



Our Point of View

# How ContentOps Tames the Content Explosion

# Personalized content at scale is the key to relevance

Every individual touchpoint is a battle for the hearts and minds of consumers and employees. Those battles are won or lost depending on your ability to connect with content that is relevant, timely, and engaging.

Making those **personalized connections at scale** across an organization's content ecosystem requires constant reevaluation of the entire content supply chain that supports it. Effective personalization requires not only data, insights, and technology to deliver a personalized experience, but increasingly it demands creating the right content from the outset to support all the variations required.

"Content" as a concept can be abstract, but is best defined as any form of communication material that enables an organization to achieve its objectives. This could be advertising, product information, customer service, employee training courses, sales kits, and much more.

It can add up to a dizzying volume – and it all must be ideated, produced, collated, revised, updated, and distributed, and its effectiveness measured. The job of content, its creation, production, distribution, and management has become progressively more challenging.

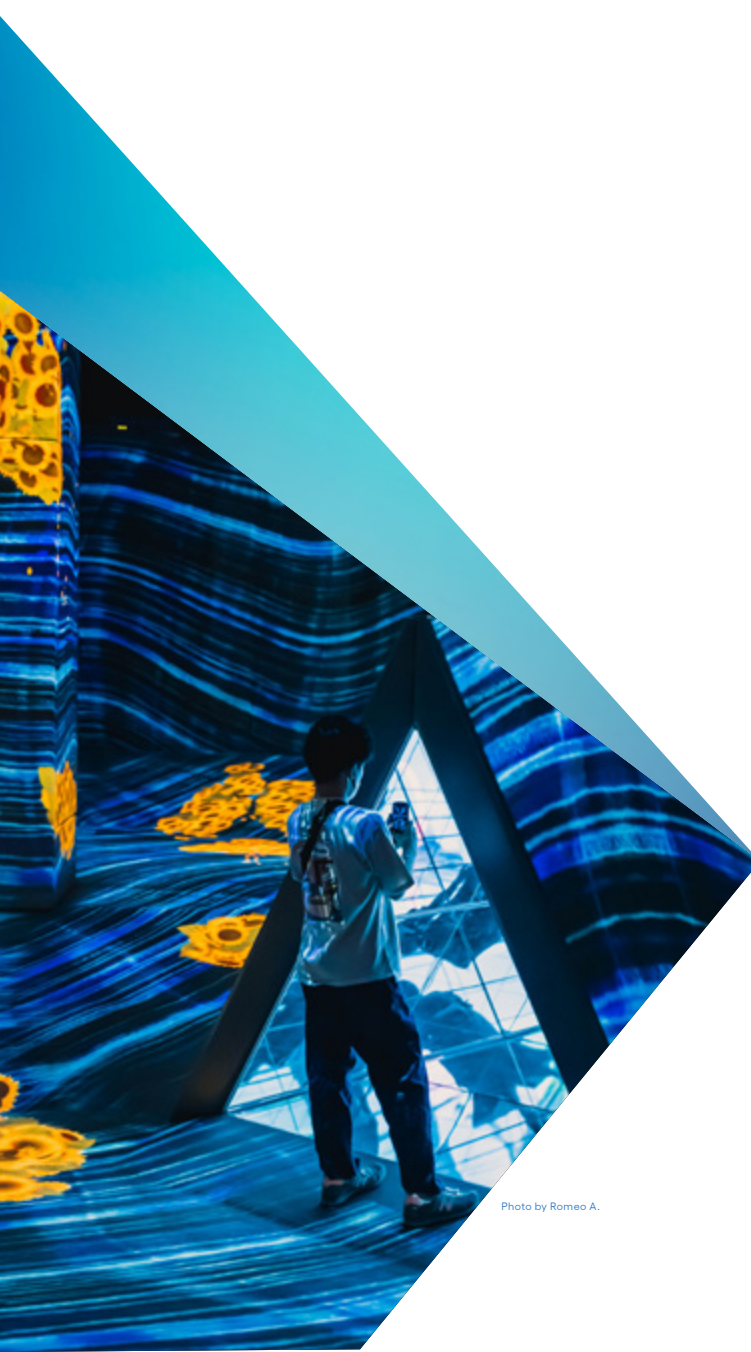


Photo by Romeo A.

