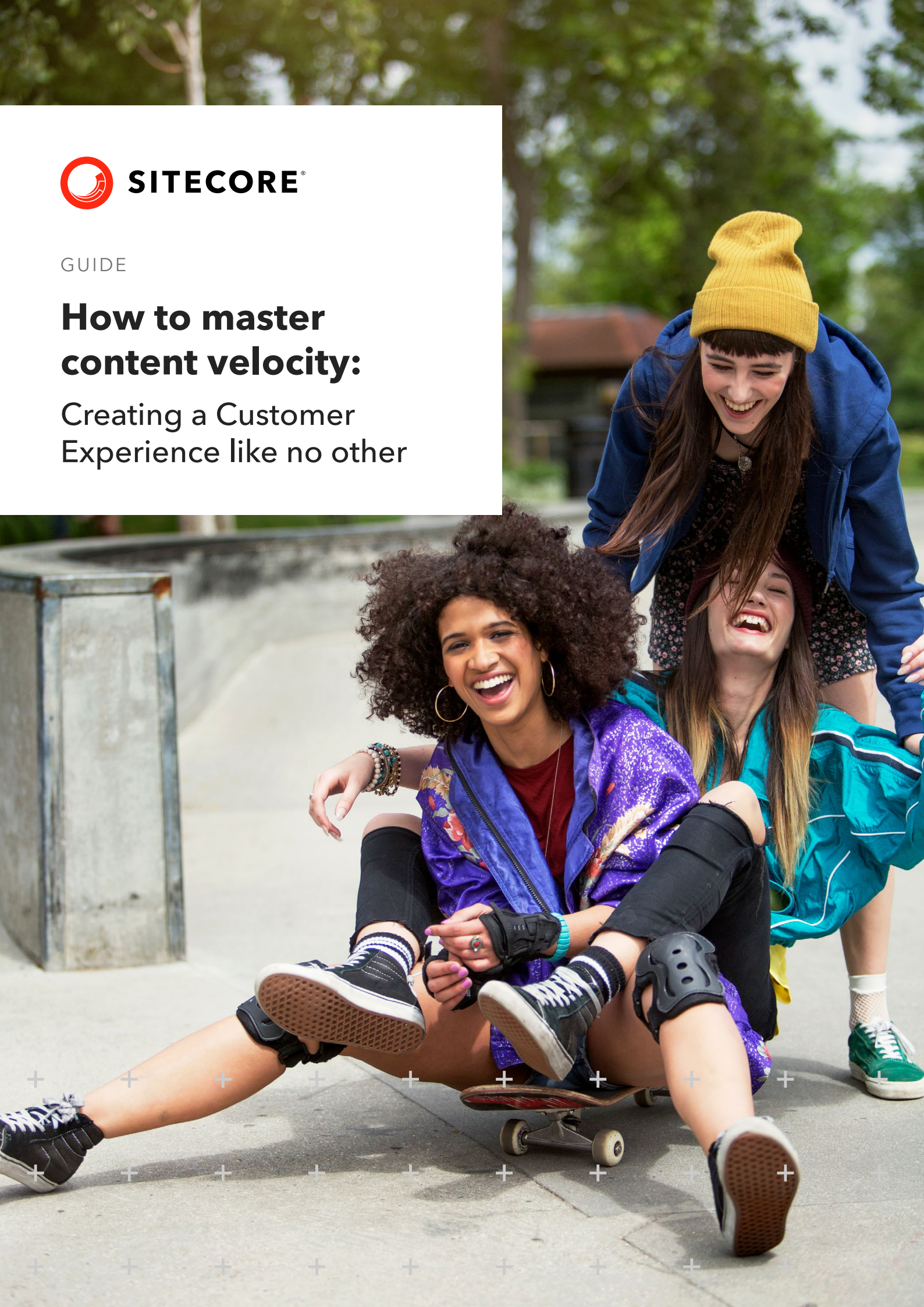




GUIDE

How to master content velocity:

Creating a Customer Experience like no other



Customer expectations have changed drastically in recent years, and brands now have to make the shift from marketer to experience maker in order to meet demands. Content is at the heart of great customer experience (CX), and content at scale is the key to truly engaging your audience. But the art of content velocity can be a tricky process, and mastering it requires an incisive combination of skills and technology.

The digital world is witnessing a content explosion. There are more channels, platforms and formats than ever before, with rising trends in personalisation and seamless omnichannel delivery. But there's so much out there already that it's content overload. Brands don't have the right strategy and processes in place to recycle content therefore they are creating a larger volume of content just to attract their target audience; in fact, research tells us that a whopping 85% of marketers¹ are under pressure to create assets and deliver campaigns more quickly.

Furthermore, the explosive nature of just-in-time content is happening so fast that over 70% of companies¹ are now creating 10x more assets than before just to keep up with customer demand.

