contentful

Want to drive legitimate marketing results with AI? Start with a value-based adoption strategy

Learn where to start, how to scale, and what AI investments pay off

Table of contents

Marketing teams are using AI, but are they seeing value?

Marketers are under more pressure than ever to do everything with AI. Launch a pilot. Add a tool. Automate a process.

But here's the truth no one wants to say out loud: AI adoption isn't success.

You can fill your stack with every shiny new tool on the market and not be any closer to driving real results. Because AI doesn't win customers, grow revenue, or solve business problems – marketers do. And most teams haven't figured out how to turn the AI hype into impact.

We recently partnered with Atlantic Insights to find out why. While 89% of marketers say they're using AI, less than half can point to meaningful improvements in campaign planning, forecasting, personalization, testing, or optimization. And only 18% say AI has actually helped them rely less on other teams.

That's not transformation. That's stagnation with fancier software.

This is what the report calls the "optimism–execution gap."

If you feel it too – the gap between what AI could do and what it's actually delivering – this guide is your roadmap out. It's time to stop experimenting with AI and to start using it to change the game.

Optimism-execution gap:

The treacherous chasm between "AI is going to revolutionize everything!" and "Why is this chatbot telling customers to eat glue?"

AI and the great content collapse

Marketing teams are always being asked to do more with less. Add in the expectation that AI will magically fill the gaps left by shrinking budgets, limited headcount, and increasing customer demands, and you have a recipe for disaster.

Companies that push AI-generated content out without governance or strategy are flooding the market with noise.

Churning out content with AI alone isn't effective. It might boost production, but not revenue. Why? Because when everything sounds the same, nothing stands out. People want content that's interesting and speaks to them, human to human.
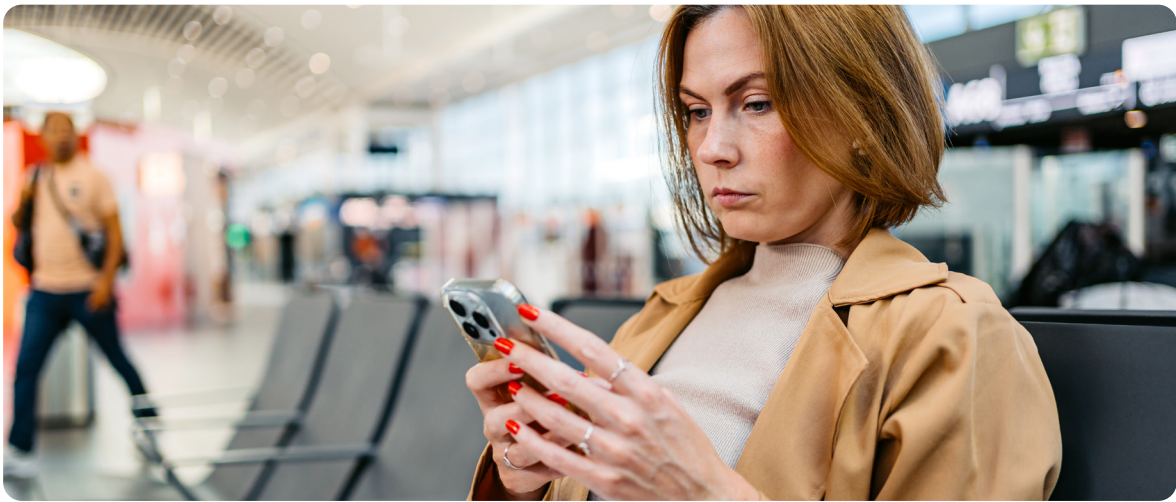
When readers suspect content is AI-generated, they report a lower emotional connection (60%), consider the content less trustworthy (48%), and are 14% less likely to consider a purchase, according to a study by Raptive. And if that content feels irrelevant, 81% of users will actively disengage.

This deluge of "AI slop" makes it harder for brands to break through the noise. At the same time, tools like Google Discover, ChatGPT, and other AI-powered systems are changing the way people get information and learn about new products and brands. SEO is giving way to generative engine optimization (GEO), and the top of the marketing funnel is starting to collapse.

To be clear, AI isn't the culprit. In fact, AI is part of the solution, but it must be used strategically.

