

**Acquia**

***BUILDING YOUR  
DIGITAL PLATFORM  
WITH ACQUIA CLOUD  
SITE FACTORY***



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# INTRODUCTION

**Over the last several years, we've seen a digital transformation take place in which organizations have gone from building project-to-project websites to building a digital factory platform to support delivery and management of digital experience content and applications across their entire organization.**

Building a digital factory platform that manufactures, delivers, and runs all of your company's digital sites and governs content delivery provides a central view of all digital experiences

across multiple brands, products, and regions at scale, while enabling teams to roll out site updates and experiences faster and more efficiently than ever before.

This newfound efficiency of the digital factory platform has allowed organizations like [Australian Department of Finance](#), Nestlé, and [Warner Music Group](#) bring sites and digital experiences to market twice as fast than they could before, and those digital experiences are more consistent and more effective.





To equip your organization to be successful in [scaling its digital experiences](#), the importance of investing in building a platform is imperative. So how do you build a platform, not a site?

In this guide, we will discuss what a digital factory platform is and the necessary transformations an organization must make in order to become factory-ready in terms of their digital governance approach and automation.

# WHAT IS A DIGITAL FACTORY PLATFORM?

**From the mid-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries, a span of about one hundred years, the world experienced a revolution in how companies created and delivered goods to consumers.**

Previously, goods were created by hand. No one item was identical to any other. This resulted in wasted effort performing the same process many times with minor differences, poor maintainability due to the lack of interchangeable parts, and inconsistent quality control.

The industrial revolution changed all of that by bringing scalability, repeatability, and governance to the world of manufacturing. Today, we are experiencing a similar revolution in the world of digital. Companies face the same problems of scalability, repeatability, and governance, and they are applying the same factory model to the production of delightful and engaging digital experiences.

Consider [SABMiller](#), a company that manages multiple brands. Separate teams manage the digital experience of each brand. Since each team has a slightly different idea of what makes a good experience for every brand, features often differ across each digital experience.

If an organization wants to implement centralized management to ensure the security and maintainability of each experience, they will need to perform assessments and updates for each property, with slight variations every time.

As the organization grows, this manual effort becomes unmanageable. Unmaintained apps become vulnerable to security breaches and degraded performance, putting the entire brand at risk.

A digital factory platform is a highly efficient, standardized approach to assembling, manufacturing, and running the foundation for digital experiences (i.e. digital sites).

The digital factory provides the right site components like templates, branding, CMS configuration and integration modules, access control and security, and cloud infrastructure resources to deliver and manage digital marketing and commerce experiences.

**Digital sites power digital content and applications as a service for the online branding, marketing, commerce, and customer service experiences across your business.**



A man and a woman in business attire are looking at a tablet together in a modern office setting. The man is wearing a blue suit and the woman is wearing a black blazer. They are both looking intently at the tablet. In the background, there is a laptop on a desk and some office equipment. The overall scene is professional and collaborative.

The very image of a “factory” depicts standardized components, processes, and management that work in a hyper-efficient factory automation mode to assemble, deliver, operate, and govern digital businesses.

As a result, the digital factory becomes the focus, IT project, and the platform. With the factory being at the epicenter, the task at hand is to build a platform not a site.

**Build a digital factory platform that manufactures, delivers, runs and enables all of your digital sites and experiences for your company across the globe.**

