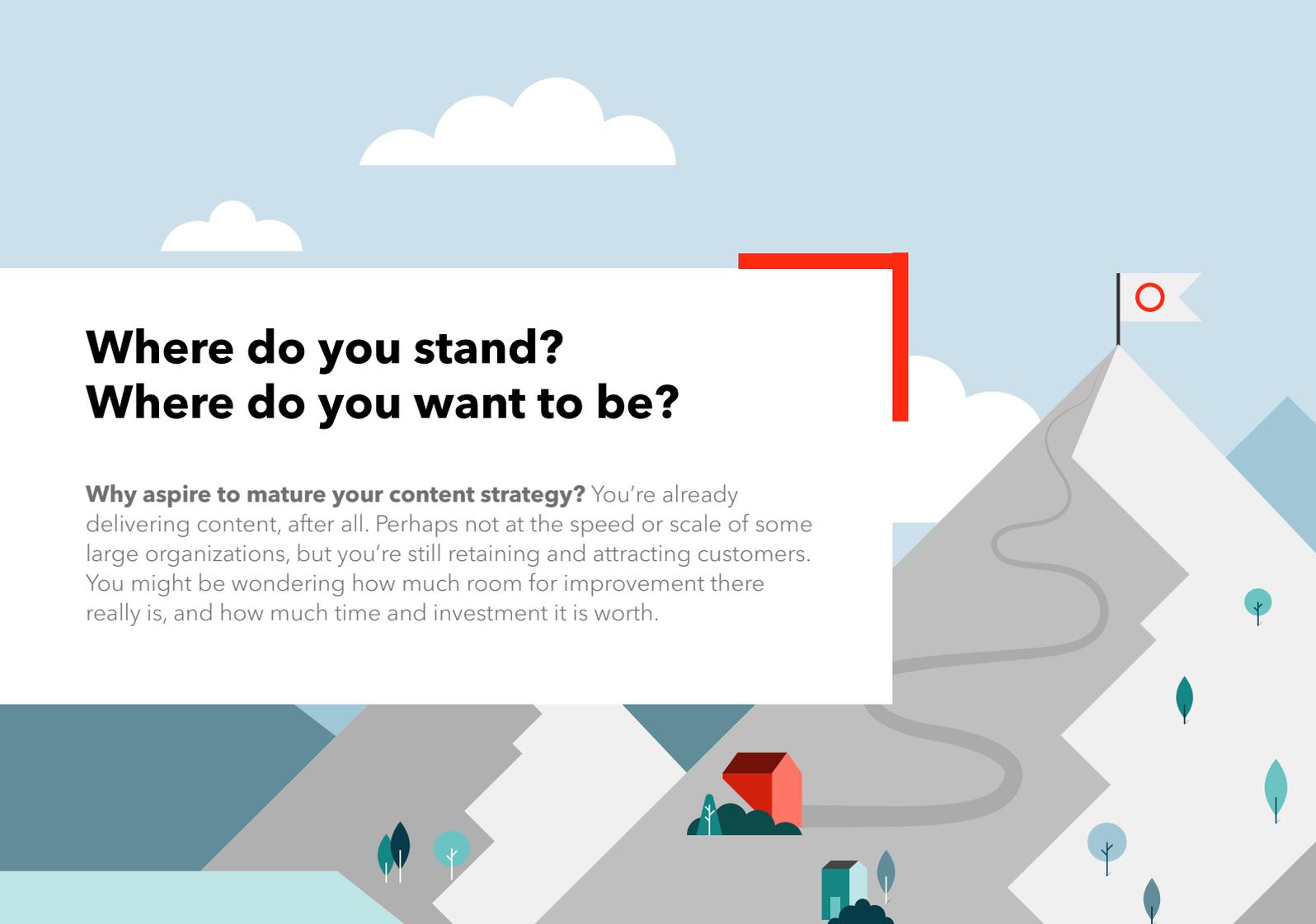


EBOOK

How mature is your content strategy?

Find out where your brand stands on our four-level scale and uncover what's needed to advance to the next stage.





Where do you stand? Where do you want to be?

Why aspire to mature your content strategy? You're already delivering content, after all. Perhaps not at the speed or scale of some large organizations, but you're still retaining and attracting customers. You might be wondering how much room for improvement there really is, and how much time and investment it is worth.

