



WHITEPAPER

Why upgrade to Sitecore XP 10.x?

The case for moving from Sitecore 6.x, 7.x, 8.x or 9.X

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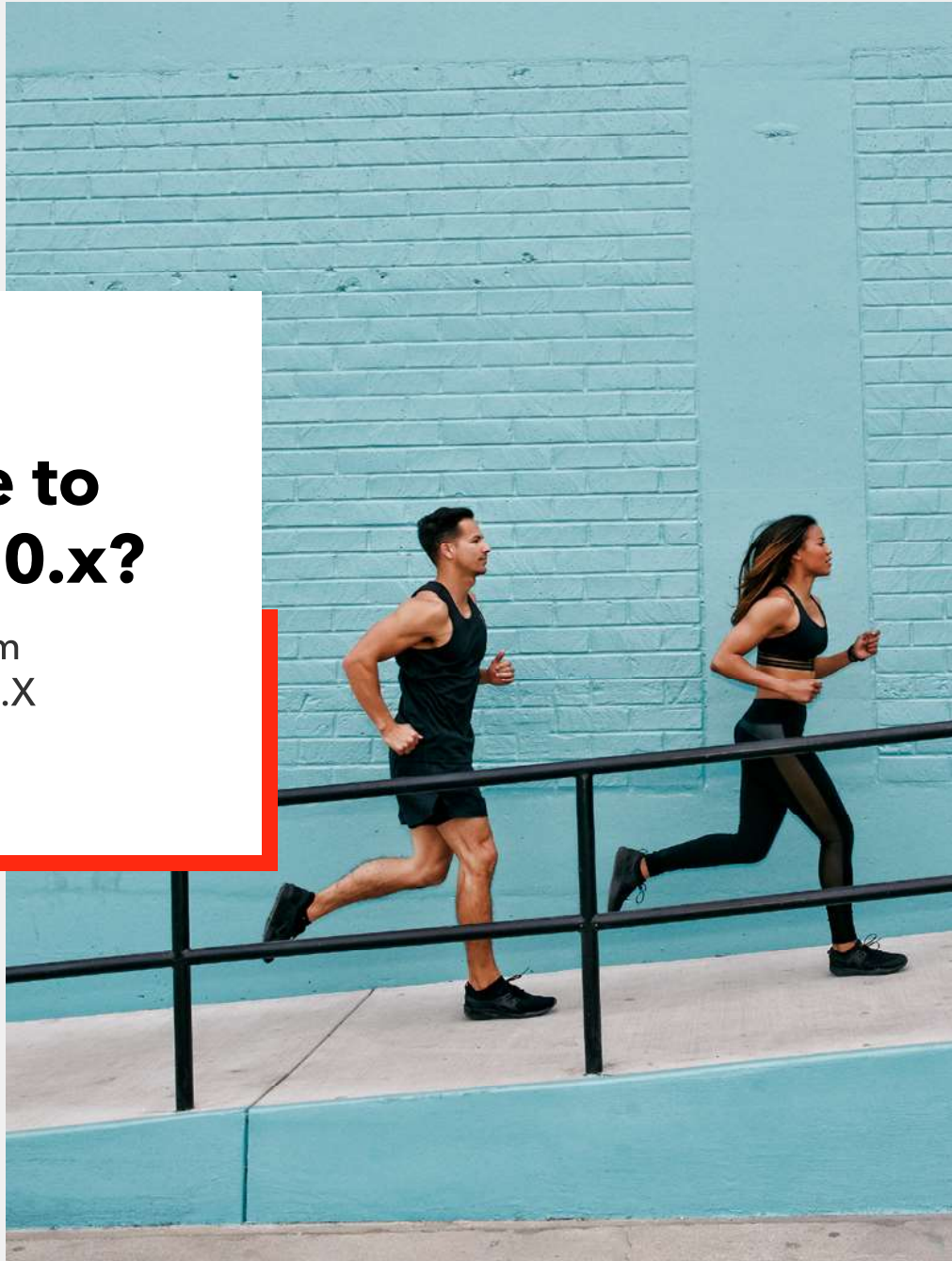


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Why upgrade to Sitecore XP 10.x?

