

Adobe

2025 Adobe Survey

State of Long-form Content Management in the Age of AI



Contents

Introduction	3
---------------------	----------

Survey Results—Long-Form Content Management	5
--	----------

Overview	5
Ranking Content Management Challenges	7
Managing Projects and Tasks	9
Deploying CMS/CCMS in the Cloud	12
Adopting AI for Content Management	15
Opportunity Case: Integrating Learning and Training Content	21

Conclusions	22
--------------------	-----------

2025 Top Three Trends	22
Adobe Top Five Recommendations	24
Looking Forward	26

Introduction

Adobe ran an open, public survey in the first half of 2025 asking business professionals involved in the content lifecycle about their experiences, goals, and concerns with their management of long-form content.

We were focused on the management of long-form due to:

- Our belief and interest in the high business value of long-form—in particular, technical content.
- Its recent uptick in market demand.
- Concerns on how this uptick trend challenges content teams to increase the volume, velocity, and accuracy of their content, making insight into the current state of long-form content management especially important.

In fact, we recently explored the value of long-form and how to measure it in our paper, “[Technical Content—Assessing Business Value and Impact](#).” But we wanted to go further and hear directly from real-world, content teams about their successes and challenges when trying to produce and manage long-form content to achieve that potential value. We were also especially curious to learn more about the changes to and efficacy of content management in this new age of AI.

Our survey revealed some compelling insights. And now in this report, we’re sharing these insights and our Adobe takeaways about them with you.

Adobe Survey Approach and Demographics

We recruited survey participants over our public website and social channels, and via email. We received over 400 responses across:



31 countries.



Companies of different sizes up to the Fortune 10.

-  Users (41%) and non-users (59%) of Component / Content Management Systems (CMS/CCMS).
-  Respondents (90%) who are mostly not current Adobe customers.
-  Respondents who mostly are in “Technical Communications” roles (53%) with IT professionals in second place at 11% **[Figure 1]**.
-  Respondents working across many industries with the top three (3) as Technology and Software Services (32%), Manufacturing-Industrial (9%), and Professional Services (8%).

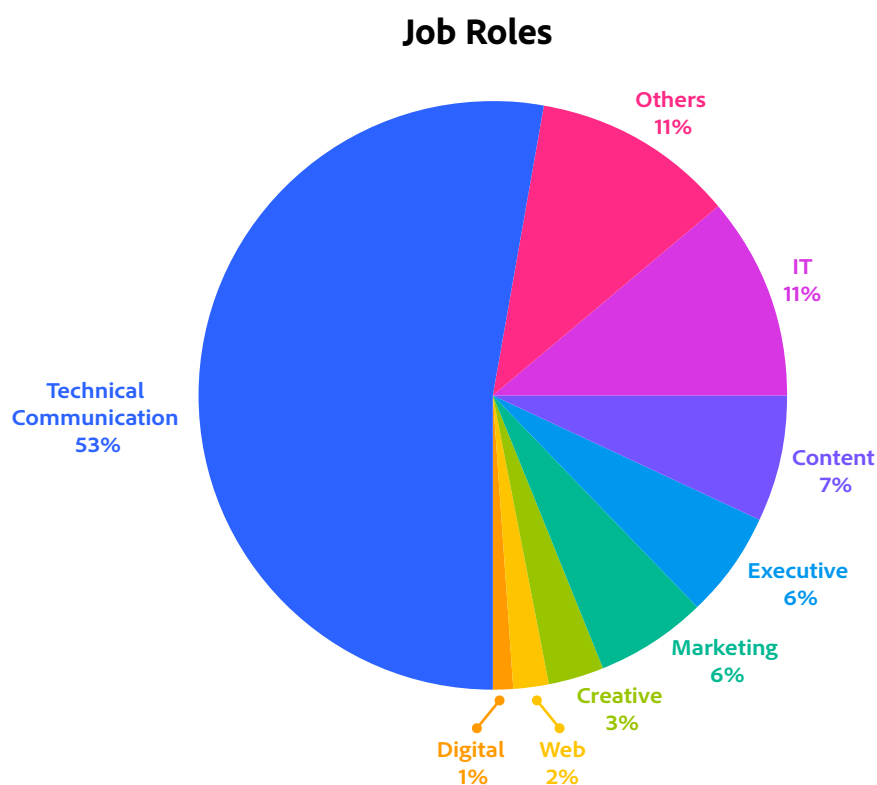


Figure 1 – Survey respondent roles

What You Will Find in This Report

- A review of the survey results on long-form content management challenges in general, with a targeted dive into key areas such as project and task management, CMS/CCMS deployment, and of course, AI adoption.
- A brief look at content management for learning and training content.
- Our takeaways and recommendations based on the survey results.

We hope that our survey and this report offers guidance that helps you on your journey of modernizing, streamlining, and considering AI implementation for your organization's content management systems and processes.

Survey Results—Long-Form Content Management

Overview

We first look at the **“Content Management Challenges”** respondents face when producing, delivering, and managing long-form content. These ranked challenges then set the context for our subsequent, targeted sections that explore content management in terms of:

- **“Managing Projects & Tasks”**: Considers how teams organize themselves and manage content projects and their challenges from a content management, business/human-ops perspective.
- **“Deploying CMS/CCMS in the Cloud”**: Takes a tech-ops perspective and asks respondents who already use a CMS/CCMS to produce and manage content if they do so from the Cloud, and if they do, why? And if not, why not?
- **“Adopting AI for Content Management”**: Determines if and how their organizations are attempting to use AI to address the preceding questions and challenges. Essentially, it explores the foundation of an exciting and emerging concept of content management ‘AIOps’.

