



GUIDE

Getting started with content personalization at scale.

When work flows, personalized customer experiences do too.



There's a reason why we all love personalization. A personalized experience captures our attention at each interaction and makes us feel seen and understood. It never wastes our time—and it never misses a moment.

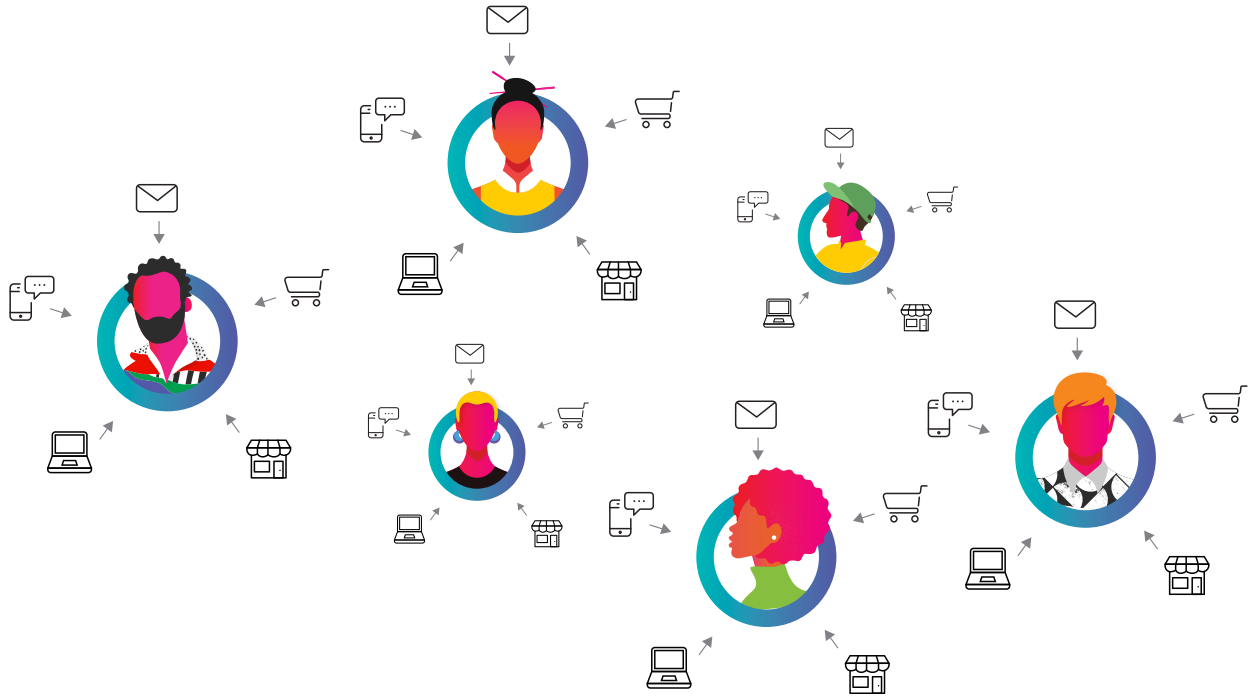
Personalization at scale does that for *every* customer *in real time*—whether that's hundreds, thousands, or millions—*wherever* they are. It's the future of the customer experience. And for organizations that aim to lead in their categories, it's happening now.

Meet millions in real time.

Personalization is delivering a customized experience to the right customer on the right channel.



Personalization at scale is being able to do that for every customer on every channel in real time.



When you're equipped for personalization at scale, customers move seamlessly from one interaction to another while you remember their preferences and create excellent experiences at every moment of their journey.

“ Personalization drives performance and better customer outcomes. Companies that grow faster drive 40% more of their revenue from personalization than their slower-moving counterparts.

Source: McKinsey & Company

You can't get personal without having something to offer the customer. And that involves content—lots of it—created and delivered faster than ever to meet customer expectations. It's a heavy lift for small businesses and enterprises alike. But not an impossible one.

In this guide, we'll show you what it takes to bring together your content and work management processes and technologies so you can create and deliver better customer experiences.

Get personal or get packing.

As we learned in Adobe's [2022 Digital Trends report](#), the pace of change in customer experience is accelerating. Over the last 2 years, online spending has grown 44%, in no small part due to the COVID-19 pandemic. More customer interactions have moved online faster than anyone could have foreseen, and businesses had no choice but to expedite their digital evolution 20 to 25 times faster than anticipated.