Customers today expect more – personalized experiences across ever changing touchpoints. To deliver experiences that connect, digital marketers must know their customers and IT teams must provide flexible technologies that support the collaborative creation, delivery, and measurement of memorable experiences at scale. Marketing and IT need to work together.

But they face many challenges. Distributed data sources, time-intensive testing and optimization, and omnichannel delivery options that often impede a clear view of the customer, including how and where they interact over time.

Sitecore® Experience Platform™ (XP) addresses these challenges as the only digital experience platform that creates efficiencies for both marketing and IT – providing the tools they need to launch and evolve unique experiences that drive successful engagements. With natively integrated content management, omnichannel delivery, customer intelligence, testing and optimization, and analytics, Sitecore XP empowers teams to deliver meaningful, personalized experiences that lead to higher customer engagement, loyalty, and lifetime customer value.

If you're on versions 6.x, 7.x, 8.x or 9.x of the Sitecore platform, why upgrade? This whitepaper answers that question and more, while walking through the advantages that our most recent releases offers you and your team.

Scale personalization with confidence: Sitecore 9.3 introduced a centralized report to let marketers view all active personalization tactics and their effects. Sitecore 10.x expands the platform's analytics functionality, offering deeper insights on audience engagement and segmentation. It can also include Sitecore AI Auto-Personalization (standard or premium), which helps marketers accelerate and scale personalization efforts.

Sitecore experience management

Marketing has changed dramatically since we released Sitecore CMS 6.0 in 2008, and we've changed with it. Sitecore has grown from a platform that provides simple web experiences to one that enables marketing teams to engage their customers across devices and channels, throughout the customer journey.

Able to capture customers' behavioral and transactional interactions with your organization, Sitecore now helps you deliver personalized content in the context of what your customers care about most. Give them the information they need, when they want it, in the method they prefer. With native integration to Sitecore Content Hub™ and Sitecore Experience Commerce™, you're able to efficiently plan, create, collaborate on, manage, and publish the content that fuels digital experiences. Increase purchases, improve marketing campaign engagement, and heighten customer satisfaction. And you can install Sitecore on the scalable, trusted, and reliable Microsoft Cloud: Microsoft Azure. Get to market faster and with a lower total cost of ownership.

No-compromise headless:

With multiple content development models, choose the one that fits your particular needs:

- Sitecore MVC: full control over presentation
- SXA: templates get your site up and running quickly and with ease; less control over presentation
- Sitecore JSS: full control over presentation with Sitecore personalization in headless scenarios
- ASP.NET Core: headless development that allows you to build your applications faster on the latest .NET technology
- Next.js: provides flexible delivery models ranging from static site generation, to server-side rendering, to hybrid approaches.

Sitecore Content Hub:

Manage your marketing assets and processes with ease and sync between systems – including connectors for Salesforce Marketing Cloud.

Mainstream support end dates for Sitecore:

- 9.2 and 9.3 in December 2022
- 9.1 in December 2021
- 9.0 in December 2020
- 8.2 in December 2019
- 8.0 and 8.1 in December 2018
- 7.2 and 7.5 in December 2017
- 7 and 7.1 in December 2016
- 6.6 in December 2015
- 6.5 and earlier in June 2015

The evolution of our platform:

