

Acquia

# The DAM Evaluation Toolkit

Your path to the right DAM solution



- 01 How you got here
- 02 Why a DAM solution?
- 03 How DAM fits into your technology ecosystem
- 04 Lay the groundwork
- 05 Try before you buy
- 06 Finding the right fit

01

# How You Got Here



If you're reading this toolkit, at some point you realized that there had to be a better way to manage your digital assets. Perhaps you're sick of the scavenger hunt that ensues every time you need to find marketing materials. Or, you're frustrated with the lack of control you have over your brand and its narrative. You're running fast — but are you and your teams actually moving forward? There's just so much to iron out. Your creative and marketing workflows could be better. Your sales teams need more support. And the list goes on and on.

The good news? You aren't alone. In fact, these little hiccups or pain points are signs that your business is growing and maturing. Now, you just need to figure out which digital asset management (DAM) solution and partner can help take you where you need to go.

02

# Why A DAM Solution?



Before you start looking at DAM solutions, take the time to understand why your organization wants one in the first place. You and your team should be clear about exactly what you want to accomplish with DAM before you hit the ground running.

A great way to identify your DAM goals is by asking the people who will eventually use the solution about what's most important to them.

---

Sample questions to ask future users

What are the biggest challenges you face with your digital assets?

What are your must-haves versus nice-to-haves for a DAM solution?

Where and how do you locate digital assets today?

What other technologies are you using that would benefit from connecting with the DAM system?

Who needs access to what groups of digital assets? For example, which teams need final versus working video files?

What does your current asset workflow look like? How can DAM software support or improve that workflow?

Once you've talked to future users about what they want to accomplish with DAM, write down the goals that people agree are most important.

---

Examples of common top goals

Automate manual tasks and streamline workflows to help teams work more efficiently

Share content across teams and locations with ease

Improve ability to search and find approved assets for brand consistency

Quickly adapt materials for local audiences, so it's easier to sell to customers

Centralize product and image content to empower sales teams

Control access to brand assets so your brand is secure and protected from misuse

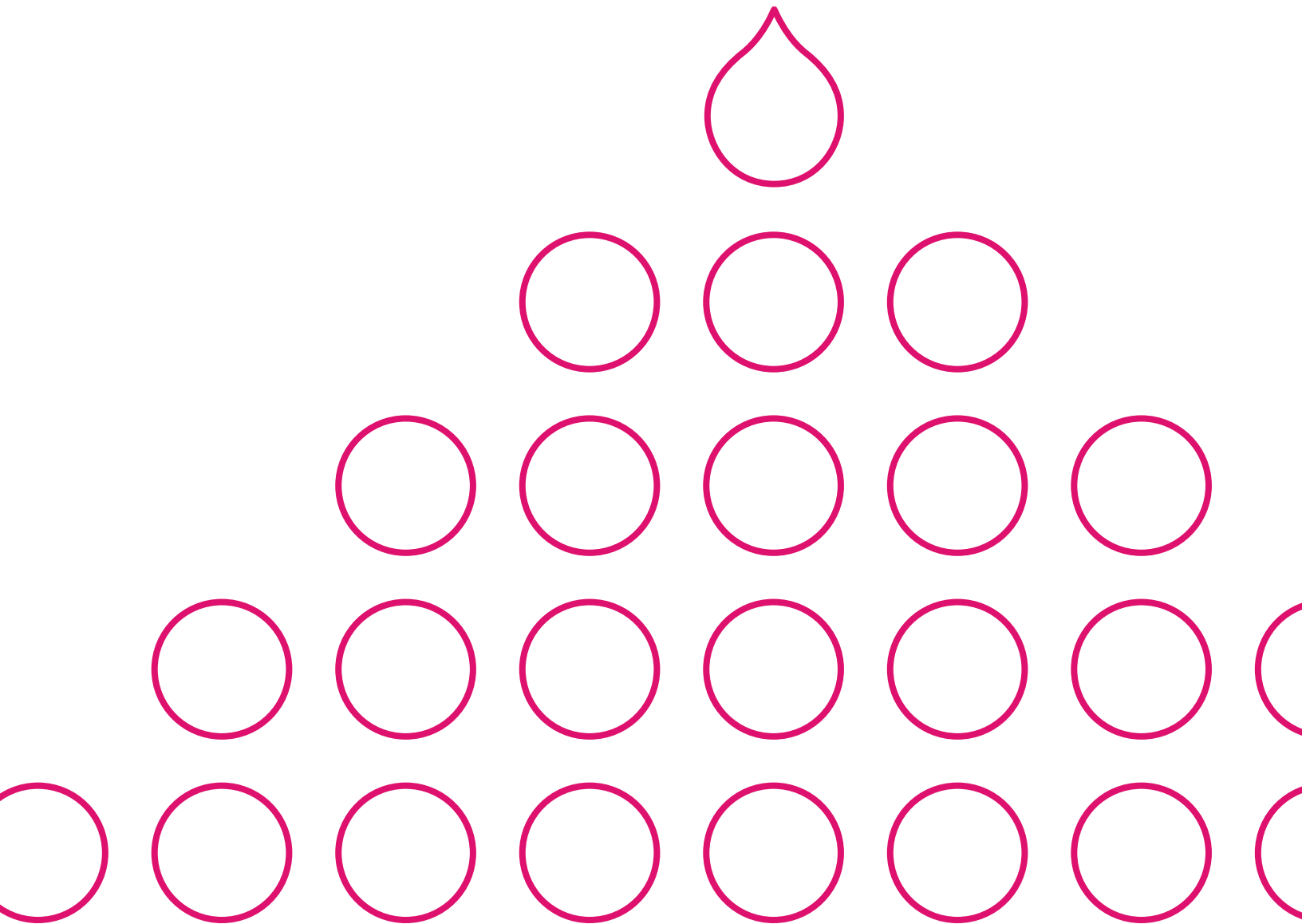
Use your list of top goals to inform your DAM use cases and requirements. Ultimately these are the factors that you will use during the purchasing process to evaluate how different software options stack up against each other. Just remember, well-rounded requirements include technical necessities, but they also incorporate human characteristics — like exceptional support — that you need from your DAM partner.