Lead your marketing team to impactful AI adoption

Our research with Atlantic Insights found that about half of marketers who report AI success are testing AI tools selectively, with a defined plan. That makes sense. Good planning is the backbone of any successful marketing program, but a whopping 75% of marketing teams lack an AI roadmap or strategy, according to the 2025 State of Marketing AI Report.
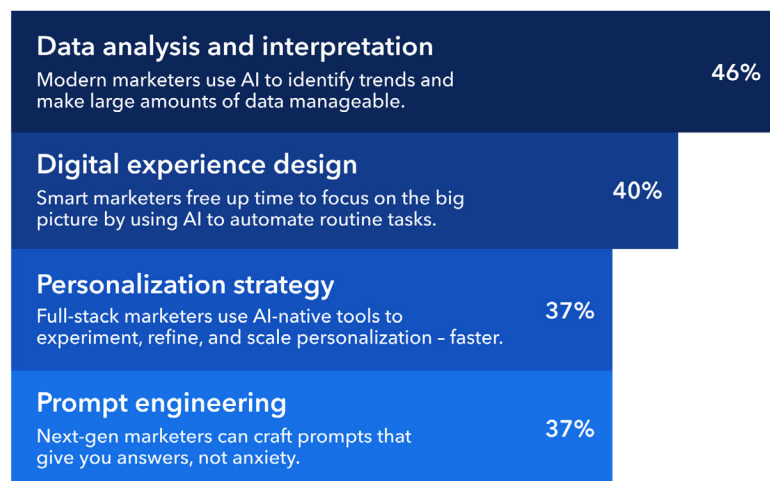
Organic AI experimentation has been helpful, but it's time for marketing teams to take a more strategic approach by understanding which AI tools people are using, identifying what works and what doesn't, and systematically integrating AI into marketing operations to maximize ROI.

> CMOs and marketing managers who wield AI tools with precision will revolutionize marketing and shape a new generation of full-stack marketers.

This guide is your call to action. Packed with practical advice on where to start, how to scale, and what AI investments are paying off. Learn how to shift from ad-hoc experimentation to a strategic plan designed to drive measurable results.

What skills do marketers say matter most?

Full-stack marketers use AI to validate ideas, enhance creativity, and get work done faster.

Data analysis and interpretation
Modern marketers use AI to identify trends and make large amounts of data manageable. — 46%

Digital experience design
Smart marketers free up time to focus on the big picture by using AI to automate routine tasks. — 40%

Personalization strategy
Full-stack marketers use AI-native tools to experiment, refine, and scale personalization – faster. — 37%

Prompt engineering
Next-gen marketers can craft prompts that give you answers, not anxiety. — 37%

Research conducted by Atlantic Insights in partnership with Contentful.

Set your team up for success

Successful marketing teams are moving away from prompt-and-publish and using AI to streamline production with humans in the loop.

Instead of replacing people, they're multiplying each person's impact. They're experimenting and implementing AI with an eye on value, identifying impactful use cases, and using AI to enhance marketing operations.

What sets successful teams apart in the age of AI?
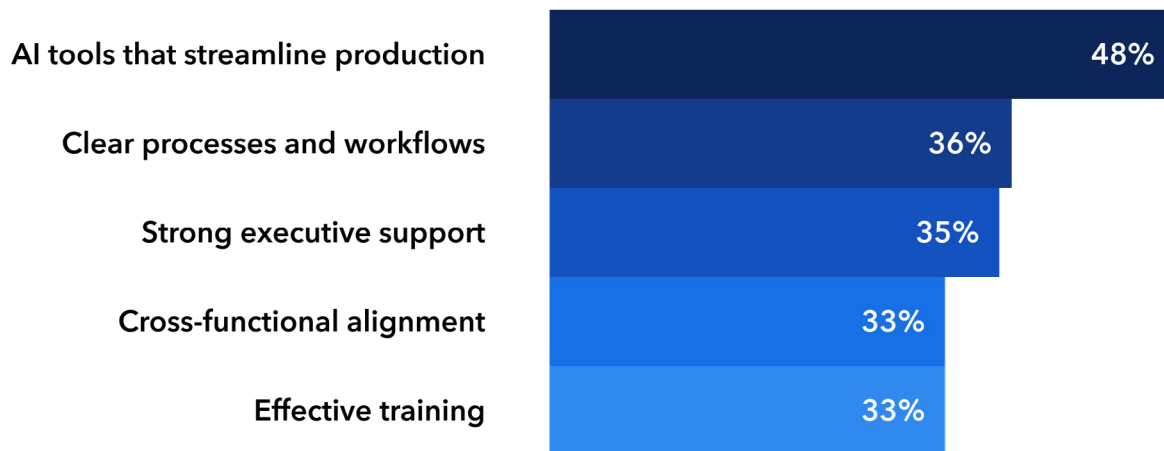
AI tools that streamline production	48%
Clear processes and workflows	36%
Strong executive support	35%
Cross-functional alignment	33%
Effective training	33%

