# Critical Assessment of Issues and Benefits of Digital Asset Management

Nawaf H. Alqahtani[1] & Tahani H. Alqahtani[2]

[1] Master of International Marketing, Specialization Digital and Social Media Marketing MSc, University of Dundee, United Kingdom

[2] Lecturer, College of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Al Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University (IMSIU), Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; Ph.D in Management, University of Aberdeen, United Kingdom

Correspondence: Tahani H. Alqahtani, Lecturer, College of Economics and Administrative Sciences at Al Imam Mohammad Ibn Saud Islamic University (IMSIU), Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. E-mail: Tahani.h.q@gmail.com

Received: March 7, 2022 Accepted: April 6, 2022 Online Published: April 11, 2022

doi:10.5430/jms.v13n1p13 URL: https://doi.org/10.5430/jms.v13n1p13

**Abstract**

Digital asset management (DAM) now encompasses business and other diversified services such as new media, proliferates, virtual organization as reality, web content management, horizontal enterprise focus, and acquisitions and partnerships. Indeed, DAM has become essential in the commercial sector. An efficient system, that manages digital assets finds DAM is crucial for increasing efficiency and productivity, which provides access to approach, distribution and sharing of assets, a system that saves a significant amount of time and, potentially, money. Without a system that collects data in one area and then finds it quickly, when needed, a loss of both time and money results.

In sum, the evolution of companies always entails a search to find the optimum mode of management methods and tools. A better understanding of the client and the development of the workplace are crucial too. These factors lead us to conclude that a contemporary system, such as DAM, might be the appropriate solution.

An agile system which can assist businesses to organize and manage their digital assets to optimize their operations and improve the performance of the company across all departments is of use.

**Keywords:** digital asset management, social media, metadata, taxonomy

## 1. Introduction

Digital asset management (DAM) can be defined as a system that facilitates the preservation, organization, management, production and distribution of digital assets (Regli, 2016). DAM began to be used when Macintosh Computers and PCs started to make inroads into companies in America.

At that time, DAM systems were merely being used by PCs' folder and file structures to access files, if and when needed. The files were searched for by file or folder name (Frey et al., 2005). Corporations in the media sector were the first to engage DAM to increase their value and earn increased profits from investments (Frey et al., 2005).

In the 1990s, printing firms were looking to organize their digital data to improve internal efficiency and assist customers to organise their digital files for printing (Frey et al., 2005). However, the really monumental shift in thinking for DAM began with the internal evolution of the Internet (Frey et al., 2005).

DAM now encompasses business and other diversified services such as new media, proliferates, virtual organization as reality, web content management, horizontal enterprise focus, and acquisitions and partnerships (Landers, 2002; Latham, 2002). Indeed, DAM has become essential in the commercial sector (Regli, 2019). An efficient system, that manages digital assets finds DAM is crucial for increasing efficiency and productivity, which provides access to approach, distribution and sharing of assets, a system that saves a significant amount of time and, potentially, money. (Regli, 2019). Without a system that collects data in one area and then finds it quickly, when needed, a loss of both time and money results (Regli, 2019).

This report discusses critical understanding of the key issues in digital asset management as well as discusses critical key benefits of digital asset management. However, the different kinds of DAM software in the field of business will not be discussed.

The report contains three sections. Section one will provide a critical understanding of the key issues in DAM. The next section will focus on critical key benefits of digital asset management. The final section will explore the development of a well-justified set of recommendations for the management of Adidas' digital assets.

## 2. Discussion of the Key Issues of DAM in Companies

There is a considerable number of digital assets in any company nowa, such as digital advertisements. Any company around the world have digital advertising, image or video for each region, to reach the customer (Regli, 2016). All these digital assets need to be managed effectively to access them as quickly as possible. Therefore, using DAM is very important, however, there are several issues for any company to consider when incorporating DAM in the workplace.

### *2.1 Inability to Have Quick Access to Digital Assets*

The first and primary issue is the inability to have quick access to digital assets, big companies such as Amazon and/or Sony having many thousands of files that need to be used and managed effectively (Tansley et al., 2005). Finding the correct file is one of the biggest problems that occur when searching for files, due to the potentially huge number of files (Tansley et al., 2005). The problem of access to files may be lost employee time, with employees spending hours searching for perhaps just one file. In fact, lost employee time searching for files is estimated at 3.25 hours per month (Vernon and Riger, 2001). This problem may be also attributable to incorrect tagging of digital assets, leading to difficulty locating the sought-after file or folder.