Requirement	Level of necessity
Cloud-based/SaaS	Must-have
Automatic file conversions	Must-have
File versioning	Must-have
Flexible metadata	Must-have
Great customer support	Nice-to-have
Multiple sharing options	Nice-to-have
Asset analytics	Nice-to-have
Image tagging via artificial intelligence (AI)	Nice-to-have



03

# How DAM Fits Into Your Technology Ecosystem



The right DAM solution will easily integrate with the tools you already use and love. A DAM integration can supercharge your operations by making it easy to share data across systems, eliminate duplicate efforts, and boost productivity.

Define which integrations are non-negotiable for your organization.

---

Common categories to integrate with a DAM solution

With tech-savvy people on your team, you can integrate tools yourself through use of an application programming interface (API). Ask vendors for their API documentation. It should be readily available and easy to understand.

Marketing automation

Collaboration

Creative and editing

Customer relationship management (CRM)

E-commerce

File sharing and storage

Online video

Product information management (PIM)

Project management

Sales enablement

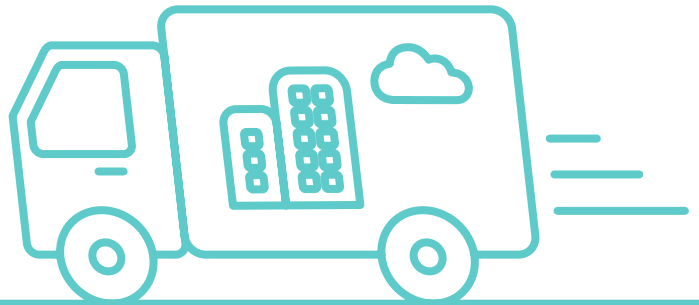
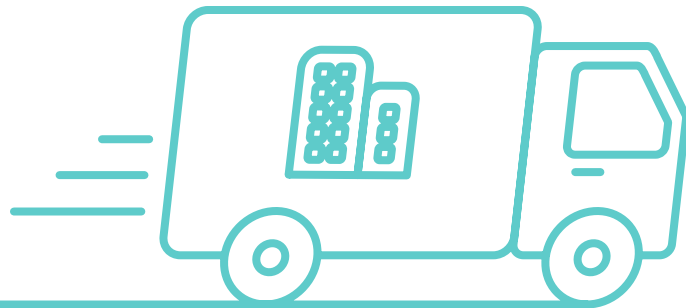
Social media management

Web content management (WCM)

AI auto tagging

04

# Lay The Groundwork



Is your organization equipped to manage change? You can easily underestimate the level of change involved in a successful DAM implementation. Getting the right people and information in place is key to fostering a positive buying experience and ensuring your project makes it to the finish line.

