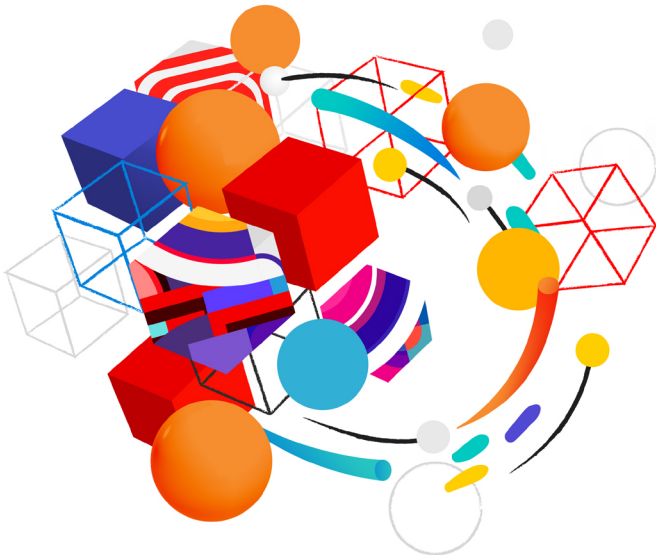




CONTENT VELOCITY GUIDE

Connecting the DAM dots.

Moving business forward faster
with high-speed content



Between the moment the photographer snaps the perfect picture and the moment you see the full-fledged ad on a Times Square billboard, there are hundreds of steps. That winning photo file—the one with just the right lighting, expression, and composition—is a precious resource that requires care and tending. From getting the RAW file off the camera to editing, design, publication, and beyond, businesses devote a huge amount of time and energy to their assets. The faster their assets can move, the faster their business can too.

In [The Great DAM Renaissance](#), we learned about the pivotal role a digital asset management system (DAM) plays in the customer experience. As content continues to fuel experiences, asset management has become a business necessity. DAMs are no longer mere repositories to protect and store company assets. With the growing importance of content, asset management has also grown into a robust, multidimensional engine through which to search, collaborate, manage, and optimize for any channel. Digital asset management has become central to the business necessity of content velocity—the ability to create and deliver relevant, personal, timely experiences across channels and at scale, allowing companies to move from asset creation to monetization as quickly as possible.



With the increasing normality of remote work in a volatile global economy, the role of DAMs in content velocity has only become more important.



“One of the core tenets of being customer-obsessed is moving from being siloed to connected. And a DAM can act as that connective tissue across the organization.”

Nick Barber
Forrester Analyst

In a time when employees are physically separated from one another—and when customers can't interact with businesses in person—this connective tissue is vital to the health of an organization.

This guide will give you a deeper look at how digital asset management makes content velocity possible and how you can use it to maintain business continuity during unprecedented times.

Speeding the content cycle for business continuity

“Content should be easy. But it’s not.” As Adobe Senior Business Consultant and Content Strategist Elise Hahn suggests, content can be deceptively problematic. With more and more companies working to deliver personal customer experiences at scale, leaders are coming to realize that there’s more to asset management than they ever imagined. Assets aren’t just files—they’re the building blocks of content, which is the building block of customer experience. With so much of the world at home and online, one of the most powerful ways to form valuable customer relationships is by delivering unforgettable digital experiences.

With a content velocity mindset and DAM, you can speed customers along the path you’ve outlined for them, regardless of channel, and deliver personalized experiences to every individual. The goal is business continuity—but making content easier is a great side benefit.

Getting more done at every single moment

Despite the rise of predictive digital technologies, time is still a very real factor in delivering experiences that earn ROI. At scale, every second it takes for employees to search for, edit, or store an asset adds up to very visible overhead costs. To achieve content velocity, businesses need to eliminate inefficiencies in every part of the content cycle, from creation to publication. Automated workflows in modern DAMs are one simple way of shaving off extra minutes and seconds. Similar in some ways to project management tools, automated workflows can add team members to projects and assign them roles so assets never get stuck or lost. Microservices add even more power to the mix, bringing in AI to automate time-intensive tasks, like bulk uploading or asset rendering. Especially with mid-

sized to large remote teams, a little bit of automation goes a long way when it comes to saving time with asset management.

