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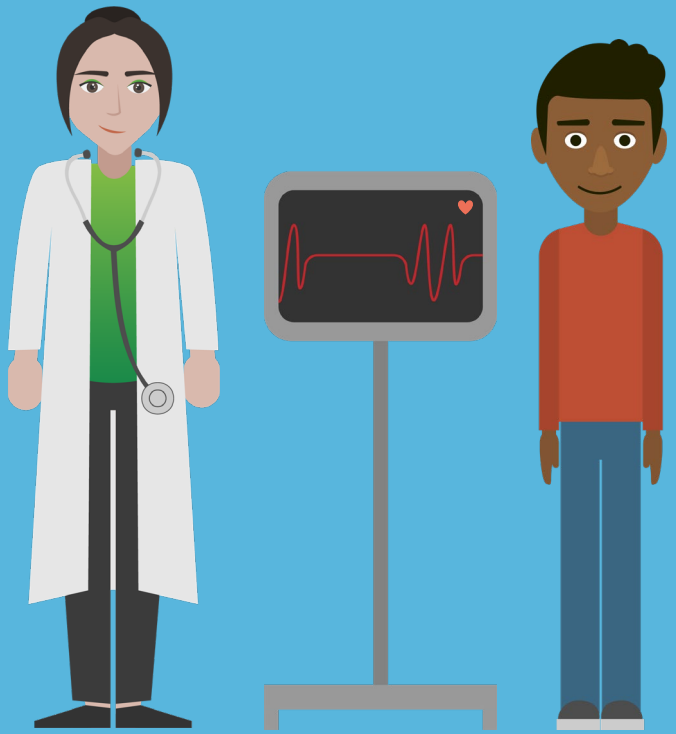
Tell Me Where It Hurts

Advocating for the User in Our Content and Beyond

Val Swisher, CEO
Content Rules, Inc

Do you ever feel like you are a doctor, and your patient is your customer? Perhaps you have been told to fix product problems in the documentation. Or perhaps you are testing some procedures you have written and realize that the user interface is confusing or convoluted.

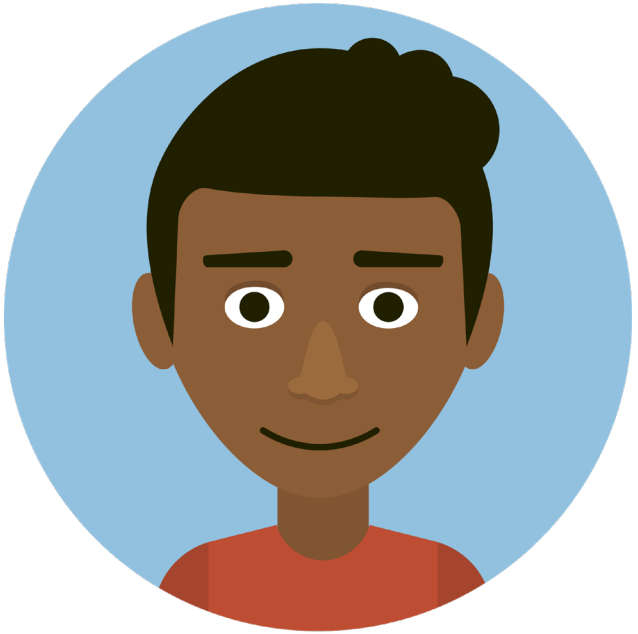


In this session, we will discuss how we advocate for customers while we do our jobs creating user documentation. We will look at ways you can best represent your customer before, during, and after the product is released.

1. **What is an Advocate?**
2. **Benefits of Advocacy**
   - For Business
   - For Users
3. **How to Advocate**
   - While Creating Content
   - Chatbots
   - After Product Ships
   - Staying in Touch

What is an Advocate?

