

Assessing the Value of DAM Systems for Advertising Agencies

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INTRODUCTION

Advertising agencies make money providing innovative solutions to promote their clients' brands and services through an increasingly wide spectrum of media. Innovative creative solutions today typically involve innovative technology to support its creation. But in contrast to the readiness to adopt new technology that assists in creating artwork or automates formatting of final output for production, the adoption of systems to manage the creative process has not been as rapid.

In the final analysis, it's all about time to market and the pressure from clients to accelerate the delivery schedule is ever-present. The challenge is to blend a creative workflow with the digital production workflow to achieve a satisfactory return on investment (ROI) — while minimizing disruption and keeping up with a manageable maintenance regimen — that fits the objectives of the organization.

This paper provides a basis for justifying the adoption of a Digital Asset Management (DAM) system. There are a number of ways to calculate return on investment, each of which takes into account some aspect of:

- Pre-purchase planning,
- System installation and integration, and
- Post-installation system adoption.

Adopting a DAM system is as much about changing the culture of a company as it is changing the technology. The only way to truly achieve a positive ROI is to make sure that every stakeholder understands and embraces any changes that might occur on their desktops, in their overall workflow or most importantly, in the relationships they have with each other. The considerations, calculations and best practices used by successful DAM system sites are described below.

Technology in Context

The past 10 years have been particularly interesting for the advertising industry. The emergence of the Web provided new revenue opportunities as well as the potential for workflow enhancement. Taking a high-level view of all that has come about as a result of the development of a commercially available Web, one can characterize the past decade as a period of transactional productivity gains.

Every file downloaded, form filled out, item purchased and message sent is a transaction: relatively easy stuff to automate and easy to quantify in terms of cost savings and increased productivity. In the beginning, data repositories supported these transactions as a component in hybrid digital workflows. The net result of the on-going development of these transactional productivity solutions

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is a slew of new technologies (including Web services, XML metadata, open standards such as RDF, DHTML and PHP) that support many variations of commercial transactions.

A by-product of these transactional productivity developments is the establishment of an infrastructure to support the current wave of advertising agency workflow. This wave is characterized by interactive productivity solutions that may include transactions but more importantly provide new ways for agencies and clients to interact with each other in the creation, review and approval processes.

The reality is that design will continue to be subjective and regardless of how sophisticated technology becomes it will only support and validate that which humans tell it to expect. Forget impersonal transactions for routing content or hybrid approaches for proofing, marking up, and distributing critical images and layouts: Instead of a totally automated design workflow, the ideal vision is one that is automated where appropriate and supports the interaction and management of interactivity regardless of scale or gateway. The ideal system is operating system neutral and device neutral.

“Clients are collaborating on PDF approvals and image approvals. They’re branding materials online. As a team of people, we’ve made asset management work very well.”

Mark Maguire
Group Production Director
TAG Publicis

ROI in Context

Quantifying the return on investment of a DAM system in the advertising agency environment is useful even if in the end it is only a small part of the total story. Consider the competitive context in which these systems exist:

- **Cost of Doing Business (CDB)** Calculate, if only anecdotally, the cost of not adopting a DAM system, improving a workflow, or taking advantage of a new revenue opportunity the technology enables.
- **Total Cost of Ownership (TCO)** Determine the associated cost of managing and maintaining a system within a creative workgroup or through an IT department.
- **Total Cost of Adoption (TCA)** A broader point of view requires examining the cultural implications of changing the way a company does business. When a post-mortem is done after a new system is installed, the factors that lead to a successful or failed installation are often the ones that should have been included in a TCA calculation. Avoiding failure in introducing a system is normally a result of positive TCA considerations and procedures.

ROI can also be broken down into two distinct and related perspectives:

- **Tactical ROI** relies on measured savings from increased productivity in the department(s) where a system will be used.
- **Strategic ROI** relates to the positive or negative impact on the broader activities of the company.

No two companies are exactly alike. Even two departments or subsidiaries in the same corporation will often have vastly different workflows. Introducing a system of any type into these environments is often the beginning of formalizing, or even standardizing, a workflow.

Expertise in “how the business works” rests with one or at most a few persons. Replacing this human intelligence with machine intelligence cannot instantly result in productivity gains. In the long run, however, codifying the storage and management of valuable intellectual property overshadows the relative stability of the status quo. Especially if the company’s success means a flood of new assets to manage and a more complex workflow. What might have worked in the smaller company is quickly eclipsed as the system scales up.

The following discussion provides some considerations about tactical and strategic ROI, CDB, TCO, TCA, and some other best practices to be aware of in making a case for adopting a system. It’s almost universally accepted today that digital asset management systems provide short term

ROI and long term workflow advantages. The primary reasons for failure to see a positive return are poor planning, lack of understanding of business objectives, and poor change-over management when moving from an existing workflow to the new system.

Cost of Doing Business

When all is said and done the control over digital assets is becoming more than a useful workflow enhancement it's becoming a corporate imperative. First of all there are compliance issues. Sarbanes-Oxley is the accounting equivalent of Y2K. The repercussions on how we value intellectual property and how we account for it as a managed resource are felt throughout the organization and eventually throughout the industry. In times past, when intellectual property was either managed through a database of records or in physical form this was less of an issue. Today, CEOs must take responsibility for accurately disclosing this often-substantial asset. Of course, this cannot be done unless there is a system in place to authenticate the existence and content of digital assets. DAM systems provide this controlled environment.

Another area of importance is feeding a Web presence. All advertising agencies must maintain a digital portfolio, a place for clients to upload and download artwork, and a way to support Web conferencing for interactive project review. In the best of circumstances the system that provides this level of functionality is integrated into the data repository.

The reach of the Internet also facilitates global multi-channel marketing like never before. Managing a combination of localized custom Web sites and providing access to localized marketing collateral and original art along with permission set associated with each client is nearly impossible without the support of a robust DAM system.

Understanding Total Cost of Adoption

A successful DAM system installation, in theory, is measured by a positive ROI. Unfortunately ROI calculations often prove useless because there are no calculations for the social engineering that is part of the workflow overhaul. Even with the best intentions, the expectations of the vendor, management, and users are often unreconciled before a purchase agreement for a new DAM system is signed.

There is no one formula that can adequately predict or model the success or failure of an installation, but it is easy to build a successful model of an installation and have it fail for reasons that might not be factored in to a typical ROI, or TCO calculation. For this reason, Total Cost of Adoption is this writer's preferred higher-level view of all of the social and technological input that must be taken into account and then managed in order for a true return on investment to be realized.

Understanding what the TCA factors are and how to manage them is best researched through best practices. As more and more systems are installed and case histories compiled, the best practices knowledge-base increases. It is possible to foresee the effects that implementing a new system will have on a workgroup — or on the enterprise — and subvert potential resistance.

Some of the responsibility for success and a positive ROI/TCA lies with the vendor and some lies

“Asset management is one of those disciplines that you can make very easy or make very complicated. The problem with some of the systems that we looked at when we did our research many years ago, was that they were at both ends of the spectrum, some were very easy but had no functionality, and some were very complicated and just were really prohibitive to the user.”

Mark Maguire
Group Production Director
TAG Publicis

with the customer. The important point here is that if resistance to adoption is inevitable, formal procedures must be put in place to resolve it. Communication is key but only through a formal procedure. Another key ingredient is the environment the system creates. An intuitive, high-performance, and easily-integrated environment that fits easily into an existing workflow is one that will be embraced and not seen as a threat to anyone in the creative or production hierarchy. A system that grows organically and is flexible enough to adapt to new requirements is one that can transcend just being a useful workflow solution to become a tool for modeling and building new revenue streams.

TCA FACTORS

To calculate the TCA of a DAM system in an advertising agency environment, quantify the man hours involved in:

- Reviewing and evaluating the current workflow
- Identifying points of personal contact and “flow” between ad agency departments, agency vendors and clients
- Ingesting metadata and digital asset files into new system
- Running parallel workflows during installation and testing of system
- Training system administration
- Training agency personnel in all touch-point departments
- Training vendors
- Training clients
- Ongoing training as feature sets are upgraded and as new users are added to agency, vendor and client sites

Planning for a DAM System

Good planning and execution leads to successful implementation and positive ROI. It begins with crafting a business plan to justify the system and get executive buy-in and ends with a post mortem to wrap up the project. Effective communication of objectives and status are critical at every stage of project planning and execution. A thorough understanding of the existing workflow, open and regular paths for authorized information to flow, and realistic milestones typically result in reduced risk. Expect change and learn to manage it. Expect resistance. Fear of the unknown can only be reduced over time by competent project management and communications. Putting in place procedures for communicating and decision-making is also a great way to reduce stress personally and organizationally.