Changes in consumer behavior, the proliferation of media channels and platforms, and an avalanche of data and new technologies all provide opportunities to create valuable content-driven experiences, but they also put pressure on overstretched marketing, content, and experience teams. Instead of finding new ways to deliver differentiated and valuable content to their consumers, marketing and digital teams are trapped by old organizational models, poor processes, redundant tagging, and duplicate content to manage. As a result, while teams attempt to drive quality in each phase of content development, gaps in processes and technologies introduce errors or delays.

Whether your content is designed to educate your consumers or guide your employees, to be useful, it must be seen. To be valuable, it also needs to be contextually relevant, engaging to the consumer, as well as consistent with the brand strategy. In an omnichannel world this becomes a very challenging problem to solve. Shaping a customer journey across these channels and platforms requires that the right content be delivered at the right time, in the right context, and at a cost that's not prohibitive. The challenge to any marketer of scale is balancing efficiencies delivered by automated tools and processes with creating an effective experience for your audiences.

We recently completed a study<sup>1</sup> of more than 100 decision-makers in marketing, CX, and commercial roles across several industry verticals. When asked about organizing all the content within their organization, respondents cited the following as their biggest obstacles:

### **Biggest obstacles:**

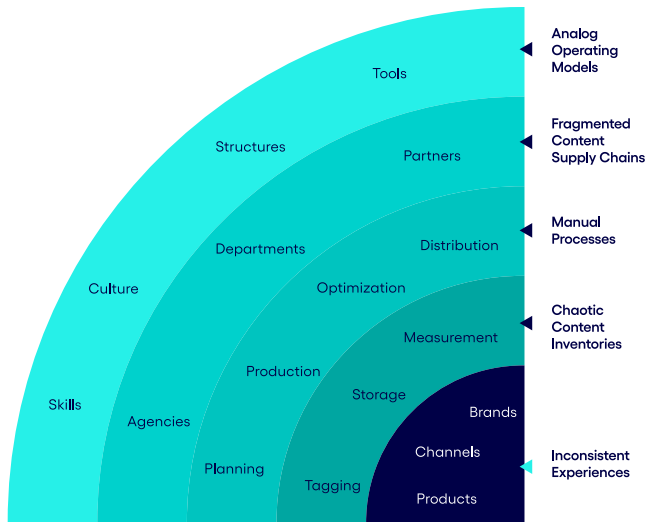
- / No way to repurpose content effectively across channels, geographies, and teams.
- / The cost of going through everything would be excessive.
- / Not knowing what content was still valuable and what wasn't.
- / Content is produced by so many different departments we don't know who should take ownership of the task.
- / Not having the right technology in place to create and disseminate content to the right audiences.
- / Not having the right team and culture in place to understand our audiences and create relevant content for them .

In short, there were issues identified across the entire Content Supply Chain.

<sup>1</sup> Methodology – research with 100 respondents at companies with £100m plus turnover per annum conducted online 06/15/21– 07/06/21

# The problem is the supply chain

The key finding of our study identified that many organizations are still relying on approaches that were designed for the predigital era, causing both ineffectiveness and inefficiency.



Overall, the results show that businesses are struggling. Whether it is lack of available data, slow decision making, or conflicting priorities, it appears that larger organizations in more traditional sectors find it difficult to create the right content at scale.

There are some well-established practices surrounding content that have served marketing teams and businesses well in the past but need a reset given accelerated changes in consumer behavior.

The big shift in thinking for marketers and content teams is the need to craft content and experiences for the whole customer journey. Classic marketing strategy is based around top of sales funnel activity – creating brand awareness and consideration – and moving audiences down the sales funnel to conversion. But the customer journey is becoming more complex all the time. It’s not linear and switches between offline and online touchpoints at dizzying speeds. Customers need different experiences underpinned by different forms of content along their journey.

