Contentful

Get more value from your digital investments

How to cut tech costs and build better digital experiences

Develop digital experiences faster with a lean tech stack

Companies are shifting to digital-first strategies, even for physical products such as makeup, sports equipment and vehicles. Delivering better digital experiences faster is a competitive advantage across the lifecycle of acquiring, selling and serving customers.

> Speed-oriented companies are ditching legacy systems and prepackaged DXPs in favor of lean tech stacks that give teams the tools they need to move quickly and maximize ROI.

As companies outgrow legacy systems and suites, they end up investing in more software to serve different parts of the business. This clutters their digital ecosystem with a sprawl of tools that don't work well together.

Maintaining and navigating a cluttered digital ecosystem is costly. Product managers, campaign managers, marketers and strategists lose time navigating multiple systems and figuring out which tools to use. One study found that employees lose 20 minutes a day just opening software and programs. Developers are tied up in system maintenance, troubleshooting and helping non-technical teams make even minor changes. Editors and other creators are doing redundant work recreating content that exists elsewhere or copying and pasting between systems.

Instead, digital leaders should go minimalist. Rather than buying bundled platforms, they should declutter their tech ecosystem with a lean stack to accelerate development and cut costs.

The benefits of minimalism can easily be applied to a lean stack: Be more productive, have more freedom, lessen the burden on others and own higher-quality things (or in this case, better tech).

Buy what you need to build what you want

In the build vs. buy debate, bundled suites gained favor by offering a lot of functions in one package. The reality is that most prepackaged suites don't have everything you need out of the box.

Getting a one-size-fits-all bundle to fit specific business needs is often a complex process that increases the cost of implementation, onboarding and maintenance. What's more, limited integration capabilities make it difficult to work with tools outside the suite and its preferred partners. As a result, teams look for workarounds and invest in additional tools, increasing the overall tech costs and losing the efficiency promised by an all-in-one suite.

On the other side of the debate, building your own platform could take years of development and would still require ongoing maintenance to keep it relevant and to integrate new technology.

Custom stacks offer a welcome third option: assemble. Buy the components you need to build the platform you want. This eliminates the time and resources required to build a platform from scratch and offers companies the flexibility to get the exact tool set they want. APIs allow for a clean and structured approach to integrating services within a tech stack.

As your needs change, components can easily be swapped in and out without untangling complex integrations.

Reduce dependency to increase developer flow

Systems that force a lot of back and forth between developers and less technical users create a cycle of waiting that plagues both teams with constant interruptions. Atlassian reports that the average employee is interrupted 56 times a day and loses 10 hours a week to distractions. Interruptions and distractions can be especially costly for developers who work best when then achieve "flow" — that illusive state in which they see the solution and can get it into code before the next distraction.

"Distractions are bad for many types of work, but especially bad for programming, because programmers tend to operate at the limit of the detail they can handle," programmer Paul Graham writes. Programmers need to hold a lot of code in their heads, Graham explains. "The danger of a distraction depends not on how long it is, but on how much it scrambles your brain."

These distractions come from overreliance on developers by other teams and roadblocks within the tech stack. "The average roadblock costs more than 40 minutes to resolve, taking you out of the developer flow state," writes Senior Sales Executive Mark Birch on the [Stack Overflow blog](). The tools developers use impact their ability to get things done. "Whether there's not enough or far too many, tools can make or break a development team's productivity," Birch writes.

To get the most value from developers, digital leaders need to invest in technology that reduces the distractions and interruptions.

Modern platforms with well-documented APIs empower developers to choose the best tools for the job without the frustration of clunky integrations. Developers can quickly find the components they need, use the languages they prefer and be confident that everything will work well together.

Contentful takes this further with its [App Framework](), which empowers even non-technical users to integrate their favorite tools, while providing governance so that no one breaks the system. Empowering non-technical teams to edit and publish content, spin up new pages and manage day-to-day tasks on their own minimizes interruptions and facilitates developer flow.

