As one of the most distinguished publishers in history, John Wiley & Sons pioneered science and technology publishing in the late 19th century, crafted a powerful business model around the unprecedented demand for college textbooks during the post-World War II boom, and provided modern diversified titles online to consumers as the Internet revolutionized academic publishing. In each of the past three centuries, Wiley has represented the best in what publishing can offer.

With such a significant and diverse history, Wiley needed a fresh, vital content strategy to respond to the pressing demands of a changing audience and accelerating competition. When Wiley wanted to ensure their distinguished reputation remained intact through a complex content strategy initiative, they reached out to Content Science.

In this case study, learn about Wiley’s situation, our solution, and the results.
The Situation

Despite its history and reputation, Wiley found its corporate identity lost in a sea of commodity publishers. With users simply coming to Wiley to get what they needed without much further interaction, Wiley realized the site had become perceived as functional, not engaging.

Wiley understood that improved content formed the core of a more engaging user experience in three ways.

Reach
Wiley.com did not seem to resonate with the right users, making it harder for Wiley’s audience to discover relevant content.

Reputation
If Wiley sounds like every other publisher, then they lose the impact of its compelling brand story. Wiley’s online personality lacked a compelling, unmistakable voice, which affects the context of its featured authors and the experience of users.

Results
Wiley understood that better reach and reputation through content would potentially boost sales through better cross-selling and upselling, deepening customer loyalty, and reducing costs through more efficient governance and maintenance of content.

To turn this vision into reality, Wiley needed to analyze its current content and develop a clear roadmap. As a result, the publisher turned to us for high-end consulting.
Our Solution

Our consulting engagement began by talking extensively with Eleanor Russell, VP, Online Channel Development and David Nusspickel, Director, Digital Product Development. We mutually decided that strategic analysis and planning were in order. Our goal? To develop a roadmap that Wiley could use for immediate and future planning.

To start, we conducted an extensive analysis.

Analysis

Focusing on Wiley’s vision, goals, content, users, and ecosystem, we conducted a thorough set of analyses:

- **Content Analysis**: Providing a collection of qualitative audits, we analyzed the effectiveness of Wiley's current content.

- **Competitive + Comparative Assessment**: How does Wiley compare to competitors?

- **Customer Lifecycle Gap Analysis**: How does Wiley’s content address all phases of the customer lifecycle?

- **Structure + Ecosystem Analysis**: Where does Wiley have content, and how does it work together as a system?
Our Solution continued

We discovered that

- **Themes emerged related to Wiley’s vision and goals** that were not represented in the current content, such as a company shift in focus from products to services.

- **Wiley’s current content** was too product-focused and lacked a distinct voice.

- **Content was not helping Wiley’s various, specific audiences** in the early customer lifecycle phases of discovery and research. Users looking for services were faced with too much product content and were not given enough options for browsing additional content.

- **While strong internal resources and governance existed**, a greater push to adhere to content processes down to the technology and template level would better help Wiley carry out its content goals.

Our overall analysis helped Wiley understand how to connect services and its brand story with a variety of users through content, instead of just serving as a functional, product-focused site.

To help make the more abstract aspects of the analysis clear, we included useful visuals.
Our Solution continued

Introduction continued

We then synthesized the results of our analysis into the findings and insights that follow. This report does discuss some implications of our findings, but it does not include final recommendations. Why? Because we find the most appropriate and most implementable guidance emerges when we:

- Think through the consequences of each recommendation—on its own and in connection with our other recommendations.
- Articulate and illustrate each recommendation thoroughly.

Your Current Content

We took an inventory of a large sample of your content to understand its current focus, or scope. We then audited the content to assess its current voice, quality, and use of visual content.

Content Focus

The vast majority of Wiley.com content is tied to products, especially books. The organization of the products is by subject or title, with a tight hierarchy.

Wiley Web Landscape

Wiley.com is part of a larger digital landscape for Wiley. Comprehensive services tend to have their own websites, many of them with different logins.
Recommendations + Roadmap

As a consultancy, we rarely offer analysis and recommendations at the same time. Strategic recommendations take deep thought. We don’t simply spout off best practices as recommendations. Why? Because a collection of best practices is not a strategy. Wiley came to us for advice on how to make content work for their unique situation, not a cookie-cutter solution.

So, we synthesized our research and analysis into a series of strategic recommendation reports and a clear roadmap. We took time to consider different possibilities, develop recommendations, and think through the impact of each recommendation on the others. We also planned how to implement the recommendations realistically.