Most organizations understand their customers on varying levels and collect a raft of data from numerous channels that isn’t often joined up and feedback to the business. Marketing knows them in one context while customer service, senior management, and digital teams know them in another. The bigger a company is, the more touchpoints it develops with its customers, the more data it collects, and the greater the need to turn these data into insight. The potential to deliver meaningful experiences is huge, but some long-held beliefs need a reboot.

# Expecting legacy content supply chain models to meet the demands of today's multi-dimensional experiences is unrealistic

Even "personalization" could do with a fresh perspective and a more nuanced take. Personalization is not an absolute, whereby one message is personalized, and one message is not.

The key question here: are the experiences they are creating for the customer (or employee) as relevant as possible? This relevancy requires understanding at a deep level what the audience wants and then using technology to help shape and deliver it.

Relevancy will have different meanings in different contexts and for different channels. For instance, marketing collateral must inspire, while customer service materials must solve a problem at speed. In either case, relevancy is what will drive a valuable action from the target audience.

As a result, content must be designed from the outset to meet the needs of the personalization process. This change also means a more collaborative approach to content strategy, structure, and development, and include more functional groups across marketing, product, and IT. These groups are all part of the personalization process and, as such, will help content teams move toward this model.



Photo by Fauxels

# Scaling an operational approach

**Modular content strategies are the best way to manage your content end-to-end. To fuel more experiences, content needs to be available in modular formats so it can be reused and reconfigured:**



By algorithms



By AI/ML



By media platforms



By other humans

Modular content, at its core, is about reuse. By definition, it is not about a whole "thing" to be made and managed, but a collection of elements and components that are more valuable precisely because of their reconfigurability. This requires a different approach to traditional content operations because the challenge is no longer in managing whole assets and versions, but instead managing relationships between containers and collections of individual components.

These relationships are rules- and logic-based, so that systems can programmatically identify the elements they need and reassemble them to meet a specific journey requirement. The more modular it is, the more it can be optimized, personalized, and adapted for different channels and audiences, which translates directly as faster time-to-market and increased ROI for the content owner.

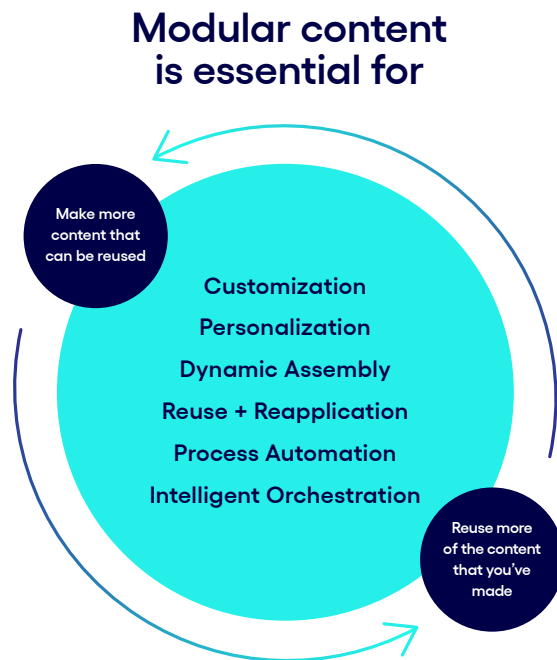
A mature, fully integrated ContentOps model will anticipate the need for modular content as far up-stream in the origination process as possible, concepting and creating componentized ideas from the outset. Less advanced organizations will need more help in retrofitting the finished assets they receive from their partners into more configurable collections of components.

The least mature organizations are still attempting to get to the same place through manual processes, creating hundreds of versions of a given asset and usually managed from excel spreadsheets. This is the slowest, most expensive path to market, and it's increasingly unsustainable.



# Modular content drives experiences

From a supply perspective, modular content cuts across functions and channels in ways that traditional content does not.



For example, a simple product image on a solid background can potentially be used in consumer marketing, customer partnerships, online retail, community outreach, localized adaptations, and so on. It defies traditional silos of function and media, which is why it's such a game-changer.

