Storyblok

The State of CMS 2024

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 the wider trends that follow their usage.

You need to understand the state of CMS itself.

Storyblok has been shedding light on the subject since the first State of CMS came out three years ago. In a landscape where adaptability is key, understanding the dynamic relationships between user expectations, technological advancements, and the evolving digital ecosystem becomes a cornerstone for sustained success. It's essential to understand not only what people desire from their CMSs but also to figure out if the existing solutions align with these expectations.

The State of CMS 2024 features our largest sample to date, encompassing a range of industries, user profiles, and technological preferences. Building upon the foundations laid in previous years, our questions have expanded, our methods have evolved, and our determination to provide nuanced insights for users has only intensified.

We hope you find it useful.

Sincerely,

The Storyblok Team

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1   **Most respondents (47%) used 2-3 CMSs** in their organization. The leading reason for this was to achieve **omnichannel capabilities** – it's 2024 and we need to stop thinking about web and desktop first.

2   **WordPress** remains the most popular CMS. Nevertheless, headless CMSs are on the rise and see an increase in usage from 2023.

3   **Collaboration features, centralized content management/omnichannel capabilities, and future-proof technology** were the top three most essential features.

4   **52% of users** reported that **visual editing** was an essential feature for their CMS, regardless of whether they were technical or non-technical teams.

5   The most common pain point users experience with their CMS was **struggling to add new technology,** followed by **security issues.**

6   **Easier/improved content scaling** was the top most sought-after missing CMS feature, cited by 43% of the sample.

7   **Security issues** and **lack of features** tie for the most common reasons users migrate to a new CMS.

8   **68% of users** have migrated to a new CMS in the past 3 years, while a separate sample showed that **57%** had plans to migrate to a new CMS in the near future.

9   **90% of respondents** had more than one team using their CMS, which may explain why collaboration features were rated the most essential CMS function.

10   **Over 99% of those who switched to headless reported improvements.** The most common were **increased ROI** (experienced by 61%) and **productivity improvements** (experienced by 58%).

11   The leading reasons preventing respondents from switching to headless were **price** and being too **technically complicated.**

12   Despite the above reasons, a separate sample showed that **74% of non-headless users were likely to switch to a headless CMS in the next 2 years.**

13   **AI-generated** content was the most popular content management trend that users were actively interested in, followed by automation and personalization.

14   79% of respondents reported using **AI-powered content tools,** while 74% reported having regulations specific to AI tools.

15   Content AI is most commonly used for **content creation, editing, and ideation & research.**

Section I: General CMS Usage

Before we can accurately understand the data we've collected, we must first establish a baseline of CMS usage among the sample.

- This sample is **87% self-identified technical users.**
- Most respondents **(47%)** used 2-3 CMSs. A startling **33%** used 4 or more, with only **19%** relying on a single CMS.
- The top reason for multiple CMS usage was to achieve **omnichannel capabilities.**
- **WordPress** remains the most popular CMS, but page builders and headless systems are on the rise as a whole.

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)?**

Non-technical
13%
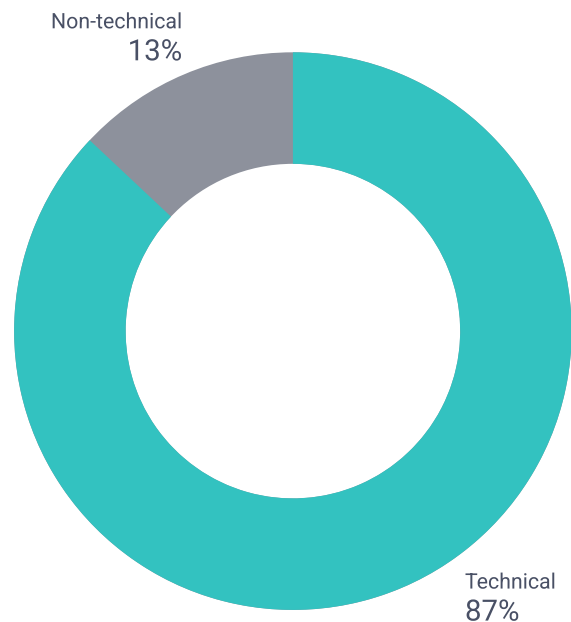
Technical
87%

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 (87%) identified as technical users, with the remaining users (13%) identifying as non-technical. This will help to 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 in the sample cannot be ignored. They represent similar users in the larger CMS user base whose experiences are just as important. While many modern CMSs are designed primarily for developers and technical users, this statistic demonstrates that such an approach still leaves some CMS users underserved.

> **WORTH NOTING**
> 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.**

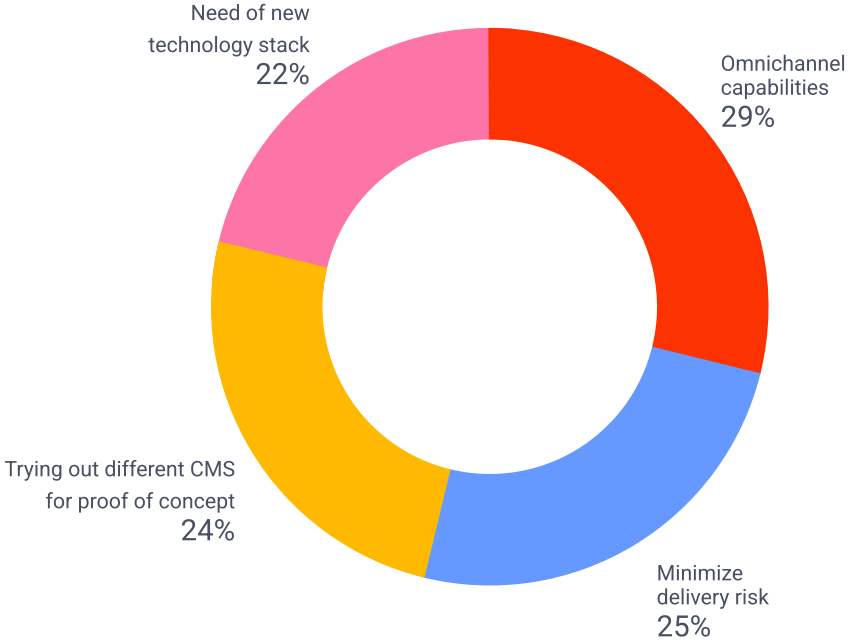## 2 How many CMSs do you currently use at your organization?
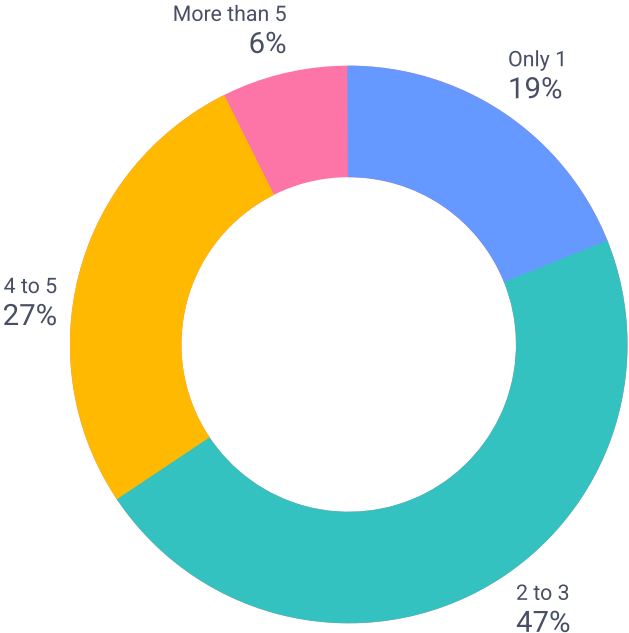
Most respondents (47%) used 2-3 CMSs in their organization. Surprisingly, the second most common answer was using **4 to 5 CMSs** at 27%, far above 2023's number of just 11%. This could be a reflection of the increasing demands on businesses to provide content to multiple markets in multiple different formats (websites, mobile apps, digital kiosks, etc).

Only 19% of the sample centralize their content management from one CMS. In fact, this number plummeted in the past year, falling 24% from 43% in 2023. This jump could be reflective of how organizations are struggling to meet modern content challenges and are turning to multiple CMSs to address them rather than centralizing with one system that can handle it all.

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

Ominichannel capabilities	67%
Minimize delivery risk	59%
Trying out different CMS for proof of concept	57%
Need of new technology stack	52%

Need of new technology stack
22%

Omnichannel capabilities
29%

Trying out different CMS for proof of concept
24%

Minimize delivery risk
25%

As technology continues to evolve, so do the expectations of modern customers. Companies must produce content that their audiences can access across a wide variety of devices, ensuring a consistent, polished, customized experience for each user every time.

As such, it's not very surprising that **67% of all users reported using multiple CMSs for omnichannel capabilities,** also known for delivering content to multiple different channels or platforms. In the context of the other options, this was **29% of all answers.** This is a significant increase from last year's sample which showed the same answer at only **21%.** This is likely a reflection of the growing importance of a robust omnichannel strategy in today's modern content markets. It's especially likely considering the shrinking number of companies using only 1 CMS as pointed out in Question 2.

> **❗ WORTH NOTING**
>
> Needing multiple CMSs to achieve omnichannel distribution is a **uniquely monolithic problem**. Monolithic systems 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.
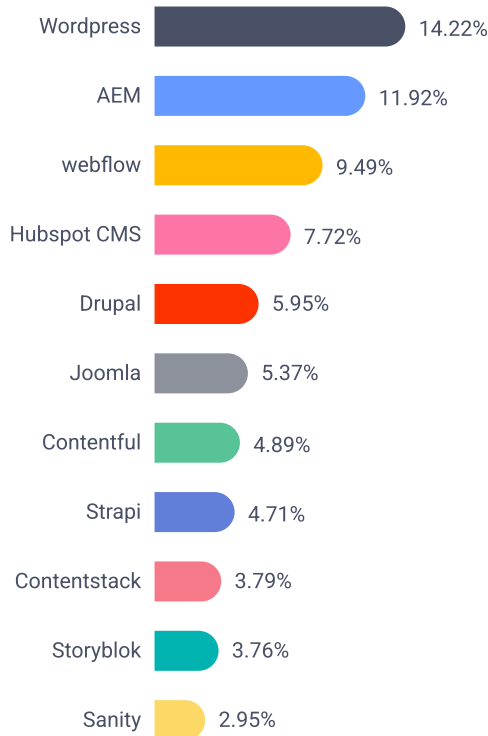
The second most common reason for using multiple CMSs was **minimizing delivery risk, with 59% of users** citing it and accounting **for 25% of all answers**. This could be from having backup systems in place or employing various content management systems to cater to different front-end needs.

The third most common reason was **trying out new CMSs for proof of concept**, from **57% of users** and accounting for **24% of all answers**. This further supports the fact that users are growing **increasingly dissatisfied with their monolithic CMSs and are seeking other solutions**. Migration is often a large undertaking, and it makes sense that users want to try a system out before fully committing to it.

Interestingly, in 2023, this option only claimed 13% of all answers. **This means people who use multiple CMSs in search of new solutions almost doubled in just one year**. This is a promising sign of movement between platforms in the industry increasing in the coming year, a trend we'll dive deeper into with Section III: Migration.

4 What CMS(s) are you currently using?

CMS	Percentage
Wordpress	14.22%
AEM	11.92%
webflow	9.49%
Hubspot CMS	7.72%
Drupal	5.95%
Joomla	5.37%
Contentful	4.89%
Strapi	4.71%
Contentstack	3.79%
Storyblok	3.76%
Sanity	2.95%

CMS usage in 2024

Just as in the State of CMS 2023, the most commonly used CMS platform in the sample for 2024 was WordPress. In second place was Adobe Experience Manager (AEM), followed by Hubspot CMS in third. This brings into focus how the monolithic industry giants (WordPress, AEM, and Webflow in particular) have continued building on large user numbers from the previous years.

