

KONTENT.AI®

Report

State of the headless CMS market 2023

by Kontent.ai Team



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Embarking on a quest for exceptional content

Content professionals are embarking on a mission to unlock the full potential of their content. They recognize that great content isn't just about quality; it's about **speed**, **adaptability**, and **control**—the three pillars of unparalleled return on content. These pillars serve as the foundation for their journey, guiding them toward content management solutions that empower them to create, manage, and distribute content that not only excels in quality but also accelerates their success.



Speed

Unmatched content velocity and time-to-market

In the race to engage audiences and remain competitive, speed is the differentiator. Content professionals yearn for solutions that empower them with unmatched content velocity and rapid time-to-market capabilities. They recognize that a swift response to market demands can make all the difference.

Adaptability

Unlimited flexibility and scalability

The demand for content solutions that can pivot and evolve at the speed of innovation has never been greater. Content professionals are seeking platforms that provide them with the unlimited flexibility to adapt to the ever-changing digital ecosystem. Scalability serves as the foundation upon which they can construct expansive content strategies, accommodating growth and evolution with ease.

Control

Unbeatable content governance and security

Control is not merely an option; it's a necessity. Content professionals understand the importance of maintaining impeccable governance and security standards. As custodians of valuable digital assets, they require tools that offer unbeatable content governance while ensuring the safety of their information in an increasingly complex digital world.

With input from 1,014 content professionals, this report delves into the shifting landscape of content management and reveals compelling insights:

- › **Growing familiarity with headless CMSs:** Content professionals are increasingly embracing headless CMS solutions. With each passing year, the adoption rate climbs, and the advantages become more apparent.
- › **Satisfaction with headless CMSs:** Among those who have integrated a headless CMS into their workflows, a remarkable 88% express satisfaction with their usage. The positive impact on content management is undeniable.
- › **Emphasis on flexibility and customization:** Content professionals highly value flexibility and customization in their workflows. They seek tools that allow them to tailor their martech stack to specific needs and preferences, avoiding the limitations of a one-size-fits-all solution.
- › **Areas for improvement:** While progress is evident, content professionals acknowledge that there's room for enhancement in their organizations. Challenges include multichannel content delivery, managing content for multiple websites, updating website content, and maintaining content consistency.

Are you ready to dive in?
The State of the headless CMS market 2023 is an invitation to empower yourself and embrace the headless approach. So, let this report be your starting point. Read it, ponder its insights, and embark on your journey toward content excellence.



Vojtech Boril

VP Growth & Marketing,
Kontent.ai

The headless CMS survey results

1

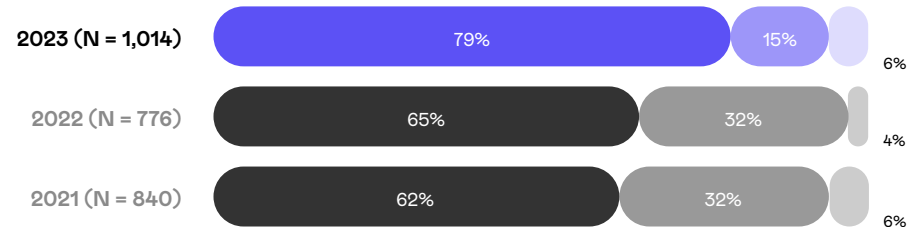
Have you ever heard the term “headless CMS”?

Respondents could select only one answer.

Out of all content professionals surveyed, a remarkable **79% are familiar with the term “headless CMS,”** which is the highest level of awareness to date.

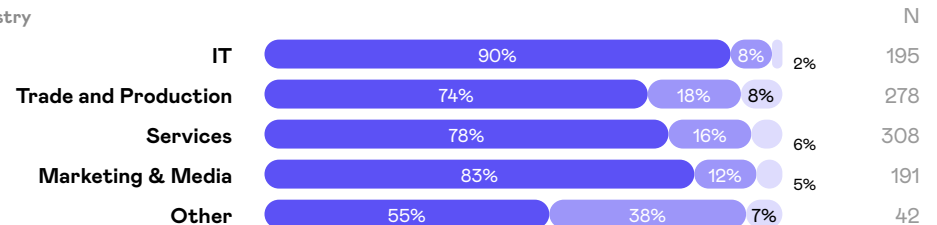
● Yes ● No ● I don't know

N = content professionals



The greatest familiarity with the concept of a headless CMS is evident among those working in the IT industry (90% said yes). This trend is also notable among participants from Asia (84%) and those aged between 25 and 44 years (81%).

