

Transforming digital marketing

A field guide to digital experience excellence

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There is no question that the world has gone digital. It's where customers are interacting and engaging with each other and with brands. They're coming to companies through websites, Twitter, Facebook, tablets, smartphones, and even through wearables, leaving companies scrambling to keep up with customer expectations. To be successful, companies need to deliver ideal digital experiences that reach customers at the right time, in the right place, with the right content—essentially, they need to achieve digital experience excellence.

Today's marketers must deliver digital experiences that put the customer at the center of every interaction and touchpoint with personalized, tailored experiences and content. In fact, the need for businesses to differentiate in the area of customer experience is so strong that Forrester released the first-ever *The Forrester Wave™: Digital Experience Delivery Platforms Q3 2014*, which highlights how companies must "focus on creating and delivering relevant, cross-channel, contextual experiences critical to the visitor at that moment of their customer journey."

Just as important, IT must be able to rapidly, securely, and reliably deploy all these digital experiences—and, in many instances, on a global scale. Implementing a technology platform that is scalable and allows the separation of content from code gives companies greater flexibility to roll out new products and services in different geographies and languages at nearly the same time, as well as quickly react to changes in the marketplace.

As such, marketing and IT must partner together to drive the transformation process required for companies to achieve digital experience excellence. True transformation goes beyond a "bolt-on" digital strategy¹ that adds a mobile app or social channel to cater to the latest consumer trend. To be successful, a company must examine the strengths and weaknesses in its organizational structures and digital technologies and determine how these can be reimagined to better serve and delight customers across all channels. It must become a company culture, where strategic decisions are based first and foremost on how customers expect you to engage with them.²

For example, Adobe launched an initiative that brought marketing and IT together to adopt a customer-centric approach by implementing Adobe Marketing Cloud solutions to gain greater insights into customers and deliver personalized digital experiences based on these learnings. The results were transformational for the business. By leveraging its own Marketing Cloud Solutions, the Adobe marketing team achieved an annual revenue lift of \$40 million, increased conversion from 2.5% to 12%, and boosted ROI by 24%.

Today's companies must fundamentally embrace digital, and as Forrester states, "take a more comprehensive approach to digital transformation and avoid simply bolting digital onto the existing business."³ This digital transformation starts at the top, driven from the CEO level, with marketing and IT partnering to achieve both digital experience excellence and digital operational excellence.

With this new imperative for CEOs to drive digital strategy across the business, C-level executives need concrete steps for setting their companies on the path toward digital experience excellence. This guide helps you put the systems and processes in place to support this goal. It includes insights from digital agencies, leading analysts, and companies who have seen success in their transformation process, and it points to valuable resources and tools available now that can help you in your own transformation.

"Companies that intrinsically understand the value of digital recognize that through digital—from experience creation and experience delivery, analytics, and optimization—they can gain significant advantage against their competitors."

—Dan Barnicle, vice president, SapientNitro

"Our objective is to make SuccessFactors' websites central to supporting the company's dynamic, personalized online content delivery strategy and filling the sales funnel. Our ultimate goal is lead generation to help deliver a substantial bottom-line impact. That requires providing an extremely relevant experience for every visitor."

