The Art of Storytelling

BY

Nick Faber

WITH PICTURES BY

Jayson Morse

Your Stories, Your Website

As a museum, you have no shortage of fascinating stories to share on your website. Your collections, your people, and even your building all have their own tales to tell. Recent technological breakthroughs have made it easier than ever to for visitors around the world to relate to your treasures in more profound and meaningful ways. And yet, planning and producing consistent, mission-driven web content can be a real challenge for museums.

A content strategy is an articulation of your goals and mission, which dictates how and why your web content is created and managed. It ensures that all of the content your visitors encounter reinforces your museum's unique value, and provides opportunities for deeper engagement. Simply put, "the goal of content strategy is to create meaningful, cohesive, engaging, and sustainable content." Without a clear content strategy in place, it's easy to be overwhelmed by your own content options.

At Cuberis, we spend a lot of time thinking about these unique challenges, as we work with museums to produce

websites that expand the reach and impact of their collections, programs, and resources. We encourage you to think clearly about your museum's goals, your audience's expectations, and how your website can help you connect the two.

This guide is intended to get you to start thinking about your own content strategies. We filled these pages with exercises, interviews, and examples of how other museums approach the production of departmentally-aligned, media-enriched, and mission-focused content.

When you invest the time and effort to develop a precise strategy for your website, a plethora of content ideas will suddenly reveal itself to you. Not only that, your content itself will have a greater impact on advancing your mission—and your bottom line.

Nick Faber

Director of Content Strategy

Table of Contents
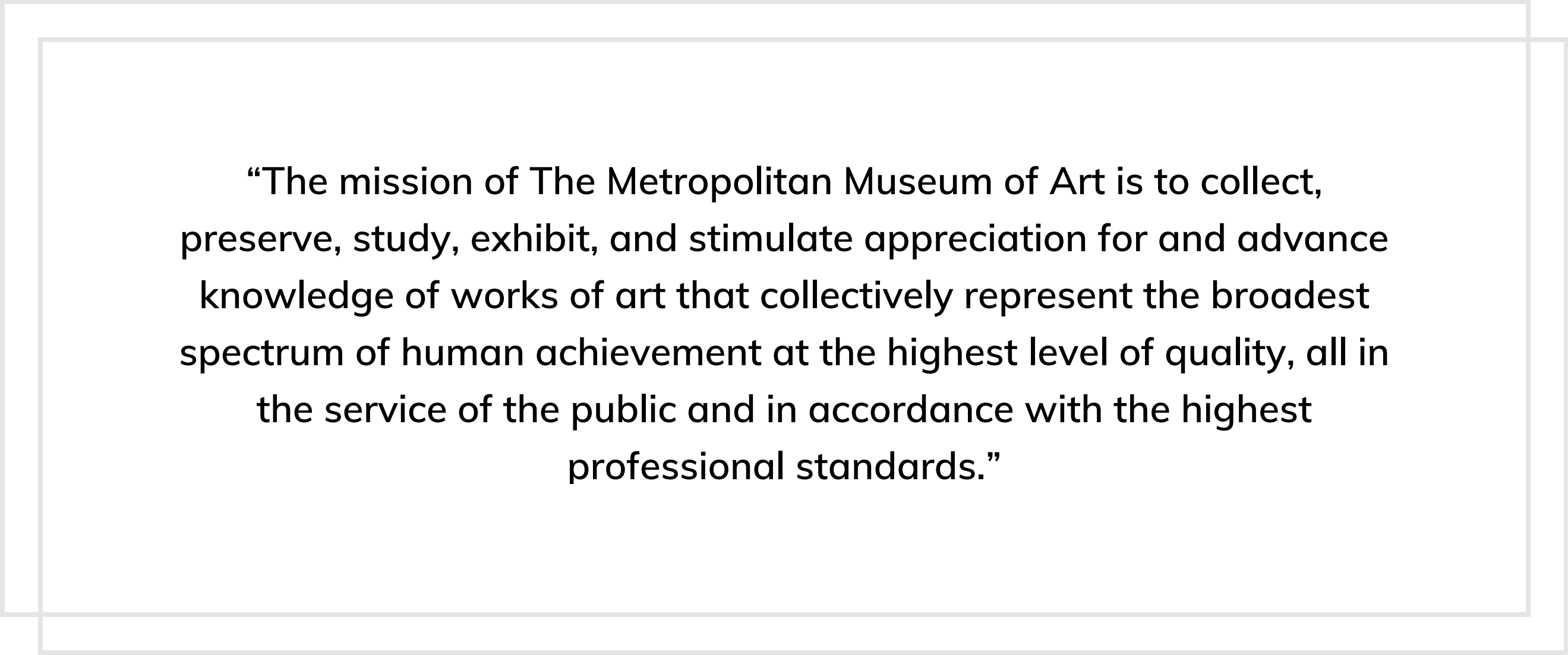
Museums & Content Strategy

The Difficulty for Museums

Unfortunately, figuring out content strategies isn't usually a simple undertaking for museums. Your collections consist of thousands of fascinating objects, artworks, artists, and histories. You have loads of content opportunities, but creating clear strategies for content development is complicated.

Generally speaking, strategies exist to advance your mission, and can only exist in the context of a clearly defined mission. But museum mission statements are necessarily broad.

Just take a look at the biggest art museum in the U.S. for an example of how a museum's mission can be bold and ambitious, yet too broad to break down into one specific goal:

> "The mission of The Metropolitan Museum of Art is to collect, preserve, study, exhibit, and stimulate appreciation for and advance knowledge of works of art that collectively represent the broadest spectrum of human achievement at the highest level of quality, all in the service of the public and in accordance with the highest professional standards."

Without a narrow mission to turn to, finding effective strategies can be elusive. There is a necessary and contingent relationship between mission and goals, between goals and strategies, and between strategies and tactics. As each stage flows into the next, options and opportunities increase. A clear mission would dictate a limited set of goals. Each goal would be aligned with a few specific strategies, and then any number of tactics could be employed to accomplish each strategy. So if you start out with a broad and expansive mission, the range of goals and corresponding strategies will multiply, and the seemingly endless tactics will be detached from any single vision.