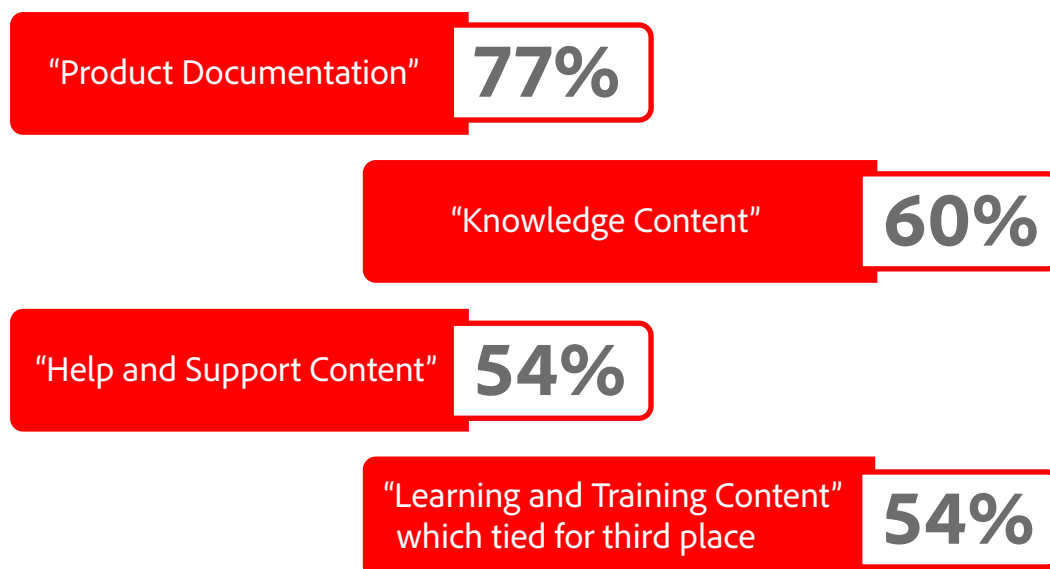
Who are the Respondents and Why is it Important?

Our “Executive Summary” briefly covered survey demographics showing that our respondents came from a cross-section of global regions, industries, and company sizes, which did not seem to place a bias on results.

But what did stand out in the data for potential results impacts are that respondents:

- **Are mainly technical communications professionals (53%),** which moves the focus towards technical content management and its challenges, versus e.g., marketing long-form content.
- **Mostly don't use a CMS/CCMS (59%)** to manage their long-form content, which then e.g., may prioritize problems that a CMS/CCMS (which they likely don't have) could normally help solve.
- **Use more personal productivity tools (~60%)** to organize themselves as individuals in content projects over professional project management tools, which leads to ranking challenges like 'fragmented tools'.

The most direct example of this role-based, demographic bias is in response to "What types of content do you manage?" The top four content types listed were:



Business and other non-technical content dropped down significantly in ranking, likely because of the much smaller representation of professionals responsible for these other types of long-form content.

Thus, for the following sections, it is safe to assume the data is most relevant to the primary respondent of the survey—technical content professionals—and the challenges they face managing more technical, long-form content such as the top four listed above.

Ranking Content Management Challenges

Voice of the Survey – Top Challenges

“The absence of a unified, enterprise-wide vision and structure for tech communications.”

In this series of questions [Figure 2], we looked broadly across content management to understand challenges in their strategy, process, tools, tasks, and stack.

What did we find?

- **Human-factor challenge ranks at the top.**

In this list, the top challenge sits squarely on the human side of the equation. “Lack of a unified content strategy” (53%) depends on human collaboration and leadership where technology can enable these activities but is neither the decision-maker nor the primary solution to the problem. And it impacts other, downstream human-factor challenges like “Content silos” (38%) that can be symptomatic of a lack of content strategy.

However, while humans ultimately still make these decisions and may use simple technology to reach them, it opens an opportunity to then use advanced technology to enforce and measure results against them.

- **Technology opportunities.**

At second and third place, “Content accuracy across channels” (51%) and “Migrating legacy content” (49%) sit at the human-technology intersection where humans oversee original content accuracy and version validation, but technology can then scale their efforts by doing subsequent validations. Tied at fourth and fifth place at (46%), “Tracking content lifecycle” and “Maintaining speed of publishing” are more directly impacted by technology with its automation and workflow capabilities.

- **Stack perception shows strong demand for AI.**

In terms of their actual stack, “Lack of GenAI capabilities” ranked as the top concern at **43%**, while e.g., concern with “Cloud-based offering” was at only **17%**.

While this disparity is not a surprise based on the maturity and availability of solutions, the interest in AI capabilities shows a strong desire to use AI to help solve tangible challenges, and that it is not just emerging in the world of content management without a clear purpose.

Top Takeaway

Collectively, these numbers show that both human-strategic and productivity, quality, task-related challenges are of high importance to content teams. And that for all but the top, human-factor challenge, technology can play a key role in helping address them, with AI already top of mind as a path forward. Importantly, addressing the unified content management strategy challenge likely includes incorporating a clear, aligned technology roadmap (**33%**).