But not every company has been able to pivot quickly to meet digital-first expectations. In 2021, the gap widened between businesses that could shift to digital and those that could not.

“ As the pace of change accelerates, those faster out of the gate will be better positioned for wins this year and next.

David Carrel

VP of Marketing, Experience Cloud
Adobe



In the game of customer experience, you're not just competing with other companies, you're competing with your customers' last best experience. Companies cannot afford to underperform on content personalization. Failure to do so will not only lead to a loss in revenue and customer loyalty, but also a dip in employee morale, increasing the likelihood that your best workers may leave for other organizations that offer more fulfilling work and the chance to develop deeper customer relationships.

3 content personalization challenges to plan for.

The forecast for the next 12 to 18 months warns of familiar personalization hurdles as well as some specific content production challenges you'll want to watch for.



Challenge #1: Content is on call 24/7.

With more audiences and communication channels than ever, organizations are struggling with the colossal content requirements of personalization at scale. Email campaigns, landing pages, lead magnets, pop-ups, display banners, ads, social posts, push notifications, digital signage—at all hours and on all channels. Multiply that across even a modest number of products and marketing regions, and the challenge of creating, storing, maintaining, and deploying content while staying on brand and on message can quickly become unmanageable. Without a centralized and accessible content hub, assets are forgotten or become stale, and terabytes of artifacts get trapped in silos.

Challenge #2: Chaos creeps in.

The challenge for virtually all organizations is that their content operation is fragmented across separate systems and nonintegrated software, interrupting workflows and making it difficult for marketing, creative, IT, and other teams to plan and collaborate productively. Teams and content get cut off from each other, work processes are ad hoc and operate at different speeds, and resources are stretched thin. When workflows aren't integrated, employees don't have insight into how their work impacts strategic goals. They can end up wasting time on misaligned content or not prioritizing their efforts to sync with broader company goals. They may disengage when they can't see why their work matters, which affects quality and slows down time to market for content delivery and personalization.

