

Sustainability storytelling:

# Elevating brand authenticity & trust in energy in 2026





# Executive summary

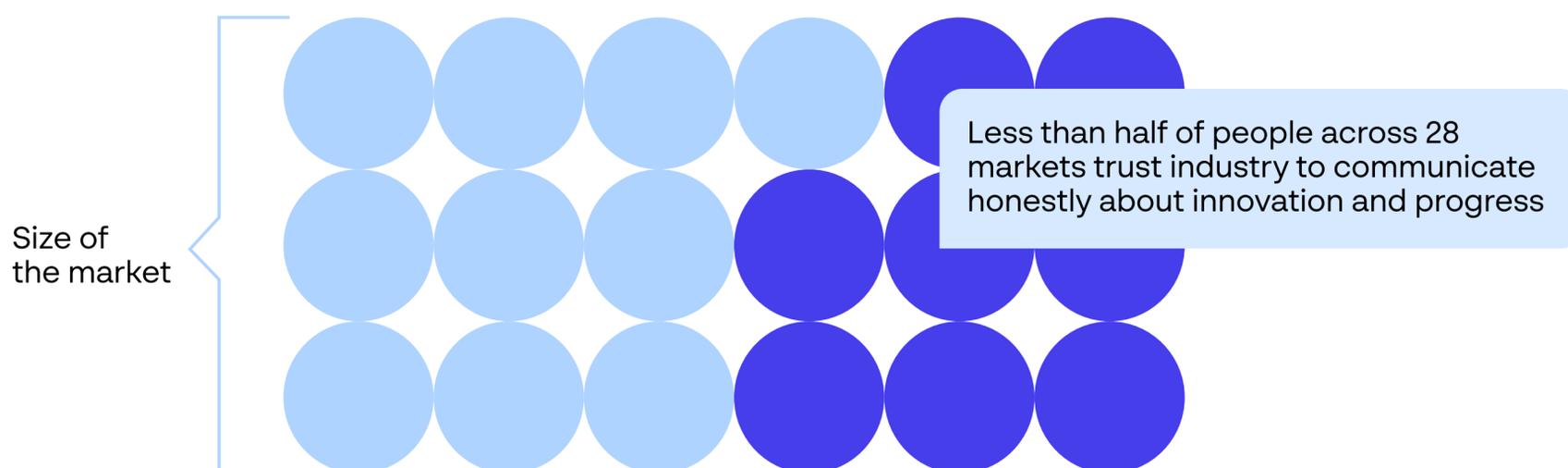
Renewable energy is accelerating worldwide, but trust in the energy sector remains fragile. For energy companies operating in increasingly competitive and regulated global markets, authentic sustainability storytelling is no longer optional — it's a business imperative.

Investors are under growing regulatory and ESG pressure across regions, prioritising brands with clear, credible sustainability commitments. Regulators are scrutinising corporate claims more closely than ever, while customers and communities increasingly demand transparency and accountability. At the same time, top talent wants to work for organisations that can demonstrate real, measurable impact.

In this environment, energy brands must move beyond ambition-led messaging and ensure their sustainability stories are consistent, compliant, and rooted in verifiable action — across every market and channel.



## Consumers worldwide report low trust in energy providers



Source: 2024 Edelman Trust Barometer

To differentiate in a crowded and competitive market, energy brands must prove their sustainability credentials with clarity, consistency, and credibility—or risk falling behind.

### This guide explores:

- Why sustainability storytelling is key to building brand trust
- How leading energy brands use authenticity to gain market advantage
- The risks of greenwashing and how to avoid them
- How the combination of compliant **Digital Asset Management (DAM)** and on-brand content creation software enables brands to craft, manage, and distribute sustainability messaging at scale—securing investment, regulatory trust, and consumer loyalty

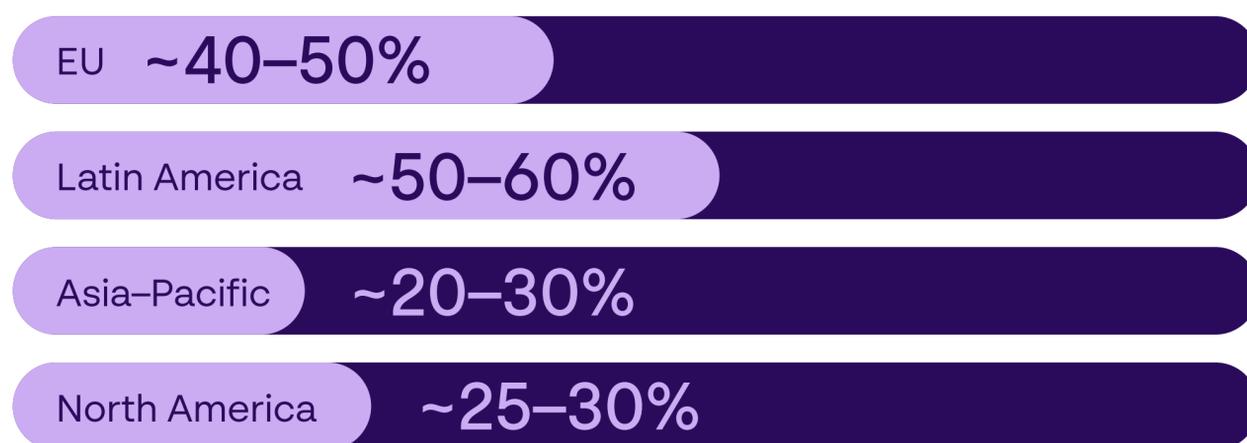
This is a pivotal moment for your energy brand. Read on to discover how to turn sustainability into a competitive advantage.