- **Sitecore CMS 6.x** took you from basic web content management to web experience management.
- **Sitecore Digital Marketing Suite (DMS) 7.x** shifted the experience from web-only to omnichannel digital experiences.
- **Sitecore XP 8.x** built on the foundation that 7.x created and focused on empowering your business and marketing users while also offering more advanced cloud deployment models for IT.
- **Sitecore XP 9.x** emphasized connection to the rest of the martech stack, with an integration to Sitecore Content Hub and the availability of Sitecore xConnect™. xConnect facilitates data interchange between Sitecore XP and external applications like CRM systems (Salesforce, Microsoft Dynamics), PIM, ERP – essentially anything. Sitecore JSS enabled modern front-end developers to quickly build headless and hybrid-headless experiences without back-end or .NET expertise. The Sitecore Universal Tracker empowers marketers to continuously aggregate, test, and optimize digital experiences in real time across devices – including headless applications like IoT, AR, VR, and other emerging channels.
- **Sitecore XP 10.0** continues to offer everything brands need to deliver experiences in a fully integrated solution. It also offers faster time-to-market features and more flexibility for development and deployment than ever before. With updates such as enhanced analytics reporting, ASP.NET Core headless development, and Sitecore Containers, Sitecore XP 10.0 is a platform that provides efficiencies across teams. Finally, IT and Marketing can accelerate customer success by aligning workflows and timelines. From container infrastructure orchestration to integrated data and marketing functionality, teams have what they need to evolve experiences quickly and deploy data-informed updates or new experience elements faster than ever before.
- **Sitecore 10.1** expands on the innovations in Sitecore XP 10.0 by introducing new functionality, including reusable tests and rules-based content profiling that significantly increase time to market for optimization efforts. A tighter integration between SXA and Horizon helps marketers create new content and evolve experiences with a simple drag-and-drop interface. Sitecore XP 10.1 also expands existing Headless Services with the introduction of a new Next.js SDK, which supports flexible delivery models such as server-side rendering and static site generation.

Sitecore has also focused on new innovations for usability, accelerated time to market, and improved performance in Sitecore XP 10.0 and 10.1. The updated editing environment offers an easy-to-use and intuitive interface. It provides real-time insights for multisite and multilingual experiences as content is created and published, giving marketers the knowledge they need to drive improved conversions. In addition, Sitecore XP 10.x includes enhanced reporting that enables marketers to make informed decisions with more granular visibility into how personalization is driving performance. It also includes improvements to out-of-the-box forms, enhancements to email and marketing automation, enhanced efficiencies in testing and personalization, and foundational performance improvements – all centered around enabling brands to accelerate their time to value.

The case for upgrading to Sitecore XP 10.x

Whether you made an early investment in web experience with version 6.x, began the journey to omnichannel delivery with us on 7.x, or empowered your marketing department to design and deliver powerful experiences without IT on 8.x and 9.x, you know how powerful the Sitecore platform is. But you'll need to upgrade to Sitecore XP 10.0 or 10.1 to drive further alignment among your Marketing and IT teams, who share the responsibility for delivering exceptional customer experiences.

Marketers benefit from the connected data sources and deeper contextual insights that Sitecore Analytics and Sitecore xConnect can provide. Additional connector enhancements in 10.0 and 10.1 provide improvements in content modeling. These support more field types when connecting CMP to XP. They also enable a two-way data integration between Salesforce Marketing Cloud and Sitecore XP in real-time. IT teams benefit from increased productivity and agility thanks to ASP.NET Core headless development, Sitecore Containers, and a new Next.js SDK. With improvements and new functionality available for both Marketing and IT, Sitecore XP 10.x has the functionality your teams need to take your customer experience to the next level.

The chart on the following page outlines the most important benefits and strongest business arguments for upgrading:



The benefits of Sitecore XP 10.x:

