

## Playbook: Unlock the hidden ROI in your Adobe Assets DAM

This Playbook is a companion guide to the article "[Unlock Your ROI with AEM Reporting and Tools](#)" by Adobe Experience Manager Champion Cindy Underwood. In this deeper dive playbook, Cindy focuses on:

- Highlighting the business value of AEM Assets
- How to run reports in AEM Assets to highlight value and ROI
- Implementing strategies to boost asset performance and adoption
- Communicating value to stakeholders who control the budget

### 1. The Business Value of AEM Assets

Continuing on our path to unlock the hidden ROI, I want to give you some information for your back pocket.

**Sometimes it can be hard to pull the information together.**

You may not know all the costs of creating and managing your assets or have not been given all the analytics. If that is your situation, my tip is to look to industry data.

For instance - in 2024, The International Data Corporation (IDC) published a study titled "[The Business Value of Adobe Experience Manager Assets](#)" showing the actual measured impacts and value attained from using AEM Assets as reported by a fairly large number of major corporations.

## The International Data Corporation (IDC) study's findings

Included here are a few charts with valuable information from the 2024 IDC study on the "The Business Value of Adobe Experience Manager Assets."

The first chart we'll look at is the impact on **asset-related spend**.

The chart shows reduced spend on duplicative assets by 62% and reduced spend on unused assets by 40%.

### Impact on Asset-Related Spend

(Percent benefit with AEM Assets)

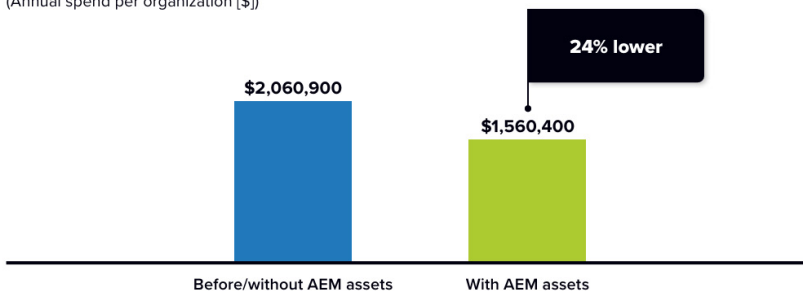


n = 8; Source: IDC Business Value In-Depth Interviews, March 2024

Next, let's look at the impact on **agency spend**. I've worked at in-house corporate agencies most of my career, and sometimes I'm amazed at how much outside agencies cost. But look at what they were able to accomplish - the agency spend went down 24%.

### Impact on Agency Spend

(Annual spend per organization [\$\$])



n = 8; Source: IDC Business Value In-Depth Interviews, March 2024

This next chart is especially important to me. I work in a highly regulated industry and risk is always on my mind. You can see here that they reduced the **risk** of using out-of-date or unapproved assets by 52% and reduce the risk of accidental disclosure of assets by 27%.

### Impact on Asset-Related Risk

(Percent benefit with AEM Assets)



n = 8; Source: IDC Business Value In-Depth Interviews, March 2024

These **highlights from the Business Value Report** are great to share with your team and your key stakeholders.

**24%** Lower spend on third-party agencies

**73%** Faster creating a new digital experience from existing assets

**55%** Faster to launch a new marketing campaign

**53%** teams were more efficient

**38%** Higher productivity with teams using digital assets

**868%** Three-year ROI

**66%** Faster to create a new digital asset

**5 months** To breakeven on their investment

Source: [IDC White Paper The Business Value of AEM Assets](#) – Maddox and Marden

## 2. Running reports

To assess ROI for your assets, AEM Assets includes these standard reports types out-of-the-box.

### AEM Assets Report types

- Upload – report of uploaded assets
- Delivered – report of downloaded assets
- Expiration – report of expired assets
- Modification – report of modified assets
- Publish – report of published assets
- Disk Usage – report of disk usage
- Files – report of files in folders
- Link Share Report – report of shared links
- Brand Portal Publish – report of assets published to the Brand Portal
- Content Hub – Activity Report – report of activities on Content Hub

NOTE: If you don't see all of these options, some of these capabilities may not be enabled in your instance of AEM Assets or they may not be enabled for your user account.

