



What is a Customer Content Platform and Why You Need One

The evolution of customer experience and the way customers research and make purchase decisions is constantly evolving. But one thing stays consistent – they use content. And a lot of it. B2B buyers will consume up to 13 pieces of content before they make a purchase decision. But it's not just buyers who want a lot of content; it's also your customers. A Zendesk study found that 69% of customers want to solve issues on their own. To do that, they need content.



The Content Management Challenge

Marketers, product managers, salespeople, customer support, and customer success professionals know they need to produce content to support customers and prospects. So, each team goes away to their department, creating that content using their own content management tools and technology. Sometimes, these teams produce the same content. Other times, they write content that is inconsistent with content another team creates.

What happens next? Content is published on customer channels – the website, support portal, knowledge base, in applications. But that content is often not consistent across channels, leaving customers confused and frustrated.

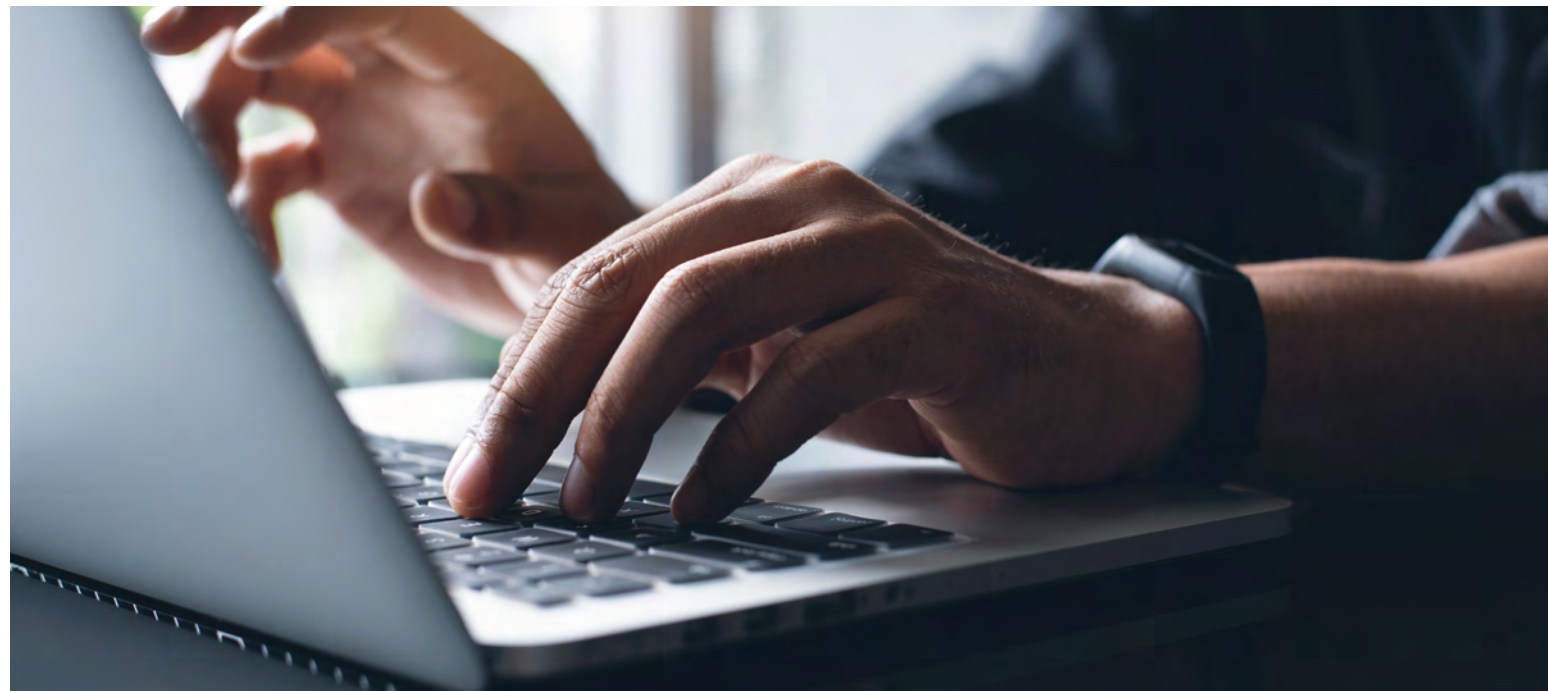
And then there's the content that never reaches the customer, like technical content hidden away in silos.