Sitecore Containers	Sitecore XP 10.0 introduced full public support for containers. Sitecore Containers support rapid Infrastructure-as-code deployment and more efficient solution and team onboarding with modern Docker and Kubernetes technology.
ASP.NET Core	Sitecore XP 10.0 introduced an additional headless development method with a new headless ASP.Net Core option that empowers teams with both flexibility and speed when it comes to Sitecore development. By upgrading to Sitecore XP 10.x you can increase developer productivity with a headless rendering architecture and more easily integrate Sitecore into your existing ASP.NET Core applications.
Next.js SDK	Sitecore XP 10.1 and JSS 16 introduce support for the Next.js SDK, which enables Jamstack architecture for your Sitecore-managed JavaScript applications. Next.js enables lightning-fast load times and easy scaling. Combined with JSS, Next.js unlocks the option for CDN-friendly static file generation of your Sitecore-managed layouts, rendering them at build time or at runtime, as needed.
Editing Experience	<p>Sitecore XP 10.0 and 10.1 expand on the Horizon editing interface and continues to streamline the content editing process while supporting more user scenarios. Sitecore XP 10.0 introduces support for larger multisite and multilingual instances with intuitive drag-and-drop design, device-specific previews, and analytics that provide real-time, contextual insights. A new dedicated field editor experience allows you to edit page metadata that is not directly editable on the page for SEO and “headless” content that is not intended to be visible on a page. Continued integration with Sitecore Content Hub also allows your team to easily build experiences using your digital assets from Content Hub DAM within the Horizon editing experience.</p> <p>Sitecore 10.1 introduces new field editors. In the authoring environment, new content and page search makes it easier to search and filter content. While a tighter integration with SXA provides a more streamlined editing experience. All of this can improve speed to market.</p>
Customer interaction data	Sitecore® Experience Database™ (xDB) is the cloud-ready, big data repository included in Sitecore® Experience Platform™. With xDB, organizations can collect actionable customer interaction data across touchpoints and target users with tailored content. Once teams have collected customer data in xDB, they can make it actionable through the associated marketing capabilities including experience analytics, experience profile, and path analyzer. New audience analytics filters introduced in 10.0 also allow for deeper insights on audience engagement and segmentation. Both can drive more targeted personalization across all of your channels.
Sitecore AI Auto-personalization	Released with Sitecore XP 10.1 and compatible with Sitecore XP 10.0, Sitecore AI Auto-Personalization (Standard and Premium) accelerates personalization efforts by automatically identifying visitor trends, creating customer segments, and modifying page elements for personalized experiences.
Marketing & personalization on Sitecore	Sitecore XM 6.x does not support Sitecore Experience Database (xDB), which provides the ability to capture customer profile data for personalization at scale. And while previous versions do support xDB, Sitecore XP 10.0 introduced enhanced reporting and analytics. Filter all reports by market segment for deeper insights on audience engagement and segmentation to drive more powerful personalization across all channels.
Managed Cloud	Sitecore XP versions prior to 9.x are not supported on Managed Cloud. Upgrading to 10.x allows you to take advantage of Sitecore on the Microsoft Azure cloud platform in a Managed Services environment. This translates into easy deployment, reduced infrastructure costs, greater flexibility and scalability, and high availability.
Content Hub integration	Remove inefficiencies within your content production processes, gain control over the end-to-end content lifecycle, and optimize both content production and personalized delivery by integrating Sitecore Content Hub with Sitecore XP 10.x. This integration provides a seamless connection between your content planning, creation, collaboration, and management tools and your content delivery and customer data management capabilities.

The benefits of Sitecore XP 10.x: (cont'd)

Sitecore Experience Accelerator	Upgrade to Sitecore XP 10.x to leverage all the capabilities of SXA out-of-the-box. The drag-and-drop framework empowers faster time to value, creative exchange to reduce dev cycles, headless delivery, and governance in multisite, multilingual deployments. Sitecore 10.x introduces a tighter integration between Horizon and SXA to support editing directly on the page for all supported field types and also do site-specific images and data sources. In 10.1 the complementing elements of both SXA and Horizon have been blended so brands can benefit from the SXA time to market capabilities within the easy-to-use Horizon UX.
Marketing Automation & SFMC	Sitecore Marketing Automation in Sitecore XP 10.x now includes an activity to integrate directly with Salesforce Marketing Cloud in real-time. This allows marketers to respond to events and immediately place visitors into marketing automation plans in Journey Builder. This update also allows marketers to send current visitor xDB data to Salesforce Marketing Cloud in real-time, strengthening the single view of customer interaction that can drive more effective omnichannel personalization.
EXM HTML Templates	Sitecore XP 10.x provides additional email template options for crafting emails and provides the ability for users to create HTML emails in any language, regardless of the context language. This can help speed up the creation and delivery of targeted emails for nurture or trigger campaigns.
Support policy	2020 was the final year of Sustaining Support for 6.x, meaning the product will have reached its end of life and no further support services will be offered or available. Versions 7 and 7.1 entered Sustaining Support at the end of 2019, while versions 7.2 and 7.5 will enter Sustaining Support at the end of 2020. Mainstream support for 8.2 ended at the end of 2019 and mainstream support for 9.0 expires at the end of calendar year 2020. Once support is ended, you lose access to security and bug fixes, assistance with unexpected behavior during installation, and development and compatibility fixes – even if you're willing to pay for those services.
Features to support data privacy compliance journey	Sitecore 10.0 and 10.1 include features that make it easier to enforce and manage consent options as well as supporting the anonymization of personal information submitted via Sitecore Forms.
Subscription Model	Subscription/Cloud provides predictable budgets over the term of your contract, with as many production and non-production installations as needed and the ability to add users without additional costs.

