



Key transformations to digitally enable your content operations



Over the past year, marketing organizations have been pressured to pivot their content strategies to quickly adapt to transforming customer expectations and the shift to all-digital. Creating personalized, real-time content—at scale—across multiple channels has become more urgent than ever to meet customer needs. However, the acceleration of content for the digital-first customer has come at a cost. Marketers are realizing the strategic shifts to digital-first have exacerbated the operational challenges they face in creating, delivering, and measuring higher volumes of content without skyrocketing spend. Despite the race to digital, many marketing organizations are slowed by their operations. They continue to operate with 20th century analog processes and capabilities. Although marketers are moving forward with new content strategies, they are not considering the operational capabilities and processes required to effectively deliver on these strategies. Effective delivery requires digitalization of the content lifecycle (or the processes that move content across each of the development, distribution, and management stages).

Limitations of analog content processes

We see many marketers face significant operating and performance challenges because they manage digital content strategies using analog processes. Analog content processes lack the frameworks and capabilities required for organizations to automate, scale, measure, and govern to be competitive in today's digital marketplace. Key characteristics and limitations of analog content processes include:

- Lack of coordination and clear pipeline visibility between marketers and agencies, resulting in continuous iteration and limited alignment on priorities
- Content is developed from scratch without reusability in mind by multiple teams and agency partners, causing duplicative content creation and effort



Digitalization is the adoption and integration of the technologies, processes/workflows, and data/analytics required to optimize value from being digital.

- Lengthy content development cycle times due to manual review and approval workflows and need for extensive agency involvement
- *Push distribution* of content to users regardless of the content's relevancy and the consumer's need or ability to utilize, which results from analog's inability to provide timely, contextual data to guide content distribution
- Limited accessibility or findability of content as it is stored in unrelated storage systems across different marketing groups and agencies, without standard naming conventions, taxonomy, or governance protocols
- Content performance data is manually generated across disparate systems and aggregated in multiple spreadsheets, resulting in the inability to provide accurate and reliable insights

Marketers that prioritize the digitalization of their content lifecycle are able to both improve the effectiveness of their digital content, while driving efficiencies in operating cost and time.

Digitalization of your content lifecycle

New, digital-first content strategies demand more from content creation and distribution teams to drive growth and meaningful interactions with the digital-first customer. At the highest level, the digitalization of your content processes or lifecycle must occur across each of the six lifecycle stages (*Illustration 1*).

Successful digitalization of the content lifecycle allows marketers to realize the full value of content and advance their digital transformation. To achieve content digitalization, marketers must:

1 Leverage new digital asset management technology

Adopting a digital asset management (DAM) system is critical to access, manage, and store digital content. It centralizes and maintains digital assets in their complete and component parts, reducing the need to recreate net new content and instances of duplication. A DAM allows marketers to quickly access, find, and update digital content by enriching assets with custom metadata and tags. Marketing organizations that prioritize the digitalization of their content lifecycle integrate the use of their digital asset management (DAM) technology across the organization, allowing for greater time and cost efficiencies through automation and self-service solutions.

2 Improve existing processes and workflows

Moving existing processes managed across manual documents (e.g. Excel spreadsheets and PowerPoints) into digital workflow management tools enables efficient, streamlined processes and data transparency. A workflow management tool allows for the real-time visibility, orchestration, and automation of the entire content process across the lifecycle. Automated, digital workflows can achieve cross-functional alignment, faster cycle times and approvals, streamlined tracking, and reduced risk. A workflow management tool can be leveraged to centralize tasks, reviews, and automate alerts to allow for the transparent and seamless communication of content feedback and approval across stakeholder groups.

However, before getting started with a workflow management tool, we recommend marketers first examine, streamline, and road test offline workflow and approval processes. We often see marketers implement a workflow management tool and use it only to input their existing processes. Marketers need to drive proper utilization and adoption across their organization to realize the true benefits.

3 Effectively leverage digitized data to measure performance

Existing content processes and performance can be enhanced by integrating and leveraging digitized data in reporting tools. The process of digitizing your content assets means that information and data associated with those assets will also be digitally stored. Building a digital foundation for managing digitized data enables the capabilities to automatically capture key information and insights to more effectively distribute and measure digital content. Establishing a solid digital data foundation starts with identifying the right KPIs and consolidating the right data to measure content effectiveness and operational performance. It also requires that data be ported into established reporting mechanisms to allow for marketers to integrate and generate data into comprehensive reports and insights.

4 Adopt new ways of operating and digital-first mindsets

As marketing organizations start establishing digital processes and capabilities across the content lifecycle, they must embrace the shift in how work is getting done, how technology is utilized, and how data is captured and reported. Marketing organizations must solidify digital foundational structures, adopt new ways of operating, and instill digital-first cultural mindsets. A digital-first cultural mindset: seeks opportunities for digital optimization; shifts from prioritizing the creation of net new to encouraging the coordination, re-creation, trans-creation, and repurposing of content; makes full use of the power digitalization has brought to the content lifecycle.

