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Straightforward Steps to DAM Mastery

Whether you're just getting started or have used a DAM for years, these steps can help you get the most out of your digital asset management tool.

Step One: Identify a DAM Manager

Ideally, this person is specifically selected for this role, but not every company has the resources to create a new position, and that's okay! Whether this is a full-time position or an addition to a current role, here's what to consider when choosing a DAM manager.

Role and Responsibilities of a DAM Manager:

- This person should be able to dedicate at least **50% of their time** to DAM management.

- Responsibilities include reviewing uploads, applying metadata, communicating with contributors, managing users, setting permissions, monitoring system stats, and advocating for the system.

- For an organization to extract value from its DAM, the entire organization needs to be aware of its value, how it can be accessed, and what it offers. This role advocates for the DAM and enforces its policies, standards, and ongoing maintenance.

Ideal Qualifications:

- This person will preferably have a background in library science, but it is not required. This person might have experience working with visual assets, photography, media, marketing, or communications.

- This person should have a solid understanding of diverse file formats (e.g., jpg vs. tiff) and their quality and size implications. Passion for data and organization.

- This role should not be assigned to a disinterested coordinator. This is a professional development opportunity and organizations should consider offering a raise and investing in training if tasking someone with an existing position.

Step Two: Create a DAM Support Team

It's important to get buy-in throughout the organization when establishing your DAM. Here's how:

Initial Team:

- Start with a small group and expand over time as more people trust and become aware of how they can leverage the platform.

- Ideally, the team should be comprised of different stakeholders across the organization.

Collaborate with Different Departments:

- The more people who know about the DAM and how to use it, the more successful it will be. Some potential collaborators may include HR, Communications, IT, and project teams.

Step Three: Identify Challenges & Create Early Wins

Take stock of your current assets, where they live, how/ if they are tagged, and how current teams utilize them. This way, you'll be able to determine opportunities for improvement and establish quick wins for the teams that will access the DAM regularly.

Identify Challenges and Opportunities:

Here are some common challenges that can be solved through DAM maintenance and auditing:

- **Backlog Management:** Many teams struggle with a significant backlog of images that need to be processed and uploaded.

- **Data Integrity:** Scattered data makes it difficult to determine what is current, and makes it difficult for users to trust the data.

- **Consistency:** Lack of established DAM workflows or standards for storing and describing data can create inconsistent storage.
- **Engagement:** While teams may know the DAM exists, they may need to be re-engaged and educated on how to use it well.
- **Mergers & Acquisitions:** Merging with other firms and integrating their image libraries into an established system is challenging. However, auditing your combined resources can create an opportunity for implementing higher quality standards and policies.

Setting Priorities and Establishing Early Wins:

Here are some quick wins you can establish early on. Please note that this will change based on your organization's priorities.

- **Create a file naming standard** and apply it to all files. At first, this should be basic, and only become more detailed/complex as business needs present themselves.
- **Establish a taxonomy** that balances macro and micro-level organization needs.
- **Clear the current queue.** For images waiting to be uploaded, use your newly established standards to add them to the system. This is a quick way to build trust and adoption with collaborators.

Step Four: Build a Space People Trust

To ensure teams adopt your DAM and its policies, they need to know what successful usage looks like.

Implement Quality Standards:

- Implement stringent quality standards for every file admitted into the system.
- Create policies around which assets can be uploaded (image quality, meeting copyright guidelines, etc).

Comprehensive Metadata Capture:

- Adopt a three-tiered model for efficient metadata management: capture metadata within the **file name**, then apply **keywords** and **text-based fields**.
- Enhance searchability and categorization of project assets within the system.

Apply Strategic Permissions:

- Maintain strict control over who sees what, with few authorized to upload. This oversight allows you to maintain standards and ensure quality.

Implement a Good, Better, Best Frameworks:

- **Good:** Basic Optimization Techniques.
- **Better:** Intermediate Configuration Enhancements.
- **Best:** Advanced Customization and Automation.

Feedback Mechanisms and Success Metrics:

- Establish methods for feedback and metrics to measure success.

Step Five: Create a Culture of DAM and Data Integrity

While a comprehensive taxonomy and metadata schema are essential, effective outreach and training are equally crucial. Even with advanced features like AI-powered search, users still need guidance.

Outreach and Integration:

- Integration with other systems and processes is crucial; your DAM should not exist in a vacuum.
- Act as the liaison between your DAM vendor and your organization. Be the go-to support person, advocate for your system, and stay updated on new features and best practices.

Knowledge Base:

- Develop a comprehensive online resource with FAQs, video tutorials, and step-by-step guides. Ensure it's easy to navigate and search.

Training Sessions:

- Organize regular, interactive training sessions that cover both basic and advanced features of the DAM system. Use real-life scenarios and practical exercises relevant to users' daily tasks to enhance).

By following these straightforward steps, you can fully leverage the power of your DAM and drive greater efficiency. You're ready to take charge, streamline your assets, and lead your organization to long-term DAM success. **Learn more at openasset.com**