Building a Unified Content Strategy

INTEGRATING WEB AND STRUCTURED CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Most enterprises have to create and manage various content assets, including structured content like PDFs, forms, user guides, and training manuals. These technical content assets are often used internally but still play a role in the buyer's journey.

Technical content needs to be united with marketing content so that internal teams managing the customer experience can find and organize everything in one place.

A component content management system (CCMS) is essential for managing technical or structured content assets. It can also integrate with other tools in the technology stack, enabling enterprises to deliver a personalized and unified digital experience for the customer.

Additionally, the modern content experience requires businesses to deliver content to channels apart from the website, facilitating customer journeys that span multiple devices yet remain seamless and cohesive no matter where the customer is searching. In these situations, companies often turn to a headless CMS to help them deliver omnichannel experiences exactly where customers need them.

Understanding which tools to use for which purpose and how to combine them is crucial for enterprises trying to determine their content management requirements and build a unified strategy.

In this ebook, we'll dive into

- The challenges businesses face using traditional CMSs to handle the modern content experience
- Why solving the structured content problem is essential and how a CCMS can help.
- The role of a headless CMS in facilitating the modern content experience
- The benefits of building an API-first ecosystem using a CCMS and a headless CMS
- Key considerations to know before attempting to integrate these tools
- How Content Bloom can help with content strategy and integration needs for ambitious enterprises

Content is the cornerstone of today's information-centric world. But agile working practices, faster innovation cycles, increased customer expectations and more stringent legislation is making it incredibly complex for companies to manage their content ecosystem.

- Thomas Labarthe, President of Language Services and Technology at RWS

The Traditional Content Management Dilemma

Many businesses rely on traditional or legacy CMSs to help them solve their content management requirements. However, the results of a [joint study conducted by Forrester and Adobe](#) highlight how much businesses using these CMSs struggle daily.

The reality is that **64% of companies that rely on traditional content management methods and tools need help to keep up with the demands of modern content creation and often suffer from many different issues.**

They lack content authoring tools that marketers need to create engaging content experiences for customers across different channels. They also can't scale their content development and, consequently, cannot provide personalized experiences due to a lack of visibility into the content lifecycle.

That lack of visibility doesn't just impact those orchestrating digital experiences, but the limitations can be felt further up the chain. Survey results also help to quantify this issue, with **44% of respondents indicating that organization leadership has difficulty tracking content progress from creation to delivery**.

While traditional CMSs are often sufficient for smaller businesses, they can create problems for large enterprises since these organizations end up

relying on disjointed solutions from multiple vendors to achieve anything close to what's required of the modern content experience. Multiple traditional CMSs can result in content silos that restrict content assets to isolated repositories, leading to fragmented data that is difficult to access and manage, hindering collaboration and productivity.

With all of these limitations of a traditional CMS, businesses often end up with a two-pronged problem that needs addressing. Internally, content teams struggle to showcase the business value of technical and structured content. Externally, they cannot consistently produce the high-quality end-to-end experiences that customers expect. Luckily, these problems can be solved with the help of the right content management systems.

64%
of decision makers say it's challenging to meet modern demands for content creation.

Why You Need to Solve Your Structured Content Problem

A CCMS can help organizations solve their structured and technical content problems. Companies across sectors such as government, manufacturing, education, healthcare, and pharmaceuticals already realize the benefits of a CCMS.

In fact, per the study, more than 80% of respondents whose organizations have deployed a CCMS said it eliminates regulatory compliance, reputational, financial, and workforce risks.

A CCMS can provide the following functional benefits:

Improve Content Asset Organization and Taxonomy

A CCMS provides a centralized repository for content components, enabling easier search, retrieval, and categorization of content.

Increase Findability

By enabling standardized content management practices and tagging, a CCMS can increase content findability, allowing teams to identify and reuse valuable information across the organization.

