



Content Modeling in 5 Steps: A Practical Guide for Optimizing Your Content

INTRODUCTION

Today's digital world requires an agile, powerful organization strategy – and content modeling answers the call.



The modern content market is fierce. You have access to users around the world – but so do other organizations. To stay competitive among so many other voices, you need to optimize your content's production and performance. That's where content modeling comes in.

Content modeling organizes your content in a deliberate, consistent way. This makes accessing, adding to, and maintaining your assets easier. As a result, you can use all of your content to its fullest potential with minimum friction and maximum efficacy.

But what does content modeling look like on the ground floor? Let's take a look at how using it can supercharge your organization. We'll also show you five easy steps to start content modeling with Storyblok. Let's go!

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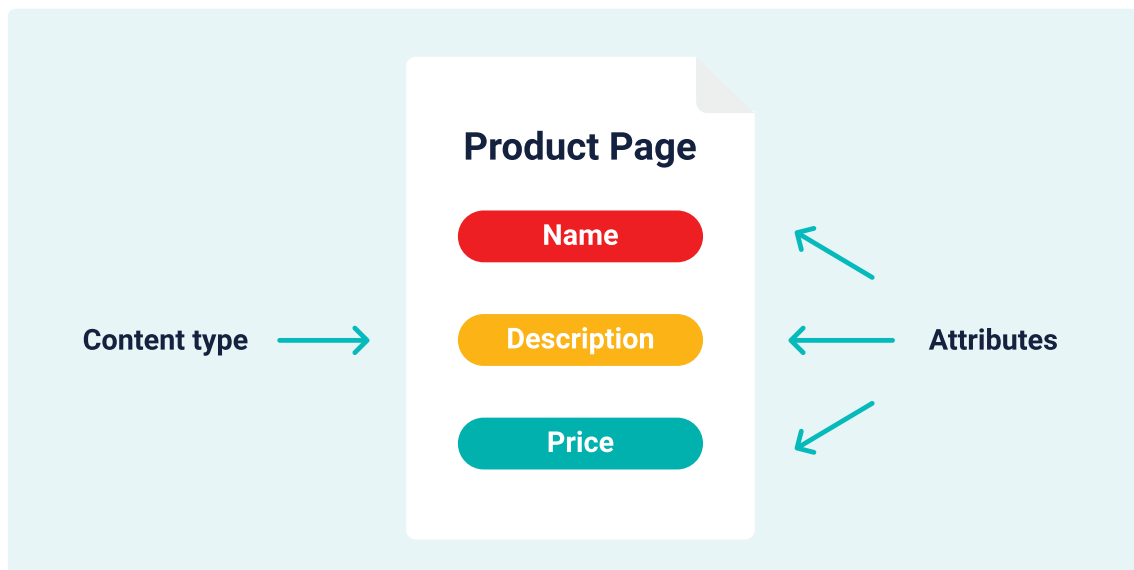
What is content modeling?

Content modeling is the process of mapping out the architecture of your content and its relationships by breaking them down into component parts.

Let's frame that in more practical terms. Every site has some form of content on it - for example, blog posts, podcast episodes, or store pages. These are called **content types** and serve as the general categories of what your content can look like.

Each content type is built by combining different aspects such as text fields, images, contact forms, and so on. These smaller component aspects are called **content attributes**.

The process of defining content types and the content attributes that make them up is **content modeling**.



How does content modeling benefit my organization?

The strategy may be fairly straightforward, but the payoffs can be impressive. Let's take a look at three of the most important benefits your company can obtain through using content modeling.



BETTER ORGANIZATION AND OVERALL EFFICIENCY

Having a clear understanding of your content and how it operates is essential. With content modeling, you're creating infrastructure for your site that can be used for years to come. **It provides everything with its own place, making it easy to add, delete, and find content in your ecosystem.**

In addition to saving time and resources through fewer roadblocks, this also helps your teams with their workflows. People working together on the backend won't run into confusion over what a content type is supposed to include. As a result, they can collaborate with the same centralized information for a more efficient work process.



EASIER TO REUSE CONTENT AND PUBLISH IT ACROSS MULTIPLE PLATFORMS

Content modeling also impacts how you distribute your work. Breaking it into smaller, more manageable pieces makes it easier to reuse the same content in different contexts without having to make drastic changes.

For example, let's say your website uses contact forms as a content attribute. They may pop up on several different content types, from the main page to Q&A sections. If you set this as an attribute early on, it becomes simple to reuse it wherever you need it.

This is not only a time-saver, but also a way to fully embrace the omnichannel marketing techniques that are so crucial to competing in today's modern markets. Content modeling provides the structure you need to quickly and consistently scale to new channels, whether they be traditional like web browsers or cutting-edge like AR/VR.



PROVIDE USERS WITH A CONSISTENT UX

Content modeling essentially creates a library of reusable content at your fingertips. The structure provides a single source of truth that can be accessed by everyone working on a project. As a result, each team has a perfect guide as to what the content is supposed to look like.

Because there's an established structure, there's little room for accidental irregularities when using content modeling. Instead, there's an element of "regulated flexibility", allowing for the visual customization of components that still remain within the boundaries of corporate identity. **This leads to a consistent, professional experience for frontend users that never looks out of place.**

For example, every instance of your “about the author” attribute will look the same no matter where it pops up unless an editor specifically decides to change it. The result is that your visitors will know what to expect of your site every time they visit it, contributing to a polished brand experience.

DID YOU KNOW?



Content modeling doesn't just bring these benefits as a one-time event: it's an investment in your future, too. These advantages will continue as long as you keep up your content modeling structure. The initial investment of time and resources you put into creating it will continue to give back to your organization as long as it's maintained.

The Way to Modern Content

Storyblok is the next-gen headless content management system empowering over 160,000 developers and content teams to create revolutionary content experiences across any digital channel.



TRUSTED BY



582% ROI

per Forrester Total
Economic Impact Study

Customer Choice

Award from Gartner

#1

Enterprise Headless
CMS from G2

Want to learn more about how Storyblok is helping companies around the world produce ground-breaking digital content experiences? Read our [case studies](#), or [reach out to a member of our team](#) today!


5 steps to content modeling with Storyblok

Storyblok is an enterprise-level [Headless Content Management System](#) that allows content creators to manage content intuitively thanks to the real-time visual feedback provided by its powerful and unique [Visual Editor](#). It is technology agnostic, ready for omnichannel marketing, easily extendable, and cloud-based. Its API-first design also means it's optimized for incredible performance.

Storyblok truly embraces component-driven development and design. It does so by providing you with easily configurable [content blocks](#) to custom-tailor the data structure for your projects. **This makes Storyblok the premier option for flexible, robust, and future-proof content modeling.**

STEP 1: DEFINE YOUR CONTENT TYPES

This process begins with an assessment of the current state of your existing site. What kind of content are you publishing right now? Think broadly! We're only focusing on the content types at this stage, so you don't need to worry about the attributes just yet.



REMEMBER

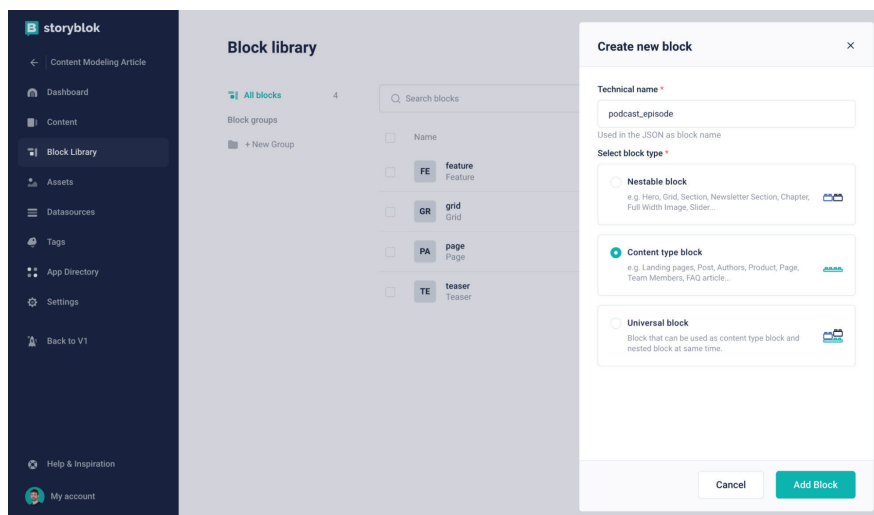
A few examples of content types include user profiles, blog posts, slideshows, product pages, and calendar pages.

