

GUIDE

Insights from the frontlines

How to engage teams in
your digital journey



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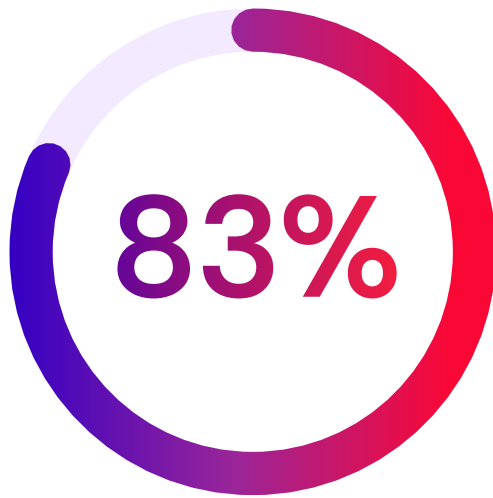


Digital experience can be incredibly difficult

For any given brand, there are hundreds of decisions being made by dozens of qualified people, all trying to deliver on the seamless, fast, relevant, and connected interactions that customers expect at every digital touchpoint.

We understand; at Sitecore we use the same tech and face the same challenges as our customers. We've road tested these strategic drivers ourselves and pulled together top tips from recent surveys, customers, and the Sitecore community to help brands and teams looking for a new way forward with creating digital experiences.

Align strategically across your organization



of marketing leaders surveyed in our recent DX Vision report highlighted strategic alignment as critical for digital experience success. Strategic alignment can make or break digital initiatives; it connects employees more completely to their projects by giving them a holistic view into the overarching goals and projected outcomes, improving efficiency, productivity and consistency.



A practical step for your strategy

Keep everyone in the loop

The key to connecting strategic dots across your organization is ensuring that genuine collaboration and open communication can flow freely at all levels. Securing buy-in from stakeholders, sharing your knowledge with them, and considering all feedback provided will go far towards making this happen.

●● Misaligned requirements can cause rework and create a headache for your delivery team. Early collaboration and clear documentation save time and headaches. ●●

ISABELLE STEPHEN, STRATEGIC CONSULTANT, REMARKABLE

●● Make a list of all the internal teams that will be impacted and set up meetings with each of them. Ask questions, listen carefully to the answers, and take notes so that you can compare the points from each team with the others. Involving teams from day one helps you spot problems before they eventuate and often helps the project develop in a way that makes it helpful for more people. ●●

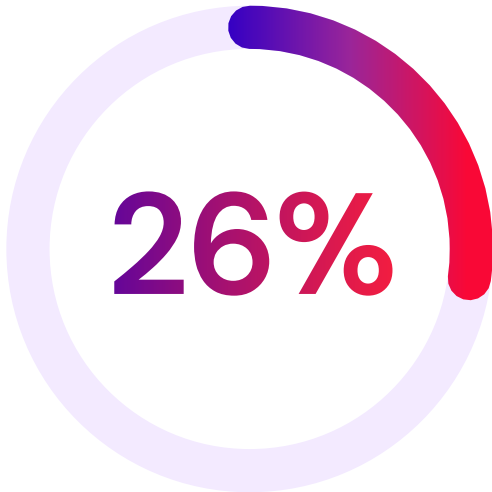
JACQUELINE BAXTER, DIRECTOR CONTENT DESIGN AND STRATEGY, SITECORE

Top Tips



Allow for employee influence

Employee pushback can be the silent saboteur of digital infrastructure projects. Get them involved early in the development and execution stages; communicate openly and often about the projected benefits of new initiatives as well as progress, changes, and results. Listen to any feedback or concerns. You don't need to take action on every one of them, but building relationships and considering different viewpoints can lead to innovative solutions and a more robust and useful final product.



Lack of collaboration was noted by 26% of the marketers we spoke to as a barrier for DX programs.