Remove Content Silos

With a CCMS, content silos can be removed by breaking down barriers between departments and teams, allowing for better collaboration and sharing of information.
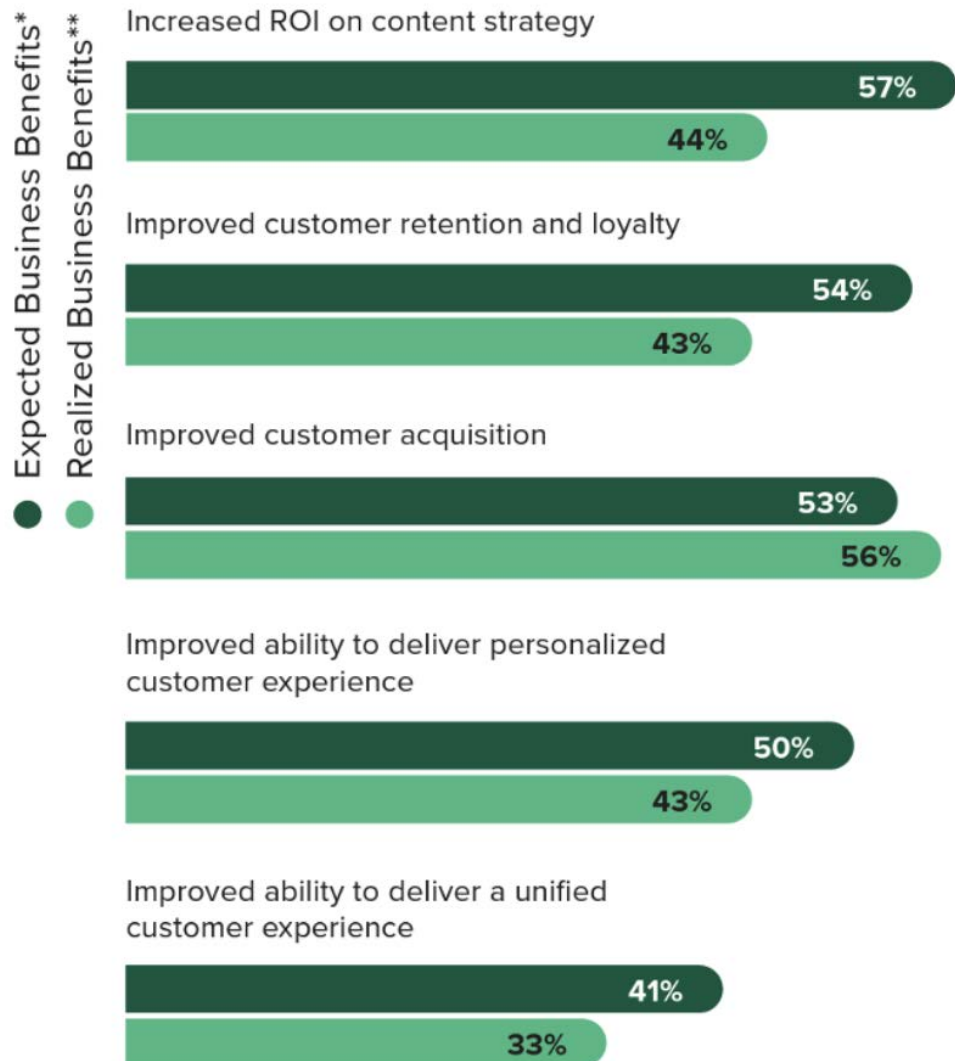
Unify the Content Strategy

A CCMS can help unify an organization's content strategy by enabling consistent branding, messaging, and style across all content types and channels.

Improve Reusability

The modularity of content components in a CCMS can help improve efficiency and reduce costs by supporting content reusability rather than starting from scratch.

Standardize Content

A CCMS can standardize content by enforcing consistent formatting and style guidelines, ensuring that all content follows a predetermined structure and tone. This can help improve content quality and consistency, reducing the risk of errors or inconsistencies. It also allows enterprises to increase scalability and personalization.