### *2.2 Cost of DAM*

The second issue that companies might have, when applying DAM in the workplace, is that the implementation costs depend on the size of the team and its requirements. The cost itself is affected by four factors (Fisher, 2006). Firstly, set up costs of DAM vary, depending on the type of fixed asset management program required. For example, brand asset management systems and digital supply chain services (Fisher, 2006). Second is the cost to activate DAM. Time spend on entering the correct file name, and placing the files in the space provided, facilitates quick searches (Rauber, 2005). Time is money in business and the time spent on transferring files to DAM depends on the amount of data the team needs (Rauber, 2005). Thirdly, the cost of training staff on the use of DAM is a factor. It is crucial that employees receive the correct training if the most is to be made of DAM (Fisher, 2006). In addition, it is important for managers to believe fully that DAM will improve the business in order to bring employees round to expecting the best from the system (Fisher, 2006). Fourthly, DAM requires maintenance, either to add more features or to tend to system crashes (Fisher, 2006). This cost is both financial and also counted in terms of lost production time (Fisher, 2006).

### *2.3 Security of DAM and Copyright Issues*

The third issue in DAM is security and protecting digital assets (Hurst, 2010). Companies must take the utmost care that employees have access only to the files they need, for their specific tasks, because of the risk of breaches of confidentiality (Hurst, 2010). Therefore, the companies must confirm the entry settings of each employee, as and when necessary, especially for new employees (Hurst, 2010).

The fourth issue is copyright images for video and/or music (Fisher, 2006). Due to legal liabilities, all companies employees should pay attention to Digital rights management (DRM) as it is likely that simple, inadvertent mistakes by employees could end up costing the company a significant amount (Fisher, 2006). Companies should not update its DAM until it is sure that it has the complete documented rights to use images, videos and/or music (Fisher, 2006).

### *2.4 The Non-acceptance of Shareholders*

The fifth issue is the non-acceptance of shareholders of DAM. Use of DAM, without the acceptance of shareholders, may lead to a lack of seriousness in its use by employees, leading to unnecessary costs. Without stakeholder support, there is a high probability of system failure in the workplace (Rauber, 2005). However, according to Bachmann (2010) acceptance of stakeholders of DAM does not have a clear effect in the workplace. The author believes that acceptance, or non-acceptance, by shareholders has an essential impact on DAM in the workplace because shareholders have the ability to make a significant change in a company. Therefore, they have the ability to raise the success rate of digital asset management and make employees use it.

## 3. Critical Key Benefits of Digital Asset Management

### *3.1 Why Does Companies Need DAM?*

With DAM, companies will be able to easily send files to affiliate stores, in order to show their modern marketing

images (Bachmann, 2010). The inclusion of DAM will lead to effective control of the search engine, by categorizing files according to date (McIntyre, 2010). For example, a new image could be sent to employees and marketing staff will know that this image is the next product of the company (McIntyre, 2010). In this way, DAM prepares the marketing department for advertising campaigns. Hence, effective coordination between the various business units is assured through the use of DAM (McIntyre, 2010).

*3.2 What Should Companies Goals Be When They Apply DAM?*

- Collaboration in the workplace.
  - To easily share work between employees and access files and comments, so that team members, or teams from different sections, can complete the work in a timely manner.
  - The ability to share content more professionally.
  - More administrative control and governance, which increases motivation (Hurst, 2010).
- Control
  - Have a degree of control over employees, by allowing them to access only the files they need.
  - Have a system that is easily-scaled, as the volume of data grows.
  - The list of files available to employees is updated periodically and sensitive information files are kept confidential.
- Save money, time and improve efficiency
  - DAM delivers the required files with minimal effort and with faster searches.
  - DAM manages assets more efficiently by accessing files needed by teams from different sections, without wasting time on unnecessary searches.

*3.3 Build a DAM Community Inside the Company*

In order for any company to draw the desired benefits of incorporating DAM, it must implement two important features (Moon, 2010). First, before applying DAM there should be a DAM community and demo team to test the system upon installation and then relay to the concerned parties any errors for repair and/or add other characteristics, as noted in the report (Moon, 2010). Secondly, after implementing DAM, all company departments must report, periodically, any problems and/or features they need, in order to refine the system and raise efficiency and effectiveness (Moon, 2010).

*3.4 The Benefits of Applying DAM in Any Company*

DAM will bring a large number of benefits to the companies' workplace (Love and Matthews, 2019). The benefits start from file management, saving employee time and efficient and timely access to files (Love and Matthews, 2019). The first benefit of DAM is time-saving for employees, when files are inserted correctly and there are common rules among employees using the system (Krüger, Stieglitz and Potthof, 2012). Thus, time wasted in the search process will be vastly-reduced, leaving employees to focus on the final product (Krüger, Stieglitz and Potthof, 2012).

