Think like a publisher and get organized

In today's ultra-competitive business environment, organizations find themselves transforming into media companies. This notion shouldn't alarm anyone, and no one is suggesting a manufacturing company transform themselves into CNN. According to Forrester, modern buyers are digital-first buyers, meaning that 92% of B2B purchases start with search, 68% of B2B buyers prefer to research online and 62% of buyers believe they can determine selection criteria based solely on digital content. With so much digital content to create, optimize and publish, it's time for brands to stop thinking about cloud storage and start thinking about cloud organization and content automation.

Is Dropbox a sustainable platform for digital asset management?

It's important that organizations be ahead of the curve when it comes to managing their digital assets. That means not only investing in various forms of media but investing in how each of these assets are managed, retrieved and deployed through the use of digital asset management (DAM). As brands start to produce more and more media, using Dropbox or Box to automate creative tasks and serve up assets to relevant stakeholders just isn't scalable anymore.

Companies require full-scale solutions that not only provide content hosting and cloud storage but also automatic delivery to other channels and platforms. And don't forget things like measuring content utilization or curation of the brand's content. With DAM, organizations can create, catalog, manage and access various types of digital assets with unparalleled speed and accuracy, something that can't be done as easily with standard cloud storage and sharing solutions like SharePoint, Box, Dropbox or Google Drive. Don't get us wrong - these tools have their strengths, but DAM is not one of them. SharePoint implementations range across a wide scope of use-cases. Box and Dropbox are great for simple cloud storage without complex use-cases and Google Drive (G-Suite) is great for document creation just like the Microsoft Suite. Where they all fall flat is when you try to rank them across the ten core characteristics of DAM. Note that Dropbox, Box, Drive, and SharePoint do not successfully qualify as "true DAM" when you measure them against the ten characteristics of DAM.

You might also consider that there are other reasons why you should use a DAM instead of a platform that is "DAM-like" like Dropbox. For example, you may need to report on content performance, so you'll need a DAM dashboard that shows which assets are used the most and by which teams.

DAM is a big deal for many companies

DAM has become not only a Dropbox alternative, but it's also fast becoming the norm for many organizations interested in streamlining and optimizing their digital assets. Every year, Henry Stewart Events hosts the world's largest DAM conferences which is widely attended by companies across almost every industry. They share best practices, lessons learned and unique and interesting applications of DAM for their particular use-cases. LinkedIn has one of the largest DAM professional groups with more than 17,000 DAM practitioners. And in the 2019 State of Branding Report, 46% of the marketers surveyed reported that they planned on investing in digital asset management in the future.

Why is DAM valuable to organizations?

Whole organizations, as well as marketing, communications, sales, and IT departments find digital asset management valuable because it streamlines the complexity associated with keeping track of thousands (or even millions) of digital assets. Such a platform can operate as a single source of truth, helping organizations like ezCater provide a central location in which to store and easily retrieve valuable content. In this environment, users can find and self-serve the right content at the right time. For many organizations, they may have assets strewn across a large number of platforms - from CMS systems to cloud storage platforms like Box, Dropbox, OneDrive or even Google Drive. They cannot quickly find content because they don't have a shared version of "the single source of truth" for digital assets. They need the digital library that a DAM platform provides.

> " Before it was just kind of manual. Going through a Google Drive where there was no naming convention, so you couldn't really search anything—you just hope for the best.
>
> Michelle Boornazian
> Director of Marketing Communications at ezCater

What are the advantages to transitioning from Dropbox to a DAM environment?

Here are four core benefits of transitioning from Dropbox to DAM:

- **Cost reduction** (Reduce content re-creation costs through increased asset findability)
- **Secure and organized storage** (through metadata, taxonomy and digital rights management capabilities)
- **Great brand consistency** (through things like brand asset approval workflows and brand guidelines)

- **Automated content distribution to your digital ecosystem** (through integrations where your DAM serves content to platforms like CMS, CRM, etc.)

Advantage of DAM over Dropbox #1: Cost reduction

Increased, measurable efficiency is a true hallmark of a DAM environment. Faster creation, retrieval, storage and distribution of content will improve ROI in relation to overall marketing and communications costs. Time spent sourcing just the right file is done in seconds or minutes, not hours. You also save time by not re-creating assets because you can't find them again. Anyone with a million folders in Dropbox knows the pain of knowing you have a file but realizing you can't find it.

Advantage of DAM over Dropbox #2: Secure (and organized!) storage

Incorporating secure digital rights management and guidelines offer heightened security for an organization's assets. No longer using unreliable communications platforms, such as email or non-IT-approved file-sharing tools, provides greater control and compliance. By applying metadata and tags, you also make sure your digital assets are easily findable in the future. If you're using a cloud storage platform like Dropbox where you just drop files in a folder and go it's time to start thinking about organizing content better. Your future self will thank you! Think about it - you wouldn't unload your dishwasher and just put up your dishes anywhere. There are specific places (tags and metadata) where you put them so you always know where to find the measuring cup when you need it!