—Gary Gamitian, senior manager of web marketing for SuccessFactors

SapientNitro on achieving digital experience excellence

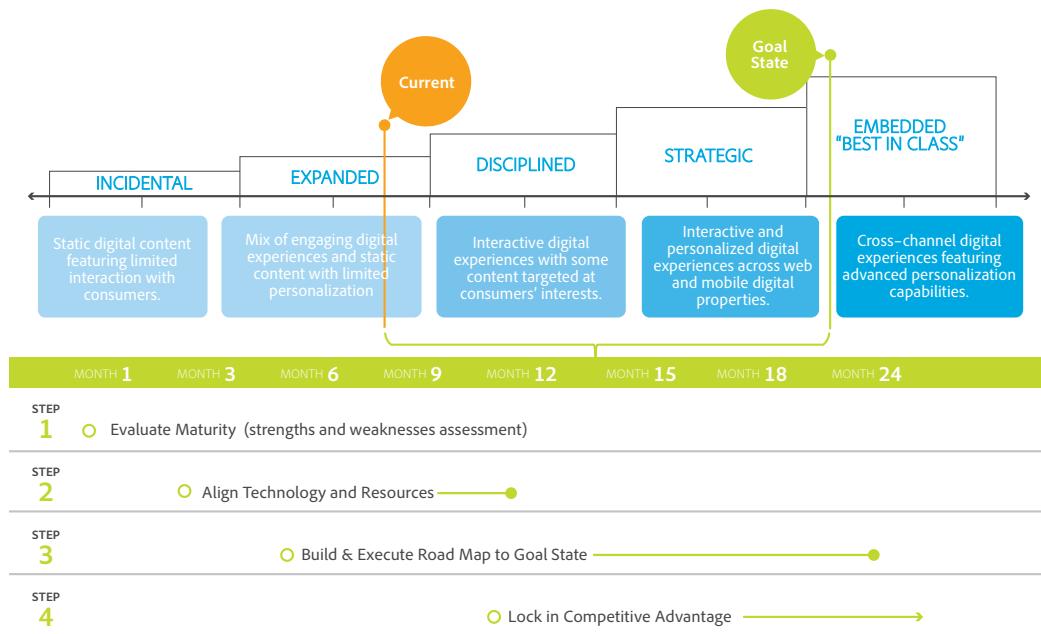
Based on years of working with clients like Hyatt and SAP, here are some key insights from SapientNitro:

- The organization must fundamentally embrace digital as a way of doing business, both internally and externally.
- Centering your business around the customer is table stakes.
- Start by determining your business metrics, and realize that digital tactics for meeting those metrics will change as the world changes.
- Organizational structure is one of the biggest barriers to success. Having a chief digital officer is a key change agent in driving digital transformation across the organization.
- Early stakeholder buy-in for organizational alignment is a must.

Steps for transforming your business

Before undertaking steps toward digital experience excellence, organizations and executive leadership must get out of the mindset that digital is a finite project. There is no goal line; rather, leadership must continually strive to improve digital experiences that meet customer expectations. It is a new way of thinking, and a new way of interacting with customers. Commitment to this way of thinking is critical, because transformation requires a top-down approach that starts with executive-level buy-in.

As an executive, you might be ready to lead your organization through the transformation process, but you might not know how to make it happen. Partners like Adobe Consulting Services or digital agencies have extensive experience working with clients to embrace digital to connect with their customers and meet business metrics. Whether you work with an agency or take on the transformation process in house, this document describes steps that digital agencies, Adobe, and their customers have taken on their path to digital experience excellence.



Step 1: Perform an organizational strengths and weakness assessment (1-3 months)

The first step is to understand what your organization's strengths and weaknesses are in terms of digital experience management. As you begin this undertaking, keep in mind your business model, your strategic business objectives, and what you want to achieve through digital transformation. For example, a retailer with a B2C model might want to increase conversion to shopping carts, improve e-commerce, move customers more efficiently through the funnel, and increase cross-sell capabilities. However, a retailer with a B2B model might want to increase content viewing, such as whitepapers, enable greater participation in communities, and improve lead form submissions.

Adobe consultants identified the seven key dimensions of digital experience maturity based on extensive work with Adobe clients helping them build world-class customer digital experiences, as well as industry analyst research and surveys. The key dimensions, which were used to create the Digital Experience Maturity Model include:

- **Web content management**—How your organization manages content across your digital properties
- **Digital asset management**—How effectively you manage and use assets across your digital properties
- **Personalization**—The extent to which your organization uses personalization to provide engaging experiences
- **Content delivery**—How your organization is engaging customers across your digital properties
- **Mobile sites and apps**—The extent to which your organization is managing its mobile digital properties
- **Social communities**—Whether your organization uses owned social media channels to engage customers
- **Strategy**—The combined level of talent, technology, processes, and knowledge of your organization's digital property management practice

"With a digital presence reaching 62 markets, Philips began looking for a new web content management system that would better meet current and future needs. "At first, we thought that this would be a project just for IT, but as we looked closer at web content management systems, we realized that a more complete system would give us opportunities to also affect business operations."

