

DAM FOR CONSTRUCTION EBOOK



DAM FOR CONSTRUCTION WHITEPAPER CONTENTS

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OUR VISION

“

**Inspire people
through visualization
of the built world.**

”

INTRODUCTION

In today's tech-charged world, AEC firms have more digital assets to manage than ever before. The growing need for high-quality digital content and the increasing ease in obtaining them adds up to one thing: a proliferation of image assets that demands attention and effective management.

But despite this, many marketers revert to using the same images over and over because they don't have the time to search for and find project photos.

With the growing volume of digital content used for commercial and operational purposes, construction firms could benefit from a proper DAM solution. But what is Digital Asset Management?



01 WHAT IS DIGITAL ASSET MANAGEMENT (DAM)?

Digital Asset Management is a way of managing your organization's digital assets efficiently and in one place. However, it is more than just a means of storage. A DAM system makes content accessible, digital assets that are searchable, and can be utilized in ways that management on native operating systems does not allow.

In simple terms, DAM is the process of managing digital content in a single, central hub. As well as providing an organized and searchable environment, a DAM offers the ability to manage the whole lifecycle of a digital asset.

Assets need to be created, managed, distributed, and then either preserved or archived. Extensive collections of media assets also need to be available on-demand to employees across the organization.

As with most modern business technology, the best DAM solutions are cloud-based; this means they are available to any authorized company user from any device. No large software downloads. No inconvenient updates. No need to be on the company network. And it's all completely secure too. Everything for marketing, operations, and sales success is at the fingertips of everyone who needs it.

Digital Asset Management is one of many technologies enabling the construction industry to improve its commercial and operational effectiveness.

Technology is set to change construction

The construction industry has been slow to adopt modern digital technologies (as is the case for many industries across the built environment). A recent survey of decision-makers in the construction industry, over four-fifths of respondents say that they intend to improve digital technology usage in their business over the next 12 months.

The move to adopt more digital technology is happening in every industry in the business world. Digital Transformation is more than a fad; it's an action that companies are taking to secure their future. The primary aim of new technology should be the improvement of customer experience and efficient working practices for your employees.



02 WHAT IS DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION?

Digital transformation is the implementation of digital technology throughout all areas of an organization, a rethinking of technology, people, and processes. The result is a grassroots change in how a business operates and delivers value to its customers.

The top drivers for digital transformation include:

- Improving productivity
- Critical to business success
- Products and services that easily incorporate digital transformation
- Competitive pressures
- Customer demand
- Improving security

However, digital transformation isn't a 'one-size-fits-all' solution; it is about making changes that are relevant to your company and to your clients to future-proof your business.

The starting point for any transformation is to think about what your company does and identify the gaps in your working processes. Once you understand where tech, process, and people improvements can be implemented for your business, you can make changes and see your workflow improve.

Digital transformation enhancements don't need to be huge - simple changes and agile solutions can often be more impactful than looking for a complicated answer to a problem.

Any technological solutions chosen must integrate well; this improves workflows, maximizes efficiency, and return on investment. In the past, a company might have purchased a single integrated system to manage all of their core system needs or had a bespoke system built. But the modern approach now looks at creating a bespoke technology experience by creating a 'stack' of integrated technologies, each with a specific function.



03 TECH STACKS IN CONSTRUCTION

A tech stack is a cumulative term for the group of technologies that a company uses to manage its core functions. The tech stack integrates these technologies to create a seamless platform that is flexible and easy to use.

Ensuring that technology works together is imperative if a construction business is to achieve the benefits. If systems don't integrate, a large tech stack will end up doing more harm than good; it will create additional processes and complicated workflows.

A vital piece of the puzzle is selecting the right stack of solutions. With an integrated tech stack, marketing, sales, operations, and business development teams have the tools they need at their fingertips. This means streamlined workflows and assets leveraged to maximize profits.



Technology in construction is designed to complement the project-based nature of the industry. Common components of a tech stack for construction include:

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)

A tool to streamline and centralize key processes while promoting better communication between departments and functions.