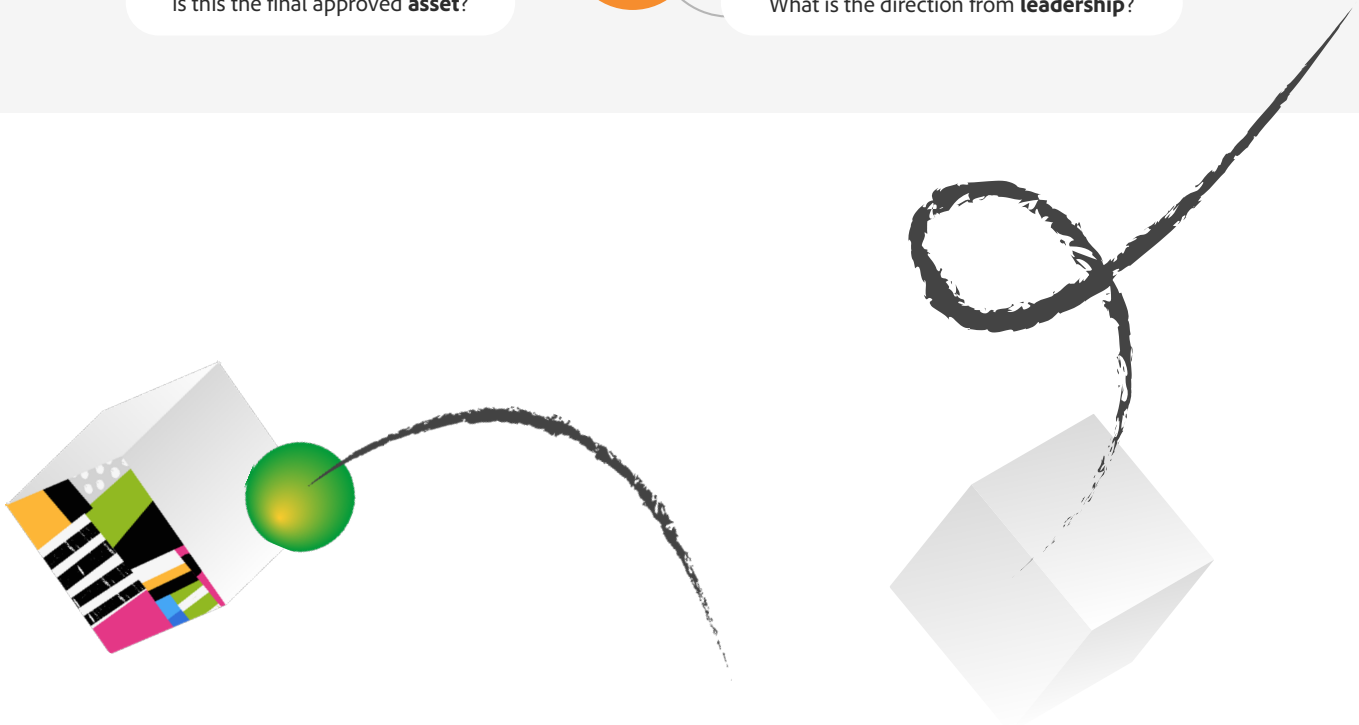
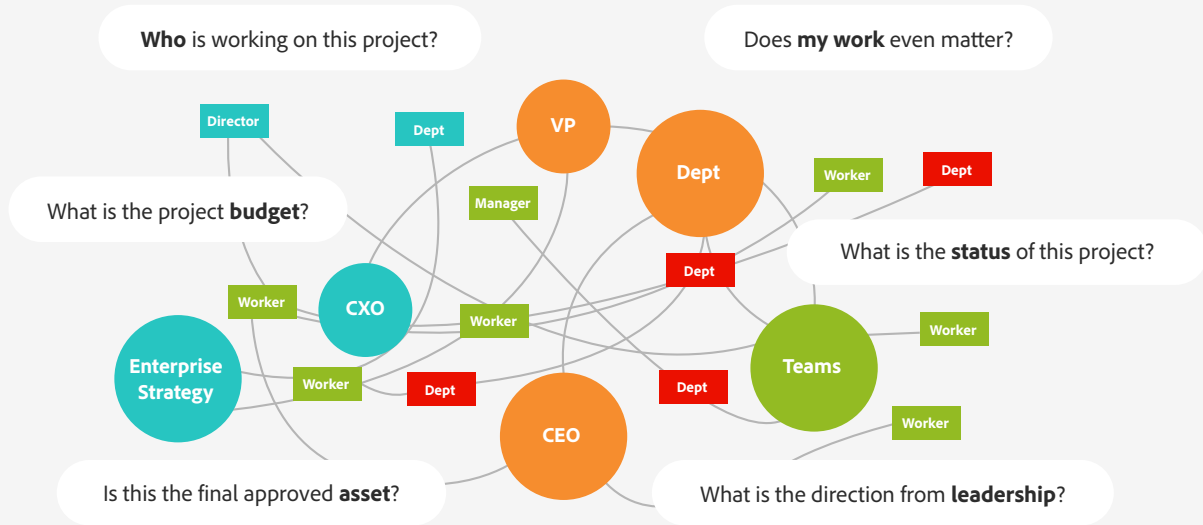


Challenge #3: The how-to can be overwhelming.

To manage the growing complexity of content production today, businesses must be able to seamlessly orchestrate the entire content development and activation lifecycle—from intake to delivery. But it can be difficult for brands to know what it takes to scale. Which systems and technologies are required? Which processes do we need to reevaluate? Where do we start? And where do we go from here?

Never fear. Personalizing content for the masses becomes easier with a solid strategy in place—and we've put one together for you.

In this environment, fragmented systems and teams create chaos.



Four steps for a successful personalization strategy.



1 Coordinate your content.

If you want to personalize for thousands or millions, you need to connect every stage of the content lifecycle into a smooth and integrated workflow with a work management solution. You also need a centralized content hub that's accessible across teams and built for version control—one that can repurpose content across channels and optimize assets for any screen size, device, or channel. It takes the following capabilities.

Make assets and insights available to everyone.

Assets are often kept in server-based folder systems with limited metadata. Browsing can be frustrating, slow, and ineffective. When content is contained in a single platform and assets are automatically populated with metadata, creatives, marketers, project managers, and others can find the specific content they need quickly. Project information, filenames, comments, and other key details can be updated and synchronized in real time. You'll have visibility into progress and outcomes, and content teams can use those insights to inform future marketing initiatives.

Create dynamic content that converts.