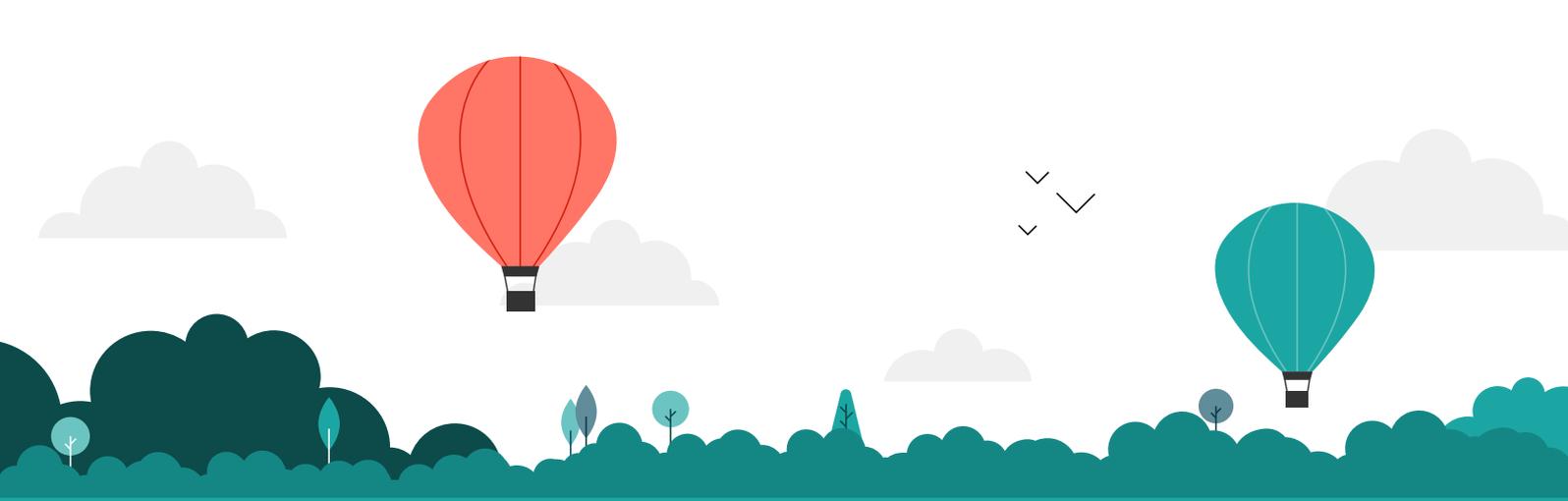
The truth is that the difference in performance between firms with mature content strategies and weaker ones is immense. By some measures, businesses with a mature, omnichannel strategy are seeing **customer retention rates of up to 83%, as opposed to 53% across the board.** They're also improving customer satisfaction by almost 23 times more than their competitors.¹

Businesses today are competing in an environment in which the Amazons and Netfixes of our world can instantly, algorithmically serve new or related content based on preferences and user behavior.

The bar has been raised. Customers have come to expect this experience, meaning every business needs to deliver a personalized, intelligent, and relevant experience in the channels that reach their audiences. But there is no sense jumping too far ahead, too fast.

You can't achieve a comprehensive omnichannel strategy that brings all these incredible benefits without an effective, proportionate approach to content. But where do you start?

Self-reflection is crucial, and that's just what this guide is designed to help with. It provides a framework for understanding the maturity of your content strategy, and simple steps that you might want to consider if you aim to advance it.



Identify your ideal content maturity level

The truth is that everyone is on their own digital transformation journey. There are no hard-and-fast rules, no strict guidelines, or single set of steps that all businesses can follow to overcome the competition.

Every company has the freedom to decide whether they need to advance to the 'next level' or not. Many businesses will be perfectly happy continuing to operate exactly as they are today, though they could be missing out on the many benefits of a mature content strategy.

But if you are looking to make a change, and to start standing out, your transformation starts here. The first step in your content strategy's evolution will be figuring out where your business currently stands on our four-level scale. Then, plot out where you'd like to be.

If you haven't yet reached your goals, you can follow the rest of this guide for tips on how to progress. If you're one of those few businesses already delivering a best-in-class content experience, this guide will help you optimize further.

