Content Strategy
for Small Businesses

Master's Thesis

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Statutory Declaration

I declare that I have authored this thesis independently, that I have not used anything other than the declared sources / resources, and that I have explicitly marked all material that has been quoted either literally or by content from the used sources.

Date: June 19th, 2017

Irene Michl

Thanks to Rahel Bailie, Meghan Casey, Erin Kissane and NapoleonCat for their permission to use their graphs in this publication.
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Summary

Small businesses can derive as much benefit from a content strategy as larger corporations. However, developing a content strategy for a small business means coping with specific limitations, such as budget, time, and knowledge. Also, project scope and deliverables must be scaled down. This thesis is one step towards a model for a content strategy for small businesses, using a case study. The study is for a hairdressing salon in London, UK.

The purpose of a content strategy is to create a content system to solve a business problem or reach a business goal. The strategy begins with a common core process, followed by processes specific to the problems or goals to be addressed.

In this case study, the business goal to be achieved is to increase profitability by attracting new customers. The strategy focuses on consistent messaging based on the brand in order to build trust and relationships with potential customers, and to retain existing customers. Recommendations are very important in the decision-making process for potential customers and online communication should support recommendations.

The content strategy spanned a number of content areas. The company website needed to be improved to provide helpful content and to attract potential customers. The role of social media was a significant consideration, as were the time resources needed to maintain social channels. Two key social media channels were chosen to maintain a dialogue with potential and existing customers. The focus of the salon’s communication is to make customers feel welcome in the salon. This welcome feeling must extend to any media used, such as Facebook, Instagram, and the website.

As with many small businesses, the responsibility for implementing the strategy lies with the business. It becomes incumbent upon the content strategist to deliver a detailed roadmap and implementation plan, along with detailed maintenance activities. This increases the likelihood that the small business owner will be able to carry out the plan and reap the long-term benefits of the strategy.
In some ways, the structure of small businesses allows content strategists to provide more support - for example, turning implicit goals, processes and responsibilities into an explicit plan. This allows small businesses to see the impact in an immediate and tangible way.

Recognising that limits in time and budget are the biggest constraints to implementing a content strategy also creates the opportunity to adapt the processes to meet that challenge. By doing so, we ensure that small businesses can get as much benefit from a content strategy as larger corporations.
# Table of Contents

Acknowledgements ................................................................................................................. 3

Summary .................................................................................................................................... 4

List of Figures ............................................................................................................................ 8

List of Tables ............................................................................................................................. 9

1 Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 10

2 Understanding content strategy .......................................................................................... 12
   2.1 Content ........................................................................................................................... 13
   2.2 User-centred approach ................................................................................................. 15
   2.3 Brand ............................................................................................................................ 16
   2.4 Content Strategy .......................................................................................................... 17
   2.5 Deliverables and methods ........................................................................................... 19
   2.6 Summary ....................................................................................................................... 25

3 Characteristics of small businesses ...................................................................................... 27

4 Content strategy process – best practices ........................................................................... 30

5 Case study: Content strategy for a hairdresser in London ................................................... 36
   5.1 Project definition ........................................................................................................... 37
   5.2 Assessment of the current state .................................................................................. 40
      5.2.1 Persona ................................................................................................................... 40
      5.2.2 Website .................................................................................................................. 43
      5.2.3 Social media ........................................................................................................... 52
      5.2.4 Governance and maintenance .............................................................................. 59
   5.3 Ideal future state ............................................................................................................ 60
   5.4 Strategy ......................................................................................................................... 62
   5.5 Implementation and management ................................................................................ 64
      5.5.1 Content ................................................................................................................... 64
      5.5.2 Website .................................................................................................................. 66
      5.5.3 Social media ........................................................................................................... 72
      5.5.4 Governance and maintenance .............................................................................. 79
6 Conclusions.................................................................................................................. 86
6.1 Project definition ........................................................................................................ 86
6.2 Assessment of the current state ................................................................................. 87
6.3 Ideal future state ........................................................................................................ 89
6.4 Strategy ...................................................................................................................... 89
6.5 Implementation and management ............................................................................. 89
6.6 The project seen by the owner ..................................................................................... 91

References ..................................................................................................................... 93

Resources ...................................................................................................................... 96

Appendix 1 Result cardsorting - message architecture ..................................................... 97
Appendix 2 Presentation deliverables .............................................................................. 99
Appendix 3 Qualitative content audit website ................................................................. 121
Appendix 4 Chart competitor website audit ..................................................................... 124
List of Figures

Figure 1 Content types and how they affect user experience (UX) screenshot (Bailie & Urbina, 2013, Chapter Business-Critical Content) .................................................................14
Figure 2 Content lifecycle, screenshot (Casey, 2015, Chapter: Content Lifecycle) ...........................................15
Figure 3 Content Strategy Quad by Brain Traffic, screenshot (Casey, 2015, Chapter Introduction) (Halvorson & Rach, 2012, Chapter Solution) ..............................................18
Figure 4 Typical deliverables for a content strategy project (Bailie, 2015) .........................................................19
Figure 5 A progression of phases within user experience and content strategy projects, screenshot (Kissane, 2011, p. 43) .................................................................30
Figure 6 Typical Process (Bailie, 2015) ............................................................................................................32
Figure 7 Behaviour flow, starting at the home page (Google Analytics 1.1.2016 - 31.12.2016) .................................................................46
Figure 8 Use of devices in 7,706 sessions (red: tablet, green: mobile, blue: desktop),
Figure 9 Screenshot Google search results for Frankie Cochrane, in March 2017 ........................................51
Figure 10 Facebook page Frankie Cochrane, screenshot, April 20, 2017 ...........................................53
Figure 11 Customers’ reviews on Facebook page, screenshot, 20 April 2017 ...........................................53
Figure 12 Sample post published by the agency, screenshot, 20 April 2017 ...........................................54
Figure 13 Facebook insights on Frankie Cochrane, screenshot .................................................................55
Figure 14 Facebook likes from 1 April 2016 (529) to 31 March (549), 2017,
screenshot (24 May 2017) ....................................................................................................................55
Figure 15 Video on the Facebook page, screenshot, 20 April 2017 .................................................................56
Figure 16 First page owned by the salon; the other search result on Facebook shows
a page generated by Facebook, screenshot, 20 April 2017 .....................................................................56
Figure 17 Instagram pictures using hashtag #frankiecochranehair ............................................................57
Figure 18 Instagram pictures using hashtag #frankiecochrane .................................................................57
Figure 19 Twitter account Frankie Cochrane, screenshot, April 20, 2017 ..................................................58
Figure 20 Rating on Google, screenshot April 20, 2107 ............................................................................59
Figure 21 Rating on yelp.co.uk, screenshot, April 20 2017 ........................................................................59
Figure 22 Final three card groups after the cardsorting .............................................................................64
Figure 23 Suggestion for website navigation based on page visits (unique clicks) and interviews .................................................................................................................68
Figure 24 Mock-up for home page ...............................................................................................................69
Figure 25 Page mock-up Stylists & Services .................................................................70
Figure 26 Page mock-up Pictures & Testimonials ........................................................70
Figure 27 Ranking of most important social networks and messengers by percentage of UK user population 2016, Statista .................................................................72
Figure 28 Number of Facebook user separated by age and gender in UK 2017, Statista .................................................................74
Figure 29 Sample post of satisfied customer (from Frankie Cochrane profile) ........75
Figure 30 Personal insights from the salon (communication goal: family) .................75
Figure 31 Customer photo with hairstylist (communication goal: relationship, creativity and inspiration) shows skills and provides information about a new product ..................................................................................................................76
Figure 32 Snaps from special situations in the salon (relationship, family) .............76
Figure 33 Instagram users in UK, March 2017, screenshot, https://www.instagram.com/p/BRIy3e5DS4O/?taken-by=napoleoncatcom .......77
Figure 34 Value of content ideas, screenshot (Casey, 2015, Chapter Content Product Planning) ..................................................................................................................82
Figure 35 Effort of producing content ideas, screenshot (Casey, 2015, Chapter Content Product Planning) .................................................................83

List of Tables

Table 1 Problems and their opportunities for Frankie Cochrane's salon ...............38
Table 2 Inventory of www.frankiecochrane.co.uk (29.1.17) including Google Analytics data from 1.1.2016 to 31.12.2016 .................................................44
Table 3 Pages sorted by unique page views (Google Analytics 1.1.2016 – 31.12.2016) .................................................................................................................45
Table 4 Example: Qualitative audit of the home page .............................................48
Table 5 Social media profile inventory of Frankie Cochrane, April 2017 .............52
Table 6 Draft of the editorial calendar for Frankie Cochrane .............................81
1 Introduction

Content strategy is often applied to large enterprises that have a range of employees responsible for marketing, communication, user research, content production and management, and governance. This thesis tests how well – and to what extent – the methodologies used to develop and implement a content strategy can be applied to small businesses.

This thesis is based on the business case of a hairdressing salon in Central London. The Frankie Cochrane Hair and Beauty Salon is a company run by a team of three hair stylists. One of the stylists is the owner himself, Paul Cochrane. His goal is to acquire new customers to raise revenue by implementing a content strategy. The salon is one of two businesses owned by Paul Cochrane; the other business is Cochrane & Co, a men’s hair replacement service. This distinction is important because of the interconnectedness of the existing approach to content.

Target audience

This thesis is meant to provide a way to apply content strategy principles to small businesses. The thesis explains how content strategy can help small businesses achieve their business goals. Based on a real project, the thesis describes the aspects of the content strategy process: identifying the business goals, analysing the current and futures states, and conducting a gap analysis to determine recommended courses of action.

Motivation

As a business consultant in Austria, the author deals mainly with small and medium businesses. Literature about content strategy primarily provides case studies of large companies with multiple departments for content production or user experience. The goal of this thesis is to show that content strategy also creates opportunities for small businesses and can help focus where to invest marketing budget.

Method in brief

The content strategy process in this case study starts with user research to define a persona and a user journey, with a special focus on online behaviour. To describe
the current state, an audit of website and social media channels was conducted, based on the results from the user research (persona, journey) and the brand communication goals (cardsorting). Additionally, several competitors were analysed and existing governance processes were assessed.

The implementation of the suggested measures will not be part of this work, as the time lapse after implementation is insufficient to measure improvements.

The term “small business” in this thesis refers to companies with fewer than 10 employees and content projects of a small scale.

**Structure of the thesis**

The report first covers the importance of content, user needs, and brand in the context of a content strategy to achieve business goals. It also covers definitions of some methodologies and deliverables. The next chapter addresses the characteristics of small businesses in relation to content strategy. A best practice process of developing a content strategy for a small business is presented in the chapter entitled “Content strategy process – best practice”. After describing the case study of Frankie Cochrane Hair and Beauty salon, the concluding chapter discusses the experience of developing a content strategy for a small business with references to literature and methodologies.
2 Understanding content strategy

There is no standard definition of content strategy or its approach and key factors. For the purposes of this study, the three main characteristics of a content strategy are:

• It is user-centred and focusses on the user’s goals and needs. A content strategy should support the users or customers to achieve their specific goals.
• The content strategy must solve one or more business problems.
• Brand and corporate identity are always conveyed by content. This is an important factor to ensure that at every touchpoint the user/customer consistently has the same impression of the company (trust building), distinct from its competitors.

The descriptions and definitions in the following chapters are based on these three main points.

Content has become a powerful business asset and it should be carefully managed. Nearly every company has reason to be concerned with content. “The moment you launch a website, you’re a publisher. The moment you begin a blog, send an email, participate in social media, build a widget, even show up in search engine results … you are a publisher” (Halvorson, 2010). In other words, virtually every company is a publisher. However, very few act in a way that suggests they understand this or that they treat their content as a business asset. There is a need for a more strategic approach to create, manage, and publish content (Bailie & Urbina, 2013). A content strategy delivers this strategic approach.

This chapter explains the terms and the relationships between good content, a user-centred approach and brand, as well as why they are important for a content strategy. The final section of this chapter, entitled “Deliverables”, explains some tools and methods commonly used to establish and document a content strategy process.
2.1 Content

Drawing on the work of several international content strategists, this section explains why content is so important to businesses.

Content has many functions. In addition to supporting business goals and user needs (Halvorson & Rach, 2012), content is used to communicate the brand (product and marketing content) and support customer relationships (pre-sales and post-sales). Content informs, facilitates transactions (e.g. online booking) and engages (e.g. changes behaviour, drives conversions, etc.). For these reasons, it should be seen as a business asset (Bailie & Urbina, 2013; Halvorson & Rach, 2012).

“Content is what the user came to read, learn, see, or experience. From a business perspective, the content is the critical information the website, application, intranet, or any other delivery vehicle was created to contain or communicate” (Halvorson & Rach, 2012, Chapter 3 Solution). As Rahel Bailie often says in her talks and classes at the University of Applied Sciences Joanneum in Graz: “A website can have a beautiful design. But, without the content, it becomes useless”. If there were no content, there would be no communication between companies and users.

Scott Abel explains the role of content as follows: “Content is the single most-used way of understanding an organization’s products or services, stories, and brand” (Abel & Bailie, 2014, Chapter Content). If there were no content, companies could not explain who they are and what they do.

Figure 1 shows a range of content types and how a content user experiences them. In small businesses, only a few types of content are important, but it is good to know which content type can enable users to achieve their goals or be persuaded to help the company achieve its goals.
However, it is not enough simply to produce content. The quality of the content is important as well. Optimised content improves readability, accuracy, clarity, consistency, tone and voice. With high-quality content, a reader can focus on the message without distractions (PG Bartlett in Abel & Bailie, 2014). In order to maintain an ongoing dialogue with the user, content has to be “well-written and intuitively organized. It keeps people coming back for more” (Halvorson & Rach, 2012, Chapter Problem).

Content production should not be seen as a linear supply chain with a clear beginning and end (as for a printed page) or as single-purpose content. Producing good web content requires much more planning and upkeep than a print brochure (Halvorson & Rach, 2012). Unlike print media, content has a lifecycle. Figure 2 shows a simple model of a content lifecycle from Erin Scime (Content Strategy Manager at Facebook), cited by Meghan Casey in her book (Casey, 2015). Other approaches are found in Bailie & Urbina (2013), Halvorson & Rach (2012), Barker (2016), Robert Rose (Abel & Bailie 2014) and Rockley & Cooper (2012).
Casey (2015) describes the stages as follows:
• Strategize: what content is needed, for whom, why and where
• Plan: roles, responsibilities and processes
• Create: this includes approval and publishing of content
• Maintain: regular updates and deletions to remain timely and relevant
• Audit: reassessing the strategy regularly (new competitors, priority changes, target audience shifts)

Content should be not only helpful and of good quality, but also findable; this aspect influences the user experience (Cheryl Landes and Scott Abel in Abel & Bailie, 2014). The user-centred focus, also reflected in content production, maintenance and delivery, is explained in the following section.

