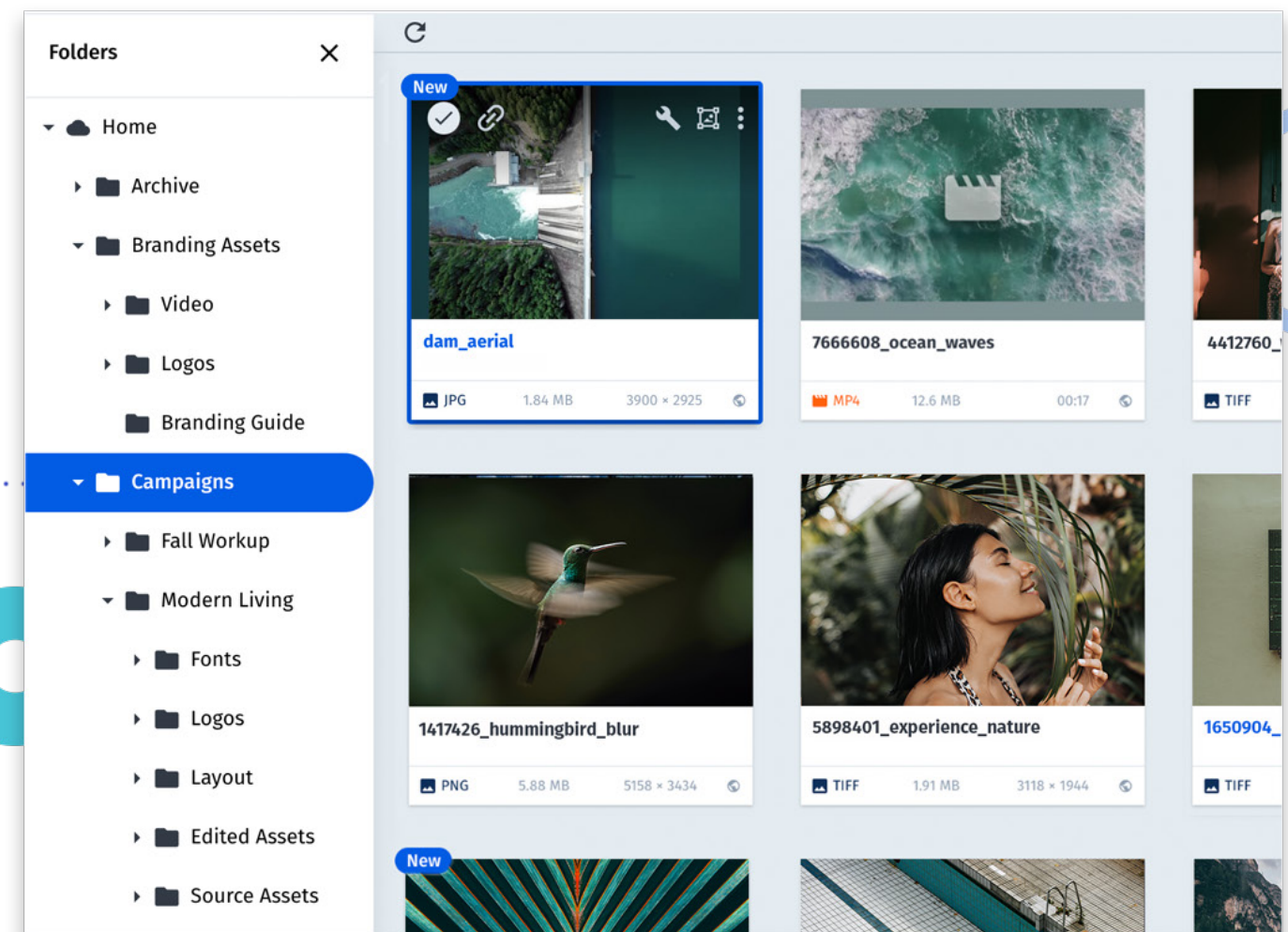
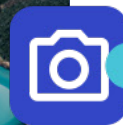


The DAM Practitioner's Playbook

Adopting a digital-first approach in intelligent automation, integration and sourcing for video, imagery, and other forms of visual media.

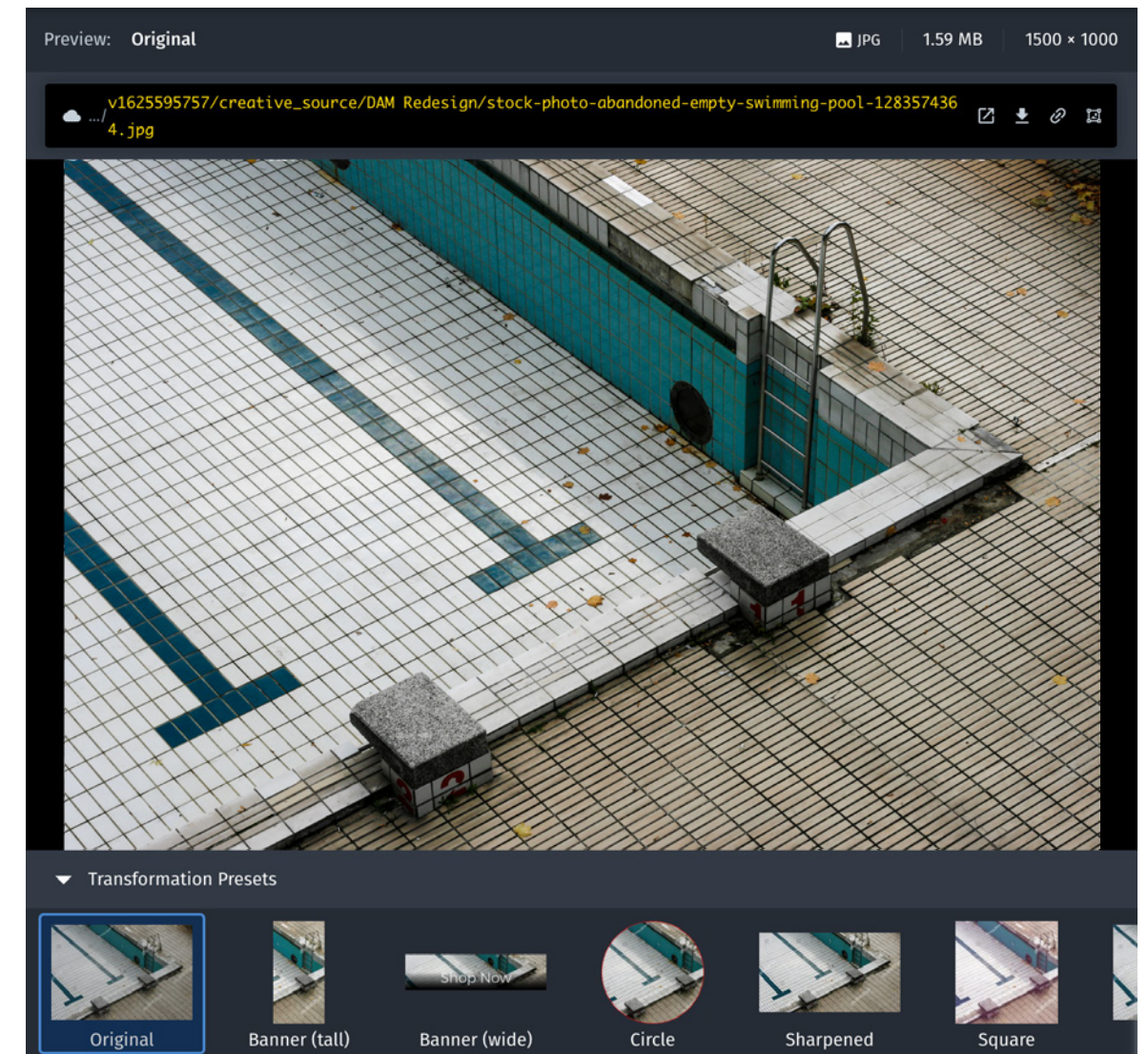


Introduction

In today's digital-first economy, the audience expects real-time interactions, immersive experiences, and personalized journeys. As usage of mobile devices keeps rising, customer reviews, a key basis for brands' online reputation, become more important, intensifying demands for a more connected virtual journey.

Digital-first Digital Asset Management solutions (DAMs for short) are leading the way with the most critical component of those experiences—content. However, to fulfill the evolving customer expectations, DAMs must do the following:

- Adopt intelligent automation, compressing workflows with AI to eliminate low-value and redundant tasks.
- Ensure a seamless integration with other business systems, leading to successful adoptions across customer-experience teams.
- Provide a single source of truth for video, imagery, and other forms of visual media.
- Offer flexibility and future proofing by embracing ongoing AI innovations along with the latest technologies and file formats.
- This playbook encompasses insights from the industry's top experts in digital-first DAM. Whether you're implementing your first DAM or upgrading an existing one, the tips, tricks, and best practices shared by those luminaries are well worth noting.



Focus of Digital-First DAMs

SESSION 01

Intelligent Automation

As a result of intelligent automation, which effectively streamlines workflows and reduces recurrent tasks, teams can focus on strategic operations that help stay ahead of competition and deliver the right content to the right audience at the right time.

SESSION 03

Adoption by All Customer-Experience Teams

Oftentimes, brands overlook the most critical piece of a new platform—its users. To achieve successful adoption, you must secure internal buy-in early on, reduce manual workflows, and prioritize user experience.

SESSION 02

Integrations With Other Business Systems

A digital-first DAM synchronizes with the existing tech stack. Failure to integrate with your key business systems, not only would your DAM's ROI dip, but adoption would also suffer, leading to delays in content delivery, functional silos, and connections with your audience will be lost.

SESSION 04

Future Proofing

While focusing on delivering personalized and captivating digital experiences for their audience, brands must also consider ways to accommodate upcoming changes in content needs that result from the advent of new technologies and other innovations.