Reducing costs while accelerating speed to market is a powerful competitive advantage — and one that's hard to get with cumbersome one-size-fits-most platforms. Lean tech stacks give you the power to rapidly gain advantage.

The fastest to market is going to capture the most customers and the most revenue, creating a sustainable competitive advantage.

A custom tech stack built for seamless omnichannel delivery provides reusable architecture that can eliminate months of work. Instead of procuring, implementing and customizing tools for each channel, developers can reuse components to build faster.

TELUS

TELUS

TELUS, Canada's fastest-growing national telecommunications company, adopted an agile, modern architecture and streamlined content operations with composable and reusable content objects to dramatically improve their time to market. When the Apple iPhone X launched, TELUS beat the competition to market — it was the only company in Canada to offer the new phone during the first 15 minutes after its release.

A common reference architecture keeps projects aligned and reduces dependency on developers for non-developer tasks, allowing them to focus on higher-value work. Teams can work in parallel, sharing and iterating on each other's work. This accelerates delivery pipelines, allowing your teams to deliver better digital experiences for less.

Faster delivery keeps projects on budget and reduces time to market, improving ROI and minimizing the risk that a new product will be outdated by the time it is delivered. Recognizing the need to increase their delivery speed, Loblaws Digital reimagined their tech infrastructure and processes to support an aggressive goal: Increase from building nine digital experiences in seven years to 150+ in one year. After implementation, they achieved $38k in monthly cost savings.

Empower teams to work smarter, not harder

An editor learning code so they can make copy changes is working hard. A campaign manager tracking data across siloed systems is working hard. Local teams re-translating content every time a few lines change are working hard. But this type of hard work isn't adding sustainable value. Modern tech stacks empower teams with tools and workflows that help them work smarter, not harder.

When you build your own tech stack, you can choose a content layer that empowers editors to create and publish content across channels |with the push of a button. API-first content platforms like Contentful can seamlessly integrate with analytics, optimization and translation tools — making it easy to manage campaigns from one hub and eliminating redundant work.

Choosing the right combination of tools and processes for your business helps teams work more efficiently and focus their talents where they can add the most value. Not only is this good for your business, it's good for your teams.

People enjoy their work more and work harder when they don't have a lot of necessary grunt work. "Our team found Contentful extremely easy to use and a breath of fresh air, particularly when working on multiple market websites, in comparison to some of the CMSes used previously," Lindsay Winstanley, global digital manager at Quorn says.

Streamline operations and automate routine tasks

In addition to the technical debt that comes with maintaining legacy systems and cumbersome, closed suites, there is a long-term cost to the workarounds these disjointed systems require. As projects scale, these inefficiencies scale with them and create mounting hidden costs.

For example, to support content on multiple devices, Nordstrom's Trunk Club rolled out several CMSes, but they didn't sync. As a result, a group of editors was charged with manually synchronizing content between siloed CMSes. Their engineering team had to deploy every single content change. More content meant more work for both teams. Trunk Club chose Contentful to streamline their operations. Now, Trunk Club's marketing team manages content across devices in one place and uses push-button publishing to reduce dependency on developers.

Open, extensible platforms seamlessly integrate the tools teams need to eliminate all the back and forth between platforms.

For example, if a monolithic platform comes with a mediocre optimization feature, editors will have to manually move content between apps to take advantage of better optimization tools.

A tech stack built around an editor-friendly content management platform can integrate the tools each team prefers into customized interfaces and workflows. This eliminates or automates mundane, repetitive tasks to save users a significant amount of time and frustration.

"The value of up-to-date tech goes beyond just improved efficiency through automation. Deployed in the right way, the right technology can encourage the workforce to be more productive, improving morale and connecting employees and disparate departments that would normally operate in silos," technology evangelist Theo Priestley explains on Tech Talk.

Flexible, extensible tools allow you to stop forcing content and workflows into rigid frameworks.