### Pro Tips from the Trenches

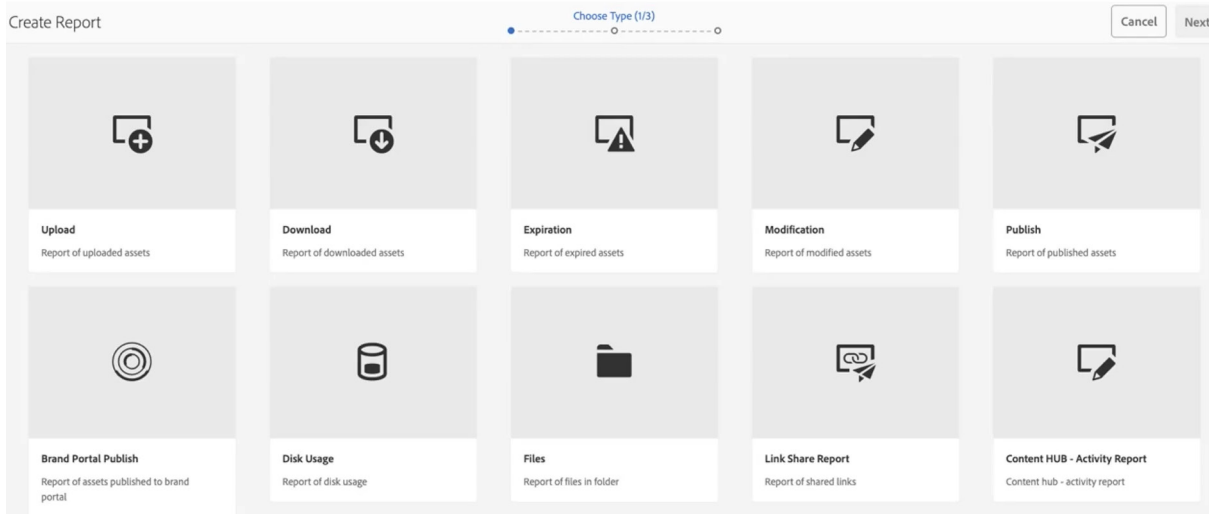
- Run the Expiration Report daily to ensure necessary assets don't expire.
- Pair it with a Review report, and you've got yourself a lifecycle management system.
- The Published Report shows which assets are actively driving your business forward.
- The Files report, shows how many assets you're managing. Together these show both usage and growth over time, so it's impactful to share that data with leadership.
- **Take advantage of these key reporting capabilities**
  - Toggle standard fields on / off to include only what matters on reports.
  - Include specific **custom fields**, based on your metadata - whether it's a tag, a keyword, or another type of information, anything that you've done with custom metadata can be included in a report.
  - Schedule a report to run daily, weekly or on a cadence.

# Create reports

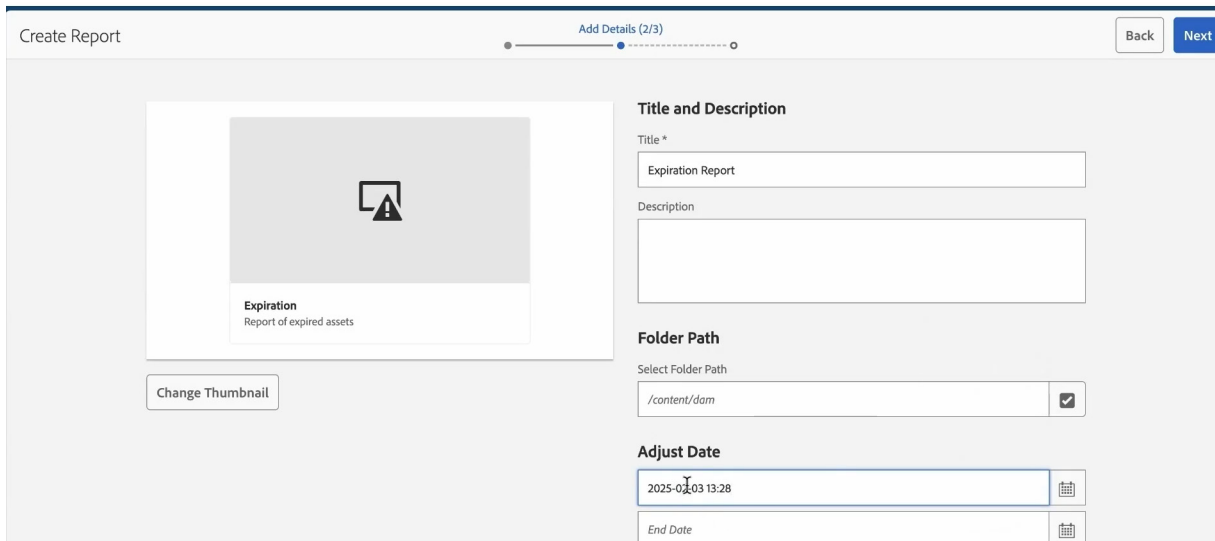
Follow these steps to create reports in Adobe Experience Manager Assets.

