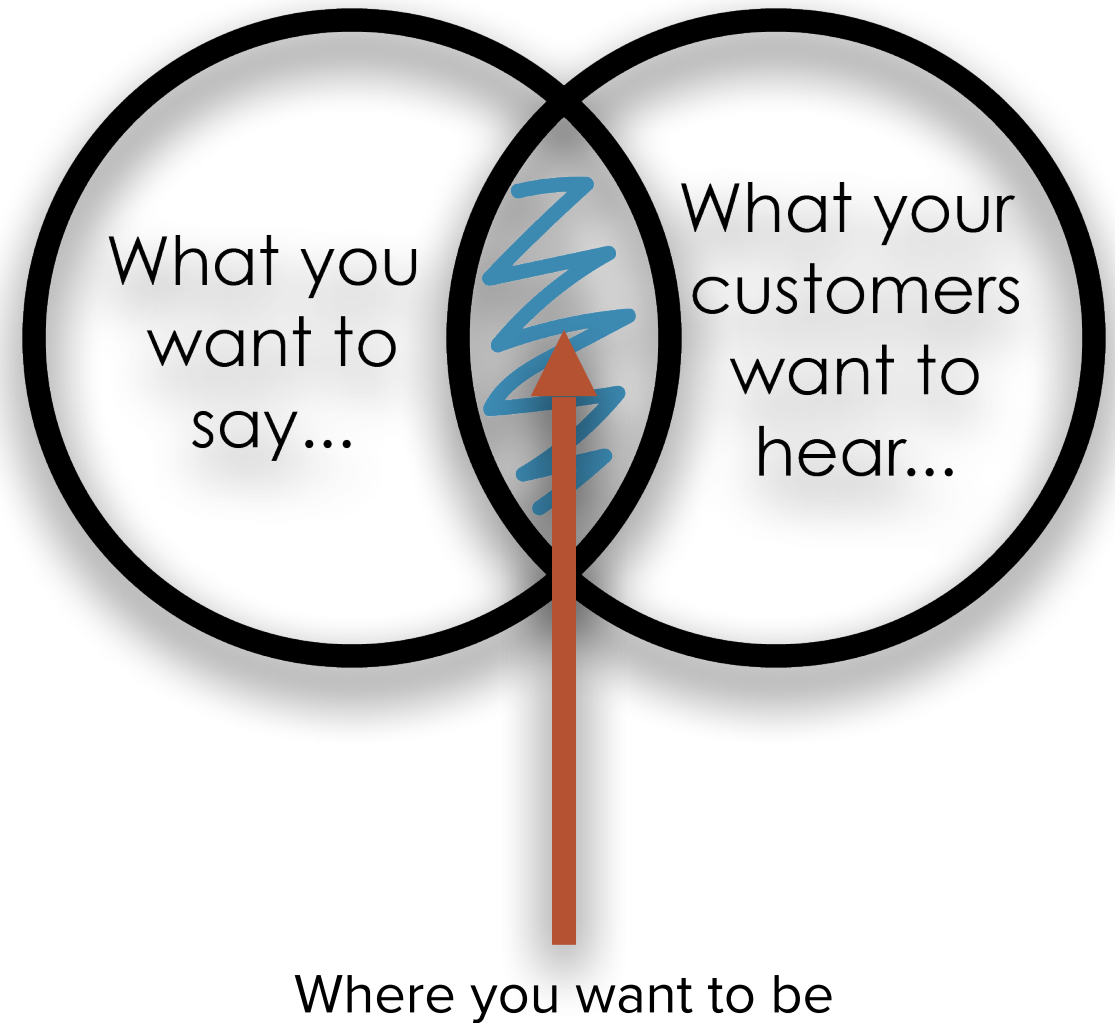
- the right **content**
- to the right **people**
- in the right **place**
- at the right **time**
- in the right **context**

