

# Executive Brief: Achieving Digital Content Excellence

Top 20 pharma executives' plans for digital transformation by 2023

By the end of 2023, leading pharma companies aim to achieve digital content excellence across process, technology, and resourcing in all channels and geographies. The next 24 months are critical to support a digital-first mindset without increasing spending.

Over the past decade, organizations have navigated cost-cutting challenges, pressures to standardize, the need for cross-channel consistency, and new models of working with external partners. The pandemic pushed marketers to create more content than ever before. In fact, in 2021, Veeva Vault PromoMats managed more than 22.5 million documents—double the volume since 2019. This rapid rise in content creation has left many leaders wondering: How do you achieve content excellence at speed and scale?

Veeva Executive Content Innovation Council, comprising 12 senior leaders from the top 20 pharmaceutical companies, recently discussed the challenges and opportunities on the path to digital content excellence. Some of the key metrics driving change in commercial organizations included:

90%

of content  
will be digital  
in 2027

75%

have decoupled  
content creation  
and production

50%

of content is  
expected to be  
modular

50%

lack the ability to  
measure content  
performance

# Accelerate digital transformation

To address these challenges and opportunities, content leaders are focusing on the following key areas to drive content excellence.

## #1: Simplify your content ecosystem

When the pandemic hit, companies made significant investments in technology and integrations to accelerate their digital transformation. Decisions had to be made without proper planning and resourcing. The industry reached an inflection point, and it's time to reassess the value of those investments and technology needs.

Currently, 50% of council members have more than five content technology integrations, making content ecosystems complex. Even when technology is centrally managed, different systems can create inefficiencies and fragmented workflows.

With the shift to digital, the gaps in the foundational work become more apparent. "We need to find the right balance between innovation and execution," shared Parker Richardson, VP of Omnichannel Operations at Astellas. "As tempting as it is to add all these advanced innovations, we made it a point that to achieve digital excellence, we must first focus on building a solid content ecosystem supported by technology, talent, and operating models. The ability to move with speed and optimized workflows is dependent on that foundation."

There's still ample opportunity for organizations to fully leverage functionality in existing technology, including claims management, building modular libraries, centralized digital asset management, and standardized channel templates. Beyond these key functionalities, part of building a solid foundation includes having the global infrastructure and process for tagging and taxonomy to enable content traceability.

Before investing in more point solutions, take a step back and find ways to simplify your technology stack. Prioritize building the right foundations so that your team can move with agility and are set up for success.



50%  
of council  
members have  
5+  
content technology  
integrations



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Parker Richardson, VP of Omnichannel Operations at Astellas



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## #2: Demonstrate value by embedding data into the process



50%

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Fifty percent of Veeva's Content Innovation Council members say they cannot measure content performance and do not have clearly defined key performance indicators (KPIs). Benchmarking and access to key data points are imperative to enable a data-driven content strategy. There needs to be dedicated effort and resources to get it right.

Companies still have a high dependency on external partners and fragmented datasets to draw clear insights and intelligence. A culprit of fragmented datasets stems from having too many technology integrations where reconciling data becomes an additional burden with more layers of assumptions and inconsistencies. "In our journey to achieve digital content excellence, I quickly realized our technology stack was too complex, we had dependencies on external partners, and our processes were fragmented," shared Thomas Thestrup-Terp, Corporate VP for Commercial Excellence and Operations from Novo Nordisk. "To influence executives and empower teams across the organization, I knew that having meaningful data was critical. Not only that, I needed access to data in a timely manner so that we could start making data-driven decisions and benchmark against ourselves. Data needs to be embedded into the process from start to finish."

Council members agree that the top KPIs to be tracked are: speed to market, customer satisfaction, and content reuse. Make it a priority to establish a clear way to measure these metrics and start benchmarking. The data does not exist if you cannot measure it.



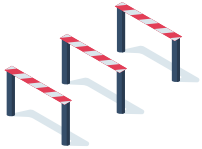
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### #3: Modular content can bridge the gap across channels and geographies



60%

of executive members claim that one of the most significant barriers to adopting promotional materials created by global teams is concern over quality

Traditionally, a field rep could drop off a detail aid for HCPs to read. Marketers were not required to think about the omnichannel experience for customers. “The pandemic shifted requirements drastically—it’s now the expectation that we deliver more relevant bite-sized content relevant to our customers through their preferred channel,” said Raakhi Sippy, VP and Head of Global Pharma Marketing Operations at GSK. “To deliver that personalized experience, we have to take on the complexities which require a total change of mindset, skills, technology, operating models, and data. Marketers are expected to create more content faster, and at scale—without an increase in budget—which means we have to adopt a modular approach. It’s an effective way to deliver that easy and simple customer experience.”

Modular content is critical to scale and accelerate the creation of personalized content. Marketers use pre-approved content modules to create localized assets and bridge the gap across channels and geographies more efficiently. Over 60% of executive members claim that one of the most significant barriers to adopting promotional materials created by global teams is concern over quality. There are significant inefficiencies between content created by global and local teams.

However, you should not design all content for modular, and marketers need to define clear use cases for what should be modularized and what should not. Leaders are working toward the assumption that at least 50% of content will be modular. With a variety of new digital channels available to engage HCPs, empowering marketers with a flexible way to create and reuse channel-agnostic promotional materials is essential for content excellence.

Customer satisfaction should be the ultimate goal. By taking a modular approach, marketers can deliver more personalized, relevant content to drive a better customer experience for HCPs and their patients. The added benefit is they can do this faster and increase content reuse.



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Raakhi Sippy, VP and Head of Global Pharma Marketing Operations at GSK

## #4: Improve content efficiencies with more automation for medical, legal, and regulatory

The review process remains the biggest bottleneck in getting content to market, and executives still face finding the right balance between compliance and speed. While council members have implemented many best practices to optimize medical, legal, and regulatory (MLR) processes, they unanimously agree that there's more work to be done.



Council members agree that they'd like to see

75%

of the MLR process automated by 2025

"Given the regulatory needs and associated risk, 100% automation is unlikely in the short term," says Anuj Maheshwari, VP of HCP and Patient Engagement Enablement at Pfizer. "Having said that, there are significant opportunities to accelerate the MLR process, especially using a tiered approach. Leveraging pre-approved components, reviewers can see what is pre-approved and focus on areas that need review. We've reduced the submission to approval time from 38 days to 7 days."

Council members agree that they'd like to see 75% of the MLR process automated by 2025. A modular MLR approach—assessing risk profiles based on reusing pre-approved content—will significantly accelerate the review and approval process.

Offering more training and change management support for MLR teams is essential. A digital-first mindset means MLR teams also need a scalable model to review and approve content. "I know that regulatory teams are open for change, especially as we strive to achieve digital content excellence," shared Alan Dunbar, Global VP of Regulatory Affairs at Amgen. "While the priority is to build momentum within marketing teams, it's important to make sure that MLR teams are included in the decision-making process."



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## Stay focused over the next 24 months

Companies have already made significant changes to achieve digital content excellence, but there's more work to be done. There is no one-size-fits-all recipe, and companies will need to find an operating model that makes the most sense for them. The focus needs to be on simplification, building a strong foundation, and implementing a modular approach to your content strategies to achieve content goals. The digital-first model enables HCPs to have a more personalized experience, allowing them to access the right content to drive higher quality engagement and, ultimately, the best health outcomes.

**Learn how other content leaders strategize in commercial content.**

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