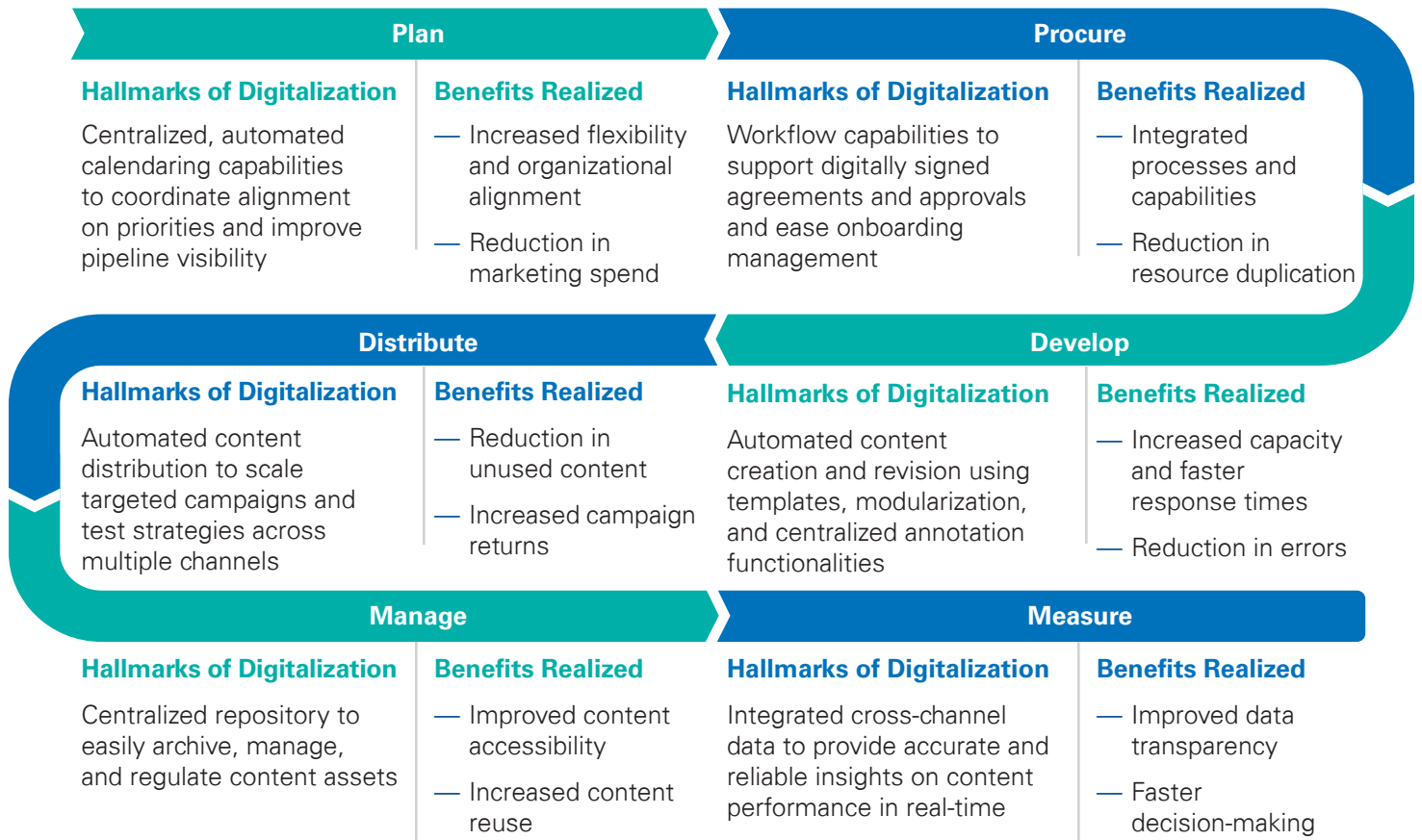
These cultural shifts, ultimately, improve utilization and cost value of content and drive a robust content strategy across the organization. With this shift, we see marketing teams and their cross-functional partners better able to form a common understanding of their customer to align their approach to content. Basic questions are asked and debated, such as:

1. How do our customers want to see this?
2. What channels are best to reach customers?
3. What content format is best to reach them?
4. Have we executed on this before and with what outcome?
5. Are we able to reuse what we have already created today?

Without a solid operating framework in place and a shift in mindset and behaviors, organizations will face challenges in transforming their digital content processes and strategy.

While taking these four key actions may seem considerable, the benefits realized are more than worth the effort. The chart below illustrates how digitalization across the content lifecycle can come to life and some of the benefits realized.

Illustration 1: Content Lifecycle & The Hallmarks of Content Digitalization



Taking action towards content digitalization

Marketing organizations need to strategize and plan for a future that adopts digitalization, if they wish to realize the full value of content and advance their digital transformation. In the next follow-on posts, we will dive deeper into the key actions organizations have taken as they identified opportunities and built the capabilities and technical solutions for true content digitalization.

If you would like to find out how KPMG can help you digitize your content marketing, reach out. Let's start the conversation.

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