**This is often said, but that doesn't make it any less true.**

# Relevance & context

Meaningful conversations happen when brand goals meet user interests—

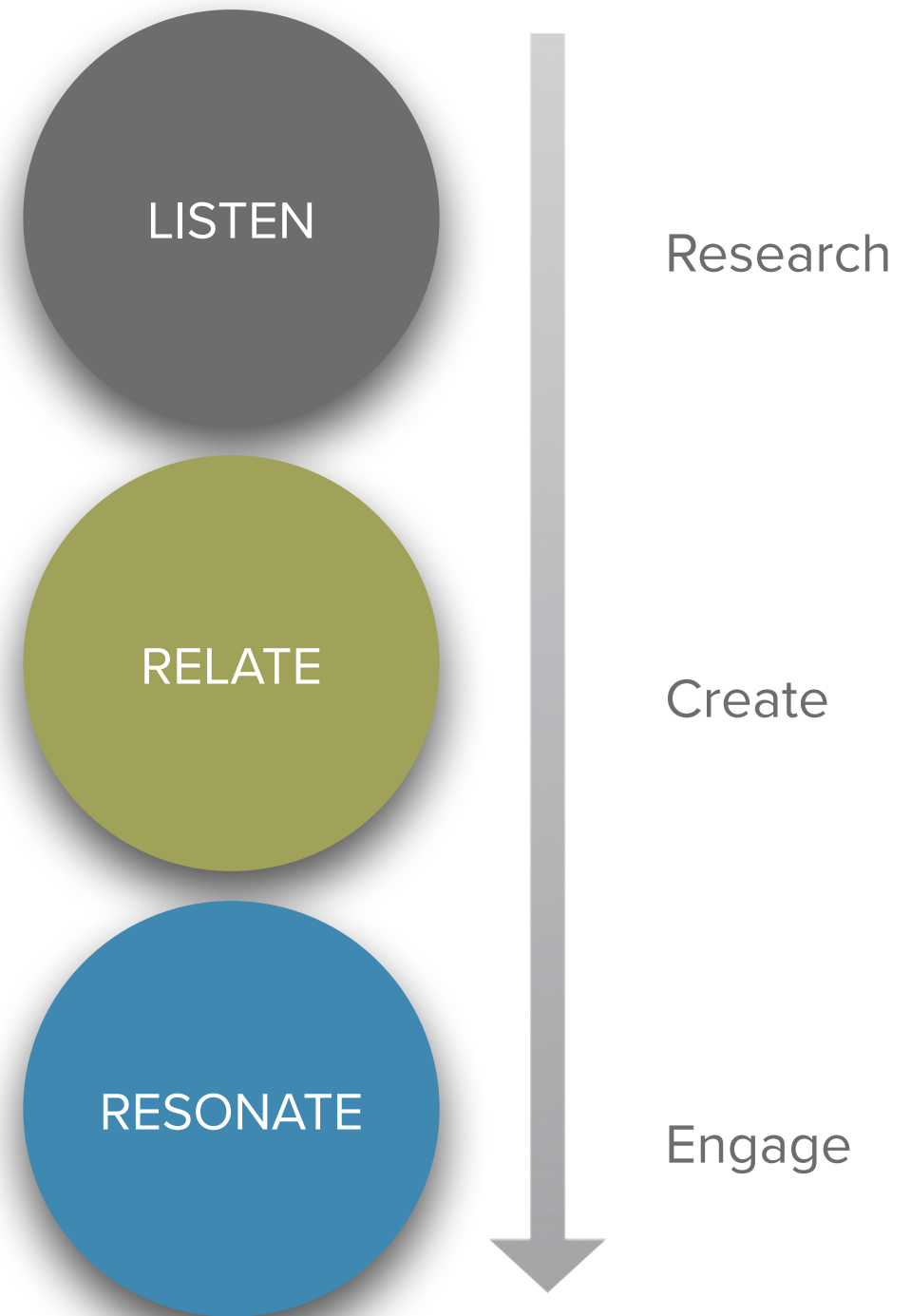
And a conversation ensues





When we listen and understand, we can cater content to an experience so that it truly resonates.

