

**Acquia**  
EXPERIENCE DIGITAL FREEDOM

***HOW TO PIVOT  
QUICKLY IN TODAY'S  
DIGITAL ECOSYSTEM***



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Building an adaptable digital experience infrastructure while maintaining strong security and governance

### **IF YOU CAN'T PIVOT QUICKLY, YOU CAN'T COMPETE**

Customers are constantly using new channels and technologies to interact with brands. True competitive advantage rests on a brand's ability to consistently deliver relevant, personalized content and experiences across all relevant channels. To do this, brands need an IT infrastructure that is architected for adaptability: Agile enough to integrate with the growing number of digital channels customers use, and flexible enough to pivot quickly in the future.

### **THE CIO MUST ENABLE THE AGILITY NEEDED TO ENGAGE CUSTOMERS**

In the past, the CIO's role was operational, focused on keeping costs under control while ensuring that business systems were stable and

secure. Today, a CIO's value lies in creating an architecture that makes it simple for the business to take advantage of any technology they might need to engage customers wherever they are.

### **OPEN SOLUTIONS ARE ARCHITECTED FOR ADAPTABILITY**

Platforms built on open source technology are inherently connective, channel-agnostic and feature thousands of prebuilt connections to other widely adopted platforms and solutions. With an open infrastructure, you can seamlessly integrate new channels and technologies without worrying about interoperability. Open systems are also supported by a thriving community of developers. This means they evolve faster and more effectively than any closed or proprietary system ever could.

### **ACQUIA DRUPAL CLOUD: THE RIGHT CHOICE**

Acquia Drupal Cloud gives you the enterprise functionality needed to pivot quickly without sacrificing security and governance. With Acquia, you don't have the risks that come with the templated and "headless only" solutions at the lower end of the market, and you don't have the costs and inflexibility found with proprietary solutions at the higher end of the market. It's really the best of all worlds.

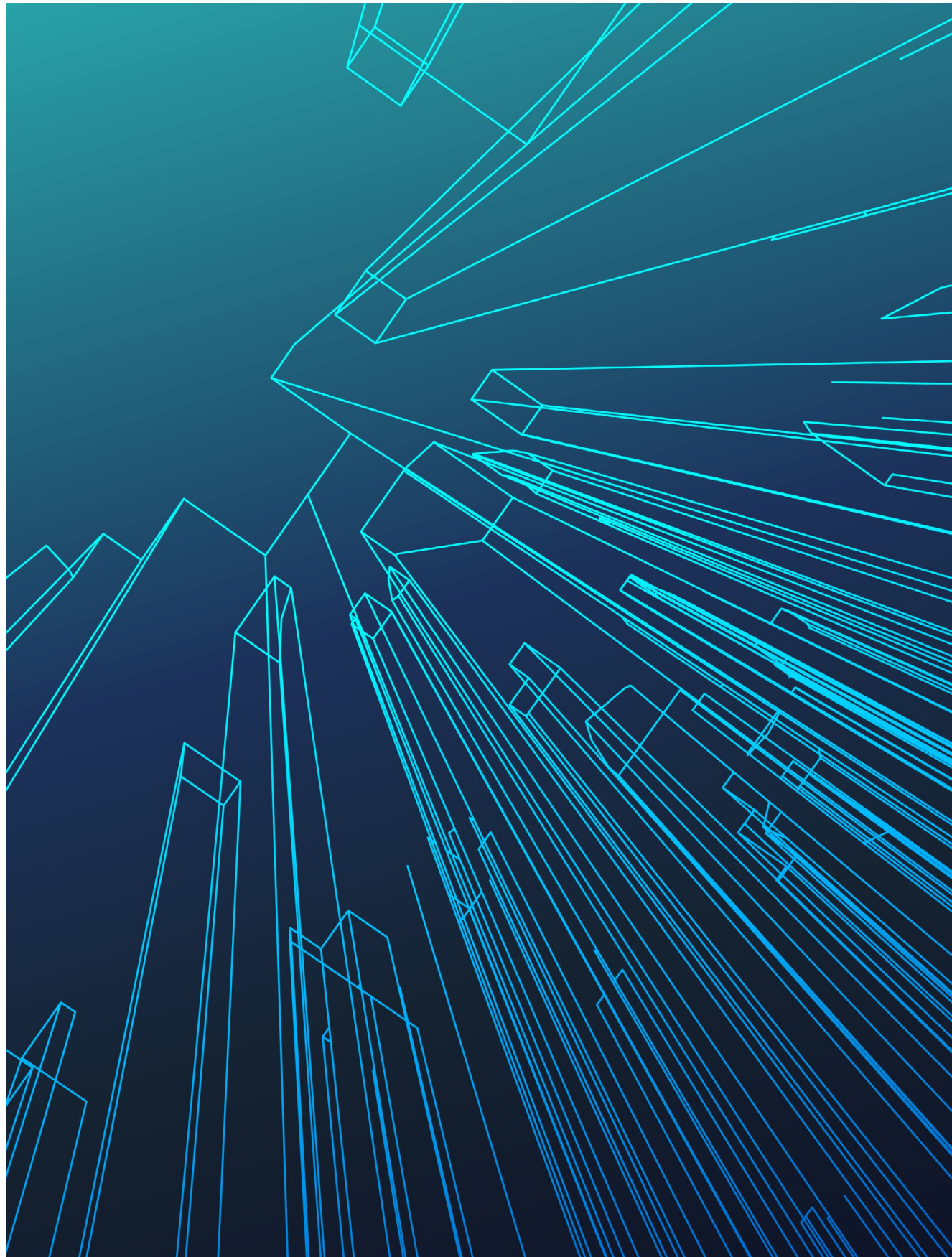
We don't know how many or what kind of channels you will need to interact with customers in the future. We do know that with Acquia, you'll never have to worry about it.

