storyblok

# Content-Driven Growth: What Manufacturers Need From Their CMS

From the State of CMS 2024 Series

STORYBLOK.COM

## What makes a great CMS *great?*

## Is it being the most feature-rich? Offering API-capabilities? Having the most integrations?

## Or is it more complex than that?

## To know the answer, you need to understand both content management systems themselves and big shifts in the way teams use them.

## You need to understand the state of CMS itself.

In the *State of CMS 2024,* Storyblok polled over 1,700 people across a wide range of industries. We heard from these teams on how they use today's content management technology to build a digital ecosystem that is the cornerstone for sustained success.

These global statistics are certainly enlightening, but they don't always tell the full story. Different industries have different needs, goals, and metrics of success. Naturally, this also means they have unique feelings about their CMS technology and how well it supports their ambitions.

In this report, we're drilling down deeper. **We've isolated the data set to only include those in manufacturing.** By heightening our focus to a single industry, we strive to make this data more valuable, targeted, and practically beneficial to those within it.

We hope you find it useful.

Sincerely,

The Storyblok Team

## Table of Contents

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. **Most respondents (47%) used 2-3 CMSs in their organization.** The leading reason for this was to **minimize delivery risk,** followed by **omnichannel capabilities.**

2. **Adobe Experience Manager** was by far the most popular CMS for the manufacturing industry – a stark contrast to the leadership of WordPress in the full sample.

3. **Reusability of content, future-proof technology,** and **collaboration features** were the top three most essential CMS features.

4. The most common pain point that manufacturing users experienced with their CMS was **struggling to add new technology,** followed by **security issues.**

5. **Easier/improved content scaling** was the top most sought-after missing CMS feature, cited by 36% of users.

6. **Lack of features** was the most common reason users migrated to a new CMS, followed closely by **security issues.**

7. **80% of users** in the industry have migrated to a new CMS in the past 3 years.

8. **85%** of respondents had more than one team using their CMS, though still experienced collaboration issues such as **poor version control** and **difficulty of non-technical users to make content changes.**

9. **100% of manufacturing users who switched to headless CMS reported improvements.** The most common were **productivity improvements** (experienced by 62%) and **increased ROI** (experienced by 60%).

10. The most common reason preventing respondents from switching to headless was **price** by a large margin. **Being too technically complicated** came in second.

11. Despite the above reasons, a separate sample showed that **80% of non-headless users were likely to switch to a headless CMS in the next 2 years.**

12. **AI-generated content** was the most popular content management trend that users were actively interested in, followed by **automation** and **AR/VR experiences.**

13. **56%** of respondents reported using **AI-powered content tools,** while **68%** reported having regulations specific to the use of AI tools.

14. Content AI is most commonly used for **content creation** and **editing,** but 36% of the sample isn't using it at all.

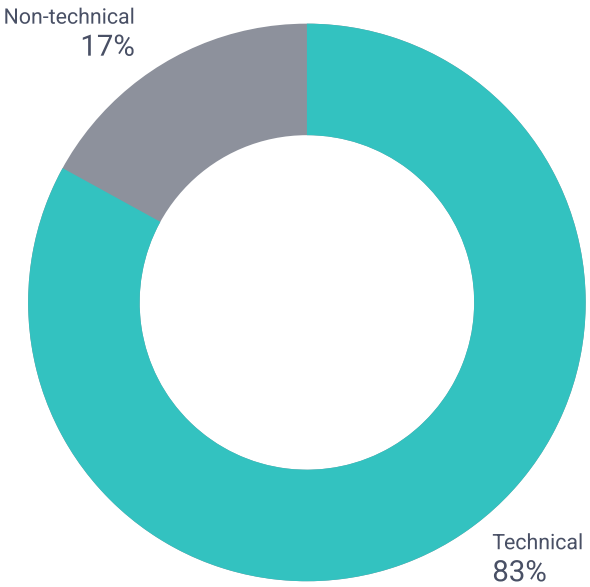
15. **80% of manufacturing users** see the potential for AI to help in some area of their operations.

# Section I: General CMS Usage

To fully understand how the manufacturing industry interacts with CMSs, we need to start with some basic information to establish a baseline.

- This sample is **83% self-identified technical users.**
- Most respondents **(47%)** used 2-3 CMSs. **34%** only used one.
- The top reason for multiple CMS usage was to **minimize delivery risk,** followed closely by achieving **omnichannel capabilities.**
- **Adobe Experience Manager** was the most popular CMS in the manufacturing industry, a departure from the popularity of **WordPress** in the full sample.

## 1 Do you consider yourself a technical CMS user (such as a developer, project manager, CTO) or a non-technical CMS user (marketer, content editor, sales)?



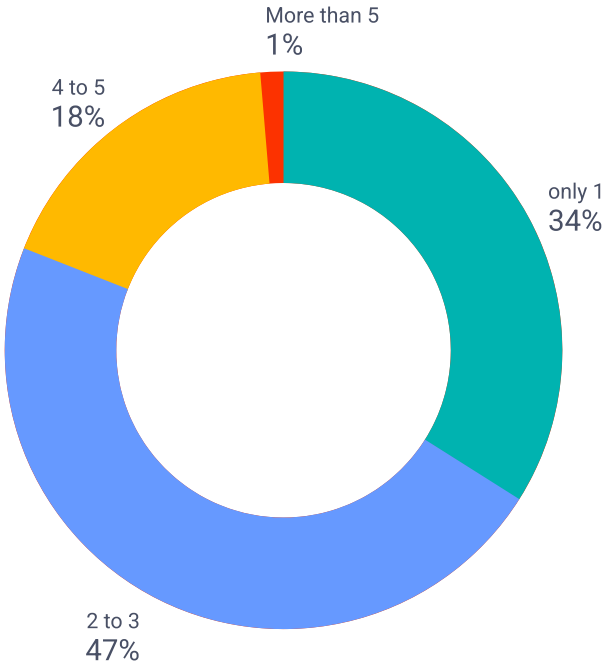

As the heart of content-driven organizations, CMSs are used by a wide range of users with different levels of technical skill. This difference naturally impacts how they use their system, their satisfaction with it, and the kinds of roadblocks they face.

The vast majority of respondents in the survey (83%) identified as technical users, with the remaining users (17%) identifying as non-technical. This helps add context to the responses in the rest of the survey, as **most of the answers come from users who consider themselves to be "technical".**

Despite this strong majority, these non-technical users cannot be ignored. While many monolithic CMSs used by the manufacturing industry (see Question 4) are designed primarily for developers, this statistic demonstrates that such an approach still leaves some users underserved.

In addition to creating frustration for those users, this can also cause inefficiency across the organization as it inhibits independent operation and collaboration between teams. **CMSs must be optimized not just for technical users but for those of all skill sets to ensure the system can perform to its full potential regardless of who is using it.**

## 2 How many CMSs do you currently use at your organization?



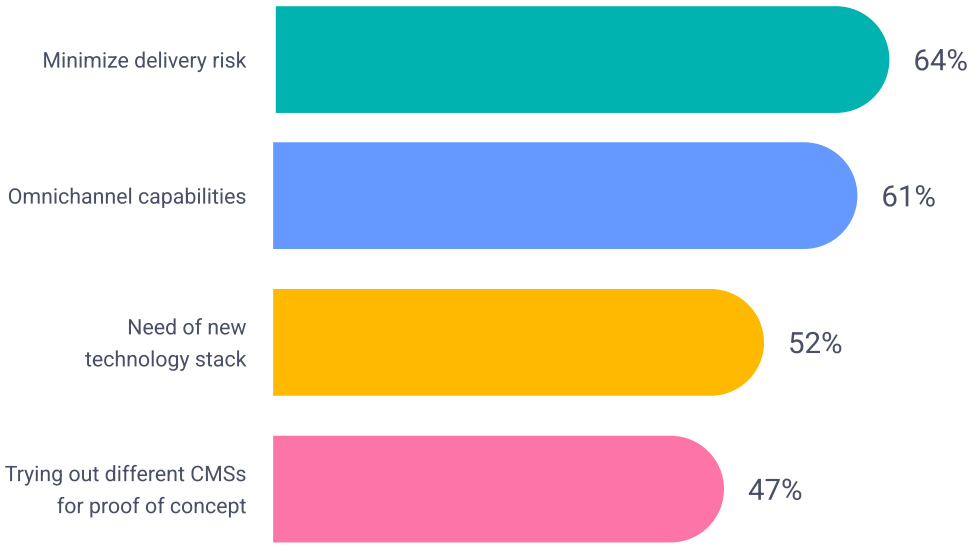

**Most respondents (47%) used 2-3 CMSs in their organization.** The second most common answer was using only **1 CMS at 34%.**

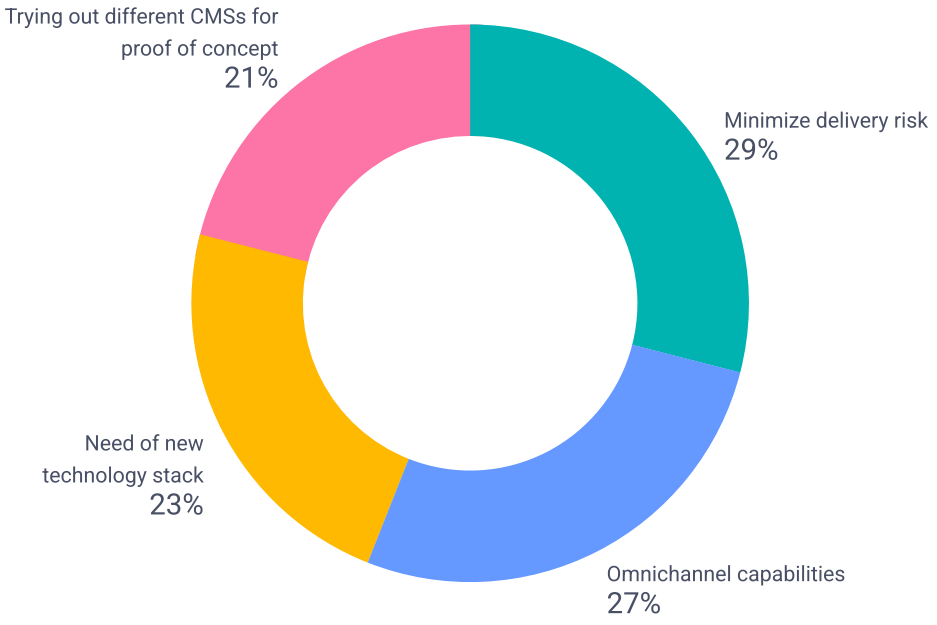
CMS

WORTH NOTING

**In the full sample for State of CMS 2024, only 19% of users used one CMS. However, the manufacturing sample here shows 34% doing so. This may suggest that the manufacturing industry prioritizes the benefits of centralizing content management from a single system more so than the general public. It could also be reflective of the comparatively lower number of channels used by this subset, a topic further explored in Section IV.**

## 3 If you use 2 or more CMSs, please select the reason(s) why:




We use two types of charts for multiple-choice data: bar charts (showing respondent percentages) and pie charts (showing answer percentages). Bar charts reveal how many users chose each option, while pie charts show how their responses compare. For a more detailed explanation, **please see page 51.**

The most common reason for using more than one CMS was to **minimize delivery risk,** cited by **64% of the sample** and accounting for **29% of all answers.** This could be from having backup systems in place or employing various content management systems to cater to different front-end needs.

Close behind was trying to achieve **omnichannel capabilities,** cited by **61% of all users** and accounting for **27% of all answers.** While omnichannel was not the primary reason for multi-CMS use here as it was in the main sample, the large number still means it is likely a reflection of the growing importance of a robust omnichannel strategy in today's modern content markets.

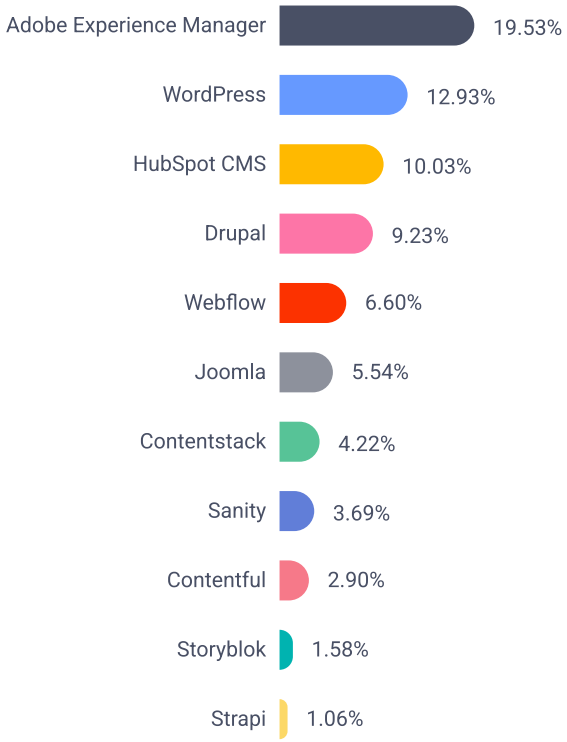
WORTH NOTING

Needing multiple CMSs to achieve omnichannel distribution is a uniquely monolithic problem, reflected here by a sample that greatly favors such systems. These CMSs are not designed for dynamic multichannel delivery: thanks to the backend being tightly tied to a single frontend, distributing content across multiple platforms is incredibly difficult. This data shows users are turning to multiple content management solutions to achieve this functionality instead.