As a consequence, you may find that your website is falling short of its potential impact. Your updates may become less frequent and consistent, and the content you do publish may not have a common thread from one section to the next. Taking the time to think about how your mission can be broken down into departmental goals will help you create strategies that take the guesswork out of choosing which stories to tell and how to tell them.
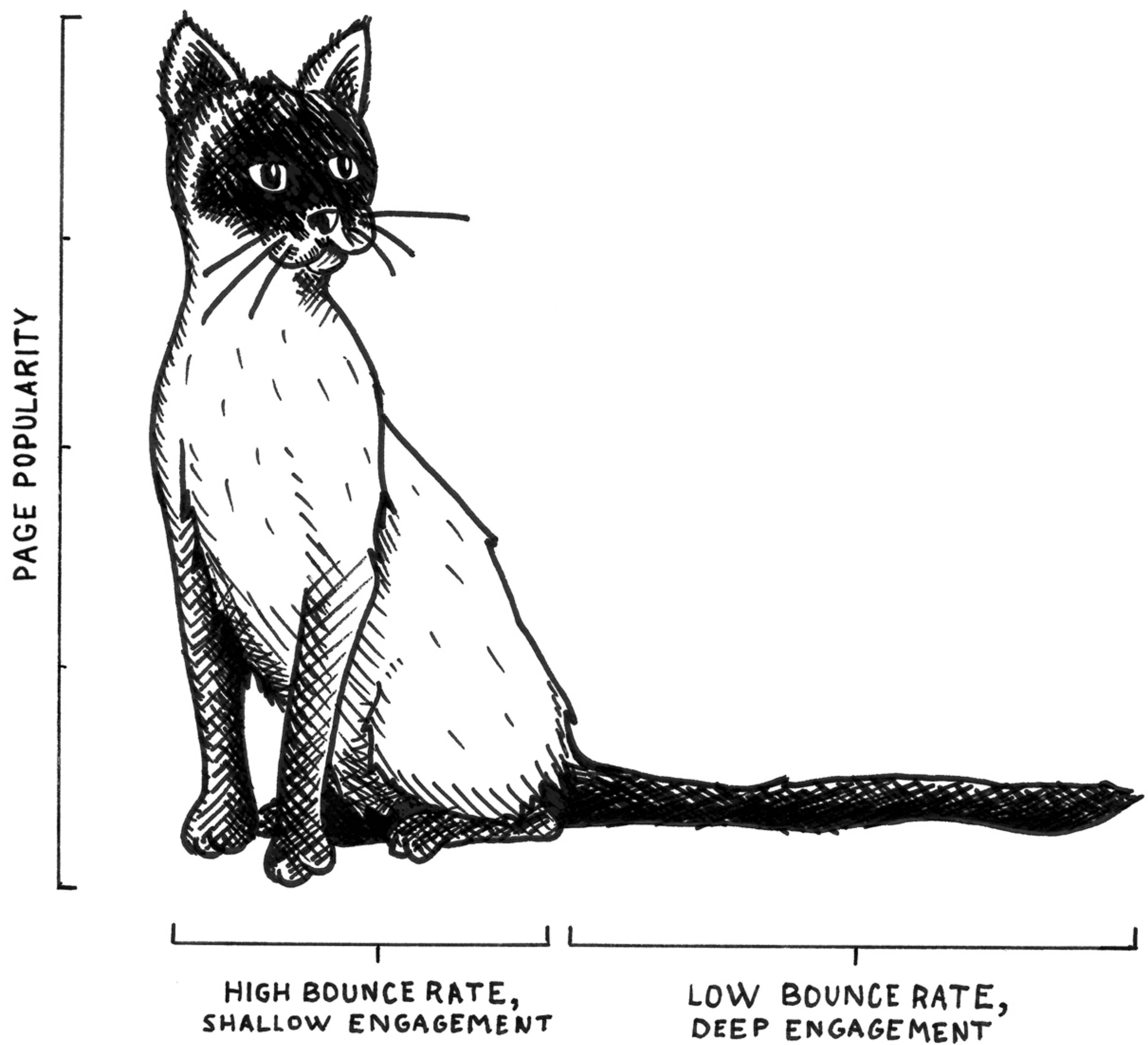
Your Museum's Long Tail

In his groundbreaking article "The Long Tail", Chris Anderson pinpointed the real reason digital retailers were outselling offline competitors. Without the limitations of a physical space, online stores could stock plenty of obscure releases along with "the hits", and an expanded market could suddenly buy the items they couldn't find in their local shops. When you tallied the sales from the multitude of niche titles, the total dwarfed the sales from the hits. Anderson dubbed this occurrence the Long Tail Effect.

Museums, like brick and mortar retailers, can only put the "hits" on display. "But most of us want more than just hits," says Anderson. "Everyone's taste departs from the mainstream somewhere, and the more we explore alternatives, the more we're drawn to them." Your museum's long tail of objects in the vaults remains out of reach to your visitors. Thanks to the digitization of collections, even the most obscure objects can find their audience. These people aren't just looking for museum hours and bouncing, they are seeking to engage with your museum's stories in a meaningful way.

The cat's head represents your most popular landing pages, and its long tail depicts obscure niche content found via the internet.

Art + You = High Museum

The High Museum of Art's website features a novel tool for highlighting specific works from its collection. "How Artsy Are You?" is a personality test, modeled after pop-culture oriented online quizzes. After clicking your way through nine offbeat questions about art, the quiz assigns you a taste profile and presents links to objects that fit your taste. And the quiz isn't the only type of content through which the High connects with its audience on a personal level.

On the homepage, the words "Art + You" are superimposed on a photo of a museum visitor. In the navigation menu, the first two options are "Art" and "You". The "My High" page suggests events relevant to your own interests and allows you to create a custom map to your favorite works of art. This website isn't just about a museum and its collection. It's about you, too.

"Art + You" is more than a tagline. It's a guidepost for all current and future web content. In other words, "Art + You" is the launching point for the High Museum's content strategy.

Who is your BFF?

High Museum of Art - "How Artsy Are You?" Quiz

Q & A

Ivey Rucket,
High Museum

Nick: How did you arrive at the "Art + You" theme for your website?

Ivey: Our goal is to extend and deepen our relationships with the community through art. We are interested in creating a dialogue not only between the museum and its visitors, but also between the visitors themselves. Ideally, by leveraging art's power to bring people together, we will help diverse members of the community connect with each other. We thought the simplest way to distill our priorities was to just state them plainly. We're about Art and You.

Can you tell us about the inspiration for the "How Artsy Are You?" quiz?

We wanted to create a way for people to interact with our collection online, and we wanted it to feel like a conversation. Originally, we considered developing an interaction where people could "like" or "dislike" works in our collection with a thumbs up or a thumbs down. But we thought that felt a little flat.

Then it occurred to us to build a BuzzFeed style quiz where we would ask people about their tastes. Rather than asking them to tell us what they thought about our objects, we would ask them to tell us about themselves. And based on their answers we would comment on their "art personality" and give them a few recommendations of works to see during their next visit. It's a simple idea – make it about them not about us.

Which parts of your museum's mission does your content strategy help you fulfill?

Our director has a very clear vision for the High Museum. He wants to promote growth, inclusivity, collaboration, and connectivity. Our content strategy is designed to support each of these goals.

Growth: We try to grow our audience by reaching them where they are (the platforms on which they choose to communicate), and by joining their conversations. What are Americans, Southerners, and Atlantans interested in? And how can we be relevant to them?

Inclusivity: We take this very seriously not only in terms of the types of content we choose to deliver, but also in terms of how we deliver it. We are currently working toward a more accessible website with the goal of being fully WCAG 2.0 compliant by the end of the year.

In terms of content, the High has chosen to present more shows that feature works by women and artists of color. We've also decided to focus more attention on our permanent collection which includes a strong holding of works by African American artists. And naturally, our digital content reflects this shift.