WordPress showed the deepest decline when compared to the data from 2023, with an absolute decrease of about 3.78%. A large part of this can be attributed to WordPress's sheer size: as the leading option, more users may be interested in switching to other options.

On the other hand, there was an impressive amount of growth across almost every headless CMS in the sample compared to last year: Storyblok, Contentful, Contentstack, and Sanity all saw increases. Strapi was the only headless CMS to see a decline.

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 usage — 41%
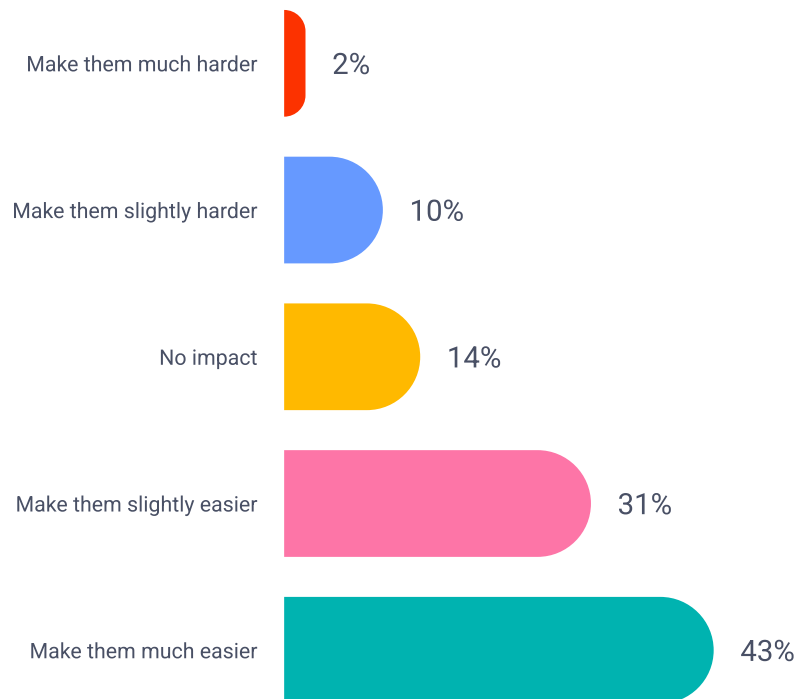
Headless usage — 25%

Pagebuilder/other — 34%
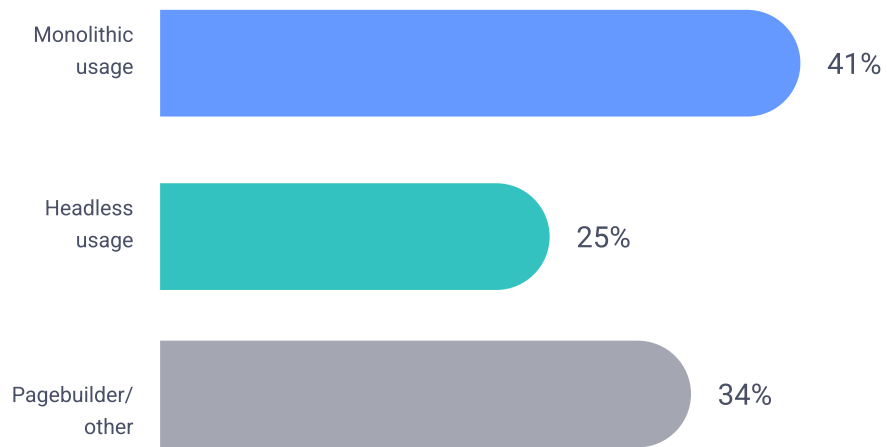
Monolithic CMSs remain popular, making up **41%** of the sample – but **down 7%** from 2023. **Headless on the other hand claimed an impressive quarter of the sample,** an appreciable achievement for relatively new technology.

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.

- **43%** of users said using a CMS has made their team's daily processes much easier.
- The sample reported that the most **essential CMS features were collaboration features, centralized content management/omnichannel capabilities, and future-proof technology**.
- The most commonly experienced pain point was **struggling to add new technology,** followed by **security issues.**
- Users missed **easier/improved content scaling, advanced digital asset management,and collaboration tools** in their current systems and would like to see improvements.

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

Make them much harder — 2%
Make them slightly harder — 10%
No impact — 14%
Make them slightly easier — 31%
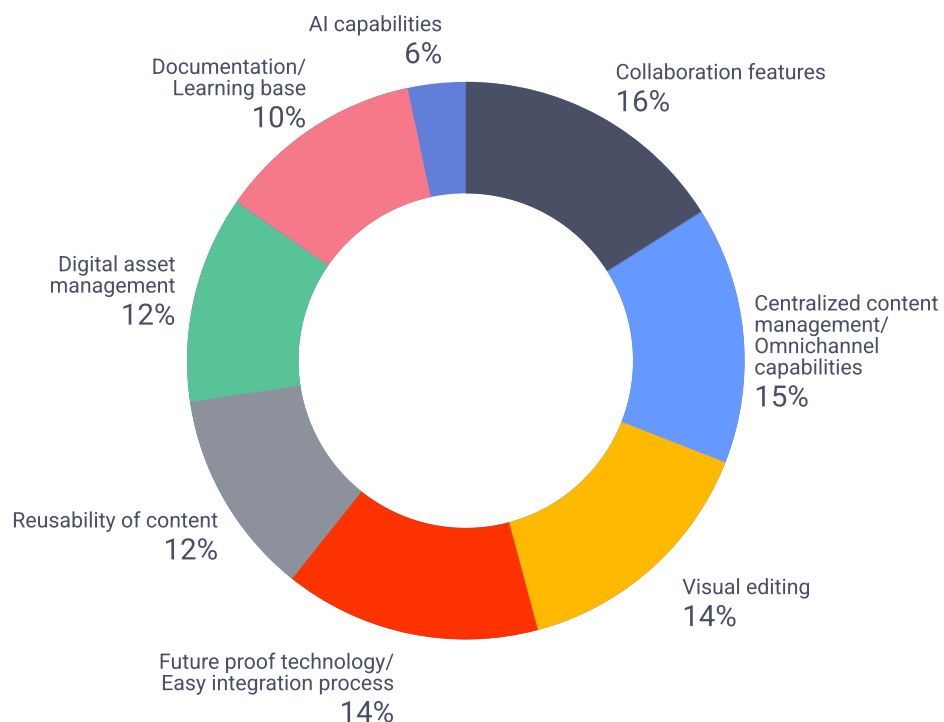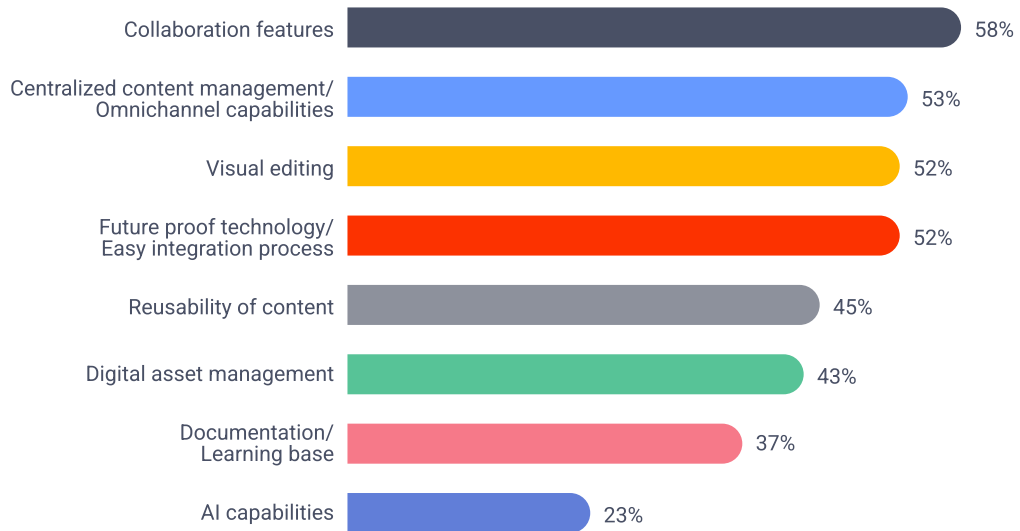Make them much easier — 43%

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

Most of the sample **(43%)** reported a CMS had **made daily processes much easier.** Only 10% reported them slightly harder, and only 2% reported them much harder.

In addition to being resounding support for how CMSs can transform daily processes, it also shows an uptick from 2023. Last year, we asked users to rate their current satisfaction with their CMS's impact on workflow processes. Only **8%** found them very easy, with most **(42%)** giving it a fair/moderate rating. While the exact wording of these questions differs and thus may impact the responses, such a large discrepancy likely points to the effects of CMS providers trying to improve the user experience. More specifically, this may be a result of the growing number of CMSs that are accommodating the non-technical user experience.

6 What CMS features do you consider essential?

Feature	
Collaboration features	58%
Centralized content management/ Omnichannel capabilities	53%
Visual editing	52%
Future proof technology/ Easy integration process	52%
Reusability of content	45%
Digital asset management	43%
Documentation/ Learning base	37%
AI capabilities	23%

Donut chart:
- AI capabilities 6%
- Documentation/Learning base 10%
- Digital asset management 12%
- Reusability of content 12%
- Future proof technology/Easy integration process 14%
- Visual editing 14%
- Centralized content management/Omnichannel capabilities 15%
- Collaboration features 16%

Collaboration features are the category winner for features considered essential, leading with 58% of respondents and 16% of answers. It's a clear signal that not only do CMSs need to be powerful and feature-rich, but they also need to be accessible to a variety of users and enable them to work together. This reasoning is further explored in Section V: Collaboration.

In second place was **centralized content management/omnichannel capabilities,** affecting 53% of the sample and making up 15% of all answers. Given that omnichannel capabilities were the leading reason for multiple CMS usage as seen in Question 3, this is not a surprise. If users are willing to juggle multiple systems to achieve such a function, it also makes sense that they would prioritize the capability to centralize such tasks when searching for a CMS. This also highlights the downsides of multiple CMS usage: if users were fully satisfied managing content with multiple systems, the ability to do it all from one central location likely wouldn't be an essential feature.