### 2.2 User-centred approach

“When it comes to content, ‘user-centered’ means that instead of insistently using the client’s internal mental models and vocabulary, content must adopt the cognitive frameworks of the user” (Kissane, 2011, p. 8). Meeting the user’s or customer’s needs makes content useful to them. The advantage for companies that focus on the user’s needs is knowing where to set priorities (Rockley & Cooper, 2012; Ladenburg Land, 2014; Abel & Bailie, 2014; Bloomstein, 2012; Bailie & Urbina, 2013; Casey, 2015).
For content to be user-centred, there must be a certain knowledge about the customers, gathered through user research. The goal is to know their needs, their goals and their behaviour and to make them feel comfortable at the company’s touchpoints, which means providing a good user experience with the right content.

A bad experience with the website or the company’s other content touchpoints (social media, customer service, and so on) can have a negative impact on customer confidence and might even damage the brand. A positive experience provides a competitive advantage, and not only on the website (Bailie & Urbina, 2013).

User experience is created by the interplay between interaction designers, information architects, web developers and graphic designers (Bailie & Urbina, 2013). Even if a small company does not have all of these as separate positions, these topics should be kept in mind when producing and delivering content.

A bad user experience impacts companies and is “bad for the brand, and bad for their target audience” (Bloomstein, 2012, Chapter Who should use this book-and what you can expect).

2.3 Brand

The brand influences the content and vice versa. To differentiate the company from competitors, content must specifically and authentically embody your brand (Halvorson & Rach, 2012). On the other hand, the brand defines how the company addresses itself to the customers (tone, voice, visual design).

To achieve its business goals, a company must often differentiate itself from competitors, as well as engage its customers or users. How willing users are to engage with the company is determined by how they feel about the brand (Bailie & Urbina, 2013). To figure out how the user feels about and experiences the brand is another part of user research.
Content is influenced by the brand and must meet the user’s needs in order for the company to achieve its business goals. This is the basis for planning a content strategy.

2.4 Content Strategy

“Content strategy is the application of content (planning, delivery and governance) to meet a business objective.” This is the condensed definition presented by Jonjo Maudsley (2016) on the business network LinkedIn. He considered the definitions produced by many important content strategists in order to develop this condensed version.

Kristina Halvorson made the term content strategy popular. Maudsley’s definition is quite similar to Halvorson’s: “Content strategy guides your plans for the creation, delivery, and governance of content” (Halvorson & Rach, 2012, Chapter 3 Solution). However, this thesis relies on Maudsley’s definition because he included the aspect of achieving business objectives.

A content strategy starts with identifying the business problem. This could be a decline in revenue or high customer service costs. Goals must be defined based on this problem. The next step is to conduct research to figure out more about the current state of content, (business) processes and resources. Based on the current state and the goals, the future state is defined: the desired situation. The analysis of the gap between the current situation and the ideal state is the basis for decisions regarding how to achieve the ideal state (Eck & Eichmeier, 2014; Halvorson & Rach, 2012; Abel & Bailie, 2014). Or, put more simply: “understand the gap between your user experience and your customers’ needs and fix it” (Bailie & Urbina, 2013, Chapter Introduction).

Content strategy is a holistic approach. It concerns not only users and customers but also stakeholders (people related to the company). To understand the current situation and to define the ideal state, content strategists must ask certain questions. These include not only the question of what, but also why, how, when, and by whom (Bloomstein, 2012).
Figure 3 shows Halvorson’s Content Strategy Quad that illustrates which parts must be taken into account when planning a content strategy.

In between content and people is the core content strategy, which is the underlying purpose of the content. This core strategy defines how an organisation will use content to achieve business objectives and meet user needs. It forms the basis for decisions about content (substance and structure) and people (workflow and governance). Substance defines the content needed (topics, types, etc.) and why it is meaningful to users. What messages will the organisation communicate to the audience? Structure includes how content will be organised, formatted and displayed so that the user can find the content needed. The people involved organise the workflows from ideation to publication and are responsible for content governance according to the core content strategy (Halvorson & Rach, 2012; Casey, 2015).

If the content purpose is thought through, structures are implemented and persons are put in charge, and a repeatable “plan of action,” to use Rockley’s term (Nagle,
2010), is the result. This is a content strategy that aligns all people involved in terms of priorities and objectives (Halvorson & Rach, 2012).

2.5 Deliverables and methods

Deliverables are chosen based on the project goals and scope. In her book *The elements of content strategy*, Erin Kissane notes that the deliverables and the individual processes change for each project (Kissane, 2011).

As an example, Figure 4 shows some typical deliverables. These deliverables are used for documenting and communicating research results or plans. Some deliverables will be smaller in scale than those for projects within more complex organisations. This sections explains the deliverables and methods used in this project.

![Figure 4 Typical deliverables for a content strategy project (Bailie, 2015)](image-url)
Content audit and content analysis

Talia Eisen defines the content audit as the analysis of the content inventory (see below). She distinguishes between a quantitative audit and qualitative audit (Abel & Bailie, 2014). Paula Land instead uses the term “content audit” only for the “qualitative evaluation of a set of content” (Ladenburg Land, 2014, Chapter The Content Audit).

The quantitative audit is the analysis of the content inventory and can be enriched by web analytics data, content data (metadata, number of characters of content parts, authors, etc.). This audit provides an overview of the current state of content and processes. Patterns can be found, for example, if one author uses the metadata fields in a wrong way, headlines are too long (for SEO), headlines are missing on some pages, and so on. Alternatively, certain parts may be analysed due to some suspicions based on the research phase or the defined goals.

“A qualitative audit analyses the quality and effectiveness of the content” (Halvorson & Rach, 2012, Chapter Audit). In a qualitative audit, the content is measured against objective quality benchmarks (such as editorial guidelines or message architecture) depending on the context and goals. Certain predefined research questions are needed in order to define the attributes for assessing the content. The result is an overview of which content can be used as is, and which needs to be edited, restructured or eliminated. This helps to standardise content, ensure content quality or reduce implementation costs by migrating projects (Mollye Barrett in Abel & Bailie, 2014; Ladenburg Land, 2014; Casey, 2015; Löffler, 2015).

A good overview of content audits (in German) is provided in a blog post by Babak Zand (Zand, 2016).
Content brief or creative brief

A content brief helps to define the cornerstone of a content project. The following six questions should be answered as part of this process (Colleen Jones in Abel & Bailie, 2014):

- **What** are we trying to achieve with content?
- **Why** are we trying to achieve it – to meet what business or organisational purpose?
- **Who** is our audience? Who will be involved in planning, creating and maintaining content?
- **When** will our audience need or expect content? When will we plan, create and maintain content?
- **Where** do our audiences need or expect content and in what formats?
- **How** will we structure our content for our content management system?

Casey mentions something similar, which she calls the “Strategic Alignment Summary”. This contains the following elements: business goals to be achieved, a rundown of the users’ needs, observations about the current content and a recommended roadmap to outline focus areas (Casey, 2015). This helps align project members and external suppliers.

Methods to answer these questions include desk research (examining existing documents) or interviewing stakeholders, such as the owner or the persons responsible for marketing or sales.

Content inventory

According to Paula Land, a content inventory is a listing of all content assets, digital (text, files, audio, video, images) or non-digital (brochures, business cards, etc.). This process helps define the scope of a content project and identify issues for further analysis (Land in Abel & Bailie, 2014). It also shows the scale of the content, where it is, and how it is structured and related to other content (Casey, 2015; Halvorson & Rach, 2012).
Land defines a content inventory as more than just a listing, stating that it “is a quantitative assessment of all the content on a website – a list of all the pages, images, and other files that make up the content set as well as data associated with those files, such as content type and metadata.” (Ladenburg Land, 2014, Chapter The Content Inventory) (See also section “Content audit and content analysis”).

The content inventory can be the basis for further content plans or matrices, such as a maintenance plan (when content needs to be revised) or a content migration plan (when content will be migrated to a new website). It is the basis for the content audit, and other useful information can be included in each piece of content, depending on the business strategy and project objectives (Kate Kenyon in Abel & Bailie, 2014; Ladenburg Land, 2014; Löffler, 2015).

**Editorial calendar and editorial process**

An editorial calendar can help keep important publishing milestones in mind. This is a schedule for content publishing, often projected for a year at a time. The calendar shows who will do what, in which channels, and when. This can help you plan ahead and produce content in a timely, high-quality and consistent manner. The level of detail depends on the organisation, but in any case it must not be overwhelming (Mat Szwajkos in Abel & Bailie, 2014; Bloomstein, 2012). An editorial calendar should be set up according to the needs of a company. “The first step toward a successful editorial calendar is defining why you’re creating it.” (Halvorson & Rach, 2012, Chapter People).

For small businesses, an editorial calendar can also depict the editorial process. The responsibilities must be defined: who creates content, who approves it and who publishes it.
Governance model and maintenance

Phillips (Phillips, 2015) suggests a four-step roadmap to create and implement a governance model:

1. Define content ownership and roles
2. Design and document content workflows
3. Produce and document guidelines, standards, policies, procedures and tools to operationalise content governance
4. Implement appropriate training to educate and align staff on content governance

Governance goes beyond merely producing and publishing content. The literature suggests that content should also be subject to regular revisions (at least annually) to determine whether it still meets the communication goals and is accurate and up-to-date. (Casey, 2015)

Guidelines

If there are different (or new) authors, or content is produced by an agency, guidelines and standards improve consistency in vocabulary, tone, and voice across channels, which is important for the brand and for avoiding confusion (Brenda Huettner in Abel & Bailie, 2014; Casey, 2015; Bloomstein, 2012; Halvorson & Rach, 2012; Kissane, 2011).

Information architecture

In this project, the information architecture determines the website navigation. It resembles a site map and helps people find and manage information more successfully (Bailie & Urbina, 2013; Halvorson & Rach, 2012).

Message architecture

The message architecture defines a hierarchy of communication goals with a common vocabulary. Existing content can be measured against this architecture to determine quality, and this helps prioritise budget and content investments. The architecture reflects the brand (Bloomstein, 2012; Bloomstein in Abel & Bailie, 2014).
Casey calls this the “Messaging Framework” and defines it as what the company wants their audience to know and believe about them (Casey, 2015).

A method to determine the message architecture is “cardsorting”, which Margot Bloomstein describes in her book Content Strategy at Work: Real-world Stories to Strengthen Every Interactive Project (Bloomstein, 2012). She uses a deck of 150 index cards, labelled with the adjectives most applicable to the organisation’s industry. A selected group of company members (in a small company this may be the whole staff) sort these cards in a workshop according to three categories: who we are, who we would like to be and who we are not. The second step is to filter the most attractive and suitable adjectives to define “who we would like to be”. In the final step the adjectives are grouped and prioritised. The goal is consensus and clarity around communication goals, which form the basis for visual design, content strategy, editorial strategy, nomenclature and architecture (Bloomstein, 2012).

**Persona and customer journey**

The persona is a tool to make user research results understandable. It includes the behavioural characteristics of typical content consumers and aligns decision-making with content strategy (Mulder & Yaar, 2007; Bailie & Urbina, 2013). “Persona research is central to the content strategy process because it allows us to create content that speaks directly to the users we want to target. We are able to gear our messaging toward the interests, aspirations, concerns, and desires of the very people we’ve identified as being crucial to our client” (Rowley Jr, 2013). Using a persona helps both project teams and stakeholders understand the experience from the customer’s point of view and create user-centred content.

To understand why and when the target user/persona gets in touch with your organisation (website, social media, print brochures), the customer journey is recorded (also based on user research). This helps deliver the right content at the right place (Halvorson & Rach, 2012; Casey, 2015).

There is a difference between user research and market research. Market research gives you the answer to the question: is there a market for my product/service? It
focuses on demographic details (gender, income, age, etc.) to help companies segment their audience. User research instead explores the attitudes, beliefs, concerns, experiences, behaviours and motivations of your users (the person who interact with your content) (Casey, 2015). This information helps write user-centred content. “Your content will be much more effective and easy to manage if you set some parameters and priorities about who your content is for” (Halvorson & Rach, 2012, Chapter Content).

Halvorson and Rach warn against building an entire strategy on un-researched assumptions and isolated opinions, because this will cost more time and money in the long run (Halvorson & Rach, 2012).

**Requirements matrix**
The requirements matrix is a list of business objectives to be prioritised. It helps to align content with agreed business goals (Kenyon in Abel & Bailie, 2014). It is important that the business owner and stakeholders agree on the business goals (Casey, 2015). This prioritisation helps cut activities when budgets run low.

### 2.6 Summary
In sum, the main points of this chapter are as follows:

Every company with a website or a presence in one or more social media channels is a publisher and must understand content as a business asset. Content is the means by which companies communicate and build a relationship with their stakeholders.

A content strategy takes into consideration user needs, brand and business goals. The overlap of these three considerations is the content.

Methods such as user research, cardsorting and stakeholder interviews deliver information, while the deliverables take the form of documentation that presents key findings and recommendations.
Establishing a content strategy requires time and money. However, the literature suggests that content produced and published in the context of a strategy is more effective. A content strategy avoids producing useless content or failures in (web) design processes and can help save both time and money.
3 Characteristics of small businesses

This chapter examines the findings of current literature regarding the different preconditions faced by small businesses when they would like to set up a content strategy.

The majority of the literature often refers to large enterprises with multiple departments or at least with individuals who have job titles such as information architect, content manager, copywriter and so on. A significant amount of knowledge is needed in the content production and publishing process. However, small companies do not have such a range of employees with specialist knowledge.

Janel Leonor and Isabel Rößler wrote a master’s thesis entitled “A Content Strategy Framework for Micro Enterprises and Start-Ups” (Leonor & Rößler, 2017) in the Content Strategy programme at the University of Applied Sciences Joanneum in Graz. After interviewing several small businesses and start-ups, they identified certain challenges for this size of business:
• Marketing expertise is self-taught and often involves learning by doing.
• They have low amounts of resources in both money and time.
• Allocation of tasks and/or time may be somewhat clear but is often not written down, which results in everyone doing everything.
• Founders want to conduct communication activities themselves as the company is their passion.
• They lack structure and workflow in communication and in creating content.
• Outstanding content and marketing in the context of dense competition are often crucial for the success of a small business.
• Most of the interviewees started communication without any strategy.