Content strategy maturity

	Tactical publishing	Experience delivery	Multichannel reuse	Modular enterprise content
What	Content created specifically for the desktop or mobile web, with little intent for reuse	Tactical publishing paired with digital experience, optimization/ personalization	More than one channel outcome is important to the businesses. Multiple teams benefit from content assets	Most content is managed in a modular way, carefully curated. Content perceived as an asset, not a cost center
Possible Platform	Sitecore XM	Sitecore XP	Sitecore XP + DAM	Sitecore XP + DAM + CMP (+ MRM)
Maturity Accelerators	Improve web channel performance and implement analytics	Centralize digital assets and sponsorship for personalization	Common taxonomy across platforms. Content variation requirements understood	Content has specific benefit tied to revenue



Level 1 Tactical Publishing



Meet Sandra

Sandra is the sole content marketing executive of a small business-to-business financial consultancy. She publishes one blog post per week on topics related to the industry and builds one new landing page for her company's website per month. She checks the content on the company site once per week and updates it if there have been any major developments. Her content is one-size-fits all, and lives inside a legacy Content Management System (CMS).

She is a Tactical Publisher.

What is Tactical Publishing?

- Content is created and managed at the level of the deliverable
- There is little or no intention for reuse
- Publishing is sporadic
- Resources are limited

Those businesses just beginning their content journey will find themselves at this level. Obviously, this is not the ideal place to be when **89% of companies are now competing primarily on customer experience.**²

Hallmarks of businesses at Level 1

- Little to no multi-channel or omnichannel experience
- Unable to quickly launch campaigns or experiences on any channel beyond their website, often due to inefficient content management paired with a lack of a **headless CMS**

How to optimize at Level 1

- If single or dual-channel marketing is all you can aim for at the moment, focus on creating high volumes of high-quality content for your audience
- Draft in best-of-breed MarTech, including Digital Asset Management (DAM) and a Content Marketing Platform (CMP), to fill technology gaps that your CMS can't. This could further empower your content authors and marketers

How to move to Level 2

- **Evaluate your CMS**
 - Can content authors create, collaborate on, and preview content in your CMS?
 - Are third-party systems like Microsoft Word still required, adding another step to the content creation process?
 - Can authors modularize content for future reuse?
 - Do authors have access to customer data management and analytics that enable personalization across the customer journey?
 - Do you have a centralized content repository accessible across marketing, or is it only available to web administrators?
- Keep track of key performance indicators, such as website and blog traffic, visitor retention, conversion rates, and net promoter scores
- Talk to your audience about what they'd like to see improved
- Seek internal sponsorship for greater investment in personalization, beginning with more detailed audience segmentation and content tagging
- Go beyond location-based/device-based personalization, looking more at intent and the visitor's position in the customer journey



Level 2 Experience Delivery



Meet Paul

Paul's company supplies equipment and support to large retailers. He works as part of a small marketing team that publishes multiple blog posts per week, as well as multiple long-form guides per month. His company's website remembers visitor names and recommends products based on the visitor's location. Paul's team also handles email marketing, social media content, and in-store signage using separate, disconnected platforms.

He is **delivering experiences**.

What is experience delivery?

- Tactical publishing is paired with digital experience, customer profiling, data analysis, and optimization/personalization
- A repository of regularly reviewed content is maintained to serve experience objectives and personas
- Some businesses at this level have invested in a centralized media library - for example, digital asset management for findability, reuse, digital rights management and versioning

Brands that have made a promising start with their digital transformation, but are falling behind the customer experience leaders in their industries, find themselves at this stage.

Hallmarks of businesses at Level 2

- Without a DAM, internal silos may lead to inefficient content and asset management there is a fair amount of sunken costs, wasted time, and content duplication
- High risk of unaligned or off-brand messaging due to the lack of a unified content hub and/or content blocks
- **Personalization has plenty of room for improvement**

How to move to Level 3

- Focus on minimizing content silos and duplication by implementing and encouraging the use of a single cloud storage system and a single content authoring environment. This brings the added benefit of centralizing assets and simplifying processes
- Create **modular content blocks such as brand-aligned imagery and calls to action** that content authors can re-use continuously across channels/teams to ensure correct brand alignment and messaging
- Ensure that you are capturing the right data and that it is easily accessible by those who need it
- Seek sponsorship for greater investment in personalization, beyond location-based/device-based personalization. Sitecore Experience Platform (XP) provides detailed customer profiles and analytics that can enable this



Level 3 Multichannel Reuse



Meet Lily

Lily works for a large, global supplier of IT equipment. Her team uses a headless CMS to manage and distribute content to multiple websites serving different regions, a native mobile application, and even a smartwatch application. Lily's company now serves recommended content and products to visitors based on past purchases and recent browsing history.

