



Four Ways to Enable Micro-moments of Influence

The Future of Digital Marketing

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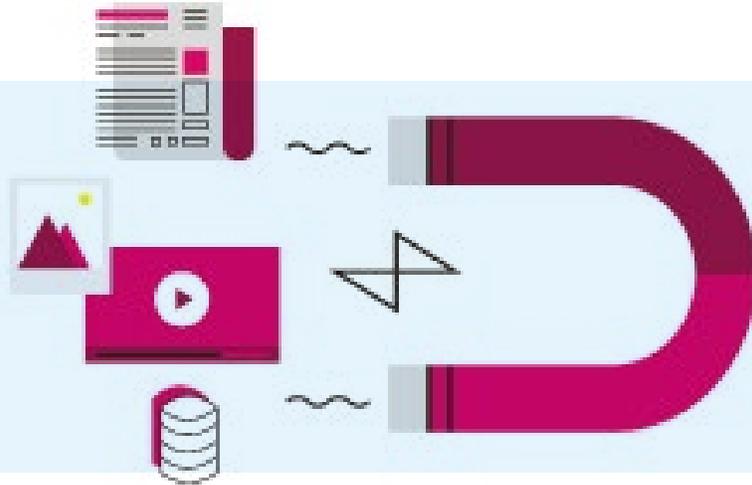
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Executive Summary

Today's consumer engages with brands across an ever-growing number of channels – sites, apps and devices. This is one of four key trends making it difficult to create a consistent, seamless experience; these trends also include an explosion in the volume of content needed to feed these channels, driving the need to manage complexity, resulting in the need for agility. Unfortunately these trends are not helped by today's traditional web content management systems (WCMS or CMS), which were typically built to push content to specific channels, usually classical websites, not pull content to many diverse channels.



In order to maximize digital experiences and commerce as well as customer loyalty and retention, companies today must leverage a new approach to content management that decouples the front end from the back end and introduces agility, best-of-breed and interoperability to the mix. This approach supports channel-agnostic content factories and introduces the notion of Content-as-a-Service, in which content is pulled together for the right customer in the right context at the right touchpoint at the right time and assembled on the glass – that is to say, at the screen or display, regardless of what the display actually is.

Readers will learn more about these four trends, how to maximize them instead of falling victim to them and a specific solution from e-Spirit called FirstSpirit CaaS (Content-as-a-Service) that can help future-proof your content strategy and enable micro-moments of influence.

Introduction

With the advent of new technology driving more channels for content consumption – and the message dilution, potential for dissonance and lack of engagement that comes with it – today’s customer journey is no longer linear. Vendors are struggling to keep up with the omnichannel demand that the new technology and accompanying changes in consumer behavior are creating. That’s because consumers’ thoughts, interests and motivations are fragmented and change by the moment depending upon the circumstances they are in and conditions affecting them at that period of time. What they are really seeking are “micro-moments” of influence and an epiphany that allows them to make their own decisions of what they want, how they want it, where they want it and when.

According to [Think with Google](#), “micro-moments occur when people reflexively turn to a device – increasingly a smartphone – to act on a need to learn something, do something, discover something, watch something or buy something. They are intent-rich moments when decisions are made and preferences shaped. In these moments, consumers’ expectations are higher than ever. The powerful computers we carry in our pockets have trained us to expect brands to immediately deliver exactly what we are looking for when we are looking. We want things right, and we want things right away.”

The bottom line is that today’s consumers don’t want to be told what, when or how to buy – they will tell you when they are ready to engage, what information they are interested in, and how and when they want to buy.

So, it is up to the modern marketer to be ready when those micro-moments occur with the right style, right content, right campaigns, right products and right type of engagement that is not only personalized, but also context-specific to that consumer’s need at that moment in time. The problem becomes how to deliver those micro-moments. For years, marketers have been challenged with delivering engaging digital experiences across a growing number of channels and devices. Then the Internet of Things happened and with it a channel explosion that’s dramatically changing the way content is managed. New channels are cropping up every day, and that growth is only accelerating. How best to keep pace with the growth of tools and channels as they evolve?

