



More creative, less process

The creative director's guide to DAM



Beautiful design requires time and clear head space. But the avalanche of creative demands in our modern digital world means creatives struggle to find uninterrupted time to zone out and hone in.

This isn't a temporary issue, either – the spotlight on design is only shining brighter. Traditional needs like packaging and advertising aren't going anywhere, while new and evolving touchpoints like web experiences and social media keep adding to the design queue.

In most walks of life, increasing demand like this is matched by increasingly sophisticated technology. But, in this case, the tools really haven't kept pace. Designers have been working with the same digital toolset for years – they're just working harder and longer to keep up.

Digital asset management (DAM) technology is helping creative teams operate at the pace of digital marketing demands. Originally created as a repository for finished images, designs and other creative assets, DAM now functions as the foundation for a modern and streamlined creative workflow.

This guide introduces new capabilities and describes how creative directors, graphic designers, art directors and other creative professionals are using digital asset management to remove some of the hazards on the road to creative bliss.



Create a better creative workflow.

Interruptions kill creativity, to say nothing of productivity. But many creative processes require more than one application or platform. Designers typically work with lots of windows open on their desktop – designing in one, searching for images in another and keeping up with instructions and feedback in a third. This stop-and-start approach slows the process down and dampens creative spark.

DAM corrects this by serving as a hub for creative operations and tying all the key pieces together.





DAM ties together the key pieces of creative operations.

Streamlined creative processes

Less process and fewer clicks lead to more creativity and better design. Many DAM systems can be integrated seamlessly with powerful design platforms like InDesign, Illustrator and Photoshop as well as CMS platforms like Wordpress and Drupal. Rather than interrupting a project to identify and download an image, creative assets can be searched, previewed and pulled directly into layouts from stock photo sites or your own asset library.

Faster reviews and approvals

Unlike creative applications that are used exclusively by designers, DAM is a common platform meant to unite all the different groups involved in the creative process, from project initiation through creative development, review, approval and ultimately distribution of final designs. Now image selection, preliminary input and approval of final designs can be fast tracked rather than lost in a mass of reply-all emails.

Simpler creative asset access

DAM corrals all your creative assets in one place and uses descriptive tags and metadata to make finding the right ones much easier. Integrations with third-party sources – even stock photography sites – can expand options from the comfort of a familiar environment. Bottom line: You'll find the right asset faster.



DAM for creative directors

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Maintain brand order – automatically.

Today's brands live in an unprecedented number of fast-moving environments. They're increasingly required to adapt and specialize across channels and touchpoints. Balancing the freedom they need to adapt and the control they need to maintain consistency is a dilemma that many brand leaders have yet to solve.

DAM can help creative directors build strong, coherent brands by keeping distributed teams, creative content and brand guidelines in sync.

Digital brand guidelines

Among the recent innovations emerging in DAM is the brand portal – one central source of brand truth that both internal and external contributors can use to execute creative projects that are true to brand requirements.

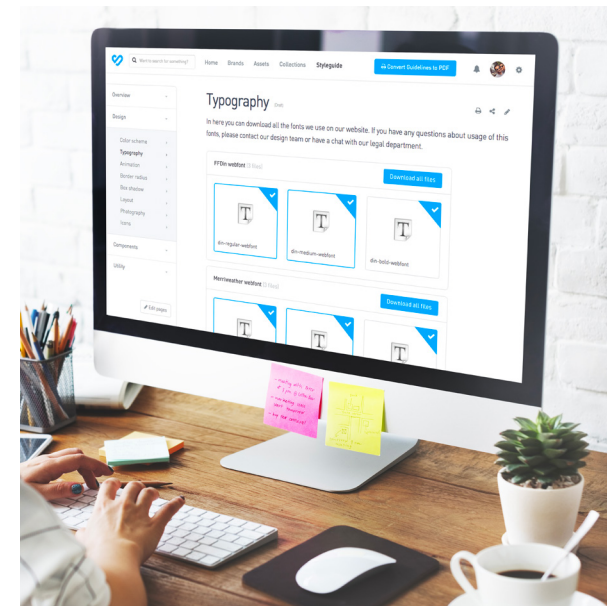
Unlike static guidelines published in PDF documents, online brand portals can be updated instantly and are always accessible. Brand portals can also provide approved brand assets along with the standards for their use.

Brand templates

Some design tasks are just plain tedious. For example: changing the address box in a flyer for 189 different retail locations. Or swapping different featured menu items every week for a chain of restaurants.

DAM offers a unique solution that allows repetitive tasks like these to be distributed to others. Brand templates lock down specific elements in a design while leaving others open for adaptation or localization. Using

these simple templates doesn't require any special design skills, so repetitive tasks can be put into the hands of others. Design once and let others handle the production work.



Remove the roadblocks to creative time.

Lots of people rely on creative services teams to provide the design support and creative assets they need to do their jobs. As the number of people involved in marketing and sales-related activities has grown, the demands on creative teams have increased. Agencies need logo files, retailers need new promotion materials, franchisees need new product shots, sales teams need collateral, partners need training materials. The list goes on and on.

Creative teams are often stuck in the middle fielding these requests. Time spent fulfilling requests is time most creatives would rather use for their projects. DAM frees creative teams from these requests by allowing field-based partners to help themselves and simplifying or automating routine tasks.

Self-serve access

DAM makes creative assets available to anyone who needs them. No middleman necessary. Cloud-based access allows people in the field to access what they need regardless of location or device. Permission-controlled entry prevents unauthorized use, although public materials can be made available to anyone through self-registration. One less nagging task for designers to check off.

Smart request routing

Even where some human intervention and judgement is required, asset requests can be simplified. DAM systems can automate the request process by using form logic to authorize requests when possible and route exceptions to an approver for review. In many cases, automated request routing cuts time spent on these requests by 85%.

Live links

Creative assets like banner images often live in dozens of locations. Replacing or updating an image can be a huge time suck as creative files are hunted and replaced. DAM can streamline asset refresh because assets live in just one central location and use live links to display the image anywhere it needs to appear. Updating the master image means it's updated anywhere the link appears.



Marketing technology has exploded in the past few years. The number of new martech solutions has doubled every year since 2011 and, last year, reached well over 6,000 unique solutions.

Integrate your app ecosystem.

Creative assets are important to many of these, like marketing automation, email marketing, content marketing, social marketing, CMS and commerce platforms.

Connecting DAM to other essential marketing systems can save creative teams lots of time and prevent the mistakes that occur when too many hand-offs are required. DAMs can connect to or integrate with these systems using an API, pre-built connectors or plug-ins.

Adobe connector

Many DAMs offer some level of integration with Adobe creative applications. Embedding access to your DAM removes process steps and broken links that interrupt creative work – again, directly addressing designers’ needs for added time and concentration. You browse DAM content in the Adobe applications and drag-and-drop assets into design projects. Finished designs can be automatically loaded from or updated to the DAM. And that means a lot less tabs, clicks and confusion.

REST API

We all love our apps, and no doubt your team has found at least one or two they can’t live without. Fortunately, DAM is ready to work with that via API. Developers can quickly and securely read and write from the DAM, enabling your brand portal to automatically serve up assets to other applications you use.



Bynder is the fastest growing DAM service, offering a simplified solution for marketing professionals to manage their digital content in the cloud.

For more information please visit our website www.bynder.com.

