

# QUT - mega web redevelopment project

User friendly content - how we thought we'd  
do it, how we did it - our successes and fails

**Jilly Magee**

**Thursday 7 February 5pm - 6pm**

**Content track**





"Wow, Godzilla waves!"

9reality.com

# QUT - why re-develop?

- to improve competitiveness
- more than 1 website for every 5 staff members - out of control and lots of infrastructure to support, not to mention brand damage
- content not user-friendly (too many versions, in QUT-speak, links aren't there or don't work)
- deliver on name and brand (Queensland University of Technology and 'university for the real world')
- the Vice-Chancellor wanted a better online presence

# How many websites did you say?

More than 1000

(video)

# Initial plan

Perfect theory meets practical reality

In theory:

- strategy, goals (part of a complete package)
- personas
- guidelines (tone of voice) and style guide
- re-usable and dynamic content
- content template
- content modelling (relationships and metadata)
- quality assuring content

Deliver 3 sparkly new sites in 9 months

# Initial plan



# Ooops

Auditing - sites in and out of scope

Scope blow out, auditing very challenging

Ummm, how did we even estimate the resources needed to re-write and approve hundreds of pages?

Crikey! We have to understand and then re-write/edit 30 - 50 pages a day each!

# Ooops





# Define your content

## Use your strategy document to define content.

Develop content for the QUT Corporate website that:

- Is aimed at external audiences
- Is focused on users' critical tasks (identified through research)
- Supports these objectives:
  - Recruiting high-calibre students
  - Promoting our research, and recruiting researchers and industry partners
  - Encouraging alumni to connect with us
  - Recruiting staff
  - Communicating key organisational information
  - Fulfilling legal/FOI requirements
- Is easy to read and use

'Content' means:

- Text – page text, form labels and instructions, links, image captions, error messages, alt tags, metadata
- File downloads (.PDF, .doc, .xls, etc)
- Photos/graphics
- Video/animations
- Audio

***You should be able to use your strategy as a test - is the content easy to read? Does it help recruit?***

# Define your top tasks

What are the top ten? Get them right first. Don't let anything get in the way.

At uni, it is finding a course, applying for a course, finding a job, etc

In gov, it is usually finding and lodging x form, paying x fee, finding contact details

# Define your tone (credit Diana Keogh)

<b>Simple &amp; straightforward</b>	<b>Conversational</b>
<p>We teach complicated ideas and theories, but we explain them in <b>clear, simple language</b>.</p> <p>We make the process of <b>studying</b> and <b>working</b> with us <b>straightforward</b>.</p>	<p><b>We use the words and phrases that real people use when they speak</b> – no jargon, marketing-speak or government-ese.</p>

# Work out how to apply your tone

<b>Simple &amp; straightforward</b>	<b>Conversational</b>
<p><b>Ask yourself:</b> Is this explained as simply as possible? Have I made this process sound as straightforward as possible?</p>	<p>See if it passes the <b>say-it-out-loud test</b>. Ask someone else to read what you've written. You'll know immediately if it doesn't sound like something a real person would say.</p>

# Dos and don'ts

Do	Don't
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be friendly</li><li>• Use personal pronouns – we, us, and our instead of ‘the University’</li><li>• Use contractions</li><li>• Think of a person you know who’s good at explaining things succinctly – how would they say it?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Talk down to people</li><li>• Speak to everyone the same way - researchers are different to high schoolers</li><li>• Use slang or cliché</li><li>• Be too buddy-buddy</li></ul>

# Strong direction makes editors happy



# Make it crystal clear

## Five things that will make this project a success for our users.

### **Different strokes for different folks**

- We will create separate, excellent websites for our internal and external audiences that focus on the specific needs of each group.

### **Structure by user-task, not by department/faculty/school**

- We will remove organisational barriers from our external facing content and streamline the structure to expose QUT's courses, research, services and activities.

### **Courses: Easy, simple, beautiful**

- We will present courses by study area so people can find them easily.
- We will present courses in a way that makes them irresistible.
- We will guide future students through the course selection process so they feel reassured and know exactly what to do.

### **Research: Solving real issues and making others want to be a part of it**

- We will profile the important, ground-breaking, high-quality research we do.
- We will make the research the hero rather than the department that does it.

### **Deliver substance, style, and the "real world"**

- We will differentiate ourselves by creating a clear, current, stylish website that delivers on QUT's real world brand promise.

# Test your content

Use real content for usability testing (and change anything that isn't working - be happy about changing as you have saved your users a lot of pain).