The second benefit is collaboration. DAM increases collaboration by encouraging contact between all divisions under a single system, thereby facilitating and improving teamwork. Moreover, product launches can be arranged and managed well, which will increase the quality Finally, the important role that DAM play in companies brand image such as coordination has an impact on any company brand, which will present a professional picture, complete with company and DAM logos and images (Reichert, 2010).

Table 1. Benefits of DAM in companies

| Benefits of DAM: | Explanation: |
|---|---|
| Saving Time | Less time spent on searching for files by any company teams. For example, (Date) (Picture title) and (Tags); a common language between all different departments decreases the amount of time employees spend to find digital assets. |
| Joint collaboration | Increase the quality of the final product by encouraging collaboration between all divisions under a single system, thereby facilitating and improving teamwork. |
| Brand image | Build a strong brand image through coordination has an impact on any companies' brand, which will present a professional picture, complete with companies and DAM logos and images. |

## 4. Development of a Well-Justified Set of Recommendations for the Management of the Brand's Digital Assets

### *4.1 Principles Before Applying DAM in Any Company*

There are two principles that any company has to consider before implementing DAM, in order to maximize the benefits of the system (Love and Matthews, 2019). Firstly, having appropriate technology in the workplace - a system such as DAM counts for little if is not properly utilized (Love and Matthews, 2019). Secondly, Companies will reap the benefits of incorporating DAM only when employees do their jobs efficiently, which means doing things with the least amount of waste and effort (Love and Matthews, 2019). Staff training to understand how to use DAM correctly entails not only technical training but also having staff understand what the benefits are and what improvements this system will bring to their own performance, as much as that of the company (Regli, 2016). Technically, employees will be trained to be able to handle tasks faster, with less effort, and with more output (Regli, 2016).

### *4.2 Companies' DAM Team*

Companies must have a DAM team and ensure that it is successful in all departments of the company (Hedden, 2019). In order to gain that success, Company can conduct surveys of all departments and employees to understand the problems they are facing and then develop and improve the management of the digital assets they own (Hedden, 2019).

This will lead to a better understanding of Company' problems and working environment, by understanding the problems faced by their employees (Hedden, 2019). The team should assist company to benefit from DAM by predicting future revenues using data analytics (Hedden, 2019). DAM's technical features contain a function that allows company to estimate profits as it analyses asset consumption across multiple communication channels, such as the Adidas website (Hedden, 2019).

The DAM team must know which geographical areas are most in demand for a particular product, through the number of product visits or shortages of the product (Hedden, 2019). This will assist the marketing team to focus more advertising on certain markets (Hedden, 2019). In addition, the DAM team must have the ability to tell the company to transfer stock from areas where there is less demand to higher demand areas (Hedden, 2019). The successful introduction of DAM will lead to more accurate identification of customers' needs and demands which will enhance the understanding of what customers really want (Hedden, 2019).

### *4.3 Companies DAM System and Backup Tools*

All sections must have one platform for DAM, with two services, such as Hi hosting, and backup functions, such as Google Cloud Storage. Because, if one of the services stops working, the other can maintain work (Hurst, 2010). On the other hand, Gonnering (2010) states that it all depends on the size of the company; for example, DAM does not need to have two services in small companies. The author agrees with Hurst that all companies need more than one service, regardless of the size; therefore. Moreover, crucially, the backup function can prevent any company from

losing its files. Furthermore, the DAM system should not only jst save a file's history, but all previous versions of DAM, which could be recoverable at any time (Hurst, 2010). DAM could have easy access to previous versions, and easy access to information from them, in order to avoid wasting time transferring files (Hurst, 2010).

*4.4 DAM IPFS Instead of HTTP*

IPFS refers to The InterPlanetary File System (IPFS) and HTTP refers to Hyper Text Transfer Protocol. Both are file-sharing systems. HTTP, when considerable numbers of users download the same file from a start point, might lead crash or slow a system, while the IPFS system is a peer-to-peer distributed file system, so files are requested from a peer instead of a start point, which means IPFS speeds file access and downloads (Nizamuddin, et al. 2019) (see Figure 3). The author believes that large companies might have more benefits by implementing IPFS instead of HTTP.