## AEM Assets Reports

- Open Adobe Experience Manager, go to Tools, then choose Assets, then click the Reports. tile to see the available report types.

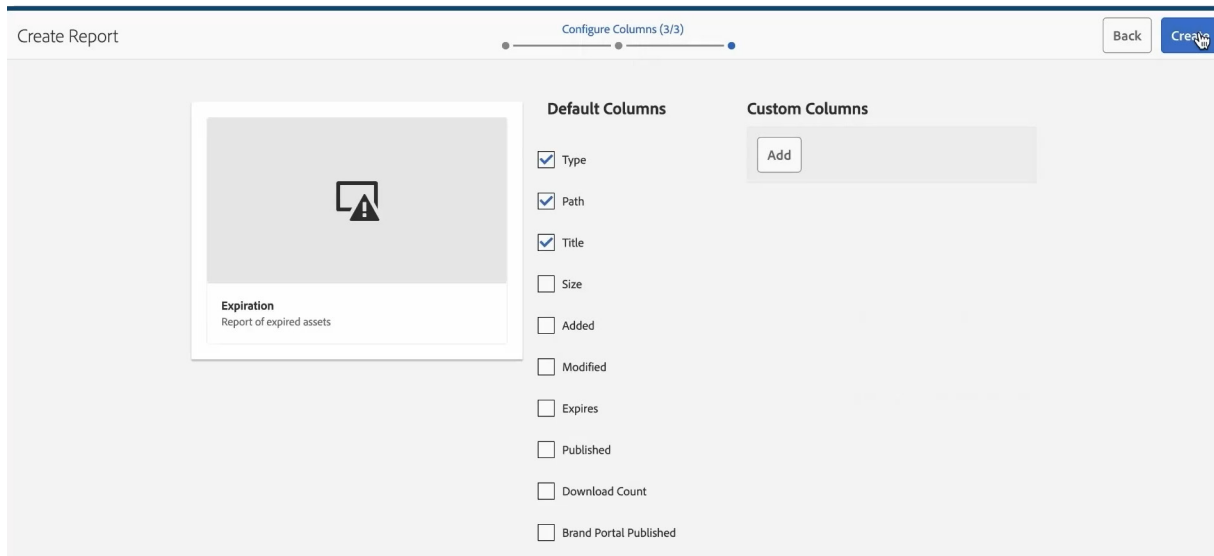


- Create a report by selecting a report type, then clicking Create. For example, select the Expiration report type, click Next, and enter your report title. The Create Report panel will be shown.



- Enter a description, then the path 0 whether it's the whole DAM or part of it
- Define the date range and click Next.

- After clicking next, the standard and custom field panel will be shown.



- Scroll down to view the full list of standard fields and select the fields of interest. The selected ones will appear as columns in your report.

### Add custom fields

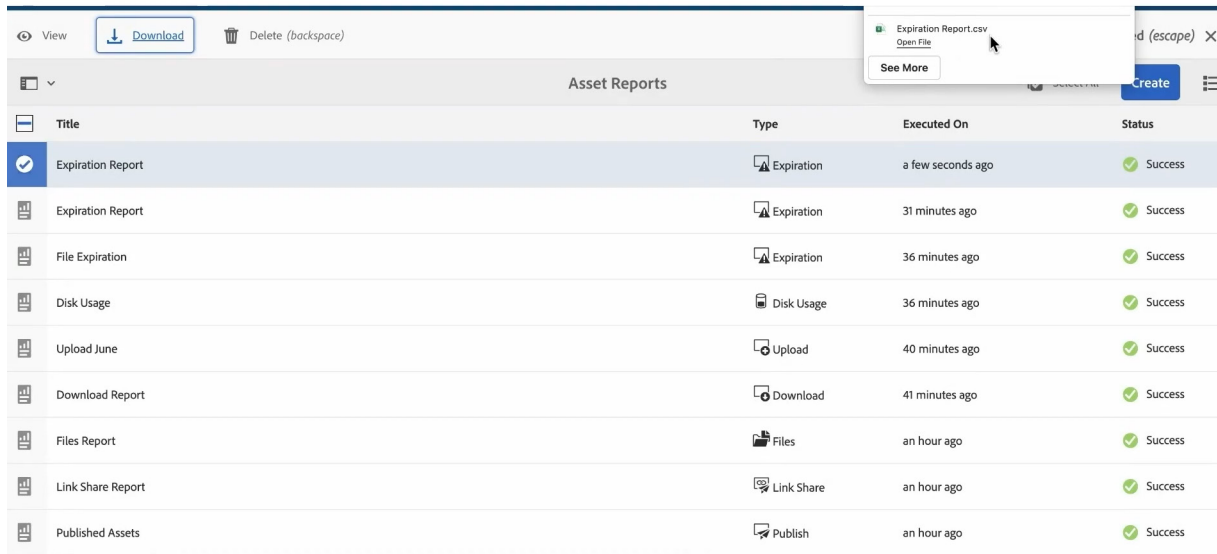
- Extend basic reports by clicking Add under the Custom Columns area. Choose custom fields here. You can include any custom metadata in your report! Be sure to provide column titles to use for those fields in the report.
- Click Create to build the report.