Traditional CMS technology requires time and resource-consuming



Providing exceptional digital experiences is an evolving challenge that will continue at a more furious pace as time goes by. That pace is driven by customer expectations, which in turn evolve with technology innovations – whether that’s new disruptive technologies that hit the market, the introduction of new channels or evolving feature sets within existing digital ecosystems.

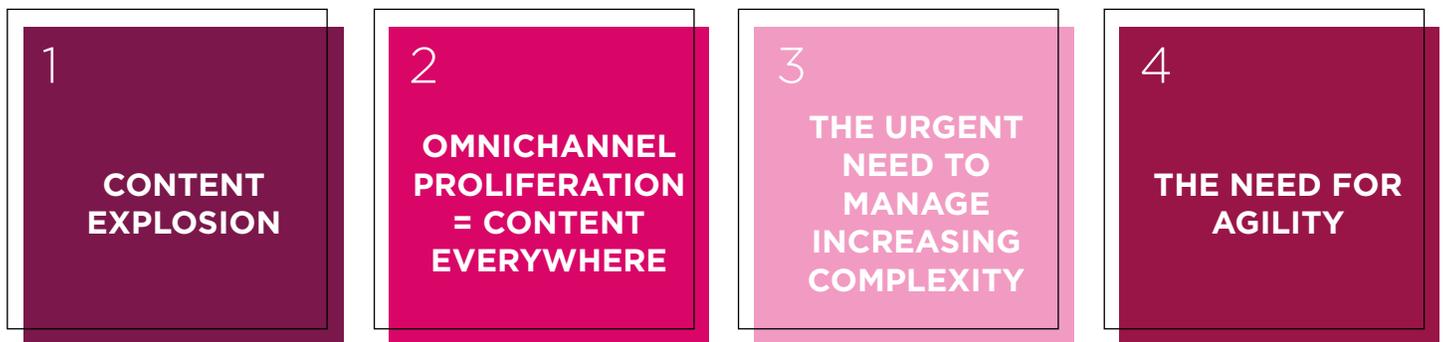
integrations with each new channel placing an additional burden on already overtasked IT departments while creating layers of complexity that traditional content management systems simply can't handle.

Creating exceptional content-driven experiences across the growing multitude of channels to deliver perfect micro-moments requires a more strategic approach to content that removes the burden of digital complexity from IT and marketing.

This white paper examines the trends driving today's digital customer experience and how companies can get ahead of them so they don't become a victim of digital Darwinism. One thing is clear: Companies that aren't agile are going extinct.

How Four Major Trends Impact Your Content Strategy

Content marketers around the world know that technology is changing faster than many businesses can respond or evolve and that the pace of change is actually increasing. This unprecedented evolution is characterized by four major trends:



The bottom line is that more and more content is being created for customers to consume via more and more channels, devices and touchpoints, leading to an urgent need to manage this increasing complexity and move towards an agile means of doing so. These trends lead to all sorts of disruption in the workplace that can be transformative when executed well, but for companies that are not able to leverage them, they lead to digital Darwinism, in which only the companies that are most responsive to these rapid changes will survive. The only way to survive digital Darwinism is to deal with the ramifications of these trends.

As consumer technology evolves, so does consumer behavior and expectations, and your marketing technology has to keep up with the changes in the marketplace. For example, can your CMS handle the brand-new channels your customers are using – such as wearable devices or virtual reality? How is their journey changing, and what must you do to create an experience that is aligned with their buying process? More importantly, how can you use content to eliminate friction and anxiety in your online relationship with consumers, and what technology will support that relationship and not introduce noise? Great online experiences that make sense, are culturally appropriate and support the brand are hard to create, and the last thing marketers need is technology that slows them down.