**SECTION 01**

**IS YOUR BRAND  
FUTURE-READY?**

How adaptable is your  
architecture?





# *IS YOUR BRAND FUTURE-READY?*

New digital platforms, devices and experiences emerge at an accelerating pace. Fifteen years passed between the launch of the World Wide Web in 1993 and the launch of the iPhone in 2007. It only took half that time for mobile search to surpass desktop search. Amazon launched Alexa and the Echo in 2014. Within 5 years they had sold 100 million units. It took about the same amount of time for Apple Watch to go from launch to 305 million sold.

Of course, this speed of adoption has been outdone more recently by apps. To cite just one example, TikTok was released in China in 2016 and worldwide in 2018. Less than four years later, it had over a billion users. To put that in perspective, it took Facebook eight years to reach that milestone (though it only took Facebook five years to get their second billion).

There's no telling what technology will take off next – AR? VR? Digital assistants? – but it's easy to see that, whatever it is, it will happen fast.

## ***THE RIGHT DIGITAL ARCHITECTURE***

True competitive advantage depends on a brand's ability to deliver relevant, personalized content across any digital channels customers use.

However, delivering personalized experiences has become more complicated. Why? Because buyers move from channel to channel and device to device in an unpredictable way. This means that brands face constant challenges when it comes to understanding and responding to the buyer's journey in a timely, relevant way.

***THERE'S NO TELLING WHAT TECHNOLOGY WILL TAKE OFF NEXT, BUT WHATEVER IT IS, IT WILL HAPPEN FAST.***



Buyers may become aware of a product on the web (accessed via a mobile device), do their research across different devices and apps (e.g., social media apps) and then have their first direct interaction with the brand through a chatbot. The customer must feel like each interaction informs the next and that the brand hasn't forgotten who they are just because they switched channels. Frankly, customers find it jarring when the experience is inconsistent from one channel to the next.

In order to meet customers where they are on all of their preferred channels, brands need the right digital architecture. Specifically, brands need a digital architecture that is agile enough to integrate with the growing number of digital channels customers use as well as flexible enough to pivot in the future.

In other words, brands need a digital architecture that is architected for adaptability.



