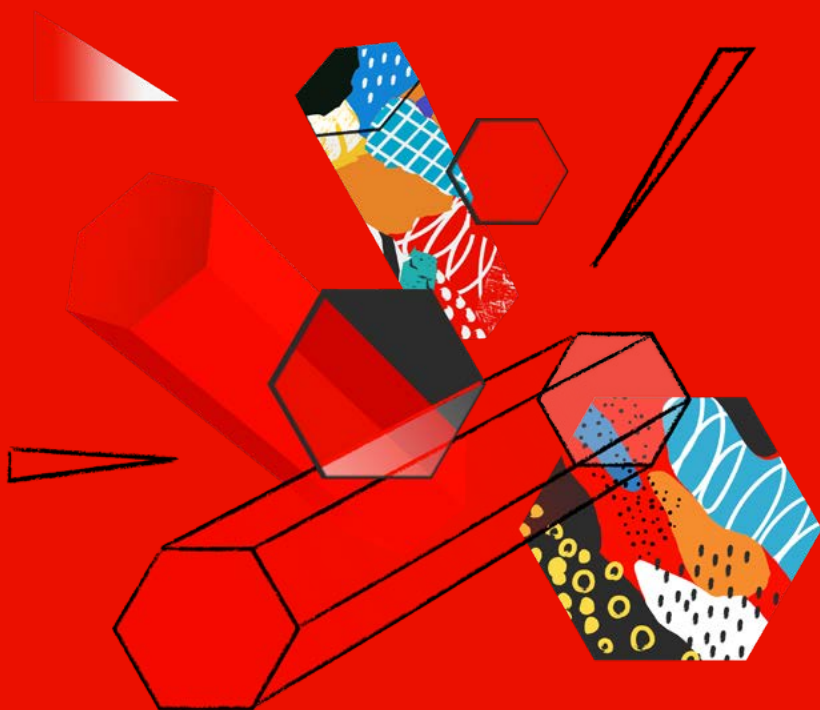# Ask more from your CMS.

Delight customers with multi-channel personalised content.

Jill Jones runs digital marketing at a wellness company that did £112 million in revenue last year. Her team has been bumping up against the limits of their out-of-the-box content management system (CMS) for years and she's finally convinced her CMO and CIO to invest in a more agile one.

Four years ago, when they chose their current system, an enterprise-grade CMS was out of their budget and would have taken at least six months to deploy – an unthinkable timeline for a mid-size company.

Now, with three brands and six country websites to support, Jill and her team need more flexibility. They want to be able to quickly build campaigns and experiences tailored to specific groups – like the high-value shoppers who've embraced a new luxe brand the company launched last year. Like Jill, leaders at most businesses are thinking a lot about how to create, deliver and optimise content-led experiences.

A recent global survey by Econsultancy said that content management, along with targeting and personalisation, is a top concern for businesses that are leading in customer experience. And it's no secret why – the same report showed that leaders in customer experience are three times more likely to have significantly exceeded their business goals.
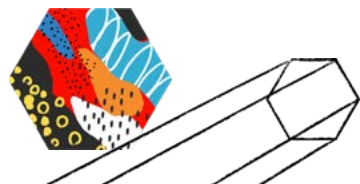
There is a direct link between content, customer experience and business results. How businesses manage their content matters – significantly.

> **❝** Leaders in customer experience are three times more likely to have significantly exceeded their business goals.
>
> Source: Econsultancy and Adobe

Fortunately for Jill's company, the landscape has shifted since their last CMS purchase. It used to be that big companies bought high-end systems and adapted them to fit their needs, while mid-size companies settled for solutions with a basic set of standard features

But the advent of agile cloud-native CMS platforms is levelling the playing field – letting companies like Jill's customise and show you how to innovate in ways they never thought possible.

Whatever the size of your organisation, this guide will show you how to choose, deploy and optimise a CMS that provides more engaging experiences for your customers and better results for your business.

So, isn't it time you asked more from your CMS?

Choose a CMS that can evolve with your business

As you explore options, imagine what your business might look like a few years down the road. Ideally, your new CMS should help you do these five things:

1. Serve content on all channels
A key consideration in choosing a CMS is how you're going to deliver content to different channels and devices.

Traditional solutions that exclusively rely on templates are easy for marketers to use but don't give you the flexibility to scale web content across other channels.

Headless CMS solutions use APIs to deliver content on any channel so are not limited by templates, but when they're the only CMS, it can be a challenge for marketers to manage content in context. The real solution is an agile CMS that gives you the best of both worlds

2. Deliver the right content to the right customer

In today's market, companies of all sizes need to be able to do at least some basic personalisation. Many CMS solutions support a simple rules-based approach to audience segmentation.