The following topics explain best practices for dealing with the different stages of project planning and execution typically found in a DAM system installation.

WORKFLOW DISCOVERY

The most important part of the project will be planning and initial discovery. This is the time when a full evaluation of the existing workflow takes place; key stake-holders are identified and assigned

Planning Checklist

- ✓ Workflow discovery
- ✓ Research products and solutions
- ✓ Consider collaboration features
- ✓ Evaluate change-management requirements

to the project team; a business plan and system specification is drafted; and initial stabs are taken at gathering existing metadata, important interoperability requirements and IT issues. All of this, plus getting senior management buy-in for the project, are essential to the success of DAM system implementation.

If planning how the system will be integrated into the existing workflow is not dealt with at this point but is left for later it will be a disaster. At that point, power shifts to the users who may accept or reject features that don't match up to a long-practiced agency-standard workflow. Many systems wind up in dusty utility closets for just that reason.

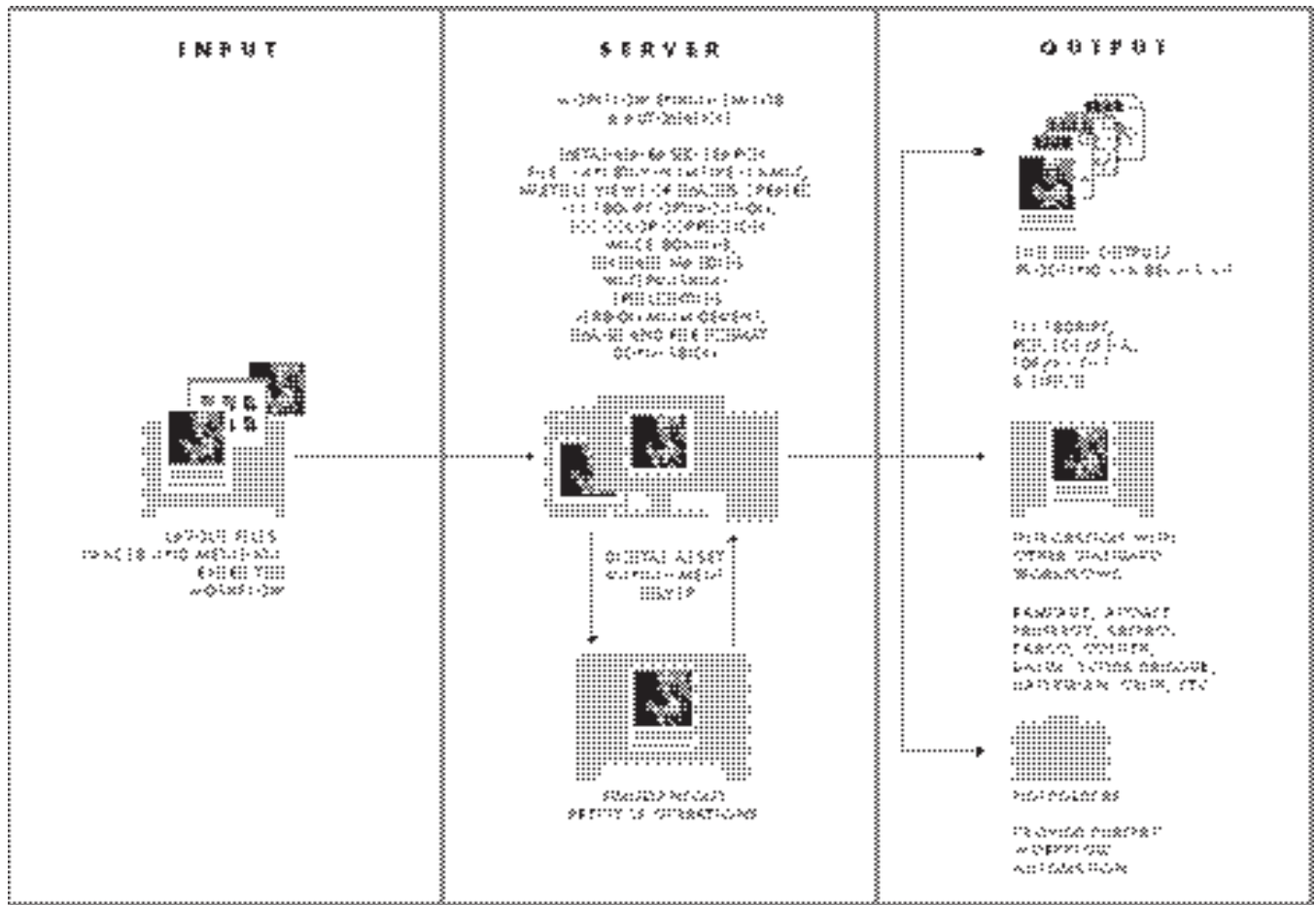
Workflow discovery must include interviews with staff to determine tasks and responsibilities; flow charts of existing workflows and touch points to other departments; and a gathering of existing metadata in the form of project names, descriptions and stakeholders who touch each project.

SEEK OUT THE MOST COMPLETE SOLUTION

In the perfect world the perfect system would be available off-the-shelf, require minimum set-up, and come at a cost that won't break the budget. Unfortunately, modern systems require a complex architecture to support a robust database foundation as well as many interoperability requirements. The key benchmark for end-to-end functionality is in evaluating the total content life cycle. A DAM system must provide functionality for the following content life-cycle stages: creation, management, distribution, and storage.

Make sure, too, that open standards are part of the solution. For example, if a system relies on XMP-formatted metadata packets, it will be compliant with a standard that is emerging in the

Modern systems require a complex architecture to support a robust database foundation as well as many interoperability requirements.



content creation community. In the life of any system, there will come a time when interoperability is critical to further automation of the system. This may be the result of the need to link to other workgroups or to other rights management or production servers. Both XMP and SQL are established standards that must be supported in systems available today. When considering competing systems, overlay the stages of content life cycle over each system and identify how each stage will be supported by some functionality in each system.

Content Life Cycle: Creation. Be sure that desktop applications are supported and the access to the DAM system is optimized by easy-to-use XTensions and plug-ins that help find and place assets with a minimum of clicks. The first place asset repositories feed is the creative process. Any resistance to using the system on the part of creative users breaks down the control and integrity of a DAM-based workflow.

Content Life Cycle: Management. How assets are stored, processed and presented to the user are important functions to understand during the product review process, as is the ascertainment that a rich metadata environment is in place to make searches efficient. A comprehensive DAM system should be compiling a history over the life of the asset during its residence in the system and long after it is archived.

Content Life Cycle: Distribution. A system's flexibility to deliver access to the many channels of asset creators and users is critical. How easy is it to provide or edit permissions for a user? Does the system handle repurposing automatically based on users' requests? How easy is it to set up access for a new client? Vertical integration means that not only is the functionality available, but it can be used by the intended audience. It's very common today for the IT department in companies large and small to push back the responsibility of managing digital assets to the department that creates them. Administering the system should be possible without hiring additional technical staff.

Content Life Cycle — Storage and Archiving. Every system provides either a built-in archiving system and/or has extensions to provide interoperability with common archiving systems. Near-line or offline storage is an important stage of content life-cycle management. Considering the sheer volume of digital assets retained by some agencies for repurposing, revision and localization, it's expected that assets will be stored offline. The process for retrieving them must be integrated into the core system. Once again this is necessary to maintain the control of asset movement and the integrity of the asset itself.

The process for retrieving digital assets must be integrated into the core system.

Does the System Promote Collaboration? Ad agency work is collaborative and while applications that support true collaboration are still a bit of a dream, the system you buy should be putting in place functions or standards that will promote collaboration. Currently, you can expect a DAM system to be a hub for content approval and proofing:

Review for Content. Most of the time reviews are done for content. Body copy, prices, SKUs must be checked and rechecked whether the file is analog or digital. It's important to have the tools to review these files both in their native format as well as in PDF format. The ideal system should allow reviews to take place without a need for the originating application. This means that clients, marketers, account executives, and sales reps would be able to review work wherever they are and without having the same application, or worse, the same application configuration.

Proof for Quality. The most efficient way to proof art is on a screen. Without this functionality true remote collaboration will not be possible. New ways to synchronize color spaces on different but linked screens are emerging to solve the soft-proofing dilemma that has persisted for many years. As new schemes emerge they should build on existing core layout review functionality and manage the review process from within the workflow, and not force users to go outside of it and once again break down the control a DAM system provides.

Change Management. Every proposed installation involves moving from one system to another. This can mean moving from an analog to a digital one or from digital to digital. It can involve moving people around or even out the door. There will be implications for training requirements. There will also be a need for post-installation support and system monitoring.

