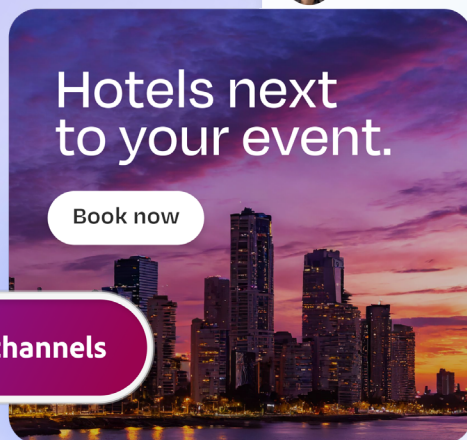
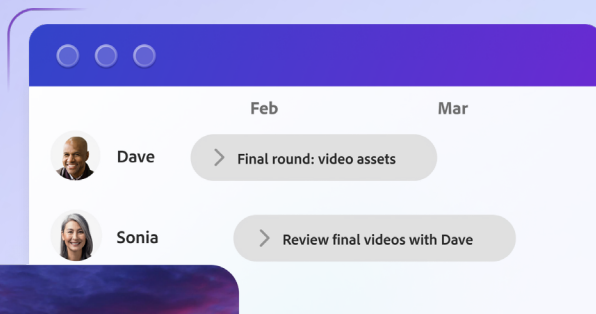




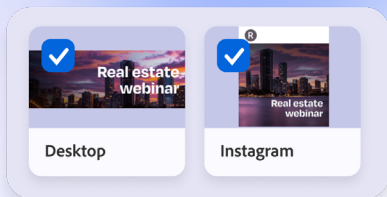
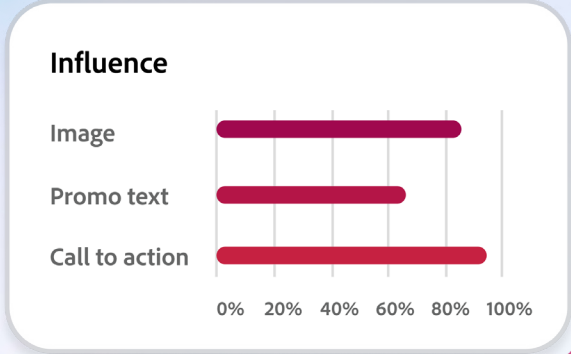
Supercharge your content supply chain.

Practical strategies for enterprises to unlock content beyond human scale.

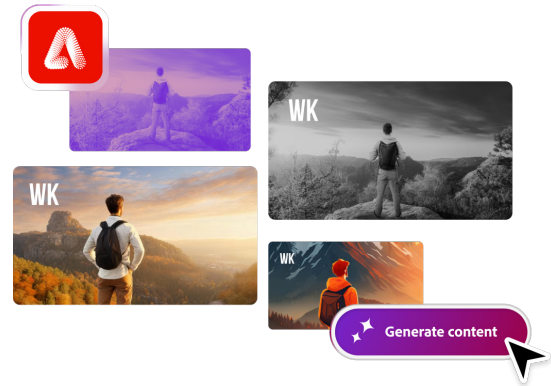


Automate task assignment

Resize for all channels



As efforts to attract and engage customers become increasingly challenging in a competitive market, organizations are facing an exponential demand for more just-in-time personalized content. “Demand for content shows no signs of slowing, with nearly two-thirds of customer experience professionals expecting demand to rise five-fold over the next two years,” said Amit Ahuja, Senior Vice President, Digital Experience Business at Adobe.



However, the process to plan, create, manage, activate, and measure high-impact content—known as the content supply chain—has become incredibly costly, fragmented, and time-consuming. As shown in Adobe’s 2023 *Digital Trends* report, less than a third of practitioners say they can produce content in a way that eliminates rework, duplication of effort, and administrative minutiae.

Meanwhile, marketing budgets are flat or declining, leaving executives with the challenge—and opportunity—to rethink their content supply chains. Recent technology innovations, including generative AI, can now make this a reality, and help businesses across industries:



Produce content beyond human scale to deliver compelling, personalized experiences.



