Spotlight

Sitecore XM Cloud: Spotlight On Migration From XP To XM Cloud

COMMISSIONED BY SITECORE, AUGUST 2025

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Sitecore commissioned Forrester Consulting to conduct a Total Economic Impact™ (TEI) study and examine the potential return on investment (ROI) enterprises may realize by deploying Sitecore XM Cloud.[1] This abstract will focus on organizations that migrate to XM Cloud from Sitecore's locally hosted XP offering — compared to organizations that migrate from competitive or alternative content management systems (CMSs) — while still emphasizing the value of XM Cloud for their organizations.

The interviewees for this Spotlight are five decision-makers at three organizations who are responsible for digital marketing and/or website operations:

- A digital CX manager and a digital product owner for a travel services provider with ~$60 billion in revenue and ~100,000 employees.
- A director of digital platform for a business insurance provider with ~$5 billion in revenue and ~20,000 employees.
- A VP of marketing and a martech manager for a financial services firm with ~$250 million in revenue and ~2,500 employees.

Interviews			
Role	**Industry**	**Region**	**XM Cloud Configuration**
• Digital CX manager • Digital product owner	Travel services	• HQ: North America • Operations: major global presence	• Standard • 5 million visits/year • 10 concurrent users
Director of digital platform	Business insurance	• HQ: North America • Operations: presence in ~40 countries	• Professional • 5 million visits/year • 25 concurrent users
• VP of marketing • Martech manager	Financial services	• HQ: North America • Operations: 80 regional locations	• Standard • 50 million visits/year • 10 concurrent users

Organizations moving from Sitecore XP to XM Cloud cited a desire to overcome common operational and technical challenges associated with maintaining legacy self-hosted platforms. A key challenge was the high maintenance overhead associated with self-hosted platform infrastructure: Some teams required two to three full-time IT resources just to manage upgrades, patches, and hosting environments. This not only consumed valuable internal capacity but also introduced delays and risk during version upgrades, which were often complex and time intensive. With legacy platforms, the reliance on developers for even basic content updates created bottlenecks, limiting the ability of marketing and business teams to respond quickly to market demands. **It is worth noting** that these challenges were also cited by the three interviewees in the main TEI study who migrated to Sitecore XM Cloud from competitive legacy CMS platforms — so they were not unique to Sitecore XP but shared across traditional digital experience solutions.

The need to increase agility, reduce operational complexity, and empower business users drove interviewees' organizations to transition from Sitecore XP to a modern CMS like XM Cloud. Their overarching goal was to adopt a cloud-native, scalable platform that could support faster content delivery, enable real-time personalization, and eliminate the heavy IT burden associated with maintaining on-premises infrastructure. These organizations sought to modernize their digital experience stack to better support omnichannel engagement, streamline content workflows, and allow marketing teams to operate independently of developers.

To be objective, it is worth noting that Sitecore XP continues to have an engaged customer base — particularly when they have kept their systems current with the latest upgrades and have invested in best practices and customizations that optimally leverage the platform. These customers were not part of the original TEI study — and their success stories, therefore, are not part of the narrative.

> *"Sitecore [XM Cloud] is absolutely worth it. We're saving money, reducing IT burden, and unlocking new capabilities. The CMS no longer limits us — it's become a growth engine."*

VP of marketing, financial services

Sitecore XM Cloud is a modern, AI-enabled, cloud-native, headless CMS designed to empower marketing and digital marketing teams with speed, scalability, and flexibility. Built on a composable architecture, it enables organizations to create, manage, and deliver personalized digital experiences across channels without the burden of infrastructure maintenance or, because XM Cloud is SaaS-based, complex upgrades. XM Cloud supports rapid content deployment, empowers non-technical users, and scales easily to meet enterprise demands — making it a strong platform for delivering consistent, high-performance digital experiences. By leveraging XM Cloud, organizations may be able to drive incremental revenue from enhanced productivity, yield meaningful cost savings from eliminating legacy platforms, and deliver meaningful efficiencies for marketers and developers working on digital marketing and operations.

