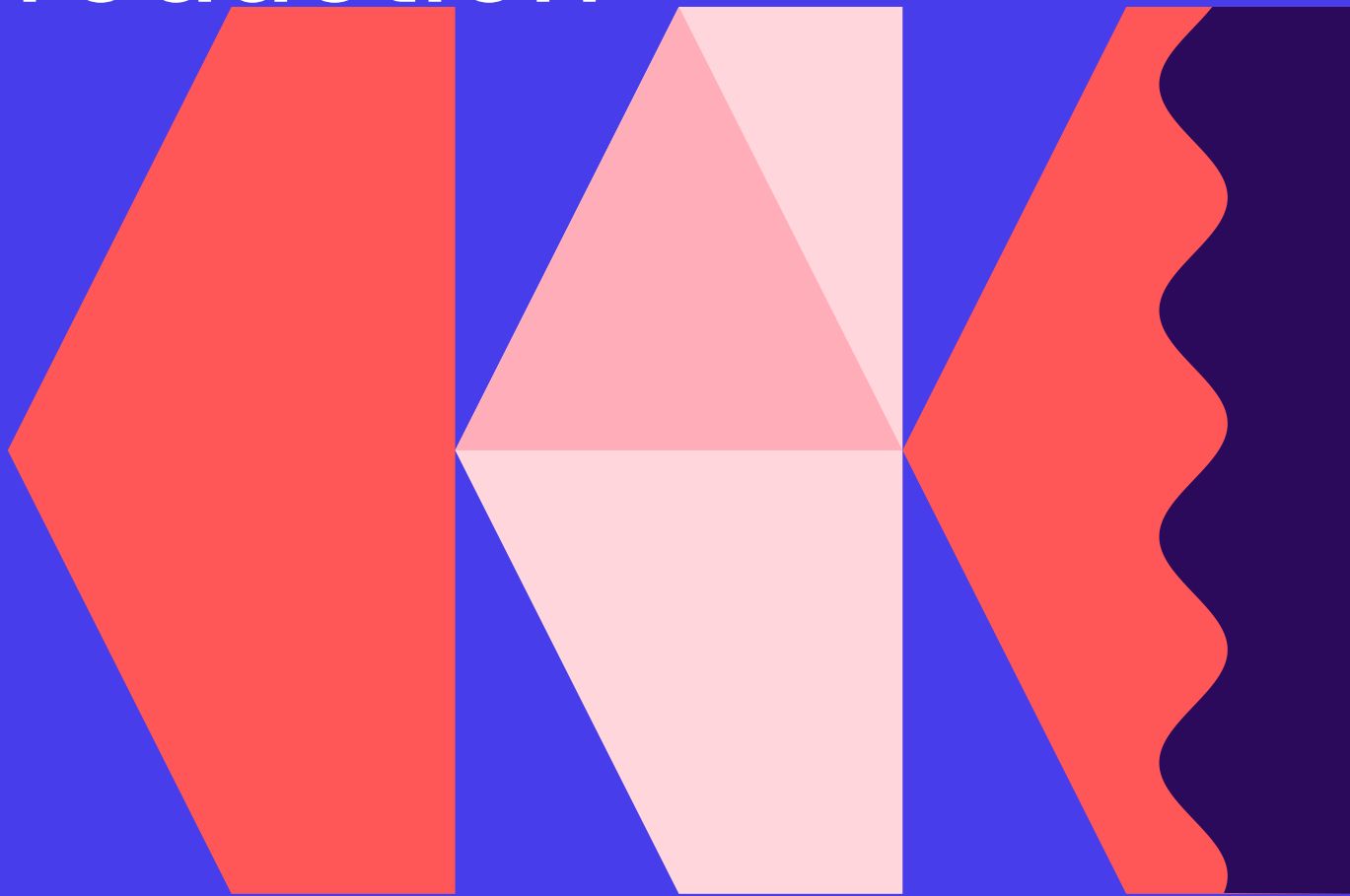


# The marcomms guide to more consistent and efficient content production





**Making a marketing communications strategy look good on paper isn't that difficult. But in the real world, even the best-laid plans can quickly fall apart if you can't keep up with content production demands.**

Our team at Papirfly has worked closely with hundreds of organisations over the years, of various sizes, reaches and reputations. Even those blessed with immense in-house creative, design and development teams find themselves facing the burdens of an ever-growing to-do list of tasks from all the way across the organisation.

Everything always feels urgent – and this urgency can soon outstrip your capacity, as well as allow mistakes to creep into the work you do produce in a bid to keep up with demand.

It is no wonder that marcomms professionals regularly cite content creation and getting content out to their audience as one of their biggest challenges.

If this is an issue you have identified in your company, this guide is for you. In this document we outline the pressures that modern marcomms teams are faced with, and what steps teams can take to address them before it becomes a logistical nightmare.

By adopting the approaches we highlight here, we are confident your marcomms team will be on the journey to a smoother, synchronised content production process – one that's fully equipped to meet increased demand throughout your organisation.