**Thus, we create meaningful conversations.**



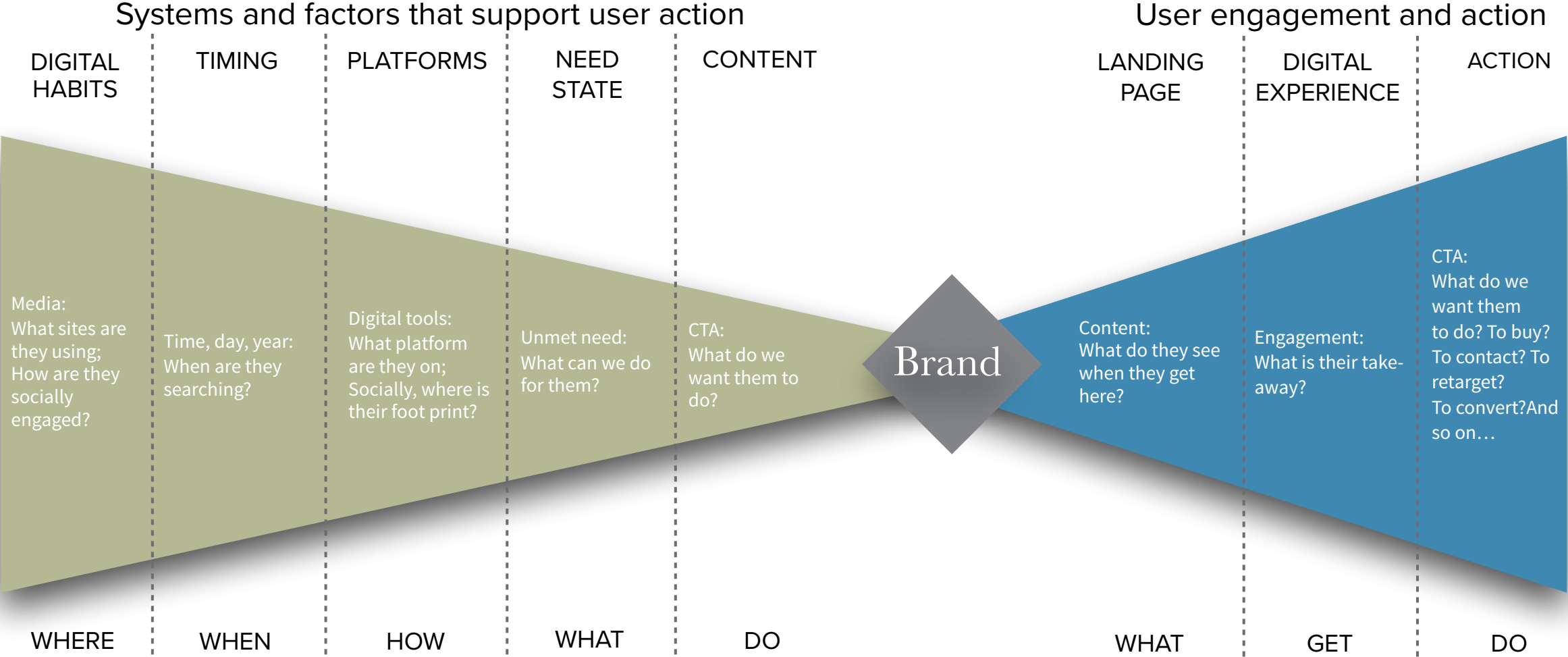
To determine the right piece of content for the experience, we need to understand the **users'** interests and **brand** goals.

**First, we ask**  
**Who** is the user?  
**Where** are they coming from?  
**What** are they seeking?

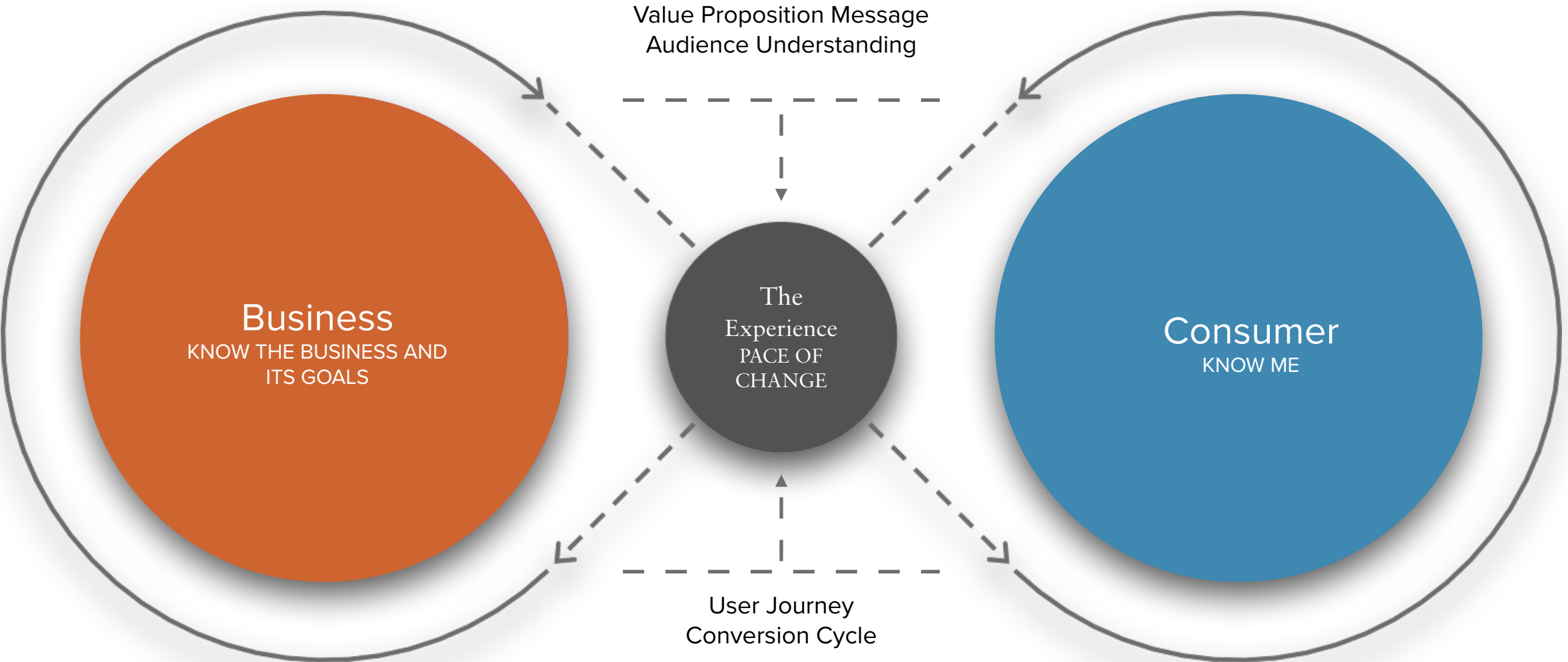
Then, we need to **listen**.  
What are they **feeling** at this stage of their journey?  
What do they **want** to accomplish?

