

Charter for an engineering knowledge management workgroup

This document outlines a series of goals, processes, strategies, and metrics behind establishment of a workgroup focused on engineering-related content across New Relic.

Group Name



Relics for the Organization of Knowledge and Documentation (ROKD)

Mission

ROKD collaborates across New Relic to reduce the friction and fill the gaps in making knowledge accessible.

Our opportunity

Today, our internal docs hamper efficient product development, innovation, and quality:

- the product org toils chasing where to put or pull information and how to structure content
 - we don't understand each other or the platform and interrupt roadmap work to gain clarity
 - we toil to find information and it is often incomplete or outdated when we do find it
 - our developers can't create their best-quality work
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Strategies

We'll reduce information toil and improve sanity of our engineers; improve product quality, innovation speed, and customer success; and get new hires confident with our platform and practices so they move faster to senior positions.

We'll guide the documentation and knowledge experience for all engineers. We'll manage docs debt; update developer tools to automatically build in documentation best practices to the dev process; and provide guidance on where, how, when, and why to use various documentation, communication, and diagramming tools.

There are an inexhaustible list of areas we can contribute, many of which will be defined by the workgroup. Some ideas:

- orchestrate doc hackathons to improve specific engineering content via updates or archival or generating diagrams
 - establish governance and best practices around documentation and doc tools
 - create doc tools, templates, or updating existing tools to automate part of the docs process
 - standardize terminology
 - vet and share cool ideas, tools, or processes for documentation or knowledge management
 - suggest useful, easy-to-implement changes to our docs culture
 - plan and establish a knowledge management / documentation CoP focused on engineering content
 - liaise with the Tools Governance Board for additional momentum around tooling changes
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Process

👍 We prioritize the group's flexibility and momentum in the following ways:

- work asvnc as much as possible via Slack

- no one is assigned work...they volunteer on tasks in a [myriad of ways](#) as their time permits
- no regularly scheduled meetings
- we avoid zoom unless absolutely necessary
- we break work into small pieces that are easily accomplished in two-week cycles
- we announce and celebrate our wins and give kudos and [Relicnition](#)
- we use simple poll mechanisms to vote on questions, tasks, and approaches posted in our slack channel and fallback to official DACIs only when a decision seems too complex

👍 We keep engineering informed and guide engineers both directly and indirectly:

- anyone not in the core workgroup is welcome to provide feedback, ideas, or concerns via [our Slack channel](#)
- we announce any planned work in [#dev-announcements](#) (where else?)
 - we announce what we are working on and why we think it is important
 - we link to the guidance around why we came up with the recommendation
 - we get engineers involved to help them understand and utilize the guidance
- we file Jira tickets against the [Growth Engineering -> Internal Dev Docs team](#) with the ticket summary prefixed with **WORKGROUP -** and the **knowledge-workgroup** label added.
- we lead others by our own example
- we evaluate our progress periodically, including via a survey measuring the engineering sentiment around documentation

👍 We embrace, promote, and improve upon our [internal communication guidelines](#).

👍 We are [driven by metrics](#).

Metrics

The workgroup will define, review, and evaluate our success via data. Some examples include:

- reduce the number of inactive sites and inactive content (# of completed archival tickets in Jira, # of archived sites or Confluence spaces)
 - increase traffic toward authoritative content (analytics on page views)
 - decrease the average age of unmodified or unreviewed content (average last_modified dates of github pages or Confluence docs)
 - reduce slack questions about where to put or find content or how to structure it
 - decrease the number of requests to the help channels that can be solved with existing documentation
 - increase speed of doc contributions and content updates (# of open PRs, PR age)
 - increase docs satisfaction and reduce toil for engineers (survey responses)
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First steps

The early participants of this group get to pick a fun name and shape the working group from the beginning including determining metrics we want to use. Additionally, early on, we'll collaborate on the following:

- Tackle low hanging fruit with immediate impact:
 - propose content sites (and Confluence spaces) that can be archived without moving any content elsewhere and file tickets to archive
 - define goals for the Engineering Confluence space
 - Remove any remaining old links from [Engineering Process Nerdlife page](#)

- Recommend outdated content to update on the [Product onboarding Nerdlife page](#)
 - brainstorm and prioritize doc opportunities and challenges
 - create a survey to measure health of our engineering content, its impact to engineers, and gather ideas for improvement
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Participation details

This workgroup provides several benefits to its members:

- fulfills passion to improve knowledge management and help others
- provides opportunities to
 - grow leadership experience
 - increase influence
 - shape a better future for engineering at New Relic

There's lots of ways to contribute—it's not all or nothing! For example:

- help generate and prioritize ideas for the workgroup
 - vote in slack
 - provide feedback or opinions
 - identify the right person or team to contact about an action item
 - create a slack announcement
 - organize and host an event
 - participate in a content mob session
 - file Jira tickets
 - lead a talk about a knowledge management topic
 - update internal tools
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Active Members

Informational resources

- [Our workgroup's backlog](#)
- [See how other companies like LinkedIn, Uber, Spotify, Facebook, and Twitter manage and enable Engineering knowledge](#)