

EXEUNT

CONTENT AUDIT & ASSESSMENT



UNT TECHNICAL COMMUNICATION

TEAM 2+SEP2021

PREPARED BY ERYN B., PAIGE G. & KELLI V.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Exuent provides powerful, innovative software tools that allow more than 1,500 companies to run their businesses and dominate their market. To help Exuent continue being the most innovative software, our team conducted a content audit to evaluate the preferences guides and provide recommendations to improve content performance.

Our findings, captured in the content assessment spreadsheet, show that the preference guides consistently perform well in terms of context, summaries, and titles, but there is room for improvement with images, plain language, purpose statements, and page length. These issues may impact your customers' ability to quickly find answers to their questions using a preference guide.

Additionally, our report evaluates the user experience of Exuent's customer software and provides recommendations and resources for improving the site's ease of use, navigation, links, metadata, and accessibility.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide the client, Exuent, a content assessment of their customer software website. The client has requested recommendations to improve user experience, documentation, and encourage customers to explore the website as opposed to calling support anytime they have a question or issue.

To gain a thorough perspective of a user, we analyzed the preference user guides. We read each preference guide and rated them based on their clarity, consistency, and use of images. We also provide suggestions for copy editing and improving accessibility. Keeping these metrics in mind, our team has identified areas that can be modified to better help your customers.



ASSESSMENT METHODS

After our initial assessment of the demo site, we decided to focus on preference guide content performance, site organization and navigation, and color blindness simulations. We want to help Exuent improve their customer experience, especially for customers with vision challenges.

We examined all fifty-nine preference guides as requested, using the article number as the unique ID for each. The Content Assessment worksheet contains the content performance ratings of low, medium, and high based on the number of errors in each area compared to the style guide rubric provided by Exuent. The majority of the content performs well across the board.

The page metrics section of the same worksheet provides at-a-glance numbers we gathered for each guide. Several guides are rather lengthy, as indicated by red backgrounds in the Word Count column.

Our team noticed how light the customer software color scheme appeared. This realization inspired a spot check for the nine types of color blindness. The color blindness simulation sheet in the accompanying Excel workbook evaluates Exuent's content against these deficiencies.

FINDINGS

During our content audit, we discovered three areas of improvement that can be addressed by technical writers. Those areas are images, clarity, consistency. Specific details about each instance may be found in the spreadsheet. We have also included several donut charts that provide an overview of the types of issues and their evaluations on a low, medium, and high scale.

- **Low:** A guide has more than three issues that affect user experience.
- **Medium:** A guide has one to two issues that affect user experience.
- **High:** A guide has no issues that affect user experience.



Images

In the Images category (Fig. 1), we examined the use and effectiveness of images within the individual guides. We learned that a majority of the images in the preference guides need to be modified to improve user readability. Modifying the images to be easier to read would enhance user comprehension on the overall customer software website.

Preference Guide Images

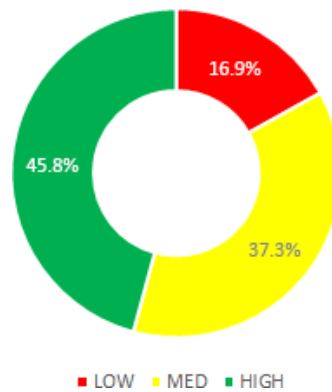


Fig. 1

Clarity

The Clarity category analyzes the plain language, context, and related guides within the preference guides. The guides generally perform well in the plain language (Fig. 2) and context areas (Fig. 3), but all of the guides have fifty-nine related guides. This poses a problem for users looking for a similar guide and instead of suggesting personalized guides, the website suggests all available preference guides.