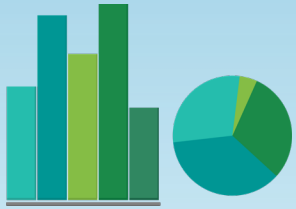
- Represents the customer
- Always customer-focused
- Direct communication line between customer and product



How Advocating for the Customer Helps

Benefit Business

- Increased Sales
- Reduced Support Costs



Benefit Both

- Improved User Experience
- Enhanced Brand Perception
- Increased Customer Satisfaction

Benefit Customer

- Better Product
- Reduced Frustration
- More Productivity

How User Advocacy Benefits the Business

Increased Sales

Reduced Support Costs

How User Advocacy Benefits the Business — Increased Sales

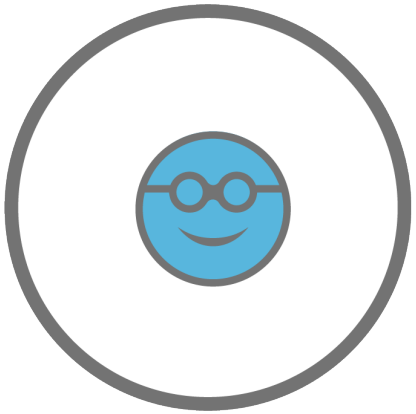
- Technical content is often used in customer research prior to the sale
- Better written and more accessible content attracts new customers
- Customer satisfaction increases the chances of recurring sales

How User Advocacy Benefits the Business — Reduced Support Costs

- Support content that is easily accessible saves money on live support
- Better documentation makes it easier for support agents and chatbots to help customers

How User Advocacy Benefits Customers

Better Products

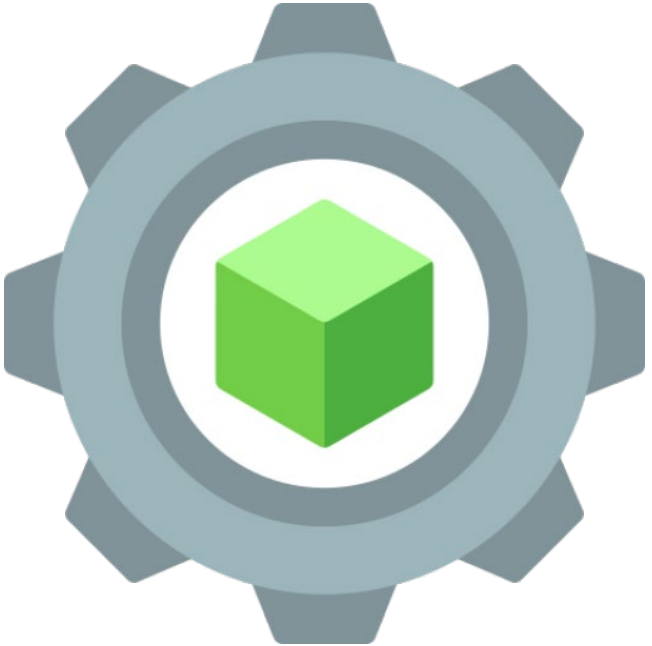


Less Frustration

More Productive

How User Advocacy Benefits Customers

- Products are more useful if the customer knows how to correctly use them
- Customers are less frustrated when they don't need to contact support
- Customers can do more with products that have effective documentation



