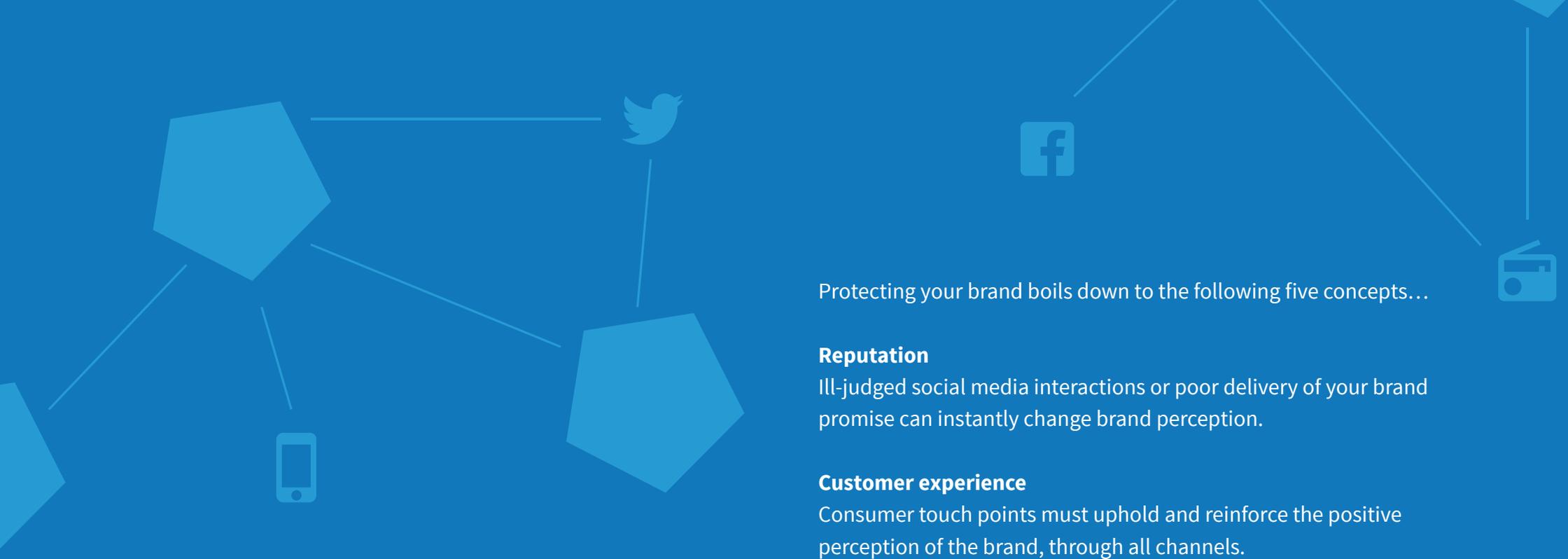censhare

Delivering a consistent brand experience

One point of truth for all brand management

Executive Summary

Your brand is your business' most valuable asset—but it's an asset that you never wholly own. It's formed by customer interactions and reputation, with your role as a marketer being to curate this identity. Modern marketing and the prominence of social media has changed the advertising landscape so dramatically over the last decade, the importance of safeguarding your brand has never been more vital, while the control you have over it has never been less.

Protecting your brand boils down to the following five concepts…

Reputation
Ill-judged social media interactions or poor delivery of your brand promise can instantly change brand perception.