371%
Return on investment (ROI) ⓘ

$3.0M
Net present value (NPV) ⓘ

> *"We've expanded our user base fivefold, added new features like personalization and A/B testing, improved productivity by 30%, and doubled our digital revenue — all while saving half a million dollars in engineering costs. I would say that our investment in Sitecore has easily paid us back many times over."*

Director of digital platform, business insurance

Investment Drivers For Customers Migrating From XP

The interviewees' organizations adopted XM Cloud to create a more responsive, cost-efficient, and user-friendly CMS environment that could evolve with their business needs and customer expectations. These organizations struggled with several challenges in their legacy environments, including:

- **High maintenance overhead for XP.** Interviewees described the XP platform as requiring disproportionate IT involvement, with one interviewee's organization allocating two to three full-time engineers just to manage infrastructure, upgrades, and support. The upgrade process itself was seen as risky and time-consuming and often avoided due to the complexity and potential for disruption. Licensing and hosting costs added further strain, with one customer estimating annual overhead in the range of $300K to $500K. The martech manager for the financial services firm stated, "We were spending more time maintaining the platform than using it to drive value." This sentiment encapsulated the broader frustration with XP's resource demands and lack of agility.

- **Limited scalability and agility.** Interviewed customers described long lead times for even basic content changes, with some noting that updates could take many weeks due to dependencies on development and QA cycles. The relatively rigid architecture of XP made it difficult to experiment or iterate quickly, limiting the ability to launch personalized experiences or respond to market shifts. Additionally, scaling content operations across brands, regions, or business units was cumbersome, often requiring duplicated effort and manual coordination. The digital CX manager for the travel services provider explained, "We needed to move at the speed of the business, but XP kept us stuck in IT timelines." This experience reflects the broader frustration with the platform's inability to support fast, flexible digital delivery.

- **Developer bottlenecks.** Content teams heavily relied on developers for routine tasks like page creation, layout changes, or launching new campaigns — often waiting days or weeks for implementation. This dependency slowed down marketing agility and made it difficult to respond to real-time opportunities. The XP environment complexity also meant that only a small number of technically trained users could operate effectively within the system. As the VP of marketing at a financial services firm described, "We had to go through developers for everything — even simple content updates — which made it hard for marketing to move at the pace they needed."

- **Upgrade complexity.** Interviewees described the upgrade process as time-consuming, expensive, and fraught with uncertainty — requiring extensive planning, testing, and coordination across IT and business teams. In some cases, organizations delayed upgrades for years due to the perceived risk of breaking existing functionality or disrupting live environments. The process also demanded specialized technical expertise, further straining internal resources. The digital product owner at a travel services provider noted, "Upgrading XP was so complex and risky that we avoided it as long as we could — it just wasn't worth the disruption." This aversion to upgrades ultimately left teams on outdated versions and unable to take advantage of new features or performance improvements.

In summary, interviewees who migrated from XP were primarily focused on reducing the costs and complexity associated with maintaining legacy infrastructure and streamlining day-to-day operations. Notably, interviewees said that their decision to remain within the Sitecore ecosystem was due to their trust in Sitecore and the value they received. Interviewees who migrated to Sitecore XM Cloud from other CMS tools were more focused on improving performance and customer experience. Regardless of origin, all interviewees reported significant benefits postmigration, which ranged from revenue enablement and faster time to market to increased usability and reduced IT dependency, and are further described in the benefits section of this Spotlight.

> *"We had great ideas, but we couldn't act on them without waiting for a developer. It felt like we were always a few steps behind."*
>
> **Martech manager, financial services**

XM Cloud Features

The interviewees' organizations chose to invest in XM Cloud for the following reasons:

- **Cloud-native architecture.** By moving to a SaaS-based model, interviewees' organizations could eliminate the need to manage infrastructure, perform manual upgrades, and dedicate IT resources to platform maintenance. The continuously updated nature of XM Cloud meant that updates were automatic and nondisruptive, freeing teams to focus on delivering value rather than maintaining systems. This shift also enabled faster deployment cycles and greater scalability across regions and business units. The martech manager at a financial services firm explained, "We no longer have to worry about upgrades or infrastructure — it just works, and that's been a huge relief for our IT team." This sentiment captured the broader impact of XM Cloud's architecture in reducing operational overhead and increasing agility.

- **Visual authoring and page composition tools.** Interviewees cited this capability of XM Cloud as a game-changer in reducing reliance on developers and accelerating content creation. They stated that these features enabled marketing and business users to build and update pages through an intuitive interface, significantly shortening turnaround times and increasing autonomy. The ability to preview, drag-and-drop components, and publish content without technical intervention empowered their teams to move faster and experiment more freely. The martech manager at a financial services firm stated, "Now our marketers can build pages on their own, which is night and day compared to how we worked in XP." This shift not only improved efficiency but also unlocked greater creativity and responsiveness across digital teams.