That might be good enough for now, but as your business matures, you'll want to provide highly targeted experiences, especially to customers in high-value segments. Investing in a CMS that has machine-learning capabilities – and that integrates with an AI-powered analytics solution – will set you up to deliver personalised experiences based on rich data insights.

3. Empower marketing and IT teams to work together effectively

Content management is a team sport and you're more likely to win if everyone has the right gear. An agile CMS provides full-featured tools for developers and contextual authoring tools for marketers that are powerful enough to enable marketers to easily author and publish modern web experiences like Single Page Applications and traditional template based content.

People in IT roles also prefer agile cloud-native platforms because they allow for more focus on supporting business requirements instead of day-today maintenance. And cloud-native solutions can auto-scale based on traffic, so you don't have to worry about your site going down during an unexpected spike in site traffic.

Don't settle for a solution that doesn't allow you to empower marketing and IT, as both play important roles in content management, creation and delivery.

4. Innovate in shorter cycles

If speed is important to you, the real value of a cloud-native CMS is in the shorter timelines for ongoing innovation. When you need to build a custom feature or a new experience, a cloud-native platform gives you access to APIs and developer tools that streamline the process.

The latest features are added automatically and continually, so IT doesn't have to spend time planning for version upgrades and marketers always have access to the latest capabilities. The faster timelines add up to a significantly lower total cost of ownership, compared to on-premise and cloud-hosted models.

For more detailed tips, download our guide How to Select the Right Content Management System.

Deploy your CMS in a way that's both fast and smart.

Choosing a solution is just the first step. To set your team up for a successful implementation, follow these best practices:

Establish a governance framework and a steering committee

Digital governance means managing all the essential factors – including people, process and technology – that contribute to the success of a digital organisation.

A governance framework lets everyone know who gets to make decisions about each aspect of your digital strategy. It ensures that your digital strategy is aligned with your business strategy. And it keeps you out of trouble in a world of complex legal restrictions on the use of customer data.

Line up the support you need early in the process

Enlist an executive champion for the project. Make sure all the relevant executives – including the CMO, CIO and CFO – support the idea of investing in a modern CMS. Communicate the vision early and often to all the people who will use, benefit from or be impacted by the new system.

Take a phased approach

Start by deploying some basic features for a subset of your websites or teams and then expand the rollout to include additional teams and features. But don't wait to introduce analytics and targeting.

Today's customers expect every experience to have some degree of personalisation and that means the first phase of your CMS implementation needs to include basic reporting and testing activities.

Identify clear goals and KPIs for what you hope to achieve

Start with your business objectives and then determine your goals. For example, if your objective is to grow online revenue, your goal might be to see a two-point lift in conversion for web pages used in outbound marketing campaigns.

For each goal, identify several performance indicators that you can measure. If you started with two or three business objectives and three to five goals, you might end up with 15 to 20 indicators. Pick the three indicators that matter most for your business. These are your key performance indicators (KPIs).

Rather than putting yourself in a position where you have to purchase a new solution soon after your initial investment, choose one that gives you a seamless way to evolve and grow into your future.

Source: Adobe - How to select the right content management system

Use the resources available

Whatever the skill level of your internal team, remember there are always resources to help you. Meet with your vendor of choice for demos and consultations.

Build on your initial success

Hire a strategic partner that can help you get the most value out of the technology. And take advantage of onboarding resources, training and customer forums for new users – these can be helpful even for technically advanced users.

Once your new CMS goes live, you'll expand, optimise and recalibrate in an ongoing cycle.
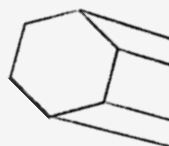
Expand your CMS deployment

When you're ready, roll out your new CMS to other web properties, intranets, and local and global teams. Then integrate other tools – including analytics, testing and digital asset management solutions – that will help you get even more value from your CMS.

Build a master list of capabilities you want to use that will help you deliver more engaging experiences. As you're planning for phase two and beyond, you'll prioritise the items on the list based on your business goals – the value of each item and the effort required to get it done. The right cadence for ongoing development depends on your business.

For some companies, a fluid biweekly cycle makes sense. But if your business model is highly seasonal, it might work better to add a big batch of features over a six-month period leading up to Black Friday, for example.

" Your customers expect content that is personalised and relevant to them. If your CMS solution doesn't provide personalisation capabilities, you will struggle to meet that basic need.

Source: Adobe - How to select the right content management system

Optimise your content and experiences

As soon as you've launched phase one of your CMS deployment, start reporting on your KPIs. If you're not hitting the target for a certain KPI, experiment with changes that will bring you closer to the goal.

