

PERFICIENT/digital

# MOVE YOUR DIGITAL EXPERIENCE FORWARD

An Adobe Experience Manager Perspective

[perficientdigital.com](http://perficientdigital.com)



We're living in the Age of the Customer, where balance of brand power has shifted from businesses to the highly informed, constantly connected customer. Mobile devices and the proliferation of other digital channels have raised the bar for consumer expectations.

Connected experiences allow consumers to jump between web, mobile apps, and offline engagements, disrupting business models in the process. Your business must become customer-obsessed to engage them in more ways that are meaningful.

In this guide, we explore:

- What defines a great customer experience
- The importance of setting your priorities
- Why you need a digital marketing strategy and road map
- The first steps of platform research
- Why Adobe Experience Manager

This guide also provides an actionable checklist to help you prepare for the implementation.

---

“The last best experience that anyone has anywhere becomes the minimum expectation for the experience they want everywhere.”

– Bridget van Kralingen, senior vice president of IBM Global Business Services, on the topic of data-driven customer experiences

# / What Makes a Great Experience?

Constantly connected customers are increasingly more difficult to engage. Not to mention that they expect stellar experiences when interacting with brands they already know and trust.

According to Adobe, a great experience is one that is:

- Compelling
- Useful
- Personal
- Everywhere

A great customer experience (CX) drives three types of customer loyalty: retention, enrichment, and advocacy. Companies that deliver on CX tend to earn more repeat business from their customers, get more incremental purchases from their customers, and attract new customers through positive word of mouth.

# 86%

of consumers are willing to pay more for a better customer experience<sup>1</sup>



“Emerging channels that provide personalized or on-demand content – television and gaming, as an example – need platforms that can actually deliver this content and manage interactions with the consumer. This is an untapped opportunity to be considered by both brands and CMS vendors.”

– Mark Polly, Principal Strategic Advisor, Perficient Digital





## / Get Your Priorities in Order

Designing, building, and implementing top-notch experiences requires a great deal of planning, strategy, time, and of course, the right platform.

Many organizations often start on the technology path by identifying feature gaps and researching platforms to see which ones best fit their infrastructure and environment. Instead, consider what you want to accomplish as a business by asking:

- What are the priorities and goals from a business perspective?
- How will this digital marketing platform affect business goals, such as increasing revenue, improving the customer experience, or reducing service costs?
- How will this platform scale to meet future business needs and goals?

Moving to a next-generation platform provides the perfect opportunity to step back and review the state of your business. Ultimately, you want a platform that excels in the capabilities that matter most to your business.

You also want to evaluate platforms on how well they align to your business strategy. For example, if your business wants to move to the cloud, then how well are cloud capabilities implemented by each potential vendor?

Work with an implementation partner like Perficient Digital to identify strategic elements of your business. Then, include those as part of the vendor evaluation process to find a solution that best aligns with your strategy.

Finally, analyze total cost of ownership (TCO), and consider how the platform will impact your internal resources and systems. As an implementation partner, we look at TCO over a five-year horizon to

analyze first-year costs versus ongoing maintenance costs. Reviewing this analysis and understanding the financial impact helps compare the true cost of each platform rather than just the initial licensing cost.

## Envision Framework

The envision framework outlined below provides the 50,000-foot view before deploying any new experience. You set milestones to assess and understand where you are today, and then use that information to create a strategy and plan for deployment. You can learn more about the framework in this [blog](#) post.



Source: Perficient Digital

# / Why You Need a Digital Marketing Strategy and Road Map

Establishing your digital marketing strategy and road map are also essential for success.

The digital marketing strategy is an extension of your company's overall marketing strategy. It defines goals and key performance indicators. It also identifies ways to achieve those KPIs including resources, funding, organizational structure, systems, data, customer experience, processes, and internal/external communications.

Documenting your digital marketing strategy is key for developing your road map. The digital marketing road map is pragmatic – it is a two-to-three-year action plan that helps you execute the digital marketing strategy.

When creating a road map, one of the first steps is choosing a new digital experience platform to fulfill your marketing strategies. However, you need to understand the dependencies and priorities of your overall plan before jumping into the selection process.

