



STRATEGIC GUIDE TO DAM METADATA



Database / PRODUCE

AEM Assets>Apparel>Coats

Data Subscribers Integrations Pending

	ASSET CONTENT ID	PATH	TITLE	DESCRIPTION
1	55723aea-c86e-403f-925f-15a33c1c06	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Sense_Green.jpg	Sense Green	
	59842108-cac2-4e4a-915c-69154462e89	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/E1_Gordo_Green.jpg	E1 Gordo Green	
	5e5278e1-e86d-47fa-9e47-5596a111d29e	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Women's Outdoor Lifestyle Coats	Women's Outdoor Lifestyle Coats	
	9238f6e1-913-483-6263-6bac7819d8f	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Brooklyn.jpg	Brooklyn	
	a4843260-ed0a-4e39-ba36-0574674311db	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/E1_Gordo_Purple.jpg	E1 Gordo Purple Hooded Puffer Ja...	
	a5239e9-8343-4867-4995-273959867a	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Double_Puffy_Black_Shelly.jpg	Double Puffy Black Shelly	purple puffy
7	b564739e-478c-473f-9c85-c7298a3a5a2d	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/E1_Gordo_Pink.jpg	E1 Gordo Pink Hooded Puffer Jacket	
8	0a29597-6015-4409-a83e-e54955e9b29	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Double_Puffy_Black_Shelly.jpg	Double Puffy Black Shelly	purple puffy
9	0a29597-6015-4409-a83e-e54955e9b29	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Double_Puffy_Black_Shelly.jpg	Double Puffy Black Shelly	purple puffy
10	6483b5e-25aa-4098-9967-7d2786a98119	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Sense_Purple.jpg	Sense Purple	purple puffy
11	6483b5e-25aa-4098-9967-7d2786a98119	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Sense_Purple.jpg	Sense Purple	purple puffy
	05653a33-a905-4061-6796-78e05dca49	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Sense_Purple.jpg	Sense Purple	purple puffy
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	114db-3105-4108-9667-4bc477780e	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Sense_Purple.jpg	Sense Purple	purple puffy

Pending: [AEM Assets Core] [Update Rows](#)

	PATH	TITLE	DESCRIPTION	FILE NAME
1	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Sense_Purple.jpg	Sense Purple	purple puffy	Sense_Purple.jpg
2	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Sense_Purple.jpg	Sense Purple	purple puffy	Sense_Purple.jpg
3	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Sense_Purple.jpg	Sense Purple	purple puffy	Sense_Purple.jpg
4	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Sense_Purple.jpg	Sense Purple	purple puffy	Sense_Purple.jpg
5	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Sense_Purple.jpg	Sense Purple	purple puffy	Sense_Purple.jpg
6	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Sense_Purple.jpg	Sense Purple	purple puffy	Sense_Purple.jpg
7	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Sense_Purple.jpg	Sense Purple	purple puffy	Sense_Purple.jpg
8	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Sense_Purple.jpg	Sense Purple	purple puffy	Sense_Purple.jpg
9	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Sense_Purple.jpg	Sense Purple	purple puffy	Sense_Purple.jpg
10	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Sense_Purple.jpg	Sense Purple	purple puffy	Sense_Purple.jpg
11	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Sense_Purple.jpg	Sense Purple	purple puffy	Sense_Purple.jpg
12	content/dam/retail/en/products/aemassets/coats/Sense_Purple.jpg	Sense Purple	purple puffy	Sense_Purple.jpg



WHY WE CREATED THIS BEST PRACTICE GUIDE ON DAM METADATA.

We've discovered through hundreds of conversations with the world's largest brands that many are significantly under-utilizing their Digital Asset Management (DAM) systems, particularly when it comes to metadata. Most recognize its inherent value, yet consistently struggle with defining, processing, and creating accurate metadata.

These persistent issues motivated us to make this comprehensive guide. We aim to provide clear, actionable guidance on mastering your DAM's metadata, helping you unlock its full potential. By the end, you'll uncover incredibly practical applications for creating thorough and valuable DAM metadata.