Content should, of course, add value to the customer, but ultimately its goal is to convert. Utilizing artificial intelligence (AI), you can create content easily that will maximize conversion rates based on audience preferences. Dynamic content adapts in real time to the actions, behaviors, and needs of the customer—even the in-session browsing behaviors of unauthenticated site visitors. With dynamic content assembly, you can personalize an email, tailor promotional offers, and serve up content blocks on any landing page according to customer preferences, wish lists, or past purchases. You can even send behavior-triggered text notifications, such as in-store promotions or welcome messages.

Activate content anytime, anywhere.

Once you have the tools in place to assemble dynamic content, you need to be able to send that content to the appropriate destination—website, mobile app, social media feed, digital sign, Internet of Things devices, and more—at the exact moment the customer wants it. When you can activate the most relevant content at the perfect occasion, you turn engagement into profits. With the right technology empowering your content production machine, you can deliver dynamic content in real time via API to any touchpoint in the customer journey.



Mohawk Industries scores big with content and collaboration.

Mohawk Industries streamlined digital asset management with Adobe Experience Manager Assets as a Cloud Service and centralized their workflow with Adobe Workfront. Since implementation, they've enabled self-service access to digital assets for almost 3,000 salespeople and 2,000 independent retailers and internal staff. They've tightened collaboration by aligning initiatives into a marketing system of record. And they can trace performance with robust KPI tracking. Mohawk anticipates \$5 million in direct incremental revenue gain from accelerated time to market and more than \$1 million in direct capacity gain from improved automation.

"With a fully integrated technology portfolio, we can reduce our time to market by 85% thanks to the improved collaboration we are seeing between product and marketing teams."

Brennan Swing, Vice President of Creative Media and Creative Director, Mohawk

Infuse collaboration into the content lifecycle.

The hybrid work model is here to stay, and it calls for new modes of work and collaboration. A work management solution enables teams to connect projects to planned imperatives and strategically prioritize work while collaborating from anywhere. When work is centralized in one place, every team member gets the big picture, from strategy to results, so they can pivot with agility, see the impact of their work, and let that feedback guide future decisions.

But there's another key element to collaborative work management: integration. Unified asset management and work management applications sync metadata across systems and automate asset delivery to help you speed up output without compromising compliance and quality standards. When you integrate your work management application with creative tools, creatives can manage requests, workflows, reviews, and approvals, and even finalize content—directly from the tools they work in. And when your asset management system is integrated with your work management and creative applications, creatives can also deliver the content without ever leaving their creative suite.

Content and collaboration checklist:

- A centralized content hub or DAM
- The ability to dynamically assemble high-converting content
- The ability to deliver that content to any channel in real time
- A work management solution to prioritize work and accelerate the strategy, development, and delivery of content



2

Transform your organization and operations.

Your digital technologies and operations capabilities need to be set up for success to achieve content personalization for millions. And that takes buy-in from the entire organization. In addition to investing in technologies, it's important to foster a culture that champions data-driven decision-making and agile marketing operations. Cross-functional collaboration operates on the following principles.

Collaboration starts with the C-suite.

Personalization at scale doesn't happen overnight. It might take years to build out capabilities across channels. C-suite executives are needed to make sure that strategies align with enterprise business goals, to secure the necessary funding, and to continue to advocate for enterprise-wide transformation.

The CMO and CIO partnership is key.

Chief information officers (CIOs) are responsible for all the technology that makes content personalization possible. And chief marketing officers (CMOs) are responsible for creating the personalization experiences that technology powers. When your CIO and CMO act from a shared vision, your organization can develop and deliver more creative, agile, and innovative experiences.

“ If IT can provide the right data, then marketing can take that data and use it in the right way. Being able to do that in real time together to understand the customer journey and end-customer experience is absolutely key.

Belinda Finch

Chief Information Officer, Three



It's a team effort.

The spirit of collaboration between CMOs and CIOs must trickle down to senior executives and their teams if companies want to increase content velocity. Yet recent surveys show that marketing and IT teams aren't collaborating to their full potential.

Adobe's 2022 *Digital Trends* report found that only 47% of senior executives believe their marketing or experience teams collaborate successfully with their technology counterparts. Of these senior executives, 65% don't think their organizations are doing enough to break down the silos created by organizational structure or competing KPIs.

