



# Putting the spotlight on quality education.

University of Michigan attracts the attention of prospective students, faculty, and donors with Adobe Experience Manager.



*"Adobe is a true partner that understands our business and acts as an extended part of our team to better serve all of our different audiences."*

*Patrick Belden, Director of Web Services, College of Literature, Science and Art, University of Michigan*

## SOLUTION

Adobe Experience Cloud, including the Adobe Experience Manager solution within Adobe Marketing Cloud

## RESULTS



Scales support to **130 WEBSITES** with less than a dozen staff with consistent code and design



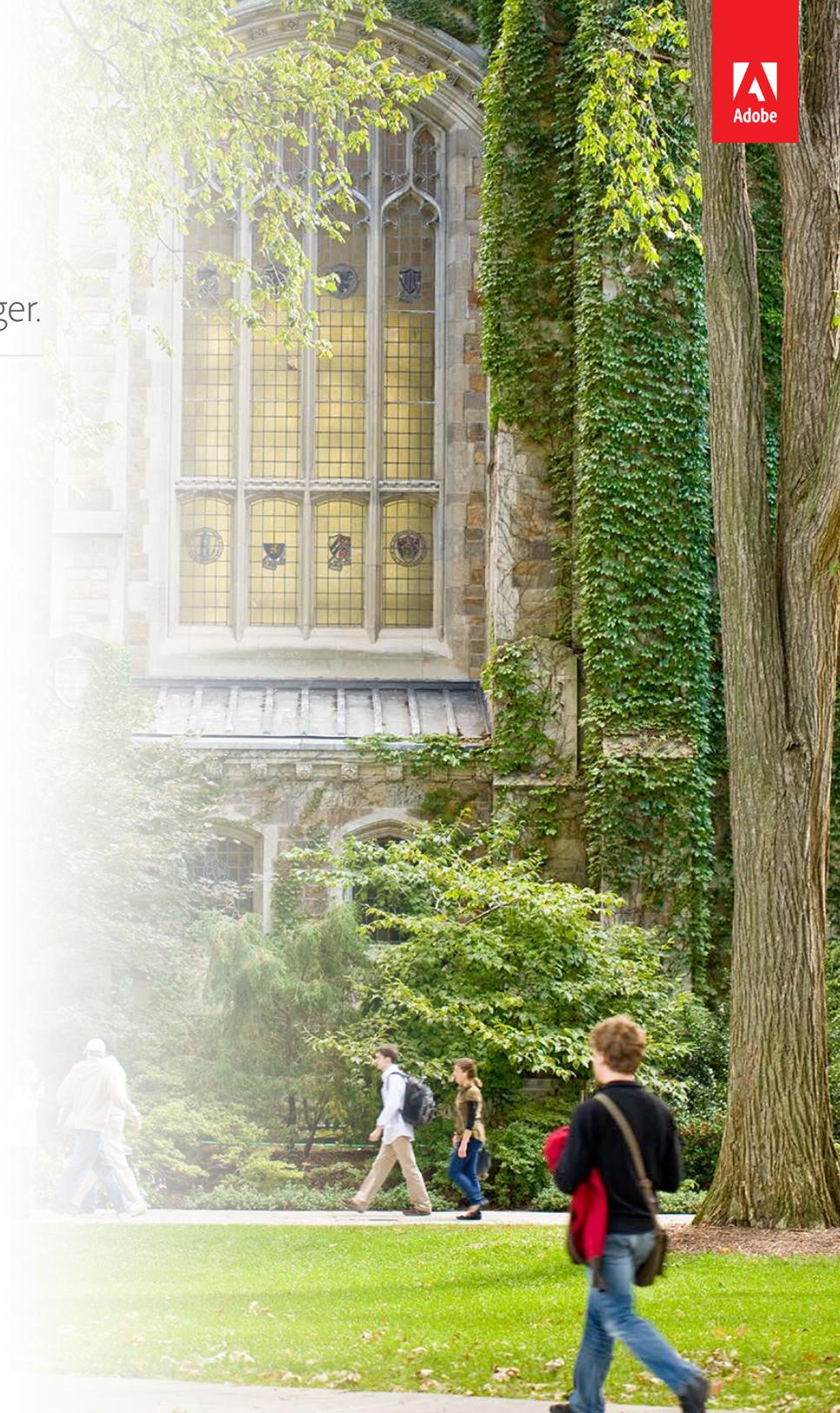
Easy for **400 CONTENT AUTHORS** to create dynamic, well-designed web pages with little assistance

**70K**

**ASSETS** stored centrally for reuse or protected for use only by specific departments



Improves **WEBSITE EXPERIENCE** for students and faculty with consistent navigation and design



## University of Michigan

Established in 1817

Students: 63,000

Ann Arbor, Michigan

[www.umich.edu](http://www.umich.edu)

## Partner

R2i

[www.r2integrated.com](http://www.r2integrated.com)

## CHALLENGES

- Create a consistent user experience across dozens of websites to encourage greater engagement from students, faculty, and donors
- Keep websites up to date with the latest news, events, and information from departments
- Scale IT staff and support resources to effectively manage 130 websites

## USE CASE

- Digital Foundation

## Connecting with students, faculty, and donors

The University of Michigan is the state's oldest university, founded 20 years before the territory even became a state. Out of the university's 19 schools and colleges, the largest by far is the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts (LSA). With more than 100 degree programs in over 75 academic departments and programs, LSA attracts a growing number of students who recognize the value of a diverse liberal arts education in a rapidly changing world.

