Considerations for a Content Development Strategy for a Vaccine Safety Website

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VSN Expansion in the Region of the Americas, PAHO

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Acknowledgements

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Introduction

A content development strategy for health websites guides the creation, distribution, and management of valuable and relevant content in order to achieve specific health care goals.[1] An effective content development strategy involves not only creating content about the safety of vaccines and promoting their use, but also creating the right content for a specific audience (who the website is for and who uses it). It involves understanding your audience's information needs, the health care landscape, your organization's goals, and how all of these elements interact in the production and distribution of vaccine safety content; it also involves conveying the right message, at the right time, to the right audience, in the most appropriate way.

A solid content development strategy enables health professionals to educate users about vaccines and the different aspects of ensuring vaccine safety. This helps users make informed decisions about their health and fosters a closer relationship between users and health professionals, as well as helping to build trust in staff and services. By offering accurate, up-to-date, and useful content, health care services and personnel can establish themselves as trusted sources of vaccine safety information, thus building trust among patients.

Information on vaccine safety is essential to decision-making. Each vaccine approved for human use undergoes extensive safety testing before, during, and after approval to assess the risks of the proposed intervention. To build public confidence in vaccines, it is necessary to have relevant information about their safety and effectiveness that reliably answers any questions and concerns the public may have.

This document is intended for public health organizations that communicate information about vaccine safety. It contains recommended considerations for organizations when developing their content development strategy, to ensure that content created for a health website on vaccine safety follows systematic approaches, thus ensuring its credibility.

Objectives

Establishing clear and measurable objectives is the cornerstone of any content development strategy. These should also guide the type of content to be created, how it will be distributed, and how its success will be measured. When setting objectives, an organization should think about what they want the vaccine safety content on their website to achieve. Objectives should also align with the broader goals of the organization as a health care provider.

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[1] https://www.weareamnet.com/blog/healthcare-content-strategy/

To set content development strategy objectives, we suggest using the SMART method:[2]

- **Specific:** The objectives should be defined as precisely as possible. Include information about what you want to achieve, when and how it will be done, and how the impact will be measured/quantified.
- **Measurable:** Objectives should be quantifiable, to enable tracking of the progress and success of the content. This will also allow the actions implemented along the way to be adjusted as necessary to achieve the established objective.
- **Achievable:** Objectives must be realistic, since unattainable objectives can lead to frustration and demotivation, rather than encouraging the team to improve.
- **Relevant:** The website's content targets must be aligned with the organization's objectives and contribute to their achievement.
- **Time-bound:** A deadline should be set for the objectives. This creates a sense of urgency and helps keep the team focused.

Identifying and understanding the audience

In addition to identifying the objectives of the content development strategy, it is equally important to identify the target audience and adapt the content to their needs. Many different tools can be used for this, including virtual opinion surveys, surveys on social networks and on the website itself, tools for measuring traffic and behavior of website visitors, focus groups, semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, media searches for vaccine stories/opinions (including newspapers, television, radio, blogs, parent organizations, and parent influencers, etc.). While some of these require more resources than others, the overall goal is for the organization to have a clear idea of its target audience and their concerns so that these can be addressed through the content published on the website.

Here are some things to consider when attempting to understand your audience's vaccine safety needs:

- What vaccine safety topics are most relevant to this audience? (Identified through some of the tools mentioned above—i.e., surveys, media searches, etc.)
- What type of content/delivery mechanism do you prefer and what format would be most appropriate to convey the information (e.g., blogs, infographics, videos)?
- Which social media platforms or other vaccine information sites do they use?
- What questions do they have about vaccine safety and what information are they looking for?

Content audit

A content audit involves reviewing current vaccine safety content to identify the website's current inventory and determine what content needs to be created, revised, updated, or removed.[3] To identify specific topics related to

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[2] Doran, GT (1981) There's a S.M.A.R.T. way to write management's goals and objectives. Management Review 1981;70:35-36.