Industry



2

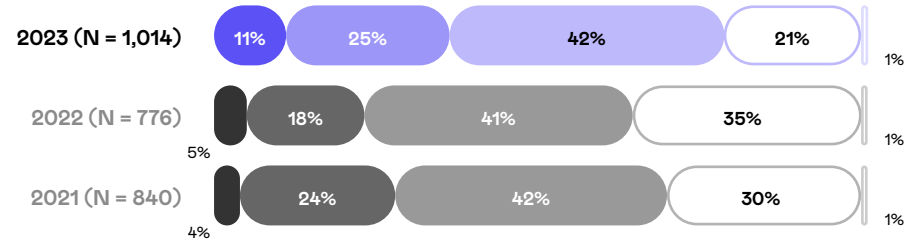
How much do you think you know about “headless CMS”

Respondents could select only one answer.

In total, **36%** of content professionals consider themselves to be experts or fairly knowledgeable regarding the subject of headless CMSs.

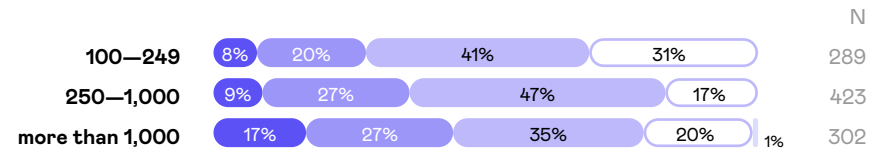
- I work as an expert in this area
- I'm quite well informed about the topic
- I know a few things regarding the topic
- I've encountered the topic
- I don't know

N = content professionals



In addition, the data reveals a positive correlation: as the company’s size increases, so does the expertise of its employees.

Company size (employees)



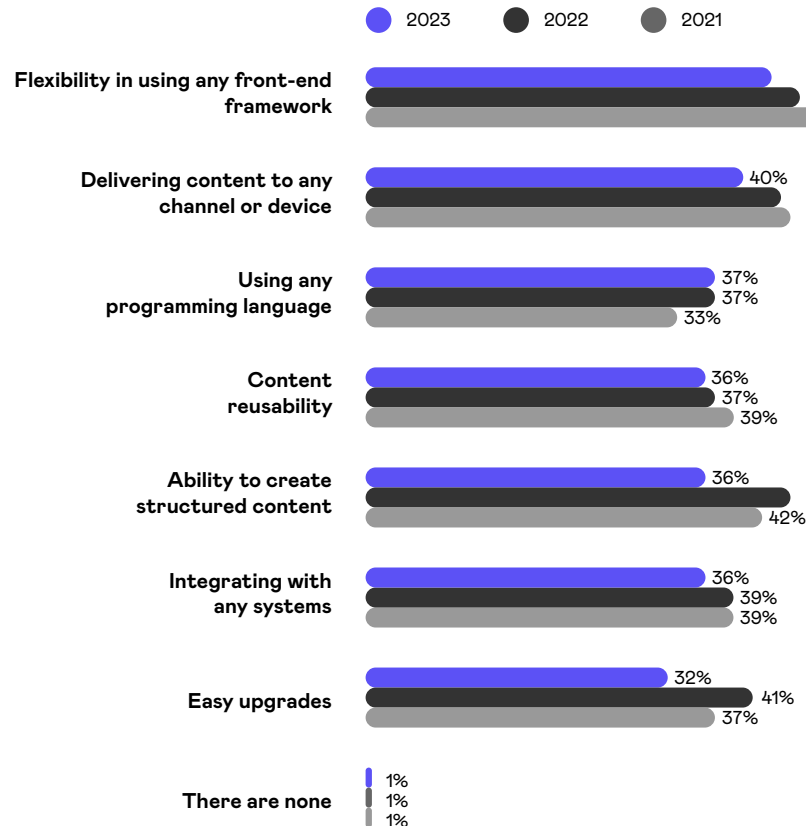
N = 802 content professionals who know the term “headless CMS”

3

In your opinion, what are the advantages of headless CMSs (compared to traditional CMSs)?

Respondents could select more than one answer.

According to content professionals, the most significant advantages of headless CMSs are **flexibility in using any front-end framework** (43%), **delivering content to any channel or device** (40%), and **using any programming language** (37%).



2023 (N = 802 content professionals who know the term headless CMS*)

2022 (N = 501 content professionals who know the term "headless CMS")

2021 (N = 517 content professionals who know the term "headless CMS")



One of the biggest benefits of a headless CMS is how easy and fast it has made content management, allowing many stakeholders to improve their efficiency and collaboration across a large organization. With Kontent.ai, we're able to create seamless and consistent experiences across various touchpoints, while leaving the front-end design flexible to our users.”