This is one reason why cloud-based digital asset management is so vital in today's landscape of distributed teams. Companies with stakeholders spread out across locations need their assets in the cloud so the right people can have access—including not just employees, but partner organizations. Agencies, franchises, satellite locations, international offices, and more all need access to approved assets for their own business or marketing purposes. Your agency might require your brand assets to launch your new marketing campaign, for instance. Or a subsidiary branch might need your latest photo assets for a regional promotion. With a cloud-based DAM, you don't need to go through multiple people to track down or deliver assets. Nor do you need to give partners an all-access pass. Modern DAMs make it easy to give everybody the right level of access,

Know your DAM:

Automated workflows

A critical piece of overall content operations, automated workflows bring project management tools into a DAM to help with content velocity. Plan, design, assign, review, approve, and publish assets all from one place.

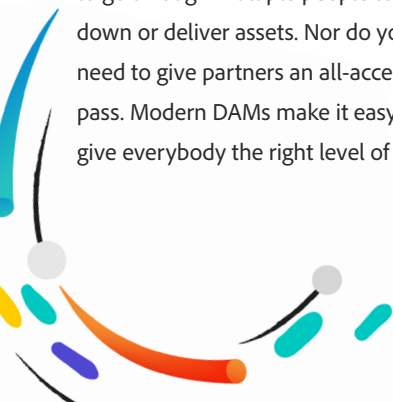
Example: Automatically assign your creative director the task of shortlisting photos from a recent shoot. Your designers will get pinged for photo editing as soon as the task is complete.

Know your DAM:

Automated custom tasks

Automate custom tasks with microservices, a feature that speeds up repetitive or monotonous workflows within your DAM. Available natively and via third-party or custom integrations, custom task automation accelerates time and labor-intensive tasks such as bulk asset creation, personalization, and rendering across channels.

Example: Instantly tag, render, and file different crops of the same photograph for your newest campaign.



instantly—so you never have to email files to teammates or partners again.

Access to the right assets at the right time is crucial at every step along the way, including content creation itself. Because assets are the building blocks of content—the photo files for an email campaign or the vector graphics for a print ad, for example—teams can't create the content they're responsible for if they're missing assets. This is why proper asset management is such a fundamental necessity to efficient content creation. Per IDC, companies that use modern DAMs can launch campaigns 20 percent faster than those that don't. These same companies are 47 percent faster at creating new assets and 84 percent faster at rendering existing assets.

But locating the right assets to create content is only part of the reason for increased efficiency. Teams spend a huge amount of time adapting assets for the right channels, be it editing for aspect ratio, video length, color, written content, or any number of other factors. With modern DAMs, editing capabilities are built right into the technology, making channel-specific changes nearly instantaneous. This link between efficient content creation and smooth publication across channels is fundamental to achieving content velocity.

Know your DAM: **Cloud-based management**

Cloud-based DAMs allow the right people to input, access, and publish content from anywhere so you don't have to waste time requesting and sending files. With everything in the cloud, every file is tracked and accounted for so your assets are always approved and in compliance.

Example: Your agency needs your logo file in grayscale, so they log in to your DAM and access it without having to request it directly.



Flowing the right content across every channel

When it comes to channels, today's digital customer journeys go far beyond the web. For every channel marketers have mastered, a new one seems to pop up every day. Emerging media enriches customer experiences—but it poses some practical challenges to organizations that are already struggling with managing their content. Web, mobile, and television are givens. The next wave of channels includes AR, VR, wearables, voice assistants, and connected cars, just to name a few. The ability to deliver personalized content across each of these and more will be necessary to stay competitive in an experience-centric future.

