10 Steps to a Digital Asset Management Strategy

Successful digital asset management (DAM) is about helping your museum understand and value the digital assets it has and is continually creating.

Planning and implementing an effective DAM strategy involves communication, consultation, reviewing and culture change. Once your assets are under control they can be exploited their full value to assist you in achieving your mission and goals, secure funding and manage your collection sustainably.

This factsheet is an early planning tool highlighting simple steps to auditing, planning and implementing a digital asset management strategy as well as guides to managing the expectations of stakeholders.

1. Talk to the people creating and using
Take time to speak to your colleagues.
Find out how they use digital assets in their daily work. Listening to and involving people who will be involved in the work early on will help build trust and support.

2. Develop some use cases
Identify the different ways in which digital assets are used in your museum.
A good exercise is to sit with your team and plot all the different uses your museum has for a single photograph.

3. Audit your assets and systems
Spend some time finding out about the digital assets you already have in your museum. How many do you have? Where are they being stored? What software do people use already to manage them?

4. Identify your stakeholders
Who creates, uses and manages your assets now?
Think about the people who will either help or hinder you in delivering your DAM strategy. How can you get them onside and involved?

5. Talk to your vendor
If you have a Collections Management System already, talk to your vendor and find out how they support DAM functionality. A familiar system will help people get on board.

6. Develop a Business Case
Create a Business Case showing how better management of your digital assets contributes to achieving the museum's mission and purpose. Consider budgets, time, training and return on investment.

7. Create a Plan
Create a clear plan of action for your strategy, including clear milestones and opportunities for people to have their say.
Make it measureable and achievable.
Share it with everybody who will be involved.

8. Roll out in phases
Many DAM strategies fail because they try to go too far, too fast. Don't be one of them!
Roll out in incremental phases, taking time to celebrate wins along the way and take staff and stakeholders with you.

9. Integrate into practice
For DAM to succeed, it has to become part of everyone's daily work.
Write DAM into your plans, policies and role descriptions.
Plan ahead for training sessions and refreshers.

10. Create a community
DAM is a long-term culture change for your museum.
An active community of stakeholders can provide support and ongoing direction.

For more resources on creating & managing digital assets visit the Collections Trust website www.collectionstrust.org.uk

Get support and become part of the Collections Trust's LinkedIn community by joining our 'Digital Asset Management' subgroup.

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