Expected Business Benefits*
Realized Business Benefits**

Increased ROI on content strategy
57%
44%

Improved customer retention and loyalty
54%
43%

Improved customer acquisition
53%
56%

Improved ability to deliver personalized customer experience
50%
43%

Improved ability to deliver a unified customer experience
41%
33%

Source: Adobe: Supercharge long-form content for personalized & consistent experiences

The Role of Your Headless CMS

When enterprises publish content, they don't want it tied to a specific channel like a website, as the user journey is no longer isolated to singular touchpoints like this. Instead, content stored in a CMS can be made available via an API, which offers more flexibility for content delivery and several other benefits.

A headless CMS enables organizations to achieve platform independence, allowing them to publish that content anywhere they see fit, whether on a website or mobile application. They can create omnichannel experiences, offering consistent and connected experiences even as customers toggle from channel to channel.

A headless CMS also facilitates improved personalization by providing the flexibility to tailor content to specific audiences or contexts. Relevant content can be delivered to the right users at the right time, no matter where they are and what device they want to use to interact with a business.

As a result, greater flexibility, scalability, and agility become possible, allowing businesses to adapt quickly and efficiently to changing market demands and customer preferences. Headless technology also facilitates the creation of new digital experiences, such as voice-enabled devices and VR applications.

Connecting Everything with an API-First Ecosystem

Given the multi-faceted demands of the modern digital world, companies often need to leverage multiple tools and business capabilities to achieve their goals. However, managing these tools can be challenging, particularly when they exist in silos and lack interoperability. This is where an API-first ecosystem can make a significant difference by connecting disparate tools more efficiently and effectively.

An API-first ecosystem prioritizes the development of APIs as the central component of software architecture, providing a common interface for different tools and systems to communicate. This approach enables businesses to integrate and leverage the best software for their specific needs rather than being constrained by a predetermined set of tools.

Changing Business Preferences

One of the main reasons businesses are going this route is because it offers adaptability and flexibility. With an API-first ecosystem, companies can easily switch out different tools as needed without having to rewrite their entire software architecture. This allows them to quickly and efficiently respond to changing market demands and customer needs and stay ahead of the competition.

Modern enterprises are discovering that an all-in-one suite isn't always the perfect solution for everyone. Each company has different priorities, and an API-first ecosystem enables them to choose the best tools and services for their specific needs. This results in a more tailored and customized solution better suited to their business requirements.

Furthermore, an API-first ecosystem can help businesses overcome challenges associated with managing multiple siloed tools and systems. By connecting these tools and through APIs, companies can improve interoperability and reduce the complexity of their software architecture. This can improve efficiency, productivity, and collaboration across different departments and teams.

API-first Ecosystem in Practice

Taking an API-first approach to building a software stack can result in several different solutions as enterprises are presented with the freedom of choice. For example, when it comes to combining headless and component content management systems, this might look like this:

1. Integrating a CCMS like Tridion Docs with a headless CMS like Contentful or dotCMS.
2. Alternatively, enterprises can build an ecosystem using Tridion Docs as a CCMS and Tridion Sites as a decoupled CMS. A similar result can be achieved with AEM Guides as a CCMS and AEM Sites as a CMS.
3. A comparable outcome can be reached with AEM as a headless CMS and AEM Guides as a CCMS.

