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BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL MULTISITE PRACTICE

Taking a ‘Factory Approach’ with Digital Site Governance

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INTRODUCTION

Digital site governance continues to be top of mind for many companies building new websites and digital experiences.

Global organizations are managing multiple sites and experiences across dispersed teams, using a variety of content management systems and tools, driving up costs and creating managerial headaches for IT and digital business teams.

When you're in a multi-brand, multi-region organization, you need to start thinking about governance and automation holistically as it relates to organization around workflows, delivery, maintenance and enhancement of sites over time.

WORKFLOWS

DELIVERY

MAINTENANCE

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ASK YOURSELF: WHAT DOES DIGITAL SITE GOVERNANCE MEAN TO YOU?

Do you want to provide teams with specific roles and access for sites? Are you looking to document corporate standards and educate your team on how to follow those guidelines?

Or, do you want to enforce very specific policies; whether those pertain to how you're building sites, what technologies or applications are allowed to be used in building sites, and or what baseline requirements must be met?

Maybe you just want to ensure that all of your digital experiences are consistent across the organization — from the look and feel of your overall experience to the type of content that is used across all of your sites.

Digital site governance encompasses all of these areas and more. Our definition of digital site governance centers around people, technology and processes.

This includes user roles and permissions, as well as development, delivery, and management standards of sites. When you start to think about governance, you will need all of these components to have an effective program. Additionally, you need automation behind each of these areas to make managing digital site governance as efficient and low cost as possible.

Before developing your digital site governance strategy, here are a few areas to consider as it pertains to people, technology and standards.

GETTING IT AND DIGITAL BUSINESS TO WORK TOGETHER

In order to be successful in your digital site governance approach, it will take teamwork. Companies such as Warner Music Group, Astellas Pharma, Commonwealth Financial Network, SABMiller, and Nasdaq recognize that it takes a team to come together to create a digital experience, from planning to production through to operations.

When you start to look at the teams involved in building a digital experience, there are often two very different roles with conflicting goals: digital business and IT.

Both digital business and IT need to work together for governance to be successful, we will explore their conflicting priorities below.

IT

IT processes are centered around lowering risk, speeding delivery velocity, and cutting cost. IT teams are constantly evaluating how they can have better visibility, trust and control across people, policies, and technology standards within the organization.

This group may include architects and technical professionals that are responsible for the digital platform itself or architecting security, performance, and availability. In addition, the IT team may have developers, site managers and site engineers who are building a variety of themes and branding across different sites.

DIGITAL BUSINESS

On the other side of the house is digital business. This group may be made up of marketing, commerce, fulfillment and customer support professionals, among others. Those on the digital business side that touch the customer experience, for instance marketing and commerce teams, play a crucial role in creating the content and campaigns that drive the digital experience for customers.

Digital marketers want to build and create new sites to be consumed on an ongoing basis, and their perspective of a positive business outcome is ultimately increasing revenue, and growing and retaining customers.

Like the marketers, the commerce team also cares about results in terms of how many customers check out and complete their shopping purchases.

Increasing engagements and conversions means being creative, having fast launches, and being able to turn around new campaigns quickly — without worrying about site governance and security.

At the end of the day, their priorities are centered around how to engage customers throughout the digital or shopping experience in order to increase bottom line metrics.

ADOPTING A DIGITAL PLATFORM FOR MANAGING EXPERIENCES

Organizations may choose to adopt their digital platform for building, delivering and optimizing digital experiences across the organization.

When it comes to planning an approach for multisite delivery and governance, IT and digital business teams must first take a step back and evaluate all of their content platforms; in particular, their digital platforms, to understand the current state of planning, development, delivery, and management.

First, uncover what digital properties exist within the organization, as well as the projected future state. At some point, digital business teams will want to begin optimizing their dot-com site and digital customer journey to improve engagement, brand loyalty and conversions.

IT needs to be prepared for this. Invariably, as new digital properties are built across brands and products, the complexity increases. On the front end, there will be a need to access, publish, and support experiences across a number of different channels, whether that be mobile, social, or even IoT. On the back end, there are multiple tools like CRM or marketing automation systems that store customer information that marketers or commerce teams will want to leverage in order to personalize content for their customers across the journey.

This architecture of front-end and back-end systems starts to become complex; in particular, when assessing the architecture and required system integrations across multiple brands and regions.