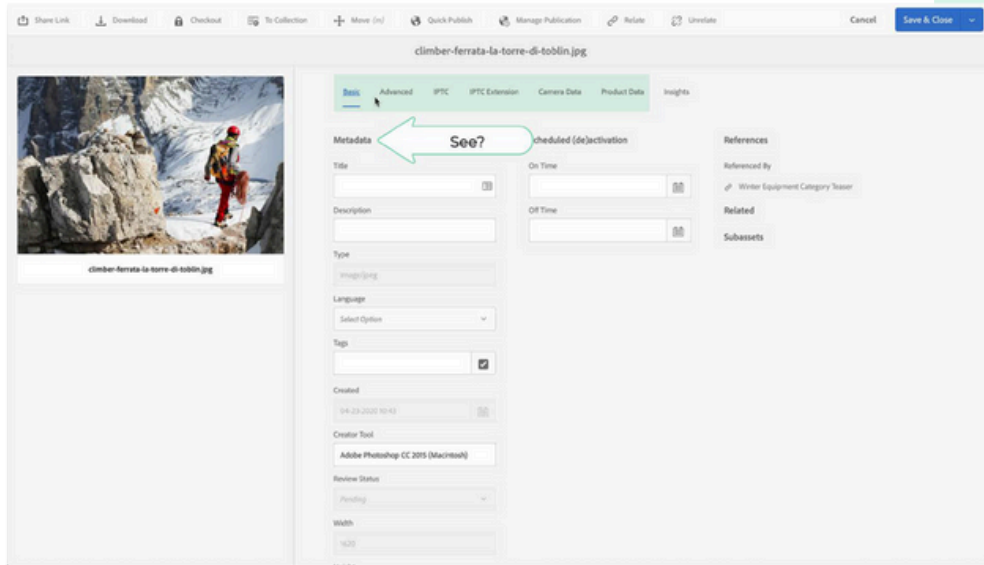
A PRIMER ON DAM METADATA

Enterprise Digital Asset Management (DAM) is a rapidly expanding category, driven by the explosion of digital mediums and increasing consumer digital engagement. The market is witnessing tremendous growth in digital assets across various industry verticals, making DAM a fundamental technology in the enterprise tech stack.

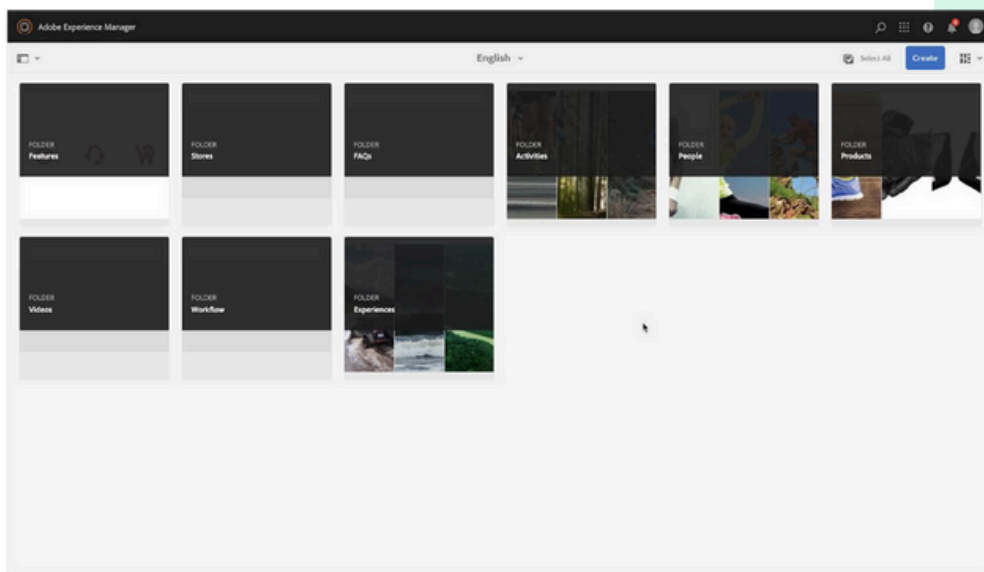
While numerous DAM solutions exist, this guide focuses on an often overlooked – yet incredibly valuable – component when implemented correctly: metadata.

DAM metadata encompasses all the descriptive data and attributes associated with your digital media assets. This includes details about webpages, images, product listings, videos, audio, or any other content stored within these centralized enterprise DAM solutions. Essentially, an enterprise DAM empowers organizations producing large quantities of rich media to efficiently create, manage, and reuse their valuable digital assets.