With modern digital asset management, marketers can adapt assets from one central location and publish them across every channel. Because customer behavior changes depending on where they interact with a brand, content needs to be able to adjust, too. To deliver a holistic customer experience, marketers need to be able to tailor content as needed while also staying true to brand and campaign standards. Modern asset management can help streamline your approach to omnichannel customer experiences by automatically pushing the right assets to the right channels and adapting them as needed.

Know your DAM: **Emerging media**

With the ability to support emerging media, today's DAMs house assets like 3D, IoT, wearables, AR, VR, and voice assistants. Keeping these media types all in one place is critical for time and budget efficiency, as well as creating true omnichannel experiences.

Example: You're unable to go on location for a photo shoot, so your design team works collaboratively with an agency to build 3D renderings of your newest products. The output is photo-quality renderings that let your customers get up close and personal with products without ever having to take a traditional photograph.



One of the ways this happens is through content atomization. A modern DAM can help you adapt your assets—cropping, color, length, and so forth—but content atomization takes it a step further. The best campaigns publish content that's specifically built for each channel. But reworking content for every channel is time intensive. And no longer necessary. Content atomization is a feature within modern DAMs that breaks each part of your content down to its channel-agnostic pieces. Then it automatically reconfigures content depending on the needs of the channel. Customers get a customized experience on every channel—without adding extra tasks to your to-do list.

Know your DAM:

Content atomization

Create more content faster with content atomization, a DAM feature that breaks content into channel-agnostic assets, like copy blocks, images, or videos—and automatically creates new content based on channel and personalization requirements.

Example: Your new campaign needs to go out to hundreds of segments and a dozen channels. You create the content once, and your DAM automatically adapts assets into content that best fits each channel and customer.

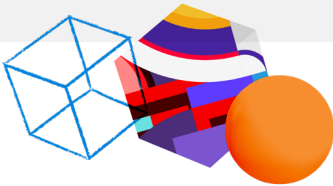
Crafting unique experiences—automatically

But customers expect experiences that are personalized to them, and not just customized to the channel. So much so that, according to Forrester, 94 percent of marketers rate personalization as “important,” “very important,” or “extremely important.” While delivering handcrafted experiences at scale is impractical, if not impossible, modern DAMs can help marketers take a smarter approach. Personalization is not the enemy of content velocity—in fact, the content velocity approach helps make better personalization possible.

Know your DAM: Personalization

Don't let content creation become a bottleneck for your personalization efforts. With a modern DAM, you can not only create content faster, but also apply automatic personalization. Get more out of every piece of content in a fraction of the time and deliver thousands—even millions—of unique experiences.

Example: You want to leverage a former campaign, but with new images and copy. With your DAM, you can easily repurpose existing assets and automatically personalize all your content so no two customer experiences are alike.



Making personalization fast and manageable depends entirely on data, including the data in your DAM. As Adobe Director of Product Marketing Kevin Lindsay said, “Content needs to have some smartness to it so data can do something with it.” From finding assets quickly to delivering customized experiences, the data associated with each of your assets—or metadata—is a critical component of the modern DAM. When you bring metadata and audience data together, you get the traction you need to automate personalized experiences. For example, in a nationwide U.S.-only campaign, your DAM could combine the geographic location of your customers (audience data) with tagged images of all 50 states (metadata) to deliver the most relevant experience to each customer. Because all the data is already in your DAM, this happens automatically, requiring no extra time or effort from marketers. As Lindsay states, “The DAM is where data becomes an important part of content. Data informs the content and what it’s supposed to do, and what purpose it’s supposed to serve.”

This is why tagging each asset with the right metadata is so important—without it, there's no way to automatically find the right assets. According to Hahn, the difference between a file and an asset is that assets contain metadata. “An asset without metadata is basically clutter,” said Hahn. Many modern DAMs apply metadata automatically based on native data sets that can intelligently label every asset.

In a changing economy, the ability to deliver personal customer experiences at maximum business efficiency is a winning combination. At the center of it all is digital asset management, the single source of truth for companies looking to quickly deliver consistent, personal experiences—across every channel, at scale. But making content velocity your new business reality requires more than just the right DAM. It also requires that organizations set themselves—and their DAMs—up for content velocity success.