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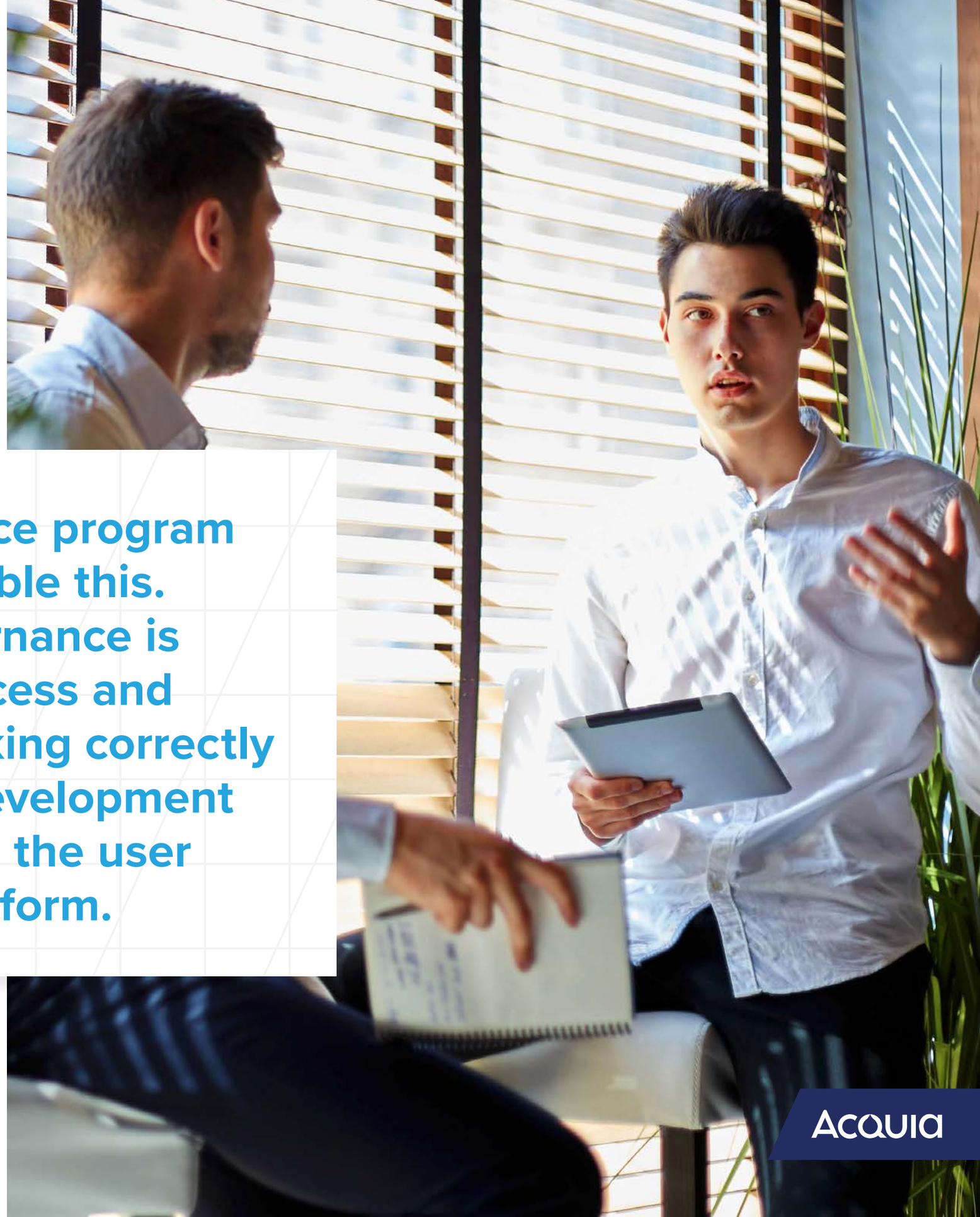
It’s key to choose a digital platform that will allow you to capitalize on the tools and investments you’ve made and take a best of breed approach to building customer experiences so you can get started right away with the tools that you need.

Your digital governance program should be able to enable this. In this instance, governance is ensuring that the process and technologies are working correctly — from planning to development all the way through to the user experience of the platform.



IMPLEMENTING STANDARDS AROUND BUILDING DIGITAL EXPERIENCES

Without digital site policies or standards, even with the right digital platform, there will be governance gaps in preventing digital business and IT from coming together to build ambitious digital experiences. There are a few challenges to be aware of in trying to close gaps and bring these teams together.

For instance, one challenge is the increasing costs across the organization due to the complexity of the customer journey and the technical deliverables around those digital experiences. Organizations with regional operations may be managing multiple platforms and content management systems across languages to build and deliver digital experiences — driving up the cost. Companies have started turning toward governance for digital properties via one digital platform to centralize and manage all of their technologies and experiences.

The end result is a reduction in costs and maintenance, while establishing a repeatable, reusable mindset to digital site delivery and governance.

Although the goals of IT are very different from digital business, both groups must work together to be successful in building and managing digital experiences to create positive outcomes for each other, and most importantly, a positive experience for the customer.

The vision of success is one in which the IT team can become a trusted service provider of a continuous range of sites across the organization regardless of brand, region, or team.

These sites will be easily monitored, well managed, and low cost while still enabling digital business' creativity and digital experience needs.

BEST PRACTICES FOR BUILDING A DIGITAL CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

For organizations adopting a new digital site platform, establishing organizational support early on is imperative, especially if you want to increase your chances of success.

This means building a center of excellence. But let's start with the basics: what exactly is a center of excellence?

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A center of excellence (CoE) is an internal group made up of stakeholders from various teams that monitors digital site governance throughout the organization and beyond. Sometimes called the shared IT unit or shared digital platform group, the center of excellence creates site policies and processes and ensures that they are being followed on every digital implementation.

Now, how do you create your own center of excellence? Here are three best practices to keep in mind when building your CoE: understanding your stakeholders, undergoing a creative maturity assessment, and creating a site governance model.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STAKEHOLDERS

The first step is to identify who your stakeholders are in regards to digital governance and how they will need to be involved; this will be the core of your CoE. But when taking on a large-scale digital governance project, it's not just about who will benefit from the CoE.

Two critical characteristics deciding who to work with from various stakeholder groups are flexibility and initiative. You want people who can take on new digital initiatives with speed and agility.

Each of the roles within the CoE can be assigned to one person or shared with several, depending on the organization's size and digital ambitions.

