



Content Types in SharePoint Online



In the vast and versatile world of SharePoint Online, content types emerge as foundational elements that drive structured content management and enhance collaboration. Content types in SharePoint Online enable organizations to categorize and manage information consistently across lists and libraries, streamlining workflows and ensuring data integrity. This article delves into the concept of content types, their practical applications, and provides step-by-step configuration instructions, all while integrating essential keywords for search engine optimization.

Understanding Content Types

Content types in SharePoint Online are predefined schemas that describe the attributes, behavior, and appearance of a specific piece of content. They can include documents, forms, and list items, among others, and are defined by a set of metadata, workflows, and other settings. By using content types, organizations can ensure that each content category is handled consistently, adhering to compliance and governance policies.

Key Benefits of Implementing Content Types

- **Consistency and Reusability:** Apply the same content structure across various lists and libraries within SharePoint Online.
- **Efficient Content Management:** Automate workflows, and manage metadata, retention policies, and document templates centrally.
- **Improved Search and Discovery:** Enhance content discoverability through consistent metadata and categorization.

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Practical Use Examples

Example 1: Project Documentation

For project management, a specific "Project Document" content type can include metadata fields such as "Project Name," "Project Manager," and "Completion Date." This ensures that all project-related documents across the organization are consistent and easily searchable.

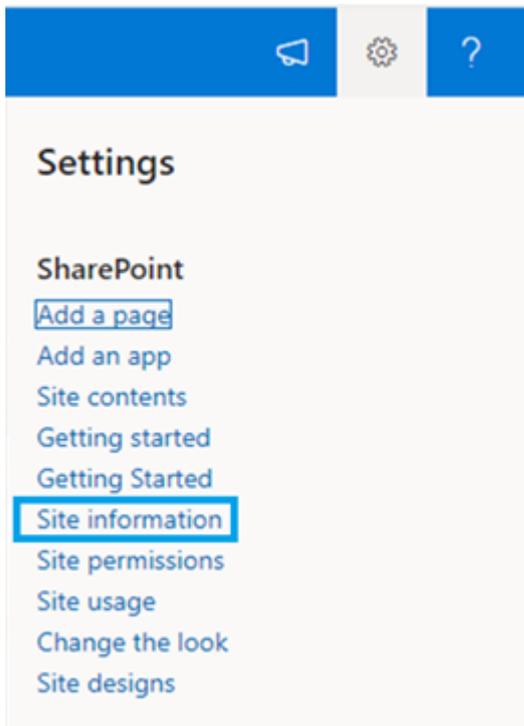
Example 2: Employee Onboarding

An "Employee Onboarding" content type might comprise forms, checklists, and instructional documents with metadata like "Employee ID," "Department," and "Onboarding Date," streamlining the HR onboarding process.

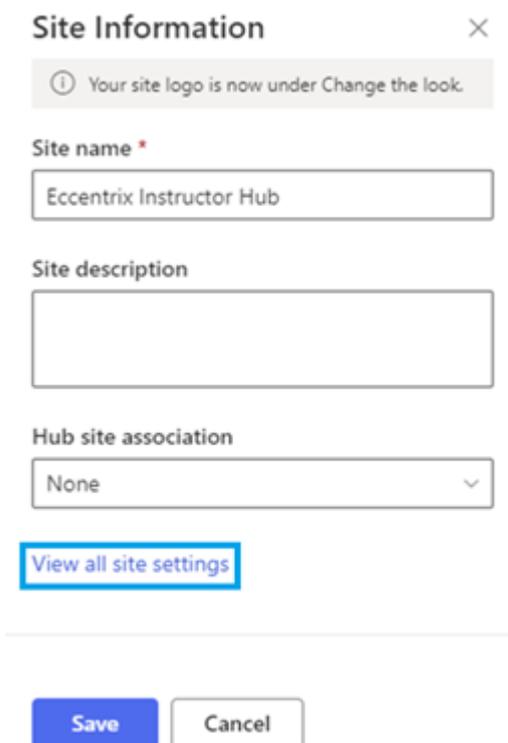
Configuration Steps

In the next steps, we will proceed with the provisioning of a content type at the site level (although, very similar steps can also be performed on the tenant level). Then, we will associate it with a list, and see that certain elements from it effectively follow and get applied at the target list.