# THE FACTORY APPROACH

**The digital factory platform is 75% approach and 25% automation.**

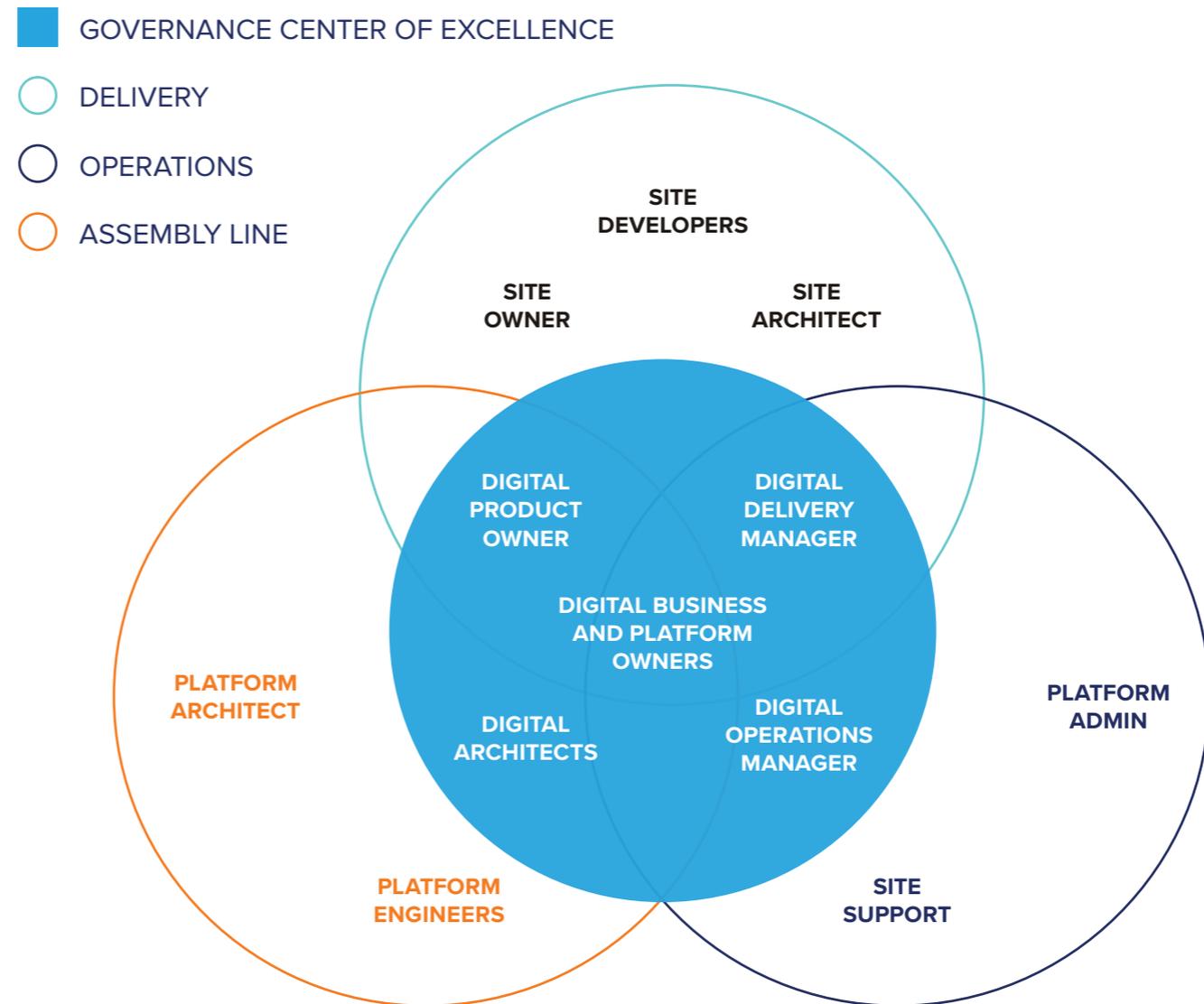
The reason why 75% of your efforts should be spent on the approach is because it is the foundational framework, behavior and culture, both technically and organizationally, that is integral to mobilizing your entire IT digital and marketing teams to work in unison as a factory. Adopting both makes it a factory.

Let's first examine the approach that you need in order to have a functioning factory. The approach is largely focused on organizational requirements within your IT digital team, as the group and its individuals are the ones ensuring the factory is running smoothly.

It encompasses building out the roles and responsibilities of the digital factory team including assembly, delivery, operations, and governance. It's worth mentioning that our approach is meant as guidelines; it does not need to be followed down to a T.

## BUILDING A DIGITAL GOVERNANCE TEAM

### DIGITAL GOVERNANCE TEAM



Start the adoption by defining role-based teams. The exact number of people can vary based on the IT digital organization, digital projects, and overall platform scope. The teams and/or individuals can be centralized or distributed across the organization

## ***THE ASSEMBLY ROLE***

When building a factory, you're now in the business of manufacturing sites at scale, not hand-crafting individual items. The assembly role owns the assembly of the shared Drupal distribution.

