

# Modular Content in the Marketing Ecosystem

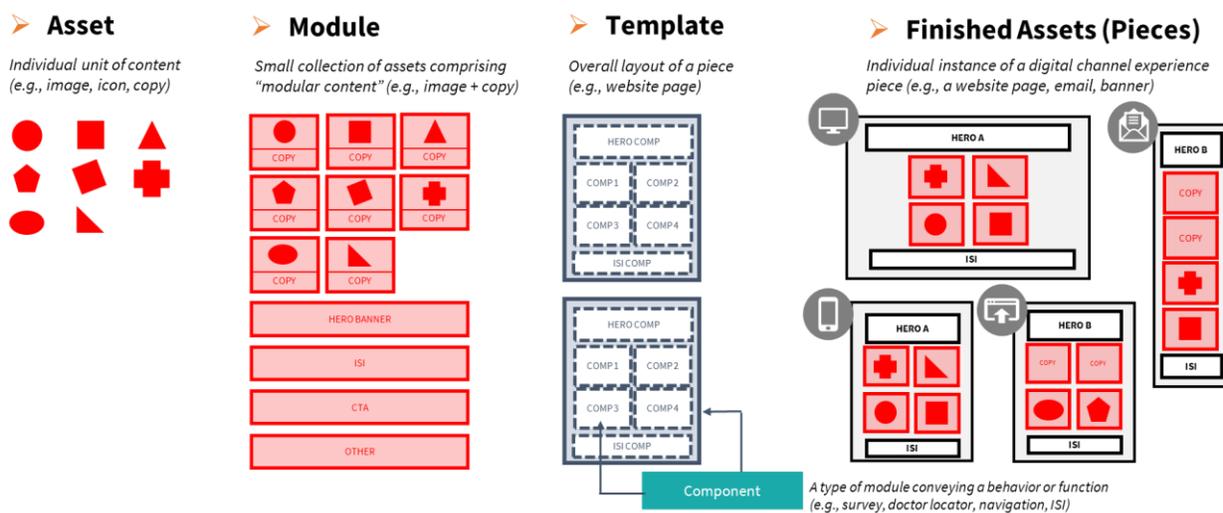
## The Problem

The big hurdles with content today are sheer volume, storage, and accessibility – all of which are impeding the ability to leverage assets. Content is neither stored in nor accessible from a single location for the stakeholders that need it. Content is found in highly fragmented cloud systems, network drives, and content management systems. We have seen client situations where over 75% of content was created new as “single use” never to be used again, when much of that content is basically the same (e.g., logos, footers, and ISIs) and lends itself very well for leveraging.

So, why is content rebuilt over and over by the Agency of Record (AoR) or Technical Agencies working for the brand? The main reason is the structure of and access within the Marketing ecosystem.

## What is Modular Content?

At its core, Modular Content is digital assets that are built in a way that it can be reused and repurposed. Modular Content can be broken into smaller units of content fragments and when put together with other content, it adds context and enhanced meaning. Let’s look at how the content evolves from Assets to Modules to Templates to Finished Assets (Pieces):



Courtesy: Intouch b2d (adapted by Xpediant Digital)

Assets are pieces of content that may or may not have any context by themselves. An example may be a picture, an illustration, or a graph with no textual context. These can be and are used by themselves, or they may be turned into Modular Content. If you take an asset that is a graph and add claim text around it, this graph now has context and meaning – it is now a piece of Modular Content. The Modular Content may or may not require MLR approval. For our example, we will assume it does not; however, it will get final MLR approval as part of a Finished Asset. This Modular Content can now be reused and/or enhanced across channels and approved as part

of the current MLR process. No need to go create then recreate primarily single-use assets over and over for each channel or for each new Finished Asset. In a perfect world, that piece of Modular Content would be pushed through MLR and, therefore, would be approved for use in other channels – significantly reducing the amount of content pushed to MLR and reducing approval time, which translates into reduced time to market and cost savings. While an aspirational goal today, it will be a reality tomorrow.

Let's dig a little deeper. Assume an Author wants to relate different pieces of content. For example, the Author wishes to have an efficacy chart with research, a claim, and a call to action in one piece of Modular Content that will also include contextual value. The Author can create this by reusing two or more pieces of Modular Content. When these pieces are pulled into a Template with business rules, a Finished Asset (*e.g.*, a website, IVA, or email) is quickly created. Changing the mindset from “creating single use content” to “leveraging content for multi-use” is key to capturing the time and cost savings associated with a model where Creating Once and Publishing Everywhere (COPE) is the new mindset.

