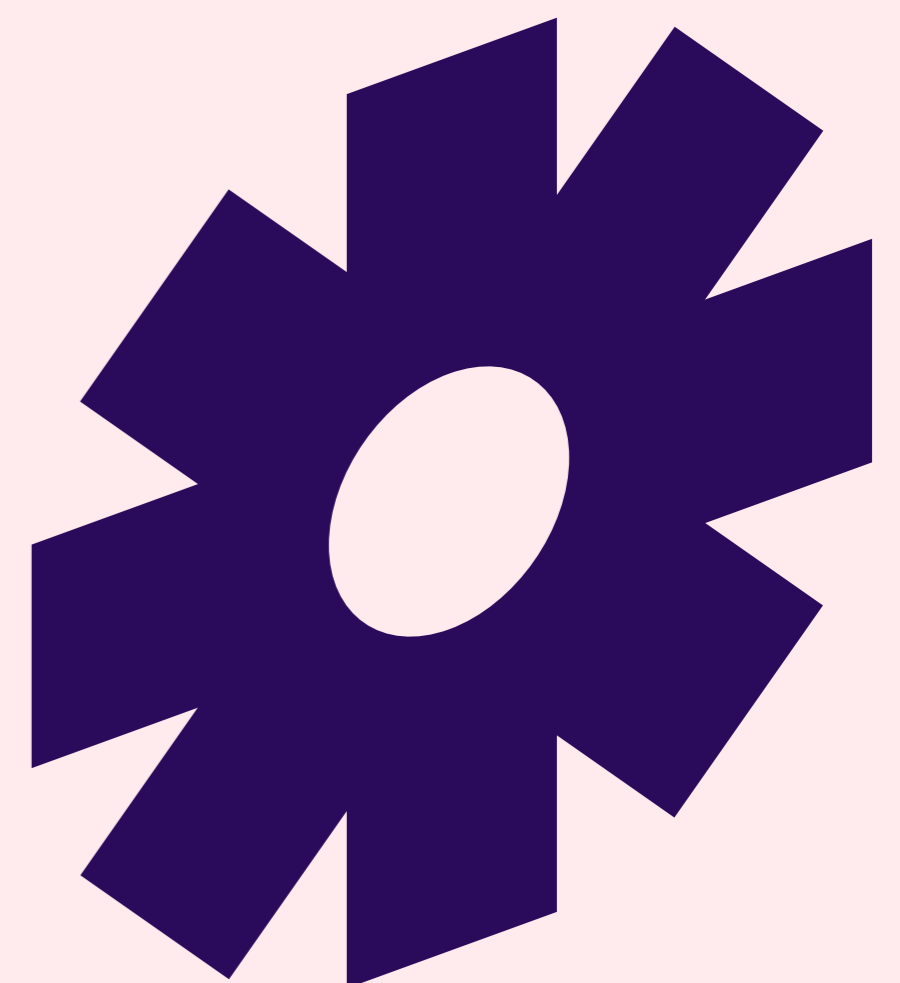
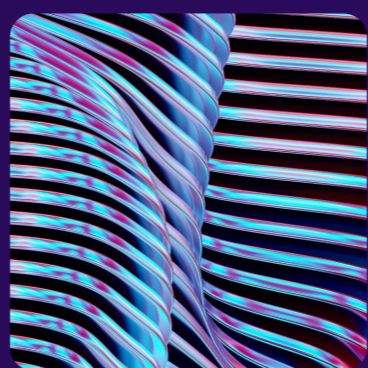


Your DAM buyer's guide

Choosing the best Digital Asset
Management system for your business





London, UK ,
office image

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Introduction

Today, **Digital Asset Management (DAM)** systems are the centerpiece of modern marketing operations.

With the growing demand for digital content, the rise of **multichannel marketing** and organizations increasingly fragmented across the globe, the right DAM system delivers a single source of truth for your entire library of assets – cutting costs, improving productivity and securing **brand consistency**.

But not all DAM solutions are created equal. With more choices available than ever, selecting the right DAM software for your business – both now and for the future – is a challenge.

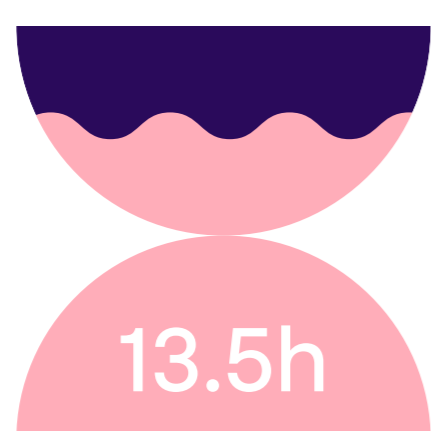


That's where our DAM buyer's guide comes in.

In this detailed guide, we will help you:

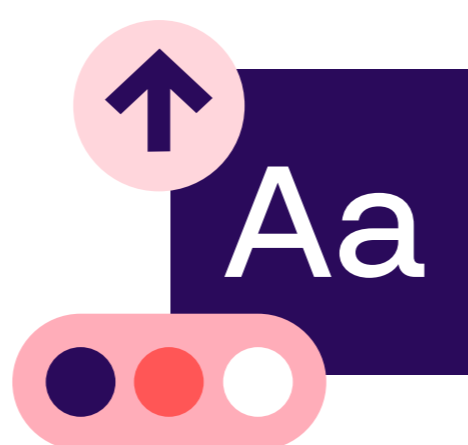
- Know the essential features you should prioritize in your DAM system search
- Understand how the best Digital Asset Management software goes "beyond DAM" through compliance managers, **templated content creation** and brand portals
- Recognize the crucial qualities of a DAM solution, from scalability and usability to long-term reliability and security
- Identify the key characteristics of credible, trustworthy DAM vendors
- Discover the steps required to locate, justify and deploy your ideal DAM platform

Whether you are purchasing a DAM system for the first time, replacing one that isn't meeting your needs, or upgrading to support your company's growth, this guide gives you the foundation to select the best DAM software for total brand governance across your organization.



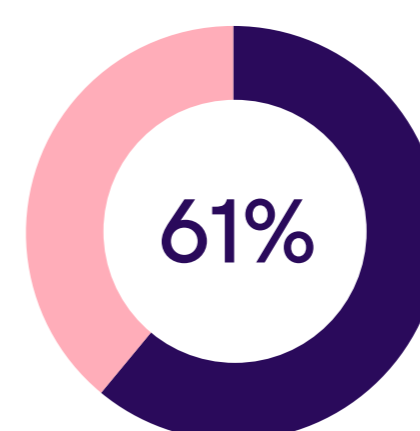
Companies using DAM systems report **saving an average of 13.5 hours per week** on asset-related tasks

Source: MediaValet



80% of organizations using DAM systems report stronger brand consistency

Source: MediaValet



62% of global companies were using DAM software in 2019

Source: Spherical Insights



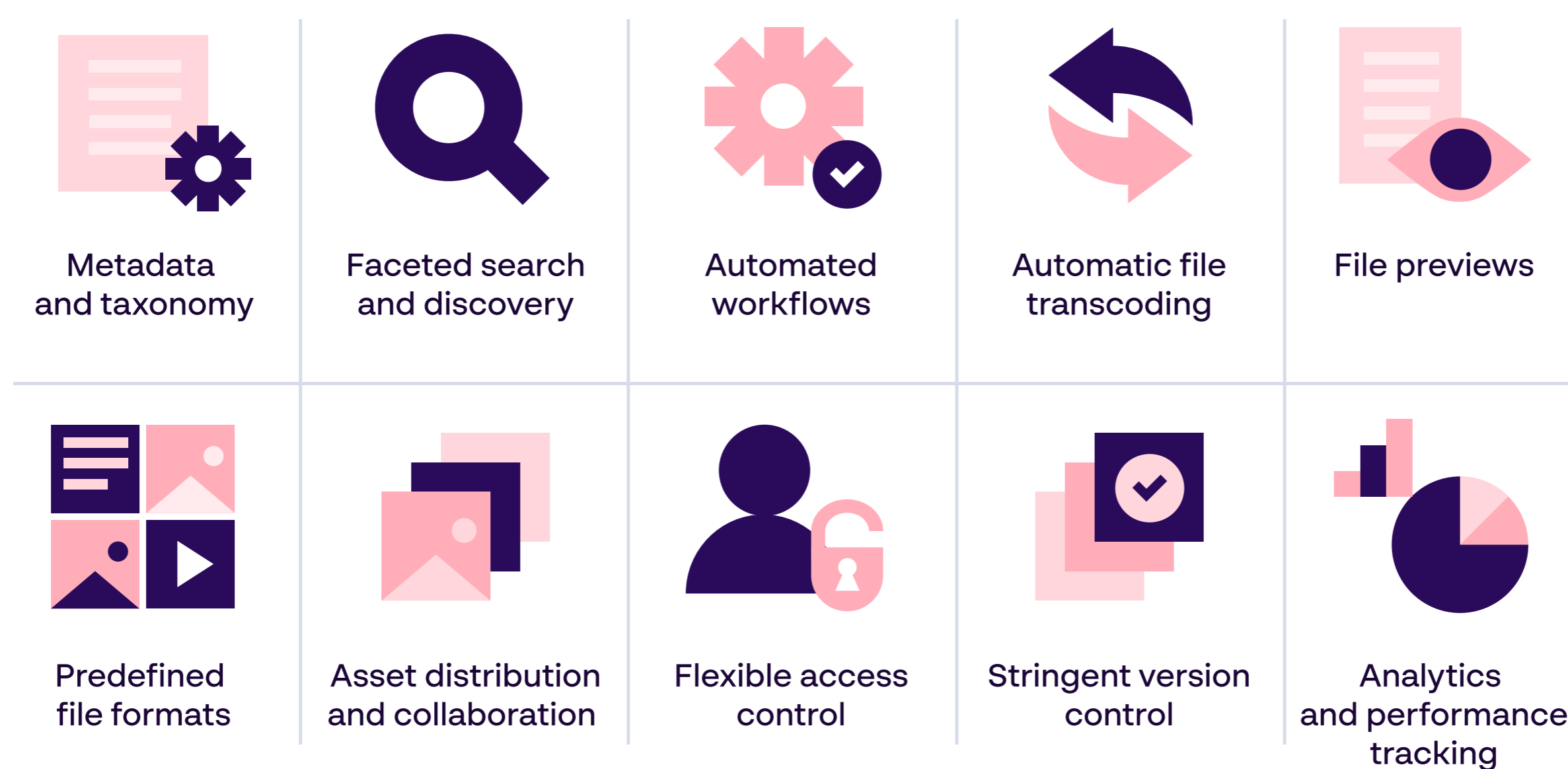
The fundamental features of effective Digital Asset Management software

Let's start with the all-important question: "What key features and functionalities should I look for when choosing a **Digital Asset Management solution?**"

To be fit-for-purpose, a DAM system must:

- Centralize all company-wide digital assets
- Organize and categorize assets for easy retrieval
- Enable quick search and identification of relevant assets
- Prioritize the most up-to-date asset versions
- Control access based on location, language, or campaign
- Ensure consistency with strong brand governance

If a DAM solution cannot fulfill these core obligations, it isn't worth pursuing. It will fail to deliver the fundamental requirements of this software – to make managing your digital assets simpler, more efficient and more consistent.





Metadata and taxonomy

The ability to tag assets with data such as color, location, product, photographer, descriptions and beyond is vital to an efficient, organized and searchable DAM solution. Your system must be able to populate metadata properties – including those from third-party systems such as Product Information Management (PIM) – to make assets easy to find.

A sophisticated Digital Asset Management tool also provides AI-driven smart tags to all assets uploaded to the platform. Your company's taxonomy language dictates this, with everything tagged using common, familiar language.