## Renewables are growing worldwide — but clear communication is key

With renewable electricity growing rapidly in markets worldwide, energy companies have an opportunity to build credibility with audiences that increasingly care about climate impact. However, simply producing clean energy isn't enough. To earn trust, organisations must align their sustainability actions with transparent, consistent, and credible communication across every market.

### Renewable energy's growing role across global regions



Source: International Energy Agency (IEA), Global Energy Insights

In an era where authenticity is at the forefront of everyone's minds, and climate change dominates global conversations, showcasing the work you do to minimize your environmental impact can help attract investment, strengthen your reputation, improve sales and streamline **talent acquisition**.

Furthermore, an established reputation as a sustainable brand unlocks opportunities for international expansion into countries and regions that place a premium on sustainable practices (e.g. the EU), and opens the door to related renewable industries such as technology, automotive and finance to enable your energy brand's continued growth.

But weaving a compelling sustainability story is no easy feat. With countless sub-brands to represent, audiences to account for, and territories to tailor content around – establishing a credible, trustworthy and sustainable **brand identity** is a huge undertaking for your marketing team.

Before we explain how the right tools can help you compose a brand that helps you stand out as a sustainability leader, let's take a closer look at how sustainability storytelling for energy companies delivers meaningful value to your key stakeholders.



# Why sustainability storytelling is so important

As a leading player in an industry responsible for **72% of global emissions**, your brand is under intense scrutiny. But sustainability branding isn't just about reputation—enhancing your renewable energy brand positioning helps secure **investment, regulatory approval, market share, and top-tier talent.**

By establishing a credible sustainability narrative, your brand can:

- ✔ **Win investment**

Investors now manage \$35 trillion in ESG-aligned assets and seek brands with clear sustainability commitments.

- ✔ **Strengthen regulatory relationships**

Compliance with EU sustainability reporting laws (CSRD, SFDR, UNPRI) can unlock funding and ease approvals.

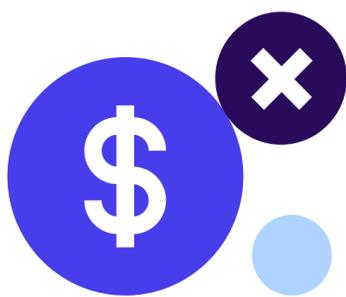
- ✔ **Attract top talent**

Over 54% of Gen Z and 42% of Danish Millennials expect employers to take a strong stance on climate action.

- ✔ **Gain consumer trust**

88% of customers prefer brands with dedicated ESG initiatives.

In these ways, sustainability storytelling is your most powerful tool to prove credibility, differentiate from competitors, and drive long-term business success.



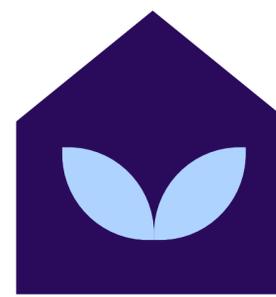
43% of investors are seeking to exclude carbon-intensive assets from their portfolios

Source: Nordsip



50,000 European companies are subject to the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD)

Source: Nordic Sustainability



68% of Swedish young professionals prioritize organizations with strong social or environmental missions

Source: Universum

## Attract investors

External investment is vital to any energy organization's growth and evolution; both companies and investors are highly aware of this. With only so much funding available, modern investors are far more selective about brands they choose to do business with – and a key parameter is a company's stance on sustainability and ESG (Environment, Social and Governance) issues.

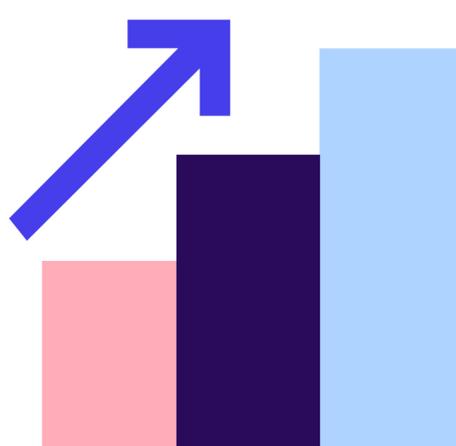
Today, over **\$35 trillion in assets** are managed under ESG frameworks – a number that continues to **climb year on year**, demonstrating investors' desire to make more responsible, ethical investments.

Additionally, official and government-led frameworks such as the **EU Taxonomy for Sustainable Activities**, **Sustainable Finance Disclosure Regulation (SFDR)** and **UN Principles for Responsible Investment (UNPRI)** put substantial pressure on investment companies to focus on sustainable opportunities.