ADVANIS AND SITECORE, 2024

Top Tips

● ●

Carve out time in company all-hands to deliver updates on your project; people get nervous when they don't understand what's happening and are much more likely to push back if they feel that changes are being made for the sake of it. Taking the time to tell them what's happening and why pays big dividends in the long run. ● ●

HANNAH GRAP, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT
CORPORATE MARKETING, SITECORE

● ●

Bring everyone along any changes being made. This includes senior leadership, mid-level management, but most importantly the contributors. Give everyone a chance to voice their ambitions, challenges, and risks. The more people's voices are heard, the better the chance that they will adopt the change. ● ●

JAINA BAUMGARTNER, CEO AND LEAD
DIGITAL STRATEGIST, PIXLERATION

Stay on track with KPIs and metrics

Set unified key performance indicators (KPIs) that align with both business goals and customer experience (CX) to ensure that all teams are working towards the same outcomes. Make sure that your goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) and that all members of the team are aligned on the data points that will be used to define a successful outcome. Be clear about which tool will be the source of truth for important KPIs; some metrics may be captured differently in some platforms. Create a dashboard that displays all KPIs in one place and make it accessible to the full team.



Align on terminology. The words we use matter; and in marketing, the terminology, acronyms, and nomenclature can vary greatly in meaning between organizations and platforms. Take a moment at the beginning and throughout a project to agree on a glossary and terminology so that your team and your client have a shared understanding of definitions. ●●