Along with these CCMSs, businesses can connect additional tools crucial for the digital customer experience, such as eCommerce, marketing automation, PIM, and CRM solutions.
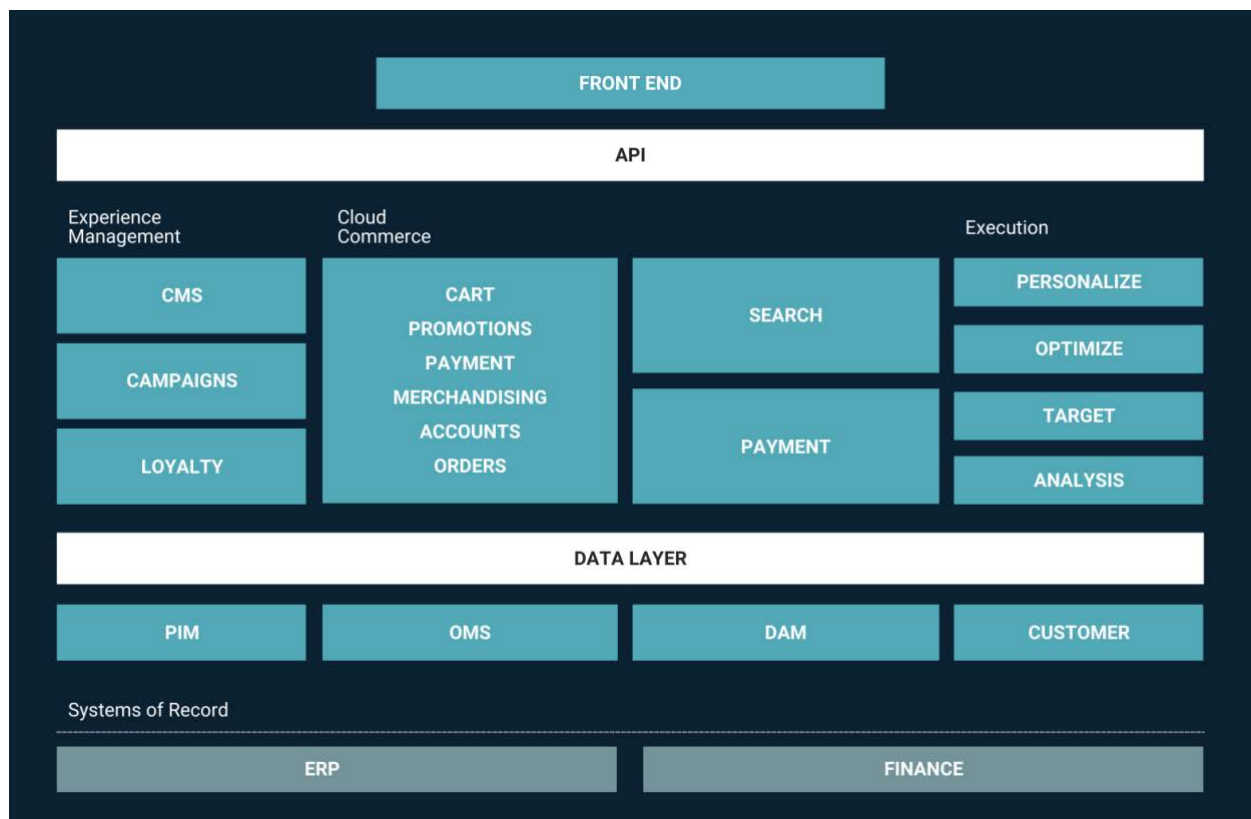
Benefits of an API-first Ecosystem

A software stack built with an API-first approach brings forth numerous advantages that enterprises can tap into.

Increased Flexibility

Organizations can choose the best tools and services for their specific needs rather than be constrained by a single solution.

This allows for greater flexibility and agility in software development, enabling faster innovation and better outcomes.

Better Data Sharing

APIs enable seamless data sharing across different systems and platforms, allowing for more efficient and effective data management.

This can improve decision-making and customer experiences by providing a complete picture of customer needs and behaviors.

Content Hub

By uniting the tools needed for managing content, companies can create a centralized content hub for all digital assets.

This enables easier management and distribution of content across different channels and touchpoints, plus improves the findability of content assets.

Better Brand Consistency

An API-first ecosystem can help ensure consistency in user experiences and branding, regardless of the device or platform being used.

This can improve brand recognition and loyalty and enable better tracking and analysis of customer interactions.

Improved Collaboration

Better data sharing, such as between technical writers and marketing teams, can help break down organizational silos and enable better alignment and coordination of efforts, leading to improved productivity and innovation.

Faster Time to Market

With greater flexibility and agility in software development, an API-first ecosystem can help organizations bring new products and services to market faster, enabling them to stay ahead of the competition and capitalize on new opportunities.

