



Mastering Multisite Management:

5 Best Practices for Success

Introduction

There are many reasons why your organization may need to manage multiple websites—to support different product lines, communicate with customers in different countries, or run specific campaigns or initiatives, for example. Or maybe you’ve acquired companies or operate through franchises, dealer networks, or B2B2C models that require multiple sites. Whatever the reason is, without a well-defined strategy and the right technology in place, managing this complex web of sites can quickly become overwhelming.

That’s because all the things you must consider for managing one site, such as ensuring brand consistency, providing localization, tracking metrics, and making sites accessible across different devices and channels, get exponentially more complicated when you manage multiple sites.

Simplify Your Multisite Environment with a DXP

Standalone tools like site builders, content management systems, admin consoles, translation plugins, analytics, and troubleshooting tools can help with multisite management. A digital experience platform (DXP), however, provides and consolidates all the functionality these tools have and more in one interface.

A DXP is a platform that can offer native capabilities for site building, content management, and a wide variety of other functions within a composable architecture, so you can swap other technologies in and out as needed.

This guide will show you how a DXP can help you master multisite management through five best practices:

01. Launch New Sites Quickly and Make Changes Across Sites Efficiently

02. Provide Consistency Across Sites and Channels

03. Speed Up Site Localization

04. Centralize Site Management for Easier Administration

05. Outsource Hosting and Web Operations

1. Launch New Sites Quickly and Make Changes Across Sites Efficiently

Launching new sites and implementing changes shouldn't be a laborious, site-by-site process. But according to a recent Forbes article, a site can take anywhere from 10-14 weeks to build.¹ A robust DXP should empower you to quickly spin up new sites using existing templates or even cloning entire sites, significantly reducing development time. And if your organization's business model requires constantly creating and maintaining multiple sites, your platform should support hierarchical site structures so that you can manage and control site updates across all your sites efficiently.

Look for a platform that enables you to:

Use Templates to Launch New Sites Fast

Site templates offer a predesigned layout with prescribed customization options. Perfect for campaign sites, event sites, or blogs, site templates enable your content creators to add to the site without worrying about how the pages should be formatted or where banners and articles should be placed. Some DXPs allow you to apply templates to a group of sites, making future updates much easier. For example, if you've applied a template to a group of sites, any changes you make to the template can be applied across all of your sites automatically.

Clone and Customize

Site cloning is best when you want to replicate an existing website's design and functionality almost entirely, saving time and effort on rebuilding from scratch—helpful if you're creating multiple similar sites with minor variations. Site cloning is a good option for duplicating a microsite, a product line site, or a brand site, as cloning gives you the ability to set up the layout, navigation, and structure quickly and then customize the site with new graphics and information as needed.



¹ How Long Does It Take To Build A Website?



Push Changes Across Sites Automatically with Site Hierarchies

Site hierarchies give you centralized control of core branding and content at the corporate level while empowering local franchisees or agents to manage elements of their sites that are more regionally specific. For example, large financial institutions, retailers, insurance providers, real estate companies, and other organizations typically have a corporate site and dozens to hundreds of local sites to better serve their customers.

With site hierarchies, you can make branding and content changes on the parent (corporate) site and automatically push relevant updates across all child (local) sites. You can also provide local site owners with permission to make content updates on designated sections or pages such as a local information or contact page.

2. Provide Consistency Across Sites and Channels

Maintaining brand consistency across multiple websites and channels can be a challenge, but it's well worth the effort. A study from Forbes shows that consistent brand presentation across platforms can boost revenue up to 23%. This increase in revenue demonstrates the link between how customers see your brand and your brand worth.²

Fortunately, a flexible DXP can help your marketing teams create websites that conform to brand guidelines while also streamlining your content creation and delivery efforts by providing a hybrid headless, multisite CMS. Headless content management separates content from design elements so that approved, on-brand content can be displayed across different channels using headless APIs. And native site-building capabilities provide important features to ensure brand guidelines are applied consistently on website pages.