SESSION 05

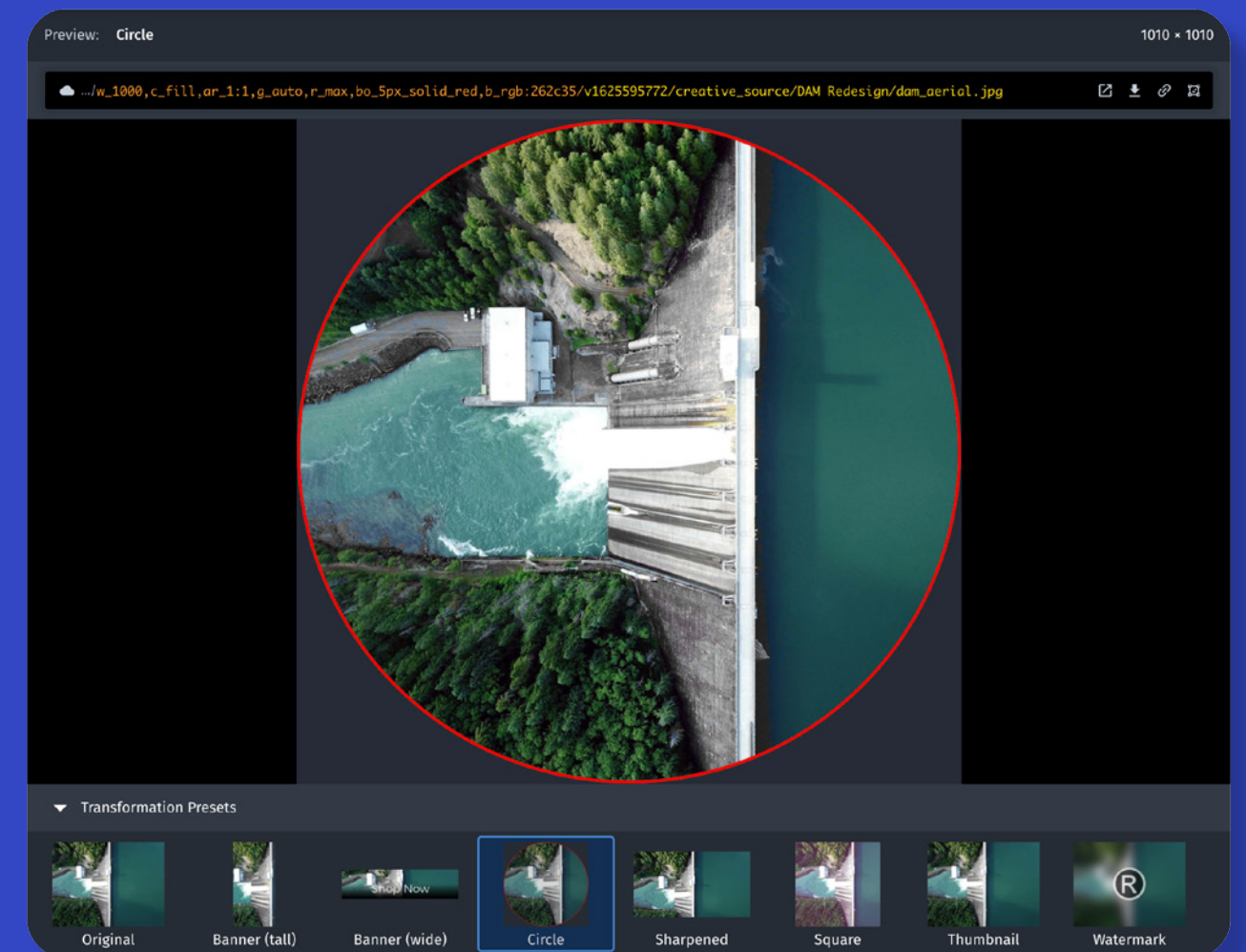
Flexibility

Customization and versatility are paramount. With effective add-ons and tailoring options, digital-first DAMs offer endless opportunities for businesses.

○ SESSION 01

Intelligent Automation

○ SESSION 02



SESSION 01 Q & A

Intelligent Automation



Q: What role do DAMs play in speeding up the creation and adoption of the massive amount of content required for all channels?



Russ Barr

Managing Director of DAM, Clouduary

A: To scale the creative operations and then the marketing operations, have a DAM system that's not just a traditional repository. You need something beyond a dumping ground for assets—**something that's proactive, giving you the assistance you need to generate content and then manage, categorize, and distribute it.**



John Horodyski

DAM and Metadata Expert

A: Enforcing strong metadata and workflow standards in a DAM makes all the difference when implementing your MarTech stack. Your DAM is the single repository for all the assets built by marketing and creative services. Being able to efficiently track, find, and distribute those assets makes all the difference in the day-to-day operations, yielding experience-driven marketing opportunities for your brand. **A good marketing initiative based on experience begins with your data flowing through your DAM.**



Lori Meyers

Digital Assets Manager, Monumental Sports and Entertainment

A: We're more efficient now than ever before because of all the information we can gather at the front end. I would say that 90% of our data is new creative assets from our design department. And that makes it really important for us to maintain the metadata, which helps users find the right assets quickly.

What has helped us become more efficient is enabling users to make their own light boxes—similar to a personalized folder—and add in a specific group of assets. Users don't have to download them and then upload them to an email. They can just share a quick link, and **it really speeds things along.** No more waiting for file uploads or downloads.



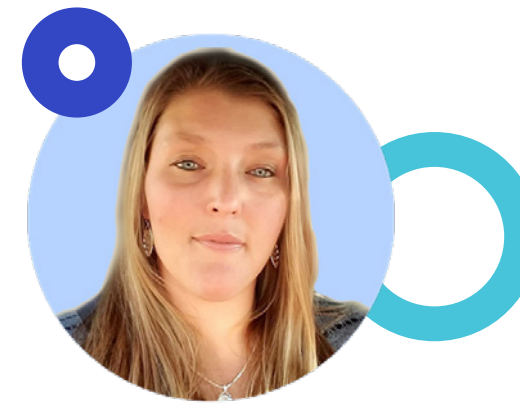
Q: What key DAM features would help brands compress workflows and automate repetitive tasks?



Russ Barr
Managing Director of DAM, Cloudinary

A: Automatically generating transformed files is one of the big-ticket features. It's the one we all hope will help us scale quickly. It doesn't do any good to create a huge amount of transformations and direct derivative files if you can't trust the system, or if the system doesn't have the capabilities to be sophisticated with what it's creating. **You have to go a step further and use AI to make sure that you're intelligently automating the process.**

For example, with product imagery and models, you need to make sure that whatever is critical for a specific shot is part of the cropped image. If you have to do that manually, you're not automated enough. With AI, you can tell it to look for a person or specific people or a specific garment. **It's about fine-tuning the process and then turbo-charging it.**



Jennifer Sunday
Global Technology Manager of DAM, Stanley Black & Decker

A: The first feature is data identifiers for assets that look the same during the ingestion process. **If you have an enormous amount of assets in your system and hundreds coming in daily, you need the ability to flag them and reduce their duplication in the system.** Another key feature is being able to identify and differentiate between two types of data maintenance. That would be incredibly efficient.



Q: How will AI evolve to become even more useful for DAM users?



Russ Barr

Managing Director of DAM, Clouinary

A: AI gives you endless scalability and the ability to process a massive amount of data. If AI can be trained to see what's trending in the real world—to see what's been successful and what assets are having the most traction with customers—and then provide that feedback to you and suggest the next steps ... you could maximize your influence, and it would be really powerful.