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The roles and descriptions below are meant to be guidelines, not restrictive commands:

DIGITAL BUSINESS

This role includes the product owners that determine the business strategy and the vision for the platform. They review, approve and prioritize feature requests, as well as communicate business requirements to the site architects, developers, and operators.

ARCHITECTURE

Architecture is responsible for any change management and feature development on the platform code. They put architecture governance in place so that new feature requests can be evaluated to ensure it can work within the architecture of the platform.

DIGITAL OPERATIONS

Digital operations maintains the digital sites and ensures that the platform works as expected. They manage new support requests, security requests, bug fixes, and feature requests. They also complete sprint management and platform development.

SITE OPERATIONS

The site operations unit is focused specifically on enhancing content and experience at the site level. They build and theme individual customer websites and manage customer requests. This is the group that takes care of the feasibility studies, looking at site-specific, feature request requirements and ensures that they can work with the sites.

DIGITAL SECURITY

Digital security is responsible for reviewing adherence and compliance to different security guidelines. This team is responsible for working with digital business and architecture to ensure the platform and all sites are secure and compliant with both organization-specific standards and industry-specific standards.

UNDERGOING A CREATIVE MATURITY ASSESSMENT

The second step is to undergo a creative maturity assessment. A creative maturity assessment is when organizations evaluate their current state of digital site creation, delivery, and management.

The assessment includes users, processes, technologies, and various data or information involved in your digital site delivery strategy. The assessment also encompasses how you measure planning activity, development, delivery, management and governance overall.

Evaluating your current state of digital delivery and management is a great way to understand all of the gaps and roadblocks. It's worth taking the necessary amount of time to ensure a thorough evaluation, as the results will help you envision and plan for your future state.

Once your assessment is complete, you should develop a plan around how to close the gaps.

CREATING A SITE GOVERNANCE MODEL

The next best practice is establishing a site governance model as part of your CoE. A site governance model is a standardized model and approach to defining a set of specific policies or principles that your digital sites

(and even teams) should follow. For instance, if you look across your corporate, brand, and commerce sites, what are your policies from a security perspective? How are you going to capture site data across your sites in a secure and reliable way?

A site governance model should also include a specific governance team that can help drive established requirements. Your center of excellence will need to think about what capabilities should be standardized and made available to all sites.

In order to ensure consistency and compliance, you will have to find the right balance of providing sufficient creative freedom and flexibility (to users like marketers and content editors) and retaining certain level of control and oversight over all your sites.

SABMiller is a great example of a company that has established a site governance model and its own Digital Development Standards; these encompass legal and compliance standards as well as user experience, development, quality assurance, analytics and more.

Making your digital site governance standards easily available to your team is a step in the right direction toward adoption of your center of excellence team, site governance model, and digital site governance overall.

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WHAT IS A DIGITAL FACTORY PLATFORM?

From the mid-18th to the mid-19th centuries, a span of about 100 years, the world experienced a revolution in how companies created and delivered goods to consumers.

Previously, goods were created by hand. No one item was identical to any other. This resulted in wasted effort performing the same process many times with minor differences, poor maintainability due to the lack of interchangeable parts, and inconsistent quality control. The industrial revolution changed all of that by bringing scalability, repeatability, and governance to the world of manufacturing.

Today, we are experiencing a similar revolution in the world of digital. Companies face the same problems of scalability, repeatability, and governance, and they are applying the same factory model to the production of delightful and engaging

Let's look at SABMiller again, a company that manages multiple brands. Separate teams manage the digital experience of each brand. Since each team has a slightly different idea of what makes a good experience for every brand, features often differ across each digital experience. If an organization wants to implement centralized management to ensure the security and maintainability of each experience, they will need to perform assessments and updates for each property, with slight variations every time.

As the organization grows, this manual effort becomes unmanageable.

Unmaintained apps become vulnerable to security breaches and degraded performance, putting the entire brand at risk.

A digital factory platform is a highly efficient, standardized approach to assembling, manufacturing, and running the foundation for digital experiences (i.e. digital sites).

The digital factory provides the right site components like templates, branding, CMS configuration and integration modules, access control and security, and cloud infrastructure resources to deliver and manage digital marketing and commerce experiences.

Digital sites power digital content and applications as a service for the online branding, marketing, commerce, and customer service experiences across your business.

The very image of a “factory” depicts standardized components, processes, and management that work in a hyper-efficient factory automation mode to assemble, deliver, operate, and govern digital businesses. As a result, the digital factory becomes the focus, IT project, and the platform.

As a result, the digital factory becomes the focus, IT project, and the platform.

With the factory being at the epicenter, the task at hand is to build a platform not a site. Build a digital factory platform that manufactures, delivers, runs and enables all of your digital sites and experiences for your company across the globe.

The factory platform is 75 percent approach and 25 percent automation. The reason why 75 percent of your efforts should be spent on the approach is because it is the foundational framework and mindset, both technically and organizationally, that is integral to mobilizing your entire IT digital and marketing teams to work in unison as a factory. Adopting both makes it a factory.

TAKING THE FACTORY APPROACH

The factory approach allows organizations to set corporate standards from within the platform so the creation of site or updates to sites can be handled easily by non-technical individuals such as content creators or the agency that the company partners with.

Let's examine the approach that you need in order to have a functioning factory. The approach is largely focused on organizational requirements within your IT digital team, as the group and its individuals are the ones ensuring the factory is running smoothly.

THE ASSEMBLY ROLE

When building a factory, you're now in the business of manufacturing sites at scale, not hand-crafting individual items. The assembly role owns the assembly of the shared Drupal distribution. This role analyzes site requirements for content types, integrations, digital assets, and management needs up-front and creates a site model to define the core Drupal distribution.