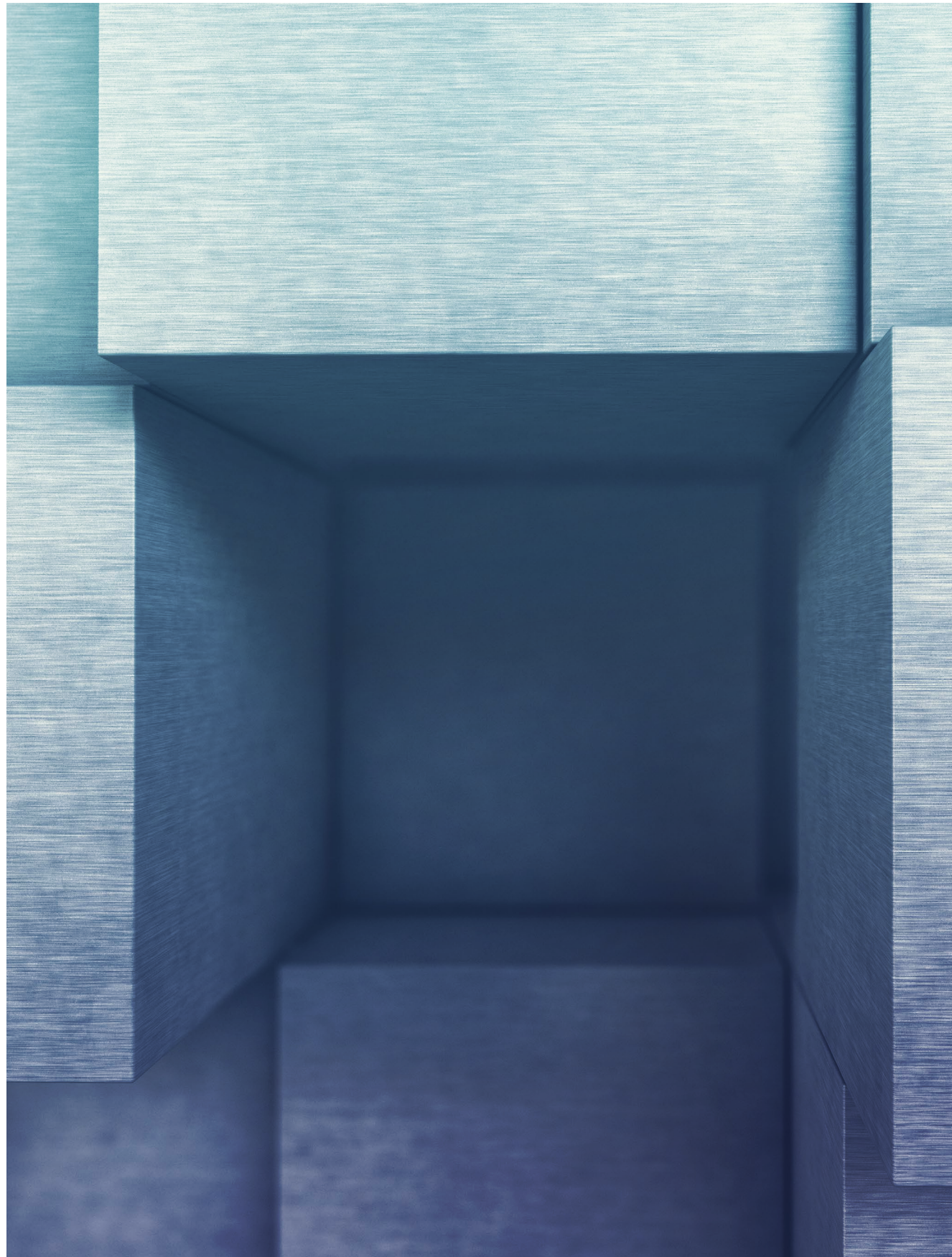
**SECTION 02**

**A CIO'S  
TRUE VALUE**

What CIOs must now bring  
to the table.







# A CIO'S TRUE VALUE

## **THE PROPRIETARY BALL AND CHAIN**

Many companies still rely on proprietary vendors for their digital experience stack; that is, all the technologies used to create, support and analyze digital interactions with customers. Unfortunately, proprietary technology simply can't provide brands with the flexibility necessary to adapt to all the new, emerging channels and modalities customers use. This is because proprietary systems are not architected for adaptability.

