



# The State of CMS 2023: Germany

## INTRODUCTION

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Content management systems (CMSs) are at the heart of any modern business. They connect digital brands with relevant audiences and support the day-to-day operations that come with running a successful organization. As the core of a company, it's not enough for a CMS to do the bare minimum. In a world of high customer expectations, systems as well as their users must constantly evolve to create the best possible experience.

Usage habits in Germany continue to develop, ranging from which types of teams interact with the CMS to how many they're juggling at once. Even the core technology itself has gone through significant developments: the once universal monolithic CMS with a tightly coupled front and backend no longer holds a monopoly over users. Headless technology – systems that separate the two ends – has changed the game, transforming what users can expect from their content management system. Keeping up with unfolding patterns like these is key to understanding the current and future state of the industry.

That's why Storyblok has compiled the Global State of CMS 2023: Germany report. We set out to take stock of the modern user's needs and behavior: what makes one CMS worth using and another worth abandoning? How has the headless revolution affected their company's performance? How are they reaching their current audience, and how will that strategy change in the coming years?

To find the answer to these questions and more, we've collected data from users around the region to understand their choices – and in turn, what role CMSs play in a constantly changing market.

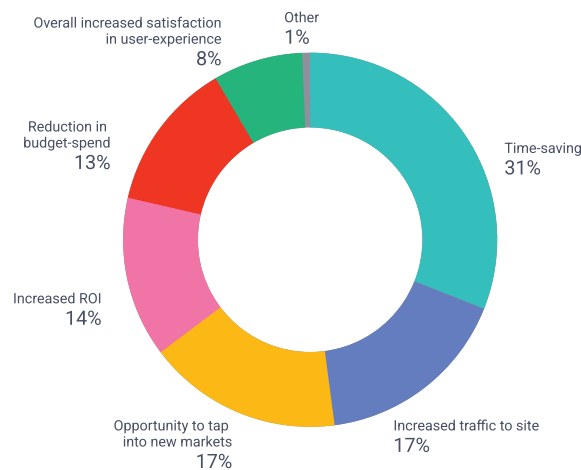
Total respondents: 167

## Table of Contents

- 4 Executive Summary**
- 5 The State of CMS - Germany**
- 6 Survey Results**
- 21 Key Takeaways**

# Executive Summary

- 1 The majority of users (**63%**) need more than 1 CMS just to maintain their content operations, with **8%** using **4** or more CMSs.
- 2 **Minimizing delivery risk, need for a new technology stack, and omnichannel delivery** are the main reasons behind having more than 1 CMS in place - a direct result of the legacy architecture of traditional CMS solutions like *WordPress, Adobe Experience Manager, and Webflow*.
- 3 **Security issues, time-consuming processes, and difficulty in needing to learn a new system/skill/tech stack**, are the 3 main reasons why businesses change their CMS.
- 4 **36%** of respondents believe their current CMS workflows are difficult or very difficult.
- 5 In the vast majority of businesses (**79%**) multiple teams use a CMS on a regular basis, making proper workflows and collaboration capabilities even more important.
- 6 **43% of businesses** already use a Headless CMS to manage their content from one central hub and publish simultaneously on any channel.
- 7 **An overwhelming majority (84%)** of businesses report improved KPIs, revenue growth, and productivity since using a headless CMS.



Reported improvements since using a headless CMS

# The State of CMS - Germany

Content management systems have been essential tools for organizations for around 25 years. As technology continues to evolve, so does the general understanding of what a CMS is and what it can do. However, knowledge and use of these systems are not necessarily universal, and not every team member comes into direct contact with them on a day-to-day basis. It's important to make sure that we're assessing the state of CMS based on the choices made by active users.

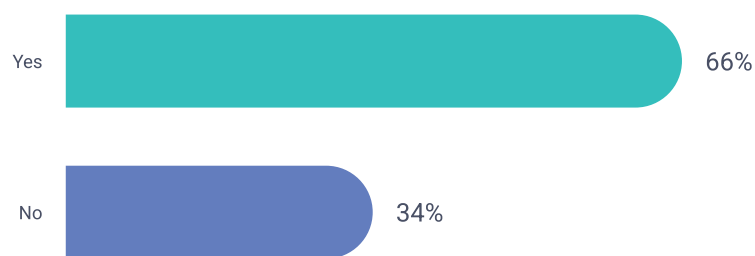
As such, we started the study with a screening question to make sure respondents were familiar with how their organization manages content:

“ A Content Management System (otherwise known as a CMS), is a software application that allows users to build and manage a website without having to code it from scratch.

## BASED ON THE DESCRIPTION ABOVE, ARE YOU CURRENTLY USING A CMS AT YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Those who answered “yes” continued on with the study, while those who answered “no” were excused. This ensures that all our participants were operating within a company that uses a CMS.

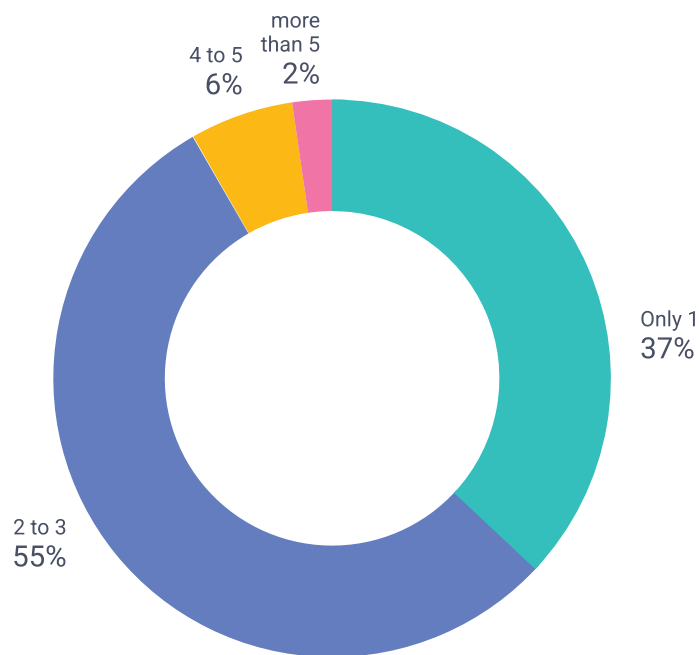
Our results revealed the following:



A majority of respondents (**66%**) indicated that they currently use a CMS at their organization and thus could accurately respond to the following questions. This brought the qualifying sample from 167 to **111**.

# Survey Results

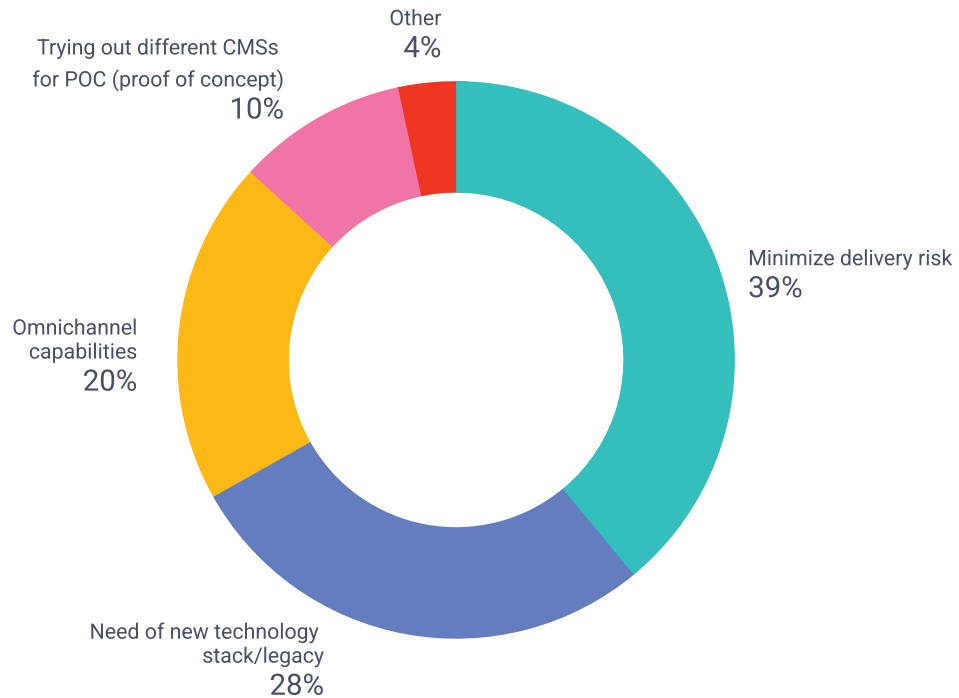
## 1 How many CMSs do you currently use at your organization?



**A majority of respondents (55%) used 2 to 3 CMSs in their organization.** Those using just one CMS came in at **37%**. Using 4 or more CMSs stands at **8%**, proving many companies still struggle with a central solution to content management.

2

If you use more than 2 CMSs at your organization, please select reasons why you are using more than 2 CMSs at your organization:



The use of multiple CMSs is not always wise: it can lead to issues such as disorganized workflow, content siloing, and communication issues. Thus, it's important to understand why some users continue to operate several CMSs regardless of these downsides.

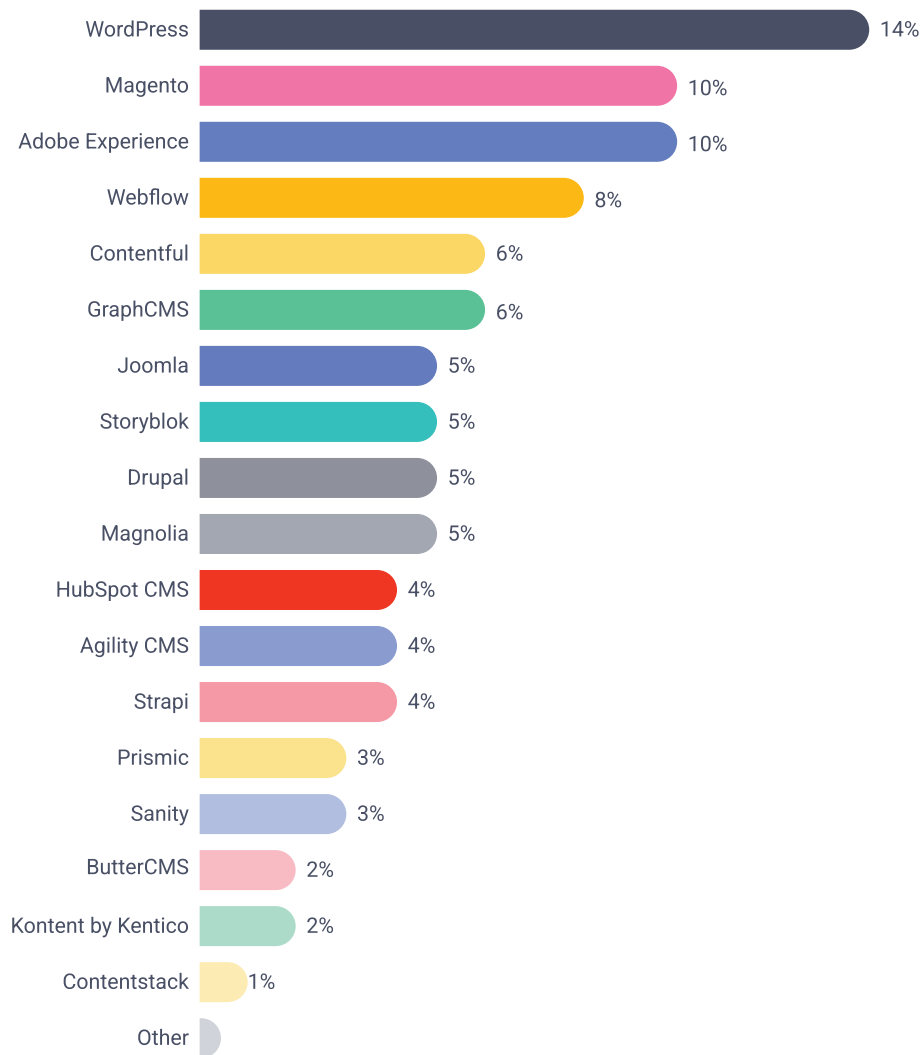
The top-listed reason for using more than 2 CMSs was to **minimize delivery risk**. This could be the result of having backups, or perhaps using multiple CMSs to serve multiple frontends.

The second reason behind using more than two CMSs was to satisfy the **need for a new technology stack/legacy**. Monolithic systems are not built to be adaptable: the all-in-one, tightly connected nature of the technology makes it hard to change things or add new programs. It can be a costly, difficult process that carries the risk of crashing the entire system should a failure occur. As such, users who need additional capabilities may find it easier to simply use an entirely new CMS. Unfortunately, this is not a sustainable solution.

The third most commonly cited reason was **omnichannel capabilities**. Omnichannel strategies are an essential part of modern marketing. Customers expect to be able to access content across a huge number of channels, one that will only continue to grow. However, monolithic systems are not suited to providing omnichannel experiences: the backend is tied to a single, inflexible frontend, meaning getting content on multiple platforms is extremely difficult. This may be one reason that users resort to a multi-CMS ecosystem.

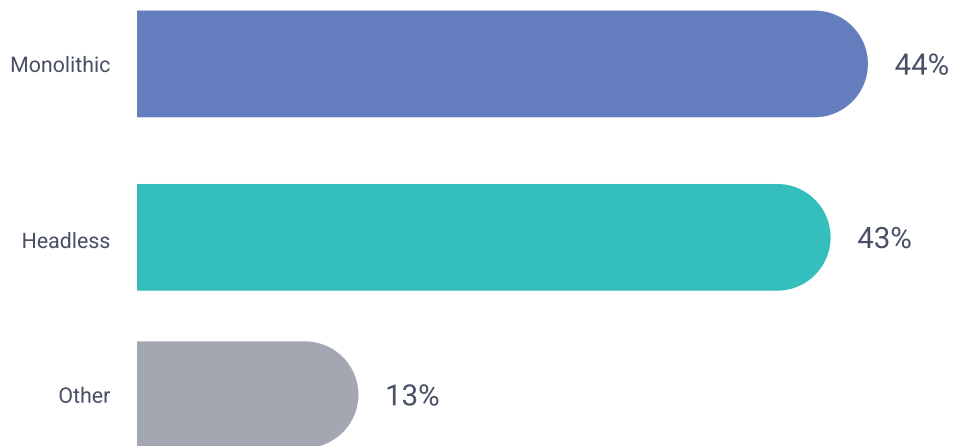
## 3

## Which CMSs are you currently using?



**The most commonly used CMS platform in the sample is WordPress.** The top 4 CMSs by number of users alone were all monolithic systems: WordPress, Magento, Adobe Experience Manager, and Webflow. However, the 5th and 6th top systems were both headless: Contentful and GraphCMS.

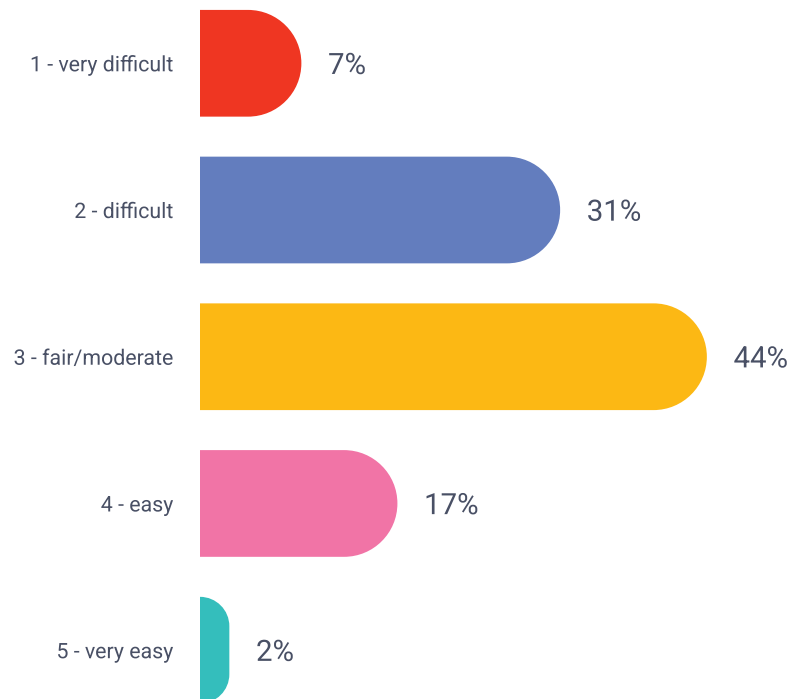




In Germany, **nearly as many people use headless as monolithic – favoring monolithic systems by a single percent.** This is above the international average of 36% of users using headless. **Germany demonstrates a uniquely high rate of users adopting headless systems.** Other choices (such as page builders, web apps, and custom CMSs) came in last, representing just 13% of respondents. These numbers imply that German users are very quickly adopting headless systems, more so than the rest of the world.

4

## How would you rate your team's/organization's processes prior to using a CMS? - 1 being very difficult and 5 being very easy

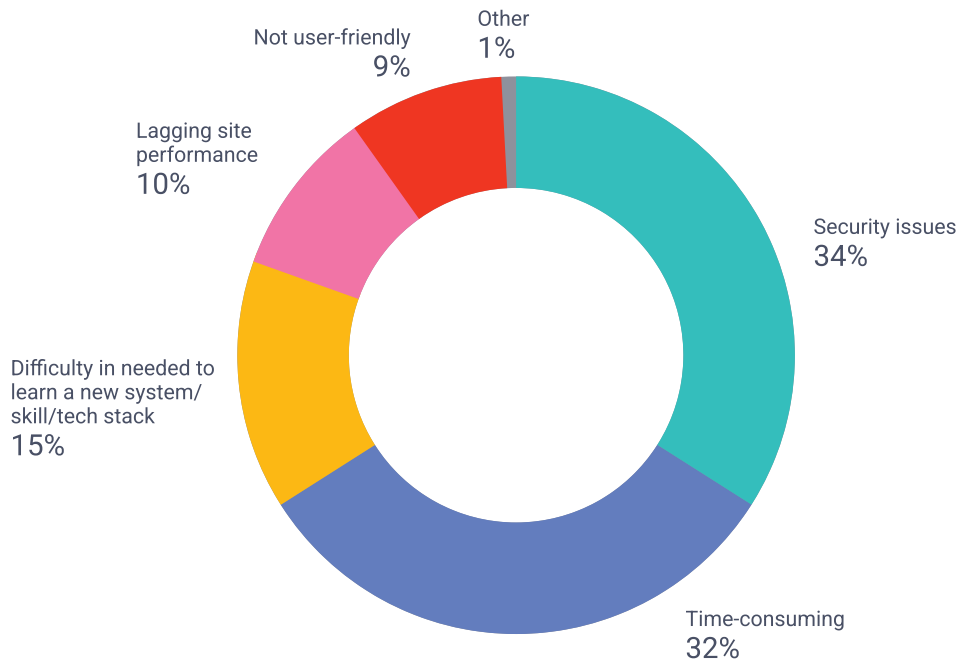


CMSs often bring big changes to organizations, contrasting the prior and current experience interesting to investigate.

In this case, the majority of respondents reported that their organizational processes before using a CMS were Fair/Moderate. 38% cited that it was either difficult or very difficult. **Overall, only a minority of 19% saw their processes prior to using a CMS as either easy or very easy.**

5

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



It's unlikely that users switching to a new platform have only a single pain point to cause such a change. As such, users were able to choose multiple options for this question.

**The most common pain point was that the old platform demonstrated security issues.** Security threats to a CMS can lead to serious consequences for the organization: lost revenue, stolen data, and a huge blow to customer trust. This is one reason why many users choose a headless CMS. The use of APIs means that each program is naturally quarantined, so a security risk in one area cannot spread to another. Threats are contained immediately. This is opposed to a monolithic system, where one security breach has the potential to take down an entire system.

**The second most common pain point was time-consuming processes.** Better time management impacts every part of the content pipeline and improving it can be an essential way to optimize an organization's performance. This may also be connected to Question 4's data showing many users find their CMSs hard to use, as inefficient processes can lead to frustration and unnecessary extra effort.

The third most frequently cited pain point was **difficulty in needing to learn a new system/skill/tech stack**. This is another aspect that can negatively impact a company's productivity and effectiveness – an inability to change old programs and add new ones can mean falling behind as customer expectations and technology evolve.

# How Storytelling Scales

Storyblok is the headless content management system that empowers 110,000 + developers and content teams to create better content experiences across any digital channel.



## TRUSTED BY



### STRONGER

**123%**  
traffic increase  
within 6 months

### MARC O'POLO

**14 days**  
full implementation  
of Storyblok

### WÜSTHOF

**50%**  
revenue growth  
in 60 days

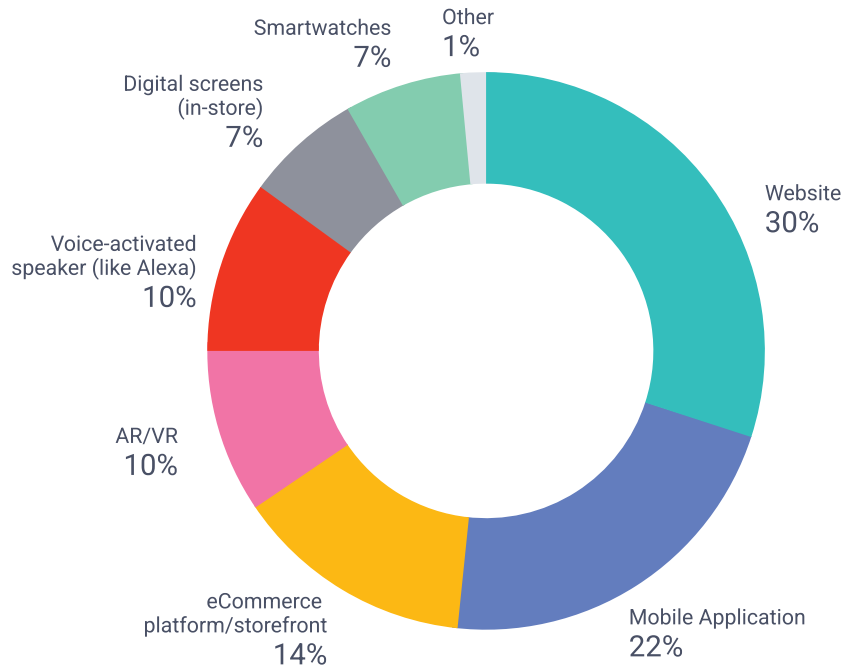
### UPC

**3x**  
faster website  
performance

To learn more about how Storyblok helps companies provide next-generation digital experience, [read our case studies](#).

## 6

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



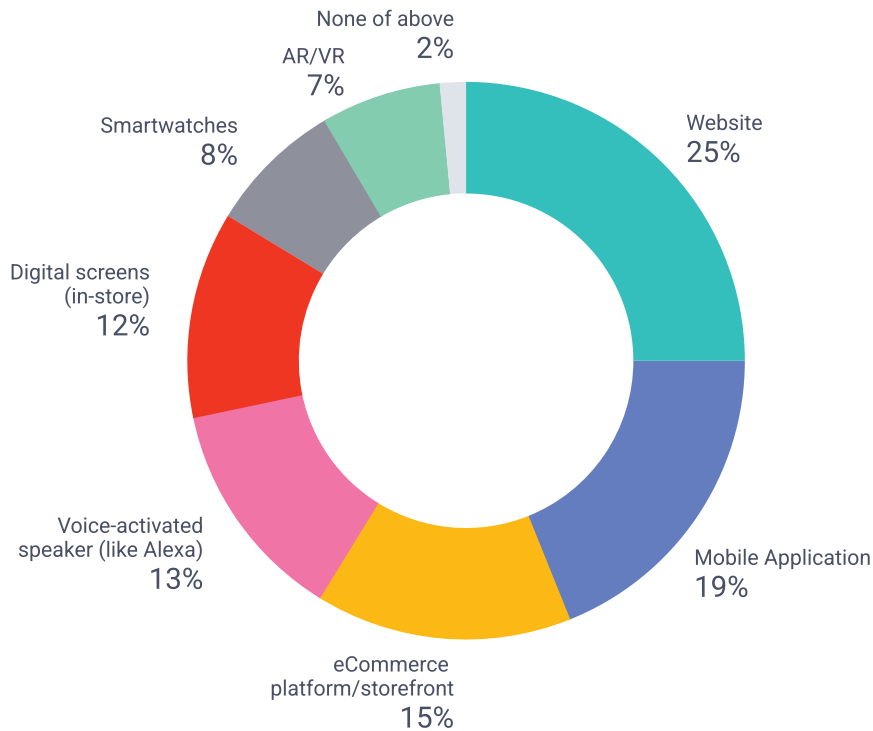
The most commonly reported channels served by CMSs were **websites, mobile applications, and eCommerce platforms/storefronts** in that order. Given that these are typical channels for modern organizations, this is not surprising.

By contrast, the Internet of Things (IoT) options were not as popular. The percentage of respondents using AR/VR and voice-activated speakers was just 10% each, with digital in-store screens and smartwatches at 7% each.

This itself might reflect an interesting pattern in Germany. AR/VR and voice-activated speakers are commonly used at home. In-store digital screens are of course used in brick-and-mortar operations, and smartwatches are frequently used wherever the wearer travels. The fact that this sample favored using technology more often used in the home may be a reflection of the pandemic's drive toward eCommerce. It may also suggest that these strategies worked well in German markets and are thus still in use.

7

## Which new platforms and channels do you plan to serve with your CMS in the future? (Check all that apply)

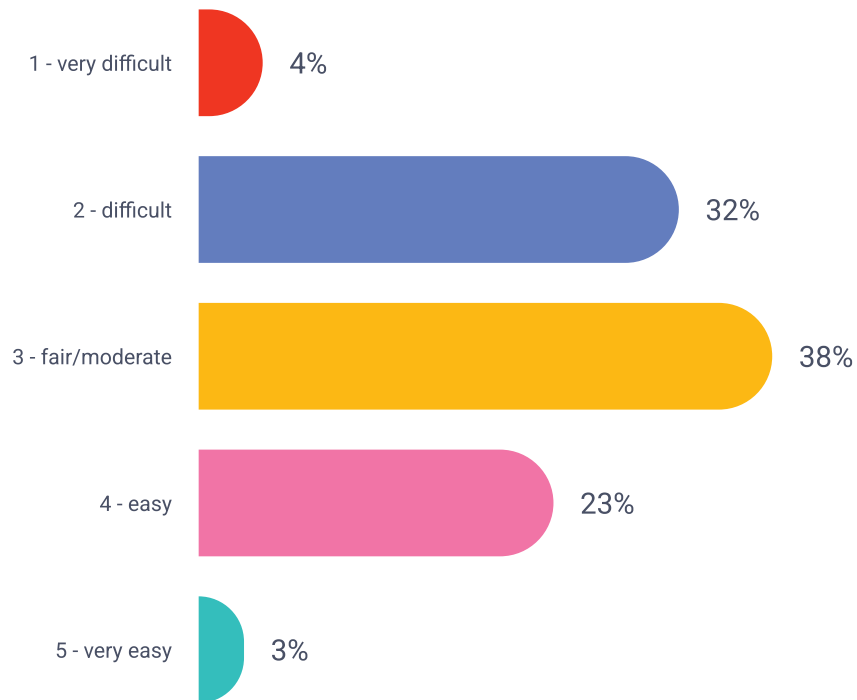


The top three channels that users plan to use in the future were the same as the currently used ones. However, there were a few differences in the IoT channels. Each saw a moderate increase in respondents planning on using them in the future except for **AR/VR, where fewer users plan to use it in the future than they currently do.**

While the difference is small, it might also be a sign of where future German market trends are headed. If combined with the data from Question 6 which suggest usage patterns may still be affected by the pandemic, AR/VR may be becoming less popular simply because demand for immersive in-home shopping has gone down. While the pattern worked in the past and accounts for the number of current users, future strategies may reflect investing in different channels.

8

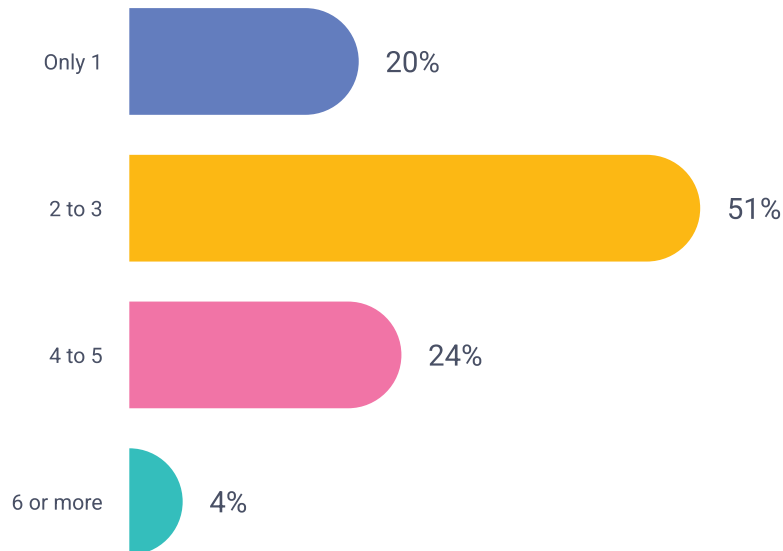
## Rate your satisfaction with your current workflow process with your CMS on a scale of 1 to 5 - 1 being very difficult and 5 being very easy



The satisfaction rate for CMS workflow processes presents fairly similarly to the satisfaction rate before using a CMS. However, the differences that are present are important to note: more respondents found their processes were better, with a **7% increase in the number of people who found it easy or very easy.**

9

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



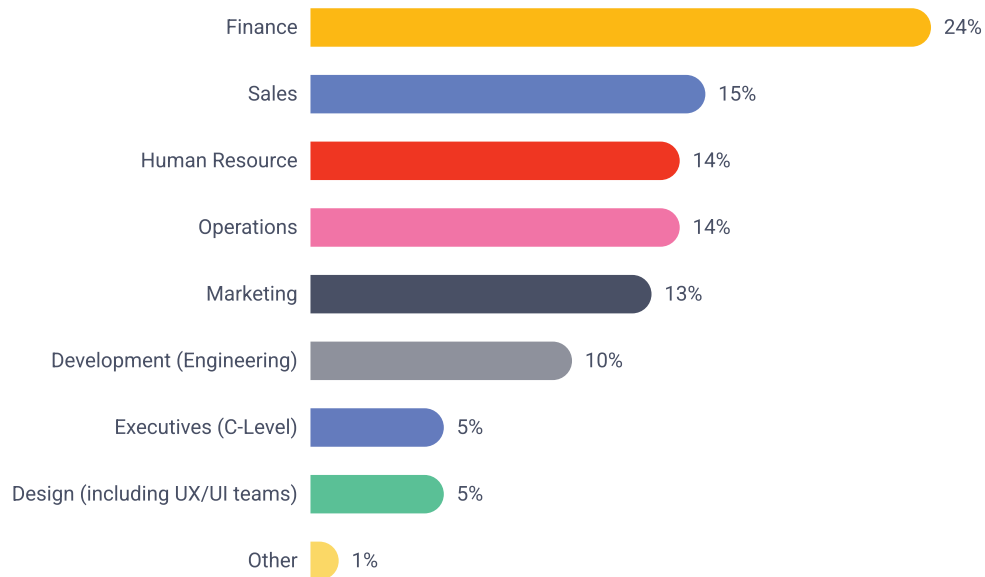
**51% of users stated that 2 to 3 teams currently use the CMS at their organization.** 6 or more teams using a CMS was the least common choice, with only 4% indicating that they do so.

As for the 20% of respondents using only one team with their CMS, this may be explained by the type of system. Monolithic CMSs often present issues where they're trickier for non-technical teams to use. This may lead to only one team – perhaps developers – using it. However, this may also mean developers have to handle content responsibilities such as uploading and editing, which can be an inefficient use of their time and make the lives of content creators harder.



10

## Please tick which teams are currently using a CMS at your organization



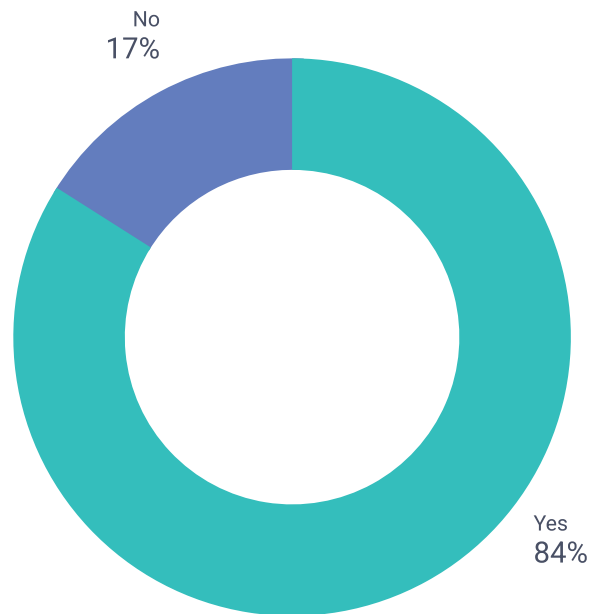
**Finance** was the team most likely to use the CMS, followed closely by **Sales** and **Human Resources**. The two teams least likely to use an organization's CMS were **Design** teams and **Executives**.

Interestingly, **developers only made up 10% of the sample in the region**. However, this is an increase from the international numbers in 2022. Combined with the data from Question 3, one reason for this may be the increasing usage of headless in Germany: as organizations are moving away from monolithic systems and page builders, developers may be finding that they can do more with headless CMSs and thus participate in their usage more.

Another reason for this might be that monolithic CMSs often lack robust collaboration tools. Without proper communication in-engine, developers might find it easier to work with each other and content creators through external tools. Unfortunately, this adds unnecessary steps and roadblocks to the workflow. This theory is further supported by Question 5's indication that time-consuming processes were the most commonly cited pain point.

11

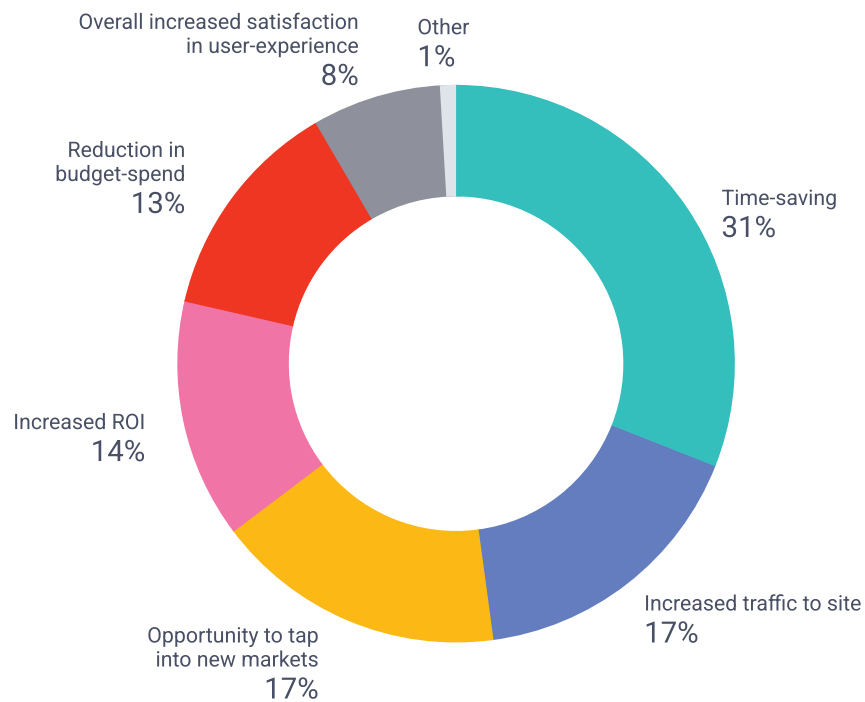
Would you say there have been improvements in terms of time-saving, budget, productivity, increased revenues/growth, meeting your KPIs since using a headless CMS? Have you seen any improvements?



**An overwhelming majority of 84% found that switching to a headless CMS improved their content operations.** This is despite the fact that the top three CMS choices in the sample were monolithic systems. On the contrary, this data explains the large number of headless CMS users in the German market as shown in Question 3. More people are seeing improvements to their system when they switch, likely leading to more organizations acknowledging the benefits and switching over themselves. **This question's results are a ringing endorsement of how headless CMS serves modern content needs better than its monolithic counterpart.**

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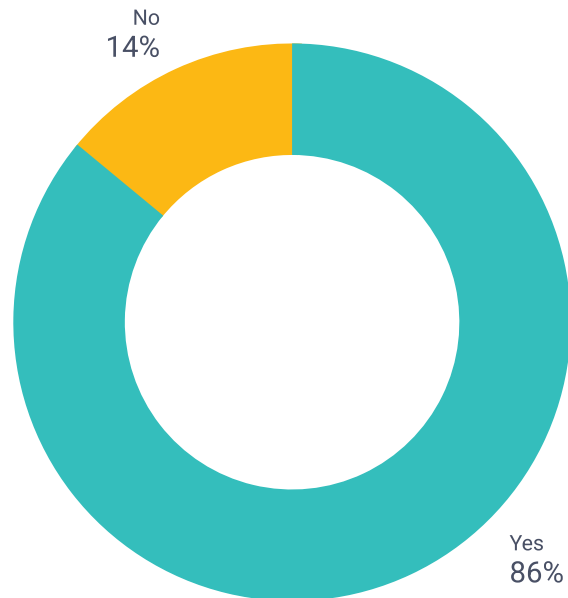
## If yes, please choose one or more following improvements you have seen since using a headless CMS



After switching to a headless system, **31% of people saw time-saving improvements**. Considering that this same sample demonstrated time-consuming operations as the main pain point leading them to seek out a new system, this suggests that **switching to a headless CMS can be the solution to the most common content problem**. Additionally, **17%** saw increased traffic after adopting a headless system, and **17%** found better opportunities to tap into new markets.

13

## Do you think your current CMS will be effective for the next several years?



An impressive **86% of users believe that their current CMS will remain effective in the coming years**. Given the large number of users in Germany who have already switched to headless, this might be an indicator of how effective such systems are. Because headless CMSs are API-based, adding new programs is seamless. It can be done with any type of technology or channel at any time, and just as easily undone if necessary. This eliminates the risk of a system becoming outdated and thus may be the source of this confidence.

# Key Takeaways

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The content management industry in Germany is in a period of impressive growth. This is perhaps best illustrated by the rise of one CMS type in particular: headless. This study reveals that nearly half of the respondents in this region's sample use a headless CMS and are seeing significant benefits from doing so: less time spent, better security, and more.

This in turn seems to have encouraged optimism for the future of headless systems: a large percentage of users indicated an interest in expanding to IoT channels such as AR/VR and voice-activated speakers. As providing these experiences is extremely difficult with monolithic CMSs, it could be another sign of the growing awareness of how headless CMSs can better serve modern needs. The optimism that systems will remain effective in the future in a sample with such a high percentage of headless users is also a strong show of confidence.

Overall, the German state of CMS in 2023 is one that suggests more and more users will turn to headless systems in the future as the benefits continue to demonstrate themselves. While the use of monolithic systems remains high, so does the awareness of their shortcomings. The CMS market seems to be on the precipice of a turn toward the limitless possibilities that headless CMS can offer.

## **ABOUT STORYBLOK**

Storyblok is a next-generation headless content management system revolutionizing how storytelling scales. With an API-first approach, it helps users create and scale content to any digital channel. Features like the visual editor and digital asset manager mean content creators can work independently. The power of headless's best-of-breed approach also means that developers can build a perfectly customized tech stack, all protected by Storyblok's ISO 27001 security certification. Add the benefit of Storyblok's advanced collaboration suite, and all these teams can come together to work together directly within the CMS.

In a constantly changing world with more user experience demands than ever before, brands such as Netflix, T-Mobile, and MindValley trust Storyblok to provide secure, personalized experiences to their users.

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

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