Angeline Oh

Senior Executive, Brand & Digital Marketing, Income

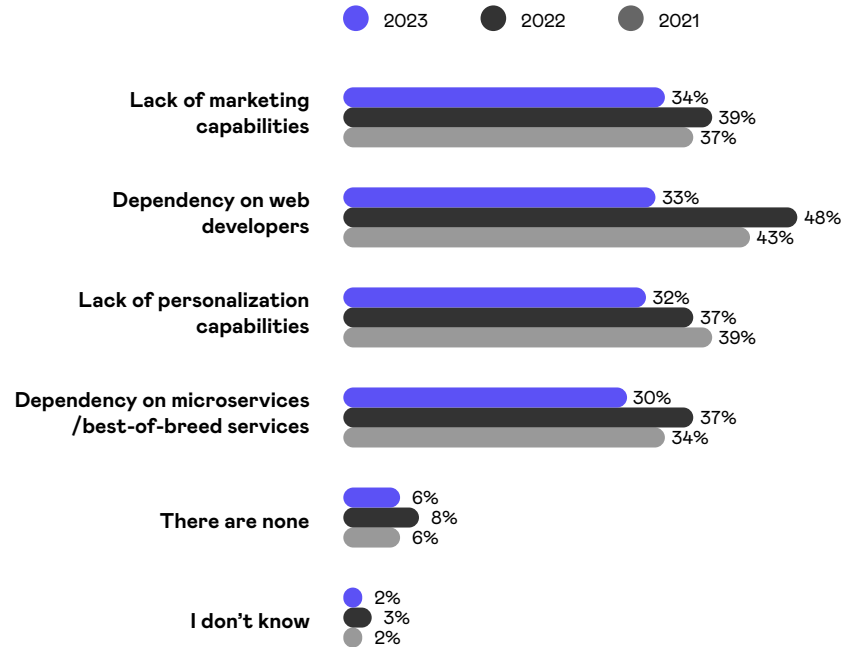
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4

In your opinion, what are the disadvantages of headless CMSs? (compared to traditional CMSs)?

Respondents could select more than one answer.

The most commonly perceived drawback of headless CMSs is the **absence of marketing capabilities** (34%), closely followed by **reliance on web developers** (33%), and **lack of personalization capabilities** (32%).



2023 (N = 802 content professionals who know the term "headless CMS")

2022 (N = 501 content professionals who know the term "headless CMS")

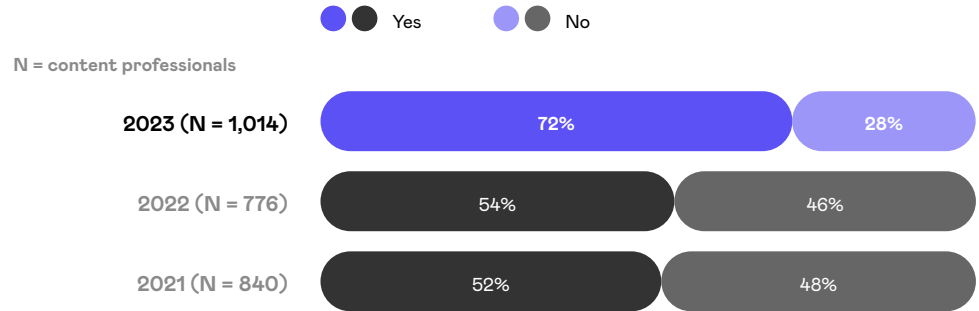
2021 (N = 517 content professionals who know the term "headless CMS")

5

Have you ever used any headless CMS product?

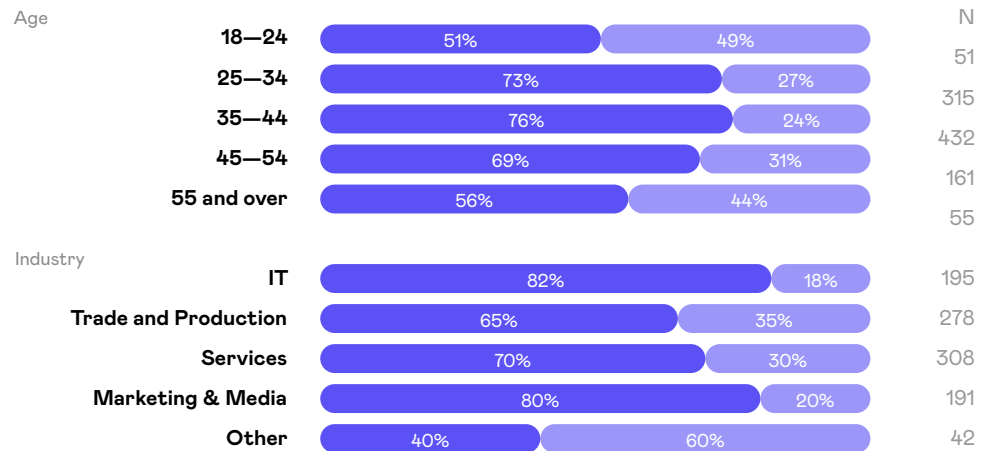
Respondents could select only one answer.