And now, what do we want them to **do**?

# So we constantly ask questions at every stage



# Keeping all sides of the conversation in mind





Because the user is ready to engage...

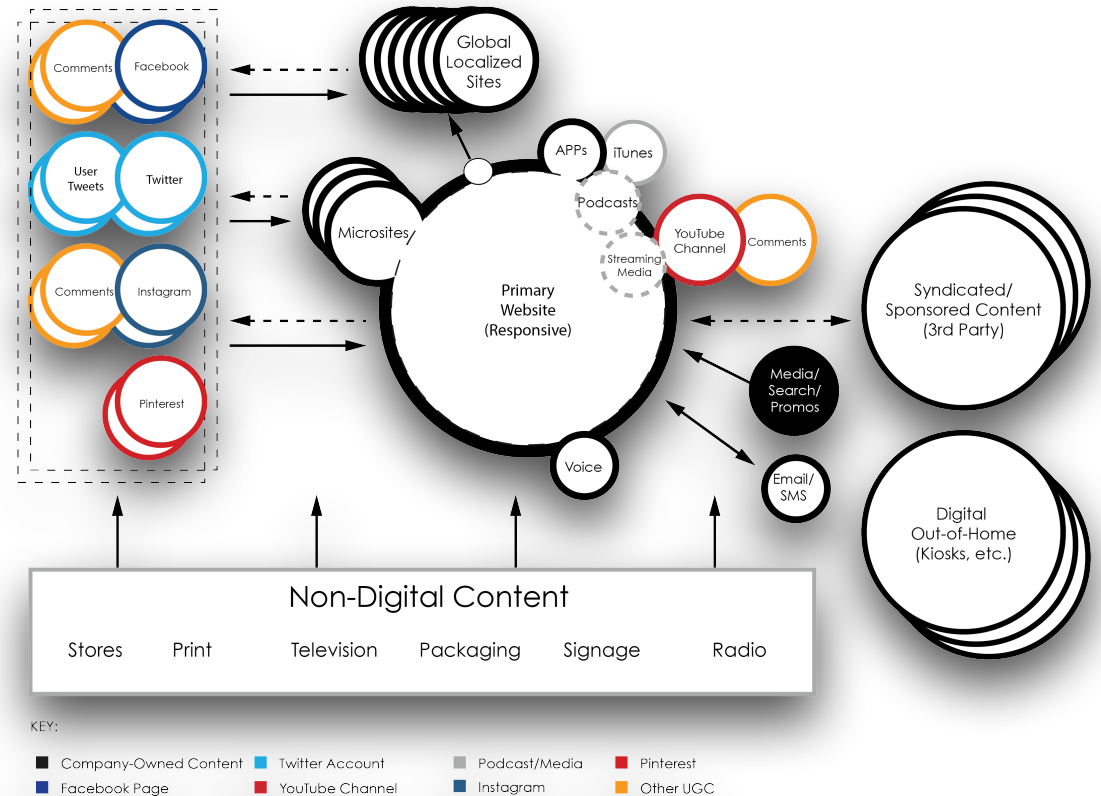
At any point in their journey...



