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The State of CMS in the Retail Sector

The retail marketer's guide to web content management

State of CMS: Retail

Magnolia's State of CMS report explores the content management plans, challenges and preferences of 200 marketers and IT professionals.

To garner a deeper understanding of the data, Magnolia has launched this report which will explore the unique needs and challenges of marketers in the retail sector. Through this analysis, we'll explore the hurdles that retail marketers need to overcome, the growing disconnect between marketing and IT teams, and the top features retailers should look for when implementing a CMS.

If you're a retail sector marketer thinking about investing in a new content management or digital experience solution, then this is the guide for you.

What retail marketers need in a CMS

Typically, brands have relied on e-commerce platforms for their marketing and merchandising needs. While e-commerce platforms are ideal for increasing margins, these solutions often don't think about the content needed, resulting in slow release cycles that take up far too much of IT's time. In fact, some require the complete application to be re-deployed to make any changes.

Today's retail marketers need to be able to quickly deliver seamless content across multiple channels — from desktops to mobile phones and tablets. As such, marketers in this space need a way of modelling their content so that multiple items can be reused across pages, experiences and channels. By doing so, curating great customer experiences becomes much easier.

As such, it's no wonder that creating content that works seamlessly across any platform is the top priority for over a third (37%) of marketers in the retail sector.

Instead of relying on a cumbersome, monolithic platform to manage their web presence, a CMS allows retail brands to manage content flexibly and at speed. This not only benefits them in the short term, but can also result in a huge cost savings over time.

# What challenges are holding the retail sector back?

As the retail industry becomes more customer-centric, there's now more pressure on brands to improve the digital customer experience and better serve shoppers. As such, tech innovations that will help this process need to happen faster and at a greater magnitude.

The biggest challenge for marketers in the retail space looking to launch digital experience (DX) projects is the lack of ownership. With no clear project lead, marketers must fight with IT teams to get new technologies and experiences off the ground.

Internal bureaucracy is another issue that many in this industry are up against, with a quarter of marketers highlighting it as a key concern.

As a result of these challenges, new digital experiences are proving slow to implement and are ultimately being delivered to a far lower standard than they should be.

Key challenges for retail marketers

31%

Lack of ownership of digital experience

25%

Lack of communication with IT

25%

Internal bureaucracy
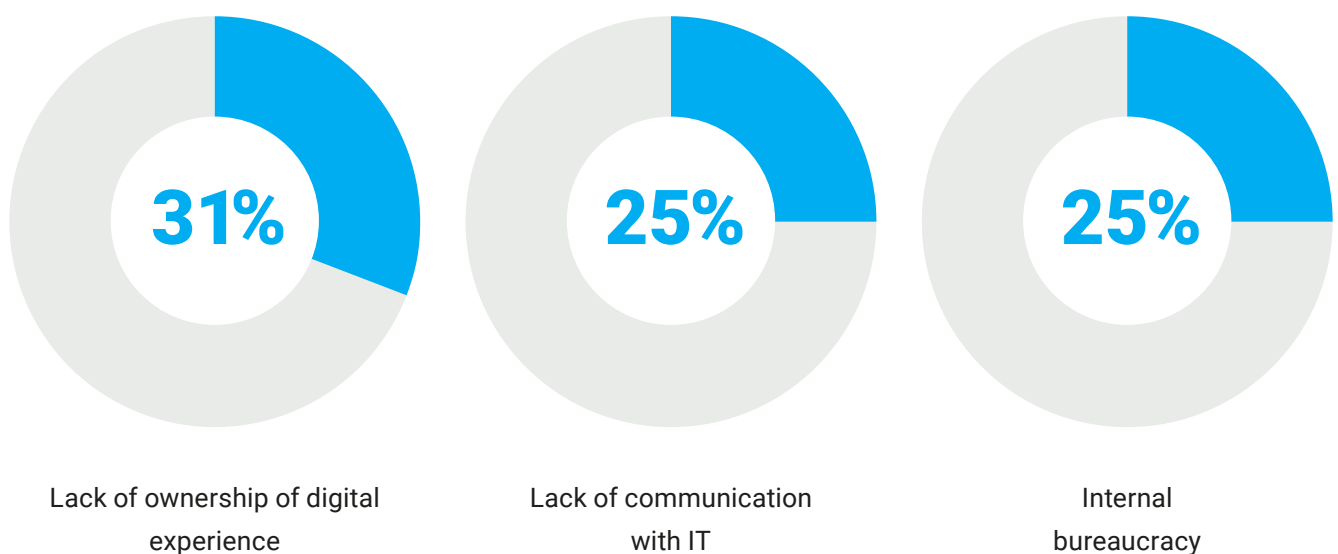
The marketing / IT disconnect

A good CMS will give marketers the freedom to create and manage digital assets for their website in real-time, without any input from IT.