In an era increasingly shaped by AI, the quality and consistency of this metadata are more critical than ever, directly impacting the effectiveness of AI-driven personalization and content optimization efforts.

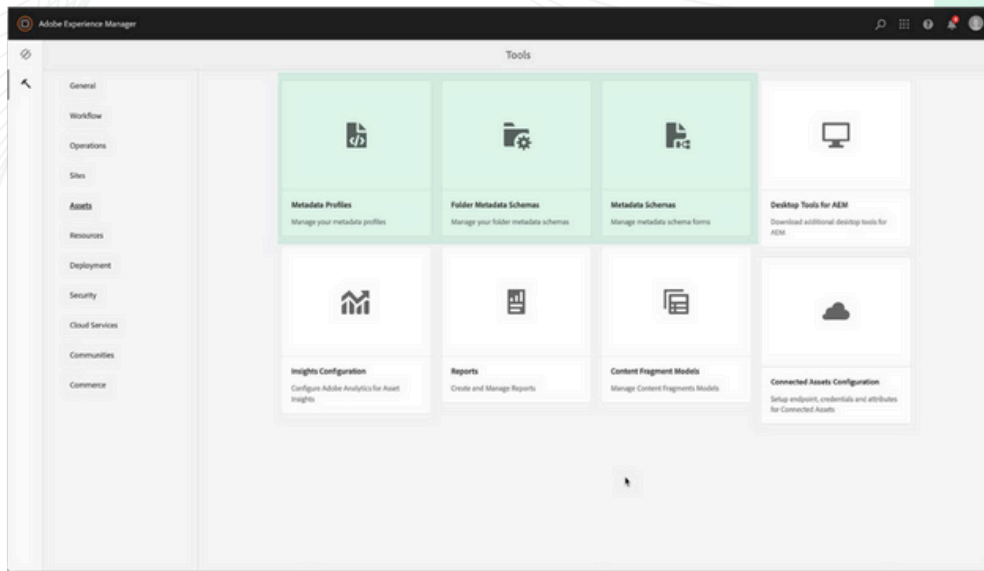


For example, the tabs on this image (stored in Adobe Experience Manager Assets) are sections of metadata.

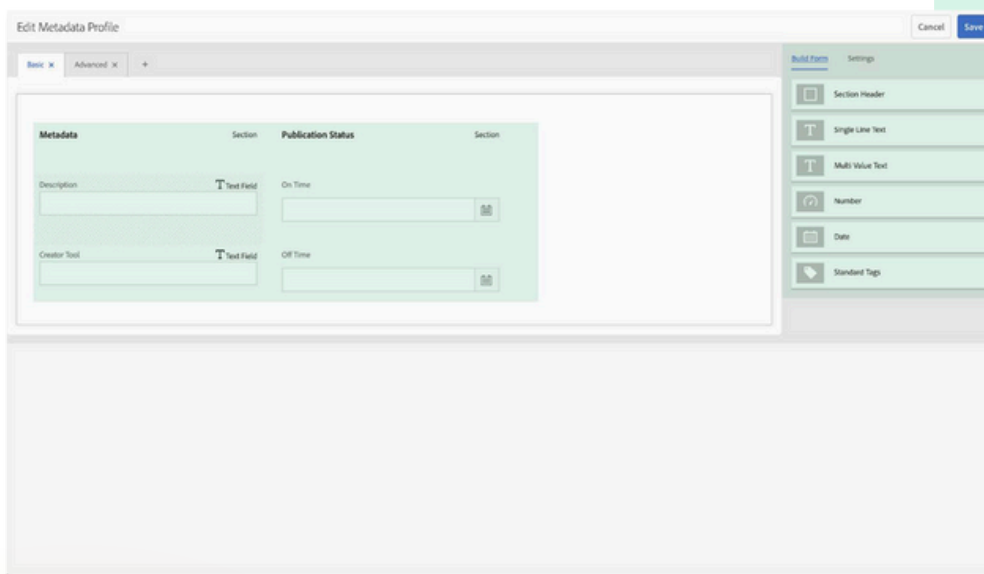


And this image is just one of potentially thousands (or hundreds of thousands) of digital media assets stored in your DAM.

