

# The Managed Collaborative Model of Assessment Content Development

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A Brief Introduction



## Our Goal

Our aim is to be the primary point of contact for customers seeking high-value, high-quality, assessment content for grades K-12 in Mathematics, English Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies.

## Our Model

We work under a cooperative arrangement (which we call a “managed collaborative” model) wherein our **developers work together** on all projects and review each others' work as a standard practice. Our developers are highly experienced—most have at least 10 years' experience—and over the years we have come to recognize this is best possible environment for item development.

## Our Services

We provide a wide range of services in support of high-quality content development, including:

- Item Authoring/Editing
- Passage Authoring
- Style Editing
- Project Management
- Art/Illustrations
- Page Production
- Book Production for Committee Reviews
- Facilitation of Committee Meetings
- Data Entry
- Professional Development in Assessment
- Psychometrics

Our contracts may provide for any reasonable combination of the services listed above.

## A Typical Workflow

1. Startup meeting and/or an initial review of specifications, sample items, and other requirements.
2. Project manager generates item writing templates and assignments.
3. Developer 1 writes initial items, preferably with on-going customer review and feedback.
4. Developer 2 reviews the items.
5. Style/Editorial reviews the items.
6. Developers prepare items for delivery.
7. Project Manager inventories the content and delivers the items to Customer for review.
8. Customer returns items with review comments to Project Manager.
9. Developers make revisions based on reviewer comments.
10. Style/Editorial reviews revised items.
11. Project Manager delivers items to Customer.
12. Any remaining issues are resolved and items are entered into a data management system.

## The Use of Freelancers vs. the Managed Collaborative Model

In recent years, the trend toward outsourcing has required test publishers, state departments of education, and other measurement professionals to divest in permanent staffing in favor of a “freelancer” model. While this certainly lowers the cost of assessment content development on the balance sheet, *many ongoing and “hidden” costs often remain*. And, as per-item costs paid to freelance item development professionals are further reduced, the most experienced developers often leave the field in search of other opportunities—leaving a much less experienced pool of developers in the overall marketplace.

Our collaborative model is designed to provide a “win-win” solution for both developers and customers.

**Under our model, customers gain access to some of the most highly experienced and knowledgeable developers in the field**, along with services independent freelancers usually cannot offer on their own. Likewise, developers working under our model gain access to projects that utilize their unique talents and abilities while collaborating with their peers. Under this arrangement, they are free to focus on what they do best: develop content. Services that any one freelancer cannot provide (Style Editing, Art/Illustrations, etc.) are simply handled by other specialists within the project team.

The table below highlights some key differences between two key outsourcing models for developing assessment content:

	Multiple Freelancer Model	Managed Collaborative Model
<b>Points of Contact</b>	Multiple	Single point of contact
<b>Number of Developers</b>	One or more	At least two, but larger projects may require as many as 15 for some subject areas
<b>Ease of Administration</b>	Low; multiple freelancers require multiple contracts to administer; additional services require additional contracts	High; only one contract to manage, with a variety of services included
<b>Method of Delivery</b>	Varies by freelancer, but usually delivered via standard email	Consistent delivery of content via secure, web-based system
<b>Project Management</b>	Internal by customer	Project Manager ensures capacity, consistency of deliverables, and delivery schedule
<b>Quality of Initial Items</b>	Varies by freelancer	High, due to early QA process and the use of pre-qualified, experienced developers
<b>Quality and Viability of Finished Items</b>	Depends on number of staff and hours available to manage, edit, and administrate the work of various freelancers	High, due to refined development process and customer interaction