Examples of DAM metadata

Asset title	Asset description	Creator of author name	Date and time created	Dimensions
Asset type	Campaign or project	Copyright information	Usage rights	Location or region
Approval status	Camera aperture	Image resolution	Product number or SKU	Model
Product material	Color profile	Marketing channel	Target audience	Brand or sub-brand

Faceted search and discovery

With metadata in place, faceted search refines results, allowing users to filter by criteria like format, location, or campaign. This saves time, especially when handling thousands of files across multiple channels.



Automated workflows

From automatic notifications for uploaded assets to be reviewed and approved by your marketing managers, to preprogrammed expiration of assets when they are no longer usable – automated workflows drive efficiencies across your marketing operations and ensure every asset is fully signed off for full brand governance.

Automatic file transcoding

File maintenance should be simple and efficient. Instead of making multiple file format outputs requiring regular maintenance and updates, automatic file transcoding means your DAM tool takes care of this for you. You decide what outputs to auto-generate.

File previews

An asset library without file preview is useless. Regardless of file type, your DAM system should generate thumbnails that make it immediately obvious for users to identify the right asset and download it.

Predefined file formats

With your digital assets often required in multiple sizes and formats, your DAM software should enable you to predefine what sizes images should be available in. The DAM then generates the final output, making asset maintenance and retrieval far more streamlined.

Asset distribution and collaboration tools

A DAM solution should facilitate seamless distribution to media outlets, CDNs, social platforms, and internal teams. Instead of relying on heavy email chains, it should enable users to access, share and download assets from one central repository.

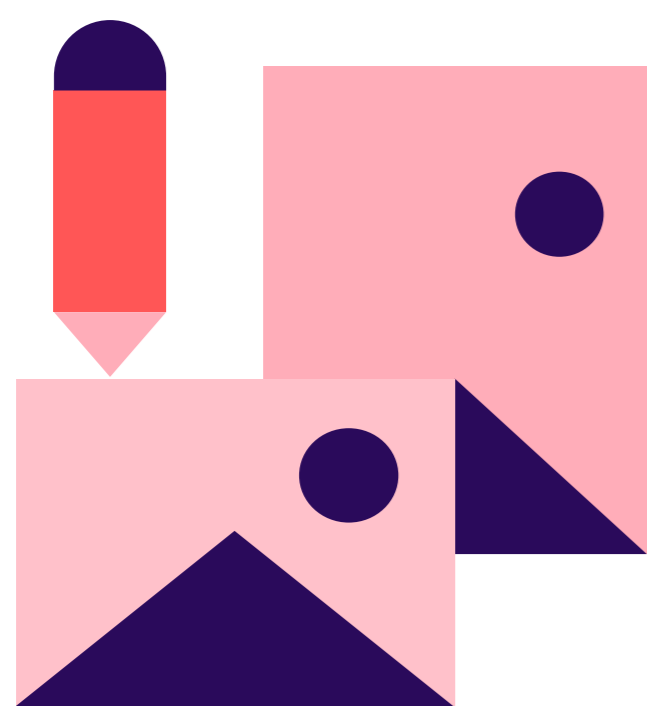


Flexible access control

Access control and user permissions should be available to ensure that only valid users can access relevant materials. It prevents users from mistakenly using assets intended for certain regions or campaigns, providing greater brand governance across your internal and external (agency) users.

Stringent version control

You never want out-of-date or noncompliant assets to enter your marketing stream. Version control and file expiration management ensures that users can see the most up-to-date version of an asset, with a clear record of changes and amends over time.



83%

of employees say they have needed to recreate assets because they couldn't locate existing versions

Source: Documill

Analytics and performance tracking

Insights and metrics related to asset downloads, search activity and top search terms will empower the long-term performance of your DAM solution – ensuring that it evolves based on the behaviors and demands of your users.

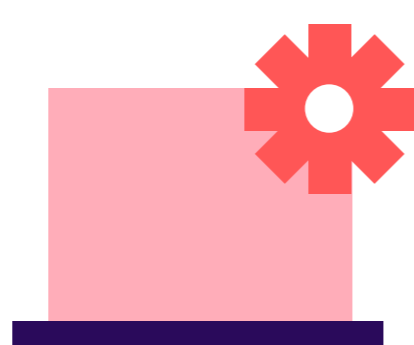


The above features represent the core of a Digital Asset Management tool. But as DAM systems have evolved over the years, the “essentials” to prioritize in your search shouldn’t end there.

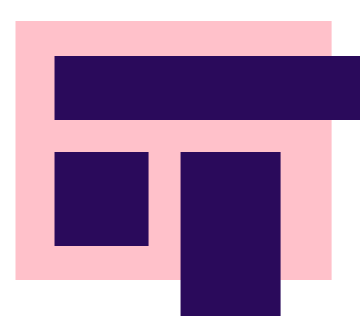
Today’s very best DAM software goes “beyond DAM” to deliver even more for its users. These “advanced features” transform a functional tool into the true transformative engine that modern marketing teams need to thrive in an evermore complex landscape:



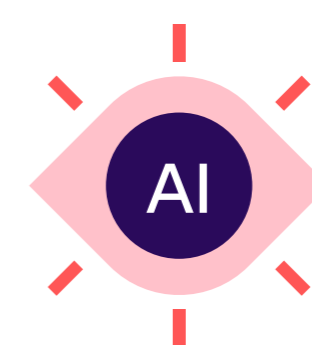
GDPR compliance manager and privacy features



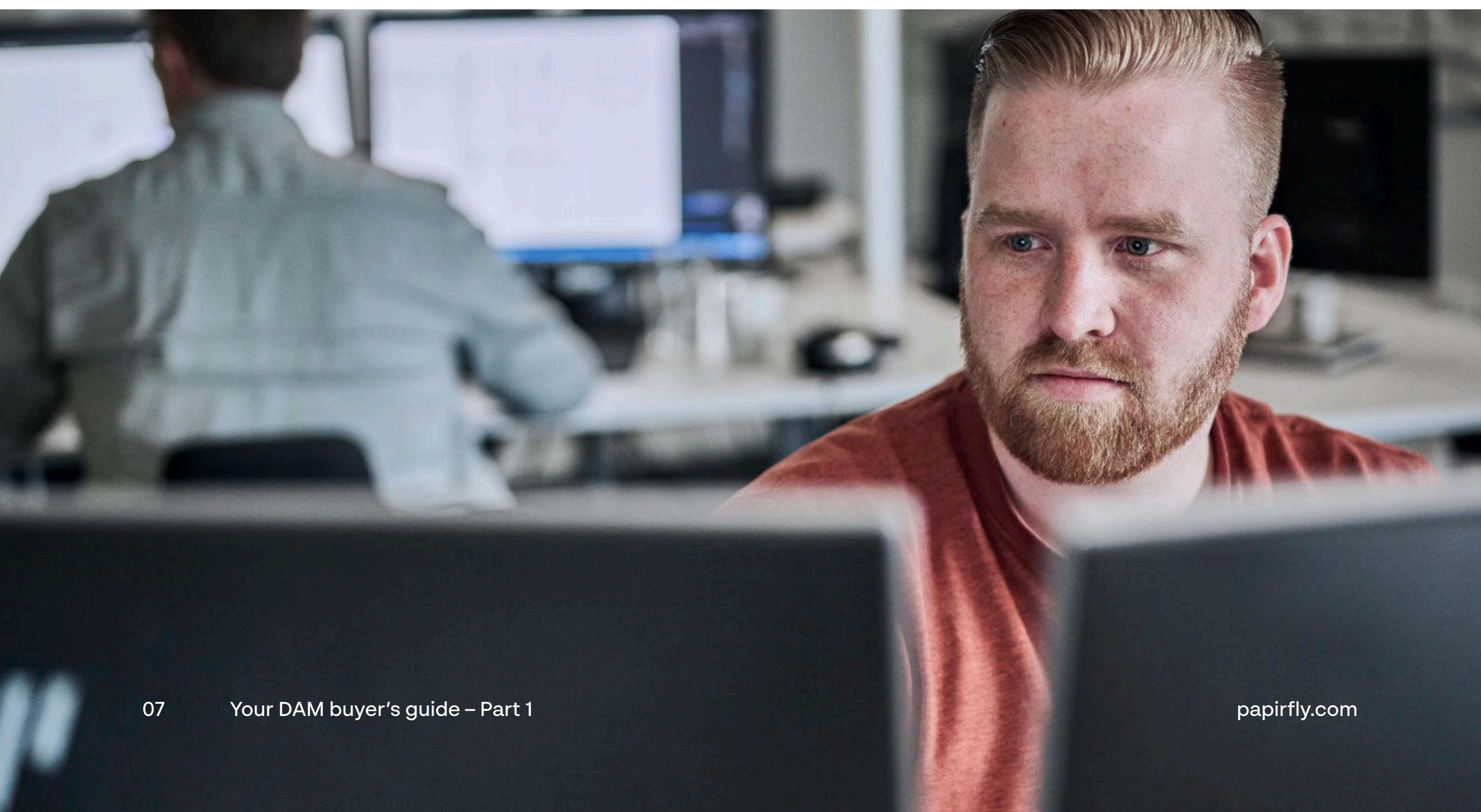
In-built brand portals and guidelines



On-brand content creation tools and templates



AI-driven integrations and features

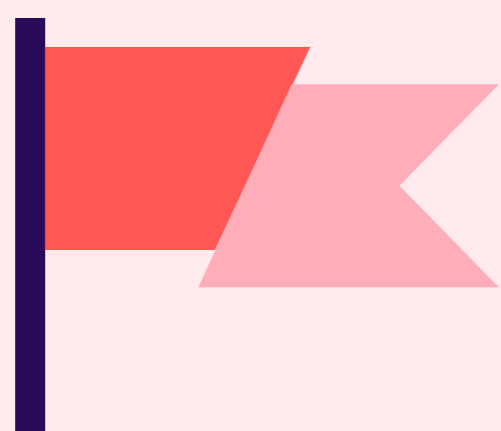




GDPR compliance and privacy features

In today's digital landscape, protecting data privacy is not just a legal obligation but a cornerstone of customer trust. As businesses generate more digital content, ensuring compliance with regulations like GDPR and CCPA is increasingly complex.

Without an automated system, tracking and removing non-compliant assets – whether due to expired consent or removal requests – can be time-consuming and prone to human error. Any oversight doesn't only incur significant fines; it can derail customer relationships and shatter brand governance.



In the first quarter of 2024, **20% of marketing assets reviewed** were flagged for potential regulatory compliance violations

Source: PerformLine



Noncompliance with general data processing principles under GDPR has **led to over €2.4 billion in fines**

Source: Statista

The way your organization manages its digital assets today defines its reputation tomorrow – and a **Digital Asset Management solution with a dedicated "GDPR manager"** can make it simpler to manage consent across your marketing operations.



Effortless consent capture

Marketing materials often contain assets that require explicit consent to use, such as photoshoots, testimonials, and transcripts. An effective DAM system verifies consent via QR codes, digital forms or email, ensuring legal approval before asset use.

Pending assets flagged

Assets requiring consent should never enter circulation prematurely. A GDPR manager within your DAM flags assets that are “pending approval”, locking them from use until proper consent is verified. Once approved, the system automatically integrates them into the main asset library.

Instant asset revocation

Using an asset you no longer have permission to use can be costly. A DAM system with instant asset revocation automatically removes non-compliant assets, ensuring they are no longer accessible. This eliminates the need for manual removal and prevents accidental usage.

Time-based permissions

Some assets have limited usage windows, such as photoshoot rights that expire after a year. The best DAM platforms allow assets to be uploaded with preset expiration dates, automatically removing them when compliance expires.