Determine which department will “own” your DAM solution, but also put a DAM-evaluation squad in place.

---

DAM-evaluation squad

**Executive sponsor**

Senior leader with buy-in that will secure funding and visibility for the project

Gain support by connecting DAM to C-suite goals and priorities from day one

**Decision-makers**

Team of people who will work together to select your DAM solution

Include stakeholders from varying disciplines in the organization

**Administrator**

Designated “admin” who will maintain the system, train users, and drive user adoption

Assign an admin early to involve them in system decisions and setup

**Champions**

Advocates that will rally support for DAM budget and processes

End users who've experienced DAM challenges firsthand make great champions

Prepare your business case.

Justify how a DAM solution will improve operational and marketing efficiency, drive business results, and generate a positive return on investment (ROI). And as always, keep your audience in mind. Your positioning will look a lot different if you're talking to your executive sponsor versus a day-to-day system user.

Need some tips? Contact a DAM expert to help you understand and articulate how DAM technology can be life-changing for your teams, business, and brand.

Visit [acquia.com/about-us/contact](https://acquia.com/about-us/contact) to directly connect to your DAM expert today!



Learn everything you can  
about the DAM purchase process.

---

Watch industry and vendor webinars

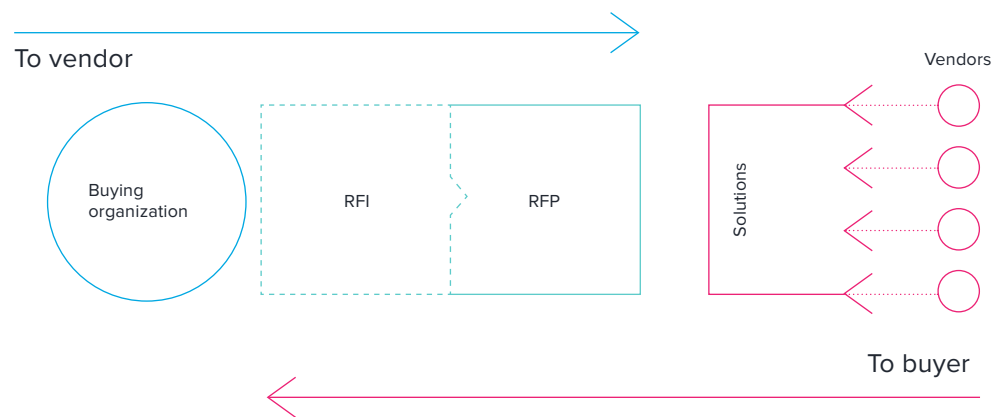
Read case stories, articles,  
and whitepapers about DAM

Talk to DAM experts

Ask your network about  
the DAM solutions they use

Attend vendor and industry conferences  
on DAM and marketing technology

Determine how you will manage the DAM selection process. One way to stay organized and ensure you have all the information you need to make an educated decision is through a request for information (RFI) and/or request for proposal (RFP).