Construction Project Management (CPM)

Software that is used to manage construction project processes, including tasks, document management, communications, materials and other day to day requirements.

Customer Relationship Management (CRM)

A system that provides a holistic view of all past customer interactions and gives insights into what clients need.

Digital Asset Management (DAM)

A central repository for managing, organizing, and maximizing the value of a firm's digital assets. DAM can be used as a tool for tracking construction progress, documenting finished projects, and collating useful marketing content.

Content Management System (CMS)

Enabling content to be quickly published and managed on a firm's corporate website with varying levels of approvals and control.

Marketing Automation

Automating targeted marketing programs to leads, locating high-potential leads from existing databases, and managing website landing pages and forms.

Web Analytics

Tools to measure site visits, time on page, and actions taken. Reports generated give a better understanding of marketing performance and ways to improve.

Contract, Legal & Compliance

Not so long ago, signing physical paperwork for agreements and contracts could be a bottleneck in a transaction process. But with tech that allows clients to sign legal documents digitally, firms can offer more efficient transaction processes and save costs. And using less paper means you'll save some trees too.

Each of the components listed above is powerful in its own right and designed to streamline marketing efforts. However, the real value comes from their ability to work together. An integrated tech stack will eliminate the time and effort of manual processes. It will ensure the highest return on investment for each element. This creates a system that is more than the sum of its parts.

A good digital asset management solution will integrate with most other tech stack components.

04 WHY IS DAM IMPORTANT FOR CONSTRUCTION FIRMS

Digital Asset Management has moved to be a ‘must have’ for many areas of the built environment sector. It offers sales and marketing a source of approved assets for commercial purposes. It also provides a means of efficiently storing images and files used in project progress.

Almost any file that company users might need access to can be made available on your DAM. For example:

- High Quality Marketing Photography
- Videos and drone footage
- InDesign files (packaged and saved as .zip)
- Word documents
- PDFs
- Company brand items
- Presentations
- Marketing content and collateral

Managing sales and marketing collateral across teams and regions can become complicated as offices expand. To enable all teams to utilize digital assets such as images, videos, and graphics, you will need a seamless content creation and distribution process.

This process can be challenging for a complex organization with multiple offices and the use of external agencies. Plus with a larger team of contributors adding to your digital assets, keeping track and finding assets can become exponentially tricky. DAM takes the pain out of managing digital assets across dispersed teams and strengthen your brand.

With many teams (potentially across regions) working on multiple projects, efficient collaboration is vital to the success of any project. An integrated DAM can improve collaboration across your business, reduce bottlenecks, and streamline workflows.

Sales and Marketing

An essential objective for construction companies is to create compelling sales, proposal, and marketing content; it is vital to have the best content available when it's needed. A DAM system is a tool often used by many teams, but it is particularly useful for sales, marketing, creatives, and third-party partners (such as agencies or photographers).

An integrated DAM system pools information from other systems, such as your ERP and your CRM, and connect the dots to help you create winning bids and proposals.

Digital Asset Management allows for brand consistency, helping companies to build a strong brand portfolio by keeping the digital assets and brand guidelines in sync across your firm.

DAM also puts you in control of a digital asset's lifecycle in a way not possible without one. All assets need to be managed, distributed, and then preserved or archived. Employees working in companies with large collections of media assets need easy access to suitable assets; DAM gives assurance that users only have access to approved content. When that content is out of date, you can instantly remove its availability. You no longer need to ask colleagues to delete old files from network drives. You are now in full control of your company brand.

Project management

In construction, Digital Asset Management can play an integral part in the project management process. Onsite project progress reports can be supplemented with visual updates uploaded to your DAM system.

When a DAM system is integrated with an ERP or CPM, information and content can be pushed to your DAM from an ERP or vice versa. This means images can be managed and controlled with ease and made easily accessible to those people in your organization that need them.

OpenAsset also offers OpenAsset Camera; this a photography app for iOS and Android that allows you to take photos on the go with your phone or tablet and upload them instantly to OpenAsset.