Proprietary platforms often lock organizations into a set of channel-specific solutions (email, web, social, etc.). Although companies may already have point solutions focused on some of this functionality, you must "buy the stack" if you want your solutions to interoperate.

Inevitably, IT leaders get stuck trying to integrate a tangle of these channel-specific solutions. This takes time and resources, so they often don't have time to plan for what's next. New channels aren't adopted as quickly, if at all. As a result, the digital experience suffers because the brand can't meet customers where they are.

### **THE CHANGING ROLE OF THE CIO**

Traditionally, CIOs managed a handful of monolithic solutions, such as email marketing platforms or CRMs from proprietary tech vendors (Oracle, IBM, Adobe, etc.) that took care of predictable business processes. The CIO's role was effectively operational, focused on keeping costs under control while ensuring that business systems were stable and secure.

However, the times are changing quickly. CIOs must now drive the strategic adoption of applications and technologies that foster innovation. Doing that means creating an infrastructure that makes it simple for the business to adopt any technology it might need to engage customers everywhere.

## ***OPEN SOLUTIONS: ARCHITECTED FOR ADAPTABILITY***

If you can't adapt, you can't pivot. If you can't pivot, you can't compete. Bad digital experiences mean that customers go elsewhere, revenue declines and the most talented employees jump ship.

Maintaining competitive advantage begins with a new approach to digital experience technology. Brands must pivot away from closed, proprietary systems and embrace open, extensible ones. If they don't, they risk being left in the dust by competitors who do.

## ***OPEN SOLUTIONS EMPOWER YOU TO PIVOT QUICKLY AND EFFICIENTLY***

Platforms built on open source technology are inherently connective, channel-agnostic and have thousands of prebuilt connections to other widely adopted platforms and solutions. With an open infrastructure, you will be able to seamlessly integrate new channels and technologies without worrying about interoperability, meaning you will always be able to adopt new technologies fast.



Open systems are also supported by a thriving community of developers. They evolve faster and more effectively than any closed or proprietary system ever could. Plug-ins and integrations for new channels and technologies are constantly being created, so you can easily adopt whatever you need to pivot and meet customers on their preferred channels.

As the world rapidly changes, which do you think is best suited to help you stay competitive? A proprietary, channel-specific architecture that's been closed for all of its history? Or a modular, extensible ecosystem that's been open since day one?

***BAD DIGITAL EXPERIENCES  
MEAN THAT CUSTOMERS  
GO ELSEWHERE, REVENUE  
DECLINES AND THE MOST  
TALENTED EMPLOYEES  
JUMP SHIP.***



**SECTION 03**

**YOU DON'T HAVE  
TO WAIT**

Anyone can adopt an  
open approach.





# *YOU DON'T HAVE TO WAIT*

You might be thinking, “That sounds great. I want this agility and I need to be future-ready, but we’ve already invested in our current setup and have signed agreements with our vendors.”

