

# The Importance of Scalability for Digital Asset Management

## iBase Professional Digital Asset Management

### 1 Introduction

At the very heart of why digital asset management systems are so important is the rate at which the number of assets that need to be managed by any organisation relentlessly grows day by day. Bear in mind that these assets include not only image, video and audio files, but also PDFs, Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, PowerPoint, MS Publisher files and so on. All file types in fact.

There is also the matter of an increasing numbers of users and ever-rising file sizes. And of course, with increasing volumes of assets to manage there is an ever-present danger that manpower resources will be swamped if the digital asset management system doesn't have efficient high-volume handling capabilities

For many reasons, including those above, it is important not only that a digital asset management system is used, but also that it is inherently and seamlessly scalable in every important respect.

### 2 Number of users

Your digital asset management system needs to support any number of concurrent users, of any type, without additional cost.

Any limit on the number of users will quickly affect productivity and the usefulness of the system, or otherwise have a severe and negative impact on costs.

### 3 Types of users

By 'types of users', we mean everything from the users - system managers - who have permissions to do anything that the system is capable of, through to those who are only permitted for example to view low resolution images.

Here are some illustrations of the types of users – or roles – that could be needed -

- System manager - can do everything, including setting access permission for other users, changing the folder structures, rearranging collections etc...
- Editor – who can view everything and add and edit content. An editor might also have permissions to enable an item to be viewed and downloaded by others.
- Uploader – has permissions to upload new assets, and perhaps to edit the metadata of only those items which they have uploaded themselves.
- Downloader – can download originals and / or specified resolutions of images.
- View only – for users who are permitted only to search and view items.

The best digital asset management systems will enable system managers to create any number of roles with whatever permissions are required for each.

## 4 Number of assets

It's amazing how quickly the number of assets in a system can grow. Whereas a system which is only used for one specific purpose might contain only a few thousand assets, in a more general-purpose environment the number could be tens or hundreds of thousands, or indeed millions of files.

Your system must be able to support any number of assets with no adverse impact on the experience for users.

## 5 File types

There are so many different files types that it would be silly, futile and very boring to list them all here. But it is worth mentioning that a good digital asset management system will support the storage of absolutely any type of file, and should also automatically provide thumb or other suitable non-image previews for the most common 'end user' types, such as these -

AVI	JPG	PPT
BMP	MOV	PUB
DOC	MP4	TIFF
DOCX	MPG	TXT
FLV	PDF	WMV
GIF	PNG	XLS
JPEG	PPT	XLSX

Again, to be clear, this is by no means an exhaustive list, and in any event if a new file type is to be uploaded the system manager should be able to do any configuration adjustments that might be required – if indeed any are required.

## 6 Batch upload or file size limits

A good digital asset management system will not place any restrictions whatever on the number of files that can be uploaded in a single batch, nor on the maximum size for a single file. While compressed JPG images might only be a few tens of megabytes in size, HD video files can be very much larger and might be several hundred gigabytes.

The speed of uploads will be dictated by the bandwidth of the connection between the upload point and the DAM system, and if cloud based the most significant factor is likely to be the speed of the connection to the internet.

## 7 Metadata limitations

A digital asset management system will rarely be static in its structure, and needs to be easily configurable to accept additional metadata fields, and for the additional fields to be included in quick and advanced searches.

## 8 Security and access permissions

If the system doesn't have a fully comprehensive security and access permissions model, then it will inevitably place limitations as the scope of its use grows. To ensure that there won't be any restrictions in the ability to configure any permissions that are needed, look for a security model which allows the set up different levels of access to the assets and associated metadata, allowing specification of exactly who can upload, view, edit, download or share different assets, who can see or edit which metadata fields, who can carry out editorial or workflow-based functions or who can access the various administration functions of the system.

[Contact us](#) by email or phone for more information or to request a free system.