ASSETTE

Assette Implementation Approach

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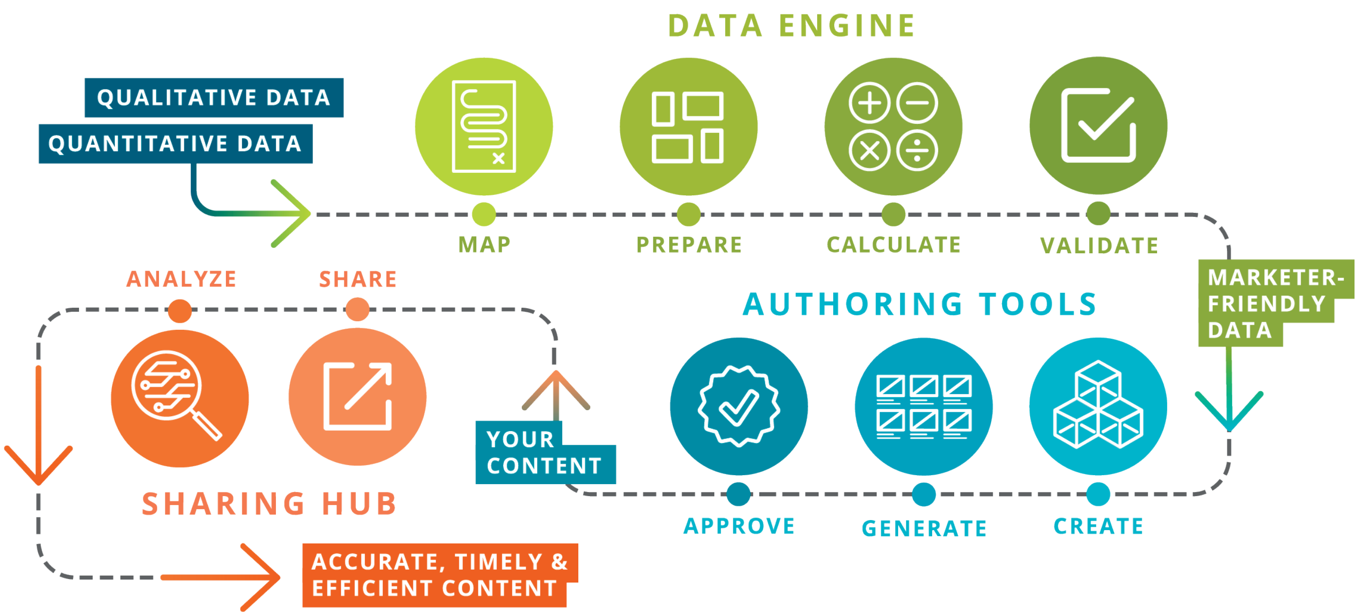
Assette Software

Assette is a cloud-native software solution that runs on Microsoft Azure. The product has three core parts, two facets and several modules.

- **Core parts:** The Assette Data Engine, the Assette Authoring Tools, and the Assette Sharing Hub.
- **Facets:** The application and the Developer Tools. Note that the application includes admin, configuration + data object and AssetteGPT editors.
- **Modules:** Assette Presentations, Assette Client Reports, Assette Factsheets, Assette DDQs, Assette Investment Commentary, and Assette Client Portal.

  Product capabilities are bundled into modules that are based on the type of content you plan to automate. The core parts and facets are embodied in each module. Your IT team or an ACE-certified consultant implements each module with Assette's guidance.



