7 secrets to jumpstart your modular content journey.

Life sciences organisations face several challenges when implementing modular content. In this whitepaper, we reveal our seven secrets to help change that. Inside you'll find the best tools, techniques, and practices needed to make your modular content pilot a success.

Life sciences organisations have a content problem.

We live in a content economy. How businesses speak to the world – and the tools they use to do so – are more valuable than ever. Life sciences organisations (LSOs) know this well. They're faced with some of the toughest content requirements and a demanding audience spanning stakeholders and healthcare professionals (HCPs).

HCPs rely on digital content. To find resources, 89% read email newsletters according to an Elsevier survey[1]. They have high standards too. 73% of physicians are more likely to engage with personalised content[2] and 66% of HCPs say they want to receive relevant and compliant emails from field teams[3].

To keep up, pharma marketers are overcompensating. According to Veeva data, they produced 20% more content in 2022 than in 2021 – promising, it would seem – except that 77% of it is rarely or never used by field teams[4]. What's more, 85% of pharma firms don't believe their HCP

audience is engaged across multiple channels, and only 18% say their HCP engagement is highly effective[5]. HCPs mirror this: 34% don't feel that LSOs understand their needs[6].

One of the biggest hurdles here is getting approval for content from Medical, Legal, and Regulatory (MLR) reviews – a process which can take up to three weeks[7]. These delays are compounded by demands for personalised, omnichannel content, as well as localisation edits for different countries and markets, which can all require multiple MLR reviews. The irony of these setbacks, of course, is that content is neither

[1] Elsevier, Physicians are online - here's why, 2022.
[2] Elsevier, Physicians are online, 2022.
[3] Veeva, Guide to Digital HCP Engagement, 2021.
[4] Veeva, Veeva Pulse Field Trends Report Q4 2022, 2022.
[5] EPG Health, The Future of HCP Engagement Impact, 2023.
[6] Sermo, Insights for 2023 on HCP content habits and best practices, 2022.
[7] Veeva, 2022 Veeva Pulse Content Metrics Report, 2022.

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timely nor relevant when it's finally released to HCPs.

This is why LSOs are moving in a new direction. They're turning to modular (or 'Atomic') content, an approach where blocks of components such as images, text, references, and claims are assembled in different shapes and sizes to form marketing assets. Using a content authoring solution like the Shaman platform, teams across an organisation can create and manage modular content across various markets and channels at scale. It also makes compliance easy. MLR teams only need to approve each module once, rather than repeatedly reviewing entire assets.