Leticia Mooney, a content strategist, also works with small businesses. She identifies additional challenges in her article on LinkedIn: small business owners are ideas people, and they often do not have the time and knowledge to think strategically, or they have not thought about their business from their customers’ perspectives (Mooney, 2016).
Facing a lack of knowledge and resources, a content strategy must be adapted. Leonor and Rößler summarise some of the points to be considered when tailoring content strategy projects for small businesses (Leonor & Rößler, 2017):

- Use a smaller scope (although Mooney contradicts this, stating that a small company does not necessarily imply a small project scope (Mooney, 2016));
- Maintain focus to use resources efficiently and effectively;
- Have employees wear multiple “hats”, which can mean that the whole company becomes involved in the process;
- Establish a “robust and clear” framework;
- Define a simple yet strict set of rules about the basics of content creation in order to create consistency; and
- Keep a clear track of company strategy, vision and the “why” in order to gain credibility and authenticity.

Clara Guasch delivered a talk at Congility 2014 with the title “Content strategy at a micro scale” (Guasch, 2014). Her essential point was: “Size doesn't really matter: content is important and difficult for everyone”. Even very small companies must provide useful, compelling content on their website. She also mentions in her blog post some difficulties that small businesses face:

- They believe it is normal to create their own content (no copywriter);
- They are not taught how to create content;
- They are not aware of the risks they run with poor content;
- Micro-companies are generally not aware of their key messages;
- They create content without a goal; and
- The majority have never thought about the fact that they have and convey an identity.

She states that micro-companies often have a very deep and direct knowledge of their users. The beauty of it all, as she states, is that in small companies, a content strategy can have a very direct impact on content, on people and on the business itself. The overlap of content strategy and business strategy is great. Meanwhile, change is very direct and fast, as the decision-makers are often the same people that implement the strategy.
Scott Kubie, content strategist at Brain Traffic, notes that in relations with small businesses, he would reduce the content inventory and the audit in scale, as well as web governance. However, he also admits that this depends on the company’s situation (Leonor & Rößler, 2017).

Making individual adaptations is also the approach of Jan Godsk, founder of Ideatakeaway, a firm based in Denmark with a focus on creative media solutions. He would use the same content strategy process and the same tools as for larger companies. However, what he finds important is that small businesses have a different kind of budget and different resources (Leonor & Rößler, 2017).

In the conclusion section of their thesis, Leonor and Rößler (Leonor & Rößler, 2017) note that not every small business requires a content strategy, but rather only companies that want to publish content on a regular basis (e.g., on their website, in email newsletters, on social media or via their web shop).

On the other hand, content strategists who want to work with small businesses must also meet special requirements. They have to have a wide range of abilities and interests and be knowledgeable about all parts of content strategy tactics and implementation. They are at once coaches, psychologists, business consultants and marketing specialists in situations where brand, strategy and company goals might not be as clear defined as needed to develop a strategy (Leonor & Rößler, 2017).

For the implementation of a content strategy, Leonor and Rößler describe the following behaviour of small businesses according to their own experience: the client is highly motivated at first but then overwhelmed by the sheer number of action points. Some measures are immediately implemented and others are postponed, then forgotten after a while. The solution is to provide a maximum of three tasks or recommendations and only after the client reports that these have been implemented will the next steps be taken. The same conclusion is drawn by content strategist Scott Kubie (who was interviewed as an expert by Leonor and Rößler), who suggests using small, tactical steps to nudge start-ups in the right direction (Leonor & Rößler, 2017).
4 Content strategy process – best practices

After presenting their literature review and the results of their interviews with experts and small businesses representatives, Leonor and Rößler suggest that the process must be divided into clear phases with logical and non-redundant steps using few but effective tools. Wording and terms must be easy, clear and self-explanatory to the businesses. Their findings suggest that the experts and small business representatives they interviewed thought a content strategy for a small business may be “too much”. The development of a “content strategy light” was suggested. For the future, if the company grows, the simple strategy would then become a good basis for a more in-depth strategy (Leonor & Rößler, 2017).

However, adopting the strategy concerns not only small businesses. Content strategist at Brain Traffic, Scott Kubie, points out that there is no one single content strategy process. The process must be adapted to the customer needs (Leonor & Rößler, 2017).

Kubie is not alone in this opinion. Erin Kissane also stated that she adapts her deliverables to the project needs, which also means in some ways adapting the process (Kissane, 2011). The author’s opinion is that the process will, in essence, be the same, with the same phases. However, the number of activities in each phase and their associated deliverables can vary based on the scope and goals. As a basic process, this thesis uses the five phases presented in Figure 5:

![Figure 5 A progression of phases within user experience and content strategy projects, screenshot (Kissane, 2011, p. 43)](image)

The structure of this chapter follows these process steps. Explanations regarding each step are mostly from Casey’s book, The Content Strategy Toolkit. She takes a similar approach and describes the phases in her book like a how-to-guide (Casey,
Additionally, the approach presented by Leonor and Rößler in their framework for small business is included (Leonor & Rößler, 2017).

**Project definition**

Casey begins by identifying the problems and, more importantly, the opportunities to convince leaders and get the stakeholders on board to provide budget resources.

Small businesses have only a few stakeholders to convince. They may consist only of the owner and some key members of the staff. Depending on the structure, there may also be some financial stakeholders to consider.

**Research and analysis**

The next steps are understanding the business environment, the audience and users, identifying existing content, and learning about workflows. This is done through stakeholder interviews, quantitative and qualitative research (Casey, 2015). For small businesses, this can be either a short phase or a substantial part of the content strategy, depending on the previous strategic work (Leonor & Rößler, 2017).

Key questions in this phase are as follows (Leonor & Rößler, 2017):

- What is the company’s strategy? What are its organisational goals?
- Which content and communication channels are already present? How do they perform?
- Which resources – both financially and in terms of know-how, network and time – are currently used for content and communication? What others are available?
- What does the competition do online? Which content gaps remain available for a new competitor to fill?
- Who are the customers and/or users currently? Who should benefit from the content? What does their online behaviour look like?

Many answers to these questions can be prepared by the owner or the person responsible for communication and strategy. However, preparing the information with an external person offers insights into aspects that might only be clear to the
company’s representatives. The role of a content strategist is to ask the right questions and record the answers to reach common agreement (Leonor & Rößler, 2017).

In this approach, the phase is split into two parts, following Bailie (2015):

1. Assessment of the current state, and
2. Determination of the ideal future state, which leads to the strategy.

This division is illustrated in Figure 6.

**Overview of Methodology**

![Diagram](image)

*Figure 6 Typical Process (Bailie, 2015)*

**Strategy**

After the research phase, the strategy is developed. Casey now defines the two key components of a content strategy:

1. The core strategy statement, which covers these four points: content product (what content should we produce?), audience, user needs and business goals; and
2. The messaging framework, which clarifies what the company wants its audiences to know and believe about them.
For Casey, measurements are also an important part of the strategy. Only if objectives are measurable can a company know if and when they have achieved their goals or if adjustments are needed.

The key questions in this phase are as follows (Leonor & Rößler, 2017):

- What is the core strategy? What is the path the company will take to provide meaningful and useful content?
- What are the main and secondary messages? Which architecture do they build upon?
- How will content be governed? Who is responsible for governance? Which values and principles are the online content based upon?
- Which channels and platforms are needed to fulfil the core strategy? Which personas are reached at which touch points?
- Which key performance indicators will determine the success of the strategy?
- What are the technical and design-related aspects that will make content appeal to the personas, e.g. on the website?

At the end of this phase, a small business should have a plan for the creation, distribution and governance of content. The deliverable is a strategy paper that should ideally be signed by all affected persons to show their commitment. This is the basis for all the ensuing tactical steps (Leonor & Rößler, 2017).

Leonor and Rößler (2017) mention an additional phase between strategy and implementation, which they call the “Analysis Phase”. This phase breaks the strategic paper down into operative tasks. The author believes that this distribution into operative tasks is part of the roadmap developed in the following implementation phase, and this is therefore incorporated in the next chapter.

**Implementation and management**

After defining the strategy, the next steps concern implementing structure and processes (Eck & Eichmeier, 2014). For Kissane (Kissane, 2011), implementation
and management are separate phases. The author summarises these two in this chapter because they are closely connected and differ from the previous phases.

As shown in Figure 5, this is the point where consultancy projects normally end. Leonor and Rößler also confirm that if small businesses hire a consultant, they will stop the consulting at this stage due to budget reasons and manage the rest on their own. Thus it is an important objective to create guidelines that support implementation (Leonor & Rößler, 2017).

These guidelines or roadmaps are the result of the previous phases. As Bailie puts it: “A content strategy will assess an organization’s current state, understand the ideal future state, recognize where the gaps are, and develop an implementation roadmap” (Abel & Bailie, 2014, Chapter Content Strategy).

The implementation roadmap covers roles and responsibilities as well as the governance, planning and maintenance processes throughout the content lifecycle. Guidelines and standards are defined (Casey, 2015).

Leonor and Rößler define key questions for what they call the analysis phase, which in this approach fits in the implementation phase:

- What workflows are needed? What does the content lifecycle look like?
- What does the technical system and the content have to look like to be optimised for search engines?
- How are the messages transported? With which voice does the company speak?
- What emotions are evoked through the content?
- Which are the topics to be transported? Which topic fits the personas’ needs at what time and what place?
- How is the community managed? How are crises dealt with?

As the section “Characteristics of small businesses” mentioned, in small businesses the owner or the person in charge of implementation may be overwhelmed by the sheer number of action points. Leonor and Rößler suggest breaking it down into small tactical steps, probably a maximum of three tasks (Leonor & Rößler, 2017).
However, they do not explain this approach in more detail. The author suggests developing the roadmap with a time schedule for each small step. If there is more funding available, a coaching meeting with the consultant should take place after certain steps to reflect the progress. There may also be a sense of commitment to the consultant to help comply with the schedule.
5 Case study: Content strategy for a hairdresser in London

This chapter describes a case study involving development of a content strategy for a small business. This approach differs slightly from the best practices described in the previous chapter. Some relevant findings and assumptions of Leonor and Rößler (2017) were added later, as their thesis only became available to the author in April 2017, after certain major parts of this project had already been carried out.

The project took place from January to May 2017. The small business is the hairdresser “Frankie Cochrane Hair Salon” in Central London. The author played the role of a consulting content strategist. Unlike a normal consulting situation, the author was not paid, which means there were no restrictions in terms of a consulting budget. Implementation will be carried out by the salon itself.

Paul Cochrane has been the owner of the salon for about 20 years. He works there with two other hairstylists. The salon is situated in the borough of Holborn, in London. The owner is very passionate about his profession. As an open-minded person, he is interested to hear other people’s ideas, and he trusts the advice of experts but not without some scrutiny. Together with his staff, he supported this project. The owner felt extremely confident in the idea of achieving his business objectives with the help of a content strategy.

The owner conducts two types of business in the salon: the first is a non-surgical hair replacement system, which is a service for men, and the second is hair styling for both men and women. In this case study, the focus is on the hair styling business. Nevertheless, the hair replacement business has to be kept in mind, as there are interconnections.

The customers are professional women and men who live or work nearby, with an income of about £35,000 to £45,000 a year. The majority of customers are loyal, long-term customers.
There is a local internet marketing agency involved, responsible for search engine optimization (SEO). This agency is also responsible for the social media channels and for updating the website.

5.1 Project definition

The owner wants to improve his hair styling business. He would like to increase profits by gaining new customers. The shop has some free capacity. In the beginning, he thought about achieving this goal by SEO because he had already had good experiences with this for his second business pillar, the hair replacement business. However, the decision-making journey for a new hair stylist differs from that of a hair replacement system. According to the owner’s experience, this has more to do with personal recommendations than online searching. This is why he considered trying a different method: a content strategy.

The time frame for this content strategy project was five months from defining the project to completing the finished strategy paper.

Business goals

The primary goal is to increase profits by acquiring new customers through (online) communication. As a secondary goal, the owner wants to raise the number of online bookings because of the easier administrative handling.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Key performance indicator (KPI)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New customers</td>
<td>150 new customers within 1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More online booking</td>
<td>increase of 15% to 20% within 6 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The focus is on three target groups:
- Employees of the nearby hospital;
- Lawyers practising in the area; and
- Customers in the age range from 25 to 35.

On average, the owner wishes to acquire approximately one new customer from each group per week, adding up to approximately 150 new customers within a year.
The current retention rate is already strong at 60 to 80%. The customers come approximately every five to six weeks to have their hair done. Currently, there are about 13 online bookings per month. The owner would like to increase this by 15% to 20% within 6 months (including the implementation of a new booking system).

**Problems and opportunities**

After a heuristic assessment of the online appearance, in the first project meeting the following problems were presented to the owner along with the opportunities for solving these problems with a content strategy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problems</th>
<th>Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Website does not reflect the atmosphere in the salon (brand).</td>
<td>Potential customers who would feel comfortable at the salon will be attracted by a consistent online presence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some technical and web design issues provide a negative user experience (logo over copy, booking system complicated)</td>
<td>A good user experience strengthens the trust in a business.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The posts on Facebook and Twitter are random and do not tell the story of the salon. They are only links from other websites (styling, fashion, etc.). There is no interaction with the social media user.</td>
<td>Communication with customers can be extended to an online dialogue. This maintains the relationship and makes it easier to share online recommendations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1 Problems and their opportunities for Frankie Cochrane’s salon*
Content brief
The answers to the following six questions were elaborated to define the cornerstone of the project (Jones in Abel & Bailie, 2014).

Why are we trying to achieve it – to meet what business or organisational purpose?
We want to achieve business growth by increasing the number of regular customers.

What are we trying to achieve with content?
Brand and customer communication should be extended to online channels in order to promote a good and trustworthy user experience and strengthen the relationship with (potential) customers.

Who is our audience? Who will be involved in planning, creating, and maintaining content?
The audience is similar to existing customers with a main focus on hospital employees, lawyers and younger customers. Paul (the owner) is the primary person responsible for implementing the strategy. The staff and the agency will also be involved.

When will our audience need or expect content? When will we plan, create and maintain content?
Potential customers need content which will answer their questions during their decision journey and give them an impression about the salon and the hair stylists. Existing and new customers require some service information such as business hours, contact information, address and how to book an appointment. Planning, creating and maintaining content has to fit into short time resources during working hours.