She is **reusing content** for **multichannel experiences**.

What is multichannel reuse?

- At this stage, more than one channel outcome is important to the business
- Businesses at this stage will be reusing assets across the channels, campaigns and components
- Optimization and content variants are managed in a modular way
- Multiple teams derive value from the utilization of content assets

Level 3 is a really positive place to be, but there are still opportunities to optimize existing processes and provide an even richer, omnichannel experience.

Hallmarks of businesses at Level 3

- Your customer experience should now qualify as multichannel, with content blocks ready to serve different teams working on different channels
- However, there's not much granularity, and so personalization strategies may not have reached their full potential
- Don't bite off more than your team can chew. Your technology and processes may be working well, but incorporating more channels or even deeper personalization could work against you if you haven't got the right quantity of content to scale

How to optimize at Level 3

- With foundational content blocks in place, businesses can focus on building channel-specific content blocks, which content authors can re-use, giving each user on each channel a more personalized experience

How to move to Level 4

- It's time to think about channel prioritization. Keep tabs on KPIs to figure out where the ROI is coming from, and double-down there
- Ensure common taxonomies across all platforms (CMS, CDP, CRM, etc.) for even more harmony between systems
- Incorporate structured workflows for content planning and production that allow creators to design more granular assets
- Level up personalization even further, creating specific pieces of content for specific personas, for each stage of their customer journey



Level 4 Modular Enterprise Content



Meet Craig

Craig's franchise company now manages hundreds of websites worldwide, each with unified messaging and connected systems, from customer data platforms to product content management systems. His team manages a pool of content, assets, and media from one place, so that different marketing teams can also work from definitive versions. They also benefit from structured workflows for planning, producing, and publishing content.

He has unlocked the power of **modular enterprise content**.

What is modular enterprise content?

- Most, if not all, content is modelled and managed in a modular way
- Content production is separate from the delivery channel, and takes omnichannel experiences into account
- Module granularity is carefully curated
- Content is available to the enterprise as a service, and to all stakeholders
- There is a centralized content practice in place, especially for those specializing in complex areas such as documentation
- Content is perceived as an asset with real business value, not just a cost-center

Level 4 represents the gold standard in content strategy and delivery. Not many brands have achieved this, although it's certainly within reach for those who have invested in the right technology and made sure the right culture and processes are in place.

How to optimize at Level 4

- Look for opportunities to use AI or machine learning to automate complex processes and mundane tasks. This will free up resources to spend more time planning and creating value-adding content

Striking the balance

While it is tempting to aim straight for Level 4, it's important to remember that a company's level of content maturity has to match its current business situation – and that means considering current business needs, available resources, industry maturity, and competition.

By acknowledging the context that frames your business, you may conclude you're more than happy at Level 2 or Level 3.

With that in mind, determine if your content publishing maturity is appropriate for where you need to be. If you see that you are falling behind (perhaps in comparison to your competitors' progress), it could be time to start accelerating your plans.

Your platform for ever-changing content demands

If, through this guide, you've decided that your brand needs to be on a higher maturity level, get in touch with us to learn more about our digital experience platform. Our technology makes managing the end-to-end content lifecycle simple.

