

Content Strategy Training:

Dell Empowers Employees Worldwide to Embrace Content Strategy

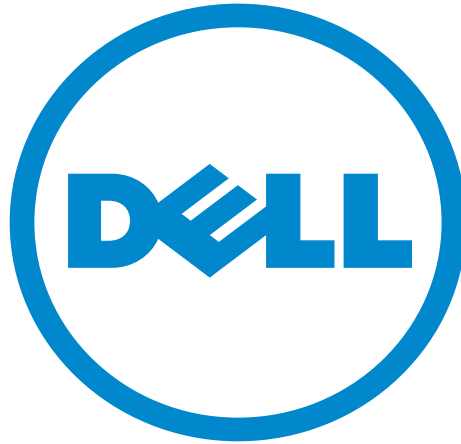
Client: Dell Inc.

Report Type: Case Study

Industries: Technology, Retail



The Client



Dell's story is well-known: What began as an unconventional PC startup grew into a global technology leader. As one of the top computer makers worldwide, Dell has divisions serving the consumer and business-to-business markets across the globe. Now, in the face of a rapidly changing technology landscape, Dell is reshaping its business to provide end-to-end technology solutions for its customers—resulting in even more products, services, and markets that all need compelling content to support them.

Technology changes at lightning speed, and so must Dell's content. With its motto of "The power to do more," the company realized it needed to create a unified content strategy vision and empower its employees by providing training, tools, and resources to bring that vision to life.

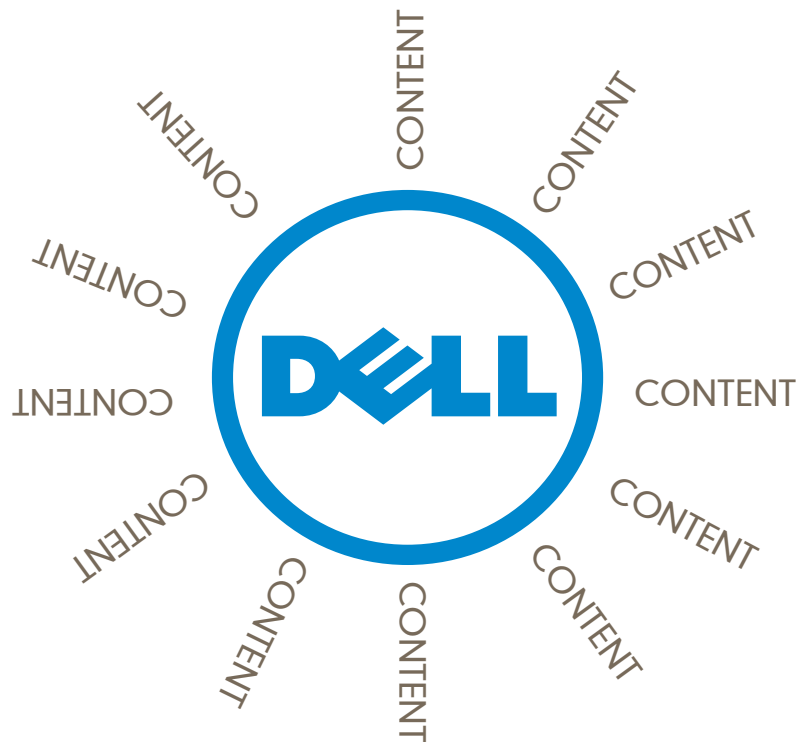
In this case study, learn about Dell's situation, our solution, and the results.

The Situation

With an extensive range of products, services, and markets, content creation at Dell involves hundreds of employees and takes place all over the world. Until recently, operations were segmented around business units. Content was an extension of that, created in walled-off silos. A few years ago, the company replaced its content management system and content creation was further decentralized. Content continued to proliferate with little planning or oversight.

As Brennan Dell, the company's Director of Marketing Education, explains, the company realized it needed to change course:

"Let's reign this back in, and not only decrease the number of people with the ability to create content, but sync up our approach and get more consistent about our strategy around content creation and maintenance."



The Situation *continued*

Separating content from the business unit silos meant more people working together to achieve a content-first approach. Aaron Burgess, Dell's Senior Manager for Content Strategy, recognized:

"If we are building an interface that is just one company collecting content from all these different silos into one presentation layer, then holy cow, we need a plan for how we work together."