However, attempting to build a single online presence with multiple CMSs comes with a variety of downsides including content silos, disorganization, inefficient distribution, fragmented user data, and inconsistent user experiences. Both backend and frontend users end up with a sub-par content experience marked by frustration and confusion.

On the other hand, headless CMS is designed to excel in omnichannel delivery because it provides a flexible and decoupled architecture that separates content creation and management from the presentation layer. **The very design of headless removes the need for multiple CMSs.** Thus, as knowledge of these capabilities increases, there might be a similar increase in the number of headless users who make the switch to achieve true omnichannel functionality.

## 4 What CMS(s) are you currently using?

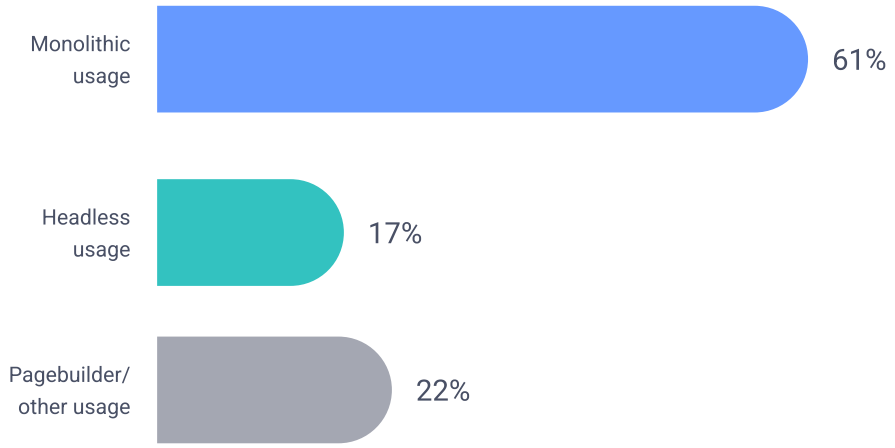



**The most commonly used CMS for the manufacturing industry in 2024 was Adobe Experience Manager (AEM).** In second place was WordPress, followed by Hubspot CMS in third. This brings into focus how the monolithic industry giants (AEM, WordPress, and Webflow in particular) have continued building on large user numbers from the previous years.

WORTH NOTING

**While the full sample showed WordPress as the most popular CMS for 2024, the manufacturing industry preferred AEM by an impressive margin of nearly 6.6%.**

These answers were then broken down into the major 3 categories for further analysis: Monolithic CMSs, Headless CMSs, and Others (page builders, custom solutions, etc).




Monolithic CMSs remain popular, making up **61%** of the sample. **Headless on the other hand claimed an impressive 17% of the sample,** an appreciable achievement for relatively new technology.

When compared to the main sample, the manufacturing subset showed quite the difference:

- Monolithic CMS: + 20%
- Headless CMS: - 8%
- Pagebuilder/other CMS: - 12%

WORTH NOTING

**As further explored in Section IV, users in the manufacturing industry were more likely to use fewer channels than the larger sample. This explains the higher use of monolithic CMSs and the lower use of headless CMSs. With fewer channels to manage, the benefits of a headless system may not seem as crucial.**

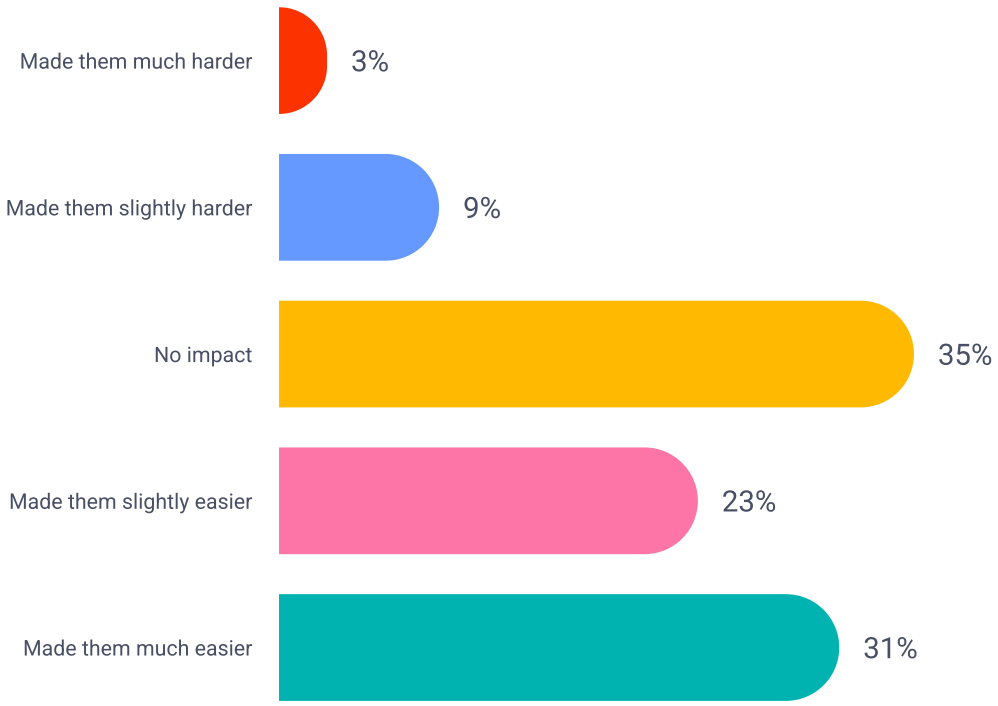
# Section II: Features and Pain Points

While CMSs have transformational potential to solve many issues for organizations, they're also not immune from presenting issues of their own. These can be a result of missing features that users need, unexpected underperformance, or even flaws with the architecture itself. Understanding what users value and where CMSs are falling short can help shed light on trends to come.

- **54%** of users said using a CMS has made their team's daily processes slightly or much easier.
- Despite being mostly traditional CMS users, the sample reported that the most essential CMS features were the reusability of content and future-proof technology.
- The most commonly experienced pain point was **struggling to add new technology,** followed by **security issues** and a **lack of features.**
- Users missed **easier/improved content scaling** and **omnichannel capabilities** in their current systems.

> WORTH NOTING
> **Very notably, these salient issues experienced by those in the manufacturing industry all came down to one common cause: the use of monolithic CMS.**

## 5 How has using a CMS impacted your team's daily processes?

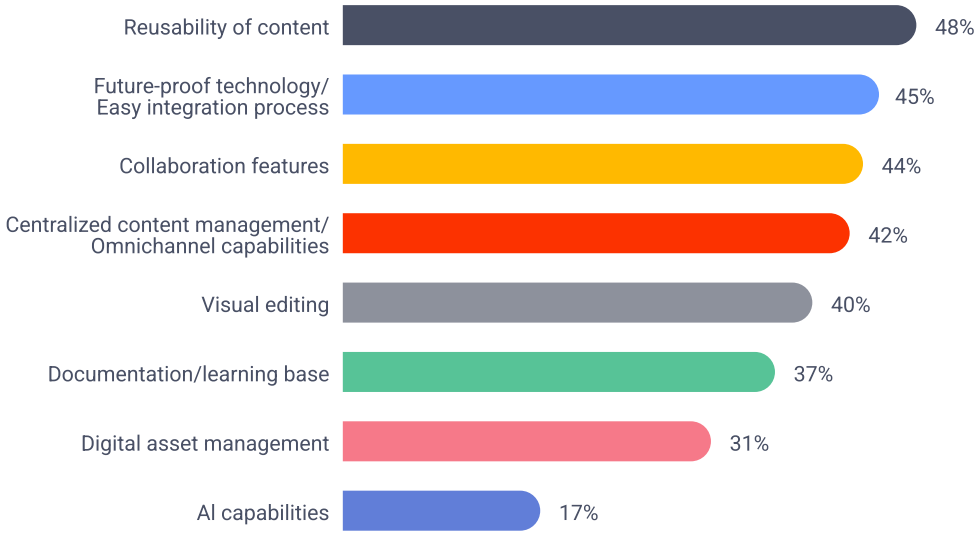


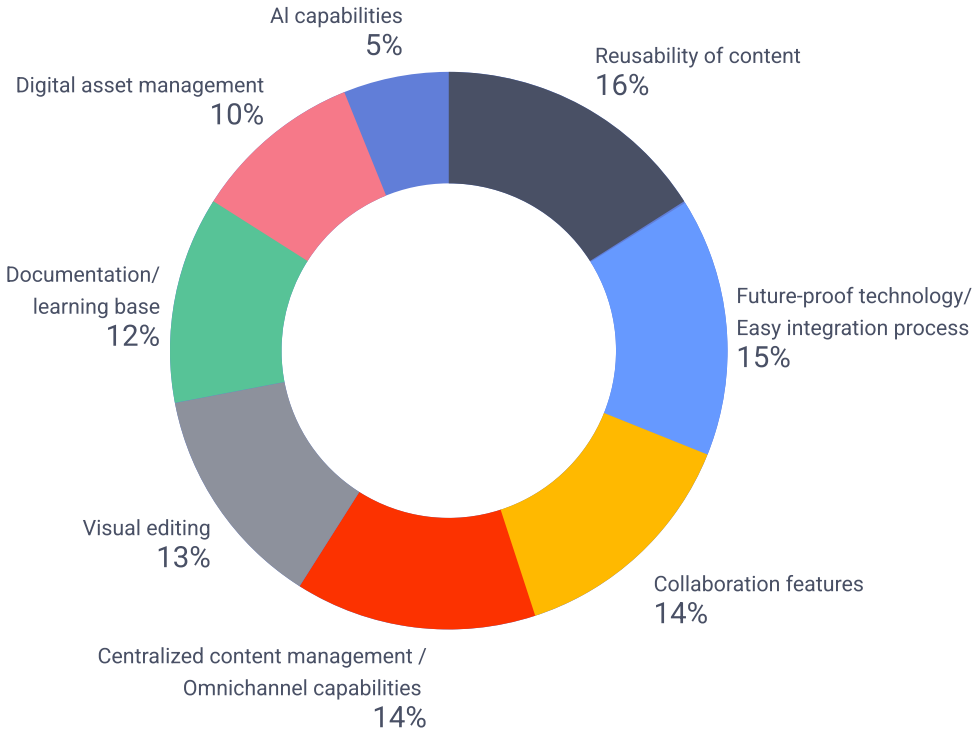
When applied correctly, CMSs have the potential to revolutionize how an organization operates. Thus, comparing the general ease of processes before and after their implementation remains an area of interest.

**54%** of manufacturing users reported a CMS had **made daily processes slightly or much easier.** Only 9% reported them slightly harder, and only 3% reported them much harder.

The next few questions will help to shed some light on why nearly half of this industry (47%) felt that their CMS was either non-impactful or even negatively so.

## 6 What CMS features do you consider essential?




**Reusability of content is the leading essential feature for the manufacturing industry, cited by 48% of the sample and claiming 16% of all answers.** Having content that can easily be reused saves time, resources, and effort for all teams. As such, it's not surprising to see that it's a highly in-demand feature for this industry.

The second most essential feature for manufacturing was **future-proof technology / easy integration process,** cited by **45% of the sample and claiming 15% of all answers**. It's easy to understand the benefits of such a feature: such flexibility allows for easy, efficient adaptation to changing technology and prevents companies from becoming stuck in the past.