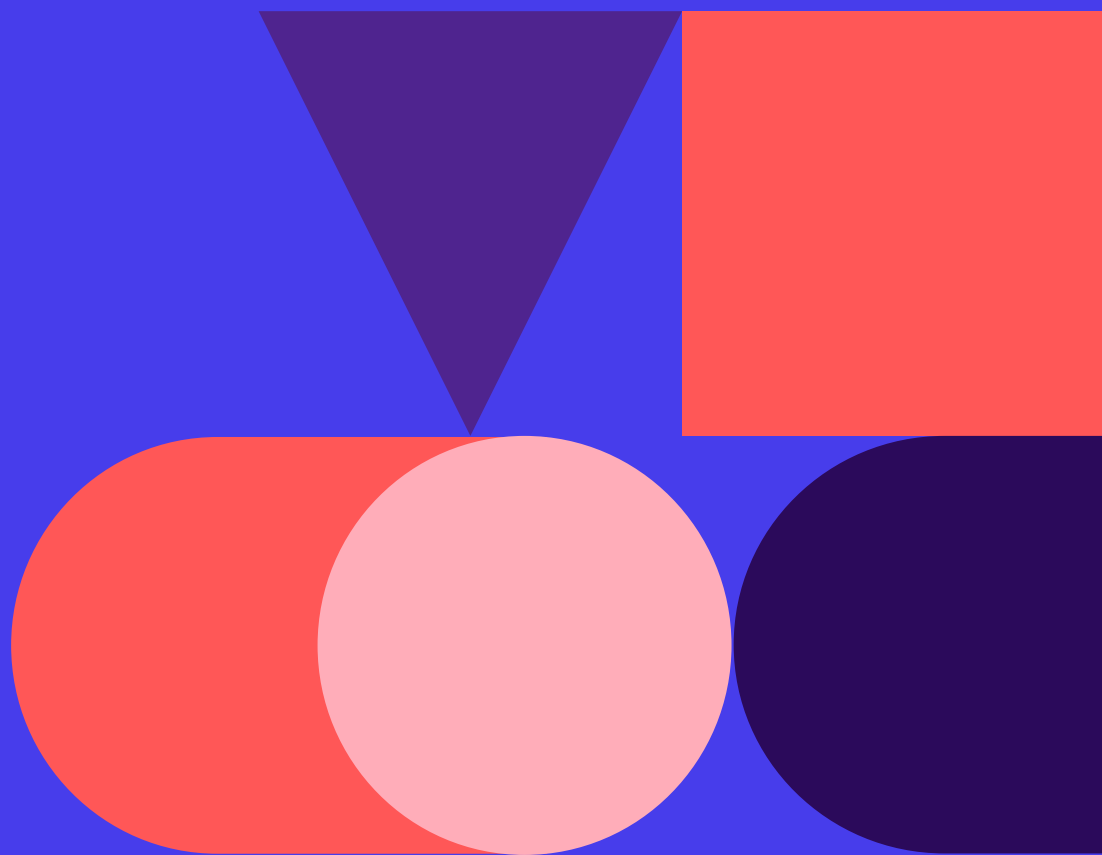
**Enjoy!**



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What are the  
content production  
challenges facing  
today's marketing  
teams?



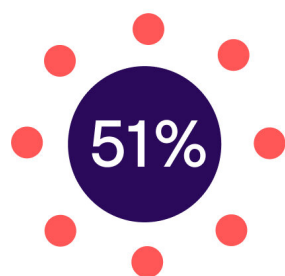


The burden on marcomms teams is not getting any lighter. Even if this burden hasn't hampered the capacity and capabilities of your team right now, it is worth anticipating any potential problems – and acting on them before they make life slower and costlier.

Below we have outlined some of the biggest challenges facing marcomms professionals right now...

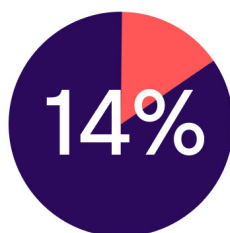
## Increased demand for content

The modern marketplace is noisier and more crowded than ever:



51% of companies use  
at least 8 channels  
to engage customers...

\*Source: Aberdeen



...yet just 14% of organisations  
run coordinated marketing  
campaigns across these channels

\*Source: Autopilot

It would be impossible to list the near endless list of ways brands communicate with their customers, employees and the wider public – by the time you read it, it will have probably grown even larger.

And as more and more channels become available, both on digital and physical platforms, this places more and more pressure on your marketing and communication teams. Each channel needs to be fed with regular, optimised content to effectively communicate your brand message to your audience.

You generally need a lot of content going out to make an impression, making it no surprise that marketing teams worldwide are having to ramp up production year on year.



## Optimal posting frequencies on social media

Facebook	1 post per day
Twitter	15 posts per day
Instagram	1-2 posts per day
LinkedIn	1 post per day
YouTube	1 video per week

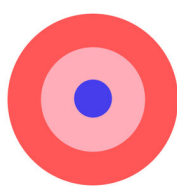
\*Source: Louise Myers

## Being global AND being local

As well as ensuring your brand has a presence across the ever-growing range of available channels, for global organisations there is the added demand to localise that content for each of their specific markets.

Your central brand message may be relevant the world over. But for it to truly resonate to each audience, it must be adapted to meet the varying needs and preferences of consumers in different areas.

This requirement for localised campaigns inevitably means more production work for your marcomms team.



**Locally-targeted content**  
secures 6 times the  
engagement of posts  
designed for the global market

\*Source: 90 Seconds

## Crowded production processes

It's rare for a single person to be responsible for the end-to-end creation of an asset.

You have the strategic or account lead who outlines the brief, then the creative lead who sets out the top-line requirements and vision for it. Then, depending on the nature of the asset, an assortment of designers, copywriters, developers, SEO experts, UX specialists and more will run with this brief to take it from concept to reality.



Now this might be essential that all these people offer their input. But, it can be a big challenge when it comes to organising all these moving parts.

If the workflow is clunky and assets are being created from scratch time and again, the time it takes for everyone to contribute, review the work and carry out the revisions can lead to substantial delays in sign-off times. Deadlines are missed, and so are timely marketing opportunities...

## Requests from all corners of the business

It is not only the marketing department who require the attention of your organisation's creative teams:

- Sales teams need brochures and similar documents to help them clinch a deal
- HR is looking for content to support their talent acquisition and onboarding processes
- Executives require a high-quality branded presentation for their shareholders

As these requests pile up from across your organisation (all with urgent notices alongside them), your design teams can get overwhelmed in a hurry.

## Dependence on specialists and agencies

In order to maintain a consistent level of quality across their assets, many organisations find themselves relying on a finite number of specialists, whether that is within their internal workforce or an external agency.