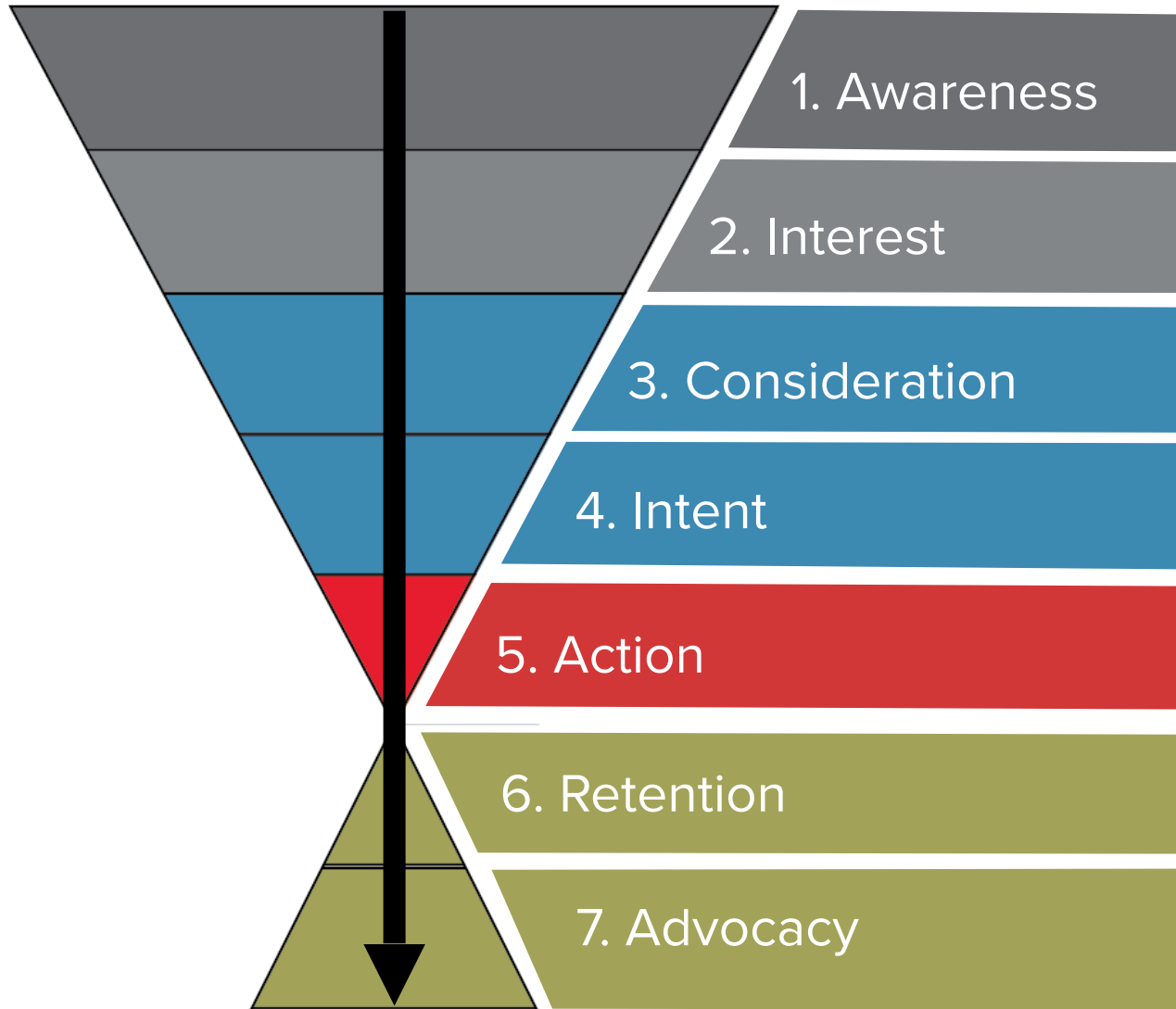
## Context matters

It's important to not only recognize where your audience is within the content ecosystem and at what point of their journey.

**Then, guide them through it.**



# Content guides them through the funnel



## **Generate awareness**

Ads, fresh content, a compelling experience, and content marketing efforts

## **Nurture leads**

Email, social content, newsletters, etc.