As it stands, a fifth of retail marketers say that they have to check in with IT every single day, just to progress with their digital projects. A third also believe that IT is holding back the pace of their marketing.

These delays are causing huge amounts of frustrations for marketers who need to publish new content quickly across omnichannel environments and in many different languages.

If you're experiencing issues with slow, IT-dependent projects and currently using cumbersome marketing and commerce technology, it may be time to upgrade to an agile, headless CMS.

31%
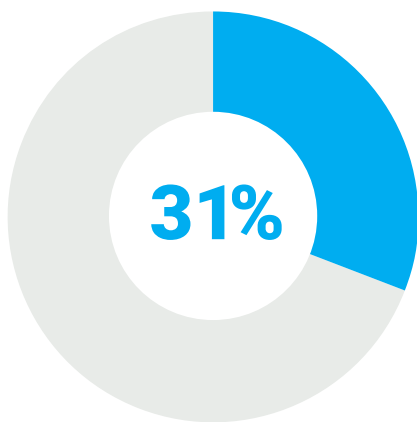
of retailers believe that IT holds the pace of their marketing back

19%
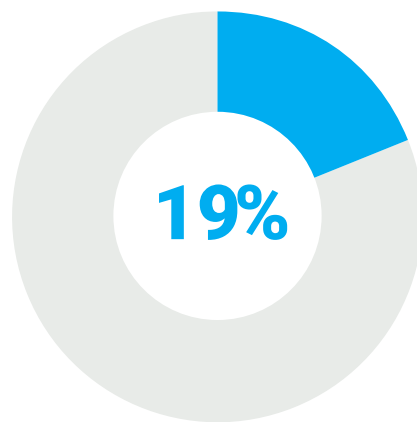
of marketers in the retail space have to work with IT every day

→ *Read our Tour de Suisse case study to see how one retailer overcame it's slow and complex martech experience.*

How a headless CMS can help

To give both IT and marketing teams the freedom to work exactly how they want, brands should consider deploying a headless CMS.

One of the key drivers of a headless CMS for marketers is the ability to manage content more effectively. Retail marketers must consider how and where their content will be used to determine which content should be broken down into more easily reusable assets.

Having these assets to hand creates huge efficiency for teams as once the initial curation is done, it can be published to any page or channel. This process of curate once, publish everywhere (COPE) also provides marketers with the ability to then edit only once, with all updates managed centrally, including any translation layers.

However, there is one drawback of many headless CMS's — marketers that leverage content of all types to create experiences have lost their visual aid, the Page Editor.

This means that they're no longer able to easily preview the complete experience as they would've done on a monolith solution, leaving marketers unsure that published content would be as they imagined and consistent across all channels.

But Magnolia has found a way to simplify the operating model by introducing a Single Page Application Preview Editor, which ensures that marketers can include all of the assets of their choice (such as video clips, social links or products) as well as preview these pages before publishing. Once marketing have more autonomy in designing, testing, personalising and previewing the experiences, the IT teams can now be brought in on more critical topics around functional enhancements.

A headless CMS helps to unify marketing and IT teams and enable brands to deliver relevant, consistent content across all touchpoints. This not only provides a better experience for marketers and IT, but also for the end customer.

What retail brands should look for in a CMS

When it comes to selecting the perfect CMS, retail marketers say that they need the following requirements:

Integration with apps

Half (50%) of retail marketers need a CMS that can easily integrate with other systems like analytics, CRM, commerce, marketing automation etc. A good CMS will help to accelerate your time to market, acting as a 'hub' that solutions can be added, integrated and built on.

Ease of use

37% of marketers in the retail space say 'easy to use' is their key concern when it comes to selecting a CMS. There's no room for a cumbersome CMS in a busy retail environment.

Omnichannel-ready

Creating content that works seamlessly across any channel is a top priority for 37% of retail marketers. This means being able to publish content on traditional web pages, interactive apps, web-to-print, digital signage – essentially any touchpoint. The ideal CMS will enable you to review and reuse content, from small experience fragments to entire campaigns.

Speed of content creation

In a fast-paced retail environment, marketers need to be confident that they can create and publish content quickly, with a third (31%) of marketers saying this is a top priority for them this year.

SEO-friendly

Generating SEO-friendly content is key for retail marketers looking to stay ahead of the competition. The research shows that for a quarter (24%) of retail marketers, an SEO-friendly CMS is the top priority.

Flexibility

Modern retail brands need to react quickly to market changes. Adopting a 'headless' CMS means that retail marketers can obtain full control over integrations and a single toolset to manage the digital experience. Currently however, only 19% of retail marketers are using a headless CMS.