There has been a substantial rise in the proportion of content professionals who have used a headless content management system. This year, the share reaches **72% of all respondents.**



Headless CMS products are most often used by respondents aged 25-44 years.

In addition, those from the IT and Marketing & Media sectors have higher experience with headless CMSs than respondents from other industries.



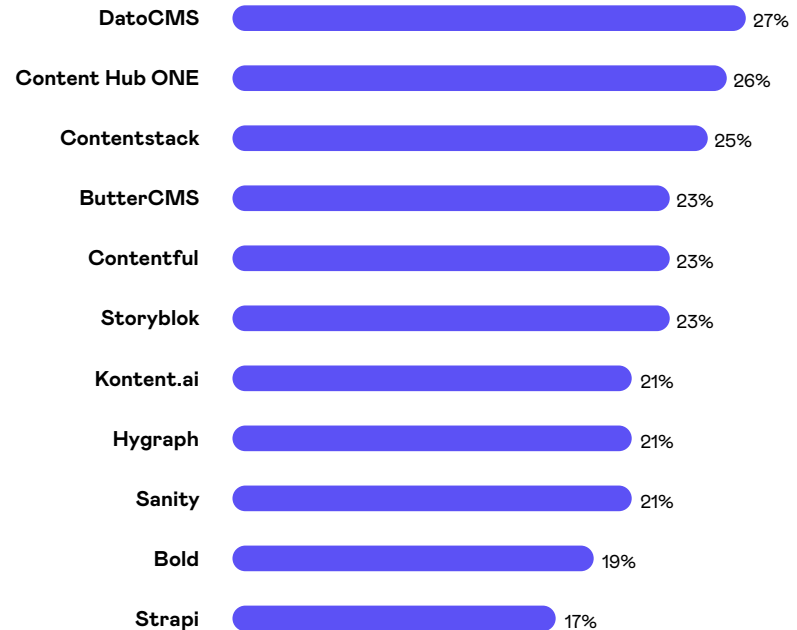
N = 1,014 content professionals

6

Please, select all the headless CMS products you've ever used.

Respondents could select more than one answer.

The CMS products that the respondents are most familiar with include **Dato CMS** (27%), **Content Hub ONE** (26%), and **Contentstack** (25%).



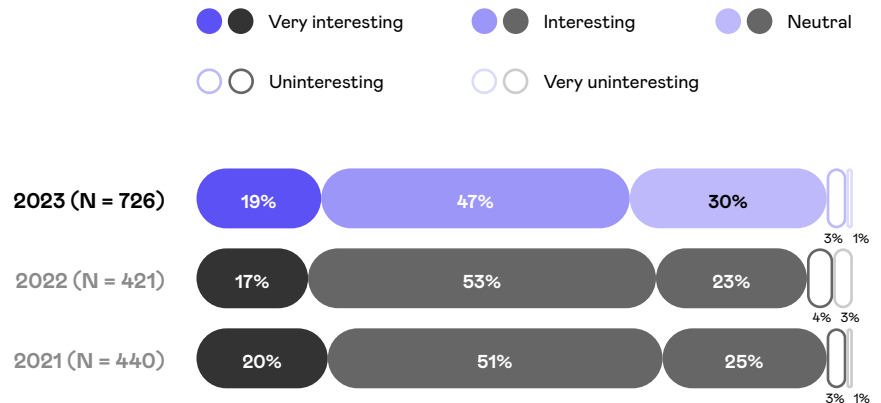
N = 726 content professionals who have used a hadless CMS before

7a

Based on a description of what a headless CMS is, how would you rate headless CMSs? Use the scale from 1 to 5; 1 means very interesting and usable, and 5 means very uninteresting and unusable.

Respondents could select only one answer.

Among respondents who have no prior experience with headless CMSs, 66% find them either very interesting (19%) or somewhat interesting (47%). The proportion of respondents with a neutral opinion has slightly grown year over year, while the percentage of those who do not find these tools interesting remains negligible.



