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# BUILD A DAM AND CREATE ORDER
## FROM CHAOS

### WITH ADOBE EXPERIENCE MANAGER ASSETS

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# BUILDING A DAM

If companies want to succeed in the 'customer experience business,' CMOs and their teams are on the hook to create more engaging, interactive, and visual content across online and in-person channels.

According to a recent survey from Adobe, more than 80% of marketing executives believe they need to restructure marketing to better support the business.[1] Improving the organization with efficient use of digital assets is one area where marketing leaders have turned their attention.

# 89%
## OF CONTENT
### MARKETING BUDGETS
### REMAINED THE SAME
### OR INCREASED
### FROM 2014 TO 2015[2]

As the demand for content continues to rise, most marketing leaders realize that housing digital assets in a shared folder on a server or in the cloud is not enough. To execute campaigns and create customer experiences that lead to higher conversions, digital asset management (DAM) solutions are now essential for a wide variety of organizations – not just media firms or ad agencies.

In this guide, we will explain the benefits of DAM, help you understand the need to invest in DAM, review best practices for DAM implementation, and discuss considerations for choosing a DAM vendor and implementation partner.

# WHAT CAN DIGITAL ASSET MANAGEMENT **DO FOR YOU?**

DAM solutions work as a content repository for customer-facing visual and interactive content. But there's more to it than that. These solutions organize and serve content to related delivery channels such as web content management, commerce platforms, print, and ad-serving networks.

When DAM solutions are well planned and implemented, you can streamline your marketing operations with the DAM serving as a single source of truth for your organization.

The key benefits of DAM include:

/ **Reducing the costs of content re-creation**

/ **Increasing operational efficiency**

/ **Improving brand compliance and consistency[2]**

Using DAM as the foundation for your broader digital marketing ecosystem you will be able to deliver engaging omni-channel experiences and provide a better customer experience.

# FIVE SIGNS
## YOU NEED DAM

DAM implementations broadly impact organizations because more business users typically need access compared to other digital experience platforms. Typical users include digital marketing teams, retail, corporate communications, public relations, eCommerce teams, web teams, direct marketing, print publication, and external agencies.[3]

How do you know if an enterprise DAM is the right solution for you?

Several key business drivers play a role:

1. ESTABLISHING A SINGLE SOURCE OF TRUTH FOR MULTIPLE DELIVERY SYSTEMS

2. IMPROVING ACCESS ACROSS THE ORGANIZATION AND TRACKING ASSET USAGE

3. ESTABLISHING AND MANAGING A METADATA TAXONOMY

4. SCALING YOUR EXISTING DAM SOLUTION IN ANTICIPATION OF FUTURE GROWTH

5. SETTING UP CONTENT CREATION WORKFLOWS AND RULES FOR DIGITAL USAGE RIGHTS, GLOBALIZATION, AND LOCALIZATION

A STANDALONE DAM CREATES **A CORE REPOSITORY FOR OMNI-CHANNEL CONTENT** THAT IS INDEPENDENT OF THE PRESENTATION LAYER[3]

A single source of truth for your digital assets helps you improve efficiencies because the same asset is not stored in two different systems. Digital asset management also streamlines asset consumption by other systems, such as eCommerce, internal sales systems, and public web properties.

In addition to efficiencies gained from DAM, your organization may require more robust functionality such as accurate and descriptive metadata and taxonomies. According to Forrester, enterprise DAM solutions support organizations with deeper metadata and taxonomy needs, especially when multiple business units have common and business-specific dictionaries and taxonomies.

Enhanced search capabilities are another benefit of an enterprise DAM, allowing you to implement features such as semantic analysis, faceted navigation, and suggested search terms.[3]

However, not all enterprise digital asset management vendors are equal. Some organizations need to scale their existing DAM solution for future growth, especially if growing by acquisition. If you face "vendor stagnation," you want to find a DAM vendor that invests in its software and frequently releases updates that allow you to scale your solution as your business grows.

Furthermore, enterprise DAMs have capabilities that help support broader organizational processes, such as content creation workflows and establishing rules for digital asset usage. A DAM solution with out-of-the box workflow capabilities can be particularly helpful if your business is in an industry with heavy regulatory approvals, if you use multiple external agencies, or have multiple in-house creative teams. And as you invest more in content marketing, delivery of localized content helps you establish brand context and relevancy.[3]

# BEST PRACTICES FOR
## DAM IMPLEMENTATION SUCCESS

Choosing a DAM vendor and implementation partner will significantly impact your organization, so you need to lay the groundwork for implementation success.

**① ESTABLISH A BUSINESS CASE**

At the beginning, you want to identify your main constituents or stakeholders. What are their roles in the organization (i.e., publishing vs. maintenance), and how would they use the DAM on a daily basis?