With an API-first content platform, you have the freedom to pick the best tools for the job and integrate them into customized editorial workflows. This removes barriers and empowers teams to take advantage of the modern technology they need to stay competitive.

ALDO

CASE STUDY
The ALDO Group

The ALDO Group was concerned that their outdated CMS was costing too much time when making content changes and was getting in the way of digital initiatives like conditional content, bi-variate testing and personalization. "In today's competitive landscape, offering a personal and relevant digital experience is crucial. We needed a product that would scale with our ambitions" Daniel Morabito, Product Owner Ecommerce, says. Contentful met these needs and provided a big return in time saved for both marketing and technical teams.

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> "The business benefits are huge. We don't have to spend so many resources now just getting content out. It allows us to use our development resources much more wisely now."
>
> Ann Lau, Senior Product Manager at Xoom

Right person; right role: Use top talent wisely

Another hidden cost of relying on cumbersome legacy tools is that few people in the organization know how to use them well. Xoom (PayPal) hired a content manager early on to manage a home-grown CMS. Over time, she became the gatekeeper for all content on the official site. When she announced her retirement, Xoom knew it needed a solution that was easy for anyone to use. With Contentful the team was able to streamline operations and onboard over 30 team members in six months.

Years of customizations, poor documentation and fragile integrations often result in a complex digital ecosystem that is hard for new staff to navigate. Paying senior writers to copy and paste, or developers to push a simple change live is obscene when you think about the hourly cost, but for many organizations it is hard to move these tasks to junior staff.

Tools with good documentation, training, granular permissions and clear roles allow digital leaders to deploy existing resources where they are needed. They can create cross-functional teams and quickly onboard new talent without fear that they will break something or overstep. Junior talent can be particularly helpful in freeing skilled staff from mundane tasks such as fixing typos or updating hero banners. "Hire junior talent to relieve senior staff from repetitive, routine and monotonous tasks," HackerNoon recommends.

Cloud-based tools with strong collaboration and integration features also provide better support for distributed teams. This can help enterprises open local offices in new markets faster and access a bigger talent pool not limited by geographic location.

Get more value with integration and reusable components

Investing money in more technology doesn't always equate to adding more value. Often, companies invest in channel-specific tools, create content and workflows for individual projects and then repeat the process each time they add a new channel or a new product. Any added value is diluted by costly customizations, redundant work and the cost of replatforming.

> To get more value out of technology, digital leaders should think about how new investments will support future use cases.

Open, extensible platforms can integrate with existing tools and delivery pipelines and support the tools you need to grow and scale. Instead of starting from scratch for each project, an assembled tech stack provides reusable components that form the building blocks of new digital experiences. New content, images, apps and other components are housed in unified layers within the stack, where they can be reused and pushed out across channels to maximize the reach and value of each piece of content while reducing build time.

Like a chef in a well-organized kitchen, teams can quickly grab the ingredients they need to spin up digital experiences for different audiences and channels. Stack architecture can be modified or added to without intervention, making it that much easier to create that final product.

Companies that build their own DXP can choose tools that work well together, building on the value of existing investments and unifying content and data for easy reuse.

They have the freedom to choose specialized components that fit their needs instead of customizing the tools that come with a pre-packaged platform. Choosing the right tools to fit your business saves money with more efficient processes and less redundancy. Many Contentful customers collaborate with agency partners within the content platform.

Instead of adding a new CMS, agencies can build new digital experiences and pull in existing content, reducing launch time and increasing the reach of content. In-house editors can then easily manage that content moving forward, enabling them to update content faster and reduce agency dependency.

A modular approach is key to the new operating model

Prepackaged bundles and legacy systems pose a problem for businesses when they want to experiment with or add new tech to their tool set. "Technology is a core element of any next-generation operating model, and it needs to support a much faster and more flexible deployment of products and services. However, companies often have trouble understanding how to implement these new technologies alongside legacy systems or are hampered by outdated systems that move far too slowly," McKinsey Digital notes. "To address these issues, leaders are building modular architecture that supports flexible and reusable technologies."