Know your DAM:

Metadata and metatagging

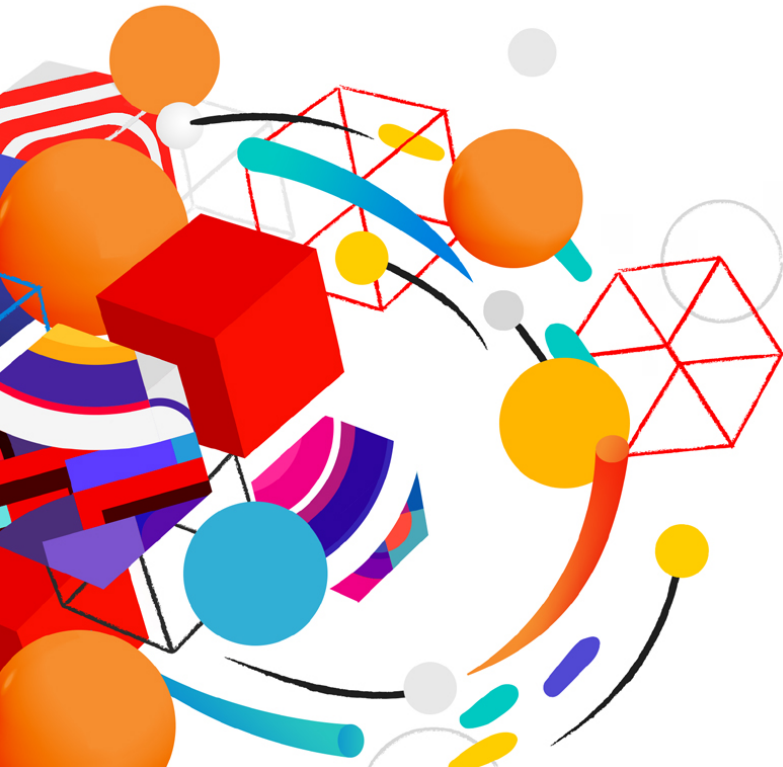
Save time and energy by letting your DAM do the busywork for you. Metatagging assets is a crucial part of using modern DAMs, but that doesn't mean you have to do it by hand. Today, DAMs use AI to intelligently and instantly label files with metadata.

Example: You bulk upload a folder of recent stock photo assets. Instead of labeling each one with metadata for easy retrievability, your DAM does it for you.



Setting yourself up for DAM success

Digital asset management plays a pivotal part in content velocity. But building out the roles and processes around your DAM will help you get the most out of your technology. The following best practices will help you carve out a place for a modern DAM within your organization so you can deliver the high caliber of experiences that will keep your business running smoothly.

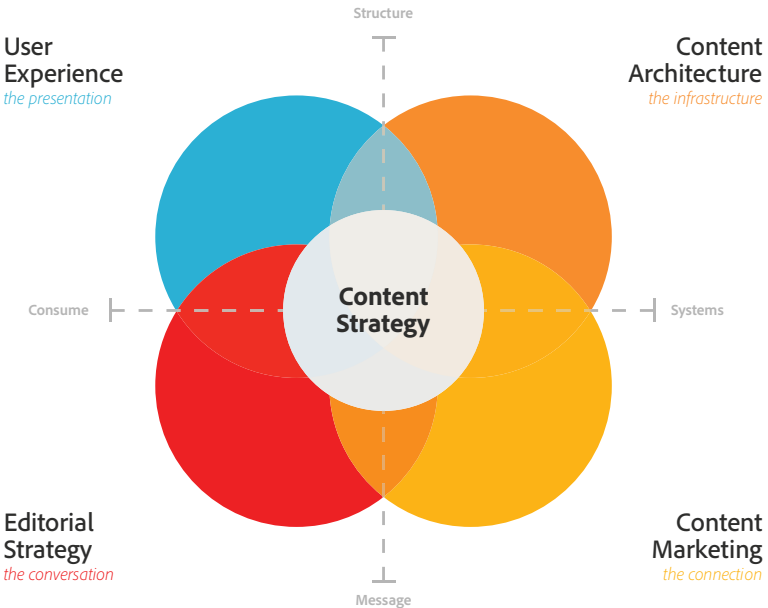


Best practice #1

Get your content strategy into shape.

