

The Complete DAM Buying Checklist for Fashion Brands

Your Strategic Guide to Selecting the Right Digital Asset Management Platform

Introduction: Why Fashion Brands Needs Purpose-Built DAM

The fashion industry operates differently than other verticals. Your digital asset management platform needs to handle:

- **Seasonal collection cycles** with tight, non-negotiable deadlines
- **Global teams** coordinating across design, production, merchandising, and marketing
- **Massive visual libraries** with thousands of SKUs per season
- **Complex rights management** for photographer contracts, model releases, and influencer content
- **Multi-channel distribution** from e-commerce to social to retail environments
- **Real-time collaboration** between creative teams, buyers, and regional markets

This checklist will help you evaluate DAM platforms based on what actually matters for fashion 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: Fashion-Specific Asset Management

Product & Collection Organization

- ☐ **Organize assets by season/collection** (SS25, FW25, Resort, etc.)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Hierarchical categorization** (Brand → Collection → Category → SKU)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Link multiple assets to single SKU** (studio shots, lifestyle, detail shots, videos, 360 views)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Color/material/size variant management** for the same style
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Archive old collections** while maintaining searchability
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Support for pre-production samples and development imagery**
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Fashion-Specific Metadata

- ☐ **Custom metadata fields** for fashion-specific attributes:
 - Style number/SKU
 - Fabric/material composition
 - Color name and code
 - Size/fit details
 - Price point/category
 - Seasonal attribution
 - Care instructions
 - Sustainability certifications
 - Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Controlled vocabularies** for consistent naming (e.g., "Navy" vs. "Dark Blue")
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Model information tracking** (name, release status, usage terms)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

☐ **Photographer/creative credit management**

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

☐ **Lookbook and editorial tagging** for storytelling assets

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

Visual Search & Discovery

☐ **Visual similarity search** (find similar styles, colors, silhouettes)

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

☐ **Color-based search** and filtering

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

☐ **Advanced filtering** by multiple attributes simultaneously
(season + category + color + price point)

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

☐ **Saved searches** for frequently used queries
(e.g., "FW25 Outerwear Lifestyle Approved")

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

SECTION 2: Workflow & Collaboration

Multi-Department Coordination

☐ **Role-based access control** for different teams:

- Design (upload/edit capabilities)
- Merchandising (view/download/approve)
- Marketing (approved assets only)
- Sales (customer-facing materials)
- Retail (store-specific assets)
- Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

☐ **Collection-level permissions** (give regional teams access to specific markets)

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

☐ **Asset approval workflows** with multi-level review (design → merchandising → brand)

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

☐ **Comments and annotation tools** directly on assets
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

☐ **Version control** to track asset iterations (pre-retouch, final, regional variants)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Collection Launches & Deadlines

☐ **Project-based asset organization** (Pre-Fall Launch, Holiday Campaign, NYFW)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

☐ **Scheduled publishing** for embargo releases (press, wholesale, retail, consumer)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

☐ **Deadline tracking** and reminders for asset deliverables
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

☐ **Task assignment** for retouching, translation, regional adaptation
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Global Team Support

☐ **Multi-language interface** for international teams
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

☐ **Regional asset variations** (different models, pricing, messaging by market)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

☐ **Global brand consistency tools** (approved logos, fonts, color palettes accessible to all regions)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

SECTION 3: E-Commerce & Digital Channel Integration

E-Commerce Platform Integration

☐ **Integrations with e-commerce platforms:**

- Shopify
- Magento
- Salesforce Commerce Cloud
- Custom platforms via API
- Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

☐ **Multiple image variants per product** (thumbnail, zoom, lifestyle, detail)

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

☐ **Automated image resizing** for different digital channels

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

☐ **SKU synchronization** with product databases

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

Social Media & Content Marketing

☐ **Direct publishing** to social platforms or integration with social management tools

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

☐ **Influencer asset management**

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

CMS & Marketing Automation

☐ **Content management system integration** (WordPress, Contentful, etc.)

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

☐ **PIM (Product Information Management) integration**

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

SECTION 4: Rights Management & Legal Compliance

Photographer & Creative Contracts

- ☐ **Contract attachment** to assets (photographer agreements, model releases)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Usage rights tracking** (editorial only, commercial, regional restrictions, time limits)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Expiration date alerts** for time-limited usage rights
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Automatic watermarking** for non-approved or restricted assets
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Brand Protection

- ☐ **Counterfeit prevention** (secure access, download tracking)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Embargo management** for pre-release collections
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Asset download auditing** (who downloaded what, when)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **External portal** for controlled sharing with media, influencers, wholesale partners
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

SECTION 5: Technical Requirements

File Format & Quality Support

- ☐ **RAW file support** (CR2, NEF, ARW, etc.) for original photography
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **High-resolution image handling** (100MB+ files)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Video format support** (MP4, MOV, ProRes for runway/campaign footage)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Design file support** (PSD, AI, INDD for campaign materials)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **3D/AR file storage** (GLB, USDZ for virtual try-on)
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 (post-photoshoot)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Search performance** with thousands of assets
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Concurrent user support** (how many team members can work simultaneously?)
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
- ☐ **GDPR compliance** for EU operations
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
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
- ☐ **Asset versioning** and recovery (restore previous versions)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

SECTION 6: User Experience & Adoption

Interface & Usability

- ☐ **Intuitive interface** that non-technical users can navigate
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Mobile access** (responsive web or native app)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Bulk operations** (upload, tag, download, approve multiple assets 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
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Asset Sharing & Distribution

- ☐ **Shareable links** with expiration dates
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Password protection** for sensitive shares
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Branded portals** for external partners (press, wholesale, influencers)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Lightbox/collection creation** for assembling asset packages
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Download format options** (original, optimized, specific dimensions)
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

Statistics System

- ☐ **Timeline** (asset downloads reports)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **User activity reports** (who's accessing what, when)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Asset lifecycle tracking** (from upload to archive)
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 your needs grow

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

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

☐ **Fashion brand references** in similar size/market

Requested references: _____

☐ **Case studies** demonstrating fashion 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:

Fashion-Specific Features	%			
Workflow & Collaboration	%			
E-Commerce 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)
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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.