

# Meredith Corporation: The Creative Library

*Leading media and marketing company leverages content technology  
to reduce costs and increase revenue*

Sebastian Holst  
Senior Editor, The Gilbane Report  
March 31, 2004

Meredith Corporation reviews its implementation of The Creative Library; an enterprise digital asset management solution that serves as a resource for its many publishing and marketing businesses. Their recipe of careful planning, consensus building and integration of commercial content technology products has proven to be both a business success and a well-received evolution to the professionals within this 100+ year old media and marketing firm.



## Table of Contents

<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>3</b>
CONTENT TECHNOLOGY WORKS (CTW).....	3
OVERVIEW OF SUCCESS STORY .....	3
GOALS AND NON-GOALS .....	3
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	3
<b>IN THEIR OWN WORDS .....</b>	<b>4</b>
MEREDITH CORPORATION'S PERSPECTIVE.....	4
<i>What were the symptoms in your organization that brought this need to your attention? .....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>How did you identify what specific content technologies were appropriate? .....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Which vendors were selected; what were the overriding considerations? .....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>How did you justify the funding and other necessary resources? .....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>What were the challenges and approaches used to get the most of your suppliers? .....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>What specific changes in your organization resulted from this deployment? .....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>How did you capture the value of this deployment? .....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>What future plans are in place to further develop or exploit the results of this initiative? .....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>What were the most valuable lessons learned? .....</i>	<i>6</i>
<b>MEREDITH CORPORATION BACKGROUND.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>PROJECT DESCRIPTION .....</b>	<b>8</b>
PROBLEM DEFINITION .....	8
METRICS FOR MEASURING EXTENT OF THE PROBLEM AND CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS .....	8
1. <i>Cost Savings</i> .....	8
2. <i>New Revenue</i> .....	8
3. <i>Intangibles</i> .....	8
<b>IMPLEMENTATION REVIEW .....</b>	<b>10</b>
EARLY OBJECTIVES AND MILESTONES .....	10
IT BUDGET .....	10
TIMELINE AND APPROACH .....	10
<i>Digital Asset Management Selection Process .....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Organization .....</i>	<i>13</i>
THE CREATIVE LIBRARY .....	14
<i>Logical architecture .....</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>Distinguishing characteristics .....</i>	<i>15</i>
<b>FUTURES .....</b>	<b>17</b>
ONGOING AND ANTICIPATED CONTENT TECHNOLOGY INITIATIVES .....	17
<b>IN THEIR OWN WORDS .....</b>	<b>18</b>
A SUPPLIER'S VIEW: ARTESIA TECHNOLOGIES SHARES ITS PERSPECTIVE .....	18
CONCLUSIONS: THE GILBANE REPORT'S PERSPECTIVE .....	19
<b>PARTNER PAGE.....</b>	<b>20</b>

### Introduction

#### Content Technology Works (CTW)

The CTW is an industry initiative that is administered by The Gilbane Report to develop and communicate content technology best practices and success stories. The premise is that when given enough proven recipes for success, enterprise consumers will be able to adapt and replicate that success for themselves – increasing productivity and confidence.

Success stories are written by The Gilbane Report and are told in the voice of the enterprise adopter (in this case, Meredith Corporation) with final editorial control resting entirely in the hands of the adopter.

The result is that:

- Success stories are as opinionated and as jargon free as the adopter prefers
- Analysis is included from The Gilbane Report and invited contributors
- In addition to technology recipes, strategies for securing funding, measuring actual value, driving adoption and other business and social issues are of interest
- Vendors do not control content

Typically, this kind of valuable information is only available for purchase. CTW content is different because CTW partners subsidize the program to ensure that this information is free. Partners want to push as many best practices to as many organizations as possible with the expected result being an overall acceleration of content technology adoption. For more information on the CTW program, visit [www.gilbane.com/technology\\_works.html](http://www.gilbane.com/technology_works.html).

#### Overview of success story

The Meredith Corporation has translated the promise of digital asset management into significant savings and the promise of incremental revenue through new publishing and marketing products. The successful assimilation of advanced content technology into Meredith's 100+ year old business is accomplished through careful planning, conscientious consensus building and a thorough deployment methodology. This success story outlines how senior executives, technologists and publishers combined to assess opportunity, commit resources and orchestrate an enterprise deployment of a digital asset management solution servicing magazine, book and special interest publishing lines of business.

#### Goals and non-goals

This success story outlines essential elements of a successful enterprise deployment of content technology. This is an individual enterprise's story told in its own voice. While Meredith's approach may not be universal, its success is indisputable.

There is no attempt to generalize Meredith's recipe for success into a universal formula

#### Acknowledgments

The Gilbane Report would like to acknowledge the generous contribution of time and intellectual property from The Meredith Corporation. Specifically, they have allocated the time of talented and heavily committed staff in support of this effort to improve the understanding and adoption of enterprise content technology.