This means to reliably tap into this capital and build trust with today's financiers, you must place a firm emphasis on sustainability in your energy brand. Through annual ESG reports, case studies and other indicators of your sustainability initiatives, you must communicate this messaging strongly to stand apart from others looking for funding.

Taking the time to **effectively communicate** your environmental goals and green initiatives can also signal to investors that your enterprise has a clear path for long-term growth – an attractive prospect for any backer looking to minimize risks and maximize returns.



The ESG investment industry is expected to **grow between \$35 trillion and \$50 trillion by 2030**

Source: Fortune

## Build rapport with regulators

As you're no doubt aware, energy companies in Europe are subject to a wide variety of international, EU-level and governmental sustainability frameworks:

- EU Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) & Non-Financial Reporting Directive (NFRD)
- UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- International Energy Agency (IEA) Policies
- Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD)
- Nordic Council & Nordic Energy Cooperation
- National Energy & Climate Plans (NECPs)



Under increasing scrutiny and with global Net Zero targets drawing closer, effective sustainability storytelling has become essential for renewable energy companies. Without clear branding, messaging, and assets that communicate concrete actions to reduce emissions, regulatory bodies can quickly challenge or discredit sustainability claims.

At best, this lack of clarity can lead to increased audits, delayed approvals, and prolonged decision-making processes. At worst, it can result in organisations being excluded from public funding, tax credits, or government-backed renewable energy programmes, such as those tied to EU climate frameworks, US federal clean energy incentives, and similar schemes emerging across Asia-Pacific markets — as well as exposure to significant financial penalties or legal risk.

Investing in a robust, sustainability-led brand and marketing strategy strengthens relationships with regulators, policymakers, investors, and public stakeholders. In practice, this means renewable energy projects can move forward more efficiently, as sustainability commitments are clearly documented, consistently communicated, and aligned with regulatory expectations across markets





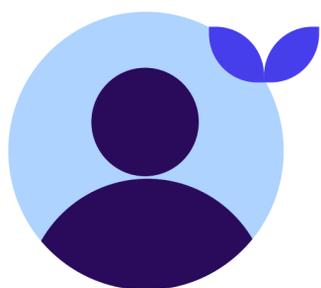
# Draw in consumers

Having a sustainable brand image is a big factor for today's eco-conscious customers. But how much stock do buyers actually place in sustainability?

According to the latest statistics, **88% of customers** are more likely to trust and stay loyal to companies with dedicated ESG initiatives. **58% of consumers** also said sustainability was an important factor to consider when purchasing a product.

## Consumer Demand for Sustainability

To fully appreciate Nordic consumers' demand for greater sustainability action, let's examine the findings of the latest **Nordic Consumer Sustainability Index (2024)**.



85% of customers say they're willing to change aspects of their lifestyle to take care of nature



79% of consumers feel they have a responsibility to choose products and services that are eco-friendly



73% of customers believe their buying choices help make a difference for the environment



Just 25% of consumers believe brands do enough to make their operations environmentally friendly

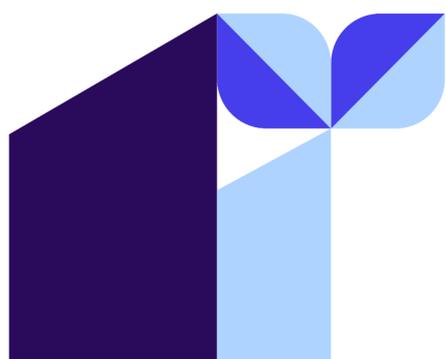


## Key barriers to consumer trust include:

- Lack of **independent certification** for eco-friendly claims
- **False or exaggerated sustainability messaging** (greenwashing)
- Difficulty verifying if products are truly sustainable

To earn trust, brands must take a **transparent, verifiable approach to sustainability marketing**—or risk losing credibility in an increasingly skeptical market.

While it's hard to quantify the exact sales you could gain with more renewable-focused marketing, one thing is clear: customers prefer to buy from energy brands that are committed to looking after the planet.



# 59%

of 18-34 year olds say they are more likely to buy from a brand that **advertises and substantiates their sustainability efforts**

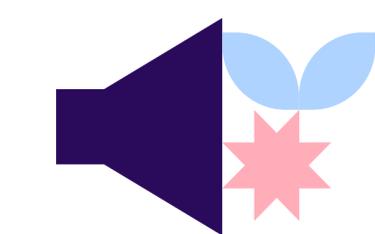
Source: CIM



# Greenwashing: the biggest threat to any sustainable brand

Sustainability-led branding is non-negotiable in your efforts to build trust with investors, regulators, customers and your wider stakeholders. But how you do this is where the success of your efforts will truly lie.

Consumers, investors, and regulators are no longer taking sustainability claims at face value. In an era of high-profile greenwashing scandals, energy brands that fail to back up their messaging with proof and transparency risk severe reputational and financial damage.