As the Director of Web Services for LSA, Patrick Belden and his team support hundreds of websites, including 130 department and program websites and more than 500 smaller websites for specific classes or research projects. The information on the various websites is critical to students, who use this information to look up courses, view academic requirements, learn about upcoming events, and plan their education at LSA.

The website also provides a huge opportunity to connect with people outside of the university, such as prospective students and faculty, alumni, and donors.

"By bringing larger audiences to our websites, we can increase donations and attract more world-class researchers and hard-working students to our university," says Belden. "But we needed to transform our websites to give our audiences a better user experience with exciting design and consistent navigation across hundreds of pages. We finally found the answer to our needs with Adobe Experience Manager."

## Finding a partner for digital transformation

For many years, each department or unit at LSA developed its own website. With no consistent code or design guidelines, each website felt like a completely different experience. This could confuse users as it made it more difficult to quickly recognize where relevant information was located on each page. The lack of common code also made it more difficult for the LSA IT team to support websites, as each website had its own unique code challenges. Some larger departments even hired their own IT staff to support their websites, further distributing IT resources across the college.

LSA took a first step toward transforming the website experience by standardizing everyone on the OpenText platform using common templates and code. However, updating websites with OpenText was still quite difficult for many content creators, and the IT team spent a great deal of time and resources helping authors create and publish content.



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LSA enlisted the help of digital agency R2i for insights into best steps for transforming its website experiences. After meeting with dozens of stakeholders and comparing vendors, R2i presented LSA with its top choices for a website platform. Adobe Experience Manager, part of Adobe Marketing Cloud, stood out for two major reasons: easy content creation capabilities and improved cost and resource allocation through a managed services environment.

“When we shared Adobe Experience Manager with our stakeholders, they were ecstatic,” says Belden. “They couldn’t believe how easy it was to create websites, manage content, and build an experience. This allows them to engage students, faculty, and alumni with the right information, at the right time.”

For the IT team, the option to work with Managed Services offloaded a great deal of administrative work and freed up internal resources to work on supporting users and creating new digital experiences for LSA audiences. “Adobe is a true partner that understands our business and acts as an extended part of our team to better serve all of our different audiences,” says Belden. “Working with Adobe Experience Manager Managed Services, we can achieve high availability and rigorously tested environments while making better use of our internal resources to support our users.”

### Easy to use for 400 users

Department administrators, faculty, researchers, and all other content creators at LSA love working with Adobe Experience Manager. The IT team creates the overall framework, templates, and components for websites. More than 400 users then pull the content together using simple drag-and-drop operations in Adobe Experience Manager Sites.

“Adobe Experience Manager allows us to deliver standard templates and components to improve consistency, design quality, and user experiences across websites without completely restricting users’ ability to customize pages,” says Belden.

Content authors can even add dynamic components that add news, events, and social media feeds to a website. With so many departments, LSA runs thousands of events every semester. Departments can easily tag events so that they are added just to that department’s event feed or so that they can be viewed college wide.

More than 70,000 assets are stored within Adobe Experience Manager Assets. A central folder hosts templates, components, images, copy, and other assets available to all users. Because users can share and reuse assets, they can create content even faster. LSA also uses sophisticated permissioning in Assets that allows each department or unit to upload protected assets. For instance, the Biophysics department might create a banner image promoting an event meant only for Biophysics students. Using permissions, the department can prevent other departments from accidentally seeing or publishing that banner.



## SOLUTION AT A GLANCE

Adobe Experience Cloud, including:

Adobe Marketing Cloud

- Adobe Experience Manager
- Sites
- Assets

For more information

[www.adobe.com/marketing-cloud.html](http://www.adobe.com/marketing-cloud.html)

[www.adobe.com/marketing/experience-manager.html](http://www.adobe.com/marketing/experience-manager.html)



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## Raising funds for enriching experiences

With consistent and clear design, LSA websites are much easier for audiences to browse and use. Prospective and current students can quickly find information about courses, requirements, and events from any department website. For students, one of the main features is the course guide. Before the start of each semester when students are finalizing schedules, the course guides can peak at 300,000 hits each day. Using the flexible APIs in Adobe Experience Manager, LSA integrates the course guide data and pulls course information into each faculty member's profile page, giving students more ways to research and select their academic studies each semester.

For alumni and friends of LSA, each department website displays a prominent donation banner alongside events and news to encourage giving. "The LSA websites present huge opportunities to clearly communicate all of the accomplishments of our faculty and students," says Belden. "We can improve our donations by using websites to show potential donors how departments are using money to provide scholarships, better learning experiences, or enriching events for students."

## Supporting 130 websites with fewer staff

By standardizing on Adobe Experience Manager, LSA can scale services to support 130 websites and more than 100,000 pages of content with less than a dozen people. Since all departments are working on the same platform, new code improvements and bug fixes can be rolled out to all departments at once. About 30 to 40 of these updates are released every six to eight weeks, creating an innovative environment where the digital experience is consistently improving.

The IT team spends much less time dealing with support and training for Experience Manager. Previously, support requests would spike around the beginning of each semester when departments would struggle to remember how to update their websites. Since deploying Experience Manager, those spikes have disappeared. "Users are finding Adobe Experience Manager so much easier to use that it's reducing the amount of training and support that we need to provide," says Belden.

With more free time, the IT team is focusing on rolling out the next iteration of websites for their customers including a password protected gateway where faculty, staff, and school departments can access internal documents and information. LSA will also use Adobe Experience Manager for a student portal—a personalized online tool where students explore and record diverse opportunities; access and receive passive and active guidance; and connect to advisors, coaches, projects, communities, alumni, and professional experiences.

"Working with Adobe Experience Manager Managed Services, we're getting the support that we need to create dynamic experiences for prospective and current students and faculty," says Belden.