Now let's think about the storage of these assets, whether MLR or Librarian approved. MLR approved assets are stored in Veeva Vault, native to Veeva Vault PromoMats. For Librarian approved assets, the Author uses Adobe AEM and stores the assets either in the native DAM within Adobe AEM or by using Adobe Assets. At least two silos are now in play, and in reality there are many more. For instance, the AoRs may be storing assets in their systems, and the brand and country teams may have their own local DAM. It's easy to see that these multiple storage silos impede the ability to reuse assets, as assets do not reside in one location for Authors to search and reuse. So, the “creating single use content” mindset continues.

### **Demystifying Modular Content for the Marketers**

We consistently hear three objectives for Marketing:

- Create strong brands
- Increase the velocity of deploying content
- Execute in a cost-effective manner

Modular Content – combined with the right ecosystem, governance, and policies – will achieve or exceed those objectives. But, we need to be cautious. Incorporating Modular Content is only effective if done within an integrated and automated (where possible) ecosystem. The opportunity to drive significant business benefits using Modular Content is what we call ***The Power of One.***

**One DAM**

**One Integrated and Automated Ecosystem**

**One Modular Content Framework**

- One** Authoring Platform
- One** Automated MLR Package Creation Capability
- One** Integrated MLR System (where comments are visible to Authors)
- One** MLR Approval Process for All Content

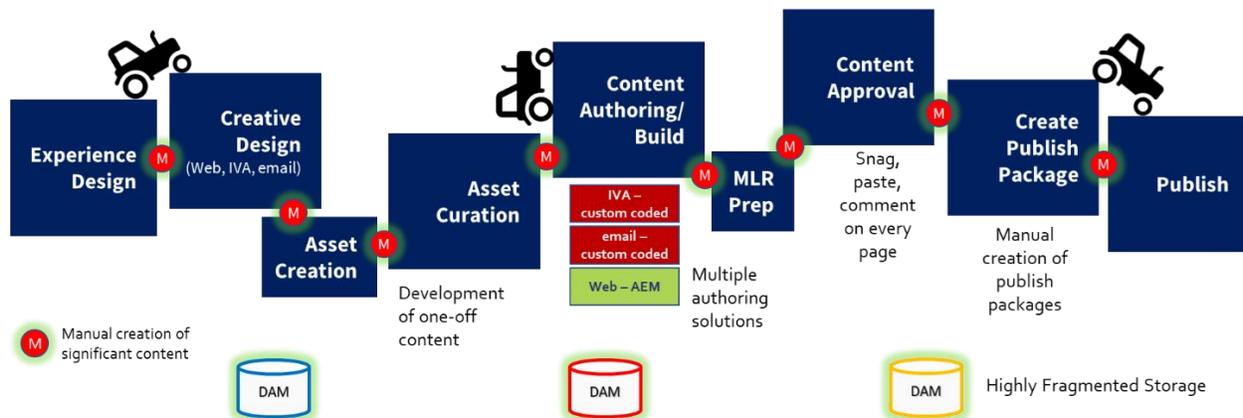
**The Power of One** provides a foundation that will drive both speed to market and cost savings by increasing content velocity by 50% or more.

### A Modular Content Example

Let’s take a large pharmaceutical scenario and see how we can transform a fragmented, error prone, time consuming, and very expensive process into a seamless, cost-effective, and error free end-to-end process using Modular Content within an integrated and automated ecosystem.

NewPharma is the company. They have 14 brands and each brand has an AoR. The AoRs develop strategic concepts and content. They build composite assets using a variety of tools for a variety of channels. Each AoR stores their assets within their own DAM. The MLR process at NewPharma is known to be a very lengthy undertaking, significantly increasing time to market and cost. One of NewPharma’s brands, NewBrand, recently completed a clinical study that confirmed an increase in efficacy of 10%. NewBrand needs to communicate this update to their audiences across all channels. So, let’s get started.

NewBrand uses Adobe AEM for the website CMS and for the Authoring platform. Veeva CRM is used to deliver IVAs and RTEs, while Adobe Campaign is used to distribute home office emails. For the MLR process, Veeva Vault PromoMats is used, with approved assets flowing into the native Veeva Vault DAM. The diagram below depicts NewBrand’s non-integrated, non-automated process. These manual processes require a significant amount of custom coding of channel content with limited design standards or use of Modular Content.



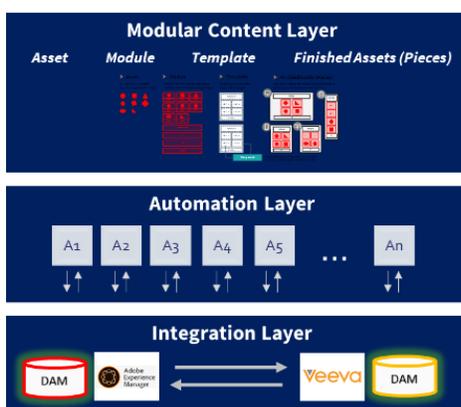
Given the number of hand-offs, manual interventions, and manual creation of assets, it goes without saying that the process is very vulnerable to errors. This translates into MLR rejection, which translates into multiple cycles (we see on average three cycles) contributing to increased cost and lost time to market.