Brands know they can reap higher margins when they sell direct to consumers, and they take great pains to support their commerce efforts with sticky, clicky content. In the end, the goal is to merge content with commerce to drive the best user experience possible, increase conversions and revenue, and gain customer loyalty. Providing exceptional digital experiences is an evolving challenge that will continue at a more furious pace as time goes by. That pace is driven by customer expectations, which in turn evolve with technology innovations – whether that’s new disruptive technologies that hit the market, the introduction of new channels or evolving feature sets within existing digital ecosystems.

The bottom line is that today’s consumers don’t want to be told what, when or how to buy – they will tell you when they are ready to engage, what information they are interested in, and how and when they want to buy.

To create the best digital content experience possible for your brand consumers, you’ve got to deal with these four trends right now. Let’s look at each of them in-depth.

1. Content Explosion

It’s no surprise that digital content has exploded. Content marketing is a huge part of business-to-consumer strategy, and professionals are keen to develop new content, reuse and repurpose their content and fuel the customer journey. The problem is that so much content is needed these days, and 48% of marketers surveyed by the [Content Marketing Institute](#) say they don’t have enough time to devote to content marketing and 37% face content creation challenges.

The content explosion is so mind-boggling that it’s hard to even think about incorporating best practices, such as using buy buttons in blog posts, making videos shoppable or linking social hashtag campaigns for user-generated content directly to product pages.

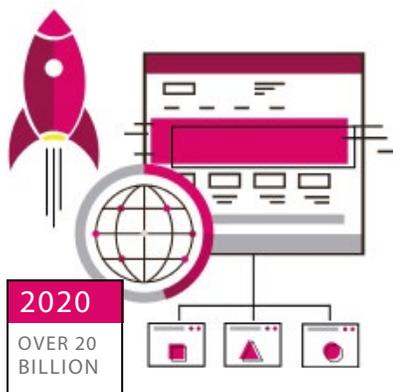


What’s interesting about the content explosion is that it is very much a double-edged sword. The need for more content creates the need for relevancy, which drives personalization – and the ability to personalize and create more contextually relevant content drives the need for even more content. Simply put, marketers must deliver specific content for specific people in specific situations. Unfortunately, companies face organizational and resource constraints not just in creating high quality content, but also in distributing it. There are silos everywhere – think about all of the different departments involved in developing contests, giveaways, quizzes, tweets, social media chats, videos and surveys, and managing user-generated content. It’s so mind-boggling that it’s hard to even think about incorporating best practices, such as using buy buttons in blog posts, making videos shoppable or linking social hashtag campaigns for user-generated content directly to product pages.

Technology can help. In fact, according to research firm Gartner, “web content management (WCM) is being regarded now as a mission-critical priority to help drive the overall digital strategy.” By year-end 2017, Gartner estimates that more than 90% of organizations claiming digital success will regard their WCM software as a mission-critical component of that success. But the problem with that technology is that it’s typically created just for web channels, making the feeding of all of today’s different channels less than optimal. Let’s look at that problem next.

2. Omnichannel Proliferation = Content Everywhere

Before the Internet, there were tried and true ways to reach consumers – mostly in-person and via brick and mortar stores. The advent of the Internet made digital business possible for the first time. But now there is a proliferation of channels, devices and touchpoints that deliver content everywhere. It’s not just websites anymore, but also social media, mobile devices and apps, text messaging, digital signage and the Internet of Things (IoT), such as wearables, smart home devices and other Internet-connected devices.



In fact, in its report titled “Internet of Things Primer for 2016,” Gartner predicts that “by 2020, over 20 billion connected things will be in use across a range of industries; the IoT will touch every role across the enterprise,” and Strategy Analytics predicts that there will be 33 billion devices connected to the Internet! IDC, another analyst firm, characterizes vendor and enterprise IoT spending as “explosive” and projects it will reach \$1.7 trillion by 2020.