—Lonneke Vink, product owner, consumer website at Philips

Based on this maturity model, Adobe consultants have developed the Digital Experience Management Self-Assessment Tool, a comprehensive and interactive tool that lets companies evaluate their digital experience management maturity across the model's seven dimensions by answering a series of questions. The responses are analyzed and applied to the maturity model, and a personalized report shows the organization's strengths and weaknesses in each dimension and recommended ways to improve weak areas. The organization can benchmark itself against peers and key industries, set future goals in areas that need improvement, and receive recommendations on how to reach these goals.

ACTION: Complete the self-assessment

Review your results and report for strengths and weaknesses. As you create your digital transformation plan, use the survey results and, in particular, the weaknesses to address, to prioritize resources and focus your development efforts.

Step 2: Align organization resources and technology (3-12 months)

It should come as no surprise that the biggest barrier to successful digital transformation is organizational structure. People, processes, and technology all work hand in hand to make digital business transformation happen, and organizations cannot afford to ignore any of these components. However, as Forrester notes, responsibilities for digital are typically spread throughout the organization between marketing, IT, e-commerce and digital revenue teams.⁴ These teams all need to work together to bring about digital transformation.

This is where it becomes critical for leadership to set an organization's digital vision and strategy. In smaller companies, this responsibility might fall to the CEO. In larger organizations, the CMO might lead the digital strategy, given marketing's customer-centric focus. Forrester states, "Business leaders need to be digital strategists, well versed in the technologies, mechanisms, and skills required to inspire the company toward digital transformation."⁵

Just as important as enlisting the right people to lead an organization's digital strategy is ensuring that the right skills and processes are in place to execute on the strategy. Unfortunately, current conditions fall low on this scale, with Forrester reporting that only 15% of organizations have the right people and skills in place, and only 14% of companies employ processes that are necessary for digital transformation.⁶

ACTION: Identify an executive sponsor

To make progress toward putting the right people and processes in place for digital transformation, first enlist a senior-level executive sponsor who embraces digital and has a vision for how digital can transform the entire organization. In some cases, this could mean bringing a chief digital officer on board. Because the executive-level sponsor needs to work across marketing and IT, as well as potentially other organizational channels or silos, the ideal sponsor should have these characteristics:

- Strategic thinker with the ability to think outside the box
- Recognizes the business opportunity that digital experience excellence offers
- Displays leadership and is influential in the organization
- Change agent and risk taker
- Well versed in customer experience
- Technically knowledgeable and data-driven

ACTION: Identify key stakeholders

The executive sponsor helps identify other key stakeholders, which include the key owners (executive and senior level) of:

- Marketing
- IT
- E-commerce
- Business units and digital revenue teams
- Sales
- Customer service

"The chief digital officer's role is driven more internally than externally, helping the organization determine what needs to change structurally, which metrics and collaboration models need to be in place to activate the opportunities externally with customers to take advantage of digital. It's a tough role—it is as much being a change agent as an operator—but this is a necessary step in the journey for an organization to take advantage of digital."

—Ryan Scott, vice president, strategy & platforms, SapientNitro

ACTION: Establish a dedicated digital team or center of excellence

Now that you've secured buy-in from the appropriate people across the organization, depending on your organization structure, form a dedicated digital team or center of excellence to help drive transformation. In its research, Forrester has found that more and more firms are forming separate technical digital teams out of marketing and IT, "allowing the semi-independent group to operate in a more agile environment and act as a bridge between marketing and IT disciplines."⁷

In a global business, where there is a centralized marketing organization with a hub-and-spoke model, a center of excellence will prove to be of value. For example, the central core team can provide governance and make recommendations about which campaigns need to be launched at a regional level, yet the regional teams have the flexibility to localize the content or campaign before they launch in each region. Early research from Forrester indicates that a global center of excellence with a local execution model is most effective for large organizations.⁸

ACTION: Prioritize required investments in systems, program development efforts, and key areas for development

The results of the strengths and weaknesses analysis in Step 1 helped identify where your organization may need additional or alternative digital technology solutions to improve your digital customer experiences. Examine your scores in each dimension to prioritize your technology investments. For example, if your content authoring score is below industry average and you want to move up toward best-in-class, invest in a tool that lets business users make quick and easy changes to a digital property through a channel-agnostic WYSIWYG interface without dependence on IT.