Test any tricky content.

Test more than one version (back yourself up with data that no one can question).



# Test your content

We used:

- mockups (paper, balsamiq)
- we asked users to explain and define terms (ask users to paraphrase/explain the definition when face to face and online use Cloze testing)
- IA testing (treejack)

Excellent content testing resource - <http://www.alistapart.com/articles/testing-content/>

# Test your content

If you're not sure if you should add it, test it, test it, test it.

Create and use a 'to-publish?' test (does this content help us meet our business goals, does it help users get their top tasks done, does it meet tone of voice, do we really need it?).

# Template your content



## Web content template

### Web page details



Information architecture (IA) code	e.g. Ap-1-3
<b>Metadata</b>	
Page title	e.g. How to apply for a course
Description <i>(a short description of your webpage that may be displayed in Google search results)</i>	e.g. <a href="#">How to apply</a> for entry to courses at QUT.
Keywords <i>(include keywords for your specific page only)</i>	e.g. apply, applying, applications, entry, admissions
Subject	TBA
Function	TBA
Audience <i>(delete inapplicable)</i>	Alumni, International, Prospective, Postgraduate, Undergraduate, Research, Industry/business, Staff, All

# Template your content

<b>User journey</b>	
Site (Corporate, Student Gateway, Staff Gateway)	e.g. Corporate
Related personas	e.g. Hamish, Lucy
Related tasks/questions ( <i>see user research, content plans</i> )	e.g. How do I apply for a course or degree?
<b>Writing and reviewing process</b>	
Content creator ( <i>find this in the content audit</i> )	e.g. Peter Gatbonton.
Author	e.g. Phil Shakhovskoy (25 June 2010)
Reviewed by ( <i>Content team member</i> )	e.g. Sofie Falkenbach (30 June 2010)
Reviewed by ( <i>Person outside the content team</i> )	e.g. Kath MacDonald (3 July 2010)
Reviewed by ( <i>Content expert</i> )	e.g. Eva Cegielka (10 July 2010)
Reviewed by ( <i>IA</i> )	e.g. Diana Keogh (31 July 2010)
Proposed review ( <i>eg annual, monthly, specific date</i> )	e.g. To be reviewed annually
<b>Additional content</b>	
Non-text content ( <i>images, documents, multimedia, online forms and associated "alt" text where required</i> )	e.g. kg-wireless-map.jpg – alt "Map of Kelvin Grove campus showing wireless internet access")
Related links ( <i>links to content in other areas of the QUT site – max 3</i> )	e.g. Credit for prior learning [Ap-2-1]
See also links ( <i>links to other sites – max 3</i> )	e.g. QTAC [ <a href="http://www.qtac.edu.au/">http://www.qtac.edu.au/</a> ]

# Model your content

## Content modelling 101

### 1. Identify content types and their structural elements

(eg

Content type: event

Structural elements: name, date, venue inc address and location, description (short and long), extra details as required inc registration, catering, cost, etc)

See:

<http://www.clevegibbon.com/contentmanagement/content-modelling/content-types/>

2. Show relationships between content, importantly for this project, how it all can be re-used – multiple variations available within this single model (at this stage, it can become a data modelling exercise) - modularisation

3. Develop models and content templates for every content type and then build some funky tools in the CMS

1	Mandatory	Chris notes	Friendly Name	Description	Attribute	Corpsite facets to disp
2	Yes	<b>Title</b>	*Name of event		Text, <140 Characters	
3	Yes	<b>description</b>	*Short description	Context sentence/points.		
4	Yes	<b>existing AGLS?</b>	*Start date	Date event starts		
5	Yes	<b>existing AGLS?</b>	*Finish date	Date event finishes		
6	Yes	<b>?</b>	*Start time	Start time for event	Time	
7	Yes	<b>?</b>	*Finish time	End time for the event		
	Yes	<b>new</b>	*Event type	Type of event or date	Dates - Academic calendar - Public holidays, national days, world days and birthdays - Other  Events - Open days, tours and information session (showcase) - Conferences and short courses (professional/academic development) - Cultural events - Sporting events - Award and graduation ceremonies - Public lectures - Orientation - Other	- Academic calendar - Open days, tours and - Conferences and sho - Public lectures - Cultural events - Sporting events
8	No	<b>Broad study area</b>	Broad study area	This affects event filtering in the central events area	See: <a href="https://spreadsheets2.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?hl=en_US&amp;key=te20FwXCewjJV3DYWAMAtMA&amp;hl=en_US#gid=0">https://spreadsheets2.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?hl=en_US&amp;key=te20FwXCewjJV3DYWAMAtMA&amp;hl=en_US#gid=0</a>	
9	No	<b>Narrow study area</b>	Narrow study area	This controls where on the site this displays	See: <a href="https://spreadsheets2.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?hl=en_US&amp;key=te20FwXCewjJV3DYWAMAtMA&amp;hl=en_US#gid=0">https://spreadsheets2.google.com/spreadsheet/ccc?hl=en_US&amp;key=te20FwXCewjJV3DYWAMAtMA&amp;hl=en_US#gid=0</a>	#
10	Yes	<b>Audience</b>	*Audience (global)	This controls where on the site this displays and events filtering in the central events area	See global	- Future students - Future staff - Alumni - General public
11		<b>Child event IDs</b>	Related event IDs	This generates a list of sub-events	IDs	