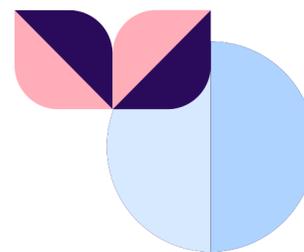
54% of global consumers say they are skeptical of brands' sustainability claims

Source: Edelman Trust Barometer, 2025



53% of environmental claims in the EU are vague, misleading, or unfounded

Source: European Commission, 2025 update on green claims directive



73% of global consumers want brands to act on climate change — but only 32% trust them to do so

Source: Ipsos Global Trends, 2025

## To earn trust, your sustainability narrative must be built on three core pillars:

**Authenticity** – Claims must align with real, measurable impact.

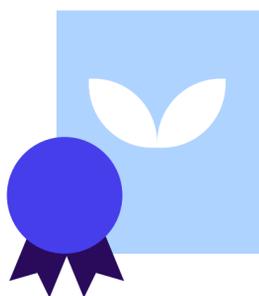
**Transparency** – Open reporting, clear data, and third-party validation are critical.

**Consistency** – Sustainability messaging must remain uniform across every touchpoint, from investor reports to marketing campaigns.

Brands that fail on these fronts risk losing credibility—and once trust is broken, rebuilding it is far harder than establishing it correctly in the first place.

With high-profile cases dominating headlines in recent times – like **Volkswagen's dieselgate scandal** that tanked brand trust and cost the company billions – investors, regulators, candidates and customers simply aren't willing to take your eco claims at face value.

Any discrepancy between your sustainability-focused **marketing materials** and your company's operations and practices will be identified and called out by your audiences. Greenwashing accusations can quickly wipe away the goodwill you hoped to inspire from stakeholders (in some cases permanently) meaning you must work much, much harder to restore their faith.



62% of Europeans say energy companies are not transparent enough about their environmental impact

Source: Eurobarometer Climate Survey, 2025

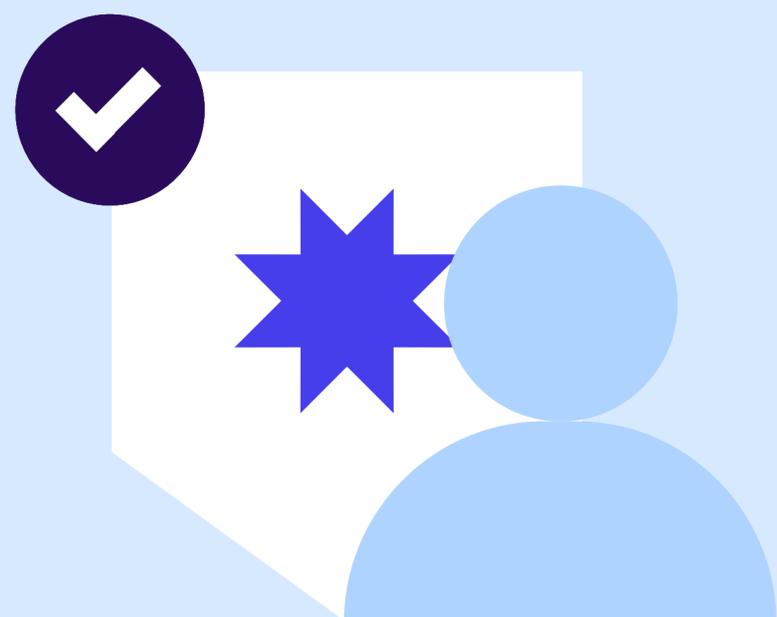


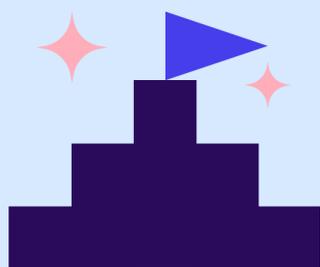
68% of global consumers say sustainability claims should be independently verified before being marketed

Source: GlobeScan Sustainability Leaders Survey, 2026

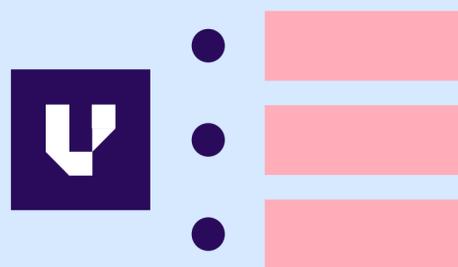
## How to deliver an energy brand people can trust

Even brands with the best sustainability intentions struggle with execution. Fragmented teams, disconnected marketing channels, and evolving regulations make it difficult to maintain a clear, consistent sustainability story.

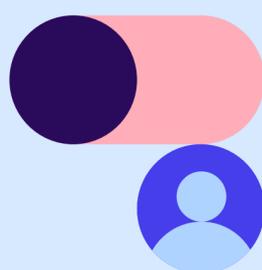




You must align hundreds of employees to a single sustainability vision



You have to create and coordinate content for multiple sub-brands at once



You have different audiences to accommodate, each with their own preferences



You must localize every campaign across every touchpoint

Preserving a coherent, consistent sustainability story amid this landscape can be a real struggle, especially when many energy organizations have been slow to adopt integrated digital tools for brand and content management.

Brands must catch up to accept that there are no excuses – the digital transformation in marketing has already happened. Today there are **innovative branding tools energy companies** need to deliver the authentic, responsive, and transparent sustainability messaging that audiences demand – and ensure it is presented consistently and accurately across all touchpoints.

