

## Best practices

## Next practices

- **Engage stakeholders throughout the project life cycle.**

Engage stakeholders during the requirements phase to develop use cases. Involve them in the design of the content authoring tools. To keep surprises to a minimum, continue to solicit stakeholders' feedback after the initial implementation.

- **Use pilots as a tool for evaluation and learning.**

Commission pilots to help with the vendor selection process and use them to build enthusiasm and gain buy-in from critical constituencies, as well as to help catch mistakes early in the implementation cycle.

- **Keep it simple throughout the initiative.**

To decrease costs and implementation times, keep requirements to a minimum. Make customizations an exception, as they can increase maintenance overhead and interfere with upgrades. And to control scope creep and flush out problems early, split the project into multiple phases.

- **Bridge the business/IT gap with a dedicated team.**

To help dissolve "it's not my job" syndrome, create a joint marketing-business-IT team whose sole responsibility is to manage and improve Web properties.

- **Create a customization governing process.**

Define a set of criteria — include items such as ROI and productivity impact — that can be used to make decisions on whether or not to proceed with customizations.

- **When taking an agile development approach, don't forget deployment.**

Problems can only be surfaced during an agile cycle by actually testing on a live server.

- **Create a "skunkworks" and encourage experimentation.**

Winning companies adopt a "perpetual beta" approach to digital channels, using lightweight and more flexible WCMs to support experimentation.