Research conducted by Atlantic Insights in partnership with Contentful.

Get started: Eight ways to use AI in marketing right now

AI is not a technology where waiting until everyone has it figured out will pay off.

Most marketing teams (89%) are already using AI tools. They're learning what works and what doesn't, and building skills that will help them outpace more hesitant competitors.

We tapped into this growing AI marketing knowledge and identified speed, quality, and personalization as key areas of opportunity.

The following are low-risk, high-reward ways you can use AI now. Implementing these is a great way to start seeing value from AI while developing your AI adoption strategy.

89% of marketing teams are already using AI tools

1. Put data at your fingertips:

Data-driven decision making is the gold standard, but getting that data takes time that most marketers don't have. Use AI to consolidate data, analyze it quickly, and surface key insights in near real time.

For Contentful customers:
Contentful Analytics tracks what teams actually need to know. Get performance data right in your workflows. Need more information? Ask questions like "Which headlines are driving the most clicks?" and get instant answers, complete with charts, context, and next steps.

2. Make A/B testing a breeze:

Marketers know the value of experimentation, but it can quickly chew up bandwidth you don't have. Using AI to identify audiences, generate variants, and automatically route traffic makes experimentation at scale possible.

For Contentful customers:
Contentful Personalization makes experimentation easier. Use Variant Generation to create on-brand content variations in seconds with preconfigured inputs like audience, tone, and format.

3. Optimize content for SEO and GEO:

AI can quickly optimize content, generate metadata and alt text, and take care of the tedious, but important steps that propel content to the top of the search results or AI summary.

For Contentful customers:
Integrate search optimization into your workflows with **AI Actions for SEO** to ensure everyone completes those critical steps. Use **AI Actions in bulk** to apply SEO/GEO enhancements site-wide.

4. Translate content for new markets:

Copying content, pasting it into templates for translation, then copying translated content back into layouts is time-consuming. Use AI to generate the content variations you need faster.

For Contentful customers:
Streamline translation workflows with built-in support or integrations with your favorite tools. Use **AI Actions in bulk** to scale translation to larger jobs, like an entire product catalog.

5. Generate multimedia content fast

Multiply the reach of human-generated content. Use AI to turn a webinar into a blog post, animate a static image, or craft social feeds for your next campaign.

For Contentful customers:

Use our **AI Image Generator** to create and edit images on demand. Make visually appealing assets with less demand on design teams.

6. Improve segmentation:

Digging through analytics tools, setting up complex rules, and acting on data before it changes requires super-human powers. AI is the superpower that lets you segment and personalize at scale.

For Contentful customers:
Audience Suggestions surfaces dynamic segments based on live behavioral signals, contextual data, and how users interact with your content. Pair it with **Customer Data Connectors** to bring in first-party data from the rest of your stack to fine-tune your targeting.

7. Target returning visitors:

Use AI to identify visitors who didn't convert and win them over. AI can help your team use visitors' behavioral data to increase return visits and boost conversions with targeted experiences.

For Contentful customers:
With **Contentful Personalization**, you can identify returning visitors and increase conversion rates by tailoring experiences based on their previous behavior.

8. Generate on-brand content variants:

With generative AI, marketers can focus on creating unique experiences, while AI does the more tedious work of creating personalized variants for each audience.