Then, outline all the various types of content created by your organization. How do the different users and systems consume these assets? Will you need different types of content for mobile platforms and your web site? What about print, advertising, and email campaigns?

When you answer these questions, you will better understand your business requirements, which will help you narrow your choices of software vendors and implementation partners.

## ② DEFINE YOUR BUSINESS SCENARIO

Taking it a step further, you will want to identify stakeholder priorities. What matters in the content creation or publishing processes? How do these different users define success, and what key performance indicators (KPIs) measure that success?

You also need to understand the current user experience and environment. What tools and processes are currently used? What aspects of the current experience work well? What do these teams want the future experience to be like?

What other digital experience platforms consume digital assets – web content management, analytics, and/or personalization technologies? What are the technical constraints of these different systems? Do different teams share assets, and how does that process work?

Additionally, you need to analyze development processes (such as content creation workflows), review processes, and publishing. The bottom line is that you first need to understand the types of content, processes, and key users of the DAM platform before asking the systems-related/technical questions.

### ③ CREATE AN AGILE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Once you establish your business case and define the vision for the project, you will want to form the implementation team and develop an agile implementation plan. Your team of internal resources typically consists of business (marketing and/or corporate communications) and technology (IT team, developer, and/or librarian) stakeholders.[4]

The agile implementation plan begins with vendor scoring and selection. If you gathered enough information from the business case and project vision, then you can score vendors based on initial requirements.

Our clients find us to be a valuable resource at this stage because of our technology expertise with a variety of digital experience platforms, including enterprise DAM solutions.

The vendor–scoring process reviews the software vendors for a particular project – in this case, DAM – and then makes a high-level comparison relative to the project's business requirements. Not only do we score vendor options based on the software's feature set but also on characteristics such as stability of the company, overall user experience, and implementation support.

The list of potential vendors narrows to a select few, and then the short list goes through an extensive evaluation and demonstration with the customer to observe priority features and functionality. We take all of this information, rank the vendors, and then prepare and present a recommendation, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of each solution.

After the vendor is selected, it's time to get to work. By creating an implementation plan for the DAM, we work with you to prioritize how everything rolls out, creating a project road map with iterations or phases.

This is where "agile" comes into play. This phased approach allows you to improve upon a functional system or process rather than spending more time to roll out the "perfect" solution.

The initial focus is migrating core assets and establishing workflow and security processes. Once this foundation is set, choose the teams or individuals who will be involved on the iterations for the migration and configuration process.

Establishing processes is essential to upholding the value delivered by a DAM solution. For example, Adobe Experience Manager Assets and Sites have capabilities that analyze which content is used by different channels, allowing you to see a specific asset, and all of its variations, whether it is published on a mobile site or web content management system. However, these features only add value if you have workflows and governance processes in place.

# A PHASED APPROACH ALLOWS YOU TO IMPROVE UPON A FUNCTIONAL SYSTEM OR PROCESS **RATHER THAN SPENDING MORE TIME TO ROLL OUT THE "PERFECT" SOLUTION.**

### ④ ESTABLISH TAXONOMY AND METADATA STRATEGY

The taxonomy and metadata strategy is important within the overall implementation as it applies to all of the migrated content.

Consider building a taxonomy structure to facilitate simpler search and browse within the DAM. Whether you choose to implement a business-driven, content-driven, or user-driven taxonomy will depend upon the stakeholder priorities identified in the business scenario.

You also want to build metadata taxonomy with technical, descriptive, and functional metadata. In our experience, we recommend establishing ten required metadata fields. Additionally, consider the governance process you will put into place, and what DAM administrators/librarians will need to do to keep the DAM updated on a daily basis.

When classifying assets, you will need to consider internal- and external-facing taxonomies. For example, SKU numbers, product categories, and product attributes may fall under an external-facing taxonomy – what the end customer sees.

However, an internal-facing taxonomy defines how different business units classify information about products and related digital assets. This taxonomy strategy affects how business users search for assets. When possible, automate tagging of metadata to reduce the burden of manual tagging. Solutions such as Adobe Experience Manager Assets can integrate with third-party recognition APIs to provide automated tagging via object and facial detection.[4]

The bottom line with taxonomies is to keep it simple; you have to determine how you want to find these assets as well as how you consume and display them externally.

MOST FIRMS LEAD WITH BUSINESS-DRIVEN AND CONTENT-DRIVEN TAXONOMIES **WHILE KEEPING THE BEST USABILITY EXPERIENCE TOP OF MIND.**[4]

## 5  CHANGE MANAGEMENT

If you build it, they will come, right? Change within an organization is not easy, and you cannot build a DAM with the expectation that users will embrace it with open arms.

Underinvesting in usability and change management is among the top reasons DAM implementations fail.[4] Establish a process that encourages your teams to use the platform and follow the workflows.