This allows localisation edits to be applied with greater ease and precision, and generally speeds up the review process.
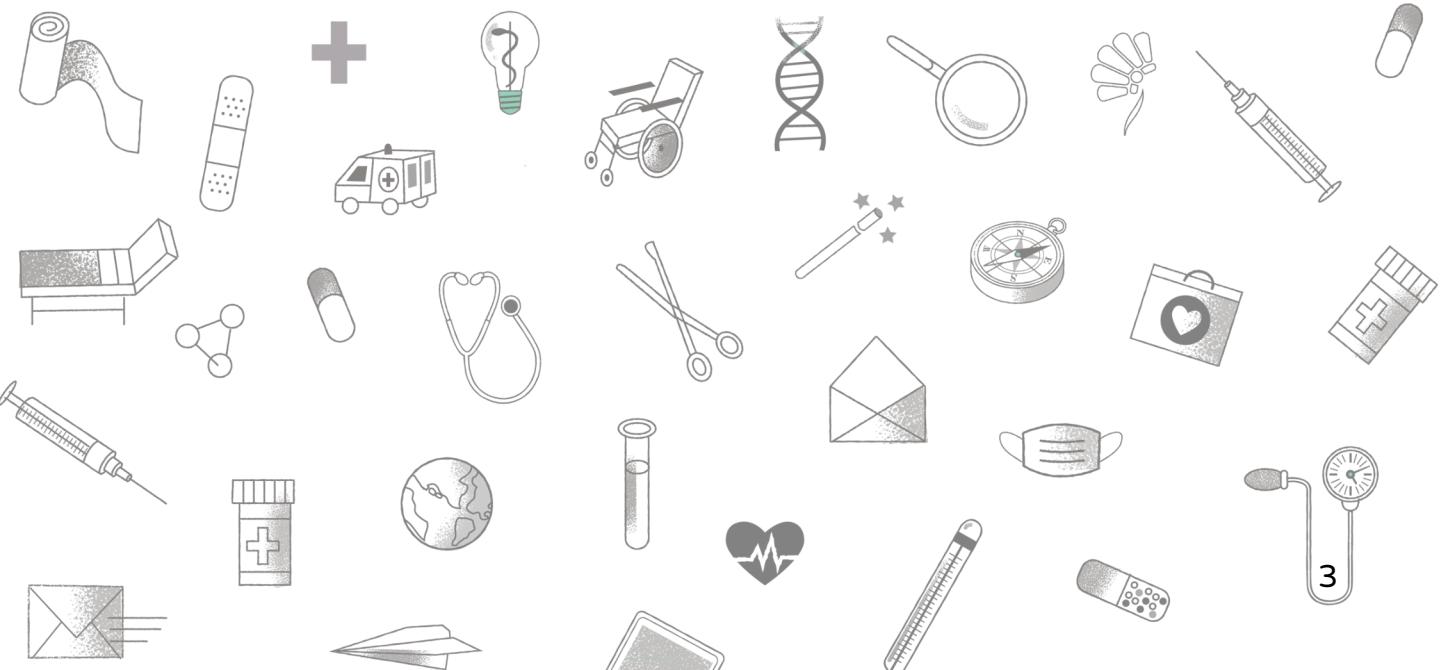
The benefits of modular content, at a glance:

Faster MLR review times:
Optimised MLR workflows see 57% shorter review times and 55% less time spent in review meetings.[8]

Improved chances of first-time MLR approval:
Three-quarters of modular content is approved in one review cycle.[9]

Lower Costs:
Modular content cuts production costs by over 20%.[11]

Reduced content production timelines:
Modular content boosts time-to-market by more than 50%.[10]

Empowerment:
Modular content creates opportunities for teams to roll out personalised, compliant content at scale.

[8] Veeva, Making MLR Review and Approval More Efficient and Effective, www.veeva.com/blog/making-mlr-review-and-approval-more-efficient-and-effective, 2023.
[9] Veeva, Veeva Vault PromoMats Datasheet, 2023.

[10] Veeva, *PromoMats Datasheet*, 2023.
[11] Veeva, *PromoMats Datasheet*, 2023.

The state of modular content in Pharma

Modular content is now common in sectors like fast-moving consumer goods and retail, but it's relatively new to the pharmaceutical industry. That said, LSOs are recognising the benefits and taking their first steps toward implementing pilot projects. But there's a learning curve – as with any new approach – and these efforts can be hindered by some common misconceptions, including:

What modular content is

Some consider it content design, others, template-based marketing. Despite grasping the basics of modular content (i.e., building assets from blocks), LSOs can be confused by the details, such as the scope of modular content – including its reusability and omnichannel capabilities – how it handles references, and the number of changes to a workflow it requires to produce positive results.
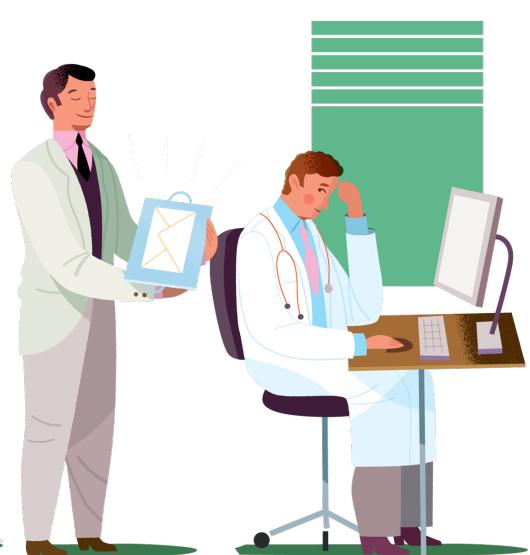
The impact on workflows and MLR approval