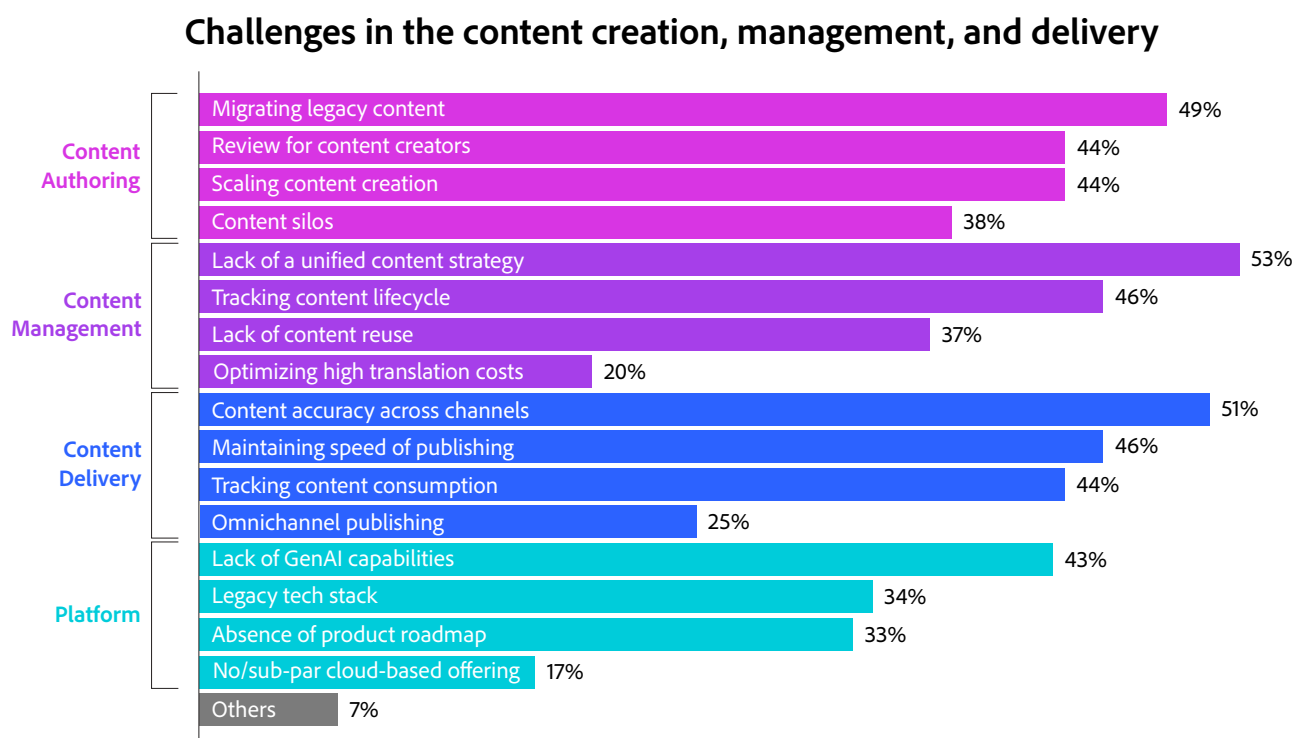


Figure 2 – How do you rank your content management challenges in 2025?

Managing Projects and Tasks

Voice of the Survey – Top Challenges

“Delays in receiving inputs or clarifications can cause bottlenecks. Developers often prioritize code over documentation, so maintaining clear communication and visibility into development timelines is critical.”

Our first area of deeper investigation—project and task management—has a direct impact on the ability of project and content teams to achieve their goals and address the challenges ranked in the prior section.

When surveying on this topic [**Figure 3**], we sorted into two (2) primary roles, the **“Project Manager”** and the **“Content Professional”**. And looking at the responses, we see a clear, and not unexpected, difference in focus between ‘pure’ project managers and ‘pure’ content professionals (not those with combined functions.)

Project managers, aligned with their job function, prioritize team visibility, tracking, planning, budgeting, reporting and tool enablement across projects. In contrast, content professionals who are required to create deliverables on a schedule, are focused on their individual task productivity within projects.

While both are highly important and core to the success of content management, this split in roles and focus led to some interesting observations on their challenges.

Fragmented tools and less control for project managers.

- At only **17%** of respondents, the lower percentage of pure project managers generally corresponds to the lower ranking of use of purpose-built project management tools. The top tools listed are employee productivity tools of email (**58%**) and spreadsheets (**54%**), which are more likely used by the pure content professionals who were **42%** of the respondents.

- The predominance of content professionals using personal productivity tools likely leads to “Fragmented tools” being the top challenge at **57%** for project managers.
- There is a conflict between “Fragmented tools” as a top concern, and “Adoption of project management tools” as the lowest concern at **31%**. This suggests that while project managers don’t have an issue with adopting tools—perhaps their extended teams (still using personal productivity tools) do.

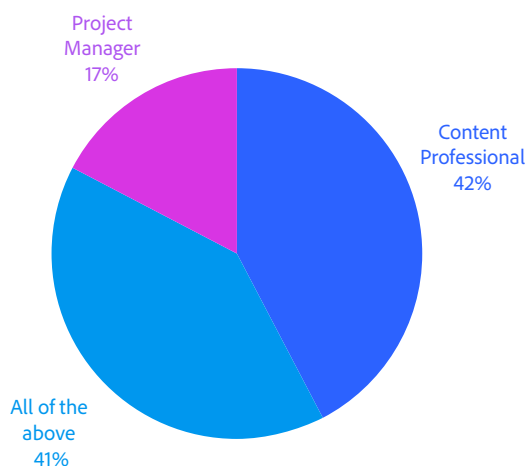
Significantly lower productivity for content professionals—unless (perhaps) they are using Jira.

- The challenges ranked by content professionals suggests a lack of appropriate tools—either project or content management—to manage their process and workload, which is not surprising if most don’t have a CMS/CCMS and they use email as their top project management solution.
- While a collection of project management tools was listed, Jira was at the top after personal productivity tools listed in third place (**44%**). As a common solution used in engineering environments, this is not a surprise for our primarily “Technical Communications” professional respondent whose top content type is “Product Documentation”. In this circumstance, they may have a productivity edge over their colleagues primarily using email and spreadsheets.

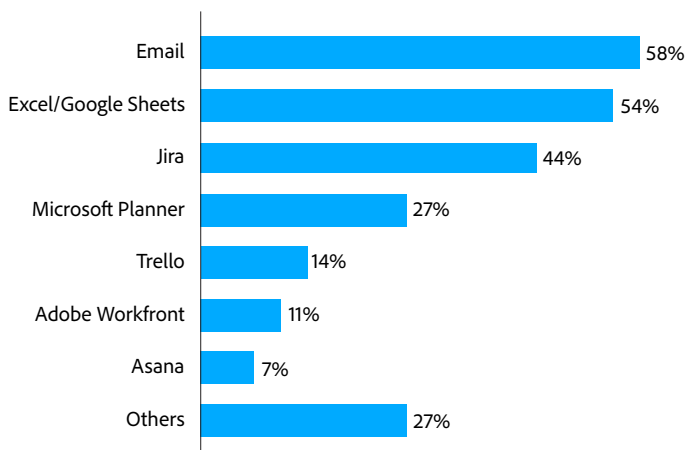
Top Takeaway

While the split in focus between the two primary roles is not a surprise, the data suggests a persistent either lack of appropriate tools, and/or tool silo that leads to tool fragmentation, lack of visibility, and lack of control for project managers, and impaired productivity for content professionals—causing bottlenecks and constraining content teams and projects from reaching the volume, velocity, and accuracy they need for long-form content.