Close behind omnichannel, there was a tie for the third most essential feature: **visual editing** and **future-proof technology/easy integration process,** each experienced by 52% of the sample and accounting for 14% of all answers. The visual editing aspect speaks for itself: having a system where it's easy to create and edit content for users of all technical skills makes the entire workflow process smoother. On the other hand, having future-proof technology simplifies work for the development team: they won't have to continually switch between CMSs as technology evolves. Instead, they can seamlessly integrate whatever tools or structure they need.
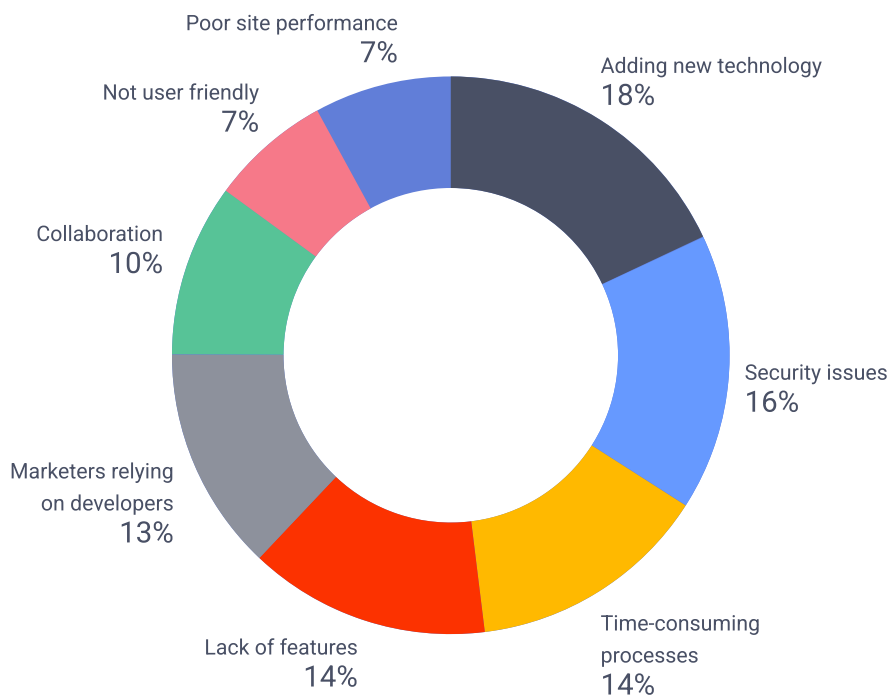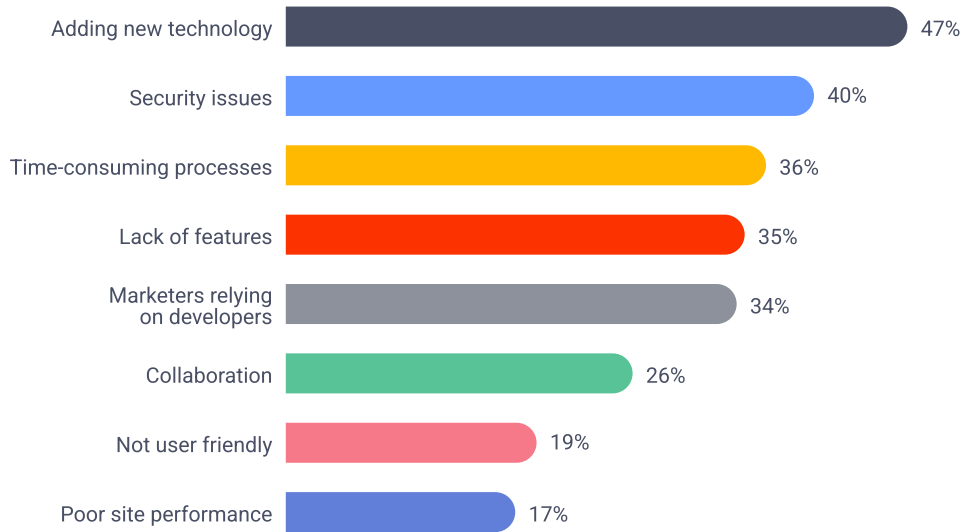
> **WORTH NOTING**
> These results come from a sample that is 87% technical users. As such, it's a demonstration that collaboration features and visual editing aren't just benefits for non-technical users - **they can positively impact the entire team.**

The second most common pain point was **security issues affecting 40% of the sample and accounting for 16% 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 decreased by choosing a 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 year to come.

In third place were **time-consuming processes, impacting 36% of users and accounting for 14% of the sample.** Given how inefficiency in a CMS can impact every area of a company, it's no wonder this continues to be a struggle: wasted employee time, overspent budget, missed deadlines, unhappy clients, and more caused by wasted time can quickly become daunting roadblocks.

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

Pain Point	Percentage
Adding new technology	47%
Security issues	40%
Time-consuming processes	36%
Lack of features	35%
Marketers relying on developers	34%
Collaboration	26%
Not user friendly	19%
Poor site performance	17%

Poor site performance
7%

Not user friendly
7%

Collaboration
10%

Marketers relying
on developers
13%

Lack of features
14%

Time-consuming
processes
14%

Adding new technology
18%

Security issues
16%

The most common pain point in the sample was **adding new technology, affecting 47% of users and accounting for 18% of the sample.** Technology is constantly shifting and evolving, a pattern that has only accelerated in the last couple of years. To keep up with trends and competitors, users need to be able to quickly and easily adopt new programs – a pattern retail companies will recognize from the scramble to go online during the COVID-19 pandemic.
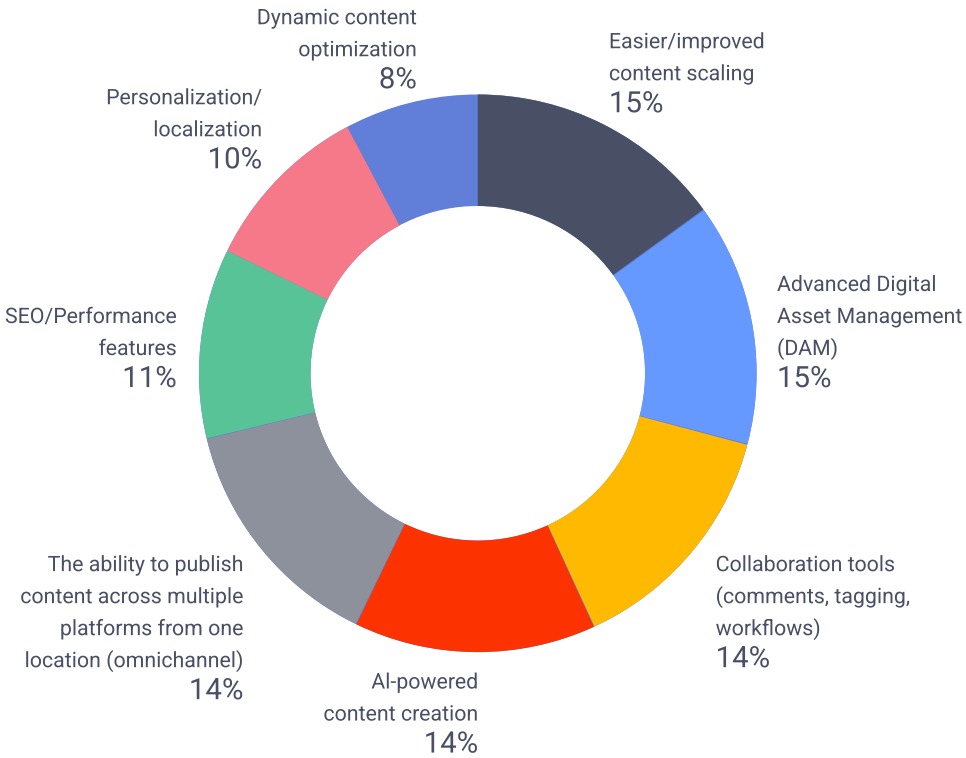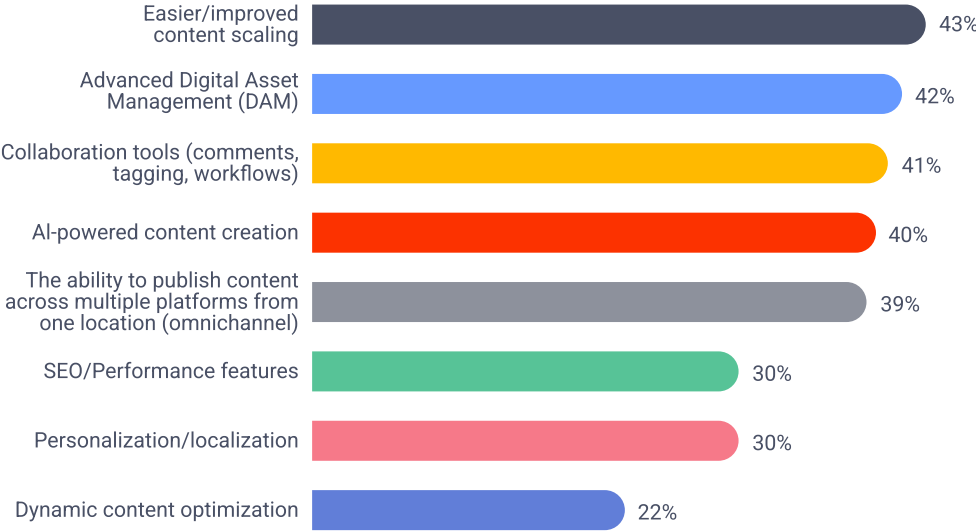
WORTH NOTING

This is also reflective of what users this year are prioritizing. **Future-proof technology/easy integration process** tied for the third most commonly cited essential CMS feature in Question 6. This may suggest that such flaws in CMSs will be less tolerated by users in the coming year.

The second most common pain point was **security issues affecting 40% of the sample and accounting for 16% 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 decreased by choosing a 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 year to come.

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

Feature	%
Easier/improved content scaling	43%
Advanced Digital Asset Management (DAM)	42%
Collaboration tools (comments, tagging, workflows)	41%
AI-powered content creation	40%
The ability to publish content across multiple platforms from one location (omnichannel)	39%
SEO/Performance features	30%
Personalization/localization	30%
Dynamic content optimization	22%

Dynamic content optimization 8%

Personalization/localization 10%

SEO/Performance features 11%

The ability to publish content across multiple platforms from one location (omnichannel) 14%

AI-powered content creation 14%

Easier/improved content scaling 15%

Advanced Digital Asset Management (DAM) 15%

Collaboration tools (comments, tagging, workflows) 14%

The highest-ranked missing feature for CMS users was **easier/improved content scaling, impacting 43% 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 this sample being roughly 75% monolithic CMS and page builder users. 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 a number of factors, including a lack of omnichannel capabilities and technological inflexibility.

Users were also missing **Advanced Digital Asset Management (DAM)** in their current CMSs, affecting **42% of users and accounting for 15%** of all answers. Especially in today's landscape where multimedia is paramount to the user experience, it's important for users to have a system that can keep those multimedia assets neatly organized and easy to use.

Collaboration tools came in third, impacting 41% of users and accounting for 14% of all answers. This reemphasizes the importance of such features, which is covered in more detail in Section V: Collaboration.

Close behind Collaboration tools was **Artificial Intelligence (AI), affecting 40% of users and making up 14% of all answers.** This is a trend that has been skyrocketing in the past few years. It's gained popularity in generating art and written text, but content applications go even further beyond that: video scripts, image captioning, optimized social media posts, even code generation and behind-the-scenes automation.

> **WORTH NOTING**
>
> In 2024, AI is becoming less of a 'what-if' theory and more of a concrete consideration with current applications for users selecting a CMS. We explore this trend deeper later in the report with Addendum B: AI and Content Trends.

Section III: Migration

When a CMS fails to meet a user's expectations, migration is rarely far off. However, migration 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.

- **68% of users** have migrated to a new CMS in the past 3 years.
- The most common migration roadblock was a lack of technical support. **Lack of examples/templates to get started** and **lack of content structuring know-how** were also significant issues.

