

# The DXP Guide

## Discover AI-Ready Platforms to Accelerate Execution and Measurable Growth

### STRATEGIC GUIDANCE FOR REPLATFORMING IN AN AI-DRIVEN WORLD

**Choosing a DXP or CMS isn't about comparing feature lists or chasing the latest technology trend. It's about selecting a platform that supports how your organization needs to operate, including how fast you need to move, how much autonomy your teams require, and how you plan to grow.**

Marketing leaders today face mounting pressure to deliver more with fewer resources. They're launching faster, proving performance, and integrating AI into everyday workflows.

At the same time, the platform landscape has shifted. What were once content management systems are evolving into marketing operating systems that support creation, experimentation, personalization, optimization, and increasingly, AI-driven decision-making.

However, not all platforms play the same role. Some embed AI directly into marketing workflows. Others are designed to integrate AI through composable architectures.

Some platforms prioritize speed and simplicity, helping teams move quickly without the overhead of complex orchestration.

Each approach can be right when chosen intentionally.

When evaluating a replatform project, the goal is always strategy first, technology second. It's not about the best platform. It's about choosing the one that helps your teams move faster, integrate smarter, and deliver tangible growth now and over the next five years.

**For organizations preparing to replatform today, one requirement now stands above the rest: AI readiness.**

# AI-Readiness

For mid-market and enterprise organizations planning a replatform, AI readiness is a strategic priority.

Simply connecting a platform to an LLM doesn't address how marketing actually works. LLMs can generate outputs, but they don't manage workflows, apply governance, orchestrate data, or continuously optimize experiences on their own.

The platforms best positioned for the next five years have built-in or deeply integrated AI capabilities that support real marketing workflows, from content creation and experimentation to personalization, optimization, and insight generation.

That doesn't mean every platform should lead with AI in the same way. It does, however, mean every replatforming decision should be made with a clear understanding of a platform's AI posture: whether intelligence is native, enabled through architecture, or intentionally secondary to speed and simplicity.



## PLATFORM EVALUATION

### How to use this guide

This guide focuses specifically on mid-market to enterprise DXP and CMS platforms, where replatforming is a strategic decision with long-term operational consequences.

Rather than ranking winners or repeating analyst grids, we draw on the experience of Verndale's certified architects and platform specialists who have implemented and evolved these systems across industries.

Their insights reflect how modern teams actually operate, including:

- How platforms enable speed, scale, and operational autonomy
- Where AI accelerates outcomes and where it doesn't
- When complexity creates value, and when it slows teams down

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# Platform Spotlight



**Optimizely is an experimentation-first DXP that brings CMS, experimentation, and customer data together in a unified SaaS platform built for marketing velocity and measurable outcomes.**

Optimizely's SaaS CMS is augmented by Opal, its embedded agentic AI, alongside a connected CDP, CMP, and DAM. Together, these capabilities enable teams to plan, create, experiment, personalize, and optimize in one continuous workflow without stitching together tools.

## STRENGTHS



Built-in agentic AI that powers experimentation, personalization, and continuous optimization across marketing workflows



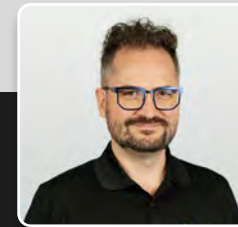
Transparent, flexible pricing that lets teams start small and expand as experimentation and AI maturity grow



Experimentation-first by design, enabling teams to test, learn, and optimize faster as part of everyday execution

## WHEN TO CHOOSE

Best suited for marketing-led enterprises that prioritize agentic AI, experimentation, personalization, and connected content operations, and want those capabilities unified in a single SaaS environment.