Where does our audience need or expect content and in what formats?
Potential customers look for personal or online recommendations. They also search on Google and expect to see meaningful search results. On the website, potential customers expect copy and photos of the staff and salon, while existing customers expect service information as copy. On social media,
potential and existing customers expect photos, statements as copy or as a graph, and short videos.

**How will we structure our content for our content management system?**
As there are only a few pages on the website, there is no complex structure to take into consideration.

### 5.2 Assessment of the current state

After defining the goals for the business and for the project, the next step is the research and analysis phase. The goal is to understand the business environment and to learn more about the customers, their behaviour and their needs. Based on this information, the criteria were set for the qualitative audit of the website and assessment of the social media channels. Based on the business site, current content and publishing process were identified.

The research methods of this phase are as follows:

- Stakeholder interviews with owner Paul Cochrane and the internet marketing agency;
- User research (one-on-one interviews to define the persona and customer journey);
- Website audit (quantitative, qualitative and some usability criteria);
- Audit of social media channels; and
- Competitor website audit (qualitative).

#### 5.2.1 Persona

To understand the needs and behaviours of Frankie Cochrane’s customers, a persona was constructed on the basis of user research results. The research took place in the form of one-on-one interviews with existing customers carried out during their visit to the salon. These interviews mostly concerned the description of the average customer of Frankie Cochrane’s. As there was not enough information about the process by which new customers decided in favour of a new hairdresser, a number of street interviews with women were also carried out in order to define the
information that potential customers might seek on a hairdresser’s website. For more
detail on this process, see the feasibility study accompanying this thesis (Michl,
2017).

The salon’s customers either work or live nearby. Recommendations are the most
important decision factor; these are generally personal, but, if someone has recently
moved to the area and has no one to ask for a recommendation, then they may
perform an online search.

The persona “Carrie” represents the research results. She is a 30-year-old manager
at a nearby hospital. She represents a mix of all target groups of this project: hospital
employees, lawyers and younger customers (25-to-35-years old).
## Personal Profile
She places a high value on her appearance. Her work is demanding. She is open to and interested in other people.

She follows recommendations (personal or online) to find a new hairdresser, preferably near where she works or lives to save time. Trust and a good relationship are important. A good cut is mandatory. She wants a salon with a friendly atmosphere where she can relax and she likes it when staff are attentive. She rarely comes with an idea of a new haircut and ultimately trusts the advice of her hair stylist.

She makes an appointment when her hair is too long or she need a new colour. She then wants to have an appointment within the next three days. Special offers are not a trigger to make an appointment. For booking, she prefers personal contact and an appointment that fits her working hours.

After the visit, looking good makes her feel better and she likes to see herself in the shop windows. She tries to preserve the look as long as possible.

She uses social media but not excessively, more to keep up with friends than to follow a brand.

### User Goals
- Carrie wants to …
  - look and feel good after hairstyling
  - have quality time at the salon

### Business Objectives
We want Carrie to …
- be satisfied
- feel part of the family for long-term relationship

## “Work-life balance? I wish.”
- Time is tight
- Quality is more important than price
- Prefers a personal relationship

## PERSONAL INFORMATION
- Profession: manager at a local hospital
- Location: Holborn
- Age: 30
- Home life: married, one child
- Hobbies: gym, reading books

## HOME INFORMATION
- Current home: Rents a 2-bedroom flat in the Holborn area

## COMFORT WITH TECHNOLOGY
- User type: has grown up with computers and smartphones
- Internet user type: always online, most of the time on the phone
5.2.2 Website

The salon’s website is eight years old and maintained by the internet agency. This agency is chiefly responsible for the SEO of the hair replacement business and for the social media channels. Three years ago, a proper website was built for the hair replacement business, but the salon’s website has not been reworked and thus many SEO actions remain for hair replacement on this site.

Inventory and quantitative audit

A website inventory was performed for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2016 using the crawling software Screaming Frog (screamingfrog.co.uk). The relevant data from this inventory is shown in Table 2.

There are some telling findings. The “calligraphy cut” page has no analytics data as it has been online only since January 2017. There is a high bounce rate at the home page and the contact page (bounce rate indicates that persons have accessed and left the site on the same page). This is not a problem, however, if these people were simply looking for the telephone number or online booking system, which seems to be the case, as people spend about one minute on this page. Meanwhile, the bounce rate at the hair styling page (menu 4) is high and people stay only for 24 seconds on average on this page. Possible explanations for this issue and some more details about the other pages are found in the qualitative audit.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>menu</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title 1</td>
<td>Frankie Cochrane</td>
<td>Hairdresser &amp; Hair Replacement</td>
<td>Holborn</td>
<td>Frankie Cochrane</td>
<td>Hair</td>
<td>Salon, Hair Cut &amp; Hairdressing</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>Frankie Cochrane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meta Description 1</td>
<td>We are a professional hair salon located in Holborn, London, providing bespoke hairdressing and hair replacement services. Call us today on 020 7405 7797</td>
<td>Frankie Cochrane is the place to go in London for professional hair styling, by a team of passionate hairdressers. Secure your appointment on 020 7405 7797</td>
<td>Book a hair styling or hair replacement with Frankie Cochrane on 020 7405 7797 now! Get a celebrity treatment from our qualified hairdressers &amp; pamper yourself</td>
<td>Give your hair volume, texture and bounce with the latest hairdressing technique - the Calligraphy cut. Visit our London studio and get a free consultation.</td>
<td>We are proud to be the leading men's hair salon in Holborn, London. Call us today on 020 7405 7797 and see what we can do to make your hair look awesome!</td>
<td>Book Frankie Cochrane's hair replacement treatment on 020 7405 7797 &amp; feel great again! Our non-surgical hair solution method guarantees amazing results</td>
<td>Arrange your visit to Frankie Cochrane's salon on 020 7405 7797 now! Save money with our hair salon promotions, like our Early Bird Blow-Dry with breakfast</td>
<td>Call Frankie Cochrane on 020 7405 7797 today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1-1</td>
<td>HAIR SALON IN LONDON</td>
<td>Hair Salon Holborn</td>
<td>Professional Hairdressing Holborn, London</td>
<td>Calligraphy Cut</td>
<td>Want to know what to look for from a male haircut...</td>
<td>HAIR REPLACEMENT SYSTEMS</td>
<td>Relax Let Frankie do it.</td>
<td>Find Our Hair Salon In London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2-1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hair colouring services in London</td>
<td>Benefits of the Calligraphy Cut</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Outlinks</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Outlinks</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Time</td>
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<td>0.617</td>
<td>0.589</td>
<td>0.516</td>
<td>0.519</td>
<td>0.492</td>
<td>0.594</td>
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<tr>
<td>Page Views</td>
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<td>2909</td>
<td>1813</td>
<td>8795</td>
<td>1198</td>
<td>1404</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique Page Views</td>
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<td>1649</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td>1226</td>
<td>5212</td>
<td>949</td>
<td>1191</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Time on Page</td>
<td>00:00:58</td>
<td>00:00:29</td>
<td>00:00:22</td>
<td>00:00:24</td>
<td>00:01:22</td>
<td>00:00:23</td>
<td>00:01:46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrances</td>
<td>2516</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>4684</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>220</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bounce Rate</td>
<td>51,43%</td>
<td>37,50%</td>
<td>52,00%</td>
<td>66,67%</td>
<td>40,86%</td>
<td>64,10%</td>
<td>75,91%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Exit</td>
<td>44,08%</td>
<td>16,06%</td>
<td>14,44%</td>
<td>14,01%</td>
<td>43,37%</td>
<td>18,28%</td>
<td>49,07%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 Inventory of www.frankiecochrane.co.uk (29.1.17) including Google Analytics data from 1.1.2016 to 31.12.2016
In the inventory, we see that the website has eight pages including the home page (see also Table 3). The page with the most visits is the hair replacement page, probably due to its direct link from Google business entry (search results, more information below). However, this is not the page with the most important information about the salon (telephone numbers, business hours, and other basic information).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Unique Page Views</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frankie Cochrane</td>
<td>Non-Surgical Hair Replacement Treatment</td>
<td>/hair-replacement/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frankie Cochrane</td>
<td>Hairdresser &amp; Hair Replacement Holborn</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frankie Cochrane</td>
<td>Hairstyle &amp; Hair Replacement London</td>
<td>/services/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frankie Cochrane</td>
<td>Hair Salon, Hair Cut &amp; Hairdressing London</td>
<td>/hair-salon/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men’s Greatest Haircut</td>
<td>Frankie Cochrane Hair Salon</td>
<td>/hairstyling/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frankie Cochrane Hair Salon and Hair Replacement Systems London</td>
<td>/contact-us/</td>
<td>1191</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frankie Cochrane</td>
<td>Early Bird Blow-Dry &amp; Other Promotions</td>
<td>/promotions/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calligraphy Cuts</td>
<td>Frankie Cochrane Hair Salon</td>
<td>/calligraphy-cuts/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 Pages sorted by unique page views (Google Analytics 1.1.2016 – 31.12.2016)

Google analytics indicates the behaviour flow through the website. Each grey line shows the next click of a user, starting with the home page (red indicates the exits at each page). It shows that users jump around and there is no common path or journey through the website.
According to Google analytics, approximately 50% of site visitors used a mobile device to access the website, which must be taken into consideration when planning how to make the content mobile-friendly.

Qualitative audit
The qualitative audit is based on the inventory. It assesses each page based on the three communication goals: “family, relationship, creativity and inspiration” (see section 5.3). An additional column is used to show how often content relates to the hair replacement system. The following 10 columns show the information that potential customers search for on the website in their decision-making process.
These are business hours, phone number, pictures of haircuts done by staff, prices, styling products, service, skills, staff, testimonials and the salon's address.

The last three columns indicate:

- the content quality (spelling mistakes, structure, readability, etc., graded as good, satisfactory or poor);
- relevance of the page to the website user (according to Google Analytics data and interviews, 1 means important and 3 means not important); and
- notes about each content item on the page.

The entire qualitative audit can be found in Appendix 3 with detailed information regarding each page. Table 4 shows the audit for the home page as an example. Screenshots of the website can be found in Appendix 2.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Menu</th>
<th>text/link</th>
<th>content element</th>
<th>family</th>
<th>leadership</th>
<th>creative &amp; inspirational</th>
<th>hair replacement</th>
<th>service</th>
<th>skills</th>
<th>staff</th>
<th>testimonial</th>
<th>address</th>
<th>quality</th>
<th>priority</th>
<th>notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HOME</td>
<td><a href="http://www.frankiecochrane.com/">http://www.frankiecochrane.com/</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frankie Cochrane</td>
<td>Hairdresser &amp; Hair Replacement Hol</td>
<td>link</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>combination hairdresser and hair replacement could deter women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.frankiecochrane.com/wp-content/themes/logo">http://www.frankiecochrane.com/wp-content/themes/logo</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HAIR SALON IN LONDON 1</td>
<td>copy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>copy is only about hair replacement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.frankiecochrane.com/hair-replacement/">http://www.frankiecochrane.com/hair-replacement/</a></td>
<td>link</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>phone on homepage with active link +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tel 02074057797</td>
<td>phone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>phone booking system has a bad user experience, leads to another website</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="https://connect.saloniq.co.uk/SalonIQ/OnlineBookings">https://connect.saloniq.co.uk/SalonIQ/OnlineBookings</a></td>
<td>button online booking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>are the mailings used? What happens with the e-mail addresses?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="https://www.facebook.com/frankiecochranehair">https://www.facebook.com/frankiecochranehair</a></td>
<td>form field e-mail</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="https://twitter.com/FCHairdressing">https://twitter.com/FCHairdressing</a></td>
<td>twitter button</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>does not fit to the communication goals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>background picture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>should be on homepage?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>poor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 Example: Qualitative audit of the home page

We are a professional hair salon located in Holborn, London, providing bespoke hairdressing and hair replacement services. Call us.

Frankie Cochrane, hair salon London, hairdresser London, hair colouring London, hair replacement London, hair replacement systems London, hair cut London, hair salon in...
In general, six of the eight pages are rated as “poor”, and two pages as “satisfactory” (hair replacement and promotions) but with an importance of 3 (not important). None is rated as “good” (the highest rating).

The website uses stock photos and does not reflect the atmosphere in the salon. There are some technical issues, including the fact that on smaller screens (e.g. smart phones), the logo overlays the copy and the navigation panel does not fit. The online booking system is quite complicated. In general, it can be a bad user experience, which reflects negatively on the image of the salon.

Copy and metadata focus largely on the hair replacement system. This could leave the impression that it is only a men’s salon or more specialised in men’s hair styling. This is supported by the fact that the page “hairstyling” shows only men’s haircuts.

Some information needed for customer’s decision journey is missing or hard to find, such as: prices, pictures of the salon and its staff, information about staff and their skills, and others. The copy is inconsistent in voice and tone and often not easy to read due to missing section structure, including between headings or bullet point listings.

Some content is outdated (e.g. links to articles that no longer exist; Christmas business hours still on the page in March, etc.). The styling videos on the “service” page lead to the supplier’s page, which has a salon finder, among other things. The salon is named in five different ways (Frankie Cochrane, London studio, salon Bloomsbury, Frankie’s, salon Holborn).

Some headlines are written in capital letters and some are not. The title does not always correspond to the content (services). There is only one call to action (“For more information, click… or call…”). Calls to action should guide users through the website and encourage online booking or other desired actions.

One of the subpages describes the hair replacement system in great detail. It includes prices, which means it must be carefully maintained and updated when prices change. The website for the hair replacement system (hairreplacement-
London.co.uk is only linked to once in an in-text-link. On the other hand, it is well written and structured. The page "calligraphy cut" also has well-structured and appealing copy.

There are issues with the mobile version, as not all content is represented properly (a picture of a staff member did not appear and half of the "calligraphy cut" page was missing).

**Competitor's audit**
A short competitor audit was conducted in order to see what the main competitors' websites looked like and what features and content they were using. The salons were chosen by the owner. Some were local competitors that had websites he liked. Screenshots and notes can be found in the deliverables, and the analysis table is presented in Appendix 4 Chart competitor website audit.

Some competitors presented their online booking buttons clearly on their home pages. Some indicated more of the information a potential customer might need to take a decision. They were all very different in their online appearance.