The assembly role provides continuous distribution lifecycle management to maintain Drupal versions, modules, assets, and all platform required code. The benefit is the digital organization can set company-wide standards, without limiting individual flexibility.

THE DELIVERY ROLE

This role is both internal and often an external digital development firm or agency. This role or team is responsible for the process of taking the shared Drupal distribution provided by the assembly team and customizing it to the individual site needs. It becomes a straightforward, less technical activity to customize sites provisioned by the standard platform in which corporate standards are baked in.

Creative branding and content activities can work efficiently using the same shared distribution. If the platform does not meet all of the requirements, the assembly role is asked to upgrade the Drupal distribution for new requirements.

THE OPERATIONS ROLE

The main responsibilities of operations consists of provisioning and operating the digital sites at scale. Working closely with the IT operations and support organization, this team provides all site changes, site content updates, security, and site retirement. Digital sites are the foundation for “living” experiences and the operations team needs to be prepared to treat them as such.

THE GOVERNANCE ROLE

The governance role consists of product or business managers, IT digital platform leaders, digital platform architects, and other experts who are involved in establishing standards and policies to support digital platforms. This role provides a unified company playbook for the people, policies, and standards for digital sites including planning, developing, delivering, and operating digital sites and experiences... basically, everything.

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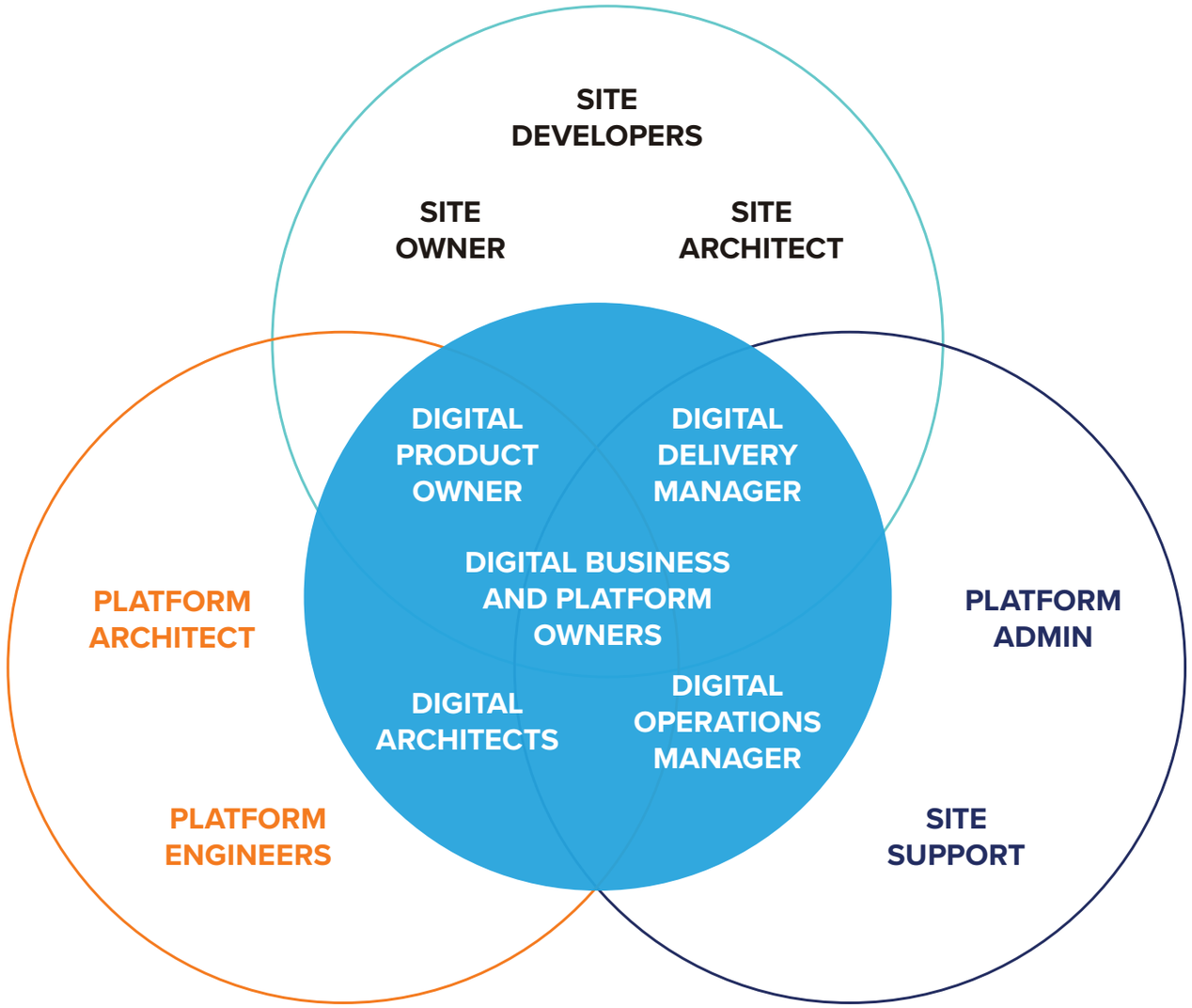
DIGITAL GOVERNANCE TEAM



Organizing and restructuring to be factory-ready can sometimes seem like a daunting task, especially for organizations that have small teams and limited resources. However, digital transformation doesn't have to happen all at once – in fact, it's best that you take the time to do it right.

