

ORIGINAL RESEARCH AND IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

Understandable Digital Services Readiness Report

A practical assessment of content complexity, language-version availability, CMS patterns, reviewer ownership, and operational readiness for Plain Language and Easy Language.

This report gives public-service, content, accessibility, IT, and procurement teams one shared way to assess the work required for understandable content at scale.

Simple8 GmbH | 2026 edition

Executive summary

Understandable content succeeds when it is treated as an operating capability, not as a one-time rewrite. The strongest programs connect service priority, language mode, accountable review, source-change detection, delivery, and measurement.

Five readiness findings

1. **High-impact journeys need priority.** Start with content where misunderstanding causes exclusion, support demand, delay, or avoidable risk.
2. **Plain Language and Easy Language are different products.** Choose the mode by audience and task instead of using one generic simplification setting.
3. **Reviewer ownership is an operating requirement.** Every language version needs named content, specialist, and publication responsibility.
4. **Language versions must follow source changes.** A content version becomes operational only when teams can identify, review, and republish changes.
5. **Quality and workflow outcomes belong together.** Measure comprehension, reviewer effort, publishing time, support demand, and maintenance.

Readiness dimensions

Dimension	Ready when	Evidence
Service priority	Critical journeys and target audiences are named.	Journey inventory and impact rationale
Language model	Plain Language and Easy Language are separated.	Mode criteria and audience guidance
Review	Roles and approval steps are explicit.	Reviewer matrix and acceptance checklist
Integration	Source, draft, approval, and publication connect.	CMS or API workflow
Governance	Changes, retention, access, and incidents are controlled.	Policies and operational records
Measurement	Quality and operating outcomes are tracked.	Baseline and pilot scorecard

Assessment methodology

Use a repeatable sample of representative service pages or content units. Record what is visible to the user, how the content is maintained, and which teams own the decisions behind it.

Sampling method

- Select high-volume, high-consequence, and high-support journeys.
- Include informational pages, forms, confirmations, notices, and error guidance.
- Capture the source system, current language versions, update frequency, and owner.
- Exclude protected content from public evaluation environments.

Measures

Measure	Question	Suggested evidence
Content load	How difficult is the source to understand and act on?	Sentence structure, terminology, information order
Coverage	Where are understandable versions available?	Locale and mode inventory
Workflow	How is a version created, reviewed, and published?	Process map and system record
Maintenance	What happens when the source changes?	Staleness detection and review trigger
Audience fit	Can the intended audience use the result?	Structured review and audience testing
Operations	Does the workflow reduce effort and avoid rework?	Time, support, revision, and publishing data

Limitations

Automated signals can identify patterns, but they do not prove comprehension, certification, legal compliance, or suitability for a specific audience. Use qualified human review and audience evidence for consequential content.

Operational recommendations

1. Prioritize one service journey

Choose a journey with visible user impact and a manageable content boundary. Document the source, audience, mode, reviewer, delivery path, and expected outcome before creating versions.

2. Define two mode decisions

Write separate Plain Language and Easy Language entry criteria. The decision should name the audience, task, consequences of misunderstanding, review level, and publication conditions.

3. Assign accountable review

Name a content owner, specialist reviewer where needed, language-quality reviewer, and publication owner. Record the decision and keep the source and approved version connected.

4. Integrate change detection

When the source changes, mark the related language version for review. Keep the previous approved version available until the updated draft has passed the required checks.

5. Measure the pilot

- Time from source selection to approved version
- Reviewer effort per content unit
- Meaning and terminology issues found
- Audience comprehension or task completion
- Support contacts or avoidable follow-up
- Publishing and maintenance effort

Four-week pilot scorecard

Use the scorecard before and after the pilot. Keep the same representative sample, mode definitions, and review criteria so the comparison remains meaningful.

Area	Baseline	Pilot result	Decision
Quality	Record source issues and current review effort.	Record meaning, terminology, structure, and audience findings.	Accept, revise, or stop
Workflow	Map current creation and approval steps.	Measure time, handoffs, and rework.	Choose target workflow
Integration	Document source and publishing systems.	Validate API, CMS, widget, or export path.	Approve architecture
Security	List data categories and policy questions.	Review processing, retention, access, and providers.	Approve controls
Operations	Record current maintenance and support load.	Measure update handling and reporting.	Define rollout owner

Pilot completion decision

- Proceed when quality, review, integration, security, and operating ownership meet the agreed acceptance criteria.
- Revise when the use case remains valuable but one or more controls need a bounded correction.
- Stop when the workflow cannot meet the audience, risk, or operational requirement.

Readiness checklist

- The target audience and service journey are named.
- Plain Language and Easy Language are evaluated separately.
- Representative public content is selected.
- No protected content is used in the public demo.
- Reviewer roles and approval criteria are documented.
- The source and language version remain connected.
- A source change creates a new review decision.
- The delivery path is defined for API, CMS, widget, or export.
- Processing, retention, access, and providers are documented.
- The pilot has measurable quality and operating outcomes.
- A rollout owner and maintenance process are assigned.

Next step

Use this checklist with representative public content in the Simple8 demo, or plan a four-week pilot that evaluates quality, reviewer effort, integration, security questions, and rollout readiness.

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