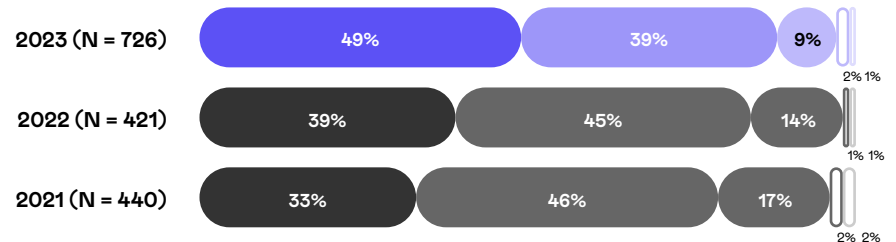
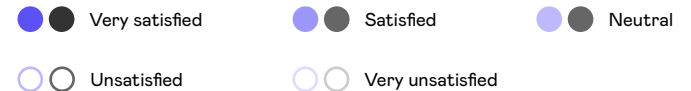
N = content professionals who have never used a headless CMS before

7b

Based on your previous experience, how would you rate headless CMSs? Use the scale from 1 to 5; 1 means very satisfied and usable, and 5 means very unsatisfied and unusable.

Respondents could select only one answer.

The satisfaction rating for headless CMSs has shown year-over-year improvement among content professionals who have prior experience with them. Currently, **88% of respondents** who have used headless CMSs before **express satisfaction with their usage**.



N = content professionals who have used a headless CMS

8

In your opinion, which features should headless CMSs offer to ease content production and collaboration for people in your organization? Select the three most important ones.

Respondents could select three options.

Within the top three critical features that headless CMSs should provide to streamline content production and collaboration for content creators, the following priorities emerge:

- > **Managing multiple websites or channels, together with a customizable workflow** tailored for each project
- > **Seamless content preview capabilities** across various websites/channels, along with **multiregional content management**
- > **Full-text search** to find any piece of content





Adopting Kontent.ai as our headless CMS has been a pivotal part of our stack and in our digital transformation. ROI was achieved rapidly and can be calculated in days: Kontent.ai has been an engine of efficiency and success.”



Marc Lamothe

Director of Web Technology, American Bath Group

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9

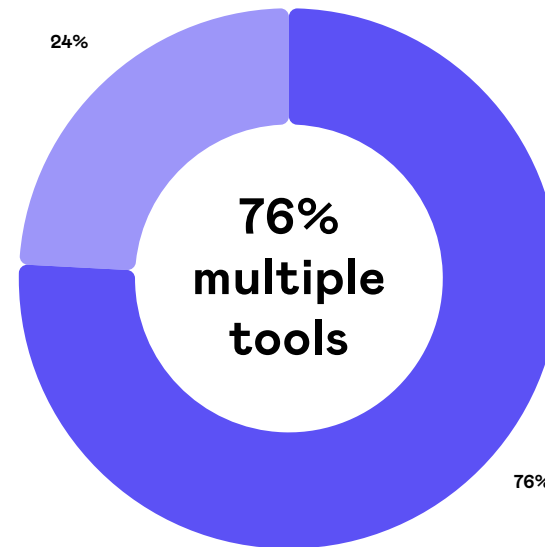
As a content professional, which option would you prefer for your work?

Respondents could select only one answer.

76% percent of surveyed content professionals would rather **utilize multiple tools of their own or their team's choice** for their work, as opposed to relying on a single vendor to provide a unified suite of tools.

This suggests that they value flexibility and customization in their workflows, allowing them to tailor their toolkit to specific needs and preferences, rather than being locked into a one-size-fits-all solution.

- Using multiple tools of my (or my team's) choice
- Having all the tools in one place provided by a single vendor



N = 1,014 content professionals

10

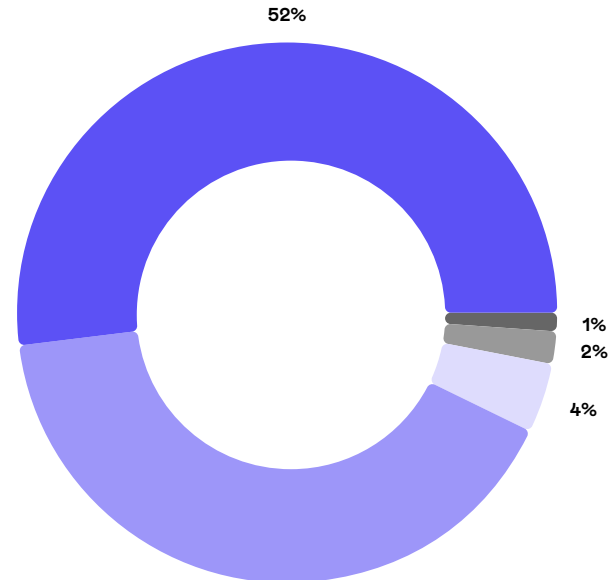
Can people in your organization easily share content across teams, departments, websites, etc.?