While the expertise and creativity of these groups is essential for conceptualising the design, if they are also having to devote time to execute these across a wide range of assets, it is not an efficient use of them. It cuts down their ability to create new concepts and design ideas by burdening them with work that doesn't require a specialist eye.

Furthermore, an overreliance on agencies, who will have other clients to focus on and aren't "living in" your brand day-to-day, creates a situation where assets take far longer to be delivered and errors in brand



Spending on marketing agencies account for **22%** of total marketing budgets

\*Source: Gartner



## Competing priorities

Picture this scenario: You've planned your primary marketing campaign, and have established a viable schedule for all required content to be completed.

However, unplanned-for requests start coming in from all angles, crowbarring their way onto your work schedule and devoting attention away from the primary campaign. Sound familiar?

Timetables get skewed, and this can prove especially problematic where there is no company-wide agreement on what counts as "urgent" work.

## Staying consistent

As well as the problems plaguing efficiency, the pressures placed on marcomms teams also impact on their ability to stay consistent across all platforms.

If your messages or visual identity seems to change from channel to channel, or you fail to maintain your core brand values in the content you create, this can quickly lead to your audience becoming confused.

In a busy marcomms department, with multiple parties involved in the production process and the need to roll out assets more pressing than ever, there is a very real risk of losing control of your brand message and of inconsistency creeping in. This can in turn hurt your reputation and how effectively your brand resonates with your customers, employees and the general public.



87% of customers believe brands should be working harder to deliver a more consistent experience



Consistent brands are 3.5 times more visible to customers than inconsistent ones

\*Source: Gartner



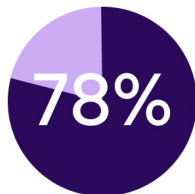
Consistent branding can increase a company's revenue by 33%



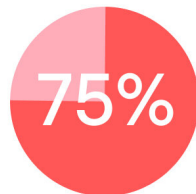


## The COVID-19 conundrum

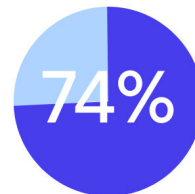
It would be wrong to ignore the added challenge that the COVID-19 pandemic has placed on marcomms teams and their ability to be at their most productive. This is pertinent because, despite the circumstances, consumers still want and expect brands to advertise as normal:



of consumers believe brands should talk about ways they're helping people right now



feel brands should communicate what they're doing to manage these circumstances



believe that advertisers should not look to exploit the situation to boost sales

This means that even though many organisations' marketing budgets have taken a hit, especially in the immediate response to the outbreak, audience expectations for the output to remain unchanged places even more pressure on marcomms teams to deliver more with less.

And this added pressure can lead to more mistakes emerging, leading to longer turnaround times to address these.



# Addressing marcomm challenges

To overcome all of the problems plaguing marketing teams that we've listed above, we suggest a three-pronged approach:

## Workflow optimisation

Ensuring your content production processes are fit to meet the demands of today's rapid and ever-evolving marketplace.

## Brand consistency

Finding the perfect balance of quantity and quality, and putting methods in place to make sure your content always stays on-message.

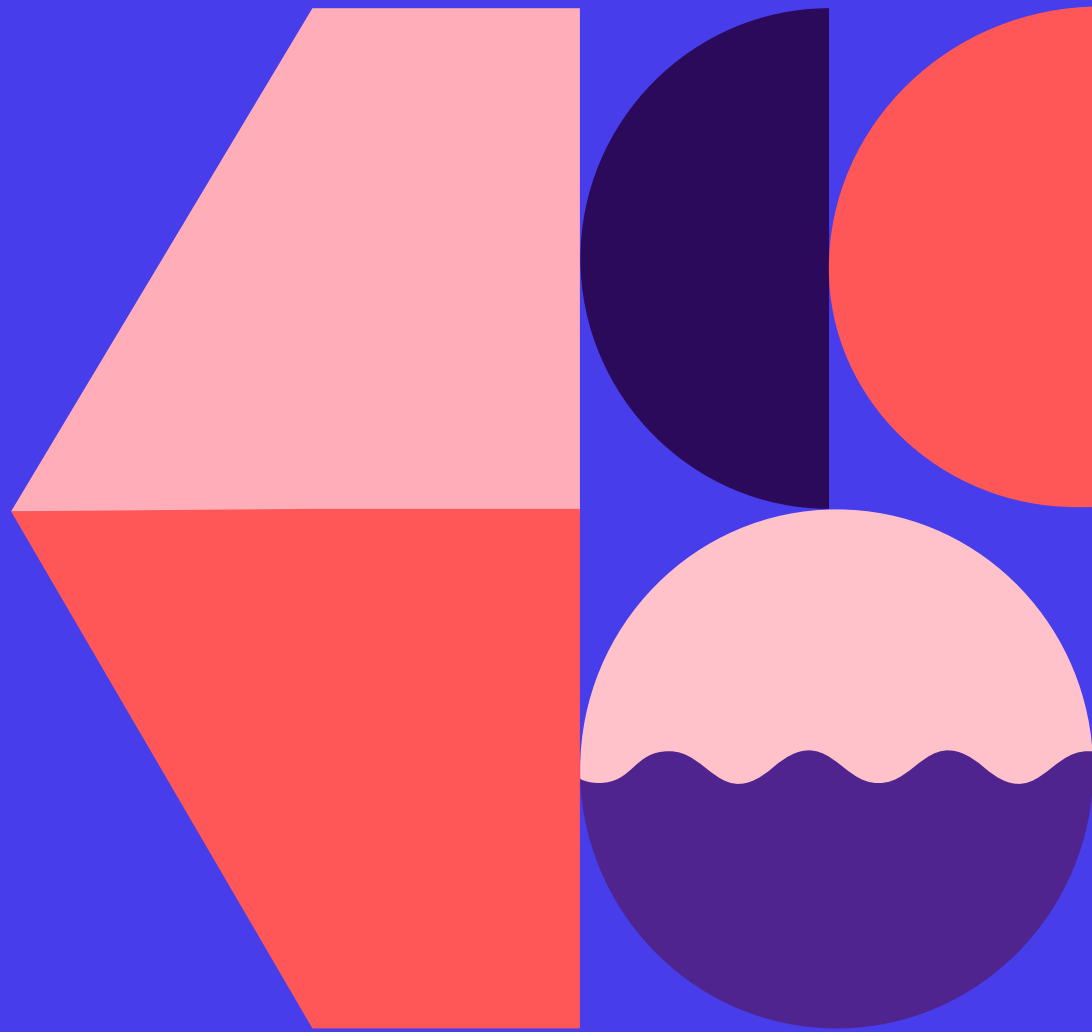
## Self sufficiency

Release the burden on busy creative teams by making it easier for those without specialist technical skills to create fresh content themselves.