Advantage of DAM over Dropbox #3: Greater brand consistency

With an increase in digital assets available, companies regularly struggle with having complete control over their brand narrative. A DAM environment significantly reduces the risk and costs associated with losing control of the brand. Thousands and thousands of assets can be confidently managed and protected, thereby ensuring greater brand consistency. Organizing content by type and usage rights means that your company can increase brand consistency. Further, some DAM platforms also come with baked-in Brand Guidelines which allow you to more easily communicate brand standards to the rest of the company - a feature you won't find in simple cloud storage platforms like Dropbox. Putting context for usage right next to a digital asset is different than just having a downloadable PDF with Dos and Don'ts.

Advantage of DAM over Dropbox #4: Easier integration/Connected digital ecosystem

Acting as the primary source of truth, DAM allows organizations to also use third-party tools more efficiently. Whether using content management systems (CMS), customer relationship management (CRM) tools, marketing solutions or IT resources, DAM allows for the ideal administration of digital assets across multiple, integrated solutions. It's not uncommon for companies to struggle with multiple versions of content across

their digital ecosystem. DAM simplifies this because DAM integrations enable your company to organize content in a central place, but distribute content across multiple platforms and touchpoints.

How can companies transition to a DAM environment?

While some organizations have leveraged the benefits of digital asset management, many more still rely on outdated asset management practices, such as Dropbox or WeTransfer. Utilization of such file-sharing and storage tools can be harmful to the brand over time - when employees use individual accounts and then leave the company, does an asset handover occur? Usually, the answer to this question is no. When a comprehensive solution is necessary to expertly manage various types and sizes of assets, only a true DAM environment will provide long-term value. The steps necessary to migrate from Dropbox or Box to a more robust environment are not prohibitive, but you've got to ask yourself the right questions!

How can you establish a digital asset management strategy?

Desiring a DAM solution requires a bit of forethought. To maximize the effectiveness of this new environment and simplify the transition, developing a strategy will help determine how an organization can maximize its use and realize a true ROI, but also will help you build the business case internally for transitioning to a DAM environment. What worked with your Box or Dropbox implementation? What didn't? Consider these when you're building out your DAM strategy.

How can you create a vision for digital asset management?

Determining how a DAM environment will operate as the foundation for your organization's digital ecosystem should equate to a primary vision - determining the internal and external resources available to assist with the DAM program. Use the DAM strategic planning workbook to think critically about your DAM vision and mission. If you started with Box or Dropbox as your content repository, you likely had a more narrow scope for its usage. Think outside the box (or Dropbox) when you create your DAM vision. What kinds of efficiencies and automation would you like to drive with your DAM platform? (Think hosting content on the website, more easily ingesting UGC content, etc.) Or go a level deeper - how much of the content on your website is readily available to be re-purposed or re-used? Website organization is one thing - content that's hosted on your website being organized is another.

How do you conduct a digital asset audit for DAM?

Knowing current asset availability is critical when taking inventory of existing files. It will also be necessary to decide current usability, what will be needed and what is no longer necessary. We've created a handy DAM Appraisal Guide and asset tracking sheet which can serve as a blueprint for identifying where your digital assets are stored, and which ones are "assets of enduring value" to be ingested into the DAM. Don't be afraid to leave assets behind that are stored in Dropbox or Box. If they don't have business value, they don't belong in your DAM.

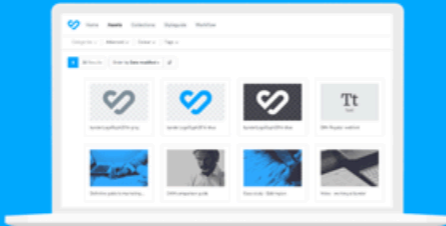## How do you determine business requirements for DAM?

An organization must know which departments, partners and customers will need access to which files. It will also be necessary to know how each stakeholder will use and deploy those files, as it may require specific access rights depending on the nature of the stakeholder's relationship. Use the DAM Requirements gathering guide to determine your business requirements for DAM. And if you're using Box or Dropbox, likely, you're only using it with specific teams - think bigger when it comes to DAM. You're building a content library for your company where you can allow people to re-use assets so you can get the most out of your investment. You might also have the requirement that you need to easily share content with external teams - which is a big use-case for many teams using cloud storage platforms like Dropbox or Box. Many DAM platforms allow for easy sharing of digital assets with external teams.

How do you migrate or ingest digital assets into a DAM platform?

When transitioning digital assets into a DAM solution, organizations must create specifications for each file to properly ingest them. Assigning tags such as metadata, file formats and size will make items easier to find later. When migrating into the DAM environment, uploading manually in groups or via a script (IT involvement is recommended in this case) will speed the importing process. If you're using Dropbox or Box, you might need to reach out to see how you can get a quick export of all of your assets. There's nothing more frustrating than waiting for batches of 200 files to download when you have a library of thousands or hundreds of thousands of digital assets!

Start your DAM journey

Drive the business case internally by signing up for a free demo of Bynder, where you can discuss your use-cases for DAM and see what life without Dropbox or Box looks like. Get a detailed demo of Bynder from one of our DAM experts: