How to Prepare for Product Launches With DAM

Organize your content and accelerate time to market with Acquia DAM (Widen)

Acquia

> "Being organized is important because the retailers have spoken: strong product assets are no longer a luxury, they are an expectation."

Martin Hill
Director of Digital Sales at PRADCO Outdoor Brands

Omnichannel marketing is a complex and dynamic endeavor. Creating content to support a cohesive and compelling brand experience across every customer touchpoint requires a clear strategy, cross-team collaboration, and coordinated workflows.

Product content in particular — which is essential for customers making online purchases — needs to be reliable. And with e-commerce sales projected to grow by 50% by 2025[1] it's never been more critical for brands to scale product content creation to keep pace with the demands of digital business.

Acquia DAM (Widen) is a combined digital asset management (DAM) and product information management (PIM) solution that simplifies how brand and product content is organized, accessed, and delivered to market.

This includes creative files for advertising; specs and marketing copy for product pages, video files for social media, sales enablement tools for regional teams, and much more.

In this how-to guide, we take a close look at three features in Acquia DAM (Widen) that help marketers prepare their assets for product launches:

Governance to control content access across a range of stakeholders (page 3)

Portals to curate and share a selection of assets with specific audiences (page 6)

Entries to enrich assets with data and copy and create retail-ready product profiles (page 11)

Together, these capabilities help teams centralize brand and product content, automate workflows, and regulate asset distribution across touchpoints and channels.

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[1]Stephanie Chevalier, "Retail e-commerce sales worldwide from 2014 to 2025," Statista, Feb 4, 2022, https://www.statista.com/statistics/379046/worldwide-retail-e-commerce-sales/.

Organize assets in one system with governance

Governance is the act of controlling access to assets in the DAM system through asset groups, user roles, and permissions. These security settings work together to ensure that every user can only access assets they are authorized to use.

All assets in the DAM system are assigned to one or more asset groups, and all users are assigned to one or more roles. Permissions then dictate how users in each role can interact with content in each asset group. These settings can be configured to accommodate specific business needs — and the options are endless. In the context of a product launch, these settings could be used to help marketers:

- Store training materials for a product that doesn't hit the market until next year

- Ensure outdated product assets aren't available to sales teams, distributors, and dealers

- Control content distribution to global sales teams, so they can only access the collateral and promotions created for their region

Let's take a closer look at this third use case, and how we could configure asset groups, user roles, and permissions to form a basic governance strategy that supports a controlled global product launch.

User roles	Permissions	Asset groups
System administrator	Setting one: Full system control over user administration, metadata creation, asset upload and download, bulk edits, and more	Public assets
Creative team		Americas
Sales team - Americas		Asia Pacific
Sales team - Asia Pacific	Setting two: View, upload, and download	Europe
Sales team - Europe		
	Setting three: View and download	
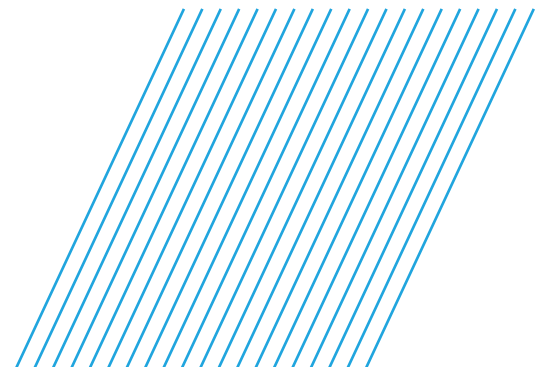
Acquia DAM (Widen) does not limit the number of user roles, asset groups, or permissions that can be created, allowing every customer to build a governance strategy that's tailored to their workflows. This flexibility translates to comprehensive content control.