To continue creating the best customer experience possible as the world transitions to IoT, companies must maximize their use of these new channels, screens and touchpoints. Without that dedication to a consistent and compelling customer experience, there will be fragmentation and dissonance across the journey as channels continue to increase and evolve. That’s because the more consumers interact with your brand across multiple channels, there are more opportunities to get it wrong. It’s not just about getting consumers to place something in their cart anymore.

One thing is clear: marketing channels will only continue to grow as time goes by. The problem is only becoming greater as every new device, app and Internet-connected thing comes on the market. Unfortunately, with every new touchpoint, companies can make the mistake of creating new isolated content silos, which introduces inefficiency into the workflow. Multiple publishing channels can create content silos because traditional content management systems typically only work best for websites. A new approach is needed in which the customer’s need for content drives its creation, not the brand’s ability to push content out.

3. The Urgent Need to Manage Increasing Complexity

With the explosion of content and channel proliferation due to the interconnectedness of everything comes the urgent need to manage complexity. Just as technology solves problems, it also creates them, and one of those problems is specialization. For example, according to marketing technology company [Conductor](#), 45% of consumer marketers don’t target their content at all, clearly pointing to an inability to leverage specialized skills in



order to deliver content that is relevant, well-timed or useful.

Just how can marketers keep up with complicated and complex marketing specializations, such as multivariate testing, targeting and personalization, and SEO (among many others), while delivering new types of content to new channels, such as augmented reality, artificial intelligence and other new technology we can't even imagine yet?

The answer is, they can't – unless they have the right platform. But because content management systems are built for generalists, they

typically don't support all of the specialist skills and tools now needed in the modern marketing suite. Without the right platform, companies build whole departments out of siloed vertical expertise, which creates the potential for more fragmented experiences. What if there were an all-in-one platform that facilitated the creation of compelling experiences for customers, regardless of what skills and tools were required?

4. The Need for Agility

The three preceding trends are driving the need for agility in order to create the right digital ecosystem and not fall victim to digital Darwinism. Digital dexterity will win the game. The problem is, traditional web content management systems are outdated because they work best for one channel – the website – and simply push content to that end point. And, a traditional CMS fails to support the entire customer journey. Providing superior customer experiences is not just a competitive advantage; for many companies, it is their only competitive advantage.

Gaining that advantage requires engaging with customers across a growing number of channels, touchpoints and devices, and delivering content that is timely and contextually relevant.

Today, that engagement must span not just the buying phase of the relationship, but also the entire end-to-end customer journey, and it requires a growing number of tools and systems – most importantly, your CMS – that connect all of the components required for a seamless customer experience.

In this way, marketers will have to give up pixel-perfect control in order to create context-perfect experiences, and that means spending less time on the presentation layer and more time on making sure you have content for every context.

With the multitude of touchpoints, companies must now shift to pulling content from multiple sources (third-party, mobile, social and IoT) and assembling it on the screen/display (aka "the glass") at the exact micro-moment it's needed.

Traditional Solutions Hinder Digital Transformation

Most content management systems do exactly what they promise: they manage content, usually for one channel, your website. And even though that's more about managing a website than content, it worked fine – until omnichannel proliferation. These content management systems simply aren't architected to deliver contextually aware content out to consumers on the growing number of channels they want with expediency. That's a problem, and homegrown content management systems have a similar limitation. IDC's research has shown a significant percentage of companies are still using a homegrown web content management system – despite the fact that commercial solutions have been broadly available for more than 15 years.

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It's time to move your old CMS to the attic and leave it there. It's time to maximize the possibilities and power of content. We're moving away from systems to services that allow you to assemble digital experiences on the fly at the end point.

These content-driven experiences happen only when content management, campaign management, personalization, e-commerce AND web analytics come together. Think omnichannel customer engagement across websites, mobile sites and apps, social, IoT and digital signage limited only by your imagination. Introducing Content-as-a-Service.