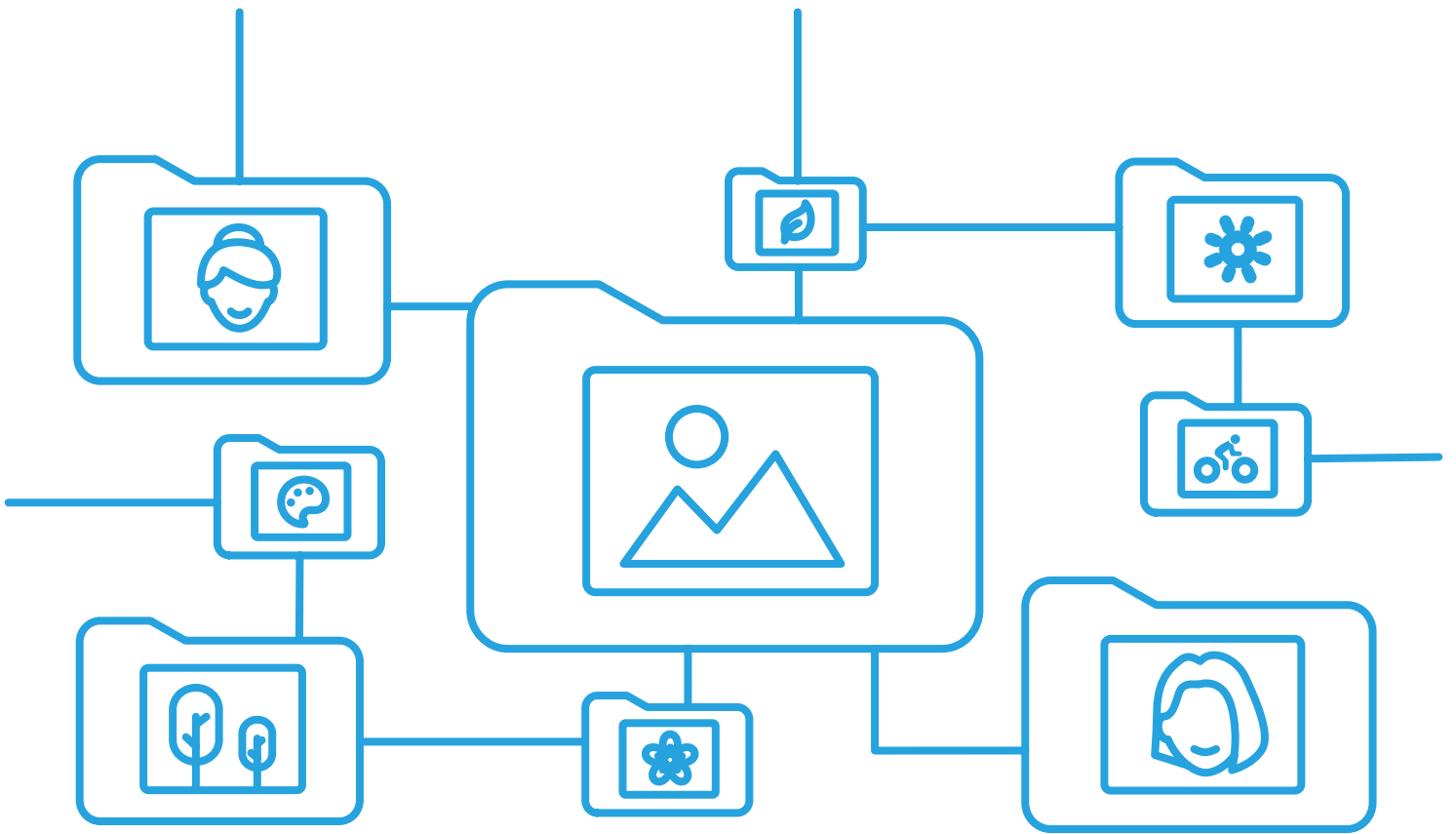


**RFI**  
An exercise that some buying organizations use as a precursor to an RFP to help them confirm research, get answers to high-level questions, and ultimately qualify vendors for an RFP.

**RFP**  
A document that businesses create to help them compare options and identify the most qualified vendor for a project. An RFP outlines a buying organization's requirements and needs and invites qualified partners to respond with solutions and information on how their products and services can help.

05

# Try Before You Buy





In addition to having vendors walk you through a demo of their DAM system, ask them for deeper hands-on access to their software. To start, request a guest pass, or free trial, to test-drive basic functionality and get a feel for the user interface (UI). Then push further with a proof of concept (aka sandbox) so you can test use cases and experience firsthand how the system handles all of your different scenarios.

Remember that list of your DAM goals and requirements? Use it as a litmus test as you try different solutions and decide, with your team, which option helps you best accomplish them. And don't be shy — ask in-depth questions to help you understand the system and how well the vendor will support and partner with you.