In a perfect world, all the content organizations need to support their customers would be created in a single system, written and managed by a single team, to ensure it's accurate, consistent, and complete.

But this isn't a perfect world.

Content is created in different formats by different teams using different systems. It's published separately, updated separately, and managed separately for each channel.

There is a better way to manage and deliver content-driven customer experiences.



What is a Customer Content Platform (CCP)?

A customer content platform (CCP) can help you manage and deliver all your content in a consistent, accurate way. But what is a customer content platform?

“A customer content platform unifies all your content, regardless of type or format: marketing content, product and technical content, support content. It provides capabilities to manage the entire content lifecycle and delivers that content to every customer channel including the website, documentation portal, customer portal, mobile apps, in application help and more.”





Who Uses a CCP?

One of the most important questions to answer is – who can benefit from a customer content platform? The short answer is – **anyone who works with content.**

The longer answer:

- **It's for Content Development Pros** – Technical writers need a better way to create and manage technical content destined for multiple channels. A CCP provides them a way to write structured content and collaborate with others to ensure it's complete, accurate, and ready for publication.
- **It's for marketing** – A CCP provides marketers with all the content they need to deliver today's customer experience across all channels. Marketers know that education is the new conversion, and they need tools to help them collect all the content necessary to support customers' research and education processes.
- **It's for product managers** – Product content is becoming an essential source for selecting and successfully using products.



Product managers know they need a tool to help them build faster content pipelines and improve content discovery, ensuring the right content is available for customers when and where they need it.

- **It's for engineering** – With a CCP, development teams have one place to connect their applications and websites to get content. No need to connect to multiple sources and combine content, one API for all content.
- **It's for content strategists** – The struggle to define and support a content strategy that works for everyone across the organization is real, and it's critical. A CCP can provide content strategists with a place to define that strategy and content model - one unified repository, structured intelligently, and available to use for all customer channels.
- **It's for content translators** – For global companies, a CCP supports faster translation pipelines by offering a single place to manage translation elements and content workflows.

All these teams benefit from the four pillars of a customer content platform.



4 Pillars of a Customer Content Platform

A CCP provides four primary capabilities to help organizations create and deliver consistent, relevant content to the right people (customers and prospective customers) on the channels to use when they need it.



Content Repository

The content repository is the foundation of the CCP. It provides a place to unify all content, regardless of how it's created or what format - XML, DITA, HTML, markdown, Word, PDF. The CCP also retains the structure, intelligence, and metadata of all content stored in the repository.

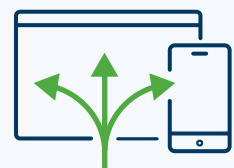
The CCP provides connectors to third-party applications, including CCMS, XML-based content systems, web content management systems, file shares, and other applications. In addition, content is synchronized, ensuring it is always up to date in the CCP.



Editing and Authoring Content

You can manage any content type in the CCP, from highly structured DITA and XML to HTML and simple text. The CCP offers configurable workflows, editorial review and staging, and unified metadata. Even Word and PDF documents can leverage the same editorial processes that structured content uses.

Along with importing content from other systems, the CCP provides the functionality to create XML and HTML content directly, following the same taxonomy and editorial processes.



Omnichannel Content Delivery

With a customer content platform, you can deliver contextual experiences on every site and channel, including your websites, mobile apps, documentation and customer portals, web applications, and field services.

A CCP provides a hybrid content delivery approach encompassing dynamic publishing and page rendering, headless API-based programmatic content delivery, and traditional static publishing for online and offline consumption.



Content Discovery

You can store all the content you want in a unified repository, but if you don't offer tools to help employees find that content, the whole idea of reuse doesn't work. A CCP provides a search function that allows users to search across the entire content repository and even out to connected repositories through federated search to find the content they need to deliver the right content experience.

In addition to providing a robust search engine for your internal teams, a CCP can also supply search capabilities for your customer websites and support portals. The CCP includes federated search tools that can search across repositories such as websites, databases, and applications and connect customers with the content they are looking for, regardless of where it lives.

Spotlight on Headless Content API

It's no secret that the customer experience has grown past the traditional website. Customers spend more time on websites, social channels, chat, mobile applications, and customer portals. They expect to have a consistent experience with your brand regardless of which channel they use. And that means you need a new way to manage and deliver content to make it available to all your customer channels.

A headless content API enables all channels to connect to a content repository and pull the content needed for each experience. For it to work, your content repository must support a structured, intelligent content model - a way to create and manage content separate from how it is presented in any application or website.