05 PROJECT-BASED DAM - WHY IT'S THE BEST FIT FOR CONSTRUCTION

There are many Digital Asset Management solutions available, with each one catering to different industry and sector needs. Marketers need to consider the requirements of the firm when choosing a DAM. But how do you find out which DAM solutions will best meet your organization's needs?

Among the many considerations that go into evaluating DAM, an important factor often overlooked is how a DAM system gets used day to day. Knowing your potential users, and how they work can be the difference between a successful DAM adoption and a flop.

Most DAMs are brand-based to brand creative workflows, but OpenAsset is the only project based DAM for AEC.

Project-based DAMs are built to store, organize, and connect digital assets to specific projects and/or properties. Brand-based DAM solutions cater to CPG, retail, and eCommerce, and are product, advertising, and consumer-facing.

As the construction industry is entirely project focused, a project-based DAM is the most obvious choice. Project-based DAM has all the same features as other DAM solutions; however, it is better suited to the way that the AEC & Real Estate sector works.

With a project-based DAM, content can be uploaded using the project name and be tagged using project keywords, which helps to define the image. Overall, these features create a simplified search process for images.

When choosing between a project- or brand-based DAM solution, here are some of the differences you should consider and how they can affect your DAM experience.



STATE OF DAM IN AEC

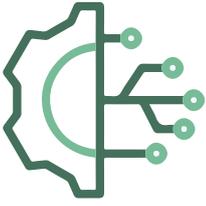
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WHITEPAPER: BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL AEC TECH STACK

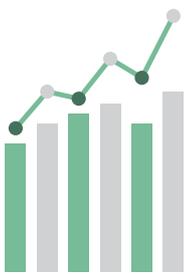
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Integration



Depending on whether a DAM is project or property-based, integration with other technologies can vary. For example, project-based DAMs will integrate with ERP and CRM solutions, delivering essential project and customer information to visual assets and files. Brand-based solutions, on the other hand, focus more on integration with consumer-facing technologies.

Sales and Marketing Material Development

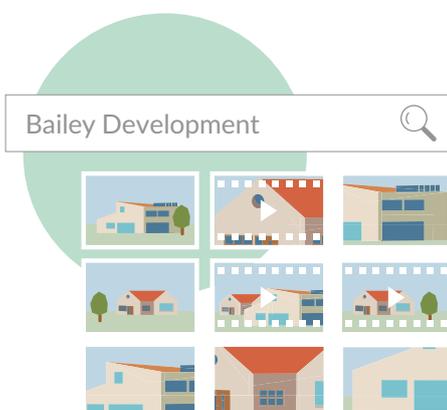


Product-based companies and project-based firms take different approaches to marketing and engaging with customers. As a result, the way they use DAM and the assets they store are different too.

For example, in a brand-based company, the roll-out of a new brand identity or new packaging guidelines for a product requires content to be distributed to the global supply chain. Brand-based DAMs are designed to enhance and support these workflows.

For project-based companies, digital assets are used to create marketing content for professional services. Features in project-based DAMs (like OpenAsset) enhance workflows for proposals, presentations, employee CV, and the creation of sales content to support commercial efforts.

Image Search and Management



Search and file management are two important aspects of a satisfying DAM experience. The way a business organizes and searches for assets depends on how employees view and access their work. Project-based companies may find it intuitive to search and tag assets by location, winning project manager, or reference number.

Support and On-Boarding



Industry-focused DAM vendors tend to tailor their solutions to the needs of their market. This includes the support that comes with your DAM purchase, beginning with the onboarding process. In other words, if you are a project-based firm selecting a project-based DAM, you can expect your vendor to understand your asset management needs and have a good idea of how you want to set up your system.

So, when you are considering a new solution, make sure to ask which industries the vendor specifically caters to or serves. By choosing a specialized DAM vendor, you can expect a smoother transition to your new technology, a better ongoing fit, and greater overall satisfaction with your new DAM solution.