We take a closer look at each of these solutions in the coming sections...

Solution #1

# Optimising your content production workflow



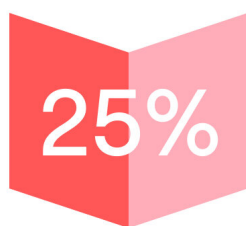


As we highlighted in the previous section, an overly complicated or poorly managed workflow can quickly slow down the content creation process.

Whether that is people getting in the way of each other, the ability to access content and collaborate being restricted, or the lack of a birds-eye view of all marketing activity, these can all contribute to marketing and communications that are less efficient and less consistent.

Here are our suggestions to streamline your marketing processes, making content creation more seamless and manageable.

## Establish a central brand portal



Only **25% of brands** stick to their documented brand guidelines

\*Source: Inc.

Brand guidelines, files and assets that are siloed by departments or locations are one of the biggest barriers to efficient content production. Your creatives should have the information to create with confidence, and never be worried about potentially straying away from your established brand identity.

Removing these siloes is essential to approving your workflow – and establishing a Brand Portal is critical to achieving this. Put simply, a brand portal provides a single, central location for all of the key building blocks for your brand. Brand guidelines, colour charts, tones of voice, exemplar assets – all of these should be readily accessible here.

It should also contain reusable assets, such as photos, videos and approved leaflets, adverts and posters, which will prevent any work being duplicated and provide a template for future work to be developed.

By placing all this information in one, easy-to-reach digital place, your brand portal will help ensure people are spending less time finding the information they need to deliver perfectly branded marketing. This means they have more time to devote to actually producing content – no time wasted hunting for guidelines or existing assets.

**Brand governance starts with Papirfly's brand management platform and your dedicated Brand Portal. Ditch disjointed approaches – discover it today.**



## Create a universal feed for all work requests

When production requests can arrive at any time from anywhere in your organisation, this can derail content production plans in a hurry. Without a unified system for feeding work through, this leaves your marcomms team tracking many separate threads – which can soon become crossed wires.

An “ad hoc” approach to content production can also make it harder for those managing your creative teams to know what work is going on at any given time. High-priority jobs could be missed or inadvertently put on the back-burner for another “urgent” task.

Workflow management tools such as Trello and Asana can be a valuable support in making sure all jobs are contained in one place, with total visibility for those who need it. Whichever system you use, the most important thing is having that central feed, and that all stakeholders buy into it – any system can fall apart if certain individuals try to bypass it.

## A company-wide prioritisation system

Speaking of “high-priority” work, when work comes in from an executive or another person high up the food-chain in your organisation, the natural reaction would be to tackle this above all other jobs – no matter what else is on the agenda.

For the good of your overall marketing workflow, this needs to be resisted. Instead, you need a system for prioritising work, agreed upon across your entire company. As a rule, this should be based on what carries the most value to your business – for instance, content relating to customer-facing campaigns will likely take precedence over internal comms.

You can help achieve this by requiring that content requests should be accompanied by a colour-coded prioritisation tag – making it clear that ‘red’ urgent requests are reserved only for tasks that are actually urgent.

## Create a shared terminology in your organisation

In a similar vein, within your specific team, you might refer to certain words and phrases that relate to part of your marketing workflow. However, not everyone in your organisation might be clued into this terminology, which can then cause communication breakdowns.

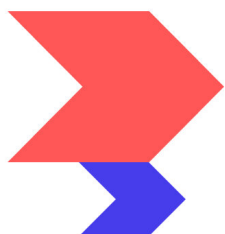
To prevent time being wasted on internal emails asking to explain what a certain acronym means, devote a window of time to come together as a team and set a shared terminology in stone for your marketing workflow going forward.



## Employ templates where possible

Brands need to stop thinking of marketing templates as a cheat – they are a crucial support for both time and consistency reasons. When marketing teams are regularly using the same type of material for your strategy, why should they dedicate time to creating from scratch over and over again?

Instead, utilise templates and make minor updates to these when required to save time and energy when executing your plan. Workflows become more manageable and delivering work is far faster. Plus, it will normalise your audience's expectations for your content.



Out of all content-related tasks a business can outsource, **84% relate to content creation**

\*Source: Content Marketing Institute

## Agree on parameters for outsourcing work

Where a content production task demands skills that are outside your team's capabilities, outsourcing becomes a necessity. However, taking this approach can quickly snowball into an overdependence on third parties like agencies, even where work can be done in-house.

To make best use of your resources, you need to avoid situations where jobs are referred to an agency when they are well within the capabilities of your people.

