

Introduction to creating a content model

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Creating a quality content model is a key to a successful content strategy yet knowing all the ins and outs is far from easy. This article will take you through the steps of modeling content one by one. If you follow this guide, you'll get a suitable content model for your business or at least a good basis for one.

Primarily, content modeling answers the question, “**What relationships does my content have?**” However, different companies will have different answers.

In the coffee industry, each coffee has a preferred brewing method. In the insurance industry, articles should increase insurance sales. Similarly, **content that relates together should be modeled that way too.**

This is not the beginning of the content modeling journey

If you just got here and you're not sure what content modeling is or why you should invest your time into it, we recommend reading [What is content modeling](#) first.

During the whole process of this tutorial, bear in mind the following:

- Content modeling is a very large topic. These steps summarize our experience at Kontent.ai and focus on the main points to get the proper result, yet not going into all details that different businesses might have.
- No general advice can work in all cases. Sometimes, going against generally accepted advice is the best approach. So, don't hesitate to decide differently than advised here and there if you strongly believe so. (Or, [send us an email](#) and we may look at it.)

It's essential that the content model is approved by all stakeholders. That's why **we recommend involving at least one stakeholder from each department in all steps of this article.**

Key points

- Involve all internal stakeholders to collect current content and design a basic diagram with your favorite tools. Start small with your core content types and expand it as you go.
- Start listing your content type elements with any enforced validation rules, and mark any repeating elements which might be grouped into their own [content type](#) or [content type snippet](#).
- Map out relationships among all content types, and add metadata for personalization, tagging, and so on.
- Decide what marketing scenarios you need to cover in your app and accommodate your content model for them.

Now, let's get to it!

List your core content types

First, **put together those content types that are the center of your content production**. Go through all your content repositories – your websites, apps, all types of storage for files like PDFs or Microsoft Word documents. Group them based on their purpose.

Feel free to use any suitable tool – a whiteboard, software for diagrams (for example, diagrams.net), a spreadsheet, or even mind mapping software. You can also use just a piece of paper, yet you'll often redraw parts of the diagrams which creates more work.

In this tutorial, the examples are from our example project Safelife, a fictional insurance company. You may have testimonials directly on your website or as a bunch of PDFs on a shared drive in such a company. If so, draw a rectangle representing a content type labeled *Testimonial*.

Like that, go through all your content and draw a rectangle with a relevant label for each content that you find useful or with purposes.

Include both information that will be displayed on a website or through a different channel (for example, *Blog post*) and information that serves an internal purpose (for example, *Global brand identity*).



Example diagram for the [sample Safelife insurance company website](#) and related content

Additional support during content modeling

To maximize the results of modeling your core content types, we recommend organizing a [core model workshop](#).

You can also use our [Customer Success Services](#), in which our Solution Architects guide you through this process.

Add structure to the content types

Once you note your core content types, **extend each content type so that it also contains the content type's structure**. Look for elements that somehow define the content type and what the content type consists of. Add those elements to the content type's rectangle.

Going back to the testimonial example from the previous step, such a content type could have elements like a *Tagline*, *Quote*, *Author*, and *Author's headshot*. Or, looking into blog posts, they usually consist of a *Title*, *Lead paragraph*, *Content*, and an *Author*. But there can also be other elements in the structure, such as related blog posts or CTAs.

In this part, **try to focus on the actual content**. You don't need to include metadata, which will be described in the next chapters. Do not include elements used for formatting purposes, such as color, font, or layout type.

If you're already familiar with the different elements used in Kontent.ai, note also the element's type. If not, read [What is content modeling](#).



You can also [view the diagram in diagrams.net](#) to zoom in and out or [browse through the website](#).

Change visual content types into semantic content types

After defining the content types and their elements, think about each content type you created. The goal is to **evaluate whether the content type expresses the essence of what it represents** instead of how it is represented.