The Benefits of Pulling Content Instead of Pushing It

The good news is that web content management technology has become more agile, in that we have decoupled the content creation (authoring and storage) layer from the presentation and publishing layer. This is called a decoupled or headless approach to content management, and it changes the way companies think about the content experience in that it no longer needs to be designed for a specific touchpoint format.

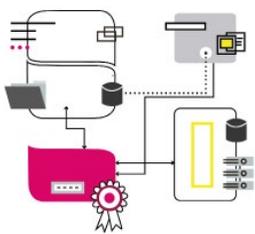
This allows for cross-channel continuity that evolves your efforts way

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past content management to content factory, from push to pull, from system to service, allowing you to monetize content, create consistent, holistic brand experiences and decrease your time to market.

FirstSpirit brings out the best in your company-wide content, helping you realize your digital strategy simply and efficiently. FirstSpirit is the perfect fit for any company looking to meet their exact business requirements – whether you need a user-friendly [Digital Experience Hub](#) to create extraordinary customer experiences for corporate websites, or results-oriented digital marketing tools to target content and engage customers on e-commerce platforms, mobile websites, enterprise portals or emerging new touchpoints like [smart devices](#), [digital signage](#) or the [Internet of Things](#). We've built deep expertise in many verticals, bringing knowledge and insight to the digital challenges you face, and more importantly, how to solve them.

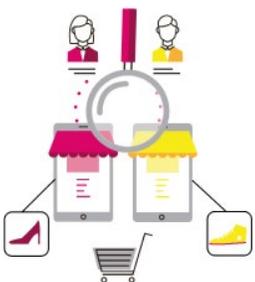
Here are the key elements that should be part of your Content Experience Hub to realize an outstanding customer experience:



Best-of-breed integration – An open and extensible CMS allows easy integration of systems and web applications, preserves investments and embraces innovation. Very often, digital transformation efforts fail due to the high cost of “rip and replace” of existing systems. In contrast, the best-of-breed approach of the Content Experience Hub initiative allows a less disruptive adoption curve with iterative improvements and keeps solutions in sync with business needs.



Globalization and multi-brand management – Any digital transformation effort must think broadly. This requires a CMS capable of supporting multiple international websites and brands on a large scale with extensive support for languages, integration with translation platforms and extensive content reuse capabilities across brands.



Personalization – With the advent of Big Data, companies know more about customers than ever. The challenge has been putting those insights into action. An important part of the Content Experience Hub is blending personalized content delivery with low resource utilization, high performance and stability.



Global user experience – Digital transformation is ultimately about people. Such a transformation is not only about the customers who experience it on the front end, but also the developers, editors and integrators in the back end who are responsible for creating a holistic customer experience. This requires intuitive tools for the entire team along the digital value chain.



Enterprise ready – At the core of the Content Experience Hub is an enterprise-ready cloud-capable content engine that is private, secure and able to automate and scale the delivery of accurate and relevant content across all channels and devices.

Introducing FirstSpirit Content-as-a-Service (CaaS)

It's official: gone are the days in which a CMS was simply used to manage web content. FirstSpirit CaaS makes the opportunity to turn digital content into revenues a reality – not just a pipe dream. Customers demand great digital experiences across all channels, and that demand is changing the way content is delivered. Content-as-a-Service (CaaS) is the surest way to deliver content with the speed and consistency needed to satisfy customers on their channel of choice – emerging or existing – whether via website, store, wearable, Internet of Things, social network, smart device or app.

Instead of the old way of pushing content out, content is delivered as-a-service across all channels instantly, eliminating the need for costly integrations while making organizations more agile by allowing them to add new channels to their mix with speed and efficiency.