## **Provide information**

Case studies and testimonials

## **Focus on key differentiating factors**

Demonstrations and ratings or reviews

## **Enable conversion**

Provide clear and actionable calls to action

## **Follow up**

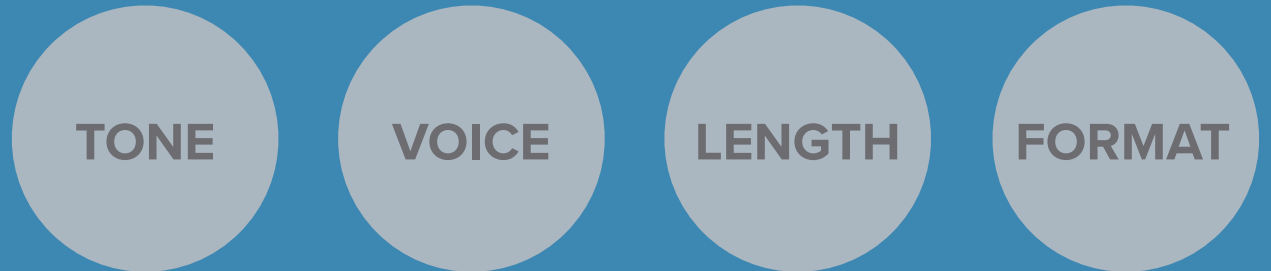
Enabling seamless customer service, follow-up, cross-sell, up-sell, and support

## **Enable sharing**

Social sharing and ongoing conversation

A user will have different needs at different points in their journey

And their emotional state may change at those points.



All of these should all be top considerations to maintain engagement.  
And push users toward their goals.



We continue the conversation through different outlets

LOCALIZED CONTENT

SOCIAL CONTENT

CURATED CONTENT

USER-GENERATED CONTENT

FILES

CONTENT MARKETING

SYNDICATED CONTENT

PERSONALIZED CONTENT

CREATED CONTENT

VISUAL ASSETS

AUDIO ASSETS

...so the conversation becomes an experience.



“The **experience** is the brand.”

- Clement Mok

It's even truer today than when he said it in the 90s.

# 5 / Putting It to Work

# Bad things can happen without content strategy

- Insufficient and poor quality content
- Poor user satisfaction or attrition
- Broken or misunderstood brand promises and inconsistent brand experiences
- Content that doesn't meet user needs
- Frustrating internal content production processes
- Legal risks through circumvented processes
- Inefficient use of expensive and powerful technology
- No understanding of content's scope, reach or depth
- Lack of clarity around content's location
- Off-brand, outdated, inconsistent, and redundant content
- Poor or unrealized SEO value
- Broken or no personalization
- Missing cross-sell and up-sell opportunities or related content
- Lack of content ownership or responsibility
- Ineffective content localization
- Lack of governance to control quality and set focus
- Inability to understand or respond to user needs

# So we look at the big picture

## The Experience

Always consumer-centric. This is the journey that defines the content experience for the end-user. Design a targeted content solution to support an enterprise content and experience strategy. Then, create compelling content to move users through the funnel. It's the conversation.

### Content Delivery

#### Connected Digital & Print Platforms

Determines the model necessary to acquire, create, maintain, and optimize content and assets—wherever they are delivered. **Drives toward branded engagement.**

### Content Governance

#### Ecosystem Evolution

Designs the operational processes and mechanisms that are required to ensure the continued success of content and assets. **Maintains and evolves the ecosystem.**

## Brand & User Knowledge

The foundation of everything. We leverage brand knowledge and user insights to inform what our goals are and how we will reach them.