# QA your content

## QA

Is this page actually required? Does it really need to exist - every word fights for its life (and page in this instance).

## Standard QA test

- Proofread for grammar and language
  - check for good/bad words
  - spell check (if in doubt, the Macquarie is the bible)
  - no meta-writing (is this the right spot for this element?)
  - tone of voice
  - good/bad/tested words - use of 'preferred terms' (note: we've repeated this from 'proofread')
  - QUT style guide
  - active voice
  - optimised for SEO
  - consistent use of personal pronouns
  - grammar correct
- Fits in IA

# QA your content

- Scannability
  - chunked content separated by headings, short sentences, short paragraphs and lists
  - has the inverted pyramid been used to bring most important content to the top of the page?
  - sentence case for everything except proper nouns, titles (anything else?)
  - omit needless words
  - links added appropriately (not sure this is the right word?)
- Accessibility
  - headings, tables (must only be used for tabular data - use defined lists instead of tables for non-tabular information), lists used appropriately
  - link text
  - non-text content used appropriately, text alternatives included
  - readability grade for high level pages = 8 and readability grade for detailed, deep pages = 12 (to be used as required)
  - if used, non-HTML content is required and accessible



# QA your content

- Styles
  - clearly marked up in template
  - no bold text (unless styled as a pull quote, caption, heading etc)
- Page title meets standard
- Cross-referenced (links to and from related pages, not an orphan)
- All mandatory metadata fields are complete including review/expiry date
- All links and emails actually work
- Meets content template requirements

# But what about the strategy?



# Content strategy - part of a bigger picture

The Web Redevelopment Project (WRP) is the application of key elements of the QUT Web Transformation Strategy 2010-2012.

The WRP will transform the way that QUT structures, styles, delivers, and manages its web presence, both on QUT sites and on digital properties owned and controlled by others. A key component of this strategy is getting our content into shape.

# Content strategy

## 4 WRP content goals

The WRP project plan outlines the following content goals:

### 4.1 Corporate website

- The migration of current externally facing content/websites into a new QUT corporate website with a global architecture that is based upon customer needs, understanding, and terminology. Content will be structured around how a customer expects to find content, requiring current website content to be restructured into topic areas, rather than organisational areas.
- Research, analysis, and design for a new integrated QUT corporate website including information architecture, templates and content.
- Coordinate information audits across the 890+ websites and 70,000+ web pages to review and classify information, and to identify content that is to be redeveloped and migrated to the new QUT corporate website.
- Rebrand and redesign of QUT's web presence.
- Redesign and rewrite content including imagery, multi-media and overall design.
- Migrate QUT corporate website content into new information architecture and content management system.
- Provide guidance on migrating/managing remaining internal content for stakeholders.
- Provide a mobile friendly QUT corporate website and mobile services.

# Content strategy

## 5 Content strategy

Our content is aligned with our customers' needs, our business goals, and our brand. Our content meets online communication best practice and is supported by customer research.

### 5.1 Content goals

The content team will develop and re-write content for the corporate and gateway sites that:

- is aimed at external or internal audiences
- focuses on customers' critical tasks (identified through research)
- supports these objectives:

# Content strategy

1. recruiting high-calibre students
  2. promoting our research, and recruiting researchers and industry partners
  3. encouraging alumni to connect with us
  4. recruiting staff
  5. communicating key organisational information
  6. fulfilling legal/RTI requirements
- is easy to read and use.

The content team also aims to:

- say it once, say it well
- only publish content that is both needed and used.