Respondents could select only one answer.

It seems that, for the majority of respondents, **sharing content** across teams, departments, and channels **poses no significant challenge**. However, when asked in Question 13, 47% of respondents stated they believe sharing content within the organization could be improved by using better tools.

More than half of them (52%) claim they store all their organization's content in one system or tool that facilitates seamless content sharing. On the other hand, 41% use multiple content management systems or tools.

- Yes, we store all our content in one system/tool that enables sharing content.
- Yes, we can share content even though we use multiple CMSs/tools.
- No, we're unable to share content easily.
- We do not need to share content across departments, teams, or websites.
- I don't know



N = 1,014 content professionals

41%



With Kontent.ai, we have managed to move content marketing from a global level to the local level. The marketing departments in all our countries are able to create or edit their own content. We're now able to do online content marketing in 24 countries and languages in an efficient and structured way."



Davey van Ommen

Online Content Specialist, Kramp

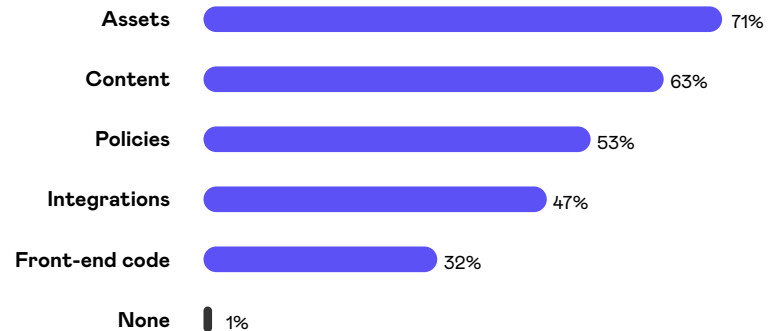
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11

What objects are reused across teams/ departments/ regions in your organization?

Respondents could select more than one answer.

Assets such as PDF files and images (71% of respondents), as well as **content** (63%), are consistently the most commonly shared and utilized resources among various teams, departments, and regions.



N = 1,014 content professionals

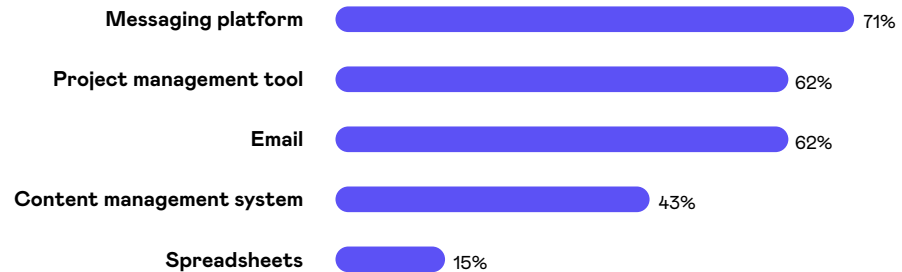
12

How does your team manage feedback and approvals on content?

Respondents could select more than one answer.

71% of content professionals employ **messaging platforms** as their primary means to oversee **feedback and obtain approvals** for content. Additionally, project management tools (utilized by 62%) and email (also 62%) are prevalent alternatives for this purpose.

Out of all the respondents, a mere 0.3% offered responses other than those listed on the right.



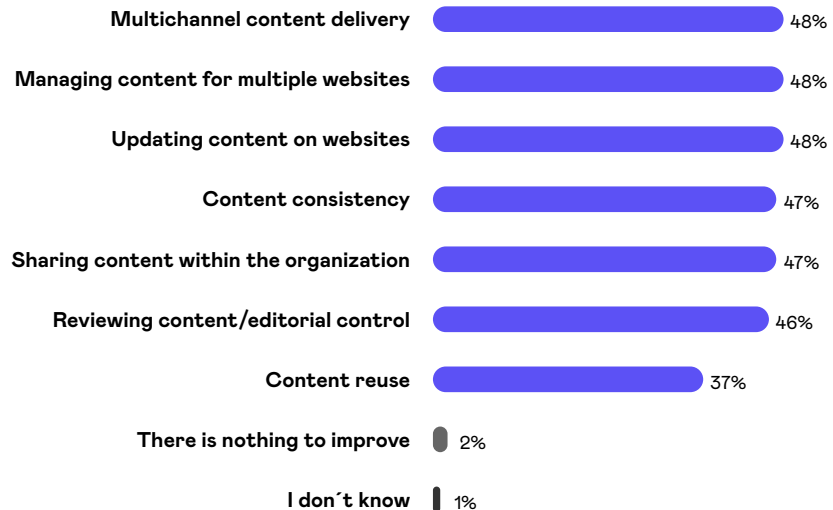
N = 1,014 content professionals

13

In your opinion, which of the following areas could your company improve by using better tools/CMS? Select all that apply.