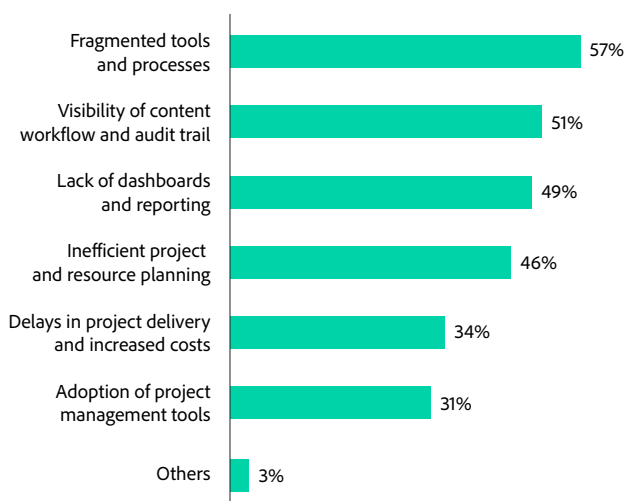
Job role in managing projects and tasks



Tools used for project and task management



Challenges faced by project managers



Challenges faced by content professionals

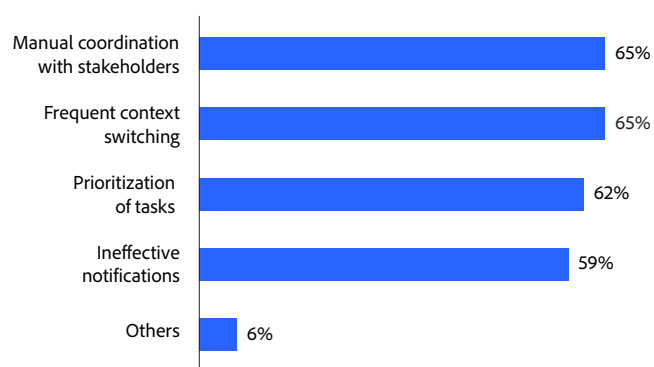


Figure 3 – What's your role in managing projects, what tools do you use, and what challenges do you face?

Deploying CMS/CCMS in the Cloud

Voice of the Survey – Top Challenges

"Managing content scattered across multiple platforms (CMSs, DAMs, Google Drive, Slack, etc.) makes it difficult to maintain version control, reuse assets efficiently, and ensure everyone is aligned."

"Biggest challenges [are] managing consistency and contextual accuracy across long-form, modular content sourced from multiple SME's and regions... Also, bridging content silos to improve discoverability and enabling AI readiness."

As suggested in the prior topic, good project and task management tools can help teams more effectively gain control over their process, planning, and productivity.

But it's the use of a CMS/CCMS system and its deployment in the Cloud that can significantly assist in consolidating fragmented tools, reducing siloes, improving access to repositories, and standardizing a scalable, cost-effective system that can increase consistency, discovery, and content reuse.

We asked respondents who already have a CMS/CCMS (**41%**) if they have migrated their CMS/CCMS into the Cloud and if so, why? And if not—why not?

Cloud is the Common Current Deployment Model

Survey showed that **55%** [Figure 4] of current CMS/CCMS users already deploy their CMS/CCMS in the Cloud or as a managed service, while **21%** did not know how or where their platform is deployed. Of the remaining **24%** that are still deployed on-premises, only **18%** (of total CMS/CCMS user respondents) are reluctant to migrate to the Cloud.

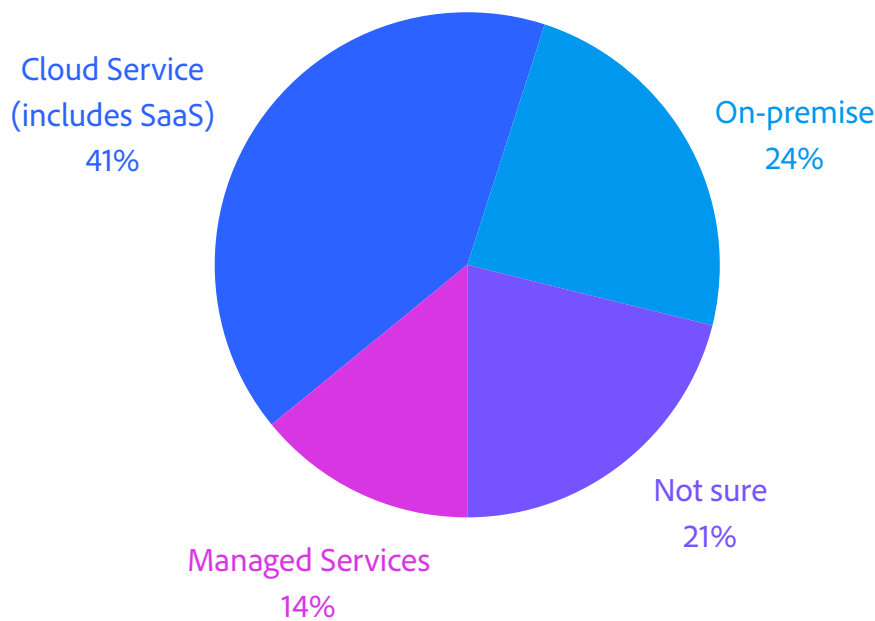


Figure 4 – Where is your CMS/CCMS currently deployed?

Pragmatism Drives Cloud Migration Benefits

For those that already have or want to migrate, when reviewing the ranking of benefits [Figure 5] associated with migration, reduced costs, scalability, flexibility, performance, reliability, accessibility, and collaboration cover the top half of benefits for migration. This suggests a trend toward more operational priorities associated with a mature technology.

Yet curiously, while “GenAI capability gaps” ranked as a top concern with their stack at **43%** in overall content management challenges, it did not rank as a highly motivating factor (**35%**) to migrate to a cloud-based solution—which can enable more rapid access to new features like AI.

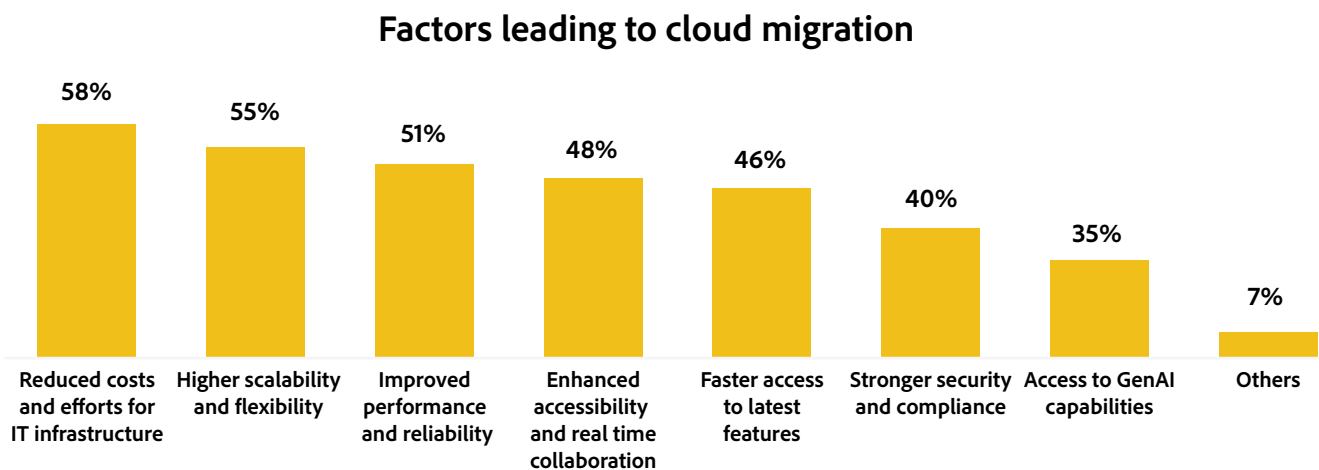


Figure 5 – Why migrate your CMS/CCMS to the Cloud?