Right to be forgotten

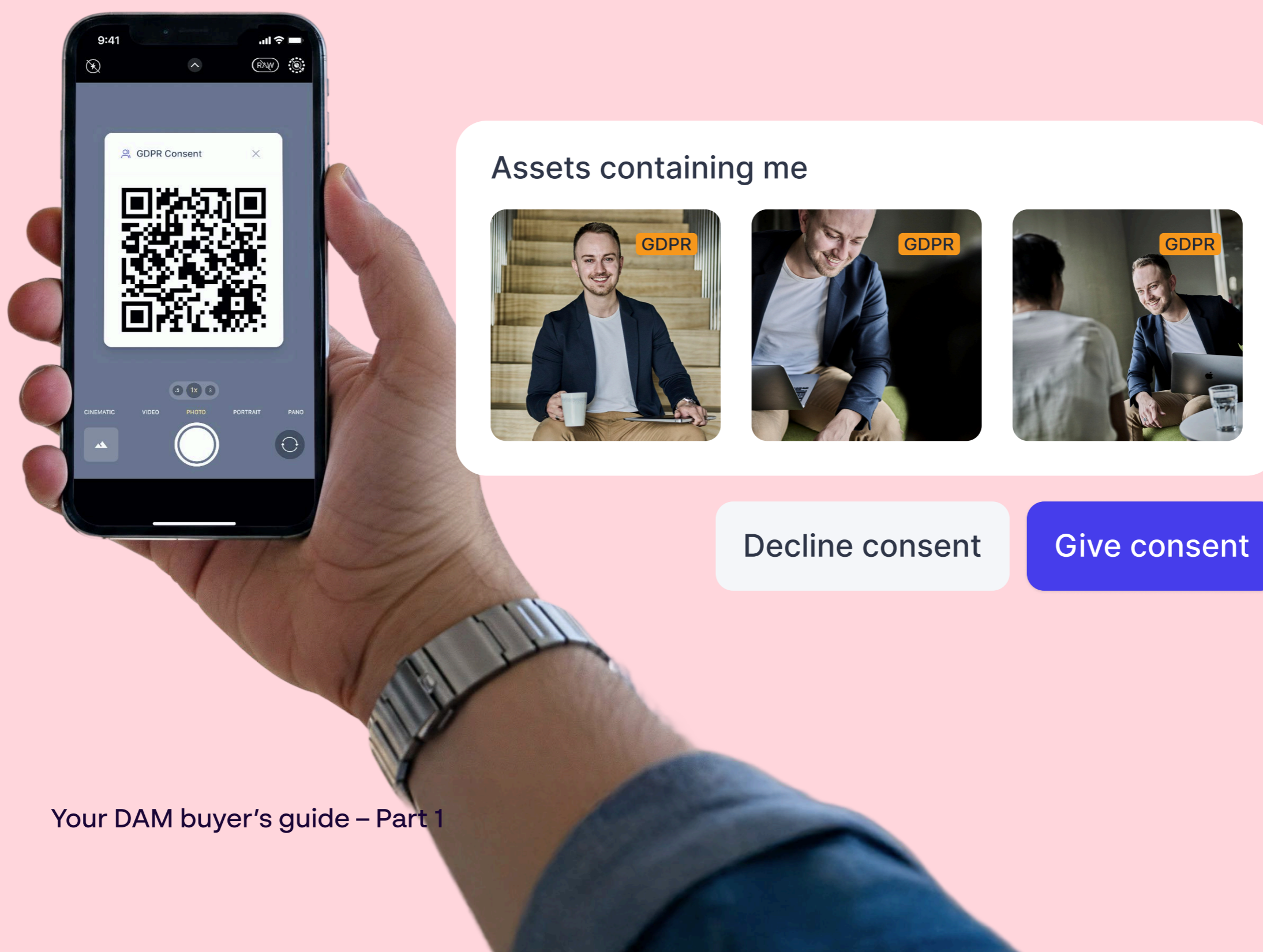
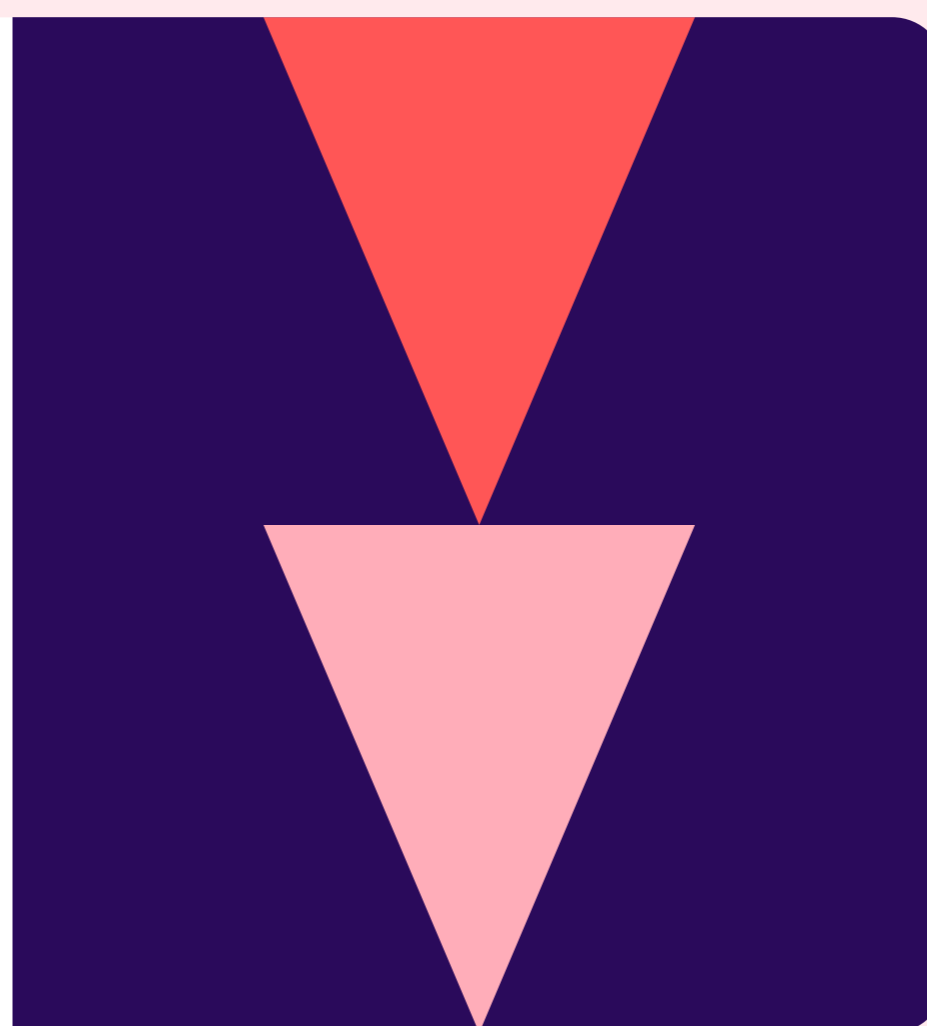
Under GDPR, individuals can request removal from digital assets. A DAM system simplifies this by sending a self-service link, allowing individuals to review and revoke their content, ensuring legal compliance and brand governance.



As compliance regulations grow evermore complex from territory to territory, automating compliance and consent across your digital assets is vital for end-to-end brand governance – giving you much-needed peace of mind that no request for asset removal slips through the net.

Discover the value of GDPR compliance features in DAM solutions

Read our blog post

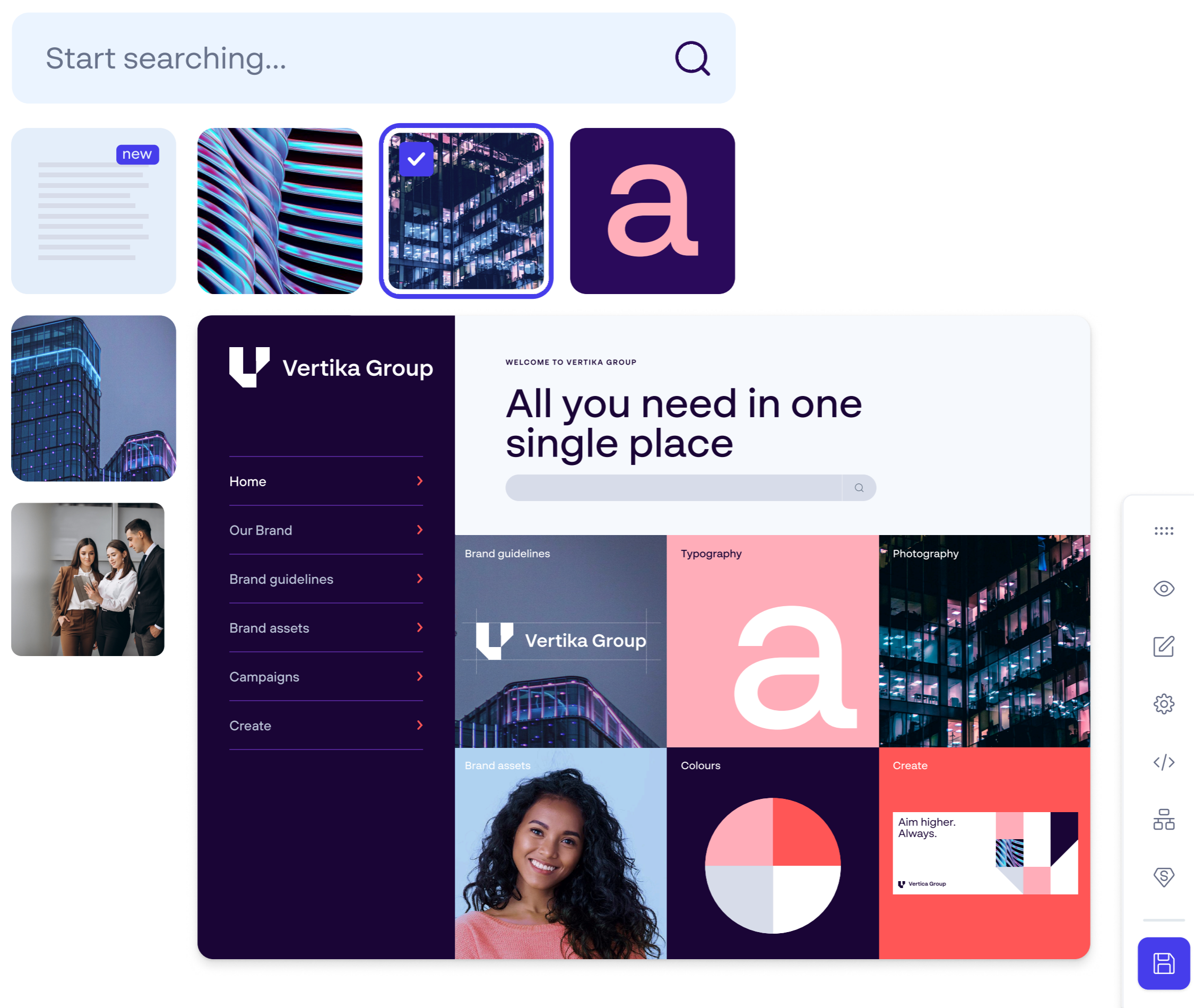




Digital Asset Management and brand portals

A traditional Digital Asset Management system is a global asset library, housing all content used in **marketing campaigns**. But in today's decentralized content landscape – where non-designers and frontline staff are expected to create assets – simply storing files isn't enough to maintain brand consistency.

Without proper context and guidance, users risk misusing assets and diluting brand identity. This is why DAM solutions with **integrated brand portals** are essential. A brand portal serves as a central hub for everything that defines your brand culture – something anyone in your team can use to **understand your corporate brand**.





