



GUIDE

# Work management that works the way creatives do.

The complete guide to accelerating—  
and protecting—the creative process.



As a creative today, it's easy to feel like a pinball, bouncing from one deadline to another, constantly bumping into distractions. And once you're finally in the creative zone, you find yourself abruptly changing course to work on a different project. Not only is it frustrating, but it's also hard to score creative wins when you don't have the time to do what you were hired to do.

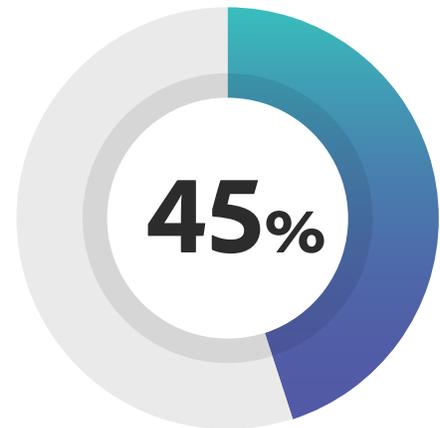
Too many creative teams are struggling to keep up with today's insatiable demand for content. They're getting countless ad hoc requests, being pulled from one priority to another, and spending too much time on non-creative tasks like tracking down feedback, searching for assets, and jumping from app to app. All while being asked to create more work than ever.

This simply isn't sustainable. The way creatives work must change—but in a way that protects the creative process.

A lot of creatives shudder when they hear the word "process." But the right process with the right structure will protect creatives, giving them the time they need to do great work—while allowing them to deliver more content faster. You can turn creatives into believers with a work management platform that does the following:

- Keep creatives in their favorite tools so they aren't constantly switching between apps and disrupting their work.
- Facilitate collaboration, digital proofing, and version management.
- Manage and automate review and approval workflows to ensure brand integrity.
- Integrate with your content or asset management system.
- Assign and capture metadata for each asset.
- Provide total visibility into all assets for easy search, access, and sharing of assets.
- Consolidate all requests into one channel so there's a single list of priorities.

**This guide shares insights into how a comprehensive work management system that protects the creative process will help you deliver great content and customer experiences, at speed and on brand.**



Approximately 45% of creation is done on an ad hoc basis.

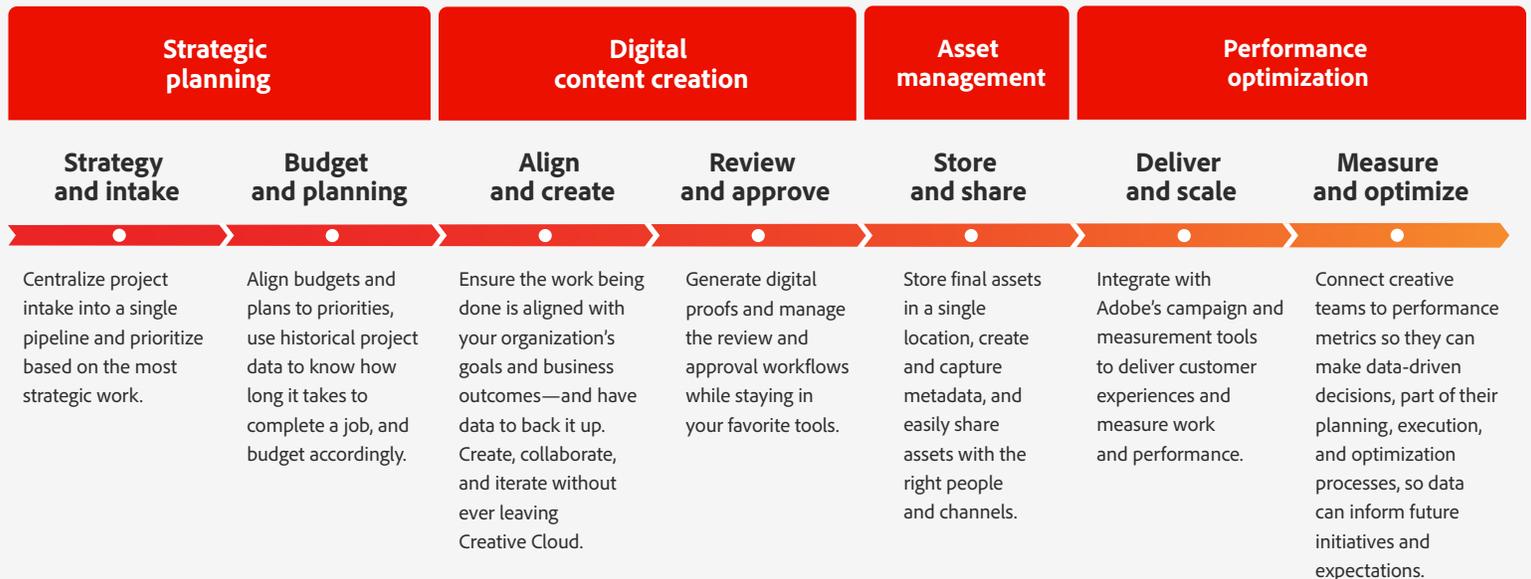
Source: IMN, Inc.