User roles	Permissions	Assets groups
System administrator	Full system control over user administration, metadata creation, asset upload and download, bulk edits, and more	Public assets Americas Asia Pacific Europe
Creative team	View, upload, and download	Public assets Americas Asia Pacific Europe
Sales team - Americas	View and download	Public assets Americas
Sales team - Asia Pacific	View and download	Public assets Asia Pacific
Sales team - Europe	View and download	Public assets Europe

"We heavily utilize asset groups, we heavily utilize roles, and those two things working together allow us to do these staged rollouts across all of our global subsidiaries."

Jeffrey Krigstein
Integrated Marketing Communications Content Specialist at Canon Medical

With this governance strategy in place, brands can control when and how different regional teams can use specific assets. They can also restrict or expand privileges with a few clicks. This strategy not only simplifies the user experience but also reduces the risk of unauthorized use by ensuring individuals won't stumble upon product content that isn't intended for them or their market.

Enable sales teams with Portals

With an effective governance structure in place, any user that logs in to the DAM system will only be able to access the content they're authorized to see or use. Now let's look at how Portals can make content access even easier.
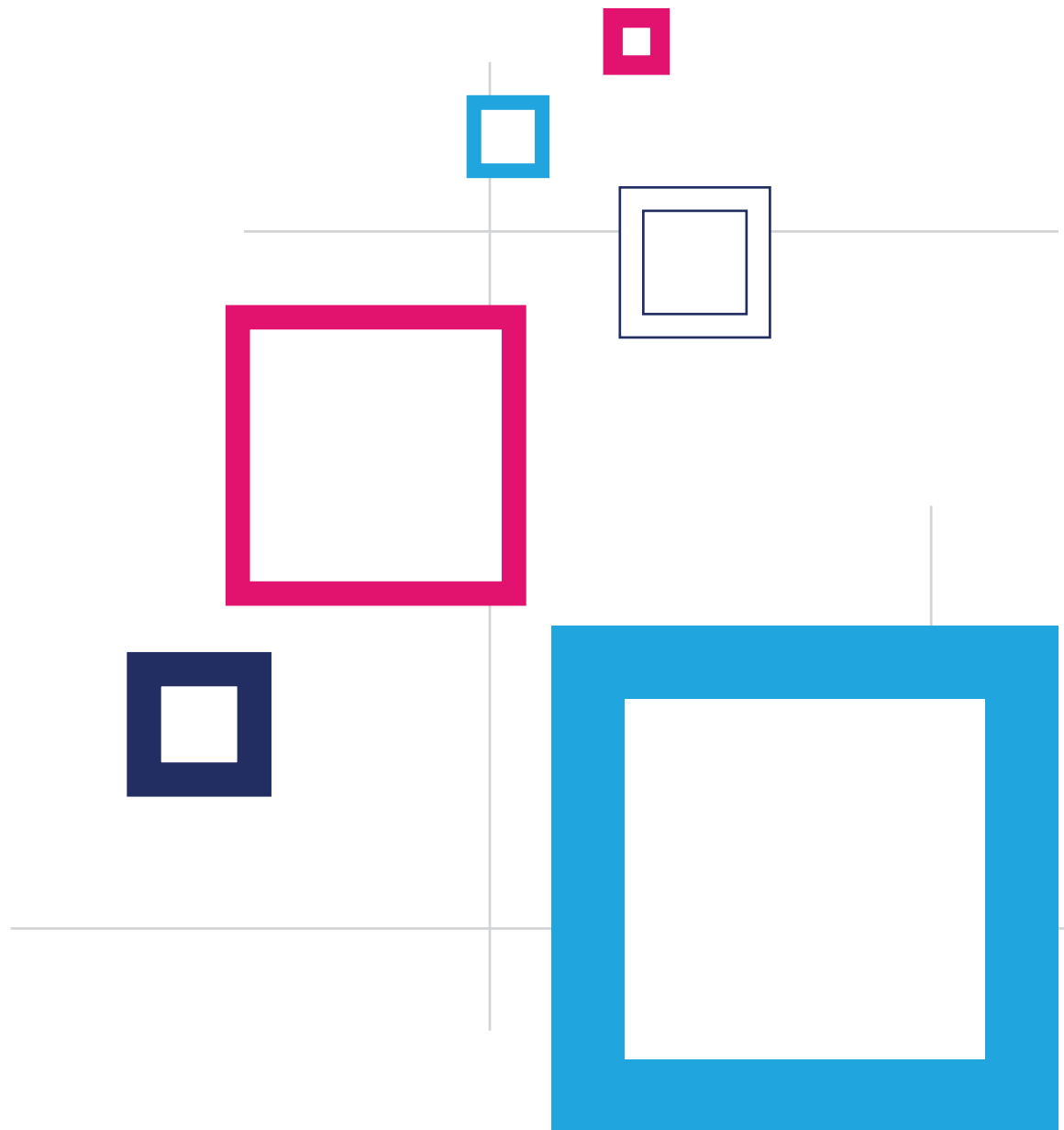
Portals offer a flexible, attractive, and simple way to share content within a branded environment. Each portal is a curated subset of assets that can be accessed via a URL, allowing the content to be securely shared with stakeholders that aren't DAM system users — such as retail partners or dealers. In addition, portals build on the organization and permission structures already established in the DAM system, and can be configured to require an access code for security.