The road map also identifies programs, support teams, and a timeline for implementing these programs. Programs consist of broad-based initiatives, such as developing an online commerce presence, and highly focused ones, such as implementing A/B testing within your digital marketing platform.

This is why creating a road map is done early in the process. You must first lay the groundwork before going about selecting the right supporting technology.



## Your Digital Marketing Strategy Should:

- 1. Drive your campaigns**
- 2. Connect your business goals to tactical initiatives**
- 3. Serve as the hub for all direct marketing channels**
- 4. Give purpose behind channel choices**
- 5. Explain how acquisition, engagement, and retention work throughout the customer journey**



# / Choosing a Platform

The digital experience platform vendor landscape is crowded. Narrowing your options will be easier once you've outlined your business and marketing goals and defined technical and functional requirements.

Where do you start? Look to research analysts like Forrester and Gartner. Both have their own method of evaluating vendor technologies. These reports provide an objective view of platform options and cut through the marketing rhetoric.

Then, dig deeper to understand how each vendor addresses your particular needs. Some features may be critically important to your strategy while

others are superfluous. Working with an implementation partner like Perficient Digital can be valuable when it comes to narrowing your choices. Part of our process involves conducting a discovery of your needs as a first step to evaluate platform vendors.

Understanding your business and technical requirements is a priority. Through a series of workshops, we work with your project stakeholders to set business priorities for each requirement. This opens a dialogue with key team members to explain any unclear capabilities or features. It also helps you make an informed decision so you implement a platform that best aligns with your priorities and strategies.

## 4 Considerations for Your New Digital Experience Platform

When researching platforms, look for ones that will:

1. Allow you to standardize on a single platform, easing the support and integration required for disparate, existing tools
2. Deliver a journey that aligns to customer expectations
3. Organize data and content to better promote your marketing campaigns
4. Provide opportunities to capitalize on customer data and reveal valuable insights that help you make data-driven marketing decisions

To learn more, read our guide [Solve Three Common Digital Marketing Challenges with Adobe Marketing Cloud](#).



## / Who Needs to Be Involved?

Your marketing team may initiate the search and request for a new platform. However, implementing a new system often requires close collaboration with IT and other stakeholders.

Involve IT and other key stakeholders/decision makers early on to address common challenges such as:

- Fully understanding the overall vision and strategy for the business
- Knowledge about existing platforms and technology stack and the ability to achieve or meet customer expectations
- Limited (or overworked) IT resources
- Knowledge/experience gaps of IT resources
- Infrastructure and security requirements

Additionally, budgetary resources are often a big hurdle. Which team funds the initiative – marketing or IT? If the budget sits with IT, then involve IT gatekeepers to approve the project.



# / A Closer Look at Adobe Experience Manager

Your ability to drive customer engagement and loyalty is only as strong as your digital experience platform. These platforms have evolved over time to keep pace with customer expectations.

Features previously considered advanced, such as separation of content and presentation, what-you-see-is-what-you-get (WYSIWYG) authoring with drag-and-drop tools, and configurable approval processes, are now table stakes. Today's platforms must include these features while also providing semantic insight, APIs, cloud, and continuous delivery.<sup>2</sup>

Adobe Experience Manager (AEM) falls under the Adobe Marketing Cloud, which is part of the larger Adobe Experience Cloud. It enables your organization to deliver experiences that are compelling, personal, useful, and everywhere.

Implementing the latest version of AEM allows you to accelerate innovation, source and manage assets at exponential scale, and manage your content and experiences. Specific innovations include:

- Production-ready responsive components for websites with broader support for cloud
- Increase in scale and performance of digital asset management
- Rich integration of brand and user-generated content (UGC)
- Fluid experience delivery by composing and delivering content beyond owned channels and touch points



Forrester recognizes AEM as a leader among web CMS vendors<sup>2</sup>

# / Your Pre-planning Checklist for an AEM Implementation

## TECHNICAL PLANNING

- Determine the number of sites to convert**
- Review user experience (UX):**
  - o Mobile compatibility
  - o Identify must-have UX capabilities to convert
  - o Identify new UX capabilities to consider
- Document data conversion requirements:**
  - o Content
  - o Customers
  - o Products, pricing, inventory, orders (if applicable)
- Identify and document customizations driving business logic customer experience**
- Review system integrations needed for conversion:**
  - o Customer relationship management (CRM)
  - o Enterprise resource planning (ERP)
  - o Email and marketing campaign management
  - o Analytics
- Pre-conversion - Benchmark current metrics/key performance indicators (KPIs)**
  - o Current conversion rates
  - o Site traffic
  - o KPIs specific to your business