Bring more campaigns to market in less time—all while controlling costs.



Maintain a globally consistent brand voice and visual identity.

This playbook lays out steps and strategies for transforming your content supply chain into an engine for experience-led growth.

Five key challenges organizations face when transforming their content supply chains.

In working with enterprises across industries and regions, Adobe has found five roadblocks that repeatedly come up as organizations attempt to modernize their content supply chains.

1 Limited visibility into existing and planned content across the enterprise.

At many companies, final approved assets reside in multiple repositories, including hard drives and personal cloud storage, and there's no easy way to find them across teams, geographies, and functions. It's also virtually impossible to search for content that is still being planned and developed. This leads to wasted effort, duplicative spending, and low rates of content reuse. "Based on our conversations with customers, we often see that 50% to 70% of content produced is never used because teams can't easily find it," said Tammy Pienknagura, head of strategy and innovation for content supply chain at Adobe.

2 Lack of a unified approach to content data and governance.

In our experience, few organizations have adopted and enforced a consistent naming and metadata strategy for content across teams—and even fewer have implemented automation to ensure assets are consistently and regularly tagged. "Without a global metadata strategy, it becomes incredibly difficult to find and re-use content, manage rights tied to assets, and gain insights into asset performance at any meaningful level of scale," stated Remington Lee, head of content consulting for Adobe Professional Services.

In a study covering 900 organizations, Adobe assessed content supply chain maturity to uncover that 82% of marketing teams don't have a metadata strategy—and 90% still require manual effort to create metadata and tag assets. Many different people and teams may own siloed content supply chains or different parts of the content supply chain.

3 Highly manual and siloed content workflows.

Teams involved in content production and delivery frequently find themselves chasing people and information instead of focusing on their core areas of expertise. "Creative staff like graphic designers spend hours interpreting feedback from multiple stakeholders, searching for the latest content version, localizing ads, and other highly repetitive, low-value activities," observed Pienknagura. Extremely manual and broken processes also increase the opportunity for errors, significantly delay the approval and routing of final assets, and make it difficult for teams to stay aligned on goals and requirements.

As per Adobe's content supply chain maturity assessment, 73% of marketers said they don't have integrated tools for managing reviews and approvals.

4 Reliance on highly specialized, overburdened teams.

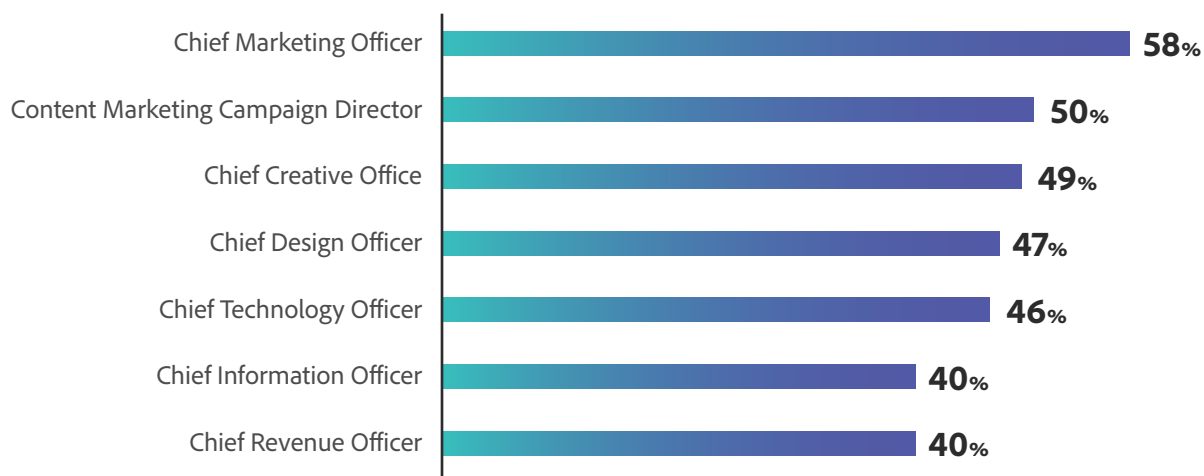
At most companies, virtually all content projects require specialized staff like graphic designers, audiovisual experts, and copywriters. These specialists, whether internal or external, are increasingly spending time on non-creative activities, such as resizing assets for different channels, managing feedback and information flows, or even logging timecards. “Not only does this mean you’re using a costly resource for low-skilled work, but it also contributes to burnout and turnover on creative services teams,” explained Pienknagura. This exacerbates the content bottleneck and can, over time, negatively impact the quality of what is created.