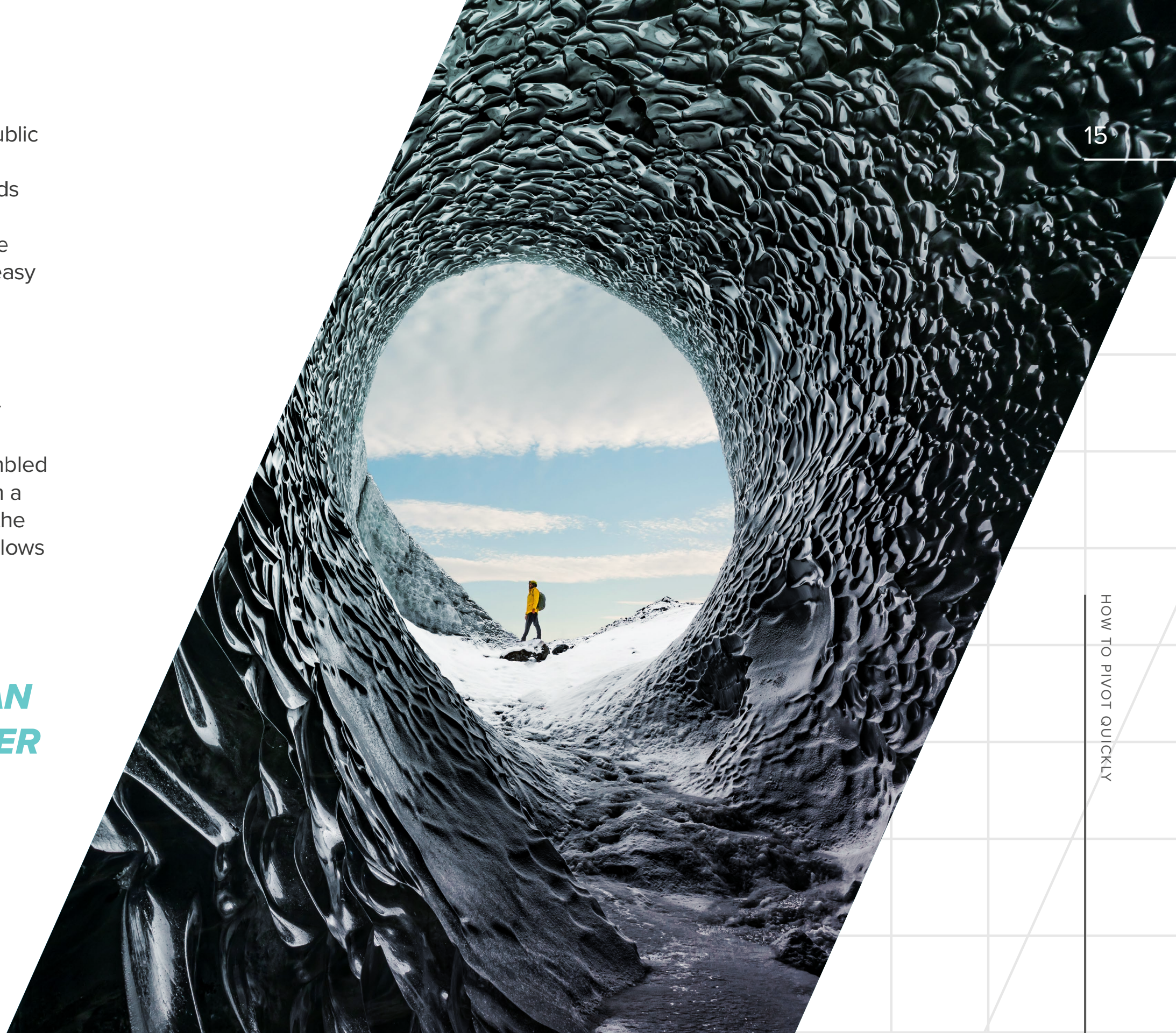
No matter where you are in your IT journey, whether your organization is built on decades of legacy technology or you’re a young enterprise looking for the most optimal, cost-effective solutions, you can begin embracing the power of open today. Thanks to their built-in interoperability, you can quickly integrate open, API-first solutions into your existing infrastructure.

Maybe some of the proprietary solutions you have are perfectly suited for your purposes. The good news is that there’s no need to rip and replace anything. Open solutions allow you to create an ecosystem that supports what you’re using now while providing a future-ready architecture that can evolve to fulfill every new customer expectation.

For example, let's say you host applications on a public cloud, with Salesforce as your CRM and a legacy .NET CMS. You have a new campaign site that needs to launch but the timeline isn't feasible due to the integration work required, not to mention the simple fact that proprietary vendors don't always make it easy to move your content and data.

This would be a perfect opportunity to explore the benefits and speed that open source can provide. With open source, there are prebuilt connectors for Salesforce CRM, there are modules to deliver to a conversational interface, and content can be assembled through a series of components, not extracted from a single web page. The interoperability of open and the ability to dynamically assemble new experiences allows you to pivot quickly.

***NO MATTER WHERE YOU ARE  
IN YOUR IT JOURNEY, YOU CAN  
BEGIN EMBRACING THE POWER  
OF OPEN TODAY.***



**SECTION 04**

***THE FOUR  
MAIN CHOICES***

Choose your digital experience infrastructure wisely.





# *THE FOUR MAIN CHOICES*

When building out your digital experience infrastructure, you essentially have four options to choose from.