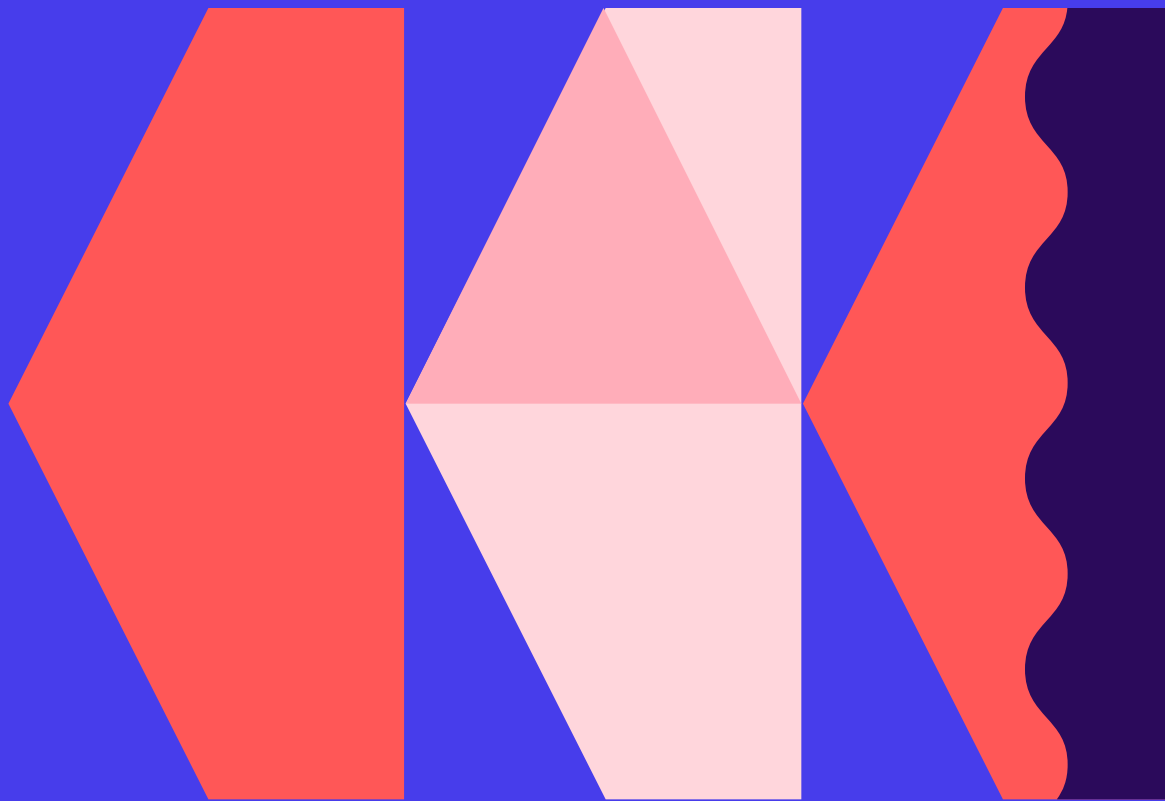
At the same time, it is inefficient to have your creatives struggling to complete tasks that really ought to be outsourced.

In response to this issue, carry out an audit on your existing creative team's skills. Through this, you can draw up a clear policy on precisely which tasks can be kept in-house, and which need to be completed elsewhere. It can also highlight opportunities to upskill your team in order to minimise your agency spend moving forward, making you more efficient in the long run.

**Want to explore further ways to make your marketing process faster and more cost-effective? Find more here.**

Solution #2

# Locking down on brand consistency





Now we have discussed making your workflow more productive and ensuring work requests from across the business are suitably logged, prioritised and allocated.

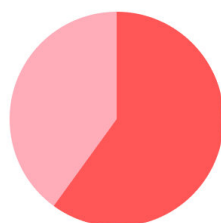
But, alongside this, it's crucial to ensure consistency in your presentation – something that becomes far more challenging when the volume of content you produce is constantly increasing and as more people become involved in the process.

Here we break down a variety of ways to tie down consistency across your channels.

## Establish a united style guide and strategy

60%

of B2B brands say that their content **doesn't conform** to set brand guidelines



\*Source: Demand Metric

First and foremost, it is impossible to achieve any level of consistency in your marketing communications without guidelines that are set in stone. We highlighted this in the previous section, but we think it's impossible to reinforce this point too much.

Without a "rulebook" for your creative teams to abide by when developing their content, it creates the conditions for people to go off-piste when creating assets, and stray too far from your brand identity – especially when they go from one channel to another.

Once your guides have been locked-in, make sure these are communicated across your teams internally. Making them actively accessible in a brand portal is a good way to ensure they are always followed, and never unnecessarily forgotten or overlooked.





## Build up a library of core assets

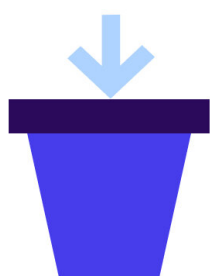
Whether it's a case study for your sales department, a LinkedIn ad for HR or a banner ad for marketing, a library of core assets provides a set of 'building blocks' for creating all content right across your organisation.

Alongside the guidelines discussed previously, this library of approved assets is a great visual indication for your creative teams on what they should be delivering, which can often hit home harder than if it is just written down.

Contained within your library of assets you might find:

- Straplines, disclaimers and other key texts
- Lists of regularly-updated hashtags for social media posts
- Design files for the likes of banner ads, print adverts and product listings
- Photography and branded imagery
- Video, audio and animation files

## Make all assets widely available



# 51%

of marketers **waste money** producing or recreating assets that go unused because people don't know they exist or can't find them

\*Source: Demand Metric

Having this library of assets doesn't carry any value unless everyone involved in your creative work can't access this with ease. Establishing a digital space where anyone can see these approved assets and potentially reuse/adapt them for future marketing is both a brilliant time-saver and greatly reduces the likelihood of creatives going off-message.

It can be especially useful when you are instructing outside consultants and agencies, as this gives them a definitive set of instructions to accompany their brief.



This makes a Digital Asset Management (DAM) system a wise investment for any marketing team. These systems enable organisations to centralise thousands of assets into a simple online folder structure – an effective way to store, search and share files across departments and locations, so nothing ever needs to be duplicated again.

## Utilise locked-down templates

Templates aren't simply time-savers – they are guardians of your brand consistency. Establishing templates across your range of assets, from social media posts and emails to beginning and end cards for your videos content, this prevents creatives moving away from your brand visuals.