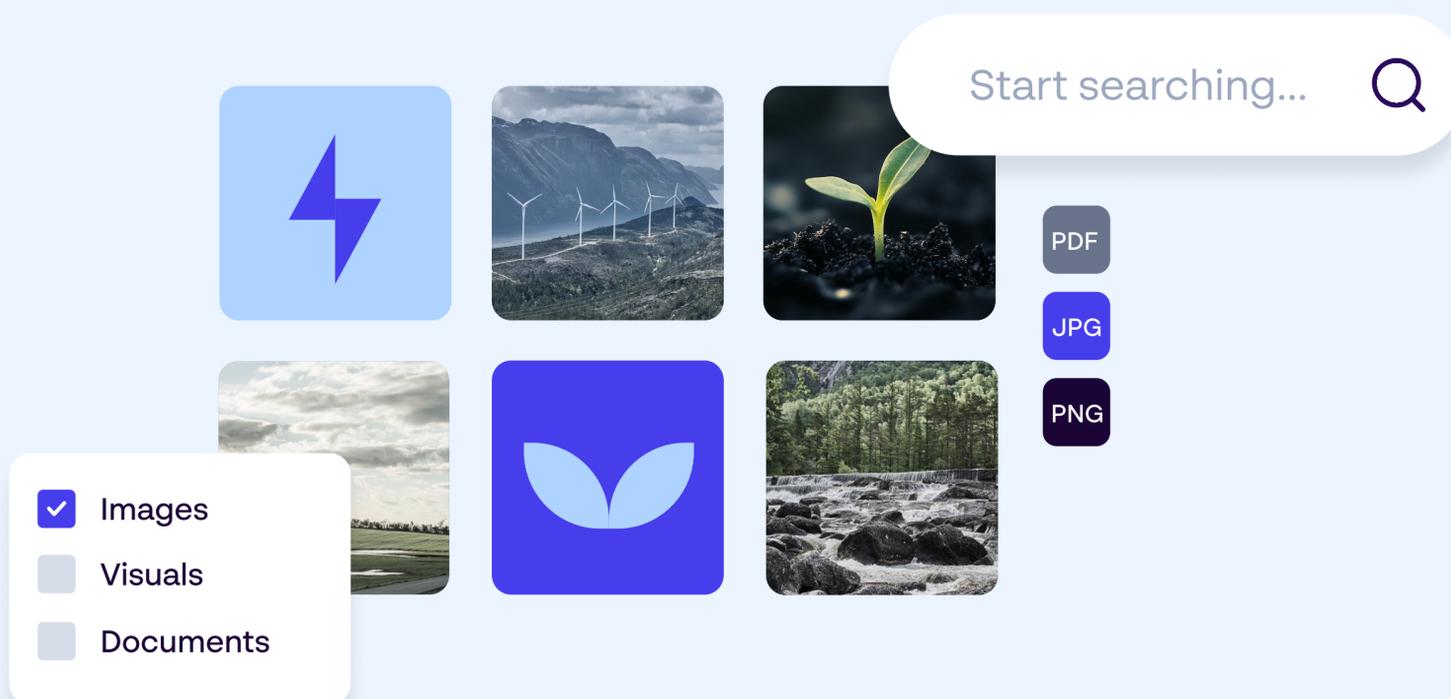
The foundational software solutions that deliver your sustainability story lie in how you create and manage your content, using the core software solutions of:

## Digital Asset Management and Templated Content Creation



# Digital Asset Management (DAM)

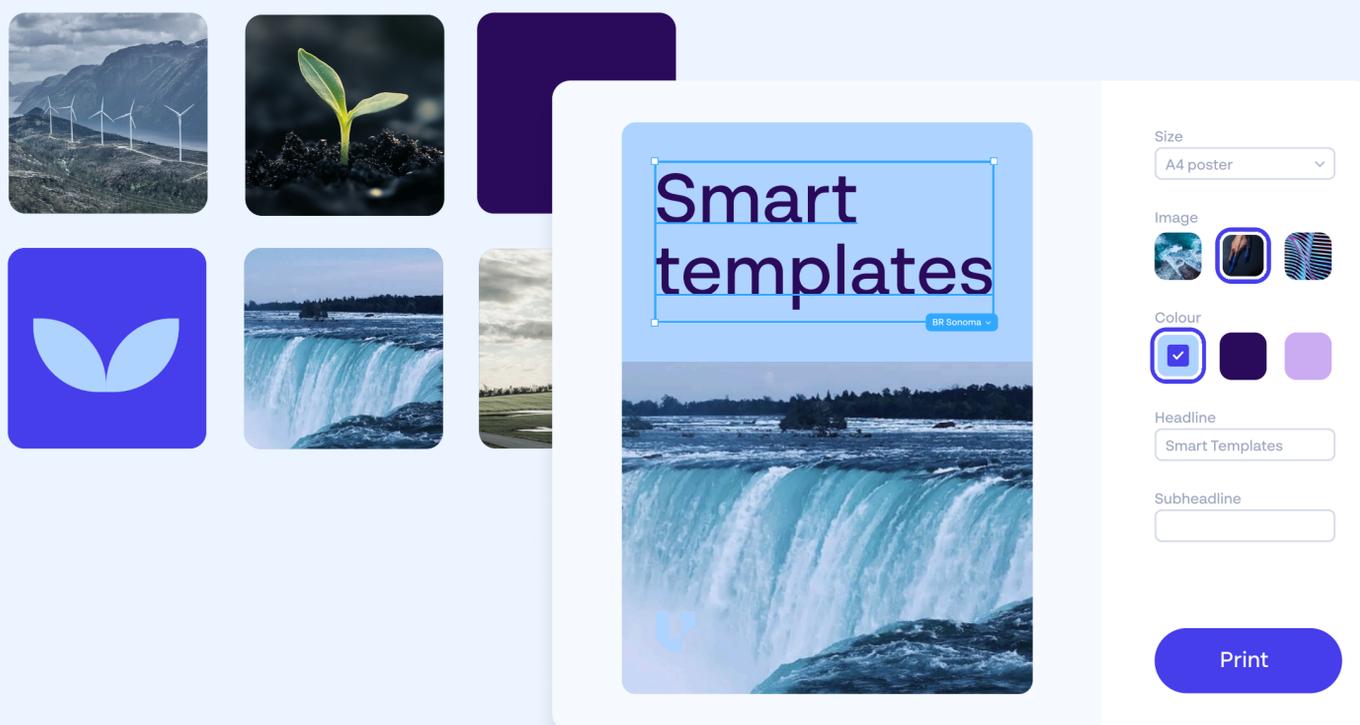
Showcasing your brand assets, a DAM system is a single source of truth for your energy brand. Not only a centralized repository for all sustainability-focused assets, collateral, brand guidelines and beyond, a robust DAM ensures only the right user groups have access to fully compliant assets. Each team has content relevant for their specific market – all neatly organized so every team can deliver streamlined content delivery while speaking to their specific audience, with complete brand governance.





# Templated Content Creation

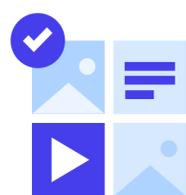
On-brand design templates ramp up the efficiency and consistency of your sustainability storytelling. Intelligent templates enable anyone in your organization – regardless of their design skills – to create studio-standard, branded assets in minutes for faster campaign execution and more consistent, transparent sustainability messaging. Providing flexibility in what elements must be locked down, can be chosen from pre-selected visual or text options, and amended for personalization, every asset is on-brand and aligned to your story.





# One aligned sustainability story

The benefits of implementing robust DAM and templated content creation solutions can revolutionize your energy brand and create a consistent story in the following ways:



## Showcase every aspect of your brand identity, messaging, and story

- Organize all assets to create clarity around campaign messaging
- Establish complete brand governance and compliance by guaranteeing only up-to-date and approved on-brand assets can be used



## Ensure messaging consistency across all markets, teams, and campaigns

- Centralize ESG reports, infographics, and sustainability assets in one DAM system
- Use smart templates to guarantee brand-aligned storytelling across all teams



## Streamline compliance and investor reporting

- Provide accurate, up-to-date sustainability data for regulators and stakeholders
- Automate ESG report generation for different audiences



## Accelerate content creation—without losing control

- Enable local teams to create region-specific sustainability content, while ensuring alignment with core brand messaging
- Lock brand governance rules to prevent off-brand or misleading green claims



## Boost speed to market for sustainability campaigns

- Automate content approval workflows to remove bottlenecks
- Ensure all campaigns align with Nordic and EU sustainability frameworks

To explain how this is achievable, let's look at some scenarios you'll recognize.



# Delivering your powerful sustainability story

Your sustainability story is your most valuable brand asset. It influences investors, regulators, consumers, and top talent.

At a time when climate change is at the forefront of stakeholders' minds, and renewable electricity production is the primary focus of your energy brand – telling your sustainability story is necessary if you want to lay a foundation of trust and success for the future.

The question isn't whether you should tell this story—it's **how well you tell it.**



It's what will help you secure much-needed investment among today's more ethically-conscious financiers. How you'll build rapport with the regulators responsible for approving future projects. How you'll attract top talent in today's hyper-competitive market. And how you'll better appeal to climate-savvy customers.

But despite the incredible benefits this approach offers, actually weaving a compelling eco-narrative is a difficult undertaking. With countless materials to produce, audiences to consider and countries to accommodate, having the right technology by your side – such as Papirfly's **Digital Asset Management and Content Creation Suite** gives you the tools to create, manage, and distribute sustainability messaging at scale.

**Authentically, transparently and consistently.**

## **Align everyone with your sustainability story with Papirfly**

Trusted by over 1,500 world-renowned brands, Papirfly is the #1 solution to create and manage content. On-brand. At scale.