Key features to look for in a hybrid CMS include:

Site Templates

Templates allow your teams to define exactly how your content should be displayed to your audience on your site. You can specify what elements, such as headings, graphics, text, and banners, should appear on a page and where they should appear. You should be able to apply templates to your entire site or to a collection of similar content, such as articles, press releases, blog posts, and product pages. Using templates not only accelerates website creation but also helps enforce brand consistency and reduces the risk of design inconsistencies.

Reusable Components

Create reusable components for headers, footers, navigation bars, call-to-action buttons, and more to standardize elements and accelerate page building. By utilizing these pre-designed components, you also help ensure that all your websites adhere to the same visual standards, resulting in a cohesive and professional brand experience for users.



² Building Brand Recognition Through Your Content And BI Tools



Digital Asset Library

In the same way that components can be used across different sites, digital asset libraries can be shared between sites so that they all use the same standard images, videos, documents, and other assets. You can also use these libraries to help group and organize content for different departments, teams, or individual projects and campaigns that require a specific collection of approved assets.

Style Guides

To further reinforce brand consistency, implement comprehensive style guides. These guides should outline specific guidelines for all visual elements, including typography, color palettes, imagery, and spacing. Although your CMS may provide some style guides to get you started, it should also give your web designers the ability to bring in their own CSS and create their own style guides. Style guides can help your teams maintain a consistent look and feel across all websites, regardless of their specific purpose or audience.

Headless Delivery

If it's important to make your approved, brand-consistent website content available on different devices and channels, you need a publishing environment that supports headless delivery. Headless APIs empower your front-end developers to build and deliver richer, faster, and more responsive user experiences around your content with their preferred technology (e.g., React, Angular, Vue, or what's popular tomorrow). These digital experiences include mobile, apps, chatbots, wearables, and IoT/smart devices.

3. Speed Up Site Localization

As you seek to grow or strengthen your business in international and multilingual markets, the need to connect with customers in their native language becomes critical. In fact, 76% of online shoppers prefer to buy products from websites in their native language, and 40% will never buy from websites that are not localized in their language.³

Make site localization easier by using technology that provides the native multisite building, content management, and translation capabilities you need to create and support multiple websites in different languages.

If you're looking to be effective in international markets, consider the following features:

Multilingual Content Editing

Editors can switch between different languages within the CMS interface to edit and review content in multiple languages simultaneously.

AI-Assisted Translation

With integrated AI-assisted translation, content teams can generate translations for multiple languages with a single click, which can serve as a starting point for initiating a translation project.

Translation Workflows

Many DXPs integrate with external translation management systems (TMS), allowing users to send content directly for translation, receive translated versions, and manage the review process within the DXP's content management system.



³ Analyzing Consumer Language Preferences and Behaviors in 29 Countries



Locale Settings

A CMS can automatically adjust date, time, currency, and other locale specific elements based on the user's selected language.

URL Management

Manage and set different URLs for your desired languages. Set up friendly URLs to make it easy for customers to recall and for search engines and other tools to crawl your site.

4. Centralize Site Management for Easier Administration

Managing many websites can present a significant challenge. Whether you have multiple corporate sites, blogs, or campaign sites, keeping track of the various domains, content management systems, and hosting platforms is a difficult process that can quickly become formidable. By consolidating all your sites on a single platform, a DXP can help you streamline site management, especially when deployed in the cloud.

Through a central console, you can access all your sites through a single login, allowing you to easily switch between different sites and perform important administrative functions in one place.

This centralized control simplifies site administration and offers a comprehensive platform so you can:

Set Up Roles and Permissions

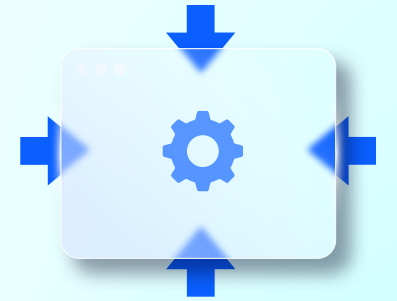
Key elements of a roles and permissions system should include:

- **Different role types** such as site admin, content editor, contributor, and custom roles, with the ability to assign different permissions to each role.
- **Granular permissions on content actions** such as specifying who has the right to create, review, edit, delete, or publish.
- **Group permissions options** for assigning permissions across teams or departments.
- **Clear visibility** into who has access to the platform.
- **Permission at the individual content level** to ensure only authorized users can perform assigned actions on specific assets on your site.