ACTION: Select and implement the technology

Evaluate various vendor solutions for the technologies identified and prioritized in Step 1. A good place to start is *The Forrester Wave™: Digital Experience Delivery Platforms, Q3 2014* report in which Forrester evaluates the 13 most significant software vendors in digital experience delivery platforms across 29 criteria. Because the market is in its infancy, no leaders offer an end-to-end solution—yet. However, because of its acquisitions of Omniture and Day Software and "its vision of the connective tissue between its tools and its aim for single customer profile," Adobe is considered one of two pioneers among the "strong performers."

Another excellent reference point is *The Forrester Wave™: Web Content Management for Digital Customer Experience, Q2 2013* report. It provides a deep look at 100 criteria from 10 web content management (WCM) vendors, with a focus on which WCM solutions—a cornerstone of digital experience delivery platforms—provide comprehensive digital customer experience requirements. Forrester states that Adobe leads with breadth and momentum, and that it "has leveraged acquisitions, such as Day Software's CQ WCM platform and Omniture's analytics, to establish a digital experience management portfolio that appeals to marketers, developers, and implementation partners."

After you have reviewed the reference materials and selected a specific solution, work with the vendor to implement it.

Step 3: Build and implement a transformation roadmap (3–24 months)

Now that you've identified your strengths and weaknesses when it comes to delivering digital experiences, secured executive-level sponsor and key stakeholder buy-in, aligned your resources and processes, and selected the technology, you need to create roadmaps to keep your progress on track.

Work with stakeholders to define and implement your transformation roadmap. Define the overall direction of the program, the solution architecture, and how you'll deploy it to meet your business needs. Above all, focus on the customer, and think about how your digital customer experiences will save customers' time, reduce frustration, and increase the value of your products or services.⁹ Keep the long-term vision of what you want your digital customer experience to be to prioritize your roadmap.

"One of the ways we see clients moving toward digital excellence is by establishing central governance over campaigns, but allowing local freedom in the execution of campaigns. The central group will share what's best in class for a product launch, promotion, or e-commerce, and the technology platform can govern through use of templates, components, standards, and responsibilities. The central group can also set up comparable analytics, allowing to see what tactics are working in what regions over others, and even conduct A/B testing to experiment with a type of tactic and then roll it out to other brands or regions to see if it generates the same performance."

—Dan Barnicle, vice president, SapientNitro

Base the roadmap on the previous step, taking into account:

- The transformation program's goals and dates by which to achieve them
- Required resources, including headcount and budget
- Means of capturing and sharing key learnings and best practices
- Methods for communicating results and progress

ACTION: Build your transformation roadmap

In building your digital transformation roadmap, either in house or with a trusted partner like Adobe Consulting Services, consider what is needed from a technology perspective to implement certain capabilities. Technology does not always work in parallel—keep dependencies in mind as you deploy them. For example, if your goal is to assemble a 360-degree profile of a customer so that you can personalize experiences across your digital properties for that customer, first make sure that web analytics have been deployed and then expand the analytics capabilities to the other digital channels. Timing can also vary depending on the complexity of the business model. A simple website might only require a week to deploy analytics. However, a complex website with multiple microsites can take anywhere from 3–4 months for the same analytics implementation.

After you have a good understanding of the complexity of the business, you can break it down into separate steps and determine the dependencies, laying out which steps can be done in parallel and which have to be done first. In the previous example, Step 1 would be to deploy analytics on the website. In parallel, you could deploy Step 2 for testing, but Step 3, deploying multichannel analytics, depends on completing the first two steps.