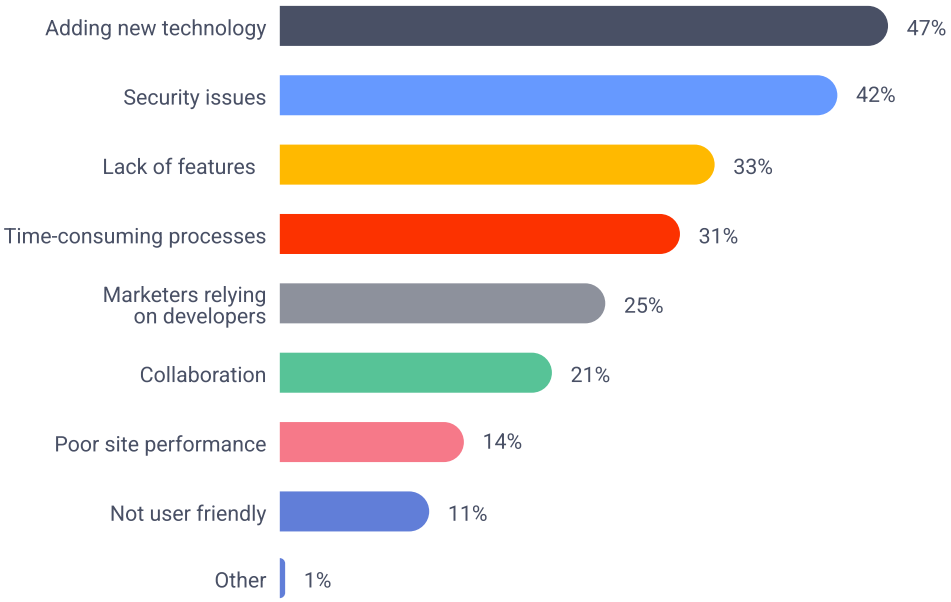
WORTH NOTING

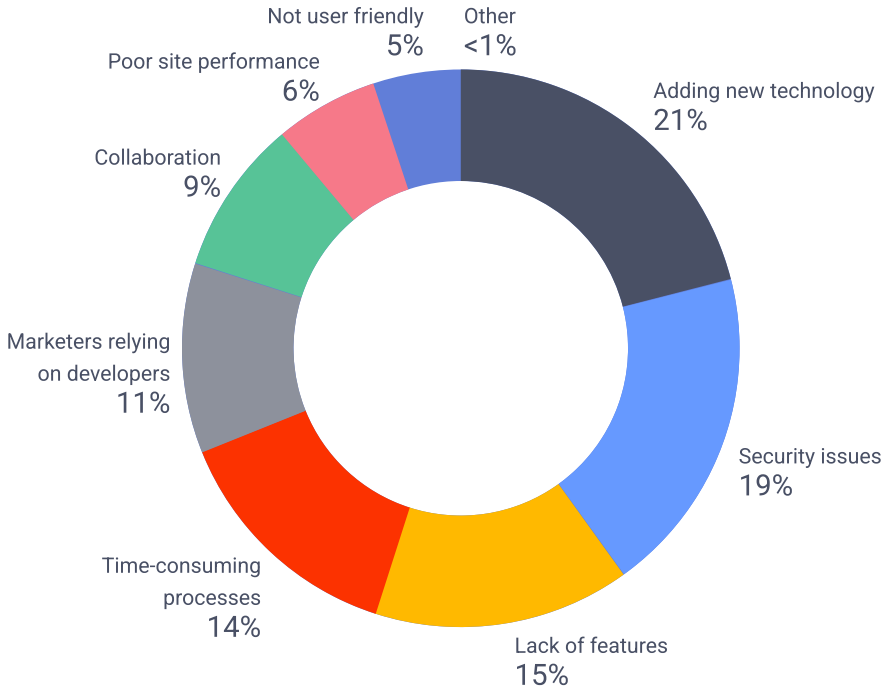
Combined with the data from Question 4, this answer becomes a bit of a puzzle. In this sample, the manufacturing industry heavily favors monolithic CMSs. Monolithic systems are by their very nature **inflexible and difficult to customize.** This automatically limits the amount of future-proofing that one can accomplish.

**Why then, in an industry where 45% of users deem future-proofing essential, did 61% of them choose a CMS that is largely incapable of doing so?**

The exact answer is unclear. However, it could be a sign of change to come. As more users find that easy integration and adaptability are not common in traditional systems, we may see more and more of the manufacturing industry turn towards headless solutions in 2025.

## 7 What pain points do you struggle with when using your CMS?




The most common pain point in the sample was **adding new technology, affecting 47% of users and accounting for 21% of all answers.**

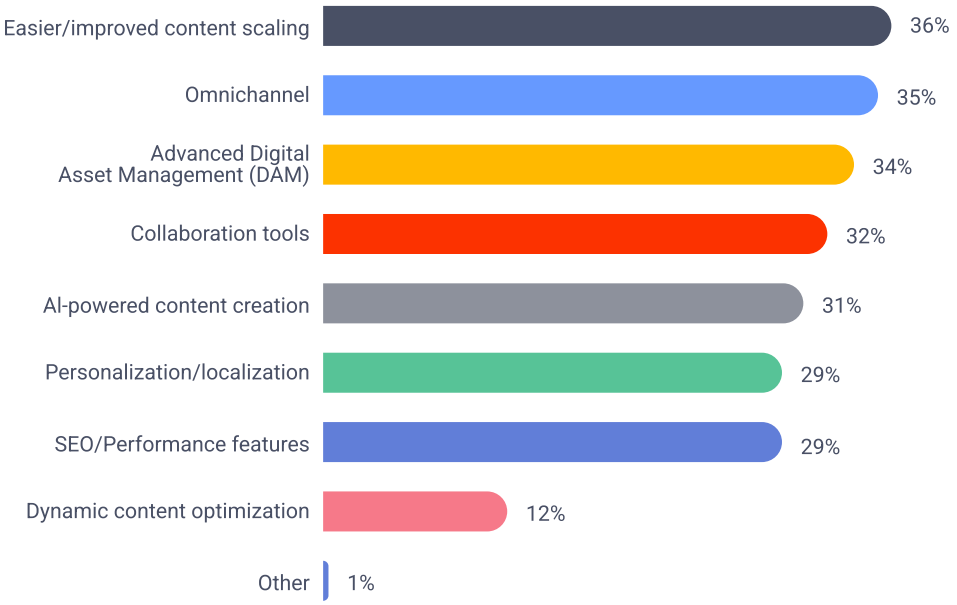
WORTH NOTING

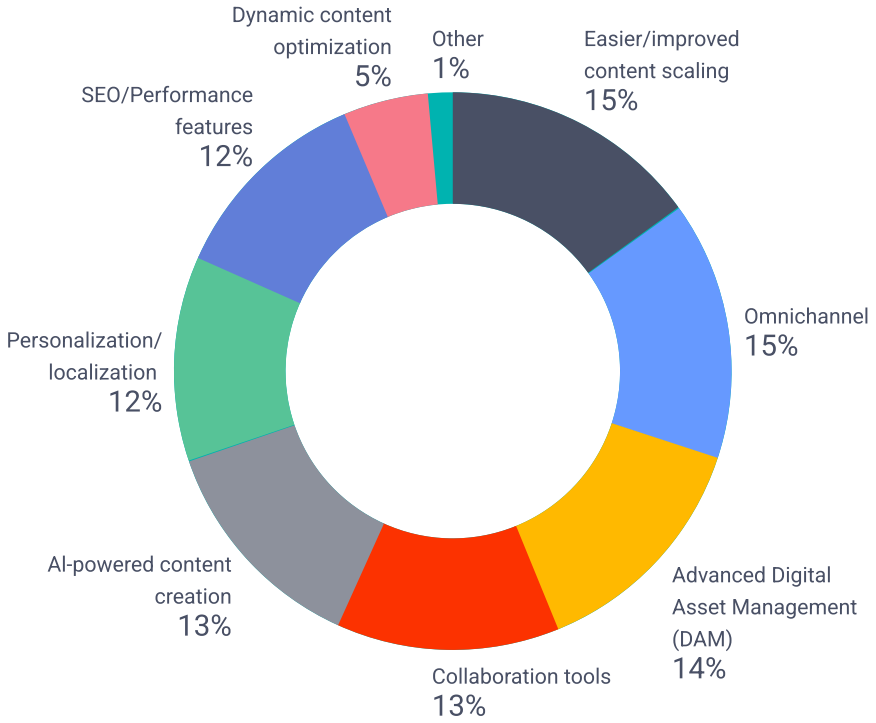
**This only adds to the issue from Question 6. The manufacturing industry highly values adaptability, but still struggles greatly with adding new technology. Yet they remain mostly monolithic users. As these pain points add up, it's looking more and more likely that the coming year will see this industry move away from monolithic systems.**

Just as with the main sample, the second most common pain point was **security issues affecting 42% of the sample and accounting for 19% of all answers.** Security issues are an omnipresent threat in the technical sphere. They carry huge potential damage to companies in terms of compromised user data, damaged reputations, and money paid out for ransom. Unfortunately, a large portion of CMS users still struggle with such threats. While these risks can be mitigated by choosing a headless CMS that has strong security features such as ISO 27001 certification, this has yet to become an industry standard and thus will continue to affect many users in the next year.

In third place was a **lack of features, cited by 33% of users and accounting for 15% of answers.** While not as prominent as the issue of adding new technology, this further supports the idea that monolithic systems and their comparatively basic functionality are on track to becoming less popular in the manufacturing industry.

## 8 What features are missing in your current CMS that you'd like to see?




The highest-ranked missing feature for manufacturing users was **easier/improved content scaling, impacting 36% of users and accounting for 15% of all answers.** It's an indicator that many CMS users continue to be growth-minded, and are seeking a system that will support that growth instead of inhibit it. Given how many users it impacts, it's also an alarming sign that scaling capabilities are still not where they need to be.

WORTH NOTING

**This could also be reflective of how 61% of this industry uses a monolithic CMS. While there are benefits to such systems – such as simplicity, quick starts, and affordability – one of the greatest challenges these users often face is difficulty with scaling. This is often due to several factors, including a lack of omnichannel capabilities and technological inflexibility.**

In a similar vein, **35% of manufacturing users (15% of all answers) also found the lack of omnichannel features** an issue. This is again a monolithic problem: with a set frontend and backend that are not easily separated, users must resort to multiple CMSs (and the problems they bring) to achieve omnichannel capabilities. Headless systems, by contrast, are designed to allow this as a native feature.

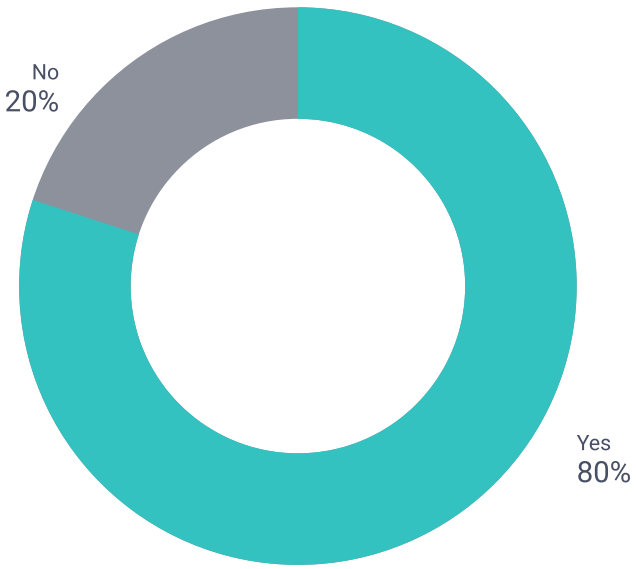
Finally, users were also missing **Advanced Digital Asset Management (DAM)** in their current CMSs, affecting **34% of users and accounting for 14% of all answers.** Especially in today's landscape where multimedia is paramount to the user experience, users need to have a system that can keep those multimedia assets neatly organized and easy to use.

# Section III: Migration

When a CMS fails to meet a user's expectations, migration is rarely far off. However, it can be a tricky process: there are costs to anticipate, roadblocks to tackle, and all the growing pains of getting used to a new system. Knowing the challenges that await users and the success rates of such an investment can help inform future migration decisions.

