SITECORE®

Understanding the end-to-end content lifecycle to succeed in a digital world

Consumers are becoming increasingly demanding with digital experiences. Content is the key to forming real connections, making your CX memorable.

Introduction

With the business world shifting most of its activities to digital, a brand's online presence has never been more critical.

However, simply running ads or selling trending products may not be enough in 2020, as studies indicate that the customer experience itself dictates company success. In fact, customers are likely to spend 140% more after a positive experience than customers who report negative experiences. Furthermore, 67% of B2B and 73% of B2C customers say their standards for good experiences are higher than ever — and worse yet, 53% believe that most companies fall short when it comes to meeting those expectations.[1]

Content is the key to meeting those expectations. Personalized content, delivered at the right time in a customer journey, to be precise. This is the goal of every ambitious company, and yet, their CMS — the platform they depend on to manage and publish that content they work so tirelessly to produce — might be the same platform that's holding them back.

The importance of the customer's experience is a factor in both B2C and B2B environments. In this guide, we're delving into how brands can efficiently manage and publish content in a way that enhances the customer experience by mastering the end-to-end lifecycle of their content.

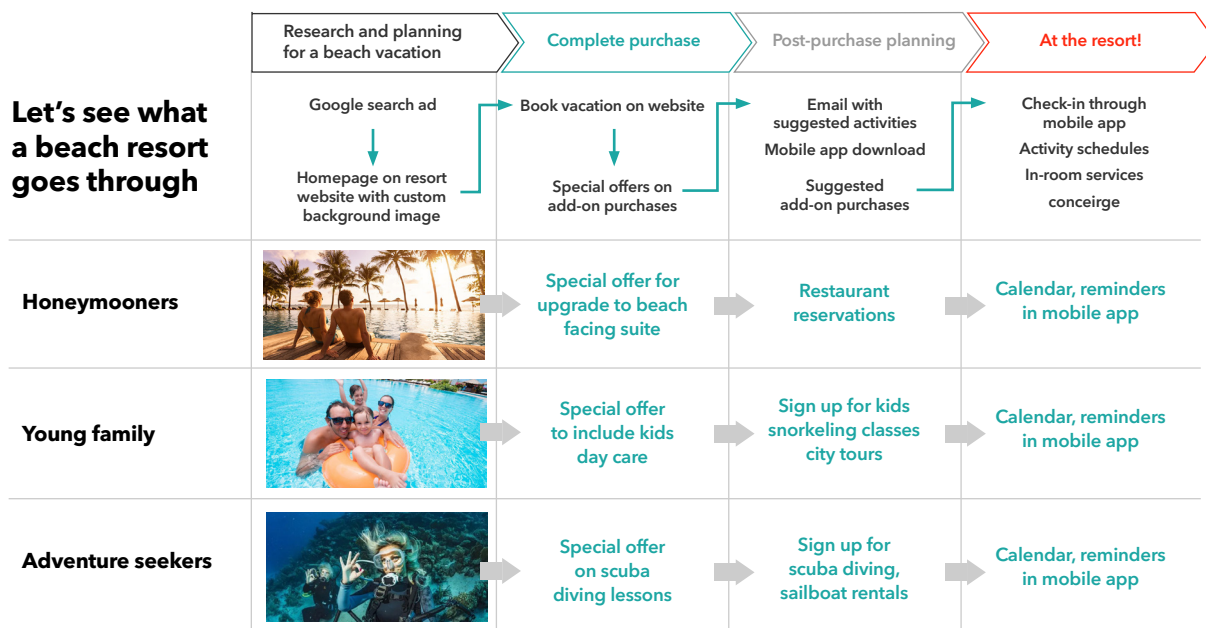[1] "State of the Connected Customer", Salesforce Research, 2nd Edition

The content crunch: How to survive in a content-driven digital world

Approximately 84% of customers say being treated like a person, not a number, is very important to winning business. Additionally, 80% of customers say they are more likely to do business with a company if it offers personalized experiences.[2] Thus, brands are faced with a growing need for more and more content to fuel these personalized experiences. But because they are faced with challenges associated with creating, managing, and publishing content at-scale, content production is falling far behind content demand.