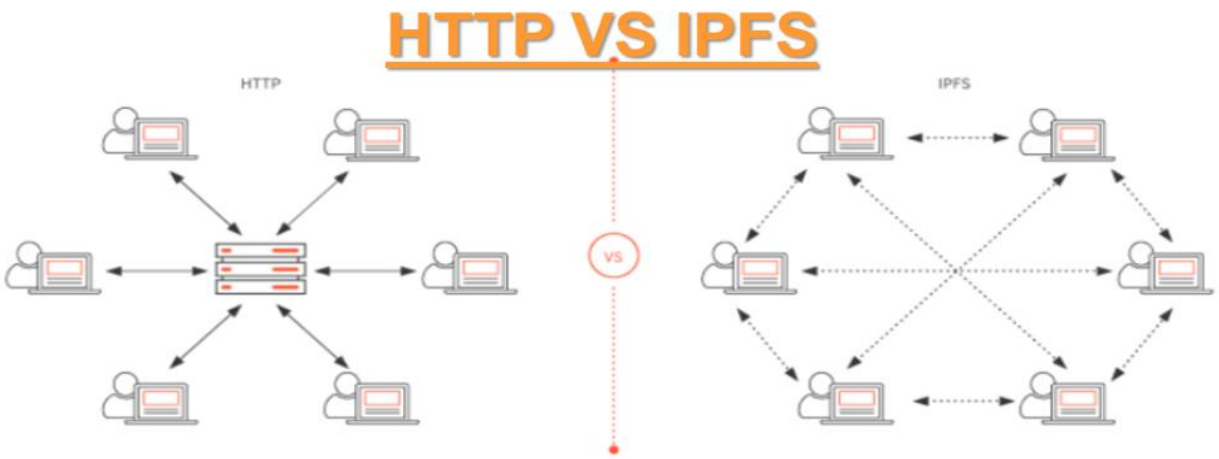


Figure 3. HTTP VS IPFS (Source: STACKPATH 2019)

*4.5 Copyright Tools in DAM*

DAM provides all copyright information when uploading any image from companies' systems (Fisher, 2006). Moreover, DAM tools allow a company to place a reminder expiration date of photos and videos (Fisher, 2006). Therefore, Digital Asset Management assets help companies keep their photos and videos legally for use under Digital Rights Managements (DRM).

*4.6 DAM Links With Social Media Accounts*

Nowadays companies have accounts in different social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (Gonnering, 2010). DAM can assist social media teams in locating pictures immediately and post them again on different social media platforms (Gonnering, 2010). Those pictures may have been taken up to five years before and yet employees can access them in moments, through the remarkable developments in social media.

Companies must be well-presented on these platforms, through the management of digital assets to allow access to images faster and the ability to resize images to suit the particular platform (Gonnering, 2010). DAM allows employees to change aspects of the picture (colour, etc.) to suit customers' emotions (Gonnering, 2010). For example, winter may be on the way, so a picture might have warm colours to give the customers a warm and positive feeling (Gonnering, 2010). Having a social media team that understands all the different tools in DAM, and that knows how to use them correctly, will lead to enhanced engagement with more customers on social media platforms and develop strong relationships between a company and its target customers (Krüger, Stieglitz and Potthof, 2012).

*4.7 Metadata and Taxonomy*

Metadata is describing a digital assets object (photo, graphic, PDF, video etc) by using terms that are related to that object (Hurst, 2010). This association may involve information. For example, the file name, the file creates date, a description or keywords (Hurst, 2010). The author believes that before the company are planning to start work on the

metadata, it might need give the employee the training they need to create a common language between them in order to find these digital assets later (Hurst, 2010).

Taxonomy assists firms to approach their digital assets. Taxonomy builds up a hierarchical relationship that assists to organize digital assets in an ordered mode (Hurst, 2010). Taxonomy could store the data consistently as well as improve efficiency and effectiveness in searching in the DAM System. Each firm might use different taxonomies that suit their unique business needs (Hurst, 2010). The author believes that companies might need to do the following before work on Taxonomy:

- How do employees currently search for Digital assets in company DAM system.
- What level categories of information might be helpful for company to search? (For example, department, product, region, season, project).
- What kinds of digital assets will be storage in the DAM?
- Describe how Employees will use the digital assets. For example, in a marketing campaign, to share with others in the organization, On social media (Hurst, 2010).

## 5. Conclusion

In sum, the evolution of companies always entails a search to find the optimum mode of management methods and tools (Hurst, 2010). A better understanding of the client and the development of the workplace are crucial too (Hurst, 2010). These factors lead us to conclude that a contemporary system, such as DAM, might be the appropriate solution.