One of the easiest ways to alienate staff is to leave them out of the loop regarding the plan and objectives of the new system. It is critical to overcome resistance to a new way of doing things with the key stakeholders and to use this as leverage to communicate with and win over the remaining user base. An alienated pool of creative and production people will guarantee failure.

Change management is an organic process and every bit as important as risk management in the life of a project. It should be a formal process that takes what is learned during the initial workflow discovery stage, continues through installation and is synthesized into communications that are part of user testing of the system and user training.

Tactical ROI

Productivity typically equates to reducing keystrokes with the eventual result in a reduced head count or increased capacity. This truism is first of all the easiest case to make in building a business plan for adopting a new system. In lieu of literally counting keystrokes, one can draw upon some studies done by industry analysts and consultants. Numbers alone don't tell the whole story, especially in a highly charged environment such as an advertising agency. In such a setting it's important to explore the consequences of working with and without a controlled data environment.

TIME LOST ACCESSING DATA

The most commonly used estimate of the amount of time used to search for a file is three minutes and the searched-for file is not found 40% of the time. The estimate of the number of searches done in a typical year is 2,500 per person. That equates to 15.5 man-days in 200 for searching. Obviously, searches will continue regardless of whether or not a system is in place and time doing it will continue to be spent.

A typical consequence for not having a digital asset readily available is usually a recreation of that asset or additional time spent hunting down acceptable pickup art. One conservative estimate calculates the replacement value of each asset at \$400. If art must be redone for the 1,000 or so assets not found (40% of 2,500), and each is nominally valued at \$400, the result would be a \$400,000 ROI calculation. While this is not a bad starting point to assess your own savings, the truth is that companies with successful DAM system implementations are easily achieving this and more.

One of the most important things a DAM system does is enforce a way of working with assets. It discourages ad hoc interaction with them. This can mean that assets move from an environment that encourages data silos (little mini-repositories on each designer's desktop) to a central repository where each asset is accounted for. It also means that unlike the distributed storage of assets typically found in manually administered folder-based systems, the central repository uses more efficient and consistent means to characterize assets.

An efficient, robust system today uses metadata for this purpose and it is the most important technology available for performing granular searches and tying together assets within the database that are part of composite layouts and artwork. Without pervasive use of metadata and easy-to-use tools to attach metadata values to files, repositories cannot account for the increase in productivity you should expect to achieve.

Access to data also refers to syndication. Once the assets are stored on a central repository, access to them is through a software client. In the past these clients were native UNIX, Windows, or Macintosh programs. Today, the most efficient platform-neutral approach utilizes a browser-based system. The user interface remains consistent regardless of browser used or operating system. The

“We don't order a lot of DVDs any more. We don't order a lot of CDs anymore. We don't have to. It's wonderful to be free from that because everything we are doing is very time sensitive. The time it takes to walk something across New York City, that's precious time.”

Jd Michaels
Director of Print Services
BBDO NY

process is simple, regardless of where the user is or what language is required.

Relying on a browser and using browser user interface conventions, greatly reduces the changeover time and costs of moving from another system. These costs — the cost of disruption — can have an effect on work in progress and the overall culture of a company. While these costs can be factored in to the ROI, they also fall neatly into the overall Total Cost of Ownership and Total Cost of Adoption.

HARD COSTS AND SOFT COSTS

ROI calculations typically focus on hard costs and soft costs. Hard costs relate to outside services that are purchased to assist in managing data. For example, shipping proofs, chromes, or mockups via an overnight service is a hard cost. An expense. Included in this calculation is all of the media used to store the assets. CDs, DVDs, tapes.

Soft costs are all of the activities that go into managing and preparing for transport of the assets. Examples include: burning DVDs and CDs, setting up and ripping PDF files, and assembling all of the digital assets to build the package to send out. The day-to-day activities managing the network, training users, and providing support can also provide a significant soft cost to the equation.

QUANTIFYING ROI

There are four main ways to quantify an ROI. They are:

- Payback period
- Detailed analysis of cost vs. expected benefits

Payback period. This simple calculation quantifies how soon the investment in a system will be paid back. So, using one of the methods mentioned above to estimate the amount of time that will be saved by reducing searching and tangential activities related to hard and soft costs, and breaking it down to a monthly savings before dividing it into the system cost will provide a quick but imperfect guide to the ROI of the system.

Obviously a shorter time for payback is preferred over a longer time. When put into a broader strategic ROI context, however, a longer period may be acceptable. The ratio and range often quoted for DAM system ROI is between 8:1 and 14:1. This means for every dollar spent, the resulting savings will be 8 to 14 dollars over a period of time. The period of time is the variable and takes into account the narrowly focused departmental need for the new system or the broader and more strategic corporate need for the system.

Detailed Analysis of Cost vs. Expected Benefits. Strategic implications can affect the value of an investment in a DAM system. Where strategic ROI impacts the quantification of return on investment is where it is part of a broader corporate initiative or product development project. Often a new system is brought on to support a new client or project and limited to assets used for that project. This provides some time for a group of eventual champions for the system to work with it in a limited way and find out how it meshes with the culture and workflow ideals of the company.

When the new system is part of a broader corporate ERP or CRM makeover, the expected benefits interlock with other departments effected in the changeover. In this case, the keystroke saving calculations of the creative group would be added to the other calculations and a case would be built for a larger system.

“We have saved the equivalent of two people on my staff who used to have to do fulfillment work.”

Steve Gleason
Director of Digital Studio
Young & Rubicam Brands

Strategic ROI

In general, strategic ROI is expressed in the reusability of assets and the use of the core intellectual property of a company to develop new revenue streams. The reuse of assets and development of new revenue streams often happens outside of the creative department where the assets may have originated. Prior to the emergence of the Web as a sales and distribution tool, the notion of making money by repurposing assets was not the significant business factor it is today.

For example, an agency with an automotive account can keep track of dealer group usage of specific assets downloaded from a DAM system through a log, then bill the client for rights and processing in an efficient way.

Examples of strategic advantages — advantages that have an impact on the corporation — are sprinkled throughout this document. They include compliance, collaboration, brand syndication, more effective use of resources in creative and IT departments, and the ability to integrate a DAM system into the general corporate data flow. What should not be overlooked in all this is that a DAM system is a unique brand of multi-media database that exists usually in an environment of other databases. At some level it is useful for these dissimilar, critical repositories to frequently communicate and synchronize data. While DAM systems serve content creation with rich media, surrounding database systems serve data that is transformed into information that can become knowledge.

New revenue opportunities can be a bit more abstract when considering a new system. It's true that hosting and managing the digital assets of a client is one way to monetize a system. Short of doing that however is the typical self-service functionality that web-based systems provide to enable users, wherever they are to serve themselves assets in the style and format they need for the job.

Today more and more emphasis is being placed on achieving an all-digital workflow. For example, among the hard and soft costs mentioned above were those associated with preparing and shipping proofs and media for the review and approval cycle. Time is spent, shipping costs accrued to the job, and a fair amount of time lost to the lag while things are prepared and on the way. If this lag time is converted to productive review and approval time the result is a streamlined process and increased margins. None of this can be achieved with an analog or hybrid system. They just don't scale well or promote efficiency. It can only be done with the type of file transformation automation provided by DAM systems with additional functionality for soft proofing and annotation.

The implication of a pure digital workflow, that includes improved review and approval cycles, is immense. It touches the client's sales (time to market), marketing collateral printing costs, Web development timeframes, and the betterment of customer relationships in general. This is where the advantages transcend tactical keystroke-based calculations and relate to strategic impact.

“Ad agencies have realized they can make money out of asset management, so whether they charge per click or whether they charge a maintenance fee, it works for them. It's another revenue source.”

Mark Maguire
Group Production Director
TAG Publicis

Appendix

Digital Asset Management in Advertising Agencies

Danielle Cass

is Director of Public Relations at Xinet, Inc. Formerly a newspaper reporter at The Oakland Tribune, Cass has interviewed over 100 Xinet customers in North America and Europe, including those at Macy's, Ogilvy & Mather, McCann Erickson, Time, Sports Illustrated, and BBDO. Cass serves on the Editorial Board of the Journal of Digital Asset Management. She is a graduate of the Northwestern University Medill School of Journalism.