**Google Search results**
The salon has an entry in Google My Business, but the website link leads to the hair replacement subpage of Frankie Cochrane's salon. The search results show the title: "Frankie Cochrane | Hairdresser & Hair Replacement Holborn". The link to the hair replacement page and the entry may be confusing, even irritating, for potential female customers.
Figure 9 Screenshot Google search results for Frankie Cochrane, in March 2017
5.2.3 Social media

An inventory of all social media accounts was performed, which brought up some interesting insights. Many were present, some were unused and forgotten, and some were not used correctly (e.g. a Facebook personal profile for the salon).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frankie Cochrane Hair &amp; Beauty</th>
<th>Cochrane &amp; Co Hair replacement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>Official page</td>
<td>Official page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook generated page</td>
<td>There is one generated by Facebook that has to be merged with the official one</td>
<td>There is one generated by Facebook that has to be merged with the official one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook Profile</td>
<td>Personal Profile named “Frankie Cochrane” maintained by Paul Cochrane must be deleted when Facebook page shows some posts according to content strategy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>@FCHairdressing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instagram</td>
<td>@fchairdressing</td>
<td>@cochrane.co can be deactivated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Google +</td>
<td>Not in use since 2015, but post came up April 2017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YouTube</td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCi-QKty-i6fQGDY1sJ3Y7g">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCi-QKty-i6fQGDY1sJ3Y7g</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yelp</td>
<td><a href="https://www.yelp.com/biz/frankie-cochrane-london-2">https://www.yelp.com/biz/frankie-cochrane-london-2</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medium</td>
<td><a href="https://medium.com/@frankiecochrane">https://medium.com/@frankiecochrane</a> can be deactivated, started March 2017</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 5 Social media profile inventory of Frankie Cochrane, April 2017*
Facebook
Page: https://www.facebook.com/frankiecochranehair

The Facebook page has no personal profile picture, which creates an impersonal feeling on the Facebook page. Once a year, a customer writes a (good) reference, but no one from the salon’s side reacts to these posts.

Figure 10 Facebook page Frankie Cochrane, screenshot, April 20, 2017

Figure 11 Customers’ reviews on Facebook page, screenshot, 20 April 2017
The social media channels are hosted by an internet marketing agency. The posts are not personalised and only contain links to sites such as: elleuk.com, Cosmopolitan.com, and Popsugar.com, often without any comment. There is no content about the salon itself or references to the staff, and posts are written in the third person (“Frankie Cochrane's expert hairstylists”) without names of the staff or prompts such as “contact us”. No online booking button is integrated.

![Sample post published by the agency, screenshot, 20 April 2017](image)

There are sometimes user reactions under the posts but most often there is no interaction and low reach (550 fans as of 20 April 2017). The fan base grows slowly, by about 20 fans per year (see Figure 14).
At the beginning of the page, where all videos are shown, is a video about football (which is unexpected and potentially confusing).

The owner at one time set up a personal profile, “Frankie Cochrane”, on which he continues to post. The content is a mix of personal stories at the salon (which are good examples of content to post in the future), but also some content that is more about the owner’s interests (e.g. football).
Instagram

There are two accounts. One is @fchairdressing with only one post from 2013. The other is @cochrane.co with 18 posts (hair replacement), which was started in 2015. There is also a place called “Frankie Cochrane Hair & Beauty” that one post refers to. The hashtags used are #frankiecochranehairdressers (4 times, including 2 posts from the cochrane.co account) and #frankiecochrane (6 times, 5 by cochrane.co).

![Image of Instagram pictures using hashtag #frankiecochranehair](image1)

**Figure 17** Instagram pictures using hashtag #frankiecochranehair

![Image of Instagram pictures using hashtag #frankiecochrane](image2)

**Figure 18** Instagram pictures using hashtag #frankiecochrane
Twitter
https://twitter.com/FCHairdressing

Since 2010, the salon has maintained a Twitter account. This is also hosted by the agency and the posts are generated by a social media automatisation tool. Posts are about fashion and hair styling. There are 111 followers (April 2017) but many of them are companies or organisations and not individuals. There are between 5 and 17 tweets a day. There are no interactions and no personal posts. A list has been set up but has no members.

YouTube
There is a YouTube channel “Cochrane & Co Hair Replacement London”, but it is for Frankie Cochrane & Co, the hair replacement system.
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCl-QKty-i6flQGDY1sJ3Y7g
Google+
Google+ was started for SEO reasons and has not been in use since 2015.

Recommendations
On Facebook, the star rating is 4.8 out of 5 and on Google it is 4.7 out of 5. This is already strong. On yelp.co.uk, there are 6 reviews with a 3.5-star average rating.

Figure 20 Rating on Google, screenshot April 20, 2017

Figure 21 Rating on yelp.co.uk, screenshot, April 20 2017

5.2.4 Governance and maintenance
The owner, Paul Cochrane, is responsible for all aspects of communication. He has engaged an internet marketing agency that is responsible for the salon's presence on Twitter and Facebook (both the salon and hair replacement pages), as well as on the YouTube channel, which serves the hair replacement business. They also check the SEO performance on the website and make changes on Paul's behalf.
The agency spends about eight hours per week on its duties and manages about two posts per week, one on the salon's page, one on the hair replacement business’s page. They generate statistics for the website and SEO every month for both websites. They are paid approximately £200 per month.

The owner is willing to invest 2 to 3 hours per week to implement and maintain the content strategy. This is important to know in order to fit the activities to his time resources. Hair stylist Lucy Andrews, who has a creative education, intends to support him.

All team members generally do not work at a computer. There is one in the salon for the booking system and for email. Digital technology and social media are only a small part of their daily life.

5.3 Ideal future state

The goal of this section is to define success for this project from different perspectives. Obviously, achieving the business goals is a success. However, choosing the right technology and defining the right processes are also an important part of a long-term, successful content strategy implementation. Measuring all the possible gains is too time-consuming, and thus this project defines success indicators only for the business goals.

Business perspective

The business goal is to gain 150 new customers within a year. The target groups are employees of the nearby hospital, younger customers (aged 25 to 35) and lawyers. To determine whether the content strategy has an impact, new customers must be asked how they came to the salon.

The secondary business goal is to increase the number of online bookings by 15% to 20% within six months. This will be influenced by the usability of the booking system and mechanisms to persuade customers to use it through calls to action. Along with the number of online bookings, the reduced amount of time spent on telephone calls for fixing appointments can be tracked.
Referral links from social media to the website can be tracked (e.g. campaigns with special landing pages). An increase in website visits on certain pages could indicate that new customers have used it to form their opinion about the salon.

**Brand perspective**

At the moment, there is a difference in appearance between the salon and the online presence. When the online presence attracts the right potential customers, this is a success.

Consistent communication would improve trust and confidence in the salon and help maintain a good relationship with existing customers. These are also factors that create and support the Frankie Cochrane brand.

“The USP of the salon is to be always honest and authentic whilst discovering what our customer needs are. Then, together (we can) agree on a course of action that will best suit our customers’ needs,” said the owner.

**Content management perspective**

A clear idea of what will be communicated supports the content production process, making it faster and rendering communication more successful. When the whole staff has the same idea about their customers and knows the communication goals, they are empowered to take part in the production process, which makes it both more diverse and more authentic. A defined content production and editorial process supports cooperation with the agency through clear communication and saves both time and money.

**Customer perspective**

When (potential) customers can quickly and easily find the information they need, this will also help them save time. When existing customers recommend the salon to a friend and can do so by sharing social media posts or sharing the right website link, this will also be a success for both the company and the customer.
Technology perspective
A clear strategy about what to communicate on which channels indicates what type of technological support is appropriate. Tools that support planning and publishing can save time but they must be appropriate for inexperienced digital users and thus in this case non-technical.

Knowing what content is needed and how it must be presented helps to accelerate the web design process and supports the selection of the right content management system and templates. Carrie (the persona) has little extra time. She wants a fast, online booking procedure.

Change management perspective
The content strategy is successful when the whole staff supports its implementation, the whole team is integrated in the development process and the results are communicated to them.

5.4 Strategy
Carrie needs to be convinced by recommendations. A content strategy must include a way to make it easier to find recommendations for potential customers that also helps existing customers give recommendations. This could be supported by social media.

Core strategy statement
The core strategy statement answers fundamental questions for providing content for the right people, at the right time and place and for the right reasons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>What content should we produce, procure, curate, and share?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>Who, specifically, is that content for?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User needs</td>
<td>Why do those audiences need or expect this content from us?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business goals</td>
<td>What outcomes does providing this content help us achieve?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content</td>
<td>Relationship, insights, personal, family, information to support decision making process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience</td>
<td>Existing customers and potential customers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User needs</td>
<td>Trusting staff skills, feeling welcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business goals</td>
<td>To reach new customers and strengthen the relationship with current ones</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To build a trusting relationship with our (potential) customers, we will provide personal, insightful and relationship-focussed content to our (potential) customers, to give them the feeling of trust and being welcome in our salon.

**Message architecture**

The message architecture is the prioritisation of communication goals and influences with regard to how the salon will be perceived and how content will be structured. The owner and his team members have developed the message architecture with its communication goals for the salon. They were asked to sort a deck of about 100 cards, 80 with the adjectives listed in Margot Bloomstein’s book (Bloomstein, 2012, Chapter How does message architecture drive the content and design?) and 20 with adjectives that customers used to describe the salon during their interviews.

The result was three groups of adjectives with their “headlines” in order of priority (see Figure 22 and also Appendix 1 Result cardsorting - message architecture):

1. Family
2. Relationship with the customers
3. Creative and inspirational
These three groups are prioritised and present the focus for written and visual communication. This message architecture and these communication goals are important to differentiate the salon from competitors. They represent the brand in one way or another and must always be kept in mind when producing a piece of content.

5.5 Implementation and management

Based on the research and analysis phase presented in the previous section, the strategy was developed with its core strategy statement and message architecture. The next step was creating a strategy paper as a roadmap for implementation in order to determine the processes and break the strategy down into tasks.

The following sections will answer the question: “How can we get the right content to the right person, at the right time, and in the right place?” (Halvorson & Rach, 2012, Chapter Content).

5.5.1 Content

Good content relates to user needs and to the brand with prioritisation of communication goals (message architecture) and supports the business goals. This also reflects the core strategy statement.
**Business perspective**

In the communication goals, the salon shows how it differs from competitors and what makes it special. The first communication goal is “family”, which is strongly related to the second goal, “relationship”. The core story of the salon is this feeling of sitting in the living room with friends or family. People sharing stories, laughing and conversing. They feel comfortable with the music and interact with other long-term customers. Additionally, there are skilled hair stylists, which is communicated in the third communication goal: “creative and inspirational”.

Every piece of content must include this family aspect, because this is the first communication goal. Content according to the goal “creative and inspirational” can be added where it fits.

These communication goals, this story about the salon, help to choose photo motifs and the voice in which any copy should be written. All these activities aim at communicating the brand in a consistent manner over all touchpoints where (potential) customers might make contact with the salon.

**Customer perspective**

Whether or not the content is attractive and helpful depends on the customer’s view. Potential customers need certain information for their decision making process, as discovered in the user research (Michl, 2017, p. 21): prices, skills, pictures, products, business hours, service, staff profiles, testimonials and a phone number. All this information must be on the website.

On additional communication channels, this content could be attractive for potential customers: pictures of how people get their hair cut or more personal information about the hair stylists to get an idea of their personalities and skills.

As the persona “Carrie” shows, trust in the hair stylist is important. Thus, existing but not yet long-term customers can be reassured about the salon with information about the staff and what happens in the salon. Meanwhile, long-term customers who are
already used to chatting with the staff may find it nice to discuss these topics online, as well.

**User-generated content**

Content produced by the customers can also be part of the content strategy. As Ann Handley puts it, “Make your customer the hero of your story” (Handley, 2014). The story of the family atmosphere in the salon can be told by the salon itself but also by its customers.

By monitoring social media feeds (name and related hashtags), content about the salon can be found. Customers can be encouraged to post their new look on social media and use a specific hashtag. The salon can then interact with that post and share it on its own channel. Republishing permission must be requested and the post should be posted with attribution. This makes the customer the star for a day while also sharing relevant content (Handley, 2014).

**5.5.2 Website**

Existing customers currently do not use the website, so the content is mainly for the acquisition of new customers. However, existing customers should be encouraged to use the website for online bookings. This booking process should be as convenient as possible.

The website will be the most important channel in online communication. It is the virtual shop window to the world. When potential customers are passing by, they should get the feeling of being welcome and they should get the information they need to make their decision.

The following ideas for redesign and reorganisation of content have been presented to the owner and staff and are to be discussed in the next stage with the web designer.
Design
“Design follows content” means that content parts and their characteristics are defined in advance. The design in which they will be presented is to be determined based on this definition (Löffler, 2015). The “mobile first” approach helps focus on the most important content, i.e. the content that would be shown first on the mobile phone. It is easier to enlarge a small design to larger screens (desktop) than the other way around. The current rate of access by mobile devices to the website is about 50%. A mobile-optimised website would also improve the ranking in Google search results.


Copy style
The voice and tone must reflect the communication goals of the message architecture, as well. Some quotes from the staff could make it more personal. Information should be easy to read. Copy should enable quick and full understanding. The language should reflect the users. Headlines, subheadings and story structure must enable readers to scan. Sentences and paragraphs should be kept short and unnecessary words left out (Ginny Reddish in Moore, 2015).

Information architecture
Information architecture is the basis for the navigation. There are some research methods such as card sorting (Rosenfeld, Morville, & Arango, 2015) to allow users to group and name navigation points. Since this is a small website with fewer than 10 pages, the author took a different approach appropriate for the scale of this content strategy project.

In Figure 23, the first column shows a possible navigation through the pages ranked by unique clicks in 2016 (see also Table 3). The page “replacement” is in brackets.
because this page has more clicks than the home page due to the Google search result link. The page “calligraphy cut” was not online in 2016.

The second column shows a navigation based on the information that potential customers were looking for on the website. They are ranked in order of mentions in 10 interviews (Michl, 2017, p. 21):

- Prices (6/10)
- Skills (3/10)
- Pictures (3/10)
- Products (2/10)
- Opening hours (2/10)
- Service, staff, testimonial, phone (1/10)

Skill and staff were combined in order to show which person has which skills.

The author suggests that the optimal navigation would be a combination of both columns. As such, the first navigation point (after the home page) should be "Stylists & Services" (which includes the prices). "Pictures and Testimonials" should show visual content. “Meet us” instead of “finding us” would be a more inviting label (communication goal: family/relationship), followed by products and hair replacement, which are less important on the salon site (because there is a separate
hair replacement site). Booking is an additional navigation point to find wherever you are on the site (as increasing online booking is one of the business goals).

