

The Complete DAM Buying Checklist for Construction & Engineering Firms

Your Strategic Guide to Selecting the Right Digital Asset Management Platform

Introduction: Why Construction Firms Needs Purpose-Built DAM

The construction and engineering industry operates with unique complexity. Your digital asset management platform needs to handle:

- **Multi-year project lifecycles** with thousands of documents, drawings, and photos per build
- **Distributed teams** coordinating across architects, engineers, general contractors, subcontractors, and owners
- **Massive mixed-media libraries** with CAD files, blueprints, site photos, safety documentation, and compliance records
- **Complex rights management** for architect drawings, engineer specifications, contractor work product, and third-party materials
- **Multi-stakeholder distribution** from project teams to owners to regulatory agencies to legal counsel
- **Real-time collaboration** between design teams, field crews, safety officers, and project management

This checklist will help you evaluate DAM platforms based on what actually matters for construction operations—not generic enterprise features that don't address your specific challenges.

How to Use This Checklist

As you evaluate DAM vendors:

- Check each requirement that applies to your organization
- Star critical must-haves that are non-negotiable
- Take notes on how each vendor addresses your specific needs
- Compare responses across platforms using this standardized framework
- **Scoring Guide:**
 - **Essential (Must-Have):** Platform cannot be considered without this
 - **Important (Should-Have):** Strong preference, willing to compromise if other areas excel
 - **Nice-to-Have:** Differentiator between otherwise equal platforms

SECTION 1: Construction-Specific Asset Management

Product & Collection Organization

- ☐ **Organize assets by project/job site** (Project Name, Job Number, Location)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Hierarchical categorization** (Portfolio → Project → Phase → Discipline → Document Type)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Link multiple assets to single project element** (as-builts, shop drawings, field photos, RFIs, submittals, change orders)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Phase-based organization** (Pre-construction, Foundation, Framing, MEP, Finishes, Closeout)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Archive completed projects while maintaining searchability** for warranty, legal, or future reference
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Support for design development and pre-construction documentation**
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Construction-Specific Metadata

- ☐ **Custom metadata fields** for fashion-specific attributes:
 - Project number/job code
 - Project phase/milestone
 - Drawing number and revision
 - Specification section (CSI division)
 - Discipline (architectural, structural, MEP, civil)
 - Contractor/subcontractor attribution
 - Location/building/floor/room
 - Date taken/created
 - Compliance/safety certification status
 - Submittal/RFI number**Priority:** ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Controlled vocabularies** for consistent naming (e.g., "MEP" vs. "Mechanical/Electrical/Plumbing")
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

- ☐ **Contractor/subcontractor tracking** (company name, scope of work, contact information)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Photographer/documentation credit management** (who took site photos, drone footage)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Safety and compliance documentation tagging**
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Visual Search & Discovery

- ☐ **Visual similarity search** (find similar site conditions, construction methods, material applications)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
 - ☐ **Location-based search and filtering** (by building, floor, room, site area)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
 - ☐ **Advanced filtering by multiple attributes simultaneously** (project + phase + discipline + document type)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
 - ☐ **Saved searches** for frequently used queries (e.g., "Project X Foundation Phase Approved Submittals")
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
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SECTION 2: Workflow & Collaboration

Multi-Stakeholder Coordination

- ☐ **Role-based access control** for different teams:
 - Architects (upload/edit design documents)
 - Engineers (specifications and calculations)
 - General Contractors (project oversight and coordination)
 - Subcontractors (scope-specific documentation)
 - Owners (approved documents and progress reports)
 - Inspectors/Regulatory (compliance documentation)**Priority:** ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

- ☐ **Project-level permissions** (give subcontractors access to specific trade packages)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Document approval workflows** with multi-level review (submittal → engineer review → owner approval)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Comments and markup tools** directly on drawings and documents
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Version control** to track document revisions (design iterations, RFI responses, change order documentation)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Project Milestones & Deadlines

- ☐ **Phase-based asset organization** (Pre-construction, Mobilization, Foundation Pour, Substantial Completion)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Scheduled publishing** for milestone releases (permit submission, owner review, punch list)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Deadline tracking and reminders** for submittal deliverables and compliance documentation
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Task assignment** for document review, RFI responses, closeout documentation
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Multi-Site & Distributed Team Support

- ☐ **Multi-location project management** for firms with regional offices or national portfolios
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Project-specific asset variations** (different jurisdictional requirements, owner preferences, local codes)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Corporate brand consistency tools** (approved logos, templates, safety signage accessible across all projects)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

SECTION 3: System Integration & Construction Technology

Project Management & Collaboration Platform Integration

- ☐ **Integrations with construction management platforms:**
 - Procore
 - Autodesk Construction Cloud (ACC/BIM 360)
 - PlanGrid
 - Bluebeam
 - Custom systems via API
 - Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Multiple document variants per drawing** (design, issued for construction, as-built, record)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Automated file conversion** for different stakeholder needs (PDF, DWG, image formats)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Drawing/specification synchronization** with project management databases
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Marketing & Business Development

- ☐ **Portfolio showcase capabilities** for proposals and corporate marketing
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Project photography management** for award submissions and case studies
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Document Management System Integration

- ☐ **CMS integration** (WordPress, corporate website platforms)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **ERP/Accounting system integration** (project cost codes, billing documentation)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

SECTION 4: Rights Management & Legal Compliance

Design Professional & Contractor Agreements

- ☐ **Contract attachment to assets** (architect agreements, engineer contracts, subcontractor work product terms)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Usage rights tracking** (internal use only, owner deliverables, marketing permitted, restrictions on reuse)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Expiration date alerts** for time-limited licenses or warranty documentation
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Automatic watermarking** for non-approved or draft documents (e.g., "NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION")
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Legal & Compliance Protection