Collaboration: This is part of the fabric of our institution. We collaborate regularly with other cultural organizations, artists, and community groups, and this filters into our communication efforts in a very natural way. But we're also working with social media influencers, and potentially guest bloggers to create relevant content for diverse audiences.

Connectivity: Whenever possible, we try to highlight our relationship to our community – to Atlanta, and the South. In recent years, the

High's staff has worked hard and succeeded at broadening our audience. Now we want to deepen our existing relationships, especially within the region. Therefore, whenever possible, we try to create opportunities for a dialogue within our community.

How do the various departments in your museum contribute to or influence your content strategy?

We have a very collaborative staff. The multimedia technology department, of which I am a part, works very closely with interpretation, education, curatorial, creative services, marketing, and membership to make sure all of our messages are getting out in a clear, engaging, and user-friendly way. We have regular "web and new media" meetings to discuss content strategy for the permanent collection, special exhibitions, and museum programming. We also discuss our blog content in these meetings. Beyond those regularly scheduled meetings, we try to create opportunities for people to contribute – either by submitting a blog post, or brainstorming a new in-gallery technology. We want to allow for freedom and creativity within the framework of our larger strategy.

What advice would you give to another museum starting to think about Content Strategy?

Content strategy needs to align closely with the overall goals of the museum, which means there must be clear communication between leadership and the content creators. The leadership team also needs to endorse and promote the strategy. My only other advice is to keep it short and simple, otherwise no one will read it, let alone adopt it.

Ivey Rucket

Manager of Digital Strategy,
High Museum of Art.

Departmental Goals

Put yourself in the shoes of your colleagues. In the spaces below, imagine what their specific goals might be for your museum's website. What do they want people to do when they land on one of your site's pages?

MARKETING

CURATORIAL

DEVELOPMENT

EDUCATION

DIRECTOR

Defining a Content Strategy for Your Museum

A Content Mission Statement

> "As a [TYPE OF MUSEUM] we aim to provide [OUR AUDIENCE] with [THIS UNIQUE VALUE] in order to [THIS DESIRED OUTCOME]".

If your museum were a small business that sold one kind of widget to one kind of customer, it would be easy to fill in the blanks in the above statement. Starting with a Northstar statement like this helps inform the tactics of a content strategy. But as you saw in the previous exercise, your institution has many goals and hopes to reach a wide variety of people. So your Content Mission Statement would either be very general or very long. Or both. It might look something like this:

"As a community-oriented, experiential, public art museum, we aim to provide tourists, students, families, and everyone else with the stories behind our modern art galleries, cafe hours, and information about our art camps in order to extend collection reach, increase visits, and solicit donations and memberships."

You can't communicate every goal on every part of your website. But if you break your site down into types of content, you may find that each goal can be reached in the way that suits it best.
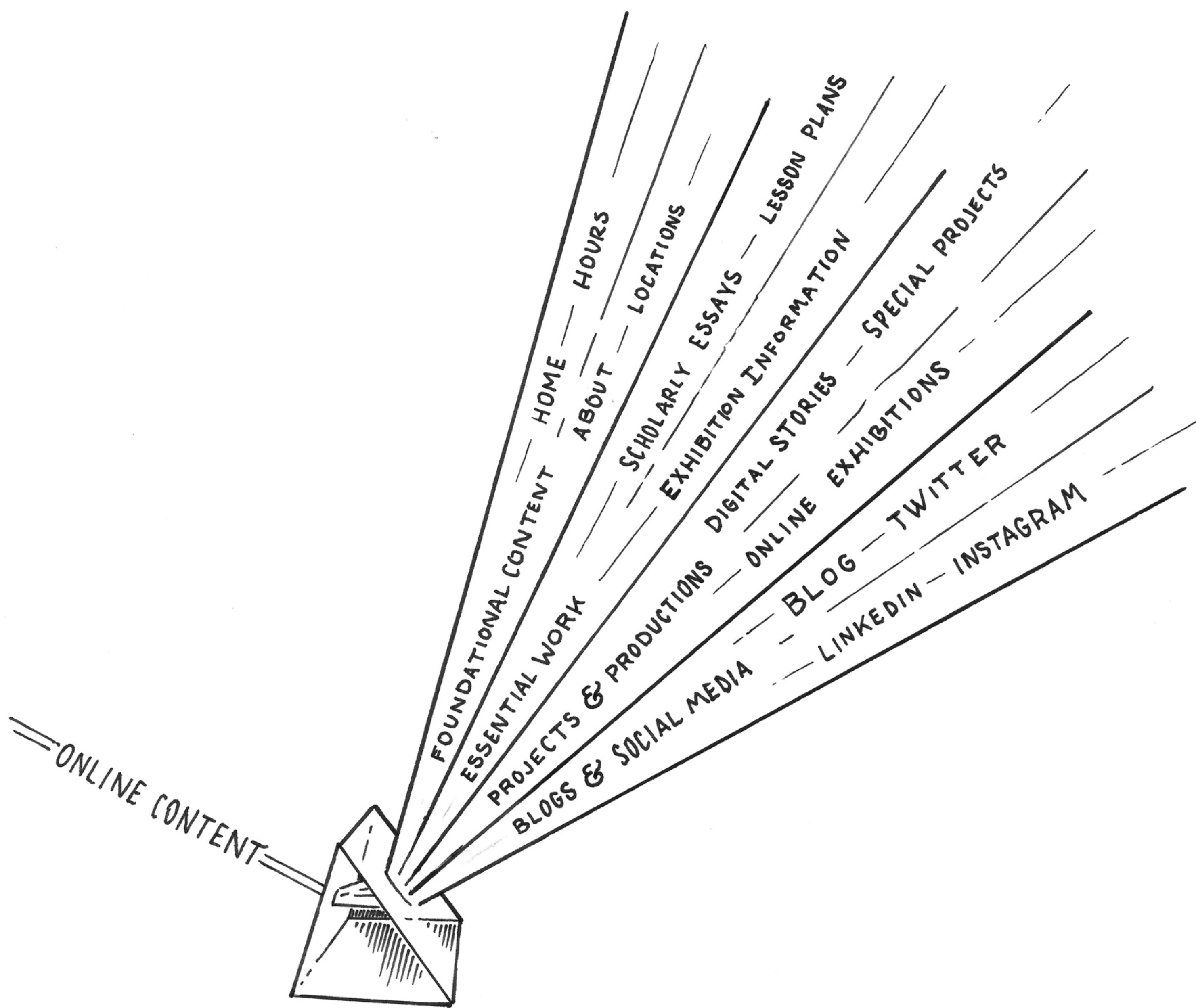
Our Methodology

At Cuberis, we kick off content strategy consultations by bringing together representatives from each department to discuss and align goals. Then, we simplify content options into four typical categories to help us imagine which parts of the website correspond to each goal.

We'll dive deeper into each of these content types in the next section, but on the next page, you'll find the prism through which we view museum websites.