1. Navigate to the SharePoint Settings of your site and select **Site information:**



2. Click on **View all site settings**:



3. Click **Site content types**:

Site Settings

Users and Permissions

- People and groups
- Site permissions
- Access requests and invitations
- Site app permissions

Web Designer Galleries

- Site columns
- Site content types**
- Web parts
- List templates
- Master pages
- Themes
- Solutions
- Composed looks

4. Choose **+ Create content type** in the content type gallery (you will notice different content types already exist there):

Site content type ↑	Parent ↓
Announcement	Item
Audio	Rich Media Asset

5. Enter a name, the description (optional), its category (you can choose to create a new category to distinguish it from the others...) and Parent Content Type details (choose the parent that matches the closest your need). Click **Create** when done:

Create content type

Name *

Training details

Description

Enter description here

Category

Use an existing category Create a new category

Name:

Custom Content Types

Parent content type

Choose the content type that you want to base this content type on.

Parent category:

List Content Types

Content type:

Event

Create Cancel

6. Once the content type is created, you will see its information, notably the site columns that come with it:

7. At this point, add a new column to the content type by selecting **+ Add site column**, and then **Create new site column** from the dropdown:

[Edit](#) [Advanced settings](#) [Delete content type](#)

Training details

Category

Custom Content Types

Parent

Event 

Content Type ID

0x010200569231C702A29A46803F85D246A689E1

Site columns

Add and manage the site columns that are a part of this content type.

[+ Add site column](#) 

Name	Type
Title	Single line of text
End Time	Date and Time
All Day Event	All Day Event
Recurrence	Recurrence
Workspace	Cross Project Link

Site columns

Add and manage the site columns that are a part of this content type.

[+ Add site column](#) 

Create new site column

Add from existing site columns

	Type
Title	Single line of text
End Time	Date and Time
All Day Event	All Day Event
Recurrence	Recurrence
Workspace	Cross Project Link

8. Define the column name, its category, the type, and additional settings as required and click **Save**:

9. Notice the new column (in our case, *Training name*) has been created and that it is part of the content type:

Create new site column

Name *

Training name

Description

Category *

Use an existing category Create a new category

Category :

Custom Columns

Select from column type:

Single line of text

Default value

Enter a default value

Use calculated value ⓘ

More options ▾

Save

Cancel

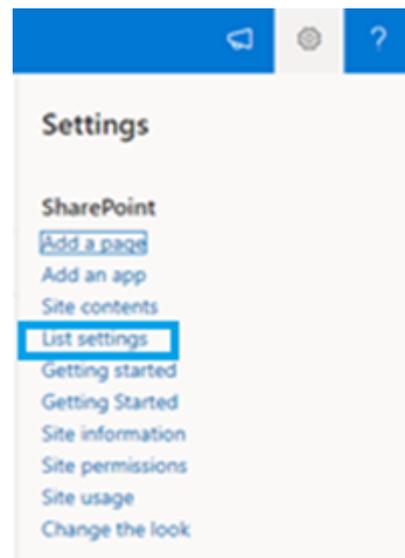
Site columns

Add and manage the site columns that are a part of this content type.

+ Add site column ▾

Name	Type
Title	Single line of text
End Time	Date and Time
All Day Event	All Day Event
Recurrence	Recurrence
Workspace	Cross Project Link
Training name	Single line of text

10. Now, we will associate the content type to a list by clicking on **List settings** (at your list level...):



11. From there, select **Advanced settings** :

Trainings ▸ Settings

List Information

Name: Trainings
Web Address: https://eccentrix.sharepoint.com/sites/instructor-hub/Lists/Trainings/AllItems.aspx
Description:

General Settings

- List name, description and navigation
- Versioning settings
- **Advanced settings**
- Validation settings
- Audience targeting settings
- Rating settings
- Form settings

Permissions and Management

- Delete this list
- Save list as template
- Permissions for this list
- Workflow Settings
- Apply label to items in this list or list
- Generate file plan report
- Enterprise Metadata and Keywords

12. Enable the **Allow management of content types** radio button (set the value to **Yes**):

Settings ▸ Advanced Settings

Content Types

Specify whether to allow the management of content types on this list. Each content type will appear on the new button and can have a unique set of columns, workflows and other behaviors.

Allow management of content types?

Yes No

Item-level Permissions

Specify which items users can read and edit.