This role analyzes site requirements for content types, integrations, digital assets, and management needs up-front and creates a site model to define the core Drupal distribution.

The assembly role provides continuous distribution lifecycle management to maintain Drupal versions, modules, assets, and all platform required code. The benefit is the digital organization can set company-wide standards, without limiting individual flexibility.

## ***THE DELIVERY ROLE***

This role is both internal and often an external digital development firm or agency. This role or team is responsible for the process of taking the shared Drupal distribution provided by the assembly team and customizing it to the individual site needs.

It becomes a straightforward, less technical activity to customize sites provisioned by the standard platform in which corporate standards are baked in.

Creative branding and content activities can work efficiently using the same shared distribution. If the platform does not meet all of the requirements, the assembly role is asked to upgrade the Drupal distribution for new requirements.

## ***THE OPERATIONS ROLE***

The main responsibilities of operations consists of provisioning and operating the digital sites at scale.

Working closely with the IT operations and support organization, this team provides all site changes, site content updates, security, and site retirement. Digital sites are the foundation for "living" experiences and the operations team needs to be prepared to treat them as such.





## **THE GOVERNANCE ROLE**

The governance role consists of product or business managers, IT digital platform leaders, digital platform architects, and other experts who are involved in establishing standards and policies to support digital platforms. This role provides a unified company playbook for the people, policies, and standards for digital sites including planning, developing, delivering, and operating digital sites and experiences... basically, everything.

Organizing and restructuring to be factory-ready can sometimes seem like a daunting task, especially for organizations that have small teams and limited resources. However, digital

transformation doesn't have to happen all at once – in fact, it's best that you take the time to do it right. To make transformation easier, getting creative with how you form digital teams and assign certain roles is a must.

For example, the digital organizations that have creative and development partners may choose to have their partners as one of the roles listed above (often the partner takes on the delivery role). At Acquia, we provide professional services and dedicated technical account personnel who eventually become part of an organization's digital team as well.

# THE FACTORY AUTOMATION

Once you've outlined the factory approach, the second part of the transformation is the automation of the digital factory, which we call the 'Site Factory'.

This is made up of all the non-human components of the factory including the Shared Drupal CMS Distribution, the Management Console, the Management Application, the Cloud PaaS, and Stacks for enabling groups of sites to be spun off from multiple codebases.

It's important to note that unlike the factory approach, there is less flexibility on the automation approach as there are few substitutes for many of the required technology components of the digital factory.

[Acquia Cloud Site Factory](#) (Site Factory) provides the fastest way to deliver and govern digital sites at global scale.

Site Factory is the digital factory automation for organizations to create their own digital platform factory.

**Below we outline the components of the Site Factory that provide all of the necessary functions to make delivering and managing digital sites and experiences possible.**



## COMPONENTS OF ACQUIA CLOUD SITE FACTORY

### Shared Drupal CMS Distribution

A [Drupal CMS distribution](#) is a configured Drupal CMS containing a core platform, selected integration modules, and deployment of specific configurations. [Acquia Lightning](#) is an Acquia provided Drupal distribution for customers to use as a starting digital platform.

The Digital Factory governance and assembly teams can start with Lightning as a baseline and add their company specific components, configurations, and requirements, to assemble their standard company CMS Distribution.

This is “building a platform and not a site,” and is a key transformation in becoming a hyper-efficient digital site manufacturer for your organization. The shared CMS distribution is the strategic, factory asset. Each Site Factory customer creates [digital sites based on a shared CMS distribution](#).

### Management Console

The Site Factory management console is the user-friendly interface and front-end application to the Digital Factory. The console user interface provides a Factory dashboard for working with sites, users, and administration.

The management console is a centralized, browser application that provides a unified view of all digital sites, who in the organization has access to these sites, and reports on

sites, users, and digital applications. From the management console, you can also execute all site provisioning and management functions.

No longer does the IT or web teams need to build sites. The Site Factory management console and application automatically “builds the sites” just like a Factory rapidly assembles and delivers products. Sites are the products of the Site Factory.

No complexities and much lower learning curve when the Factory builds the sites. For example, using the management console you can assign role-based profiles for controlling how your digital experience team works with sites.