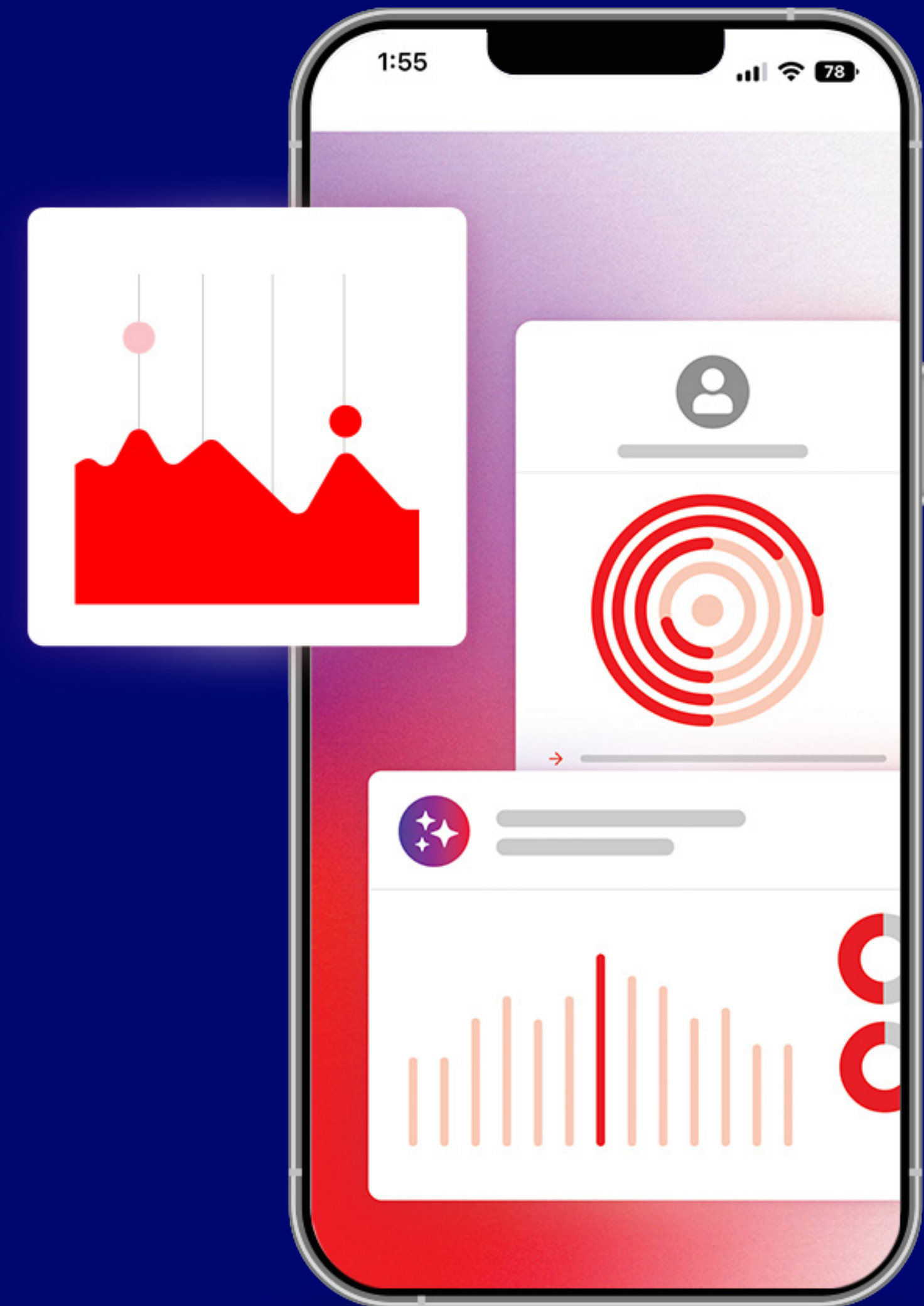
MEGAN MUELLER JENSEN, PORTFOLIO SPECIALIST, PERFICIENT

Top Tips



Even brilliant strategies can wither in the wilderness of corporate politics and budget cycles. Build your roadmaps with multiple paths to success and escape routes for when priorities shift. ●●

CADE WHITBOURN, HEAD OF CLIENT SERVICES & DIGITAL STRATEGY, ACEIK



Deliver digital experiences at speed

Digital delivery is all about agility and processes that enable you to make continuous improvements and react to evolving markets and customer needs at speed.



A practical step for your strategy

Embrace procedural simplicity

Simplicity is harder to achieve than complexity, but keeping clarity, directness, and accessibility at the core of your planning can ensure long-term success. Use simple language, clean visual layouts, and embrace progress and productivity over perfection.

Top Tips

●● Set up the foundational mechanisms according to the platform's design, rather than heavily customizing solutions or directly replicating existing models in your business. Your initial use cases are just the beginning, so establishing a scalable foundation up front will save you a lot of headaches in the long run. ●●

COLLIN MACINTOSH, PRODUCT OWNER, WOLTERS KLUWER

●● Before working with web applications, I was a production manager for a concert company in Canada and sequencing was critical – getting the rigging hardware in the ceiling, so we could run power and mount the lighting to clear the way for setting up the stage, and so on. The same strategy is applicable here: have a group build in the right order, ensuring the next team gets what they need as early as possible. ●●

JASON MACLEAN, SENIOR SOLUTION ARCHITECT, MNP DIGITAL

Give employees the power to fail

Empowering your employees to solve problems, and crucially, to fail, is central to building teams that can react with resilience. Creativity is not possible in an environment where failure is met with recrimination and steep consequences, and without creativity there is no chance of innovation. Employing a framework for intelligent failure, which comes after careful planning and provides valuable learnings, can help your teams challenge old ways of working and unlock new agile advantages.



Make sure you're being very clear about what you're trying to do, how you're going to try, and that you don't know exactly what will happen. You're essentially running an experiment so follow laboratory rules: keep a watchful eye on elements that might explode, check in at pre-specified intervals to see how things are going, and be ready to act quickly on what you learn. ●●

MEGAN ENGARD, SENIOR MARKETING TECHNOLOGY AND
ENABLEMENT MANAGER, SITECORE

Top Tip

Take a two-way door approach whenever possible

Think about your decisions as one- and two-way doors, as Jeff Bezos has described. If you're at a one-way door, it is hard to go back through. Because you can't undo the decision easily, you need to be careful, plan deliberately, and ensure that the decision you are making can support the long-term needs of the business. One-way door decisions are an essential part of any healthy project; when they arise, the whole team must understand that this is a one-way door decision, that you are ready for it, and that everyone can articulate why it was decided in that specific way to other stakeholders.

A two-way door is different; if you go through and don't like where you ended up, you can come back. Because the decision is easier to reverse, you don't have to make a perfect choice the first time. This approach is ideal for strategic frameworks, information architecture, and page designs. It opens opportunities to experiment, iterate and learn from decisions—offering the flexibility your teams need for continued agility.



Jeff Bezos' "one-way door" and "two-way door" methodology is helpful for making choices like where to host a site and how data will flow through it. Because these are one-way door decisions you should take extra time to evaluate and plan carefully before stepping through that door. This approach really helps teams make choices that set them up for success in the long run. ●●

DEREK HUNZIKER, DIRECTOR DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY, SITECORE

