

ALEX HOWARD

Content Systems & Operations Leader

I build content organizations that scale.

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SUMMARY

Content Systems & Operations Leader with twelve years at Lonely Planet, combining editorial command, structured-content architecture, and operational leadership. Current HR title: Senior Editorial Director, Content Product.

SELECTED IMPACT

- Designed the POI-based Contentful architecture and app content model: 200k+ POIs within a 730k+ entity single-source platform for print, web, app, and future discovery surfaces.
- Accountable for the \$4M books budget and co-own the \$1M app and digital budget with another director.
- Lead a current 20-person content organization across direct, indirect, and contract reports, supporting on-time delivery across 230+ guidebooks and illustrated travel books annually.
- Led a 46% overall website-traffic rebound in 2023, then guided the strategic response through a later 20% AI-search decline.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Senior Editorial Director, Content Product | Lonely Planet | Mar 2026 – Present

- Lead content systems and operations for a 20-person organization across reporting layers, connecting Editorial, Product, Engineering, and Design.
- Led the app editorial plan for Best in Travel 2027 (Sept 2026), re-sequencing the release schedule around app demand and destination readiness.
- Own the rollout of editorial AI governance, including Lonely Planet's published editorial AI policy, contributor guidance, and QA guardrails for AI summaries.
- Lead the in-development 2027 guidebook strategy through reader research, strategic framing, and a board-level roadmap; first titles are scheduled for March 2027.
- Coached a team of five senior editors into manager roles.

Editorial Director, Content Product | Lonely Planet | Mar 2024 – Mar 2026

- Led the Contentful implementation and the transition from EPAM/external-consultant dependency toward internal CMS ownership.
- Prioritized and scoped a guidebook-to-app editing automation built by Engineering, reducing manual editing work.
- Directed content operations and editorial strategy for the January 2026 mobile app launch, making Editorial a product-development partner through release planning and cross-functional coordination.
- Across Managing Editor and Editorial Director roles, grew the core Destination Editor team from 9 to 13 direct reports between 2022 and 2025.

Managing Editor, Destinations Content | Lonely Planet | Feb 2022 – Mar 2024

- Built a commissioning workflow that returns 170+ instrumented hours annually and reduces contract processing from days to minutes.
- Developed the international-destination strategy behind 164% destination-session growth and 46% overall traffic growth in 2023.

Earlier roles | Lonely Planet | 2014 – 2022

- Senior Editor, Homepage; Managing Editor, US Magazine; Destination Editor.
- Led content, contributor, and audience work across digital, print, video, and media appearances.

CORE STRENGTHS

Content systems and operations | People leadership and organization design | Structured content and taxonomy | CMS architecture | Editorial operations at scale | Cross-functional product leadership | Adaptable operating models

EDUCATION

Florida State University: BA English, Minor in Communications (Certificate in Publishing)

Transom Traveling Workshop: Certificate in Podcasting