Portals can be nested within each other, so a main portal links out to other portals, or sub-portals. And they have automation functionality, to help ensure that the content is current. For example, when an asset in the DAM system is updated the most recent version of that file is automatically displayed in any portals. And a dynamic gallery, which is a layout option for displaying assets, will automatically populate assets from the DAM system that meet designated search criteria.

While there is a wide range of use cases for portals, here are a few ways they can support a product launch:

- **Marketing operations portals** ensure distributed marketing teams have access to the right assets for their campaigns or trade shows

- **Channel portals** give partners like dealers and retailers access to product-specific assets that support the sales process

- **Sales portals** supply sales teams with the most recent version of collateral and promotional material
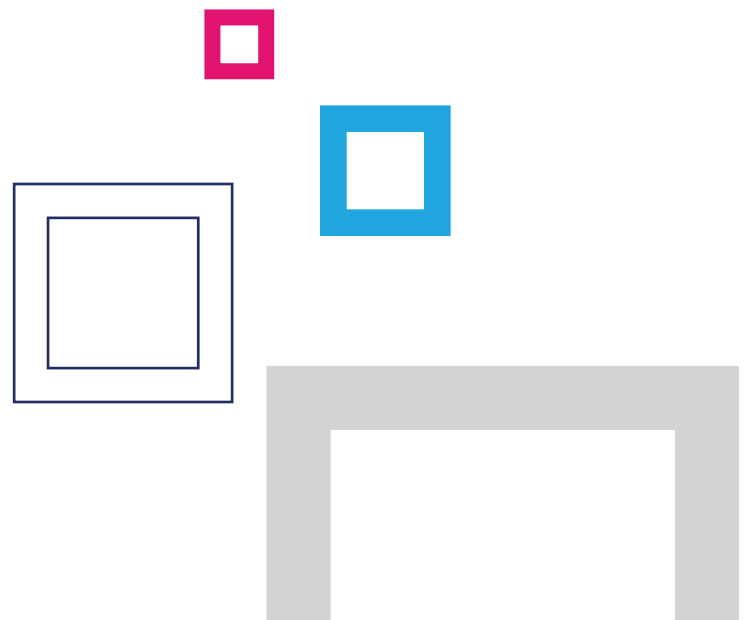
Let's build a sales portal that gives teams all the information they need about a specific product, such as bikes. And let's start with an overview of different portal elements.

The content in every portal is divided into sections. In Acquia DAM (Widen), Standard Portals have two section types: assets or banner sections. Brand Portals also includes color palettes, columns, and video sections.

Sections can be added or moved by dragging and dropping. If there's a section that no longer applies to a portal, it can be deleted by simply clicking the trash can icon.