In addition to the above, your DXP should also be able to synchronize and verify users through LDAP, SCIM, SAML 2.0, or OpenID Connect.

Provide Site Metrics

DXPs make it easy to find key performance metrics in one place and make them accessible to your stakeholders so they can see where improvements may be needed. While some DXPs integrate with analytics providers like Google Analytics and Semrush, other DXPs also provide their own analytics dashboards, making useful data such as the following available:





- **Behavior Metrics.** Traffic and path analysis provides insights into navigation patterns and shows where customers get stuck.
- **Site Metrics.** Page views, top pages, search terms and interests, and visitors by day can help inform what pages are more critical and which need to be updated more regularly.
- **Asset Metrics.** The number of downloads and engagement levels for different assets, including downloaded files, provides insight into what content customers find most helpful and what assets should be prioritized.

Monitor Site Performance

When you have an issue with your site(s), you need tools to diagnose and resolve technical problems quickly. Your hosting environment may provide you with website performance cloud monitoring tools that can help your admin and developer teams track project activities, configure services, and resolve technical issues. These tools may include:

- **Application Metrics** that can track application memory, CPU usage, and network data transfer.
- **Real-Time Alerts** that notify administrators of unexpected events such as higher-than-normal memory consumption and database connection issues.
- **Environmental Logs**, which can help diagnose and resolve technical issues by logging runtime, orchestration, and build information.
- **Shell Access** that lets you look inside applications and see details not easily spotted in logs.

5. Outsource Hosting and Web Operations

When you manage and host your own websites, you alone are responsible for things like handling your DXP or CMS software and security updates, server maintenance, and other critical tasks that impact your site's uptime. If your IT resources are limited, outsourcing these responsibilities to a cloud provider frees you to focus on growing your business rather than managing, hosting, and scaling your web application and infrastructure yourself.

Here are some of the key hosting and web operations the right partner can provide for you:

Web Application Updates

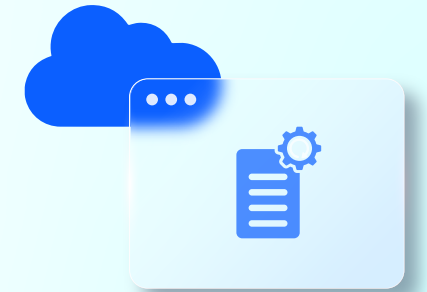
Regular upgrades of your DXP, fixes, or updates ensure your web application software runs smoothly and your team has access to all the latest productivity-enhancing features.