As you can see between the number of potential metadata fields combined with the number of total assets, that's a lot of metadata to deal with. No wonder it's underused and overlooked - it's a daunting task.



To make matters even more complex, the metadata tabs shared in the image above are just the “out of the box” ones. There are other places to customize metadata even further.



This can include completely customized metadata profiles depending on your organization or department’s specific needs.

Clearly it is quite the task to define, align, and manage all of this metadata. Nevertheless, it needs to be done.

WHY METADATA IS NON-NEGOTIABLE FOR YOUR BUSINESS.

You're investing heavily in creating content and managing your DAM. But what's the real cost of incomplete or messy metadata? It directly impacts your customers' experience, and also your bottom line.

We've identified 5 critical ways missing metadata actively harms your marketing and sales efforts. These issues have clear, negative impacts on your digital performance:

1. Lack of complete indexing and findability within your enterprise DAM and customer-facing search functionality.
2. Decreased visibility and key information available on external search engines and social platforms.
3. Poor accessibility for people with disabilities.
4. Sub-optimal display of content within your own managed digital experiences.
5. Lost opportunities within recommendation engines and dynamic related content.

Each of these issues leads to real costs for your organization – from wasted internal time spent searching for or duplicating assets, to poor customer experiences that directly impact online conversions. For a detailed explanation of each of these 5 issues, read our article: ["The Importance of Complete Content Metadata."](#)

Metadata taxonomy can and will ensure exceptional customer experiences, and optimizes internal efficiency to save your organization money and boost online conversions.



COMMON OBSTACLES TO MASTERING DAM METADATA.

There are a few obstacles that organizations bump into when dealing with DAM metadata:



No standardized language or naming conventions for metadata values



No workflows or governance to complete metadata requirements



Inefficiencies within DAMs themselves for bulk management of metadata

Let's explore each of these in more detail:

No standardized language or naming conventions for metadata values

Many organizations don't consistently establish or enforce a common language for their metadata values, often across dozens or even hundreds of fields. While DAMs excel at storage, they typically lack the built-in functionality to enforce these critical standards.

Revisiting the metadata profile builder shared above, you can see that most of this is free form data users can enter

You won't find integrated picklists, or clear guidance on required value formats. This fundamental gap creates an inherent flaw in the digital asset management process.

Some organizations attempt to manage these rules externally through a separate taxonomy or ontology system, but without seamless synchronization to the DAM, automated enforcement is impossible.

Others rely on shared spreadsheets – a common practice that, while familiar, is inherently inefficient and impossible to keep in sync with a dynamic DAM. Regardless of the solution, manually checking and creating metadata values remains a significant source of ongoing errors.

No workflows or governance to complete metadata requirements

Beyond simple "required field" options, most DAMs do not provide automated processes or guided workflows to efficiently create metadata for each asset. There's a notable lack of interconnectedness between metadata sets; if a value is entered in one field, the system doesn't automatically propagate related metadata to other relevant fields within that digital asset.

Crucially, there's also often no integrated notification system or checks and balances to flag inconsistent or missing values. Imagine the benefit for content directors who could receive alerts and summaries on newly created digital assets, allowing for proactive auditing instead of reactive cleanup.

Inefficiencies within DAMs themselves for bulk management of metadata

As highlighted earlier in this guide, the sheer volume of metadata quickly becomes enormous (Number of Assets * Number of Metadata Schemas * Number of Metadata Fields). Even with a modest example of 1,000 digital assets, 3 metadata schemas, and 7 fields each, you're looking at 21,000 individual data points to manage – and this is a conservative estimate for many enterprises.

Remarkably, many DAMs do not adequately address this challenge with robust bulk editing capabilities. This makes it incredibly difficult not only to find errors en masse but also to efficiently correct them. This limitation represents another significant inherent flaw in many traditional DAM implementations.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS FOR GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR DAM METADATA

We've established the sheer volume of metadata, its undeniable importance, and the hurdles organizations face in managing it effectively. So, considering this depth and value, how does your organization actually put its metadata to work?

