PLANNING YOUR

Content Strategy

BY ARIANNE FOULKS

A vital first step before creating a website is working on content strategy, and a very important part of your content strategy is going to be figuring out your site map: what pages will be on your website, and how are you going to organize your navigation so that people can find what they need?

If you already have a website, it's always good to take a look at it after some time has passed, reassess your goals, and adjust your pages and navigation. It can be great to do this on an existing site, because you will hopefully now have some data and feedback to use to inform your decisions.

Step 1: Define your goals

What is every possible thing your website could do to benefit you? Once you have these ideas, rank them in order of importance, so you'll know how to prioritize the different sections of your site later.

Examples:

1. Sell products directly to retail customers

2. Attract and inform potential wholesale clients.

3. Promote my custom design work.

Step 2: Consider your visitor's goals

Write down your visitor's goals when visiting your website. What interests her, what is helpful, what is she looking for?

Examples:

1. Find something cute for her sister's birthday.

2. See if she can return it if it's the wrong size.

3. Find out if it can be shipped to Singapore.

Step 3: Brainstorm your pages

It's fine to include anything at this stage, and you want to be sure you don't leave out any page you may end up needing. How do you plan to grow? For shops, consider product categories carefully: striking a balance between too few and too many should be your goal.

Examples:

home   custom work   wholesale   shop   blog   photo gallery   about events   press   testimonials   contact   FAQ   retailers   policies   our studio etc.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Step 4: Narrow it down

For every page above, consider if it directly helps you with your goals, or helps your customer with her goals. If not, cross it off the list.

Step 5: Prioritize

For every page above, consider if it directly helps you with your goals, or helps your customer with her goals. If not, cross it off the list.

Examples:

Vital: home - shop

Important: contact - policies

Useful: about - retailers - wholesale

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Step 6: Group

Group pages into lists of similar content, condensing certain groups of pages into one page where possible (such as your shipping, returns, and other policies).

Examples:

To be prominent: home - shop - contact

Easy to find: about - retailers

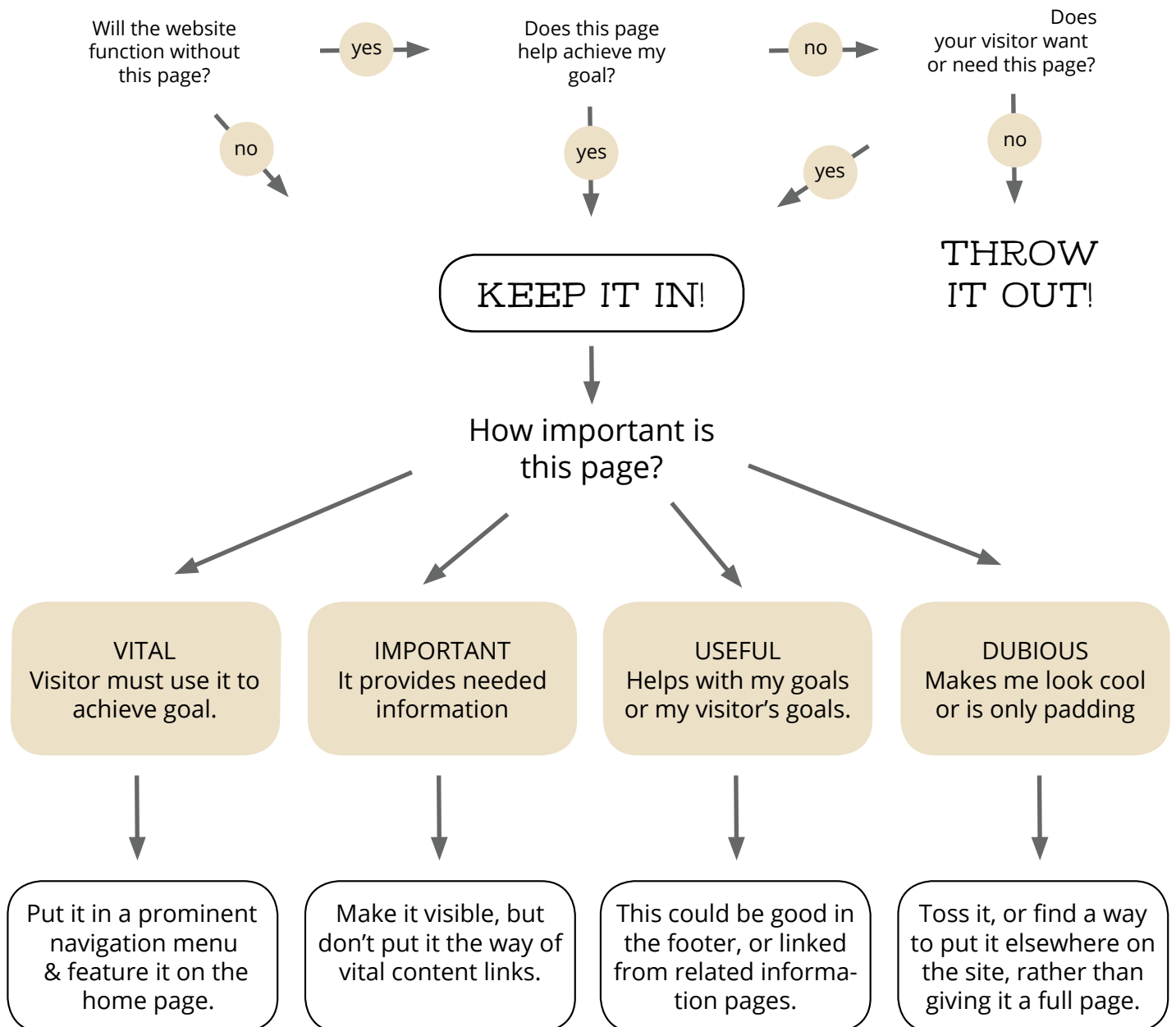*Down in the footer: policies - wholesale*