And think about the details in it

## Content marketing strategy & execution

Content design and gap analysis

**Robust governance  
models and workflows**

SEO/SEM research

Social, syndicated, and user  
generated content

Analytics evaluation

Content creation guidelines  
and author training

Messaging strategies

**Brand and editorial guidelines**

**Content design**

**Performance-driven  
content framework**

**Enterprise content strategy**

Personalization

Content inventories and audits

User-focused, branded copy

**UX Writing**

Site map review and  
experience assessment

Standards compliance and  
communication

**Content modeling**

Taxonomy design

**Metadata specification**

Tagging strategy

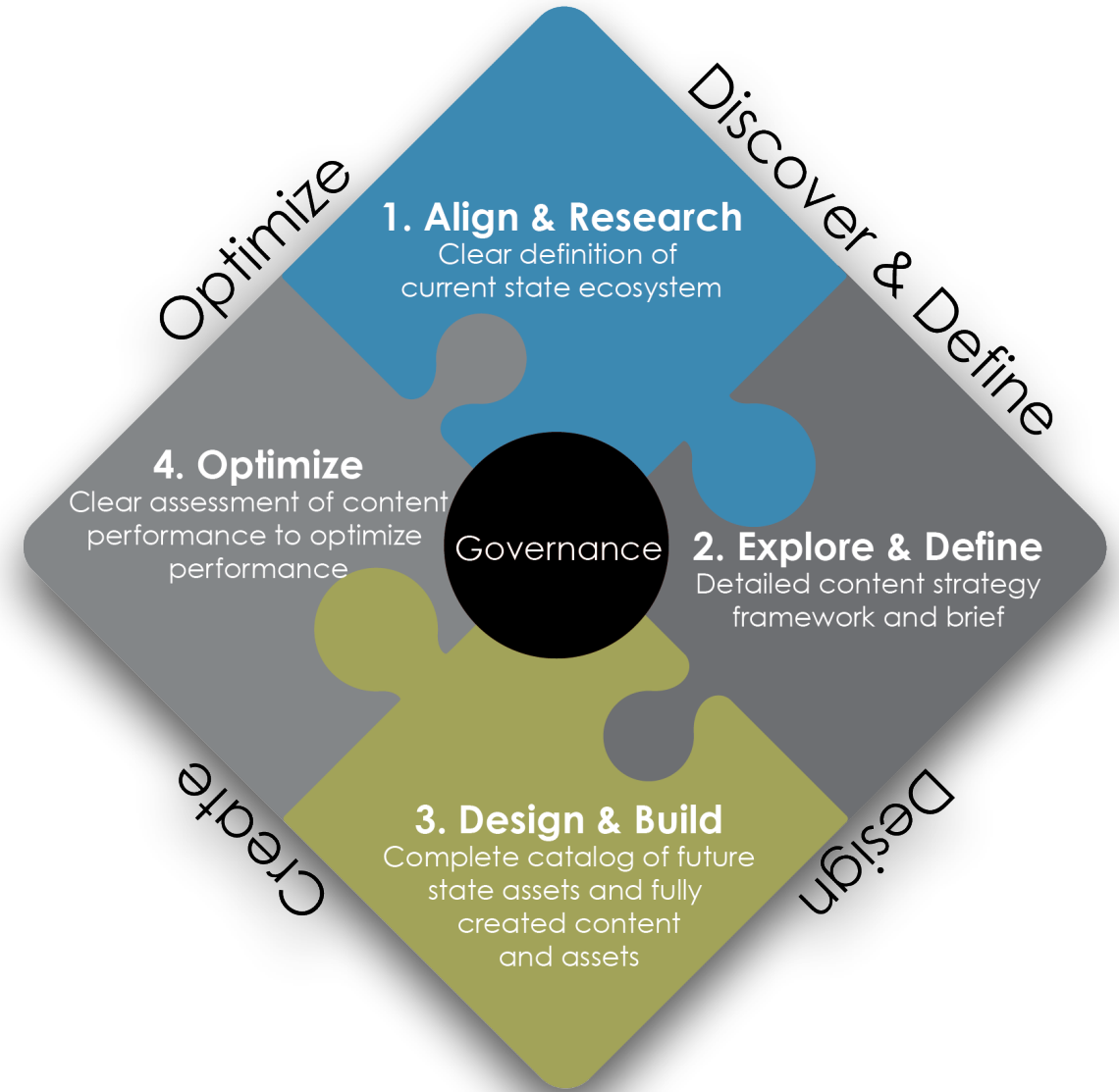
**Content  
accessibility**

**Omni-channel content strategy**



# How it fits together

- Consider content ecosystem holistically
- Continually think about context
- Know why you're doing something
- Be timely & relevant
- Always measure & optimize
- Always evolve & build scale