## In Their Own Words

### Meredith Corporation's Perspective

When selecting a fine restaurant, nothing is more valuable than a review. The best ingredients cannot guarantee a great night out; recipes, price, service, convenience, etc. are all critical elements. CTW success stories are organized around a *recipe* for success rather than the *ingredients*. This interview section takes the analogy one step further and provides a review of the entire experience. Here, some Meredith employees introduce their experience with an eye towards enticing others to follow.

*What were the symptoms in your organization that brought this need to your attention?*

#### How did you know you were hungry?

"It was common knowledge that we were creating but not caring for our assets. We had an art library that held roughly 500K assets, but when you consider that Meredith's publishing activities generate more than 200K in assets PER year, it was obvious that we were neglecting some very valuable publishing resources." – John Riha, Executive Editor, Better Homes and Gardens and Chairperson of the Digital Asset Management (DAM) steering committee.

"Can you imagine a business that does not know what assets they possess? This is a common publishing malady. Twenty to 30 percent of the assets we were paying to produce were not getting published or picked up (reused). Further, the material that was published was difficult to find (and reuse.)" – Eric Ware, Business Analyst, Meredith Publishing Group.

*How did you identify what specific content technologies were appropriate?*

#### How did you decide on what you wanted to eat?

"We looked at our current technology investments and what they were doing for us, folded in the lessons learned from 15 years of custom solutions and several research projects aimed at improving our Digital Asset Management technologies and Creative Collaboration. We built a working prototype, consulted with outside analysts and fed all of this into a formal RFP process. This approach provided a framework that helped us focus and prioritize our requirements and better communicate those requirements to potential suppliers." – Bob Furstenuau, Director of Publishing Services

*Which vendors were selected; what were the overriding considerations?*

#### Where did you dine and why?

"We selected Artesia Technologies TEAMS digital asset management system. Artesia's product distinguished itself through its strong metadata support and in its broad support of general functionality, platforms and content types that are important to Meredith. As an organization, Artesia demonstrated a solid understanding of our business and a strong desire to work with us. We supplemented the asset management functionality with Verity's search, including options for taxonomy and parametric search and visual search functionality from LTU Technologies." – Tim Kordick – Sr. System Engineer, Chief Architect for The Creative Library

*How did you justify the funding and other necessary resources?*

#### How did you pay for the meal?

"We committed to an operational break-even in twelve months and a positive return on our entire investment in thirty-six months. Our business case combined cost savings derived from reducing variable costs including the use of freelancers, scanning and duplication costs, new photo production and stock photography licensing and new revenue generation through

commitments to produce new products from a number of departments.” – Tina Steil, Director, Enabling Technologies Meredith Corporation

*What were the challenges and approaches used to get the most of your suppliers?*

**How was your service experience?**

“This project was core to our business and had as high a visibility as a technology-inspired project can have. We made a strategic decision to be our own ‘general contractor’ and to subcontract product and technology-specific projects to our suppliers.” – Tina Steil, Director, Enabling Technologies Meredith Corporation

“Our approach was to emphasize detailed project planning, force vendors to read each others API/product documentation and to get commitments for a detailed project plan from each of our suppliers.” – Tim Kordick, Senior Systems Engineer, Chief Architect for The Creative Library

**How were you able to assure acceptance?**

“It is virtually impossible to assure success at the beginning of a large and complex project – however, thorough planning and an emphasis on building solid relationships between the parties is certainly an important part of any successful recipe.” – Tina Steil, Director, Enabling Technologies

*What specific changes in your organization resulted from this deployment?*

**How could you tell when you had had enough to eat?**

“An asset’s value is recognized and captured at creation rather than after a publication. We have taken what was considered to be a post publication archival function and placed it front and center in the publishing process. Our art library evolved into a creative library with an increased emphasis on taxonomy.” – John Riha, Executive Editor, Better Homes and Gardens

“We are decreasing the volume of freelance work and empowering our editors to be more self-reliant and therefore more effective. However, it was not the intent to transform our editorial and publishing processes – it was to make our existing business dramatically more efficient and able to produce more quality publishing and marketing products.” – Tina Steil, Director, Enabling Technologies

“One of the most exciting developments that emerged from The Creative Library initiative is the formation of cross functional overlay committees that combine executive, managerial, editorial and technical staff. This organizational infrastructure was instrumental in the success and acceptance of The Creative Library and will continue to serve as a competitive weapon as we take on new and perhaps ever more transformational technology initiatives.” – Terri Fredrickson, Copy Chief, Meredith Books Group

*How did you capture the value of this deployment?*

**How would you measure and rate the nutritional value of this meal?**

“We track all of our expenses by department and product line, so comparing year-over-year expenses is a straightforward task. Further, we track all of our revenue and trace it back to our various media and marketing products. The tricky part is isolating the results that stem directly from The Creative Library versus other factors.” – Eric Ware, Business Analyst, Meredith Publishing Group.