Content from across the organization is added to a central repository (e.g., the customer content platform) and made available to requesting channels via the content API. Any content formatting happens within the requesting channel, giving you the freedom to design your customer experiences the way they expect.

Without a headless content API, you are restricted to building your customer experiences within the CMS where the content is managed. And that means you can't share content across experiences easily. The result is often managing duplicated content across repositories or not having all the content a customer needs in a particular channel.

One of the most critical elements of a customer content platform is the headless content API. The CCP brings together content from across your departments into a single repository, but it's with a content API that you can programmatically access content for any application and deliver the experiences your customers deserve.

The Benefits of a CCP

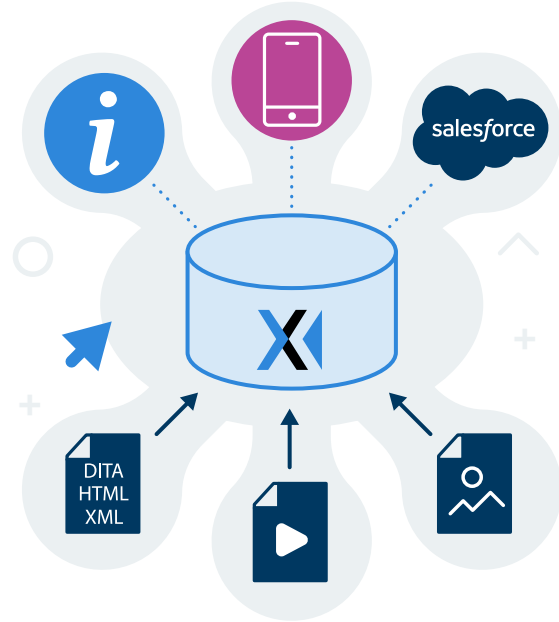
Not sure a customer content platform is right for you? **Let's talk benefits.**



Unifying All Content in One Platform

The truth is you will never have a single technology for creating content. Teams will continue to use their own content management systems, editing tools, component content management systems, desktop publishing systems, and so on. And that's fine. Use the tools you know.

But when it comes to giving that content to your customers in an accurate, consistent, and complete way, you need a unifying platform that can pull all that content together. One that connects with all your content systems and brings the content together without losing its structure and intelligence. One that can create an overarching taxonomy that supports all metadata and provides content teams with the tools needed to find and pull (or push) that content out to their channels.



Mix and Match Content for a Better Experience

There's a lot of overlap in the type of content teams create, which means there's also overlap in the content experiences they deliver to customers. A CCP enables two important things related to content experiences. First, it enables content teams not to reinvent the wheel when they need new content. Before a team starts developing a new piece of content, they can search the CCP to see if that content already exists. If it does exist, they can use it instead of duplicating the same information, which leads to the second point. With all content residing in the unified repository, content teams can mix and match different content for the channels and experiences they are responsible for delivering.



Fewer Vendors to Manage

There are many vendors supplying elements of a CCP. You have CCMS vendors that support DITA and highly structured technical content, documentation portals, technical authoring tools, repositories, and more. So, you could go and purchase several of these to provide all the elements of a CCP. But then you would have multiple vendor contracts to manage and multiple application costs.

Then there's the work to integrate these solutions to give you that single view of all your content. A lot of custom development is likely going to happen to connect everything to give every team access to all content regardless of their primary tool.


With a CCP, you don't have to do a lot of custom development. You connect the applications where your content lives so they can feed into the unified repository. Everyone has access to the repository. A CCP is built to play nice with all applications, providing either direct integrations or the tools to create custom connections. One platform, one price, one vendor to manage, one application to manage.



Build Your Content Experiences on a Solid Foundation

A customer content platform is like a customer data platform (CDP), except instead of unifying all your customer data and offering all your teams a customer data toolkit, you are unifying all your marketing, product, and technical content to create a customer content toolkit.

If you are struggling to get your product and technical content into the hands of your customers who expect to have it, it's time to look at a CCP. If you are building highly customized experiences that pull content from multiple locations and struggle to ensure those experiences are consistent and the content is accurate and relevant, it's time to look at a CCP.



ABOUT INGENIUX

Ingeniux provides customer content management software for organizations looking for a way to unify their product documentation and marketing content and deliver it contextually to every channel and platform. The CCP enables content reuse, true omnichannel content delivery, and insightful content discovery.

To learn more, visit us at www.ingeniux.com

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