- ☐ **Document security** (secure access, download tracking for litigation protection)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Confidential information management** (proprietary methods, cost data, owner-sensitive documents)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Asset download auditing** (who accessed what, when—critical for legal discovery)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **External portal** for controlled sharing with owners, inspectors, lenders, or legal counsel
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

SECTION 5: Technical Requirements

File Format & Quality Support

- ☐ **CAD file support** (DWG, DXF, RVT for Revit, SKP for SketchUp)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **High-resolution image handling** (100MB+ drone photography, site documentation)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Video format support** (MP4, MOV for drone footage, construction progress time-lapses, safety training)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **PDF support with markup preservation** (reviewed submittals, marked-up drawings, RFI responses)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **3D/BIM model storage** (IFC, NWD/NWC for Navisworks, point cloud data)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Performance & Scale

- ☐ **Storage capacity** for your asset volume
 - Current needs: _____ TB
 - 3-year projection: _____ TB**Priority:** ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Upload speed** for large batch imports (daily site photos, drone surveys, scan data)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Search performance** with hundreds of thousands of assets across multiple active projects
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Concurrent user support** (how many team members can work simultaneously across field and office?)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Security & Compliance

- ☐ **Encryption** (in transit and at rest)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **SOC 2 compliance**
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Industry-specific compliance support** (government contracts, prevailing wage documentation, certified payroll)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Two-factor authentication**
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Single sign-on (SSO) support**
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Regular security audits and penetration testing**
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Backup & Disaster Recovery

- ☐ **Automated backup schedule and retention** (critical for project continuity and legal protection)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Geographic redundancy** (multiple data center locations)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Disaster recovery SLA** (recovery time objective/recovery point objective)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Document versioning and recovery** (restore previous drawing revisions)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

SECTION 6: User Experience & Adoption

Interface & Usability

- ☐ **Intuitive interface** that field crews and non-technical users can navigate
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Mobile access** (responsive web or native app for on-site document access)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Bulk operations** (upload, tag, download, approve multiple documents at once)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Drag-and-drop functionality** for uploads and organization
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Customizable dashboards** by role/user (PM view vs. superintendent view vs. architect view)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Asset Sharing & Distribution

- ☐ **Shareable links with expiration dates** (for RFI responses, submittal reviews)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Password protection** for sensitive shares
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Branded portals** for external stakeholders (owners, inspectors, lenders, architects)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Document package creation** for assembling closeout documentation, permit submissions, or owner deliverables
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Download format options** (original CAD, PDF, compressed for email, specific dimensions for reports)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Training & Support

- ☐ **Onboarding program** for implementation
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
 - ☐ **User training** (live sessions, recorded tutorials, documentation)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
 - ☐ **Customer support hours and response time SLA**
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
 - ☐ **Dedicated account manager** or customer success contact
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
 - ☐ **Regular platform updates and feature releases**
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
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SECTION 7: Analytics & Reporting

Usage & Activity Tracking

- ☐ **Document access reports** (critical for legal discovery and compliance audits)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **User activity reports** (who's accessing what, when—important for project coordination)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Asset lifecycle tracking** (from design through construction to project closeout)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

SECTION 8: Cost & Business Model

Pricing Structure

☐ **Transparent pricing** (no hidden fees)

- Base platform cost: _____
- Per-user fees: _____
- Storage costs: _____

☐ **Scalability of pricing** as project volume and team size grows

Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

☐ **Contract flexibility** (annual vs. multi-year, exit terms)

Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Implementation & Migration

☐ **Implementation timeline** (how long to go live?)

Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

☐ **Migration support** from existing systems (file servers, SharePoint, legacy project archives)

Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

☐ **Data migration tools** (automated vs. manual)

Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

☐ **Metadata preservation during migration**

Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Total Cost of Ownership

☐ **Initial setup costs**

Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

☐ **Ongoing maintenance requirements and costs**

Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

☐ **Additional fees** (overage charges, add-on features)

Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

☐ **Internal resource requirements** (IT support needed?)

Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

SECTION 9: Vendor Evaluation

References & Case Studies

☐ **Construction firm references** in similar firm size/project types

Requested references: _____

☐ **Case studies** demonstrating construction industry success

Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

☐ **Peer reviews and industry recognition**

Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Decision Matrix

Use this framework to score and compare vendors:

Category	Weight (%)	Vendor A Score (1-10)	Vendor B Score (1-10)	Vendor C Score (1-10)
Construction-Specific Features	%			
Workflow & Collaboration	%			
System Integration	%			
Rights Management	%			
Technical Requirements	%			
User Experience	%			
Analytics & Reporting	%			
Cost & Value	%			
Vendor Stability	%			
TOTAL WEIGHTED SCORE	100%			

Next Steps

After completing this checklist:

1. **Schedule demos** with your top 3 vendors
2. **Request live walkthroughs** of fashion-specific features
3. **Talk to reference customers** in the fashion industry
4. **Negotiate trial period** to test with your actual workflows
5. **Involve key stakeholders** from design, merchandising, marketing, and IT
6. **Calculate total cost of ownership** over 3-5 years
7. **Review contracts** carefully (exit terms, data ownership, SLAs)

About NetX

NetX provides enterprise digital asset management solutions trusted by leading fashion brands worldwide. Our platform is built to handle the unique demands of fashion: seasonal cycles, global teams, massive visual libraries, complex rights management, and seamless e-commerce integration.

Ready to see NetX in action?

Schedule a personalized demo focused on your specific fashion workflows and challenges.

This checklist is provided as a strategic resource for fashion brands evaluating DAM platforms. For more information about how NetX addresses these requirements, contact our team.