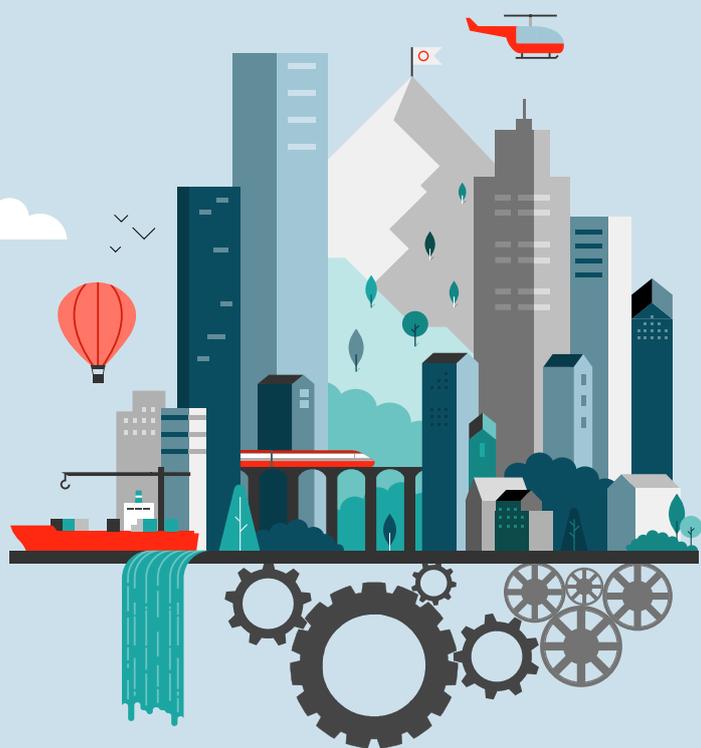
By combining Sitecore Content Hub and Sitecore XP/XM, enterprise brands are already:

- Benefitting from housing all their digital assets, media, product, and other content in one place
- Capitalizing on personalization and seamlessly managing the content that feeds it
- Leveraging AI and machine learning for automated content tagging
- Enjoying effortless integration with Sitecore's Digital Experience Platform (DXP) and commerce solutions
- Planning, scheduling, and organizing content production with structured, yet simple, processes

For an example of Sitecore Content Hub in action, continue reading.

You can learn more about Sitecore's solutions by reaching out to a member of the team or visiting our website.

[Learn more](#)





Case study: From one to many

How a renowned German automaker identified their maturity and mastered the art and science of content repurposing.

At [Sitecore Experience Europe 2020](#), we shared the story of how Star Cooperation led a renowned German luxury automotive manufacturer to success by adapting content for a global audience.

The automotive company, mastered the art of leveraging one piece of content for use by multiple audiences, channels, and languages, and transformed its organization by scaling to meet the demands of 80 different markets worldwide.

Back in the 1990s, the company's marketing consisted of a single print promotion of eight car models, with only a single target persona in mind – the more mature, affluent gentleman.

Today, that same company offers more than 50 models of vehicle, and targets a wider range of personas, including younger professionals. This requires marketing across multiple channels and in 30 different languages, resulting in a demand for nearly 1,600 content adaptation projects a year.

The car manufacturer required a change of system, as the on-premises system they had in place was not designed to handle the organization's evolving content needs. Working with Star Cooperation and Sitecore, the automaker implemented **Sitecore Content Hub**, a solution designed to help marketing organizations manage their entire end-to-end content lifecycle across all channels.

With Sitecore Content Hub, the car manufacturer now publishes 2,000 PDFs every day across 30 languages.

Sitecore Content Hub helped marketing teams create a single source of truth by seamlessly connecting to other existing systems and merging all the different content pieces, taking into account the product, organizational, and geographical taxonomies.

