

Library Science via DAM

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DAM is the practical application of library science fully integrated into the business world using the explosive capabilities of technology. It is fitting that we see how the field of tv and film helped shape the evolution of DAM. One can easily see how the push and pull of business needs, technology limits, and cost all shape the DAM solutions. We see how the industry needed to store a vast collection of items and be able to retrieve one quickly - thus the need for a robust way to search the collection quickly and accurately. In order to have good findability, the cataloging needs to be done thoroughly on the intake of an asset into the system. But, there are a huge number of film clips that need to be stored so the time for indexing an item on intake cannot be excessive because that would be too expensive. Film will degrade over time and with multiple copies so moving to a digital representation creates a "perfect" asset that can be copied or distributed forever as needed. But, then we see the challenges with storing all these assets - they are huge files that need huge servers to handle the load. We also need mirrored backup servers to safeguard against any technical issues. Servers are expensive and again we run into the business issue of cost as we implement a DAM solution. The tv and film industry clearly illustrate the challenges of a DAM solution when one must balance business needs with cost and technology.

In the tv and film example we see the original problems that DAM was trying to solve, but DAM can also be used to improve and grow a business. A DAM solution can reduce productivity lost to rework, reduce time lost in manual work-flow with automated work-flow for processes, and generate revenue from previously created assets that can be resold. Once company assets are in a DAM system then these assets allow for a return on the initial investment. I really was impressed with how practical a solution DAM is to real business problems. In real business situations one needs to think about the return on investment and many times the best solution is a "good enough" one.