However, an important part of this step is thinking about the future as well. Your site's needs and what resonates with your audiences may change over the years, so keep an eye on content types that might develop in the future.

For example, your brand might create a podcast, and you might want a content type that exists just to provide audio files for each weekly episode. Having an idea of what your future needs may include is an important part of keeping content modeling active.

We also recommend that you check for potential issues among your existing content at this point. For example, does the same content type look different every time it's posted? Are there certain content types that are consistently underperforming? Noting roadblocks now will help you address them accurately in later steps.

Once you have these concepts laid out theoretically, you can apply them practically. In Storyblok, you can easily create any number of [Content type blocks](#) to represent the different types of content that your brand requires. In order to accomplish that, you can create a new block in the Block Library of a Storyblok space and choose to create a new Content type block. Let's follow the example of creating a content type for a podcast episode.



STEP 2: CREATE FIELDS ASSOCIATED WITH THOSE CONTENT TYPES

Now that you have a broad idea of what you'll need to keep track of for your site, we can get into the more specific aspects of what attributes make them up. Take a typical blog article content type for example. You may think of your ideal blog post and see a pattern of attributes that appear on that page type, such as

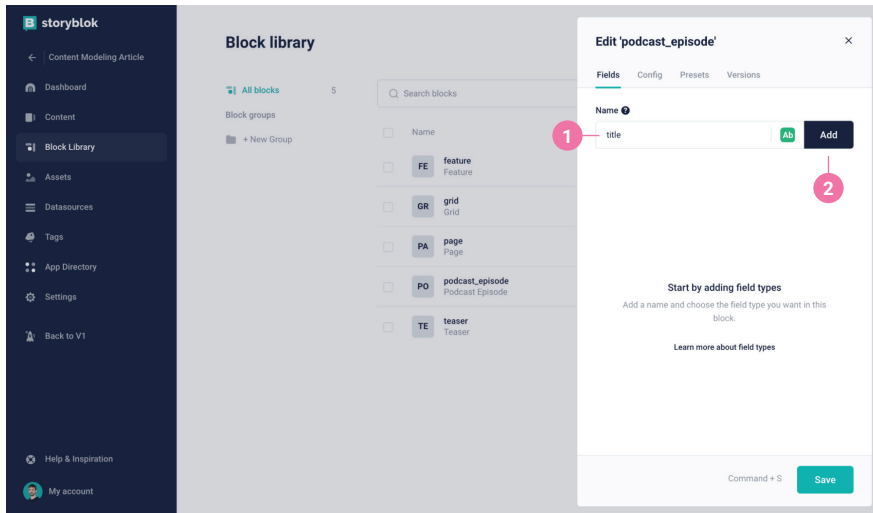
- Text boxes
- Images
- Author descriptions
- Newsletter signups
- Summaries
- Tables of contents

Some attributes may only belong to a single content type. Some will be more popular – text fields, for example, are likely to show up in quite a few of your content types. The important thing for this step is to **establish what fields are associated with which content types so you can create them accurately.**