How User Advocacy Benefits the Business and Customers

Improved User Experience

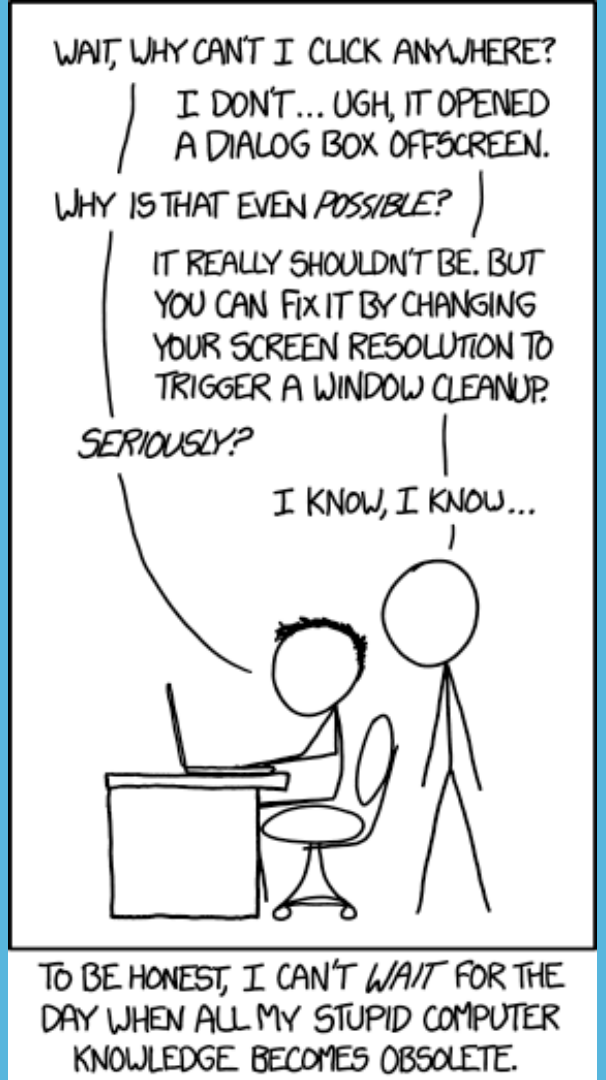
Enhanced Brand Perception

Increased Customer Satisfaction

How User Advocacy Benefits the Business and Customers

- Users have a better experience with the product when we advocate for them
- User advocacy can influence how users see your brand and if they choose your products in the future
- Users need content that is well-written and consistent —confusion leads to frustration

What's a Tech Comm Professional to Do?

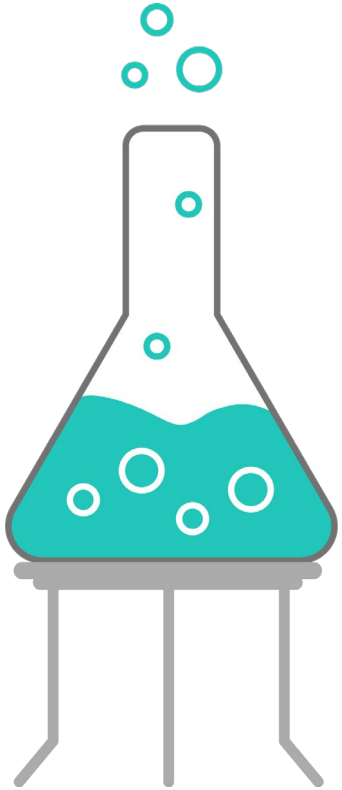


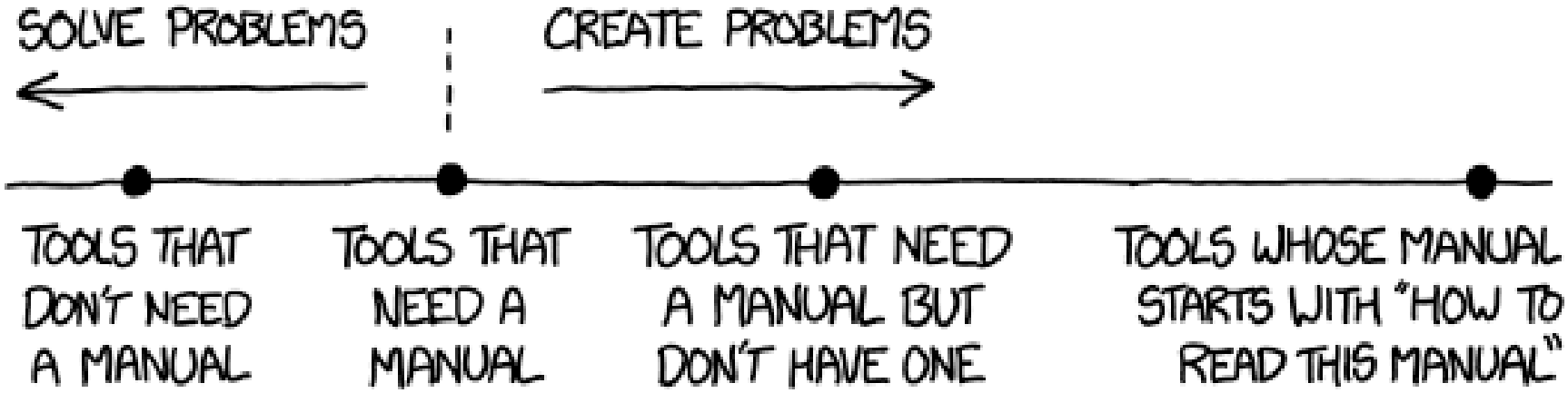
https://xkcd.com/

How to Advocate

While a Product is in Development

- Keep user focus in mind
- Explain (and re-explain) ramifications of poor design
- Participate in user interface design
- Provide feedback to marketing
- Provide feedback to engineering
- Participate in user testing