Based on these dependencies, you can build out a timeline. Adobe Consulting has found success in helping customers through the transformation process by breaking the roadmap down into smaller goals and checkpoints, for example, three-month intervals. Also beneficial is doing periodic assessments, say at 6 or 12 months, to verify that digital properties are aligning with business goals. From time to time, business goals can change, so periodic checkpoints help ensure that your digital programs are aligning with the business needs. Industry consulting teams know the best practices for maximizing program results, and their advice and guidance can greatly accelerate the transformation process.

ACTION: Measure your success and communicate your results

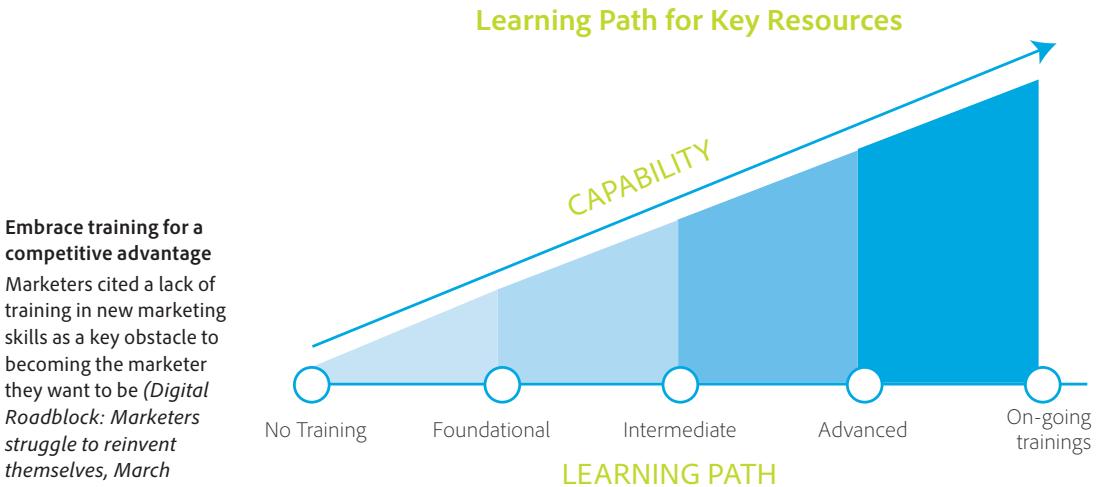
The digital team or center of excellence must agree on the metrics of success that take into account measurements across marketing and IT and how they are aligning to business needs. Digital allows you to measure and test and iterate, alleviating the pressure on marketers to have everything perfect when you launch. You can quickly try a new tactic, measure how well it's doing, and change mid-course if another message or tactic is performing better. Capture these key learnings and share them across the organization to continue to drive the commitment to digital.

Step 4: Lock in a long-term competitive advantage (12–24 months and ongoing)

As pointed out time and time again, true business transformation requires that leadership and key stakeholders across the organization buy in to digital. This means a new way of thinking. It is not a project that will be completed in one or two years. Business needs will change, goals will evolve, disruptive technologies will emerge, and customer expectations will increase. To meet these new challenges and thrive in the long term, you must develop deep capabilities within your organization or partner. Such capabilities come from training your key resources to use the technology and refine processes as they see trends emerging.

ACTION: Make it last—develop deep capabilities and knowledge

People are one of the three pillars required for digital experience transformation. As a key resource, your employees must acquire and maintain the skills needed to deliver the kind of digital experiences that engage customers across all channels. Adobe offers several training courses for marketers and technical staff to build deep knowledge. Learn more about Adobe Training at <http://training.adobe.com/training/courses.html#solution=adobeExperienceManager>, or talk to an Adobe training counselor to learn which course is right for you by requesting a consultation at <https://adobeformscentral.com/?f=hzra9KjYbPLa%2AvouQX1lHQ>.



Embrace training for a competitive advantage
Marketers cited a lack of training in new marketing skills as a key obstacle to becoming the marketer they want to be (*Digital Roadblock: Marketers struggle to reinvent themselves, March 2014*).