*What future plans are in place to further develop or exploit the results of this initiative?*

**When and how often do you plan to go back?**

“Open access to promotion and sales departments. This kind of access will give our sales force an unprecedented advantage.” – Bob Furstenau, Director of Publishing Services

“We will provide deeper integration between publishing and business workflows and develop improved support of remote, distributed and freelance workflows.” – Tim Kordick, Senior Systems Engineer, Chief Architect for The Creative Library

*What were the most valuable lessons learned?*

**What advice would you give your friends?**

“You need to plunge ahead, don’t hesitate. Be sure to have dedicated players. You cannot count on part-time people to ‘rise to the occasion.’ You also need a champion. I was invited to be chair of The Creative Library steering committee because I had a broad business understanding of our magazine, book and other media and marketing lines of business. We correctly recognized that the guiding principles for this project had to be set by the business.” – John Riha, Executive Editor, Better Homes and Gardens

“Begin your enterprise-wide project from the top down building consensus from senior management. However, once general principles and objectives have been established, restart the process in a bottom-up fashion by enlisting group managers and senior contributors. Both their input and support are as important as the executive commitment.” – Eric Ware, Business Analyst, Meredith Publishing Group.

## Meredith Corporation Background

Meredith Corporation ([www.meredith.com](http://www.meredith.com)) is one of the nation's leading media and marketing companies with businesses centering on magazine and book publishing, television broadcasting, integrated marketing, and interactive media. The Meredith Publishing Group, the country's foremost home and family authority, features 17 magazine brands, including *Better Homes and Gardens*, *Ladies' Home Journal* and *American Baby*, and more than 160 special interest publications. Meredith owns 12 television stations, including properties in top-25 markets such as Atlanta, Phoenix and Portland.

Meredith has nearly 300 books in print and has established marketing relationships with some of America's leading companies, including The Home Depot, DIRECTV, DaimlerChrysler, Wal-Mart and Carnival Cruise Lines. Meredith's consumer database, which contains approximately 75 million names, is the largest domestic database among media companies and enables magazine and television advertisers to precisely target marketing campaigns. Additionally, Meredith has an extensive Internet presence that includes 26 Web sites and strategic alliances with leading Internet destinations.

As a media and marketing company, Meredith recognizes the value of the digital content it owns as both product components (publications) and essential ingredients in the promotion of those products (branding, sales and marketing tools). Reuse (or “pickup”) of content is an essential part of Meredith’s business model as the material that is originally produced in support of its flagship magazines serves as the baseline for numerous special interest and specialty book and magazine products.

## Project Description

### Problem Definition

The Meredith Corporation produces on an annual basis over 41,000 pages of content and 200,000 images. They reuse a certain percentage of those assets<sup>1</sup> but did not have a reliable system to track the assets that were not published. Approximately 20 to 30 percent of the surplus assets were “falling on the cutting room floor” and not being considered for reuse. A significant proportion of Meredith’s business comes from producing books and special interest publications (SIPs) dependent upon pickup of in-house assets. Historically, the selection of content was an intensely manual process requiring an inordinate amount of time searching for material for each publication.

Meredith’s previous inventory management approach included a centralized Art Library and a collection of decentralized group-specific systems and processes. The centralized Art Library included:

- Physical storage of creative assets (primarily film)
- Manuscript and Art (M&A) records that included over 500,000 records that provided minimal information identifying and describing assets stored in the Art Library primarily focused on rights and usage data.
- Digital Archive that represented a subset of the M&A inventory including 20,000 “as-published” content files and 100,000 associated “as-published” images.

The number and character of the decentralized group-specific systems were unknown and were not included in the business case for Digital Asset Management.

### Metrics for measuring extent of the problem and criteria for success

Metrics fell into three categories.

#### 1. Cost Savings

- After examining a typical freelancer workflow (non-staff and therefore a variable cost), it was estimated that searching for content to pick up was estimated at 10% of their total work effort.
- Reduction of scanning and other process duplications
- Reduce annual new photo production
- Reduce stock image licensing

#### 2. New Revenue

Time savings for editors and other full time staff did not translate into cost savings; it translated into increased capacity.