Customer experience
Consumer touch points must uphold and reinforce the positive perception of the brand, through all channels.
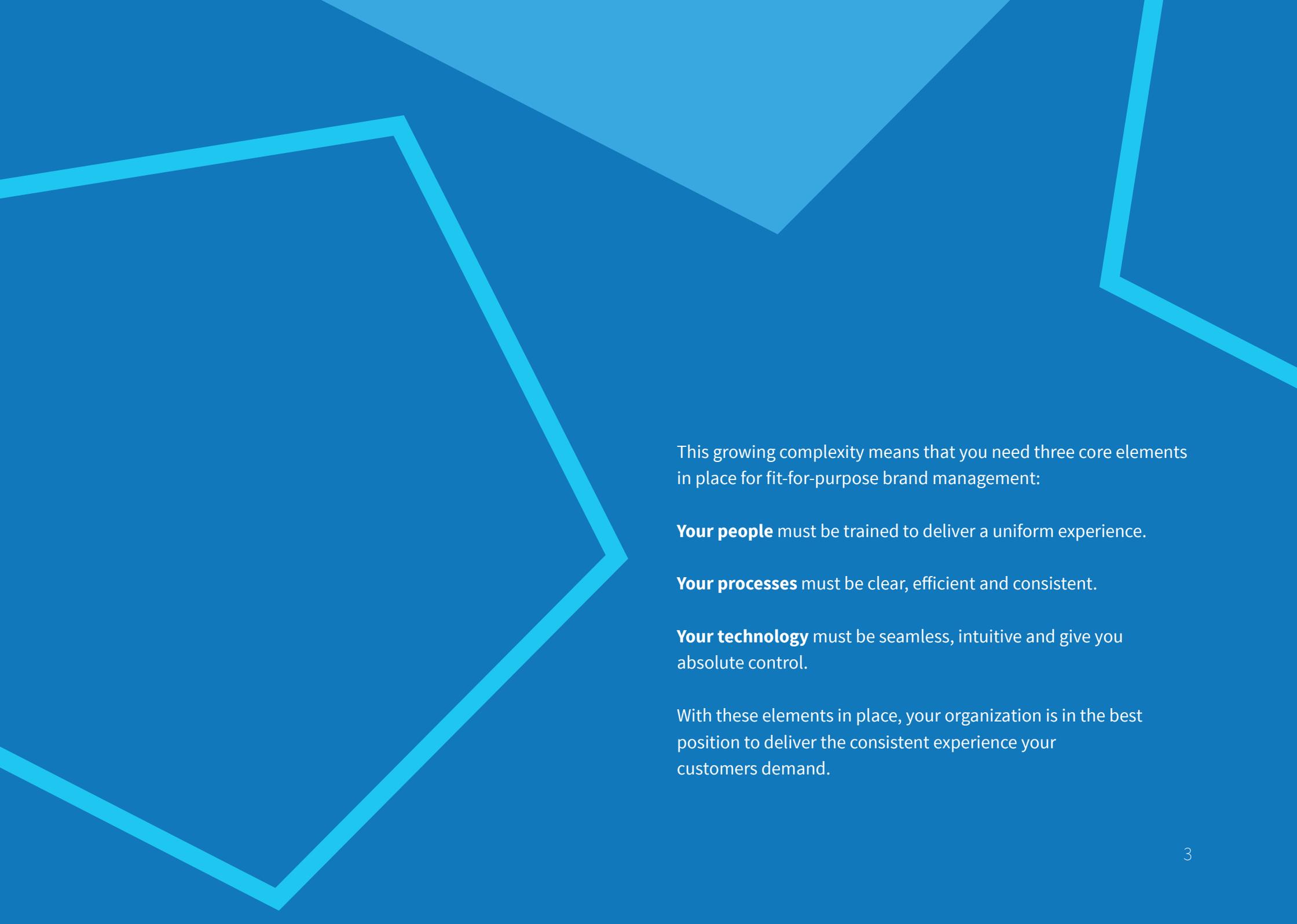
Quality
The quality of products and services must meet brand expectations and mirror your communication.

Consistency
Every employee's a communicator in this digital world, making a consistent brand experience difficult.

Control
Brand management must support sales, marketing, and customer service, making curation of the brand easier to administrate.

This growing complexity means that you need three core elements in place for fit-for-purpose brand management:

Your people must be trained to deliver a uniform experience.

Your processes must be clear, efficient and consistent.

Your technology must be seamless, intuitive and give you absolute control.

With these elements in place, your organization is in the best position to deliver the consistent experience your customers demand.

Achieving consistent brand management

Brand isn't just an administrative exercise—it's the bedrock of your organization's communication strategy and marketing efforts. If your brand is going to work across all audiences and markets, it needs to be consistent. And that means that your processes need to be completely focused on delivering equal experience to all stakeholders.

But maintaining this consistency comes with challenges of its own, particularly around volume—you need to be delivering 100% quality everywhere, all the time.

That's because it's not just about company straplines, color palettes, or business cards. It's not even solely about customer interactions.