Is NewPharma’s complex ecosystem delivering the speed to market and competitive cost requirements the business needs? Let’s pause and ask ourselves some questions:

1. Do all stakeholders, both internal and external, have access to the MLR and Librarian approved assets?
2. Is a consistent set of design standards in place for all AoRs?
3. Has the content or Modular Content been designed using a common set of design principles?
4. Are assets reusable, or are they created for single use?
5. Is custom coding of composite content required for emails, IVAs, or websites?
6. Are deployment packages manually created and then ingested into another silo?
7. Is there a single owner throughout the end-to-end process of hand-offs and interventions?
8. Are critical metrics readily available to support key business decisions?
9. Can Modular Content provide the full benefits in the current fragmented ecosystem?
10. Is the total cost of the current ecosystem fully understood and transparent to the key stakeholder?

Now, let’s contrast the current state example with one that is integrated and automated.

Three foundational layers are required to deploy an integrated and automated ecosystem: 1) Integration Layer, 2) Automation Layer, and 3) Modular Content Layer. Each layer works together ensuring the digital assets and their associated metadata are moving in a bi-directional manner throughout the ecosystem.



### Integration Layer

The Integration Layer is the foundation providing the connection to the various systems, allowing access from the Author to the Single Source of Truth DAM (as well as all other relevant systems in that ecosystem). It enables setting up custom workflows or leveraging predefined workflows. The bi-directional integration has significant intelligence incorporated. The end point systems are Adobe AEM and Veeva CRM, with integrations into other systems that create the complete ecosystem.

## **Automation Layer**

The Automation Layer is focused on automating the key intersection points in the ecosystem that require significant manual intervention. Why is this important? Because the creation of the Finished Asset is an iterative process, resulting in a large consumption of time and costs. Quantifying this drives the point home. Think about this set of numbers: A company maintains 200 websites and adds 15% new sites annually, creates 1,000 new IVAs annually while updating another 500, and sends over 2,000 RTEs and over 1,000 home office emails every year. It is worth pausing to let the impact of these numbers resonate.

The Automation Layer converts the manual snagging and pasting routine into a quick, seamless process in which all associated metadata, source files, and distribution packages move with the assets. Even the creation of MLR packages can be done automatically. This layer drives out errors and cost while increasing speed.

## **Modular Content Layer**

The Modular Content Layer drives the COPE model and mindset. The content created is done so with leverage in mind. This is an evolution which begins with a core set of content that can be used across multiple channels. Then, incorporating MLR approved and Librarian approved content that can form a basis for Modular Content creation follows. Having a set of components and templates that supports Adobe AEM as the single authoring platform for website, IVAs, or emails is foundational to realize the value. When governance and design standards are added, time to market and costs savings begin to be realized immediately with reuse and leverage of Modular Content being embraced as training and value are fully understood by the organization.

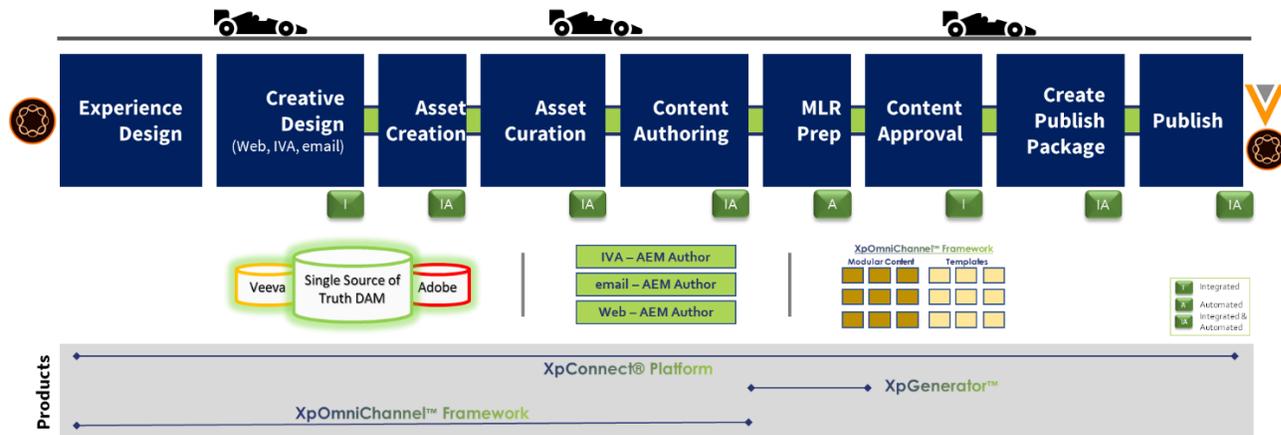
## **Operationalizing Modular Content**

To successfully operationalize Modular Content, the Author is the center of the ecosystem. This approach reduces the number of handoffs and provides the Author the tools needed to simplify and to streamline the process across all channels. That Author is empowered to create content and to drive it through the ecosystem at least 50% faster. Manual processes decrease. Errors decrease. Costs decrease. Quality increases. Speed increases.