Adobe Consulting Services internal research from 2011 discovered that Adobe customers who embraced training services were four times more likely to be more successful.

Based on insights Adobe learned from training more than 500 organizations each month, we saw a clear correlation between the level of training and capability.

The Adobe Digital Marketing Academy and the annual *Adobe Summit* conference provide two opportunities for training. But in addition, you can:

- Take advantage of *Adobe Training Services* for Adobe Experience Manager and Adobe Marketing Cloud.
- Attend Adobe's monthly webinar series (WEM Wednesdays) for digital marketing managers.
- Regularly visit CMO.com to get digital marketing insights and information from digital marketing thought leaders.
- Participate in Adobe Marketing Cloud community groups to share your experiences with digital transformation and learn from others.

ACTION: Promote your successes and maintain excitement

Communicating success about how you are enabling more immersive, engaging digital experiences for your customers helps generate excitement throughout the organization and drives commitment to digital transformation. Incentivize employees for embracing digital both in their groups and cross-functionally. Consider publicizing your success more broadly via your partners' channels.

The following are best-in-class examples of Adobe customers who have embraced digital across the organization and transformed their business.

SuccessFactors, a market-leading provider of cloud-based human capital management solutions, wanted to make its websites central to supporting the company's dynamic, personalized online content delivery strategy while filling the sales funnel. Its ultimate goal was lead generation to deliver a substantial bottom-line impact, which required providing an extremely relevant experience for every visitor. After a rigorous evaluation process, SuccessFactors chose to implement Adobe Experience Manager and was able to:

- Create an industry-best web presence to generate leads and instill best practices for website management
- Manage multiple sites worldwide with ease and a small staff
- Provide tailored content based on geography, product interest, and other variables

Over the years, *Royal Philips of the Netherlands* has expanded from lighting solutions into a diversified technology company also offering healthcare and consumer lifestyle products. After using Adobe Marketing Cloud to create a successful community-based digital experience for its male grooming product line, Philips made Adobe Marketing Cloud the core of its online digital presence for websites across all markets, corporate domains, and its global intranet, and was able to:

- Let users on any device navigate digital campaign sites, product catalogs, and customer care areas without going through multiple environments
- Empower local marketers worldwide with a single platform to manage customer touchpoints
- Improve Buy button click-throughs in one instance by 20% using Adobe Target and Adobe Analytics to test and optimize web pages

The *Palms Casino Resort* in Las Vegas was looking to overhaul its website to enable a personalized experience that would cater to each individual based on which stage the person was in the journey toward booking a stay at the Palms, as well as tailor content based on the customer's device. By working with Adobe and SapientNitro, the Palms transformed its digital customer experience to:

- Revamp its image to engage more experienced, sophisticated travelers
- Create a responsive site that works seamlessly across devices
- Integrate interaction with social channels directly into the site, including Twitter and Facebook
- Refine online user experiences around convenience and ease of use
- Enable business users to make updates on their own to reduce administrative overhead

Get started today

Preparing your business for digital transformation is not an easy or quick undertaking, but chances are if you're reading this guide, you're ready to lead your organization down that path. The steps and resources outlined here provide you with essential direction for putting people, processes, and technology in place to achieve digital experience excellence. The competitive landscape for winning, serving, and retaining customers through engaging, immersive digital experiences will only continue to intensify in the coming months and years. Digital visionaries are needed at the executive level to drive business transformation that creates value for the customer. Are you ready to get started today?

Additional resources

On-demand Webinar: Seven Deadly Sins of Digital Experience Management. Stephen Powers, Forrester Research, and Loni Stark, Adobe.

Mobile is not just about shrinking content. Joe McCarthy.

Forrester Wave™: Digital Experience Delivery Platforms, Q3 2014.

Digital Roadblock: Marketers struggle to reinvent themselves.

References

¹ *The State of Digital Business 2014*, Forrester Research, Inc., May 7, 2014.

² *Competitive Strategy in the Age of the Customer*, Forrester Research, Inc., October 10, 2013.

³ *The State of Digital Business 2014*, Forrester Research, Inc., May 7, 2014.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.