Each content type has its own strengths and weaknesses. By breaking down your site like this, you might find obvious goals that each type of content is suited for.

For instance, if one of your goals is to solicit donations (and why shouldn't it be?), how would that affect your blog? Or your homepage design?

ONLINE CONTENT

FOUNDATIONAL CONTENT — HOME — HOURS

ESSENTIAL WORK — ABOUT — LOCATIONS

SCHOLARLY ESSAYS — LESSON PLANS

EXHIBITION INFORMATION

PROJECTS & PRODUCTIONS — DIGITAL STORIES — SPECIAL PROJECTS

ONLINE EXHIBITIONS

BLOGS & SOCIAL MEDIA — BLOG — TWITTER

LINKEDIN — INSTAGRAM

How we will "refract" your content in this book.
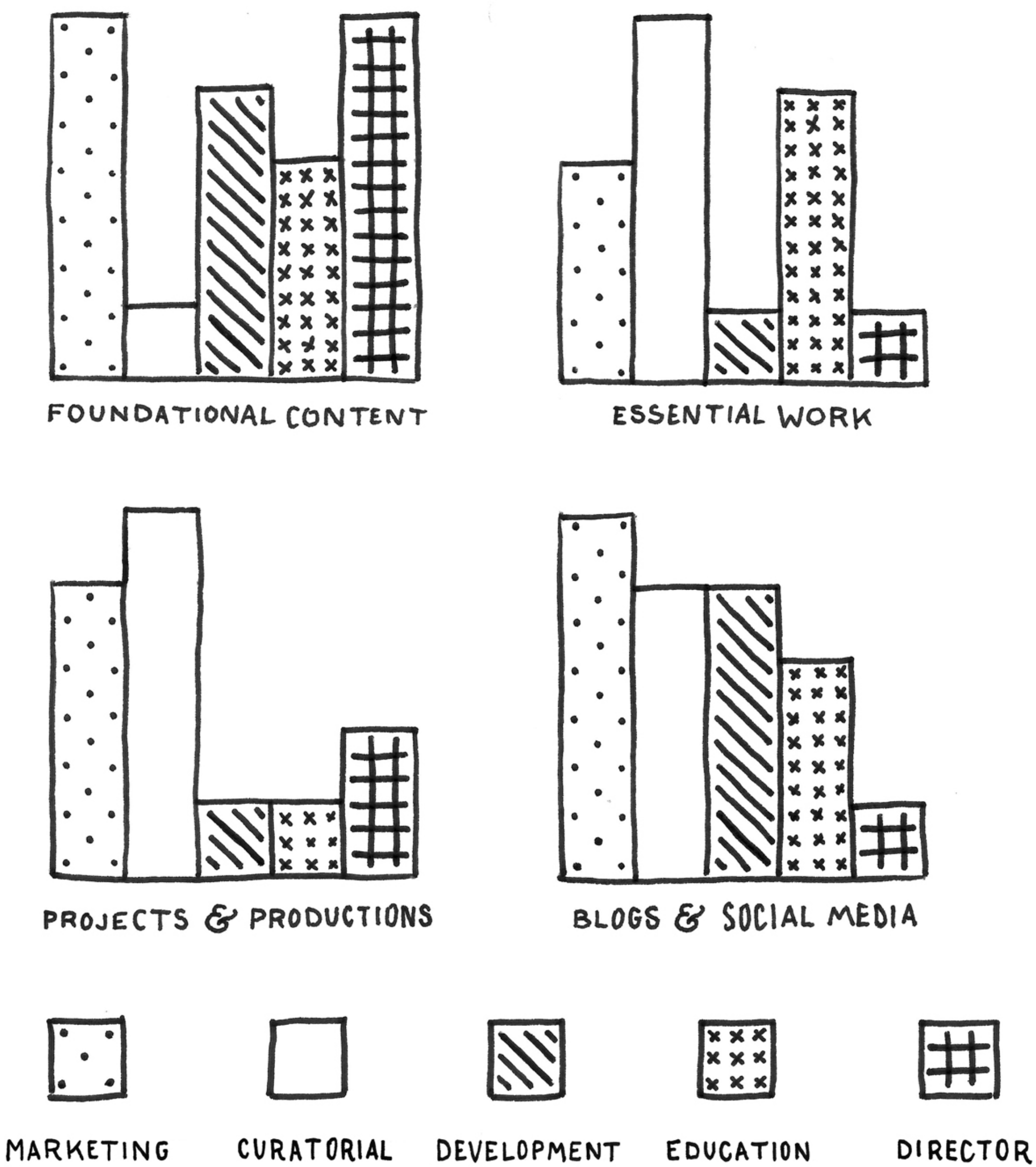
A Blend of Strategies

By now, you have probably identified several goals for your new website. Goals like extending collection reach, increasing visits, building social media following, and soliciting donations and memberships are all valid and doable, but how do you prioritize them?

As we said before, if you were a small business, your goals are simple: lead generation and sales. But a museum needs to balance the expectations of a broad audience with the goals of a wide array of stakeholders.

Here's the truth about museum content strategy: It isn't just one strategy, but a blend of several strategies, working in harmony to fulfill your museum's mission and achieve your departments' goals.

When you consider that your site is comprised of different content types, you may find that not all content is best suited for every goal. Your blended content strategy should reflect the amount of input and impact each department should expect for each type of content.

Below is an example of what a museum's strategic blend could look like. This hypothetical director may put a lot of emphasis on Foundational Content, but not on Blogs, which are more impactful to the Marketing department. Your own blend may look quite different:

FOUNDATIONAL CONTENT

ESSENTIAL WORK

PROJECTS & PRODUCTIONS

BLOGS & SOCIAL MEDIA

MARKETING CURATORIAL DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION DIRECTOR

Prioritizing Your Strategies

Once you've done the work of aligning priorities with content types, you need to decide where to start. In the same way that any one museum might have a unique blend of strategies, your museum might have different content needs or capabilities than others.

Let's think through how our hypothetical museum might prioritize their strategies:

The Art Museum of Springfield has added calls to action on every page, and has seen a real uptick in small donations. For now, Foundational Content is not a big priority. And being a smaller public museum, high-cost Projects and Productions feel a little out of reach.

However, the museum has just hired a savvy Curatorial Assistant with a real passion for art and artists. She can't believe that so many wonderful objects go unviewed by the public. When the communications director learns about this new hire, she asks her to write for the museum blog. They make planning and producing new blog content their first priority.