If you're moving from Sitecore XP 8.1 or higher, the upgrade is simple and allows you to upgrade directly.

Expanded deployment options

Sitecore XP provides customers with the widest array of deployment options, including on-premises, self-managed cloud, and Sitecore Managed Cloud services. With Version 8.1, Sitecore optimized XP for Microsoft Azure PaaS (platform-as-a-service). Seamless integration allows Sitecore topology to be deployed in as little as 30 minutes through Azure Resource Manager (ARM) templates or Azure Marketplace. With version 10.x, Sitecore provides IT teams with more flexibility by optimizing for Docker and Kubernetes technology, allowing for rapid development and continuous deployment models. The bottom line is that IT teams enjoy maximum flexibility and infrastructure-as-code options, while marketers achieve faster time to market with the assurance that campaigns will run smoothly even in peak demand times.

The path to Sitecore XP 10.x: Upgrade vs. migrate from scratch

The decision to upgrade from your current version (or even another web content management platform altogether) to Sitecore XP 10.x isn't always the same.

If you're moving from Sitecore XP 8.1 or higher, you can upgrade to Sitecore 10.x directly. But if you're moving from a lower version, there are other paths:

1. If you are on 6.6, 7.2, 7.5, or 8.0, you could start with a clean Sitecore XP 9 install and migrate your content using the Express Migration Tool. You can then upgrade directly to XP 10.x from XP 9
2. If you are on 6.5 or lower, 7.0, or 7.1, you can run through each upgrade version to one supported by the Express Migration Tool. Then upgrade directly to XP 10.x from XP 9.

Any upgrade to Sitecore XP 10.x is more than a simple technical decision, however. An upgrade provides a great opportunity to revisit your content strategy and clean out outdated or ineffective content in your CMS. It's also the perfect time to re-evaluate your marketing strategy and develop new plans that enable the creation and delivery of unified, contextual customer experiences.

Some of the activities you and your marketing users will want to do prior to any upgrade include:

- **A content audit:** Take the time to document and evaluate the content on your digital properties. If there's outdated or unused content, there's no need to migrate it to Sitecore XP 10.x. A content audit will reveal what content is worth keeping, what needs to be updated or built upon, and what you need to archive or delete.
- **Creation of customer journey maps and personas:** It's not about your products or services, it's about your customers. To create lifelong customers, you need to understand who they are and their journeys to a decision and beyond. Without this information, you're working in the dark. Start by defining a small number of

personas and map their journey to purchase. Don't forget to identify how they expect to interact with your brand after the purchase. The customer life cycle doesn't end with the sale, and retention is a critical component.

- **Review and revamp your information architecture:** With clearly defined personas and customer journey maps, you can now build an information architecture for your website and mobile apps that supports those journeys while aligning with your business and content strategies.
- **Define appropriate metrics and measurables:** Move from gathering traditional web analytics that measure traffic and clicks to experience analytics that measure both the quantity and quality of engagement. You need to define metrics and KPIs that give you a holistic view of what's happening with each customer and your digital property.
- **Technology audit: With any upgrade, you'll want to review the technology you currently use for:**
 - Tools you can drop because Sitecore XP 10.0 or 10.1 includes the functionality.
 - Integrations you'll need to set up with various data sources or software you need to keep and connect to, made easier by Sitecore xConnect and Data Exchange Framework.
 - Training required for both developers and business users.
 - Infrastructure changes required.