For Contentful customers:
Variant Generation uses your configuration, previously sent data points, and additional context like tone, voice, and personalization strategy to create meaningful content variants that are on-brand.
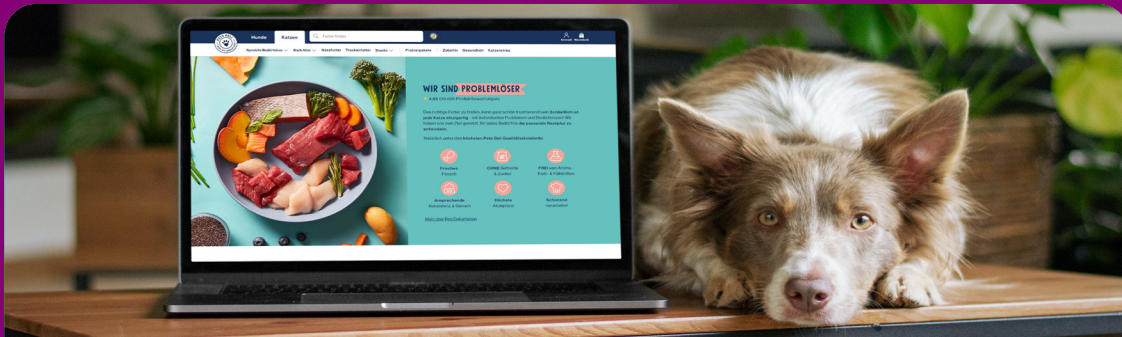
PETS DELI

How a low-effort personalization experiment boosted conversion rates 51% for Pet's Deli

As a leader in the European direct-to-consumer pet food market, Pets Deli offers only the highest quality goods for feline and canine companions. While the quality alone attracts a steady stream of buyers, the company saw a significant leap in conversion rates when it personalized **Black Friday** promotions.

Eight weeks before Black Friday, Pets Deli began sketching out plans for a series of personalized campaigns that would allow the company to eliminate promo codes, and reduce friction as customers moved closer to making a purchase.

Personalization as a quick, low-effort win. The tool gave marketers an editor-friendly way to update content without disrupting the broader tech stack, which includes **Shopify** and a custom customer database manager.

KEY OUTCOMES:

51%
increase in conversions

10%
decrease in bounce rate

"There's nothing comparable to Contentful Personalization in terms of easy integration and flexibility for advanced ecommerce websites using the Jamstack. This, along with their exceptional customer service, makes them a powerful force."

—**Sascha Turowski**, Chief Technical Officer, Pets Deli

Drive value: Identify your high-impact use cases

MIT found that 95% of corporate AI initiatives have no measurable return.

This is not to say that AI in marketing won't pay off. It's a reminder that volume of AI-generated content, number of AI experiments, and AI tool adoption rates do not necessarily equate to business value.

AI needs to be deployed thoughtfully by humans to yield the promised returns.

Take a data-driven approach to AI adoption

- **Gather baseline metrics:** 42% of successful teams begin by benchmarking metrics for tasks and outcomes.

- **Define the problem or opportunity:** Articulate what you hope to achieve and the expected business value.

- **Design AI experiments:** Strong AI experiments include testing, validation, and optimization.

- **Connect budget and tools to outcomes:** Track AI adoption by outcome, including throughput as an AI metric (outcome + reduced time to achieve outcome).

Success is not about using the right AI tools; it's about starting with the right business problem

With so much potential, deciding where to focus your AI investments is a challenge. We've designed the following framework to help you decide where AI is likely to have the biggest payoff.

Use this framework to organize potential AI use cases based on importance and frequency to identify the most impactful investments. Use cases that fall in the upper right are your best AI bets.

Focus AI adoption on high-importance, high-frequency use cases to maximize your impact

```
                                                    Personalize
                                                    content
                        Translate
                        content         Competitive
                                        intelligence
        Develop
        brand story
                                                            Product/
                                                            campaign
        Write press     Personalize                         launches
        releases        promo offers
                                    Generate
                                    draft content
I
m                                                   Generate
p               Segment                             header images
o               audience
r
t
a
n                                                               Generate
c                           Automate                            content
e                           review process                     variants

                Optimize for
                SEO/GEO                      Automate
                                             retargeting
                                             campaign

                            Frequency

        Ad hoc                              Standardizing
        analytics                           internal coms
```

Once you've identified your best bets, consider what level of AI-automation is right for each use case. We recommend keeping humans in the loop for your most important use cases — think product launches, major campaigns, and competitive intelligence — while moving high-frequency, low-importance tasks towards full automation.