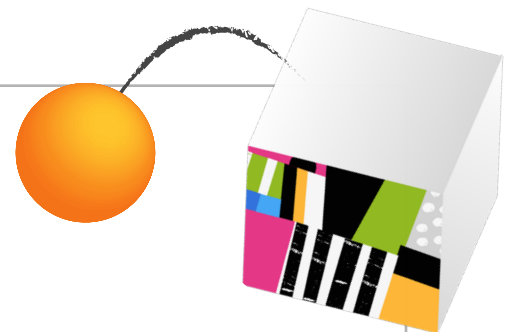
To strengthen collaboration, senior executives must check in with their teams regularly to see where they're struggling and what's impacting work day-to-day. In addition to listening, executives need to clearly communicate the importance of personalization initiatives and promote a collaborative exchange of information and services across departments.

A governance or center of excellence team can help.

Put a team of business and tech executives dedicated to collaboration in charge of your digital transformation program. This governance or center of excellence team will map out the strategy, prioritize capabilities and use cases, develop the business case for buy-in, and create a step-by-step implementation plan. Your center of excellence team will also be responsible for restructuring business processes and identifying the organizational changes that are needed to usher in content personalization at scale.

Collaboration checklist:

- Support from the C-suite
- A harmonious CMO-CIO partnership
- Cross-functional collaboration between senior executives and their teams
- A center of excellence team



3 Get clear on content objectives.

The latest findings from McKinsey's *Next in Personalization 2021 Report* show 71% of consumers expect companies to deliver personalized interactions and 76% feel frustrated when these expectations aren't met. Follow these content objectives to ensure your experiences won't disappoint.

Increase revenue with engaging brand experiences.

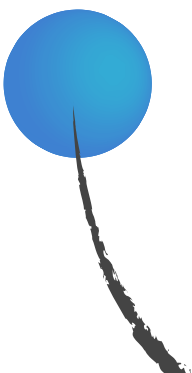
To increase revenue, you need high engagement and conversion. This takes a commanding brand presence.

How would you feel if every time you interacted with someone, they couldn't keep their story straight? You wouldn't trust them. And you certainly wouldn't do business with them.

It's the same for brands. Your personalization efforts should always keep an eye on telling a consistent brand story by adhering to the visual components that differentiate your brand from its competitors. Keep your latest assets, style guides, and branding in an accessible content hub to ensure brand consistency and empower brand excellence.

You want to keep the customer at the center of all your messaging. Rather than appealing to all audiences, the most engaging brand experiences speak to the unique needs of the individual. Tap into all your enterprise customer data sources—in-store and online sales data, customer service data, web browsing data, advertising data, and marketing automation platform data—to create individualized customer experiences. Put these insights to work with predictive technology, which can analyze and uncover patterns in data that can be used to forecast likely future behavior.

Once you are able to better gauge the type of content your customers need at different stages of their journey, follow best practices for length—which varies according to format and channel. Use clear calls to action. Write with SEO in mind and align your content with keyword research to maximize effectiveness. And whenever possible, use A/B testing to determine the content strategies that yield the highest conversion rates.



Keep content up to date and in the right hands.

So much time, content, and productivity are lost when teams don't have access to the most up-to-date content. When you have thousands or millions of assets, version control can get, well, out of control, and asset governance may get tricky. A digital asset management such as Experience Manager Assets tidies up your content catalog and fuels personalized customer experiences with digital assets that are easy to manage and available precisely when you need them. Teams across the enterprise stay aligned while always producing on-brand, personalized content at scale.

Be insightful and boost marketing ROI.

Data, analytics, and AI supply the insights you need to truly understand your customers, develop meaningful content, and deliver highly personalized experiences at the right moments. You can use customer experience data to refine personalized content for target market segments. According to 451 Research, intelligent personalization can be responsible for as much as \$5.6 billion in additional revenue in just 6 months by encouraging consumers to spend more money with a cross-sell or personalized recommendation. Maintain an insight-oriented, data-driven approach at every step of the content journey.

Content checklist:

- Develop a consistent brand presence
- Organize teams around a digital asset management system
- Use data and insights to inform your content strategy



4 Get clear on collaboration objectives.

These days, work is done across multiple teams and locations—but that doesn't mean teams have to do scattershot work. Follow these collaboration objectives to ensure smooth communication and consistency among cross-functional teams.

Tie every action to strategy.

