# Stakeholder Interview Guide

In order to understand the business requirements for an integrated content strategy for <organization>, Content Company and <client> will interview a variety of stakeholders/subject matter experts.

Goals of these interviews include:

* Learning more about each department’s business needs and goals
* Getting an understanding of each department’s knowledge about and perception of the association’s audiences and their needs
* Hearing first-hand about what is working now, as well as the impact of current challenges

We will conduct the interviews in small group sessions either in person or via phone conference call. We recommend that each group be comprised of either people in the same division or in comparable roles.

The interviews are for sharing as well as learning. We will encourage candid and honest discussion; the following questions will be used as guides for our discussions.

## Interview Questions

We will ask the following questions in all interviews:

1. What is the primary function of your role and department?
2. Of the content, programs, products, or services you provide, which do you feel are most important to the organization?
3. Who are the three most important audiences you communicate with or provide services for?
   * If members are one of your most important audiences, do you focus on specific member groups (students, new professionals, established professionals, etc.) or member types (industry, government, academic, etc.)? Can you prioritize these audiences?
4. For your most important audiences, what are they typically looking for from <organization>? In general, do you feel they are satisfied? In what areas do you feel your audiences need more content or information?
5. Do you set specific, measurable goals for the content that your division/department creates? If so, who creates those metrics and determines whether the content meets those metrics?
6. How much do you use each of <organization>’s digital channels (website, e-news, social media) to reach and engage with audiences who are interested in what you offer? In what ways are those digital channels effective for you, and how can they become more effective?
7. How much do you use non-digital channels to reach and engage with audiences? What channels do you use, how effective are they (are they measured?), and how can they become more effective?
8. What are the different ways the website supports your work? (In other words, if the website disappeared tomorrow, how would it affect your ability to do your job?) How do <organization>’s other channels support your work?
9. What are the biggest challenges for you regarding <organization>.org and <organization>’s other communication channels today? Do you hear complaints about anything and, if so, how do those factors affect your ability to accomplish your goals?
10. Who among your peers (other associations or commercial entities) has the websites, social media channels, or print communications you admire most? What do you like most about them? How would you rate <organization>’s channels in comparison to those?
11. What is the one thing/opportunity/objective you most want to see achieved as an outcome of this effort to align content?
12. How much information does your department/division publish? Has that volume changed over the last 1 to 2 years? Do you expect it to increase or decrease over the next 1 to 2 years?
13. How much time does your staff spend posting/publishing information? How has that changed over the last 1 to 2 years? Do you expect it to increase or decrease over the next 1 to 2 years?
14. How often do you need to get entirely new content developed? What is the process for that? (How do you identify the need, assign ownership, oversee development, qualify prior to publication?)
15. Is there a review process for the information you put online? Is your group following that process? Does that process result in higher quality information?
16. Are <organization>’s own channels the only or most authoritative source for the information you create?
17. Do you get feedback about the website? If so, what types of feedback do you typically receive, and through what channels? What actions do you take, if any, in response to the feedback you receive?

There are also questions that we’ll ask specific groups. For the most part, these will come up organically in conversations, but here are some examples:

For senior-level staff:

1. How should <organization>’s content advance and support the organization’s strategic goals?
2. How should <organization>’s content balance persistent strategic goals with short-term initiatives from leadership?

For people who post content for their department:

1. Roughly, what percentage of your job is devoted to creating, publishing, or managing your content? What is the balance between online and offline?
2. Do you use an editorial calendar or schedule to determine when to publish information? If so, who created that calendar, and who maintains it?
3. What proportion of your information has elements besides text, such as tables, graphics, forms, images, videos, etc.? If you have other elements, who creates those? How is this information saved, categorized, indexed? Do you plan for reuse when developing these assets?
4. How is your information promoted – for example, highlighted on your division/department landing page, the ift.org home page, on the organization’s Facebook page, LinkedIn group, or other social media channel(s), included in an e-newsletter, advertised elsewhere? Who is responsible for deciding on promotions and for executing them?
5. Do you get metrics for your content? If so, how often, and what actions do you take based on those metrics?