Modules can be reviewed in tiers by MLR teams, saving them the time and effort involved with approving entire assets at a time. However, changing the MLR workflow in this way can be daunting for LSOs that have long relied on certain content operation models and localisation processes, and MLR teams which are (naturally) quite risk-averse. Getting it wrong, after all, can mean violating regulations and miscommunicating medical information. The key here is for LSOs to clearly show MLR teams how modular content incorporates the approval process and mitigates risk.

Changes in team relationships

Pre-approved modular content is stored and managed from one place, eliminating the silos that global and local content teams typically work in. This makes the workflow more visible, speeds up production timelines, and removes the need for agency outsourcing. It also allows marketing teams to collaborate in assembling assets for use across multiple channels and regions. However, this increased interdependence requires changes to communication channels and workflows, which LSOs can struggle to picture.
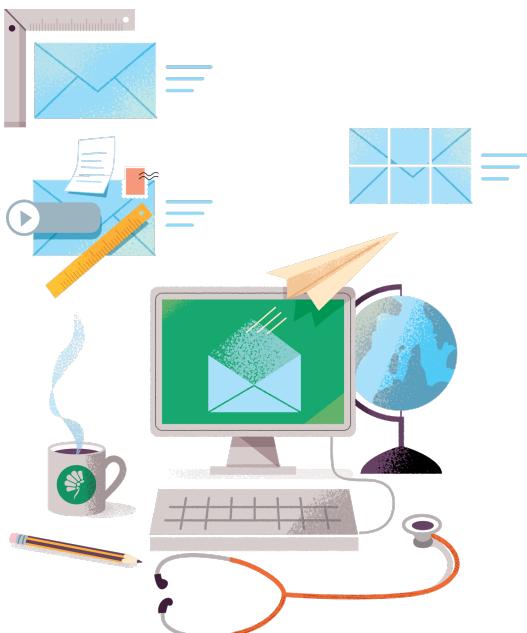
Technological preparedness

New approaches require new tools, and modular content is no different. Organisations need to establish a claims library, prepare their Veeva Vault, and select a quality digital asset management (DAM) such as the Shaman platform to manage their modular content for the pilot. The transition also requires a compatible supply chain and a tech-savvy workforce, as well as investments of time, money, and resources. It's quite natural for a company to feel insecure about any or all of these points.

Shaman on modular content

By 2027, 90% of content will be digital – 50% of which will be modular.[12] Meanwhile, companies using content the most are outpacing others by four to one.[13] This is why at Shaman, we believe the time is now for LSOs to embrace modular content and start producing marketing assets that cut through the noise. These are our three main beliefs:

1

Modules mean efficiency

When content is trapped in an MLR review pipeline or buried under a mountain of other assets, nobody benefits. Modular content offers a far more efficient production cycle. Pharma marketers can create and assemble it quickly, MLR teams can approve it in fast, tiered reviews, and HCPs can be sure that they're getting high-quality, trustworthy information, every time.

2

Content should be relevant

Traditional content is linear and inefficient; it doesn't suit healthcare audiences with specific needs and preferences. Instead, successful content teams will be those consistently producing personalised HCP experiences. Modular content empowers them to do so by providing the building blocks to create relevant, omnichannel marketing assets tailored to specific audiences.

3

The right tools matter

We've poured a lot of time and resources into scaling our platform. Now, it provides powerful and intuitive modular content capabilities that accelerate marketing efforts and simplify the sharing and reuse of content within an entire organisation. Plus, as we're partners with Veeva, our products are fully integrated with Veeva Vault PromoMats to support the full lifecycle of promotional content.

[12] Veeva, Executive Brief: Achieve Digital Content Excellence, 2022.   [13] Veeva, Veeva Pulse Field Trends Report Q4 2022, 2022.

