



How a Semantic Network is the Future of Digital Asset Management





Introduction

As a marketer what's the one thing that you wish you could do? What's that one talent that eludes you? It's not that you're not creative enough, or not a good enough writer, or the fact that you haven't mastered web design. None of that is holding you back because those are just tasks. Someone else can do them. You don't lack imagination, you lack the power to read minds.

So, the answer is easy. Stop at a psychic on your way to work in the morning. Too busy for that? I'll bet there are still 900 numbers you can call or perhaps psychics are online now? I personally keep one on staff. Finding a crystal ball with an apple on the back of it so she fits in wasn't easy though.

The ability to read minds might seem a farfetched solution to progress your career but it's not as implausible as you might realize. How does Google know what you're typing into its search box before you're halfway finished typing it? Google's algorithms work to make sure that the most relevant information possible comes up for every search possible. Of course, this is nothing new to you. What will come as news though is that the technology that Google uses isn't as elusive as it might sound.

An Everlasting Relationship

Google algorithms work because they understand context. In marketing the term 'contextual marketing' has moved beyond buzzword to a tried and true practice. Essentially, context in this capacity means understanding what the user wants. Think of Netflix suggesting movies and TV shows based on your viewing habits or Amazon displaying items that you might want to purchase. When you start typing into your Google search bar there are over 200 factors that Google is looking for to both autocomplete your search and pull up your rankings.

The same way that Google, Netflix and Amazon relates their data; the data both relates to each other and relates to the user, is the fundamentally what modern marketing is all about.

The Technology Behind It All

This whitepaper is not about how to take advantage of Google algorithms. This isn't about crystal balls and reading minds. But, it is about the technology behind it all and how you can improve not just your marketing but your entire organization. Let's take a step back and consider how you are managing your marketing assets right now.



That's Just the Way We Do It!

It's often said that the most dangerous phrase is "that's the way it's always been done." Technology sometimes remains stagnant longer than it should; but with so many technological advances, it's impossible to imagine a business unit not exploring ways to improve. Too often the issue is a reluctance to stray from the status quo, rather than the quality of options available.

It's hard to rationalize "investing" in software or other technology that is going to be obsolete before it's even implemented. Also, with so many options, who could possibly have the time to research not only products but also vendor reliability.

With this in mind, the ideal vendor should use the most advanced technology on the market. If their network is outdated, it won't be long before their product is left in the dust. In other words, don't pick a vendor -- pick a technology.

With SaaS solutions being so prevalent it's easy to focus on the interface while overlooking how the software actually works. When you're procuring software on the enterprise level, that becomes particularly problematic because the money and time spent for both the product and the implementation can run into the millions of dollars and take months to install, provide training to users, and go-live.

Technology is only as sound as the network that powers it. This is especially true within digital asset management (DAM). Gone are the days when DAM was simply used for file storage and retrieval. Today an enterprise-level DAM should be an all-encompassing marketing solution. From asset storage to omnichannel output and easy file sharing and editing capabilities in between, today's DAMs are powerful machines. The evolution has happened so quickly that many legacy companies have simply not been able to keep up, and try to add features with a network that cannot handle them.

What Makes a Network Powerful?

Let's start with a network that functions like a human brain in that it's able to relate things. You likely use the technology daily without realizing it. Every time you do a Google search, it uses relational data to ensure your search turns up useful information.

A semantic database works the same way. Anything that should relate, does relate. For example, one photo in many systems is simply a photo. That same photo in a semantic network is also the photographer, the photo rights, an article associated with the photos, the model who is in the photo, previous campaigns run using that photo, model, photographer's work, etc. Just like humans, the fact that it can correlate relationships makes it truly intelligent.

How does it work? A graph database allows you to interconnect relationships of nodes and arcs by patterning them correctly as opposed to an SQL code. An SQL code could not intuitively understand that a dog is not only a canine, but also has four legs and barks; Dog = Canine, Dog = four legs, Dog = barks would all be written into code, surely. But what if the dog also likes to chase squirrels and the squirrel runs from the dog? Then the coding would become more complex. A semantic network understands these relationships and can quickly adjust a relationship based on any scenario.

While the concept is somewhat intuitive thanks to Google, it's still new

to companies that in many cases have isolated departments who use different platforms and different assets, despite all working together to deliver the same message. By implementing a relational digital experience system for your omnichannel content management strategy, you are allowing your company to work intelligently and together across multiple departments and locations.

Why Your Network Should Think Like You

If humans are wired to work a certain way, it follows that our technology should work the same way since that's what we know. It makes working with the technology easier; our brains are the most advanced technology we know how to emulate.

The more intuitive a network is to use, the quicker training will be and the more efficient your processes will be, ultimately leading you to being able to use new platform sooner. The faster you are able to utilize it, the costs go down and your purchase will end up creating more ROI.

Benefits of a semantic network

Efficiency

What could all marketers use in greater quantities? Time. Marketing is a never-ending process. Whether it's planning, strategizing, creating or implementing, time is always lacking. The last thing a marketer needs is to get delayed by issues such as where a photo is stored, whether or not it's legal to use it or whether it's approved for the campaign.

With a semantic network, assets that relate to any campaign will be available in the repository and easily viewed by the right person, because the relational data will recognize the connections, eliminating huge hurdles that many marketing departments deal with often.

Product Management

A semantic digital asset management network not only functions as a DAM but also as a PIM, or product information management system.

Each product will be easily findable, trackable and usable because the metadata will ensure that any other product, customer, ad campaign, or anything else that might be relevant will display alongside it.

Project Management

Budgets weigh heavily on every project no matter how small or significant. Staying within budget is a fundamental part of a project manager's job. Imagine if your project managers could use the same tool to track their progress as the people involved in the project itself.

Since you can assign a person as an asset, a customer or team member, it's not only easier to track the progress of a project, but to track the people who are involved in the project as well.

At the end of the day, it's the people you're managing to get the project done, not the other way around.

With the relationship values a semantic network can assign and the solutions' ability to track expenses, staying on budget is simplified with the right DAM platform.

Not only does the digital asset management system allow you to more easily track budgets, but with the ease of finding the right asset for the right campaign the costs incurred per project will lessen significantly.

A Better Campaign

The fact that every available asset is in one place and easily located, tracked and intuitive makes for better campaigns. Marketing departments across the globe can streamline their efforts and connect broad campaigns with local efforts.

Headquarters can efficiently and easily review for approval. Project managers can assign tasks and track the progress in real time.

Mistakes can be fixed with a click of the button. There is no part of the campaign that the relationship coding won't address behind the scenes and show marketers in real time, which means consistent branding, easier campaign management, and better overall campaigns whether they are local or global.



Evaluating Your DAM Options

Any competitive edge that a marketer can get is intrinsically valuable in today's business climate. No matter what kind of marketing department you have, the ability to manage content is necessary. Exact functionality of your DAM will be determined by a lot of variables, but with a semantic network at its core, no matter what capabilities you require, your users will be using the most advanced technology available.

Now that you understand the power of a semantic network, take stock of what current solutions you use, what your procurement analysis has found and how a single source solution would solve an array of problems that you might not have even known you had. Now that you understand that the interface might just be disguising an outdated network, take a hard look at your potential vendors and make sure to ask whether or not their platform is run by a semantic network.

Take the crystal ball back and give your team of professional marketers the opportunity to really do their job well!



About censhare

censhare provides software marketing solutions to medium-sized and enterprise-level companies that have the need and see the value for an integrated, modular marketing and product system.

We're leading the way in making your marketing and product data work harder, with a relationship-driven approach to solving your content and marketing issues.

Find out more about us at www.censhare.com