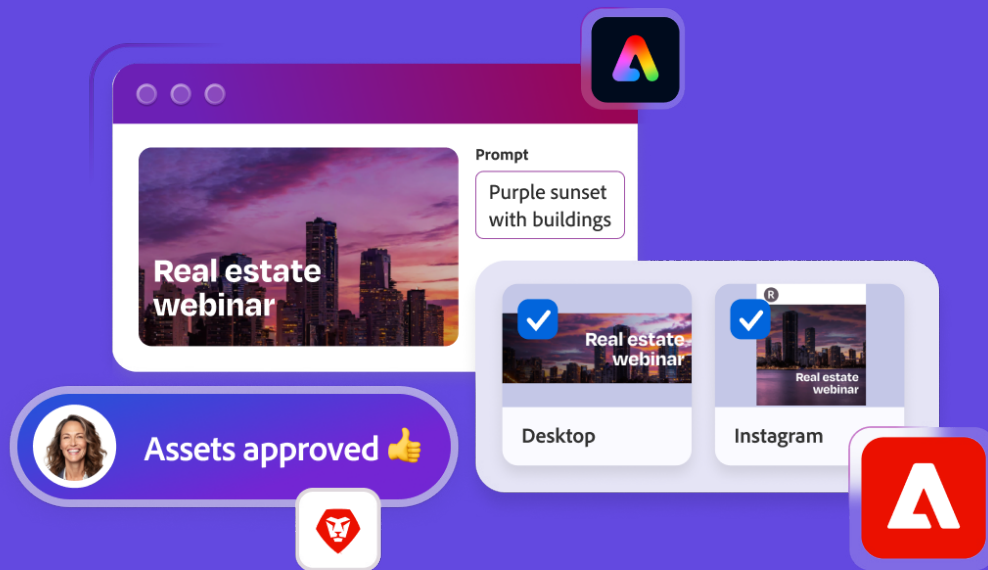
According to the assessment, 89% of marketers require manual effort or outsourced services to localize content for multi-market projects. And according to another Adobe study, an average of 21+ hours per week is wasted on manual design tasks that could be automated.

5 No clear owner of content strategy or governance model.

Ownership of the content supply chain is typically broken across departments. Leaders from marketing, design, sales, and IT—sometimes at a regional or line-of-business level—are often responsible for parts of the content lifecycle and yet make decisions independently. As a result, shared services teams may not know how to prioritize requests for content, and business units often rely on bespoke processes and vendors. This limits organizations’ ability to optimize costs, measure success, and make thoughtful decisions. “What ultimately happens is that fragmented teams and leaders spend precious resources duplicating projects that could have been reused from somewhere else in the organization,” said Lee.

In Adobe’s analysis of content management across 400 North American organizations, respondents identified the following roles as responsible for overseeing the content supply chain.





Five essential strategies to transform your content supply chain.

Based on our work with hundreds of organizations globally, we have identified five strategies for unlocking the content supply chain. Below, we'll outline critical steps for getting started, as well as advanced approaches for higher maturity organizations. These strategies are:

1. **Transform the organization and operations.**
2. **Build connected, intelligent workflows.**
3. **Accelerate creation and scaled production.**
4. **Enable omnichannel distribution and activation.**
5. **Harness advanced content reporting and insights.**

1 Transform the organization and operations.

Position your team for success by understanding where you stand today in terms of content resources, output, and usage. Define digital priorities and empower leaders to drive your content supply chain transformation.