**Content elements**

For the home page, the author suggests using the grid design. A mock-up for the page is presented below. The home page has some fixed content parts such as the booking button, address, phone number and ratings. Some elements are temporary, such as promotions and special business hours (holidays, for example). The navigation items on the home page are integrated in the grid (important for mobile phones to avoid navigation menu).

![Figure 24 Mock-up for home page](image)

“Skills” are a type of information that potential customers are searching for. To adhere to the communication goals of “family” and “relationship”, we emphasise each staff member and show their skills. After each member, we include a booking button, as well as a call to action at the end of the page. This would address one of the key business goals, namely, to increase online bookings.

To explain why the salon is named after Frankie Cochrane, we can introduce Frankie Cochrane here on this page, as well. (The salon is named after the father of the owner).
Showing more about how hair styling works at Frankie Cochrane’s requires photographs. The idea is to integrate the Instagram channel in this page in order to reduce effort in governance and maintenance (automatisation from Instagram to the page). The content consists of photos of the customers (before and after), special moments in the salon, special products and quotes from testimonials or quotes that might resonate with customers, presented as a grid. Additionally, as on all the other pages, the booking button is integrated as a call to action.
The content on the “meet us” page will be reduced to some key facts presented in a well-structured way, with booking buttons (in between and at the end) as a call to action:
• address
• phone
• email
• opening hours
• Google maps
• directions
• photos of the salon

The pages “Products” and “Hair replacement” are simply information pages. They should have brief copy and may include pictures to add visual appeal and make the page easier to scan (important for the time-challenged persona, Carrie).

Social integration
To make the content “more social”, the pages should include share buttons for Facebook, and perhaps some content should even be sharable, such as the profile of each staff member. It is important to devote attention to a good preview picture, which will be shown in the Facebook posting.

Search Engine Optimisation (SEO)
The salon works with an agency that specialises in internet marketing and SEO. It should be ensured that the entries in Google and the search results fit the new strategy (e.g. meta-description, titles, and so on). Also, it should be verified that links from other sites to the website (as from the Google+ profile to the hair replacement subpage) are replaced properly with the new URLs. The efforts for the hair replacement business have, essentially, cannibalised the SEO for the salon. These two businesses need to have separate SEO strategies.

Online booking system
One of the strategy’s goals is to increase online bookings. The current online booking system is quite complicated to use. User-friendly systems must be found and, ideally, tested by the customers to choose the most appropriate option. Tests
can easily be run using the “think aloud protocol” explained e.g. by Steve Krug, where the participants in usability testing sessions speak out loud as they interact with a website or app's design, content and user interface (Krug, 2009).

5.5.3 Social media

Due to limited time resources available for the owner and his staff, the decision was taken to focus on only two social media channels that seem most appropriate to achieve the business goals: Facebook and Instagram. Figure 27 shows Facebook as the most used social platform in the UK. Twitter and Instagram are quite similar, and we focus on Instagram because it is a visual platform that supports our communication goals with additional capabilities.

![Figure 27 Ranking of most important social networks and messengers by percentage of UK user population 2016, Statista](image-url)
In the user research (Michl, 2017), very few people mentioned the use of social media. If they mentioned it, the sense was that “I follow my friends but I do not post myself”, or “I follow no brands”. Some said: “I follow my friends on Facebook”. As the communication goals include “family” and “relationship”, the idea is to extend the “friendship” between customers and the salon’s staff to Facebook.

Facebook and Instagram will help generate online recommendations through sharing. For both, it must be taken into consideration that additional time is needed for monitoring user posts in order to react to them. In particular, when a user writes a recommendation, asks a question or posts their new look on Instagram.

The recommended hashtag is #frankiecochrane (see also Figure 18) because this is (currently) unique on Instagram (and also on Twitter, should there be a need at a later time).

**Facebook**

Goal: Strengthen the relationship with existing customers and encourage them to share posts for recommendations

Audience: Facebook can reach the target group of younger customers (25-35), as well as existing older clients
Frequency: In the beginning, two scheduled posts per week

Communication goals: Family and relationship, dialogue, communication, exchange

Content: The content feels like the chats in the salon. It shows the relationship with customers, between staff and within the street or borough. Pictures have a wider reach and better reaction, but each picture should be accompanied by text to provide context. Links can be shared but always with a statement of why it is important for the audience or some expert know-how as an introduction to the link.
Figure 29 Sample post of satisfied customer (from Frankie Cochrane profile)

Figure 30 Personal insights from the salon (communication goal: family)
Interaction: When someone writes a comment, the salon should at least “like” it within a day, or, better still, provide a written response. Customers should be asked for their consent to be tagged in photos or text. The page can also be tagged from
the business in the borough. Sharing posts from other people or pages and commenting (as Frankie Cochrane) on other posts will help to reach a new audience.

The social media audit shows that there are many existing social media accounts. The page generated by Facebook must be merged with the official Frankie Cochrane page. Although a personal profile has a better reach, the personal profile “Frankie Cochrane” should be deleted so that the Facebook page operates according to the strategy. It is against Facebook guidelines to use a personal profile for business. Friends of Frankie Cochrane should be invited to follow the business Facebook page. The performance of existing posts can be analysed with regard to engagement rate (likes, comments, shares) to figure out a pattern for future content.

**Instagram**

Instagram has a dual function. It will be integrated into the website as a gallery. Interested potential customers can see how the staff at Frankie Cochrane’s work, what skills they have, and get an impression of daily life in the salon.

Goal: Reach and inspire new customers/demonstrate creativity

Audience: The younger target group (25 to 35) (see Figure 33)

![Instagram users in UK, March 2017](https://www.instagram.com/p/BRIy3e5DS4O/?taken-by=napoleoncatcom)

*Figure 33 Instagram users in UK, March 2017, screenshot, https://www.instagram.com/p/BRIy3e5DS4O/?taken-by=napoleoncatcom*
Frequency: In the beginning, one scheduled post per week by a staff member with a client and her new hairstyle. To liven it up, a post once a month with a quote (e.g. a testimonial or something to engage the customers) shown graphically.

Communication goals: Family and relationship, skills, creative, inspirational

Content: Instagram is a visual platform. According to the communication goals “family” and “relationship”, staff should be shown during the hairstyling and at the end with happy customers. The third level of communication goals “creative and inspirational” can be shown, along with the skills desired by potential customers. Some pictures can be used for both Facebook and Instagram (see also Figure 30, Figure 31 and Figure 32). Context can be given by writing a statement and/or using hashtags.

Interaction: Instagram generally uses many hashtags. Suitable hashtags for the salon, the communication goals and (potential) customers should be devised and used to make the salon’s pictures findable. The customers should be asked to use the hashtag #frankiecochrane. If customers use the hashtag or write comments, the salon should respond.

The current account is a private profile. It must be changed to a business account (https://www.facebook.com/business/help/502981923235522). The advantage of a business account is to have a contact button and access to all essential statistics about reach and interaction. A profile picture that shows a person should be uploaded.

**Recommendation platforms**

Google and Facebook already show a strong recommendation ratio. To improve these and to have current written recommendations, customers should be asked during their visit to the salon whether they would like to write a recommendation on platforms where users have already started to do so (Google, Facebook, Yelp, and others). These recommendations can also be embedded on the website or quoted on Facebook or Instagram, but the person must agree that the quote can be used.
Any recommendation on Facebook, Google or Yelp should be answered or responded to, which requires regular monitoring.

**Twitter**
The Twitter account should be turned into a private account so it can be reactivated when needed.

### 5.5.4 Governance and maintenance

After defining the strategy, processes must be implemented and people must be given responsibility. This section describes the useful tools and structures for this project.

Content has a lifecycle with the following stages: strategy, plan, create, maintain and audit (see chapter Content, Figure 2).

An audit has already been conducted as a basis for the strategy, but this should be done regularly to define which content is still accurate and which must be revised or deleted. The strategy stage has already been defined: the channels, what kind of content for each channel and for whom it will be created in order to meet the communication goals.

Planning and creation are addressed in the sections “Editorial calendar” and “Editorial process”. The tasks for the “maintain” stage are presented in the section entitled “Maintaining”.

**Governance**
To keep the process alive, everybody must know which tasks they are responsible for:

- **Paul Cochrane**: Head of content strategy. His responsibilities are to make sure that the planned process and tasks are completed in a timely manner.
- **Lucy Andrews**: Creative tasks, photographer, content producer, bringing in ideas for content planning
- **Grant Harper**: Content producer, bringing in ideas for content planning
Guidelines
Guidelines should be useful and usable. This is particularly true for a small business; short guidelines should be enough to refer to during the content production process. The best way to do this would be to write down the decisions made during the website updating process and the findings based on the use of social media.

Guidelines help maintain consistency: How will the salon be referred to (there are now different names on the website)? What style will be used on the website (fonts, colours, etc.)? Which hashtags will be used? Once decisions are taken regarding voice and style, these can easily be communicated to new staff members and agencies.

Editorial calendar
The goal of the calendar is to support integrated communication over all channels. It should be consistent in topics and allow for regular publishing. This calendar is adapted to the salon's needs. It shows the different goals and focus areas for each channel. There will be monthly changes to main topics (such as Christmas, local festivals, and so on) to which the posts refer in the social media channels, as well as sometimes on the website.

Planning the posts in advance helps to aggregate similar activities, which makes content production more efficient.
Message architecture  |  1. Family, 2. Relationship with customers, 3. Creative and inspirational
---|---
**Goals** | **Relationship:** family and relationship, dialog, communication | **New customers:** family and relationship, skills, creative, inspiration | **New customers:** online booking, opening hours, specials
| Date | Day | Focus | Facebook | Instagram | Website |
| 1.5.2017 | Monday | Bank holiday | | | |
| 2.5.2017 | Tuesday | spring | Finally: drinking coffee outside in the sun! (pic Paul at Tutti’s with coffee, tag Tutti’s) (Family relationship) | | |
| 3.5.2017 | Wednesday | spring | | | |
| 4.5.2017 | Thursday | spring | | hair styling with Paul | |
| 5.5.2017 | Friday | spring | | | |
| 6.5.2017 | Saturday | spring | local subject | | |
| 7.5.2017 | Sunday | spring | | | |
| 8.5.2017 | Monday | spring | | | |

Table 6 Draft of the editorial calendar for Frankie Cochrane

The initial presentation of the calendar to the owner led to the suggestion to have a calendar on paper rather than digital form, as this fits better with their work routines and Excel is not a software in daily use at the salon.

**Editorial process**

For Frankie Cochrane, the editorial process may follow these steps:

1. Collect ideas that align with the core strategy statement
2. Prioritise ideas
3. Discuss the ideas as a team, including effort estimation (editorial meeting)
4. Select and add content ideas to the editorial calendar
5. Determine who should be responsible for on-time completion (mark this on the editorial calendar)
6. Approve completed content
7. Publish on the planned date on the planned channel

In the beginning, editorial meetings should be held once a month.

To create new content, all spontaneous ideas should be captured. The staff meant to feel comfortable to have sticky notes around to write down ideas. At the regular editorial meetings, the team can evaluate ideas and schedule them as posts on the
editorial calendar. Ideas must align with the core strategy statement, and then they can be validated by matching them to one of the four squares in Figure 34.

![Figure 34 Value of content ideas, screenshot (Casey, 2015, Chapter Content Product Planning)](image)

Business impact means support of the business goals, in this case, new customers and online bookings. User needs are articulated in Carrie's profile: trust and relationship, a relaxing atmosphere, attentive staff and creative advice from the stylists.

Needs and content ideas can be ascertained during the chats in the salon between the stylist and customer and then be collected for the editorial planning (especially for the main target groups). After determining the value of an idea, it can also be checked for the effort required to produce the content.
Effort means time, money and other resources required to produce a piece of content. The more effort, the lower the priority. After evaluating the ideas, the salon staff can then plan them in the editorial calendar. The person responsible is determined and must produce the content on time. The owner will then approve and publish the content.

**Posting and comments**

Posts on social media, especially Facebook, should be spread regularly over a period of time rather than several posts on one day and then none for a week.

The goal of the social media post is to stimulate interaction (likes, comments and shares) for two reasons: this leads to a broader reach to attract a new audience and the engagement strengthens existing relationships.

Social media always runs the risk of producing critical comments. Reactions to these posts should be based on facts and remain free of emotion. A good reaction might even be to thank the user for taking the time to write a comment. If the critics are justified, the salon should apologise and list the next steps to compensate or explain how the mistake will be avoided in the future. If the criticism was not justified, the situation must be explained and clarified. In either case, this must be very straightforward, based on facts and transparent so that everybody can read the
answers. It might be useful to invite the respondent to a personal or email conversation (to remove the discussion out from public view).

A negative post should never be deleted unless it is illegal or offensive, and even then, an explanation should be posted on the page that the post has been deleted and, perhaps, that a personal message has been sent to the person to explain in more detail why it was deleted. A person who is upset that his or her post has been deleted unjustly can often express this somewhere else.

**Monitoring**
Social media monitoring helps to find posts where “Frankie Cochrane” is mentioned in order to respond, either with a comment or a 'share'. Monitoring can also help recognise critical mentions on the web. There are free tools such as “Social Searcher” or “Google Alert” that send email alerts when something is mentioned on social media. The search keywords should include the name of the salon, including all variations, hashtags possibly used for the salon, and also certain special products (such as the calligraphy cut).

**Publishing on social media**
Producing different posts at the same time for later publishing makes the production process more effective. Facebook allows the user to schedule posts, but unfortunately this is still not possible on Instagram.

Instagram has a feature allowing pictures to be simultaneously shared on Facebook from the Instagram app (when this meets the communication goals of both channels and is planned in the editorial calendar). In this case, the hashtags for Instagram should be added in a comment, because it is not common to use as many hashtags in Facebook as on Instagram.

There are tools that can support scheduling on different platforms, including Instagram. In the implementation process, a decision must be taken as to whether the salon’s team wants to work with such a publishing tool. The answer depends on what works best to organise the production and publishing process.
Maintaining

After implementing a content strategy, everything is up to the new standards. To keep this quality at the same level, some maintenance is necessary.