#### 3. Intangibles

Intangibles are benefits that should intuitively flow from making The Creative Library available across the enterprise. However, the concrete monetary advantage was not determined or used in

---

<sup>1</sup> An estimated 100,000 images are not used.



the business case to justify the initial investment. Selected intangible benefits for Meredith included:

- Improve processes & increase efficiencies
  - Art & Editorial resources within Publishing spend 5-10% of their time managing the creative process
- Reduce/eliminate redundant processes
  - Reduce photography & labor costs for “dotting process”
  - Repurpose content for Manuscripts and Buyers Guide information
  - Reduce costs associated with hi-res “as-published” from external pre-press
- Reduce cycle-time for creating prototypes for Advertising, Sales & Promotion opportunities
- Increased product quality
- Positioned for more effective integration of consumer products across editorial assets. Examples include:
  - Products Database
  - Covers, Recipes, Plant/Gardens Database
  - Historical Archive

## Implementation Review

### Early Objectives and Milestones

Meredith organized its project to ensure that The Creative Library, an enterprise Digital Asset Management system, would be assimilated into the business and emerge as an integral part of Meredith's publishing workflow. Specific objectives and milestones included:

1. Upfront identification of the appropriate technology, software, and personnel necessary to manage the system.
2. A definition of the scope of data to be included in the initial deployment phases. Meredith has a vast archive. Entering all of the assets in a single phase would be counter-productive, time consuming, and expensive. The decision was made to begin with current art and editorial assets (both published and unpublished) as they enter the normal workflow and institute a second phase to enter pre-existing assets on an on-going basis.
3. Establishment of programs to adapt the system to the Meredith culture and, where appropriate, the Meredith culture to the system. These included offering incentives for involvement to the various departments as well as providing proof that the system provides individual benefits to each department and benefits to the corporation as a whole.
4. Subsuming the existing mainframe-based copyrights management system into The Creative Library.
5. Making the system fully searchable by both objective and subjective criteria. For an image, objective criteria could include photographer, date of shoot, date published, status of rights and restrictions. The same image could also include subjective criteria such as content descriptions of the scene, people, objects, style, angle, color and tone.
6. Developing a metadata model and a means to extract and automate the population of metadata fields to support items 5 and 6 above.

### IT Budget

The detailed budget for The Creative Library is confidential, but these high-level facts are worth noting. Each of the following expense categories were evaluated and assigned a capital investment figure:

- Internal and external resource costs
- Hardware, software and labor costs
- Contingency amount to cover unscheduled costs and to reduce risk

The total capital investment that was finally approved was \$3,700,000, with a commitment to achieve break-even operations in one year and a positive return on the total investment in three years.

### Timeline and Approach

- January, 2003 – Digital Asset Management Selection Process
- June, 2003 – Project Kickoff
- November, 2003 – Centralized Repository
  - Conversion of Manuscript & Art System to selected Digital Asset Management system (Artesia TEAMS)

- Migration of Digital Archive to Artesia TEAMS
- Standardized Asset Ingestion Process
- March, 2004 – Process Improvements
  - Stabilize systems, processes & procedures
  - Define and pilot “Best Practice” creative process

### *Digital Asset Management Selection Process*

The selection of the Digital Asset Management (DAM) solution was obviously a critical milestone in the implementation of The Creative Library. The requirements of the business are absolute and, as a result, every missing or incomplete feature would translate into increased cost, implementation time and be an ongoing maintenance burden. Conversely, a DAM supplier whose current and forward-looking product plans were well-aligned with Meredith’s requirements would translate into a simpler and more cost-efficient implementation and maintenance profile. A formal RFP process was initiated that communicated and prioritized technical, security, business and financial requirements. Specific requirements were identified that measured competence in the following subject areas:

#### **Product**

- Media format support: native support for regular publishing and image formats that included previews, automatic thumbnail generation, metadata extraction, component management, versioning, etc.
- Metadata: robust metadata support that included the ability to capture both objective and subjective attributes of assets as well as the business context of those assets, e.g. project and product-related context.
- Workflow: Built-in components that could reflect existing and planned use case and business process scenarios.
- Security: User, role, project and asset-based security.
- Robustness: Scalability, availability and diagnostic functionality.
- Platform Support: Support for existing and strategic server and desktop platforms and applications.
- Architecture: Open architecture able to reliably support integration with existing and planned third-party components and applications.

#### **Service**

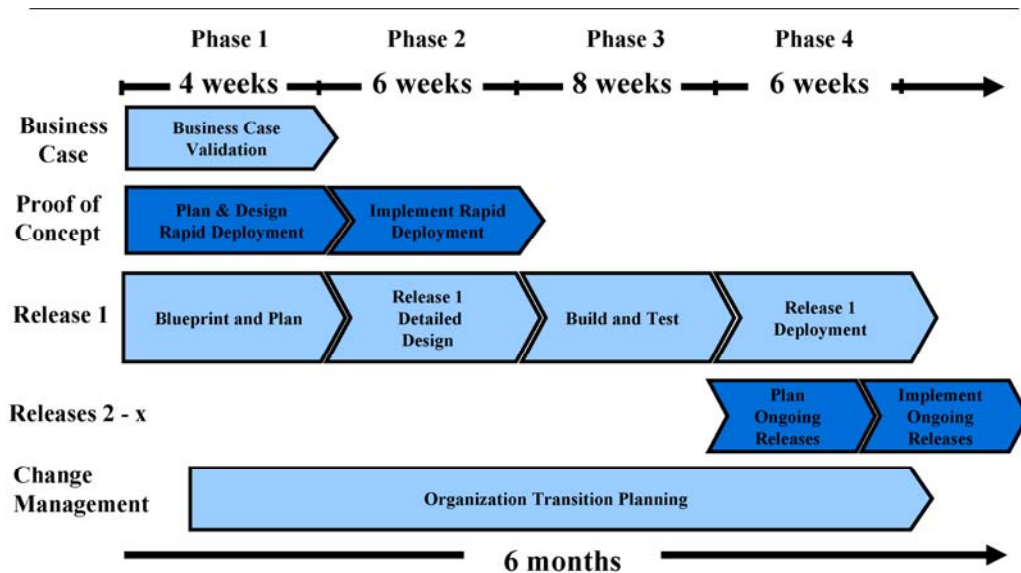
- Methodology: A well-documented and mature approach to project management and system development.
- Relevant industry/customer experience: Staff experienced in related and relevant project work. Professional publishing experience was especially valuable.