## BUDGET PLANNING

- Confirm total cost of the migration:**
  - o Initial setup and implementation of the platform
  - o Changes or enhancements to the current user experience
  - o Platform integration and customization
  - o Testing and quality assurance (QA)
  - o Platform licensing costs
  - o Licensing costs for other supporting platforms
  - o Costs of hosting options
  - o Ongoing platform and application support
  - o Internal resources needed to support the migration

## DEPLOYMENT PLANNING

- Develop project team responsible for supporting the deployment**
- Confirm resource availability**
- Develop timeline and set milestones for implementation:**
  - o Define conversion requirements
  - o UX conversion
  - o Platform configuration
  - o Customization development
  - o Data conversion
  - o Content migration
  - o User acceptance testing
  - o Go/no-go decision criteria
- Create and deliver a communication plan about the migration**
  - o Internal team and broader organization
  - o External customers
  - o Develop plan to roll back in the event of deployment challenges

## POST DEPLOYMENT PLANNING

- Post-Conversion - Standardize metrics/KPIs**
  - o Current conversion rates
  - o Site traffic
  - o KPIs specific to your business

## NOTES

---

---

---

---

---



## / Why Choose Perficient Digital?

Many companies find implementing a digital marketing platform to be a daunting task and opt to work with an experienced implementation partner. Choosing a partner that's the right fit is critical to success. Perficient Digital is an Adobe Premier Solution Partner that brings unparalleled digital transformation expertise to the table with capabilities that include:

- Digital strategy development
- Marketing and analytics
- Branding, experience design, and software deployment
- Systems integration and migrations
- Digital design for web and mobile applications
- Performance testing and optimization
- Change management and governance

The power of Adobe's best-in-class technology enables the ultimate differentiation in an intensely competitive and disruptive market.



Transforming to an experience business requires careful planning and execution of the technology that delivers a top-notch customer experience. It's how you remain competitive while satisfying rising expectations of the always-on customer. It's about innovating and bringing something new to your business and your customers that satisfies their unmet needs.

When you deliver experiences that drive customer loyalty through retention, enrichment, and brand advocacy, you rise above the competition.

Let us help you deliver a remarkable experience with Adobe Experience Manager.

---

**Sources:**

1 "The Rules of CX Are Changing," Cloud Cherry

2 "Forrester Wave: Web Content Management Systems, Q1 2017," Forrester





## Meet the Contributors

### **Greg Dawson, Adobe Experience Manager Solution Lead, Perficient Digital**

Greg has more than 20 years of experience as a technical architect and has deep experience with Adobe Experience Manager. He has managed large, challenging client engagements from defining requirements through post-implementation support and has a passion for mentoring teams of associates.

### **Robert Sumner, Principal Consultant & Adobe Practice Director, Perficient Digital**

Robert provides strategic consulting, business planning, and sales strategy development aligned to Adobe Marketing Cloud. He has more than 16 years of experience leading enterprise content management and portal technology delivery initiatives with deep expertise in web-related technologies, knowledge management, mentoring, and support.

### **Mark Polly, Principal, Strategic Advisors Consulting, Perficient**

Mark provides leadership in digital solutions strategies with expert service offerings and the execution of digital solutions projects. He leverages his 30+ years of experience working with clients on strategic initiatives, enterprise architecture, roadmaps, platform selection, governance, assessments and best practices. Mark contributes thought leadership to several Perficient blogs, and has spoken about digital solutions at several industry and vendor conferences.

# / Perficient Digital + Adobe

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

As an Adobe Premier Partner with broad experience in digital marketing and deep technology expertise in Adobe Experience 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.

---

Perficient**Digital**.com



[@PRFTDigital](#)



[Facebook.com/PerficientDigital](#)



[Blogs.Perficient.com/PerficientDigital](#)



[Blogs.Perficient.com/Adobe](#)



[\(855\) 411-PRFT](#)

