



Gaining a foothold in the quest for *more customers.*

Adobe 2018 Content Management Report

It was over in record time—just 3 hours and 56 minutes. Yet Alex Honnold's momentous free solo climb up El Capitan, considered the most impressive climbing wall on earth, was months in the planning. Years, really, if you consider how long he'd been thinking about it.

Honnold climbed the 3,000-foot, sheer granite face, partly in the dark, and entirely without a rope. One wrong move and he'd drop to his death. It was an unbelievable accomplishment that *New York Times* columnist Daniel Duane called "one of the great athletic feats of any kind, ever." Just watching *Free Solo*, the film that documented his ascent, can induce vertigo and make your palms sweat.

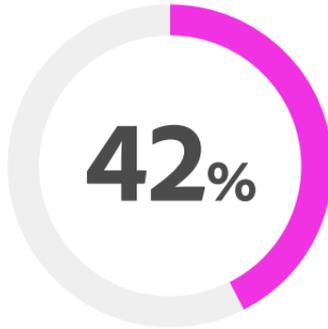
Honnold's physical prowess is undeniable. But also critical to his success is the way he thinks. MRIs show that his brain processes stimuli differently from most people, allowing him to stay calm and analytical in the midst of danger. "Free soloing plays mainly in the mind. A lot is physical. But staying calm and performing at your best knowing you could fall to your death requires a certain kind of mindset," explains Honnold.

Climbing to the top in business also requires the right mindset. Here's your chance to get inside the minds of mid-level business executives like yourself who are tackling today's biggest content management challenges. Learn how they're thinking. What they see as opportunities. And how they're planning to come out on top.

Understanding the *terrain*.

Honnold was obsessive about understanding the mountain and mapping out the best route to conquer it.

Marketers, too, are scrambling to find the best path to their customers' hearts and minds. And for good reason. We're living in a world where personalized experiences are the ultimate differentiator.



42% of customers say content that isn't relevant to them can prevent them from making a purchase.

Source: Adobe

To be a customer experience (CX) leader, you need to create, manage, and deliver relevant and meaningful web experiences. And do it as well as the larger brands that are competing for the same customers. But the challenges are many, from struggling to deliver personalized content, to managing difficult system interfaces, to relying too much on IT. If you're facing some of these same struggles, the insights in this report will help.

Removing the obstacles to success.

Just 1 in 10 organizations rank themselves as “very advanced” in customer experience—a mere 2% increase since 2015.

10%

CX leaders are almost three times more likely to have exceeded their top 2018 business goals by a significant margin.

3x

No wonder half of organizations surveyed are planning to increase CX spending in 2019.

50%

Source: Econsultancy

Survey approach.

To better understand what businesses are facing today, we interviewed 10 key decision-makers (C-suite representatives and directors) in a variety of mid-level businesses about their top challenges and opportunities with content management systems (CMS). Their answers are anonymous so they could speak freely.

Industries:



Finance



Retail



Travel and
Hospitality



Media

8
out of
10

8 out of 10 have a marketing team under 30 people.

\$50 million
to
\$5 billion

\$50 million to \$5 billion in revenues.

4
out of
10

4 out of 10 use third parties to support content authoring needs.

Challenges, yes. *Insurmountable*, no.

Before he free soloed El Capitan, Honnold climbed it more than 50 times on ropes, marking his route with chalk and memorizing thousands of hand and foot movements. He also carried an empty backpack to remove small rocks that could be dangerous obstacles.

The decision-makers we interviewed are working hard to overcome obstacles, too—the biggest by far being personalization.

Most respondents said they do little or no personalization due to technical limitations.

Most business leaders know they need to do a better job of targeting and customizing the site experience for each visitor. Yet while they aspire to do more personalization, they're still figuring out how. And how to prove the value of their efforts. Adding to the challenge is the fact that they need to create personalized experiences as well as large enterprise businesses that have larger teams and budgets.

Top challenges:

- Personalization
- Keeping up with current technology
- Difficult-to-use content management systems
- Over-reliance on IT teams for simple functions
- Inadequate access to customer data and insights
- Integrating third-party apps
- Managing and optimizing content

Not surprisingly, companies using legacy systems listed the most challenges, seeing a need to leap past outdated technology and adopt more advanced systems.

Recommended route.

Personalization is critical to success. Choose a system that includes data and analytics insights to better understand each user and personalization algorithms that tap into the power of AI. This will allow you to automate the delivery of truly individual, engaging experiences to countless customers—greatly increasing your efficiency.

Choosing *which way* to go.

In the months leading up to his jaw-dropping climb, Honnold spent 99 percent of his practice time roped up. “Preparation before performance,” he explained, adding that he also did five or six other free solos that had never been done before.