- Make this a C-suite level priority. At most companies, the CMO will sponsor the initiative and work in tight collaboration with the company's technology and operations leaders.
- Establish a baseline of your current content operation, including spend and output across teams and formats, key pain points, and utilization rate.
- Identify a senior owner for transformation across the organization and goals to track progress against.
- Rethink how shared services teams can best support content efforts, piloting new approaches and re-drafting charters and engagement guidelines for business units.
- Score early wins by eliminating areas of duplication and consolidating your pool of vendors to those that consistently deliver the most value.
- Define initial ways for your organization to adopt generative AI and begin evaluating solutions and governance needs.

Content supply chain transformation spotlight:

Adobe

“ We wanted to create a highly operational and efficient content supply chain, yet this required company-wide change and impacted tools, processes, and how marketing teams work together. We got started by executing a rapid discovery on the current state to clearly identify pain points and pockets of excellence. We then focused on a few high-impact pilots, supported by clearly defined operating processes and strategies for end-to-end execution and digital asset management.”

Mike Inman

Senior Director of Strategic Initiatives,
Adobe Global Marketing

Avoid these pitfalls.

- ✗ Not assigning and empowering a senior owner or team to drive the transformation.
- ✗ Not investing in change management.
- ✗ Not involving key stakeholders across the content lifecycle in early pilots and tests.
- ✗ Not identifying an initial place to start and rapidly test new capabilities.

Advanced transformational strategies.

- ✓ Form cross-functional committees to share and evaluate best practices.
- ✓ Rapidly track and optimize progress of initial pilots and extend them to your broader organization.
- ✓ Fuel continuous improvement through ongoing testing and assessment of new capabilities.
- ✓ Conduct ongoing reskilling and upskilling of talent.

2 Build connected, intelligent workflows.

Drive higher speed to market and less complexity across your teams through integrated tools and processes, minimizing time spent on tracking versions, status, tasks, and briefs, while gaining insights for ongoing process improvements.

- Map out critical content needs across the enterprise—by region, format, and channel—with a comprehensive content audit to inform your future content strategy. The audit should also include identifying owners at different stages of the content lifecycle. These content owners will eventually be the primary stakeholders to build out the right workflows and the overall process.
- Choose one or two workflows to prioritize for redesign. Consider selecting ones known to be frustrating and time-consuming, such as intake requests or stakeholder review and approval.
- Implement a “test and learn” strategy by conducting pilots for new workflows that have a high level of buy-in from key stakeholders, focusing on simplifying hand-offs and information sharing. Document and apply learnings, share early wins broadly, and plan for expansion with necessary integrations as you scale across the business.
- Brief teams on new processes and guidelines and make education and outreach parallel priorities.

Content supply chain transformation spotlight:

Thermo Fisher Scientific

By redesigning and automating content review and approval workflows, Thermo Fisher Scientific:



Reduced overall project duration by 20%.



Achieved 24% reduction in the duration of legal reviews.

“ At such a large organization, it's impossible to pay attention to everything. Adobe gives us the ability to pull in the right information and show it to the right people at the right time so that they can do their work and not worry about all the other noise.”

Amy Zakrzewski
Marketing Operations Manager,
Thermo Fisher Scientific

Avoid these pitfalls.

- ✗ Not ensuring buy-in of all relevant teams before demanding new ways of working.
- ✗ Not defining future processes and workflows before implementing new work management tools.
- ✗ Not focusing on integrations among existing tools—such as creative production and digital asset management—to drive desired results.

Advanced content workflow strategies.

- ✓ Adopt advanced work orchestration techniques, including automated handoffs, AI-enabled brief creation, and automated creation of content variations.
- ✓ Draw upon deep operational data and insights to identify process bottlenecks and opportunities to drive efficiency.
- ✓ Identify and pilot how generative AI can be infused in all workflows, such as campaign planning, work management, and content publishing to web, social, and other channels.