Bringing a DAM solution onboard

If you're reading this, there's a good chance that you know you have a problem managing digital assets at your firm. Conversely, management might not be aware of the additional work that it's causing teams. It's the case you've done such an excellent job against the odds that, like a duck serenely floating along, they don't see the furious paddling that's happening underneath.

As with every investment in a new system or digital service, there needs to be a clear business case for the purchase. Next to highlighting the apparent benefits of more efficient working, a common metric used to sell the concept of a DAM to those managing the purse strings is Return On Investment (or ROI).

However, it can be a daunting task to work out all the variables that give you a clear ROI for budgetary conversations. An ROI calculator enables you to look at the variables, understand the process, and see how you've reached the end figure.

A stylized illustration of a digital display or calculator interface. The main display area is a green rounded rectangle showing the text 'ROI = \$30,000' in white. Below this is a horizontal bar, and at the bottom are four circular icons: a picture, a checkmark, a list, and an exclamation mark.

ROI = \$30,000

Let us do some of the heavy lifting with our ROI Calculator

[CALCULATE ROI](#)

Some of the benefits of a DAM include:

Assets are easy to find and available immediately, meaning significant time savings for teams across your business. DAM allows employees to focus on their core job, not admin.

Assurance that your brand's integrity is maintained and delivered consistently.

A DAM is scalable with your business; as the number of assets increases, the workload in managing them does not.

Editing, sharing, and repurposing assets is greatly simplified.

Facilitated data analysis - tools that allow your organization to forecast revenue, carry out market research, and data analysis.

It's easy to underestimate how much time marketing, graphics, and communications staff spend managing and working with images. Without the right tools, finding, resizing, and using images takes up a tremendous amount of time.

If you don't know how much time you spend managing images, the problem will often continue to be overlooked. Such oversight could be costly.

Firms that have DAM solutions in place are likely to enjoy greater marketing productivity and process efficiencies.



06 USING DAM IN YOUR CONSTRUCTION FIRM

A Digital Asset Management system can help marketing teams make their collateral production more transparent in a time-efficient way. As well as creating a seamless collaboration process and maintaining brand guidelines while maximizing the use of all digital assets.

With a DAM, you and colleagues can upload and download digital assets such as high-resolution images and videos as well as brochures and logos. While the main function is to store assets and make sharing easier, a DAM (like OpenAsset) also has many other functions particularly useful for marketing teams.



Upload content

The first and most important part of any DAM solution is getting content into your DAM. Most vendors offer a data migration service to help you get content uploaded and tagged quickly. This is where you should take advantage of your vendor's expertise.

High-Rise

Office

Glass

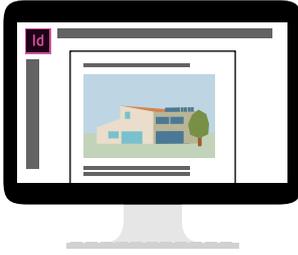
Arial

Keywords

After you've uploaded your images to your DAM, it's time to work on your keyword strategy. Less is more when it comes to keyword management, especially when you're just getting started with DAM. Keywords are an integral part of any DAM; that's what makes it easier to find and manage your assets.

Setting up keywords might be the responsibility of the marketing team or the DAM admin. Still, it can be helpful to get input on keyword lists and structures from other teams using the DAM.

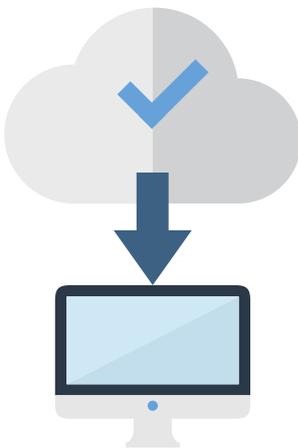
Your keyword lists and structures should be defined and tested and should have considered any variation in uploaded content. Keywords should use familiar terms from within the firm, enabling everyone to understand.



Producing Marketing Content

A DAM like OpenAsset integrated with InDesign means users can use images straight from the DAM without needing to download files. You can also preset InDesign templates, ensuring links aren't broken and avoiding unnecessary file downloads.