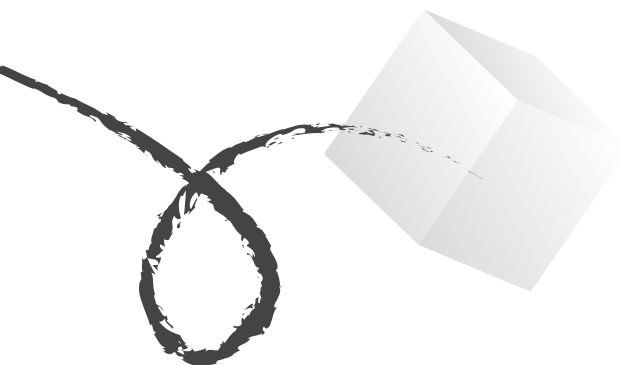
A work management solution can help you connect business strategy to content delivery while streamlining processes and improving your workflow. Get rid of ad hoc requests and rework and you have more time for the creative content that drives exceptional experiences. Every team member has a more accurate view of their tasks and can prioritize accordingly. Communication between departments can roll easily along, and everyone has an eye on progress so any stopgaps or pivots can be addressed as they happen.

Never lose sight of the creative work lifecycle.

When the ins and outs of creative work are spread across email, communication platforms, and creative tools, details are bound to go missing. Reviews and approvals often sit outside of the creative environment with limited stakeholder visibility, which leads to time-consuming email trails, duplication of assets, governance and regulation disasters, and conflicting feedback.

Conversely, executive and operational leaders, creative teams, campaign teams, and data teams gain visibility into the full cycle of creative work when all aspects of the content lifecycle are integrated, from planning work to delivering and measuring work.

Using collaborative work management technology, you can capture campaign and creative requests in a single location and set up templates to make intake more efficient. You can compare these requests with current assets to avoid duplication of effort. And when work across the enterprise is centralized, it's easy to connect each initiative to overall strategy and prioritize assignments accordingly. A work management solution such as Workfront also allows you to plan for different scenarios so you can optimize budget, resources, and timeline. You'll know who's available for which assignments, can easily track progress, and keep communication flowing at every step of the creative work lifecycle.



Do it faster.

Creatives can lose precious time toggling between different systems, joining countless Zoom calls, and tracking emails and Slack messages to keep the work flowing. The right work management technology can speed up the creative process, allowing your creative team to be more streamlined and strategic with their efforts. With Workfront, for instance, creatives can work the way they want in Photoshop, InDesign, and Illustrator and produce memorable content faster than ever, even as your business grows. They can upload files directly from Creative Cloud to Workfront projects and tasks, update project status, respond to feedback, and activate review and approval cycles without having to toggle windows or interrupt the creative flow.

Collaboration checklist:

- Align strategy and execution with a work management solution
- Integrate the content lifecycle
- Keep teams working in their favorite tools





It's time to get up close and personal.

- Personalization at scale requires content at scale.
- Centralize work in one place and make sure everyone stays connected to strategy, progress, and performance.
- Implement the necessary cultural and operational changes to stay agile and respond quickly to evolving customer expectations and content needs.
- Accelerate content creation without compromising compliance and quality standards.

You can do it all with Adobe.

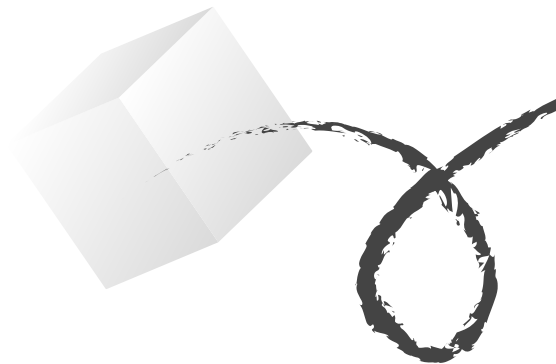
Adobe Workfront is a work management platform that keeps teams and enterprises running efficiently, even in the face of unpredictable challenges. And Adobe Experience Manager Assets is a cloud-native DAM built for today's content needs, letting you easily manage thousands of assets to create, manage, deliver, and optimize personalized experiences at scale. Designed for seamless integration, Workfront and Experience Manager Assets help you deliver personalized communications that impress.

Discover more about how our solutions can orchestrate efforts across the entire content development and activation lifecycle—from intake to delivery.

[Learn more about Adobe Workfront](#)

[Explore Adobe Experience Manager Assets](#)

[Get details](#)



Sources

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["Next in Personalization 2021 Report,"](#) McKinsey & Company, November 2021.

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