Within each section, there are several different layout options to choose from. In an assets section, there are featured collections, asset galleries (including dynamic galleries), and collection cards.

Featured collection   **Asset gallery**   **Collection cards**

The settings for each section can be adjusted to control how asset names and metadata are presented, the search and filter options, and the number of assets displayed — as well as sort order.

Let's give our sales portal these four sections:

- **Header**

- **Featured product assets**

- **Pricing information**

- **Entire sales kit**

Header

The **header** will use a banner section to display a large image that helps brand the portal experience.


Featured product assets

Next, for **featured product assets** let's add an asset section. Although asset sections can include up to 5,000 assets, we're going to use it to display just a handful of the most important files for this product. This could include featured photography, the spec sheet, a one pager, and UPCs.
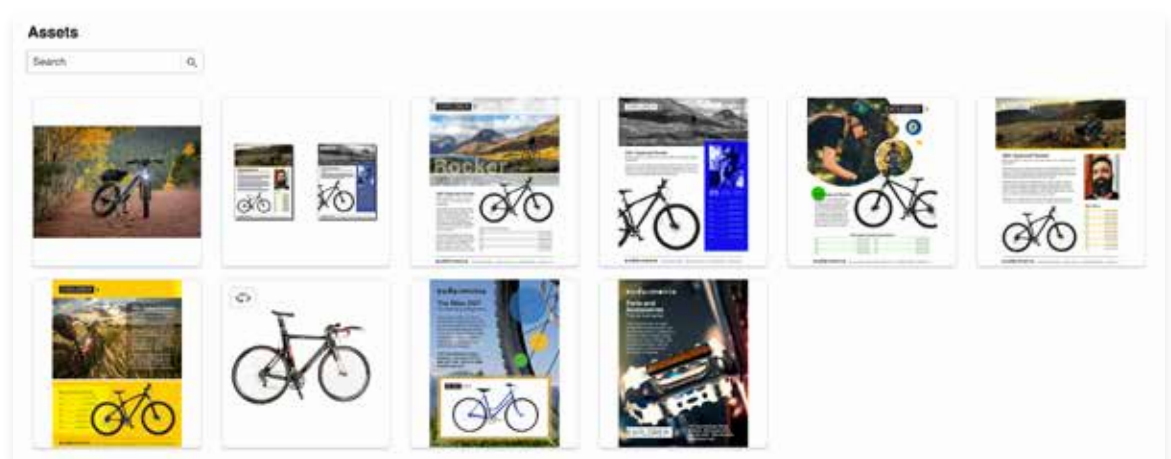
Pricing information

In **pricing information** we're going to house documents with sensitive pricing details. So let's create a sub-portal for this content and require an authentication code to access it. Then, we'll link to this separate portal from an assets section in our main sales portal. When the link is clicked, it will ask for the access code to open the sub-portal, creating an extra layer of security.
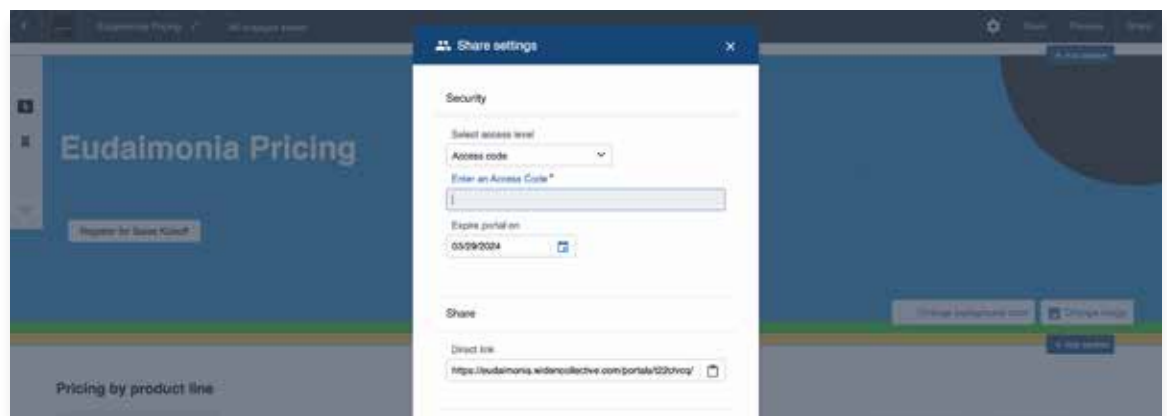
"We knew we needed to serve our distribution network in a better way, and Portals was the obvious choice for that."