The modular content scaling challenge

- Let's assume your brand has 30-40 modules, including key messages, study data, and claims, as well as general information on products and dosages.
- If you're active in 40 markets, you'll want to localise all these modules. That's around 35 modules, which, multiplied by 40, equals 1400.
- If there are 10 active brands in your portfolio, 14,000 modules need to be localised.
- Shaman believes that empowering local MLR and brand teams with the right technology is the best way to accomplish tasks on this scale.

At Shaman, we've combined our collective expert experience to reveal seven practical, insider secrets that'll help you successfully roll out your modular content pilot. Read on to find out what they are.

Secret 1: Be selective

Modular content is not a catch-all solution. In general, it's better suited to reusable assets that need multiple MLR reviews. Companies risk wasting time and resources on creating modules for single-use or low-impact content otherwise. That's why the Shaman platform offers brand design templates, an asset builder, and a modular content system to suit all marketing requirements. The matrix below offers some ways to decide between these tools:

	Brand design system	Share final composite assets	Modular Content
When	• Local iniatives • Usually no/light MLR • Non reusable	• Regional campaigns • Reuse local initiative • Share best practices	• Heavy MLR • Key brand/TA claims • Product information
Strategy	• New or duplicate • Based on design system	• Text searchable (en) • Duplicate and translate	• Pre-approved assets (global, local) • Drag and drop modules
Example	• Local invite • Local reimbursment info	• Webinar recordings • Patient day • Local email fragments	• Core brand claims • New disease data

Brand design system

There's no need to create a module for, say, an email invitation, when it'll only be delivered once and likely need little to no MLR reviews. Instead, it can be made from scratch using an approved email template on the Shaman brand design platform.

Shaman Hub

Completed marketing assets may require some degree of localisation for regional campaigns. However, if they won't be reused often, need multiple MLR reviews, or make any medical claims, they can be built from a brand design template and duplicated on the Shaman Hub. From here they can be easily searched for, edited, localised, and submitted for MLR approval.

Modular content

When assets with medical claims are being reused and localised many times, modular content is king. The Shaman platform offers a simple drag 'n' drop UI for content teams to assemble pre-approved modules into marketing assets. The modular content system is best suited to core brand statements and important product and disease information – or any content which appears across multiple channels and regions.

Secret 2: Focus on small wins

Transitioning to modular content in one giant leap is a sure way to fail. As with any large project, the key is breaking it down into relevant, manageable steps; starting with just one brand and a couple of countries, perhaps. This way, the success of the project is far easier to measure.

According to Veeva Pulse data, 50% of pharmaceutical companies are unable to measure the performance of their content. That's why we recommend establishing key performance indicators (KPIs) based on the benefits expected from modular content. What should be tested for? What needs to be proven? These metrics will help reduce the time scale and complexity of the project while providing stakeholders with something tangible to work with. Be objective – figure out what can and can't be done to control the scope of a modular content pilot, reviewing and adjusting where needed.

1 Elsevier, Physicians are online - here's why, 2022.

Here are some KPIs worth focusing on:

Are we reducing MLR bottlenecks?

MLR teams only need to approve modules once, meaning they can work through assets in smaller and more precise chunks. This tiered approach should translate to fewer MLR reviews – is that true for your pilot? Check whether teams are using automatic claim linking tools to better prepare content for review across multiple markets, making fewer mistakes, and generally reducing MLR times and workloads.

Have we boosted the content production timeline?

Thanks to faster approval times, modular content campaigns can be launched on the fly and step in time with changes to data regulations and customer preferences. Skills gaps will thwart progress here, however. Look at your content production timelines. Are teams creating more assets? Are local brand teams effectively repurposing modular content for different markets rather than creating assets from scratch? Is this all resulting in a shorter time-to-market?

Are we producing higher-quality content?

Content teams need to be comfortable using modules to create focused, high-quality content, and personalising it for different languages, customs, tones, regulations, and more. The best metric for this is engagement. Determine how much time HCPs are spending consuming your content. If modular content is helping content teams to create relevant assets, audience trust and satisfaction will increase. The advantage of modules here is that they can be tracked separately, providing a far more granular view of where content is working and where it isn't.