Dell began using content strategy on key projects, such as the new PowerEdge Server product launch—with much success. Brennan Dell and his team realized

"This is the way we should be doing it in the future."

But how could Dell scale this strategic approach to the global enterprise level? The company needed to create a clear, common vision of content strategy and get employees at various levels across the world on the same page.

Dell turned to us to create and deliver customized, actionable content strategy training and resources for employees worldwide.



Our Solution

We worked with Dell to assess their situation and agreed upon some core needs:

- aligning practitioners and stakeholders on a vision for content strategy;
- educating them on the value of content strategy;
- providing a framework for implementing content strategy; and
- providing best practices, tools, and resources.

Using Dell's vision and questions, as well as our experience and expertise in crafting content strategies for large organizations, we devised a multi-pronged solution.

Content Strategy Brief

To promote planning and communication, we worked with the company to develop a template for a custom Content Strategy Brief to be completed before any new content is created or published.

The benefits of creating content strategy briefs include:

- encouraging users to think through all aspects of the content such as lifecycle and audience;
- explaining the strategy for anyone involved; and
- assessing content created (does content created match the strategy?).



Content Strategy Brief Template

Our Content Strategy At-a-Glance
Our content will _____

By _____

• _____

• _____

• _____

• _____

How We Will Carry Out the Strategy
Will we curate existing content, edit existing content, or create new content?

Content Strategy Brief

Our Solution *continued*

Training Class

To unite employees and stakeholders around a vision for content strategy and provide them a roadmap and tools to get going, we planned training customized to Dell's needs. We drew upon our own repository of training materials, content strategy methods, principles, and techniques and also collected specific Dell.com examples in collaboration with the company.



Content Strategy Training

We devised and delivered in-person sessions for U.S.-based employees with three core modules. The first aimed to align and educate attendees on content strategy and its value as well as inspire attendees to fulfill their respective roles in bringing Dell's content strategy vision to life. The second two were geared toward practitioners with the goal of helping them implement the content strategy framework. We also planned frequent activities to drive home the learning and overcome attention span decay.

We then adapted that training for overseas employees, shortening the session and modifying the activities for virtual delivery. We also localized the examples and factored in special considerations for each market, such as differences in culture, language, or product and service offerings.

Our Solution *continued*

The training achieved the goal of getting the company rolling on creating a long-term content strategy. Brennan Dell says,

“It was a good level-set across the E-Dell division on the importance of content strategy, why we need to have a content creation brief and what goes into creating a good content environment and user experience.”

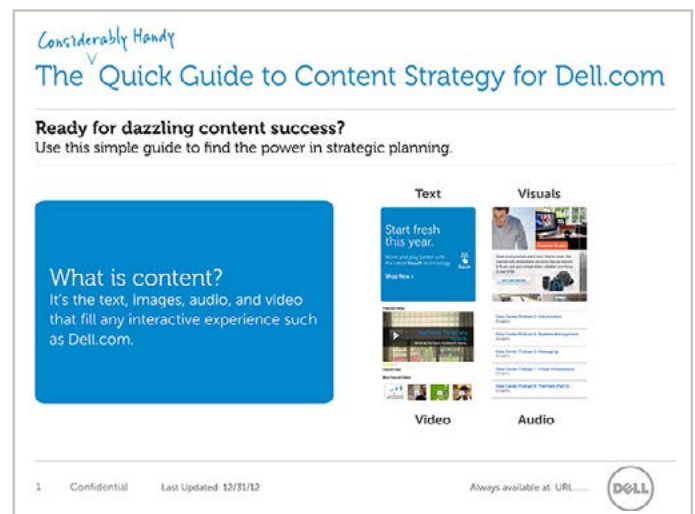
Burgess applauded the connection the training made between the user experience and content marketing aspects of content strategy.

“The course was aimed primarily at marketers, and it was speaking their language right from the start.”

Quick Guide and E-Learning

To help Dell refine their content strategy efforts down the road, as well as get new hires and stakeholders up to speed quickly and efficiently, we created additional resources for the company.