Keywords: advertising agencies, DAM, speed-to-market, profit centers

Abstract

This paper reviews how some advertising agencies in the USA and Europe — Ogilvy, McCann Erickson, Grey Worldwide, BBDO, Leo Burnett Worldwide, Euro RSCG, Publicis' Capps Digital and TracyLocke — chose and implemented a flexible, scalable digital asset management (DAM) system that allows them to collaborate via the internet with hundreds of agency offices and clients, worldwide. Executive, creative and production people from each ad agency describe how they approached their return on investment (ROI) research before choosing their DAM solution, and how they implemented the solutions to deliver lucrative business results. Agency staff explain how a coherent DAM system allows advertising agencies to do more work with fewer staff by ensuring speed to market, productivity savings, increased agency and client revenues, secure client branding and a 24-hour art studio. The paper also tells readers how to handle the critical issues of file-naming criteria, load balancing and ensuring a cultural buy-in within the agency.

INTRODUCTION

In the last decade, most advertising agencies recognized the need for a coherent digital asset management (DAM) system and many implemented solutions to best meet their requirements.

As the number of assets grew, and many agencies consolidated into much larger organizations, however, the need for more flexible, scalable and accessible asset management solutions became very apparent.

The following is a review of how some agencies in the USA and Europe — Ogilvy, McCann Erickson, Grey Worldwide, BBDO, Leo Burnett Worldwide, Euro RSCG, Publicis' Capps Digital and TracyLocke — chose and implemented a DAM system that works, that grows and that allows the agencies to link up hundreds of offices and clients, worldwide.

THE TIME TO UPGRADE

Recognizing the need to “know where everything is,” McCann Erickson implemented their asset management strategy seven years ago with Canto's Cumulus.

However, as the number of McCann's assets grew beyond two million, “the system ground to a halt,” said McCann Erickson's New York Senior Vice President, Brad Mintz.¹

While researching their options for a replacement system, McCann identified a solution that would return many thousands of dollars in savings and new revenues. Launched on 1 January 2005, the

new DAM system connects 120 people in the prepress studio and creative departments of McCann Advertising and McCann Relationship Marketing, and will ultimately link all McCann offices worldwide.

“Xinet’s WebNative is, in my opinion, the de facto standard for doing digital asset management at ad agencies,” Mintz said.

NEED FOR SPEED TO MARKET

What drives the push for more effective DAM systems at ad agencies is the need for speed in highly competitive industries.

Research by GISTICS Incorporated, an Oakland-based research firm, indicates that speed and coordination in the creation and distribution of marketing content leads to successful new product campaigns.² And any increase in the time to market — if only by a few days — can mean increased sales.

“Speed to market and real-time marketing is where you need to be right now in the advertising industry,” said Fred Squeo, Partner at TracyLocke, the agency of record for Pepsi International and Grand Marnier.

“Your client is always challenging you to do things efficiently, and to explain where their marketing budget is being spent, and is it to the greatest effectiveness. We knew we had to have the technology to help us get there,” said Squeo, who uses DAM to create and host all the advertising and promotional assets for Pepsi International and Grand Marnier.

Like McCann Erickson and all the agencies mentioned here, the solution used by TracyLocke is Xinet’s WebNative, which provides web-based, 24/7 access to live and archived files, and significant image and layout-handling functionality. Figures 1–9 in this paper are images created and distributed by advertising agencies using WebNative, Xinet’s DAM solution.

Without leaving their common work environment, people can contribute to the back-end systems, such as designers accessing low-resolution images through a web interface. The solution creates a transparent workflow by not changing the workflow already in place.

“DAM gives our clients speed to market because it cuts down time during the creation and approval process,” said Chris Formisano, Vice President Associate Creative Director at Euro RSCG in Wilton, CT. “The bigger the business, the more levels of bureaucracy that slow down the approval process. Now the process is more active because everyone has access to the system from any web browser.”

MONEY

Of course nothing spurs action like a Chief Financial Officer recognizing a huge monetary windfall.

“When I did the calculation on productivity savings with our new DAM workflow system, the numbers were so astronomically high, I was afraid to present them. I had to dumb them down,” said McCann’s Mintz, who spent months studying every DAM solution on the market and possible workflows of how his agency would use the new system.

“I based the ROI on little calculations of how



Figure 1: “Mr Incredible” from the popular film “The Incredibles” is an image from a McDonald’s campaign through Europe



Figure 2: Digital asset management ensures that advertising agencies can provide their clients global branding, speed to market and real-time marketing



Figure 3: Images placed in a DAM database ensure colour standards and accuracy

much you're going to save on this task and that task, equating time to dollars. When you deal with a formula like that, the savings can be huge in terms of productivity. And when you add in client cost savings and additional revenue from new services, the figure is even higher," Mintz said.

In other words: time is money, says Chris Carlock, Infrastructure and Workflow Engineer at Publicis' Capps Digital.

"The quicker we can get this stuff, the more we save because we pay overtime. If you can grab assets off the system or server quickly, and it saves five minutes from each worker's day every day, those five minutes mean you are saving a tremendous amount of money," Carlock said.

HOW THEY DO IT

McCann Erickson

As the agency of record for Microsoft, McCann Erickson uses its new DAM solution to distribute all the assets and ads for Microsoft to 60 different McCann Erickson and McCann Relationship Marketing offices used worldwide.

"When it's four in the morning here and someone in China needs an image for an ad, I don't need to worry about having someone here to make that image," said Warren Vegas, Vice President of Production Services for McCann San Francisco. "It's a 24-hour facility without having to staff it 24 hours a day."

Every image placed on the DAM database and distributed to each country includes information on how the files should be used, color conversion information, color standards for Asia, Europe and USA, and SWOP Toyo in the Euroscale.

"All these asset management modules allow the studio and production teams to be more efficient when finding files we're working on, finding the right version, and distributing them to creatives as they're needed — without mistakes," Vegas said.

Ogilvy London

Ogilvy London uses its DAM solution to manage the brands of blue-chip clients such as Castrol and Unilever, and to collaborate with Ogilvy offices in 106 countries.

Running off Ogilvy's server at the London hub office, images and brands are accessed securely from any location worldwide beyond the firewall.

"Through a series of customized websites designed for each client and product, art directors approve shots, images, brands, and layouts wherever they are in the world," said Iain Seers, Director of Ogilvy London's CreativeSystems group. "For file delivery, our system allows us to reach our 26 markets and 50 offices across Europe alone, quickly and reliably, eliminating both the hard and soft costs of ordering, burning, amending and delivering artwork CDs."

"The ROI on the software itself was paid off within three months," Seers said. "When you factor in expense of the platform, it was covered within a year."



Figure 4: WebNative enables ad designers to access low-resolution images through a web interface

BBDO

Since implementing an organized DAM system in their New York office, BBDO is doing twice the amount of work with two less people.

“That’s based solely on our DAM organization,” said Jd Michaels, BBDO’s New York Vice President Director of Graphic Services. “Before DAM, searching for a file was akin to an ‘X-Files/ Indiana Jones’ scene. Remember that room at the end of ‘Raiders of the Lost Ark’? That was our DAM system.”

The first thing Michaels did when he arrived was install two enormous blackboards in his office.

“The best DAM systems are visual. Art directors think in a visual way. If you try to explain something to them and talk about numbers or concepts, all you get are puzzled expressions. But if you go to the blackboard and show them, the light bulbs go on. The light bulb DAM solution is the one that shows me, it doesn’t tell me,” Michaels said.

Days after implementing its new DAM system, BBDO used it to solve a colossal problem: One giant client had a worldwide shoot scheduled for 5,000+ final photos from eight countries with eight different languages, and wanted every image processed through the New York office.

“It worked perfectly. The photographers shot digitally. We gave each of them an uploader for their desktops with their names on them so they could drag and drop their images 24 hours a day. When the New York office woke up, there were 5,500 final shots awaiting them that were uploaded while we slept.

When our creatives came in to review them, we said: ‘Click here. These are all your pictures.’ When the client came in, they were expecting reams of paper photos taped up on the wall, but instead we used the DAM system to project them as a medium. Then we gave them a web address so they could review it at home if they wanted,” Michaels said.

This underscores the central misconception of asset management, Michaels says. “It’s not a library function. It’s a dynamic active database tool designed for problems like this.”

Leo Burnett Worldwide, London

For Stars Digital, Leo Burnett Worldwide’s in-house digital studio in London, installing a DAM system six years ago was instrumental in adding to the agency’s client roster of corporate big hitters, which includes Coca-Cola and Kellogg’s.

Stars Digital uses its DAM solution to work on the production of mechanicals for McDonald’s Happy Meal boxes, which go out to 46 different markets and can range up to 2GB in file size.

DAM also translates into savings for Stars Digital because the customers access their files via the internet, eliminating all courier charges during the creation and approval process.