9   ## Have you migrated to a new CMS in the past 3 years?
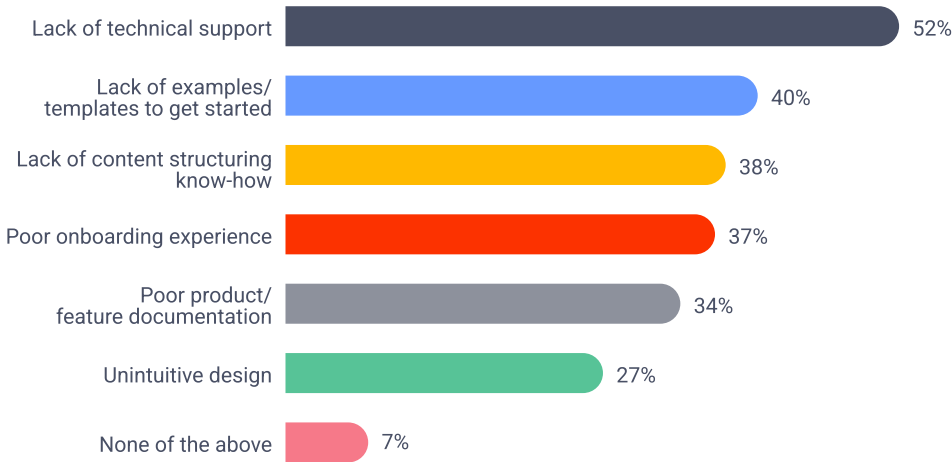
No
32%

Yes
68%
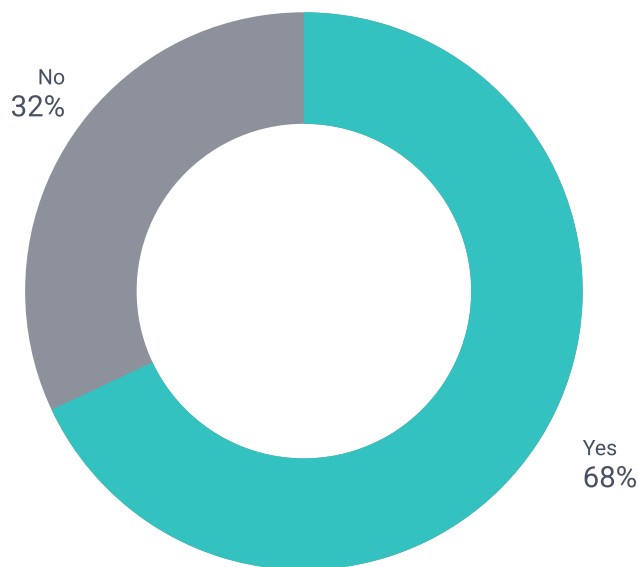
68% of respondents reported migrating to a new CMS in the past 3 years. This is an indicator that when faced with CMS issues, more users than not are willing to migrate to solve the issue. It could also be a reflection of the explosion of CMS options in the recent past: with so many solutions available, there are bound to be users with needs that originally went unaddressed but are now taken care of by a new option.

It might also show a trend in opinions towards migration. The pains of adjusting to a new system and moving all content over are well-known. However, more and more providers are focused on offering resources that aid the process such as technical guides and staff assistance. These support options may be improving to the point where the hurdles of a CMS migration aren't as prohibitive as they used to be.

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

Roadblock	Percentage
Lack of technical support	52%
Lack of examples/templates to get started	40%
Lack of content structuring know-how	38%
Poor onboarding experience	37%
Poor product/feature documentation	34%
Unintuitive design	27%
None of the above	7%

None of the above
3%

Unintuitive design
12%

Lack of technical support
22%

Poor product/
feature documentation
14%

Lack of examples/
templates to get started
17%

Poor onboarding experience
16%

Lack of content
structuring know-how
16%

The most common roadblock while using a new CMS was a lack of technical support, cited by 52% of the sample and accounting for 22% 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 second most common adjustment roadblock was the **lack of examples/templates to get started (40% of the sample and 17% 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.

The third most common frustration was a **lack of content structuring know-how, which impacted 38% of the sample and accounted for 16% of all answers.** 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**
> This data can serve as a useful indicator for organizations that are currently in the market for a new CMS. They might want to look into the previous user satisfaction with these commonly cited issues for each system they're considering to avoid similar structures.

Section IV: Content Distribution Methods

CMSs come with a variety of different features and functions, but content distribution remains a core component. User expectations and technological channels continue to evolve. The ability of a content management system to provide access to these audiences and adapt to the required technological changes is a cornerstone of how well it supports a company.

- Just **17%** of the sample served content in only one language. The majority (53%) worked with 2-3, while **31%** served content in 4 or more languages.
- Websites, mobile apps, and eCommerce platforms are currently the most popular platforms for serving content.
- However, Internet of Things (IoT) options such as digital screens and AR/VR have grown in the past year and are predicted to continue on this trend in 2024
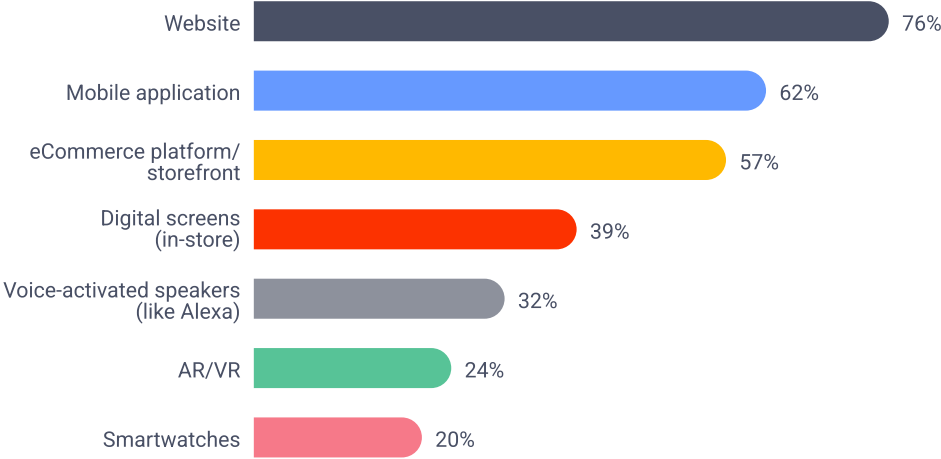
11 How many languages are you serving content in with your CMS?

6 or more
7%

1
17%

4-5
24%

2-3
53%
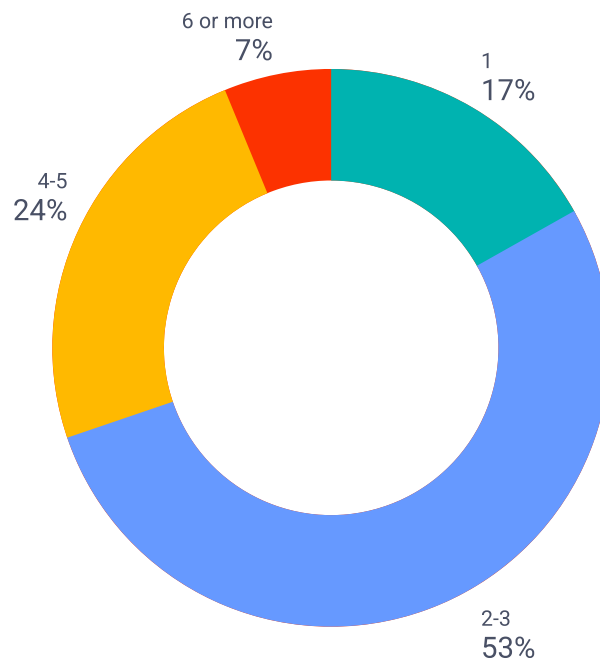
Over half of respondents **(53%)** reported serving content in 2-3 languages. Only 17% of the sample was serving content in 1 language, while an impressive 31% serve content in 4 or more languages. This further proves the need for modern CMSs to provide customized omnichannel experiences as well as scaling capabilities like localization options and collaboration for multilingual teams.

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

Website — 76%
Mobile application — 62%
eCommerce platform/storefront — 57%
Digital screens (in-store) — 39%
Voice-activated speakers (like Alexa) — 32%
AR/VR — 24%
Smartwatches — 20%

Smartwatches 7%
AR/VR 8%
Voice-activated peakers (like Alexa) 10%
Digital screens (in-store) 13%
eCommerce platform/storefront 18%
Website 25%
Mobile application 20%
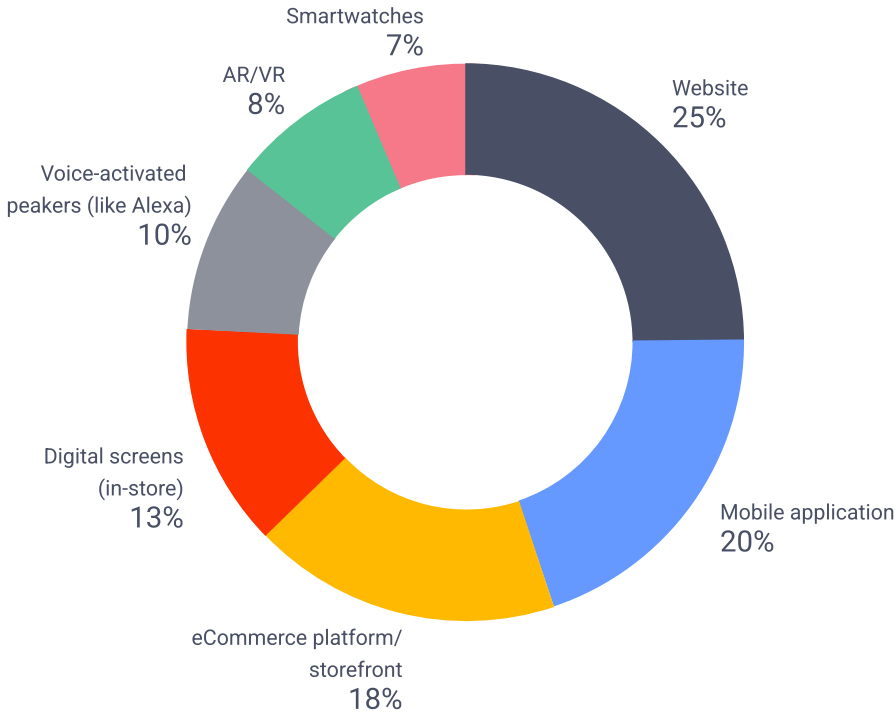
The most commonly reported channels served by CMSs were **websites, mobile applications, and eCommerce platforms/storefronts** in that order. Given the obvious popularity of these platforms for modern organizations, these results are expected.

When comparing the percentage of answers to 2023's report, website use was down 7% (previously 32%) and mobile was down 2% (previously 22%). Conversely, **every other option was up in usage from 2023:**

- eCommerce platform/storefront: +3%
- Digital screens (in-store): +4%
- Voice-activated speakers: +2%
- AR/VR: +1%
- Smartwatches: +2%

These results demonstrate that an omnichannel approach embracing the Internet of Things (IoT) shown above is an essential part of modern marketing. This is further driven home by the fact that omnichannel capabilities have already come up in the survey as both a reason to juggle multiple CMSs and an essential feature for any system. **As the omnichannel trend continues to pick up steam, it will be vital for competitive companies to choose a CMS that can effectively support this strategy.**

> **WORTH NOTING**
> The biggest increase, seen with digital screens, could be attributed to the waning effects of the pandemic. As more shoppers return to stores, the use of in-person digital screens has become more practical and worthwhile. The others might also be less direct descendants of the pandemic: the adverse market conditions forced organizations to reimagine what the digital experience could be and get creative with how they reached users. This increase in IoT channel usage could be reflective of those strategies maturing.

Finally, when comparing 2024's actual usage with 2023's predicted usage, there was a fair amount of similarity. The biggest difference was a higher usage of eCommerce platforms (+4%) and digital screens (+2%), balanced out by a slightly lesser-than-predicted usage of mobile apps (-2%) and AR/VR (-1%). Such minor differences are likely to be negligible. In fact, it points to the fair amount of accuracy that users predict their future channels with, **even comparing two completely different survey samples one year apart.** This lends some credence to the potential accuracy of the next question, which similarly strives to predict channel usage trends in the coming year.