# The lifecycle of marketing work.

According to IO Integration, the top two creative operations challenges are a lack of workflows and processes, and bottlenecks and wasted time. Automating and streamlining the entire work process—whether it’s for the smallest piece of content or a major campaign—can solve them both.

A work management application like [Adobe Workfront](#), working together with other Adobe applications like Adobe Creative Cloud, gives your designers, writers, project managers, and account managers a single system for managing that process from start to finish. It also integrates with the business-critical applications you use to communicate, plan, and execute work, so the entire lifecycle of work flows freely across your organization.

Here’s a brief look at the marketing work lifecycle and how the right project management tools can help with every step.



# Work management should work the way creatives do.

When creatives can manage requests, reviews, approvals, and deliveries without ever leaving the programs they work in, they can do great work and get it done faster.

Workfront seamlessly connects to Adobe Creative Cloud. This means the entire design process, from request to approval, can be managed without ever leaving Photoshop, InDesign, Illustrator, or XD. When the asset management process is also part of the larger workflow, you can easily find, use, share, and deliver assets—not only saving time but also helping you get more value from the content you create.

Workfront has enhanced integrations with [Adobe Experience Manager Assets](#) and [Experience Manager Assets Essentials](#), which is a lightweight digital asset management (DAM) system. In fact, it was an integration designed by and for creatives—resulting in a single place to manage work, post feedback, and track changes. And it gives your entire marketing team full visibility into all assets and versions.

When all these solutions are integrated and can be configured for what your team needs, creatives spend less time doing non-creative tasks—like manually managing job intake or routing approvals—and more time creating great experiences.

Stanley Black & Decker is a great example. There's a banner hanging in one of its factories that reads, "Changing the way we work." The integration of Workfront and Adobe Creative Cloud has helped the company do just that. Creative team members are no longer sitting in countless meetings, constantly jumping between multiple interfaces, and spending hours tracking down proofs and approvals. Workfront has dramatically streamlined their creative process, allowing the company to produce three times as much work as they were previously—without tripling their workforce.



# Digital content creation: Maximum creativity, minimal disruption.



In our report [The Future of Creative Experiences](#), we found that just 30% of creatives' time is spent on actual creative work.



On top of that, 82% of creatives said work settings changed due to COVID-19, and only 34% of creatives currently work in an office. This can result in a lack of integration between tools and processes, and often, collaboration between people. As a result, work doesn't get shared with everyone who needs it, and there's little visibility into who is working on what. This makes it harder to communicate and move creative work through the pipeline efficiently.

But when creative teams have a good work management system that allows them to design, communicate, collaborate, and iterate directly in the tools they use every day, the barriers to producing great content go down, and they can spend more time focusing on the creative, strategic tasks at hand.

To achieve this, you need a work management solution that integrates with your creative tools, facilitates digital proofing, and manages the review and approval workflows to ensure brand integrity.

## Consolidate and integrate tools to keep creative work on track.

Workfront allows creatives to upload files directly from tools they use every day, so they spend less time toggling between applications and more time creating. They can easily add comments and updates to Workfront tasks directly from Adobe Creative Cloud to work without interruption. And they can iterate, upload new versions, notify stakeholders, and track everything in a single system for more efficient version control.

Geographic information system company Esri streamlined its marketing tools by integrating and consolidating 74 request systems into a single streamlined system of record, and decreased its digital project approval time from six weeks to one day.

Source: Adobe



## Automate the proofing, review, and approval process.

While creatives are being asked to work faster, the review process is stuck in the slow lane—bogged down by disparate feedback, email bottlenecks, and paper processes. When you digitize and standardize the proofing process, you make it easier—and faster—for all stakeholders to review, compare, track, and reconcile changes.

The ability to create digital proofs and make side-by-side comparisons of visuals and copy makes the review and approval process simpler, more accurate, and more efficient. Stakeholders are automatically notified when a proof is ready for review. Creatives stay in their favorite tools, see all feedback in one place, and can focus on the work rather than moving between tools or tracking down approvals.

This kind of workflow also helps ensure versioning compliance and brand integrity. The right people can see and audit changes without having to track revisions through multiple applications, emails, or quick conversations, so fewer changes slip through the cracks.

Teams that automate the review and approval process have up to 29% fewer revisions and 56% faster project delivery.

Source: [Adobe](#)

Since deploying Adobe Workfront, Thermo Fisher's Creative Innovation Studio has increased its intake of new work by 16%. They credit that increase to Workfront features that standardize and streamline key processes, including creative strategy, ideation, and execution, all the way through proofing and approvals. The solution's online proofing, capacity planning, workflow automation, and reporting capabilities have helped the studio improve productivity, shorten approval cycles, increase visibility, and better allocate resources. [Read more](#)

## Asset management: Find, use, and share assets more quickly.

With today's surge in content creation, marketing teams have an enormous amount of digital content to manage. According to research published in *Communicate Magazine*, organizations continue to experience an almost 10% increase per year in content creation. If you're creating hundreds or thousands of assets a year, 10% more can be incredibly hard to manage—especially if you're dealing with disconnected teams, content, and functions. This can result in a slower process and many assets sitting unused, trapped in separate silos.