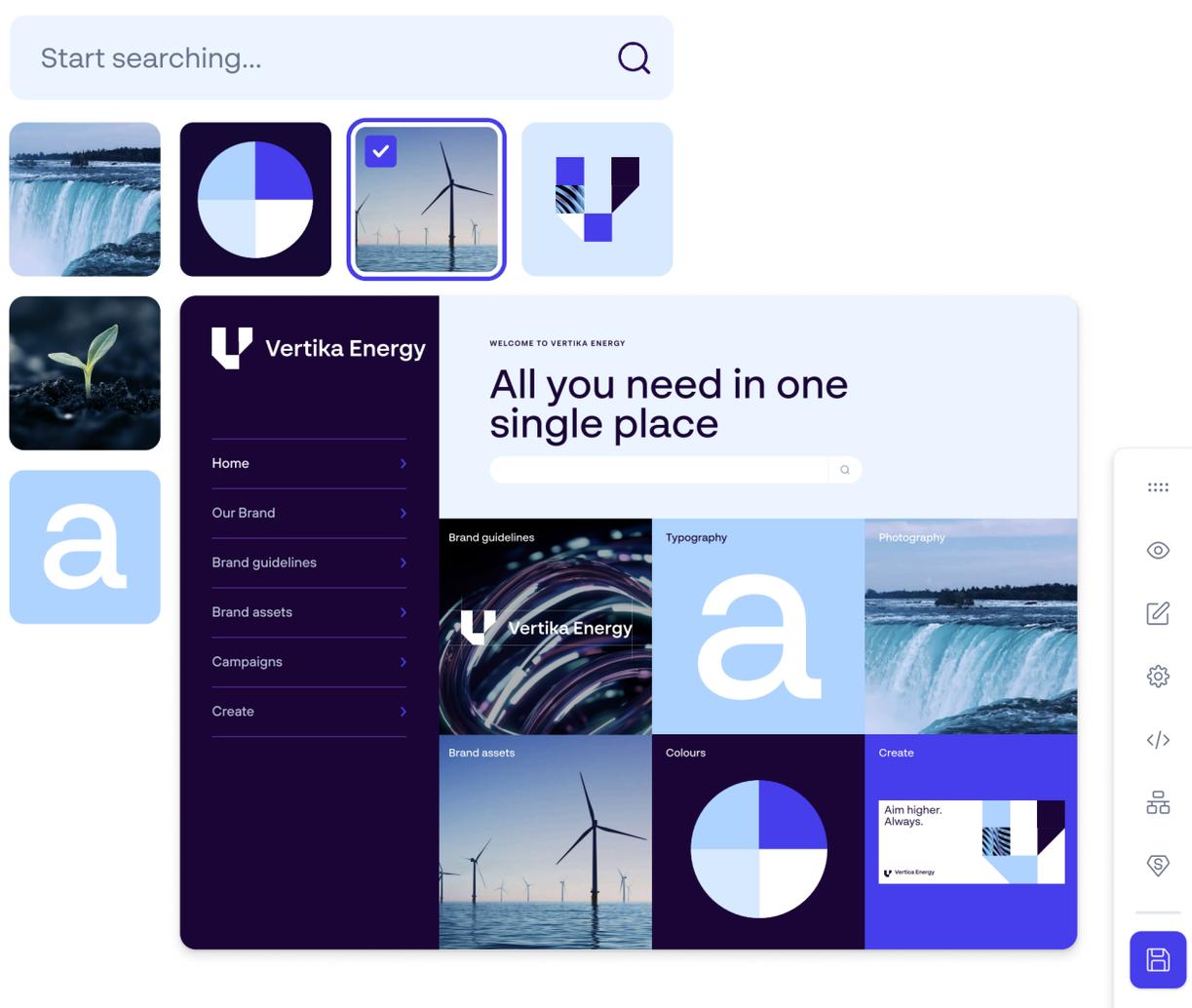
Our innovative marketing solution helps organizations both in and outside of the energy industry position themselves as sustainability leaders – and it can do the same for you.



## Unleash your single source of truth

Effortlessly organize, locate and distribute your entire library of **marketing materials** with intuitive tagging and categorization functionality.

Give every individual and team across your company the access they need to create studio-quality **marketing materials** for every touchpoint.



Establish a centralized source of truth that seamlessly integrates into pre-approved design templates, enabling you to uphold true brand consistency at all times.

Achieve true GDPR compliance with helpful tools that store information about data subjects, monitor their consent status and track changes seamlessly.