[2] "State of the Connected Customer", Salesforce Research, 2nd Edition

Why is so much content needed to deliver the personalized experiences customers crave? Here's just one example of all the content needed to tailor the different journeys of different customer segments for a beach resort:

Example of personalizing the customer journey for different customer segments

	Research and planning for a beach vacation	Complete purchase	Post-purchase planning	At the resort!
Let's see what a beach resort goes through	Google search ad → Homepage on resort website with custom background image	Book vacation on website → Special offers on add-on purchases	Email with suggested activities / Mobile app download / Suggested add-on purchases	Check-in through mobile app / Activity schedules / In-room services / conceirge
Honeymooners		Special offer for upgrade to beach facing suite	Restaurant reservations	Calendar, reminders in mobile app
Young family		Special offer to include kids day care	Sign up for kids snorkeling classes city tours	Calendar, reminders in mobile app
Adventure seekers		Special offer on scuba diving lessons	Sign up for scuba diving, sailboat rentals	Calendar, reminders in mobile app

Personalization at this scale is difficult when you don't have a hold over the entire content lifecycle. Today, just 5% of marketers have developed a completely systematic approach to producing, managing, and distributing content, while 69% of marketers said that while there are "some systems in place, there is still a lot of manual work."[3]
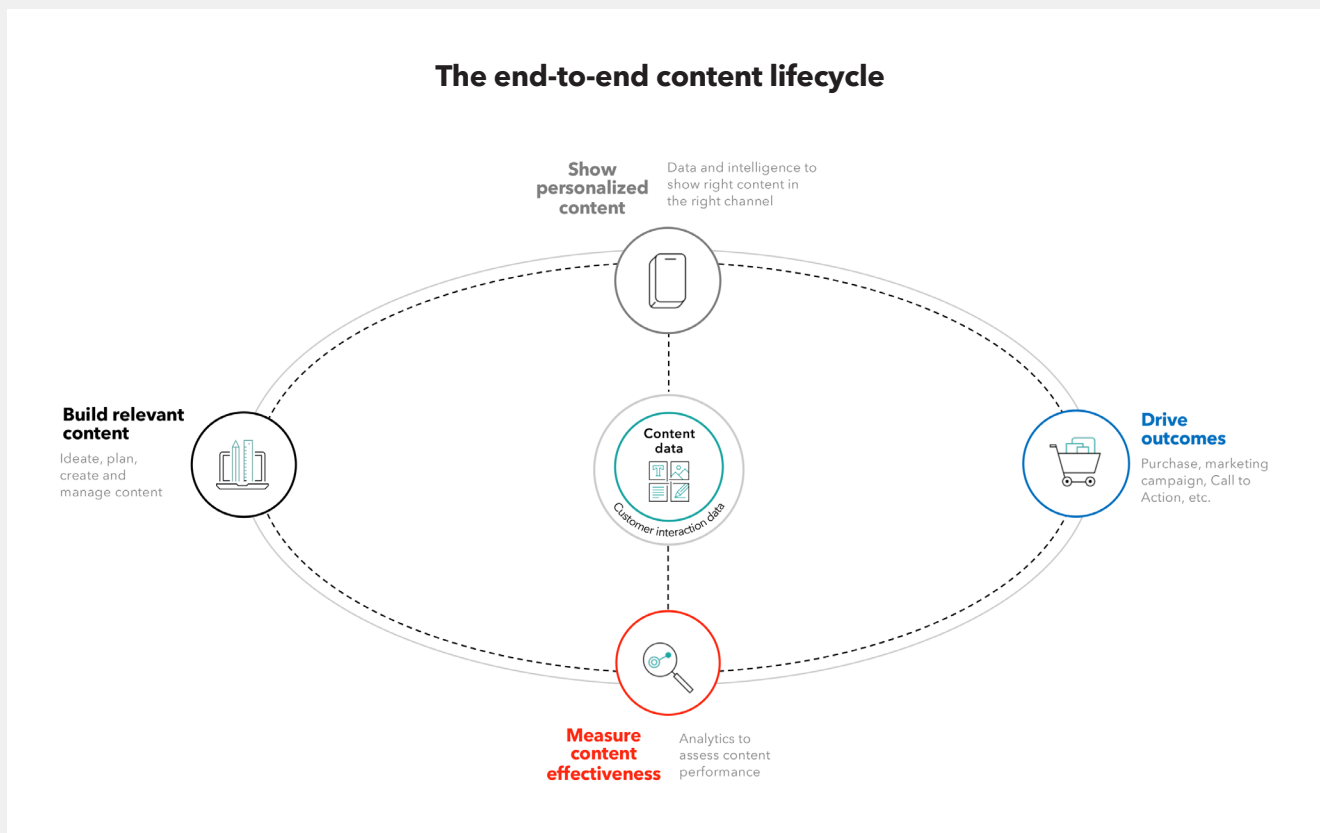
When content is fragmented across multiple platforms and technologies, hidden within siloes, it's hard for marketers and content authors to:

- See what content has already been created and avoid duplication
- Brainstorm new ideas with existing content in mind
- Leverage digital assets like images and video content that may be lost or hidden among the different, disconnected technologies in use.
- Produce, tag, store, and easily locate content for specific audience segments, at specific points in the customer journey, and for specific channels.