Another benefit of preset InDesign templates is that colleagues can make use of them without needing to request files. For example, Sales teams can produce brochures and collateral using the preset templates and approved marketing images.



On-Demand Download

Producing multiple types of content will require a variety of image sizes. OpenAsset has incorporated the automatic image resizing option which means creatives can save time by selecting the sizes they require and downloading their resized images onto their desktop.

Ensuring Consistency and Control with Brand Guidelines

Marketing is often responsible for approving and distributing content to be used by other teams; maintaining user permissions and access is vital for controlling content.

OpenAsset has simplified this process by creating the Access Level system; admins can choose the access level per team for each asset or project. This can reduce the risk that unapproved assets or outdated assets are used. It also ensures that teams produce content within brand guidelines



Centralized Storage with Easy Access

Collaboration between teams, leadership, and external agencies can be a challenge, especially when you have time constraints. A DAM is a centralized storage system, enabling easy access for all teams across the firm. This means that when working on a project, final versions can be saved onto the system for approval without having to send the file across in an email.

External creatives can also be given limited DAM access to upload assets and view collateral. Those in leadership, sales, or business development roles can easily access logos, high-res images, and videos to produce presentations with ease.

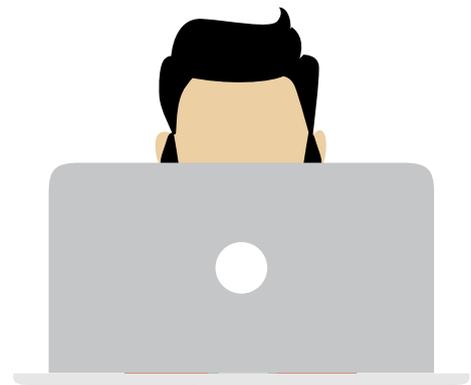
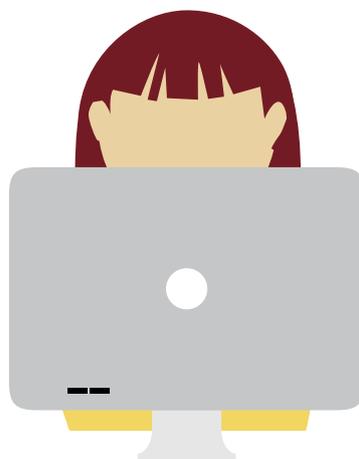


Find Assets with Ease

Digital assets tagged with appropriate metadata significantly reduces the time users spend finding what they need. Finding content in a DAM is simple, and much less of a headache than searching through network drives. What's more, content can't be lost in a DAM, meaning you'll never have to worry about the cost of recreating lost assets.

OpenAsset has been created with the AEC & Real Estate sector in mind, which is why you can organize your assets by projects and keywords. Users can upload and tag their digital assets with keywords which consistency with the image or video. For example, you can select which location and year the image was taken in as well as which materials or buildings are present in the asset. Users can search for these terms, and the results will show all the assets tagged with those specific keywords.

A time-saving feature we've developed for OpenAsset is Image Similarity Search. By integrating artificial intelligence into OpenAsset, users can select an image in their DAM, and the Image Similarity Search feature will show a selection of images identified as visually similar.



Overall, your digital assets will continue to grow as your firm and team expand. It is essential to manage and organize your digital assets to maintain your marketing and project output, and ensure digital assets are accessible.

If your firm is looking to take control of its digital assets to better showcase project expertise, a project-based DAM may be just the answer. With the system in place, the next time anyone in your firm needs images related to a specific project, the assets they need will be just a click away.

About OpenAsset

OpenAsset is the number one digital asset management (DAM) solution for architecture, engineering, construction, and property services companies. It is delivered and supported by Axomic, which has a global presence with staff based in London and New York and clients ranging in size from 5 to 50,000 employees.

OpenAsset is specifically tailored to solve the image management needs of companies working in the built environment. Its development roadmap is guided by our client base of over 600 of the world's leading AEC companies.

[OPENASSET.COM](https://openasset.com)

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