# The standard roles are:

## **PLATFORM ADMIN**

Provides overall responsibility for deployment within Acquia Cloud Site Factory, including management of websites and OpenID accounts

## **SITE BUILDER**

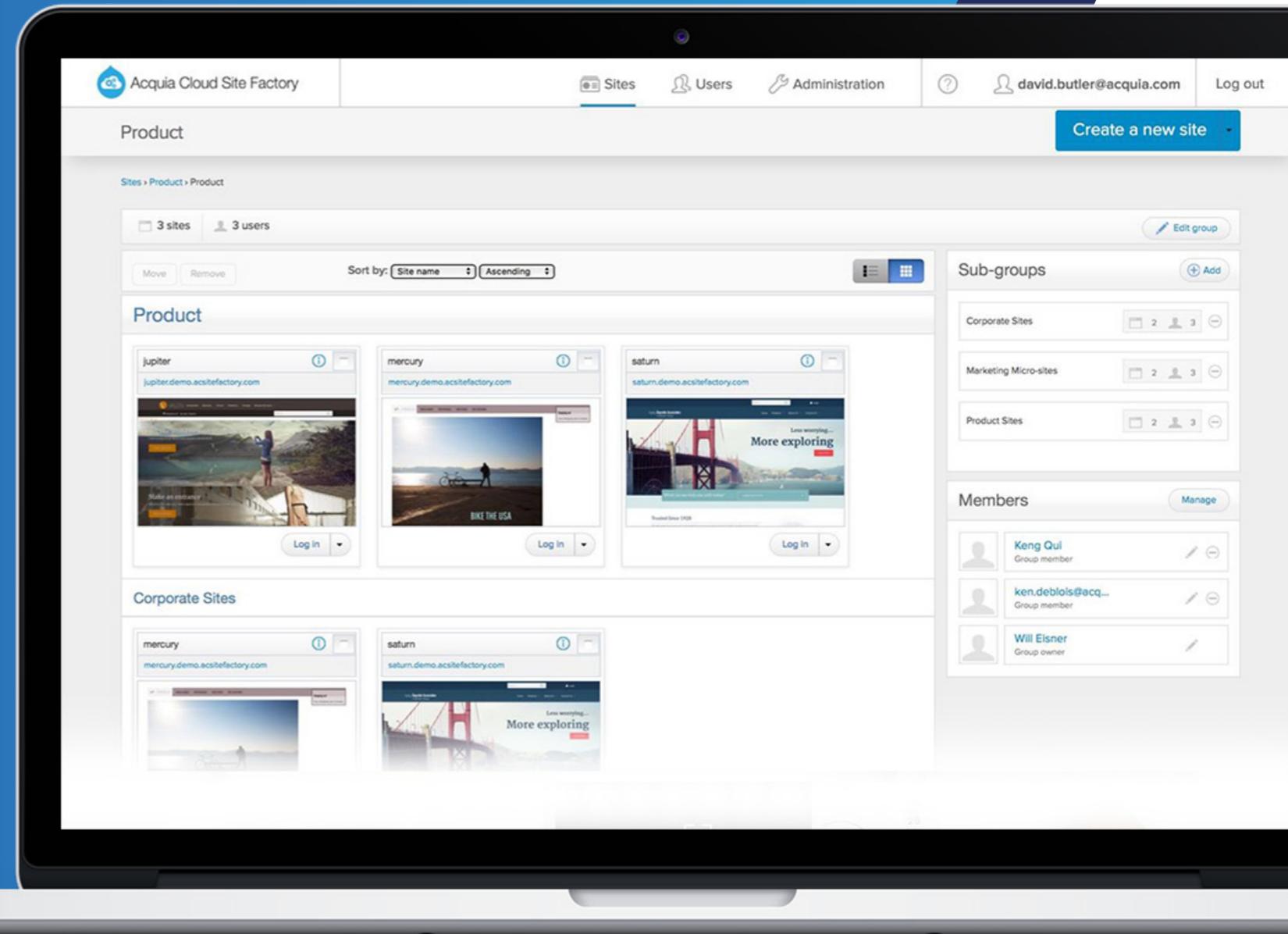
Allows for website and content creation and management

## **DEVELOPER**

Enables updating for PaaS development and staging environments with new and updated code

## **RELEASE ENGINEER**

Grants access to the PaaS production environment for code pushes and updates for status monitoring





## Management Application

Together with the management console, the management application provides the orchestration services for automating creating, copying, cloning, backing up, changing, and securing digital sites.