“Our system is reliable and straightforward for our clients to use. Normally we can have them set up within five minutes to use their own customized image banks,” said Dave Ewers, Systems Manager at Stars Digital. “And the 13 built-in languages that come out of the box with the system are really useful because we host sites for clients in a number of European countries.”

Grey Worldwide

Grey Worldwide’s New York office turns out ads for



Figure 5: DAM gives large corporations like McDonald’s secure brand management



Figure 6: Leo Burnett’s Stars Digital uses Xinet’s WebNative to work on the production of mechanicals for McDonald’s Happy Meal boxes, which go out to 46 different markets and can range up to 2GB in full size



Figure 7: Using a DAM system to search for images increases agency productivity

billboards, print, magazine, newspapers and the web with remarkable speed, thanks to its DAM system.

For example, a recent job for Grey's client Canon, a photo spread from the Indianapolis Speedway, appeared in a magazine one day after it was photographed.

"After we upload the files, art directors look at them online without having to download the whole high-resolution file. Then we can pass it to whatever vendor needs to see the ad, then send it to the magazine itself within hours," said

Graeme Thomson, who works in Grey's art studio and graphics services department in New York.

Grey also uses its DAM system to automate and simplify PDF creation and printing.

"PDF creation is an important thing for an ad agency, because a lot of our type proof or replacement proof work goes back and forth to the client in PDF form," Thomson said. "By centralizing it with our DAM system, we have one way of making a PDF. We don't have different people with different settings making different types of PDFs at different resolutions. And we're not wasting bandwidth, sending files to the client."

Publicis' Capps Digital

Since implementing a DAM system, Publicis' Capps Digital has eliminated an entire department within its agency, the archiving group, which had two full-time employees and one part-time person.

"We've gained the ability to un-archive files in a matter of minutes, versus having an archiving group where people would take requests and find specific files on CD," said Capps Digital's Chris Carlock. "Now we have an interface that anybody here can access to search and retrieve files from any location. And they can see a thumbnail of that file."

Capps Digital also gained a new revenue source by creating customized websites where clients access, review, download and upload their assets.

"Each customer wants to look at something personalized for them. Now we can quickly develop personalized sites and create custom online storage solutions with custom coding that gives the client a site with a unique look, feel and shopping cart," Carlock said.



Figure 8: A DAM system with effective metadata adds value to the digital shoebox so the system is not just visual

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

Success stories aside, everyone agrees that the crux of a good DAM system is built on logical, file-naming criteria.

Like the Dewey Decimal system developed for US public libraries, an ad agency DAM system must have an intuitive, proprietary naming system so an agency's staff and clients can look at a file and immediately understand the aspects of it.

"The asset management system is only as good as the information that's put into it," said Capps Digital's Chris Carlock. "Keywords don't generate on their own. It has to start at the beginning of the workflow system with work in progress on the server, then go downstream from there."

In other words, adding metadata adds value to the digital shoebox. It shouldn't all be visual.

To preserve the consistency of the metadata that goes in, some sites find it necessary to employ a full-or part-time

librarian to input metadata. The beauty of the systems executed by the agencies profiled here, however, is that metadata are automatically ingested from the files themselves, along with XMP metadata and document linking information. Alternatively, agencies can choose to add more metadata from a separate interface, if they want.

“Databases and metadata are only good if you apply them,” said McCann’s Warren Vegas. “Once you put a million assets into your system, no one goes back to enter metadata. You have to come up with a plan at the start that extracts information from the assets as they’re ingested, and that takes into consideration what the account people are looking for, what the studio people are looking for, the client job number, etc.”

A good place to begin is to ask the client exactly what they want in a personalized DAM system. That’s the approach TracyLocke took with its client Grand Marnier.

TracyLocke’s Director of Studio Services wrote a discovery survey for Grand Marnier that covered 15 questions, such as: What’s important to you in a DAM? What are you looking to do? Do you want a button that says “Download JPEG?”

Then TracyLocke built the whole system according to the client’s specifications.

“Instead of being locked into a box of an asset management system, we really noticed how viral this could get as far as of branching out into other possibilities,” said TracyLocke’s Fred Squeo.

LOAD BALANCING AND CULTURAL BUY-IN

One bonus of having an agency-wide DAM system that’s widely used is the ability to balance workloads between offices.

“If our San Francisco office has more work than it can handle at a given moment, New York can take on extra work to help out and vice versa, and this system will certainly enhance the process,” said McCann’s Brad Mintz. “When one talks about load balancing, to me that means it’s going to streamline our production process tremendously by allowing our people to get their work done faster and make them look better. Getting work done faster means more money.”

To ensure a cultural buy-in so his agency would feel comfortable using the DAM system, BBDO’s Jd Michaels brought in Apple Computer so that his colleagues — some of whom were in their mid-60s — would first get familiar with programs like iPhoto, iMovie and iTunes.

“I put iPhoto, iMovie and iTunes on everyone’s desktop so they would play with them and get them familiar with them in that way. One woman is 63 and now she can both search our DAM and mix and burn CDs! She is the first person you turn to when you need something,” he said. “She learned, through looking for songs on iTunes, the basic principles of navigating any digital asset management system.”

DAM AS A PROFIT CENTER

Part of the fear for some ad agencies in embracing DAM is the fact that it represents a new business model for advertising.

“We did a proposal last year on how by moving to a distributed model over the internet and no longer burning and shipping discs we could gain an efficiency savings of six figures for us and the client,” said McCann’s Warren Vegas. “For us, the big savings revolve around efficiency. We will still charge for doing something but the man hours for doing them is way lower because it allows the server and the distribution method to do most of the heavy lifting for us. And it’s now usually correct because it’s consistent.”



Figure 9: It takes minutes for new clients to become accustomed to utilizing a good DAM system

The new business model that DAM presents boils down to more work with fewer people.

“In terms of the business model, we are working faster and we are working smarter. We’re able to handle more work, and I have not asked for one more employee,” said BBDO’s Jd Michaels.

In a nutshell, a good DAM system is something an ad agency puts in once, then leverages over and over for clients on opposite sides of the globe.

“With today’s technology, the geography of your office means nothing. It’s the technology that you have. We are in Wilton, Connecticut, a small suburb 45 miles outside New York City, but we service our Pepsi International client throughout the Mideast, Asia, Europe,” said TracyLocke’s Fred Squeo. “That we are managing all the assets for Pepsi International out of our server in Wilton, Connecticut is a fact that really speaks for itself. Fifty gigabytes were downloaded last month off the Pepsi databank and our server didn’t even break a sweat.”

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Case Study: How Digital Asset Management Supports Account Management, Creative Services and Workflows at Ogilvy

Duncan Stokes

has spent some 30 years in the advertising, direct marketing and printing industries. For many years he was Creative Services Director at the top agencies, WWAV Rapp Collins and Grey Integrated. He joined OgilvyOne nine years ago as Creative Services Director. Four years ago, he took over the additional responsibility of production within Ogilvy & Mather London as Creative Services Director for both the United Kingdom and Europe regions. He is currently responsible for a 75-strong production and creative services team and sits on both the OgilvyOne and O&M Executive Boards. He has spoken about digital asset management (DAM) at several leading tradeshow and conferences in 2004 and 2005.

Iain Seers

has spent some 20 years in the advertising industry. He started his working career as a finished artist in the days before Apple Computer changed the whole artwork production process. After this event, he fully embraced the new digital age of advertising by devising workflows and procedures for some of the biggest agencies in London, among them Saatchi & Saatchi, McCann Erickson and BBDO. Now he is a Director of Creative Systems at Ogilvy & Mather London, where he puts all of this experience to its best use. He has spoken about digital asset management and the return on investment of DAM at several leading tradeshow and conferences recently and has been widely quoted in top trade magazines on these subjects.

Keywords: digital asset management, advertising agency, return on investment (ROI)

Abstract

As the advertising industry undergoes major changes and clients become more scrupulous in looking for proof that their advertising spending is paying off, agencies must search for new ways to remain competitive. Ogilvy & Mather Ltd. London has sought to keep its edge over other agencies by building a global digital asset management system with Xinet's WebNative. The agency uses this system to deploy digital assets to 29 European Ogilvy offices and top clients in 106 countries, as well as 400+ employees in the London hub office involved in production, account management, creative, studio, traffic department, art buying, suppliers and outside printing. The bottom line: Ogilvy's DAM system has given clients like Ford, IBM, BP, Dove/Unilever, Cisco and American Express speed to market, shortened sales lead time, and eliminated the hard and soft costs of burning and shipping CDs.