The Content Strategy Quick Guide is a concise recap of the training’s main takeaways that content creators and managers can keep handy and refer to frequently.



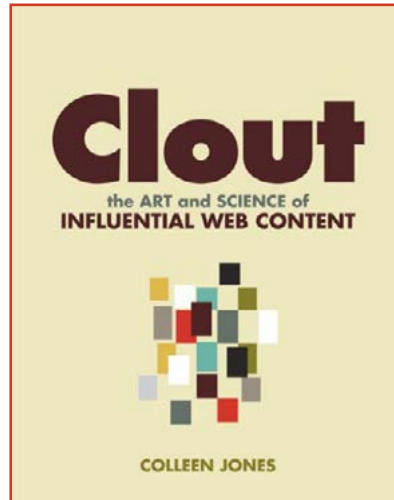
Content Strategy Quick Guide

Our Solution *continued*

We also adapted the training session into a short e-learning module with video and a quiz for future hires or refreshing the learning.

“These were great supplements to the delivered training,” Brennan Dell notes.

“Along with Colleen’s book, one of the authorities on the topic, it was a good package to get people thinking and also give them some independent study materials.”



*Clout: The Art and Science
of Influential Web Content*

The Results

The training and materials Content Science provided helped Dell translate their vision for a scalable content strategy into action. Stakeholders and practitioners are now aligned around a common vision and they clearly see the content possibilities that await. According to Burgess,

“The biggest success so far has been changing the conversation and getting people speaking with a similar vocabulary about content at Dell and where we need to go.”

The content strategy brief brings that conversation to life in actionable ways.

Dell has incorporated the briefs into projects and content development processes where they serve as informal contracts among the various stakeholders, detailing what elements go into content planning, who owns what, and how to evaluate content. Brennan Dell recognizes this makes it possible to repeat wins like the product launch success story.

Dell has also set up a repository for all the materials and resources, which Burgess says has been active with people accessing and downloading them.

“Each of these things is a little seed that’s being planted and we’ll see more good results coming out.”

Why Partner with Us

Our partnership with Dell was a success, resulting in training and resources the company can call upon now and into the future as it refines its content strategy. Why? We were able to navigate through the complexities of a large, international corporation to get all the players on the same page and taking concrete steps toward a common vision. Burgess says,

“I found Colleen very approachable and very much willing to spend the time it took to get in and understand the complexities of the company. One of the things we were really impressed by was that she focused on measurable results, and measurable results as they were relevant to our business.”

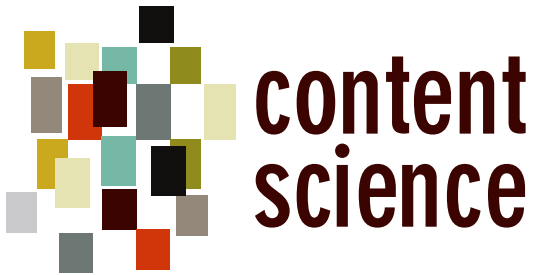
Brennan Dell commended Content Science’s project management and ability to keep the engagement moving along. The project management system

“was a really helpful tool when we had multiple stakeholders who are all quite busy and don’t necessarily interact with each other on a daily basis.”

If you work with us on creating content strategy training and resources, you could gain benefits such as

- ✓ **A framework** for more efficient content creation, management, and evaluation.
- ✓ **Better communication** on your team and among stakeholders about content.
- ✓ **A motivated, ready-to-act team** thanks to a well-understood plan for moving forward.
- ✓ **A strategy and actionable plan** for content training that creates value both now and later.
- ✓ **A foundation** for expanding customer reach, boosting your reputation and increasing revenue.

About Content Science



We're an award-winning consultancy in Atlanta, GA, advising Fortune 500 companies, startups, institutions, and government agencies around the globe on digital content strategy. Our services include consulting, research, and training.

We named our company Content Science because content is, indeed, a science. We study what works well—and what doesn't—so companies can make informed decisions about content.

Our principal, Colleen Jones, is the author of the top-selling book *Clout: The Art and Science of Influential Web Content* (New Riders Dec 2010), as well as a contributor to countless past and upcoming reputable publications.

Want to make your content work for your organization? We can help.

Contact us to find out how:

content-science.com/about-us/contact-us