Of course, we're all figuring out how to use AI in our daily processes. Even if full automation is the goal, it's okay to start with manual AI triggers and gradually increase the level of automation as you become more confident in the AI tools.

The AI automation spectrum

Manual triggers	Human-in-the-loop workflows	Intelligent automations	Autonomous agents
Rewrite or summarize while editing	Trigger AI translation with human approval before publishing	Automatically regenerate, SEO metadata on content updates	Monitor content performance and suggest improvements
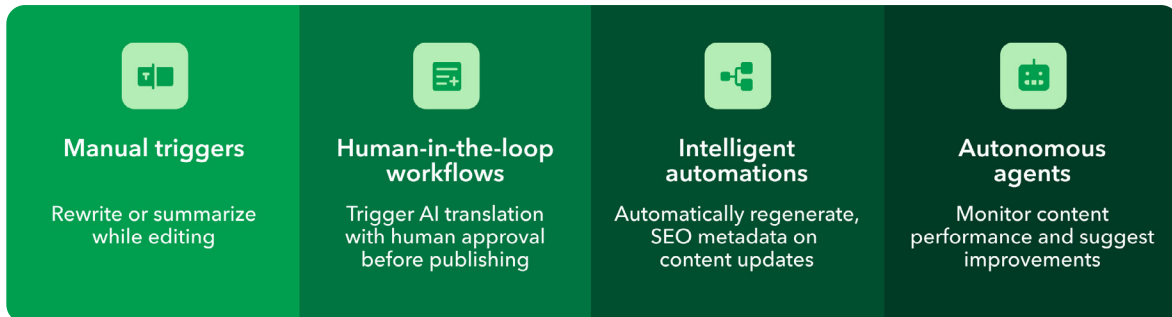
At Contentful, we believe that there are four stages of AI Automation. No matter where you are on your AI adoption journey or where your use case fits on this spectrum, we have the AI capabilities you need.

Scale: Where to invest for long-term success.

The framework we introduced in chapter two will help you identify your best AI bets. **From there, we recommend balancing AI investments across three primary areas: speed, quality, and personalization.**

Why these three areas? Marketing teams need to increase speed and efficiency to do more with smaller budgets, and they must do this without sacrificing quality, creativity, or brand integrity. What's more, marketing teams must build personalization capabilities to cut through the noise, reach, and retain customers.

Investing in these three areas maximizes your ROI by turning AI into a marketing multiplier. Not replacing people, but empowering them to do 10x more with the resources they have.

Maximize your ROI by investing in speed, quality, and personalization

Pillar	☑ Speed	★ Quality	👤 Personalization
Where to invest	Productivity copilots, workflow automation, A/B testing tools, generative AI content, integrating LLM-based agents with business systems.	Contextual AI content, AI-powered design, AI-enabled search/ knowledge management, AI-assisted review and approval processes, auditing tools, brand and compliance checks.	Chatbots, recommendation engines, predictive analytics, audience segmentation, real-time, data-driven personalization, account-based marketing.
Primary outcome	Reduce time-to-market, clear bottlenecks.	Maintain creative excellence, protect brand voice.	Relevant experiences at scale.
For Contentful customers	Use **AI Actions** to automate and accelerate workflows. Check out **advanced features** that take content ops to the next level.	**Contextual AI** uses your content, data, and guidelines to generates content that sound like you, not slop.	Create content your customers can't ignore with **Contentful Personalization**, **Segmentation**, and **Analytics**.

Biogen

[Biogen](#) leverages AI Actions to scale localization with Contentful

Biogen researches and manufactures medicines to treat spinal muscular atrophy, Alzheimer's, and MS. Their digital platforms educate physicians and patients on their offerings and clinical trials — until recently, publishing this content was a long, drawn-out process, thanks to a well-known but rigid content management system (CMS).

"Our goal was to simplify the way web pages are built, streamline localization, and reduce the overall cost of building pages. We also wanted to find a way to have content creators publish pages in near real-time, and not have to wait for a deployment to production or deployment from lower environments to higher environments," shared Arthur Allard, Customer Solutions Lead at Biogen.

In 2020, Biogen switched to Contentful — and got exactly what they were looking for.

"When we started comparing the cost and time it takes to build the same things on our former CMS, Contentful clearly had the upper hand," Allard added. "We didn't need to code everything, which meant we didn't need to outsource additional development support."