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

Platform	Percentage
Mobile application	60%
Website	60%
eCommerce platform/storefront	54%
Digital screens (in-store)	48%
Voice-activated speakers (like Alexa)	45%
AR/VR	44%
Smartwatches	32%

Smartwatches 9%

AR/VR 13%

Voice-activated peakers (like Alexa) 13%

Digital screens (in-store) 14%

Mobile application 18%

Website 17%

eCommerce platform/storefront 16%
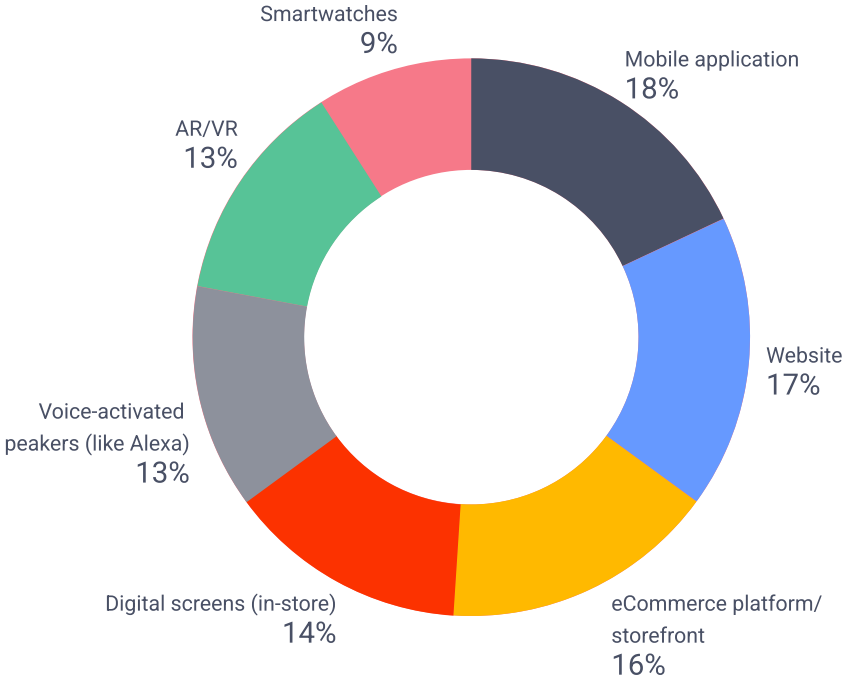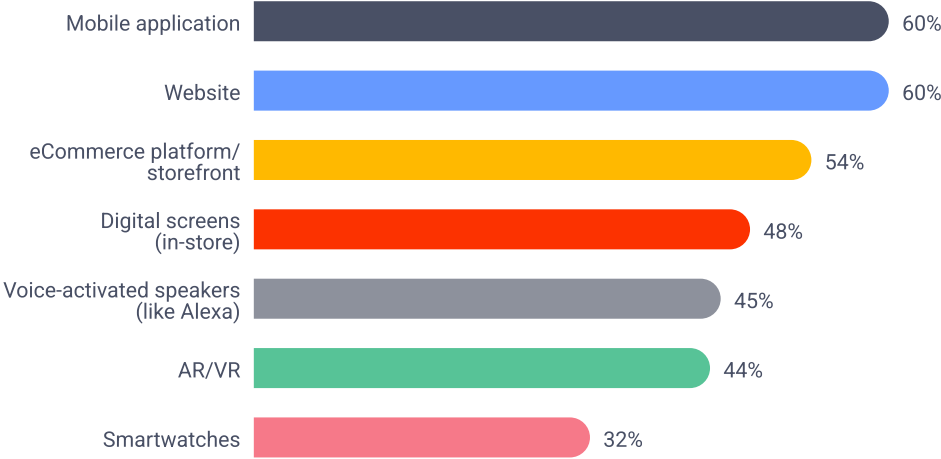
Users in the sample gave a surprising prediction for the future of platforms. Users anticipate that their website usage will **decrease by 16%, dropping 7%** in the total sum of all answers. Mobile applications and eCommerce platforms also see a minor potential decline.

In balance, there's an anticipated growth in **all remaining IoT options.** In particular:

- **Smartwatches** (a predicted 12% more users to account for 2% more of total answers)
- **Voice-activated speakers** (a predicted 13% more users to account for 3% more of total answers)
- **AR/VR** (a predicted 20% more users embracing it to account for 5% more oftotal answers)

This is further evidence that **the future of digital content is omnichannel.** Users have clearly indicated plans to expand their digital presence in new, technologically advanced ways, demonstrated by this question and supported by the data in Question 3 showing that omnichannel is the leading reason to use more than one CMS.

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.
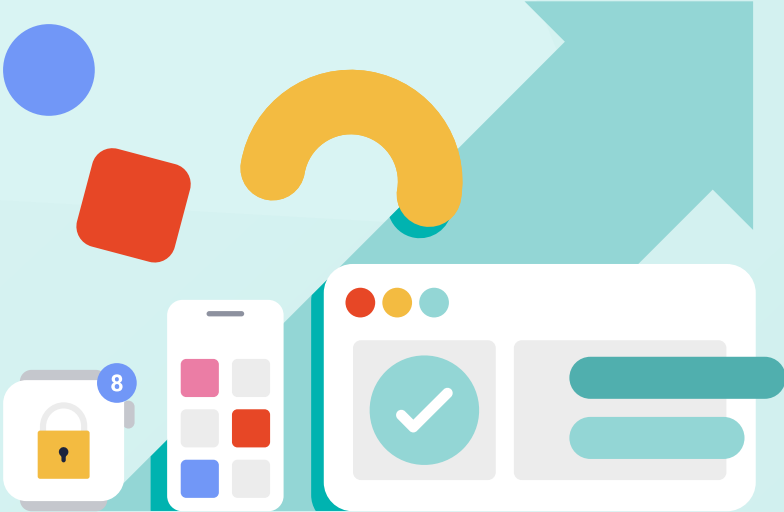
582% ROI
Per Forrester Total Economic Impact Study

Customer Choice
Award from Gartner

#1
Enterprise Headless CMS from G2

TRUSTED BY

adidas AUTODESK Heineken Mindvalley NETFLIX OATLY! Pizza Hut

RALEIGH upc HappySocks deliveroo

OATLY
16 Global Sites in 2 Months

CHRONEXT
3x App Session Times

MINDVALLEY
8 Languages Launched with 50% Less Development Time

DAMEN SHIPYARDS
75% Cost Reduction

Want to learn more about how Storyblok is helping companies around the world produce ground-breaking digital content experiences? Read our case studies, or reach out to a member of our team today!

Section V: Collaboration

In today's digital age, 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 must be able to create, edit, and publish content efficiently through seamless communication and workflow tools. Any gap in the process can impact the entire content ecosystem. As such, a CMS must meet all collaboration needs to truly be considered competitive in the modern world.

- The vast majority of users - **90%** - have more than one team currently using their organization's CMS. The largest group **(50%)** worked with 2-3 CMSs.
- Marketing, development, and design were the most common teams to use a CMS in that order.
- The most common collaboration challenge was **working across multiple independent platforms and migrating final content to the CMS.** However, the **difficulty of non-technical users to make content changes** was also a significant roadblock, as was having **limited user roles**.

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

6 or more
8%

Only 1
10%

4-5
32%

2-3
50%
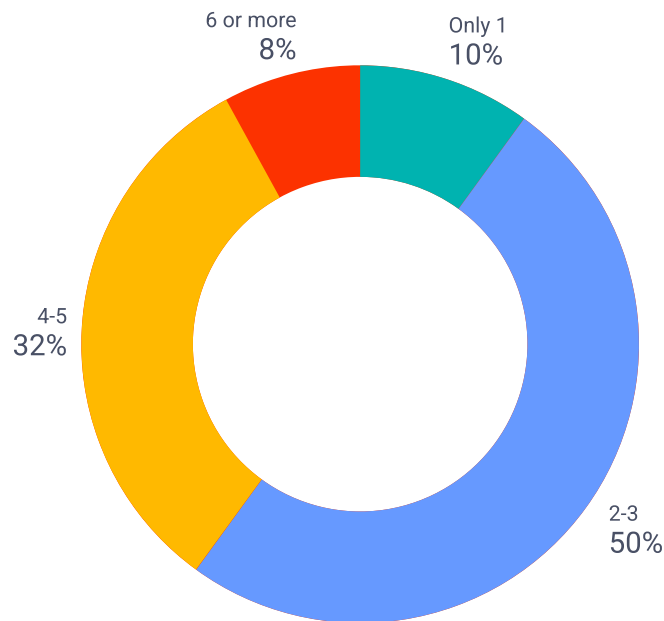
50% of users stated that 2-3 teams currently use the CMS at their organization. This is a 4% increase from 2023. Additionally, the number of organizations with only one team using their CMS decreased by a staggering **17%** compared to last year.

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.
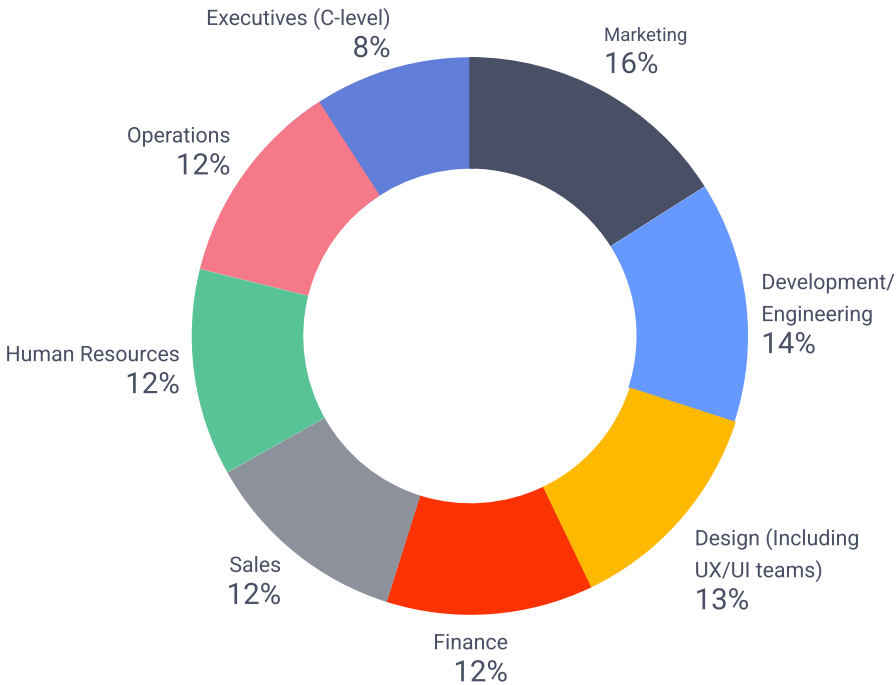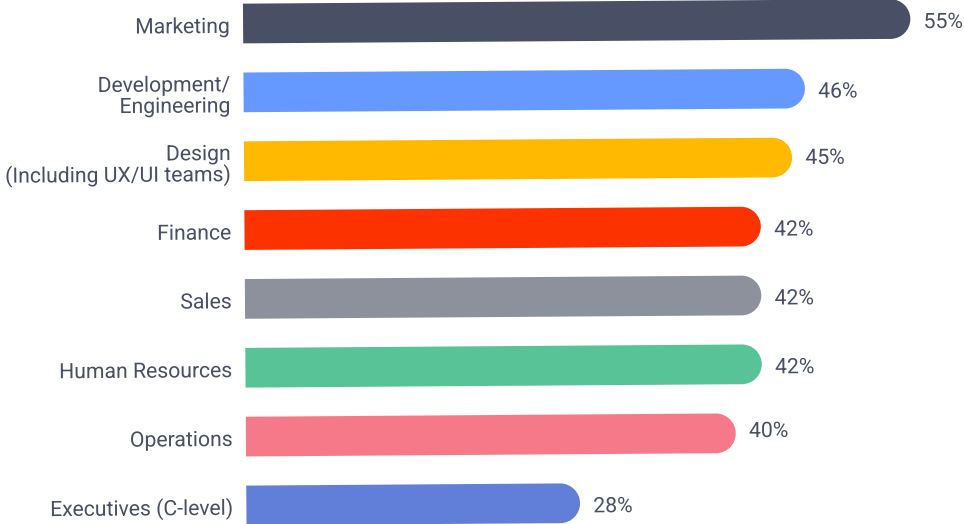
> **WORTH NOTING**
> The decrease in organizations with only one team using the CMS could also be reflective of the slight decrease in monolithic users for this year's sample. Monolithic CMSs can get overly complex, leading to only one team (likely developers) handling all operations regardless of how inefficient it is. As more users decide to move away from these systems, we may continue to see more teams becoming involved in the operation of their business's CMS.

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

Team	Percentage
Marketing	55%
Development/Engineering	46%
Design (Including UX/UI teams)	45%
Finance	42%
Sales	42%
Human Resources	42%
Operations	40%
Executives (C-level)	28%

Executives (C-level) 8%
Operations 12%
Human Resources 12%
Sales 12%
Finance 12%
Design (Including UX/UI teams) 13%
Development/Engineering 14%
Marketing 16%

The top three most likely teams to use a CMS at an organization were **Marketing (55% of all users), Development/Engineering (46%), and Design (45%)** in that order. Just as in 2023, Executives remain the least likely group to use their CMS.

Using the percentage of answers breakdown, we're able to more closely compare the results to the past year's. Interestingly, **14%** of users stated that Development/Engineering used their CMSs this year, compared to only **10%** in 2023. Similarly, Design teams were **13%** of the percentage of answers this year, but only **7%** in 2023.
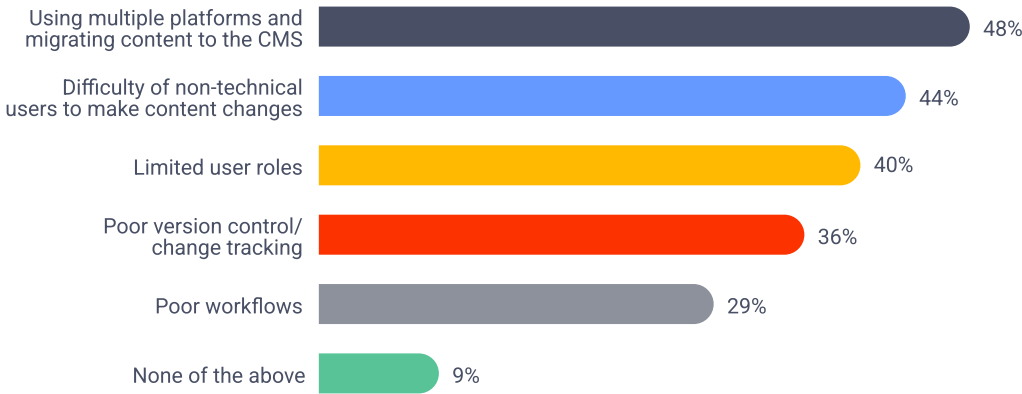
WORTH NOTING

This could be a result of the data seen in Question 4, which showed a trend of people moving away from monolithic systems. As developers have more technical freedom with headless and custom systems, they can be more involved in the usage of the system as they customize it for their exact needs.

16 **What collaboration issues do you struggle with?**

Using multiple platforms and migrating content to the CMS — 48%

Difficulty of non-technical users to make content changes — 44%

Limited user roles — 40%

Poor version control/change tracking — 36%

Poor workflows — 29%

None of the above — 9%

None of the above
4%

Poor workflows
14%

Poor version control/
change tracking
17%

Using multiple platforms and
migrating content to the CMS
23%

Difficulty of
non-technical users
to make content changes
21%

Limited user roles
20%

The most common collaboration issue that respondents struggled with was **working across multiple independent platforms and migrating final content to the CMS, affecting 38% of users and claiming 23% of all answers.**

> **WORTH NOTING**
> The need to do so 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 of using monolithic systems.

The second most common collaboration issue was **difficulty of non-technical users to make content changes, affecting 44% of respondents and claiming 21% of all answers.** It's essential to note here that this sample was overwhelmingly technical users, meaning **roadblocks created by this challenge impact even technical teams.**

Limited user roles came close behind in third, **experienced by 40% of respondents and accounting for 20% of all answers.** Though at first glance this seems like a minor feature, poor user role control can lead to a variety of issues: information security, content quality control, compliance issues, and even scalability potential can all suffer if an organization can't closely control which users have access to what content.

Lastly, only **9% of all 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.
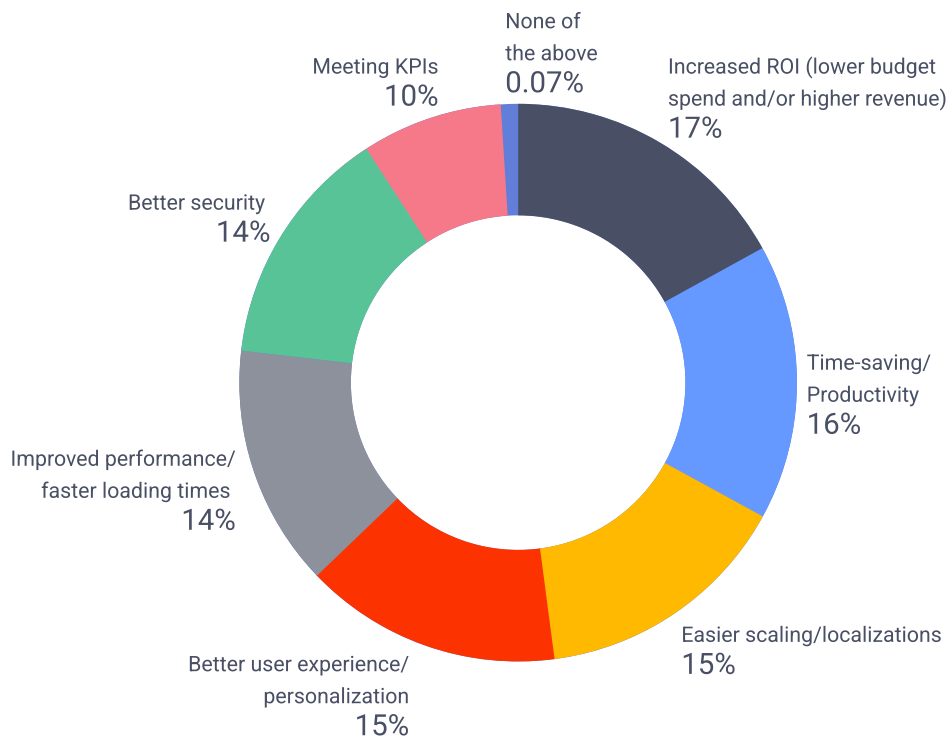
Section VI: Headless CMS vs Monolithic CMS

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

- The top improvements that headless CMS users reported were **Increased ROI, time saved/ increased productivity, and easier scaling/localization.**
- Only 2 users reported no benefits from shifting to headless CMS - barely 0.25% of the sample.
- The leading reasons for not switching to headless CMS reflect companies for whom a headless CMS would not be a good fit: it having **prohibitively high pricing** and being unnecessarily technical for the users' needs.

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

Category	Percentage
Increased ROI (lower budget spend and/or higher revenue)	61%
Time-saving/Productivity	58%
Easier scaling/localizations	54%
Better user experience/personalization	54%
Improved performance/faster loading times	49%
Better security	49%
Meeting KPIs	34%
None of the above	0.25%

Meeting KPIs 10%

None of the above 0.07%

Increased ROI (lower budget spend and/or higher revenue) 17%

Better security 14%

Time-saving/ Productivity 16%

Improved performance/ faster loading times 14%

Easier scaling/localizations 15%

Better user experience/ personalization 15%

Respondents who switched to using a headless CMS reported a wide variety of advantages from doing so. The most prominent was an overwhelming **increase in ROI, experienced by 61% of users and claiming 17% of the sample.** 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 **headless can be a successful financial investment.**

The next most commonly experienced headless improvement was **time saving/productivity, experienced by 58% of users and claiming 16% of the sample.** 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.

> **WORTH NOTING**
> Only 2 did not report improvements after using a headless CMS - barely 0.25% of the sample. Exactly which improvements users experienced of course varied, but that's also a testament to the wide variety of benefits that headless has to offer based on an organization's specific needs.

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

Price is too high — 41%

Too complicated/technical/ requires too many developers — 38%

Don't know enough about it — 31%

Don't need the functionality/needs are fully met with current system — 26%

Don't want to deal with migration issues — 17%

Don't want to deal with migration issues
11%

Don't need the functionality/needs are fully met with current system
17%

Price is too high
27%

Don't know enough about it
20%

Too complicated/ technical/requires too many developers
25%

The users who aren't currently using a headless CMS provided a wide variety of reasons stopping them. **The leading reason was a too-high price, affecting 41% of users and accounting for 27% of all answers.**

The second most common reason was that headless is **too complicated/technical/requires too many developers, affecting 38% of users and accounting for 25% 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, they will not want to invest in the required resources to achieve these with a headless system. They may be better suited to monolithic or page builder options.

Finally, the third most common reason for not using a headless CMS **was not knowing enough about it, impacting 31% of users and accounting for 20% of all answers.** As previously emphasized, headless isn't a one-size-fits-all solution, and it's not an investment to be taken lightly. Combined with the fact that it's still a relatively new technological innovation, it makes sense that one of the leading reasons for not using it is not knowing enough about it.
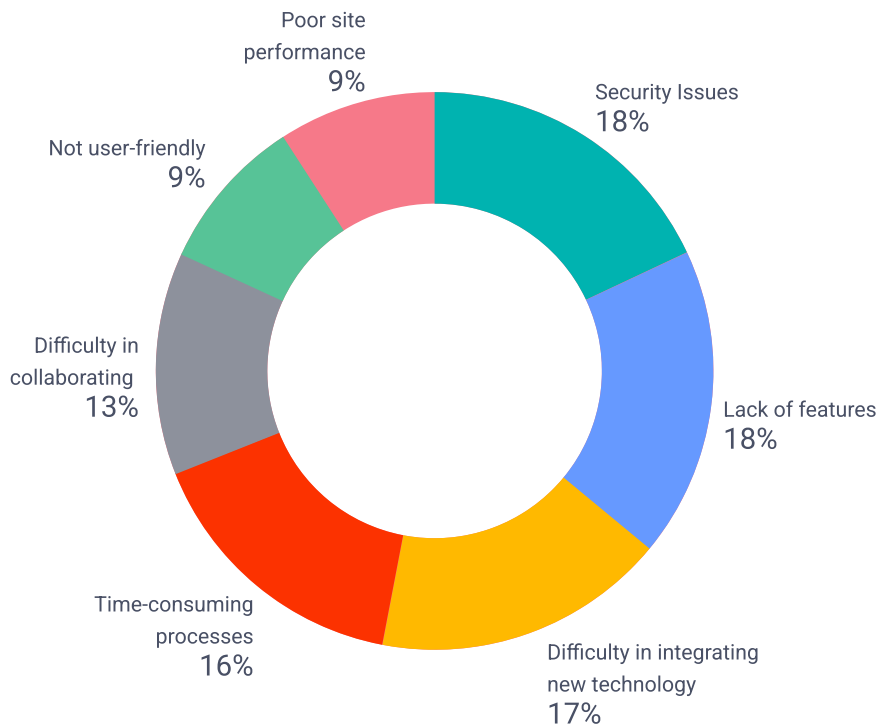
Addendum A: Expanding Our Scope

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 clearly 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 in 2024.

> Addendum A Sample:
> Regions consulted: USA, UK, Netherlands, Germany, Sweden
> Total respondents: 2,000

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

Poor site performance
9%

Not user-friendly
9%

Difficulty in collaborating
13%

Security Issues
18%

Lack of features
18%

Difficulty in integrating new technology
17%

Time-consuming processes
16%

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. However, some factors may be more influential than others. To focus on this perspective, we featured the chart with percentage of answers here.

Given the growing security threats in the modern age, it's no surprise that **security issues were one of the biggest pain points causing migration claiming 18% of all answers.** It further demonstrates that not only is security an issue, but one with potential consequences large enough to merit a total platform move. This might also be a component in the shrinking number of monolithic users.

However, there was a tie for first: **lack of features** was also a major motivator. The data from Question 8 can shed some light on which exactly of these features users tend to miss. While not every person struggles with a lack of features, **those that do struggle significantly enough that they are more likely to move because of it.**

Close behind in third place was **difficulty in integrating new technology, with 17% of all answers.** Composable architecture and the benefits it offers – technical flexibility, a future-proof build, omnichannel capabilities, high-grade security, and so-on – has only gotten more popular in the last few years. Being able to adapt to technical changes with agility and ease is essential now more than ever, going so far as to motivate moves to new CMSs that enable it.

20 **Were these pain points resolved by switching?**

Barely
1%

Not at all
<1%

Partially
20%

Completely
23%

Mostly
56%
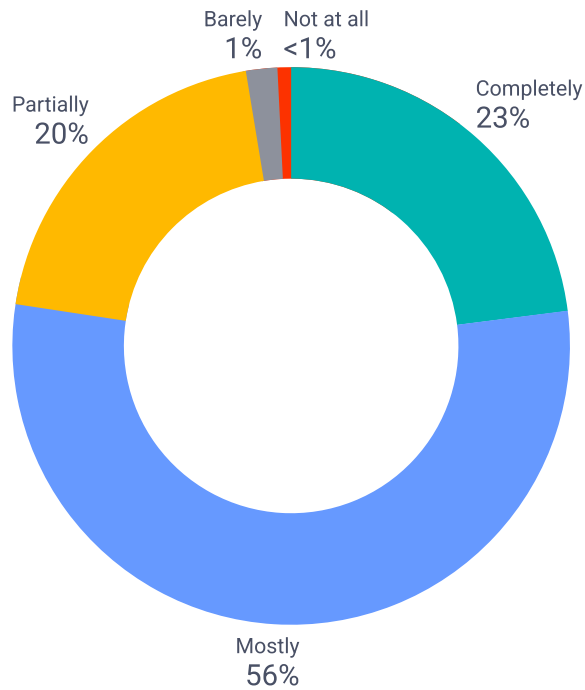
While migrating is often the solution to an ill-fitting CMS, it's unfortunately not guaranteed to solve all issues. In this sample, the results are encouraging: **switching to a new system solved all issues for 23% of users, and most issues for 56%.** Nevertheless, that still leaves 20% of respondents who went through the process of migration for only a partial solution.

This speaks to the necessity of users clearly understanding their needs, why they're not being met with the current system, and why a new CMS will fill those gaps. In addition to research and tools such as RFPs, this is best achieved through hands-on experiences like personalized demos and free trials.

> **WORTH NOTING**
> Fortunately, only about 1% fell into the barely/not at all category. This is an indication that on the whole, migration is often a winning prospect: 79% of people who migrate will find their pain points mostly or entirely resolved.

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

1 (Very Difficult)	2%
2 (Difficult)	10%
3 (Fair/Moderate)	35%
4 (Easy)	35%
5 (Very Easy)	18%
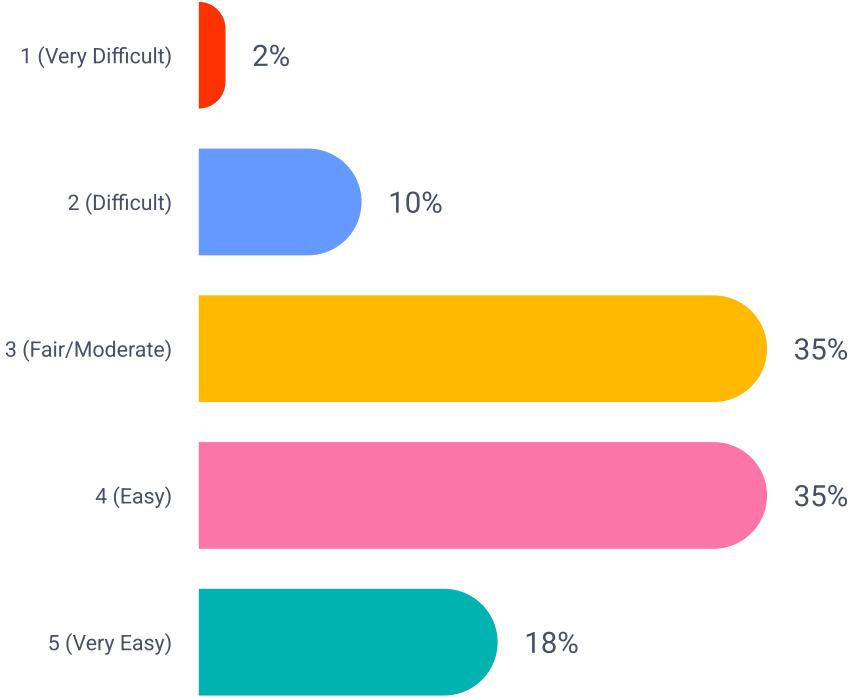
Users generally had a fair or easy time adjusting to their new CMS, with 35% citing it as moderate and 53% citing it as easy or very easy. Only **12% found it difficult or very difficult.** This is an impressive testament to the advancement of quick-start resources that are making migration easier than ever and removing roadblocks for users to find their perfect fit CMS. However, the presence of any users still finding difficulty indicates there is still room to grow in this respect.

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?

No
53%

Yes
47%

This question was provided to users who indicated they were not using a headless CMS. Of that sample, 47% were familiar with the concept of headless CMS.

Over 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 grow, so will the number of users opting for it.**

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

No
26%

Yes
74%
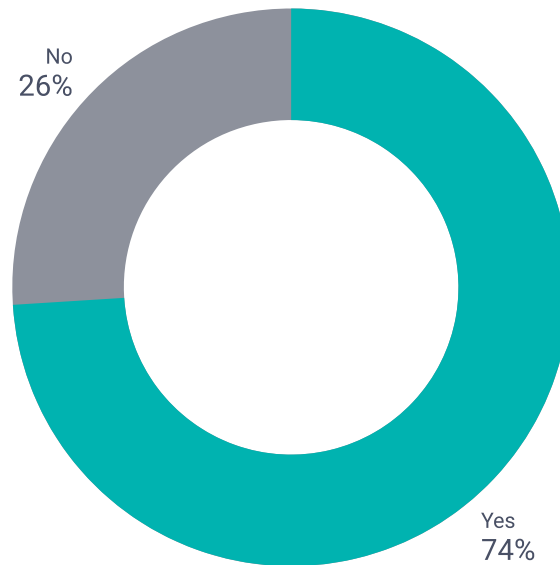
Nearly ¾ (74%) of monolithic users who knew what headless CMS was said they were likely to switch to a headless system in the next 2 years. This is an extremely promising reflection of the benefits users have consistently seen proven by data in Question 17: increased ROI, more time saved, better productivity, and easier scaling/localizations to name a few.

It also lends context to the large number of users planning a migration soon, even those who have made a relatively recent change. This data reinforces how **headless is widely becoming accepted as the future of content management.** Based on these results, it's logical to assume that next year's State of CMS will find an uptick in headless users.
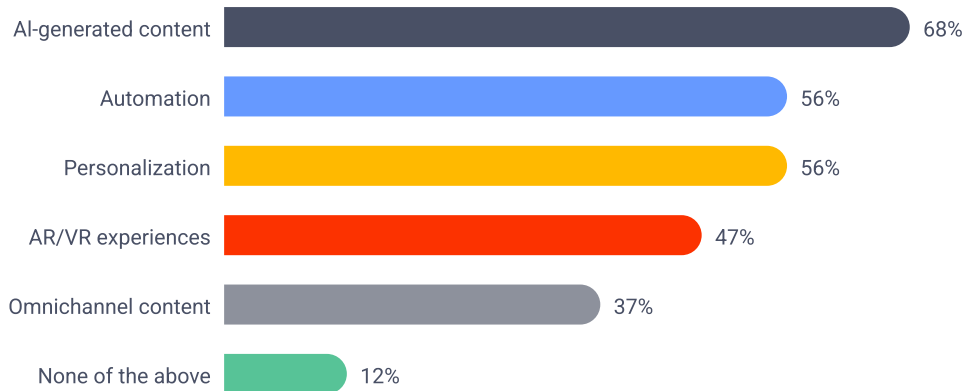
Addendum B: AI and Content Trends

Intrigued by the responses to Question 8 in the main sample, we also 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.

Addendum B Sample:
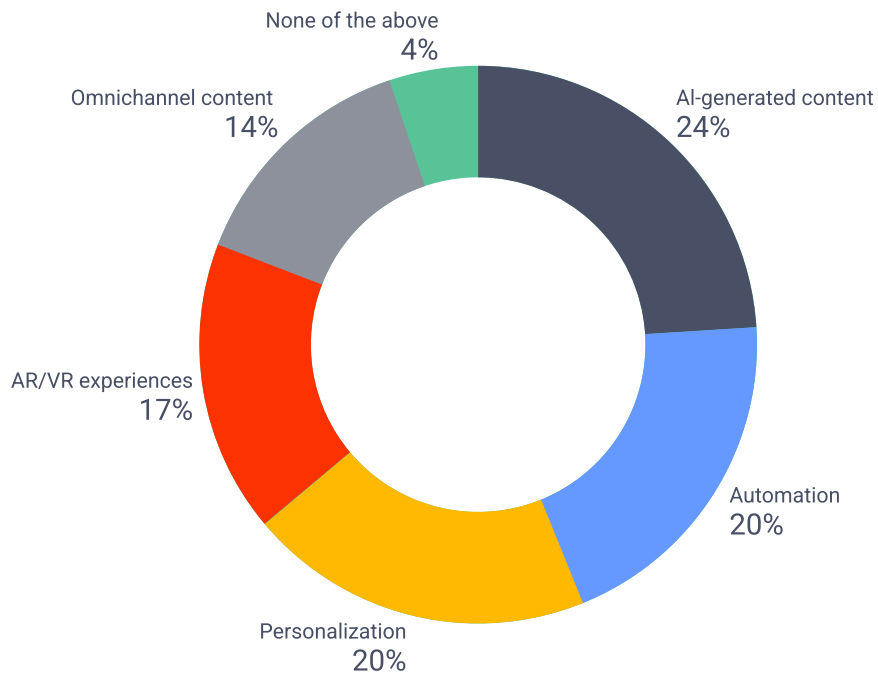Regions consulted: USA, UK, Germany
Total respondents: 300

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

Trend	Percentage
AI-generated content	68%
Automation	56%
Personalization	56%
AR/VR experiences	47%
Omnichannel content	37%
None of the above	12%

AI-generated content was the most popular content management trend that users were actively interested in, cited by **68%** of the entire sample and accounting for nearly a quarter of all answers. Content remains an important part of many 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 a tie between **Automation** and **Personalization,** each cited by **56%** of the sample and accounting for **20%** of all answers. Automating content management processes can increase efficiency while allowing team members to better apply their expertise to non-repetitive tasks. Personalization is a similar concept: more relevant content will lead to more effective marketing.

None of the above
4%

AI-generated content
24%

Omnichannel content
14%

Automation
20%

AR/VR experiences
17%

Personalization
20%

Finally, third place was **AR/VR experiences,** cited by **47%** of the sample and accounting for **17%** of all answers. The trend in the main sample towards omnichannel capabilities is again relevant here. 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.

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

No
26%

Yes
74%
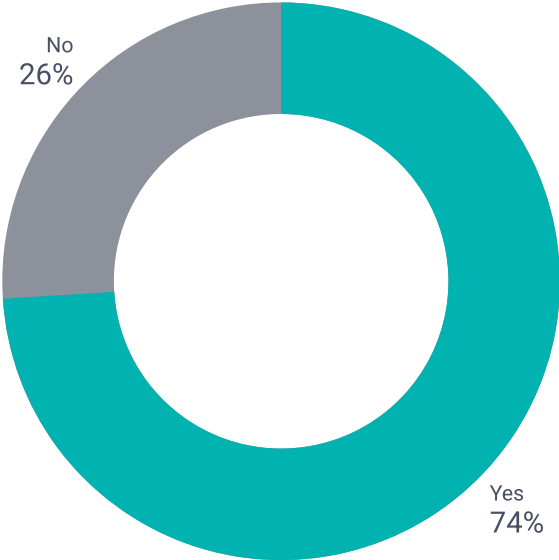
Nearly ¾ of the sample (74%) currently have official regulations on using AI tools at their business. As AI continues to rapidly develop, there have been concerns about how organizations can ensure quality and ethical usage. The wide-reaching implementation of standards is thus not so surprising.