[3] https://www.searchenginejournal.com/on-page-seo/content-audit-checklist/

the components of the Safe Vaccination Model proposed by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO),[4] the content analysis matrix offered in the tool in <u>Annex 1</u> can be used.

A content audit also identifies the content available, the pages with the most views, the most-read stories, and how much time visitors spend on a page, to understand what types of content work best with the audience. This involves analyzing both the topics covered in the content and the current variety of content formats on the website.

The use of web analytics tools allows data to be measured and analyzed to understand user behavior on a website, as well as what pages the audience visits, how long visitors stay on a page, etc. There are a variety of platforms that can measure behavior and activity on a website.[5] Some of the information generated through analytical tools includes:

- **General information on the audience:** number of visits to the site, what country they are visiting from, what search engine or device they use (computer or mobile), etc.
- **Audience behaviors:** landing pages, frequently visited pages, exit pages, duration of a page visit, number of pages visited, etc.
- **Performance and user engagement:** which websites drove the most traffic to the page, which keywords resulted in a page visit, website optimization, etc.

It is important to establish a period and frequency for the content audit (some suggestions are included in Table 1 below), and the tools that will be used for the audit. For most websites related to vaccine safety, the content should be reviewed at least once a year. Some content may need to be updated more frequently as new evidence becomes available.

The information obtained from the content audit helps understand what types of content work best for the identified audience, by answering questions such as:

- Where do site visitors spend the most time: on text articles, videos, etc.?
- What type of content do they share most frequently?
- What type of content is the most visited on the page?

Choose content delivery mechanisms based on the audience

The content delivery mechanism, or type of content, created for a website should be in line with your objectives and the preferences of your audience, both of which can be identified in the content audit.

Some of the following content delivery mechanisms could be considered for the content development strategy for vaccine safety:

- Video/audio

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4   https://www.paho.org/en/topics/vaccine-safety
5   https://www.linkedin.com/advice/1/what-most-effective-ways-use-web-analytics-tools

- Short articles
- Infographics
- Job aids and checklists for health care workers
- Case studies or beneficiary experiences/stories
- Interviews with experts

Content calendar

A content calendar is a scheduled plan of what content you will publish, where you will publish it, when, and how often it should be reviewed. One of the main aspects to consider is timing and frequency: publishing the right content at the right time is essential. Here are some important aspects to consider:

- **Relevance:** Schedule content based on topics that are always relevant (based on content audit, use of metrics, current national context, etc.). For example, content about flu vaccination would be more appropriate during the country's flu season.

- **Holidays and special events (such as campaigns and celebrations):** Taking advantage of holidays or special events (e.g., World Immunization Week) allows you to create timely content.

The content calendar should also allow for flexibility and adaptability. Especially with new vaccines, information can constantly change, so it is important to be able to adapt to provide the most relevant information to your audience.

Below is a proposed content calendar focused on topics related to vaccines and their safety, which can serve as a reference for your organization. You may wish to consider the categories and some themes identified in the content analysis matrix (which is not exhaustive) found in Annex 1. In any case, it is important to create a customized calendar based on your website's objectives, audience, and content.

Table 1. Example of a content calendar, including review frequency

Content category	Content types/themes	Audience	Update frequency	Teams involved
Quality vaccines	Stages and phases of vaccine development	General public, health personnel	Annual	Content development team (EPI, Epidemiology, Communication)
	Definitions of vaccine efficacy and effectiveness	General public, health personnel	Annual	Content development team (EPI, Epidemiology, Communication)
	Vaccines registered in the country, vaccination schedule	General public, health personnel	Annually, or as soon as changes occur at the national level	Content development team (EPI, Epidemiology, Pharmacovigilance, Communication, etc.)