Magnolia: A flexible CMS for the retail sector

"Magnolia is a million times faster and easier, and has given freedom to our creative, marketing and developing teams. Our potential for conversions has increased dramatically."

— **Gio Faso, Technical Delivery Lead, MOO**

Built on highly flexible architecture, Magnolia's CMS is designed for fast-paced retailer marketers working across omnichannel environments. Our CMS is scalable to grow with your business, with an intuitive design that provides simplicity and security for both marketers and IT teams.

For marketers, Magnolia can be used to develop highly effective omnichannel marketing campaigns.

For developers and IT teams, the CMS provides a flexible architecture that can be easily integrated with other e-commerce and retail tools. This makes it the perfect CMS for retailers with a strong commitment to customer service and digital experience.

But don't just take our word for it. Check out our customer testimonials below.

Installing the Magnolia CMS, award-winning online print and design company, MOO, is benefitting from

- 90% reduction in the amount of time developers spend creating new pages
- Creating pages seven times faster
- Content is translated in four languages in less than half the time it took previously

Trusted by the global retail brands

TESCO   KUHN RIKON SWITZERLAND   Sainsbury's   MARELLA   Argos   FENDI ROMA   MIGROS   WEEKEND MaxMara

What the experts say

"The solution that we implemented had to guarantee fast and easy content creation and management for in-store multi-touch devices in order to provide customers with e-coupons, special offers, rewards and an interface to update their personal data. Magnolia's flexibility, adaptability and openness to integration allowed us to easily implement a specific customization of the platform, saving time and finishing the project within the challenging deadline that we had."

— **Michele Miraglia, Manager, Square Reply**

"Magnolia is a great easy-to-use platform! Thanks to its open architecture, we easily integrated Magnolia with our own systems in order to provide all the data required through the Totem. We can also quickly control page components, creating and editing our content through a simple and user-friendly interface."

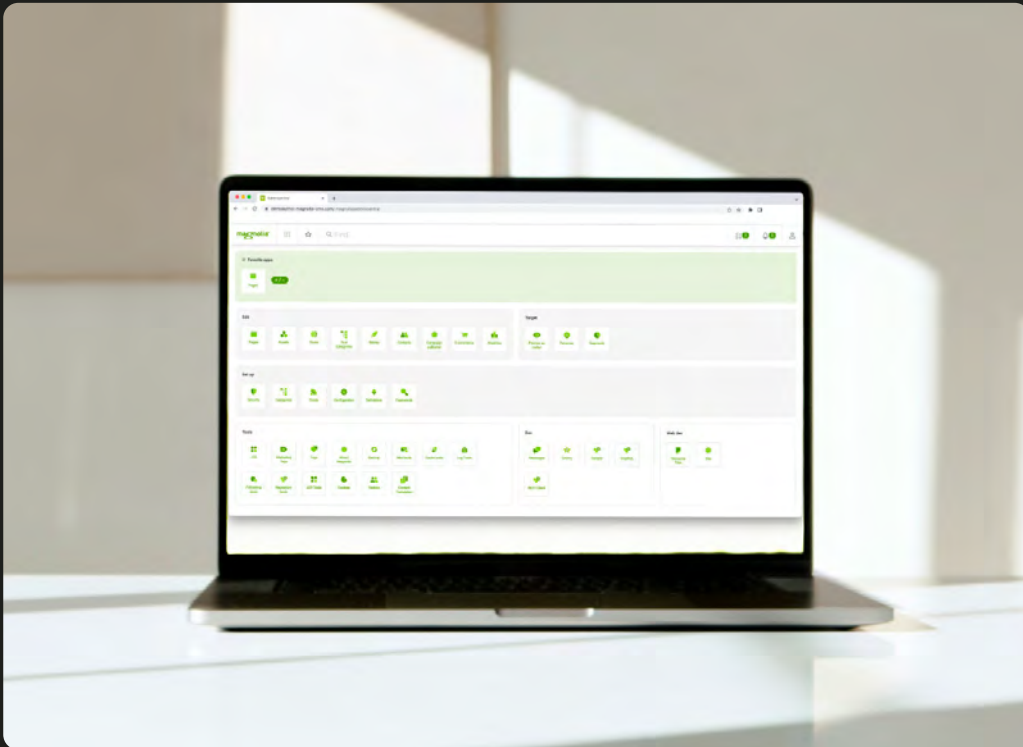— **Francesco Soda, Manager, Coop Alleanza 3**

"Magnolia enables us to optimize and boost certain products easily, which helps drive revenue."

— **William Malcarne, Global Ecommerce Manager, MOO**

Want to join the world's biggest retail brands on Magnolia CMS?

Get in touch to see the platform in action.

Get in touch

To learn how Magnolia can help you launch great digital experiences faster, contact us at:

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