Secret 3: Scope before you start

Before diving head-first into a modular content pilot, draw up a pre-rollout checklist which irons out any chinks in the strategy and pre-empts roadblocks down the line. The matrix below highlights some of the main factors to consider:

Define scope of pilot	Determine Veeva Vault readiness	Distill MLR requirements
• Local iniatives • Objectives • Stakeholders (OCE, Vault, MLR, Brand) • Scope • Brand • LOCs, users • Channel RTE/ME • Selection of claims • Timelines, Period • KPIs • FB loops	• Claims library • DAM • Suggest links • Lifecycles and approval workflow • Access and permission	• Current involvement and commitment • Experience with claims library • Known requirements • MLR workflows: • Global modules • Localised modules • Final composite asset

Defining the scope of your pilot means deciding what's needed, how it can be achieved, and how long it'll take. This is a team effort. It involves getting the relevant stakeholders onboard, deciding on workflows, selecting the countries, channels, and brands you'll focus on, and establishing your core brand objectives and claims, including the KPIs from **Secret 2**. The Shaman team can help here to guide everybody through the process and ensure the project continues moving forward.

Modular content must be compliant, so prepare your Veeva Vault and establish a claims library of pre-approved statements and references before getting started. Enable the Veeva Suggest Links feature too – this allows teams to automatically match claims to text, making it far easier to create modules. The claims library will also need to be connected to a digital asset management system (DAM), which ensures all modules are structured and tagged correctly, and stores them in one secure location for teams across an

Secret 4: Start with the end in mind

Rome wasn't built in a day and a modular content system won't be either. To see the project through, start with the end in mind and work backwards from there. A clear vision of how modular content will be used (i.e., modules added to a local email) and how it will benefit the organisation can become a goal in itself and provide motivation, direction, and focus when challenges arise.

> ❝
> ## Stop setting goals. Goals are pure fantasy unless you have a specific plan to achieve them ❞
>
> - Stephen Covey

The table below provides a good way to think about this. It's easier picturing the end product – a global module – than deciphering how to first create and localise all its components.

3. Use

French email with module
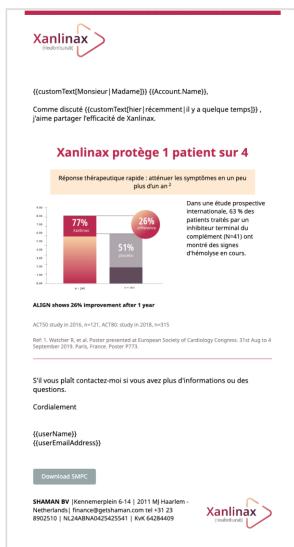
2. Localise

Localised module
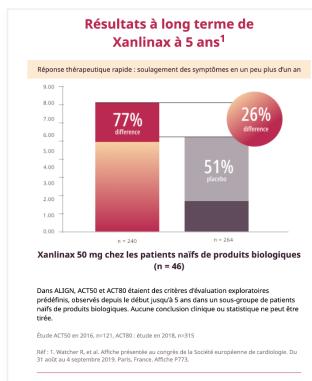
1. Create

Global module
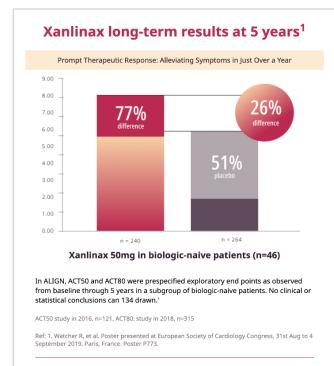
Secret 5: Define the anatomy

Modules are blocks of pre-approved and reusable content such as images, graphics, video, text, claims, and metadata. Rather than building these blocks from the ground up, content teams only need to assemble them into marketing assets before distributing them across different regions and channels.