Content category	Content types/themes	Audience	Update frequency	Teams involved
Storage and distribution/Cold chain	How do vaccines get to vaccination centers safely?	General public	Annual	Content development team (EPI, Epidemiology, Pharmacovigilance, Communication, etc.)
Safe Injection	Vaccine contraindications and precautions: How to evaluate whether someone can receive the vaccine	Health personnel	As necessary	Content development team (EPI, Epidemiology, Pharmacovigilance, Communication, etc.)
	Safe injection protocols, contraindications, and precautions	Health personnel	As necessary	Content development team (EPI, Epidemiology, Pharmacovigilance, Communication, etc.)
ESAVI Surveillance	Vaccine safety surveillance	General public	Annual	Pharmacovigilance team
	Frequency of common non-serious adverse events	General public	Annual	Pharmacovigilance team, epidemiology team
	What an ESAVI is and how to report it	General public	Annual	Pharmacovigilance team, epidemiology team
Communication and risk mitigation	Benefits of vaccines/Why is vaccination important?	General public	Annual	Content development team (EPI, Epidemiology, Pharmacovigilance, Communication, etc.)
	Myths and truths about vaccines	General public	Annually, or as needed in the country's context	Content development team (EPI, Epidemiology, Pharmacovigilance, Communication, etc.)
	Common vaccination questions and answers	General public	Semiannual review	Development team
	Other information pages on vaccine safety	General public	Annual	Web development team

Creating content

Vaccine safety content on an organization's website should balance being clear, direct, concrete, and informative, while ensuring scientific accuracy and offering a readability that is suited to the audience. On one hand, the information provided must be reliable and supported by scientific evidence; on the other, the content must be understandable and appealing to a general audience. The content's language needs to align with the target audience; for example, content intended for the general public should be clear and at their level of health literacy. Content for health care professionals should also be in plain language but may include appropriate terminology.

It is important to remember that digital channels, including search engines and social media platforms, reward content that engages readers and keeps them on the page. Therefore, the content of a page must be accurate and appealing enough to capture and hold the attention of its readers. Suggestions for topics to include can be found in the content analysis matrix shown in Annex 1. This checklist can help you identify vaccine safety issues related to the components of PAHO's Safe Vaccination Model. We suggest starting with a minimum of five pieces of information related to vaccine safety for your organization's website, selected based on the organization's priorities and its target audience.

When creating content, it is important to consider the following aspects:[6]

- It should be written in a professional manner, using correct spelling, grammar, and syntax. The language should be at the audience's level of health knowledge; it should be clear and should use simple language for terms and numbers. Images should be inclusive and represent the core audience.
- Include an optimized title and description tags, ideally with keywords that are consistent with the topic.
- Include the date the content was updated or revised.
- Use titles and sections to segment content intuitively.
- Use links to other VSN websites (see Annex 3).
- Include references or sources of scientific, medical, and health information (including author names, affiliations, and agencies).
- For audio and video files, use a suitable streaming format.
- For downloadable files, show the file sizes.
- Include options for sharing content via email and social networks.

Below are some commonly used content development methodologies. Annex 2 contains additional strategies that your organization could consider using in the future.

Creating original content

- **Writing:** Create unique articles, blog posts, or reports tailored to the specific vaccine safety niche or topic. Your audience will be able to use these resources with the assurance that they are credible.
- **Images and graphics:** Design custom images, infographics, charts, and illustrations to complement written content and convey information visually. It is preferable not to copy or paste from other documents from another source that uses another style. Images and graphics should represent the members of the audience the content is intended for.
- **Videos:** Produce informative and audience-friendly videos, including interviews and educational videos. If possible, include experts who resonate with your core audience.
- **Data-driven content:** Create content based on data analysis and research. This may include reports, case studies, and data visualizations. In content for the general public, present data in simple language (round numbers).

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[6] https://www.optimizely.com/insights/blog/how-to-create-and-execute-a-web-content-strategy-that-works-for-you/

Content curation

- Add relevant content from various sources, presenting it in a coherent and organized manner. It is important to remember that any content published on the website must be justified by the organization.
- It is essential to always attribute and provide links to original sources.
- Annex 3 lists some websites and information sources that may be relevant for obtaining reliable information on vaccine safety.