Security and Compliance are Top Cloud Migration Challenges

For those yet to migrate and are challenged or reluctant to do so [Figure 6], pragmatism remains the focus with top concerns being a combination of security (47%), high costs (36%), and satisfaction with an existing non-Cloud solution (26%) in fourth place. Based on these numbers, it is no surprise that overcoming the barrier to get leadership buy in on a strong ROI case (29%) is in third place.

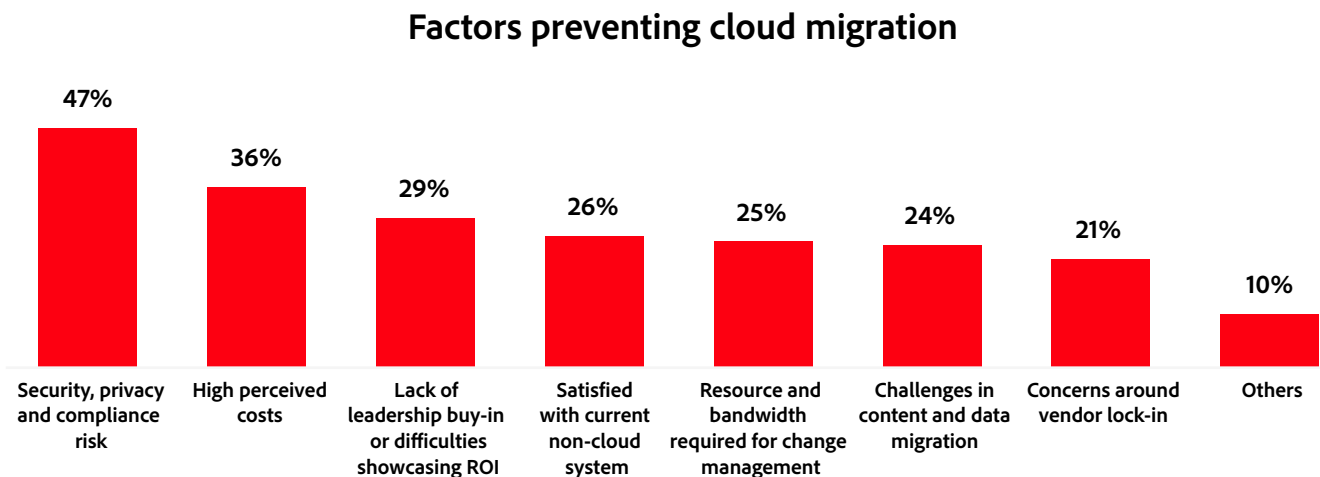


Figure 6 – Why wouldn't you migrate your CMS/CCMS to the Cloud?

Top Takeaway

While most CMS/CCMS users have already migrated to the Cloud, for the remaining 24% still on-premises, challenges are based on common, practical operational concerns of security, costs, and overcoming the resulting business-case barrier needed to get buy-in on the budget and change mandate—which may effectively hinder their access to AI capabilities and achieving broader content strategy goals.

Adopting AI for Content Management

Voice of the Survey

"GenAI tools in Content Management Systems are unable to understand context and retrieve results. They often bring wrong results or bring no results if the user frames a question differently; even when the answer exists."

In this section, we explore an exciting area of AIOps for content management, which basically means, using AI to augment or perform content management tasks.

For insight into where content teams are in the adoption curve and how they are experiencing it, we asked our respondents about which AI benefits they are most interested in, which use cases they are prioritizing, and which top barriers to adoption they are facing most.

Productivity Benefits are the Top Priority for AI

When considering the potential benefits, the initial enthusiasm of 'AI-for-all' is evolving into a more practical, discerning, and ROI-focused approach. It balances a desire to improve productivity [Figure 7] with the business case needed to adopt it.

- Ranking "Productivity" as the top driver suggests that users may be developing a more sophisticated understanding of AI's true value.

For example, "Faster content delivery" while still important, is an end-of-pipeline metric. In contrast, productivity is a broader concept that encompasses the entire content creation lifecycle.

- Though still important in third place at 50%, "Better customer service" shows a marked drop (17%) in priority versus internal productivity and performance.

This response could be based on a variety of factors, such as a better understanding of the best practical application of the technology. Or concerns with customer exposure risk to AI quality issues. Or perhaps it shows the demographic bias where producers of “Product Documentation” have less direct contact with customers and customer service.

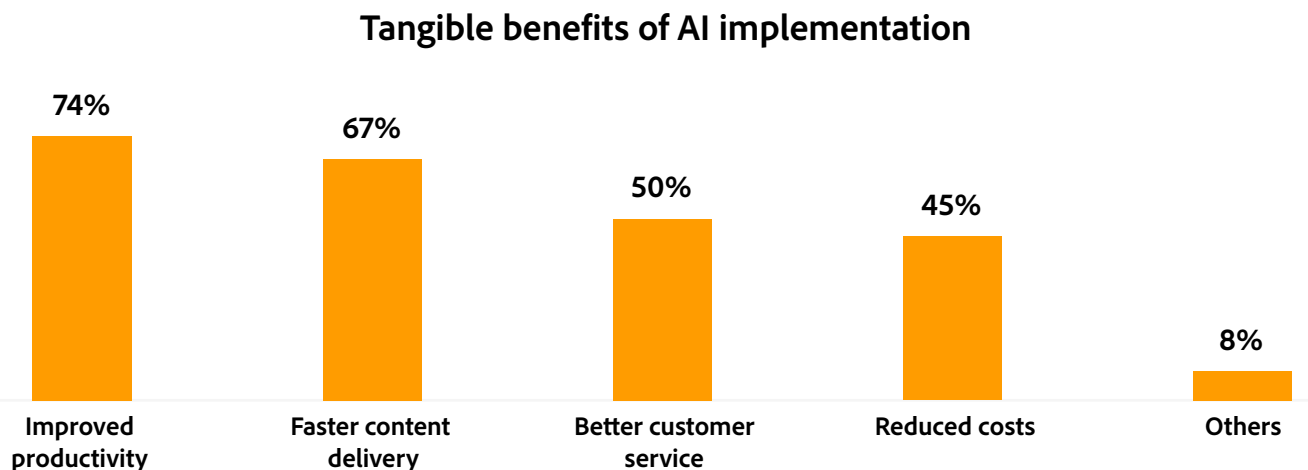


Figure 7 – Which AI benefits are most important to you?

