Case Study

Taming Complexity: How a Global Pharma Leader Transformed Its Digital Asset Ecosystem

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INFORMATION SCIENCE

In the world of global pharmaceuticals, marketing is anything but simple. With hundreds of campaigns running across dozens of countries, and each one tightly regulated, commercial content becomes both a vital asset and a logistical minefield.

One leading biopharma company found itself at this crossroads. With more than 80 brands in over 50 markets, the company had accumulated a vast and growing library of digital content: sales assets, promotional materials, training modules, detailing tools, and more. Each asset had to meet local regulatory standards, pass through rigorous approval processes, and be made available for reuse where appropriate.

But that reuse rarely happened.

Despite a massive investment in content creation, the organization couldn't easily find or repurpose what already existed. Marketers were reinventing the wheel, sometimes unknowingly, resulting in duplicated efforts, longer time-to-market, and millions in unnecessary production costs. Searching for assets across disconnected systems was tedious, often ending in frustration or non-compliance. Worse, there was no shared language across markets, teams, or tools; each group used different terms to describe the same things. Without common ground, collaboration was nearly impossible.

This wasn't just an operational issue; it was a strategic one.

The Moment of Clarity

Recognizing the scale of the problem, the company set out to rethink how it managed its commercial content. It wasn't simply about implementing a better digital asset management (DAM) system or a slicker search interface. What they needed was a foundational shift: a way to unify how content was described, categorized, approved, and retrieved across every geography, team, and platform.

That's when they brought in Earley Information Science.

EIS didn't begin with technology. They started with language.

A Taxonomy for a Global Ecosystem

The heart of the problem lay in how content was organized, or more accurately, how it wasn't. Without a consistent taxonomy (a structured vocabulary of terms and relationships), content remained siloed and invisible. EIS set out to design what would become the metadata backbone of the company's global Commercial Asset Management (CAM) strategy.

Together with client stakeholders, they mapped out the entire asset lifecycle from planning and production to review, approval, and distribution. Then, they created a global taxonomy that reflected every nuance of that journey: brand and product hierarchies, delivery channels, asset types, target audiences, regulatory checkpoints, and more.

But taxonomy alone isn't enough.

EIS ensured that this new framework could be embedded across the company's ecosystem: digital asset libraries, marketing resource management tools, interactive detailing platforms, learning management systems, and enterprise search. They coordinated the translation of terms into multiple languages, tested the taxonomy with marketers across continents, and designed governance structures to keep it evolving without falling apart.

From Chaos to Clarity

The transformation wasn't theoretical. It was measurable and fast.

- A new, centralized digital asset library was launched across 40+ countries.
- Over 5,000 assets were tagged, indexed, and made searchable with the new taxonomy.
- More than 1,100 users in the U.S. alone gained access to global, approved content—accelerating campaign creation and reducing compliance risk.
- Federated search was overhauled to support guided navigation, faceted browsing, and advanced filtering.
- Business units from Germany to Brazil began contributing to and reusing a shared pool of marketing resources.

What had once been an unmanageable sprawl of disconnected content became an orchestrated system. Reuse increased. Time-to-market shrank. And most notably, the company saved an estimated $9.1 million globally, with the U.S. market alone surpassing its cost-savings target for the year.

Lessons Learned

This was more than a taxonomy project. It was an exercise in aligning people, process, and platforms around a shared language. It taught the organization that if you want to scale globally, you can't rely on tribal knowledge or isolated tools. You need structure. Governance. Usability. And above all, a system that makes the right thing easy to find—and easier to reuse.
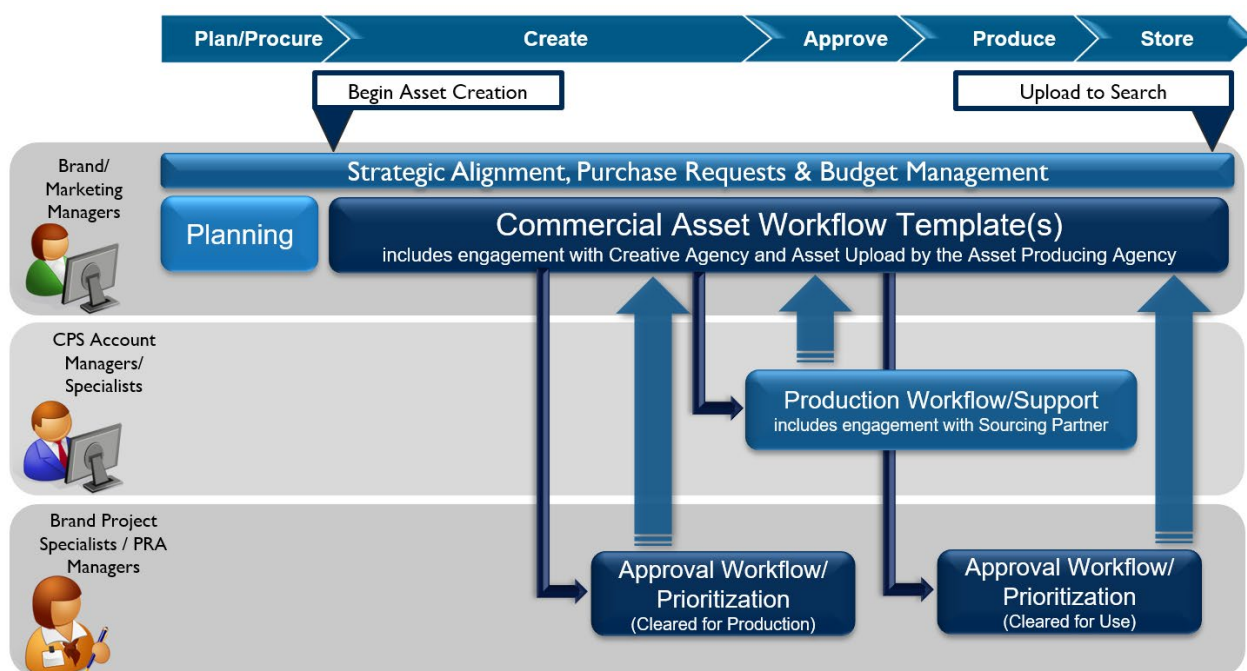
In a world where marketing complexity is only increasing, this company now has a foundation it could build on: not just a better DAM, but a smarter, more connected way to manage its most valuable commercial content.

ABOUT EARLEY INFORMATION SCIENCE

Earley Information Science is a specialized professional services firm. We support measurable business outcomes by organizing your data – making it findable, usable, and valuable.

Our proven methodologies are designed specifically to address product data, content assets, customer data, and corporate knowledge bases. We deliver scalable governance-driven solutions to the world's leading brands, driving measurable business results.

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