Long-lasting and reused content

- Create long-lasting content that remains relevant over time. This can include comprehensive guides, glossaries, and tutorials.
- Repurposing existing content in different formats, such as turning a blog post into a video or podcast episode, can help promote content that is still relevant but may no longer generate the expected traffic.

Localized and multilingual content

- Translate and adapt content to reach a broader, global audience.
- For specific topics, consider creating content specific to local regions or cultures to effectively target a local audience, as identified by your organization's needs.

Content partnerships and collaborations

- Include links to other members of the Vaccine Safety Net (or scientific organizations with established credibility).

The best content generation methodology for a website may involve a combination of these approaches. It is important to align your content development strategy with the objectives of the website and of the organization, audience preferences, and available resources, while maintaining a commitment to quality and authenticity.

Incorporating content into the website

The content development strategy should also include procedures for incorporating new or revised content into the website. These procedures include:

- identifying the criteria for content to appear on the website;
- a list of the required authorizations and the graphic guidelines to be followed (according to organizational guidelines);
- cataloging of articles and content according to the structure/wireframe of the page;
- uploading the content to the webpage.

Search engine optimization (SEO) and distribution

Search engine optimization (SEO) involves optimizing a website's content to improve its visibility and attract more visitors through search engines. Including SEO in a content development strategy can inform the design of a website's content so that it contains information that directly addresses users' queries. For more information on what criteria to consider when optimizing a website, consult the website analysis tool in [Annex 4](#).

The first step to incorporating SEO into a content development strategy is to identify keywords. This involves identifying the words and phrases that people use to search for information related to vaccine safety. There are many online tools that can help with this process.[7] Once these keywords are identified, the next step is optimization: strategically incorporating keywords into content, including titles, headings, body text, and meta descriptions in a natural way, without compromising readability or quality of information.

Monitoring content performance

As part of a content creation and promotion strategy, the organization should periodically review and update its audience analysis to ensure that content remains relevant, accurate, and practical, and is continually improving. It is essential to constantly monitor and measure content performance against objectives, using metrics. Some key metrics to consider include website traffic, social media engagement, content downloads and clicks, approximate time a user stays on the page, and potential users or generated interactions (as defined above). Data on user behavior can help provide personalized content experiences and recommendations.

Conclusion

Developing a content development strategy for a website focusing on vaccine safety is critical to fostering understanding, trust, and informed decision-making. By providing accurate, accessible, and evidence-based information on websites, we can significantly contribute to public health and the well-being of communities. It is imperative that a website remains up to date and presents content based on the latest evidence and expert recommendations; this will ensure the content is relevant and useful to those searching for it. By doing this, we are taking an important step toward health promotion and disease prevention, and strengthening the knowledge base and trust in vaccines.

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[7] https://www.iebschool.com/blog/herramientas-imprescindibles-gratuitas-seo-sem/

Annex 1: Website content analysis tool

This tool brings together evaluations of VSN criteria and an analysis matrix for vaccine safety content. The first tab contains instructions on its use.

View Excel document: 20240123_Content assessment EN.xls

Annex 2: Additional strategies for creating content

User-generated content:

- If your organization's policies allow it, you can invite users or clients of your website to contribute content. The organization should clearly include where to find reviews/edits/clearance of user-generated content. Some formats to consider include reviews, testimonials, comments, and forums (it is imperative that the organization have dedicated staff to monitor and follow up on this process, to avoid misinforming the audience and undermining credibility).
- Some other options to consider include contests or campaigns to solicit user-generated content, and rewarding participants for their contributions.

Republishing content:

- Content from other authoritative sources may be republished, with permission, to supplement the original content and provide different perspectives. The appropriate licenses or permits must be obtained for this.