The delivery and operations teams use the Site Factory management console and application as their interface to all the digital experience teams internally and their partners externally.

**For example, the management application is pre-built with all of the required delivery and management functions so that even non-technical users can deliver and manage sites.**

## Here are some of the functions available from the management console:

**ESTABLISH SITE ACTIONS AND ORGANIZATION**

**ORGANIZE YOUR WEBSITES, COLLECTIONS, AND GROUPS**

**CREATE SITES AND SITE GROUPS**

**MANAGE SITE GROUPS**

**CREATE SITE COLLECTIONS**

**MANAGE SITE GROUP USERS**

**FIND SITES WITH FILTERS**

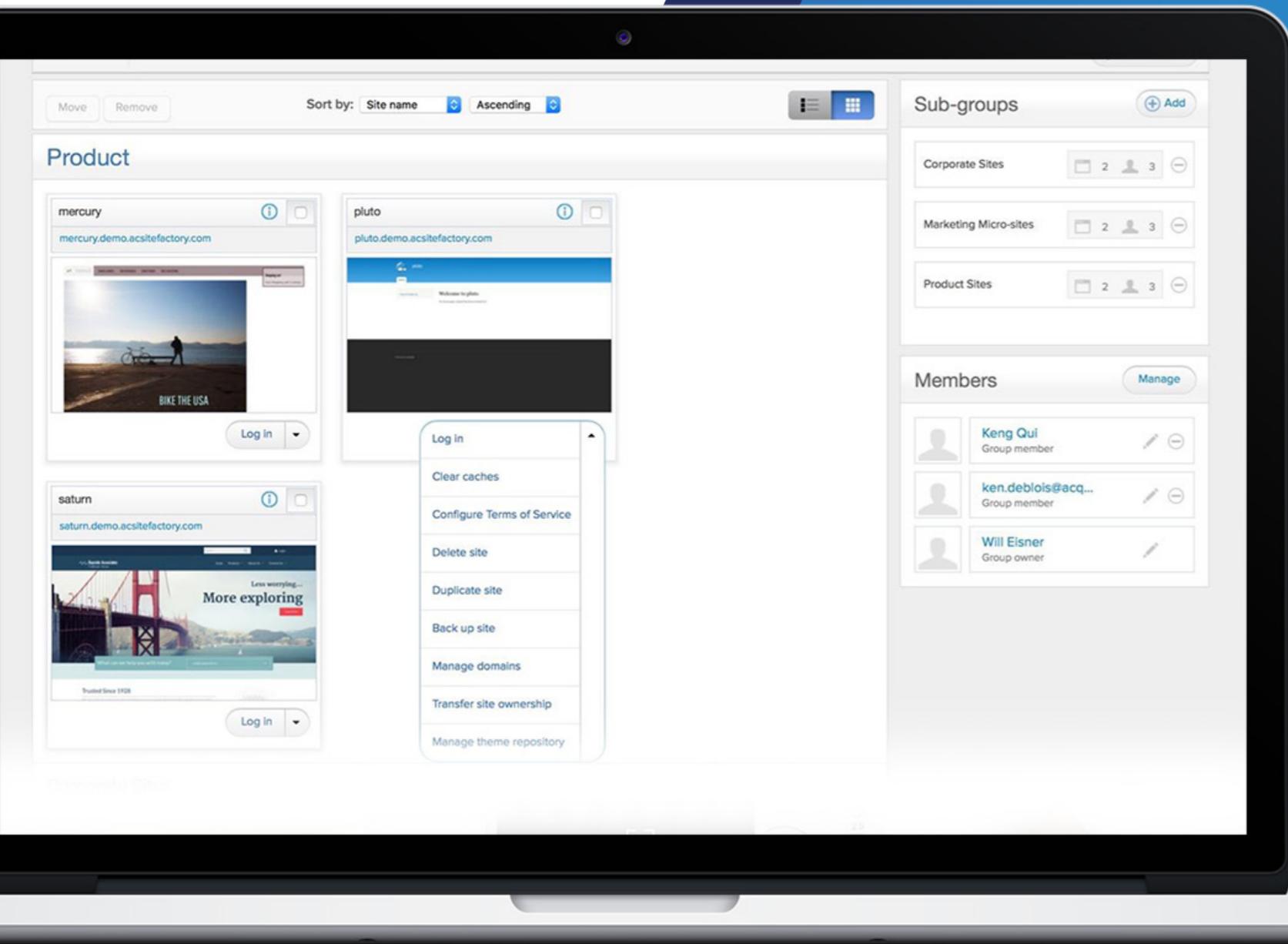
**MANAGE SITES ON A CLUSTER**

**DUPLICATE A SITE**

**DELETE A SITE**

**BACK UP SITES**

**RESTORE A SITE FROM A BACKUP**



**TRANSFER SITE OWNERSHIP**

**REFRESH WEBSITE THUMBNAIL IMAGES**

**SET THE TERMS OF SERVICE STATEMENT**



## Cloud Service Management

The operations team becomes a trusted and automated site service provider using the built-in cloud service management automation based on the Acquia Cloud Platform-as-a-Service.

The Digital 6 operations team does not need to configure infrastructure to power their site and digital experience deployments. Site Factory runs based on capacity needs across the number of sites and is easily optimized for specific digital deployments. This is the power system of the factory.

Acquia provides the entire service. For example, the service management provides each Factory:

***AUTOMATED CLOUD MONITORING***

Provides high-availability hosting and monitoring infrastructure across multiple web servers, with Varnish caching and replicated database servers.

***PROVISIONING ENVIRONMENTS***

Automates development, staging, and production Site Factory platform deployments.

***SLA-DRIVEN, MANAGED SERVICES***

Operations team on call 24/7 to test your website and keep it up-to-date with relevant updates and security patches.

## Stacks

A [Site Factory Stack](#) contains a complete Factory including the Site Factory-ready Drupal CMS Distribution, the Acquia Cloud PaaS, and dedicated Cloud infrastructure resources.

The delivery and operations team needs flexibility and control when:

- **Supporting the digital needs of global organizations**
- **Ensuring IT compliance and security**
- **Optimizing the CMS distribution for specific digital experiences and applications such as: branding, commerce, and customer service**

The Site Factory management console makes it easy for delivery and operations teams to centrally provision and manage all sites across multiple Site Factory Stacks, even when deployed in different cloud regions.