3 Accelerate creation and scaled production.

Unlock new creative concepts and drive greater scale by minimizing manual tasks and making use of generative AI and automation capabilities to supercharge creative ideation and execution.

- Identify the most repetitive and time-consuming activities as well as areas of wasted effort—such as resizing images or re-creating versions of the same asset.
- Develop a strategy that enables teams to fully utilize generative AI technology like Adobe Firefly. Create custom templates with automated tasks, such as pixel pushing or generative image fill, to minimize repetitive, manual work for creatives. Gather feedback to optimize quality and processes before scaling across creative teams.
- Facilitate creative collaboration via shared workspaces, especially when sharing work-in-progress assets for peer review.
- Consider how generative AI can help teams create key content types (for example, still imagery, copy, and so on) while minimizing potential brand safety, licensing, and IP issues. Start with low-risk use cases, such as creative ideation, to begin identifying and testing new technologies.
- Empower non-creative teams to edit approved assets via self-service creative and generative AI tools so they don't have to rely on creative teams for simple updates. At the same time, add guardrails to these tools, such as template locking, to ensure content stays on brand.

Content supply chain transformation spotlight:

Prudential Financial



1.24x ROI on content.



365% YoY increase in the number of people engaged.



94% net positive sentiment for media and social media mentions.



Being able to self-serve certain capabilities, like cropping an image five different ways, gives our creatives more time to focus on other high-impact work.”

Terry Chu

Director and Product Owner
for Marketing Technology,
Prudential Financial

Avoid these pitfalls.

- ✗ Not prioritizing change management and creative controls when introducing AI and automation to the organization.
- ✗ Not including brand standards and guardrails in creation tools made available to non-creatives.
- ✗ Not having a scalable content management and versioning strategy that keeps pace with the exponential growth of your content.

Advanced activation and distribution strategies.

- ✓ Grant teams governed access to all final, enterprise-wide assets through unified search capabilities across repositories to eliminate wasted effort.
- ✓ Use AI to automatically flag and edit assets that do not meet brand and/or regulatory standards, reducing time-consuming rework and review processes.
- ✓ Train your own generative AI model for brand-specific content creation at scale.
- ✓ For global organizations, apply generative AI and automation to drive localization and personalization efforts simultaneously across formats, such as imagery and copy. This will improve campaign velocity and content deployment to web, social, and other channels.

4 Enable omnichannel distribution and activation.

Seamlessly deliver content to customers and prospects at every stage of their journey by making it easier for employees to find, deliver, and measure the right assets.

- Evaluate your current content and asset management strategy for key gaps, including access and storage, tagging, and downstream integrations.
- Centralize final approved assets in an enterprise-grade digital asset management solution that is implemented to fit with the right governance and access rules suited for your organization.
- Determine if your existing content data strategy reflects key segments, products, journeys, and touchpoints. If not, design a new asset metadata strategy and roll it out to both internal and external teams.
- Begin planning integrations, where needed, between central asset repositories and downstream tools, such as CMS and journey orchestration solutions, as well as upstream systems such as creative and work management tools.

Content supply chain transformation spotlight:

Under Armour



Increased daily active users and monthly asset downloads from the company's Asset Sharing Portal by over 2x.

“Automatic tagging [of metadata]... saves a lot of time for creative teams as they upload files. And it surfaces many assets that might have gotten lost previously.”

Ben Snyder
IT Product Owner,
Under Armour

Avoid these pitfalls.

- ✗ Not defining a common taxonomy or metadata strategy for content across the enterprise. Without it, content will not be easily found and used.
- ✗ Not providing the right level of access to assets across all teams, including creatives, to simplify governance.
- ✗ Not having a plan to integrate content management solutions with both creative systems upstream and activation and measurement systems downstream.

Advanced content analytics and insights strategies.