GenAI Content Discovery for Search is Top Use Case

There were some results in our query on AI use cases that met our expectations. For example, using AI to discover content for search responses was the top-ranked at **77%** [Figure 8]. As AI has become the common first response of overall web searches, this makes sense for prioritization whether for use in public search, or in internal search cases.

Similarly, we expected that with “Productivity” as the top desired AI benefit, use cases that support improvements in productivity would rank highly. We saw this in the response with “Authoring copilot” and “Content reuse” at **62%** and **57%** respectively, being key capabilities that content professionals would desire to save time and effort.

There were some other findings, however, that were not expected, but seemed important:

- **Some lower ranked use cases are needed to enable other, higher ranked use cases.**

For example, the ability to tag and generate metadata (**51%**) is critical for successful, accurate content discovery (**77%**), Content reuse (**57%**), or even when searching repositories (**40%**). Without these tagging and labeling capabilities, improving content reuse, customer experience, and accurate search of published content for better customer support and marketing purposes may be difficult to achieve.

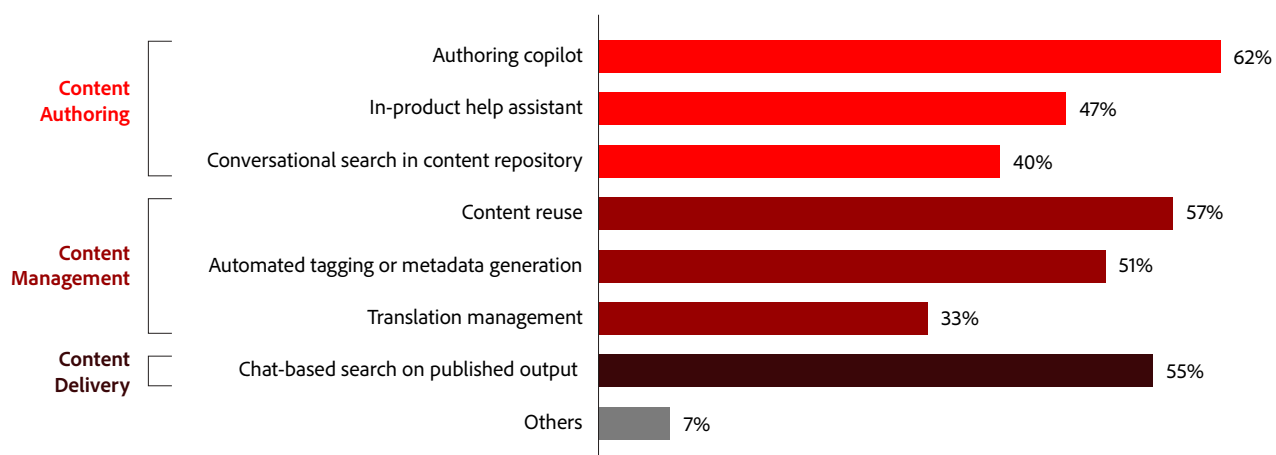
This generally means respondents may have ranked the business-impacting problem they want solved higher, even if the enabling use case is a higher priority for deployment due to a technical dependency.

- **AI use cases consistently rank higher than their correlated content management challenges.**

Returning to our first section on “Ranking Content Management Challenges”, we can see that while “Content reuse” as an AI use case ranked at **57%**, the “Content reuse” challenge was at **37%**. The desire for AI translation management was at **33%**, while high translation cost concerns were at only **20%**. And while the AI authoring copilot use case was highly rated at **62%**, the need to scale content creation and maintain speed of publishing were almost 20 points lower at **44%** and **46%**, respectively.

This is likely not a discrepancy but suggests that AI is not always considered to be the solution for the highest challenges (e.g., unified strategy) as these challenges may retain a strong human component or cases where AI may not (yet) provide the best solution. Instead, adoption is focused on improving productivity more broadly across many (important) use cases where intelligent automation may be more helpful, and AI may offer more consistent quality results at this time—and better align with the concerns in the next section.

AI use case in demand



How important is GenAI content discovery for search?

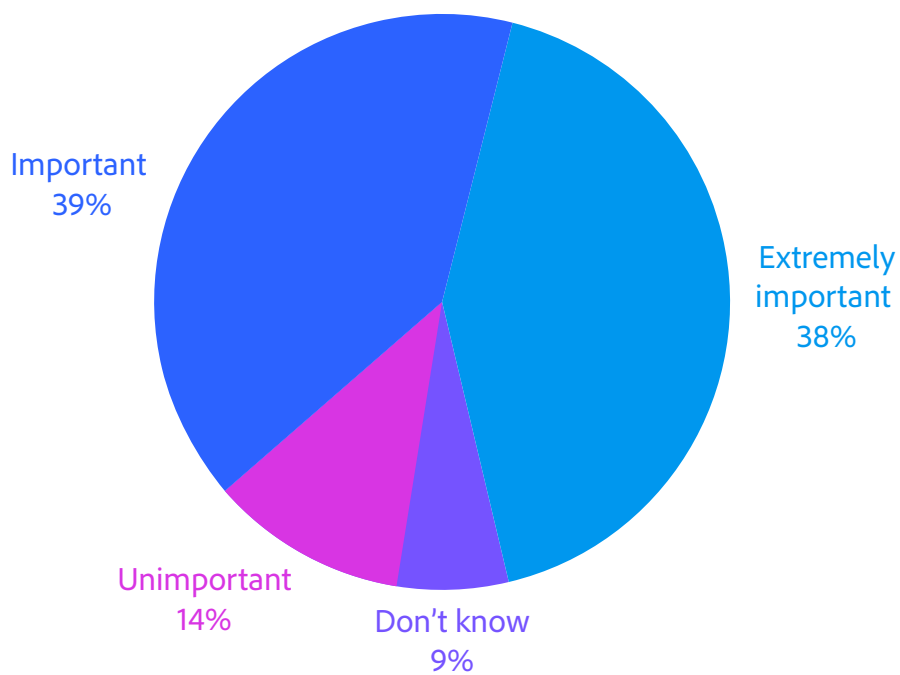


Figure 8 – What are your top AI use cases in content management?

