

Metadata Matters

Metadata matters ... because when it comes to content, it's everything you have. Metadata is the spirit of an intellectual or creative asset ... it is the Descriptive, Administrative, and Structural (Technical) depiction of an asset.

Metadata is a strategic imperative in the endeavor to effectively manage a company's knowledge. The successful implementation of any content-related strategy requires the implementation of a holistic metadata schema that is supported by technology, people and process. Metadata increases the return on investment of a content system by unlocking the potential to ingest, discover, share and distribute assets.

Metadata by Definition

Metadata is the spirit of an intellectual or creative asset ... it's everything you have. In its purest form, metadata is data about data. Metadata, simply stated, is information that describes other data. It is the descriptive, administrative, and structural data that define your assets.

- Descriptive metadata describes a resource for purposes such as discovery and identification (i.e., information to use in a search) with elements such as title, creator, author, subject and keywords
- Technical metadata indicates how assets are structured for example, how a digital image is configured as a JPEG or a GIF as provided in EXIF data (e.g. file format, dimension, and length)
- Administrative metadata provides data that helps manage an asset such as rights management and/or licensing metadata (intellectual property rights) and/or preservation (data needed to archive)

Metadata is the foundation of a profitable digital strategy to deliver an optimized and fully engaging consumer experience.

Content drives brand... regardless of where it comes from and what it is, content is what is driving the DAM and more importantly, your brand. Think of content for what it does for you but also for what it is for your users ... if DAM is a journey, then content is the road upon which you travel; metadata is the constant connection between your content and your users.

Metadata is Value

Metadata increases the return on investment of a content system by unlocking the potential to ingest, discover, share and distribute assets. Every piece of content has the potential to be exploited for a variety of purposes. A metadata schema that includes administrative information allows for targeted access, meaning that the system can be used and manipulated by more users. A well-designed metadata schema also allows automated structural metadata, like file type and size, to be leveraged to help creative and publishing teams speed the time to market. Every piece of content has the potential to be exploited for a variety of purposes.

Metadata is the key that unlocks the commercial potential of information, data and intellectual or creative assets. Every piece of content has the potential to be exploited for a variety of purposes. For example, a medical image tagged with the descriptive metadata about a particular therapeutic

area can be discovered and used for targeted marketing or for part of a study used in a HCP Portal. A metadata schema that includes administrative information allows for targeted access control, allowing information and content systems to be used and searched by more users without expanding risk of misuse. A well-designed metadata strategy also allows automated technical metadata, like file type and size, to be leveraged to help creative and digital production teams speed the time to market.

Metadata and Governance

Language is always changing. Research shows that workers waste more than 40 percent of their time searching for existing assets and recreating them when they are not found. This lost productivity and redundancy from the non-discovery of assets is expensive. The best way to plan for future change is to apply an effective layer of governance to your metadata.

There is more to maintaining the metadata than just maintaining the taxonomy and metadata specifications – you must manage the change. Vocabularies must change over time to stay relevant, and processes must be created to manage this change. The key is good metadata! Your data wants to be found!

Develop an incremental, extensible process that identifies and enables users, and engages stakeholders with feedback loops, user testing and evaluations for your metadata. Remember that metadata is a “snapshot” in time. Take the time to manage your language and control the change.

Metadata Best Practices

1. “Content is no longer “the” only king. The user is also worthy. If you have great content and no one can find it, the value of the content is diminished so ensure you are building the right DAM for the right users.
2. Understand how your users/customers want to interact with information before designing your metadata and the user interface.
3. Develop an incremental, extensible process that identifies and enables users, and engages stakeholders with feedback loops, user testing and evaluations. Remember that metadata is a “snapshot in time.
4. Accept that it won’t be perfect.
5. Implement good governance policies

Metadata Matters ... it is the foundation of a profitable digital strategy to deliver an optimized and fully engaging consumer experience. There are many facets of a successful digital strategy but a sound metadata strategy is the foundation for any organization looking to understand, manage and capture the full value of its data and content.

Author: John Horodyski



John Horodyski is a Partner with Optimity Advisors with executive management strategy experience in Information Management and Consumer Brands including Digital Asset Management (DAM), Metadata and Taxonomy design, MarTech, Content Strategy, Governance and Rights Management. John is a world leading expert and has provided strategic direction and consulting for a variety of Fortune 50, 100 and 500 clients from Consumer Packaging Goods, to Media & Entertainment, and the Pharmaceutical industry. John is also an Adjunct Faculty at San Jose State University where he teaches a graduate course in Digital Asset Management. In addition to regular training and public speaking on digital media and metadata, John is a Board Member and Metadata Editor of the Journal Of Digital Media Management, and is a monthly DAM contributor to CMS Wire. John recently published in May 2016 the book, “Inform, Transform, Outperform: Digital Content Strategies to Optimize Your Business for Growth.”

With Contributions From: Huw Jenkins



Huw Jenkins is Veeva’s Director of Strategy in Digital Asset Management. Huw has 20 years’ experience consulting on marketing technology solutions. Over the past five years with Veeva and Zinc, Huw has been focused on Digital Asset Management in Life Sciences. Prior to his time at Veeva, Huw worked with digital production agencies that specialised in content production and localisation. He has extensive experience working across verticals to help global and local marketing teams deliver more effective content.



THANK YOU

Thank you for your valuable time. For further information, please contact:



Washington, D.C. • Berlin • Los Angeles • Minneapolis • New England • New York • Riyadh

Optimimity Advisors is a global advisory firm that helps organizations architect, build and launch human-centered strategies and solutions that embrace the complexities of our digital world.