Your DAM can be a powerful tool—if you have the right structures in place to use it. Kristina Halvorson, content strategy expert, entrepreneur, and founder of content strategy agency Brain Traffic, defines content strategy as “planning for the creation, delivery, and governance of useful, usable content.” With the multitude of factors that go into creating customer experiences, it pays to have a solid plan ahead of time.

According to Hahn, there are four core practices within the field of content strategy:



The Presentation: User Experience (UX)

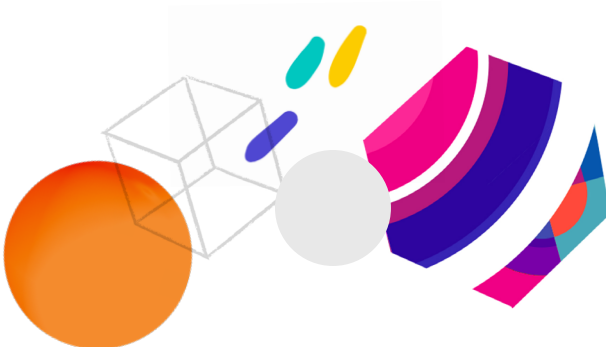
Most often considered a field unto itself, user experience governs the presentation of content—how it appears visually. As the next step after information architecture, it plays a big role in the overall customer experience. In the world of UX, it makes sense to have a single, unified DAM where teams can easily access assets to build out the visual interfaces that live at the core of every customer experience.

User Experience roles: UX/UI specialist, content designer, information architect, interaction designer, front-end developer, digital experience strategist, content strategist

The Infrastructure: Content Architecture

If information architecture is limited to individual platforms, content architecture encompasses the full continuum where an organization's content appears. Roles within content architecture ensure that content moves through your ecosystem seamlessly and as planned. Content architects are more than DAM strategists or library scientists—they are the linchpin between marketing and engineering. In order to have a holistic view of content within an organization, content architects need systems like DAM to act as the reliable yet adaptable home for a company's full set of assets.

Content Architecture roles: Content architect, library scientist, taxonomist, metadata specialist, information architect, marketing technology specialist, content strategist



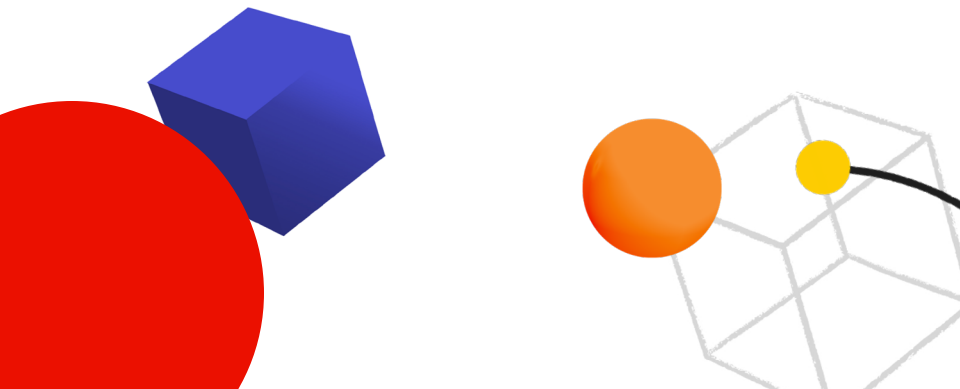
The Conversation and Connection:

Editorial Strategy and Content Marketing

These two practice areas are what most people today think of as "content strategy." On the editorial end is creative—all of the decisions made before and throughout content creation. The marketing end is all about distribution—building a relationship with customers via content. Both sides need the single source of truth that a DAM can offer in order to plan, create, and deliver consistent, on-brand customer experiences.