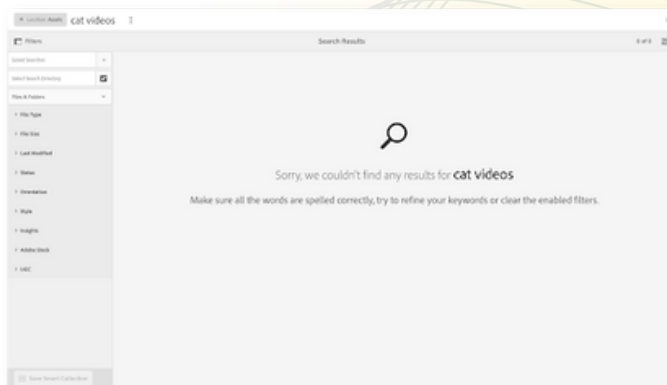
We've identified at least **six clear ways** to leverage your DAM metadata for significant impact:

- **Internal DAM search:** Thorough metadata makes it easier for your users to search and find the digital assets they need
- **Site search/filter applications:** Thorough metadata also makes sure that customer-facing filtering and search utilities are as effective as possible
- **Customer-facing presentation layer:** The metadata creates a more comprehensive presentation layer, e.g. metadata on product listings
- **Data layer optimization:** If you make use of the data layer for passing values to execution and analytics systems, metadata gets stored in the data layer
- **Search engine optimization:** If your digital asset is web crawlable, the metadata enriches the SEO value
- **Content/audience matching:** If your digital assets are tagged sufficiently, and your campaign data is as well, you can match the right piece of content with the right audience

Here's a deeper exploration of each.

Internal DAM search

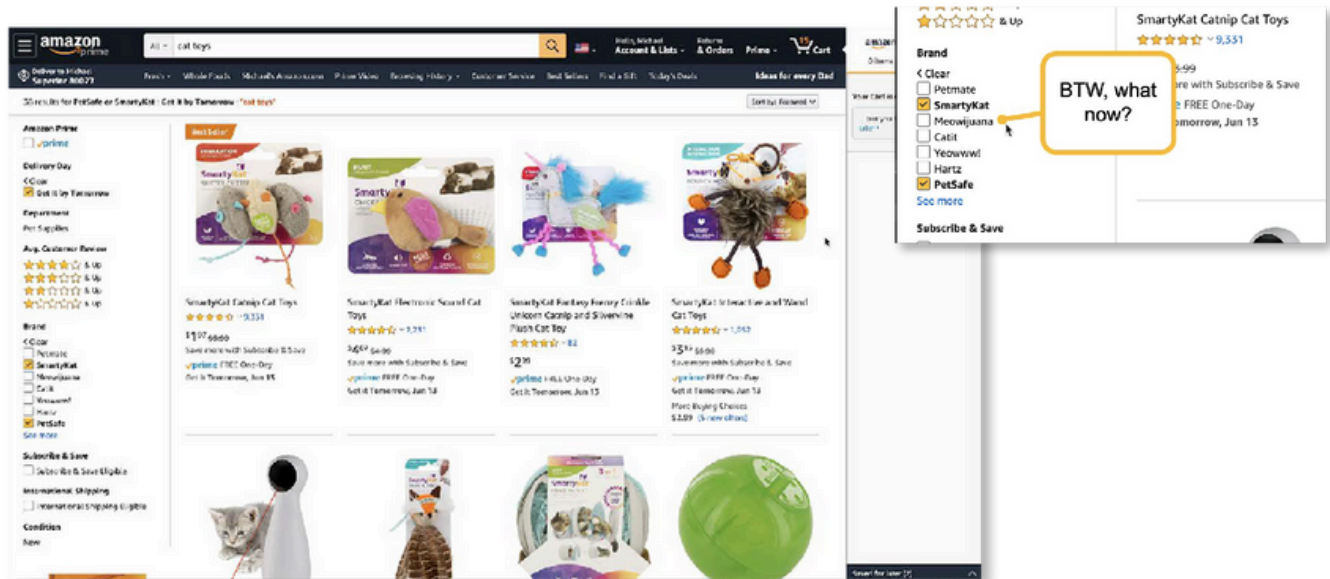
One of the most common drains on content creation efficiency is duplicated effort – frequently because team members can't find the assets they need. This often stems from a lack of standards in creating file names or associated metadata, leading to internal DAM searches yielding no results, even when the asset likely exists.