## Doug Yoder

Technical Director  
Optimizely MVP

*"Optimizely excels at connecting content, experimentation, and customer data across the marketing lifecycle, redefining what a modern martech stack can be. Its CMS acts as a growth engine, augmented by AI that unites content, experimentation, personalization, and commerce into one adaptive ecosystem.*

*Another plus is that organizations can start small—often with CMS, Commerce, or Experimentation—and expand seamlessly into the full DXP as their digital maturity grows. With Opal AI powering continuous optimization and integrated data guiding every decision, Optimizely enables leaders to amplify strategy, execution, and performance within one intelligent, evolving platform."*

# Platform Spotlight



Sitecore is an enterprise-grade DXP with AI agents that help power content management, personalization, and customer data in a mature SaaS, headless offering.

With SitecoreAI, Sitecore delivers a composable SaaS platform with embedded agentic AI, enabling teams to modernize legacy environments while maintaining enterprise-grade control, scalability, and depth.

## STRENGTHS



Built-in agentic AI powers content, search, and personalization, while maintaining enterprise-grade governance and performance



Comprehensive content and asset management through Content Hub, combining CMS, CMP, and DAM functionality for centralized governance



Advanced composable architecture with a robust ecosystem of components and integrations

## WHEN TO CHOOSE

Best suited for mid-to-large enterprises in regulated or complex industries that require AI-driven personalization, strong governance, and enterprise-grade security. Ideal for organizations modernizing legacy Sitecore environments with a SaaS-based, composable architecture.



## Richard Cabral

Principal Platform Architect  
Sitecore MVP

*"SitecoreAI's CMS is among the most established SaaS options. We recommend it for clients who want lower infrastructure burden and faster innovation cycles."*

*"Its composable architecture gives teams the flexibility to scale and integrate without compromising governance or performance. Additionally, SitecoreAI's CMS page design interface remains one of the most powerful visual page composition editors in the enterprise CMS market."*

# Platform Spotlight



**Webflow is a visual-first CMS that enables marketing teams to design, launch, and iterate web experiences without heavy developer dependency.**

Webflow has carved out a new category as a Website Experience Platform (WXP), prioritizing speed, autonomy, and creative control for teams that need to move fast without traditional CMS overhead.

## STRENGTHS



Visual-first tools that democratize web development, blending the simplicity of low-code/no-code tools with a flexible, composable architecture



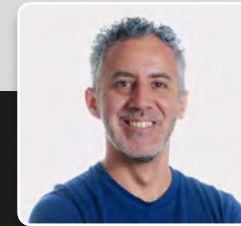
Rapid iteration for marketing sites, with built-in automation that reduces time spent in content production



Optimized for rapid execution and creative control without the operational overhead of enterprise DXP platforms

## WHEN TO CHOOSE

Best suited for design-led teams that prioritize speed and autonomy, and aim to reduce developer bottlenecks. Webflow offers brands a way to build agile web experiences without the technical overhead typically associated with traditional systems.



## Paulo Guerra

Associate Architect

*"Webflow empowers marketers to quickly design and launch high-performing digital experiences with greater speed and autonomy."*

*It combines creative flexibility with enterprise-grade scalability through features like component libraries, code components, and built-in testing. And by giving teams a shared visual environment, Webflow keeps design and engineering aligned, helping ambitious teams move fast, from campaign microsites to complex enterprise ecosystems, with agility and control."*

# Platform Spotlight

## Contentstack

**Contentstack is a composable, headless CMS designed to orchestrate content and experiences across complex enterprise ecosystems.**

Its API-first foundation gives teams the flexibility to integrate AI services, data platforms, and delivery channels as part of a scalable, global architecture.

### WHEN TO CHOOSE

Best suited for large, digitally mature enterprises that prioritize composability, scalability, and deep integration across systems. Ideal for teams orchestrating global content and experiences with strong internal development or managed services support.