Every business, no matter how big or small, has a challenge with managing content velocity - especially in a time when every competitor is ramping up production. So how can you cut through the noise and create the perfect experience for your customers?

¹ <https://docplayer.net/17143593-Proving-the-value-of-digital-asset-management-for-digital-marketers-and-creative-teams-an-idc-infobrief-sponsored-by-adobe-june-2015.html>



CHAPTER 1:

Understanding your content velocity (and why it matters)

In the simplest of terms, content velocity is the measure of how much content a brand creates over a certain period of time. This includes the speed at which it's created and produced, the speed of the publishing process itself and the speed of change in content requirements. It's something that all businesses are keen to improve – but why does it matter so much?

Three reasons you should care about content at scale

The volume of content you publish is something that every brand should be thinking about, despite the fact that it goes against established content rules about quality vs. quantity. While the rules still stand, it's essential for marketers to change their perspective on how to achieve the right balance. Here are three reasons why:

1 Get the edge over competitors

To understand your content velocity, you would choose a particular period of time (month, quarter or across the year) and measure your publications against other brands. By measuring your content output, you can gain valuable and actionable insights to inform your strategy.

While quality will always win over quantity, that doesn't mean you should ignore the latter. In fact, it could have a lot more weight than we once thought. If your competitors are also producing quality content and they happen to be making more of it, they're going to be more attractive to your shared audience.

Plenty of companies have highly trained content teams and strategists, so opposition is fierce. The power now lies in producing quality, relevant and engaging content at a much larger scale.

2 Improve your SEO efforts

Another obvious reason for pushing out fresh content at speed is making your website friendly to search engines. Optimisation is more important than ever in 2021, with an overall rise in online search queries² due to COVID-19. But even before the pandemic, 85% of consumers³ were already doing online research before making a purchase.

This makes SEO one of the most important strategies for digital marketers, and the amount of content created can directly impact how search engines crawl, index and value your site. This is because fresh content is critical for SEO, inviting search bots to visit your site more frequently. As a result, the more you produce, the better your search engine rankings will be over time.

3 Make your customers happy

Finally, customers have more control than ever before and are firmly in the driving seat when it comes to the buying journey. They dictate that CX needs to be fluid and rapid, and that everything should be joined up across multiple devices and channels. By working on your content velocity, you can meet these demands and give your audience exactly what they desire.

² <https://www.wordstream.com/blog/ws/2020/05/08/seo-during-covid-19>

³ <https://transaction.agency/ecommerce-statistics/85-percent-of-consumers-conduct-online-research-before-making-a-purchase-online/>

How does this translate into better CX?

Today's customer expects fast, compelling content on all devices – and across all channels. They don't want to experience your brand as different and disconnected departments, such as your call centre being a disparate hub to your Twitter and Facebook. More importantly, with mobile commerce sales expected to account for 72.9% of ecommerce sales worldwide in 2021⁴, businesses need to be thinking mobile-first.

That's why we're now seeing so many unified contact centres, bringing together phone, email, messenger and social media communications for an omnichannel approach to customer service.

Consumers want an enjoyable, seamless and hassle-free experience with your brand. By ramping up your content velocity, you can become an expert in your field, provide answers to problems and respond to customer pain points – placing your brand front-of-mind when it comes to purchasing solutions.

Know the challenges

Before you get started in building your new content plan, it's crucial to know the challenges that lie ahead. Managing the content explosion isn't an easy task, and the main issue facing many businesses is the speed of production.

⁴ <https://www.statista.com/statistics/806336/mobile-retail-commerce-share-worldwide/>

Other challenges that can impact your campaigns are:

1 Too many channels

With so many channels available and many more being introduced, it can be hard to make time for content creation. Not only does it mean increasing your output, but you also need to treat each channel differently as each has its own audience and unique algorithms.