- **80% of users in manufacturing** have migrated to a new CMS in the past 3 years.
- There was a tie for the most common migration roadblock: **lack of technical support,** and **lack of content structuring know-how.**

## 9 Have you migrated to a new CMS in the past 3 years?

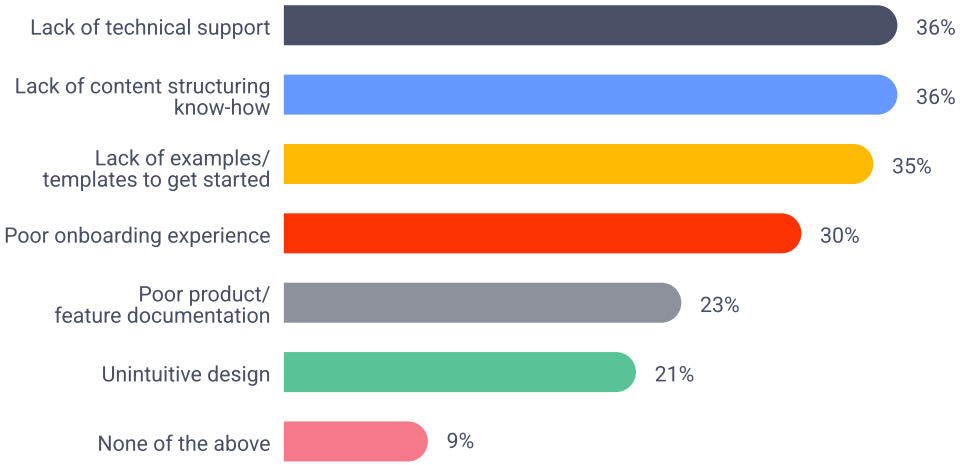


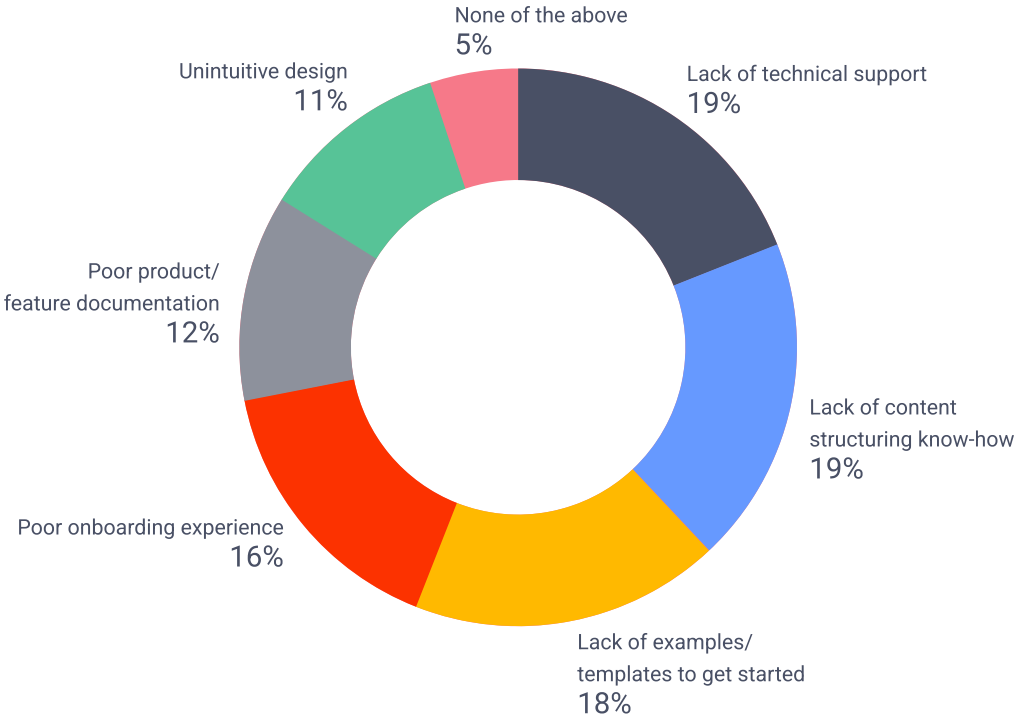

**A shocking 80% of respondents reported migrating to a new CMS in the past 3 years.** This is an indicator that when faced with CMS issues, most manufacturing users are willing to migrate to solve the issue.

WORTH NOTING

**The percentage of recent migration in the manufacturing industry comes in at 12% more than the full industry sample. This suggests that manufacturing users are more willing and/or able to move on from a system that doesn't meet their needs.**

## 10 Did you encounter any of the following roadblocks while adjusting to your new CMS?




There was a tie for the most common roadblock when using a new CMS for the manufacturing sample. The first was a **lack of technical support, cited by 36% of the sample and accounting for 19% of all answers.** This is an understandable frustration: even in a large sample of technical users, it's clear that getting used to a new system can require someone with product-specific expertise. CMSs that fail to provide this risk frustrating new customers, and given these results, this is an ongoing issue.

The other top answer was a **lack of content structuring know-how.** Content structuring refers to the systematic, logical organization of information for efficient use and management. Some consequences of this include disorganized/inconsistent content, poor information architecture, and limited use of crucial metadata.

WORTH NOTING

**While these answers generally parallel those of the larger sample, the lack of content structuring was a bigger issue for manufacturing users. This highlights that different industries have unique struggles, which directly impact their CMS experience.**

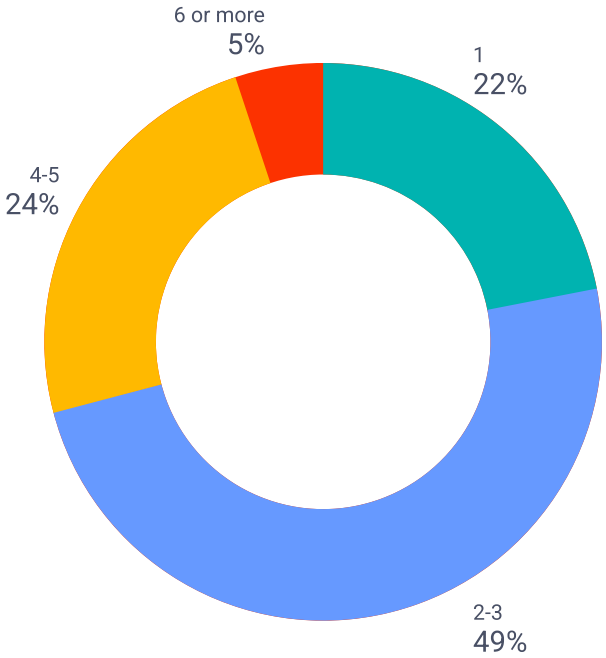
The second most common adjustment roadblock was the **lack of examples/templates to get started (35% of the sample and 18% of all answers).** Especially if users are acclimating to a new type of system – from monolithic to headless, for example – having a starting point can be extremely helpful. Regardless, it seems a large portion of users are still not feeling they have the guidelines they need for a smooth start.

# Section IV: Content Distribution Methods

CMSs come with a variety of different features, but content distribution remains a core component. Providing access to audiences across multiple channels and adapting to the required technological changes are cornerstones of how well a CMS supports its company.

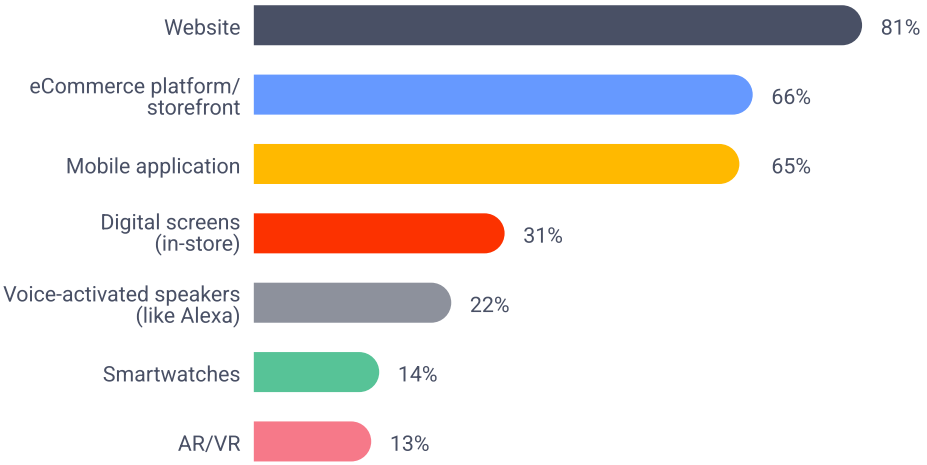
- Just **22%** of the sample served content in only one language. Most **(49%)** worked with 2-3, while **29%** served content in 4 or more languages.
- Websites, eCommerce platforms, and mobile apps are currently the most popular platforms for serving content - far more so for manufacturers than the larger sample.
- However, the industry predicts that Internet of Things (IoT) options will explode this year, most notably a predicted **46% more users embracing AR/VR.**

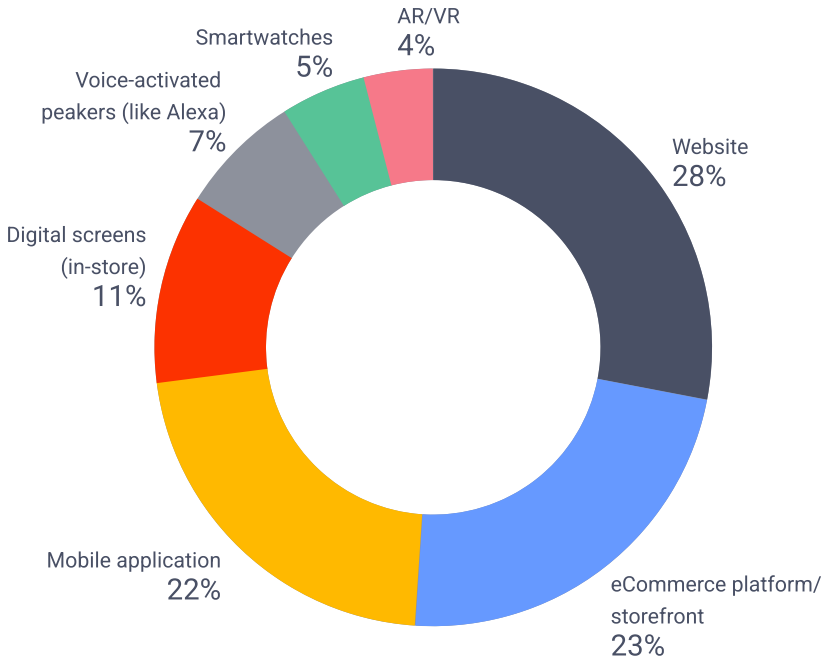
## 11 How many languages are you serving content in with your CMS?




Just under half of respondents **(49%)** reported serving content in 2-3 languages. Only **22%** of the sample was serving content in 1 language, while an impressive **29%** served content in 4 or more languages. This further proves the need for modern CMSs to provide customized omnichannel experiences as well as scaling capabilities like localization options and collaboration for multilingual teams.

## 12 Which platforms and channels do you CURRENTLY serve with your CMS?




The most commonly reported channels that manufacturers served with CMSs were **websites, eCommerce platforms/storefronts, and mobile applications** in that order. Given the obvious popularity of these platforms for modern organizations, these results are expected.

When compared to the full sample, **manufacturing users were more likely to rely on those three more traditional options:**

- Website: +5%
- eCommerce platform/storefront: +4%
- Mobile application: +8%

They also **relied less on the Internet of Things (IoT) options:**

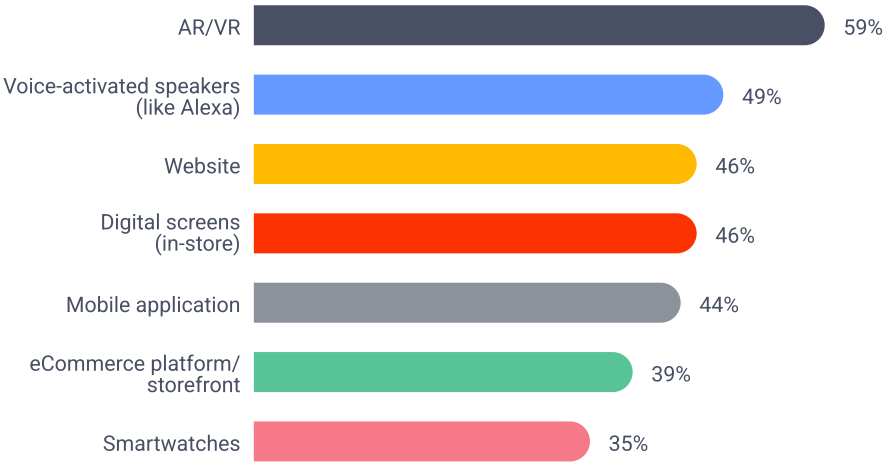
- Digital screens (in-store): -8%
- Voice-activated speakers: -10%
- AR/VR: -11%
- Smartwatches: -6%

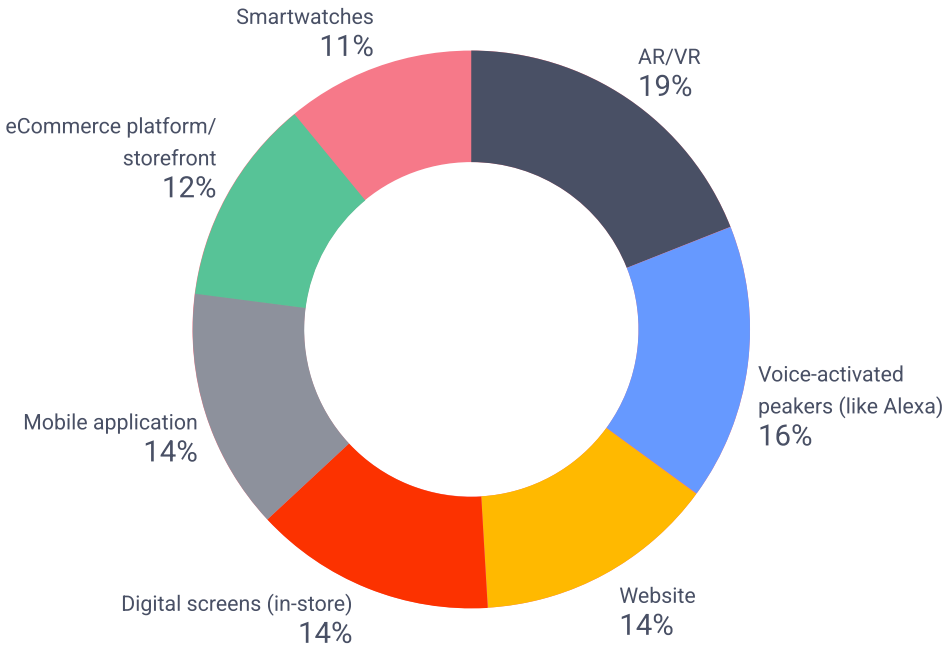
Nevertheless, this does not mean that the manufacturing industry does not need newer channels. Nearly a third of these users are using in-store digital screens, and over a fifth are using voice-activated speakers.