Interactive content:

- Interactive content such as quizzes, surveys, calculators, and interactive infographics can engage your audience. However, it is imperative that the organization know how to analyze and use the data collected, with a clear objective in mind.
- Interactive content can also be useful in collecting user data and preferences.

Interviews and contributions from experts:

- Conduct interviews with industry experts, thought leaders, or influencers and turn them into articles, podcasts, or video content.
- Collaborate with guest authors or contributors who can provide valuable insights and ideas.

Annex 3. Reliable sources of information on vaccine safety

In addition to primary research found in peer-reviewed scientific publications, you may want to consider the following sources of information. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list.

1. "Vaccine Safety" (PAHO): https://www.paho.org/en/topics/vaccine-safety
   a. ESAVI Surveillance https://iris.paho.org/handle/10665.2/55945Manualhttps://iris.paho.org/handle/10665.2/55945
   b. Virtual https://campus.paho.org/en/course/surveillance-events-vaccinationCourse on https://campus.paho.org/en/course/surveillance-events-vaccinationSurveillance of https://campus.paho.org/en/course/surveillance-events-vaccinationESAVIshttps://campus.paho.org/en/course/surveillance-events-vaccination
   c. https://www.paho.org/sites/default/files/recursos_adicionales_comunicacion_seguridad_vacunas_additional_resources_vaccine_safety_communication_0.pdfAdditionalhttps://www.paho.org/sites/default/files/recursos_adicionales_comunicacion_seguridad_vacunas_additional_resources_vaccine_safety_communication_0.pdf https://www.paho.org/sites/default/files/recursos_adicionales_comunicacion_seguridad_vacunas_additional_resources_vaccine_safety_communication_0.pdfResources https://www.paho.org/sites/default/files/recursos_adicionales_comunicacion_seguridad_vacunas_additional_resources_vaccine_safety_communication_0.pdfon Vaccinehttps://www.paho.org/sites/default/files/recursos_adicionales_comunicacion_seguridad_vacunas_additional_resources_vaccine_safety_communication_0.pdf Safetyhttps://www.paho.org/sites/default/files/recursos_adicionales_comunicacion_seguridad_vacunas_additional_resources_vaccine_safety_communication_0.pdf https://www.paho.org/sites/default/files/recursos_adicionales_comunicacion_seguridad_vacunas_additional_resources_vaccine_safety_communication_0.pdfCommunicationhttps://www.paho.org/sites/default/files/recursos_adicionales_comunicacion_seguridad_vacunas_additional_resources_vaccine_safety_communication_0.pdf
2. "Pharmacovigilance" (PAHP): https://www.paho.org/en/topics/pharmacovigilance
3. Vaccine Safety (WHO): https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/vaccines-and-immunization-vaccine-safety
4. WHO Global Vaccine Safety Initiative: https://www.who.int/initiatives/the-global-vaccine-safety-initiative
5. GACVS (Global Advisory Committee on Vaccine Safety) reports: https://www.who.int/groups/global-advisory-committee-on-vaccine-safety/committee-reports
6. WHO Essential Programme on Immunization: https://www.who.int/teams/immunization-vaccines-and-biologicals/essential-programme-on-immunization/supply-chain/guidance#chain
7. EMA Pharmacovigilance Committee: https://www.ema.europa.eu/en/committees/pharmacovigilance-risk-assessment-committee-prac
8. WHO vaccine reaction rates information sheets: https://www.who.int/teams/regulation-prequalification/regulation-and-safety/pharmacovigilance/guidance/reaction-rates-information-sheets
9. Institute for Vaccine Safety (Johns Hopkins University): https://www.vaccinesafety.edu/

10. VSN member websites
11. National regulatory authorities' websites
12. National Immunization Program websites

Annex 4: Analysis tool for web-related aspects

This tool brings together evaluations of the VSN criteria, plus an analysis matrix of web-related aspects that will be useful for evaluating options for optimizing the functionality of the website and the user experience. The first tab contains instructions on its use.

View Excel document: Web Assessment EN.xls