Unbreakable brand guidelines and style guides

Rather than have brand guidelines that gather dust in a file cabinet in your offices, a brand portal digitally centralizes your style guides, tone of voice and design parameters. This ensures consistent branding and communication across every channel, campaign, and region.

Actionable asset templates and tutorials

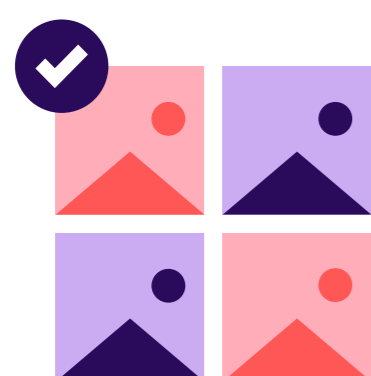
Within your brand portal, you can incorporate templates, tutorials, FAQs and other resources that educate and enable users to develop their own digital assets within your DAM solution, safe in the knowledge that these will not compromise your brand guidelines.

Bespoke portals for locations, campaigns and beyond

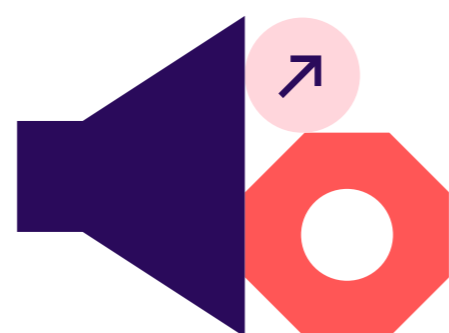
Brand consistency must adapt to different markets. A DAM solution with brand portal functionality enables the creation of tailored portals for locations, campaigns and sub-brands, ensuring users always access relevant guidelines for their audience.

A brand portal supercharges a DAM tool from a simple asset library into a single source of truth for absolute brand governance. By integrating guidelines, templates and best practices, it ensures every asset aligns with your brand identity – no matter who creates it.

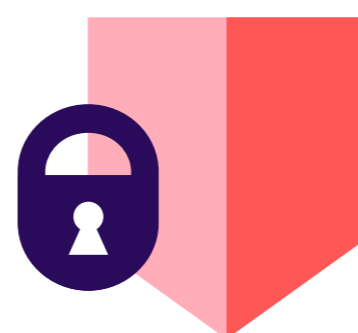
4 advantages of an effective brand portal



Absolute brand consistency



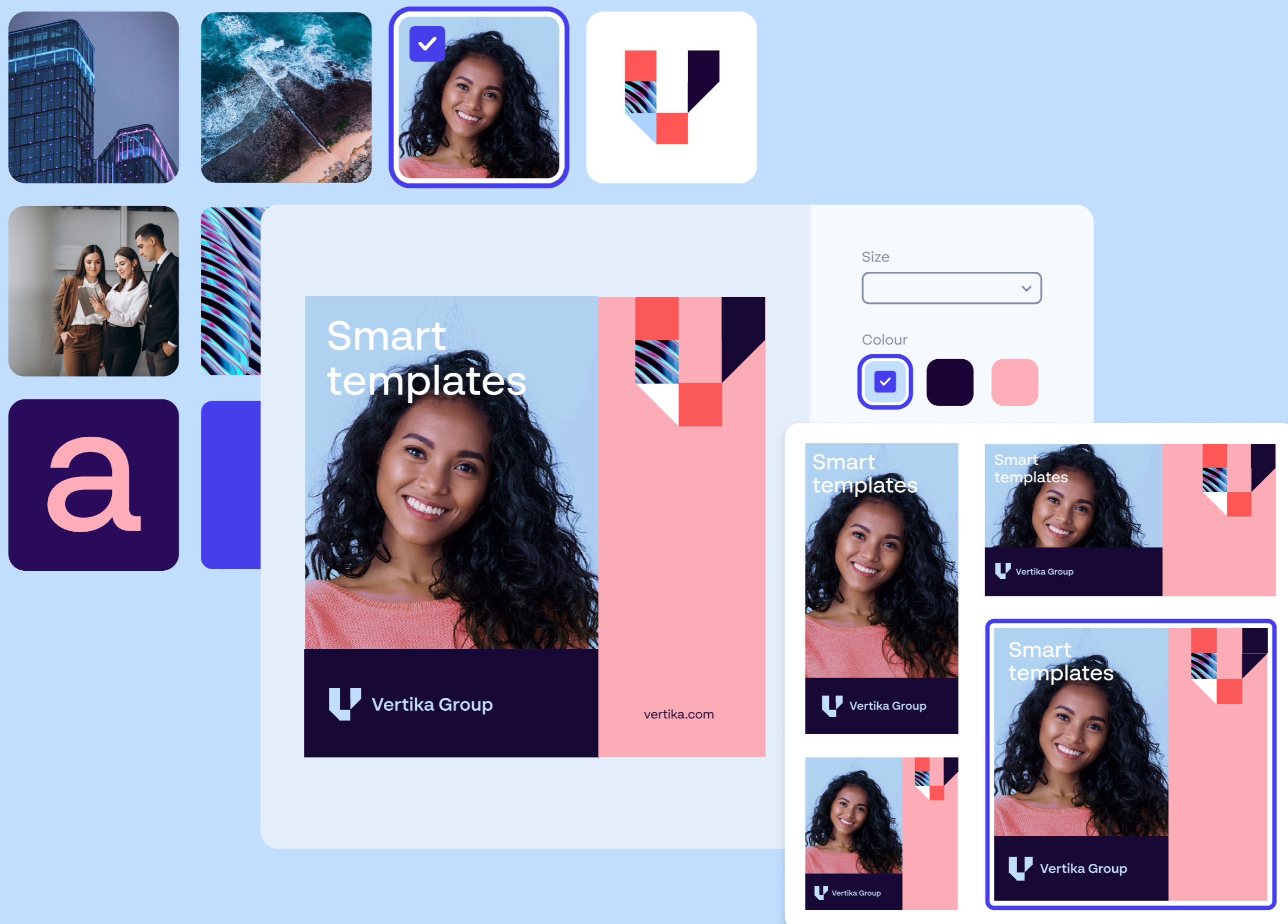
Increased marketing efficiency



Security over brand culture



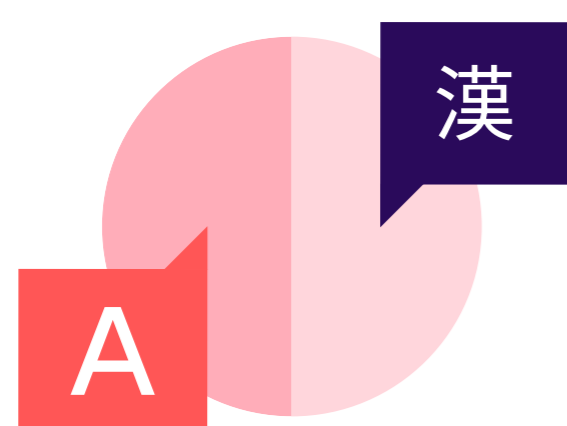
Company-wide collaboration



Digital Asset Management and Templated Content Creation

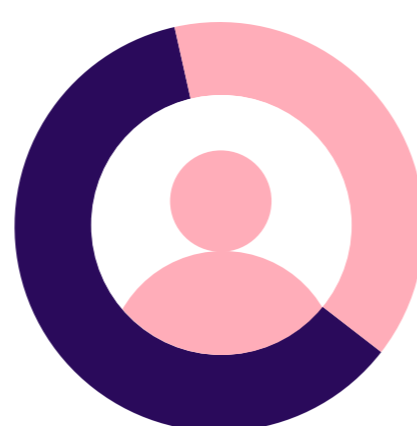
The top **Digital Asset Management software** does more than enables users to contain, categorize and distribute assets across their organization – they empower users to create assets as well.

The demands on content production are greater than ever before. Multichannel marketing is the growing norm. The competition for customers' attention is immense. People expect personalized, **localized content** that matches their specific needs and languages.



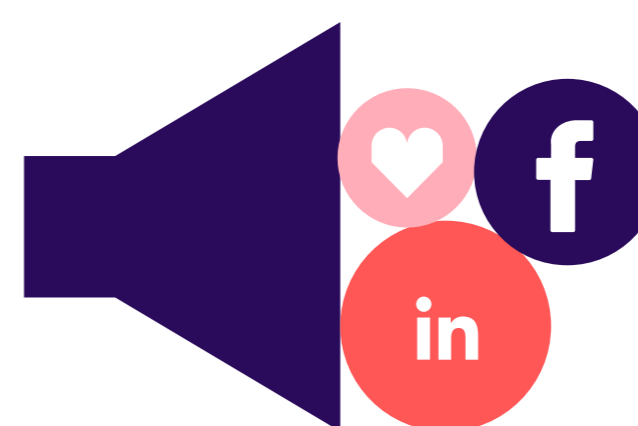
76% of consumers prefer to buy from websites in their native language – 40% won't buy if content isn't in their language

Source: CSA Research



60% of consumers say they'd become repeat customers after personalized shopping experiences

Source: Twilio Segment



Marketers using 3+ channels earn a 494% higher order rate than those using a single-channel campaign

Source: Omnisend

Meeting these rising requirements is impossible when marketing teams persist with an overly manual approach to content production. The right DAM system takes this burden off the shoulders of your designers, providing the tools and templates necessary for anyone in your organization – regardless of design skills – to create studio-standard, branded content.

By prioritizing a DAM solution with templated content creation capabilities, you:

- Empower your people to effortlessly generate assets using templates tailored around your brand guidelines and style guides
- Enable users to adapt the language and imagery of assets within your DAM library to better resonate with local audiences
- Ramp up production with templates for various asset types, allowing you to build a wider presence on more marketing channels
- Place less pressure on your in-house designers and external agency partners, freeing up these resources for more demanding projects



The result of this? Greatly reduced cost, time and effort attached to your asset creation across the board, leading to a stronger return on investment (ROI) for your campaigns.



Templated content creation software **reduces the effort of asset creation by 80%**

Source: Papirfly



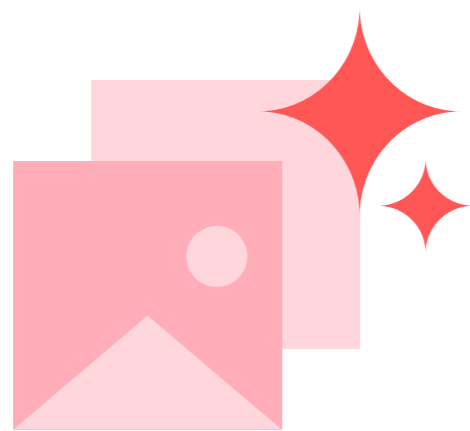
Templated content creation software **saves \$200 on agency spend per asset**

Source: Papirfly

Digital Asset Management and AI integration

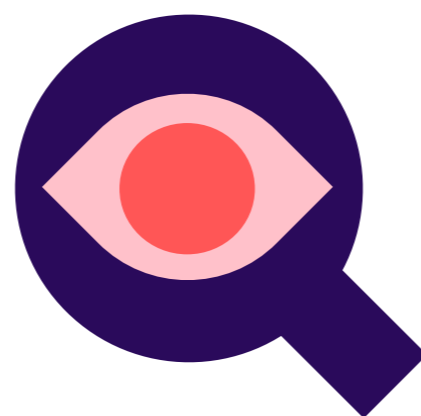
The future of marketing is being shaped by artificial intelligence (AI), transforming how brands create, manage, and deliver content at scale.

AI is transforming Digital Asset Management, streamlining workflows, enhancing searchability, and boosting productivity as organizations manage an ever-growing volume of digital content.