AI Barriers—Concerns with Security, Governance and Quality

When reviewing the responses in this section, we noticed that the top two concerns [Figure 9] are questions of risk management and quality (which raises operational cost), which closely mirror the top CMS/CCMS migration barriers to the Cloud. However, in this case, rather than costs of migration, it's the hidden costs of managing poor quality output creating redundant work, errors, or even the potential of external, reputational harm to a company.

We found this interesting as Cloud represents a mature set of technologies and deployment models, while AI is still emerging, but the concepts of migration and initial technology adoption both have strong operational requirements that must be applied whether a product or technology is new or well understood.

What did seem to apply specifically to AI included:

- While third place 'Guidelines' is somewhat redundant to governance (first place), training (for worker productivity) is key and directly impacts the success of AI implementation.

If e.g., the deployment, onboarding, and usage reduces productivity rather than offers it as a benefit—especially if there are quality and hallucination problems—ROI is difficult to establish and achieve.

- By ranking “Unclear ROI” just above “High cost and effort”, users appear interested in adoption but are struggling to quantify the benefits into a consistent, clear business case for investment.

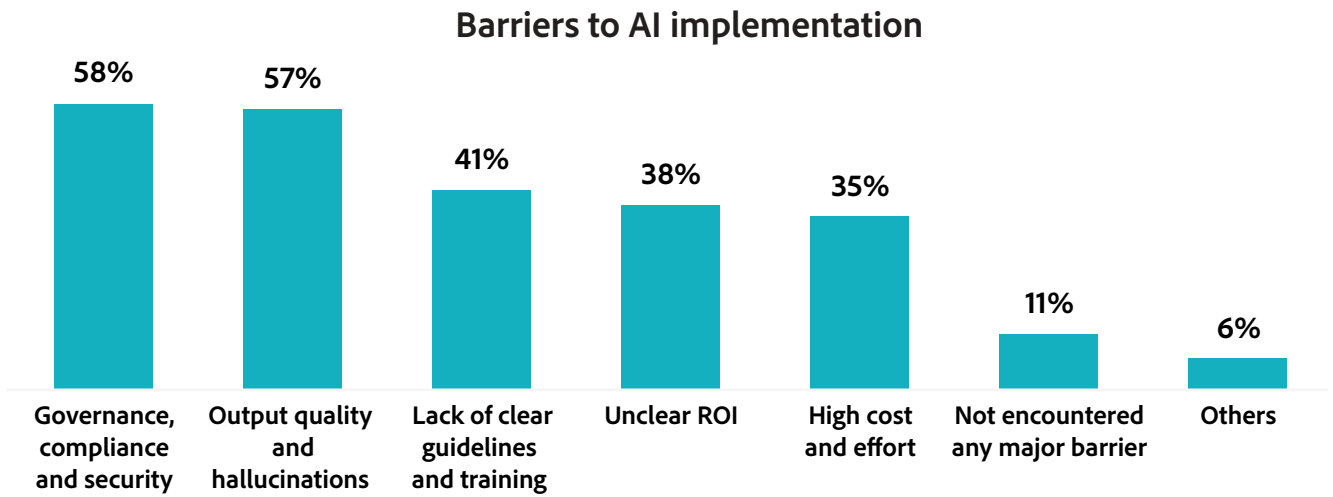


Figure 9 – What are your top organizational barriers to AI adoption for content management?

Top Takeaway

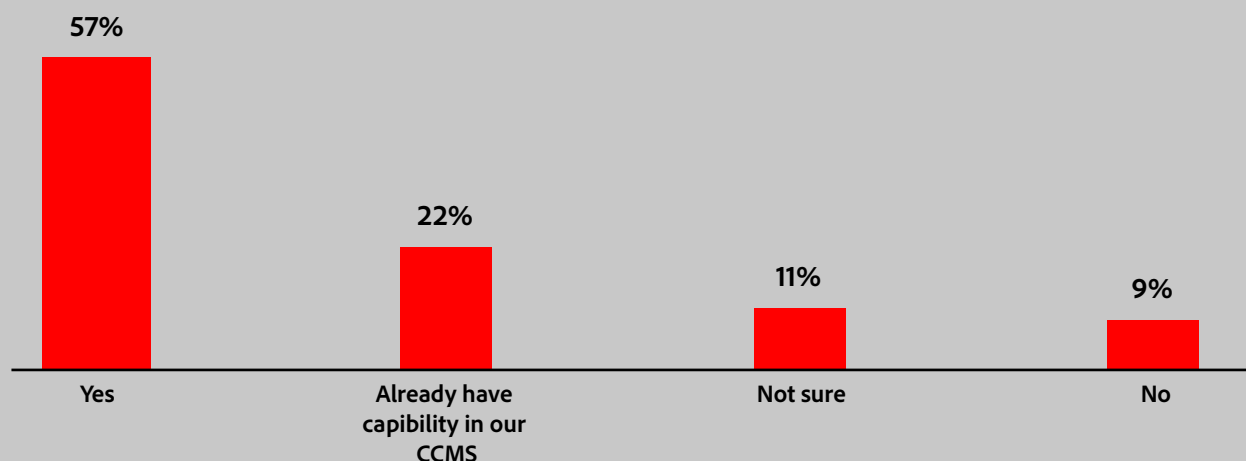
While the top barriers to adoption for AI closely mirror the practical concerns of Cloud migration, the concern with quality and training, combined with the use case focus on distinct, achievable productivity gains suggest that content teams have strong interest in the use of AI – if they can use it and reliably get the results expected.

Opportunity Case: Integrating Learning and Training Content

In our survey, we also took a closer look at learning content creation which yielded some interesting results.

The data demonstrates a **60%** overlap of current CMS/CCMS users who also produce learning content. And while **57%** want to be able to create it using CMS/CCMS integrated capabilities to centralize knowledge, reuse content, improve consistency, and streamline updates, only **22%** have those integrated capabilities today.