INTRODUCTION

Everyone knows the advertising industry is in a state of upheaval. The old ways of doing business aren't as profitable as they used to be. While agencies are trying to fit the traditional media world into the new-media world, marketers are demanding better proof that their ad spending is actually

paying off. Multimillion-dollar accounts can be gained or lost with a moment's notice, often based upon a single deciding factor — which agency can get the client the most visibility worldwide for the least amount of money.

To enhance our competitive edge in winning accounts, Ogilvy & Mather Ltd., an agency at the forefront of creativity and technology systems since its founding in 1948, built a digital asset management (DAM) system that connects Ogilvy London internal departments with 29 European Ogilvy offices and top clients in 106 countries (Figure 1).

With Xinet's WebNative asset management solution as our foundation, Ogilvy uses our DAM solution to set ourselves apart from the competition. Since 2001, we've used WebNative to manage and protect the brands of clients like Ford, IBM, BP, Dove/Unilever, Cisco and American Express;

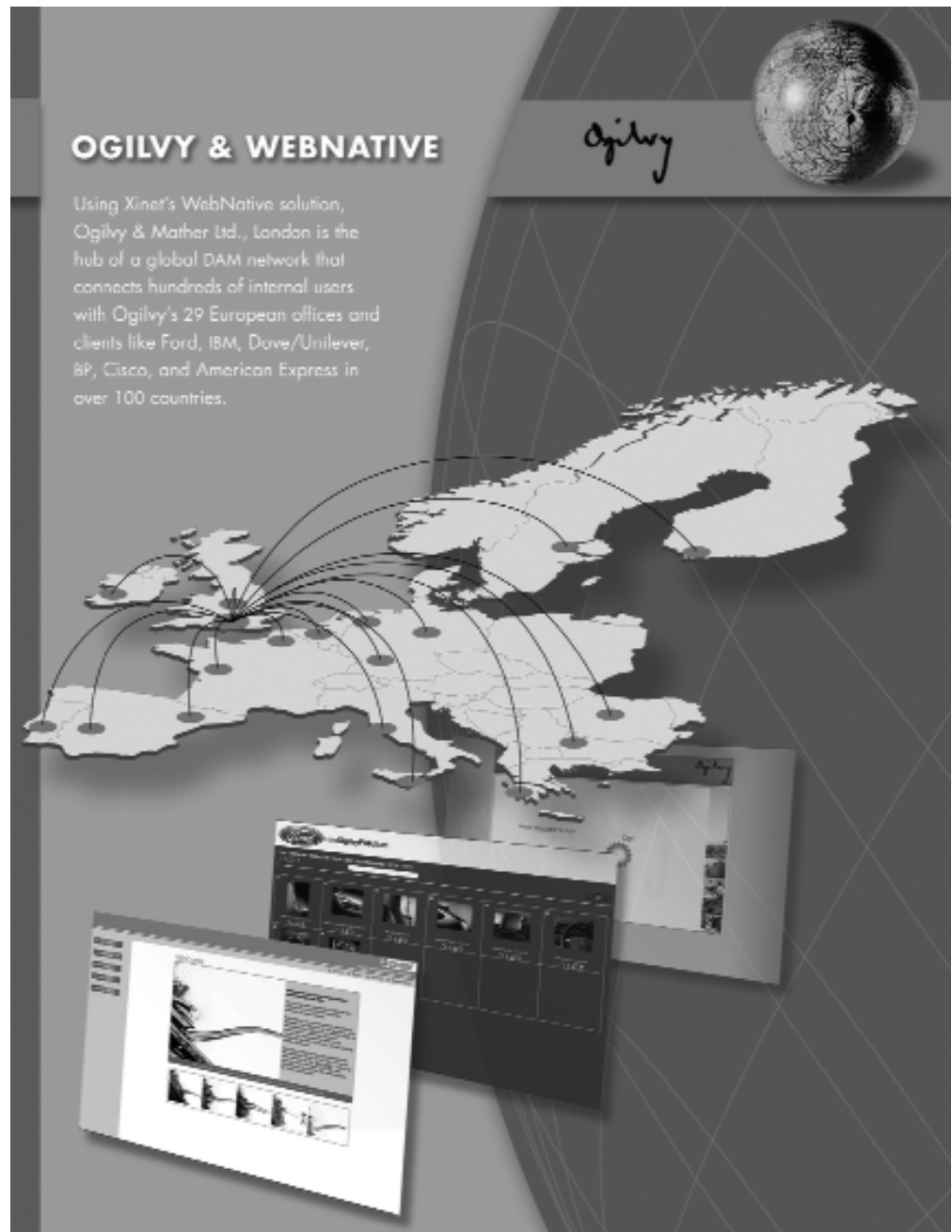


Figure 1 Ogilvy's European DAM hub

give these clients speed to market; shorten our sales lead time, and save money for the agency and clients by eliminating the hard and soft costs of burning and shipping CDs.

Xinet's WebNative provides web-based, 24/7 access to live and archived files (Figure 2), and image and layout-handling functionality. WebNative Venture is an integrated database that allows users to search for assets using standard or unlimited customized metadata. With the DAM solution, people can contribute to the back-end systems without leaving their common work environment, such as designers accessing low-resolution images through a web interface. The solution creates a transparent workflow by not changing the workflow already in place.

Running off Ogilvy's server at the London headquarters office, images and brands are accessed securely from any location worldwide beyond the firewall. Through a series of customized websites designed for each client and product, Ogilvy's art directors, production, account management, studio, creative, traffic department, art buyers and suppliers can access, develop and approve shots, images, brands, and layouts via the internet wherever they are in the world.

In a nutshell, when clients come to us because they want fulfillment across Europe or the world, we show them that we have a global DAM system already in place to provide precisely that.

MOMENT OF TRUTH

The 'moment of truth' that led to this system came four years ago when we were still using Canto's Cumulus for asset management and FTP and ISDN for file delivery. We were frustrated because Cumulus could not grow with us as our number of digital assets grew exponentially, and FTP was such a cumbersome workflow system.

After reviewing the top DAM solutions on the market, we realized that we could achieve what we needed with Xinet's WebNative. It gave us a tick for every box: it replaced FTP, had wider capabilities than Cumulus, distributed files across Europe, and could be tailored for our expanding



Figure 2 Ogilvy uses Xinet's WebNative DAM solution to provide its clients and partner offices with web-based, 24/7 access to live and archived files

needs.

We implemented WebNative agency-wide, and you will read here about our ensuing success with it. However, to remain at the cutting edge of technology, we routinely investigate other DAM solutions on the market. If we were shopping for a digital asset management system today and doing a review of every solution available, Ogilvy would still choose WebNative because it is the best solution for our needs.

WHY AND HOW OGILVY USES DAM: EVERYTHING IS DIGITAL

Before undertaking the development and execution of an agency-wide DAM project, one must understand why the need for DAM in the advertising industry is more pressing today than ever: everything is digital.

Digital photography, now the worldwide standard for advertising imagery, puts high-resolution images higher up in the process. DAM is the ability to provide and share assets easily. At Ogilvy, we use a true digital workflow from the beginning of the process, when a photographer takes a digital photograph of a product or fashion model, to the end of the process, when the final ad is sent digitally to the magazine, newspaper, billboard, store or web page, where the public views it.

Prior to implementing Xinet's WebNative as the way to access and distribute our digital assets, we burned entire ad campaigns onto CDs and shipped them worldwide via courier to partner offices overseas and clients. Every time a campaign was updated, a new CD had to be burned and distributed to each location again to replace the old CD. There were endless multiple costs attached to this, as it involved not just one CD, but hundreds each time an asset of a campaign was modified.

With the Xinet solution, we can demonstrate to our clients the enormous savings in hard and soft costs because we have eliminated the time, labor and expense of burning CDs and paying courier fees (Figure 3).

Now Ogilvy London is the hub of the DAM operation with nearly 600 people here that can use it every day: production, account management, creative, studio, traffic department, art buying, suppliers, and outside printers. All 29 large European Ogilvy offices use the DAM solution as well.

The Xinet solution gives us a place to store our data and numerous ways to access that data to the printing environment. Yet that access is not just limited to remote users: nearly 400 people here in London use the DAM system every day internally.

HOW TO PITCH AND BRAND FOR DAM

Each Ogilvy client gets a DAM system branded uniquely for them because every client has a different workflow and requirements.

When we pitch the DAM system to a client, we often show them how we're using it with other unnamed clients. We discuss the intricacies of how they might use it in each particular market. It helps marketers once they see how they can utilize the system to access their work during and after an ad campaign, and how they get ticks in every box because it's a tangible return on investment (ROI) for their spending.