Mike Giresi

Chief Digital Officer, Molex

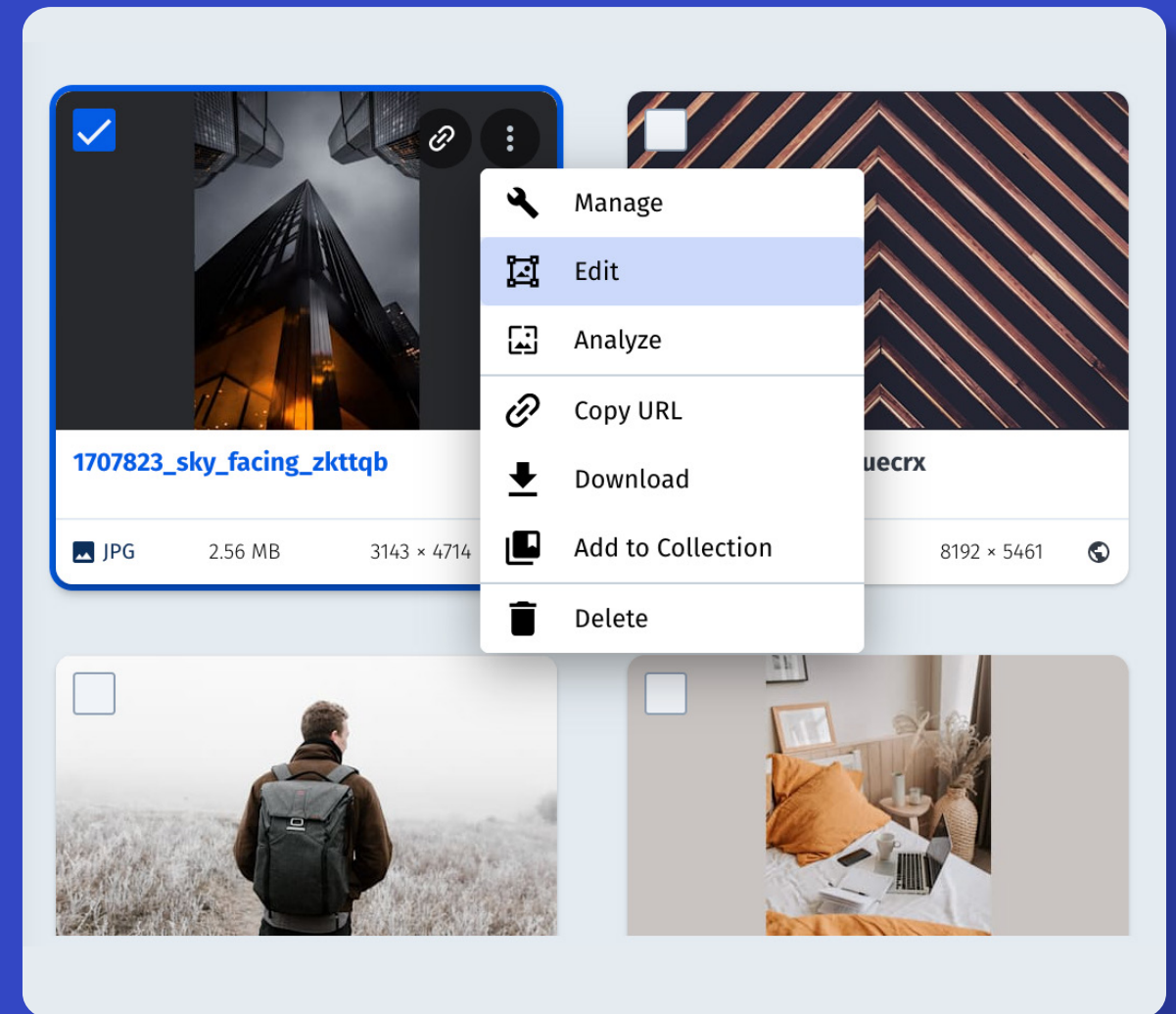
A: We really want to understand what people are trying to do through interaction with our infrastructure and then think forward. How can we help them achieve that in a way that our competition isn't? **What started as Digital Asset Management is really going to become customer engagement and experience.**

SESSION 01

SESSION 02

Integrations With Other Business Systems

SESSION 03



SESSION 02 Q & A

Integrations With Other Business Systems



Q: How can DAMs work well in the modern MarTech or traditional tech stacks?



Russ Barr

Managing Director of DAM, Cloudinary

A: It's all about having the right system in the right part of the tech stack because each of them is a specialized system. If you want a single tool that does everything, there will always be compromises. And those compromises are going to be too many to give you the best in breed across the various functions. For different systems to do the overall job, they must talk to one another.

And that's what modern DAMs are built for. It should be easy to get real-time information and data in and out. **It should speed up execution overall and keep the entire process moving forward.**



John Horodyski

DAM and Metadata Expert

A: Think of the DAM as the circulation of that MarTech stack. It acts as the backbone on top of which you can build the rest of your stack. **The software you chose as your DAM is the foundation.** It's where all your creative content and data lives. Choosing a strong software system gives you a great base to build upon. However, a good DAM is nothing without the data that moves it. Taxonomy, metadata, and governance are the muscles that you pack into your DAM.