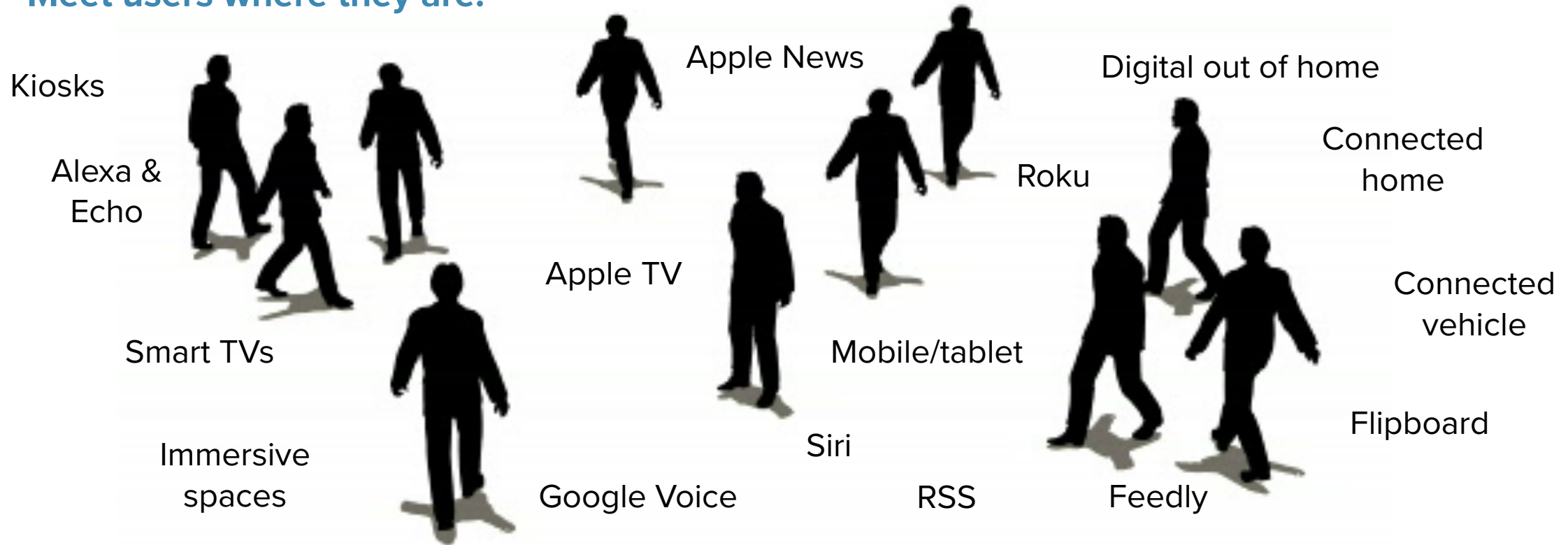
# Using this process, we can help

- ✓ Any project that will require the creation of new content or any modification/migration of existing content
- ✓ Any project that will make content design decisions for a future-state experience
- ✓ Content marketing and social content strategies and execution
- ✓ Designing new digital experiences that include content, including omni-channel experiences
- ✓ Metadata & tagging strategies for content and assets, including taxonomies
- ✓ CMS re-platforms / CMS implementations / DAM implementations
- ✓ Analytics implementation
- ✓ SEO and Keyword Strategy
- ✓ Bought, owned. earned content strategy

# 6 / Where We Are Going

# What the content landscape entails now, or what we think about

## Meet users where they are:



## Tailoring information to their needs:

Customization | Personalization | Globalization & Translation | Localization | In-Vehicle Experiences  
In-Home Experiences | Chat Bots | Voice & Other Interfaces | Accessibility | Physical Spaces



# Embodying a larger content strategy with content marketing efforts

Content marketing is a tool in the larger content strategy toolbox, not a separate activity altogether—it's a tactic that requires an overarching content strategy to support it.

**Effective content marketing requires:**



**CONTENT  
DIRECTION**



**SEO**



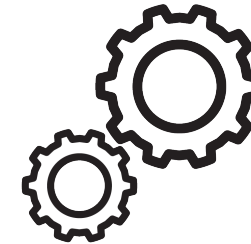
**ANALYTICS**



**SOCIAL  
ACTIVATION**



**COPYWRITING &  
UX WRITING**



**METADATA &  
TAXONOMY**



**DIGITAL  
ASSETS**

**Bought** → **Owned** → **Earned**

Content marketing allows us to create tailored user journeys through tagged content. The more **content** we have, the more **confidence** they gain.

↑  
in the brand

↑ relevant,  
educational,  
inspirational,  
etc.

It's a mutually beneficial relationship.





# About Rubicon CX



# Leadership – seasoned experience you can rely on



**Executive Director,  
Content & Experience**

Timothy Truxell is the principal of Rubicon CX, a full service content and experience strategy consultancy. He was previously a Senior Group Content Strategy Director and national content practice lead for Rightpoint, based in Atlanta.

Tim has also worked as a content strategist for for 23 years, including twelve and a half years at Sapient, where he helped build its content strategy practice. He focuses on determining how content will best contribute to the overall user and brand experience for both customers and business users.

He is equally comfortable on both sides of the content and experience “line”: the traditional "creative" brand and copy side and the technical, system side of content design.

# Warning!

Obligatory brand slide ahead....

# Selected clients





# And tech slide too...

# Key technological enablers & tools



*All the usual as well as other dinosaurs that still roam the earth...*

# Thank you.