Editorial Strategy and Content Marketing roles: Copywriter, branding expert, content lead, technical writer, graphic designer, video producer, SEO/SEM strategist, multi-channel marketer, campaign manager, social media manager, email marketing, direct marketing, SEM specialist, industry marketer, content strategist

Content strategy connects these four practice areas operationally, ensuring a holistic, effective, and efficient approach to content throughout an organization. As the technology that lives at the center of it all, digital asset management gives teams a solid content foundation that can help them deliver millions of amazing experiences.



Best practice #2

Get to know the different ways your teams will interact with your DAM.

Your DAM is your single source of truth, but it can appear in many different ways to many different types of users. Because of how valuable assets are—especially once they are rigorously organized within a DAM—most organizations don't give just anyone an all-access pass. Depending on the use case, DAM interfaces and capabilities can change so that every team member can get just what they need, without ever compromising assets.

At a high level, there are two main types of users—power users and light users.

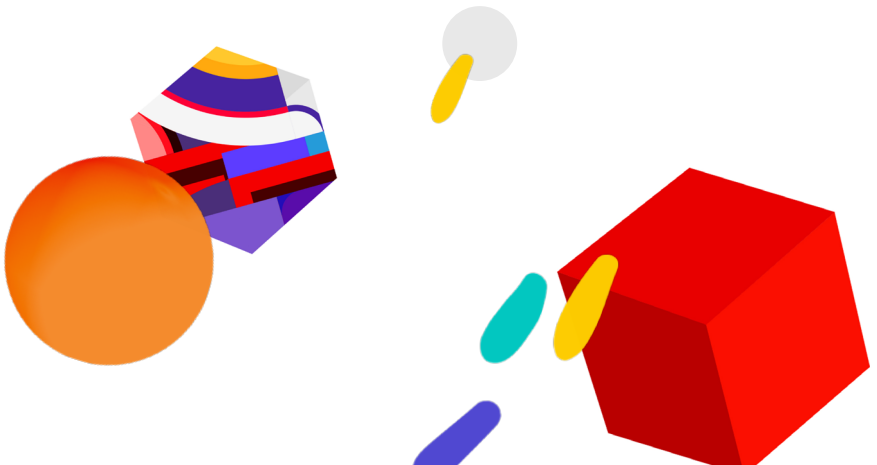


Power users: Delving into the nitty-gritty

Power users are the people who are in charge of your DAM system. Their roles involve a high degree of strategy, specialized knowledge, and technical capabilities. Whether their title is asset manager, librarian, or taxonomist, they have full access to the DAM and are responsible for maintaining its integrity. They are specially trained to ensure the DAM runs as efficiently and effectively as possible, whether it's automatically applying metadata, creating rules for version control, or verifying compliance. With control over a company's full assets, individual or small groups of power users can empower a wider set of light users to use DAM in the way that makes sense for their roles.

Light users: Keeping it easy and breezy

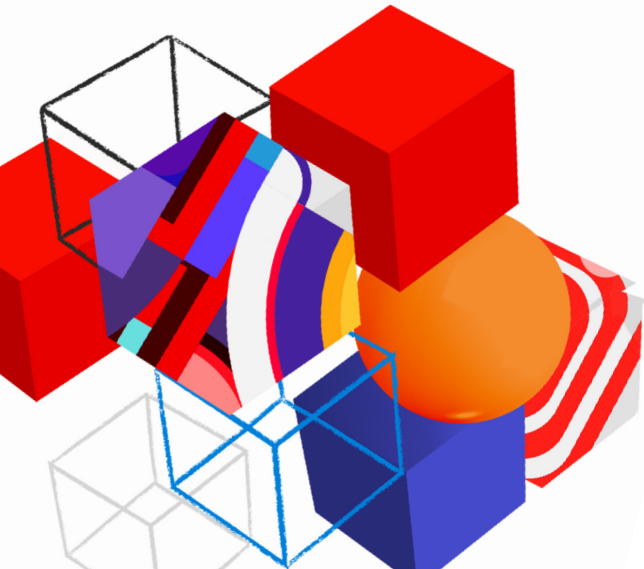
In any given organization, most people who touch the DAM are considered light users. From your marketing department to partner organizations and beyond, the bulk of DAM users will fall into this category. Modern DAM systems make it easy to build separate interfaces, like a marketing hub or brand portal, depending on your users' needs. You can even connect your DAM system to existing solutions, like email marketing software, so all your assets are available at the click of a button. This makes it easy for light users to directly access your most up-to-date, compliant assets to create consistent content experiences—fast.