Respondents could select more than one answer.

Content professionals feel **there is a lot to improve in their organizations**, including multichannel content delivery (48%), managing content for multiple websites (48%), updating website content (48%), content consistency (47%), or sharing content within the organization (47%). Only 2% of respondents think there is nothing to improve.



N = 1,014 content professionals



Kontent.ai enabled us to create a localized mobile experience that simply wasn't possible with our previous content management system. We were able to translate our website content into additional languages in only two weeks and are now generating both printable and mobile versions of our boarding passes straight from the CMS."

Aylin Ubilla

Head of Digital Conversions, JetSmart Airlines

[See the full customer story](#)

Conclusion

The survey results demonstrate a growing recognition of the benefits that headless CMSs offer, with a notable **79% of content professionals being familiar** with the term, and 36% considering themselves knowledgeable or experts in this domain.

The key advantages of headless CMSs, as highlighted by respondents, include the **flexibility to use any front-end framework**, the **ability to deliver content to diverse channels and devices**, and the freedom to **employ various programming languages**. This adaptability is pivotal in an era marked by the demand for personalized, multichannel content experiences.

Furthermore, the survey reveals a substantial increase in the adoption of headless content management systems, with **72% of respondents reporting their use**.

Content professionals have articulated clear expectations from headless CMSs, prioritizing features like managing multiple websites or channels, customizable workflows, or seamless content preview. **These priorities underscore the need for efficient content production and collaboration tools** that enhance productivity and content quality.



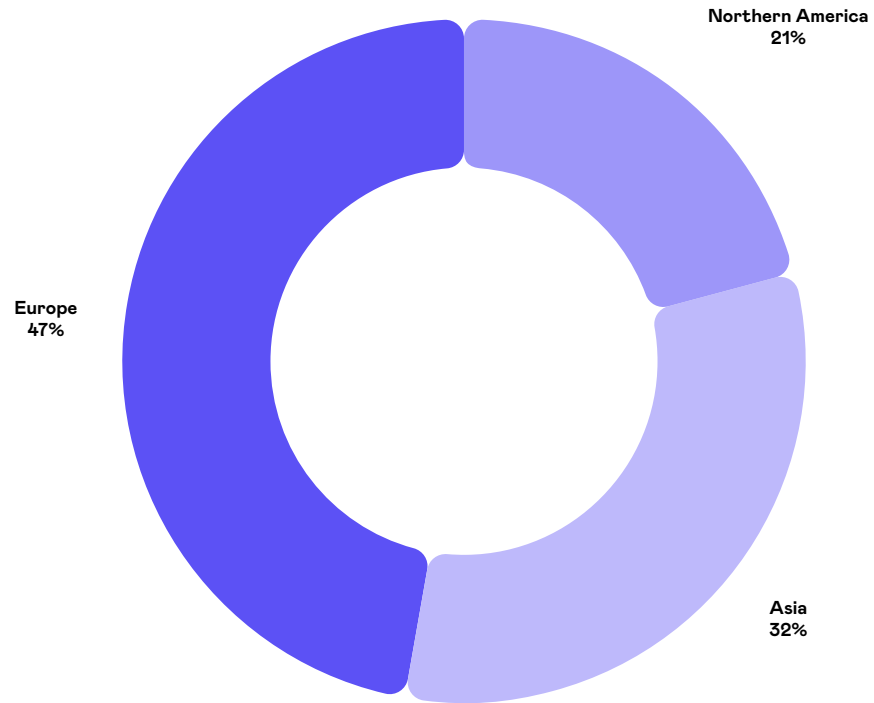
Perhaps most notably, **76% of respondents prefer using multiple tools** of their choice over a single vendor's suite, emphasizing their desire for flexibility and customization in their workflows. This signifies a shift away from rigid, one-size-fits-all solutions, as content professionals seek to tailor their toolsets to specific project needs and preferences.

Finally, the report reveals that respondents feel there is substantial room for improvement within organizations. Key areas include **multichannel content delivery, managing content for multiple websites, updating website content, maintaining content consistency**, and facilitating content sharing within the organization. These insights underscore the evolving challenges that content professionals face in a rapidly changing digital landscape and the need for continued innovation and adaptation in the field.

In conclusion, the findings of this report illustrate a dynamic and forward-looking content industry, where professionals are **embracing the potential of headless CMSs while advocating for greater customization and flexibility**. These insights provide valuable guidance for technology providers and organizations seeking to support the evolving needs of content professionals in 2023 and beyond.

