Content Strategy: Introduction
by Scott Abel and Seth Earley

Delivering the right information to the right people at the right time in the right language and format is one of the biggest challenges faced by businesses today. Add to the mix the desire of consumers to access content when and where they want, on an increasing array of mobile devices, and it’s easy to see why so many organizations are struggling to keep pace with technological change.

Part of the struggle is indeed related to the speed at which technology is moving. But, much of the pain organizations experience when attempting to meet the needs of their digitally savvy consumers is caused by a lack of a content strategy.

At its most basic, a content strategy is a systematic, repeatable plan for efficiently governing the creation, management and delivery of useful, usable, accessible content. Most organizations do not have a formal content strategy, opting instead to prioritize and tackle content challenges as one-off obstacles as they become too important to ignore.

In this issue of the *Bulletin of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, we present five articles designed to help demystify the often-misunderstood discipline that is the turf of content strategists. Written by the world’s top practitioners, the articles examine content strategy and provide many examples of how it relates to practice in particular situations.

In our initial article “What’s the Buzz about Content Strategy?” Rahel Anne Bailie emphasizes the primacy of content, defines content strategy and gives an overview of what content strategy entails, concepts that Kristina Halvorson enlarges upon in her article “Understanding the Discipline of Web Content Strategy.” She lists the content-related disciplines that comprise content management and concludes with the final call to arms that could be the message of this issue: “Stop pretending content is somebody else’s problem. Take up the torch for content strategy. Learn it. Practice it. Promote it. It’s time to make content matter.”

Jeff Carr, Seth Earley, and Ann Rockley and Joe Gollner all present content management case studies or recommendations based on such studies. In “Case Study: Developing a SharePoint 2010 Strategy,” Carr looks at the challenges of introducing this powerful content management tool into an organization in a beneficial way, while Earley focuses on governance mechanisms for content management in “Developing a Content Maintenance and Governance Strategy.” Finally, in “An Intelligent Content Strategy for the Enterprise,” Rockley and Gollner define the concept of intelligent content strategy and provide case studies from several different sectors illustrating its use in practice.

As a package, the articles presented in this special issue present a framework for understanding the need for a formal content strategy. They aim to help you understand the role and duties of a content strategist, as well as the tools, techniques, technologies and standards aspiring content strategists will need to master.

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About the Guest Editors

This special section of the *Bulletin* was compiled and edited by Scott Abel and Seth Earley.

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Scott P. Abel is a content management strategist and social media choreographer with strengths in helping organizations improve the way they author, maintain, publish and archive their information assets. A presenter at content industry conferences, he is a founding member and former executive director of Content Management Professionals (www.cmpros.org/) and assists in the production of several industry events including Web Content Chicago (www.webcontent2010.com), Intelligent Content (www.intelligentcontent2010.com) and others. His blog, The Content Wrangler (www.theccontentwrangler.com), is a popular destination for communication professionals seeking information about content management. He can be reached at scottabel-at-me.com.