Once the blog is up and running, the museum can think about how to optimize its Essential Work. But before we get too far ahead of ourselves, let's take a closer look at the four content types of your museum's website.
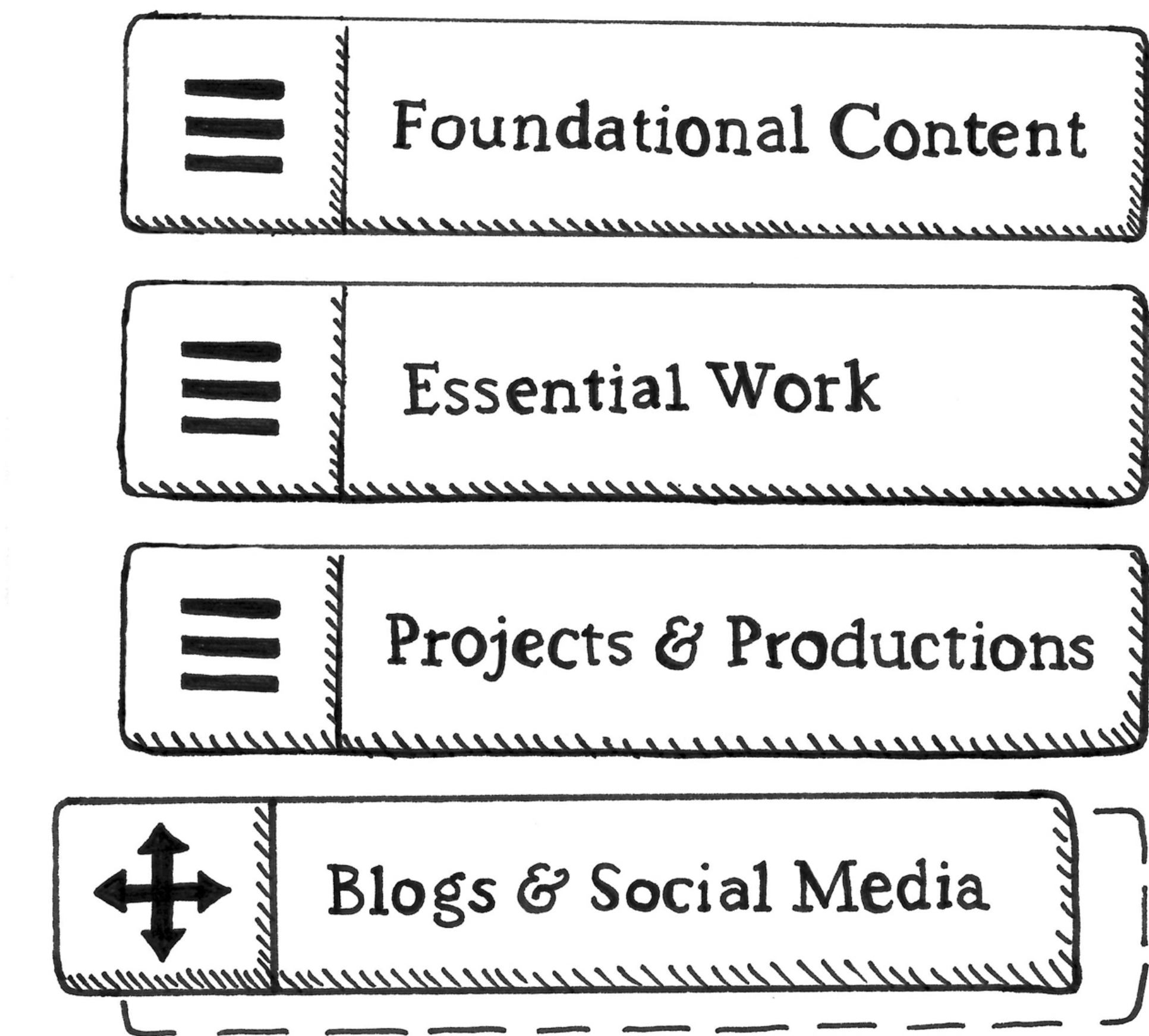
Re-ordering priorities based on needs and capabilities

Four Content Types

Foundational Content

A website needs certain elements to meet the baseline expectations of visitors. For a museum, this usually means information like hours, history, and how to join or support. This content is often taken for granted, but, from a strategic perspective, it offers clues to some of the goals that you hope to achieve on your website. If you have a membership page, then one of your goals must be to drive membership. Are there other areas where you can connect people to a membership application, or where you can talk about the benefits of being a member, or how members help the museum thrive?

Let's think about a couple of departmental goals and how they could be supported with Foundational Content. In the previous section, we mentioned the goal of soliciting donations. One piece of foundational content for most museum websites is the navigation bar. Donation calls to action are often buried a couple of clicks deep, from a "support" item in the nav bar, to a "donate" page within the support section.

Why not put a "donate" button in your nav bar, where it will be displayed on every page? Better yet, consider inline calls to action, or contextual pop-ups reminding site visitors of your need for ongoing financial support.

Increasing visitors is another goal you might have uncovered, and a little bit of strategic planning can help convert website visitors into foot traffic. Homepage carousels are fairly common on museum websites. Most content management systems can be modified to allow multiple buttons on your carousel images. So instead of sending people to an information page about an upcoming exhibit, on which they might find a link for tickets, you can include two buttons on your carousel image: "Learn More" and "Buy Tickets".

What do you want visitors to do on your website? What do they expect to be able to do? If you can answer those questions from the perspective of your museum's mission and departmental goals, you'll have the first piece in place for your Foundational Content strategy.

Newfields: Experiences by Design

Because these seemingly basic pages carry so much of your traffic, it is important to ask yourself what you want your visitors to do when they come to your website. In the case of Newfields in Indianapolis, the navigation menu reframes this question by thinking of what the visitor might want to do. When the Indianapolis Museum of Art branded its 152-acre campus as Newfields, it also restated its mission as "impacting lives through exceptional experiences with art and nature".

This focus on "experiences" helps provide substance, structure, and a unifying voice to the website's content. In practical terms, every clickable part of the homepage is labeled with verbs, such "do & see", "learn more", and "explore". The experience motif also appears in more substantive ways, such as the Visit page's beautiful, animated map that responds to your mouse cursor.

Newfields' experience-driven homepage

Audience Expectations

When creating digital content, it's an all-too-common mistake to forget about the audience. The tendency instead is to think about how awesome you are, and to assume that everyone else should think so, too. But the reality is that the people you are talking to want to feel like they are awesome.

In the left-hand column, list three to five transactional goals for your museum website. In the right, translate those goals into a question you can uniquely answer for a potential visitor.

MUSEUM GOAL	AUDIENCE EXPECTATION
Drive foot traffic to new exhibition	Where can I go on an interesting date?

Essential Work

Imagine the world before the Internet. For museums, there was still plenty of work to do that didn't need a home online. Scholarly research was conducted, lectures were written and delivered, events were hosted, and exhibitions were curated. All of that essential museum work still happens every day, and thanks to the digital nature of most work, you have plenty of material for building out your long tail with meaningful content. And not only that, you are also able to bring to light the abundant stories that may not be visible to visitors of your physical space.

So let's say one of your goals is to shed light on some of the objects that are hidden away in your archives. You could create a strategy to include links to recommendations for every object in your collection. "Oh, you like this famous Van Gogh? Perhaps you would like this lesser-known work from Childe Hassam. And if you like that, you may also enjoy Boudin." And so on.

But why stop there? You may have another goal to share more scholarly content produced by your museum. Another strategy for your essential work could be to always include links to related essays and historical documents.