FirstSpirit CaaS extends content reach to channels with greater agility, on demand. There's no need to integrate your CMS with anything. Simply create content using FirstSpirit, and it goes wherever called via our REST API – instantly. Because content is separate from presentation, you can design the perfect digital experience for each channel, improving the customer journey and helping turn content into revenue.

What Makes FirstSpirit Different

In order to deliver true omnichannel experiences, your CMS should serve as the central content hub of your entire digital ecosystem, seamlessly connecting people, processes, technology and channels, while giving you the agility and interoperability needed to quickly capitalize on evolving consumer behaviors, new disruptive technologies and channels, and evolving digital marketing toolsets. This approach not only meets the digital experience demands required today, but also future demands as well. And that's the e-Spirit way.

From its inception, FirstSpirit was built with agility and interoperability in mind. Our long-term strategy was – and still is – to be the most agile and highly interoperable content management system on the market. That strategy, along with our best-of-breed approach and focus on [usability](#), supports our customers' overall readiness and ability to quickly adapt to the rapidly evolving marketing landscape. It's also how we help customers adopt and capitalize on technologies that help shape and create unique and truly competitive user experiences.

BEST-OF-BREED

Our best-of-breed focus helps organizations avoid the “sameness” experienced when using inflexible, all-in-one marketing suites by building custom digital marketing suites to suit their exact business needs using the richest and most modern set of capabilities available on the market. We’ve developed strategic partnerships and deep, certified integrations with the top best-of-breed vendors in each area of the digital marketing stack – such as SAP, Salesforce Commerce Cloud and IBM WebSphere, among others. And moving forward, we’ll continue to expand upon FirstSpirit’s network of best-of-breed vendor integrations – particularly with customer journey-focused platforms and marketing middleware tools that further enable the digital experiences that consumers expect.

AGILITY

FirstSpirit’s inherent agility allows marketers to act at the precise moment when consumer behaviors evolve, new disruptive digital marketing tools are introduced, new channels emerge or when features no longer meet their needs by letting them add, remove or replace key systems within digital marketing stacks with best-of-breed systems. Agility helps companies quickly seize on opportunities for differentiation, advancing ahead while competitors with less flexible digital ecosystems wait for their existing systems to catch up. This offers a true competitive advantage in a world where differentiation is increasingly hard to come by.

Agility also means your digital ecosystem is future-proof, eliminating the moment when you realize your CMS no longer meets your needs and must be ripped out and replaced. In a very real way, our agility ensures that FirstSpirit is the last CMS you will ever need to purchase.

INTEROPERABILITY

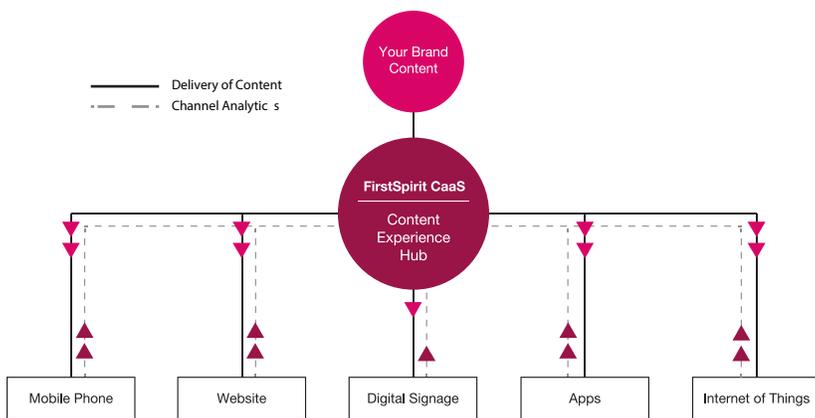
FirstSpirit is highly interoperable with any system, from CRM systems to e-commerce to DAM to ERP and so on. In fact, we’re so interoperable that you can easily integrate with any system and pull or push content to it or even to any “thing” in the Internet of Things, promising to open up whole new sales channels for e-Spirit customers while simultaneously giving them real opportunities for competitive differentiation. We play nicely with everyone, and that approach helps marketers quickly adopt and capitalize on technologies that place the customer at the center of every interaction for competitive omnichannel experiences. Our strategy moving forward is to open up a whole new level of interoperability – one that extends FirstSpirit’s ease of integration to organizations that want to integrate their products with ours.