- **Composable and headless architecture.** Interviewees noted that this architecture was instrumental in unlocking flexibility and future-proofing their digital ecosystems: It allowed them to decouple the front end from the back end and enabled faster development cycles, easier integration with modern frameworks, and the ability to deliver content across multiple channels. It also gave teams the freedom to select best-of-breed tools for analytics, personalization, and commerce without being locked into a monolithic stack. The digital product owner at a travel

services provider stated, "We can now plug in new capabilities without rearchitecting the whole system — a huge leap from where we were with XP."

- **Built-in personalization and experimentation.** In their prior state, interviewees' organizations struggled to activate personalization features in XP due to technical complexity and limited usability, which often required developer support and custom configurations. With XM Cloud, teams could launch personalized content and A/B tests directly within the platform, significantly reducing time to launch and increasing marketing agility. The VP of marketing at a financial services firm noted: "We finally have a platform where personalization is actually usable by marketing. It's no longer just a feature we talk about but never implement." This shift enabled more dynamic, relevant experiences for users and empowered business teams to continuously optimize performance.

- **Faster deployment and integration.** With XP, deployments were often slow and resource-intensive, requiring coordination across IT, QA, and development teams. In contrast, XM Cloud's modern DevOps support and cloud-native delivery model enabled faster time to market and smoother integration with other systems. Customers reported significantly shorter deployment timelines and the ability to iterate more frequently. The digital product owner at a travel services provider observed, "What used to take us six weeks to push live can now happen in a matter of days — or even hours — depending on complexity." This acceleration not only improved operational efficiency but also allowed teams to respond more quickly to business needs and customer expectations.

> *"The intuitive interface of XM Cloud empowers more employees to work on the platform, improving morale and collaboration."*
>
> **VP of marketing, financial services**

> *"We use Sitecore's headless capabilities to serve content across multiple regions and languages — 23 sites in 12 languages."*
>
> **Director of digital platform, business insurance**

Key Results For Customers Migrating From XP To XM Cloud

For the main TEI analysis, Forrester constructed a TEI framework, a composite company, and an ROI analysis that illustrates the areas financially affected based on the six interviewees, including the three noted in this Spotlight. The composite is a midmarket, B2B2C, global organization with 2,000 employees and $500 million in annual revenue. The composite organization has several product brands, with each brand operating semi-independently. The composite organization had a legacy set of disparate, self-hosted CMS solutions.

The results of the investment for the composite organization include:

Incremental revenue benefit from XM Cloud. XM Cloud enables the composite's marketing teams to rapidly deploy content, personalize experiences with more precision, and integrate with CRM and e-commerce platforms, resulting in a 50% improvement in conversion rates by Year 3. Over three years, XM Cloud's personalization and A/B testing capabilities, composable architecture, and intuitive content management tools drive nearly $2.1 million in operating profit for the composite organization.

Interviewees also experienced incremental revenue benefits from XM Cloud. The director of digital platform at a business insurance provider explained: "Since moving to XM Cloud, our digital revenue has doubled, with online sales increasing by 200%. This growth is due to a combination of the new website, faster performance, and rebranding, but Sitecore's platform was central to enabling these improvements. The ability for marketing to quickly launch co-branded partnership pages and run A/B tests has directly impacted our conversion rates and partner relationships."

Cost savings from eliminating self-hosted legacy solutions. The composite organization can retire its legacy platforms and avoid infrastructure, upgrade, and IT maintenance costs, saving between $175,000 and $205,000 annually. The composite no longer needs dedicated staff for patching or hosting. XM Cloud's fully managed SaaS

model, which includes automated updates, built-in scalability, and reduced reliance on internal IT, enables more than $471,000 in savings for the composite over three years.

Interviewees shared the benefits of eliminating their legacy CMS platforms. The VP of marketing at a financial services firm said: "By moving from our on-premises CMS to XM Cloud, we're saving an estimated $300,000 to $500,000 annually. These savings come from eliminating hosting, licensing, and IT maintenance costs that were required to keep our old system running. Now, our IT team is freed up for more strategic work, and ongoing maintenance is minimal."

> "Switching to XM Cloud allowed us to reduce engineering costs by $200,000 to $400,000 per year since we no longer needed developers focused on content updates and infrastructure. The SaaS model means we don't have to worry about upgrades or server management, and we're scaling down our engineering team as a result. Over time, we expect to save about half a million dollars annually compared to our previous setup."
>
> **Director of digital platform, business insurance**

Improved website marketing team productivity-driven savings. XM Cloud's drag-and-drop editing tools and real-time publishing capabilities allow the composite organization's marketers to reduce page creation time by up to 60% and developers to cut integration time by 50%. Non-technical users can manage content independently, freeing developers to focus on innovation. Over three years, the improvements made possible by XM Cloud's visual authoring interface, headless architecture, and API-first design are worth nearly $400,000 to the composite.