On the other hand, a work management solution that integrates with your content or asset management system and assigns and captures metadata for each asset makes finding and managing them easier—and it helps get more value from each one you create.

**79%**

of organizations surveyed are seeing revenue gains of 10% or more from their DAM.

**21%**

are seeing gains of 40% or more.

Source: IDC and Adobe

## Integrate your digital content and digital asset management systems for a single source of truth.

A work management application that syncs with a DAM or content management system (CMS) not only brings all your digital content into a centralized storage location, but it also streamlines how you work—increasing the speed at which you can find, access, and share assets.

Marketers and creatives will be able to easily collaborate on assets they're using. Marketers can open an asset and post information for creatives, and a designer can immediately get to work. When they're finished, she can make notes about what they've done and notify the marketer.

It also provides a single source of truth for people outside of marketing—such as legal, licensing management, product development, and external stakeholders—to help maintain brand integrity.



# 86%

of organizations have reduced risk by 10% or more with a DAM.

# 18%

have reduced risk by 40%.

Source: IDC and Adobe

## Automatically assign and capture metadata for each asset.

The ability to automatically tag every asset isn't just nice to have—it's a must have for any organization that wants to meet customer demand for content. Workfront automatically tags each asset with important metadata, making it easy to find the right assets, ensure campaign teams have the most up-to-date versions, and eliminate duplication of work. This speeds time to market, improves brand consistency, and helps you use assets again and again to get their full value.

Consider Under Armour, for example, which has more than 300,000 assets. The integration of its other Adobe tools with Workfront has reduced the time spent retrieving assets from hours—or even days—to just minutes. The platform also links their asset storage to the brand's work. Whenever a new asset request is created in Workfront, the system automatically creates a single unified ID for it, which can be used to track the project, campaign, brand channel, and other data relevant to that asset—eliminating inefficiencies and increasing the speed of Under Armour's content creation across its global marketing operations.

# Make your entire creative process more strategic.

With creatives being pulled in so many directions, it's essential to hone in on a more strategic process—integrating the process end to end, making it transparent to the right people, prioritizing the right work, and allocating the right amount of time to do it. Just as important is connecting the work to measurable outcomes. Adobe Workfront helps you accomplish all the above—without compromising the creative process.

## Prioritize the right work.

Creatives want to ensure the work they do is connected to company strategies and goals. But according to Ad Age, 53% of creatives say their briefs lack focus and don't describe how the project will support business goals. Furthermore, ad hoc "urgent" jobs can derail creatives from these more important projects.

A fully connected solution like Workfront provides a single pipeline for work and a central platform for standardizing the intake process. This lets you see all incoming work in a single place, giving you a clear picture of how to align strategy, resources, and work and helping you prioritize requests based on how they ladder up to your company's larger goals.

You can continually vet each request, so there's never a question of whether your team is working on the right things. And the process doesn't lock you in. You can shift on the fly and reallocate resources when company strategies or market conditions change. You can even do scenario planning to see how changes impact the rest of your work.



## Allocate the right amount of time.

Workfront gives you the ability to collect and measure historical data around how long it takes to do a job so you can build achievable timelines. Then, with visibility into who has availability and what they're working on, you can make the best assignments. Once jobs are assigned, you can use the calendar features for full visibility into their status from start through completion.

Tracking time also helps you understand the true cost of getting a job done, as well as the cost savings compared to outsourcing.

## Connect your work to measurable outcomes.

Having solid data helps demonstrate the efficiencies you're creating and justifies the time your creatives need to complete a job. Performance metrics for your team also help you make better decisions around your ability to take on new projects. When those projects come in, you can prioritize those that offer the most value and complete them first to achieve a higher ROI.

Thanks to the Workfront and Adobe Analytics integration, you can also gather data on how an asset performs in the market. You can also gain insights on how to optimize it or how to proceed with future campaigns.



# Revamp your work process, protect the creative process.

The best way to compete in today's fast-moving and rapidly changing marketplace is to give your creatives the tools—and the time—to create amazing experiences.

When your teams can stay in their creative applications to not only design but also collaborate, proof, iterate, and store and manage their assets, they'll spend less time wrangling work and people and more time doing what they do best—creating great work.

Adobe Workfront connects seamlessly to many other Adobe solutions, streamlining the entire workflow from intake to analytics and optimization. Our platform Fusion integrates with your business-critical applications too, so your operations run more efficiently.



Read *The Complete Guide to Work Management for Marketers* to learn more about accelerating the entire marketing work lifecycle to consistently deliver great customer experiences—on time and on budget.

[Read now](#)



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