[3] "2018 Content Management and Strategy Survey" by the Content Marketing Institute

With the majority of brands working in this fragmented and siloed environment, it's no wonder that 74% of senior marketers say they can't produce the sheer volume and variety of content required for personalization fast enough.[4] This is the content crunch.

In order to improve the content supply chain, we need to understand the end-to-end content lifecycle.

The end-to-end content lifecycle

Show personalized content — Data and intelligence to show right content in the right channel

Build relevant content — Ideate, plan, create and manage content

Content data — Customer interaction data

Drive outcomes — Purchase, marketing campaign, Call to Action, etc.

Measure content effectiveness — Analytics to assess content performance

A valuable exercise for organizations to undertake is to audit their strengths and capabilities for each step in this model. Working with leading brands we have found the individual capabilities of this model are important, as well as the interrelationship between four core components (building relevant content, showing personalized content, driving outcomes, and measuring content effectiveness). Strengths in one part of the lifecycle will increase efficiency and provide greater impact to the entire process. However, weakness in any spot will negatively impact the ability of the entire lifecycle's operation.

A traditional Content Management System (CMS) is challenged when asked to support the full content lifecycle. Limitations that arise with a traditional CMS include the capabilities for content planning, personalization, and omnichannel content delivery. In fact, a traditional CMS was really only intended to give marketers a WYSIWYG interface to create content, store that content, and then display it via a website.

As we move deeper into 2020 and beyond, brands that want to provide memorable digital experiences should consider moving beyond the traditional CMS in order to control their end-to-end content lifecycle, from content planning to data analysis and everything in between – to deliver personalized customer journeys.
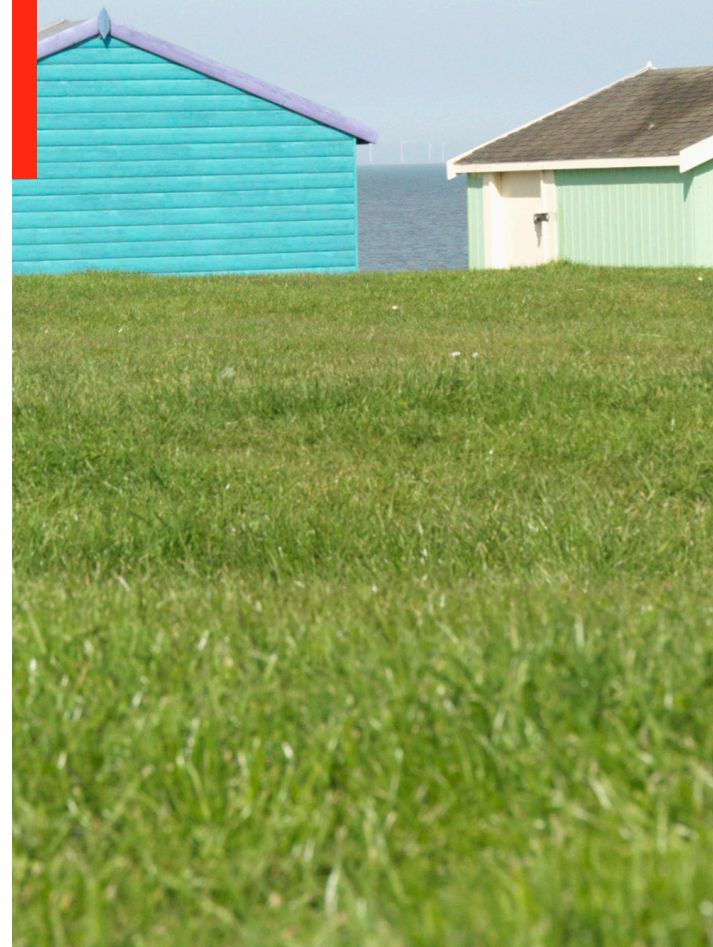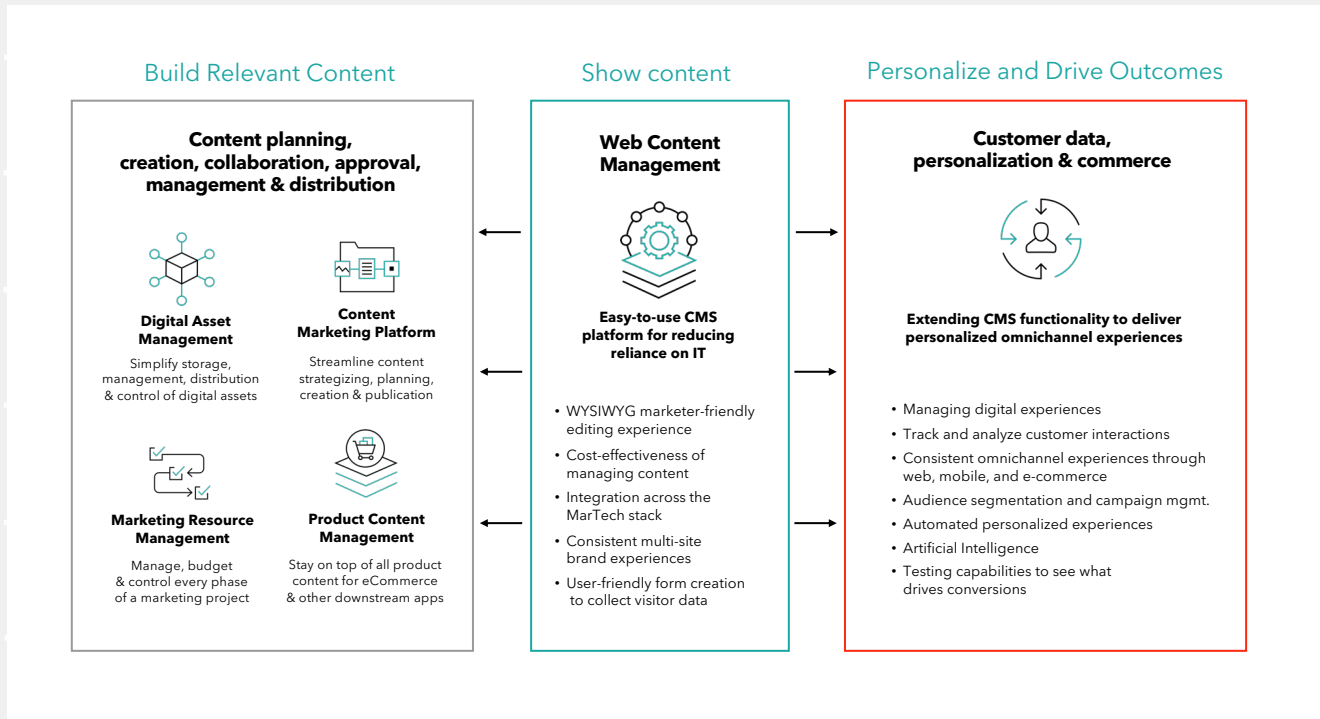
Going beyond traditional content management