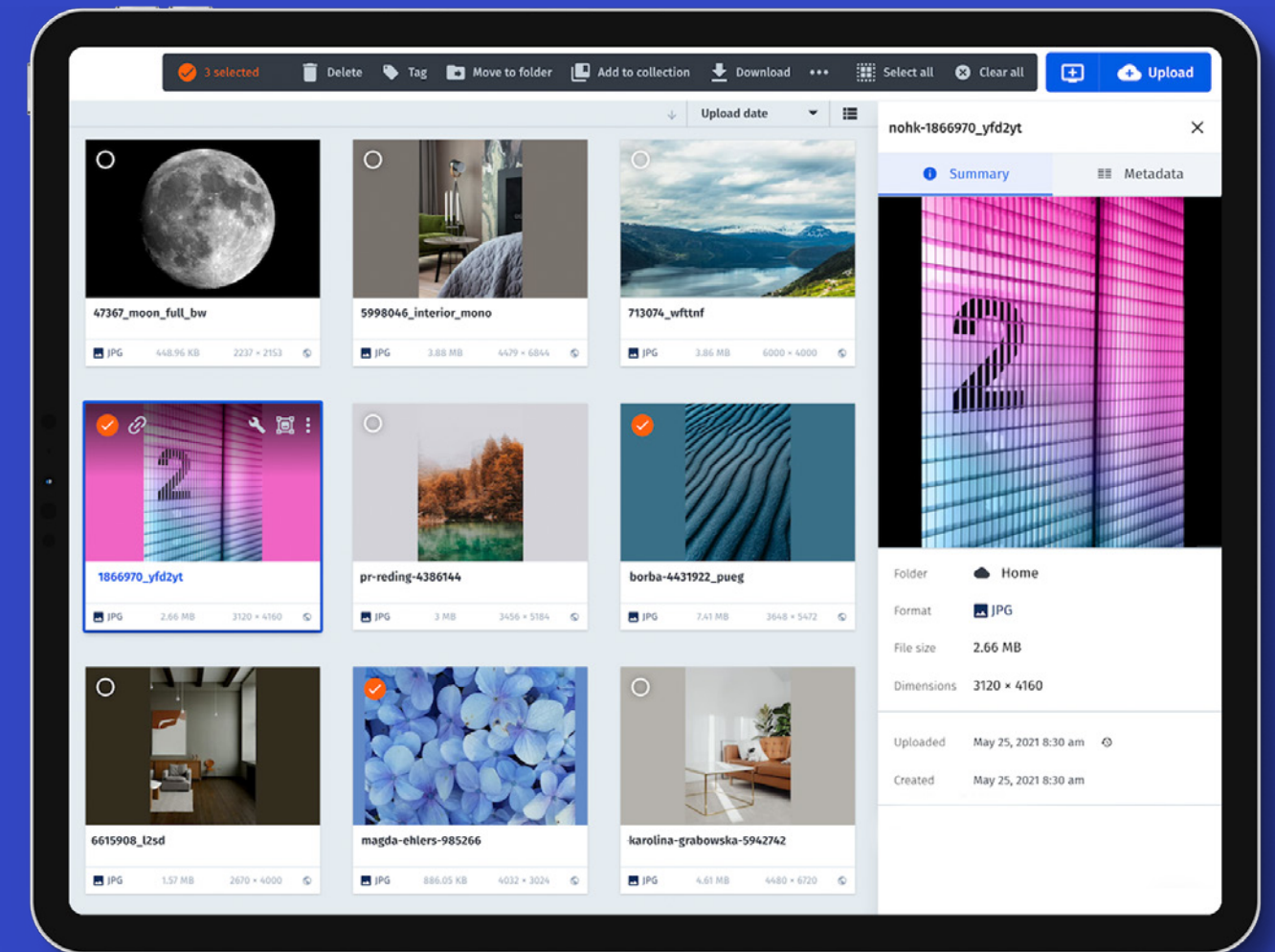
Also, be mindful of the people, processes, and technologies that might influence the transformation you desire. **Using DAM effectively can deliver knowledge and measurable cost savings, time-to-market gains, and brand consistency.** Those are all valuable and meaningful effects from your MarTech solution.

SESSION 02

SESSION 03

Adoption by All Customer-Experience Teams

SESSION 04



SESSION 03 Q & A

Adoption by All Customer-Experience Teams



Q: Why do DAM deployments or adoptions often fail?



Russ Barr

Managing Director of DAM, Clouddinary

A: Most of the time it's less about the technology and more about the people and their expectations and understanding of the technology, which is just an enabler for processes, not a complete replacement. You might have the best tool—the best potential solution—but without the right people engaged, the right understanding of what success looks like, and a process to constantly connect with those people and make sure that needs are met, you're going to have a problem.



Melissa Pauna

Senior Product Manager of DAM, Salesforce

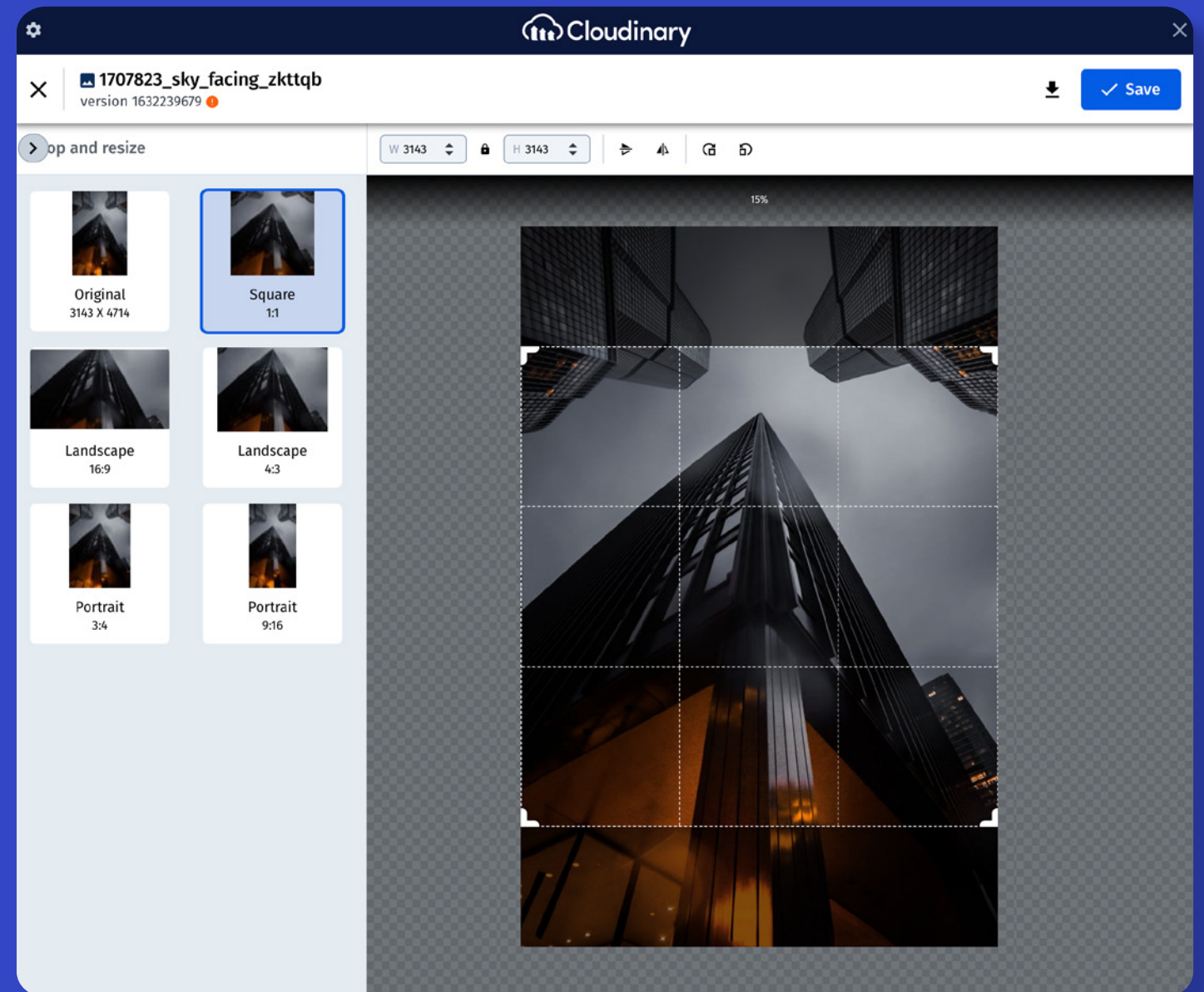
A: Scalability is often the problem—a lot of DAMs can't scale. As your organization adds more and more assets and use cases, scalability becomes an issue. Other times, the tool isn't configured properly or your organization cannot accommodate new uses and needs for the DAM. **If it's not set up in a way that makes sense with existing workflows, adoption problems emerge.**