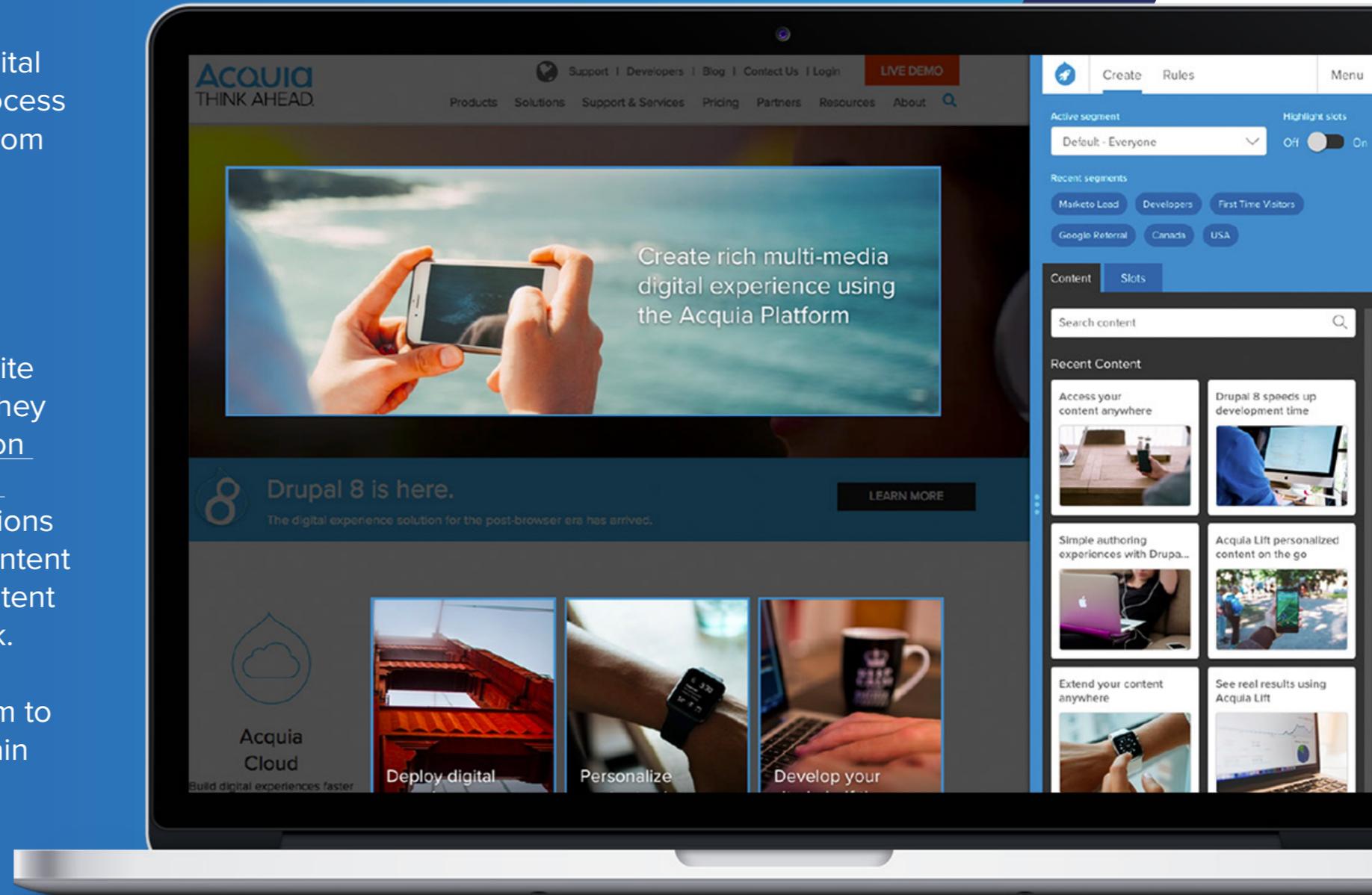
- 
- The background image shows a man and a woman in a meeting. The man is pointing at a whiteboard with a yellow pencil. The whiteboard has a list of items and a flowchart. The list includes: Executive Summary, Company Summary, Products and Services, Market Analysis, Management, Financial Plan, Appendix, Team, and Risk analysis. The flowchart shows 'BUSINESS PLAN' at the top, leading to 'Objectives', which leads to 'Mission', which leads to 'Strategy', which leads to 'Market Analysis'. There are also some handwritten notes like 'Key to Success' and 'Product and Services'.
- Executive Summary
  - Company Summary
  - Products and Services
  - Market Analysis
  - Management
  - Financial Plan
  - Appendix
  - Team
  - Risk analysis

## FACTORY READY FOR CONTENT DISTRIBUTION

Acquia Cloud Site Factory provides digital experience teams with an adoption process and platform automation to transition from building ad hoc, unmanaged websites to delivering managed, digital sites as a service to the digital business and marketing teams.

For organizations that want to extend site governance into content governance, they can use [Acquia Lift's content syndication functionality](#) together with [Site Factory automation](#). Acquia Lift gives organizations the ability to manage and update all content within their network, and distribute content out to relevant sites across the network.

This enables the IT digital platform team to control content consistency and maintain governance with automation.



# CONCLUSION

**Choosing to build a platform and not a site ultimately increases efficiencies for delivering and managing multiple digital applications and experiences at scale, while minimizing risk and maintaining digital governance and consistency.**

As a result, the IT digital platform team transitions to becoming an IT-managed digital site service provider measured on speed to delivery and overall service level availability. While the digital marketing team becomes site consumers focused on content creation and digital programs that drive business goals.

Together, both teams become experts in controlling the platform and innovating the digital experience. This is the roadmap for hyper efficiency and the foundation for accelerating digital business success.



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