Nick Polcyn
Creative Services Leader at
Alliance Laundry Systems

Entire sales kit

And finally, for the **entire sales kit**, let's link to a sub-portal that contains all of the sales kit materials. In addition to the assets highlighted in the kit essentials, this sub-portal could contain dozens of additional assets, including photography, brand logos, packaging files, presentations, resources translated into different languages, and more. Adding filters to this sub-portal will allow the assets to be displayed by file type, color, region, or other criteria.

We could also use dynamic galleries in some sections of this sub-portal to automatically populate assets based on live search results from the DAM system — which will help ensure the most current and relevant content is displayed.

Once the main sales portal is built and the sub-portals are linked, it can be shared by sending the URL via email, posting it to your Acquia DAM (Widen) dashboard, or embedding it on an intranet site or other digital platform. Not only will this streamline content distribution, but it also gives DAM users (and non-users!) secure and easy access to the essential product information they need to accelerate time to market.

Get products retail ready with Entries

Now that we've explored how to use a governance strategy to control content access and portals to simplify sharing, let's look at how Entries can help us prepare our product content for multi-channel distribution.

Product content includes everything from dimensions and descriptions to compelling imagery and short-form videos. Presenting this content accurately and consistently across search-optimized listings helps brands gain customer trust — increasing sales and conversion rates and reducing cart abandonment.
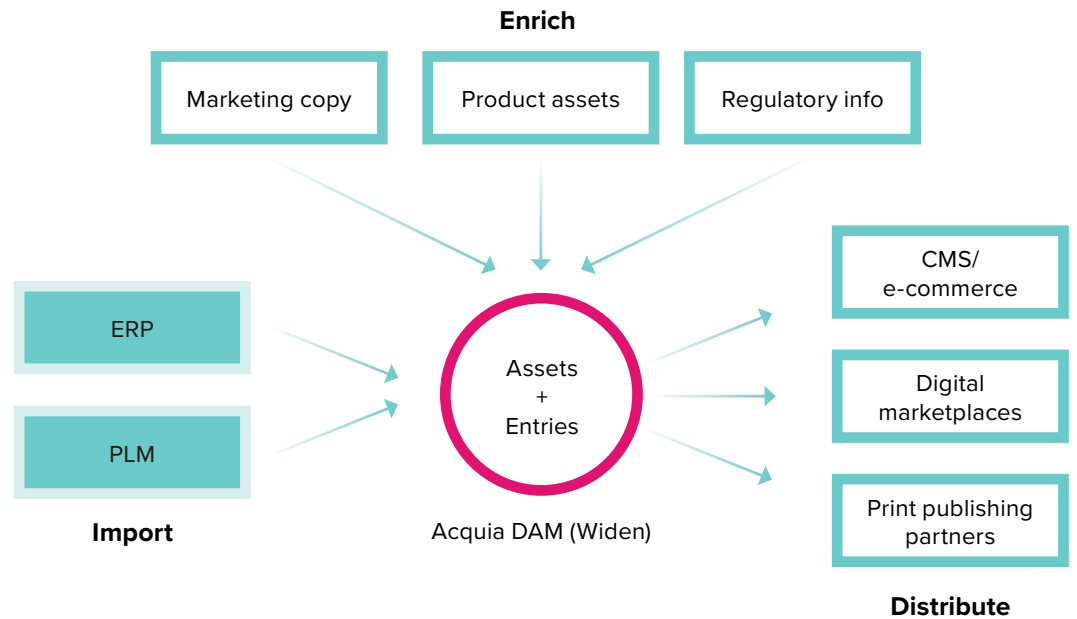
Entries is the product information management (PIM) system in Acquia DAM (Widen) that allows product marketers and e-commerce teams to manage and distribute product content — including data, marketing copy, and assets — from one central location. It helps teams prepare assets for a product launch by allowing them to:

- **Create** product profiles to manage attributes for a diverse range of products

- **Organize** what a specific audience will read, see, and hear about products in one user-friendly view

- **Deliver** up-to-date product content to e-commerce marketplaces, print publishers, websites, and other channels

Acquia DAM (Widen) integrates with downstream and upstream platforms to make Entries the central source of truth for product content.
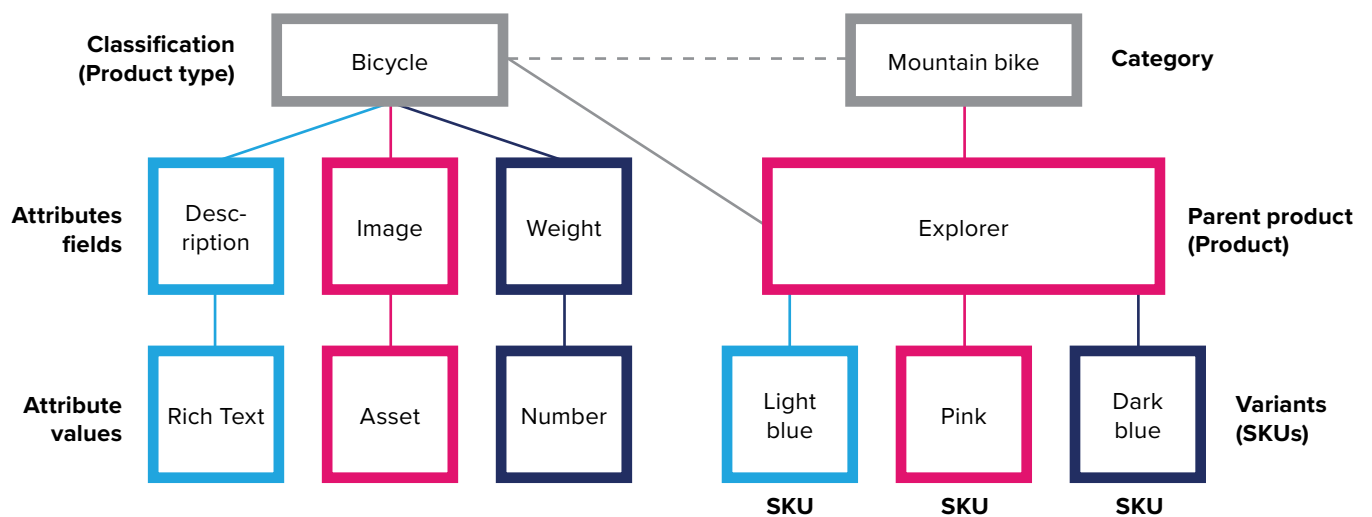
Data flow

Enrich

| Marketing copy | Product assets | Regulatory info |

ERP

PLM

Assets + Entries

Import

Acquia DAM (Widen)

CMS/ e-commerce

Digital marketplaces

Print publishing partners

Distribute

Let's walk through this process — importing data, enriching products, and distributing content — with the goal of curating what a specific audience will read, see, and hear about products in one view, again using a bike manufacturer as our example.

First, we'll **import** product data, like materials, dimensions, SKU, and other specs, that are usually set by product and information teams. This data is often housed in an upstream enterprise resource planning (ERP) or product lifecycle management (PLM) system, and can be brought into Acquia DAM (Widen) via the API, FTP, or a CSV upload.