SESSION 03

SESSION 04

Future Proofing

SESSION 05



SESSION 04 Q & A

Future Proofing



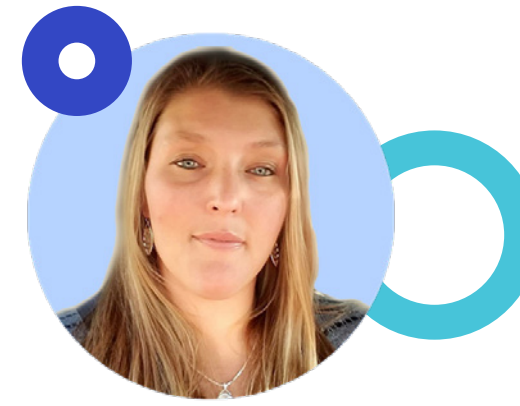
Q: How do you see DAM evolving in the future?



Russ Barr

Managing Director of DAM, Clouinary

A: There are many different trends and areas where DAMs are moving to meet the needs of the future. Video might sound like a weird one to bring up—after all, it's been around for a long time—but it's evolving and growing all the time. **DAMs aren't keeping up, though. Certainly they can store and play video, but that's typically where the capabilities stop. DAMs should help create video—through automation, adaptation, and so forth. They should also help scale video for reuse in different campaigns, locales, or regions.** I see DAMs evolving to maximize the return on investment with video.



Jennifer Sunday

Global Technology Manager of DAM, Stanley Black & Decker

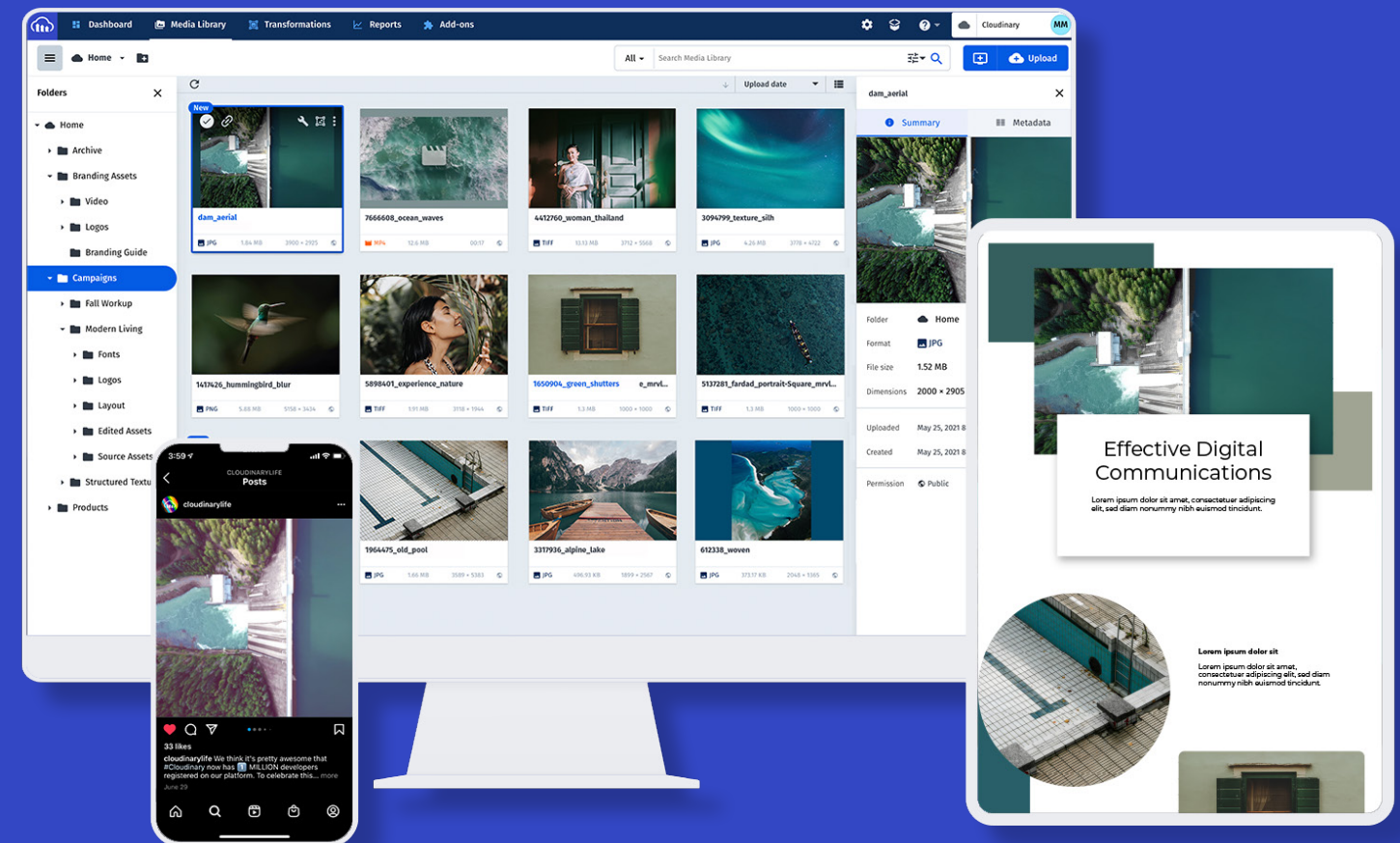
A: AI is only as good as the current system usage and can be intimidating unless we teach it to work correctly. As a start, we must standardize the data flow from DAM to the endpoints and ensure that the transfer process is done in a controlled, accurate, and concise manner. That way, DAM becomes the heart of the software process and the single source of truth: It gets the right data at the right time and sends it to the right places.