Yearly tasks:
• Check website page by page to determine whether everything is still accurate
• Reassess the strategy to determine whether it still suits the user needs, business goals, brand communication and business environment
• Check whether the company’s information on Facebook, Instagram, Google Business, Yelp, etc. is still accurate (create an inventory of these platforms)
• Perform user tests on the website and booking system to see whether improvement is needed
• Check guidelines to ensure that they are still appropriate and discuss with the team to ensure that everybody remembers the guidelines

Monthly:
• Facebook and Instagram insights: Which posts had the best performance (reach, interaction, etc.). Are there any patterns to follow for future posts?
• Website statistics: Are there conspicuous performance indicators?

Weekly or more often:
• Check reviews on Google, Yelp and Facebook and respond to them

Daily (including weekends):
• Check comments on Facebook and Instagram and comment/react as Frankie Cochrane

Changes during the year:
If there are changes during the year, such as new permanent business hours, new services or staff members, a search must be performed to determine where this information appears and it must be updated (e.g. business hours in Google Business, Yelp, Facebook). It is helpful to have an inventory of which information is published on which platforms.
6 Conclusions

This chapter presents the experiences, assumptions and ideas of the author related to a content strategy for small businesses and to this case study. These ideas are often hypothetical and may provide subjects for future studies.

Working on this project has shown that the strategy process is not linear. After obtaining the research results, adjustments were made in content briefing and goals. Through the interaction with the client during the strategy process, the consultant learned more about the company, which also affected the strategy.

6.1 Project definition

Developing a content strategy for a small business requires awareness of available resources: budget, time and knowledge. This is true not only for the development process, but also for the implementation and maintenance processes.

Budget and time are cornerstones for determining project duration and scope. One must consider how a lack of knowledge on certain topics (content writing, use of social media channels, web content management systems, etc.) can be reduced or eliminated. One must determine the minimum knowledge required to make the strategy work and where affordable outside knowledge is needed.

To define business goals, the author believes that a conversation with a consultant helps the customer identify goals and define KPIs. Goals must be expressed as clearly as possible and must be measurable. They also have to be ranked by importance in order to abandon less important goals if resources are not sufficient. Data on existing knowledge, time or budget can be collected in advance through a questionnaire instead of stakeholder interviews, which should reduce consulting time.

A clear definition by the client of responsibilities and timeframes supports project management. It must be made clear to the business what their part in the content strategy development is and at what point they must provide resources or information.
During the project, another important business problem arose and the business’s focus shifted from the content strategy project to this problem, meaning that some of the client’s tasks were forgotten. As a result, to get back on schedule there was interaction (by email) between the owner and the consultant to remind the former of the next steps.

6.2 Assessment of the current state

The research and analysis were time consuming in this project, especially the user research interviews. However, the whole strategy must be based on reliable data and research cannot be omitted.

Conducting and analysing the interviews took about 40 hours (excluding the time to develop the persona). Aware of this problem, the author looked for alternatives to reduce the time spent by an external researcher. Halvorson and Rach note that the persona can be reduced to a bullet point list of basic user attributes (Halvorson & Rach, 2012). Nevertheless, these attributes have to be based on research.

A solution may be to build a proto-persona. “Proto-personas are a technique to provoke empathetic, customer-oriented thinking without necessarily requiring you to do exhaustive customer research or have loads of statistical data to underpin your thinking.” (Buley, 2013, p. 132) According to Buley, these can be developed in 3 to 6 hours (1 or 2 hours of workshop and preparation time).

In addition, the method of empathy mapping is similar to developing a proto-persona, as both are based on the experience of staff with customers (Cao, n.d.). Laura Paplauskaite (head of User Experience and Partner in the digital agency Bit Zesty) told the author at an empathy mapping workshop that the match between empathy mapping and the results of user research is 80% to 90%. However, the risk is that the unknown part may hold the most interesting and useful insights.

The author suggests additional interviews or conversations with the customers, conducted by staff or interviewers, to verify the proto-persona and minimise the risk
of leaving out any important information. Staff must be trained or sensitised for interview techniques, but they are already in regular contact with customers. A survey could also help verify the proto-persona. At the salon, it is easy to verify the proto-persona through the conversations that are always taking place there.

It is important when budgets are small to make a clear definition of what information is needed regarding the current status and the customers. The method can be used or adapted, taking into consideration that minimising funds carries the risk of reduced quality. Budget and quality must strike the right balance.

Audits can be time-consuming, as well. There are many elements to be audited. A clear definition of the audit’s goal is important to manage the short timeframes. If the setup is done by an expert, the audit itself can perhaps be carried out by a staff member who has a certain knowledge of how to use common office software. In the hairdresser’s case, none of the staff is used to working with computers or spreadsheet software.

It is a positive thing that there is an SEO agency involved with the small business. The changes on the website (separating the two businesses) should not have a negative impact on the search engine optimisation done for the hair replacement business.

The number of different social media channels does not seem to be unusual for a small business. Such companies often try something without really knowing how it works and ultimately there is not enough time to continue the effort. Some of the channels may have been set up by the agency for SEO reasons. It is good that the SEO strategy will now be included in the content strategy, provided that the owner adheres to the content strategy plan. For social media channels, the role of the agency must be clarified, along with the SEO needs. KPIs for social media should be defined as well.

Establishing a clear plan for maintenance tasks seems to be a good way to pass the strategy over to the owner’s responsibility.
6.3 Ideal future state

There are lots of possible ways to define success for this project. It is therefore important to decide which is the most important direction. However, success must be measureable in order to determine whether or not the activities carried out worked as planned and to make adjustments.

Of course, the number of new customers may not relate directly to the content strategy activities, so other KPIs should be defined. However, there is no basis for measuring how many people visiting the website lead to one new customer. One suggestion might be to measure any increase in customers following targeted content marketing activities and campaigns.

6.4 Strategy

The owner was very excited about the core strategy statement. He expressed that it brings everything to the point better than the vision statement. After the workshop for developing the message architecture, every staff member agreed on the result, and they were happy and seemed proud. The owner said: “The cardsorting worked brilliantly because we all took part and it really reflects our core values.”

6.5 Implementation and management

Individual customer groups were not considered in the strategy except the target age group of 25 to 35 years. More research is needed regarding lawyers and hospital employees, including their behaviour and needs. Special information for the target groups can be provided in posts and special offerings that can be announced in campaigns both online and offline in the shop.

For the goal of increasing online bookings, the owner stuck a sign on each stylist's mirror stating “Frankie says relax and book online”. Within six weeks, the number of online bookings tripled. This idea was not part of the content strategy concept, and the owner came up with it before the strategy was finished. Defining goals seems to change the focus, which is reflected in these spontaneous new ideas. Designing a (content) strategy brings a change of mind-set with good side effects.
There was no brand definition, but cardsorting proved to be a fast way to define a common sense of what the company wanted to represent, which is similar to brand development. This might not be practical for a start-up, but for the 20-year-old salon, it was more or less just a matter of writing down how the brand was cultivated.

In this project, there was no hurry to set up the website. Time estimates for website projects are often too short. This seems to be the same for small and large companies. However, this project shows that it makes sense to build a good basis for web development. Small businesses have the advantage of fewer pages so the copywriting process is considerably shorter. Nevertheless, copy should be written by a professional copywriter to ensure it is optimised to help the salon achieve its business goals. The cost of hiring a copywriter should be included in any future budget plans.

Before the strategy was finalised, the owner posted a photo of a happy customer and himself on Facebook according to our visual communication goals. He was excited about it, which continued for several days after and stimulated a significant amount of interaction. Based on this observation, the author recommends that the content strategy process include certain improvements that might be experienced even before the strategy is finished in order to gain a sense of achievement. Showing small businesses, the “low-hanging fruit” during the strategy process helps maintain enthusiasm and motivation.

Writing the style guidelines during the development process with the web designer and agency is a good approach. If they are written later, nobody can remember why certain decisions were taken and this leads to inconsistency. For writing the guidelines in advance there is currently not enough information from web design (colours, fonts, etc.) which fits with the communication goals and can be used for all the other channels. The guidelines are certainly less extensive than in a larger company with many different individuals working on them. Details such as a company policy (Löffler, 2015) can be omitted for small businesses.

In small businesses, the production and publishing process is not as complicated and generally faster than in larger enterprises with different departments involved.
There is little content to be published, only one persona and fewer goals need to be considered.

Tools have to be adapted to the knowledge and daily routines of the company. When discussing the editorial calendar template, which was prepared in an Excel spreadsheet, it turned out that a hard copy was more effective and usable. There was no routine for working with Excel and, as the owner said, “we are creative people and like to work with our hands”.

As stated above in the section entitled “Characteristics of small businesses”, there is a risk of clients being highly motivated at first but then overwhelmed by the number of tasks. This project has shown that, if there is another business problem, it immediately has an impact on the strategy project. The same would be the case if there were no routine for publication and maintenance. After the first experiences using Facebook, after one week the owner stopped due to time constraints. This was before implementing an editorial plan, but it showed how fragile the first steps of implementation are.

Maintenance will probably be the most challenging part for a small business. There is a risk that these tasks will be postponed or not carried out. However, maintenance is necessary for the return on investment. Regular updates with the consultant can help make an ongoing process of implementation and maintenance. The means of financing this implementation coaching must be considered.

6.6 The project seen by the owner

After the project the owner Paul Cochrane was asked about his experiences. “I was very open and expected to improve on the current strategy – which was very loose. The development process was very easy as Irene made it quite simple to follow. Now, I feel brilliant excited and confident of the future. During the process, I became happier, confident and most importantly having a very clear idea of who we are and how we need to come across to our customers. Gains have been to make an advert all be it cheaply but our message was and is strong and clear but most importantly authentic. My expectations are to build, build, and build more whilst checking how we
appear to potential customers. I have no additional recommendations to the process as Irene has covered everything and more for us. Finally, I would however like to thank her for all the help and enlightenment on this project and would be more than happy to personally recommend Irene and her expertise.”
References


Resources
Appendix 1 Result cardsorting - message architecture.........................................................97
Appendix 2 Presentation deliverables ....................................................................................99
Appendix 3 Qualitative content audit website.................................................................121
Appendix 4 Chart competitor website audit......................................................................124
Appendix 1 Result cardsorting - message architecture

Card sort – Message architecture

If you don’t know what to communicate, how will you know if you succeed?

What’s a message architecture?
A hierarchy of communication goals that reflects a common vocabulary — concrete, shared terminology, not abstract concepts.

Message architecture drives content
# Nomenclature
# Calls to action
# Content types
# Sentence structure
# Diction

Message architecture drives design
# Photographic angles
# Background colours
# Headline typography
# Density of information

“Content strategy can create harmony from cross-channel cacophony.” (Margot Bloomstein)

Communication goal #1 - Family
„Family means to be a part of something. “

Adjectives:
consistent, trusted, welcoming, approachable, friendly, value orientated, down to earth, reliable, efficient, professional

Communication goal #2 – Relationship with our customers (Psychology)
Psychology is: Build relationship with our customers to have long term relationship over many years where we actually deliver the right hair cuts at the right time at the right price. We have always things in mind but at the same time we are warm, structured, we take care of that person be attentive and probably that’s customer orientated. But making each person realise that we are there for them, and them alone.

Adjectives:
leading/cutting edge, relationship orientated, warm, structured, take care, attentive, kind, customer orientated, fun, clean, detail oriented, tailored
Communication goal #3 – Creative and Inspirational

It means you have to be on top, you have to pre-think what clients are going to be asking so you have to be able to deliver the service they want. You have to be competent to do that service, you have to proactive to go out and find the ideas at the first place.

Adjectives:
Progressive, fashionable, versatile, innovative, competent, trendy, hip, visionary, proactive
Appendix 2 Presentation deliverables

Research results and website suggestions
Frankie Cochrane Salon
Presented by Irene Michl and Rahel Bailie

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTRO</th>
<th>01</th>
<th>02</th>
<th>03</th>
<th>04</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Future state</td>
<td>Current state</td>
<td>Gap analysis</td>
<td>Next steps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Content strategy brief
- Readings
- Requirements matrix
- Business goals
- Communication goals
- Present
- Governance assessment
- Competitive analysis
- Audit-frankiecochrane.com
- Website recommendations
- Information architecture
- Suggestions contact alternative website pages
- Roadmap
## Content Strategy Brief

### WHY
- To grow business through more customers (Hospital employees, lawyers, younger 25 – 35 years)

### WHAT
- Identifying customers pain points
- Unifying customer experience

### WHO
- Existing clients
- Potential clients
- Paul & staff
- Local Fame

### WHERE
- Website
- Social Media
- Suggestions for on- and offline communication
- Salon

### HOW
- Goals for future state
- Understanding current state
- Gap analysis
- To fill the gap
Proposed roadmap

Discovery
- Current inventory
- Organization audit
- Accountability map

- Data entry and inventory
- Entry results to consumers
- Data entry into the platform

- Plan for discovery phase and recommendations

Channel strategy
- Meet of channel for<br> optimization objectives

By end of April

Brand development
- Content set
- Knowledge architecture

- Workshops with key, context &<br> strategy

Website update
- Migration evaluation<br> and architecture<br> development<br> +
- Content strategy<br> development<br> +

- By end of March<br> with website

Knowledge transfers
- High priority<br> - internal agency transfer

By end of May

Understanding Goals
For The Future State
## Requirements matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Month 1</th>
<th>Month 2</th>
<th>Month 3</th>
<th>Month 4</th>
<th>Month 5</th>
<th>Month 6</th>
<th>Month 7</th>
<th>Month 8</th>
<th>Month 9</th>
<th>Month 10</th>
<th>Month 11</th>
<th>Month 12</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Note</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Increase profitability of the online portal</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Launch online services, including online booking for hospital employees, younger customers (ages 18-30), and lawyer (ages 31+).</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Create a customer journey mapping tool for analyzing customer behavior.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Improve customer satisfaction levels by 10% over the next 12 months.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Implement a loyalty program to encourage repeat business.</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Business goals

### New customers
- hospital employees: plus 12 new customers/3 months
- younger customers: plus 12 new customers/3 months
- Lawyer: plus 12 new customers/3 months

### Measuring methods?
- strokes on a sheet of paper

### Online bookings
- 41 online bookings (3 months): raise of 15% - 20% within 6 months (after implementation of new booking system)
Communication goals – message architecture

Communication goal #1 – Family
Communication goal #2 – Relationship with our customers (Psychology)
Communication goal #3 – Creative and Inspirational

Persona

Carrie
Manager

Personal Profile
She places value on her appearance. Her work is demanding. She is open and interested in other people.

She follows recommendations (personal or online) to find a new hairstylist, preferred near to work or where she lives. Trust and a good relationship is important. A good cut is mandatory. She wants a salon with a good atmosphere where she can relax and feel at home. She is aware of the latest fashion trends.