To make transformation easier, getting creative with how you form digital teams and assign certain roles is a must. For example, the digital organizations that have creative and development partners may choose to have their partners as one of the roles listed above (often the partner takes on the delivery role).

At Acquia, we provide professional services and dedicated technical account personnel who eventually become part of an organization's digital team as well.

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SITE DELIVERY GUIDELINES AND GOVERNANCE

Now that you have your strategy and your team aligned, it's time to discuss defining and managing both organizational and technical governance for the digital platforms. Your center of excellence should establish a set of guidelines and rules around how site delivery, site design and development, and access and permissions will be managed in the platform. This should encompass:

THE PLATFORM FOR SITE DELIVERY

Within the architecture, the platform is really the code base, configurations, data, and componentry that needs to be managed on an ongoing basis, whether it be new revisions or integrations, at a site level. With a platform, multiple sites can be managed and delivered through a central, user-visible console, with visibility to the security model and content itself.

SITE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

It's important to think about how you're going to design sites within your platform. You can have the ability to standardize you site via archetypes; whether it be two, three, four or five standard archetypes within your platform. For example, your corporate site might be one archetype versus your blog sites that are another versus transactional sites that are yet another. The key to success here is to architect your platform for repeatability and the service levels that the sites need to support.

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ACCESS AND PROVISIONING

In terms of access to your platform, you need to decide who should have access to what sites or content, and what type of access they should have. Are you going to allow people to edit at a site level or only at a content level? What types of changes will they be allowed to make and what needs to be approved by the center of excellence?

How will third-party partners work with your platform and center of excellence? Your team will need to determine at what level if any they will be allowed to work within the platform — either at a platform level, site level, or content level — and if so, will they be required to follow an approval process. For instance, if you have an outside agency creating templates and designs for branding, what is the process for those being put into the platform theme library and how will they be made available to the different sites? This type of thinking is an example of a process that can be put in place, governed, and automated through the center of excellence.

Your center of excellence team members will undoubtedly become the experts in understanding all of your digital applications including branding sites, transactional sites, and digital marketing sites. The center of excellence will become both the owners of the digital platform as well as the internal advocates for the digital platform.

Their mission is to make sure that they can educate and advocate for the factory approach When we work with organizations, we suggest that they have an introductory session for their teams about this mission. You'll want to explain the processes around creating new sites, updating content, the libraries of site specs, and more, as part of the established governance standards.

Internally and across partners, the center of excellence will want to market the capabilities of the platform, as well as the successes of the platform, and be able to support these communications with a messaging platform to keep the organization informed and the center of excellence ingrained in the organization's culture.

ASSESSING AVAILABILITY ISSUES

Before you adopt a digital site platform as part of your governance strategy, you must first assess the availability issues that you have in your current systems.

That will translate into what type of infrastructure services that need to be available, how agile these need to be, the overall site performance capacity needs, and the storage and scale for different regions at various levels. You should also identify security standards or current risks to outline platform requirements for security and reliability.

To evaluate the multisite governance and delivery needs for your future platform, assess any current site or content management system duplication across your various brands and regions.

This translates into how reusable and extensible you need your sites to be on your platform. Evaluate how difficult and time consuming it is for your teams to deliver and manage sites across channels today.

You'll want to make this process as automated, efficient and fast as possible so you can deliver multiple sites and applications across brands, regions, and channels seamlessly.

As you evaluate your current systems and needs, you'll begin to make a requirements document for multisite delivery and governance y that you can start to think about in terms of your required capabilities around the platform and site management.

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Acquia Cloud Site Factory®

ACQUIA CLOUD SITE FACTORY

Building a digital factory platform that manufactures, delivers, and runs all of your company's digital sites and governs content delivery will provide IT with a central view of your organization's digital experiences globally; this also enables digital marketers to roll out new experiences and site updates faster and more efficiently than before.

Acquia Cloud Site Factory is our digital site platform for multisite delivery and governance as well as our approach to digital governance. Our digital factory-ready approach allows organizations to easily put their own center of excellence in place with capabilities to support an assembly line, delivery, and operational organization.

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This is the platform that will give digital platform owners the visibility, trust and control they need to visualize all of the digital experiences within their organization; deliver new sites or changes to existing sites; and reuse content across all the sites.

Our platform gives digital IT teams a scalable infrastructure that they can use for one or more brands; separate stacks within the platform can support multi-brand or multi-region management should you want to govern any of these digital properties separately while still maintaining central visibility. This platform factory approach brings teams together and standardizes the platform and the approach; thus lowering the complexity and increasing knowledge sharing throughout the organization enabled by a top-down governance approach.

Transformation requires two parts: the factory approach and automation. The factory approach is the foundational framework, behavior, and culture both technically and organizationally. It encompasses adoption and the organizational requirements within your IT digital team to keep your factory operating smoothly; this entails the roles and responsibilities of the digital factory team including assembly, delivery, operations, and governance.

Automation is the platform technology which we call the “site factory.” This is made up of all the non-human components of the factory including the Shared Drupal CMS Distribution, the Management Console, the Management Application, the Cloud PaaS, and Stacks for enabling groups of sites to be spun off from multiple codebases.

It’s important to note that unlike the factory approach, there is less flexibility on the automation approach as there are few substitutes for many of the required technology components of the digital factory as described below.

