

The Complete DAM Buying Checklist for Government Agencies & Municipalities

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Introduction: Why Government Agencies & Municipalities Need Purpose-Built DAM

Government agencies and municipalities operate differently than private sector organizations. Your digital asset management platform needs to handle:

- **Multi-department** and inter-agency coordination with strict accountability requirements
- **Public records compliance**, FOIA obligations, and retention policy enforcement
- **Large libraries** of official imagery, documents, maps, and media assets across departments
- **Complex rights** and usage management for contractor-created content, public domain assets, and sensitive materials
- **Multi-channel** distribution from official websites to public communications to internal operations
- **Real-time** collaboration between departments, elected officials, communications teams, and external stakeholders

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

Department & Program Organization

- ☐ **Organize assets** by department, agency, or program area (Public Works, Parks & Recreation, Emergency Management, etc.)

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

- ☐ **Hierarchical categorization** (Agency → Department → Program → Project)

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

- ☐ **Link multiple assets to a single project or initiative** (photos, documents, maps, videos, official graphics)

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

- ☐ **Version and revision** management for official documents and communications

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

- ☐ **Archive completed projects** and programs while maintaining searchability

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

- ☐ **Support for draft** and pre-approval assets prior to official release

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

Government-Specific Metadata

- ☐ **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

Search & Discovery

- ☐ Visual similarity search (find related imagery, maps, or graphics across departments)

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

- ☐ Classification and category-based search and filtering

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

- ☐ Advanced filtering by multiple attributes simultaneously (department + date + classification + file type)

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

- ☐ Saved searches for frequently used queries (e.g., "Approved Public Communications Q3")

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

SECTION 2: Workflow & Collaboration

Multi-Stakeholder Coordination

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

- Communications (upload/edit capabilities)
- Department heads (view/download/approve)
- Public affairs (approved assets only)
- Legal/compliance (review and records access)
- External partners (controlled sharing)

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

- ☐ **Project-level permissions** (grant specific departments or agencies access to relevant assets)

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

- ☐ **Asset approval workflows** with multi-level review (department → legal → communications → leadership)

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 (drafts, revisions, final approved versions)

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

Program Launches & Deadlines

- ☐ **Project-based** asset organization (Budget Announcement, Emergency Response, Public Campaign)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Scheduled publishing** for embargo releases (press, council, public announcements)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Deadline tracking** and reminders for asset deliverables tied to public meetings or legislative calendars
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ Task assignment for translation, accessibility remediation, and regional adaptation
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

Multi-Agency & Regional Support

- ☐ **Regional asset** variations (different messaging, contacts, or imagery by district or jurisdiction)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
 - ☐ **Brand consistency** tools (approved seals, logos, fonts, and color palettes accessible to all departments)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
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SECTION 3: Constituent Services & Digital Channel Integration

Website & Portal Integration

- ☐ **Integrations with construction management platforms:**
 - Drupal
 - Civic Plus
 - Granicus
 - Custom platforms via API**Priority:** ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have

- ☐ **Multiple document variants per drawing** thumbnail, full resolution, accessible formats, print-ready)

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

- ☐ **Automated file** resizing and format conversion for different digital channels

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

- ☐ **Project and program** code synchronization with records management systems

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

Social Media & Public Communications

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

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

- ☐ **Media and press** asset management for public information officer

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

CMS & Records Integration

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

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

- ☐ **Records Management** System (RMS) or Enterprise Content Management (ECM) integration

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

SECTION 4: Rights Management & Legal Compliance

Contractor & Vendor Agreements

- ☐ Contract attachment to assets (vendor agreements, contractor work-for-hire documentation)

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

- ☐ Usage rights tracking (internal use only, public release, restricted distribution, time limits)

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

- ☐ Expiration date alerts for time-limited usage rights or contract terms

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

- ☐ Automatic watermarking for non-approved, restricted, or embargoed assets

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

Records & Asset Protection

- ☐ FOIA compliance tools (access controls, audit trails, exemption tagging)

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

- ☐ Embargo management for pre-release announcements and legislative

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, partner agencies, and community stakeholders

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

SECTION 5: Technical Requirements

File Format & Quality Support

- ☐ **RAW file support** (CR2, NEF, ARW, etc.) for official photography

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

- ☐ **High-resolution** image handling (100MB+ files)

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

- ☐ **Video format** support (MP4, MOV, broadcast formats for public meetings and events)

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

- ☐ **Design and document** file support (PSD, AI, INDD, PDF for official publications and signage)

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 ow many staff 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/CCPA compliance** for jurisdictions with applicable privacy laws

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
 - ☐ **Document versioning and recovery** (restore previous drawing revisions)
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
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SECTION 6: User Experience & Adoption

Interface & Usability

- ☐ **Intuitive interface** that non-technical staff can navigate without extensive IT support
Priority: ☐ Essential ☐ Important ☐ Nice-to-Have
- ☐ **Mobile access** (responsive web or native app) for field staff and inspectors
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** dashboards by role/department
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 (press, partner agencies, community organizations)

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

- ☐ **Lightbox/collection** creation for assembling asset packages for public records requests or media kits

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

- ☐ **Download format options** (original, optimized, accessible, print-ready)

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

SECTION 7: Analytics & Reporting

Usage & Activity Tracking

- ☐ **Timeline** (asset download 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
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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

☐ **Government agency or municipality** references of similar size and scope

Requested references: _____

☐ **Case studies** demonstrating public sector 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:

Government-Specific Features	%			
Workflow & Collaboration	%			
Website & Portal Integration	%			
Rights & Records 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 government and public sector-specific features
3. **Talk to reference customers** in the public sector
4. **Negotiate trial period** to test with your actual workflows
5. **Involve key stakeholders** communications, IT, legal/compliance, and department leadership
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 government agencies and municipalities nationwide. Our platform is built to handle the unique demands of the public sector: multi-department coordination, compliance and records requirements, large asset libraries, complex access controls, and seamless integration with government technology ecosystems.

Ready to see NetX in action? Schedule a personalized demo focused on your agency's specific workflows and compliance requirements.

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