#### **Company**

- Financial viability: resources and business practices that showed stability and, ideally, profitability.
- Culture: A history of commitment to customers’ success, an appreciation of the media industry’s unique requirements and a willingness to partner were seen as essential qualities in the supplier Meredith was going to select.
- References: The Creative Library was a highly visible project that operated at the heart of Meredith’s business. Meredith could not accept the added risk of working with a vendor that could not demonstrate a history of success through customer references.

Ultimately, the list of potential suppliers was narrowed down to three. Artesia Technologies was selected to license its digital asset management system, TEAMS, and to provide professional services as a subcontractor to Meredith's in-house DAM implementation team.

Figure 1 provides a summary of the implementation timeline once the DAM supplier had been selected.



**Figure 1. Timeline and approach**

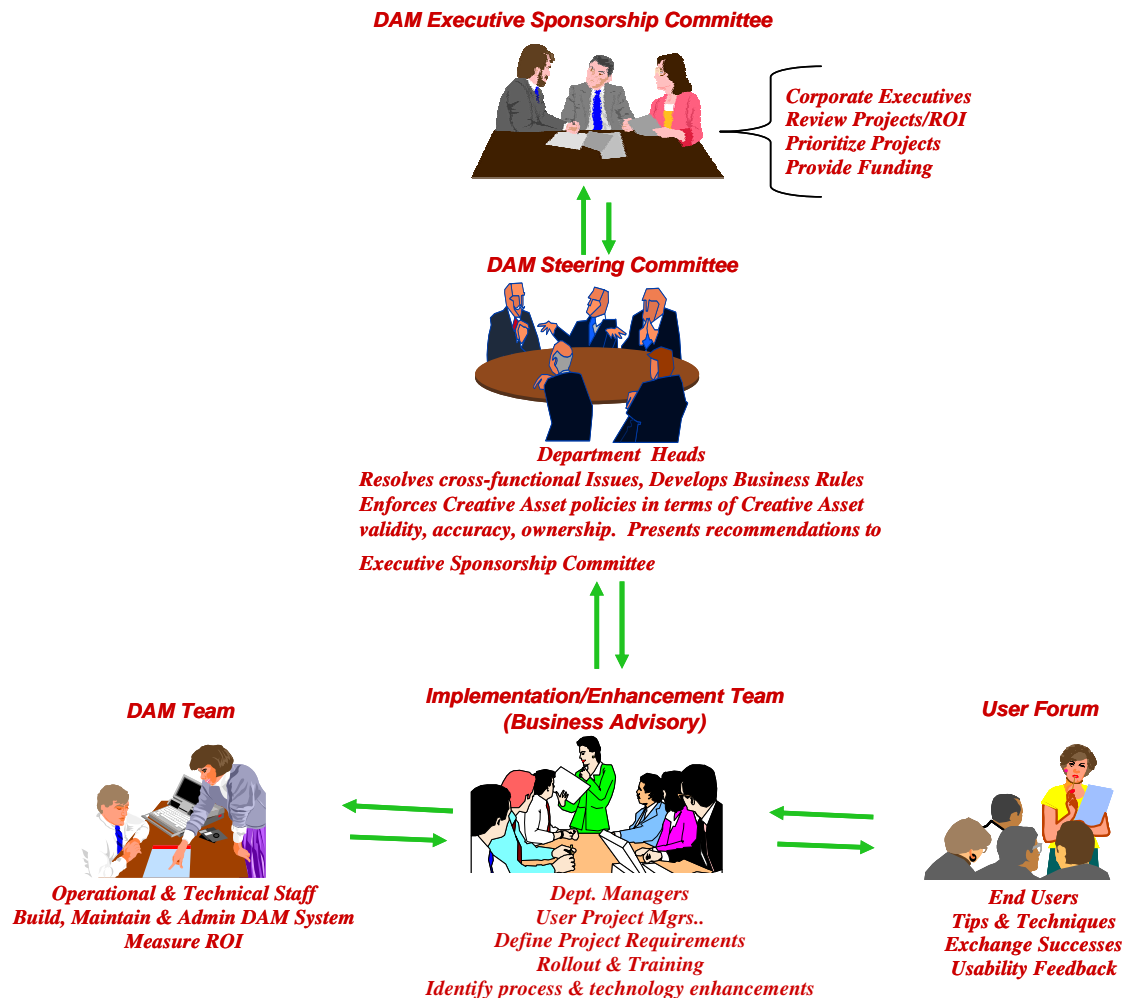
Once the commercial components were selected, a project plan was agreed to that