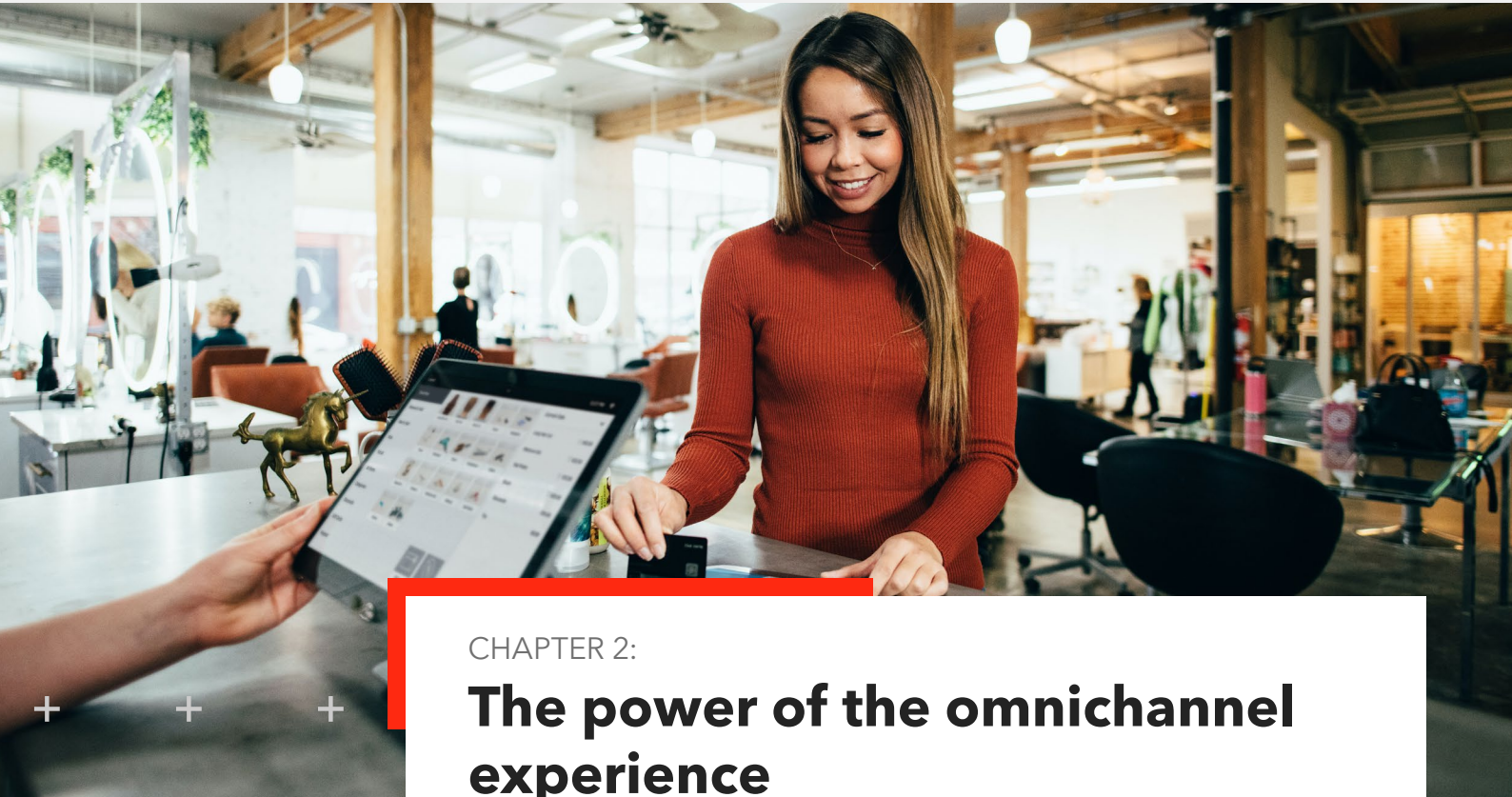
2 Not enough resources

As channels and the need for content increases, resource will likely be overstretched. But by measuring content velocity against competitors, content strategists can actually make a case for more team members. The key is in content data and presenting it to financiers and stakeholders in a way that's clear and ROI-driven.

3 Need for personalisation

In order to build meaningful, 1-on-1 conversations, brands must adopt personalization techniques when delivering content. But tailoring content for each client can be tricky when there are so many devices and channels to bear in mind. Finding the right tools is essential if you want to find fast and cost-effective ways of making personalized content work for you.





CHAPTER 2:

The power of the omnichannel experience

In order to master content velocity for your company, you need to be able to connect multiple channels, streamline workflows and perfect personalisation. It's clear that there are many challenges ahead, but there are ways to manage the content explosion – as long as you have the right tools and knowledge.

How to make omnichannel content work for you

Here are some tips for unleashing your content potential and unlocking its true value for your audience:

1 Use data to your advantage

It's true that we're overloaded with data these days, But the issue isn't in the collection of it – it's in the sharing. By analysing data on customer content consumption, you can amend your strategy to their needs, wants and desires. In order to create actionable insights for your team, there are some important things to bear in mind. Data needs to be:

- Presented in an easy-to-understand format
- Shared openly with the right people
- Updated regularly to keep your business nimble

2 Let your customers lead the way

To be relevant and effective, it's essential to get the speed and frequency of your content right. This should be dictated by your audience though and not your resource or capabilities. Let your customers guide you in what they want in terms of content delivery (when, where and how often?) and build a strategy to fit. Make a case for more resource if that's what's required and adapt your budget if possible.

Remember that content now needs to be produced at the speed of social media. That means producing consistently engaging, well-designed and visually appealing content is going to be a struggle for most businesses. More often than not, brands aren't reaching these targets, so adopting better digital processes is vital.