The result was a set of recommendations that complemented each other and worked together as a roadmap. Our recommendations turned Wiley’s challenges into actionable opportunities. A clear roadmap outlined a plan to execute upon this strategy, and emphasized getting the basics right before expanding into sophisticated, well-maintained content marketing products.

More specifically, we made extensive recommendations to change Wiley’s approach to areas such as:

- Brand identity and voice
- Editorial, social, and product content
- Content architecture and navigation
- Content roles and responsibilities
Our Solution continued

BOOK AUTHORS CONCEPT

Book Authors

The world's best and most specialized authors partner with Wiley. For good reason.

Relationships
Leading experts in all disciplines rely on Wiley to bring books of the highest professional quality.

Results
Educators, trainers, and consultants rely on Wiley as a go-to resource for their needs.

Reach
Wiley's extensive partnerships and growing direct distribution ensure that books reach readers around the world.

How to Submit a Proposal
Curating a wide range of knowledge, our three business units each accept book proposals. Get the details of proposing your book here.

GLOBAL EDUCATION

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT CONCEPT

Accounting
From basic accounting to corporate governance, Wiley connects you with the right accounting knowledge in the right way for your classroom or career.

EDITORIAL ROADMAP

1. Set the Foundation
- Add new types of context and ways of experiencing it, as in a case study or up-to-date scenarios.
- Update core curriculum to keep it relevant.

2. Fill in the Gaps
- Add new types of context, particularly for organizing and examining different points of view.
- Incorporate more curated features.

3. Maintain and Grow
- Continue adding new types of context and ways of experiencing it, as in a case study or up-to-date scenarios.
- Update core curriculum to keep it relevant.
- As you gain new content and experience, continually assess your overall strategy and identify opportunities to support emerging and evolving needs.
After we helped develop Wiley’s content vision and recommendations, Wiley gained some results immediately. The stakeholders felt they had a clear plan and direction. Nusspickel noted,

*The analysis and recommendations from Content Science were helpful in meeting our goals. Content Science provided a variety of ideas – including different features, approaches, and elements – that drove a lot of our decision making.*

Our recommendations formed a critical part of Wiley’s new direction – enough so that our strategic concepts soon caught on internally as a way to think about Wiley. In addition, our guidance about Wiley’s voice also quickly made a significant impact. “*We’re now starting to say things in a similar way, instead of in different ways,*” said Nusspickel. “*A lot of internal content normalization is starting to occur, and Content Science’s insights were critical in helping us establish that normalization.*”

Wiley found that introducing the concepts laid out by Content Science has actually helped build better working relationships between previously disparate groups. Various business units with a say in Wiley.com heard about the Content Science project, liked its insights, and began to share and connect their strategies more consistently across all groups. “*This kind of group impact is critical when we’re improving content governance and oversight,*” said Nusspickel. “*I credit Content Science with helping to spur this kind of interaction.*”
In short, our recommendations continue to help Wiley translate their vision into action. Wiley’s content stakeholders are now aligned around a common content vision and they clearly see the content possibilities that await. Motivated to achieve the goals outlined in the roadmap, the Wiley team’s communication about content objectives has become much more efficient.

*I liked my feeling of commitment and engagement from Content Science. They delved right into our business and website, and they understood who we were, what we were looking to do, and what our challenges entailed. They used all of their research and information to create well-thought-out analyses and recommendations that formed the basis of clear action items. They put in a lot of thought and time, and they were always accessible if I had questions. With a complex project, many stakeholders, and limited resources, I felt that Content Science was like an extension of my personal team.*

*David Nusspickel, Director, Digital Product Development*
Why Partner with Us

When you work with us, you can trust that we’ll turn your vision—whether it’s to be a publishing pioneer or something completely different—into reality through content.

We never lost sight of Wiley’s goals. In the same way, we’ll focus unwaveringly on your business goals throughout an engagement.

If you work with us on a high-stakes content strategy, you could gain benefits such as

✔ Better communication on your team and among stakeholders about content.

✔ A clear understanding of your current content situation, including the challenges and opportunities.

✔ A strategy and actionable plan that give value both now and later.

✔ Improved brand awareness and social engagement.

✔ Sales uplift and fewer customer service calls.

✔ A framework for evaluating content performance.

✔ Industry recognition for your efforts.
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