Software like Papirfly's brand management platform expands the potential of templates even further by making them even smarter and more consistency-conscious. This is achieved by not just allowing you to store a significant number of templates within the platform, but enabling you to set parameters for what can and can't be done to various assets.

This can be tailored by asset type, location and individual users, so that every creative on your team has the boundaries they need to deliver the same quality and consistency of content every time.

## Harness approval workflows for quick checks

While it is undoubtedly important to proof and approve work before it can ever reach your audiences to cut off any inconsistencies, this can lead to an endless cycle of checks and amends between all parties, costing precious time.

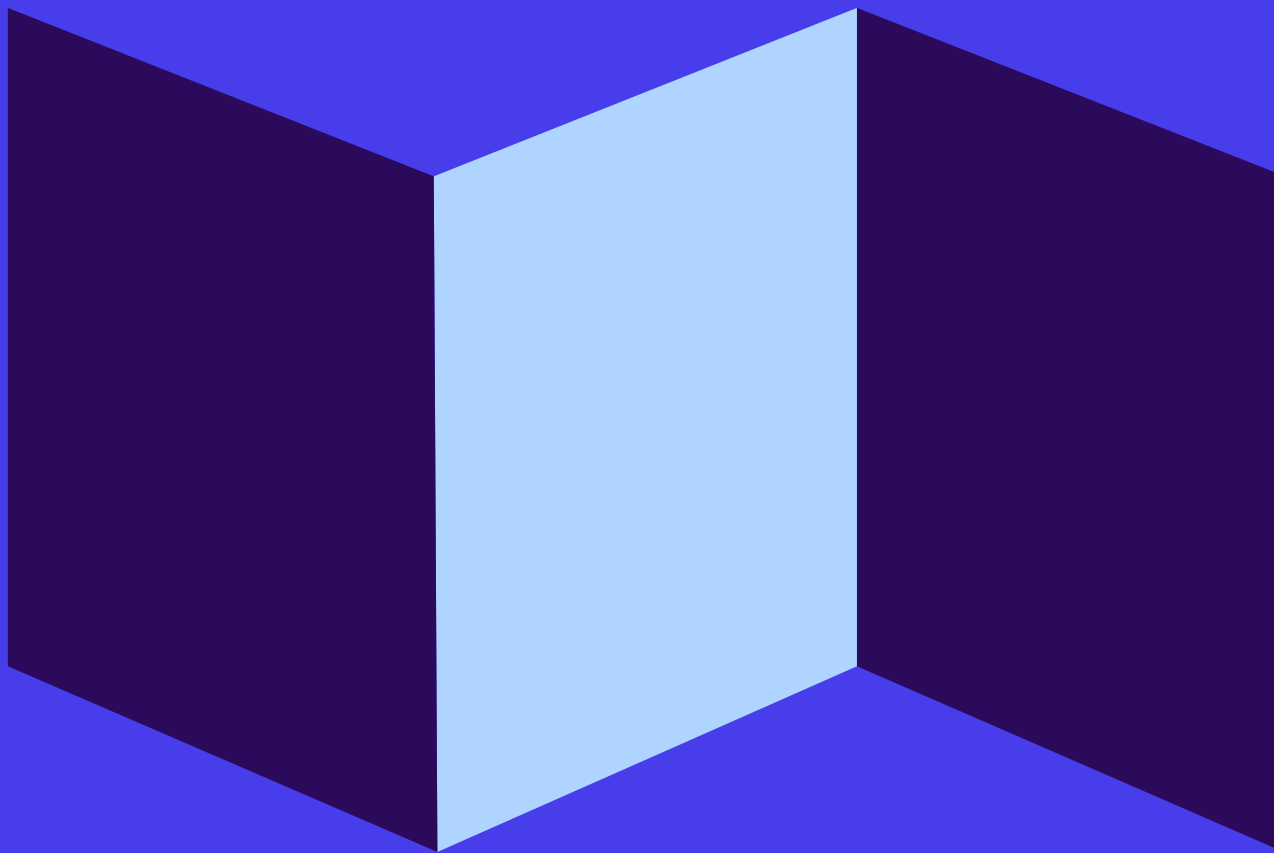
To streamline this process while maintaining complete brand consistency, institute approval workflows into your systems. These give an extra layer of governance beyond branded templates, establishing a clear order of who needs to sign off on assets before they go live and enabling them to do so in real-time.

This ensures that the right people have oversight over everything produced by your marketing and communications teams, so there is no risk of anything breaking the bounds of your brand identity.

**Discover how approval workflows cement your branding like never before.**

Solution #3

# Becoming more self-sufficient





In the context of your marketing and communications, self-sufficiency is empowering your internal teams to create and publish their own materials. Regardless of design expertise or experience. Without sacrificing quality or consistency, or spending significant sums on training them up into specialist designers.

40% 

40% of workers spend at least a **quarter of the work week** on manual, repetitive tasks

\*Source: Impact

Whether it's brochures, visually rich, branded emails, social media posts, print/digital banners or posters, by enabling everyone on your teams to produce the type of content that is routinely required (not just by the marketing department, but across all areas of the business), this approach carries a number of business benefits:

### Technical resources are used more strategically

Rather than waste your key design and agency talent creating pretty straightforward content on a regular basis, a more self-sufficient approach frees them up for more important tasks. If highly-skilled designers are spending big chunks of time making relatively minor adaptations to what essentially are the same core assets, this is highly wasteful.

A "self-service" approach means non-technical staff can be relied on to make these small tweaks and handle the more frequent, round-the-clock content demands, and free up your specialist designers more time to brainstorm and research ideas that will make your core assets and major campaigns even more effective.



## Staff feel more empowered to make a difference

With the ability to self-serve themselves with the content they require, HR, sales and other departments feel more empowered to deliver on their objectives without having to waste time waiting on others or burdening them with work they could do themselves.

This approach means more of the content production can be done by those directly requiring the content – meaning the to-do list for your marcomms department starts to shrink.