# Content strategy

## 5 Content strategy

### 5.2 Content definition

### 5.3 Benefits

A content strategy, and a plan to implement this strategy, will ensure the WRP's content goals are incorporated into the corporate website and the gateways, both now, and into the future.

Further, the content strategy supports our QUT brand, our business goals and benefits our customers by:

- meeting customers' needs, being easy to understand and being task based
- ensuring concise, current, accurate and effective communication
- ensuring consistency in style, tone of voice and terminology
- enabling ease of on-going operational maintenance
- providing a good customer experience with multiple navigational and content pathways.

# Content strategy

## **Implementation**

- we listed what we would do - working with customers and stakeholders, templates, testing, tone of voice, auditing, researching, benchmarking, matching site objectives to business goals

## **Ongoing operational strategy**

- regularly reviewed (date set in template), published in one place only (appearing in many), measured and analysed, tweaked



# Email sent to content approvers

## - part 1

As you know, as part of the Web Redevelopment Project, the following research websites are being reviewed, and amalgamated into the new corporate site, student and staff gateways.

[www.qut.edu.au](http://www.qut.edu.au) (+ many more)

We're re-writing content from the existing sites to move to the new websites, and we need your help to make sure the content is correct and current. We've developed the content based on your existing content, QUT's business goals, requirements gathered in workshops, and user research.

### **Connecting the dots (context)**

When you are reviewing the content, it may help to check out our rough page designs (we call them wireframes) to see how things connect together.

Wireframes for the gateways (including research on the staff gateway) - <https://wiki.qut.edu.au/display/webpp/Wireframes+for+the+Gateways>

Wireframes for the corporate site - Main section - <https://wiki.qut.edu.au/display/webpp/Draft+research+wireframes+-+main+section>

Wireframes for the corporate site - Faculty: <https://wiki.qut.edu.au/display/webpp/Draft+research+wireframes+-+faculty>

Refined design - <https://blogs.qut.edu.au/webservices/designs/>

# part 2

## What we need you to do

Please review this content (using track changes) to:

- check for accuracy (we don't want to mislead anyone)
- check that all the important and desirable elements are captured (is anything missing?)
- answer the questions we have included as comments in the attached documents
- send to any stakeholders if we have missed them.

**If you're confused, or notice a big problem, please call us and we'll talk it through.**

We've turned tracked changes on in the supplied document as your changes help us to continuously improve – please leave tracked changes turned on.

### **Deadline – 8 June**

Please return the reviewed content to us by **8 June 2011** – we know this is a very fast turn-around time, and we're sorry we aren't able to change that deadline but our project timeframes are getting very tight. **If we don't hear back from you by 8 June, we will presume you have no comments or changes.**

**We don't require** general feedback on the structure itself (i.e., where things are placed and how they're grouped), because user testing will ultimately determine where things should be placed so they're easy to find.

# part 3

The content has been **written to meet** our content strategy and tone of voice principles.

We've watched users performing tasks on our site, and our competitors' sites, and this research has also guided our work on this content. You and any interested parties from your area are welcome to come along to watch user testing when it's scheduled.

Further details on the project can be found by following our our blog or wiki, and to receive regular project updates subscribe to the email list: wtp-info@qut.edu.au through QUT Virtual.

Please contact me with any specific questions.

Thanks for your help.

# Content approvers had this face



<http://www.jamesvandermemes.com/page/4>

DAWSON!!!



# Fact checking the content - email evolution

As you know, as part of the Web Redevelopment Project, the following research websites are being reviewed, and amalgamated into the new corporate site, student and staff gateways:

- [www.qut.edu.au](http://www.qut.edu.au), [www.cpe.qut.edu.au](http://www.cpe.qut.edu.au) + more

We're re-writing content from the existing sites to move to the new websites, and we need your help to make sure the content is correct and current. We've developed the content based on your existing content, QUT's business goals, requirements gathered in workshops, and user research.

## Connecting the dots (context)

When you are reviewing the content, it may help to check out our rough page designs (we call them wireframes) to see how things connect together.

Wireframes for the gateways (including research on the staff gateway) - <https://wiki.qut.edu.au/display/webpp/Wireframes+for+the+Gateways>

## What we need you to do

Please review this content (using track changes) to:

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- send to any stakeholders if we have missed them.

If you're confused, or notice a big problem, please call us and we'll talk it through.

We've turned tracked changes on in the supplied document as your changes help us to continuously improve – please leave tracked changes turned on.