Beyond features, look for these quality and capability measures during demos and trial experiences:

Look for the “soft skills” of DAM

As you engage with vendors, pay attention to their sales approach. Is it passive? Pushy? Or are you getting service that’s friendly, personalized, transparent, and strategic? Every interaction is telling of the level of support you’ll receive down the line, so be on the lookout.

Ease of use

Metadata flexibility

Data tracking and reporting depth

Level of automation

Range of integrations and partners

Extent of system configurability

Superior system security and scalability

Leading service and support

Customer success stories

As you gather information through research, demos, trials, and more, it's important to keep your findings organized.

An evaluation scorecard is an objective and systematic way to compile information, evaluate vendor capabilities, and narrow down your options.

---

#### How to use your scorecard

If you answer “no” to either of these questions, the requirement likely does not deserve a spot on your scorecard.

Will the requirement help you reach at least one of the top DAM goals you and your team identified?

Is this requirement unique from any other requirements included? If not, is it the best option between overlapping requirements?

- 1 Start with a blank template. We recommend using one scorecard for the entire exercise, no matter how many vendors you include.
- 2 Determine which vendors to score. Keep the process manageable by only including vendors that you are seriously considering.
- 3 Populate your requirement and level-of-necessity fields. There's no magic number of requirements (10 is common and 100 isn't unheard of), but be diligent in striking a balance between having enough requirements to reach your top DAM goals and eliminating excess.
- 4 Score each vendor against your final requirements. The vendor with the highest score is the one most likely to meet your needs, but you may also want to weigh who best meets your must-have goals and checks the box on any DAM “soft skills.”

Sample scorecard

3 = high potential to meet requirement

2 = mid potential to meet requirement

1 = low potential to meet requirement

Requirement	Level of necessity	Vendor 1	Vendor 2	Vendor 3
Integrates with content management system (CMS)	Nice-to-have	2	1	3
Granular roles and permissions	Must-have	3	2	1
Intuitive user interface	Must-have	2	1	1
File versioning	Must-have	1	2	3
Growth focus (e.g., roadmap visibility)	Must-have	3	1	1
Easy to use API	Must-have	1	1	3
Project proofing	Nice-to-have	2	1	2
Asset analytics	Nice-to-have	3	2	1
Cloud-based/SaaS	Must-have	3	3	2
Great customer support	Nice-to-have	1	1	2
Multilingual platform	Nice-to-have	1	1	2
Demonstrates ROI	Must-have	3	2	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>25</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>22</b>

06

# Finding The Right Fit



Finding the right DAM vendor and solution is not an exact science. Your demos, trials, research, scoring, and other evaluation efforts will lead you down the right path. But before you move forward with a vendor's solution, do one last cross-check.

Validate your search and scorecard results by turning to industry analysts and credible review sites.

[G2 software and services reviews](#) →

[Forrester research](#) →

[Gartner analyst reviews](#) →

[Capterra software reviews](#) →

[Real Story Group](#) →

Also ask yourself if you should weigh any must-have or nice-to-have requirements on your scorecard higher than others. Consider if there are certain DAM soft skills that weren't included in your scorecard that are more of a deciding factor than the separation of a few points. And always come back to that golden question — where do you need your DAM solution to take you?

At Acquia, the sky's the limit. We've helped our clients reach their creative and marketing goals.

Visit [acquia.com](https://acquia.com) to learn more!

To get in touch, [acquia.com/about-us/contact](https://acquia.com/about-us/contact)

**Acquia**

53 State St

Boston, MA 02109

[www.acquia.com](http://www.acquia.com)

**About Acquia**

Acquia empowers the world's most ambitious brands to create digital customer experiences that matter. With open source Drupal at its core, the Acquia Digital Experience Platform (DXP) enables marketers, developers and IT operations teams at thousands of global organizations to rapidly compose and deploy digital products and services that engage customers, enhance conversions and help businesses stand out. Learn more at [acquia.com](http://acquia.com)

The Acquia logo is displayed in a light blue color. It features the word "ACQUIA" in a bold, sans-serif font. The letter "Q" is stylized with a white circular cutout in the center.