## Reducing agency spend

As highlighted in the previous section, it can sometimes be tempting to outsource a design task to a third party solely on the basis that there is no time or capacity to complete this in-house. While an agency can be a valuable support in honing the strategy and core creative behind your brand, relying on them too heavily on the asset creation side of the spectrum can quickly eat away at your budget.

By taking more of the “straightforward”, less strategically-driven work internally, you can reduce your agency spend and only use that resource when absolutely necessary. This means you get more bang for your buck from your agency partners, rather than use them as a crutch.

## Becoming more self-sufficient

In your bid to become more self-sufficient with your marcomms, we would suggest the following three objectives:

- **Lock down your brand consistency and governance**
- **Install a “central control” to support wider content production**
- **Make it easy for people to get to work with minimal training**

Now these are easier said than done, so here is how you can approach these goals.

### 1. Lock down your brand consistency and governance

We covered this in greater detail in the previous part, but in order for your team to be trusted to work self-sufficiently, it is essential you're in complete control of your brand identity.

Without strict brand governance underlying all of your content production, it is easy for those less familiar with your branding to ignore this when creating content... or for branding to become skewed or confused in someone's bid to be “creative” with it.



Revisit the prior section and take all the necessary actions to keep consistent across all your channels, no matter who is responsible for producing the content at hand:

- Establish a uniform style guide and brand strategy
- Build a library of core assets and approved imagery
- Make assets widely available to your teams
- Utilise intelligent templates wherever possible
- Harness approval workflows to prevent mishaps

It's only when you have control that you can ensure your brand is activated and deployed as planned, and this control can be directly measured in your chosen metrics.

## **2. Install a "central control" to support wider content production**

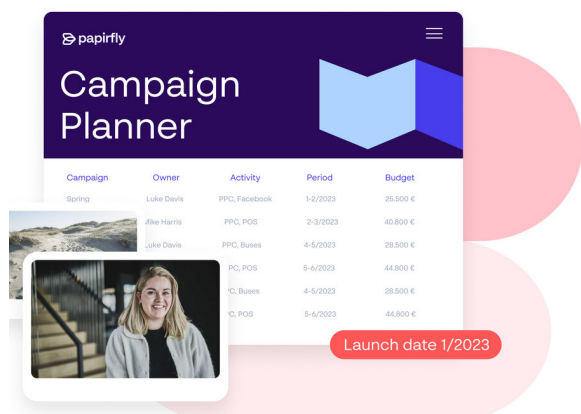
When we refer to central control over your marketing communications, we take a two-fold approach:

- A central repository of approved assets
- A top-level, birds-eye view over all campaigns

We noted in the previous section how a DAM-style system, or evolving this into a complete brand management solution, can help you store tons and tons of approved content and templates that your teams worldwide can then apply to their own work. This central bank of assets is key to tying down consistency and quality, regardless of who is adapting these resources into fresh content.

As for a birds-eye view over your campaigns, brand management software allows you to achieve that as well. By setting up all milestones and touchpoints for campaigns in one central portal, this gives you a visual overview of everything produced and when it is meant to go live. Any necessary tweaks can be communicated quickly and collaboratively, so less-skilled users can create with complete assurance that nothing inappropriate will go live.

This central birds-eye view, held by key members of your marcomms team, enables you to stay on top of marketing activity regardless of where it comes from, so everything is delivered to schedule and to the expected standards.



Papirfly's brand management platform can also assist here by:

- Allowing users to tag marketing materials to the relevant campaigns
- Letting you attach briefs to campaigns to support the creation of assets
- Create and assign folders of relevant, approved assets to each campaign
- Manage access rights to these campaigns so nothing can be misused

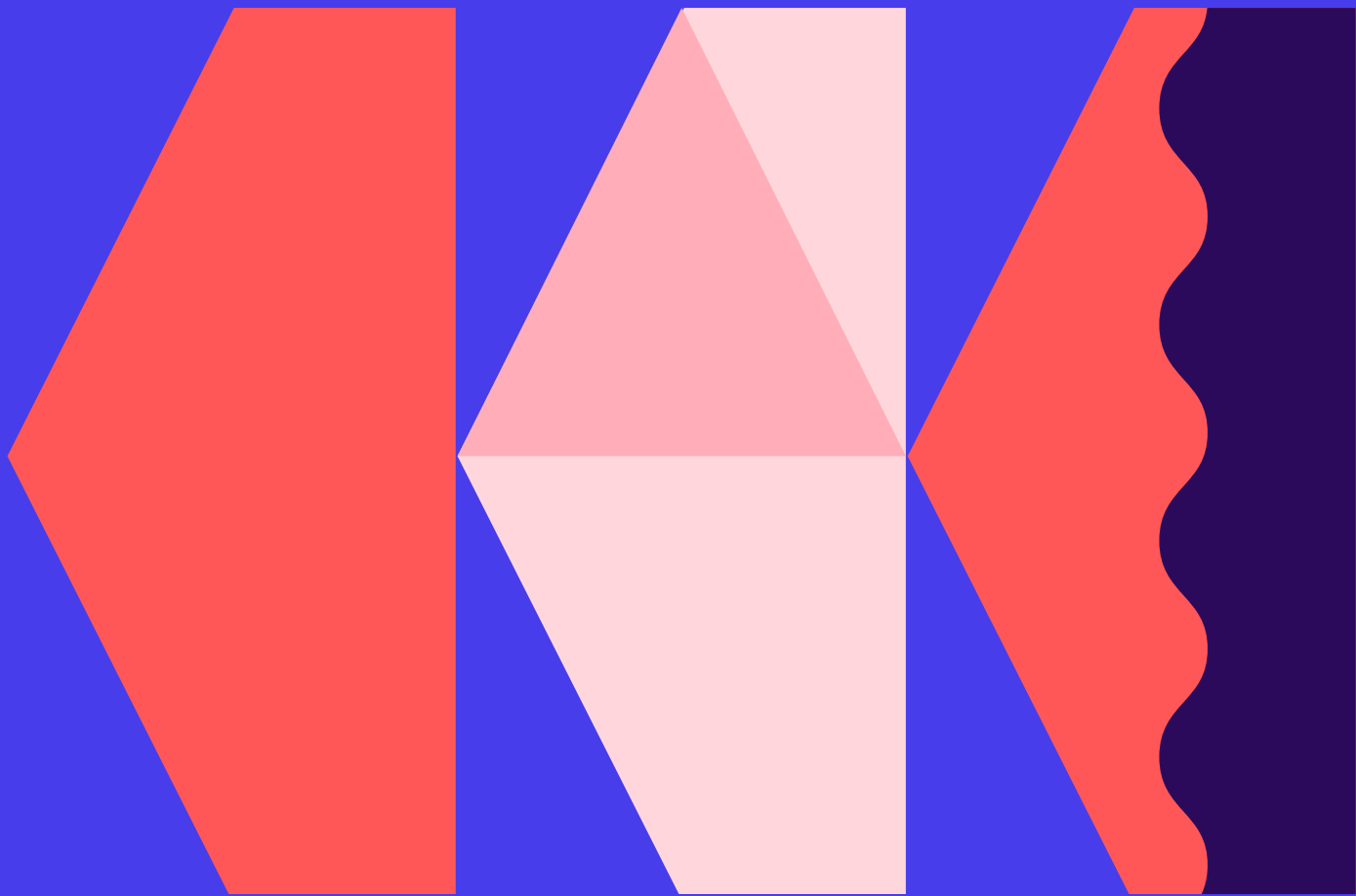
### 3. Make it easy for people to get to work with minimal training