> Technology and processes that are reusable across projects save time and money by eliminating the need to recreate content and workflows.

Instead of learning new tools, teams can build competency and reuse components to deploy new products and experiences faster. API-first tools build on these productivity gains by making it easy for teams to add on or swap out parts of the tech stack without breaking other components.

Consider businesses that have multiple CMSes to support different channels. Not only is this difficult to maintain, but it means their teams went through procurement, implementation and onboarding multiple times and had to migrate or recreate content and other components. With a modular stack built around Contentful, all that time and effort can now be channeled into creating sophisticated content and experiences that can be easily scaled across channels for maximum value.

A modular tech stack gives your teams the components they need in one place and ensures that all the parts will work well together in the finished product.

KÄRCHER

KÄRCHER

[Kärcher](#) developed and released two Alexa Skills to help customers control and learn more about their products. This included creating and structuring content for voice control. With Contentful, they were able to maximize the value of that new content, quickly scaling across four markets and translating into three languages. They can also reuse that content in chatbots and IoT-enabled products.

An integrated stack empowers businesses to unify shared assets and make them accessible for use across products and channels. This dramatically increases consistency across channels as well as the value of each piece of content. Instead of locking content into one channel where it has limited reach and value, that content can now reach users on their preferred channels. Customers like TELUS and Atlassian are reusing content to provide self-service portals and in-product assistance.

Taking a modular approach to your DXP and choosing technologies that carry that modular approach into your asset management and workflows gives your business more flexibility and more opportunities to reuse content and other components. This reusability is key to building faster and getting more out of your investments in both technology and content creation.

Ccontentful
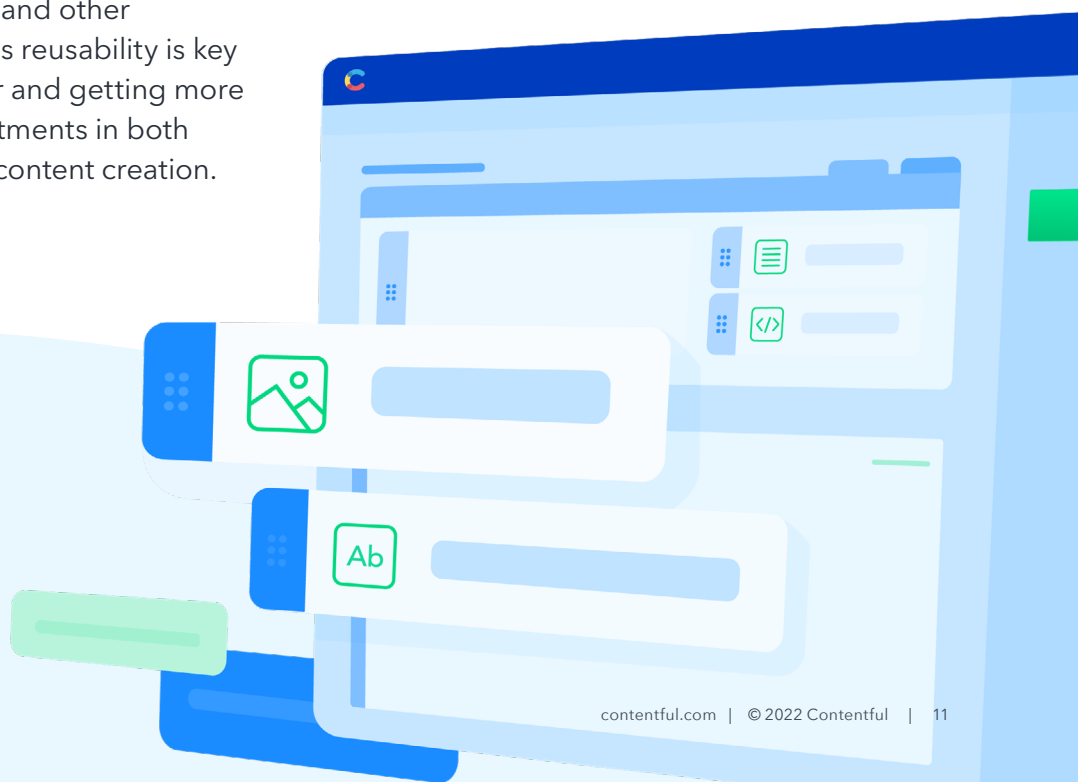
Content is the heart of the modern tech stack