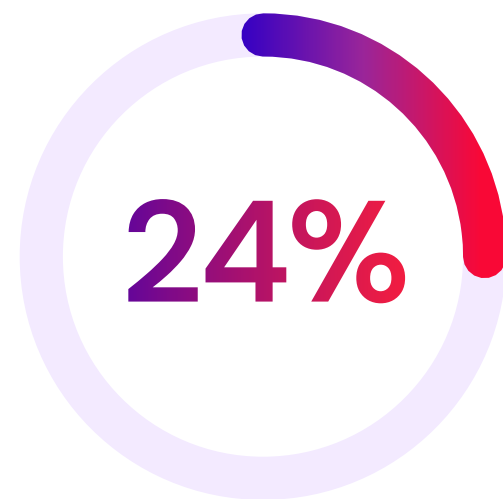
Build an exceptional DX team

Digital experience teams need a healthy mix of skills and expertise, with individuals from marketing and IT contributing their unique perspectives. Teams that will rely on the final product, like customer success and support, bring with them viewpoints and relationships that are critical to continued alignment. This team will shape and define every digital interaction that customers have with your brand, and each member of that team will bring a valuable perspective and skill set to the evolution of your messaging and digital platforms.

A practical step for your strategy

Bring teams together

Aligning your marketing and IT teams at the beginning of a project surfaces key issues and ideas front and center early, while also alerting you to concerns and essential functions across your internal organization.



Lack of alignment between marketing and technology teams was seen as a barrier to DX strategy by 24% of marketing leaders surveyed.

ADVANIS AND SITECORE, 2024

Technology teams represented in journey mapping and strategy sessions are more able to flag potential blockers and suggest alternative approaches while changes are still easy to make, and empowering marketers and business users to contribute to discussions about systems, processes, and user experience (UX) flags opportunities to streamline and improve for greater adoption.

Top Tips



Creating opportunities for team members to cross-train during projects promotes excellence and shows your team members that you're invested in them and their long-term success. When the right person is available make a role for them and invest in junior team members whenever possible. ●●

PETER CLISBY, SOLUTION ARCHITECT, SOFTSERVE



I have found taking a Navy Seal approach to team building to be highly successful over the past 30 years. Specifically: don't make assumptions and hear everyone's voice. Be prepared, challenged, and forward looking; empower others to step up and grow so there are no Ivory Towers. And finally, there is a time to push and a time to regroup. ●●

KELLY RUSK, ENTERPRISE ARCHITECT, GLOTECH



Get the right mix of people

Give your teams digitally savvy leaders who embrace the fact that they won't always have the right answer—but who have the drive and curiosity to seek it out. With this ethos, and a mix of specialists and generalists making up your team, your people will be able to experiment, learn and grow without the progress-crushing fear of criticism.

Top Tips



Schedule monthly cross-team 'show and tell' sessions and set them as a core key performance indicator for each team member to ensure that everyone participates and shares their learnings. Emphasize objectives and key results (OKR) during these virtual sessions to ensure continuous alignment with wider business objectives. ●●

KETAN SETHI, SENIOR PRODUCT MANAGER, ICREON



Collaboration fosters creativity, diverse perspectives, and shared resources, enhancing innovation. However, alignment ensures that efforts are focused on common goals, streamlining decision-making and execution. Regularly communicate expectations, clarify roles, and adjust strategies to maintain alignment. When both collaboration and alignment are present, they propel teams toward impactful, measurable success. ●●

NAVNEET PISHARODI, SENIOR SOLUTIONS ARCHITECT, FOODSTUFFS NORTH ISLAND

Listen to the customer

Regularly collect and integrate customer feedback into the development cycle. This ensures that your team is always aligned with customer needs and expectations while also establishing yourself as a brand that focuses on customer needs and values customer advocacy.

Top Tips

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Run through a comprehensive functional requirements scope with the client. What do they currently do that they still need to do in their new setup and what might they not be doing that they could be doing? This is a great opportunity to review the suite of tools that you currently work with and see what you're missing out on. ● ●

ROBERT MCGOVERN, SITECORE OPTIMIZATION CONSULTANT, REMARKABLE

● ●
Feedback comes in many forms, so think broadly. Pull in feedback from third-party sources like app stores and review aggregators. Make sure you're looking within your company as well; include call centre staff, sales teams, front of shop. These people hear goals, complaints, and opportunities every day which often add the context to quantitative insights like metrics, scorecards, and dashboards. ● ●