For example, a content type called *Page* focuses on the fact that the content in it is going to be represented as web pages. However, if you introduce a mobile app, that will no longer be true and your content model will become obsolete. Instead, use a content type called *Article* to ensure that you think about the content from the point of view of its meaning.

On the other hand, some parts of the content model will always relate to their appearance. A content type called *Landing page* will usually end up being landing pages, no matter what medium you'll be using. In that case, calling them a "page" is not a problem.

Is *page* a bad word?

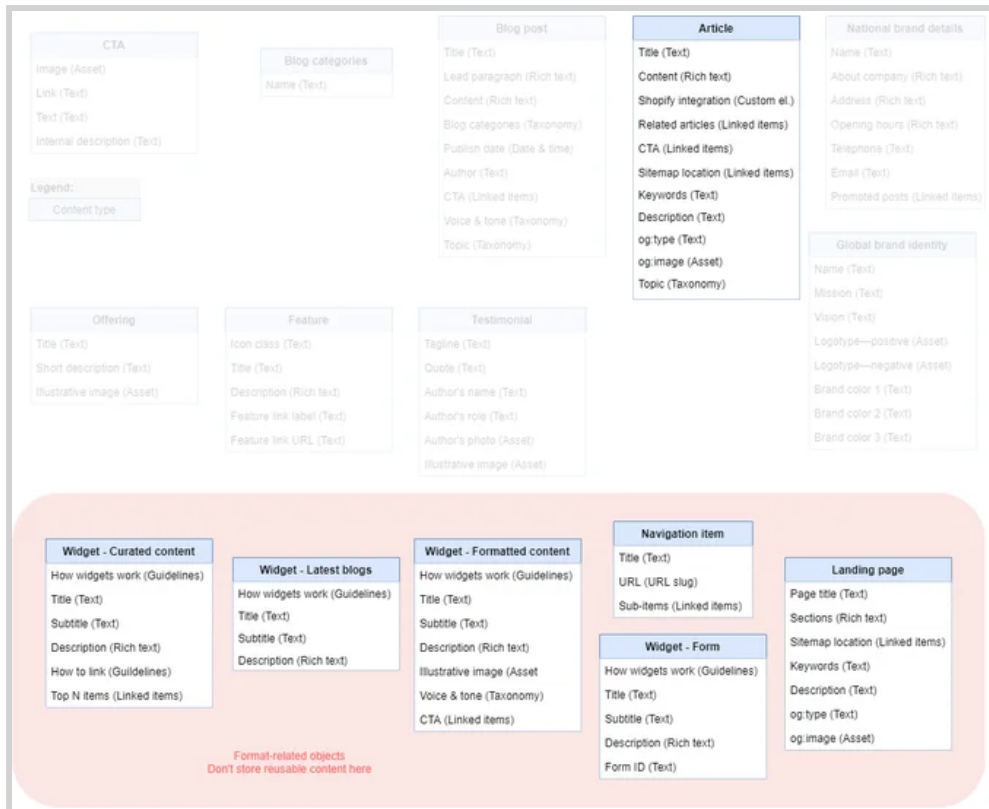
No, it isn't. It just limits content to be used within a specific channel, a website in this case. Moreover, the word *page* will be used for navigation later on.

In the example content model below, you can also notice a highlighted section that will later serve for dynamic elements on the website. Besides the *Landing page*, there's the *Navigation item* that will serve for building a website page tree and for a [sitemap](#). Navigation will be further described in the next chapters.

There are also four content types that will be used by the website to display widgets. You configure what they should contain and your developers implement their appearance so there

are no limits, yet you can [limit what content creators can fill in](#) to ensure visual unity.

As mentioned in the diagram, the content types in the highlighted section are there to be used as components or pages for one use case. One widget can be reused in multiple places, yet usually with the same purpose. That's why you shouldn't store reusable content in those.



You can also [view the diagram in diagrams.net](#) to zoom in and out or [browse through the website](#).

What's next?

Now that you know the basics for creating a content model, let's explore reusing content and defining relationships inside the content model.

[Let's reuse and connect content](#)