Today's challenges require a more granular approach to omnichannel content management, where marketers and content authors can:

- Ideate, collaborate, and communicate potential content.
- Create, modify, and publish content across channels, like they would with a traditional CMS for the web channel.
- Create and tag personalized content to be displayed to specific segments at specific points in the customer journey.
- Drive and measure outcomes to further feed their content ideation processes by understanding what worked and what didn't.

Leveraging a combination of Sitecore Content Hub™, Sitecore® Experience Platform™ (XP), and Sitecore Experience Commerce™ (XC), brands expand upon what a traditional CMS offers. That's down to solutions such as native digital asset management, marketing resource management, product content management, and automated personalization.

Build Relevant Content

Content planning, creation, collaboration, approval, management & distribution

Digital Asset Management

Simplify storage, management, distribution & control of digital assets

Content Marketing Platform

Streamline content strategizing, planning, creation & publication

Marketing Resource Management

Manage, budget & control every phase of a marketing project

Product Content Management

Stay on top of all product content for eCommerce & other downstream apps

Show content

Web Content Management

Easy-to-use CMS platform for reducing reliance on IT

- WYSIWYG marketer-friendly editing experience
- Cost-effectiveness of managing content
- Integration across the MarTech stack
- Consistent multi-site brand experiences
- User-friendly form creation to collect visitor data

Personalize and Drive Outcomes

Customer data, personalization & commerce

Extending CMS functionality to deliver personalized omnichannel experiences

- Managing digital experiences
- Track and analyze customer interactions
- Consistent omnichannel experiences through web, mobile, and e-commerce
- Audience segmentation and campaign mgmt.
- Automated personalized experiences
- Artificial Intelligence
- Testing capabilities to see what drives conversions

By using these solutions to manage the end-to-end content lifecycle and deliver personalized experiences, brands have tied content investments directly to revenue and cost savings, promoting a new view of content as a business asset. If your organization could benefit from a more robust content hub platform, but you are unsure how to convince others, read the article Making the case for a content hub to gain important insights and learn the valuable steps for improving your content lifecycle.

About Sitecore

Sitecore delivers a digital experience platform that empowers the world's smartest brands to build lifelong relationships with their customers. A highly decorated industry leader, Sitecore is the only company bringing together content, commerce, and data into one connected platform that delivers millions of digital experiences every day. Leading companies including American Express, ASOS, Carnival Cruise Lines, Kimberly-Clark, L'Oréal, and Volvo Cars rely on Sitecore to provide more engaging, personalized experiences for their customers.

Learn more at sitecore.com.