Think of all of the work that goes into an exhibition, how much of it remains unseen by the public. Without limitations on time and space, your website can offer deeper experiences for any piece, whether or not it is hanging on a gallery wall.

Illuminating Stories at the Hammer Museum

As the new Project Manager for Digital Initiatives, Hammer Museum's Philip Leer faced a daunting challenge. He was to lead the digitization of the 2014 exhibition Take It or Leave It: Institution, Image, Ideology, a show so dense with content that the average visitor might not have been able to fully immerse themselves in a single day. He and his team collected all 110 works from the collection, along with labels, artist biographies, scholarly essays, and a gallery of images from the digital archives.

"The goal of the digital archive was not to recreate Take It or Leave It, but to augment it by creating a research hub where anyone interested in the subject matter could find a jumping-off point," wrote Mr. Leers in a retrospective blog post.

What resulted was a highly produced, highly curated Expanded Digital Archive that contextualizes and illuminates the rich stories of the exhibition. And all of the content came from the essential work of museum staff.
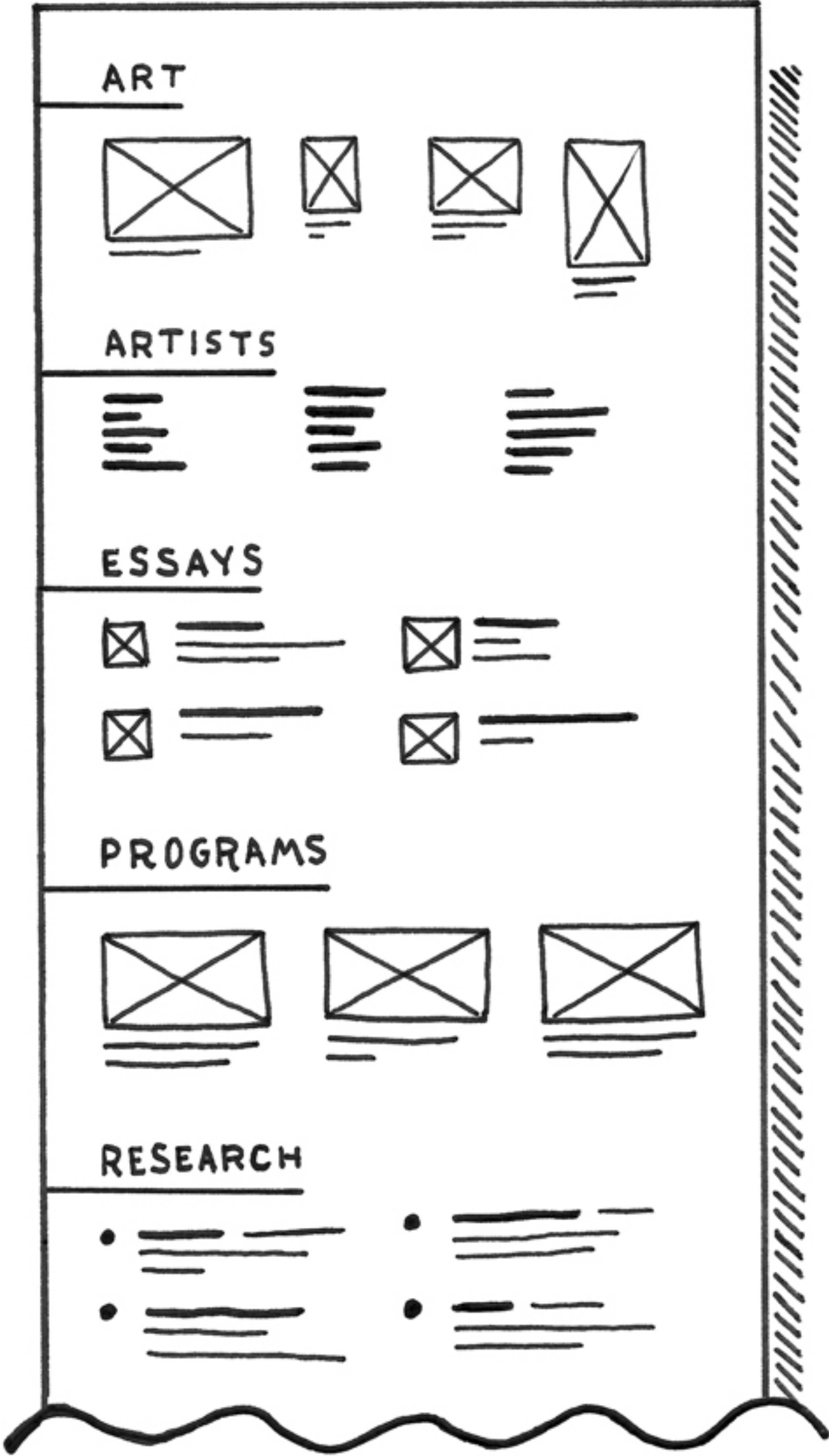
Hammer's media-enriched digital archives

What's the Story? Part 1

Pick an object from your collection. Imagine yourself as someone from each department. What would that person say about this work? What related content would they draw from, and what would need to be created? What would the title of this piece's story be?

OBJECT:

MARKETING	Perspective		Related Content

CURATORIAL			

DEVELOPMENT			

EDUCATION			

DIRECTOR			

TITLE:

Projects & Productions

One of the most effective products of a content strategy is the creation of enriched digital stories that illuminate objects or exhibits from your collections. By enriched digital stories, we're talking about curated, annotated, rich-media presentations, digital resources that further the museum's mission to extend the reach and impact of its collection.

Take a moment to review some of these examples of enriched digital stories.

GOOGLE ARTS AND CULTURE

- 🔗 **Pieter Bruegel the Elder's Tower of Babel** [1]
- 🔗 **Discovering the Home of President James Monroe** [2]

  (Note: audio plays automatically.)

THE WELLCOME COLLECTION

- 🔗 **THE COLLECTORS: Searchers, secrets and the power of curiosity** [3]
- 🔗 **MINDCRAFT: A century of madness, murder and mental healing** [4]

Until recently, creating high-production projects with your online collections was pretty much technology and cost prohibitive. But with technological breakthroughs, digital stories like these above can be emulated by all museums. Soon the only barrier between your collection's treasures and their stories will be your time and effort in telling them.

Wellcome Collection: Museum as Publisher

The Wellcome Collection produced two digital stories in 2014, using technology to create immersive, captivating online experiences. Mindcraft, a digital story about "madness, murder and mental healing," "transports the user across cultures and continents, tracing an alternative history of mind control from mesmerism in Paris to hypnotism on Freud's couch". The scrolling interface uses a variety of media, including text, video, animation, and interactives. Much of the material comes from Wellcome Library's own digital archives, allowing users from around the world to engage with the collection in new, fascinating ways.

As engaging as the original digital stories were, however, Digital Manager Danny Birchall discovered that they were lacking a mechanism for bringing people back after they've experienced it once. Mr. Birchall and his colleagues used that lesson to create a new storytelling project, which now lives on the Wellcome Collection's "Explore" section.