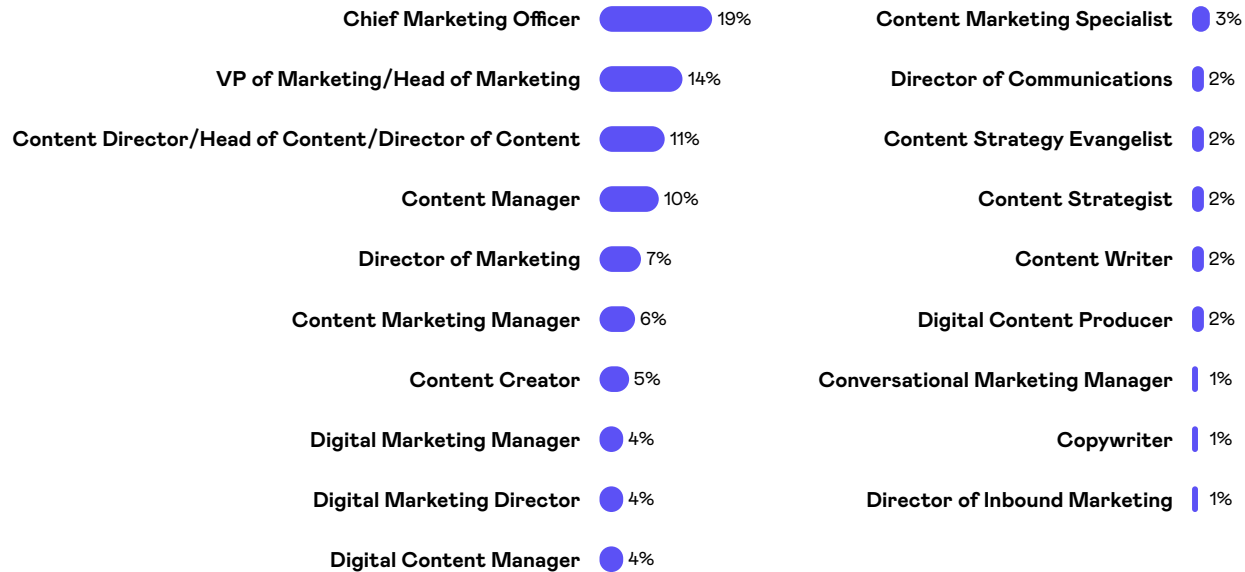
Overview of our respondents

Region



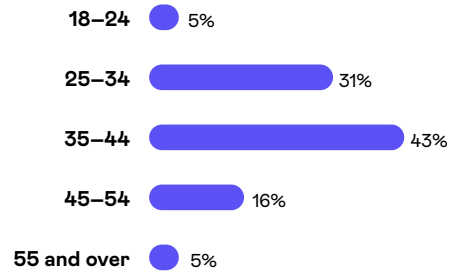
N = 1,014 content professionals

Job position

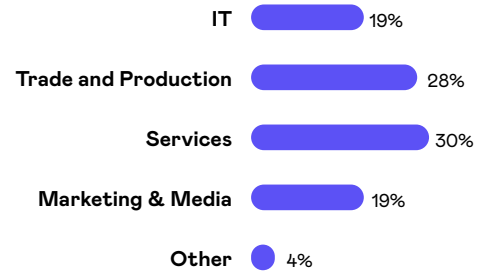


N = 1,014 content professionals

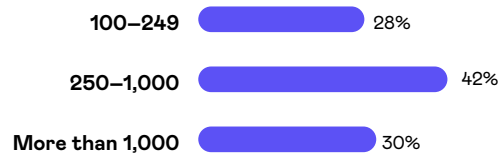
Age



Industry



Company size



N = 1,014 content professionals

About Kontent.ai

Kontent.ai's mission is to help the world's leading organizations achieve an unparalleled return on their content. In the industry's first AI-powered CMS, content teams plan, create, and optimize content and deliver it to any channel—quickly, securely, and flexibly. Kontent.ai is designed to support organizations with exacting governance requirements, often in highly regulated industries and with complex content value chains.

Want to see Kontent.ai in action?

Schedule a Demo

Tight permissions control all operations; enterprise-grade security and privacy keep content safe. With a demonstrated ROI of 320%, Kontent.ai customers, including PPG, Elanco, Zurich Insurance, Cadbury, and Oxford University, benefit from a measurable step change in how their teams operate, increasing content velocity, mitigating risk, and maximizing yield. Kontent.ai is a Microsoft partner, MACH Alliance member, and recognized vendor by Gartner and Forrester. Learn more at: kontent.ai.



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