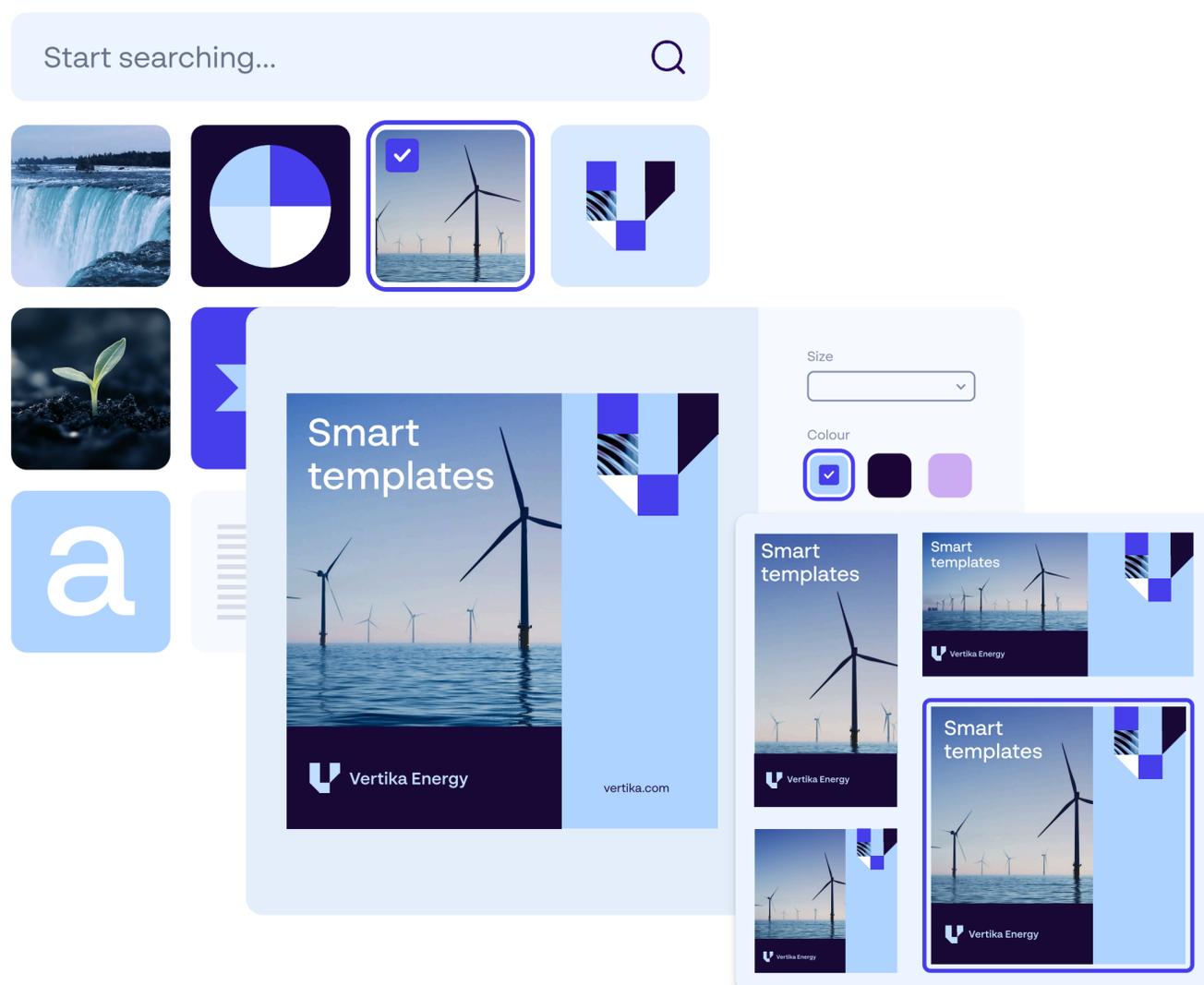
Gain a comprehensive view of all campaigns and marketing materials being created, shared and edited across your global teams.



## Create infinite on-brand marketing assets

Empower your people to generate on-brand assets in minutes – regardless of design skill – with smart templates informed by your brand guidelines.

Adapt materials to any region, platform or audience instantly, with flexible templates that uphold **consistent messaging for your energy brand**.



**Champion a consistent identity** at every level by equipping the people creating and sharing your assets with essential context for campaigns.

Effortlessly find and access pre-approved assets, so your professionals can produce collateral with unbeatable speed and confidence.

Produce more quality materials for less, and generate meaningful value with every asset your people produce.



## A powerful, integrated ecosystem

Equip your leaders with the ability to update and display key information as campaigns develop, including task statuses, budgets, key contacts and more.

Define separate access levels for user groups, so employees only have access to the specific materials they need to work effectively.

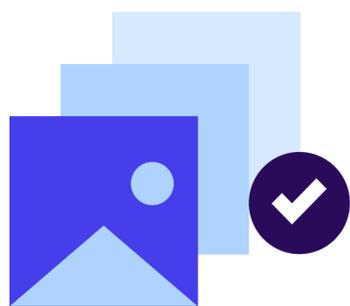
Upload and map out approval workflows, allowing your projects to move forward smoothly with input from all relevant stakeholders.

Assess how people inside your business are aligning to brand guidelines in every region, department and team to promote best practices.

Provide clear, actionable feedback to teams so they can help build and uphold your company's culture and brand.

Confirm the level of adoption of Papirfly across every corner of your enterprise, with insightful reporting functionality.

Seamlessly integrate our suite of solutions with a **wide range** of existing tools, helping you foster greater collaboration among your teams from day one.



80% reduced effort  
in asset creation



\$200 reduction in agency  
spend per asset



## The ultimate Digital Asset Management & Content Creation suite for energy brands

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

Add modules at your own pace:

- ✓ Digital Asset Management
- ✓ On-brand Content creation
- ✓ Campaign planning
- ✓ Enterprise-grade analytics

[→ Discover Papirfly Suite](#)



# Want to elevate your corporate branding efforts?

Contact Papirfly to learn how our DAM solution  
can transform your branding strategy.



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