"We removed some of the interactivity of the original digital stories and added seriality," says Mr. Birchall. "They've become something more episodic." And visitors are motivated to return to the site again and again.
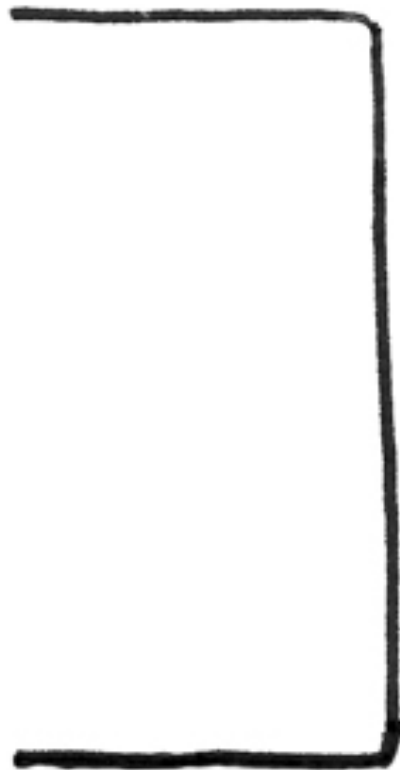
RT 1

Yoga,
Yogas

MODERN YOGA: PART 2

The Yogi as Hermit,
Warrior, Criminal
and Showman

MODERN YO

Viveka
Journe

Wellcome Collection's serialized stories

Q & A

Jen Staves & Danny Birchall, Wellcome Collection

Nick: How did your experience with Digital Stories inform your approach to your Explore section?

Jen & Danny: They were very different projects: Digital Stories was a one-off, experimental project driven by a desire to bring the audiences for our library and museum closer together. Explore is part of a much more sustained product-centred approach to Wellcome Collection's digital presence. Digital Stories nevertheless became a core part of our Explore editorial strategy because they offered a way to tell engaging & in-depth stories using our collections material. The most crucial lesson that we learned from our evaluation of the original digital stories project was the importance of seriality: giving readers something to return to and build up a loyalty to, rather than foisting a whole story on readers in the form of a full-blown product. We learned that custom design patterns are expensive and can be hard to reuse: the new digital stories have a more stripped down, narrative-led approach. We also learned that however easy you make the UX, trying to force even engaged readers into academic researcher-type behaviours is a mug's game.

How do you decide which stories to tell and when to tell them?

Our editorial content is generally driven by Wellcome Collection's mission of making connections between human health, art and history. To some extent these are determined by what we have in our collections; but we like to say that rather than telling stories about our collections, we tell stories that we know are true because of our collections. We also publish content that relates to our public programme (exhibitions, events and books), but we try to be driven by the intellectual energy behind the programme, expanding the reach of the investigation into its subjects and themes, rather than producing content in support of a physical visit. Practically, we try to operate a consensus-based commissioning model where the editorial team have a relatively high degree of autonomy in commissioning and writing, backed by a common sense of purpose and mission.

Which parts of your museum's mission does your content strategy help you fulfill?

Engagement with new audiences, and perhaps the diversity of those audiences. As part of the digital engagement department, we're contributing to a digital product with 360-degree engagement goals: reach, depth and loyalty. A goal of loyalty drives consistency in our content; depth drives the quality of our content, and reach prompts us to constantly think about how we commission and promote editorial. We have various, inevitably imperfect, KPIs for measuring our success in these areas.

How do the various departments in your museum contribute to or influence your content strategy?

Our content is influenced by the public programme, which tends to have longer lead times than digital content. We have a strong relationship with product teams, so there's shared planning on new design features that make new kinds of content possible. Longer-term we're lead by our museum's overall audience, brand and diversity strategies, and

the larger Wellcome aim of improving human health. We also try to follow a middle path between strategy and opportunism: we recently experimented with a themed week of menstruation content, which brought together elements of our zine collecting activities and visitor experience events, but at relatively short notice.

What advice would you give to another museum starting to think about Content Strategy?

If you're serious about publishing to reach new audiences, make a distinction between your content strategy and your editorial strategy. Content Strategy is a well-developed and busy field, but it tends towards being a discipline for people managing content to meet instrumental goals. An editorial strategy should go beyond that: ask yourself whether you want the editorial content you publish to have a similar impact to your public programme. If so, start to think about it in those terms, and bring the same rigour to it as you do when working on galleries and events. Try to work with the best

people you can outside your museum, and develop partnerships that bring new audiences with them. Never think of digital editorial content as being supplementary to the museum's venue-based activities.

Danny Birchall

Digital Manager,
Wellcome Collection

Jen Staves

Digital Content Manager,
Wellcome Collection

What's the Story? Part 2a

Write a brief story about the piece from the previous exercise, or about an exhibition/collection to which it belongs. On the next page, choose which rich media components you could use to enhance your story on the web.

What's the Story? Part 2b

Choose media components that already exist, or need to be produced, which can be embedded in your story for a more engaging user experience. In the spaces below, imagine the specific media you would use and where you would use it.

VIDEO:	AUDIO:
OBJECTS FROM COLLECTION:	**MAP:**
TIMELINE:	**DEEP ZOOM:**

Blogs

With a few notable and rare exceptions, most museums suffer from blog inconsistency, relegating it to an old-fashioned news and press release repository, or posting infrequently and arbitrarily. This is a real shame since museums face an embarrassment of riches for potential blog posts. While every other part of your website should work in service of your mission, your blog is by far the smoothest and easiest solution for telling the many stories of your collections' beautiful objects and illuminating histories. Sadly, it's often for lack of just a bit of planning, a bit of organizing, and a strategic focus that the amazing potential of a museum's blog is lost to the world.

Anyone who has set up a blog for their website has inevitably had to ask themselves, what should our blog's categories be? This question is especially confounding when you consider that many popular blog platforms, such as WordPress, also have another post-level taxonomy called "tags".

Understanding the general difference between the two—categories are broad and tags are specific—may give you some ideas of how to organize your content, but over time you might realize that you have created too many categories, or not enough. Or you might find that most of your posts are falling into just one category, and that you don't have enough ideas to fill the others you've created.

While the blog category question may initially feel technical, strategic use of this feature can have a direct impact on the creativity and longevity of your blog. One shortcut for choosing the right categories is to think about the themes that represent your museum. Through its simple blog strategy, Cooper Hewitt has created a way to consistently tell its stories. By narrowing its focus to just two categories, "Object of the Day" and "Meet the Hewitts," blog authors are never left to wonder, "What should I write today?" With this simple approach, you don't need the budget or resources of Cooper Hewitt to consistently share your museum's stories.