## **1. PROPRIETARY VENDORS**

Proprietary vendors may seem like the safe choice based on their market presence, but their design and business model put real limits on organizational agility and adaptability.

Proprietary vendors often intentionally make it difficult to integrate tools outside of their own stack. When these vendors fold in new channels, they do it in an ad hoc, patchwork way. That means that in order to adapt and pivot themselves, they either have to spin up a team of developers (which takes time) to build the new functionality, or they have to purchase existing solutions and stitch them into their existing toolset.

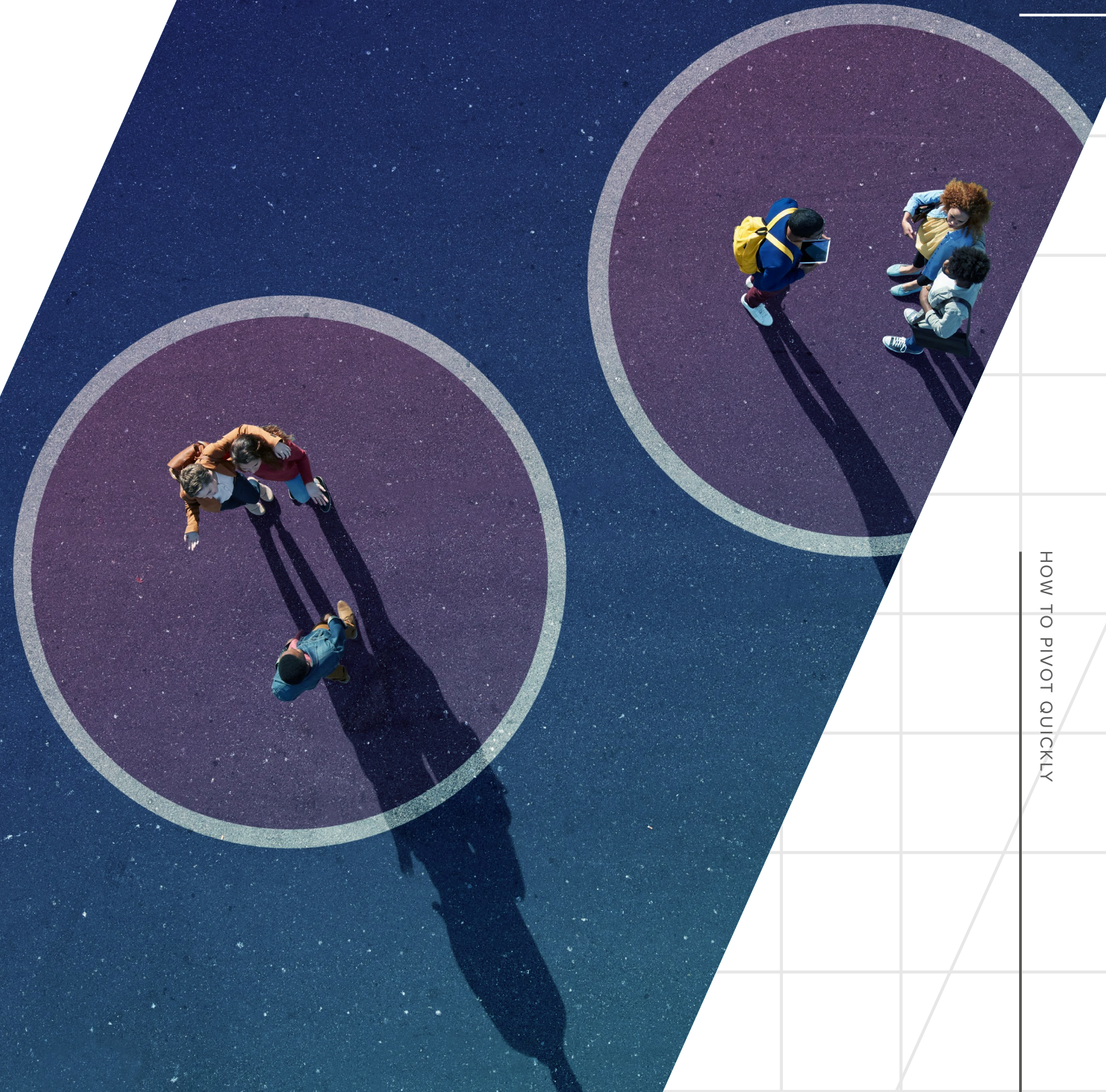
These integrations aren't seamless and often don't perform optimally. Due to the limits inherent to these solutions, your own ability to pivot suffers and time to market for new digital initiatives slows down. And not for nothing, the proprietary option happens to be the most expensive.