- ✓ Invest in capabilities that automate metadata tagging upon ingestion from internal or external creative teams.
- ✓ Develop and test modular content strategies, essentially breaking content into separate components to enable reuse across formats and channels.
- ✓ Use AI to test and optimize content-based experiences at scale that are composed in real time from content and experience fragments.
- ✓ Measure content performance down to the attribute level to understand which content resonates most with key audiences and best supports your business goals. Share these insights with both creative and marketing teams.

5 Harness advanced content reporting and insights.

Measure and understand content performance at the experience, asset, and attribute level. Understanding what assets help engage and convert customers is key to optimizing your next great piece of content. Start with defined KPIs for campaigns overall and specific channels such as web, email, and paid media.

- Implement customer journey analytics capabilities that will act as a repository for new datasets and correlate content attributes with customer interactions and performance metrics.
- Set up your websites to collect relevant first-party content identifiers and KPIs and connect to paid media sources to gather content performance data (Meta, Google/YouTube, Microsoft Ads, and more).
- Visualize the collected data to understand what content, elements, and attributes are driving business impact. These insights allow you to segment customers based on affinities for your various content.
- Develop and deploy content optimization strategies that continue to refine how your brand communicates with your customers.

Content supply chain transformation spotlight:

OTTO

Customer and product information analysis has been key to great customer journeys.



Managed 40+ optimization cycles.



Analyzed customer journeys across 10 million products.



Increased data sources, variables, and values.

“ We firmly believe in a data-driven approach to developing and optimizing our touchpoints. Good and helpful product information is the key to a good overall experience.”

Andreas Stuh

Head of E-Commerce Analytics,
OTTO (GmbH & Co KG)

Avoid these pitfalls.

- ✗ Not defining prioritized use cases and associated KPIs before implementing new analytics and insights tools.
- ✗ Not having your assets centralized in a single asset management platform with consistent metadata tagging.
- ✗ Not having a plan in place for how your teams will optimize future content and campaigns based on newly provided insights.

Advanced content analytics and insights strategies.

- ✓ Use AI and machine learning to break down every experience into its composite content elements and descriptive attributes, creating a complete metadata profile that provides a structured definition of the experience.
- ✓ Programmatically capture the “identity” of assets across campaigns and channels to significantly reduce duplicative content (for example, different sizes and formats of the same asset).
- ✓ Utilize generative AI to correlate and better understand your customers' affinities with your top-performing experiences. and assets.

Begin your journey.

“Any organization can make big improvements to their content supply chain. While some of Adobe’s enterprise customers do choose to commit to large-scale transformation programs and rethink core organizational structures, many others achieve significant results by taking a more incremental approach,” explained Pienknagura.

If you want to start smaller, we recommend identifying the biggest pain point for your organization—whether that’s repetitive production tasks, time-consuming review cycles, lack of asset discoverability, or something else—as well as one or more business units or regional teams that are willing to work on it. Then, you can adopt one of the strategies covered in this guide and incrementally strategize to include other opportunities.

Streamline your content supply chain.

Adobe offers the most complete solution in the market that streamlines and accelerates the end-to-end content supply chain. Integrated, best-in-class capabilities allow teams to plan and orchestrate work, enhance creativity with automation and generative AI, and scale content creation in a brand-safe way. Teams can easily find and activate content, optimizing performance across channels.

Adobe can take tasks that would normally take hours or days down to minutes, providing speed without any compromise to quality or brand consistency. In fact, we’re using it to accelerate our own content supply chain, cutting production times by a third in our social media campaigns and reducing the time it takes to upload and tag assets to our brand portal by half. Our creatives, marketers, project managers, and others can access desired content with only a few clicks across 12 Adobe offices and 150 external teams.

If you’re ready to transform your content supply chain, we’re ready to help.

[Learn more](#)

Winning with the content supply chain.

Adobe has extensive experience helping organizations transform their content supply chains. “When companies invest in optimizing their content supply chain, we’ve seen cost savings and productivity improvements in the 30–50% range,” shared Lee.

T Mobile

42% Increase in marketing productivity via automated workflows.

xfinity

3X Target savings in agency fees via integrated suite.

asics

30% Reduction in waste through increased asset re-use.

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