These changes could include any aspect of how you're managing the customer experience – from how you're using the CMS to the kind of content you're developing to the audiences you're targeting. When people think about optimisation, they usually think they're going to look at data on how a programme is performing in market and then tweak the experience to improve conversion.

That's something you should be doing continuously – at regular intervals and every time you launch a new programme. But don't forget to optimise for your internal customers, too. Every solution has reporting tools that show how many people are using the different features. It's worth your while to pay attention to those adoption and usage metrics.

You'll also want to gather qualitative feedback to get a sense of how people are actually using the system. Are they using the new workflows or going around them? If they aren't using the system as intended, why not? And what are they doing instead?

Recalibrate your KPIs

After launch, reassess your KPIs to make sure you have the right metrics. Six months out, if you're getting no traction toward a particular KPI and no one's asking for a report on it, then it isn't really a "key" performance indicator.

Everything on your wish list of new features should be tied to your goals and objectives. Maybe you're initially doing A/B testing but eventually you want to do multivariate testing. Make sure you can explain how you think multivariate testing will help your business

Every time you add a new feature to the list, identify performance indicators for it.

Keep growing at your own pace

As you expand, optimise and recalibrate – always paying close attention to your KPIs – you'll gradually increase the digital maturity and sophistication of your organisation.
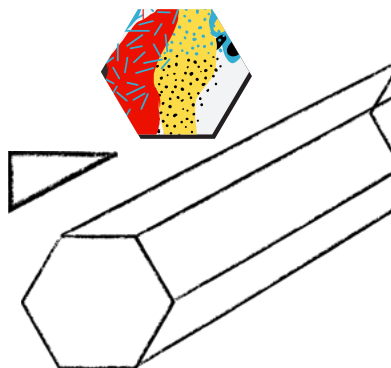
Your list of top three KPIs might change as you activate more advanced features and build new experiences. And as your business evolves, shifting priorities might prompt you to swap out some of your KPIs. Remember that you're never done. There will always be new features to adopt, new tools to master, new goals to achieve – and new customers to convert into loyal advocates for your brand.

The good news is that with a cloud-native CMS, you can innovate quickly and grow at a pace that makes sense for your business. Your customers' needs will evolve too and you'll be able to invent new ways to exceed their expectations – as well as your own.
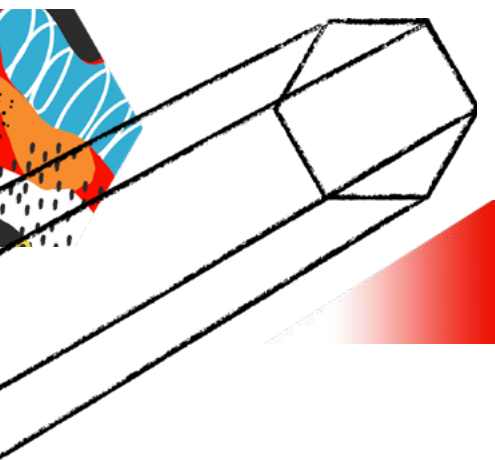
Adobe can help

Adobe Experience Manager combines digital asset management and content management into a unified solution for delivering timely, relevant and personal experiences. It helps you source, adapt, automate and deliver one-on-one digital experiences across web, IoT and more – at any scale – powered by the latest artificial intelligence.

As a cloud service, Experience Manager is always on and up to date so you can make the most of your content and stay ahead of rising customer expectations.

Find out more about Adobe Experience Manager.

Learn more
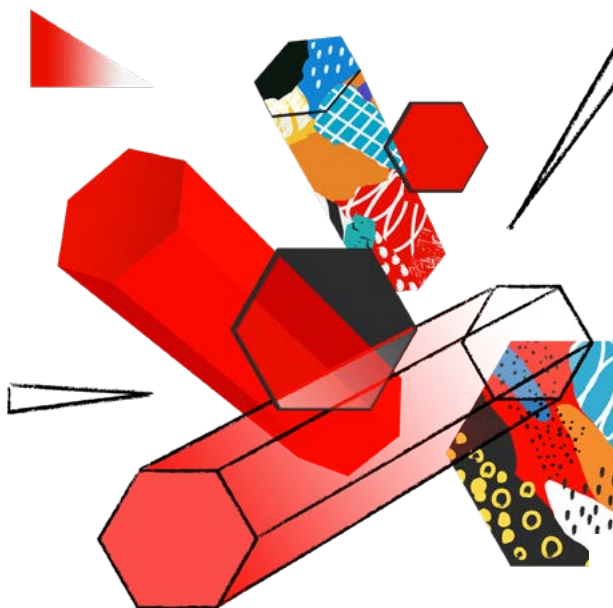
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