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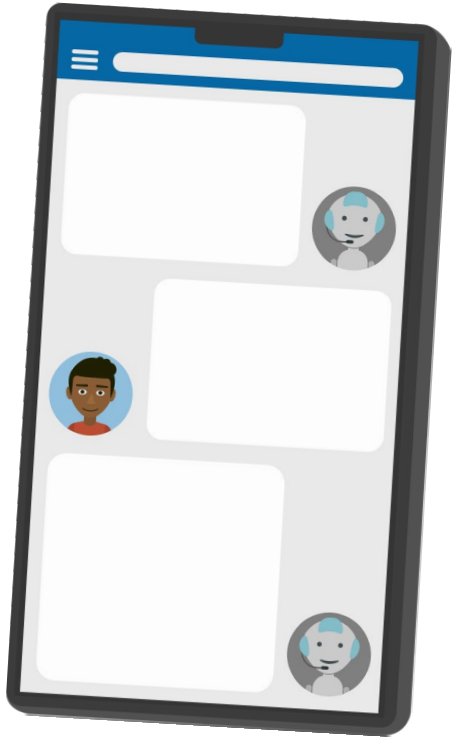
While Creating Content

- Pay attention to clarity and readability
- Single-source / reuse content
- Use consistent terminology
- Leave out ”nice to haves”

Chatbots — User Conversation

- When you write for chatbot, you are having a conversation with your user
- Need to be very careful with words —people don't want to read a lot in a chatbot response
- Try to mimic the customer voice and be conversational



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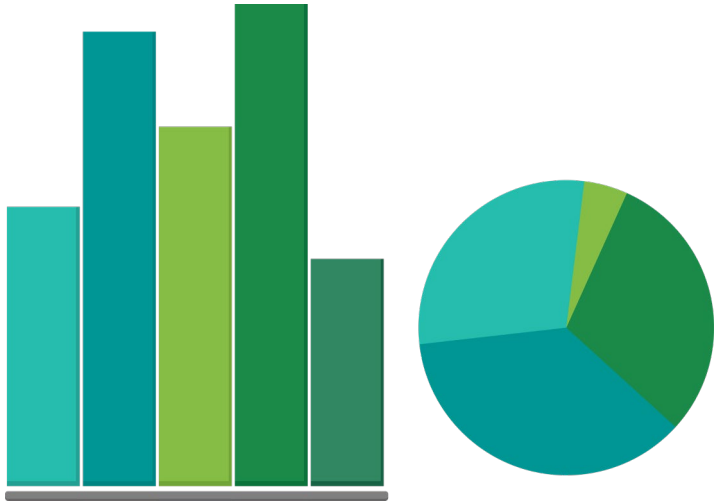
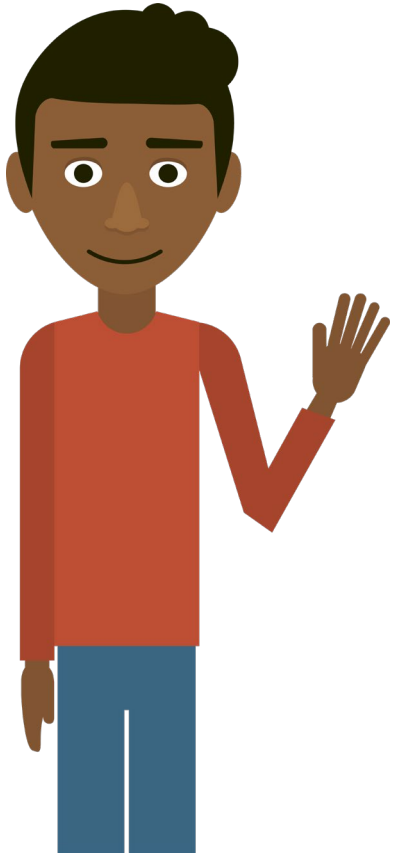
After Product Ships