### STRENGTHS



Orchestration-first approach, bringing content, data, and delivery together in one seamless flow



Enterprise-grade performance engineered for scalability and reliability across brands, regions, channels, and audiences



Supports AI-driven orchestration through composable, integration-first architecture



## Deepthi Katta

Technical Director

*"In 2025, Contentstack was coined as visionary in the DXP space and rightly so, as the platform continues to evolve to be future ready."*

*Founded as a headless CMS gives Contentstack a significant advantage compared to other platforms that are only now pivoting towards SaaS. With its recent acquisition of Lytics and Agent OS on its roadmap, Contentstack is expanding beyond headless CMS into AI-driven orchestration. Lytics adds customer data intelligence to its composable architecture, setting a new standard for DXP."*

# Platform Spotlight



**Adobe Experience Manager (AEM) is an enterprise-grade DXP designed for global organizations that require AI-driven scale, governance, and consistency across digital experiences.**

As part of the Adobe Experience Cloud, AEM embeds AI directly into content creation, personalization, and optimization workflows, which enables marketers to move faster while maintaining brand integrity, compliance, and operational control across regions and teams.

## STRENGTHS



Built-in AI powers experience generation, personalization, and optimization within Adobe's governed ecosystem



Deep integration across content, personalization, and analytics for unified, insight-driven experiences



Continuous innovation in agentic AI and automation for enterprise marketing teams

## WHEN TO CHOOSE

Best suited for global, multi-brand enterprises that require unified governance, scalable localization, and AI-driven personalization across channels. AEM is ideal when consistency, compliance, and ecosystem integration matter more than speed alone.



## Carlos Araujo

Director, Technology

*"AEM gives marketers true visual page composition editors (WYSIWYG control), with drag-and-drop authoring, inline editing, and accurate previews, all built on mature Core Components and a policy-driven Style System that keeps brands consistent.*

*Its cloud-native scale and new Agentic AI capabilities, like Experience Generation 2.0 and Site Optimizer, bring remarkable speed and governance to enterprise content programs."*

# Platform Spotlight

## Acquia

**Acquia brings the flexibility of Drupal to enterprise-scale digital ecosystems, combining open-source freedom with structured governance and cloud reliability.**

Its open architecture allows organizations to integrate AI services and data platforms as part of a governed, enterprise-grade ecosystem.

### STRENGTHS



Centralized governance across multiple properties and digital experiences



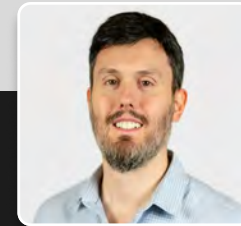
AI-assisted tools that support content strategy and SEO optimization



Backed by a strong open-source community that fuels extensibility and continuous innovation

### WHEN TO CHOOSE

Best suited for enterprises that value open-source flexibility and require developers to customize and govern complex digital ecosystems. Ideal when control, extensibility, and long-term adaptability matter more than turnkey AI-native features.



## Josh Raymond

Technical Architect

*"Acquia takes the power of Drupal CMS and electrifies it into an enterprise-grade DXP. It gives teams the speed, security, and flexibility they need to build and scale websites quickly, without losing control."*

*What makes it stand out is how it blends open-source freedom with enterprise reliability. You get the power and flexibility of Drupal, but with the cloud infrastructure and tools to personalize, optimize, and deliver across every channel, all in one place."*

# Platform Spotlight



**Contentful is a composable, API-first CMS built for developer-led organizations that require structure, governance, and long-term scalability.**

Its cloud-native foundation enables teams to centralize content models and integrate AI services, data platforms, and front-end frameworks across channels.

## STRENGTHS



Cloud-first, API-driven foundation with robust developer tooling



Deep ecosystem of integrations that support AI services, data platforms, and composable workflows



Proven governance and performance for complex, multi-brand digital environments

## WHEN TO CHOOSE

Best suited for developer-led organizations that prioritize customization, control, and structured content governance. Ideal for enterprises investing in composable architecture to power connected, omnichannel experiences.