However, be careful not to overload DAM—don't make it everything. Instead, aim at connecting the functionality of your products to the DAM, strengthen the focus, and let the data flow!

SESSION 04

SESSION 05

Flexibility



SESSION 05 Q & A

Flexibility



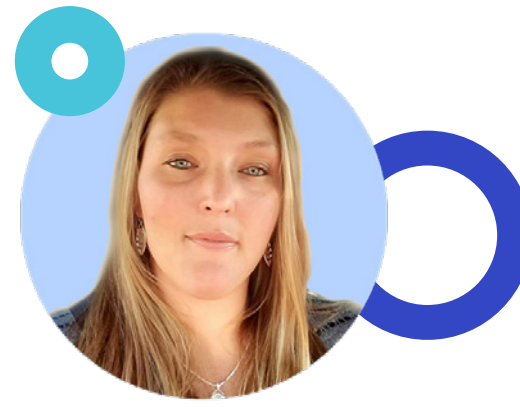
Q: How do you integrate a digital-first DAM into the current content workflows?



Russ Barr

Managing Director of DAM, Clouduary

A: The most important thing with a DAM or workflow system—or any tool that you bring in to help you with efficiencies—should support the fastest way of doing the work. **You shouldn't have to build your processes around the system's capabilities.** And that's really the most critical part—empowering people to make the system fit their needs rather than the other way around. A modern DAM should automate the repetitive work you're doing so you can spend more time on strategic tasks. For example, creating product galleries from a list of assets or downloading derivative files from a different system—those things make the system work the way you want it to work and you don't have to adapt workflows to meet the system's capabilities.



Jennifer Sunday

Global Technology Manager of DAM, Stanley Black & Decker

A: When you're integrating and fitting in a DAM with the current workflows, **you must allow for it to change, evolve, and grow.** Having that mindset is critical for the business teams and system users alike. Be sure to engage users in minor changes. As users see value in adding the DAM to their workflow, they're going to be more willing to adopt and change.



Melissa Pauna

Senior Product Manager of DAM, Salesforce

A: It's important to take an inventory of the other systems that are being used—and sometimes that's multiple systems, multiple CMSs, and even multiple DAMs. **All too often, we are pressured to move quickly and set things up.** But to avoid as many problems as possible, you must know what you have already—a clear lay of the land—so that you're not troubleshooting while deploying DAM.



Q: What customizations are essential for DAM adoption?



Mike Giresi
Chief Digital Officer, Molex

A: Many customizations have to do with what the operating model is for each company. Take a digital asset: How was it created? Who owns it? Who has decision rights and who publishes it? And how will it be published? How will you ultimately ensure visibility and access to the asset? **In the end, it's about asking the right questions and really putting an effort into it.** After all, it's not just about the application itself—it's about the **experience** with the application.



Lori Meyers
Digital Assets Manager, Monumental Sports and Entertainment

A: The one I really concentrate on is file attributes. We assign attributes—social platform or printed flyer—during upload as part of the metadata, which makes it easier and faster for our users to locate assets. As for customization, we can publish directly to the DAM from our project-management tool through an integration. We've also added customized fields within the PM tool and the exact attributes in the DAM. When we publish assets, those attributes are carried over and searchable, maintaining our taxonomy. **And they foster user searches, helping them find what they need a lot faster.**



Russ Barr
Managing Director of DAM, Cloudinary

A: You must be able to customize the DAM however you want to—every company is different. If you need to follow a certain customization path, chances are you're not going to find what you're looking for. All customers are different: They have slight nuances and variations in how they operate. That's why it's critical to have a library of functionalities to meet all those needs. **DAMs need to be personalized to each business so they can do what they need to do without limitations.**

Cloudinary's Mission

To empower companies to deliver visual experiences that inspire and connect by unleashing the full potential of their media.

With more than 50 billion assets under management and nearly 9,000 customers worldwide, Cloudinary is the industry standard for developers, creators, and marketers looking to upload, store, transform, manage, and deliver images and videos online. As a result, leading brands like Atlassian, Bleacher Report, Bombas, Grubhub, Hinge, NBC, Mediavine, Peloton, Petco, and Under Armour are seeing significant business value in using Cloudinary, including faster time to market, higher user satisfaction, and increased engagement and conversions. Ready to unleash the full potential of your media? Visit www.cloudinary.com.

For more details on digital-first DAMs, read our free ebook [Digital-First Brand Experiences Require a Digital-First DAM](#).

About Our Experts



Russ Barr, Managing Director of DAM, Clouldinary

Having been immersed in the DAM sphere since 2001, Russ has a wealth of knowledge and experience in helping organizations adopt and benefit from DAM solutions. He has worked with almost every aspect of the DAM industry, from running professional services to consulting on DAM and leading DAM sales teams.