Then we'll build a profile for each of our products. These profiles include two data structures: one based on the product type and related attributes; and another based on categories and related variants — which are used to link similar products to a parent product listing. These structures are highly customizable and can be designed to replicate an existing data model.

Classification (Product type)	Bicycle				Mountain bike	Category
Attributes fields	Description	Image	Weight	Explorer		Parent product (Product)
Attribute values	Rich Text	Asset	Number	Light blue	Pink / Dark blue	Variants (SKUs)

SKU   SKU   SKU

Every product profile begins with a product type. From there we'll identify the characteristics, or attributes, about this product that we need to capture.

We might want to create a controlled vocabulary for values in some fields, such as product type and product category fields, to support data accuracy and consistency. Here are some possible attribute types and values for our bike example:

Attribute fields	Attribute values
Product type	Bike, helmet
Product categories	Road bike, street bike, mountain bike, adult, child
Color	Red, blue, black, gray, white
Frame size	18", 20"
Frame material	Metal, Carbon fiber
Description - English	[Free text field]
Description - German	[Free text field]
Featured image	[Link to download]

By populating these values in the product profile we are **enriching** product data with other types of digital assets and marketing copy — the second step in our graphic on page 14. Fields like Featured image, Collateral, or Demo video can be filled with links to files in the DAM system. These are the same files used to create paid search ads, organic social media posts, email promotions, and other pieces of the product launch campaign.

We can also create fields to capture content needed for specific channels, online marketplaces, or other audiences. For example, we can create an attribute field to capture a search-optimized description for Amazon and another for REI.

Which brings us to the final step in our process — **distributing** product content. This starts by creating a channel in Entries for each digital destination or marketplace, so we can control which product attributes are sent where. While our channels will share some attributes, each will likely have others that are unique.
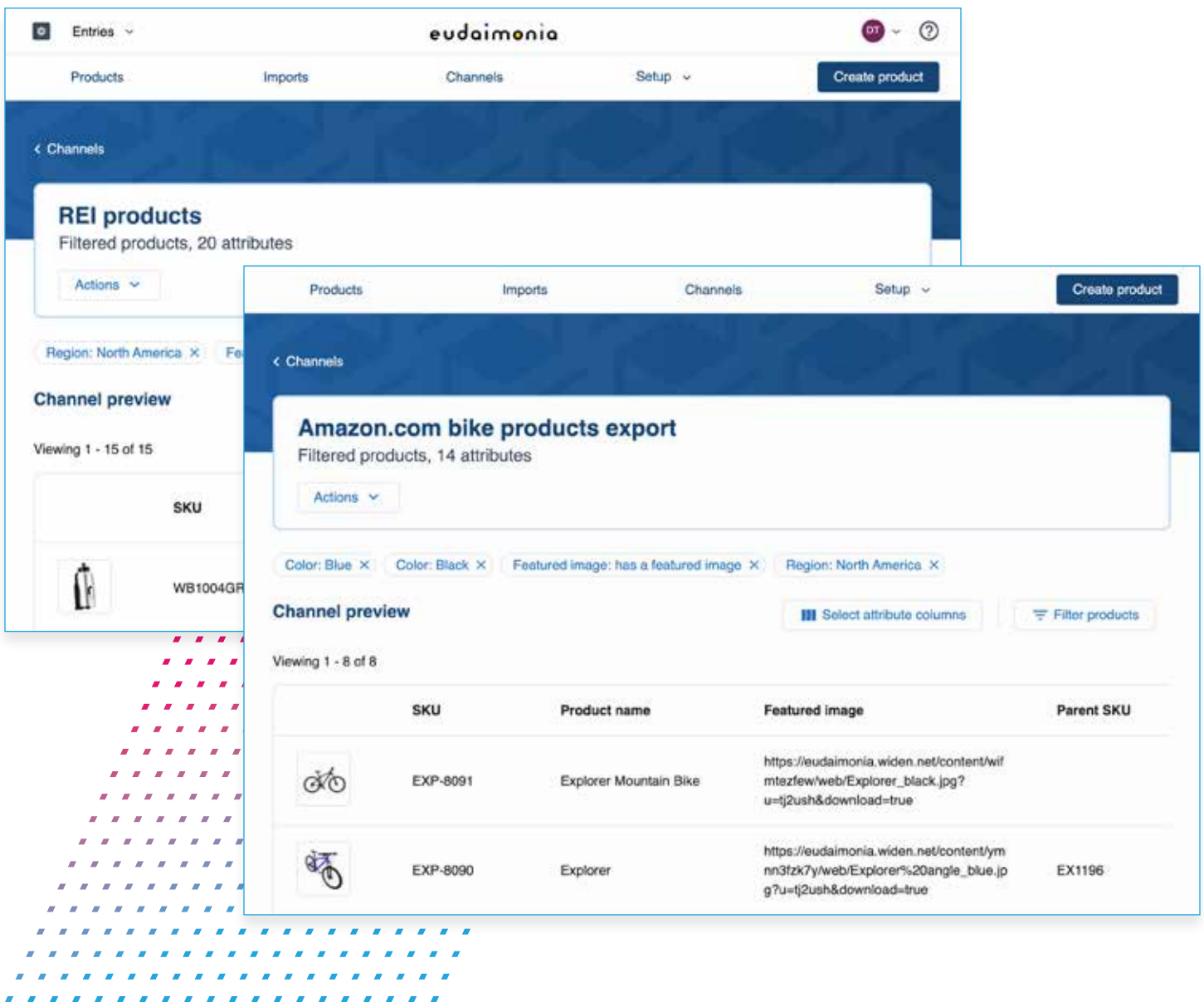
Once the channel is configured and populated with final content, we have several export options. We can use the Acquia API to sync this content with another software platform, we can download it in a spreadsheet as a CSV or XLXS file, or we can export it to an FTP location.