What's particularly of note here is that compared to Question 24, **slightly 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 getting their regulations ready to accommodate this.
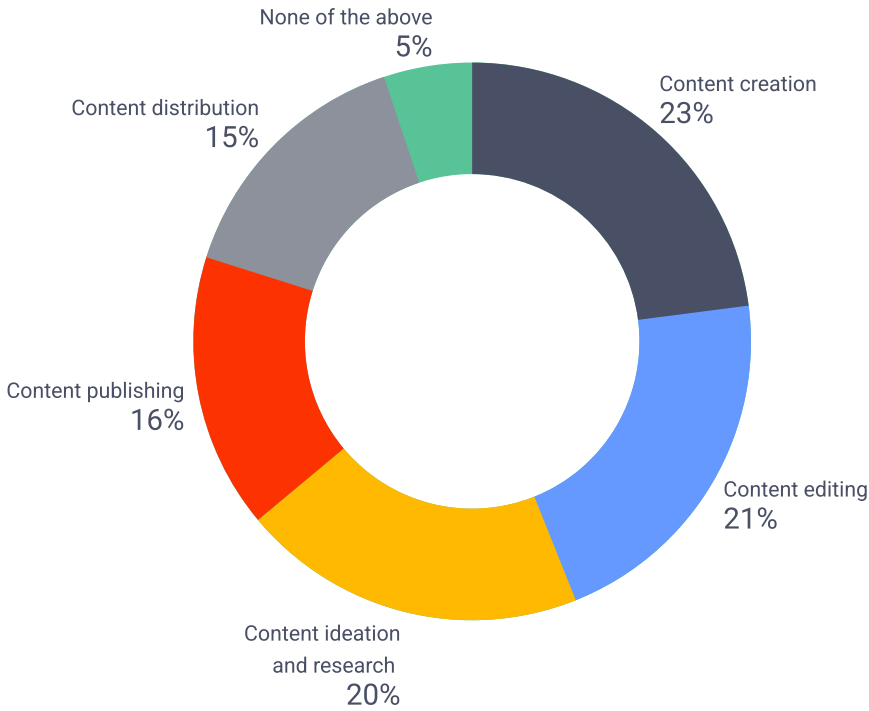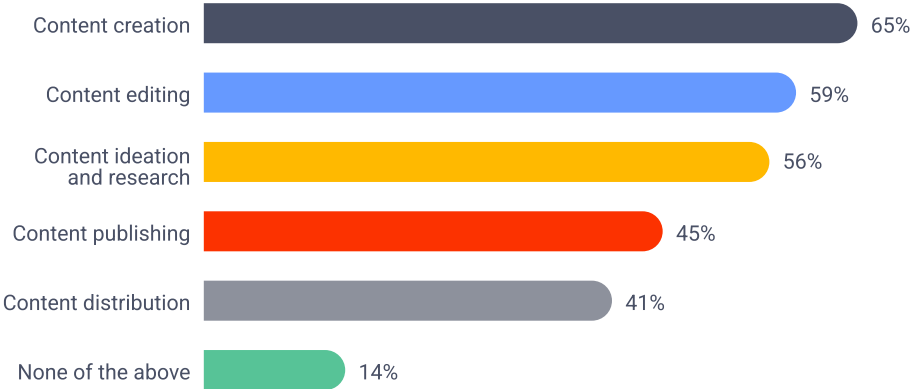
26 ## Do you use AI-powered content tools?

No
21%

Yes
79%
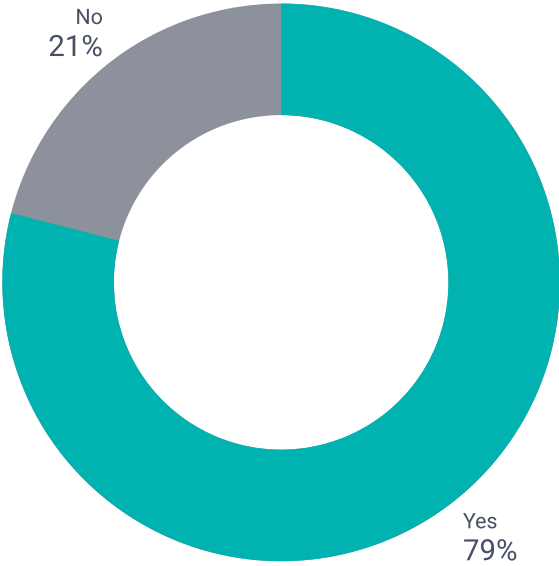
79% of the sample are currently using AI-powered content tools. AI has a variety of applications for content beyond generating entire pieces, the exact breakdown of which is explored in Question 27. This result emphasizes again that AI is a very present and powerful tool for most modern organizations.

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

Content creation ████████████████████ 65%

Content editing ██████████████████ 59%

Content ideation and research ████████████████ 56%

Content publishing █████████████ 45%

Content distribution ████████████ 41%

None of the above ████ 14%

None of the above
5%

Content distribution
15%

Content publishing
16%

Content ideation and research
20%

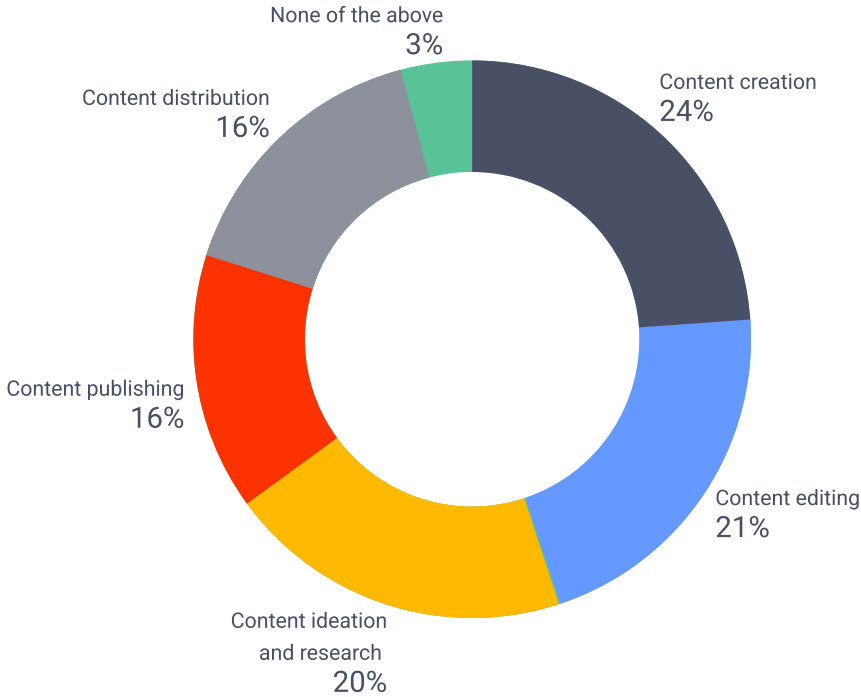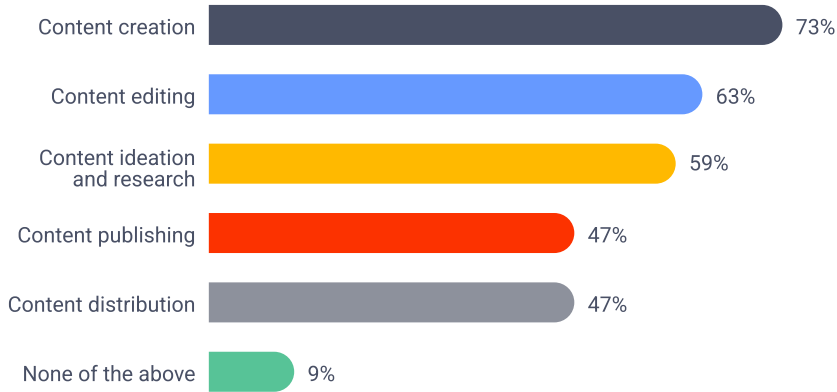Content creation
23%

Content editing
21%

These results show a breakdown of Question 26, showing which AI content tools are being used most often. The most popular response was **content creation,** cited by **65%** of the sample and accounting for **23%** of all answers. This is in line with the results in Question 24, with AI-powered content creation being the most popular trend.

Content editing was a close second, cited by **59%** of the sample and accounting for **21%** 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.

The third most common AI tool for content was **content ideation and research,** cited by **56%** of the sample and accounting for **20%** of all answers. AI's wide breadth of knowledge can make an effective, data-rich launching pad for new content. It can also greatly accelerate the research process for a more efficient content pipeline.

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

Area	Percentage
Content creation	73%
Content editing	63%
Content ideation and research	59%
Content publishing	47%
Content distribution	47%
None of the above	9%

None of the above — 3%
Content distribution — 16%
Content creation — 24%
Content editing — 21%
Content ideation and research — 20%
Content publishing — 16%

While Question 27 covers current AI trends, this one sheds light on where usage could be heading in 2024 and beyond. The ranking is identical: **users are mostly interested in using AI for content creation, editing, and research in that order.** The difference is that each option had a slightly higher percentage of predicted future use than current use, with only **None of the above** decreasing. This is a strong endorsement that users will continue and increase the usage of AI for content-related activities in the coming years.

CONCLUSION

CMS technology never stands still. However, the past year has seen it accelerate beyond expectations, with new providers, features, and functionalities appearing seemingly by the hour. Moreover, user desires are also changing as new options become available and CMSs strive to be competitive. It can seem like the only true constant in the industry is change.

However, a closer look offers one trend that shines throughout: **higher user standards.** CMS users are demanding more from their systems. They are experimenting with new channels, avidly migrating systems, and moving away from the roadblocks presented by traditional monolithic solutions.

Monolithic systems aren't inherently bad. The basic setup of such systems usually allows for a low-cost, easy CMS experience that is perfect for small, simple projects. However, this same simplicity is not designed to support modern needs as evidenced by the pain points expressed in this report. Users seek to reach more audiences than ever before, increase their productivity, and include new technologies – all of which are difficult to do with a traditional legacy architecture.

So where are these monolithic users turning to? While some are embracing page builder options, headless CMSs also saw an appreciable uptick this year across the board. Not only in user numbers but in returns: **an overwhelming amount of those who switched to headless reported concrete benefits.** While pricing and technical complexity remain roadblocks for some, the large percentage of people seeing the benefits of headless systems – not to mention the large proportion of monolithic users who weren't even familiar with such architecture – is a promising sign for the use of headless systems to increase in the coming year.

The pace of technological advancement makes it difficult to make predictions. However, the data suggests that a great shift is in the future: one where users with sophisticated digital content needs abandon underperforming monolithic systems in favor of those that can effectively support their ambitions and engage their audiences with modern capabilities.

Building Our Sample

Regions consulted: USA, UK, Netherlands, Germany, Sweden
Total respondents: 1,719

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."*

A Note On Data Presentation

To make our largest sample ever as useful as possible, 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 across industries maximize value from their content faster by speeding up workflows across the content life-cycle. Businesses choose Storyblok to improve digital performance, reduce costs, and deliver powerful customer experiences faster and more efficiently.

As a cloud-native CMS, Storyblok enables developers and marketers 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.

See how Storyblok helped global brands like Tesla, Estee Lauder, and Nissan turn their content operations into a competitive advantage. Storyblok is the only CMS recognized as Customers' Choice in Gartner's Peer Insights 2023 report. See why at Storyblok.com

Ready to see how Storyblok can take your content management to the next level?

TALK TO ONE OF OUR SPECIALISTS

Want to try Storyblok for yourself?

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