APIs are seen as more critical to successful business partnerships than any other factor.

55% of CIOs say APIs are important to relationships with developers and customers.

What to Know Before Integrating a CCMS and a Headless CMS

Today, we typically combine web and structured content via content delivery, as web and structured content come from two different CMSs, but are published in a unified content delivery environment. By using separate CMSs for web and structured content, businesses can access both types of content through the same content delivery APIs in a headless manner.

Taxonomies also play a crucial role in unifying the two CMSs effectively. Editors can classify the content in different CMSs using established taxonomies and combine related content at the unified delivery end by leveraging the taxonomies. Maintaining the taxonomies as a single source of truth is vital so that all CMSs consume the taxonomies from the source for tagging content.

Tridion is a leading CCMS that enables this approach by providing robust integration capabilities, especially for headless and shared content delivery between structured and web content. Others like AEM can also be leveraged in a similar way. But even then, web and structured content are almost always managed in different CMSs, which isn't always the most optimal approach.

Modern CMSs provide a lot of flexibility for integrations, yet we still have a ways to go to fully achieve the vision of integrating web and structured content. Integrating a CCMS and a headless CMS requires careful planning and execution. Businesses should consider several factors before embarking on this type of integration, including content requirements, integration capabilities, scalability, and maintenance requirements.

Read More: <u>Why Content Modeling is a Critical Element of Any Successful Content Strategy</u>

Tying Everything Together with a Unified a Content Strategy

Combining multiple content management systems can go a long way toward delivering exactly what customers want and realizing business value through content assets. However, none of this works without a proper content strategy in place.

A content strategy is critical to the success of integrating multiple CMSs. Without a plan, businesses risk creating content silos, duplicative efforts, and inconsistent messaging across channels.

It helps to unify different CMSs under one overarching plan, ensuring that content creation, management, and delivery are all working toward the same goals. By aligning content efforts with business objectives, companies can create more efficient workflows, reduce costs, and increase ROI. Additionally, a content strategy can help standardize content, improving reusability and reducing the time and effort required to create new content.

Luckily, having the right support can help you to uncover the best way to manage web and structured content for your business and build a unified strategy.

How Content Bloom Can Help You Structure Your Content and Unify Your Content Strategy

Building a unified content strategy is essential to getting the most value out of technical content assets and delivering the personalized digital experiences customers expect. Having the right tools, such as a CCMS and headless CMS, at your disposal is also important. But building a unified content strategy and integrating your content solutions in an API-first ecosystem isn't the most straightforward task to accomplish without adequate support.

Content Bloom helps enterprises create digital experiences that allow them to improve their business and serve customer needs. We create unified content strategies that can be used to centralize structured content assets, eliminate content silos and improve reusability.

We also support companies in choosing and implementing headless CMSs to facilitate omnichannel experiences.

By implementing an issue lookup step
driven by DITA topics and metadata tagging,
we revolutionized the digital ticketing system
for our Fortune 500 client, drastically reducing the
number of support tickets raised
for dozens of store equipment and devices.

In the first 10 weeks alone, our solution saved
1 full year of an employee's time and is said
to have "game changed the daily lives
of 200,000 employees every day".

- Damian Jewett, Structured Content Practice Lead at Content Bloom

About Content Bloom

Content Bloom is an enterprise digital consultancy providing a vast range of services from digital marketing and strategy, business intelligence, translation and global rollout, through to project management, 24-hour managed services, and cloud-based hosting.

Creativity, technology, and digital solutions

Our expertise is a unique blend of creativity, strategy, and technology that accelerates digital performance, delivering value that exceeds our clients' expectations.

Delivering results that matter

Our expertly trained team of consultants, developers, designers, and engineers have amassed many years of experience developing enterprise solutions around the globe.

Our extensive experience ensures the highest quality deliverables throughout your project.

By focusing on quality, we've exceeded our clients' expectations and have enjoyed mutually beneficial, long-standing partnerships built on trust.

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