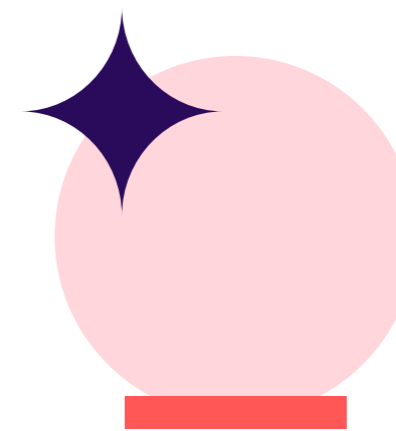
Over 60% of enterprise organizations are expected to rely on AI to manage content lifecycles by 2025

Source: Aprimo



Organizations using AI-driven search functions have reduced asset retrieval times by up to 50%

Source: Aprimo



Approximately 41% of organizations prioritize predictive capabilities in their DAM software

Source: Aprimo

At a time where speed, relevance and precision are crucial to modern content and brand management, you should prioritize DAM systems that embrace AI technology.

Automated metadata tagging: AI-centred DAM solutions can analyze images, videos, and documents to generate accurate metadata and tags, making assets easier to categorize and retrieve without manual effort.

Intelligent search and discovery: Search capabilities powered by generative AI, including visual and voice search, can help your users find assets faster by understanding context, recognizing objects, and even interpreting intent.

Content personalization and recommendations: AI can analyze user behavior and past interactions within your DAM platform to suggest the most relevant assets for campaigns, ensuring targeted and impactful content delivery.

Advanced image and video recognition: AI-driven DAM systems can detect faces, logos, objects, and even sentiments within visual assets, enhancing searchability and GDPR compliance monitoring.



Duplicate and redundant asset detection: Automated AI solutions can identify duplicate or outdated assets within your DAM library, reducing digital asset storage clutter and ensuring team members use the most current versions.

Sentiment and compliance analysis: AI systems can assess content for tone, brand consistency, and compliance with GDPR or other regulations, flagging potential risks before distribution.

AI's influence on Digital Asset Management is still in its infancy, but the possibilities are endless. So, when selecting the right system for the long-term future of your organization, choosing a solution that puts AI at the forefront is a strong indicator of a sustainable, future-proof product.

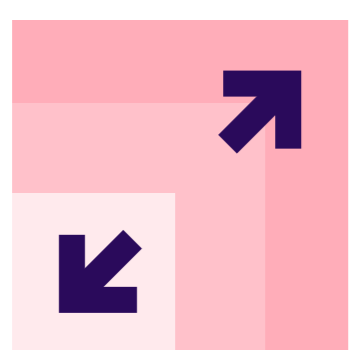


The key qualities of a future-proof Digital Asset Management solution

Selecting the best possible Digital Asset Management platform for your organization goes beyond the right features.

Now you have a clear idea of what core components to look for to make your DAM system the true centerpiece of your marketing operations, let's consider the more intangible aspects that make these solutions a long-term tool for your brand and your marketing teams.

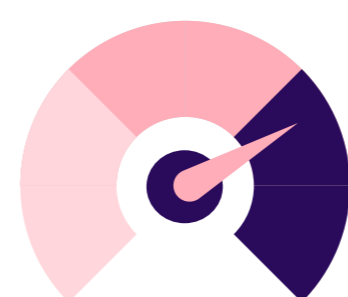
We've distilled these into 4 overarching areas:



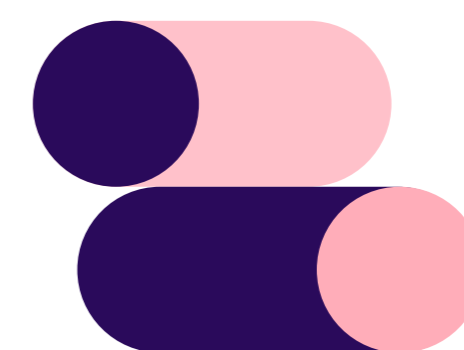
Scalability
and integrations



Usability and
user adoption



Performance,
reliability and security



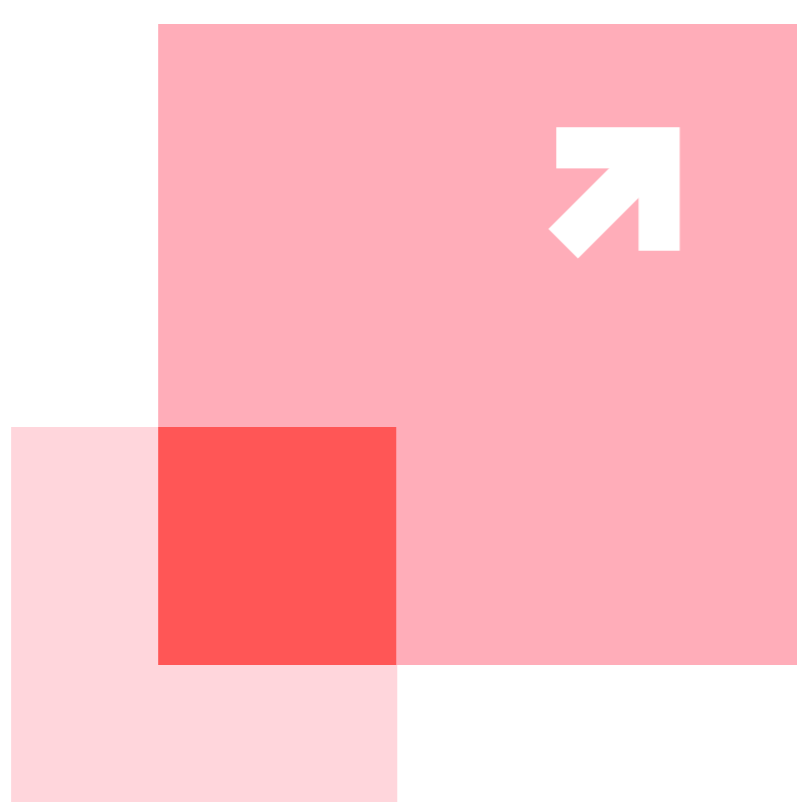
Customisation
and evolution



Scalability and integrations in DAM software

As your brand evolves, your DAM system must evolve with it. From expanding into new regions and markets, to establishing smaller sub-brands and franchises – you need a DAM solution that enables brand governance at scale.

A **scalable DAM platform** is non-negotiable. If it can't handle growing digital files or adapt as your brand expands or diversifies, you'll face a tough choice: replace it and start over or remain limited by its constraints.



Only one-third of B2B marketers say they have a scalable content creation model

Source: Content Marketing Institute

Neither option is especially beneficial, so how do you guarantee your DAM system is suitably scalable?



Choose cloud-native, SaaS Digital Asset Management

A cloud-based DAM is essential for long-term scalability. While on-premise systems were once favored for security and speed, they lack the flexibility and **cost-efficiency** of modern SaaS solutions, which:

- Scale dynamically to meet growing storage and processing demands
- Integrate with other cloud-based marketing tools
- Automate transcoding and workflows, delivering actionable insights
- Support diverse content formats, including 3D and VR
- Enable single sign-on (SSO) for streamlined access control and onboarding

Cloud-based DAM is now the standard – nothing else provides the same scalability and efficiency.

Ensure your DAM system integrates with your current Martech stack

With the average marketing team using 12 different tools as part of their marketing operations, if your DAM fails to integrate within your existing Martech stack, it can greatly hamper its usability and company-wide adoption.

Prioritize solutions that sync with your current Martech, including:

- Design tools & templates
- CMS & social media platforms
- PIM systems
- Project management software
- Communication platforms

This helps deliver a frictionless workflow throughout your Martech suite – something that is imperative for successful adoption.



Select DAM systems with diverse capabilities

Alternatively, place your focus on DAM systems that can replace or supersede your existing Martech stack.

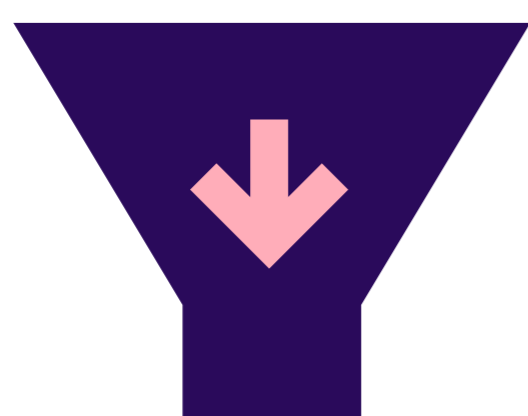
As mentioned in the previous section, modern DAM solutions incorporate features that enable content creation, **brand management**, GDPR compliance and more on top of their core capabilities.

The more diverse your DAM solution, the less reliant your marketing teams become on multiple tools, logins and platforms – making their lives less complex and increasing adoption.

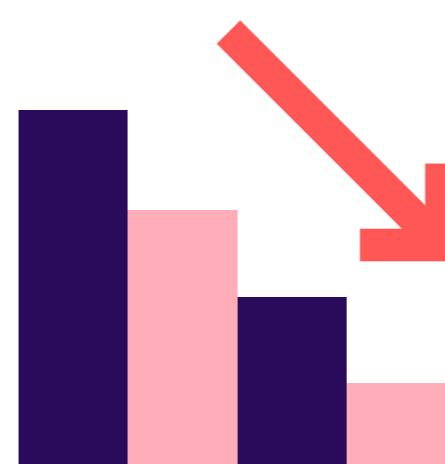
Prioritize multi-brand, multi-tenant DAM solutions

Does your organization manage multiple sub-brands or sister brands, or is planning to expand in the near future? Without a capable asset management system in place, this can add a significant amount of confusion and chaos to your marketing operations.

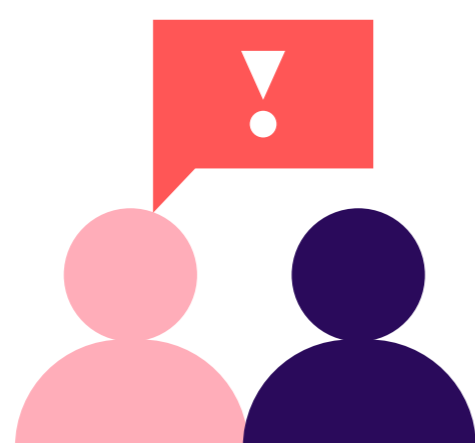
DAM systems that aren't future-proof



Cause performance bottlenecks



Restrict marketing growth



Discourage user adoption



Become obsolete sooner

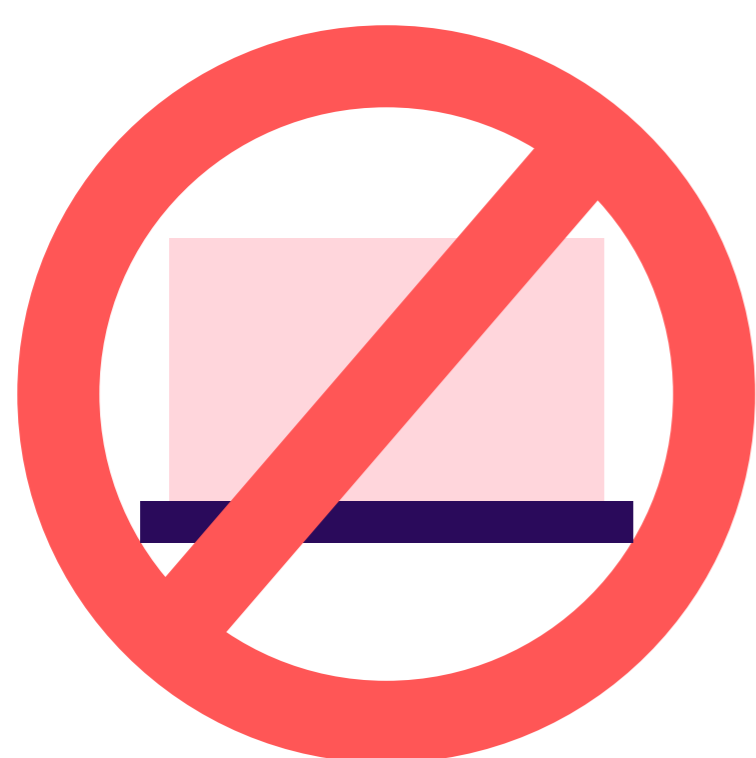


We recommend searching for a DAM solution designed for enterprises operating in multiple brands, markets and teams. By choosing a platform built for complex brand ecosystems, you can manage different sub-brands, franchises or locations in one environment, with total clarity over what brand an asset belongs to.