A modern content platform doesn't just replace multiple CMSes; it serves as the foundation for a custom tech stack empowering businesses to build a flexible DXP with seamless integrations. It adds more value by opening up more possibilities and enabling you to move faster and scale without needing to replatform for each new opportunity.

> The beauty of a modular operating model composed of platforms with proven integration capabilities is that it can meet your business where you are at and grow at your pace.

For example, Nib Health and TUI Nordic committed to speed-based architecture and completely replaced legacy systems all at once.

INTERCOM

CASE STUDY
INTERCOM

Intercom chose Contentful as their content layer and empowered editors to make changes and build pages with a structured and reusable library of components. "It all helps us iterate faster, do faster launches, support components more quickly. It's pretty seamless, so that's great," Intercom Product Manager Lauren Ottinger says.
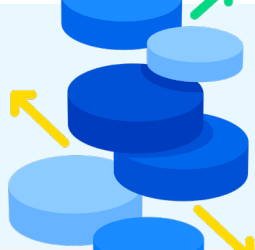
contentful

In all of these examples, choosing a flexible, API-first content layer was a key part of building their customized tech stack.

> A content platform with proven integration capabilities provides a customizable hub from which all teams can manage their content.

Creators can make their content go the extra mile with data and functionality from third-party integrations that support personalization, translation, optimization, merchandising, ecommerce, etc.

Choosing a content platform that streamlines operations for both editors and developers is a big win that can build momentum and accelerate adoption. With content at the heart of your tech stack, teams across the organization can access the tools they need, reuse content and other components and work together seamlessly.

A flexible, modular tech stack is a lower risk investment.

Buying what you need and building your own DXP means you can start with what you need now and build on it, instead of being saddled with a mega-suite that will take months to implement. This helps you start projects faster and deliver on deadline and on budget.

Streamlining operations and freeing up teams to be creative and build faster has a snowball effect. Once that ball is rolling, your teams can do more and more, extending the value of your investment well into the future. Companies that adopt lean stacks free up the time and resources to experiment and become the disruptor instead of the disrupted.

> When you look at what a modern stack offers — shorter development cycles, productivity gains across teams, and more value from tech investments — the bigger risk is sticking to the status quo.

Making the case with stakeholders

Contentful's content management platform has the proven ability to scale from a single project to enterprise-wide adoption. Our industry-leading App Framework allows you to connect your portfolio of tools and services to the content platform, making it easy to build your ideal DXP around a single content hub.

Digital leaders get more value out of investments, support agile teams and efficient workflows for long-term savings, and deliver products and digital experiences faster and with less risk. Developers can start building faster with Contentful's design system, react component library, SDKs and a robust developer community. And they can keep building faster because Contentful also supports editors, marketers, translators, platform owners and project managers with features that reduce developer dependency.

Creators will appreciate the ability to manage their own content and so much more from a single interface. Contentful can become your hub to manage translation, localization, ecommerce, knowledge bases and sophisticated digital products and experiences — everything from lookbooks and in-store touch screens to IoT integrations. With content at the heart of your tech stack, you can confidently expand your digital portfolio while keeping all the backend components connected.

Learn how our content platform maximizes the value of your digital investments and builds digital experiences faster than the competition.

Talk to a Contentful expert today