It's the font on your product packaging

It's the style and tone of your tweets on Twitter

It's the photography and design imagery you use on your website

It's the paper your hard-copy collateral is printed on

It's the quality and simplicity of your online experience

It's the wording of the CEO's LinkedIn profile

It's how your helpdesk staff answer the phone

It's how the consumer feels when you send them an email

It's about how strong an advocate people are of your products services.

Brand is (and must be) **EVERYWHERE**.

You need control

Consistency in the brand experience is key. Multiple communication channels and assets mean it's imperative to make control of your brand watertight.

Your brand must:

- Have consistency across all channels, audiences, and assets.

- Focus on the right customers, markets, and demographic groups.

- Provide the highest level of quality when it comes to brand experience.

- Be easy to implement, uphold, and deliver.

- Match the quality of the products or services you provide.

So how do you deliver brand management nirvana and remove its inherent challenges for your organization?

The answer lies in training your people, focusing your processes and integrating your tech.

Your people need the training and tools to curate the brand; your processes need to support effective brand management; and your technology needs to be more integrated and efficient. With all three elements in place, you'll know your brand is being upheld to the highest possible standards of consistency.

This way, brand management takes care of itself, with marketing able to focus on creating value-adding campaigns and communications.

Employee brand engagement and why it's vital for success

Your employees are the key to your success. Not just in their individual roles, but also as guardians of your brand—because in the digital age everyone's a gatekeeper. This means that they need to fully understand the impact of how they communicate with customers.

Controlling employee brand delivery

89% of marketers depend on customer experience to be their primary differentiator—so your people must be engaged in upholding your brand effectively. Every employee is a curator of the brand, and customer satisfaction can be deeply affected if your people don't deliver the experience your customers want.

Digital and social media allow incredibly fast, direct interactions with customers, suppliers, and prospects. Every tweet, post, and email response can affect your reputation, making the brand experience an evolving, real-time interaction between you and all stakeholders—so there's a clear need to guide your people and their behavior.

Calling a customer helpline is one key example of the challenge. Each individual member of the help desk team is a brand representative, and the relationship they build has two potential outcomes for your customer experience.

The customer service operative either:

- Makes the customer happy and enhances their advocacy of the brand.

- Lets the customer down and ruins the relationship built with the company.

The frontline of customer experience isn't just the helpdesk call center. Customer service is available through an ever-increasing number of social media channels and online networks—and every touchpoint is a potential marketing opportunity.

Marketing's job is to ensure that each chance to reinforce your brand position isn't lost or wasted. A poor brand experience isn't just an administrative hiccup; it can reduce customer trust, impact on buying choices, and decrease your advocacy from existing customers—impacting your bottom line.

What's needed is a pin-sharp focus on employees delivering the best possible brand experience.

Ten key challenges to effective brand management

Building your brand isn't a one-off process: beyond setting out its parameters, you need to make sure it runs smoothly well after the launch. To make it a long-term success, you need to be prepared to overcome a number of key challenges. These can include:

Getting employees on side
Your staff is the front line of customer experience. As brand ambassadors, your people must be engaged, trained, and on-side.

Low corporate trust
Trust of the brand team can be low, putting a wall between you and the rest of the business. That creates a barrier to messaging and exhausts goodwill around upholding it.

Brand on a budget

Your budget for brand activity will have fiscal limitations, restricting your ability to control your multiple channels and outputs.

The evolution of media

The digital age means rethinking the media channels and PR networks used to get brand messaging out to your audiences.

Social media

Social channels create advocates, and give you a forum to promote your brand, and also provide easy platforms for critics and negative comments.

Managing shifting priorities

Change is inevitable in your chosen markets and the business' underlying strategy, but you need to come out of the change management process leaner and fitter.

Keeping the brand fresh

Over time, brands become tired—so reinvention is essential but also costly to the consistency you've built up.

Staying relevant

A brand needs to be timely and relevant to stand out, while globalization means all content must be localized effectively.

Managing complex technologies

The average marketer uses 21 or more different martech solutions—and that creates complex data and workflows that can lead to inefficiencies and confusion.

A scalable solution

allow your marketing systems to grow with the business, with no limits to the numbers of users, workflows, iterations or variants per asset.

With a clear brand strategy—and processes in place to support it—it's possible to leap over these common hurdles and meet your various audiences' demanding expectations head-on.

Evolving the most efficient brand management processes

With the right brand ideology and infrastructure in place, you'll start seeing the **positive impact on your engagement, customer experience, and sales figures.**

Establishing the processes

It's your people who uphold the brand, but they can't do this effectively without the right guidance and tools.

