



2018
Content Connections
THE FUTURE OF CONTENT

Technical Documentation Optimization

Quality Control in Tech Writing

DeAnn Cougler, Mapp Digital GmbH

14.05.2018 - Berlin

Technical Documentation Optimization

- Who am I?
 - DeAnn Cougler, M.A.
 - Translation – 25 years
 - Technical Writing – 15 years
 - Process Management – 20 years
- Weakness for Terminology



Technical Documentation Optimization

- Who are you?
 - Technical writer
 - Translator
 - Engineer
 - Manager
 - Consultant ...



Technical Documentation Optimization

- Overview
 - Concept of optimization
 - Why optimization?
 - Quality control in tech writing
 - Optimization beyond tech writing



Optimization

Aspects to consider

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Technical Documentation Optimization

- Technical Documentation
- Optimization

Definition of OPTIMIZATION

: an act, process, or methodology of making something (such as a design, system, or decision) as fully perfect, functional, or effective as possible; *specifically* : the mathematical procedures (such as finding the maximum of a function) involved in this


Definition of OPTIMIZE

optimized; optimizing

transitive verb

: to make as perfect, effective, or functional as possible • *optimize* energy use

- *optimize* your computer for speed and memory —Charles Brannon

—optimizer  \ˈäp-tə-,mī-zər\ *noun*



Technical Documentation Optimization

- Why optimization?
 - Audience
 - Purpose
 - Writers
 - ...



Technical Documentation Optimization

- Optimization approaches
 - Standard texts
 - Consistent terminology
 - Style and tone
 - ...
 - Quality control



Technical Documentation Optimization

- Quality Control in Tech Writing
 - Factors
 - Tool Configuration
 - Workflow



Quality Control in Tech Writing

Waterfall

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Factors

- Background
 - German company and product
 - Larger tech writing team, including freelancers
 - Source language became “UK English”
 - Non-native speakers
 - US American
 - German
 - Polish



Tool Configuration

- CMS and Authoring system
 - CosimaGo!
- TMS system
 - Wordbee
- Quality Assurance
 - Acrolinx in CosimaGo!
 - Style Guide

*Does anyone ever
actually read a style
guide?*



Workflow

- Process heavy
 - Window Descriptions, Procedures, Scenarios
 - Wordbee – pre-translation, pre-analysis, locking of segments
 - – UK to US “translation”
 - No “on the fly” updates to UI or Help



Acrolinx at work

- Authoring
 - Non-native speakers
 - Content blocks sparse - guidance
 - Stop arguments between “flavo(u)rs” of English



Quality Control in Tech Writing

Shifting times of “agility”

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New Factors

- Change in management
 - American company and product
 - “Native” speakers
 - Smaller tech writing team
 - Content curation
 - Source language shifting to “one” English



New Tool Configuration

- CMS and Authoring system
 - CosimaGo!
 - Confluence
- Translation and localization
 - Toolless
- Quality Assurance
 - Acrolinx – beyond technical writing

Knowledge team
Cross-silo,
interdisciplinary.



New Workflow

- Lighter processes
 - Agile environment – the bane of tech writing
 - Dropping the extra English
 - Direct coordination with translation agency, memories
- Content creators
 - Poland
 - Germany
 - US



Acrolinx at work

- Authoring
 - Non-native speakers
 - Content blocks sparse - guidance
 - Stop arguments between “flavo(u)rs” of English
- Content creators – are not (trained) writers
 - “Native” speakers
 - Engineers
 - Trainers



Acrolinx at Mapp

The lessons and the future

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Newer Factors

- The power is mine
 - Expand Acrolinx outside of tech writing
 - Terminology – engineers
 - Content creation – product owners
 - Native speakers aren't always native
 - Smaller tech writing team
 - Content curation
 - Source language shifting to one English




Technical Documentation Optimization


- Requirements
 - Investment
 - Time, time is money
 - Definition of terminology
 - Adaptation of rules
 - Education
 - Explaining why QA matters
 - How QA affects costs (translation) and impressions (customers)
 - Corporate image from development to support
 - Statistics




Education


 Knowledge & Training Task Force > **General** ... Public

Conversations Files SP Docs SP Site +

 **Andrew Bradley** 11/05 17:45 👍 2
Jill Sanderson & Aaron Pratt - this is the Wikipedia article on Plain English. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plain_English



Plain English
Plain English (or layman's terms) is language that is easy to understand, emphasizes clarity and brevity, and avoids overly complex vocabulary. Additionally, it is free of...
en.wikipedia.org

 **DeAnn Cougler** 07:36
Hi guys, tech writing has been using Acrolinx for this exact purpose. We have licenses available and have already added company-specific terminology (although this has slowed down for capacity reasons). The company style guide also addresses these issues.

← Reply



Summary

- Optimization requires Quality Control at source
- No one reads a style guide
- Continuous push-back to educate and improve
- Don't trust your "native speakers"



Thanks!





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acrolinx