For a DAM implementation, follow these change management principles:

/ **PREPARE USERS FOR CHANGE:**
Create a thorough project vision and commit resources to support the change via an executive sponsor and change managers.

/ **COMMUNICATE VIA INTERNAL CHANGE AGENTS:**
Identify the various teams and employees affected by the change and assess their readiness. You also want to determine change agents/champions in these business units, plan training sessions, and recognize/reward successful change.

/ **VIEW CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND ADOPTION AS AN ONGOING PROCESS:**
After implementing the DAM, continue communicating with users about successes and challenges, host post-implementation training or seminars, and continue to support your change agents.[4]

## ⑥ ESTABLISH DAM GOVERNANCE

You can choose and implement the best enterprise DAM for your business, but without a governance strategy, your hard work may quickly unravel. Set clear expectations on how to organize assets while also clearly defining the types of assets that should (and should not) be stored in the DAM.

If your DAM has automation capabilities, take advantage of them to understand how the solution is used on a daily basis and how authors are contributing. Then, use this information to streamline the DAM.

In addition to overseeing DAM organization and keeping it clean, you will also want to track the licensing and usage of assets. Some enterprise DAM solutions have analytics capabilities so you can see exactly how and when assets are used on external-facing sites.

Governance teams also need to establish regular communication with marketing and other lines of business to gain feedback on improving storage, workflows, and desktop integration. Additionally, this team will need to create and enforce an archiving strategy for assets.
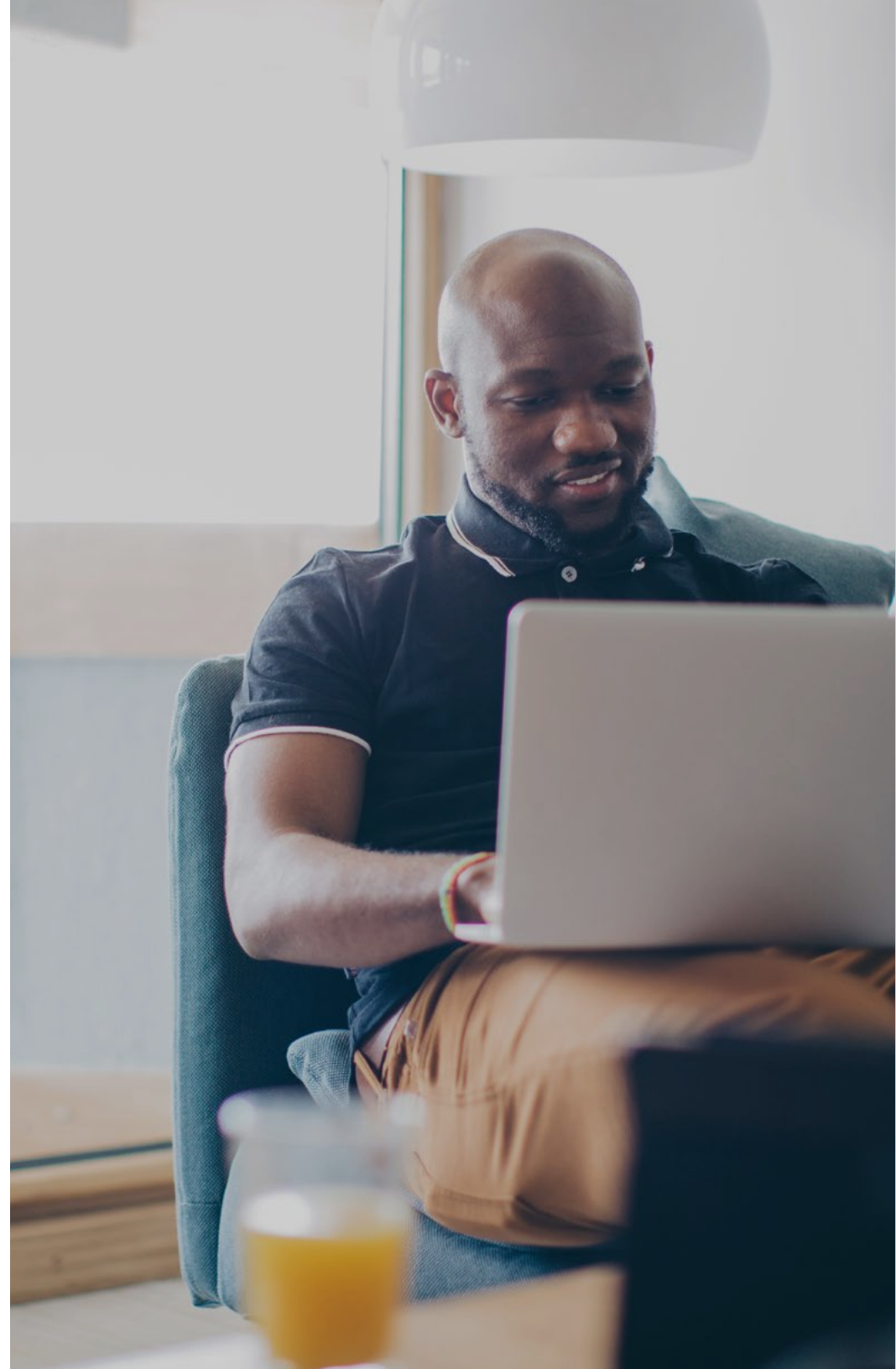
# A SOLUTION FOR
# MANAGING YOUR DIGITAL ASSETS