### Viewing or downloading reports

After creating a report, it will show in your new report in your reports list. Here you can view, download or delete reports you have created

Title	Type	Executed On	Status
Expiration Report	Expiration	a few seconds ago	Success
Expiration Report	Expiration	30 minutes ago	Success
File Expiration	Expiration	36 minutes ago	Success
Disk Usage	Disk Usage	36 minutes ago	Success
Upload June	Upload	40 minutes ago	Success
Download Report	Download	41 minutes ago	Success
Files Report	Files	an hour ago	Success
Link Share Report	Link Share	an hour ago	Success
Published Assets	Publish	an hour ago	Success

- Select any report and choose Download. It will be downloaded in .csv format so you can sort and refine the data to capture what you need. Convert the .csv to an Excel spreadsheet to further format the data and create formulas.

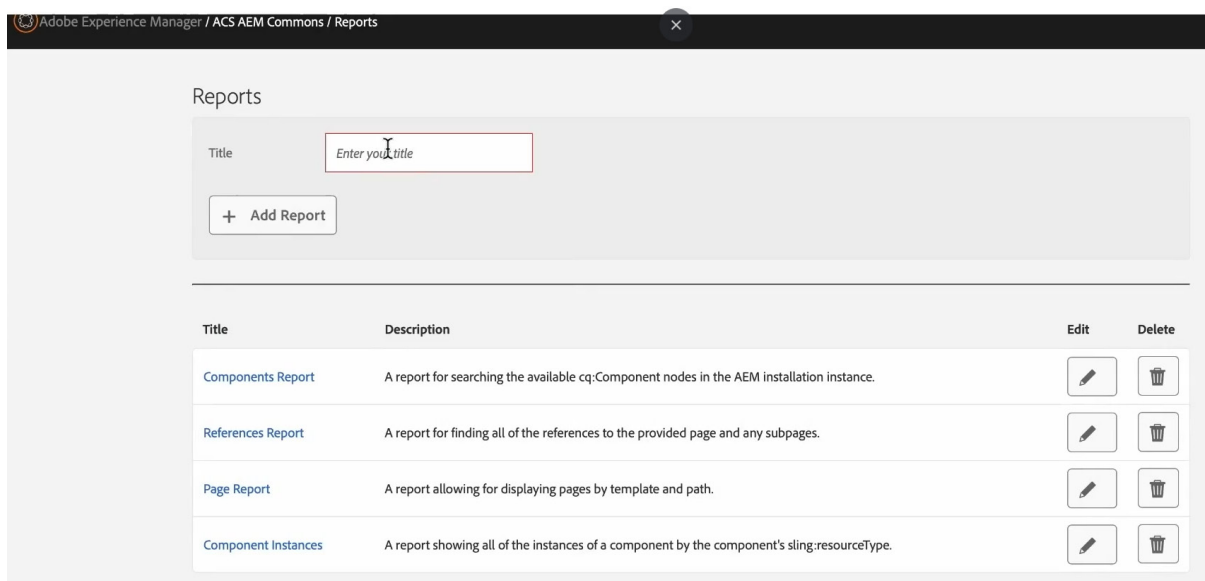


## ACS AEM Commons Reports

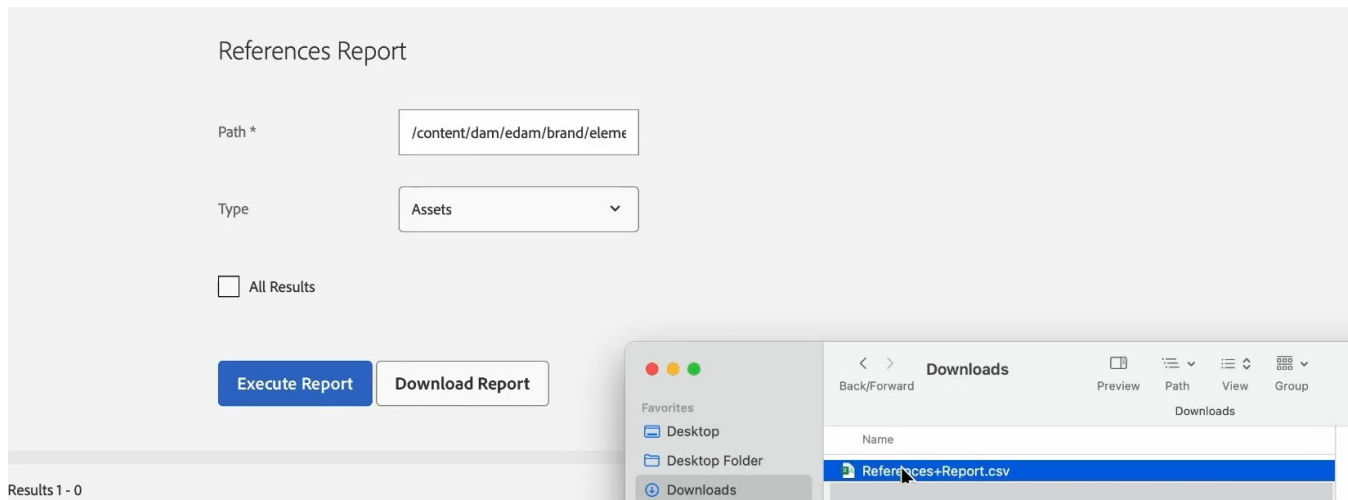
### (Adobe Consulting Services) AEM (Adobe Experience Manager) Commons reports

ACS AEM Commons is a package that contains a broad range of useful tools for AEM that fills in some of the gaps from your out-of-the-box implementation.

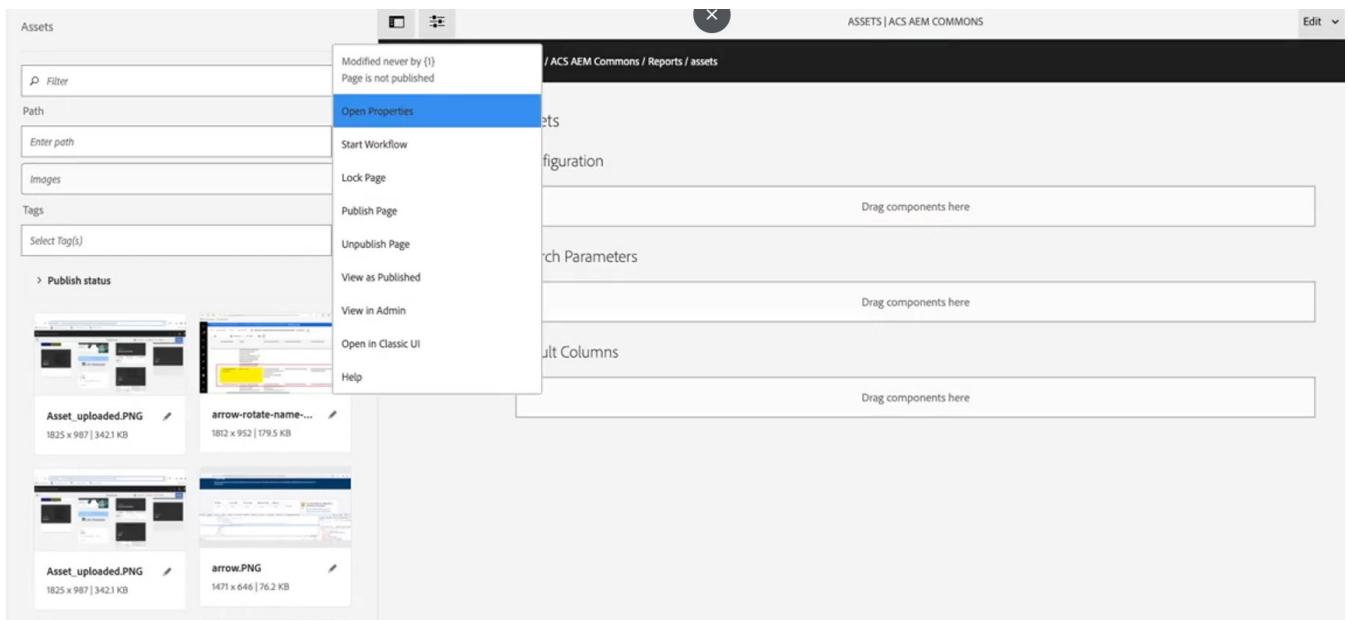
- Download the ACS AEM Commons package
- In AEM Assets, go to Tools.
- Select ACS AEM Commons, then Reports, then choose on of the four out-of-the-box report types., such as Reference, report for example



- Enter the path for what assets to include, choosing Assets for the content type.
- Click Execute Report and then download it (.csv format), so I can sort, refine, format the information.