Finally, it is imperative that your team members less fluent in digital or print design can use software that is easy to use, but delivers the same beautiful banners, emails, social posts and more that your designers and agency partners produce.

Again, this is where a solution like a brand management platform is such a valuable ally. Whether it is making all brand guidelines easily accessible and digestible for users so they know what they're aiming for, or establishing smart templates that always tie-in your relevant brand assets and formats, it is a platform that makes it practically impossible for users to break away from your brand identity.

Plus, as you can lockdown certain facets of each template so they can never be misused or removed, as well as additional parameters that prevent your teams from straying from the branding and quality standards you expect, this gives users the structure they need to deliver incredible assets, no matter their design acumen.

# Unleash your brand with Papirfly











# How does Papirfly empower your people?

We believe every enterprise should be able to provide tools to teams, so that the brand can be delivered to customers exactly as it was intended to be experienced.




At Papirfly, for over 20 years we've been driving innovation in brand management software to support brands in delivering consistent, multichannel experiences for their customers.

We empower people to unleash their brand.

## How teams work today:

-  Customers are experiencing inconsistent and diluted branding across touchpoints
-  Stressed teams aren't getting the marketing materials they need or quickly enough
-  Too much already-limited budget is being spent duplicating work and on multiple tech solutions
-  Assets are not centralised or trackable resulting in loss of data to analyse budget spend

## We know what brands need:

-  Global brand governance now and for the future with guaranteed consistency at every touchpoint
-  Faster go-to-market, creating assets in-house with the flexibility for on-brand, hyper-local messaging
-  Increased ROI, saving money on every asset produced, creating space for teams to focus on strategy

## We give you the tools to:

- Do more for less
- Produce all assets in house
- Create with no previous design skills
- Achieve 100% brand consistency
- Reach all markets, in any language
- See a complete bird's-eye view of your branding and marketing efforts

## Discover our all-in-one brand management platform



## Trusted by the world's most recognisable brands

 **1M+**  
regular Papirfly users

 **600+**  
brands using Papirfly worldwide



# Build your on-brand culture with Papirfly

Our brand management platform enables complete brand adoption, and the creation of unlimited on-brand assets with our suite of enterprise-grade products-building brand equity and long-term customer loyalty.

## Point

### Educate & Control

Support global teams to understand your brand, through clear guidelines, official assets, core values, and more from online access point. Go local with unique hubs with local languages and nuances.

## Place

### Manage & Share

Centralise all assets with a dedicated DAM solution, categorising content for global and local usage in onsecure place for all approved material. Ensure every location has assets that serve their unique audience nuances.

## Produce

### Create & Activate

Guarantee 100% brand consistency with design templates aligned to brand guidelines and produce infinite studio-quality digital, print and video assets. Empower everyone to personalise to their audience using localised images, video and text options.

## Plan

### Plan & Collaborate

Achieve your bird's-eye view of all campaigns and activities, displaying status, budgets, contacts, and official design templates for use. Ensure every location utilises workflows that drives campaign responsivity.

## Prove

### Measure & Optimise

Analyse marketing activity via your dashboard, delivering reports and data across your business. Ensure local sites get feedback on best-performing content across the business, and give them data to let them know when their efforts are driving brand strategy success.

## Plus

### Integrations

Papirfly works seamlessly with your agency tech stack – removing hacks and workarounds, improving productivity and organisational efficiency across the business.

FORRESTER®



212% ROI



80% reduced effort in asset creation



Enhanced content quality and improved business outcomes

"It's become super crucial for us with more than 50,000 users at the brand portal, both internal employees and external agencies. We are working with a huge number of downloads of all of the assets."

Interviewee from pharmaceutical

Source: A commissioned TEI study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Papirfly



# Global brands trust Papirfly



"Life without Papirfly would be stressful. It would be slow, time consuming, and costly. Papirfly has enabled us to have a system in place where we can create assets that we need very quickly. We can go to market much faster, we can react to our business and our clients a lot quicker, and it is also extremely cost effective."

Jo Bedford  
Global Recruitment Branding Manager, IBM



# Empower your people. Unleash your brand.

Discover our game-changing brand management platform.



At papirfly.com you can

- Book a demo
- Explore brand management resources
- Hear success stories from empowered customers

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