A rapidly evolving marketplace demands a digital marketing infrastructure that supports your overall readiness and ability to quickly adapt. FirstSpirit was built to support agility and interoperability from its inception, making it the best-of-breed content management system for companies intent on delivering exceptional omnichannel experiences not just now, but in the future as well.

How FirstSpirit Works

FirstSpirit is a mission-critical component of managing enterprise content for customers with the highest demands. Their marketing technology stack is often evolving towards multiple and bigger platforms, and we provide out-of-the-box capabilities to be integrated by others into this ecosystem.

Here's how it works. First, you design the perfect digital experience for each channel rather than for each piece of content. For example, mobile devices may have a header, small image and a link whereas a digital sign might have a large image and a call to action. A web page would have all of the above plus lots of text. Then you simply enter that content once into FirstSpirit and off it goes! Just put all of your content into the CaaS Cloud and deliver personalized content to any touchpoint at the precise moment a customer uses it.



You create content using FirstSpirit, and it goes wherever it's called via a REST API. Content is pulled to each channel and device at the precise moment a customer uses it, whether a website, portal, store, wearable, IoT thing, social network, smart device or app, ensuring it is always up to date. It simplifies the delivery of content, eliminating the chaos that often comes with evolving channels and marketing tool sets.

And here's the beauty of it: you also get also get powerful channel analytics data for each channel, allowing you optimize your content and create the perfect digital experiences customers expect for better targeting and greater success.

No other content management tool is as agile or efficient or fast. FirstSpirit CaaS provides the best of both worlds: a full-fledged web content management system (push) AND a powerful content API (pull) that can serve raw and pre-rendered content everywhere – instantly.

Deployment Model

FirstSpirit supports on-premise or cloud environments, as well as a pure SaaS deployment, including features to roll out and maintain new virtual instances, automating routine processes via an extensive API and improved monitoring.

FirstSpirit's cloud-first approach allows you to get the best out of virtual environments while supporting hybrid and on-premise deployments as well. See the [FirstSpirit Cloud datasheet](#) for more information.

FirstSpirit CaaS separates content from presentation. That means you enter content into FirstSpirit CaaS – subject, header, text, images, video, etc. – and your personalized content is instantly consumed and presented in the optimized format for each channel, whether you have one or 100.

How Today's Brands Are Benefiting From FirstSpirit



L'Oréal Luxe chose e-Spirit's FirstSpirit content management system to enable rich content management within editorial sections on e-commerce sites managed by Salesforce Commerce Cloud. Using FirstSpirit allows L'Oréal Luxe to easily create and share content across multiple international websites and to launch online Beauty Magazines that offer make-up tutorials, articles and styling tips, among other rich media content. For example, Biotherm is using FirstSpirit for its [LIVEMORE](#) blog, where the articles are produced by external writers and the blog's tags, categories, videos and products are all integrated. The company mapped out the workflow to approve and publish content to Salesforce Commerce Cloud and the result is a lively, helpful content site that's integrated with e-commerce.