This ensures absolute brand governance across your organization, regardless of how large or multi-layered it becomes. Even if you don't have plans to introduce a sub-brand or enter a new market now, this gives you the freedom to explore this in the future without losing control of your assets.

Usability and user adoption

A DAM system is only valuable if people use it. If a DAM solution is too complicated or cumbersome, users will quickly abandon it, creating a black hole of wasted money and resources.



70%

of software implementations fail
due to poor user adoption

Source: ERP Software

When choosing a DAM solution, prioritize user-friendly features such as:

- Drag-and-drop uploads for easy file storage
- AI-assisted tagging for quick, efficient searches
- Version control to ensure access to the latest assets
- Access control to prevent misuse of assets
- Automated workflows to streamline approvals and distribution

Also, ask prospective DAM vendors questions centered around the user experience of their systems, giving you a clear idea of what it will be like to engage with day after day.



8 questions to determine DAM system usability

- ✔ Is the interface intuitive and easy to navigate?
- ✔ How steep is the learning curve for new users?
- ✔ Does the system support AI-driven tagging or auto-metadata extraction?
- ✔ Are there automatic workflows for metadata population during asset population?
- ✔ Does the system offer drag-and-drop functionality?
- ✔ How customizable is the folder and taxonomy structure?
- ✔ Can permissions be customized by user role, department, or individual?
- ✔ What training resources are available (e.g. documentation, webinars, on-site training)?

A user-friendly DAM empowers not just designers, but everyone in your organization to play an active role in your overall content management.

Performance, reliability and security

Next, the speed, agility and dependability of a DAM system should be top of mind for decision-makers. The right DAM solution should anchor your marketing ecosystem, ensuring it meets your demands and is always reliable.

Some key components to evaluate in this area include:

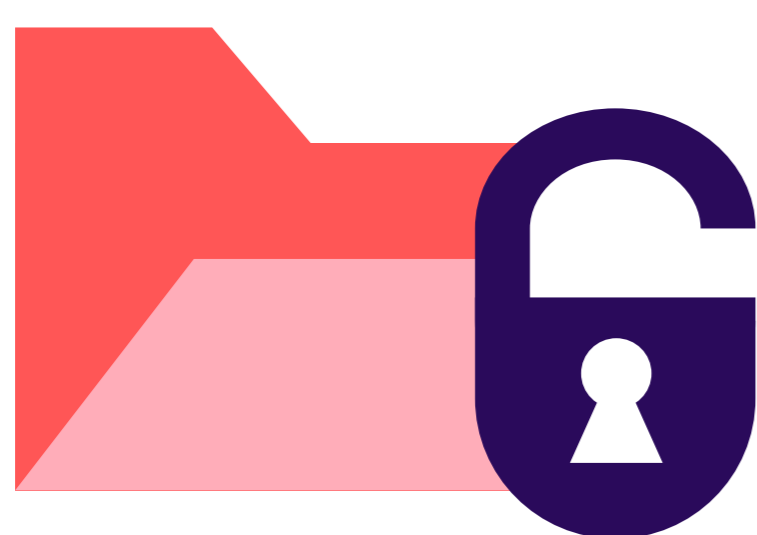
- Average uptime and availability
- Upload speeds and responsiveness
- Storage limits
- Number of users
- Content distribution speed
- Customizable workflows

Security is equally important. The best DAM systems include dedicated tools that automatically ensure GDPR compliance, preventing the use or publication of non-compliant assets.



However, with hackers becoming increasingly sophisticated, investing in a DAM platform that offers best-in-class security capabilities is an absolute necessity to guarantee brand governance. Focus on systems that deliver:

- SSO encryption or multi-factor authentication
- Antivirus and malware protection
- User permissions with different access levels
- Image licensing and copyright management tools
- Disaster recovery plans
- 24/7 monitoring



Research indicates that
**35% of corporate data is
not safeguarded at all**

Source: LLC Buddy

Customisation and evolution

Finally, customization is rightly becoming a more critical consideration in the DAM buying process.

There's no such thing as a one-size-fits-all DAM solution. The marketing and content demands of your organization will be entirely unique from another organization, even if you're similarly sized or share the same industry.

As a result, it is in your best interests to ask any prospective DAM vendor how they can tailor their product to meet your needs and interests. This ensures it can adapt to changes in your business, emerging technologies (such as AI) and act as a sustainable, agile and intelligent solution for your organization.



The desired attributes of a trusted Digital Asset Management vendor

A Digital Asset Management solution is more than software. Alongside the features and qualities we've highlighted in Parts 1 and 2, it's equally important to evaluate potential DAM vendors themselves.

Choosing the right DAM vendor goes beyond software capabilities. It's about selecting a partner who will support your organization's long-term success. A well-established, reliable vendor helps ensure your DAM system remains scalable, secure and aligned with your evolving needs.

Below, we've identified 7 key indicators to consider when assessing prospective DAM vendors to make the most suitable choice for your business and marketing operations.



The worldwide Digital Asset Management market is set to be **worth over €7.6 billion by 2030**

Source: Straits Research



1 Vendor reputation and experience

A DAM vendor's track record speaks volumes about the quality of their solution and support. Look for hallmarks that illustrate a vendor's credibility and success in the DAM space, including:

- Years of experience
- Number of users and customers
- Customer testimonials and reviews
- Case studies and **brand stories**
- Industry analyst reports (Forrester, Gartner, etc.)
- Awards and certifications
- Partnerships with other organizations

The right DAM system will be a pillar of your day-to-day operations – don't slack in assessing whether a vendor has the reputation to deliver this solution.

2 Documented implementation and onboarding process

From the costs associated with licensing, hosting and software integration, to services such as data migration, taxonomy support and training resources – prioritize DAM vendors who are transparent about how they will set up your solution for success.

Ideally, you should choose a DAM vendor with a dedicated onboarding team that will tailor your system implementation around your specific requirements and the volume of content you need to migrate into your new asset library.

Through discovery, configuration, and specification, DAM vendors should adapt workflows to your operations, integrate existing MarTech and address your pain points.

A smooth, rehearsed onboarding process is the foundation of DAM solutions that deliver real value, resonate with users and maximize long-term ROI.



3 Post-launch support and managed services

Implementing your DAM platform is just the beginning. The level of support a vendor provides post-launch can make a significant difference in user adoption and system longevity.

Focus your attention on DAM vendors that offer dedicated account managers, comprehensive training and robust customer support, including clear service level agreements (SLAs) and 24/7 assistance.

Managed services are also a key consideration for keeping your DAM solution optimized and effective. This technical and functional support helps ensure the continued performance and security of your solution, so it evolves alongside your business:



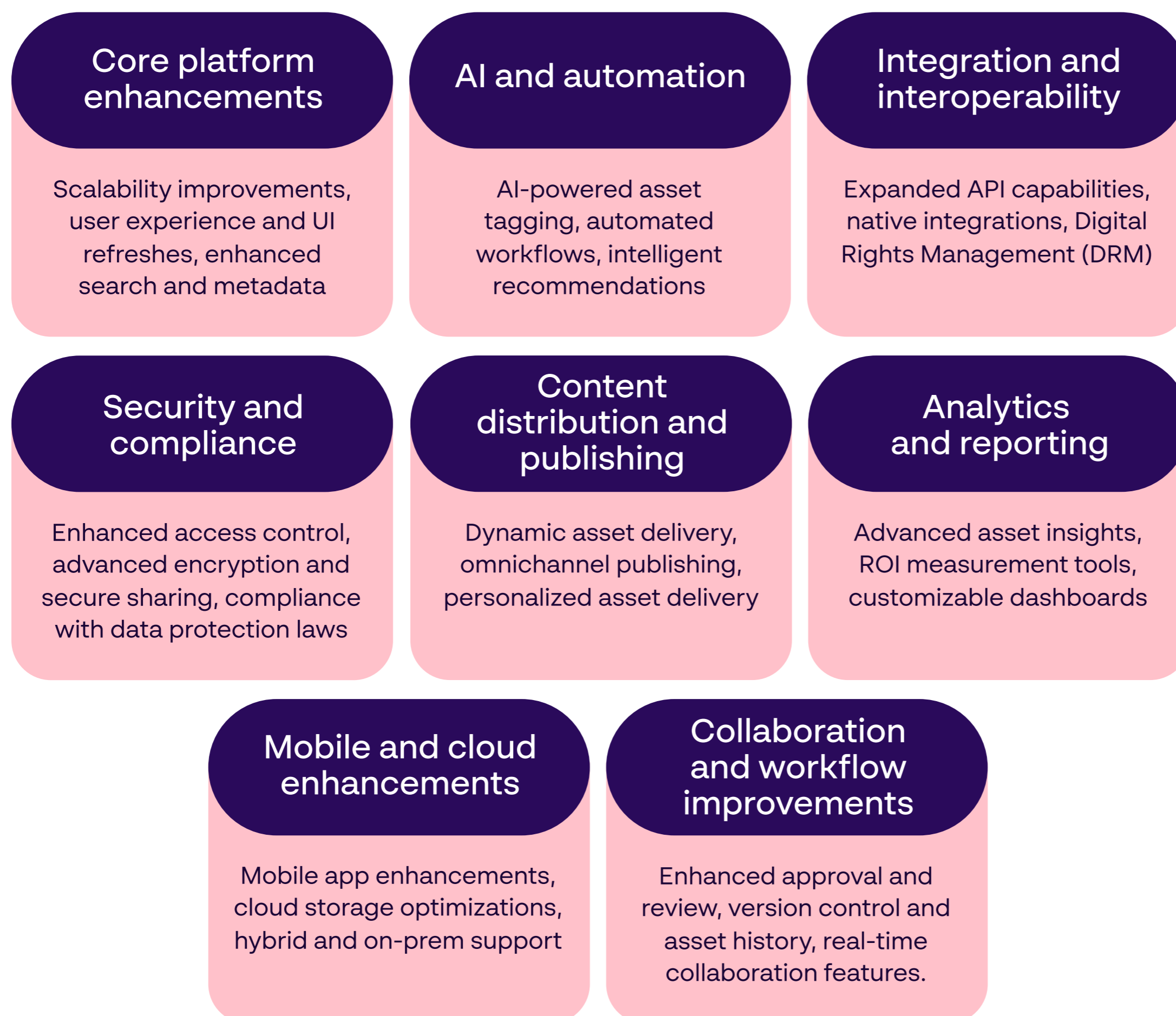
4 Roadmap and innovation commitment

A strong indicator that a Digital Asset Management solution will consistently support your teams is the vendor's commitment to innovation and evolution.

With this in mind, look for DAM vendors with a published product roadmap illustrating their solution's short and long-term growth, or request this from any vendor that you reach out to as part of your search.