## Sandy Foley

Senior Technical Architect

*"Contentful is a reliable choice for organizations that value structure, governance, and long-term scalability. Its content model supports omnichannel delivery while keeping marketing and development in sync. It's ideal for teams ready to centralize content operations across multiple brands or regions without losing control over content governance, brand standards, and delivery workflows."*

# Platform Spotlight



**WordPress VIP delivers an enterprise-grade version of WordPress, pairing familiar editorial workflows with the scalability, security, and operational rigor required by global brands.**

Built on the world's most widely used CMS foundation, it provides a stable, content-focused platform with optional headless capabilities for more modern digital architectures.

## STRENGTHS



Familiar, collaborative editing tools with optional headless delivery



Optimized hosting and built-in caching designed to support massive traffic spikes



Role-based controls, SOC 2 compliance, automatic code review, and hardened infrastructure

## WHEN TO CHOOSE

Best suited for content-heavy enterprises, publishers, and regulated industries that prioritize editorial speed, stability, and risk management. Ideal when simplicity and scalability matter more than advanced composability or AI-native orchestration.



## Sebastián Barre

Lead Engineer, Front End

*"WordPress continues to lead as an open-source CMS, empowering developers to deliver unique client solutions with its vast library of themes and plugins."*

*Additionally, marketing teams can publish and iterate quickly with its simple real-time editing functionality, while WordPress' optional headless capabilities can support more advanced digital architectures when needed."*

# Quick Comparative Insights

## IF YOU'RE A GLOBAL ENTERPRISE



Consider **Sitecore** or **Adobe** for enterprise scale, governance, and deeply embedded AI-driven personalization.

## IF YOU'RE MARKETING-LED AND EXPERIMENTATION-DRIVEN



Look at **Optimizely** for AI-powered experimentation and optimization, or **Webflow** for design-first agility and speed.

## IF YOU'RE PRIORITIZING HEADLESS & COMPOSABILITY



Choose **Contentstack** for orchestration and scalability, or **Contentful** for build flexibility within a composable, AI-ready architecture.

## IF YOU WANT OPEN-SOURCE FLEXIBILITY



**Acquia** offers enterprise-grade governance built on Drupal, with flexibility to integrate AI across the stack.

## IF YOU WANT EDITORIAL SPEED WITH MANAGED SIMPLICITY



**WordPress VIP** delivers on this and is ideal when simplicity and stability matter more than advanced AI orchestration.



## Why Choosing the Right Platform Matters

Your platform decisions will shape how marketing works day-to-day. It's about how the technology enables teams to move faster, operate with autonomy, and deliver measurable outcomes.

As AI continues to quickly progress and accelerate content creation, experimentation, and personalization, it's no longer enough to choose a platform that can simply connect to an LLM. Replatforming today requires systems with built-in or deeply embedded AI that support real marketing workflows and long-term adaptability.

**Every organization has unique priorities, which is why the right platform doesn't just support what you're doing now. It also sets you up for how marketing will operate next.**

# How Verndale Helps



At Verndale, we guide mid-market and enterprise organizations to make platform decisions that drive measurable impact, not just technical progress. Our role is to ensure your DXP or CMS choice accelerates execution, supports AI-enabled workflows, and sets you up for long-term growth.

## Preparing to Replatform?

Our complimentary DXP strategy workshop helps you assess your options and choose with confidence.

## What We Assess

- How your teams operate today
- Where AI can (and should) be embedded into workflows
- Which platforms best support speed, autonomy, and long-term success

[SCHEDULE MY COMPLIMENTARY DXP EVALUATION](#)

## STRATEGIC EXPERTISE



**Extensive & Practical Experience:** We've implemented and optimized all of the platforms spotlighted in this guide across industries, helping organizations balance velocity, governance, and scalability.



**Scenario-Based Recommendations:** Rather than forcing a "best platform" answer, we align platform capabilities to your operating model, team structure, and business goals, including AI readiness and future adaptability.



**Partnership for Growth:** Our work doesn't end at selection. We help you design, build, and evolve digital ecosystems that reduce friction, support continuous optimization, and deliver measurable outcomes over time.

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