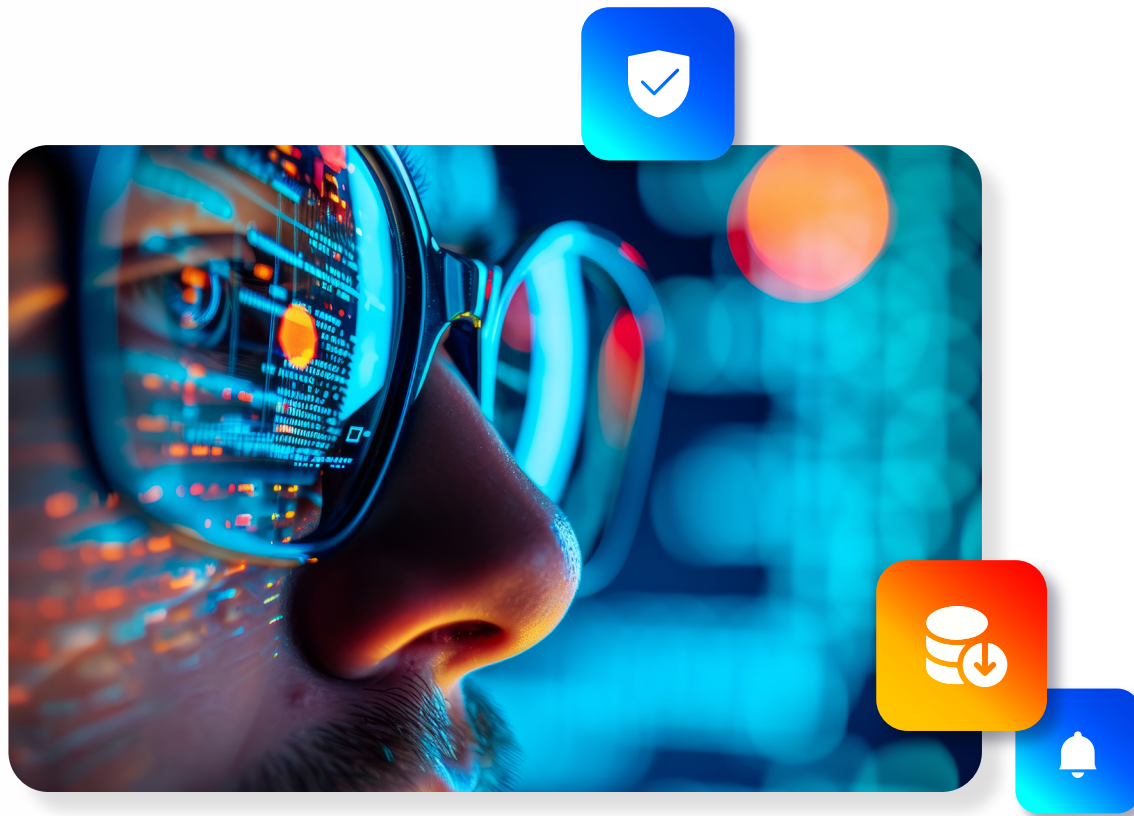
Server Infrastructure Maintenance

Your provider can ensure your servers have sufficient processing power and memory to support all your websites. The provider can also manage updates to your database, web server, and search, and optimize various aspects of performance.

Security Measures

Regular security scans and updates quickly identify and patch vulnerabilities. Security measures can also provide DDoS prevention to thwart cyber-terrorists. Additionally, self-healing, high availability, and automated disaster recovery options can make your environment even more resilient.





Auto-Scaling

Your hosting environment can automatically scale server resources based on server demands, allowing your site to stay up and run smoothly even when there is a sudden surge in site traffic.

Backup and Recovery

Regularly tested backup procedures and automated backups ensure data can be restored in case of emergencies.

Uptime Monitoring and Alerting

Real-time monitoring of server performance and website availability along with automated alerts notify administrators of potential issues.

How the Right DXP Can Help

Managing multiple websites doesn't have to be time-consuming or difficult anymore. With a powerful digital experience platform like Liferay DXP, you can streamline and execute a successful multisite strategy.

Leverage Liferay DXP's hybrid, multisite CMS to quickly spin up new sites, make updates across many sites, and ensure your digital properties maintain a consistent brand identity no matter the device or channel. Plus, use Liferay DXP's built-in permissioning system, analytics reporting, and performance tools to simplify day-to-day administration.

Lastly, deploy your sites any way you need to with SaaS and PaaS deployment models that can offload some or all of your hosting and web operations to our cloud experts.

However, mastering multisite management might be just one of your goals. Discover how a DXP can also help you enhance agility, increase security, and enable self-service or commerce on your websites.

[Download Our Ebook Now](#)



AGIA Speeds Up 300+ Client Websites' Time-to-Market

Before revamping their sites, AGIA had a basic SaaS-based platform to create and manage their websites. The platform was difficult to use without IT support and made it hard to launch new sites or features quickly. By replacing their platform with Liferay's DXP, AGIA not only finished the rollout of 300+ websites in just 9 months but also reduced the time it took to create new, personalized websites from weeks to days.

See how they did it [here](#).



Liferay helps organizations build for the future by enabling them to create, manage, and scale powerful solutions on the world's most flexible Digital Experience Platform (DXP). Trusted globally by over a thousand companies spanning multiple industries, Liferay's open-source DXP facilitates the development of marketing and commerce websites, customer portals, intranets, and more. Learn how we can use technology to change the world together at liferay.com.

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