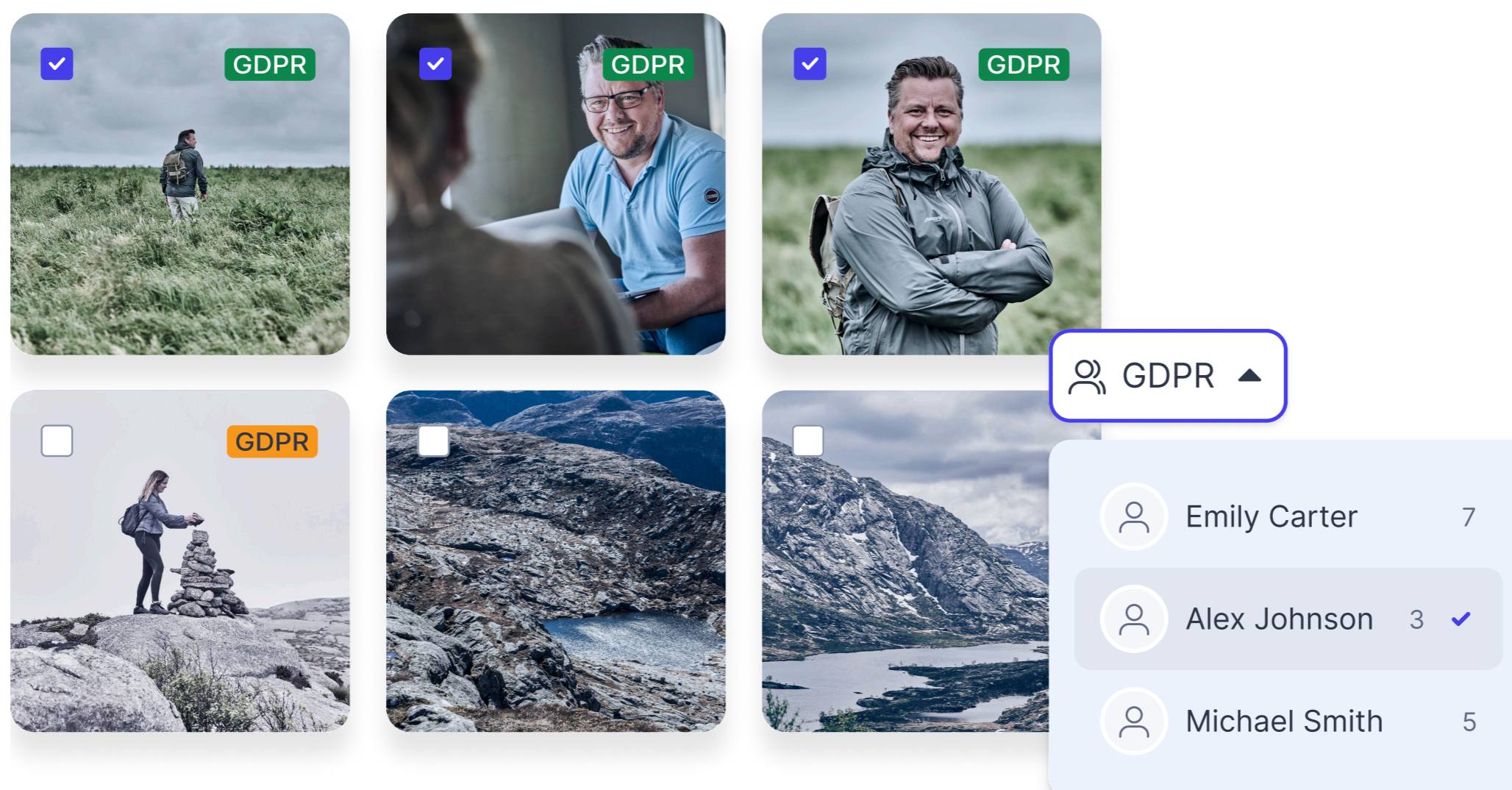
A DAM vendor that actively incorporates customer feedback and invests in emerging technologies like marketing AI and automation ensures your DAM tools remain future-proof and adaptable to industry advancements.



5 Willingness to prove capabilities

A reputable DAM vendor should be eager to showcase their solution's capabilities. Any hesitation or reluctance is an instant red flag, so be sure to request this from any prospective partner.

- Ask for a Digital Asset Management demo to trial the features and usability of the platform
- Request a technical deep-dive workshop for your IT professionals
- Check if there's a free trial version to test the solution within your operational framework
- See if the vendor offers proof-of-concept (PoC) environments



6 Compliance, security and brand governance

As noted earlier, security and compliance are critical when handling digital assets. Therefore any DAM vendor you work with should reflect the importance of brand governance in their own practices.

Ensure the vendor meets key industry regulations such as GDPR, CCPA and SOC 2 compliance. Strong security measures, including encryption, role-based access controls and disaster recovery plans, help protect your assets and maintain business continuity.

7 Pricing and contract transparency

Hidden fees and rigid pricing structures can create unexpected costs down the line, turning what should be an efficiency-driving DAM solution into an unwanted money pit for your marketing professionals.

Look for vendors that offer clear, upfront Digital Asset Management pricing with flexible licensing models (SaaS, on-premise or hybrid). A transparent cost structure ensures that your DAM software remains scalable without excessive financial burdens as your organization grows.

Selecting a DAM vendor is as crucial as selecting the DAM system itself. A vendor's experience, support, innovation, security, and transparency all contribute to the long-term success of your Digital Asset Management strategy.

By carefully evaluating these key qualities, you can confidently choose a vendor that not only delivers a powerful DAM solution but also serves as a reliable, strategic partner for your ongoing business growth.



10 questions to ask a potential DAM vendor

- ✔ What types of assets does your DAM support?
- ✔ How does your DAM system integrate with existing tools and workflows?
- ✔ What metadata and tagging features does your DAM provide?
- ✔ How does your DAM handle permissions and user roles?
- ✔ What security measures are in place to protect digital assets?
- ✔ Does your DAM offer cloud-based, on-premise, or hybrid deployment options?
- ✔ What is your pricing model, and are there hidden costs?
- ✔ How does your DAM support scalability and future growth?
- ✔ What automation and AI-driven capabilities does your DAM offer?
- ✔ What level of customer support and training do you provide?



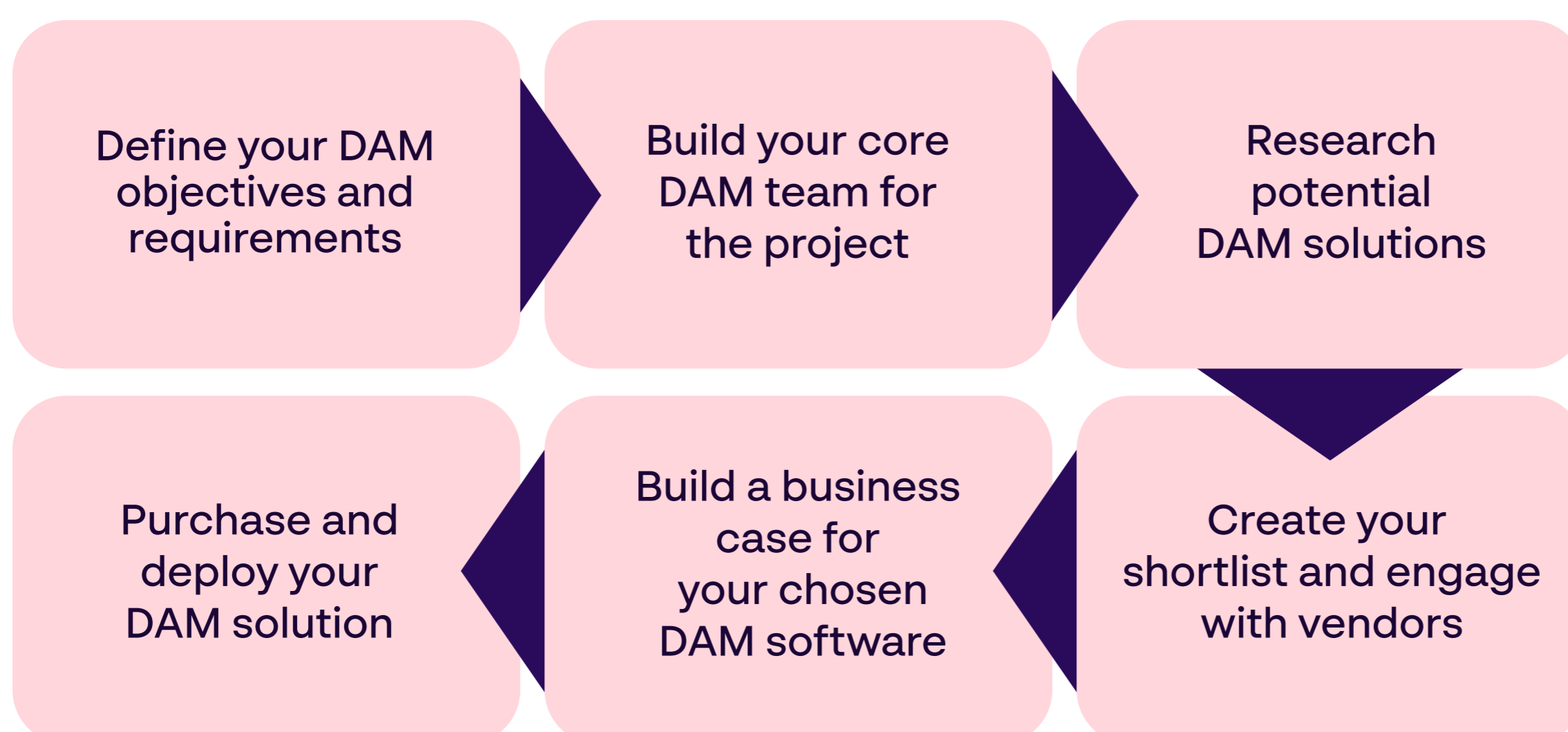


Your 6-step process to purchasing the best Digital Asset Management solution

Now that we've outlined what makes the best Digital Asset Management software and vendors, the final step is how you navigate the purchasing process to bring this solution into your organization.

From defining your requirements to final implementation, following a structured approach will help ensure you choose a system that aligns with your business needs and drives long-term efficiency.

Below, we've outlined a step-by-step process to guide you in selecting, purchasing and deploying the best DAM solution for your organization.





1 Define your DAM objectives and requirements

Before evaluating any of the DAM solutions on the market, establish a clear understanding of what your organization needs.

Gather your key DAM stakeholders together – creatives, marketers, IT, agencies – to identify what they want from a DAM system and how it would fit into your existing ecosystem.

- **Determine your challenges:** Assess inefficiencies in digital asset storage, management and distribution, and determine key pain points such as version control issues, duplication or inconsistent brand governance
- **Identify your Martech:** Outline what existing marketing technology your teams rely on, which will dictate what any proposed DAM system will need to integrate with
- **Outline key requirements:** List must-have features for your desired DAM software, considering scalability, security and user access needs
- **Set clear objectives:** Define what success looks like for your DAM solution and how you will judge its performance – faster content workflows, improved brand consistency, stronger compliance, etc.

A well-defined set of requirements will streamline vendor selection and ensure your DAM investment delivers tangible benefits.

2 Build your core DAM team for the project

Implementing a DAM system requires input from multiple departments to ensure it meets the needs of all users. Forming a dedicated team early in the selection and implementation process will help drive alignment and adoption.