Modules are channel-agnostic. Their appearance – including the style, layout, icons, and font – can change depending on the branding and format of the final asset. This makes modular content highly flexible but means that it's important to break down its anatomy as clearly as possible. Below is an example of how to do this:

Fast relief of symptoms as early as week 5[1] ——— title

Prompt Therapeutic Response: Alleviating Symptoms in Just Over a Year ——— strapline

36% by year 3
51% by year 5
22% difference
26%
45% increased change

Estimate of cumulative events
Study month
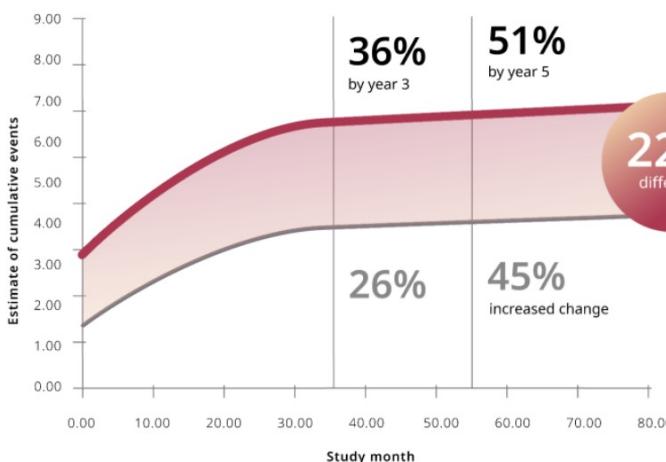
——— image

In ALIGN, ACT50 and ACT80 were prespecified exploratory end points as observed from baseline through 5 years in a subgroup of biologic-naive patients. No clinical or statistical conclusions can 134 drawn.' ——— body

ACT50 study in 2016, n=121, ACT80: study in 2018, n=315 ——— abbreviation

Ref: 1. Watcher R, et al. Poster presented at European Society of Cardiology Congress. 31st Aug to 4 September 2019. Paris, France. Poster P773. ——— reference

Secret 5: Define the anatomy

Logically breaking a module down in this way benefits everyone across the organisation.

Content teams and their agency of record will be responsible for creating modules with key messages and contexts that can operate independently across different channels, so they'll need to understand how modules work inside and out. In particular, discuss with content teams how you'll handle claims and references when creating and combining modules – they can quickly become complicated. Spending time on getting to know the Shaman platform for creating and managing modular content will help with this.
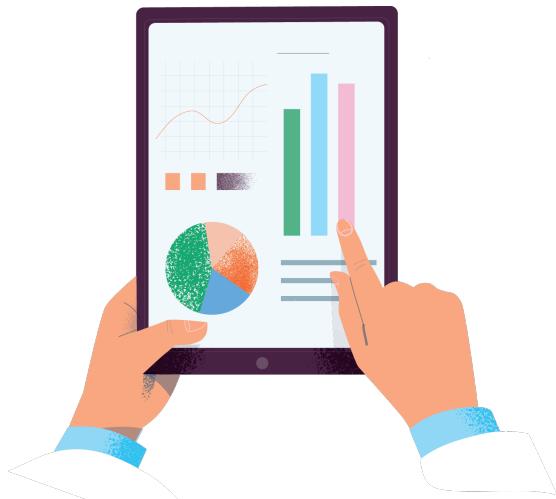
Defining the anatomy of modular content will also help eliminate any confusion circling between stakeholders and MLR teams on how final marketing assets will look, their roles in the project, and the benefits that modular content provides.

Secret 6: Establish a contract with the MLR team

MLR teams can make or break a modular content pilot. They're responsible for approving content, regardless of how it's structured, and if things go wrong down the line, the audit trail stops with them. As a result, MLR teams can be quite resistant to change. Nonetheless, their approval of the project is necessary, so it's important to establish a contract with them.

Visualise the process

The anatomy of modular content can confuse MLR teams (see **Secret 5**). They may wonder why the plain text they're reviewing is formatted differently in marketing assets. This can bring up concerns about context, where legal and medical disclaimers will be attached, how product information and claims will be substantiated, and so on. It's therefore vital to walk MLR teams through a modular project – making this as visual as possible – and align everybody's expectations for the project. It's also where **Secret 4** comes into play: if you don't know what your modular content project will look like, MLR teams won't either.