- When you create a **custom report**, there are options to add components, specific paths and more, to configure all the information you need.



### Pro tips from the trenches

- Dive in and create some test reports.
- Play around. Break things (you won't, but it feels adventurous!).
- You'll quickly discover what data tells your story best.

### Get started with thees resources

- [AEM Assets Reports](#)
- [ACS AEM Commons](#) (additional reports)

### 3. Optimizing to increase ROI

Here's the thing: It's easy to say, "We have a DAM—it stores files!" And call it a day. But you and I both know AEM Assets is capable of so much more. There are a lot of **ways to move the dial to increase your ROI**, so let's investigate.

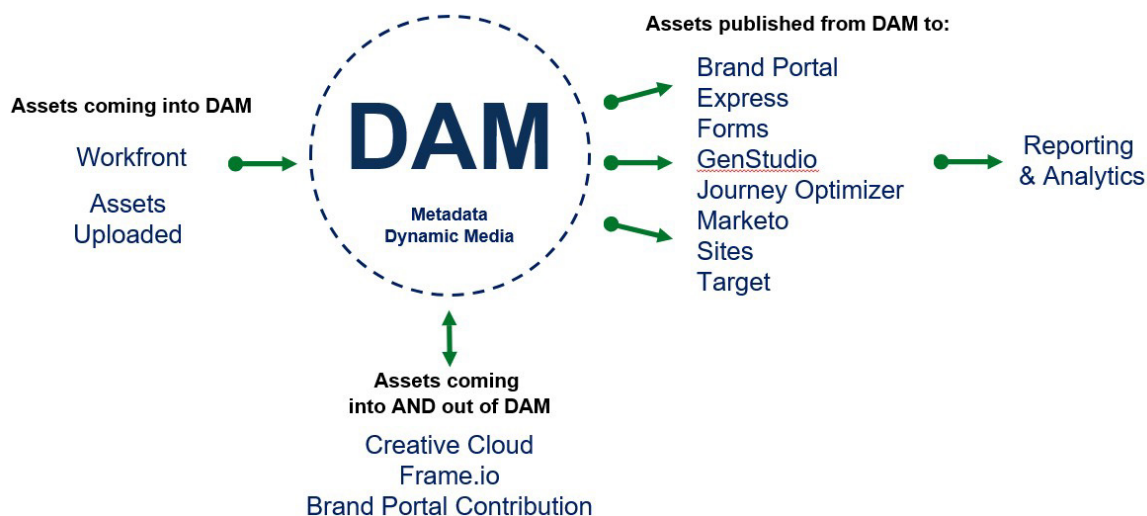
#### 1. Training

I spend a lot of time training, not just our immediate team, but anyone who has access to our DAM or Content Hub. And when they know how to use the DAM, and all it can do, it maximizes adoption.

#### 2. Connect your DAM with existing tools

Your DAM shouldn't be an island. Connect it to your CMS, CRMs, and other platforms to enhance efficiency and data consistency alongside other tools.

It's important to look at your tech stack to confirm that within your organization, or maybe your part of the organization, everyone's using the right products. Look for opportunities to consolidate where duplicate tools exist into a system for automated workflows and maximum efficiency.