By requiring and standardizing your asset metadata, you will significantly save your team's time. They'll spend less time searching for assets and, more importantly, avoid redoing work that has already been completed. This directly translates to improved productivity and reduced wasted resources.

Site search/filter applications

Site search and faceted filter tools have become essential functionalities for websites, particularly for large-catalog e-commerce sites and extensive media platforms.



Every product in your catalog relies on associated metadata (commonly referred to as attributes) to power these filters and faceted searches. If this metadata is overlooked or incomplete, key products may be frustratingly missing when your user selects a specific search filter, directly impacting discoverability and sales.

Customer-facing presentation layer

Not all metadata operates behind the scenes for search utilities; a significant portion is presented front and center on your web pages and product listings. For instance, image captions or attribution might be enabled on your site, but if you've neglected to enter the corresponding caption metadata value, it simply won't appear. Furthermore, if you have a requirement to attribute your images, missing this crucial metadata could even lead to legal issues.

Beyond visible content, complete metadata also significantly improves the site experience for people with disabilities – even if it's not content displayed to the visible eye. Adding Alt text on images and providing video captioning are two obvious examples of how metadata enhances accessibility.

Consider a dynamic video in Adobe Experience Manager (AEM) Assets requiring closed captioning. While complex, if the metadata value pointing to the independent URL containing the caption document is missing, it creates a poor presentation experience for anyone relying on closed captioning, highlighting metadata's vital role in inclusive design.

Data layer optimization

An important and significant amount of metadata is used via the data layer as well. This sometimes can even be unseen data to the visitor but important information that needs to be passed to analytics and execution systems. Just to note, when we talk of the “data layer”, here is a [Google Tag Manager](#) example and an [Adobe Launch](#) example.

For organizations that have prioritized a [first-party data strategy](#), especially around a user registration process, the data layer becomes exponentially more valuable. If you have an authenticated user, event-based actions can be enriched via the data layer. And that data layer is enriched via the metadata you create on the respective page and associated digital assets.

```

Pretty Raw Violations
1  {
2    "anonymousId": "e68def00-59ab-4241-bfe1-9753b9cbeef",
3    "category": null,
4    "context": {
5      "ip": "12.139.173.251",
6      "library": {
7        "name": "analytics.js",
8        "version": "3.4.0"
9      },
10     "page": {
11       "path": "/segment_prod/sources/app/overview",
12       "referrer": "https://segment.com/",
13       "search": "",
14       "title": "Sources - App - Segment",
15       "url": "https://app.segment.com/segment_prod/sources/app/overview"
16     },
17     "traits": {
18       "crossDomainId": "b7514b06-1468-4f60-b7e8-28013f39a2e8"
19     },
20     "userAgent": "Mozilla/5.0 (Macintosh; Intel Mac OS X 10_13_3) AppleWebKit/537.36 (KHTML, like Gecko) Chrome/6
21   },
22   "integrations": {},
23   "messageId": "a38-d8ef4833001a5b7f24492a3caef0b71b-clean",
24   "name": "Source Overview",
25   "originalTimestamp": "2018-03-19T17:49:47.701Z",
26   "properties": {
27     "name": "Source Overview",
28     "path": "/segment_prod/sources/app/overview",
29     "referrer": "https://segment.com/",
30     "search": "",
31     "title": "Sources - App - Segment",
32     "url": "https://app.segment.com/segment_prod/sources/app/overview"
33   },
34   "receivedAt": "2018-03-19T17:49:48.321Z",
35   "sentAt": "2018-03-19T17:49:47.704Z",
36   "timestamp": "2018-03-19T17:49:48.318Z",
37   "type": "page",