Note: Users with the Cancel Checkout permission can read and edit all items. [Learn about managing permission settings.](#)

Read access: Specify which items users are allowed to read

- Read all items
- Read items that were created by the user

Create and Edit access: Specify which items users are allowed to create and edit

- Create and edit all items
- Create items and edit items that were created by the user
- None

13. Click **OK** to confirm. Notice a new part of settings

now appear, that is the Content types section:

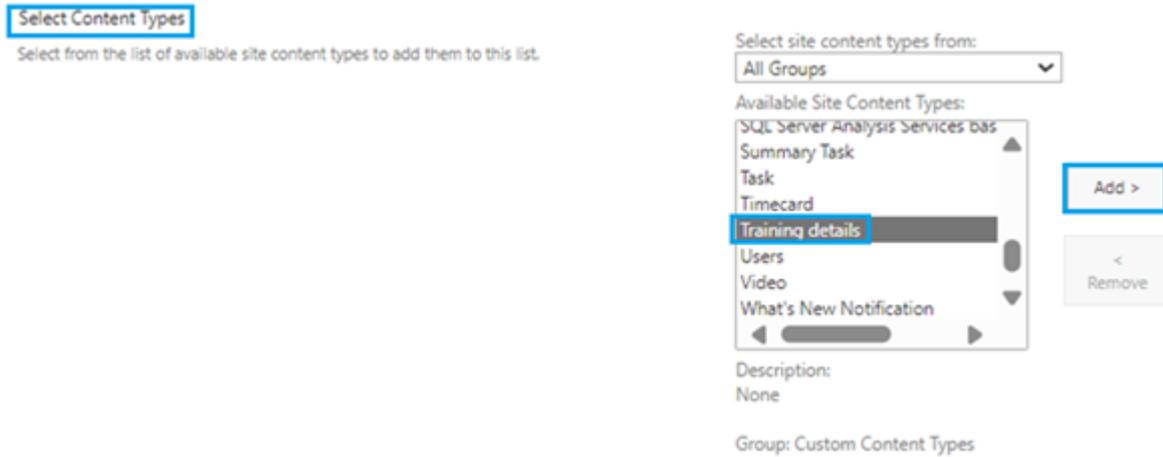
Content Types

This list is configured to allow multiple content types. Use content types to specify the information yo

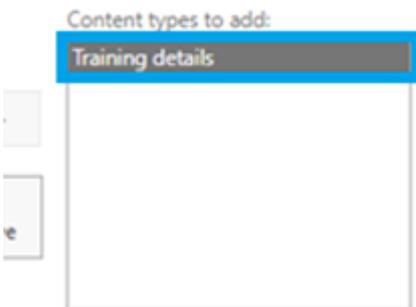
Content Type	Visible on New Button
Item	✓

- Add from existing site content types
- Change new button order and default content type

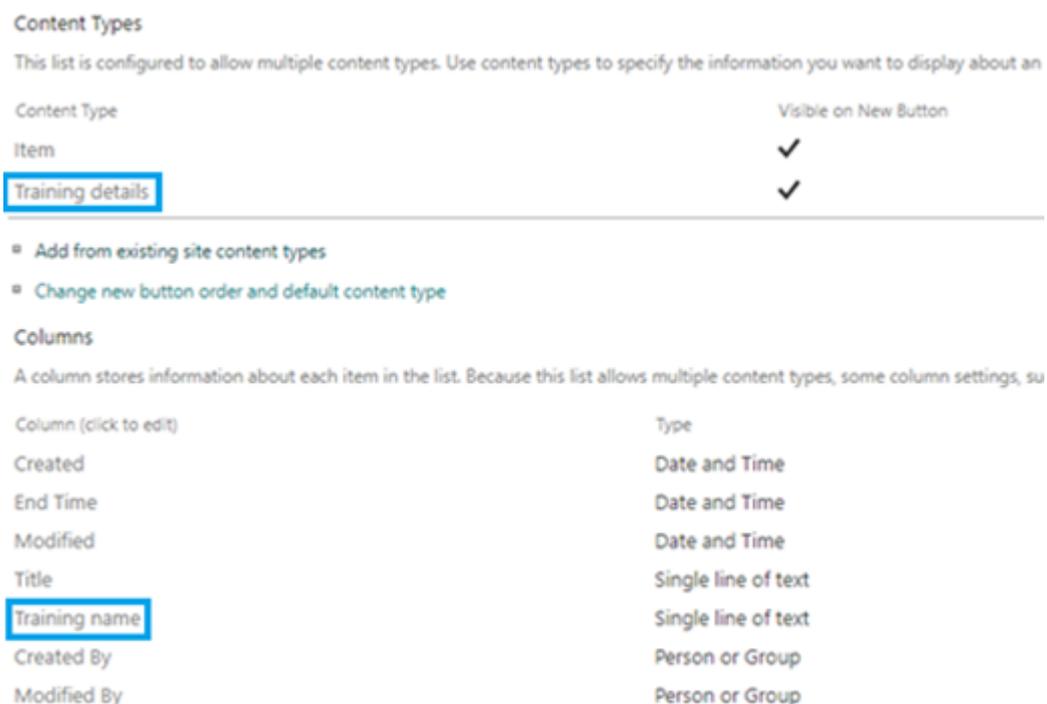
14. At this screen, under **Content Types**, click **Add from existing site content types**. Select your content type and click **Add**:



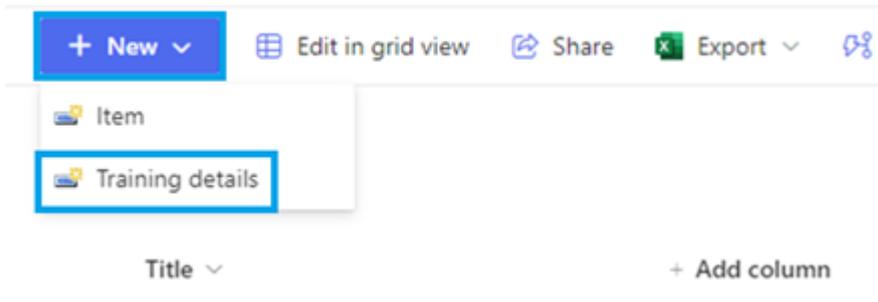
15. Notice your content type is added to the right part of the selection:



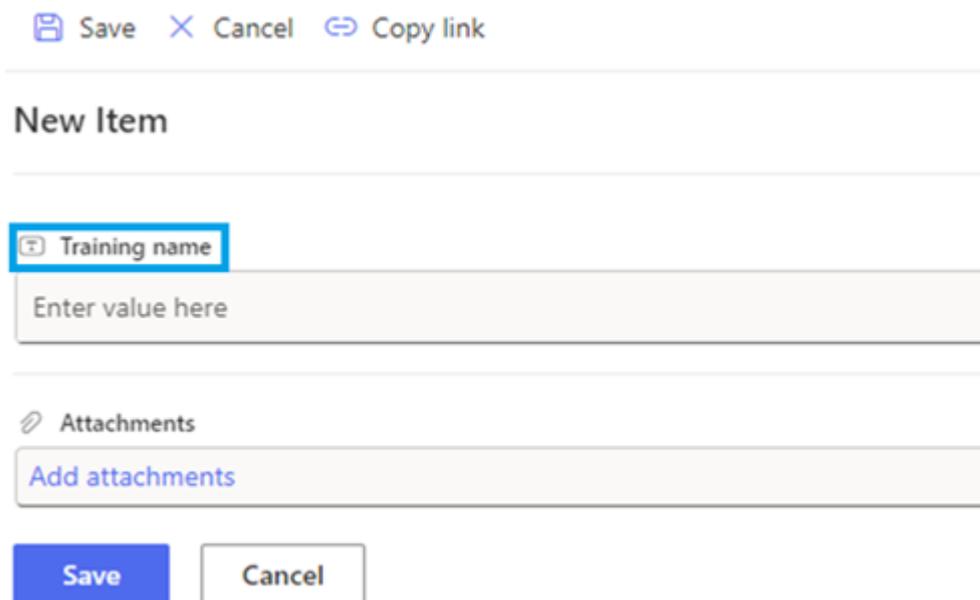
16. Click **OK** to confirm. Now the content type is promptly associated with the list. Notice the column (in our case, *Training name*) is added as well:



17. Browse to the view of your list and add a new item. You will notice you can select the appropriate content type, ensuring consistent data entry and categorization:



18. The column coming from the content type will promptly show:



Of course, there is the possibility to modify the content type, and to add or remove columns later as well. Despite that, in case you proceed with deletions at the top level, it will still not affect the data that has been applied at the list itself - the content type effectively duplicates the column at the list level and leaves it as is in case of upward changes. However, in case you change the name of the column, for example, it will change at the lower levels as well.

Consistency is the key, thus a thorough planning is required prior to the implementation of content types!

Conclusion

Content types in SharePoint Online offer a powerful mechanism for managing organizational content efficiently and consistently. By leveraging content types, businesses can achieve greater control over their information architecture, automate workflows, and enhance content discoverability. The practical applications of content types are vast, from managing project

documentation to streamlining employee onboarding processes, making them an indispensable tool in any SharePoint Online strategy.

For those looking to deepen their expertise in SharePoint Online and master content types, Eccentrix provides two trainings that target the use of content types: [SharePoint Online Power User \(MS55215\)](#) and [SharePoint Online Management and Administration \(MS55370\)](#). With Eccentrix, you gain access to expert-led courses and hands-on learning experiences designed to empower you with the knowledge and skills to effectively utilize SharePoint Online within your organization.