- refined the value proposition
- validated the product recommendation that came out of the RFP process
- delivered a production version of The Creative Library that would deliver material value to the business in as short a timeframe as possible
- provided a roadmap for future development to accommodate requirements that could not be met in the first release
- created a climate of inclusion, education and feedback for all stakeholders.

In order to execute against the project plan, Meredith recognized that a formal organization and dedicated staff were required to assure accountability, communication, and ultimately, success. The following section describes an overlay organization that proved to be so effective that it has outlived The Creative Library project and is being relied upon to govern ongoing and future technology-inspired initiatives at Meredith's Publishing group.

### Organization

One of the most significant contributing factors to Meredith's success was that, in addition to well-trained and highly motivated individual contributors, an overlay organization was created and chartered with governing The Creative Library initiative from inception through adoption. Figure 2 outlines the committee structure and their respective roles.



**Figure 2. Digital Asset Management Governance**

### Executive Oversight Committee

The Executive Oversight Committee, comprised of senior level Business and IT professionals, provides overall direction and executive sponsorship of the Digital Asset Management environment.

### Steering Committee

The Steering Committee serves as the liaison between the Implementation/Enhancement Team and the Executive Oversight Committee, and presents its recommendations to the Steering Committee. This team also facilitates resolution of cross-functional issues at that level. If an issue cannot be resolved at that level, the DAM Steering Committee makes recommendations to the Executive Oversight Committee for final disposition of the issue. The Steering Committee also operates as a governance committee to develop business rules and metric definitions and enforces policies and procedures pertaining to the accuracy, validity, and ownership of assets.

### Implementation Committee

The Implementation/Enhancement Team (Business Advisory) – comprised of representatives of the functional disciplines within various operating groups across the enterprise, under the auspices of the Steering Committee, develops and owns the digital asset management strategy.

### Implementation Team

The Implementation Team, comprised of individuals involved in direct support of the digital asset management environment, is involved in every facet of digital asset governance.

### User Forum

The User Forum, comprised of business users, meets on a regular basis to share experiences, leverage successes, and provide feedback on digital asset management (The Creative Library) usability.

### Third-Party Service Providers

Third-party service providers included specialists from Artesia Technologies, Verity and LTU who were brought in for specific implementation tasks and to train the Meredith Implementation Team.

## The Creative Library

### Logical architecture

The Creative Library is just one logical component to Meredith's many publishing applications, databases and repositories. The logical architecture for The Creative Library calls for it to be one of a finite set of authoritative sources that collectively manages guides and tracks Meredith's numerous lines of business. As such, The Creative Library has to reference and resolve multiple financial, legal and domain knowledge bases to ensure that the proper context for the assets it manages is accurately maintained.