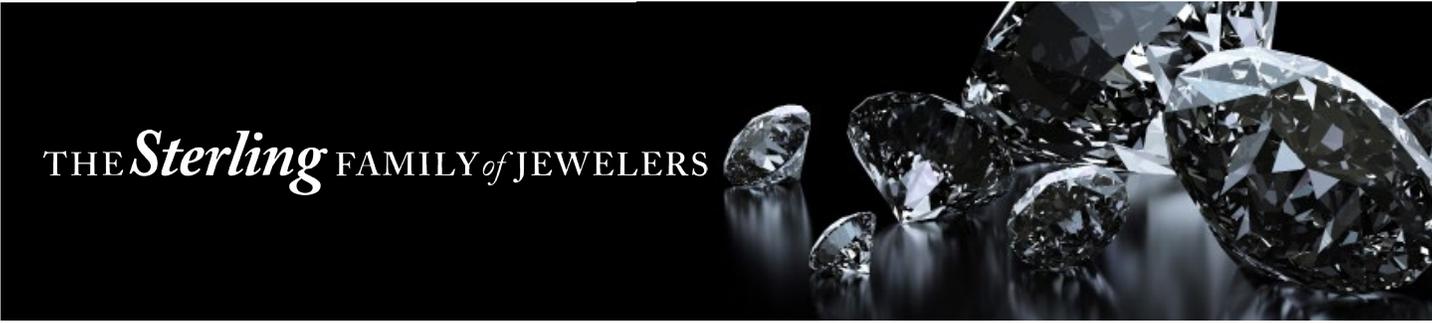
Lancôme needed to integrate content and commerce for its [Beauty Magazine](#) on a global level. The problem was while content was being created at the corporate level, it was too difficult for the different local regions to take advantage of it, with the hassles of having to translate and localize. In addition, content, such as blog articles, was being created by numerous external partners, and there was no easy way of managing that workflow. Now, Lancôme has both internal and external teams using the FirstSpirit Content Experience Hub to manage content for global distribution, ensuring that it is correctly translated and localized for its worldwide audiences. Lancôme was able to roll out this initiative to 12 countries in just 4 months with FirstSpirit!



Urban Decay already has a successful e-commerce site up and running based on Salesforce Commerce Cloud. But the challenge facing Urban Decay was that its e-commerce platform was not well-suited to supporting a global content marketing strategy. Rather than look for an all-in-one suite, Urban Decay opted to integrate the FirstSpirit CMS with Salesforce Commerce Cloud. The result is the newly launched [UD All Access](#) site that effectively doubles the size of the company's website.



Major Maine-based Outdoor Retailer – A leading multichannel merchant of quality outdoor gear and apparel chose FirstSpirit because it easily integrated with IBM WebSphere Commerce, homegrown applications, a product recommendation engine, an external digital asset management system AND multivariate testing platform. With FirstSpirit, this client was able to seamlessly connect all of its content and campaigns across channels to support its entire digital marketing strategy.



Sterling Jewelers is the largest specialty retail jeweler in the country, operating more than 1,500 jewelry stores throughout the nation. Nearly 50% of its sales are from e-commerce. With a highly sophisticated content release and approval process, its editors manage multiple brands and domains from a central location.

Conclusion

Today's consumers demand seamless, consistent brand experiences, and marketers are hard-pressed to create these experiences, capture consumer interest in the micro-moment and keep up with the pace of change in the digital ecosystem. Having the most agile, best-of-breed and interoperable technology will help you win the game, and decoupling the front end from the back end is the right approach. FirstSpirit helps you achieve faster time to market for all digital touchpoints, and it reduces digital complexity, allowing you to open up new content-driven revenue opportunities.

So why not make the evolutionary leap into the digital future? Survive digital Darwinism by turning your content into revenue with FirstSpirit CaaS. Want to see FirstSpirit for yourself?

SIGN UP FOR A DEMO TODAY

e-Spirit

About e-Spirit

e-Spirit unlocks the value of digital content and transforms the way companies communicate with their customers and employees. Using the industry-leading FirstSpirit™ content management system, organizations worldwide can connect all of their people, systems and applications to the centralized, real-time data, assets and information necessary to publish content with total accuracy and relevancy across all channels and devices. Our customers include global brands, including L'Oréal, Nintendo, Airbus, BASF, Bosch, Commerzbank, Geberit, Olympus and many more.

Visit us at www.e-Spirit.com.