Are you interested in eLearning authoring in CMS/CCMS?



Conclusions

As described earlier in the report, our respondents were primarily business producers and managers of long-form, technical content, where the majority do not yet use a CMS/CCMS, and many are depending on basic productivity tools to manage their tasks.

For those using a CMS/CCMS and already adopting AI (either within platforms or on their own), the data suggests that features and capabilities that improve productivity, like AI, are of top importance. But risk, quality, and cost concerns—a more pragmatic, business-case approach—have taken hold over hype.

2025 Top Three Trends

- 1. Bifurcation in experience—a difference in challenges between those who have not adopted content management platforms, and those who have and may already be reaping the benefits.**

Other than the top, overall content management challenge that's a human factor concern, 'lack of unified content management strategy', we can make an interesting correlation between those who have adopted technology platforms to address challenges, and those who have not—and how as a result, they ranked the challenges.

We see common percentage numbers between the respondent profiles (not using platforms like CMS/CCMS and project management at ~60%), and the higher ranking of problems that these platforms typically solve (typically ranking 40–60%). These are issues like tracking the 'content lifecycle', conducting 'content reviews', ensuring content 'consistency', maintaining 'publishing speed', dealing with project 'fragmented tools', or problems with getting 'project visibility'.

If the respondent profiles had been reversed (e.g., majority already using CMS/CCMS), we would likely see the basic content management challenges already solved by these platforms ranked lower, with higher ranking on capabilities the platforms don't (yet) offer or have matured.

2. Content management 'AIOps' is on the rise and following the overall cycle of AI adoption in the enterprise.

With 'lack of AI capabilities' as the top concern for their stack and productivity gains as the top desired AI benefit, the focus on AI adoption for content management has moved beyond its 'pilot' and early hype phase. While contained, task-oriented, speed-of-publish use cases are still important, holistic business driver and productivity gain use cases like GenAI-based content discovery for search (77%) and authoring copilots (62%) are now the top-ranking.

But in this same maturation process, organizations are also raising the bar on expectation. They are evaluating it against more sophisticated criteria in an environment where enterprise risk, quality, readiness, and Return-on-Investment (ROI) are paramount to make a business case for confidence in investment for broader organizational adoption.

3. A pragmatic, business case approach to technology adoption is key.

Across multiple domains, business impact and economic considerations are a structural force shaping decisions. This holds true for both AI adoption and cloud migration for content management where there is a need to overcome barriers like security and governance. But more importantly, to present a business case where the benefits outweigh costs by enough margin to support the investment.

The difference is, in the case of the 18% not interested in cloud migration, it's fundamentally because they believe they already have a working solution and they can't justify the cost of overcoming barriers to solve for a problem already solved, even for a mature technology. In contrast, for AI adoption, the interest is higher than the concern, with the hope that AI will address problems not already solved.

Adobe Top Five Recommendations

While providing vision for content management is an elemental, human contribution, supporting an enterprise-wide structure realize it is something where a partnership between humans and technology is essential.

1. Use a project management platform—not fragmented, personal productivity tools.

Project and task management is foundational to well-run content management. It can help tackle problems with visibility, collaboration, governance, prioritization, and distraction.

Choose the right project management platform with the right capabilities that work well with content management and lifecycle concepts, and with content professional authoring and review tools.

2. Consolidate to an integrated CMS/CCMS.

In our study, most respondents were not using CMS/CCMS and not using professional project management tools. And it showed based on how the challenges were ranked.

To modernize, streamline, derive AI adoption benefits, and help humans do a better job overall, consolidate to an AI-enabled platform to lower the costs of AI adoption and transform how you manage your in-demand, long-form content and your business.

3. Migrate to the Cloud.

Cloud deployments were preferred by a clear majority of current CMS/CCMS users. Why? The Cloud offers better centralization, standardization, access, scale, and adoption of new features and GenAI capabilities.

If you have not already migrated and are facing barriers, consider working with an established platform and/or managed services provider who is able to surmount security and governance challenges. An experienced provider can also help you more accurately estimate the costs and benefits when building the ROI business case for your organization.

4. Expand your CMS/CCMS and improve content reuse by integrating learning content production.

As our case study survey showed, there is a large overlap in content producers and a desire to manage learning content alongside other long-form content in a CMS/CCMS. But while a large majority wish to have that capability, only 22% currently do.

Review the capabilities your current CMS/CCMS platform or the one you are evaluating offers for the needed capabilities and talk to your project managers and content producers about it.

5. Focus on quality and preparedness for AI deployments and build on your AI adoption by prioritizing its enabling functions.

With security, hallucinations, and output quality as top barriers to successful AI adoption, it's important to begin with a practical approach. This means being thoughtful not just about which use cases to tackle, but also about what AI you implement, where you implement it, and how it is deployed.

Make sure you can accurately tag, discover, and search on internal data, or downstream use cases like discovery, public search, reuse, and authoring are likely to fail.

Require that AI deployments are tested for quality and security and include a robust onboarding plan for users. Without these operational steps in advance, the investment business case, desired cost, productivity benefits, and overall ROI won't meet (or exceed) expectations.

Net? Design carefully, run pilots, measure results, consider platforms with pre-integrated capabilities, and most importantly—ask your project and content teams what's working—and what's not!

Looking Forward

As demand for long-form content, productivity improvements, and better ROI increases—today's partnership between humans and technology is more important than ever.

Adobe continues to make investments in its cloud-based and AI-powered technologies. The Adobe Experience Manager portfolio with its SaaS-based AEM User Guides solution has been adding new AI capabilities and product integrations, including with Adobe Workfront for integrated project management for content management teams. Our mission is to provide a comprehensive, integrated CCMS experience for project managers, content professionals, and contributors across the entire content lifecycle.

To learn more: [Click here](#)

About the Author



Rohit Bansal

**Principal Product Marketing Manager
Adobe**

Rohit Bansal is a principal product marketing manager at Adobe, leading global go-to-market strategy for Adobe Experience Manager Guides.

With over 15 years of experience, Bansal has led marketing for product and services firms in the B2B domain and managed key functions like product marketing, digital marketing, thought leadership, demand generation and partner relations. A passionate data-driven marketer, he is also a big advocate of customer experience.



© 2025 Adobe. All rights reserved.

Adobe, the Adobe logo, and Experience Manager Guides are registered trademarks or trademarks of Adobe in the United States and/or other countries. All other trademarks are the property of their respective owners.