COMPONENTS OF THE DIGITAL FACTORY

Acquia Cloud Site Factory provides the fastest way to deliver and govern digital sites at global scale. Site Factory is the digital factory automation for you to create your own digital factory. Site Factory contains:

1. Site Factory Shared Drupal CMS Distribution

A Drupal CMS distribution is a configured Drupal CMS containing a core platform, selected integration modules, and deployment of specific configurations. Acquia Lightning is an Acquia provided Drupal distribution for customers to use as a starting digital platform. The Digital Factory governance and assembly teams can start with Lightning as a baseline and add their company specific components, configurations, and requirements, to assemble their standard company CMS Distribution. This is "building a platform and not a site," and is a key transformation in becoming a hyper-efficient digital site manufacturer for your organization. The shared CMS distribution is the strategic, factory asset. Each Site Factory customer creates digital sites based on a shared CMS distribution.

2. Site Factory Management Console

The Site Factory management console is the user-friendly interface and front-end application to the Digital Factory. The console user interface provides a factory dashboard for working with sites, users, and administration. The management console is a centralized, browser application that provides a unified view of all digital sites, who in the organization has access to these sites, and reports on sites, users, and digital applications. From the management console, you can also execute all site provisioning and management functions. No longer does the IT or web teams need to build sites. The Site Factory management console and application automatically "builds the sites" just like a factory rapidly assembles and delivers products. Sites are the products of the Site Factory. No complexities and much lower learning curve when the factory builds the sites.

For example, using the management console you can assign role-based profiles for controlling how your digital experience team works with sites.

The standard roles are:

PLATFORM ADMIN

Provides overall responsibility for deployment within Acquia Cloud Site Factory, including management of websites and OpenID accounts

SITE BUILDER

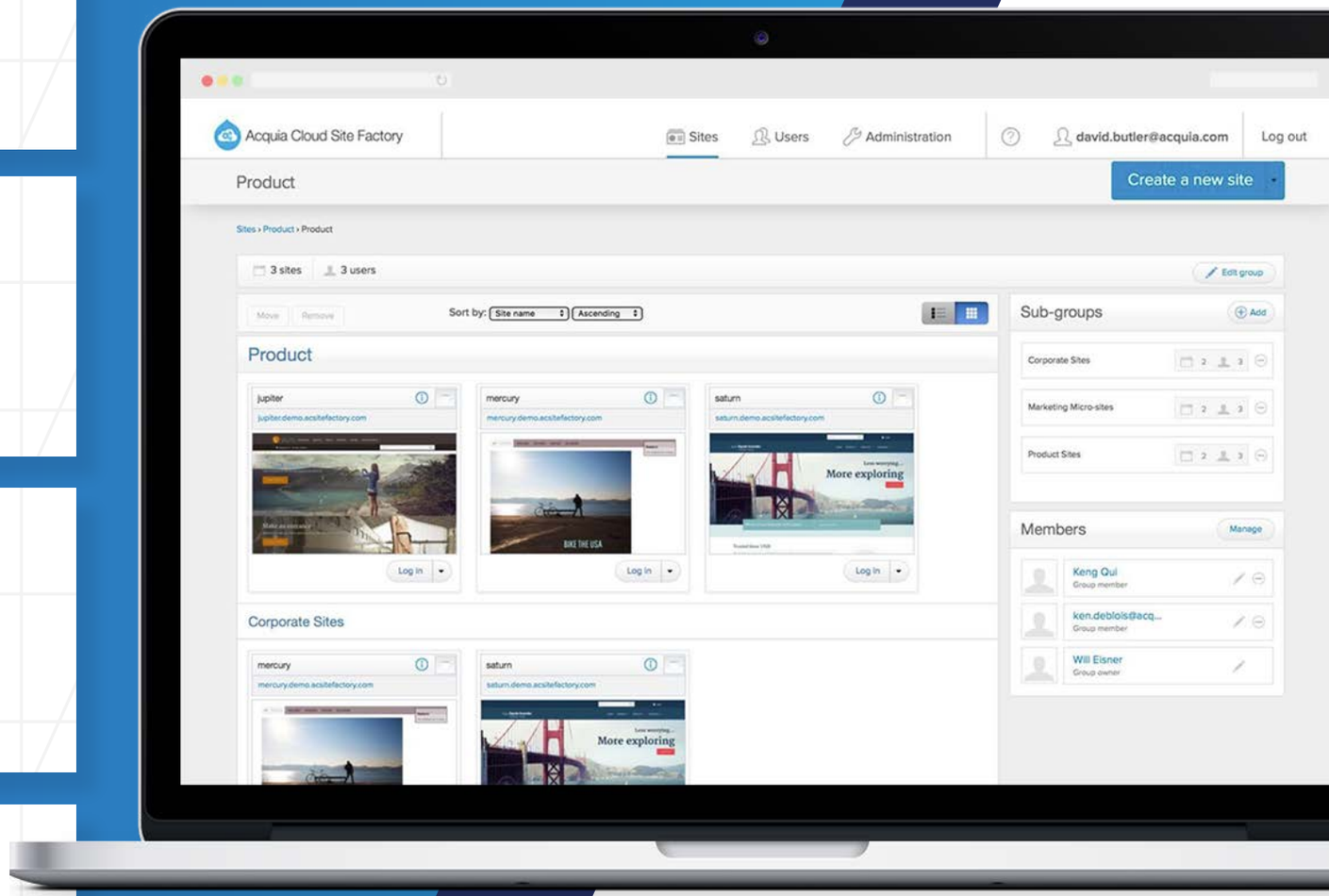
Allows for website and content creation and management

DEVELOPER

Enables updating for PaaS development and staging environments with new and updated code

RELEASE ENGINEER

Grants access to the PaaS production environment for code pushes and updates for status monitoring



3. Site Factory Management Application

Together with the management console, the management application provides the orchestration services for automating creating, copying, cloning, backing up, changing, and securing digital sites. The delivery and operations teams use the Site Factory management console and application as their interface to all the digital experience teams internally and their partners externally.