However, leveraging that fluidity to its fullest extent also requires a deep understanding of the technology, platforms, and data management that enable it. Complex, scaled deployments of modular content almost always require robust **ContentOps** capabilities to help companies realize the full opportunity.

Building a stronger operating model for aligning content and personalization is critical to an efficient content supply chain. It is a new set of efforts. One thing is for certain – there is no personalization, localization, or omnichannel reconfiguration, without modular content as its starting point. This is a central tenet of any coordinated approach to ContentOps.

# Building a framework for success

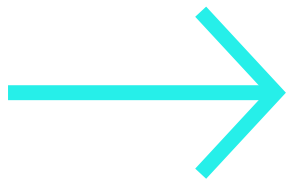


Photo by Ali Pazani

- 1/ Bring componentized thinking as far upstream as possible in your creative development process.
- 2/ Ensure you have the right platforms or partners in place to manage your modular content holistically.
- 3/ Make sure you understand the current and historic performance of a given activity so it can be measured against appropriate benchmarks.
- 4/ Focus on relevance by refreshing your journey maps often to identify the key touchpoints where you can and should be engaging with your audience.
- 5/ Identify the enablers and barriers to your goals. Make sure you have the right data and insights for full understanding of the audience and can access them in real time.
- 6/ Research the appropriate technologies needed to help orchestrate the delivery of the content and experiences you aspire to and enlist the help of an agency or consultancy to help you understand and implement it to its full potential.
- 7/ Ensure your content production capability is optimized to cost-efficiently deliver high quality in large volumes **while always maintaining focus on quality rather than quantity**. A good modular content-at-scale strategy revolves around producing, optimizing, publishing, and sharing content that is aligned with your business goals and objectives.
- 8/ Give content teams the right skills, processes, and structures to do the task.
- 9/ Make sure that metrics that measure the impact and performance of your content are in place and accessible to all.
- 10/ Pilot small initiatives that deliver incremental improvements to your content operations rapidly and use the results of these pilots to build the business case for greater investment.
- 11/ Scale successful pilots and drive organizational change and adoption through training, events, and internal communications, eg, highlighting and championing success stories.
- 12/ Continually measure and validate the value that operating model generates. Optimize the models that deliver the most value – always with the customer in mind.



# How we can help

**If you would like to discuss the findings in this report and how Cognizant Digital Experience can help your company better manage content at scale, please contact the Digital Experience Team at:**



**[helloDX@cognizant.com](mailto:helloDX@cognizant.com)**

We help clients realize the full value of their content – creation, distribution, personalization, and automation – across an increasingly complex media and experience landscape.

Adopting a ContentOps approach is the single most effective way for your organization to tame the explosion in content demand and allow it instead to drive the value that both you and your audiences are seeking. Leveraging our global network of studios and our state-of-the-art production facility in Chennai, we can help you deliver local relevance and global scale in a variety of ways:

- / Our teams will work alongside you to identify and break down silos and spot and reduce inefficiencies, while infusing new ways of thinking and working into your content supply chain.
- / We will help you reimagine the tools, the teams, and processes involved, and we will use AI technology and automation to refine the process making it more responsive, effective, and innovative at scale.
- / We will provide the strategy and governance to guide the management of your content according to your specific needs, or provide those management services directly on your behalf.
- / Together with you, we will accelerate your content production and activate it across platforms, campaigns, and audiences, while using our marketing platform partnerships (including SFDC, Adobe, SAP, Oracle, and Microsoft) to help ensure that you are getting the maximum value from your investments.



Photo by Shahadat Rahman

# About Cognizant DX

Cognizant Digital Experience helps our clients win by creating and enabling exceptional experiences.

We bring together intimacy and industrialization, contextualizing massive amounts of behavioral data with qualitative insights to connect us to the "why" behind people's behavior and integrating data intelligence, core technologies, and content and business processes at scale to enable the delivery of engaging experiences.

## We call this Experience Orchestration.

Through Experience Orchestration we unearth moments that matter most in customer and employee journeys and orchestrate data, content, software, platforms, and programs to transform these high-value interactions into personalized experiences that drive business results.



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