DOMINIC HURST, OPERATIONS AND TECHNICAL DIRECTOR, ETHISYS

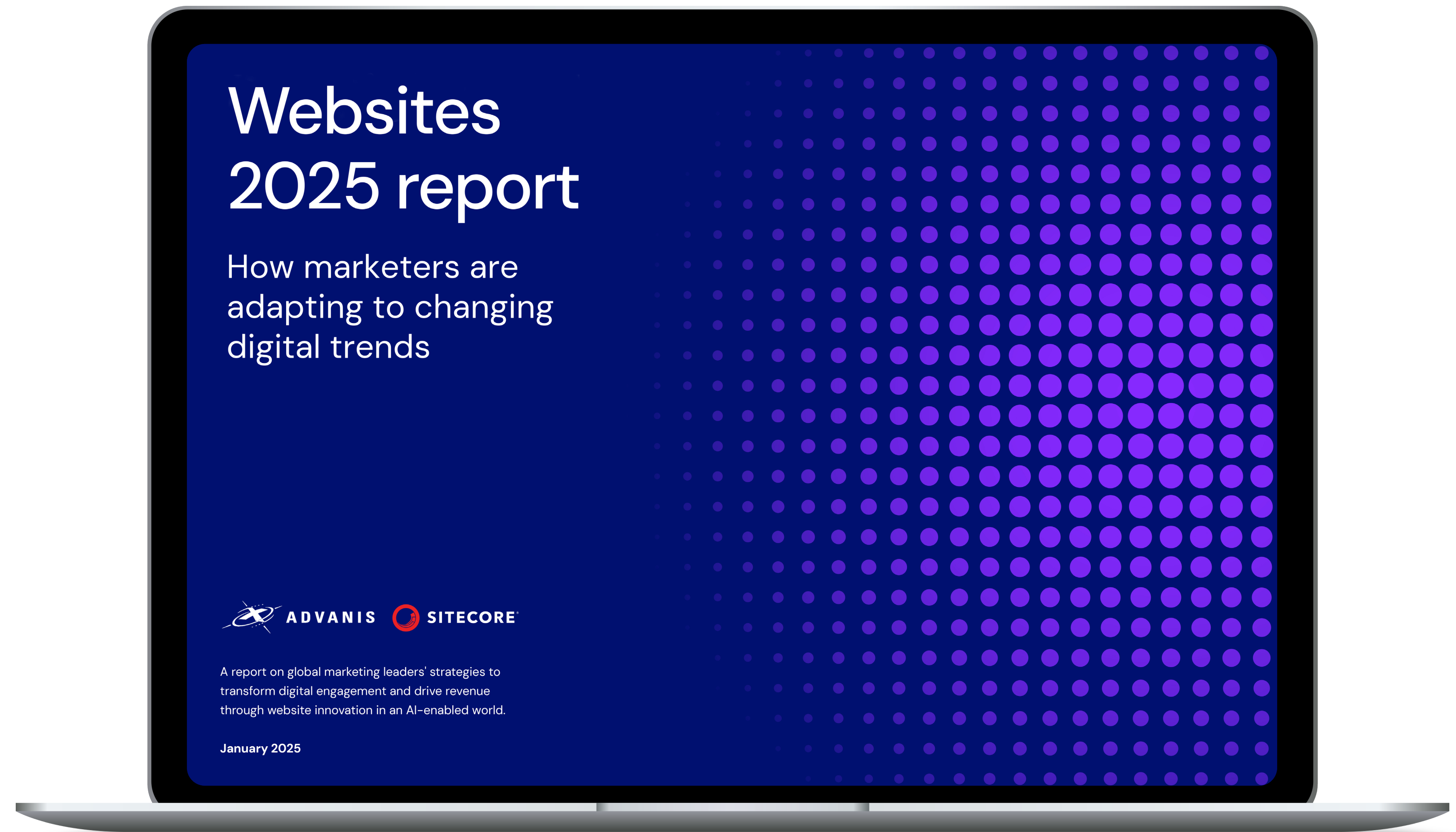


Set your sights on incredible DX

Explore the evolution of websites and learn how global organizations are leveraging AI, personalization, and scalable CMS platforms to deliver unmatched user experiences.

Download our report or get in touch to learn how Sitecore can advance your digital experience.

Visit sitecore.com for your copy



About Sitecore

Sitecore is a global leader in digital experience software, trusted by visionary brands like L’Oréal, Microsoft, and United Airlines to power their content lifecycle from content strategy to digital experience delivery. Our composable platform gives marketers and technologists the power to build together at global scale – harnessing content, data, personalization, and AI – to manage digital assets, create engaging content, understand customer intent, and deliver standout experiences across all touchpoints.

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