The ability to leverage and reuse content using standardized templates and modular content exists now! The Author can drag-n-drop assets onto a template for any channel using assets that are MLR or Librarian approved. Creating Modular Content using various assets such as an image, diagram, claim, or content fragment forms a piece of Modular Content. This Modular Content can then be reused across channels as-is or with revisions as required.

Using the XpConnect® Platform and metadata tools to ensure that the assets have well-articulated and properly mapped metadata becomes the final step before initiating the creation of the MLR package and submitting to Veeva Vault PromoMats by a simple button press. Modular Content that lives in this integrated and automated ecosystem will simplify the creation, drive speed to market, and reduce the overall cost of creating assets in the ecosystem.

Let's take a look at a graphical representation of the redesigned ecosystem using a set of tools and platforms available from Xpediant Digital ([www.xpediantdigital.com](http://www.xpediantdigital.com)):



### Enabling an Efficient Adobe to Veeva Vault PromoMats Ecosystem

There are several key factors necessary for an integrated and automated platform to drive asset reuse, content velocity, and cost reduction:

1. One single authoring platform across all channels
2. Policies and design standards
3. Established approval processes for new asset creation
4. Use of a channel authoring templates and a standard Modular Content framework
5. Common or Single Source of Truth DAM for ALL assets, not just the approved assets
6. Common or centralized authoring such as a Content Authoring Factory
7. Ongoing training program for use of the new ecosystem

It probably seems a bit daunting, but there is a step-by-step approach to break this complex challenge into manageable chunks. The good news is that the COVID era has ushered in a time where key stakeholders are realizing the need to improve time to market and cost structure for new market content creation (as well as current content maintenance) and deployment. At the same time, both patients and health care professionals are demanding well curated, personalized finished assets. The perfect storm to solve this ecosystem challenge is clearly gaining steam.

### Ready to Start This Journey?

Excellent decision! Xpediant Digital has a proven methodology for companies to evolve to an integrated and automated Modular Content ecosystem:

- Establish a baseline set of metrics to understand the scope and magnitude of the opportunity (time and cost)
- Establish a Modular Content Strategy and Roadmap
- Ensure that all content related initiatives are organized “above brand”

- Establish design principles for all AoRs for designing Modular Content
- Move to a standard authoring platform to maximize Modular Content leveragability across all channels
- Migrate to a single DAM and ensure all MLR and Librarian approved content is stored in the DAM and all stakeholders have access
- Conduct a “deploy and scale” model, *i.e.*, start with one brand, validate critical processes with a clear set of success metrics, and then scale to other brands

With an integrated and automated ecosystem using the Xpediant suite of products (XpConnect® Platform, XpOmniChannel™ Framework, and XpGenerator®), companies have seen savings of over 50% and the velocity of content has dramatically increased. In the new ecosystem led by Modular Content, the end-to-end process from creation (or updating) to MLR approval has decreased from weeks to days!

Of course, technology is not a panacea. Operating processes, business models, and organizational aspects must be taking into consideration. Even so, results are generally seen in three months. This is an opportune time for regulated industries to make innovative changes with a clear vision and goals, and now is the time to consider a roadmap to achieve faster and cheaper time to market for the brands.

## Xpediant Digital Overview

Xpediant Digital is an innovative product and services firm rooted in the pursuit of digital asset ecosystem integration excellence in the Life Sciences, Pharmaceutical, and Financial Services industries. We specialize in optimizing the digital asset supply chain with products and services.

As a Certified Partner for Adobe and Technology Partner for Veeva, we mix twenty years of experience, innovative thinking, and proven results to streamline processes, enable cost savings, and maximize returns on our clients' Adobe and Veeva investments. Building lasting trusted relationships and providing fully transparent services is the hallmark of our model.



Qusai Mahesri  
CEO  
Xpediant Digital

Qusai has over 25 years of experience and advises Xpediant clients on digital strategies and operations with a clear focus on return on IT investment. Qusai has a broad and deep experience based in digital marketing technologies, web/IT strategy, cloud solutions, change management, consulting, and operations management.

Please contact us today to discuss the opportunities for your organization. It all starts with a 30-minute discovery call.

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