Best practice #3

Get a DAM you can optimize for your specific organization.

There's no one-size-fits-all when it comes to digital asset management. Every organization is unique, with specific requirements that dictate how best to handle your assets and content. With a modern DAM system, you can customize features to better serve your specific business needs, as well as optimizing for overall content velocity. Custom, automatic workflows, for example, can help you ensure that content-related tasks never fall by the wayside. Microservices help you use ready-made or custom automations to save extra time and energy. And when you're able to track how your assets get used, you can not only evaluate performance and ROI, but also constantly improve the experiences you deliver. Taking a little time to configure your DAM system up front pays off big dividends when your processes and content are flowing smoothly.



Making time for better customer experiences



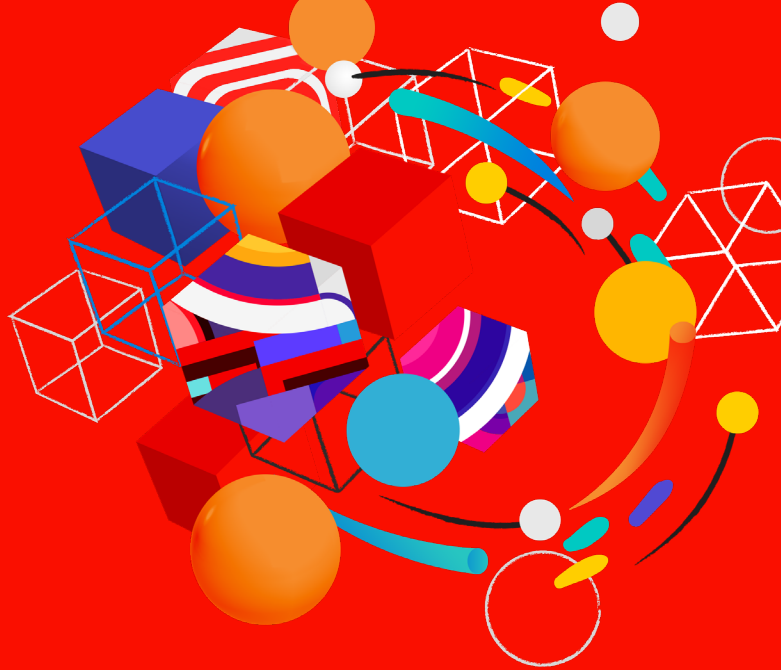
No matter how speedy and creative your team is, it takes the help of technology to make content velocity possible. With the right people, processes, and technology—including digital asset management—any organization can make strides with their content. IDC reports that digital asset management makes it 20 percent faster to launch campaigns and 27 percent faster to deliver content. But perhaps the most exciting side effect of DAM is that it gives creative teams their time back—with up to 21 percent greater productivity. With the time your team saves, you can focus on creating the amazing experiences that will keep your business moving forward, and count on your DAM to do the rest.

Adobe can help

Adobe Experience Manager Assets is the first digital asset management solution that offers cloud-native agility and scalability, combined with the power of AI and automation. It works with Adobe Target, Adobe Experience Manager Sites, and Adobe Analytics—all backed by the Adobe Sensei AI engine—to help you build better experiences and get them to market faster. And native integration with Adobe Creative Cloud helps your marketing and creative teams work together seamlessly.

Learn more about how content velocity can help your organization create and deploy content more efficiently while delivering better experiences to your customers.

[Learn more](#)



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