A DAM platform delivers features and capabilities designed to simplify your life. Many enterprise DAM solutions allow you to scale up or down depending on business requirements so you can grow into them. Even if you begin with a basic DAM, establishing a solid metadata taxonomy, organization of assets, and governance around archiving will be important.

However, the devil is in the details of the implementation vendor. Work closely with your vendor to adhere to the best practices outlined within this guide to avoid going through this process again in a few years.

## A CLOSER LOOK AT ADOBE EXPERIENCE MANAGER ASSETS

It's important to find a DAM vendor that invests in research and development. Over the last few years, Adobe has invested heavily in its research and development of Experience Manager Assets.

Recent enhancements include capabilities that customers have said they want, for example:

/ **Integration of Adobe Creative Cloud Adobe desktop products, such as InDesign and Photoshop, which streamlines collaboration between creative and marketing teams**

/ **Improved reuse and syndication of content as assets using Experience Manager content fragments**

/ **Insights and analytics to track asset usage and performance such as click-through rates and impressions on any digital channel**

/ **Ability to use original assets and create interactive, rich media viewing experiences such as zoom, 360-degree spin, and video**

Adobe also has regular release cycles, and its upgrades are well-documented, allowing developers open access to understand how to apply them. Adobe's user feedback forums and community also help you gain insights from other customers to understand how to use their tools and enhance your systems.

Additionally, complementary solutions within the Adobe ecosystem provide many benefits including asset consumption by external systems, analytics to track usage, automation to help with workflows, and auto-tagging of assets.

The Adobe consultancy within Perficient Digital will help you find the best solutions based on business and platform requirements so that you implement a stable, scalable solution to achieve your specific business goals.

BassPro Shops is among the largest sporting goods retailers in the United States. While one of BassPro's primary marketing channels is printed product catalogs, it wanted to enhance the digital experience by integrating its eCommerce with Adobe Experience Manager.

During the project discovery, we found multiple terabytes of assets across a variety of systems, and quickly determined that consolidation of assets was necessary. We implemented Experience Manager Assets as the DAM solution, providing a unified platform for all images and content delivered to BassPro's print and digital channels.

Establishing a metadata taxonomy for the DAM was key, and one of the customizations included an auto-tagging feature, which improved ease of use for the digital marketing team when images and content are re-used on other channels.

Additionally, Experience Manager Assets streamlined BassPro's creative and asset publishing workflows while providing a solid foundation to support integrations with IBM WebSphere Commerce, Google Maps, restful API, and web services implementations.

**✔Symantec**

Symantec, the global leader in cyber security, wanted to deploy a new website on Adobe Experience Manager. Challenged by limited internal resources and a fixed timeline, Symantec engaged us based on our reputation and deep expertise with Adobe.

We designed a responsive site that provides a consistent architecture and user experience on Adobe Experience Manager. The solution provides flexibility to add or update pages, efficiencies for creating content, and faster deployment of pages using the DAM capabilities of Adobe Experience Manager. The responsive design and improved navigation provides an enhanced user experience. The new look and feel of the site and streamlined content cements Symantec as an industry thought leader.

In an environment where customers seek meaningful interactions with your brand, content and rich media work together to create those emotional connections.

Building a DAM for your marketing ecosystem is one way to organize and manage the content creation process. Part of our process is to provide guidance by identifying your digital marketing challenges and developing a strategy to solve them.

To ensure success with growing your digital business, we assist you with building the business case, creating an implementation strategy and road map, and supporting the implementation.

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Michael has worked with web technologies since 1998, helping clients choose and implement tools that create better digital experiences for their end users. As the leader of Perficient Digital's strategic advisors team, he also assists clients with forming collaboration and implementation strategies as they progress through their own digital transformations.

# PERFICIENT DIGITAL +
# ADOBE

Perficient Digital blends the strategic imagination of an agency with the deep technical acumen of Perficient's established consultancy to deliver exceptional customer experiences for the world's biggest brands.

With broad experience in digital marketing and deep technology expertise in Adobe Marketing Cloud, we support you by delivering end-to-end, integrated marketing platform solutions.

Our full-service offering is designed to tackle your ever changing, ever-increasing business challenges. End-to-end is just the beginning.

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