With more than 7,000 CMS solutions available from more than 6,000 unique suppliers, it’s hard to know which path to take. But you can do your own preparation for performance. Review the following priorities listed by our respondents, determine your own needs, and scout your options—understanding that your path is likely to zigzag as your needs change.

Make it easy for non-technical marketers.

Marketers need to be more nimble. Many rely on outside vendors or their IT teams to create, change, or publish content—and that takes more time.

Our respondents want an easy-to-use platform that allows marketers to do more themselves. This includes everyday content creation and publishing, as well as periodic updates to site design or features.

“Ease of use is important. We want someone with zero technical skills to be able to make changes to the site.”

— Survey respondent

Be sure it works well with third-party apps.

Noting that built-in functionality is a “nice to have,” they also want interoperability with third-party solutions for analytics, personalization, social media, content syndication, and existing software and systems.

Choose vendors you can count on.

Most want a vendor who will take responsibility to ensure things will run smoothly and won’t break. And one that can deliver fast response times.



Emergency situations: Survey participants expect a response within the hour if the site is down or sales cannot be completed.



Less urgent needs: They expect turnaround time in hours or days, proportionate to the request, and clear communication as to when they can expect a complete response.

“Quick turnaround is more important for a midsize company than a Fortune 500 company that has a big internal team to help.”

— Survey respondent

Additional technology priorities:

- Cost and compatibility with tech stack
- Ability to scale to anticipated growth
- Ability to maintain multiple international sites on a single back end

Recommended route.

Take a holistic approach to choosing a CMS system, considering all that the solution offers, as well its interoperability. Think about the vendor relationship—who will own what, and how you can reduce your own maintenance, security, and infrastructure costs. Choose a platform that has the capabilities you need now, as well as 3–5 years down the road, so you don't hit an insurmountable wall as your needs increase.

New heights to *explore*.

Part of Honnold's incredible composure comes from visualizing where he wants to be and painstakingly planning how to get there. The decision-makers we surveyed are doing much the same thing—exploring new capabilities that will allow them to reach all new heights as an experience business.

These four opportunities came out on top:



1. Let marketers take the lead.

Survey respondents expect marketing teams to own day-to-day management of the CMS. By relying on IT only when serious problems arise, they'll see faster response times and free up their IT teams for more value-add activities.

They expect marketing to own the following:

- Content creation and publishing
- Loading media files
- Designing web pages
- Making site updates and more



2. Tie into new technology.

Three of 10 are using a solution that was built in-house. As their needs have grown, so have the challenges of fragmented solutions. It's little wonder more than half said they've either recently changed from a legacy system to a more modern one or are in the process of researching and selecting a newer system that will provide all of the capabilities they need.

Capitalizing on the cloud:

- 6 use a cloud-hosted, vendor, or hybrid solution
- 3 plan to migrate to the cloud when they upgrade
- 1 is unsure



3. Aim higher with personalization.

While the majority of those we surveyed are doing little or no personalization, they understand its value, and almost all want to add the capability as part of a new system or upgrade. **All but two aspire to do more personalization, including personalized offers for different segments.**



4. Make analytics your anchor.

Everyone surveyed uses an analytics solution—with some using a combination of apps—to better understand their customers and deliver more relevant experiences. They assume they'll continue to do so, even if a new CMS included built-in analytics capabilities.

Recommended route.

There's no one answer for integrating a new content management system. The key is to consider your industry and business needs. New technology, especially AI and machine learning, will automate many of the tedious tasks involved in creating and delivering content, and it will provide deeper insights in a timelier manner. Consider a platform that has everything you need baked in. And empower your marketing team to manage more content, so you can increase efficiency and impact, and save your IT team's efforts for strategic endeavors.

Honnold was unstoppable. *You can be, too.*

Whether you're facing a towering, 3,000-foot granite wall or massive enterprises competing for your customers' attention, success requires pushing the boundaries of what you thought possible.

*"There's a satisfaction to **challenging yourself**
and doing something well."*

— Alex Honnold, *Free Solo*

Just as Honnold turned back on his first attempt to free solo El Capitan because conditions didn't feel right, creating amazing experiences won't happen in a single effort. It will take time. And preparation. But when you visualize where you want to be, and have the right foundation to support you, you too can accomplish incredible things.

Adobe can help.

Adobe is committed to helping you achieve unbelievable marketing prowess. Adobe Experience Manager Sites gives you a content management system with all the capabilities you need baked in—including best-of-breed personalization and analytics. Tapping the power of Adobe Sensei technology and AI, it provides a strong web experience foundation that empowers you to create, manage, and take control of your content to deliver deeply personal experiences. And rise to all-new heights as an experience business. Discover what Adobe Experience Manager Sites can do for your business.

[Learn more](#)

With Adobe's unified platform, you can achieve what you thought was out of reach:

- **Create content and make updates.**
- **Easily find and manage assets.**
- **Measure performance and optimize content.**
- **Deliver personalized experiences.**

Sources

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