WORTH NOTING

**The relatively lower user rates in this industry may be more connected to the fact that most respondents reported using a monolithic CMS. Traditional systems are not omnichannel-friendly. This makes integrating different platforms difficult or even impossible, leading companies to avoid these options altogether.**

## 13 Which platforms and channels do you plan to serve IN THE FUTURE with your CMS?




Despite the previous question showing heavy investment in traditional platforms, the future for the manufacturing industry looks a lot different. Users anticipate that their website usage will **decrease by 22%,** with mobile application use dropping by **21%.** eCommerce platforms see the biggest decline, with a startling **27% fewer users.**

On the other hand, there's **anticipated growth in all IoT options.** In particular:

- **Digital screens:** +15%
- **Smartwatches:** +21%
- **Voice-activated speakers:** +27%

AR/VR will see the biggest increase: a shocking **46%** more users, going from the least popular current channel to the most popular future one.

WORTH NOTING

**This is further evidence that the future of digital content is omnichannel. Despite the currently high rate of monolithic systems, manufacturing users have clearly indicated plans to expand their digital presence. When considered alongside all the monolithic-specific pain points apparent in Section II, we may see these plans for different channel outreach materialize in the coming year as more users switch to modern content management.**

STORYBLOK OVERVIEW

# How Storytelling Scales

Storyblok is a content management system (CMS) that empowers all teams to create and scale modern content experiences across any digital channel. Build anything. Publish anywhere. Integrate with any technology stack. All with an easy-to-use, intuitive UI.


**582% ROI**
Per Forrester Total Economic Impact Study

**Customer Choice**
Award from Gartner

**#1**
Enterprise Headless CMS from G2

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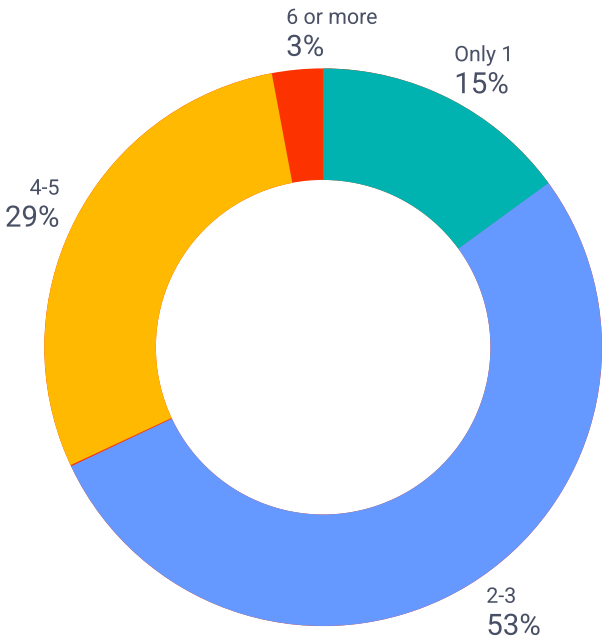
# Section V: Collaboration

Content management has become increasingly complex and challenging. While CMSs exist to streamline this process, they must also be able to meet modern collaboration needs. Users need to create, edit, and publish content efficiently through seamless communication and workflow tools. Any gap in the process can impact the entire content ecosystem.

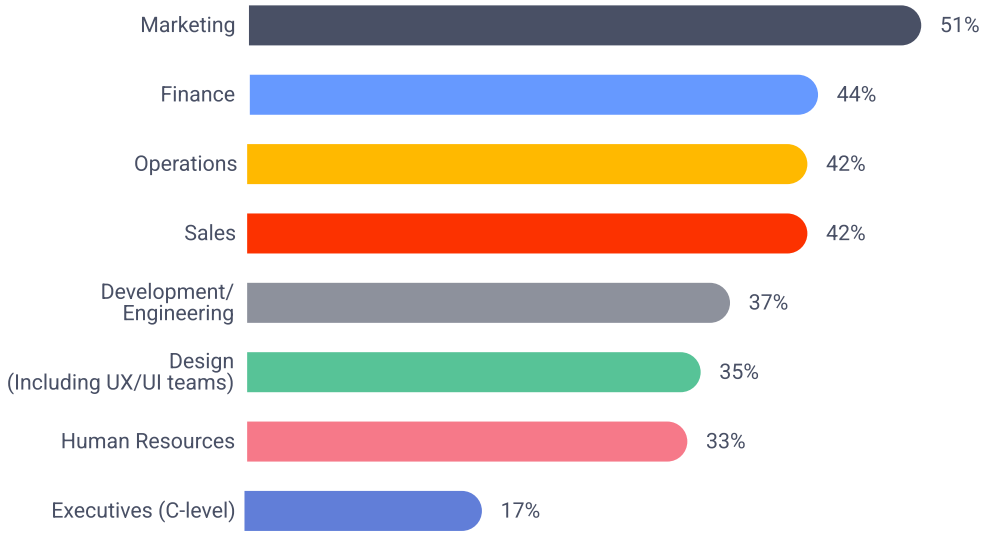
- The vast majority of users **(85%)** have more than one team currently using their organization's CMS. The largest group **(53%)** worked with 2-3 teams.
- Marketing, finance, operations, and sales were the most likely teams to use a CMS in that order.
- The most common collaboration challenge was **poor version control and change tracking.** However, the **difficulty of non-technical users to make content changes** was also a significant roadblock, as was **working across multiple independent platforms and migrating final content to the CMS.**

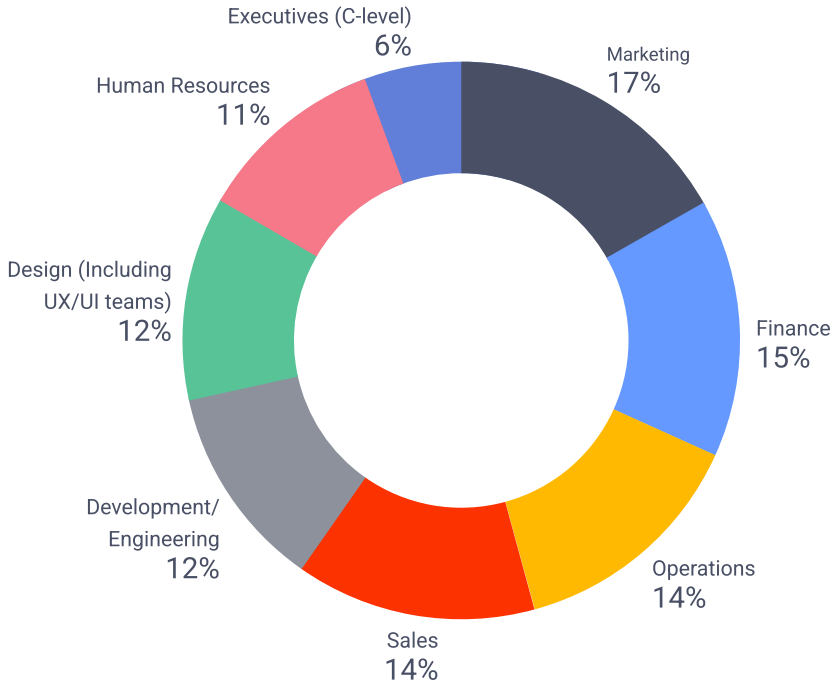
## 14 How many different teams currently use the CMS at your organization?




**53% of users stated that 2-3 teams currently use the CMS at their organization.** This is 3% more than the overall sample. The data highlights a trend of more and more teams participating in the operation of their organization's CMS. This is further evidence that such platforms should be intuitive and easy to use for all potential users regardless of technical skill. Modern content demands require multiple teams to work on projects. CMSs should be striving to meet this need.

## 15 Please select which teams are currently using a CMS at your organization:



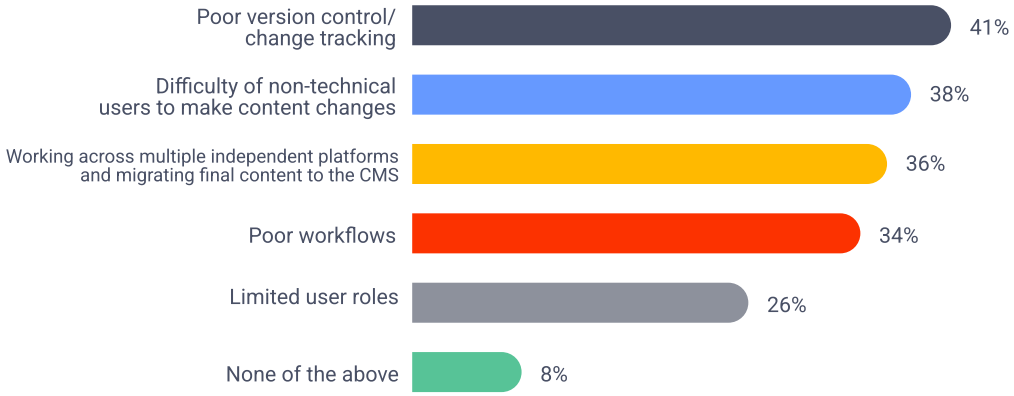

The top three most likely teams to use a CMS at a manufacturing organization were **Marketing (51% of all users), Finance (44%), and a tie between Operations/Sales (42% each).**

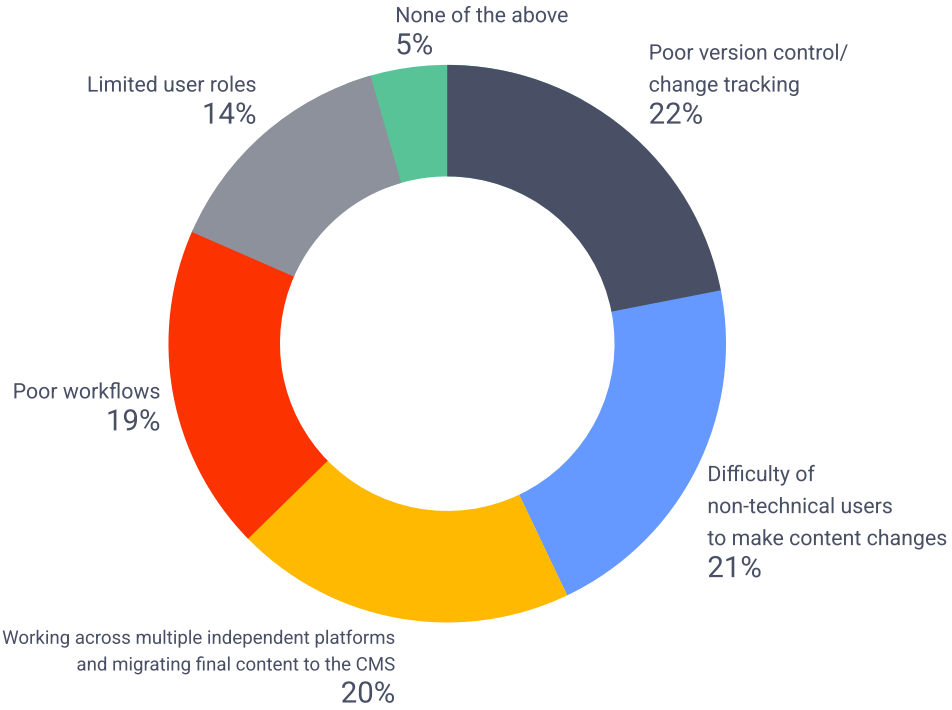
While Development/Engineering and Design were low on the manufacturing list, these were the second and third most common answers for the larger industry sample. Such results underscore how different industries have different CMS needs.

WORTH NOTING

**These answers also correlate to the responses from Question 4: In the larger sample, there were more headless users, which provides more technical freedom and thus allows greater developer involvement. However, in the manufacturing sample, we saw a much larger proportion of monolithic systems. As such, it makes sense that less technical teams would be more involved.**

## 16 What collaboration issues do you struggle with?




The most common collaboration issue that manufacturing respondents struggled with was **poor version control/change tracking, experienced by 41% of all users and accounting for 22% of answers.** Poor tracking and version control can be major roadblocks for content creators. They can lead to confusion over project progress, bad record keeping, conflicting publications, and an overall drop in quality. Having clear, consistent control over the content that's produced is essential.