Reasons to upgrade from a TCO perspective

Your current Sitecore implementation is working fine. Why upgrade? Let's examine the need to migrate from a total cost of ownership (TCO) perspective. Have you considered the following costs?

The cost of multiple applications

If you're on Sitecore CMS 6.x, you have web experience management capabilities. But your email marketing, analytics, testing and targeting, and e-commerce software are all separate applications.

Depending on your version of Sitecore 7.x, you may have the same situation.

Create a spreadsheet that documents each marketing technology your teams need to do their jobs and how much each costs. Include costs for purchasing/subscribing, maintaining, training, integrating, and supporting business users.

The cost of multiple deployments

Think about the technical cost encountered, in terms of both time and money, when you try to deploy to several locations. Using Sitecore JSS or ASP.NET Core headless options, users enjoy true headless deployments disconnected from Sitecore. In your spreadsheet, write down how much time and money it costs to deploy your solution.

The cost of infrastructure

Not only do containers deliver benefits in terms of efficiency and productivity gains, but they also tend to have a lower cost of ownership than their virtual machine counterparts. By leveraging Sitecore Containers, first available in Sitecore 10.0, your IT team can see a reduction in infrastructure costs. More light-weight, containers can better leverage the underlying operating systems, decreasing licensing and other costs associated with maintaining operating systems. By eliminating this overhead, you have an opportunity to reduce the total cost of ownership for Sitecore deployed into a container.

The cost of data management

Data hosting and processing costs have decreased in the last 5 years, but the amount of data collected has increased dramatically. Think about the data you're collecting that you don't need. If you had explicit control over all of your data, you would gain explicit control of costs.

In your spreadsheet, input your hosting and processing costs for legacy and unnecessary data — data that could be purged.



Putting it all together

These are just some of the financial considerations inherent in using disconnected systems versus taking advantage of Sitecore's integrated customer experience suite. It's not just about technology costs; it's about resource costs. It's about the time and effort required for you to easily empower your marketing users to do what they need to do – with less time and effort. With Sitecore XP 10.x, you're likely to significantly cut the costs of delivering the experiences customers demand.

Get in front of the curve

Your marketing and business users are demanding more and more every day because your customers are demanding more. If you're working with disconnected marketing technology, you'll never be able to fully embrace personalized marketing and support today's always-on digital consumer. When your customer data is spread across many applications and data silos, your business users can't see a complete 360-degree view of their customers. They won't be able to create the unique, relevant, real-time digital experiences customers expect.

Sitecore XP gives you a strong foundation and a tightly integrated user experience that enables business and marketing users to personalize their marketing based on how audiences interacted with your brand today, yesterday, last week, or last year so your brand can be relevant right now, in real time, across all channels. This isn't a decision about whether you should upgrade; it's a decision about how to best upgrade so that you can deliver great customer experiences – internally and externally.

Next steps

For further questions about Sitecore XP, you can reach us via:

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About Sitecore

Sitecore delivers a digital experience platform that empowers the world's smartest brands to build lifelong relationships with their customers.

A highly decorated industry leader, Sitecore is the only company bringing together content, commerce, and data into one connected platform that delivers millions of digital experiences every day. Leading companies including American Express, ASOS, Kimberly-Clark, L'Oréal and Volvo Cars rely on Sitecore to provide more engaging, personalized experiences for their customers.

Learn more at sitecore.com



Sitecore is a global leader of end-to-end digital experience software. Unifying data, content, commerce, and experiences, our SaaS-enabled, composable platform empowers brands like L'Oréal, Microsoft, and United Airlines to deliver unforgettable interactions across every touchpoint. Our solution provides the cutting-edge tools brands need to build stronger connections with customers, while creating content efficiencies to stand out as transformation and innovation leaders. Experience more at sitecore.com.