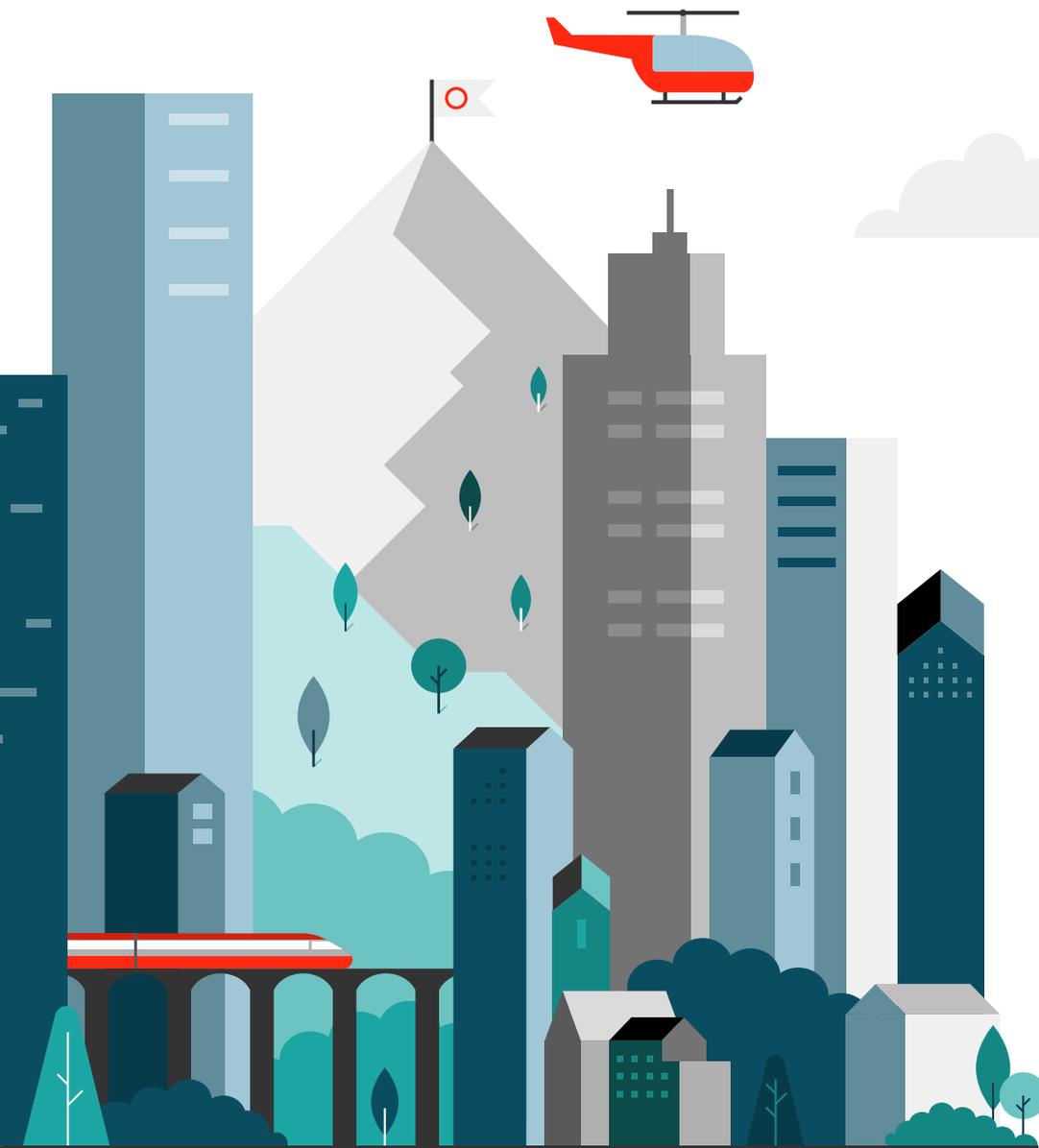
Through the Sitecore Content Hub, the manufacturer now has its content adaptation and translation processes in order, allowing them to create millions of content pieces every year. With over 800 active users collaborating on the system worldwide, they're able to publish over 2,000 PDFs every day. Their processing time for print materials has decreased from 58 days to 40 days, and digital output from 83 days to 33 days.

Because their content can now be easily translated and adapted across markets, they are seeing a faster time-to-market and increased sales. And by consolidating all content and assets into a single source of content truth, the company is able to build consistent brand communication across all channels.

Digital experiences. Human connections.

Leading organizations turn to Sitecore to create meaningful connections with their customers. We amplify the impact of digital experiences by orchestrating content, personalization, commerce, and customer data into insights that deliver the best possible experience.

[Contact us today](#)





Own the Experience[®]

Sitecore creates human connections between brands and their customers via digital experiences that leverage end-to-end content, seamless commerce and continuous personalization to enable organizations to thrive in a world where, without a superior customer experience, there is no product.

Sources:

¹Minkara, 'Omni-channel customer care: How to deliver context-driven experiences', Aberdeen, October 2017

²Sorofman, 'Gartner Surveys Confirm Customer Experience Is the New Battlefield', Gartner, October 2014

For more information:

Visit www.sitecore.com or contact us on sitecoresales@sitecore.com