## **2. TEMPLATED DIGITAL EXPERIENCE BUILDING TOOLS**

On the other end of the spectrum you have emerging, templated digital experience building tools that are generally easy and inexpensive to set up. These platforms are open and do indeed provide speed to market. They are also relatively simple to use and far less expensive than proprietary vendors.

However, the low sticker price comes with its own constraints. There is a limit to how complex your infrastructure can grow with these solutions. This means that you can't reliably add all the tools and features you may need in the future.

As the complexity of your digital infrastructure increases, these platforms will undoubtedly create a host of security risks and governance issues as well, since you won't be able to adopt more sophisticated security and governance tools. For an enterprise-level organization, this type of set-up simply won't suffice.



### **3. HEADLESS CMS PLATFORMS**

The CMS market has seen the emergence of “headless CMS” platforms over the past five years. They were designed to help organizations deploy content across multiple digital channels, not just the web. Headless CMS platforms put the power back into the hands of developers with a flexible framework so companies can deploy content on any digital channel that’s viable today, and whatever comes next.

However, headless CMS platforms require a mature development organization and a defined strategy, and they have a very limited experience for marketers and non-technical users. The vast majority of headless deployments have failed to meet expectations in terms of adoption, security, governance and general ROI. What most organizations need is a combination of the flexibility a headless CMS provides, the ease of use a marketer needs and worry-free enterprise security.



#### **4. THE SWEET SPOT: ACQUIA DRUPAL CLOUD**

Acquia gives you the enterprise functionality, security and governance you need to pivot quickly and effectively.

Backed by an ever-expanding community of Drupal developers, Acquia adds robust features and capabilities faster than any closed platform can, greatly expediting time to value and time to market. Integrations are seamless and not limited to any proprietary stack. You can use whatever tools you need in a best-of-breed approach.

With Acquia, you don't have the risks that come with the lower end of the market, and you don't have the costs and inflexibility of the higher end of the market. It's truly the best of all worlds.



**SECTION 05**

**PREPARE  
TO PIVOT**

Always be ready for  
the “next big thing”



# *PREPARE TO PIVOT*

Technology comes at you fast, and empowered customer preferences change as fast as technology. Ask yourself: A year or two ago, when everyone understood the importance of evolving from Facebook and Twitter to Instagram, had you even heard of TikTok?

We don't know what kind of channels you will need to use to interact with your customers in the future, or how many. But with Acquia, we know you'll never have to worry about it.

Built on Drupal open source technology, Acquia is inherently connective, channel-agnostic and has thousands of prebuilt connections. We leverage the integrations available in the Drupal community to provide a flexible, open architecture that is designed for emerging channels.

This approach gives brands the freedom to choose tools that suit their needs, integrate systems quickly and easily adopt “the next big thing.” What’s more, the wide availability of tools saves time and money that would otherwise have to be spent on developing custom integrations or workarounds.

If you’re already far along in your journey, Acquia can plug right into your strategy. If you’re in the early stages, Acquia can help set you down that right path.

***YOU OWE IT TO YOURSELF,  
AND YOUR CUSTOMERS, TO  
UNLOCK THE POWER OF OPEN.***



# ***GET FUTURE- READY***

Pivot and adapt to whatever the future holds with an open architecture.

***LEARN MORE*** ▶



# Acquia

ACQUIA.COM

## **ABOUT ACQUIA**

Acquia is the open digital experience platform that enables organizations to build, host, analyze and communicate with their customers at scale through websites and digital applications. As the trusted open source leader, we use adaptive intelligence to produce better business outcomes for CX leaders.