The second most common collaboration issue was **difficulty of non-technical users to make content changes, experienced by 38% of respondents and accounting for 21% of answers.** It's essential to note here that this sample was overwhelmingly technical users, meaning **roadblocks created by this challenge impact even technical teams.**

The third most cited issue was **working across multiple independent platforms and migrating final content to the CMS,** experienced by **36% of users and accounting for 20% of answers.**

WORTH NOTING

**The need to use multiple platforms likely comes from companies using CMSs that do not meet all their collaboration needs, forcing them to seek functionality elsewhere. This can lead to disorganized content, inefficient operations, and a waste of resources in needing to pay for services not included in the chosen CMS. It may also be a result of the decentralization that is a natural consequence in an industry that overwhelmingly chooses monolithic systems.**

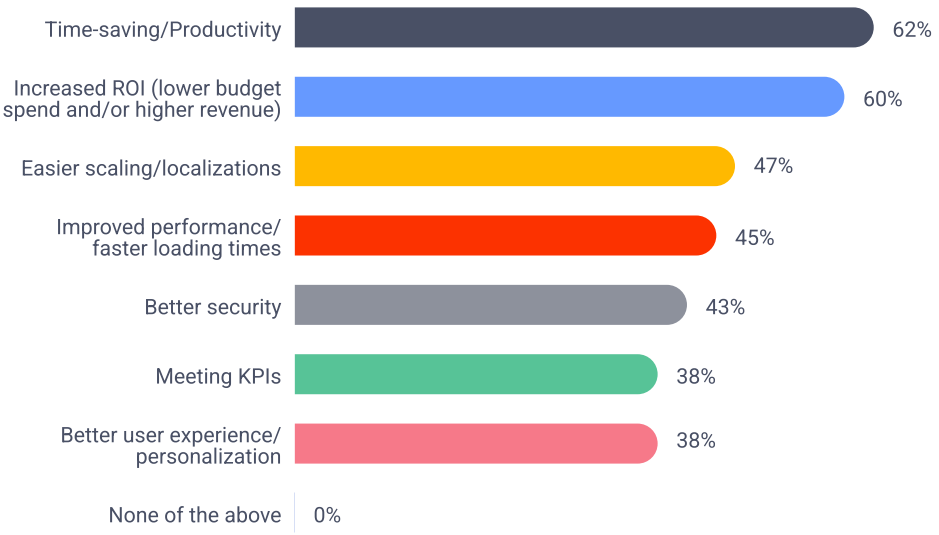
Lastly, only **8% of users experienced no collaboration issues.** This speaks to how pervasive such challenges are within CMSs as well as the importance of providers tackling such roadblocks.

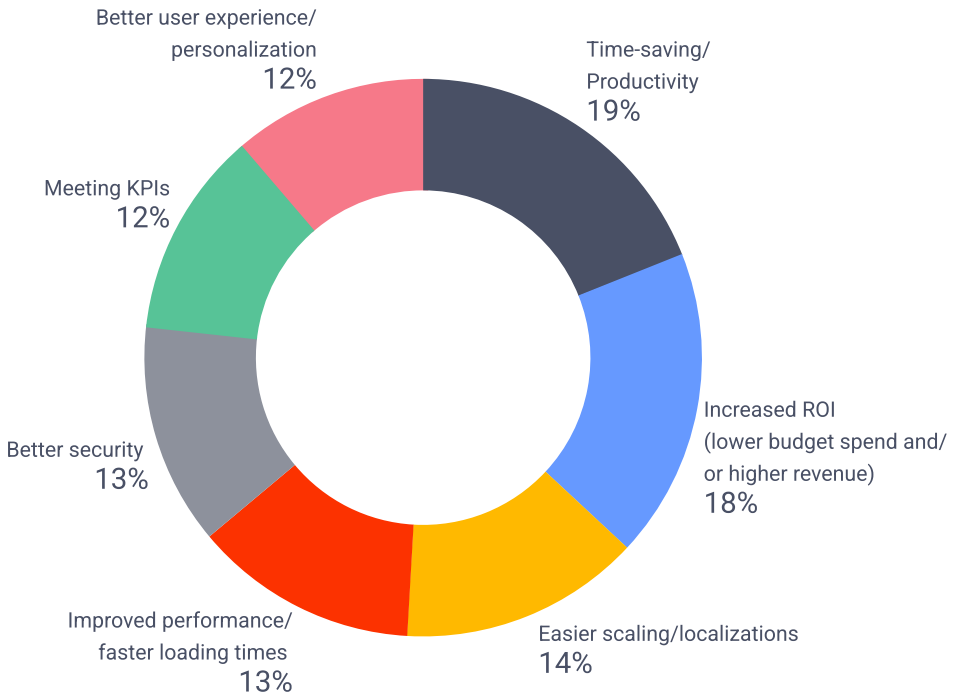
# Section VI: Headless CMS vs Monolithic CMS

As headless CMS gains more recognition, the differences between coupled and decoupled architecture continue to get more clear. Some benefits encourage migration, but at the same time, there are still valid reasons for resisting the change.

- The top improvements that headless CMS users reported were **time saved/increased productivity and increased ROI.**
- **100% users reported some kind of benefit from switching to a headless CMS.**
- The leading reasons for not switching to headless CMS include high pricing and overly complex operation - however, only 14% said that they didn't need the functionality.

## 17 Have you seen improvements in any of the following areas since using a headless CMS? Check all that apply






Similar to the larger sample, respondents in manufacturing who switched to using a headless CMS reported a wide variety of advantages. The most prominent was a high amount of **time-saved and productivity improvements, experienced by 62% of users and accounting for 19% of answers.** An efficient CMS can benefit every area of operation: easier and faster scaling, reusing consistent content, faster development cycles, choosing any technology and integrating it seamlessly, enhanced user experiences, and so on.

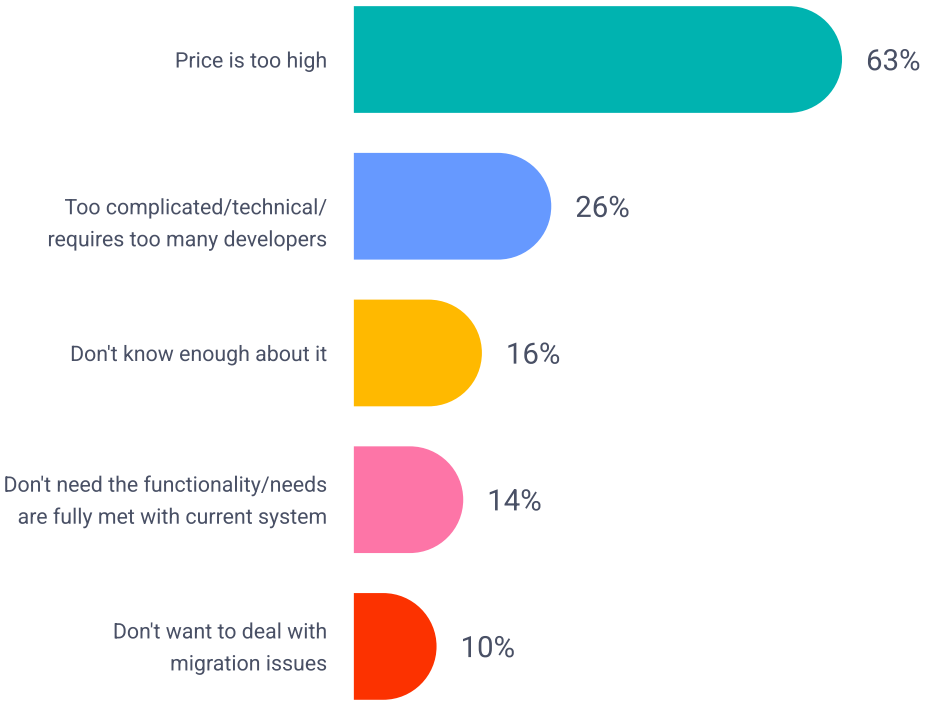
Moreover, saved time can translate into saved funds, perhaps impacting the number of users who saw **increased ROI:** as the second most common answer, this was experienced by **60% of users and accounted for 18% of answers.**

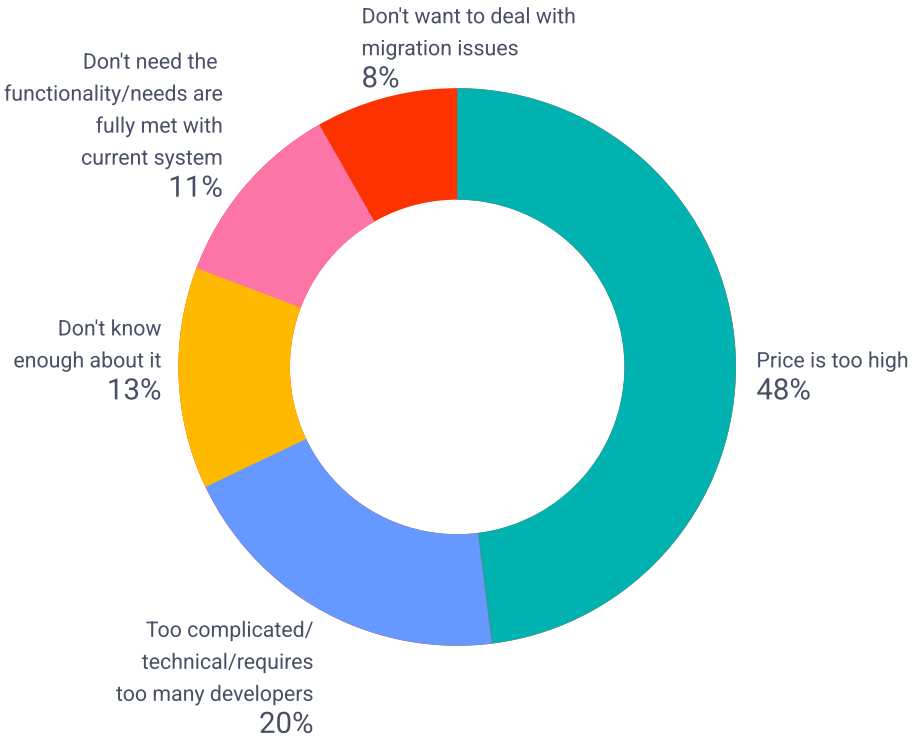
The benefits of lower budget spend and/or higher revenue are as obvious as they are valuable. This fact is important to consider for users who are cautious about migrating to headless thanks to cost. It proves that despite the wide usage of monolithic systems in the industry, **headless can be a successful financial investment for those in manufacturing.**

WORTH NOTING

**Zero users responded "none of the above" – meaning of all the manufacturing users who switched to headless, every single one experienced some kind of benefit.**

## 18 Why isn't your organization using a headless CMS?




The users who aren't currently using a headless CMS provided a wide variety of reasons stopping them. Manufacturing users cited the same reasons as the overall sample but with a far greater emphasis on cost. **The leading reason for not using headless by a wide margin was price, stated by 63% of users and accounting for 48% of all answers.**

WORTH NOTING

**Headless systems offer complex functionality that is simply unachievable with traditional monolithic systems. They also require developers with the proper expertise. These aspects generally lead to a higher price tag. While these costs support functionality that can provide next-generation digital experiences, it is also understandably a barrier to some organizations, especially smaller ones with more limited resources.**

The second most common reason was that headless is **too complicated/technical/requires too many developers, affecting 26% of users and accounting for 20% of all answers.** This is also understandable: if an organization has limited enough operations that it does not require advanced features such as omnichannel publishing and agile technological adoption with best-of-breed construction, it will not want to invest in the required resources to achieve these with a headless system. In this case, monolithic or page builder options often make more sense.