We can also choose to integrate Acquia DAM (Widen) with our syndication partner, ProductsUp, to tailor and streamline the distribution of product content and catalogs for 1,500+ e-commerce channels.

In addition, throughout the process of importing, enriching, and distributing product content, Entries has security settings that help support content accuracy. We can control access to the application, data imports, and channel exports, as well as lock down specific attribute fields.

With Entires, teams can replace spreadsheets and other siloed systems with tools that simplify and automate the entire process of importing, enriching, and distributing product content — giving teams a single, centralized source for the approved product content they need to build compelling and coordinated customer experiences.

"The most essential function [Acquia DAM (Widen)] offers is the ability for us to easily distribute e-commerce assets to our sales reps, retailers, and distributors. It allows us to organize and secure assets easily based on whatever criteria we need."

Employee in Marketing at a Sporting Goods Company

TrustRadius review

Desired outcomes

A robust DAM solution helps brands achieve
a range of valuable business outcomes.

In this guide, we explored how teams that leverage governance, Portals, and Entries in Acquia DAM (Widen) can simplify how they prepare their assets for a product launch to accelerate time to market.

In addition, this DAM functionality helps brands achieve:

Streamlined workflows through self-serve access to a centralized repository

Enhanced brand consistency by ensuring all teams use the same approved content

Minimized risk of content rights and usage violations

Expansion into new e-commerce channels while meeting unique requirements for product content

And it doesn't stop there. Once teams have mastered how to use these DAM tools to support product launches, they can consider expanding their system utilization to include these applications:

Templates to empower regional teams with localized, on-brand materials

Workflow to streamline the review and approval process for new creative content

Insights to track how users are accessing content in the system

Getting the right product content to the right audience at the right time requires the right technology. Contact us today to learn how Acquia DAM (Widen) can simplify your product content workflows across teams and channels.

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 https://acquia.com

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