For example, the management application is pre-built with all of the required delivery and management functions so that even non-technical users can deliver and manage sites.

Here are some of the functions available from the management console:

- ESTABLISH SITE ACTIONS AND ORGANIZATION
- ORGANIZE YOUR WEBSITES, COLLECTIONS, AND GROUPS
- CREATE SITES AND SITE GROUPS
- MANAGE SITE GROUPS
- CREATE SITE COLLECTIONS
- MANAGE SITE GROUP USERS
- FIND SITES WITH FILTERS
- MANAGE SITES ON A CLUSTER
- DUPLICATE A SITE
- DELETE A SITE
- BACK UP SITES
- RESTORE A SITE FROM A BACKUP

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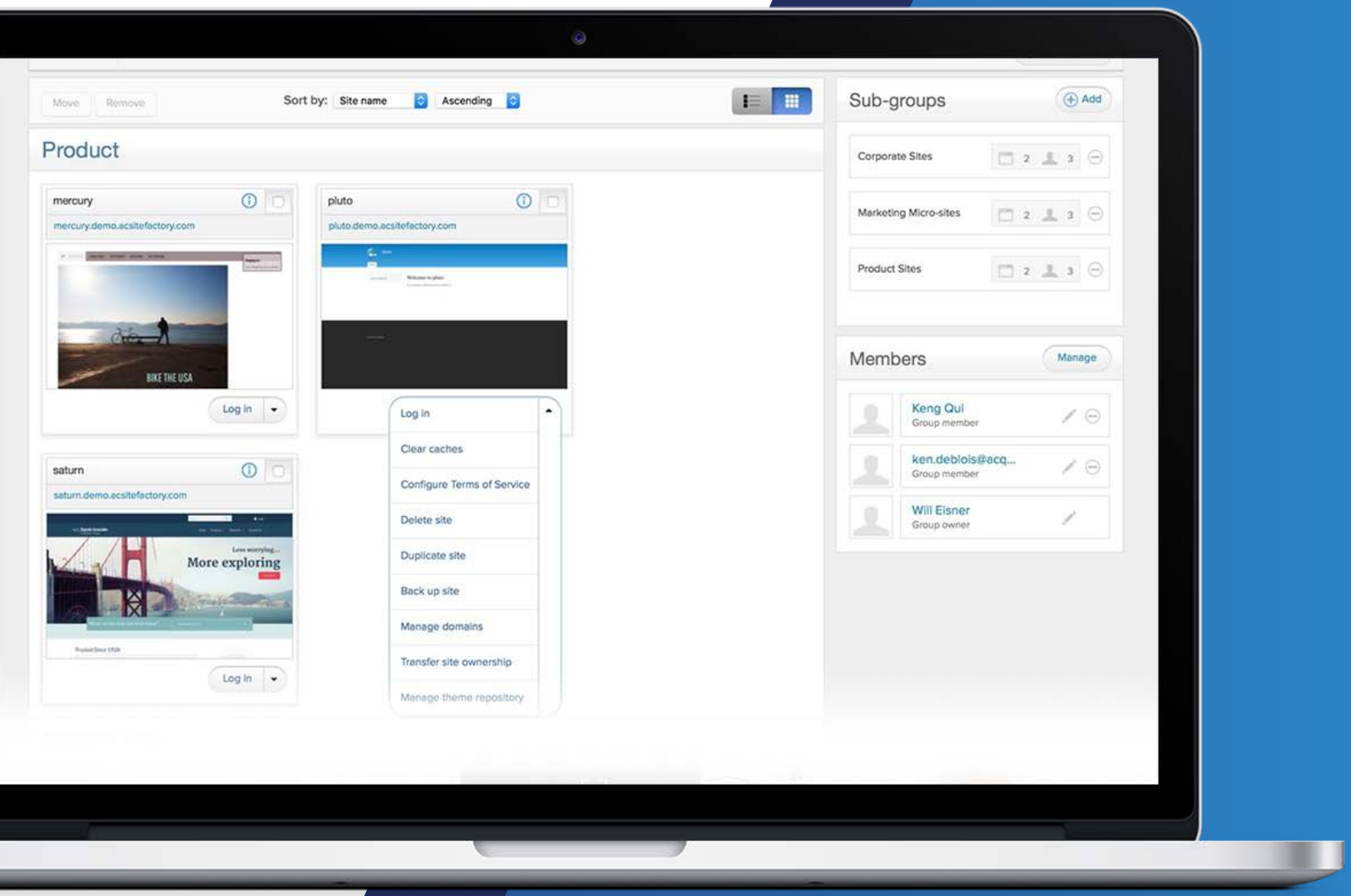

TRANSFER SITE OWNERSHIP

REFRESH WEBSITE THUMBNAIL IMAGES

SET THE TERMS OF SERVICE STATEMENT

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4. Site Factory Cloud Service Management

The operations team becomes a trusted and automated site service provider using the built-in cloud service management automation based on the Acquia Cloud Platform-as-a-Service.