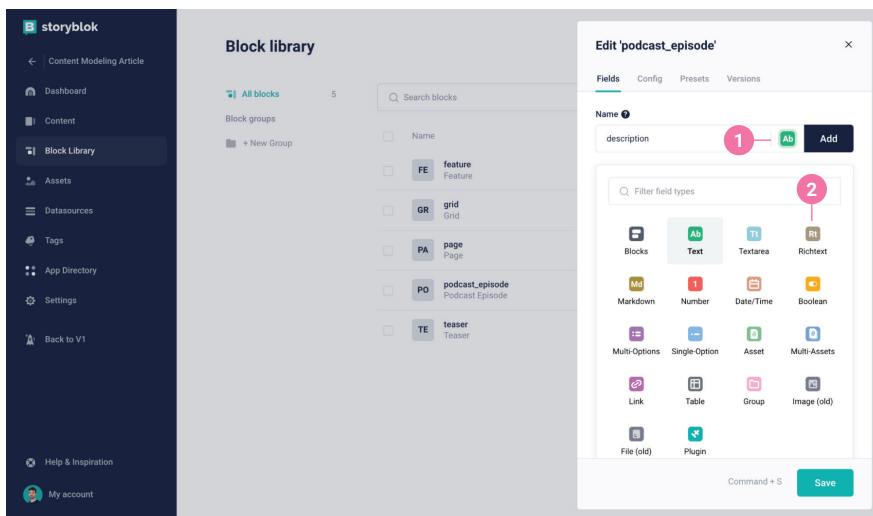
When you have a clear idea of the structure, you can move on to creating those fields with Storyblok. After having created the new Content type block, you can configure its attributes, which are represented by [fields](#) in Storyblok. Fields can also have different types. For the podcast episode content type, the following fields may be relevant:

- A title
- A description
- The actual audio file

You can create a new field for your content type block by first of all providing a name **{1}**, and then clicking Add **{2}**. Let's create the title field.



Next, let's create the field for the description. You can start by entering the name. However, this time, let's actually choose a different field type. This can be accomplished by clicking on the icon next to the name {1}, allowing you to choose from numerous options. The default type for new fields is **Text**. For the description, you may want to choose the **Richtext** type {2}, providing the editors with much more flexibility with regards to styling and formatting the text content.



Finally, let's add the field for the podcast episode. You can repeat the previous steps, but choose "podcast_episode" as the name and **Asset** as the field type.

Just like that, you successfully modeled your first content type in Storyblok, ready to be used when creating new [Stories](#). Of course, this is just scratching the surface, so let's explore what else is possible to take your content modeling to the next level.

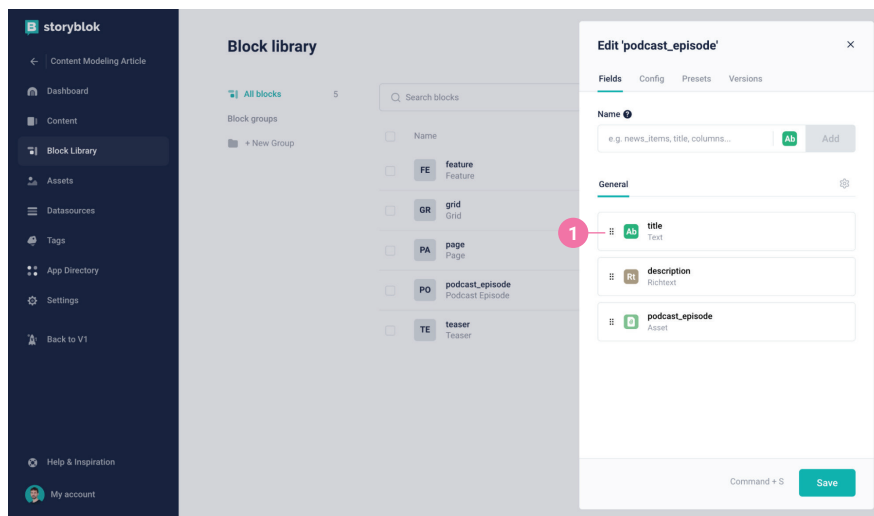
STEP 3: ENSURE CONFORMITY

We've covered continuity as a major benefit of content modeling. **You can make sure you get the full benefits when customizing your templated options.** Storyblok allows you to tailor a variety of fields to make sure editors are following guidelines that best represent your content.

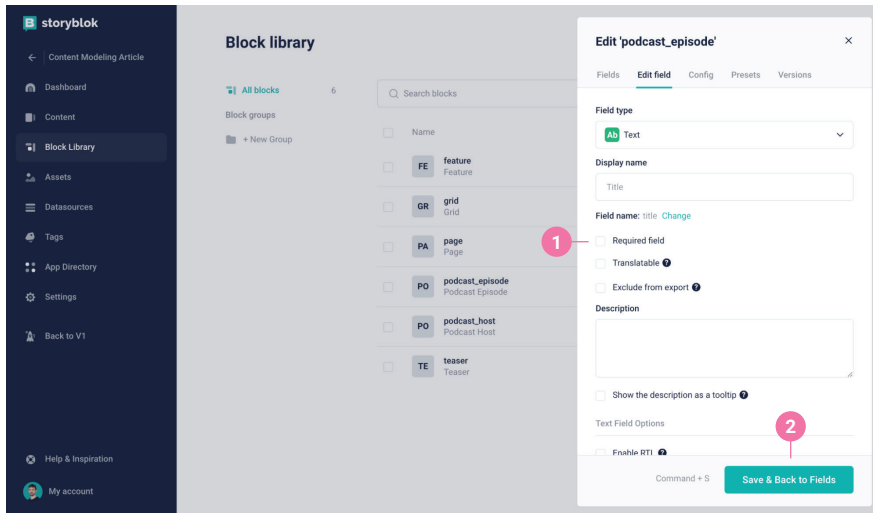
Storyblok allows you to customize and finetune each field you create. This makes it possible to complete tasks such as:

- Mark fields as required
- Set default values
- Provide different options to choose from
- Set a minimum or maximum char length

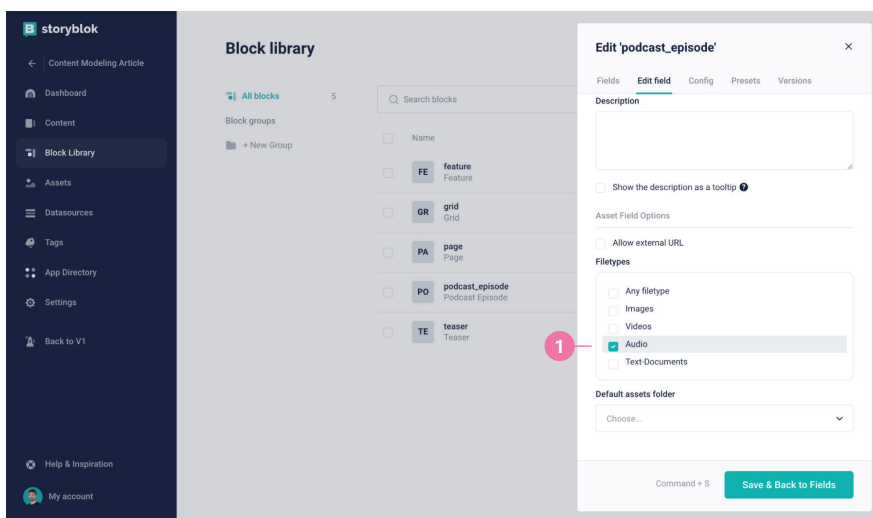
Let's dive into some examples. For your podcast episode content type, you would probably want to avoid the scenario that certain fields are omitted and left blank. Most likely, the description could remain optional, whereas the title and the podcast episode should always be provided. In order to ensure that, you can click on any of your existing fields in your content type block. Let's enter the configuration menu of the title field **{1}**.



Here, you can set the field as required **{1}**. After having saved **{2}**, you may want to repeat the same steps for the podcast episode field.



In the podcast episode field, you may also want to control the type of files that can be uploaded. You can ensure that only audio files can be uploaded {1}, preventing content creators from mistakenly uploading an image or video instead.




These are just two short examples to illustrate the multitude of options you have at your disposal when configuring fields in Storyblok, resulting in the perfect balance between flexibility and guidance for your brand's editorial team.

STEP 4: DEFINE RELIATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CONTENT

Next, it's time to **establish relationships between the content types and attributes you're producing**. Understanding what your content types have in common and what they don't will give you the clearest possible idea of your system and how it operates.

For example, it can provide insight into aspects such as:

- Navigational paths on the website
- SEO-optimized linking strategies
- Inefficient content dependencies that should be eliminated



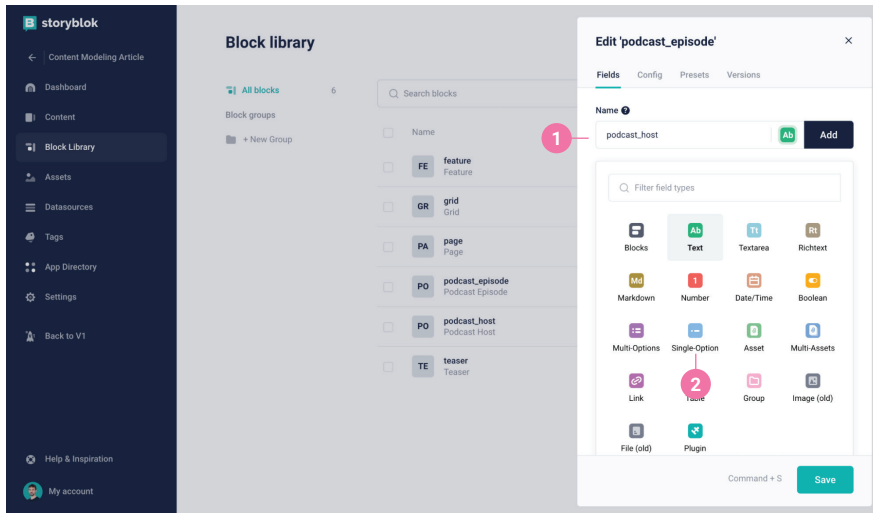
REMEMBER

Keep in mind that content modeling is not the same as a full-page template. You don't have to create an exact page structure for each content type that includes each content attribute. It's more about the relationships themselves, not how they're positioned.

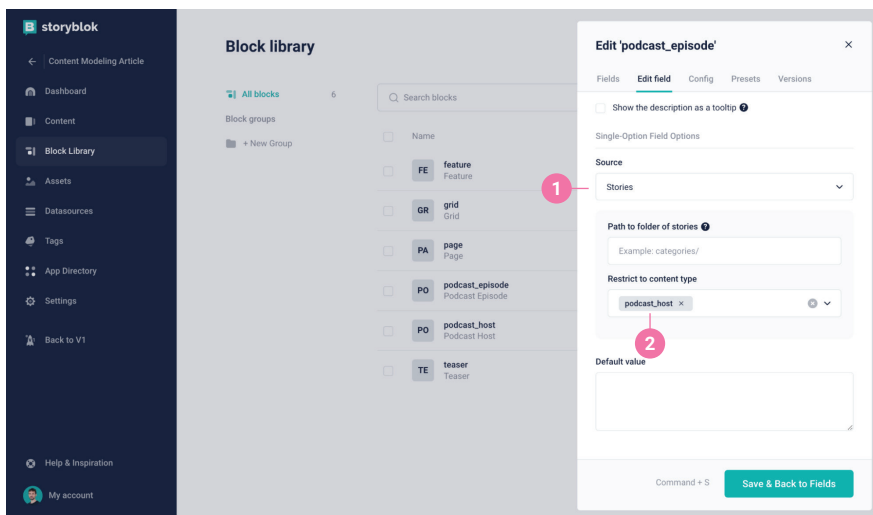
To establish these relationships within Storyblok, you can use single-option and multi-option fields in order to create links to other content entries. In the context of the podcast episode content type, a good example of content that should ideally be linked or referenced would be a podcast host.

Following the instructions outlined in Steps 1 and 2, you could create a new content type block called "podcast_host" which could, for example, consist of fields like name, about, profile picture, etc. You could also leave the podcast host content type block empty for now and define its structure at a later stage.