WORTH NOTING

Both of these roadblocks point to an important aspect: **as powerful as headless is, some users in manufacturing do not require such a CMS.** Headless systems offer many advantages, but they aren't the right solution for everyone, including companies without the scale and size that would provide the budget and staff to properly implement it. **This emphasizes that the most important aspect when choosing a CMS is not necessarily its construction, but rather how good of a fit it is for the specific searching user.**

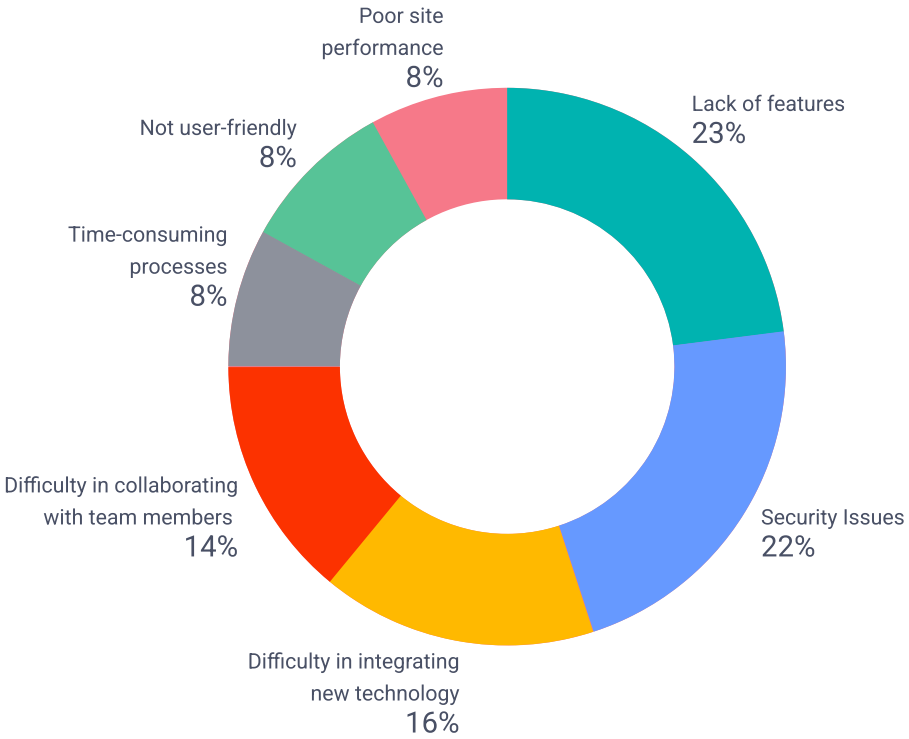
Not knowing enough about headless was a remarkably small roadblock for the manufacturing industry: the percentage of those in manufacturing who didn't know enough about headless was roughly half that of the main sample. This suggests users in this industry are better informed about headless. Nevertheless, they still reported this as a larger issue than not needing the functionality. **As such, we can assume that many in manufacturing see the potential that headless can offer but are wary of the practical challenges that it can present.**

# Addendum A: Expanding Our Scope

In addition to the main survey data presented here, we also went beyond to dig a little deeper into some of those answers. We presented them to a separate data set to ensure a diverse representation. However, to demark this difference in sample groups, these questions are separated into their own section: **Addendum A.** Please consider these results alongside those in the main survey for a richer understanding of the state of CMS for manufacturing in 2024.

*Addendum A Sample: 140 respondents*

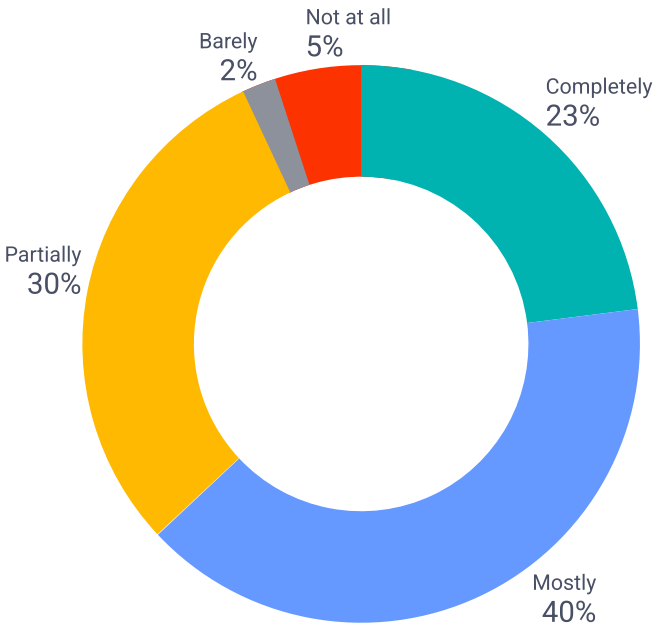
## 19 What were the main pain points and/or missing features that made you migrate to another platform?




While we covered pain points that users struggle with in Section II, we wanted to dig deeper into how those impacted migration with this sample. Migration is often a complex undertaking with many motivators behind it – and in the manufacturing industry specifically, a very common occurrence.

However, some factors may be more influential than others. To focus on this perspective, we featured the chart with the percentage of answers here. The three leading pain points in general **– adding new technology, security issues, and lack of features** – are also leading reasons for migration, though in slightly different proportions. The fact that they persist across a different sample and a slightly different use case signals the importance of CMSs addressing such pain points as quickly as possible.

## 20 Were these pain points resolved by switching?



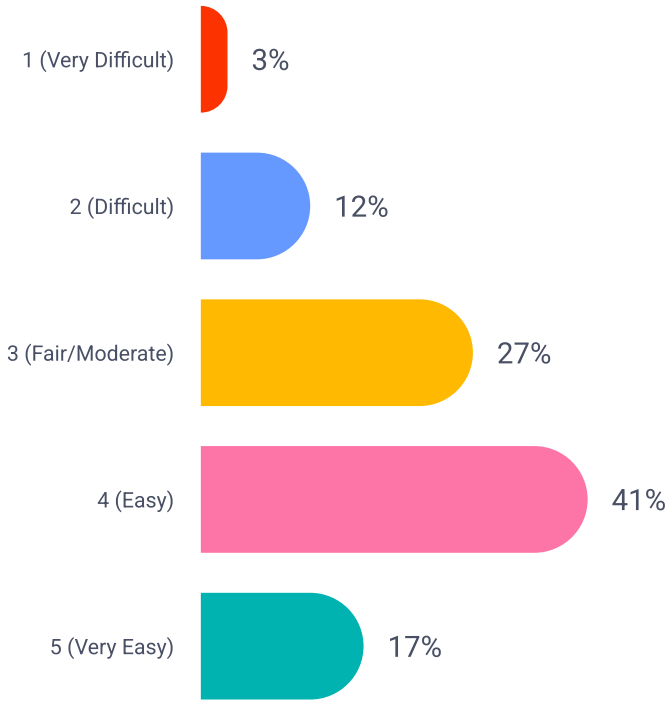

While migrating is often the solution to an ill-fitting CMS, it's unfortunately not guaranteed to solve all issues. In this sample, the results are encouraging: **switching to a new system solved all issues for 23% of users, and most issues for 40%.**

The percentage of manufacturing users who went through the process of migration to only achieve a partial solution was **37%** – a disappointing 17% higher than the general sample. This combined with the strikingly high rate of migration in the industry emphasizes how important it is to closely research options before making the move.

WORTH NOTING

**This is also a further suggestion that with many companies in manufacturing using a monolithic approach, there may be a wider industry issue with using a traditional CMS in general rather than with whatever individual CMS each organization is migrating away from.**

## 21 How easy was it to start using your new CMS? (1 being very difficult and 5 being very easy)




Users generally had a fair or easy time adjusting to their new CMS, with 27% citing it as moderate and 58% citing it as easy or very easy. **Only 15% found it difficult or very difficult.** This is an impressive testament to the advancement of quick-start resources that are making migration easier than ever and removing roadblocks for users to find their ideal CMS. It may also explain the large number of manufacturing users who often migrate CMSs. However, the presence of any users still finding difficulty indicates there is still room to grow.

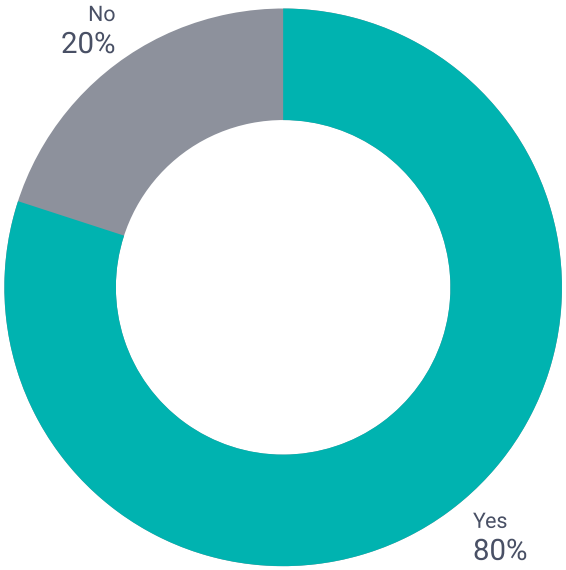
22

## A headless CMS is a backend-only content management system built from the ground up as a content repository. This provides heightened technical flexibility, future-proof architecture, and greater customization potential than a traditional system. Storyblok is one example of a headless CMS. Based on the above description, are you familiar with headless CMSs?


This question was provided to users who indicated they were not using a headless CMS. Of that sample, **53%** were familiar with the concept of headless CMS.

Just under half the sample did not even know what a headless CMS was. This is another sign that its user base numbers are impacted by a lack of general knowledge about the technology. When the high rate of satisfaction explored in Question 17 is also considered, **it's likely that as awareness of headless's benefits grows, so will the number of users opting for it.**

## 23 Are you likely to switch to headless in the next 2 years?




**80% of monolithic users in the manufacturing industry who knew what headless CMS was said they were likely to switch to a headless system in the next 2 years.** This is an extremely promising reflection of the benefits users have consistently seen proven by data in Question 17: more time saved, increased ROIs, better productivity, and easier scaling to name a few.

CMS

WORTH NOTING

**This is further evidence of the disillusionment that the heavily monolithic CMS user base is facing with the constraints of a traditional system. The pain points, migration struggles, and missing features are adding up: a huge percentage of users are ready for headless.**

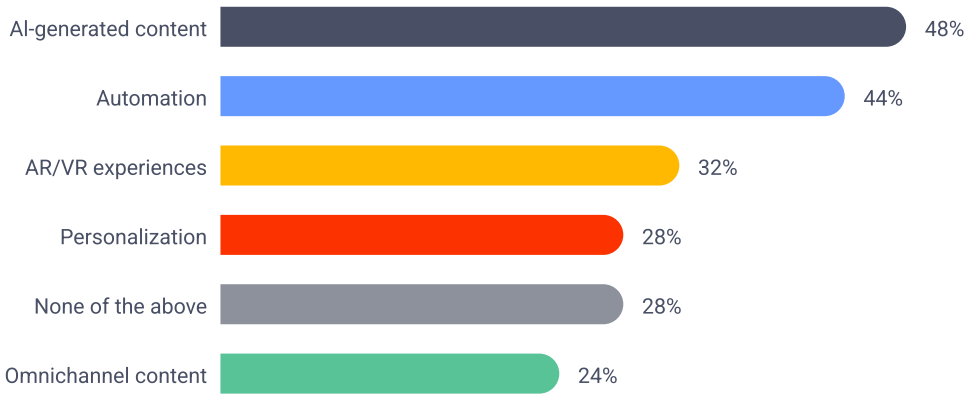
# Addendum B: AI and Content Trends

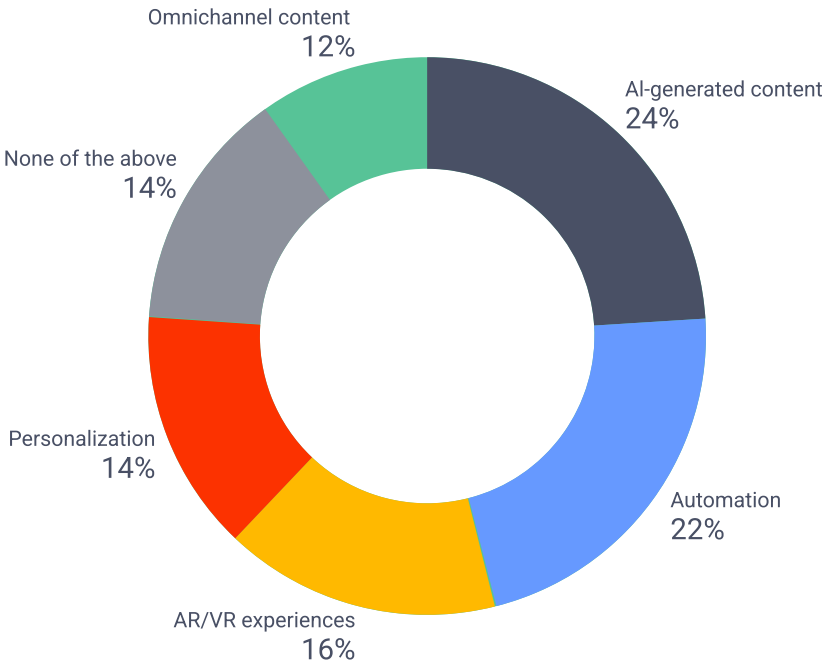
Intrigued by the responses to Question 8 in the main sample, we sought further information about the use of AI-powered tools in modern content creation. This set of questions was also presented to a unique audience and is here represented in Addendum B.

While this sample is relatively small, it still offers insight into the use of AI in the manufacturing industry today.