Identify key stakeholders

- Involve representatives from marketing, creative, IT, legal, and other relevant teams
- Get buy-in from an executive champion or decision-maker in your company
- Ensure participation from relevant agencies, vendors and other partners



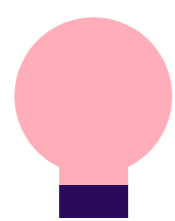
Define roles and responsibilities

- Assign ownership for requirements gathering, vendor evaluation, and final decision-making
- Appoint a project manager to oversee implementation and coordinate efforts

Encourage company-wide collaboration

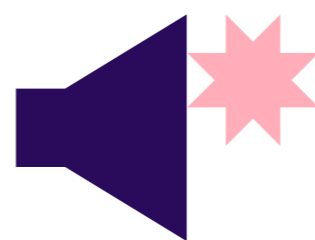
- Gather feedback from end users to understand pain points and usability needs
- Facilitate discussions to ensure the DAM system aligns with business-wide workflows

What your DAM stakeholders want



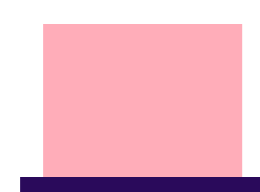
Creatives

- Streamline metadata management
- Integrate with creative tools
- Reduce login fatigue
- Simplify creative process
- Boost productivity
- Minimize asset duplication
- Ensure brand consistency



Marketers

- Deliver better customer experiences
- Stay on brand
- Boost sales and loyalty
- Ensure timely asset delivery
- Improve collaboration
- Automate content lifecycle
- Stay on budget



IT

- Meet security and risk standards
- Optimize infrastructure
- Maintainable and budget-friendly
- Agile with native integrations/APIs
- High availability and scalability
- Easily configurable workflows



Agencies

- Optimize client interactions
- Simplify asset access
- Manage creative workflow
- Boost collaboration
- Ensure timely delivery
- Streamline asset distribution



3 Research potential DAM solutions

With your objectives settled and team established, you are now in a strong position to start researching what possibilities exist in the DAM space.

Here, we encourage you to refer back to Parts 1, 2 and 3 of our DAM buyer's guide to know what essential features and capabilities to prioritize in your search, and what qualities to look for in a credible DAM vendor. This insight will serve you well, ensuring you identify the right details and ask the right questions to find your optimal solution.

Remember:

- A scalable, future-proof DAM system is critical, so focus on platforms that harness the latest technology and support emerging formats (VR, AR, 3D, etc.)
- Push for a cloud-based DAM solution as this is more capable of scaling with the needs of your business and your marketers
- Prioritize compliance, security and control features that ensure that all assets are compliant and fully signed off for true brand governance
- Pinpoint a few deal-breakers that make a viable solution undesirable (e.g. the vendor is no longer developing new features)

4 Create your shortlist and engage with vendors

Once your research has narrowed your choice to three or five DAM solutions, it is time to begin the RFP (Request for Proposal) process.

An RFP document outlines your specific requirements for the DAM solution, inviting vendors to present how their product fulfills your strategic objectives and enhances your marketing efficiency.

This ensures alignment between your business needs and DAM capabilities, helps you compare vendors objectively, provides crucial clarity on costs, features and support options, and greatly reduces the risk of selecting an inadequate DAM solution.



When narrowing down your shortlist down to one, consider the following:

- The vendor's response to the various requests listed in your RFP
- The solution's fit against the needs of your users and Martech stack
- The solution's performance in demos and technical evaluations
- The vendor's references, reputation and customer testimonials
- The cost, onboarding services and managed services offered by the vendor

Using this criteria, you can select a vendor and first backup to further the process.



5 Build a business case for your chosen DAM software

When you have honed in on your preferred DAM platform, you must package their proposal together for executive review, buy-in and sign-off. You need to justify what this investment will mean for your organization, and why your chosen solution represents the best path forward.



To build a persuasive, captivating business case for your vendor of choice:

Outline the benefits the DAM software will bring your company

From centralized, global asset storage and increased asset compliance, to more efficient sharing and collaboration across your fragmented marketing teams and external agencies – make sure the standout benefits of your proposed DAM system are front-and-center of your business case.

Estimate the ROI of the DAM platform

In marketing, everything comes back to return on investment. As part of your DAM business case, present several measurable metrics that demonstrate the tangible difference the platform will make to your business.

Examples of what to use may include:

 <p>Reduced search time to locate relevant assets</p>	 <p>Reduced asset duplication and recreation</p>	 <p>Reduced incidence of compliance issues</p>	 <p>Increased asset creation and team self-sufficiency</p>
 <p>Increased workflow efficiencies</p>	 <p>Elevated brand consistency and performance</p>	 <p>Reduced time-to-market</p>	 <p>Reduced labour and technology costs</p>



Consider a proof-of-concept (POC) project

For a concrete example of how the proposed DAM solution will fit into your marketing operations, you may consider implementing a proof-of-concept (POC) project with the support of the vendor in question.

You can execute this in a cloud environment for ease and efficiency and design it using relevant use cases that your company would experience.

However, we should stress that a POC project is only an optional step if you have the resources and capacity available to test how a DAM platform would work in a real-life scenario.

Include customer references and proof of quality

Finally, ask your preferred vendor to supply customer references, case studies and further evidence highlighting the quality of their solution – ideally using examples akin to your company.

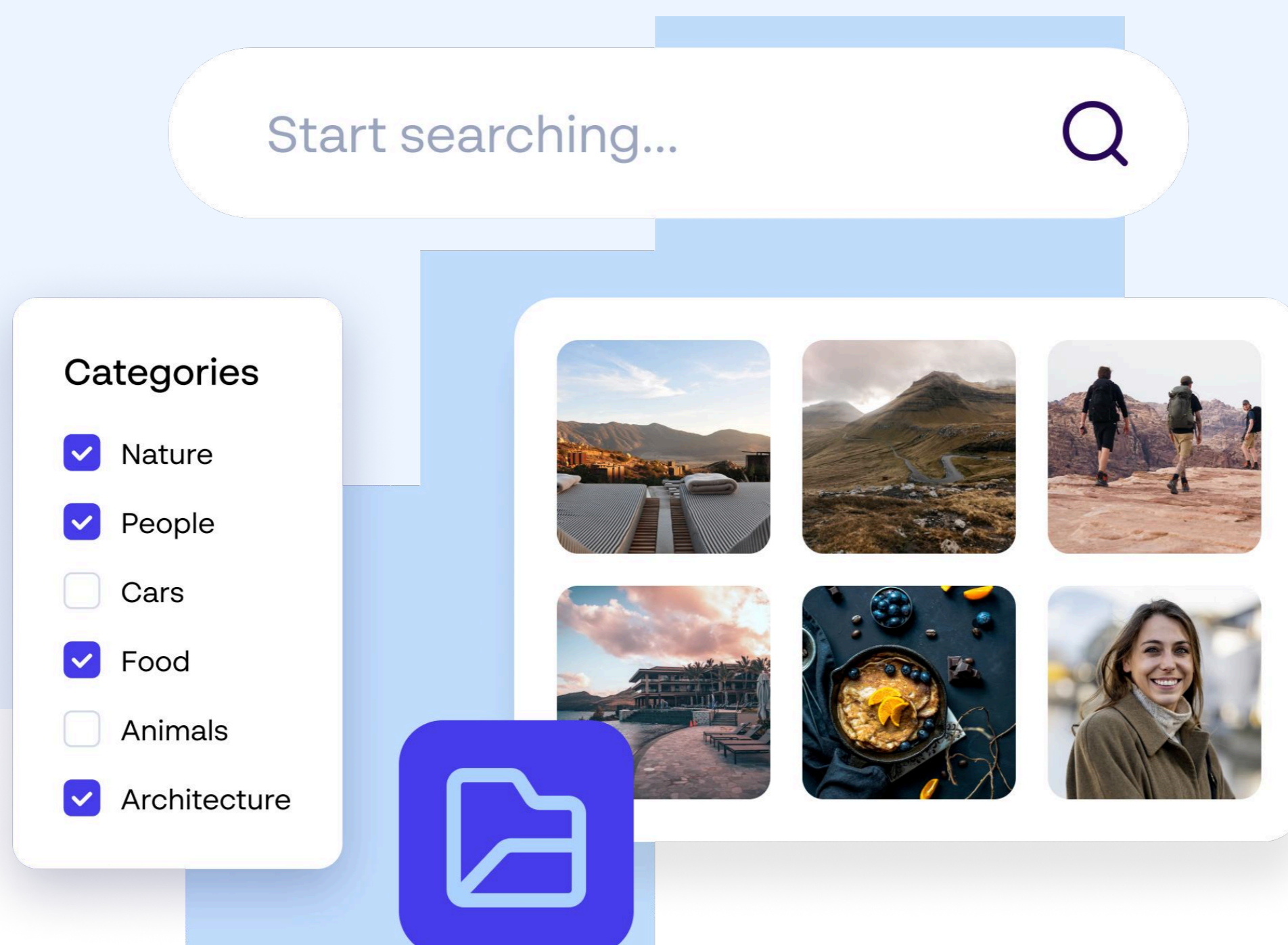
This will be key to justifying the investment to your decision-makers and other key stakeholders, providing proof that the identified solution has already delivered great results for similar organizations.

6 Purchase and deploy your DAM solution

Once you've secured executive buy-in, it's time to purchase and implement your DAM software. Effective deployment requires collaboration with your vendor and a strategic approach to maximize value.

Map out your digital assets and locations for upload

First, inventory and categorize your existing digital assets across servers, cloud storage, and folders. Use a spreadsheet or database for easy transfer to the DAM. If needed, work with your vendor to ensure all assets are collected and migrated efficiently.



Establish a common taxonomy for tagging your assets

Next, you want to establish a common language and terminology to tag your assets against. You don't want your users to do this off-the-cuff – any discrepancy in terminology makes it much harder for users to search for and locate relevant assets.

Create a standardized tagging system to ensure consistency across teams and regions. Add this taxonomy guide to your brand portal to maintain accuracy. Plus, once you establish your taxonomy guide, if your DAM tools include AI-assisted tagging, you can program your platform to handle this automatically.

Onboard and train your DAM users

A brand portal can also be valuable when onboarding new users into your DAM system. This can ensure an intuitive, familiar user interface and present educational resources that help your users make the most of this tool.

When users feel comfortable with your DAM system, they are more likely to adopt it and maximize its ROI. Self-help training resources such as video demos and guides to enable new users to pick up and harness the DAM to its fullest.



Develop feedback loops for your stakeholders

Creating feedback loops across your users and key stakeholders is one of the most effective routes to acknowledge issues, identify new capabilities and improve interoperability.

This, alongside quarterly or semiannual meetings with your DAM vendors, supports the continued evolution of your DAM system, keeping it in lockstep with your company's growth.

Continuously monitor DAM performance and ROI

Finally, monitor asset usage, workflow efficiency and system performance post-launch through regular test intervals.

In addition, regularly measure the success of your DAM program against your established ROI metrics. This will help you validate its performance and identify if it's not living up to expectations.

Checklist for DAM deployment

Map out your digital assets and locations for upload

Establish a common taxonomy for tagging your assets

Onboard and train your DAM users

Develop feedback loops for your stakeholders

Continuously monitor DAM performance and ROI



Take the first step in your DAM journey

We hope this guide has enabled you to enter the DAM-buying process with absolute clarity on what features to look for and how to make your ideal selection.

As DAM solutions become more and more pivotal to maximizing the ease, efficiency and consistency of brand management across the globe, selecting the right platform is not a decision to take lightly.



The right choice has the potential to revolutionize your marketing operations and lock down brand governance overnight. By following the tips and steps in this guide, you put yourself in the strongest position to make this choice with total confidence and unlock the full benefits of this technology across your company.

As a final step, consider using this guide to evaluate Papirfly's market-leading **Digital Asset Management and Content Creation Suite**. With over a million users of our forward-thinking DAM platform across over 1,500 brands worldwide, we are empowering companies worldwide to better create and manage content. On-brand. At scale.

Explore our end-to-end suite of products, or [book a demo](#) to find out why we're #1.

The ultimate Digital Asset Management & Content Creation Suite

Papirfly is the #1 solution to create and manage content. On-brand. At scale.

Add modules at your own pace:

- ✓ Digital Asset Management
- ✓ Templated Content Creation
- ✓ Campaign planning
- ✓ Enterprise-grade analytics

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