Since WebNative is so easy to customize, it takes Ogilvy very little time to tailor a demo presentation for potential clients with their company's specific logos and images on it. Clients love seeing their logos on a demo. Once we've created a demo site, we let the client use it for a month for free to give them 24/7 access to their digital assets via the internet so they can view, approve, download and re-purpose assets anytime. Within a month, the client has so many assets on the free demo site and so many hits on it that the site is indispensable to them and they clearly see the value to paying for it as a DAM service.

It is simple to create bespoke websites for each client, specific websites geared for a client's needs or the unique tasks of a particular ad campaign. WebNative's easy customization makes the turnaround time for building these individual bespoke websites for clients straightforward

SPEED TO MARKET, REDUCED COSTS

The WebNative DAM system gives our clients more control and increased speed to market which helps us do our work cheaper and faster. This stems from empowering clients with the ability to access their imagery anytime from any web browser in the world.

For example, before our DAM system was in place, the local market office of a client would ring up the main office to say they wanted a particular picture of a product bottle. Once you shipped them the CD containing the image, they'd say "No, that's not the one I want." Now the client can go online into their customized DAM site to search and download the exact product bottle image themselves.

This gives our clients speed to market in four critical ways:

- an advertising campaign can go live one or two days earlier because you don't need to wait for their CD to arrive via courier;
- it empowers local markets to choose the images they need for their specific local markets;
- they don't have to wait to download a whole file from an FTP site or reshoot an image;
- state-of-the-art file compression technology, co-developed by us, is used to deliver large image files to "low bandwidth" markets.

Even more client costs are reduced by the sharing of images across different Ogilvy divisions, such



Figure 3 With the Xinet solution, Ogilvy has shown clients the enormous savings in hard and soft costs by eliminating the time, labor and expense of burning CDs and paying courier fees

as advertising, direct marketing, etc. As clients become more scrupulous in looking at new ways to reduce advertising costs, we can offer suggestions on how they can be more efficient, which makes them feel innovative and in control of how their advertising budget is being spent.

DAM HELPS RETAIN CLIENTS, GIVES INCREASED SECURITY

Embracing DAM has certainly helped Ogilvy retain accounts because agencies today must show clients we are exploring new ways to reduce costs for them. With DAM, we can show them the tangible hard and soft cost savings from no longer having to burn the CD and pay for couriers.

For example, it is easy to show clients the time, labor and expense costs of cutting five CDs of images and shipping them to different markets. Put an hourly rate on all those tasks, both for the head office and the partner offices that receive the CDs, then tally all those up and you've got quite a big number.

Perhaps what clients like best about the DAM system is that it gives them more security over their branding. Clients are increasingly concerned about where their images appear and fraudulent uses of their branding. Xinet's WebNative DAM system gives clients more control over fraudulent use of packaging because the user environment is solely accessed through a secure website with user name and password protection.

CREATIVES LOVE VISUALS: EVERYONE'S HAPPY

What guaranteed our success with WebNative is the solution's usability. WebNative is very intuitive and visual, which helped with user adoption agency-wide. Creatives love it because they can get to a thumbnail preview image immediately.

We've never had a single customer complaint with our DAM system. We do a basic user guide and send it to clients. Then they just jump on the system and figure it out because it's so intuitive. Part of how we engage with the client is to organize the DAM system according to the method that they are already operating. We organize the file structure the way they normally reference their assets. The beauty of WebNative is that it doesn't force you to change the way you do business. It's simply a transparent workflow that enhances the way you work.

From an internal agency perspective, this DAM system makes our job more interesting and more fun, as there is nothing interesting about burning and couriering CDs all day. Our staff feel more fulfilled because they can actually see revenue that they're generating. The new revenue is easy to see since the ROI on the software itself was paid off within three months. When you factor in hardware costs, it was covered within a year.

Xinet Case Study: May Advertising and Design

How do you give huge, national corporations with thousands of employees and hundreds of offices relevancy to a local community?

The answer is: with customized advertising and personalized promotional campaigns based on variable data and targeted information. May Advertising and Design in Minneapolis is doing that exactly with Xinet WebNative and InPress Systems Accelerator software, and with award-winning results.

Founded in 1981, May Advertising is a mid-size marketing communications agency that provides collateral, advertising, promotions and marketing material to Fortune 500 national clients such as the nation's biggest banks, food manufacturers and grocery retailers.

The 10-person advertising agency uses Accelerator on top of WebNative so their customers can order customized print on-demand, advertising materials and direct-mail campaigns via a web-enabled interface.

"This is a great way to allow large, geographically dispersed corporations to deliver marketing messages in tune with local communities and be responsive to local retailer needs," said Rich May Jr., President of May Advertising and Design. "And it streamlines a cumbersome process of producing ads, sales collateral and point-of-sale signage with a sales force that is scattered across the country."

For example, the Minneapolis division of a large national bank wanted to take control of its advertising to make its content more local. But with the bank's large and diverse sales force spread throughout the country, the process for developing advertising and promotional material was clumsy and involved many time-consuming phone calls.

Now, the Minneapolis bank creates its own customized ads bearing contact information of its sales people without having to go through the advertising department.

Rich May says he is benefiting from WebNative's digital asset management capabilities by expanding the advertising agency's services.

"I recently sold an existing client an entire DAM system, so WebNative has been a double-pronged advantage to us," May said.

"WebNative's simplicity is a real strength. We can customize the interface and it's easy to use for our clients and their vendors."

Rich May Jr.
President
May Advertising and Design

Xinet Case Study: Mozaic

When Mary Ann Gibson and her management team founded Mozaic in the Spring of 2003, they set their sights on building a new kind of advertising agency that specializes in high quality, efficient brand execution. "We wanted to create an innovative environment dedicated to helping clients execute their brand across all media," said Gibson, CEO. "Within our first year of business, we have received continual validation from our clients that we are indeed helping them accomplish this goal."

Headquartered in the historic Hill area of St. Louis, Mozaic has more than 60 employees with offices in San Francisco and Kansas City. Mozaic serves an account base comprised of the nation's largest fashion, consumer and technology brands.

A core component to Mozaic's workflow process is a solution incorporating both Xinet WebNative and Dalim Twist solutions. The flexibility of both products allowed Mozaic's integrator to custom tailor workflow solutions to the agency's specific needs.

Each process at Mozaic is color-managed to optimize delivery for every media so there is consistency in the brand. "The combination of Xinet and Dalim allows us to execute these different workflows perfectly," said Mozaic's Gibson. "Using Xinet and Dalim together allows us to

be very efficient in our processes, which allows us to serve our clients faster.”

HOW DALIM AND XINET WORK TOGETHER

The Mozaic management team chose the Dalim/Xinet combination because they needed a tool versatile enough to execute workflows in a variety of color spaces and to a variety of output devices.

Running the Xinet WebNative platform on a Sun Fire V480 server, Mozaic’s Imaging Services Group uses WebNative for OPI swapping and a full PDF workflow. Mozaic creates optimized PostScript files that are delivered directly to Twist. With the combination of Xinet and Dalim, Imaging has the option to generate multiple assets including PDFs on the fly every time they print.

It takes three steps to set up WebNative to publish to Dalim-specific printers and Hot Folders. Set up a spooler. Name it. Click two buttons.

“It’s simple to create a print spooler that goes directly into Twist, and that’s a huge time savings for our operators because they no longer have to place hi-res files, Xinet does the swapping out automatically,” said Greg Wootten, Mozaic’s Systems Administrator.

ONE MASTER FILE MEANS CONSISTENT BRANDING

Perhaps the biggest advantage to the Xinet/Dalim workflow is the visual brand consistency it helps deliver. “We are experts in managing brand identity and adjusting for different color gamut’s relative to various output processes. When you’re talking about maintaining consistent brand identity, it’s color, it’s detail, it’s visual. Whether you’re printing for outdoor, in-store signage, catalogs, printing on a package or putting an image on a website, there must be a way to maintain the color consistency and look of the brand. We work the image one time, and then we set up standards that are automated to create the proper color gamut for the final media. That is the key,” said Bill Irvine, Director of Managing Services.

INSTANT PHOTO APPROVAL WITH WEBNATIVE

An added benefit of the workflow is using Xinet WebNative Venture for real-time photo approval when clients are not attending a photo shoot. “Since most of our major clients are located out of town, we use WebNative Venture so they can approve the composition in real time and don’t have to be in our photo studios or on location,” said Wootten.

“Xinet software is very intuitive, with easy customization for each client,” Wootten said. Mozaic also uses the Venture database to track when files are approved, who approved them as well as to show portfolios for photographers.

“When you’re talking about maintaining consistent brand identity, it’s color, it’s detail, it’s visual.”