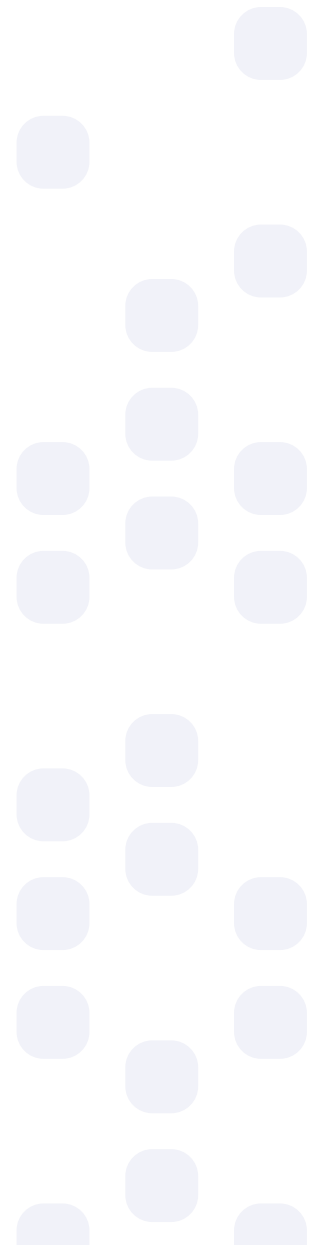
John Horodyski, DAM and Metadata Expert, Insights and Analytics Specialist, MarTech Strategist, Author, Speaker, Educator

John is a managing director at Salt Flats with executive-strategy experience in information management, including DAM, metadata and taxonomy design, content, analytics, governance, MarTech, and marketing operations. He has provided strategic direction and consulting to numerous Fortune 10, 50, 100, and 500 clients. John is the author of Inform, Transform, Outperform: Digital Content Strategies to Optimize Your Business for Growth (May 2016), with a new book, Metadata Matters, set to be published in January 2022 by Taylor & Francis.



Mike Giresi, Chief Digital Officer, Molex

A leading expert in IT-based business transformation, Mike specializes in digital-driven strategy and innovation that ensure that businesses stay in lockstep with emerging trends along with a customer-first model. Before joining Molex, he led digital-transformation initiatives at such major corporations as Aramark, Royal Caribbean, and Tory Burch.





Lori Meyers , Digital Assets Manager, Monumental Sports and Entertainment

Lori has over 10 years of experience selecting vendors, negotiating contracts, setting up workflows, and managing open APIs to establish communication connectivity. By working closely with DAM and project-management developers, Lori has created work environments between design services and asset availability that complement each other while meeting deadlines, staying within budget, and maintaining brand consistency.



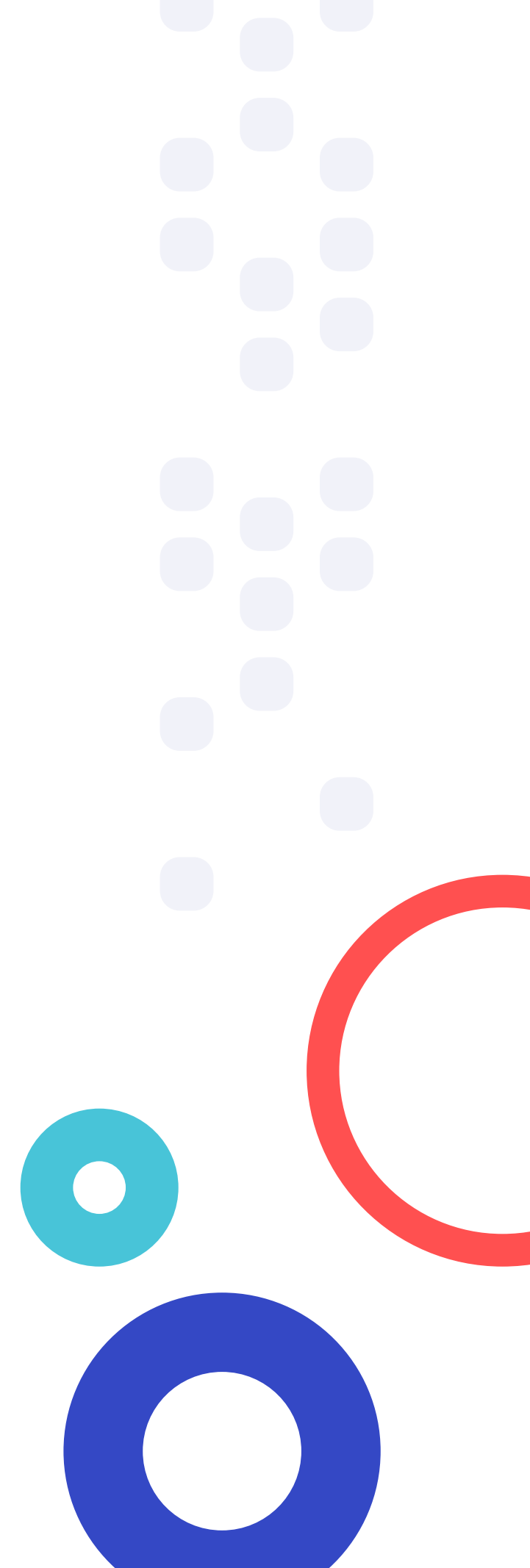
Melissa Pauna, Senior Product Manager of DAM, Salesforce

Over the past two decades, Melissa has enjoyed leading and participating in the evolution of media management as a trained archivist and digital-media curator. Partnering with innovative technology companies to create robust DAM systems for the retail and software sectors, creative agencies, museums, and archives brings her great satisfaction. Away from work, Melissa likes to explore nature, research family trees, create art, and volunteer for arts and cultural heritage organizations.



Jennifer Sunday , Global Technology Manager of DAM, Stanley Black & Decker

Jen has been involved for a decade with administrating, implementing, and integrating DAM systems with multiple types of software for a cohesive user experience. Her current role focuses on leading the global DAM practice for Stanley Black & Decker, the Global Tools and Storage division within Digital Technologies (IT).





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