Standard Operating Procedure for Converting Technical Documents to Public-Facing Content

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1 Purpose and Scope

This SOP outlines the steps to convert complex technical documents into easy-to-read public-facing content. This process is necessary to ensure that technical information can be easily understood by the target audience. This SOP applies to all technical documents intended for public consumption, including:

- user manuals

- technical reports

- marketing materials

- educational content

- training materials

- policy documents

- scientific papers

- research findings

- technical content for websites or blogs

2 Procedure

2.1 Analyze the Audience

Before converting technical documents, it's important to identify the target audience and their needs. Determine the level of technical knowledge that the audience has, and the type of information they are looking for.

2.1.1 Consider the PAC

Consider the Purpose for which the document will be used, the Audience who will be reading it, and the Context in which it will be both written and read (PAC). Understanding these factors will help ensure that the content is tailored to the audience's needs and effectively communicates technical information in a clear and understandable way.

2.2 Use Simple Language

Use plain language when converting technical documents to public-facing content. Avoid using technical jargon and acronyms, unless they are necessary. If technical terms cannot be avoided, define them clearly.

2.3 Organize the Content

Create a clear structure and hierarchy of information when converting technical documents to public-facing content. Use headings, subheadings, bullet points, and other visual aids to help readers navigate the content.

## 2.4 Use Examples and Analogies

Use examples and analogies to help readers understand complex concepts. By using real-life scenarios that relate to the reader's experience, you can make the content more relatable and easier to understand. For example, if you are trying to explain a complex technical process, you could use an analogy like comparing it to a recipe in a cookbook. Just as a recipe provides step-by-step instructions to make a dish, your technical process can be broken down into steps that are easy to follow.

NOTE Using examples and analogies can be a helpful technique to make technical information more relatable and understandable. However, it's important to choose an analogy that is relevant to the specific technical document and target audience.

2.5   Add Visuals

Research shows that visual aids can significantly improve the effectiveness of technical documents. The human brain processes images 60,000 times faster than text, and visual information makes up 90% of the data sent to the brain. One study found that after three days, a user retained only 10-20 percent of written or spoken information but almost sixty five percent of visual information.

Figure 1: Data retention rate varies based on presentation type.
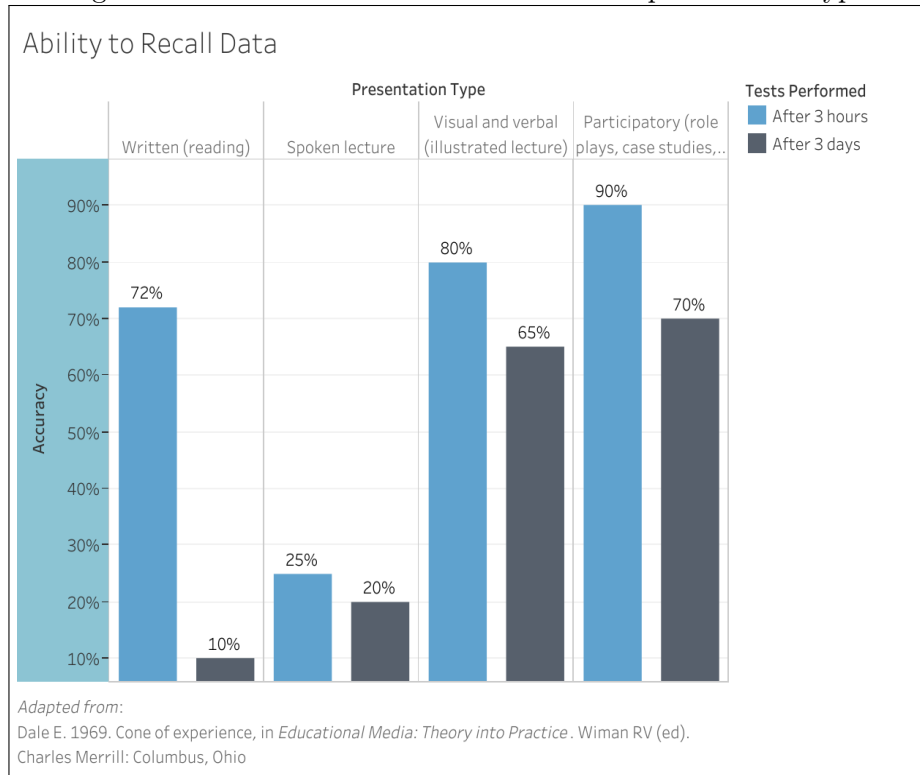
Therefore, it is important to use appropriate visuals such as diagrams, tables, and charts to support the content and make it easier to understand. When using visuals, ensure that they are clear, concise, and relevant to the content to maximize their impact on the reader.

3   Quality Control and Assurance

3.1   Test the Content

Review the content to ensure it is accurate and easy to understand. Consider conducting user testing to get feedback on the effectiveness of the content.

3.2   Revise and Update

Continuously monitor and update the content to ensure it remains relevant and accurate. Revise the content as needed to improve its readability.

3.3 Review and Approval

Have the content reviewed and approved by subject matter experts, legal, and other relevant stakeholders. Ensure that the content complies with company standards and policies.

3.4 Document and Maintain

Store the converted documents in a central location and make them easily accessible to the target audience. Regularly update the documents as needed to ensure that they remain accurate and relevant and to reflect any changes in the conversion process.