Plain Language

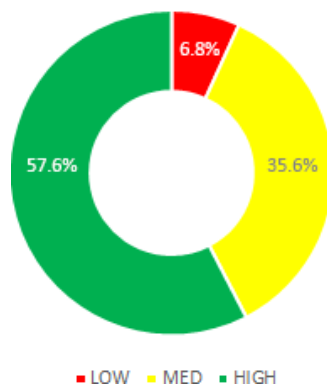


Fig. 2

Context

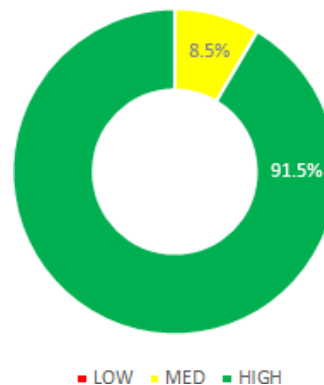
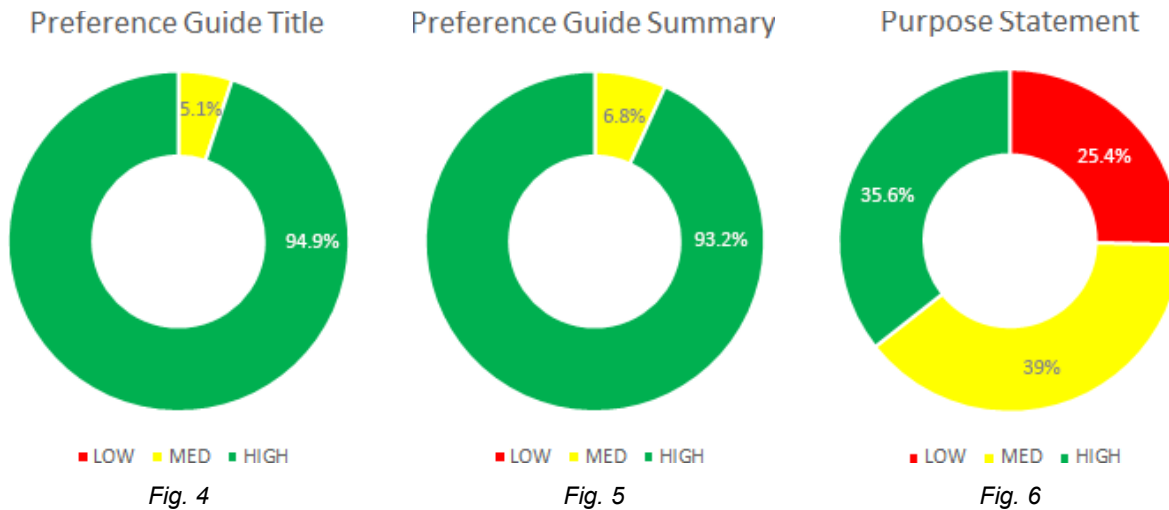


Fig. 3

Consistency

The Consistency category examines the titles (Fig. 4), summaries (Fig. 5), and purpose statements (Fig. 6) of each preference guide. This category serves to inspect how informative the guides are to the users. We found that the titles and summaries of the preference guides do well in providing clarity for the user about the respective preference guide, but the purpose statements on multiple preference guides need to be modified for clarity and conciseness.



Additionally, we captured data about the software's ease of use, navigation, links, metadata, page length, and related guides, which are outlined in the User Experience section.

USER EXPERIENCE

Although our focus in this report is on a small portion of the customer software experience, we hope our recommendations may be useful sitewide.

Ease of Use

The customer website application is a wealth of information for the customer, but finding the exact information they need is a challenge. It appears this site may have had modest beginnings but is now growing exponentially and the presentation of information needs to keep up with customers' needs.



Navigation

We found navigating the site challenging due to the layout and lack of contrast between multiple navigation bars and page backgrounds. The taskbar at the bottom of the screen was especially difficult to find when we first started finding our way around the site. In the event of a future design rollout, we recommend combining the top and bottom taskbars and enhancing the website colors to match the blue and green on the website, as they have excellent contrast. The Exeunt customer website would also greatly benefit from the addition of a site map.

The Dashboard pie charts are a very nice and colorful feature. Are the chart categories moveable? Is the customer able to hide the ones they don't use very often? Customers with smaller desktop screens, tablets, or mobile devices will have to scroll through several rows.

Links

Links in the guides open new material in the same window, so customers have to use the back arrows to find the page they were just reading. We suggest using the target attribute to have links open in new windows, especially if the link takes them off the Exeunt website. The breadcrumb links in the guides are a handy feature. Rather than manually following the breadcrumbs, it would be helpful if the final item was a link to the page described. And finally, we recommend that every technical guide mentioned in an article be linked to the target guide.

We recommend using a quick link system for each preference guide or at least for the larger guides (Fig. 7).