The key is to provide the structure they need, and the right level of access to the assets, data, and solutions they require:

Clear brand usage guides

Clearly set out the exact specifications of every element of the brand. Show how to apply your logos, colors, and fonts. Give advice on tone of voice and customer interactions.

Guidelines for print and digital

Produce easily digestible content branding guidelines to ensure your marketing collateral is always correct.

Consistent territory marketing

Ensure local marketing departments work closely with the central strategy, guaranteeing territory-specific teams align activity closely with the core brand.

A central repository for all brand asset

The number of brand-related files, assets, and data sources is growing in the New Age of Communication. Centralize all brand assets and guidelines with simple and quick access.

By providing clear definitions for all aspects of your brand and centralizing your assets, you facilitate simpler processes and a holistic approach to brand management that the whole organization can buy into.

The impact of systemized brand management

Brand management can be operationalized and broken down into the constituent elements that will bring about success. Complexity kills innovation; by systematizing your processes, procedures, and workflows, you drive productivity.

Unify your collaboration
Providing easier ways for internal and external collaboration is key to reducing branding errors and maximizing a positive brand experience. With centralized systems and processes, your core teams are more productive, and working with external contractors and freelancers becomes simpler. Rule-based operations ensure the output follows the brand and meets requirements the first time.

Centralize access and execution
A brand portal is key to this centralized approach, giving authorized users files, templates, and assets that meet your brand specifications.

A portal establishes order in the management of branding content. You bring reliability to asset delivery and give every authorized stakeholder 24/7 access to the portal from anywhere, at any time. Brand is no longer a hurdle to creativity and productivity, but becomes a seamless and automated element to all of your marketing and communication efforts.

Integrate your brand management with your digital experience
A digital experience platform is integral to delivering your brand. A centralized, software-driven system puts brand management at the heart of your marketing collateral's functionality, ideology and delivery.

An integrated marketing solution reduces the administration workload, provides increased connectivity with the central brand strategy, and helps your people meet the highest standard of brand experience.

One point of truth for brand management

For brand to become a strong foundation for all marketing, you need to focus on the most efficient drivers of its success. This means beginning with the three core elements of effective brand experience.

Engagement
Your values and your brand strategy must be a basic part of your employees' on-going training and guidance.

Planning
A consolidated strategy needs to be the key driver for your processes, broken into the core elements to systemize brand management operation.

Centralization
A single digital experience platform is crucial making delivery of your brand management more efficient and agile.

By providing clear definitions for all aspects of your brand and centralizing your assets, you facilitate simpler processes and a holistic approach to brand management that the whole organization can buy into.

Agility through integrated brand management

An integrated brand management system, as one part of a wider digital experience solution, is the catalyst for **delivering one point of truth for all your branding.**

A watertight semantic information structure helps to pull together your data streams, brand templates, and marketing workflows into one seamless information point. With easy, regulated online access to your brand portal and clear workflows, the hard graft is taken out of controlling your brand.

Every element of your marketing—whether it's images, texts, layouts, or templates—can be edited centrally and updated automatically with the relevant variants and iterations.

With brand management driven by a digital experience platform, you get:

A single point of truth for branding
your centralized system and brand portal combine to deliver a sole repository for every brand-related asset and template.

Consistency and transparency
the way brand is used, viewed and perceived is the same across all channels and customer-facing staff.

Control over external contractors
contractors and suppliers have clear brand guidance and specific project briefs for every externally created asset.

Reduction of brand abuse
training, a simple UI, and easy access to brand collateral means your people are on-tone, whatever the interaction.

Efficient, stable processes
workflows are clear, collaboration can be achieved, and there's real transparency of the marketing process.

Process reliability and cost reduction
damaging brand mistakes are avoided and marketing is delivered at a reduced cost, and to a higher quality.

One single point of truth

Once your brand management becomes an intrinsic function of an integrated marketing solution, supported by an informed and engaged workforce, it'll curate itself. The system becomes the brand guardian and does this job for you—providing the templates, assets, and guidelines your stakeholders need, freeing time to focus on the creation of innovative campaigns.

With one point of truth for your brand management, brand is no longer a problem to overcome, but a hugely powerful asset to deploy.

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**