Emphasise the benefits

Make it clear to MLR teams that modular content benefits them too. Pre-adding references to claim texts reduces the number and length of review cycles, allowing them to focus and prioritise their efforts. Most importantly, MLR teams need to know that they'll remain in full control of the approval process. Everybody adheres to the same rules and regulations no matter the content strategy.

Rephrase the language

Once MLR teams approve a module, it can be reused without being reviewed again. This means that MLR teams can review smaller content blocks in tiers rather than trawling through entire assets each time. This 'pre-approval' of content saves everyone a lot of time, but the term doesn't always sit well with MLR teams. It sounds flippant – as if modular content subverts the review process somehow. That's not true, of course, but it can be a good idea to rephrase 'pre-approval' as 'prepared for approval' – i.e., the references have been linked up and ready for teams to review.

Sign the contract

The result of these discussions is to get some form of binding contract with the MLR team. Agree on deliverables that will get them on board and ensure their approval of the pilot. It's a good idea here to leverage the requirements agreed upon with the MLR team from **Secret 3**. For instance, while they might not be willing to (pre)-approve a content module visualised as a table, they may compromise by approving a module placed in layout instead.

Secret 7: Empower local content teams

Modular content breaks down silos. While local teams have tended to work at arm's length from their global counterparts, relying on different workflows and timelines, and outsourcing projects to agencies, modular content bridges this gap. The Shaman platform centralises the content production process and empowers local and global teams to work closely in creating, managing, and localising marketing assets at scale. We believe that this collaboration is the key to success for LSOs moving forward. Here's what our platform offers:

Intuitive drag-and-drop UI

Modular content is often compared to Lego bricks or jigsaw puzzles. With the Shaman drag 'n' drop platform, it's easy to see why. Create a new asset, easily find approved global modules, and then just slot them into place. No code; no outsourcing; no rigid templates required.

Personalisation made simple

With the Shaman platform, content teams can speak directly to HCPs with highly personalised marketing assets. They can seamlessly draw up marketing strategies, localise modules in line with regional tonal and legal requirements using AI-powered translation tools, and push assets to Veeva for review and approval.

A fresh start

The journey to modular content is a team effort. It requires everyone including business leaders, stakeholders, content creators, and MLR teams to work towards a clear end goal. Though the transition will mean making changes to tech stacks, workflows, and mindsets, it's a solution that pays dividends in the end.

Here at Shaman, we're here to support you on this journey. Now that you're armed with our seven insider secrets for kickstarting a modular content project, it's time to put them into practice. The next step? Book a quick discovery call with us. We'll discuss your specific needs and answer any questions about modular content, personalisation, omnichannel strategies, and more. Our experts will work with you to understand any bottlenecks you're facing and help you find an intelligent, impactful solution with our modular content platform.

SHAMAN

About Shaman

Digital marketing today requires agility and efficiency. That's why it's time for life sciences organisations (LSOs) to reimagine their content strategy and make the switch to modular.

Trusted by over 400 marketing and medical content teams across a range of LSOs, Shaman is the leading no-code content creation platform for Veeva Commercial Cloud. It allows marketing teams to take back control of the conversation and effortlessly create Veeva multichannel content in line with their unique requirements. What's more, Shaman makes it easy to share and reuse this content across different markets, bridging the gap between global and local teams.

Content teams can create interactive CLM presentations, approved emails, mass emails, and modular content using Shaman. Our platform guides users through the process with an intuitive step-by-step approach – no design or coding skills are needed. Plus, as a Veeva Technology Partner, we fully support all Veeva Vault workflows to make integration a breeze.

Contact

Do you have a burning question? Want to find out how Shaman Solutions can help your organisation benefit from modular content? Reach out to us via our International Sales Department – we'd be happy to help. You can use the button below to do so!

Contact Us

References

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2. Elsevier, *Physicians are online – here's why*, 2022.
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