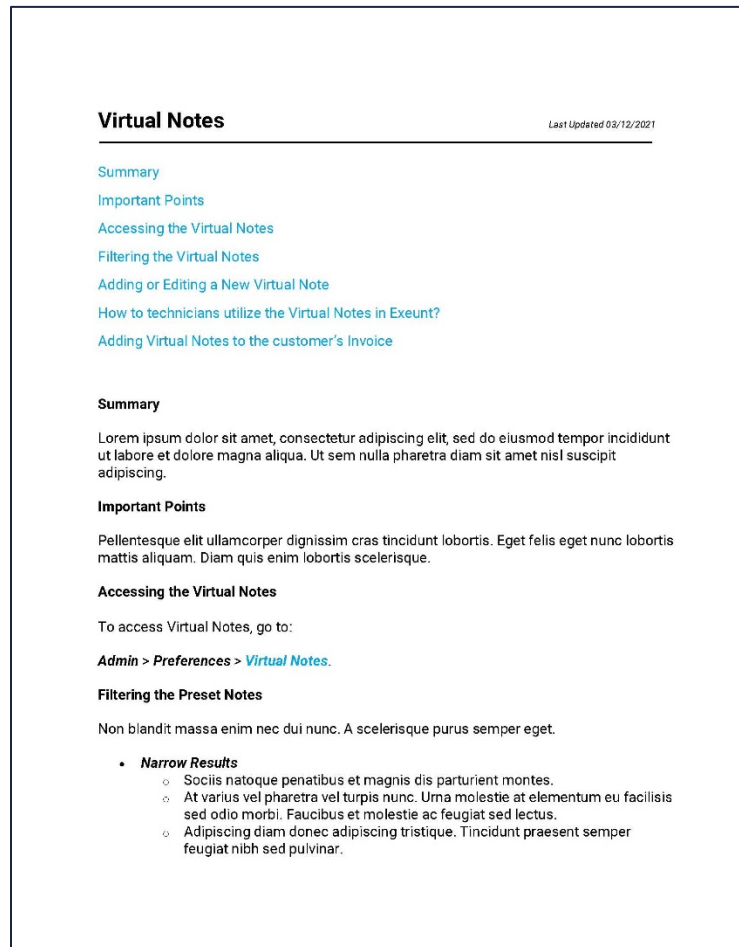


Fig. 7



Metadata

The information in this section involves content findability and though the Exuent technical writers may not be able to address these issues themselves, others on the Exuent team may. Exuent's Search engine optimization (SEO) methods are a great cost-efficient way to boost Google visibility.

Currently, the title element metadata in the preference guides appears to be identical on every page. Open browser tabs for technical guides all have the name "Exuent Help Page" title, which makes distinguishing between multiple tabs without clicking on the tab to see the content impossible for the customer. Images need alt text and captions or figures.

We used an SEO spider application to scan the website and discovered no meta keywords exist on 167 of the 175 Exuent website pages. A number of broken links and missing meta descriptions on the Exuent website is logged in the Broken Links tab in the spreadsheet. We recommend completing the descriptions and adding keywords so each page will enhance SEO rankings.

Accessibility

A thorough check of the Exuent's website and customer software application for [web content accessibility guides \(WCAG\)](#) compliance is highly recommended. Throughout this report, we've mentioned use of image alt text, meta page titles, and use of color, as seen on the Color Blindness Simulations on the spreadsheet, but this is by no means a comprehensive WCAG listing.

Preference Guide Page Length

Most of the preference guides are a manageable length, some are not, as noted in the Content Assessment page metrics Word Count column of the spreadsheet. Some of the preferences guides are more than 2,000 words, longer than this report. The spreadsheet Content Management page metrics section helps provide a better picture of the image/header/text ratio in the Exuent preference articles.

If the customer is reading the guides on a phone or tablet, the longer pages require a considerable amount of scrolling. We suggest dividing the larger guides into a series of smaller guides or placing quick find links based on the guides' subheadings at the top of the page (Fig. 7).



Related Guides

Each preference guide has the same related guides tag cloud at the bottom, whether the guides are related or not; it is like the listing is utilized as a standard guide footer. If it is not possible to personalize keywords for each guide, it would be beneficial to at least alphabetized the listing.

CONCLUSION

Keeping Exuent goals in mind, our content assessment provides data and recommendations we believe technical writers can quickly use to update the preferences guides. In addition to our content findings, we believe developers can employ our user experience data and suggestions to make changes that will provide a better customer online experience. We believe implementing our content and user experience suggestions will allow customers to easily find answers using the preferences guides and reduce the support center's call volume.