Step 7: create content & work on site structure

Now you can take your pages and create a rough site map and/or wire frame to plan your navigation. A site map can be written out in the form of an outline or ordered list, and a wire frame is a sketch of the layout of a website (not the design), showing where each navigation area and piece of content should be placed.

Site Map Prioritization

Once you have a list of pages to include on your website, you need to decide how to prioritize them. Take each page you're unsure about and run it through this flow chart to decide its fate.

Will the website function without this page?

yes →

Does this page help achieve my goal?

no →

Does your visitor want or need this page?

no

yes

yes

no

KEEP IT IN!

THROW IT OUT!

How important is this page?

VITAL	IMPORTANT	USEFUL	DUBIOUS
Visitor must use it to achieve goal.	It provides needed information	Helps with my goals or my visitor's goals.	Makes me look cool or is only padding
Put it in a prominent navigation menu & feature it on the home page.	Make it visible, but don't put it the way of vital content links.	This could be good in the footer, or linked from related information pages.	Toss it, or find a way to put it elsewhere on the site, rather than giving it a full page.

**Know the story of your business
and we'll help you tell it!**

Our work is transformative and custom to your business. After working with us, you'll be ready for the opportunities that will knock on your door. You can learn about our services on the next page.

Aeolidia

Better yet, your A-Z team. We're the complete package because we can't bear to imagine a beautiful website without a cohesive brand identity, a pretty design wrapped around poor content, or a perfect website with no customers. That's why we always have a few extras in our toolkit:

Brand Identity: You—yes you—are more than a beautiful logo. We design those, too, but more importantly we create thoughtful and engaging brand identities that last and last.

Print & Packaging Design: We delight in creating real experiences for customers using business stationery, product packaging, and printed marketing materials.

Illustration: If you can't quite picture it in your mind, let us do it for you. Express the inexpressible and unleash the intangible with custom illustrations that capture all that's unique about you.

Product Photography: Oh, snap! Presentation is everything, and photography is essential in bringing your product to picture-perfect life as your customer decides whether or not to make a purchase.

Copywriting: You have a story and a mission, but how will you tell it? Professional copywriting gets your message across in a way that speaks truth about you, your voice, and your brand.

Website Design & Development: We understand that for a creative business like yours, an online shop is not just a site, it's a home. Aeolidia is peerless (but never friendless) when it comes to creating websites that engage visitors, boost sales, and attract press.

Marketing Consultation: Your ideas are too amazing to keep to yourself. Launch them with laser-beam precision using a tailored marketing plan that'll help better your presence and boost your media exposure and sales.

Please email **hello@aeolidia.com** to ask about any of these things!