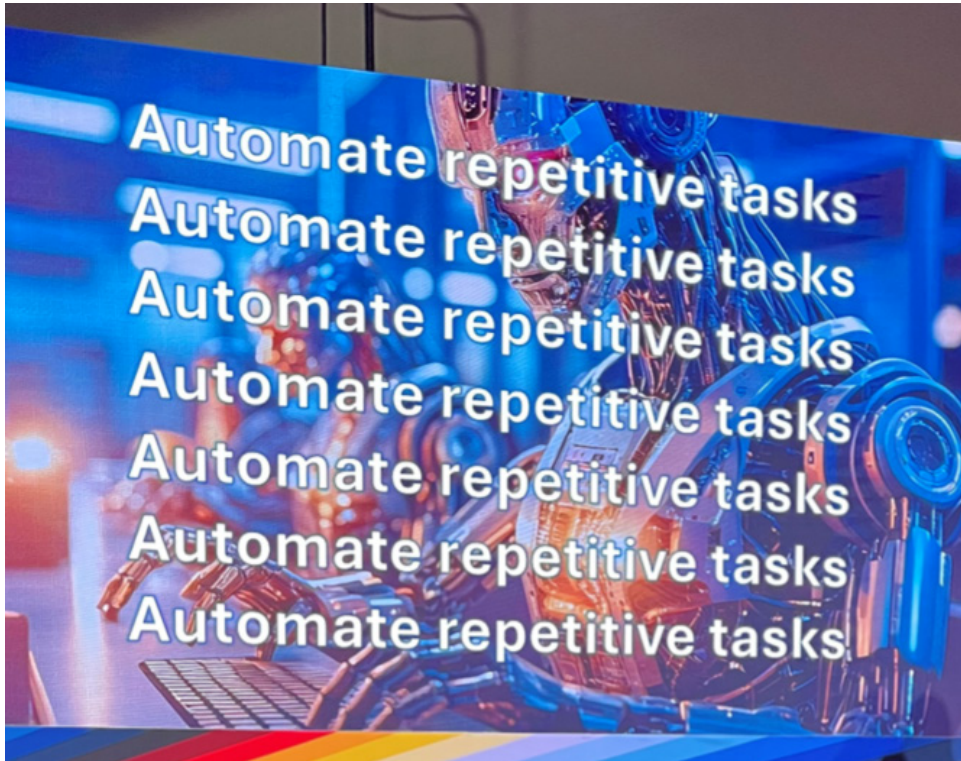
**Think of it this way: AEM Assets sits at the center of your content supply chain - the Adobe ecosystem hub where content is created, lives, and gets delivered.**

*Everything else orbits around it.*

Maybe I use this approach because managing assets is central to what I do every day, but to me, this has a lot of value.

### 3. Optimizing repetitive tasks

When I went to Adobe Summit in 2025, this was my favorite slide.



"Automate Repetitive Tasks." This says it all!  
Let's look at a few ways to optimize repetitive tasks.

#### Optimization using Dynamic Media

One of the most significant ways to reduce repetitive tasks is setting up Dynamic Media. Adobe AI started with Dynamic Media, using AI Sensei technology to target where the asset will be delivered and the ideal bandwidth for the surface it is delivered to. No need for renditions or resizing images that take time and server space.

Dynamic Media offers these key capabilities.

##### Web-optimized delivery:

Digital assets are delivered in web-optimized formats to enhance Core Web Vitals. This includes support for WebP images.

##### Dynamic asset transformation:

On-the-fly image renditions are generated dynamically and delivered seamlessly via the CDN.

##### AI Powered:

One file with size variations and visual effects created and optimized at delivery, eliminating hundreds of hours of manual image cropping and video encoding

##### Weight Reduction:

Smart Imaging reduces image size and page weight with no loss of visual fidelity (optimized for network and device)

For videos, Dynamic Media delivers subtitles and transcriptions on the fly at delivery, and delivers adaptive streaming, which is important. With traditional streaming of a 60 second video on a constrained bandwidth of less than 5 MBPS, progressive streaming needs to buffer 40 to 50 times, while adaptive streaming buffers less than five times, increasing the speed dramatically.

Other benefits of Dynamic Media include *avoiding all the time spent managing assets across various third-party sites*, providing:

- All assets are managed in-house with governance and workflows.
- A single-source of truth for video.
- AEM Analytics to show  increased performance metrics with lower load times and buffer counts.
- Delivery that doesn't require an external service.

### **Optimization using Panel Extensions**

Panel Extensions are free, and they are game-changers. They let *users work in their favorite apps* while keeping everything stored safely in the DAM. You only need to facilitate the connection. This means that an assets panel shows up within the creative application, and users do not have to open the DAM separately.

### **Assets Link to connect Creative Cloud to the DAM**

A commonly used panel extension is Asset Link for Creative Cloud. It's great because creative teams can work in Creative Cloud yet store their work in the DAM instead of desktops.

Benefits:

- Creative team works and stores design files in DAM
- Versions are auto-stored
- Teams can work and collaborate in real time

Assets stay in the DAM and are accessible in Adobe's Creative Cloud

When I worked for a resort company, we had several directories of resorts spanning over 300 pages, each updated yearly. Several teams worked on it, and we ended up with thousands of images. Downloading all those images or being on a server or separate desktops while working on assets just wasn't workable. But through the Asset Link panel extension, everything was linked in InDesign, and assets stayed in the DAM. Whether we created a PDF or were packaging a file for the printer, all the assets would be downloaded at the time of delivery and sent out seamlessly.