The Digital operations team does not need to configure infrastructure to power their site and digital experience deployments. Site Factory runs based on capacity needs across the number of sites and is easily optimized for specific digital deployments. This is the power system of the factory. Acquia provides the entire service.

Acquia provides the entire service. For example, the service management provides each Factory:

AUTOMATED CLOUD MONITORING

Provides high-availability hosting and monitoring infrastructure across multiple web servers, with Varnish caching and replicated database servers.

PROVISIONING ENVIRONMENTS

Automates development, staging, and production Site Factory platform deployments.

SLA-DRIVEN, MANAGED SERVICES

Operations team on call 24/7 to test your website and keep it up-to-date with relevant updates and security patches.

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5. Site Factory Stacks

A Site Factory Stack contains a complete factory including the Site Factory-ready Drupal CMS Distribution, the Acquia Cloud PaaS, and dedicated cloud infrastructure resources. The delivery and operations team needs flexibility and control when:

- **Supporting the digital needs of global organizations**
- **Ensuring IT compliance and security**
- **Optimizing the CMS distribution for specific digital experiences and applications such as: branding, commerce, and customer service**

The Site Factory management console makes it easy for delivery and operations teams to centrally provision and manage all sites across multiple Site Factory Stacks, even when deployed in different cloud regions.

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CONTENT SYNDICATION, GOVERNANCE, AND SITES

For organizations that want to extend site governance into content governance, they can use Acquia Lift's content syndication functionality together with Site Factory automation.

Acquia Lift gives organizations the ability to manage and update all content within their network, and distribute content out to relevant sites across the network. This enables the IT digital platform team to control content consistency and maintain governance with automation.

Pairing Acquia Lift content syndication with Site Factory increases efficiencies for building, deploying and updating digital experiences within your organization and across your network, so you can mitigate risk, maintain brand consistency, and easily manage multilingual and/or global sites. Check out our eBook to learn best practices around how to prepare and automate content and site governance.

Site Factory provides digital experience teams with an adoption process and the platform automation to transition from continuing to build ad hoc, unmanaged websites to delivering managed, digital sites as a service to the digital business and marketing teams.

As a result, the IT digital platform team transitions to becoming an IT-managed digital site service provider measured on speed to delivery and overall service level availability. While the digital marketing team becomes site consumers focused on content creation and digital programs that drive business goals.

Together, both teams become experts in controlling the platform and innovating the digital experience. This is the roadmap for hyper efficiency and the foundation for accelerating digital business success.

SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATIONS OF THE FACTORY APPROACH

Using a platform approach, reviewing, approving, prioritizing, and developing new features becomes easier and faster at scale.

Since the platform is centrally managed, any new features and changes can be rolled out instantaneously to the entire platform based on the organization's governance standards.

This can include incremental improvements to existing features, addition of new features and functionality, security and stability updates and also adding new users onto your platform.

NEW FEATURE REQUEST

This is an example of a walkthrough of a new feature request specific to a customer that just was brought onto the platform. They received a request for something new that doesn't exist in the platform.

How did they go about evaluating this request, deciding whether it's right for the platform, and if so, getting it into the platform? It's not an easy task unless you plan for this process in advance. In this example, a new feature request comes in and then the request is reviewed by the center of excellence.

This review process may include asking questions about whether this request is valuable to multiple customers. If it is, you go one direction, if it's not, you may go in the other another.

In reviewing the request if it's valuable to multiple customers, you may need to do a feasibility study and an estimation. You need to think about what adding the feature request will mean to the existing platform. What's the level of effort? What's the cost to the business? After evaluating these different variables, you can validate that business case.

- **If it is not a valid business case, you may want to archive as it could become a valuable business case down the road.**

- **If it is a valid business case, then the request moves into your operations and development team to be prioritized and added to the platform backlog, along with the other activities that are on the list. When that feature request is completed, then it can be deployed to the platform.**

Sometimes, there will be feature requests that are of specific value only to a particular customer. It doesn't make sense to spend the time and money to roll out one-off feature updates to every single site on the platform. By conducting the same type of feasibility study and estimating how much it's going to cost in resources, then you can validate that business case for a single site. Again, if this is not a valid business case after that feasibility study, you'll want to archive it. If it is a valid business case, then it gets prioritized and added to the site backlog.

Note: The site backlog is different from the platform backlog. The platform backlog means that the update will become available to all groups and sites, while the site backlog is applicable to only a specific site.

Once you know which backlog the update should be part of, you can deploy it to the respective platform or site.

CONCLUSION

As organizations continue to grow their digital footprint and create the types of experiences their customers demand, it will be important to adopt a digital site governance strategy and a factory platform to effectively manage all of their brand and regional content, sites and digital experiences, at scale.

Implementing digital site governance does not need to be a daunting task. Remember our approach to governance to help you get started with developing your strategy and platform requirements. The steps are: building a center of excellence that includes identifying and creating a governance team, undergoing creative maturity assessments and developing a site governance model; establishing a digital factory approach to governance consisting of assembly, delivery and operations; implementing your digital site governance approach, automating your factory, identifying the key components of your governance platform and adopting the platform.

These guidelines are just prescriptive, and you can start working on these key steps in any order that makes sense for your organization, but in general, these are the five building blocks to digital site governance.

Now that you understand what digital site governance is, our approach to governance and how to look at governance throughout your organization, you can begin your digital site governance journey on the right path to success.

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