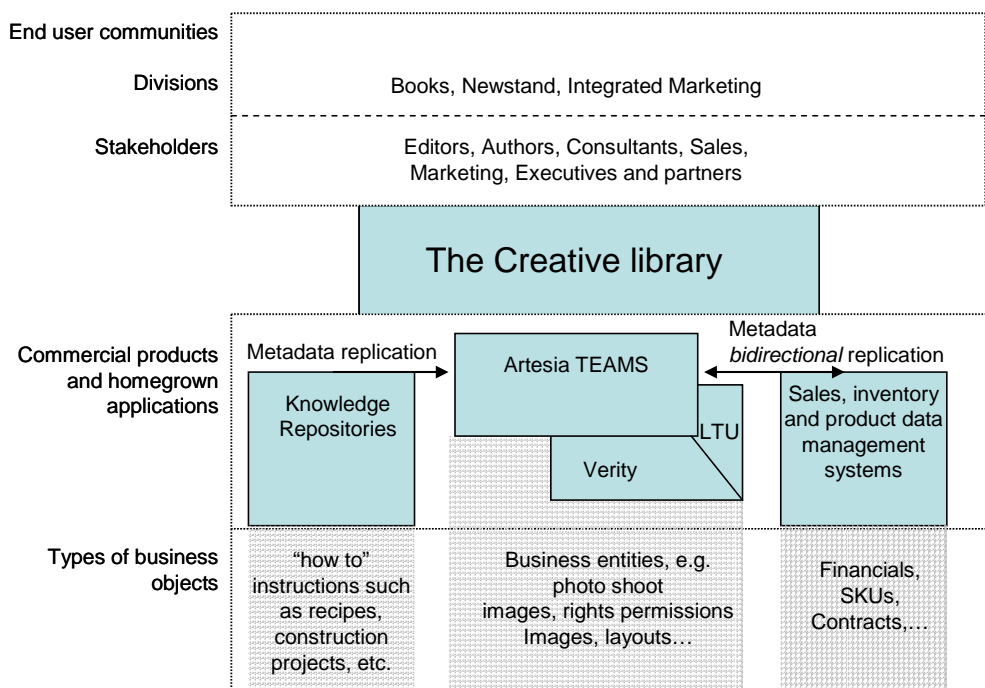


Figure 3. Meredith Logical Architecture

### *Distinguishing characteristics*

The need to associate project, financial, rights, permissions and domain information with specific assets, and to change the values of these classes of “asset metadata” as assets move through a publishing workflow created unique demands on The Creative Library implementation team. The following tasks had to be accomplished:

- Identify and define the relevant business processes to be supported, e.g. publication, photo shoots, marketing campaigns, etc.
- Definition of a metadata model that incorporated the full context of Meredith assets
- Identification of applications/repositories that serve as the single authoritative source for each piece of metadata within Meredith.
- Where possible, propose consolidation of systems to minimize integration complexity.
- Develop architecture and software services that replicate, link to, update and propagate these values to/from the authoritative source across the enterprise.

The Meredith implementation team drew a distinction between enterprise and industry metadata. Enterprise metadata captures all “tribal knowledge” about the best ways to operate a business; industry metadata is generalized and is typically optimized for exchange. Meredith has implemented a metadata model and a DAM implementation that captures and maintains a consistent view of its digital assets in a manner that reflects the company’s internal best practices (how it has learned to publish over the past 100 years).

For example, the DAM system metadata model supports a Creative Material Request, representing a commissioned work, such as an on-site photography project. The request for commissioned work is automatically linked to the publication project (i.e. a story) for which it is intended, and possibly a specific magazine issue if the story is scheduled for publication.

In cases where the Editor knows the precise shots to be photographed, then users may create placeholder Reference Assets with initial shot descriptions, ensuring critical information is entered as early as possible. When the digital photography is received, it is uploaded to the system.

Information about the photographer who created the assets, and the contractual terms under which the work was done, are immediately associated with the new assets. Capturing this information within the creative process ensures compliance and eliminates the time and cost of subsequent searches and interpretations of usage rights.

The metadata model also includes detailed publication usage information, allowing other Meredith business units to easily locate valuable assets that have already been paid for, whether or not they have been published.

Meredith’s accomplishments in creating a comprehensive business-driven DAM metadata model has yielded a number of benefits including:

- The consolidation of an existing mainframe rights and permissions database into The Creative Library. Rather than maintain a separate database, all of the content is now represented as metadata alongside the digital assets themselves.
- The availability of The Creative Library to the broad Meredith community has moved the DAM platform from an archive where assets were placed at the

end of the publishing process into the heart of the publishing process capturing relevant business metadata as assets are created, used and reviewed.

- The modeling of business entities such as a photo shoot permits the linking of assets to contracts and budgetary systems providing more accurate budgeting and forecasting.



## Futures

### Ongoing and Anticipated Content Technology Initiatives

There are a number of opportunities where Meredith sees significant opportunity to continue to reduce cost, improve operations and product quality and increase revenue through content technology-inspired projects. These include:

- Taxonomy definition, meta-tagging guidelines
- Extending the management of the rights & restrictions policies
- Evolving the Education & training programs
- “Best-Practice” Imaging Center
  - Color Management Workflow
  - Pre-press standard processes and policies
  - Historical Archive policies
  - Disaster Recovery & Business Continuity policies

Stay tuned for continued CTW success stories from Meredith Corporation.

## In Their Own Words

### **A supplier's view: Artesia Technologies shares its perspective**

Ten years ago, Content Management meant document management. Today, the needs of organizations are much more complex and extend far beyond just the management of documents. Companies require the ability to easily store, access, re-use, and distribute *all* of their digital content. Even more importantly, they are demanding greater efficiencies across a multitude of business processes and rapid realization of ROI.

The Meredith Project exemplifies this evolution and clearly establishes Digital Asset Management as a crucial segment of the Content Management marketplace. While clearly aware of the multitude of “Enterprise Content Management” solution vendors, Meredith realized that it needed a vendor’s focus and perspective to be aligned with its long-term strategy and its criteria for success. Meredith’s overriding drivers were not centered on Web content or regulatory compliance issues. Rather, Meredith had the understanding and vision to seek a solution that first and foremost solved the need to secure and centralize its most critical intellectual property, its creative content. Meredith sought a partner that could not only manage its intellectual property, but also address the surrounding workflow processes to the benefit of its staff, readership and shareholders. The undertaking clearly required a partner with deep experience and knowledge of both Meredith’s business and related best practices. For all of these reasons, Artesia is proud to have earned the right to partner with Meredith.