3**Collaborate, collaborate, collaborate**

A joined-up approach is needed if your marketing efforts are to pay off in the new digital era. While traditionally marketing and sales have operated in silos, now's the time to work together. This means sharing customer data, creating actionable insights for various teams and having a collaborative effort for demand and lead generation campaigns.

The same applies for content teams. Your social media executives should know what your article writers are publishing and vice versa. The more effectively you join forces internally, the more unified your brand messaging and the more productive you'll be.

Next steps for transforming CX

So what are the next steps for making your customer experience enjoyable and seamless? For businesses that want to delight their audience with the right content at the right time, staying flexible is paramount. To have organisational agility, choosing the right technology is a must.

On top of this, marketers must also treat content as a holistic system, one that gives them integrated views of how content is consumed. Then they can address any inefficiencies in sourcing, production and distribution as well as performance.

By organising and optimising these processes, you'll be able to go further than just churning out articles and reports. You can develop an entire content ecosystem to delight your customer and make their experience as satisfying as possible.



CHAPTER 3:

Your content strategy's secret weapon

As already mentioned, the next and most important step in mastering content velocity is using the right tools. Technology acts as the enabler, especially in this disruptive time of change where the tech solutions can increase agility and resilience.

Here are the tools you need right now

Designed to support your content workforce, a lot of content tools are there to maximise output, while ensuring you get the most out of your return. Here are some of the secret weapon solutions that can transform your omnichannel strategy:

Digital Asset Management (DAM)

The reality of storing digital assets is that it's often an after-thought. But with companies spending between \$150 million and \$250 million⁵ on digital content related activities every year, good organisation is key. Despite this, few companies are actually doing it successfully, and many are compromising security with ineffective storage solutions.

A Digital Asset Management system⁶ gives you easy and secure management of content assets, making them easier to store, share and find. This type of tool is essential in fostering a collaborative culture, giving you a central hub for everything from photos, layouts, artwork, video, 3D, source files and more.

What's interesting to note is that research actually shows the ROI of DAM tools being somewhere between 8:1 and 14:1, which is very high. This is due to the time savings accrued and the ability to boost staff productivity.

Content hubs

Do you need to find a way to take charge of your entire content lifecycle? A content hub such as Sitecore's⁷ can help you unify content planning, production, collaboration, and management with a single, integrated solution.

With this centralized tool, you can gain a 360° view of your content landscape, making omnichannel content production much easier. It includes a DAM system, which helps you store, share and access assets as and when you need them. It also gives you a content marketing platform to assist with planning and scheduling in a very structured way.

Content-as-a-Service (CaaS) platforms

One of the most difficult things when navigating an omnichannel content world is staying agile and being responsive to trends. As we've learned with COVID-19, things can change in a flash and survival is all about being able to adapt. But most brands don't have the flexibility in-house, and that's where Content-as-a-Service (CaaS) comes in.

Sitecore Experience Edge⁸ is designed to catapult businesses into the future with headless content delivery at scale. This puts content production at your fingertips, meaning you can create differentiated digital experiences faster than before and engage customers longer, while boosting revenue opportunities.

⁵ <https://learn.g2.com/digital-asset-management>

⁶ <https://www.sitecore.com/products/content-hub/digital-asset-management>

⁷ <https://www.sitecore.com/products/content-hub>

⁸ <https://www.sitecore.com/blog/content/were-thrilled-to-announce-groundbreaking-sitecore-experience-edge>



How to implement change like a pro

In order to make the most of these tools and ensure change runs smoothly, business will need to find ways to nurture and empower their content creators. Technology can support your most powerful asset - human talent - giving your team the capability to learn more about the audience and improve their strategies and techniques.

Training and support are critical elements in change management, so the goal is for people and technology to work together. As mentioned before, collaboration should be a priority if omnichannel is to be successful, and this requires a cultural shift.

Tools such as CaaS allow you adapt and modify the experience for better results, and that's why choosing the right technology is the very first step in conquering content velocity.

If you're looking to embrace the content explosion and perfect customer experience for the rising number of millennial buyers - now and in the future - striking that balance with quality and quantity is crucial. Therefore, adopting the right technology is of the essence for companies - as efficiency and productivity are set to be more important than ever in the world of content.

About Sitecore

Sitecore delivers a digital experience platform that empowers the world's smartest brands to build lifelong relationships with their customers. A highly decorated industry leader, Sitecore is the only company bringing together content, commerce, and data into one connected platform that delivers millions of digital experiences every day. Leading companies including American Express, ASOS, Kimberly-Clark, L'Oréal and Volvo Cars rely on Sitecore to provide more engaging, personalized experiences for their customers.

Learn more at sitecore.com.

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