### Deadline – 13 June

Please return the reviewed content to us by **13 June 2011** – we know this is a very fast turn-around time, and we're sorry we aren't able to change that deadline but our project timeframes are getting very tight. If we don't hear back from you by 13 June, we will presume you have no comments or changes.

We don't require general feedback on the structure itself (i.e., where things are placed and how they're grouped), because user testing will ultimately determine where things should be placed so they're easy to find.

The content has been written to meet our [content strategy](#) and [tone of voice principles](#).

We've watched users performing tasks on our site, and our competitors' sites, and this research has also guided our work on this content. You and any interested parties from your area are welcome to come along to watch user testing when it's scheduled.

Further details on the project can be found by following our [our blog](#) or [wiki](#), and to receive regular project updates subscribe to the email list: [wtp-info@qut.edu.au](mailto:wtp-info@qut.edu.au) through QUT Virtual.

Please contact me with any specific questions. Thanks for your help.

# Fact checking the content - evolved - now just 2 parts

Thank you all for your patience while we've busily been building the new LTU site! We're at the stage where we'd really appreciated your assistance with three key activities.

## **We need you to**

- Fact check the new content
- Identify any critical content gaps (that is, where you know the content exists but you cannot find it on the site)
- Recommend cross-linking between content.

## **Three easy steps for helping us out**

1. Go to the new site [http://cms.qut.edu.au/staff/teaching/\\_nocache](http://cms.qut.edu.au/staff/teaching/_nocache) and have a click around and a read.
2. Make notes in either a word document, excel or email including: factual errors in content, critical missing content, spelling and typo errors, places where you think we may have missed an opportunity to cross link content to another area.
3. Send us your notes! We recommend you leave this until you've looked at the whole site and made all your notes.

# Fact checking the content - evolved, part 2

## Things to remember

There are a few key things we'd like you to keep in mind:

The site is still in development so:

- o It's not 100% finished yet. We're working like the clappers though so be aware that you'll still see a few things being added and changed as you look – however, let us know if you get a blank page as that means something has gone wrong when we've made it live.
- o Where it appears clear that we'll be putting a link in (e.g. the name of a policy or the name of another page) we probably will be, but haven't got to it yet. Feel free to note these anyway but don't stress too much, chances are we have them covered!
- o Ignore any flashing camels. Yes, we said: *flashing camels*. These are just reminders for us take no notice of them!

Links from the big images go to wrong sports for now too... This will be fixed when we get our proper images in.

- In some places content is not as comprehensive as we'd like because, well, not all of the content doesn't exist yet! We all know this, so make notes as you go and your ideas can help with the phase 2 content prioritisation process! If the content is critical and already exists though, please let us know.
- We've had some difficulty arranging for "preview access" of the new site for LTU staff. However we've come up with an alternative solution.

Finally we ask that you please do not share these links around. We're very keen to get feedback but at this stage it helps us a whole lot if we can keep a lid on how much we get in one go! Remember a website is a living, breathing thing and there will be plenty of time to continue making it bigger and better once we get it launched!



# Fact checking the content - evolved - part 2



Getting the fact checking email right was pure joy.

# Migration

Start as soon as you can

Work experience students are gold

Update content on current sites (don't wait for new site) - this can help prove your new content is an improvement before your new goes live (use analytics, enquiries stats)

# Practical reality - what worked

- strategy, goals (part of a complete package)
- personas
- tone of voice guidelines, style guide, content bible
- re-usable and dynamic content
- redirects worked but are messy
- content template and modelling
- the 'to publish?' test

# Lessons learnt

Some people only understand pictures!

Google docs is AMAZING for editing.

Get the words right, then add images and other media (unless testing says images are critical)

Make sure there is flexibility for IA changes, and for content to grow

Shiny camels

# Lessons learnt

Always use the template, and fill out every relevant box - otherwise migrating is a nightmare

Metadata is critical (content model)

Never get lazy - always use the template

Don't lose site of your goals

# Lessons learnt



# Success (mostly)

Did we meet our goals?

Yes

- increased enquiries from future students (both Australian and international)
- decrease in 'starting' questions to Student Services
- content matches the brand (mostly)

No

- still many sites out there, some things didn't get built, scope crept and Cecil B DeMille got in on it

# Evaluate this presentation

## Content strategy and the QUT web redevelopment project

<http://sydney2013.drupal.org/content-strategy-and-qut-web-redevelopment-project>

Node: 188

**Jilly Magee**

**Thursday 7 February 5pm - 6pm**

**Content track**