We believe that there were three key functional aspects of Artesia’s products that resonated with Meredith; addressing its Mac community, intelligent handling of Quark documents, and providing an asset-centric workflow component. Artesia’s Creative Client for the Mac fulfilled these needs, as it not only extends all the benefits of the TEAMS digital asset management system, but also has a clear focus on usability and functionality specifically for the creative community. Artesia’s Creative Client includes such features as integration with QuarkXPress providing drag-and-drop of reusable text and images, the ability to generate QuarkXpress previews of multiple pages, and management of links between placed images and the layouts in which they appear. In terms of workflow, Artesia TEAMS is unlike other conventional workflow products in that it is architected with an asset-centric™ workflow philosophy. Project elements and groups of users are expressed primarily in terms of their relationship to the assets, easily answering the question of where an asset has been used. While a project may end, the assets live on and continue to provide future value.

Beneath these functional areas, Artesia’s enterprise architecture provides a firm foundation. Artesia TEAMS includes a 100% Java API, plus numerous other documented integration frameworks, to enable ease of integration with other systems. The architecture provided a stable platform from which Meredith was able to integrate with search engines such as Verity and LTU. Central to all of these capabilities, Artesia provides an enterprise metadata model that allows assets to become portable, putting them in motion across Meredith’s business processes to drive specific value. The TEAMS’ architecture allows Meredith to continue to grow the system over time as user needs and requirements evolve.

Meredith’s business case for digital asset management illustrates how significant return on investment is possible in a relatively short time period, even when millions of dollars are initially invested. Meredith’s strategy for managing its project shows healthy respect for the old adage that technology is the easy part, especially when compared to the people and process challenges typically faced in projects of this magnitude. Its success can certainly be attributed to the company’s dedication to solid business planning, bringing together cross functional and departmental groups, understanding the value chain associated with its assets, and delivering a best-of-breed solution to meet the needs of the users Meredith serves. Artesia Technologies is

excited to be working with Meredith and other leading corporations to deliver innovative solutions for the smarter management of digital assets, empowering the freedom of creativity.

### **Conclusions: The Gilbane Report's Perspective**

Meredith has a lot to be grateful for. They had the good fortune to have:

- an executive team that had the vision and the fortitude to invest in a major technology-inspired project that went to the core of its business,
- a culture that encouraged continuous innovation and individuals in virtually every department who were willing and able to contribute to the successful adoption of The Creative Library and
- vendors such as Artesia Technologies that had both the technology and the industry experience to act as a supporting partner in this complex but ultimately worthwhile endeavor.

As impressive as all of this is, we were most impressed with the single-mindedness, experience, camaraderie and deliberate speed of the DAM team. Large enterprises (and publishers in particular) are notoriously slow in adopting new processes and are typically resistant to assimilating change. The DAM team had a cache of consensus building, educational and evangelical devices that often served as the orchestrating drivers of The Creative Library project. They are a team where most had worked together for many years.

In many ways, this is the team's singular talent; recognizing the importance of adoption, cooperation and goodwill from colleagues and suppliers and an ability to build a lasting team spirit that extended beyond the technical team and sponsoring executives to include all of the Meredith publishing community.

We often hear of technology being positioned as a competitive weapon, and indeed in Meredith's case it is. However, the organizational changes and individuals who championed them have built an organization that is exceptionally well-positioned to adopt technology. That may be the most powerful competitive weapon of them all.

## Partner Page

When we first conceived of an initiative that would develop and distribute success stories that placed *recipe* over *ingredients* and favored no supplier, technology or computing standard, we also recognized that our most significant hurdle would be to recruit vendors to subsidize such an independent and open process.

Since the CTW program was first conceived in late 2003, we have sought out suppliers who were passionate about and committed to content technology as a game-changing force in the markets they served and secure in the value of the products and services they offered. The following vendors have literally put their money where their mouths are. They know that public, open and unfettered access to successful enterprise deployments, regardless of the technology mix, only benefit the commercial aspirations of organizations that offer material, dependable and predictable value.

Please join The Gilbane Report in thanking these diverse (and occasionally competing) organizations for their generous support and sponsorship of the development, promotion and distribution of CTW material. While The Gilbane Report has never endorsed a particular product or supplier for a specific use, we encourage every enterprise to consider any technology supplier who has the character and confidence to participate in the Content Technology Works program. They are an elite group. They are: [Software AG](#) (TECdax:SOW), [Sun Microsystems](#) (NASDAQ:SUNW), [Artesia Technologies](#), [Atomz](#), [Context Media](#), [Convera](#) (NASDAQ:CNVR), [INSCI](#) (OTCBB:INSS), [Trados](#), [Vasont Systems](#), [Venetica](#) and [Vignette](#) (NASDAQ:VIGN).

