

A ResourceSpace guide

Why DAM is more than just file storage



ResourceSpace

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Files are a significant part of our working lives. Whether you're sourcing the perfect stock photograph for your website, writing a sales document to win business, or editing a promotional marketing video, we all make use of items which fall under the term 'digital assets'. With this comes the practicalities of storing such items... and then finding them again.

We've all spent significant amounts of time trawling through the internal system, across our desktops or in our email inboxes in search of the photograph, design file, PDF or text document that we require. Team members all save assets they're working on with different names, and in different locations, and finding the exact item you need, when you need it, can be a time-consuming struggle.

If you've ever attempted to put a manual system in place for file saving, this may have caused even more confusion. Likely to consist of a complex hierarchy of minutely named folders within folders, all staff members need to be instructed on exactly how to accurately title and save multiple versions, often leading to even more file chaos. Sharing and distributing files is little better; now where exactly in your email inbox is that important brochure template that the marketing department sent you a few days ago? Assuming it made it through due to the large file size that is.

The solution to these issues is Digital Asset Management software, or DAM. This is a central, web-based hub used for the uploading of assets such as photographs, videos, documents and other media. Once safely stored in this way, they can be categorised and sorted, and tagged with highly descriptive metadata. Access can be controlled, allowing you to review and protect sensitive items, whilst giving your team members one site for placing, locating, and sharing all the files that they need.

You may be under the misapprehension that a DAM solution simply does the same job as cloud-based file storage like Dropbox. In fact, Digital Asset Management software is a refined and feature-rich offering that can provide more opportunities and tools than just a place to host files.

Let's take a look at reasons why DAM is much more than just your average cloud-based file storage option.



Features that DAM software offers beyond cloud-based file hosting

Advanced search

The right DAM can provide a highly detailed and accurate search function, based on advanced metadata features. File storage may have a simple search tool, but will not give the comprehensive results and filtering capabilities of Digital Asset Management software

File conversion

Basic file storage is designed to allow you to upload your files, and then download them again in the same version. However, a DAM system will give the convenience of converting an original asset not only into different formats, but into varying sizes and qualities before downloading. This cuts out any additional processes of opening, altering and resizing the file in external editing software before it is ready for use.

Carefully control access

Digital assets are a valuable part of your business, and you need to retain control over how they are viewed, shared and used. With DAM software, you can review and approve every upload, as well as sorting users into groups according to the authority you wish to give them. You can ascribe different permissions for uploading, viewing, downloading and editing items, giving you greater levels of supervision than standard cloud storage, and protecting sensitive data.

Configure and integrate

Cloud-based file storage products are likely to be stand-alone entities with limited options for integration. Meanwhile, DAM can be integrated with a variety of your existing business systems, providing a cohesive and user-friendly workflow. ResourceSpace for example, allows those working within the museum and gallery industry to integrate TMS and EMu into their DAM system. As two of the most widely used tools in this sector, the ability to sync information from TMS and EMu to ResourceSpace has been invaluable to those who use them.

Can be hosted in the cloud or on-premise

With Digital Asset Management software, you'll typically have the option to host within the cloud or install as part of an on-premise solution. By their very nature, other file storing enterprise apps will only be able to offer cloud services, removing the choice that is otherwise available to you with DAM.

Track the use of assets

Using a Digital Asset Management solution will allow you to accurately monitor the use of your files so that you can access what is being viewed and used, by whom, and in what capacity. In this way, you'll also be able to observe the demand for certain types of asset across departments or sectors and note where greater working efficiencies can be made.

Provides brand cohesion

DAM is more than just a place to host your files, actually working to promote consistency across your brand and actively improving the way that assets are used. This type of comprehensive software actively encourages you to utilise the best possible files for your project, suggests a variety of alternative options and promotes the re-use of files, reducing the waste of time and resources associated with creating or buying new content. You can also ensure that only brand-approved logos or marketing material is used, and restrict out of date or irrelevant items to preserve brand integrity and enforce cohesive communications.





Improves workflow

The lifecycle of an asset cannot be tracked with cloud-based file storage. A DAM on the other hand can observe it from creation to end use, and preserve its variations, comments and approvals along the way. During and after production, you can trace the history of an item, view notes and make modifications to the file, ideal for the reuse and repurposing of existing content.

Can be branded

With Digital Asset Management, the area in which you upload, manage and share your assets will feel totally your own. The interface can be completely customised to match your company's unique branding, offering a cohesive experience for users and becoming an extension of your own company communications. In contrast, generic cloud storage will only have the standardised look and feel dictated by the provider.

Summary

Files are a mission critical element of your business, which need to be utilised by a wide-ranging group of people from a variety of locations. You've realised that you need a professional solution to combat file loss and time-consuming searches, allow remote access and to encourage asset reuse. At this point, you've probably concluded that storing your files with a digital vendor of either DAM or cloud-based file storage is the solution.

However, whilst it may be sufficient for personal or short-term use, you're likely to find that cloud-based file storage is low in features and opportunities to bring real change to the way you store and manage files. Compared with Digital Asset Management software, cloud enterprise apps are a basic way of simply holding files, without the extensive categorisation, permissions and advanced search functions of DAM.

Whilst Digital Asset Management software can be customised and modified to fit your brand, hosted as you choose and integrated with existing systems to improve workflow, cloud storage is generic in both appearance, hosting and user-experience, with few opportunities for development or integration. Within the central hub of DAM, you'll be able to comprehensively preview files and edit formats and sizes, in comparison to the simplistic upload and download approach of file storage.

DAM is a specialised, long-term business solution for professional operations where assets truly matter. It combines multiple applications and functions in one, such as online media archiving, syncing and categorising, file editing, sharing and large file transferring, controlled permissions and security, and advanced searching and filtering. Now doesn't that sound like so much more than just file storage?





About ResourceSpace

We hope that you've found this white paper on Digital Asset Management software and cloud-based file storage helpful. DAM software can free up resources and creativity in order to save your team time and energy, with a provider such as ResourceSpace offering features and possibilities far beyond the capabilities of cloud-based storage.

To explore DAM further, start your **free trial of ResourceSpace today** to see how much easier it is to manage and share your assets digitally, or to talk to our experts in more detail about the benefits of professional asset management, simply **get in touch**.



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