Interviewees described cost savings for their organizations resulting from increased team productivity. The digital product owner at a travel services provider stated: "Content-only changes that used to take four to six weeks with our old systems can now be made in about 15 minutes. Even minor development changes are completed within a two-week sprint, so we can respond much faster to operational needs."

> "Page creation time dropped from two days to half a day, allowing our marketing team to launch campaigns much faster. The number of users able to create and edit content increased from just two or three technical staff to seven or eight, including non-technical marketers. This shift has freed up IT resources and empowered the marketing team to manage content independently."
>
> **Martech manager, financial services**

Developer time savings for website operations. XM Cloud's modern, composable architecture and API-first design streamline routine tasks such as content integration, template updates, and new feature deployment, allowing developers to focus on higher-value projects rather than day-to-day maintenance. The composite organization's development teams can deliver enhancements, integrations, and optimizations more efficiently, accelerating digital initiative time to market and reducing operational overhead. Over three years, this benefit is worth more than $320,000 to the composite.

Interviewees shared the impact of developer time savings on website operations with XM Cloud. The director of digital platform at a business insurance provider said: "We reduced the time developers spend on routine content updates and operational tasks, resulting in about half a million dollars in annual savings. Developers now focus on higher-value improvements and enablement rather than day-to-day website maintenance. The platform's automation and self-service capabilities have made it possible for non-technical users to handle most content changes."

Business impact of consolidated multibrand promotional efficiencies. XM Cloud's multisite and modular content capabilities enable the composite's marketing teams to launch campaigns faster and more consistently across brands

and regions, improving promotional agility. Centralized content management, reusable templates and components, and seamless collaboration tools drive these efficiencies and enable the composite's various brands to more efficiently promote events and drive increased revenue from promotions. Over three years, this benefit is worth more than $320,000 to the composite organization.

By way of perspective, the total revenue acceleration for this benefit represents 4.3% of digital revenue for Year 1 after deploying XM Cloud, 4.7% in Year 2, and 5.0% by Year 3.

📢 TOTAL ECONOMIC IMPACT ANALYSIS

For more information, download the full study: "The Total Economic Impact™ Of Sitecore XM Cloud," a commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Sitecore, July 2025.

Study Findings

While the value story above is based on three interviews with five decision-makers, Forrester interviewed nine total representatives at six organizations with experience using XM Cloud and combined the results into a three-year financial analysis for a composite organization. Risk-adjusted present value (PV) quantified benefits for the composite organization include:

• XM Cloud enables the composite's marketing teams to improve website conversions by 50%, driving nearly $2.1 million in operating profit.

• XM Cloud's fully managed SaaS model allows the composite organization to retire its legacy platforms and avoid infrastructure, upgrade, and IT maintenance costs, saving more than $471,000.

• XM Cloud's drag-and-drop editing tools and real-time publishing capabilities allow the composite organization's marketers to reduce page creation time by up to 60% and developers to cut integration time by 50%, resulting in nearly $400,000 in savings.

• XM Cloud's modern, composable architecture and API-first design drive developer time savings of 40%, saving more than $320,000.

• XM Cloud's multisite and modular content capabilities enable the composite's marketing teams to launch campaigns faster and more consistently across brands and regions, resulting in more than $320,000 in incremental business impact.

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$3.0M
Net present value (NPV) ⓘ

Appendixes

APPENDIX A

Endnotes

[1] Total Economic Impact is a methodology developed by Forrester Research that enhances a company's technology decision-making processes and assists solution providers in communicating their value proposition to clients. The TEI methodology helps companies demonstrate, justify, and realize the tangible value of business and technology initiatives to both senior management and other key stakeholders.

Disclosures

Readers should be aware of the following:

This study is commissioned by Sitecore and delivered by Forrester Consulting. It is not meant to be used as a competitive analysis.

Forrester makes no assumptions as to the potential ROI that other organizations will receive. Forrester strongly advises that readers use their own estimates within the framework provided in the study to determine the appropriateness of an investment in XM Cloud.

Sitecore reviewed and provided feedback to Forrester, but Forrester maintains editorial control over the study and its findings and does not accept changes to the study that contradict Forrester's findings or obscure the meaning of the study.

Sitecore provided the customer names for the interviews but did not participate in the interviews.

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