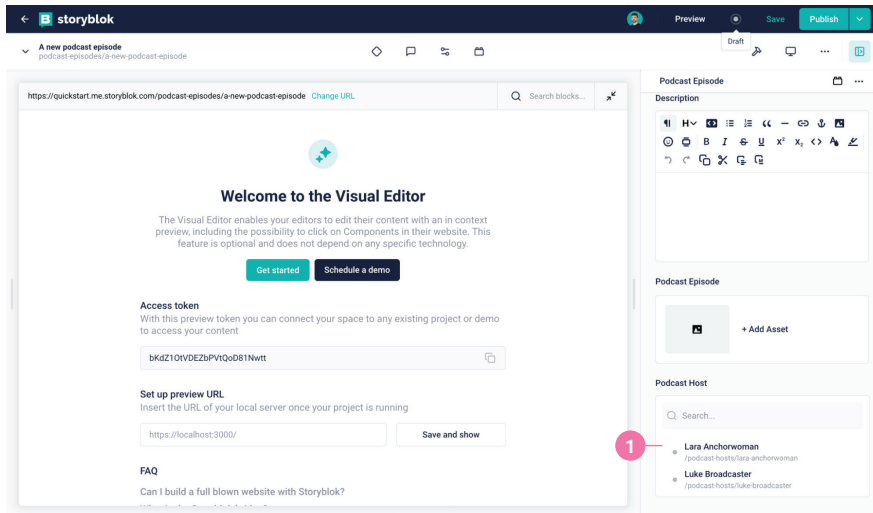
Now that your new content type exists, you can go back to your podcast episode content type and create a new field that serves to establish the relationship between a podcast episode and a podcast host. Let's call the field `podcast_host {1}` and choose single-option as its type `{2}`.



In the field's configuration menu, you can now set the **Source** to **Stories {1}**, and further restrict the content type to the podcast host content type you created earlier **{2}**.



That's it! Now, your editorial team can choose any host that's already been created **{1}**, which has the huge advantage that all of the host-specific information can be managed in one place. For example, if you want to change a host's profile picture, this only needs to be done once and will affect all podcast episodes in which this host is linked simultaneously.



And what if you need to link several content entries? In that case, you can follow exactly the same principle, but choose the multi-option field. For example, you may want to be able to choose several hosts for a singular podcast episode.



PRO TIP: It often makes sense to group content entries of the same content type in a designated **folder**. Folders also allow you to enforce that a particular content type is used exclusively.

STEP 5: PREVIEW AND PUBLISH YOUR RESULTS

Once you have a working content model set up, you can start creating content with greater organization. The preset structure will make it an easier, faster, and more consistent experience for all.

Thanks to Storyblok's Visual Editor, the composition part is also simple. It offers a what-you-see-is-what-you-get interface that provides a live preview of the changes you're making as you make them.

Editing the page only requires editors to click and drag premade blocks of content, created by developers as reusable components. However, they remain fully customizable in the content itself, so the result is streamlined content that's still perfectly personalized.



Keep in mind that the content modeling process doesn't end after you have established the structure for your current site. On the contrary, it's a cycle: as new content is created and your organization's needs change, there will be an ongoing process of content modeling to make sure it's optimized. Simply repeat the steps as needed and try to stay on top of changes!

Key takeaways

In a world where content is so essential to success, it's crucial that every forward-thinking company embraces the power of content modeling. Though a fairly simple concept, it holds massive potential. Just a few steps can help create an ecosystem that's poised to present streamlined, effective work as quickly as possible.

ABOUT STORYBLOK

Storyblok is a next-generation headless content management system revolutionizing how storytelling scales. With an API-first approach, it helps users create and scale content to any digital channel. Features like the visual editor and digital asset manager mean content creators can work independently. The power of headless's best-of-breed approach also means that developers can build a perfectly customized tech stack, all protected by Storyblok's ISO 27001 security certification. Add the benefit of Storyblok's advanced collaboration suite, and all these teams can come together to work together directly within the CMS.

In a constantly changing world with more user experience demands than ever before, brands such as Netflix, T-Mobile, and MindValley trust Storyblok to provide secure, personalized experiences to their users.

Try Storyblok for free today!

Ready to see how Storyblok can take your content management to the next level?

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