Bill Irvine
Director of Imaging Services
Mozaic

“The ROI on the software itself was paid off within three months. When you factor in expense of the platform, it was covered within a year. For file delivery, our system allows us to reach our 26 markets and 50 offices across Europe alone, quickly and reliably.”

Iain Seers
Director, Creative Systems Group
Ogilvy London

Xinet Case Study: Ogilvy London

Ogilvy & Mather London needed a way to manage the brands of blue-chip clients such as Ford, Castrol and Unilever, and to collaborate securely with Ogilvy offices in 106 countries.

Working with London integrator Turning Point Technologies, Ogilvy chose and installed the Xinet WebNative digital asset management solution to run on an SGI Origin 300 server.

Now Ogilvy London is the central hub for its clients’ images and brands, with files being easily and yet securely accessed from any location worldwide beyond the firewall.

Through a series of customized Web sites designed for each client and product, art directors approve shots, images, brands, and layouts wherever they are in the world. Clients then access the images and assets whenever they want through a password-protected Web site.

Xinet Case Study: Stars Digital

Stars Digital, Leo Burnett Group's in-house digital studio in London needed a digital asset management system sophisticated and secure enough to manage the branding needs of its blue-chip client roster: Coca-Cola, Kellogg's, Heinz, Marlboro Motorsports, McDonald's, Nintendo, Max Factor, Tampax and Walt Disney.

Stars Digital chose the Xinet WebNative platform to run on an SGI Origin 200 server. The goal was to streamline their workflow and deploy a DAM branding program for its clients throughout Europe.

Within three months, Stars Digital brought in new major clients based solely on demonstrations of how Stars Digital could manage their assets with WebNative. The new workflow made it effortless to create mechanicals for the ever-changing and ongoing marketing campaigns for McDonald's Happy Meal boxes in 46 different markets worldwide.

“Clients like the ease of use with WebNative. With most digital asset management programs you must be aware of HTML code, but not with WebNative. With WebNative, the average user with no experience of coding can easily manage a web site. And the 14 built-in languages are really useful because we host sites for clients in a number of European countries.”

Dave Ewers
Systems Manager
Stars Digital

Xinet Case Study: McCann Erickson

McCann Erickson wanted a way to grab information from a PDF form, use it to create mechanicals and automatically ingest that information into its digital asset management database.

McCann developed the PDF form a few years ago to replace small handwritten slips of paper bearing guideline information for each mechanical. The PDF form included quick reference to details such as checkboxes for new mechanicals versus pickup mechanicals, and file locations.

To link the PDF form to an asset management system, McCann Erickson New York implemented Xinet WebNative Venture, a digital asset management database, along with independent developer Triple Triangle's Mechanical Cubed, which provides a single integrated workflow for creating and maintaining mechanicals, and the metadata associated with them.

The combination of Xinet and Triple Triangle eliminates the tedious task of entering metadata by extracting it automatically from a PDF form. That same metadata is then used to create a mechanical, complete with crop marks and slugs, and is automatically pulled into WebNative Venture in English word descriptions as searching criteria by agency, clients and studio personnel.

Under the new workflow, which is in the process of being fine-tuned and deployed, Project Management will fill out the PDF form with mechanical specifications and e-mail it the Studio, where it will automatically populate all the fields that the studio artists previously retyped when creating mechanicals. When the mechanical file is saved to the server, it auto-populates those same matching fields in the WebNative Venture database.

“When the project manager gives us correct information, it remains correct three steps later and no one will have to retype it, or make sure they retyped it correctly.”

Stefani Pagano
Vice President/Manager of Digital Services
McCann New York

About Xinet WebNative

The Xinet WebNative platform is the dynamic Digital Asset Management environment that dramatically streamlines the collection, access, production, distribution and archiving of graphic media for advertising, publishing and corporate communications. This cross-platform system accelerates the creative and production workflow by breaking down barriers between staff, vendors and clients – providing powerful tools that can be used anywhere.

A server-based DAM system integrated with a powerful graphic production and networking infrastructure, WebNative is an elegant system that powers multi-site collaborative networks linked over the Internet and accessible through any browser.

WebNative ingests and stores high-resolution assets, instantaneously providing virtual low-resolution and Web-standard views of each file in separate volumes. An end-user designer can work with low-resolution graphics more efficiently through the layout and approval stages of the workflow, then automatically link documents to high-resolution files custom-configured for his mechanical for output.

With hundreds of features developed specifically to enhance the design process and facilitate premedia production, WebNative saves you time by automating time consuming graphics customization and output tasks.

WebNative also automates and enhances many aspects of the intertwined design and production workflow by providing a set of trigger and action tools that let you set up automated distribution of artwork or layouts, client sign-off protocols and next-step notifications. Using metadata triggers, a layout can move from designer to client and back to a production output queue for output in any one of a number of formats without touching the desk of a traffic person.

XINET WEBNATIVE PLATFORM: BENEFITS

- Simplifies Digital Asset Management storage, access, use and distribution
- Reads/writes XMP-formatted metadata packets – imported with assets or from any XML-compatible data source
- Enables multi-site collaboration
- Uses metadata to automate production tasks throughout creative process
- Automates notification of stakeholders throughout the workflow
- Integrates with multiple workflow systems and output devices
- Provides data security and asset usage controls
- Allows custom branding of interface skins

XINET WEBNATIVE: FEATURES

Document Handling

- Drag and drop images from Web browser into layouts
 - Image updating and relinking tools
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- One-click collection of elements for download in high-res or low-res
- Dynamic previews display updated images in QuarkXPress, Adobe InDesign and PDF documents
- Interactive PDFs link to image data in WebNative

Image Handling

- Easy ingestion of assets and metadata — locally or remotely — using Xinet Uploader application
- On-demand custom images: Cropped, scaled, reformatted
- Batch image conversion of all or select files
- Automatic generation of preview documents — viewable to all stakeholders including those who do not own native applications
- Version control
- Contextual menus
- Easy review of image use across all document files

Production

- Metadata-triggered automation of production tasks
- Hot folders
- Color correction and un-sharp masking tools
- Print queue management
- Optimized output generation: Scaling, source cropping, preflighting
- Output: PostScript, PDF, PDF/X1-A, PDF/X3, Pass4Press, TIFF and TIFF/IT

Enterprise

- Authentication through LDAP, Active Directory and OpenDirectory.
- Scalability as easy as adding servers locally or in offices across the globe: Xinet WebNative Portal recognizes every asset on the network regardless of location
- Flexibility to integrate with CRM, ERP and MIS systems; production workflow software; all PostScript and PDF RIPs

Database

- Reads and writes XML-compatible metadata
 - Automatic import of XMP packets assigned to Adobe CS/CS2 files
 - Unlimited custom metadata fields
 - Transactions logged for analysis and/or billing
 - Simple administration — no dedicated database programmer necessary
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Archiving

- Archive remains a searchable and viewable part of the WebNative database
- Quick restore of archived files
- Flexible media options

Localization

- Interface automatically localized in 14 languages — possibly a different language for every End User
- 40+ local Authorized Xinet Integrators provide additional customization

Xinet Asset Management: Across the Enterprise and Around the Globe

The Xinet WebNative suite features the renowned graphics file-server engine developed for Xinet FullPress. Whether your Digital Asset Management needs are local or global, for an extended workgroup or enterprise-wide, Xinet solutions fit your needs today and will scale as you grow.

Xinet WebNative offers an easy-to-use, browser-based graphic interface view of files hosted on the server.

Xinet WebNative Venture adds the power of a SQL database with search and metadata-powered workflow functionality.

Xinet WebNative Portal is a robust Web-hosting package that allows businesses to host secure, highly customizable, DAM portals powered by WebNative Venture.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

Xinet WebNative, Xinet WebNative Venture and Xinet WebNative Portal run on Apple Macintosh OS X, Microsoft Windows, Red Hat Linux, SGI Iris and Sun Microsystems Solaris server platforms.

WebNative server installation requires a copy of Apache http-webserver from the Apache Software Foundation.

End-users can access WebNative via any current standard Web browser application.

About Xinet

Xinet is a leading developer of high-performance server software applications for graphics and media professionals. In any industry where graphic files are transferred between servers, workstations, and output devices, Xinet maximizes efficiency by integrating and automating production, collaboration and digital asset management.

Founded in 1986 as Mt. Xinu, a cooperative of Unix system programmers, Xinet was incorporated in 1991 in Berkeley, California. The company's European office is in Munich.

To view video testimonials of Xinet customers at *Time Magazine*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Fortune Magazine*, Grey Global, Quebecor World Premedia, Ogilvy & Mather, McCann Erickson, Grey Worldwide, Deutsch and TBWA, visit www.xinet.com.

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