She makes an appointment, when her hair is too long or when she needs replacement. Then, she wants to have an appointment within the next few to three days. Special offers are not trigger to make an appointment. For booking, she prefers the personal contact and an appointment, which fits her working hours.

After the visit, looking good makes her feel better and she likes to look in the shop windows. She likes to preserve the look as long as possible.

She uses social media but not excessively, rather to keep up with friends than following a brand.

Business Objectives
She want Carrie to:
- be satisfied
- feel part of the family for long-term relationship

User Goals
Carrie wants to:
- look and feel good after hairstyling
- feel good during the time at the salon

- tight timing
- quality is more important than price
- personal relationships

PERSONAL INFORMATION
Profession: managing employee at the hospital
Location: Hospital
Age: 35
Home life: married, one child
Hobbies: gym, reading books

HOME INFORMATION
Current Home: rents a 2-bedroom flat in the midtown area
COMFORT WITH TECHNOLOGY
Line Type: has grown up with computer and smartphone
Internet Usage: always online, most of the time on the phone

103
Current State

Governance assessment

www.frankiecochrane.com
  • maintained by agency
  • change requirements by Paul

Facebook & Twitter
  • maintained by agency
  • content curation (other sources)

Instagram – two accounts
  • https://www.instagram.com/fchirdressing/ account since 2013 (only one post)
  • https://www.instagram.com/cochrane.co/ (first 80 weeks last 34 weeks ago)

YouTube (Cochrane & Co)
  • https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCi-QKty-i6flQGDY1sJ3Y7g
Governance assessment

Possible internal resources
- Paul 2 – 3 hours/week (head of content strategy)
- Lucy photos (creative education)

Agency (current)
- 3 channels: 2 post per week
- 8 h / week

• booking at the end of each page
• online booking & app
• prices – services
• prices – team member page
• Instagram, Facebook, Twitter
Fourth Floor

- only one page
- slide show photos and one video
- prices
- opening hours
- no online booking, no team member, no testimonials
- Instagram (architecture)

---

This Month: 5 Potential mistakes you could make when visiting a new salon

We have been established 14 years in Marshmont Street WC1. Our Bloomsbury salon is cozy, and welcoming. We are 5 minutes from Russell Square and Kings Cross/St. Pancras stations. Also within easy reach of the major hotels in Bloomsbury WC1.

We are open late until 8pm Monday to Friday and very early appointments are available on Wednesday and Friday from 7am. We offer good quality Hair and Beauty services in an unpretentious and friendly environment, so if you want a crunch on prices

- prices
- testimonials (text, name, profession)
- online booking with login, arrow and permanent button
- team: skills, about, prices
- services with photo and description
Website audit

- needs: opening hours, prices, place
- online booking more prominent
- pictures & copy need to be according to communication goals
- missing testimonials, photos clients
- copy only about hair replacement
- mailing list?
- booking button, telephone no., Facebook & Twitter
our salon

- pictures warm, family like
- logo over the copy
- names (first names)
- more about salon (pictures)
- staff skills
- impressions of salon and staff

We are a bespoke London hair salon where our philosophy is simple - difference is good. From classic British hairstyling techniques to cutting edge trends, we are different. We are not an ordinary hair salon. We have a kind of thinking for others. Our hair stylists strive for passion, for hair and complete satisfaction. Too much? Not for us. Our promise to you is to give you more, with a lot more.

---

services

Hair colouring services in London

- copy and headings no relation to services
- videos DIY
- different heading style
- hair replacement in copy
- broken link (to hair stylist)
- call to actions at the end of page
calligraphy cuts

WANT TO KNOW WHAT TO LOOK FOR FROM A MALE HAIRCUT...

It is vitally important that the hair cut has dual styling capabilities that work with the structure of your face shape and enhancing them, to give you a strong jaw line and more muscular area, taking into consideration recessions areas and receding edges. This attention to detail will make you feel cut above the rest. guys giving you the cutting edge and uniqueness.

If you are looking for inspiration just take a few minutes to study your favourite actor or personality as you can well assured that they will have put in the effort to make their hair work correctly for them and their personal brand.

WE AT FRANKIE HAVE YEARS OF EXPERIENCE WITH THESE CUTS SO DON'T FEAR YOU'RE IN GOOD HANDS.

- no female styling – wrong impression
- ‘hair cut’ leads to homepage
- heading in uppercases
- pictures no “real” people (family, warm)
- last sentence quite familiar
hair replacement

- our London studio
- typos
- layout
- end call to action but no link to booking system or interactive telephone no
- prices
- all three communication goals, very personal written (quote Paul & Grant)

promotions

FRANKIE SAYS
£25 TOWARDS BEACH HIGHLIGHTS

RELAX LET FRANKIE DO IT.

FRANKIE COCHRANE HAIR SALON AND HAIR REPLACEMENT SYSTEMS

Call now 020 7105 7797
42 Lamb's Conduit Street, Holborn, London, WC1N 3LJ

- Browser title does not fit to current promotion (Early Bird Blow-Dry & Other Promotions)
- “Button” left – no link
- promotion repeated
- call to action, telephone, address (should lead to booking system)
- fast overview what it is about
finding us

Google search

- booking link in snippets
- meta description fitting to communication goals
- Hair Replacement prominent - irritates women
- in coordination with Local Fame

- Landing page – hairreplacement-london.co.uk or frankiecochrane.com
Website recommendations I

Design
- design follows content
- mobile first, responsive (google ranking)
- photos, colors and fonts according to communication goals
- integrated booking app with easy handling

Trends 2017
- minimalistic web design
- card-/grid-/modular design (Pinterest, Netflix)
- (gifs)
Website recommendations II

Copy
- copy and pictures according to the communication goals:
  1. Family
  2. Relationship
  3. Creative & Inspirational
     (is this photo…., does the text sound familiar/creative/inspirational …)
- structure (headings and bullet points)
- prioritization of elements according to user needs (mobile)

Information architecture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>unique clicks</th>
<th>interviews</th>
<th>suggestion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
<td>Home</td>
<td>Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services</td>
<td>Prices</td>
<td>Stylists &amp; Services (Prices)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our salon</td>
<td>Skills/Staff</td>
<td>Pictures &amp; Testimonials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Styling</td>
<td>Pictures</td>
<td>Meet us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding us</td>
<td>Products</td>
<td>Products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotions</td>
<td>Opening hours</td>
<td>Hair Replacement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Replacement)</td>
<td>Testimonials</td>
<td>Booking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Calligraphy cuts)</td>
<td>Service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Home

fix elements
- booking button
- address & phone no
- google ratings (plug in)

linked elements
- Stylists & Services
- Pictures & Testimonials
- Meet us
- Products
- hair replacement

temporary elements (automatic on/off)
- promotions
- holiday openings

Stylists & Services

Staff (each)
- portrait photo
- about (personal story, hobbies... likes, likes not, how long at Frankie Cochrane)
- skills (photos with customers)
- services & prices
- booking button

Portrait of Frankie
- Story of the salon

Booking Button
Pictures & Testimonials

Instagram integration
• photos of customers (before/after)
• quotes of customers (graph)
• photos of salon and daily live
• special moments
• specials
  (e.g. calligraphy cut)

(Booking Button)

Meet us

• Address
• phone
• e-mail
• opening hours
booking button
• google maps
• directions
• photos salon
booking button
Products

- calligraphy cut
- booking button
- products and pictures with persons
- booking button

Hair Replacement

- Basic information
- photos (customer with staff)
- link to hairreplacement-london.co.uk
Target groups

hospital employees
  • special offers (relax package), special hours

lawyers
  • special offers (start in evening shift), special hours

younger customers
  • reach over social media, interaction
  • social media as branding
Next steps

**Booking system – for a good brand experience**
- requirements (easy process, duration of service, wording, prices, implementation on website, ...)
- research
- testing

**e-mail address**
- set up a business e-mail with domain
Proposed roadmap

**User research**
- Focus groups
- Customer journey interviews by end of January

**Discovery**
- Current inventory
- Website analysis
- User interface review
- Data analysis and inventory
- Translate results of scoping
- Finalise data and recommendations by end of April

**Brand development**
- Set brand
- Develop architecture
- Workshops with key, external Cush & Agency in 3rd week of February

**Website update**
- Member-experience
- Architecture
- Multiple assertions
- Enhance
- Test with website
- By end of March

**Channel strategy**
- Analysis of channels for optimisation
- Within
- By end of April

**Knowledge transfer**
- High-training
- Exchange and agency transfer
- By end of May

---

**SCROLL**

London, UK

By email:
info@scroll.co.uk
rahel.baillie@scroll.co.uk
irene.mich@irenemichl.at

By telephone:
UK +44 (0)203 318 1878 (office)
UK +44 (0)7869 643 885 (mobile)
AT +43 676 339 1238

Services and training:
www.scroll.co.uk
## Appendix 3 Qualitative content audit website

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Module</th>
<th>URL</th>
<th>Meta</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>H1</th>
<th>Meta description</th>
<th>Keywords</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HAIR-SALON-IN-LONDON</td>
<td><a href="http://www.frankiecochrane.com/hair-replacement">http://www.frankiecochrane.com/hair-replacement</a></td>
<td></td>
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<td><a href="http://connect.saloniq.co.uk/SalonIQ/OnlineBookings/Login/Index/FRA001">http://connect.saloniq.co.uk/SalonIQ/OnlineBookings/Login/Index/FRA001</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>HAIR-SALON-IN-LONDON</td>
<td><a href="http://www.frankiecochrane.com/hair-replacement">http://www.frankiecochrane.com/hair-replacement</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OUR SALON</td>
<td><a href="http://www.frankiecochrane.com/hair-salon">http://www.frankiecochrane.com/hair-salon</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td><a href="https://www.antidotechallenge.org.uk/">https://www.antidotechallenge.org.uk/</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="https://www.londoncompany.co.uk/hair-salons/">https://www.londoncompany.co.uk/hair-salons/</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Meta Score
- **HOME**: 1
- **HAIR-SALON-IN-LONDON**: 1
- **OUR SALON**: 1

### Title Score
- **HOME**: 1
- **HAIR-SALON-IN-LONDON**: 1
- **OUR SALON**: 1

### Meta Description Score
- **HOME**: 1
- **HAIR-SALON-IN-LONDON**: 1
- **OUR SALON**: 1

### Keywords Score
- **HOME**: 1
- **HAIR-SALON-IN-LONDON**: 1
- **OUR SALON**: 1
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROMOTIONS</th>
<th>Keyowords</th>
<th>Meta description</th>
<th>Finding Us</th>
<th>Keywords</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.frankiecochrane.com/contact-us/">http://www.frankiecochrane.com/contact-us/</a></td>
<td>Frankie Cochran</td>
<td>Call to action, find Frankie's salon on 020 7405 7379 now. Save money with our hair salon promotions, like our Early Bird Blow Dry Special, or any of our other promotions. Frankie says towards beach highlights.</td>
<td>Call to action, find Frankie's salon on 020 7405 7379 today.</td>
<td>Frankie Cochran, Hair Salon London, Hair Replacement Systems London, Hair Replacement Systems London.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frankie Cochran</td>
<td>Frankie says towards beach highlights.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

General findings:

- headlines are written in different ways (some uppercase characters, some with each word starts with uppercase, normal text writing)
- different ways of naming the salon: at Frankie, London Studio, Hair Salon Holborn, Salon Bloomsbury...
- logo on the pages hovers over the text on small screens
- communication goal #1 "family" is under represented
- some copy could be better structured: plain English, bullet points, headlines
- no person mentioned, then page with Frankie says, then hair replacement with Paul and Grant (no Lucy)
- no testimonials, no pictures of haircuts
- navigation is very long (two lines) / hamburger navigation for mobile
- meta description has to be adopted to brand messages
- hair replacement with women's salon - trust? are they serious, trustworthy?
### Appendix 4 Chart competitor website audit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>local to compete</th>
<th>local to compete</th>
<th>main competitor</th>
<th>main competitor</th>
<th>main competitor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BROOKS+BROOKS</td>
<td>Fourth Floor</td>
<td>CV Hair &amp; Beauty</td>
<td>Gino Hairdressing</td>
<td>BIBAS Hair &amp; Beauty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Home page**
- photos of women styled late availability (booking app)
- About us, Services, Gallery, Social, Careers, Education, Contact us
- buttons: Instagram, Facebook, Twitter e-mail and phone no
- reduced to the basic information
- price list, opening hours, contact (text hover)
- changing photo gallery, video
- Full of text, b/w photos background
- The team, hair services, beauty, services, Testimonials, blog, Prices, Contact us book appointment
- login, register for offers, short text information, telephone number
- Buttons: Facebook, Twitter, google+, Pinterest, Instagram
- all information on home page compactness
- home, about us, ladies, gents, products, therapy, contact
- Address, telephone, icons: FB, TW (no link) plan a journey; nearest tube, opening ours photos of salon (changing gallery)
- short welcome information, drinks, Wi-Fi, Home page

**opening hours**
- at services yes
- home page (not good readable) home page, contact opening hours

**phone**
- home page, services, contact us yes at contact home page, contact home page, contact phone

**pictures of cuts/customers/testimonials**
- Salon gallery, hair gallery salon yes: voices, name and profession no pictures of cuts/customers/testimonials

**prices**
- at services yes price list yes at prices no prices

**products**
- no yes - photo gallery (not visible on small screens) no yes: ladies/gents products and prices

**service**
- yes no services with photo and description yes ladies/gents service

**Blog**
- no no yes (cat: beauty, hair) no Blog

**Team**
- yes photos, each team member has a page, price per team member no yes: skills, about, prices no Team

**online booking**
- online and mobile app on website (right hand side) no online booking (Log in) in website integrated no online booking

**responsive/mobile**
- yes yes yes no responsive/mobile

**interactive telephone no**
- home page no no no interactive telephone no

**salon photos**
- salon gallery gallery home page no yes salon photos

**contact form**
- yes no yes yes contact form

**newsletter**
- no no yes (also text message deal alerts) yes (special offers) newsletter

**Facebook**
- photos of finished cuts, colours,... no afters, videos (twitter, after, styles of stars links, shop Facebook
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Some Statements</th>
<th>Instagram</th>
<th>Twitter</th>
<th>Instagram</th>
<th>Pinterest</th>
<th>Google+</th>
<th>CTA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stylish, catwalk, London</td>
<td>After, Blogpost, retweets happy customer tweets, no</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Link to bookings at the end of each page</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>