Biogen is also saving resources when it comes to localization by using **AI Actions**, a Contentful-native tool that leverages generative AI to streamline content management, automate translations, create image alt text, copyedit spelling and grammar errors, optimize content for keywords, and more.

"AI Actions has enabled us to really transform our translation process. It went from taking weeks, with added expenditures, to taking just minutes at no added cost." —Arthur Allard, Customer Solutions Lead

Biogen estimates that it's saving upwards of 50K dollars annually with this change.

"Contentful is the heart of our health care professional portal at Biogen. We were lucky enough to start testing AI Actions — specifically for translation — early, and this has been a small revolution within the revolution as we are now able to localize, clone, and translate a web page from one language to another in a matter of minutes, vs. days previously. We look forward to even more efficiency as we go deeper with translation and take advantage of other features like SEO optimization and copy review."

See what's possible: A day in the life of an AI-empowered marketer

Amazing things happen when you empower full-stack marketers with AI support in all the right places.

Docusign localizes content in minutes, and empowers a team of three to personalize content for 20 audience segments.

ZoomInfo cut campaign turnaround time by 40% and is moving 10x faster on high-impact pages.

Biogen cut weeks of translation time down to minutes and is saving upwards of $50K annually.

Strategically implemented AI multiples your team's impact. It's exactly what marketers need to get more done in less time, without sacrificing quality.
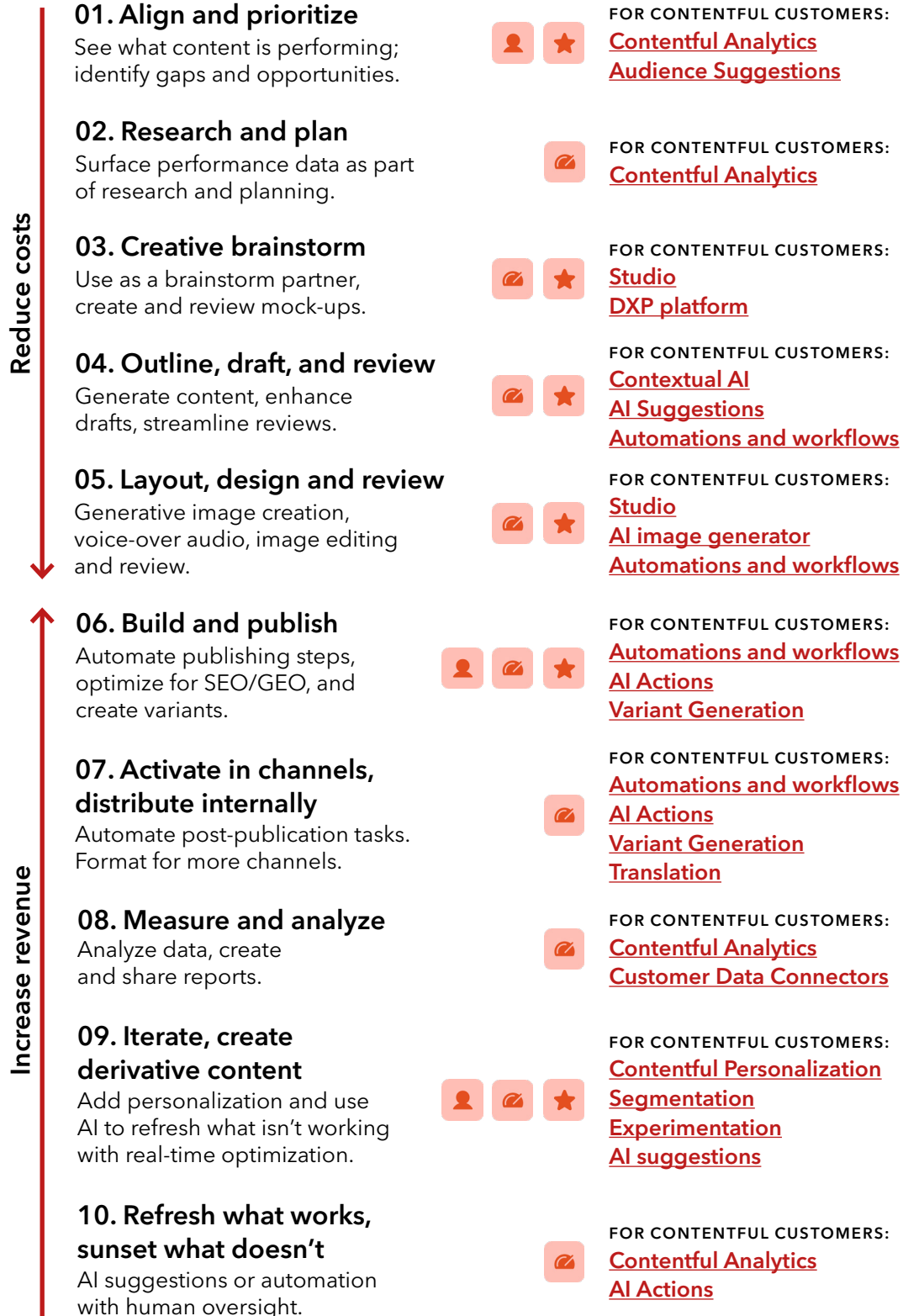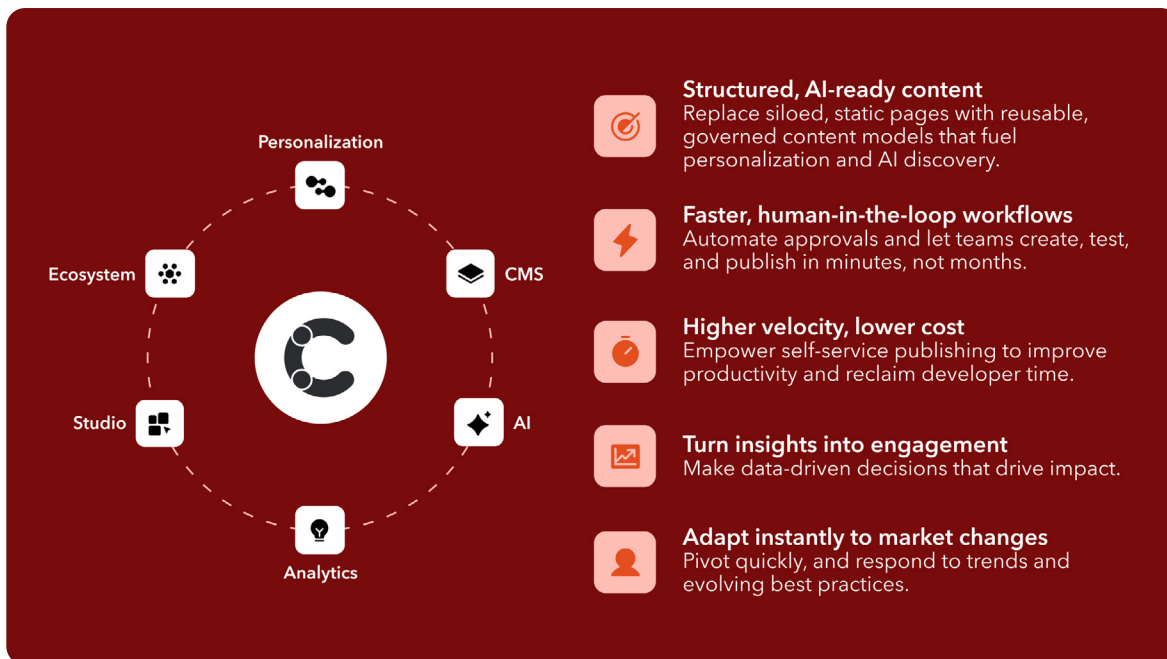
Speed ⭐ **Quality** 👤 **Personalization**

Save time and money at every step of content creation with Contentful

Reduce costs

01. Align and prioritize
See what content is performing; identify gaps and opportunities.

👤 ⭐ FOR CONTENTFUL CUSTOMERS:
Contentful Analytics
Audience Suggestions

02. Research and plan
Surface performance data as part of research and planning.

FOR CONTENTFUL CUSTOMERS:
Contentful Analytics

03. Creative brainstorm
Use as a brainstorm partner, create and review mock-ups.

FOR CONTENTFUL CUSTOMERS:
Studio
DXP platform

04. Outline, draft, and review
Generate content, enhance drafts, streamline reviews.

FOR CONTENTFUL CUSTOMERS:
Contextual AI
AI Suggestions
Automations and workflows

05. Layout, design and review
Generative image creation, voice-over audio, image editing and review.

FOR CONTENTFUL CUSTOMERS:
Studio
AI image generator
Automations and workflows

Increase revenue

06. Build and publish
Automate publishing steps, optimize for SEO/GEO, and create variants.

FOR CONTENTFUL CUSTOMERS:
Automations and workflows
AI Actions
Variant Generation