### **Connect to Adobe Target**

You can also connect to Adobe Target. You will have a panel in the Target interface; then be able to see the images that you need to deliver for A/B testing or for delivery itself.

Benefit: Target assets are directly pulled from DAM.

### **Connect to Adobe Analytics**

When you're in Analytics interface, the panel enables you to view the DAM without leaving Analytics, letting you look at what you need to analyze in one place. No app-switching required!

Benefit: Report DAM asset usage (video, image) directly in Analytics for the DAM.

### **Connect to Frame.io**

Adobe is doing some great things with Frame.io. Frame.io is a platform created originally for video but has been expanded for use with Assets and Creative Cloud.

Frame.io leverages panels to create workflows connecting Frame.io to Assets AND the Creative Cloud. When you are in Creative Cloud, you can see a panel for Frame.io and Assets, or the reverse if you're in Frame.io. This enables users to work in one application but see all three.

#### Features:

- It started with Adobe's Premier Pro and After Effects and is now available for all Adobe Creative Cloud apps and AEM Assets now.
- Collaborative space with no license needed to log in and approve/comment on a project.
- Delivers assets directly to DAM from a Frame.io panel, including the transfer of videos without connecting drives.
- Video closed captioning and transcriptions is OOTB.
- Workfront and Teams integrations available..

#### Benefits:

- Storage Bonus: Frame.io includes cloud storage which is an answer for often needed.
- Media asset management (MAM - video) storage. Keeping raw footage, proxy files and b-roll in the cloud. Keep the heavy stuff in Frame.io; deliver finals to the DAM!
- Final video files can be added to the DAM without connecting drives.
- Saves time adding the files directly.
- Project approval can be done from anyone, anywhere for all types of projects without using a "seat".

When you're working on assets in Creative Cloud or videos in Frame.io, you can get to Assets via the panel..

### **Other integrations**

There are also integrations available for Workfront and MS-Teams.

## Making Integrations Actually Work

When considering workflows and integrations, get your technical team (architects, developers, admins) working with content teams early and often. Integration success requires a team effort and coordination. Reinforce having AEM Assets at that center and explore all the places where assets can be accessible around that hub.

Work with APIs based on business needs. As an example, at one point, I was publishing assets to all the online travel agencies (OTA's), it was fascinating to see the information flow throughout the world from our DAM.

## 4. Optimization through adoption

Finally, Let's talk about adoption and how to maximize it.

- First off, *always align with senior leadership*. Let them know what you're doing and the value of having an enterprise system. Ensure that leadership is on board with having everyone use the same system. Then driving adoption becomes a trickle-down effect, because using the DAM is what the company has made standard.
- Second, company-wide adoption increases ROI and is another significant way to move the adoption needle. It's an accomplishment to have a creative team or your site's production team use the DAM, but what about the rest of the company? Where is the Sales team keeping their marketing materials? What about HR, Corporate Communications and other teams? As you add more teams to your DAM, measure the change over time and show how increased reach and adoption has also increased your ROI.
- Third, meet with anybody that's going to be joining the DAM or is considering joining the DAM. Make sure that they know all the benefits and how to use all the features. For prospective users, also explore any use case needs they may have.

Meeting with new users enables them to really see the capabilities that are offered to them, outside of just where to keep or discover files. Having a designated internal expert for user onboarding and having internal documentation for coaching users really helps drive adoption. Ensure that your team is fully trained on how to use the DAM effectively to maximize adoption and optimize workflows. Ramp up new users specifically on your brand and your best practices also encourage new users to also learn via Experience League.

## Key takeaways

By implementing AEM Assets, leveraging reporting capabilities effectively to surface data for decision-making, optimizing repetitive tasks, and driving adoption, your business can achieve cost savings, improve operational efficiency, and ultimately increase your return on investment (ROI).

## Resources

Get started with these recommendations today.

### ROI and Business Value

- [IDC White Paper The Business Value of AEM Assets](#) – Maddox and Marden

### Reporting in AEM Assets

- [AEM Assets Reports](#)
- [ACS AEM Commons](#) (additional reports)

### Optimizations to drive the ROI of your assets

- [Dynamic Media](#)
- [Connect to Adobe Creative Cloud via Asset Link](#)
- [Connect to Adobe Target](#)
- [Connect to Adobe Analytics](#)
- [Connect with Frame.io](#)
- [Frame.io](#) resources