```

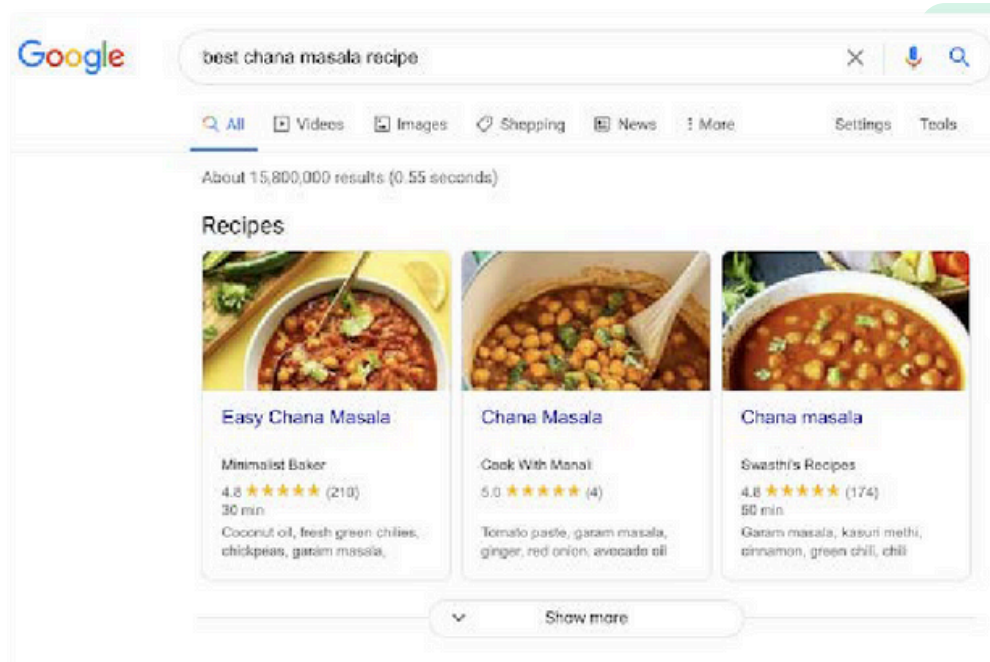
Here you can see a sample payload from the data layer

This is an example of basic information grabbed from the data layer but if custom metadata is available on the page, combined with some javascript/tag manager functionality, you can retrieve and send that metadata along to your systems of choice.

We've seen it implemented most commonly in e-commerce environments where savvy companies want to both track performance in behavioral analytics platforms and store user attributes for re-use in personalized experiences.

Search engine optimization

If you're familiar with SEO, you are likely aware of Schema.org - a collection of blueprints and standards for structured data that you implement in your site code to better describe site objects. The major search engines [use this structured data](#) to display different results and features in the SERPs (search engine results pages). There are a slew of schema options on schema.org with the most popular being products, events, locations, creative works and reviews. You can [see the magnitude of options here](#).



You see this regularly when you search for new recipes

Those elements displayed in Google are there because they wrapped in very specific schema (from Schema.org) that tell Google explicitly what the object is and it's respective metadata. Some DAMs (more so CMSes) can take advantage of a schema like this for improved search listings and performance. Each system is different however and the technical complexities of implementing schema.org in a DAM or CMS are beyond the scope of this guide.

Aside from specifically using schema.org, for any webpage you want to rank on the search engines, having ample metadata on those pages only helps.

Content/audience matching

This use case represents a significant leap in value and complexity, often seen only in the most progressive and technically skilled organizations. Here, campaign and content metadata are intimately intertwined: campaign metadata, attached to a consumer's initial engagement, is precisely matched with relevant DAM metadata. This ensures the target audience is consistently shown the most appropriate digital assets.

Enabling Hyper-Personalization: The primary importance of this application is its ability to enable machine learning, which can then deliver truly complex and personalized experiences at scale.

Real-World Scenario: Imagine a campaign with well-defined demographic and interest metadata about its audience. When a consumer engages with this campaign, that demographic and interest metadata flows seamlessly to a landing page or an in-app experience.

Precise Content Delivery: This campaign metadata is referenced and matched against respective content metadata – for example, identifying the precise video to present to someone who fits multiple demographic or interest criteria points. For instance, a campaign audience member might be a married African American woman, age 34, a mother, interested in yoga, and located in New York City. Your experience platform detects all this metadata, references it against your thoroughly tagged DAM content, and serves up a specific video tailored for her.

This sophisticated matching is a key component of the future of digital experiences, happening in large part due to the effective use of comprehensive metadata.



CONCLUSION

As the digital asset management landscape expands, the crucial role of DAM metadata for practical applications becomes undeniable.

Overlooking its importance can lead to significant problems. While implementing a standardized metadata program demands serious effort, the rewards are substantial. True success requires effective and lasting leadership committed to fostering an ongoing focus on the profound use and enduring benefits of DAM metadata.

Want to learn how Claravine helps make all of this happen? [Get Started](#)