An agile system which can assist businesses to organize and manage their digital assets to optimize their operations and improve the performance of the company across all departments is of use (Hurst, 2010). This paper has discussed critical understanding of the key issues in digital asset management as well as discussed critical key benefits of digital asset management. It has not considered the different kinds of DAM which can be applied in the business. Instead, it has covered three main ideas: a critical understanding of the key issues in DAM, critical key benefits of digital asset management and the development of a well-justified set of recommendations for the management of the brand's digital assets. In the future, further reports could be undertaken into DAM, the important role of DAM in the era of social media marketing.

## References

Bachmann, T. (2010). Video metadata modeling for DAM systems. *Journal of Digital Asset Management*, *6*(5), 247-256. https://doi.org/10.1057/dam.2010.34

Fisher, C. (2006). Manage digital assets with ITIL: Improve product configurations and service management. *Journal of Digital Asset Management*, *2*(1), 40-49. https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.dam.3640071

Frey, F., Williams-Allen, S., Vogl, H., & Chandra, L. (2004). *Digital Asset Management— A Closer Look at the Literature*. Printing Industry Centre, Chester NY [online]. Retrieved 12 October 2019, from https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/636e/d40e4029d72be66789f31de0743c83f747a4.pdf

Gonnering, M. (2010). DAM, YouTube is great for vdeo, but it is NOT digital asset management. *Journal of Digital Asset Management, 6*(6), 319-322. https://doi.org/10.1057/dam.2010.40

Hedden, H. (2010). Taxonomies and controlled vocabularies best practices for metadata. *Journal of Digital Asset Management*, *6*(5), 279-284. https://doi.org/10.1057/dam.2010.29

Hurst, M. (2010). Search relevancy got you down? Learn how to use metadata to lift your results (and your mood). *Journal of Digital Asset Management*, 6(5), 285-290. https://doi.org/10.1057/dam.2010.30

Hurst, M. (2010). Search ROI's missing element: Search analytics. *Journal of Digital Asset Management*, 6(6), 327-331. https://doi.org/10.1057/dam.2010.43

Krüger, N., Stieglitz, S., & Potthoff, T. (2012). Brand Communication in Twitter – A Case Study on Adidas. *PACIS 2012 Proceedings*.

Landers, G. (2002). *Digital asset management technology heats up*. Gartner.

Latham, L. (2002). *Rich media joins the content management pack*. Gartner.

Love, P., & Matthews, J. (2019). *The 'how' of benefits management for digital technology: From engineering to asset management*. Automation in Construction. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.autcon.2019.102930

McIntyre, L. (2010). Building a DAM, one brick at a time. *Journal of Digital Asset Management, 6*(6), 344-348. https://doi.org/10.1057/dam.2010.41

Moon, M. (2010). Approval workflow: Fixing the weakest link. *Journal of Digital Asset Management, 6*(6), 309-311. https://doi.org/10.1057/dam.2010.46

Rauber, A., Christodoulakis, S., & Tjoa, A. (2005). Research and Advanced Technology for Digital Libraries. *9th European Conference*, ECDL 2005, Vienna, Austria, September 18-23, 2005, Proceedings, (1st ed.). https://doi.org/10.1007/11551362

Regli, T. (2016). Digital and Marketing Asset Management: The Real Story about DAM Technology and Practices. *Rosenfeld Media.* Retrieved 24 October 2019, from https://www.amazon.co.uk/Digital-Marketing-Asset-Management-Technology/dp/1933820721

Regli, T. (2019). Digital and Marketing Asset Management, Rosenfeld Media, United states of America. Retrieved 12 October 2019, from https://rosenfeldmedia.com/books/digital-and-marketing-asset-management/

Reichert, D. (2010). How customer communications and interactions become digital assets and critical resources in customer engagement – An interview with Dieter Reichert, co-founder of Censhare AG. *Journal of Digital Asset Management, 6*(4), 232-242. https://doi.org/10.1057/dam.2010.26

STACKPATH. (2019). What is the Interplanetary File System?. Justin Johnson. Retrieved 29 October 2019, from https://blog.stackpath.com/glossary-ipfs/

Tansley, R., Smith, M., & Walker, J. (2005). The DSpace Open Source Digital Asset Management System: Challenges and Opportunities. In Rauber, A., Christodoulakis, S., Tjoa, A. M. (Eds.), *Research and Advanced Technology for Digital Libraries* (vol. 3652). Lecture Notes in Computer Science. https://doi.org/10.1007/11551362_22

Vernon, D., & Riger. (2001). Digital Asset Management: An Introduction to Key Issues. Retrieved 24 September 2004, from https://it.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/IT%20Reports%20and%20Presentations/DigAssetMgmt.pdf

**Copyrights**