07. Activate in channels, distribute internally
Automate post-publication tasks. Format for more channels.

FOR CONTENTFUL CUSTOMERS:
Automations and workflows
AI Actions
Variant Generation
Translation

08. Measure and analyze
Analyze data, create and share reports.

FOR CONTENTFUL CUSTOMERS:
Contentful Analytics
Customer Data Connectors

09. Iterate, create derivative content
Add personalization and use AI to refresh what isn't working with real-time optimization.

FOR CONTENTFUL CUSTOMERS:
Contentful Personalization
Segmentation
Experimentation
AI suggestions

10. Refresh what works, sunset what doesn't
AI suggestions or automation with human oversight.

FOR CONTENTFUL CUSTOMERS:
Contentful Analytics
AI Actions

Contentful: The experience platform for full-stack marketers

Personalization

Ecosystem

CMS

Studio

AI

Analytics

Structured, AI-ready content
Replace siloed, static pages with reusable, governed content models that fuel personalization and AI discovery.

Faster, human-in-the-loop workflows
Automate approvals and let teams create, test, and publish in minutes, not months.

Higher velocity, lower cost
Empower self-service publishing to improve productivity and reclaim developer time.

Turn insights into engagement
Make data-driven decisions that drive impact.

Adapt instantly to market changes
Pivot quickly, and respond to trends and evolving best practices.

How to move boldly into an AI-enhanced future

Getting from where you are to the point where AI is effectively integrated into marketing workflows might seem like a tall order. But it's not only possible, it's what other teams, including your competitors, are starting to do.

Now is the time to take strategic steps towards a future where AI multiplies your marketing efforts tenfold, making life easier for you, and driving the value your executive team and board members expect to see.

Here's what you can do to lead the way:

- **Conduct an AI audit.** How is your team using AI now? What AI tools are they using (approved or otherwise)? Where are you seeing impact? Is AI already part of your marketing operations?

- **Get support from the top.** Research, including ours, shows a correlation between executive support and AI success. Show your CMO what a day in the life of an AI-empowered marketer looks like.

- **Implement a value-based strategy.** Start with quick wins from chapter one and use the framework in chapter two to identify smart AI investments.

- **Choose the right tools and partners.** A recent MIT Study found that external partners provide an implementation advantage, with double the success rate of internal builds.

Talk to us. We're happy to show you and your team how a modern digital experience platform can free you from any limitations and accelerate AI adoption. What's more, we can introduce you to our **network of experienced solution and technology partners**.

## Ready to tap into the value of AI? Let us show you how Contentful can help you lead the way

Contact sales

About Contentful

Contentful is a leading digital experience platform that helps modern businesses meet the growing demand for engaging, personalized content at scale. By blending composability with native AI capabilities, Contentful enables dynamic personalization, automated content delivery, and real-time experimentation, powering next-generation digital experiences across brands, regions, and channels for more than 4,200 organizations worldwide. For more information, visit **www.contentful.com**. Contentful, the Contentful logo, and other trademarks listed here are registered trademarks of Contentful Inc., Contentful GmbH and/or its affiliates in the United States and other countries. Other names may be trademarks of their respective owners.

Additional resources:
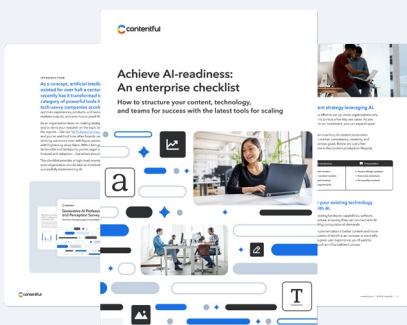
AI-readiness checklist

Follow these essential steps to build a scalable AI strategy that drives results.

Contentful and Atlantic Insights report:

See what marketing leaders who are already succeeding with AI do differently.