Museum of Life & Science: Stories from the Spaces Inbetween

On a typical Saturday morning, the 84-acre campus of Museum of Life and Science in Durham, NC is filled with families and children, bouncing from interactive exhibits, to treehouses, to live animal enclosures, and trying to do it all before naptime. There is so much to do that some of the most interesting stories of the museum, the ones that happen in the spaces between exhibits, and out of view of visitors. Where did the red wolves come from? Who drives the Ellerbe Creek Train? Why is the yellow goat more outgoing than the others? To tell these stories, the Museum follows a similar model as the Cooper Hewitt, focusing tightly on two defining themes. But instead of relegating the themes to blog categories, the Museum of Life and Science has two different blogs, Animal Keeper and Nature Watch, each written by staff subject matter experts. Not only does this approach fend off writer's block, its reliance on staff specialists brings an authentic voice to the brand.

By pairing subject-matter experts with subject-specific blogs,
The Museum of Life and Science is never lacking new stories

Themes

Can you think of four themes that represent the brand of your museum? This will help you focus your blog strategy and empower you to always know what to write next. For each one, create one blog post title and the Twitter text for your post. They could be the same, but a strong tweet should also provide value to people who don't even open the link.

THEME:	Blog Post Title
	Sample Tweet

THEME:	Blog Post Title
	Sample Tweet

THEME:	Blog Post Title
	Sample Tweet

| THEME:	Blog Post Title
	Sample Tweet

Conclusion

A Framework for Healthy Habits

Your museum's website, digitized collections, and online content are all part of a living body and your content strategy is your wellness plan. Like the different aspects of your own health, each type of content can benefit from healthy habits.

Foundational Content is like basic hygiene. It's something that is expected from you, and inattention to it may cause others to avoid you. Essential Work is like a great job. It gives you a sense of purpose, and the more you put into it, the more you get out of it. Projects and Productions are like a gym routine. It takes more effort and resources, but the impact is substantial and easily measurable. Finally, a blog is like a balanced diet. It is nourishing and sustaining. And, every once in a while, it's OK to have a little dessert.

Just like your own healthy habits, if you create a clear, meaningful plan, your content habits will eventually become automatic. Your audience will be more engaged with you, you will further advance your museum's mission, and you'll be proud of who you see in the mirror.
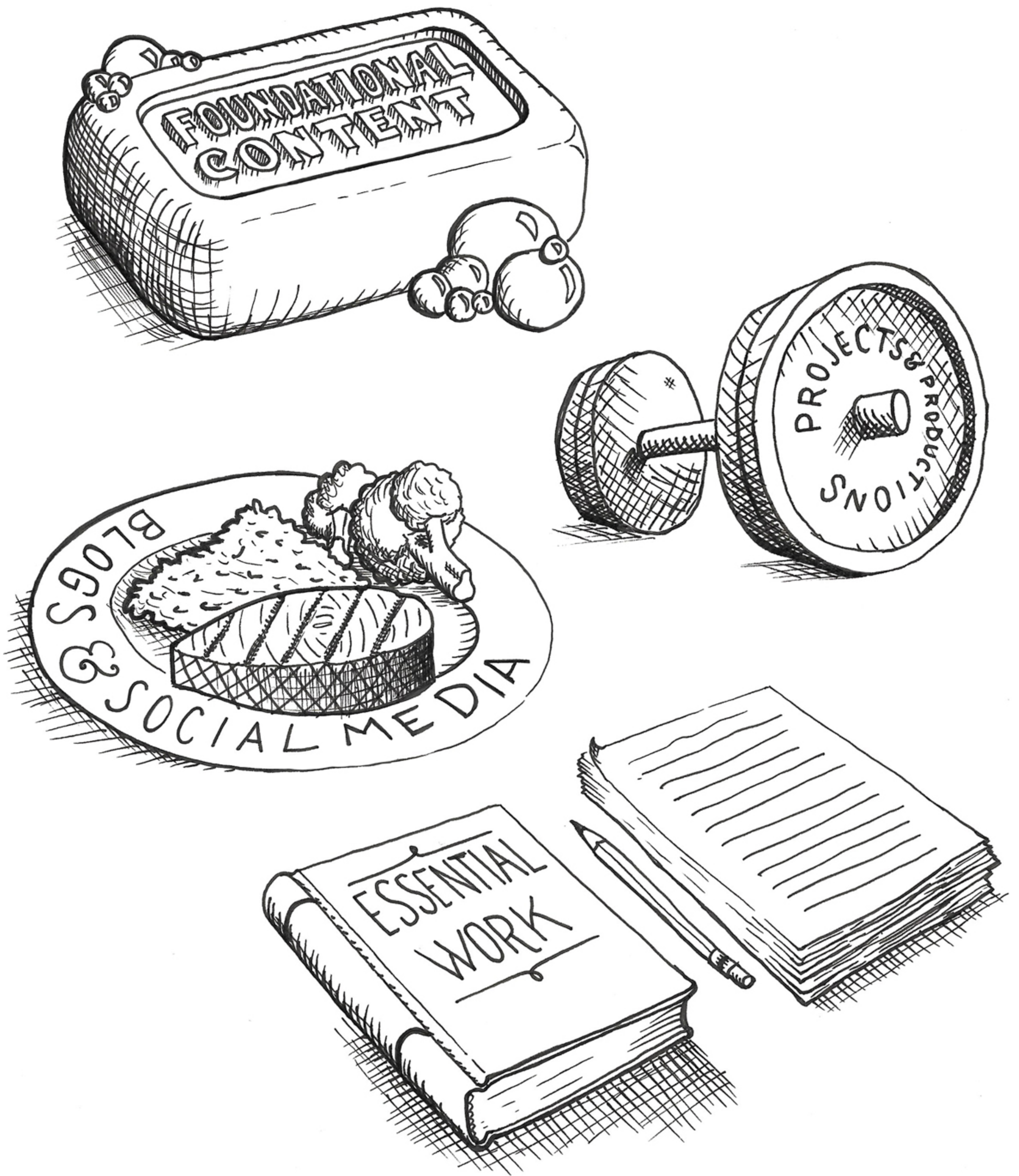
Make a wellness plan for your museum's website

Next Steps

1. Socialize your ideas. See what other people in other departments think about them. Look for opportunities to align departmental goals and start creating more strategic content with the resources you have.

2. Visit Cuberis.com and check out our "What's On" section for online resources. Our blog posts, podcast, and e-newsletter are always being updated with new content that you can use to make your museum's website more strategic.

3. Want to learn more about our methodology or talk about your upcoming project? Connect to us on LinkedIn or use our contact form on Cuberis.com.

Appendix

1. https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/oALSLk-iI3ULLQ

2. https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/4AKS3LPz94jRIw

3. http://digitalstories.wellcomecollection.org/pathways/2-the-collectors/

4. http://digitalstories.wellcomecollection.org/pathways/1-mindcraft/

5. http://arcg.is/1OW0vy

6. https://dukeuniv.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=13109c3f4aaa469097c23ffbe0ff35f1

7. https://storymap.knightlab.com/examples/bosch-garden/

8. https://timeline.knightlab.com/examples/user-interface/index.html

9. https://artstories.artsmia.org/#/o/1721

10. https://digitalstories.famsf.org/teo