*Addendum B Sample: 25*

## 24 What are content management trends you are actively interested in / pursuing?



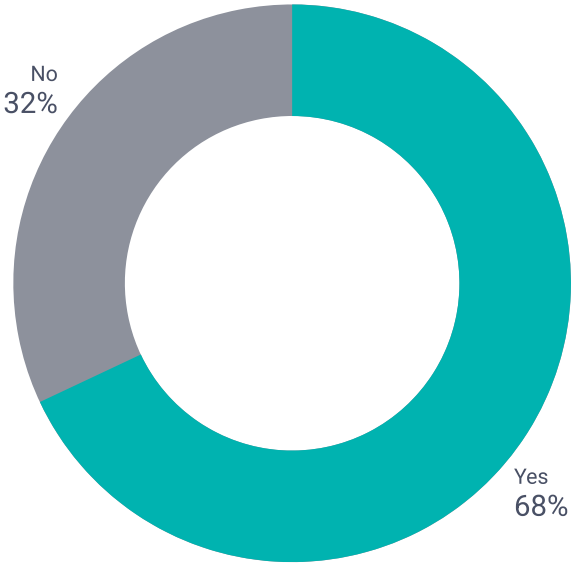



**AI-generated content** was the most popular content management trend that users were actively interested in, cited by **48%** of users and accounting for nearly a quarter of all answers. Content remains an important part of many manufacturing organizations' marketing strategy, and improving AI technology promises to help fulfill this need with lower costs and shorter timelines.

The second most popular choice was **Automation, cited by 44% of the sample and accounting for 22% of all answers.** Automating content management processes can increase efficiency while allowing team members to better apply their expertise to non-repetitive tasks.

Finally, third place was **AR/VR experiences,** cited by **32%** of the sample and accounting for **16%** of all answers. The ideal platform to deliver AR/VR experiences can expand to multiple channels and technology types seamlessly, highlighting the strengths of a headless system in the modern age and further suggesting a possible trend toward that technology in 2024.

## 25 Do you have official regulations in your business on how AI tools are used?



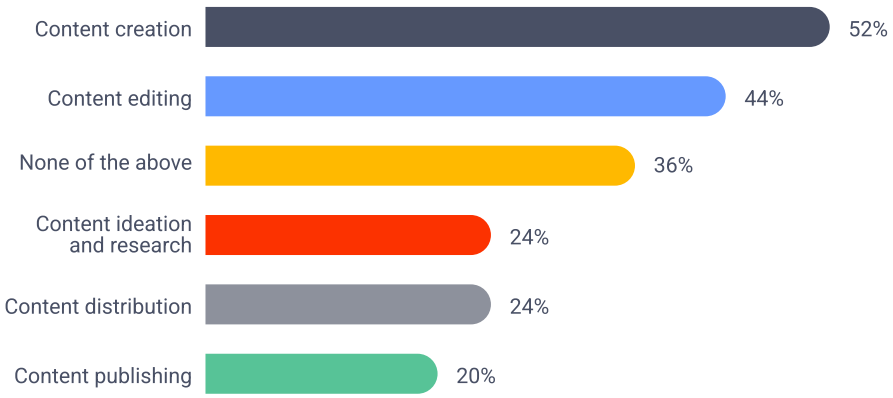

**A majority of the manufacturing sample (68%) have official regulations on using AI tools in their business.** As AI continues to rapidly develop, there have been concerns about how organizations can ensure quality and ethical usage. The wide-reaching implementation of standards is thus not so surprising.

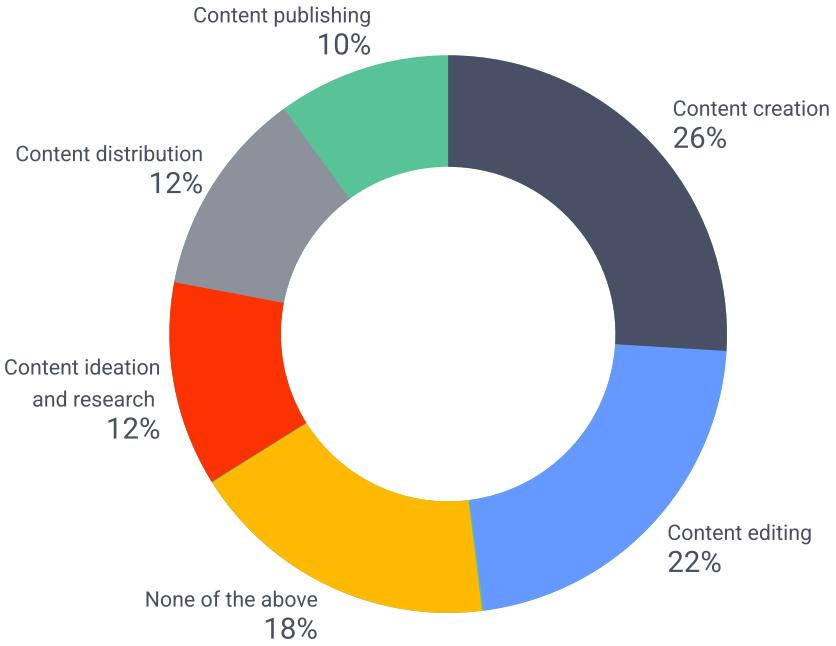
What's particularly of note here is that compared to Question 24, **20% more people have AI regulations than are currently interested in them for content management.** This likely suggests that AI usage is more widespread outside of simple content needs. It could also suggest that companies are preparing to use AI more in the future and are preparing regulations to accommodate this.

## 26 Do you use AI-powered content tools?


**56% of the manufacturing sample reported currently using AI-powered content tools.** AI has a variety of applications for content beyond generating entire pieces, the exact breakdown of which is explored in Question 27. This result emphasizes again that AI is a very present and powerful tool for most modern organizations.

## 27 Do you currently use AI assistance/tools in the following content areas?



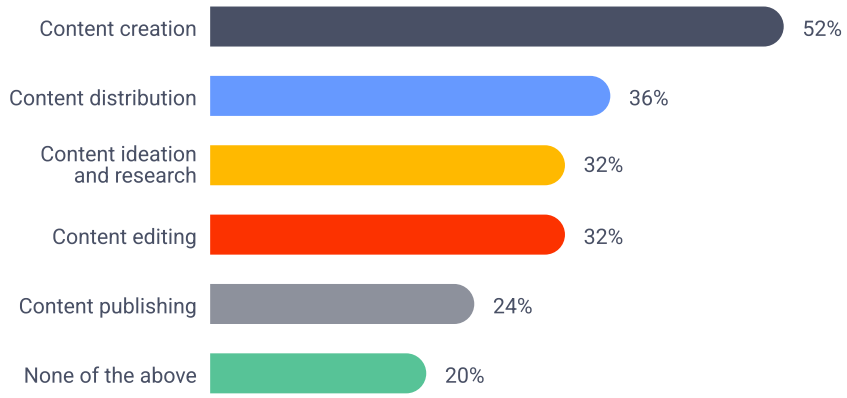

These results show a breakdown of Question 26. The most popular response was **content creation**, cited by **52%** of the sample and accounting for **26%** of all answers. This aligns with the results in Question 24, with AI-powered content creation being the most popular trend. It also parallels the results from the full sample.

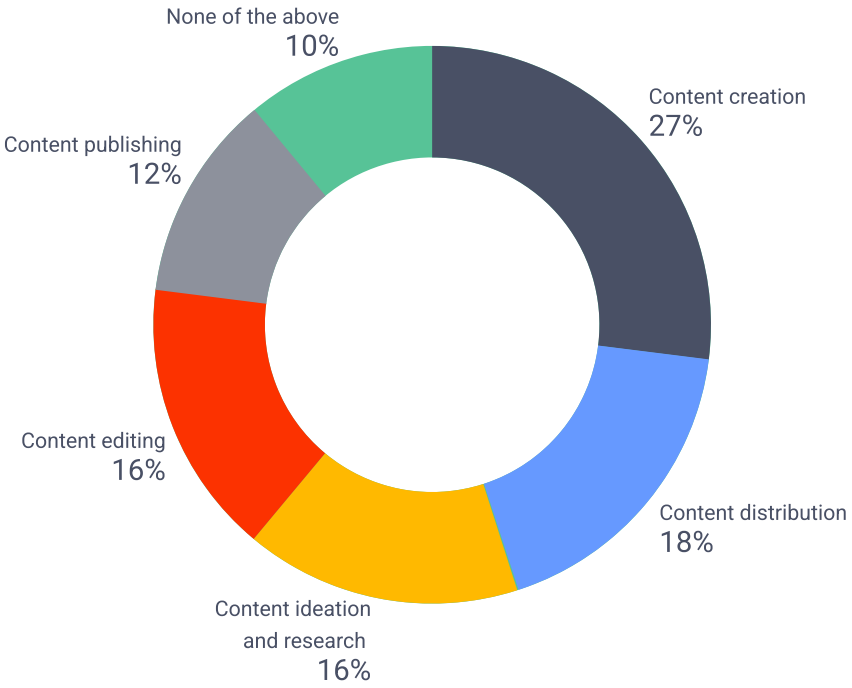
**Content editing** was second, cited by **44%** of the sample and accounting for **22%** of all answers. Editing has long been AI-supported with traditional spell-check tools, so it's not necessarily a new part of the workflow. New developments such as tools that can summarize, provide feedback on structure, and expand on existing content only enhance AI editing's value.

WORTH NOTING

**None of the above** was the third most common response, cited by 36% of users and accounting for 18% of answers. This is well above the number from the entire sample of just 14% of users. It's safe to conclude that when compared to other industries, **manufacturing is embracing AI at a slower rate.** This could be due to differences in industry needs, but it could also be a result of the heavily monolithic sample struggling to integrate the necessary technology.

## 28 In which of the following areas do you believe AI could potentially help?




This question sheds light on where AI usage in the manufacturing industry could be heading in 2024 and beyond. Over half of all users believe AI could be useful for **content creation.** There's also support for **content distribution (cited by 36%), content ideation/ research (32%), and content editing (32%).**

WORTH NOTING

**16% of people who are currently not using any AI still believe it could be useful in at least one area in the future. This is a strong endorsement that AI has the potential to help with content management in the manufacturing industry even if it has not yet attained widespread usage.**

## CONCLUSION

The world of CMSs is constantly evolving based on a huge array of variables. When focusing on how this technological whirlwind has impacted the manufacturing sector specifically, two seemingly opposed facts become clear: **manufacturing relies heavily on monolithic CMSs, and there is a growing sentiment within the industry that these traditional systems no longer meet their needs.**

Monolithic systems have their advantages – after all, there's a reason so many companies still use them. However, they also have limitations. And in an industry that values the ability to quickly adapt to new technologies and utilize omnichannel strategies, manufacturers are feeling these constraints like never before.

Future trends in manufacturing suggest that these roadblocks are forcing users to seek more powerful, flexible solutions. Users are excited about the potential that non-traditional channels and AI offer their companies. Considering both the capability of headless CMS to integrate these tools and the 100% of users in the sample who found a benefit to using such a CMS, it seems only natural that more companies will opt for this setup.

**Even if only part of the 80% who plan a shift to headless in the next two years commit, the manufacturing industry will see a significant shift towards this cutting-edge CMS tech soon.** These users are looking for a more flexible and adaptable system that can meet their evolving needs and take advantage of emerging technologies. The industry is poised for a transformation towards a more sophisticated and modern approach to content management.

Simply put: **the future is headless.**

## Building Our Sample

To ensure we were studying a sample with adequately informed users, we provided potential respondents with two screening questions:

- Which of the following do you personally use at least once a week for your job?
- Please select the correct definition of a CMS.

Each had multiple-choice options. Users had to both select that they used a CMS and then select the correct definition of a CMS to proceed, which we defined as such:

- *"A software application that allows users to build and manage a website without having to code it from scratch."*

Finally, we pared down the sample to only users who indicated they worked in the manufacturing industry. This brought us to our final sample size for the main report: **144.**

## A Note On Data Presentation

We've opted to display multiple-choice question data in two forms this year: bar charts **(percent of respondents)** and pie charts **(percent of answers).**

**The bar charts are calculated based on percentage of respondents. This shows what percentage of the sample selects any one option. As such, the numbers will not add up to 100%.**

WHAT THIS TELLS YOU:

**How users feel about multiple-choice responses without reference to others**

**The pie charts are calculated based on the percentage of answers. Because our multiple-choice options allow more than one response, there will be more answers than users. We calculate the pie charts based on the number of responses for each multiple-choice question in relation to every other question's response.**

WHAT THIS TELLS YOU:

**How multiple-choice responses compare to each other**

Rest assured that both charts are based on the **same data.** It's just a different way of looking at things depending on what's important to you and your company.

## ABOUT STORYBLOK

Storyblok is a next-generation content management system (CMS) that helps businesses engage modern audiences more efficiently and effectively by unleashing their content operations at every stage of the content lifecycle. As a cloud-native headless CMS, Storyblok enables developers to build standout content experiences faster by working off their preferred technology, developing faster with our powerful APIs, and easily extending their CMS with any third-party solution. Storyblok's intuitive visual editing experience, robust content management solutions, and omnichannel publishing capabilities empower marketers and creatives to drive global, personalized marketing strategies across all channels.

Storyblok is the only CMS recognized as Customers' Choice in Gartner's Peer Insights 2023 report. See why at Storyblok.com

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