- Survey content usefulness on webpage
- Survey customers directly
- Collaborate between knowledgebase and tech comm
- Reuse content wherever appropriate

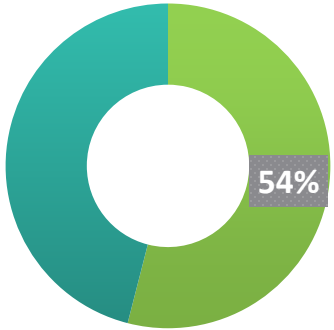


How to Stay in Touch with Customers

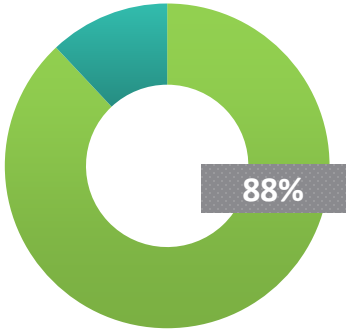
- Join (or start) a user community forum
- Get involved in your company's Facebook page
- Check out Twitter mentions
- Join LinkedIn groups
- Learn how to use Reddit



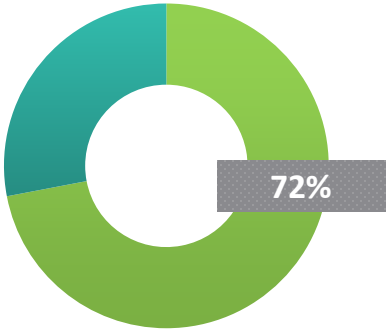
Consider Video Instead of Text



According to HubSpot, 54% of consumers want more videos



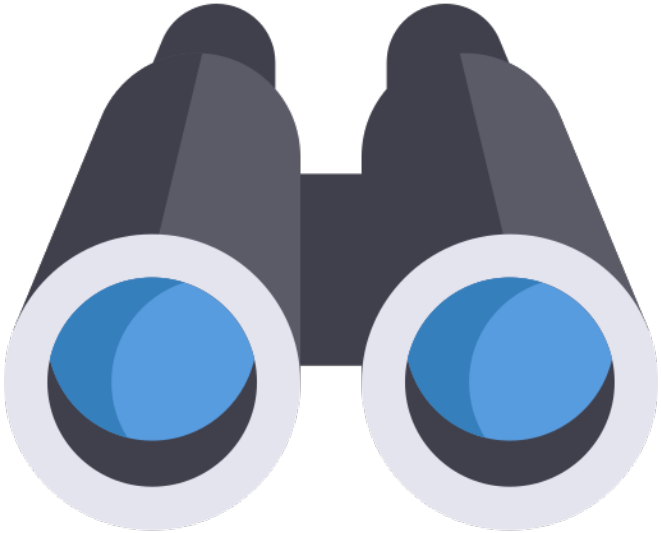
According to Forbes, the average use spends 88% more time on a website that has video



According to Wyzowl, 72% of people would rather use video to learn about a product or service

Check Out the Competition and the Non-Competition

- It's easy to get stuck — maybe other people have ideas you haven't considered
- Look at content that is available for products or services completely different from your own
  - Format
  - Structure
  - Media
  - Language



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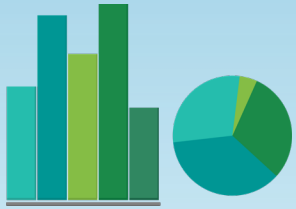

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Content Rules, Inc.

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1994

Founded in 1994

250+

Over 250 customers

5k+

Over 5,000 projects

Exclusive licensee of The Rockley Strategic Method

Authorized Acrolinx Reseller and exclusive North American Service Provider

Our Services

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Unified Content Strategy

- Content audit and analysis
- Structured authoring
- Taxonomy and metadata
- Content reuse
- Workflow
- Governance

Global Content Strategy

- Multilingual enterprise content management
- Multilingual content quality audit
- Global content analysis
- Pre-translation editing
- Structured authoring

Content Development

- Supplement your staff
- Provide specialized knowledge
- Scale up and down
- Spend time and money wisely
- Get productive fast

Content Optimization

- Content quality upgrade
- Linguistic analysis
- Terminology management
- Pre-translation editing
- Multilingual quality audit
- Global readiness training

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