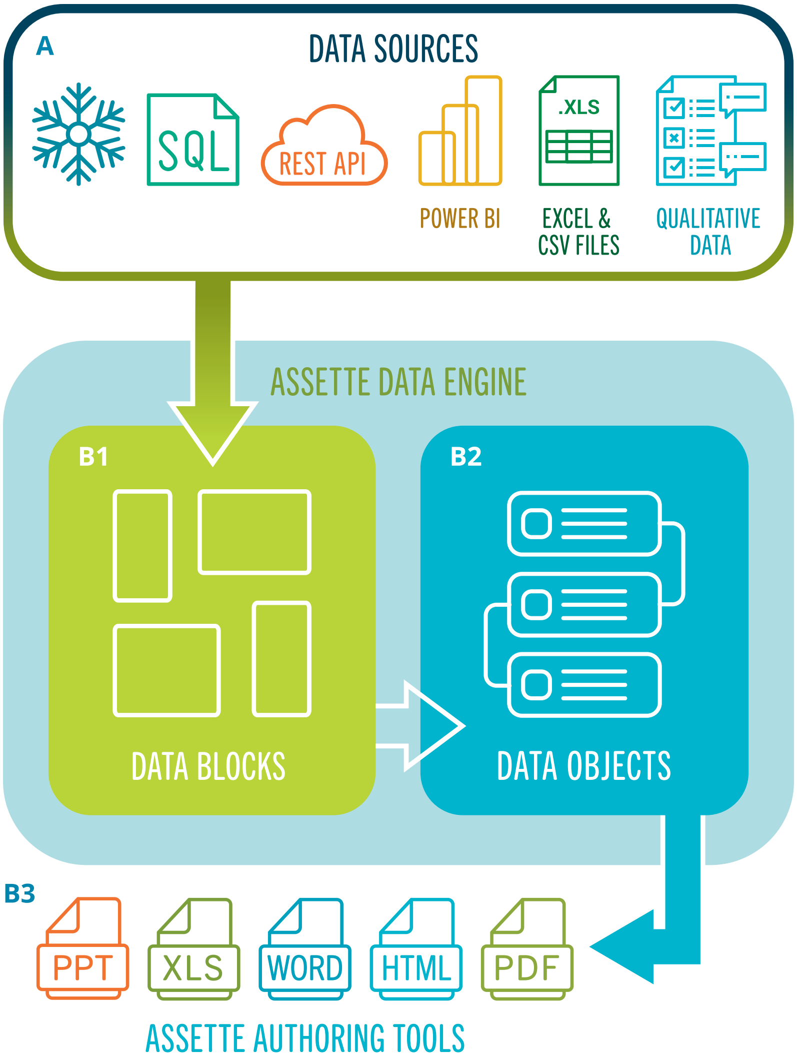
How data flows through Assette

As you begin your implementation process it's important to understand how data moves through Assette software. Here's an overview:

Data is taken from your data sources (call them "**A**"), via the Data Engine and Authoring Tools (which is "**B**") to your content (call them "**C**"). Generated content then resides in the Sharing Hub (so sales and client services personnel can easily find and deliver content).

"B" has three layers:

- **B1 /** Data Blocks layer, in the Data Engine, that interfaces with your data.
- **B2 /** Data Objects, also in the Data Engine, that take data from Data Blocks and arranges the data for reporting in a marketer-friendly manner.
- **B3 /** Microsoft Office-based editors, in Authoring Tools, that marketers use to "wire up" Data Objects to shells (charts, tables, and text blocks) in templates. There are also web-based editors for HTML templates.



Implementation Approach

We recommend implementing one module at a time and within that module focusing on one asset class or strategy. By focusing on a module and asset class/strategy/product, you realize the benefits of automation on a rolling basis.

***A BENEFIT OF ASSETTE** – You can start (and pay) only for content you are ready to automate based on data availability on your side. As you organize and make more data available, you can add modules to keep automating your content.*

The Assette Implementation Process

There are eight steps to implementing Assette Software.

1. Gather a Team
2. Train Business/Data Analysts & Developers
(and System Administrators and Qualitative Data Managers)
3. Conduct Business & Data Analysis
4. Develop & Test Data Artifacts
5. Train Authors
6. Author Templates & Test Output
7. Train Sales & Client Service Users
8. User Acceptance Testing & Go Live

Step 1: Gather a Team

Identifying the right people for your implementation team is key to success. Below are the roles you will need. Where possible having one person with multiple skills is recommended.

Role	Tasks	Experience & Skills
Project Manager Ownership of the implementation process and work.	Maintain a project delivery plan, coordinate tasks and activities among team members and the Assette team and remove any roadblocks throughout the process. Monitor delivery timelines, identify key risks and issues, coordinate issue resolution. Maintain Project Governance practices (Meeting cadence, project reporting, stakeholder management. Provide guidance on prioritization and/or changes that arise. Engage business users for clarifications as needed.	Prior exposure to IT software project management. Experience working with distributed IT/software and business teams. PMP/ACP or any equivalent project management qualification.
Business/Data Analyst Understands your firm's content and analyzes the data requirements needed to generate your content. Arranges data (coming from Data Blocks) in Data Objects to match content needs.	Document and clearly articulate data requirements to your team, especially developers.	Business data analysis skills. Investment industry certification is a plus. Previous experience in collaborating with developers about data needs.

Role	Tasks	Experience & Skills
Developer/ Data Engineer Develops data artifacts that surface your data in Assette. Arranges that data to match content needs.	Code and develop in Python, and if needed SQL. Develop Data Blocks in Assette. Support Business/Data Analysts in creating Data Objects.	Experience in working with data and an understanding of how your firm's data is organized. Ability to code in Python and SQL (if appropriate). Knowledge of YAML. General reporting/BI experience.
Tester(s) Performs testing to validate the accuracy of the data artifacts and content being produced in Assette.	Compares output generated in Assette – output of data artifacts and content – to external sources to validate accuracy.	Prior QA testing experience on software implementation projects. Ability and knowledge to procure data and content to test against. Understanding of data testing.
User: System Administrator Configures software, and workflows. Manages users.	Sets up software configuration for the firm. Performs administration tasks related to users.	Prior systems administration experience. Knowledge of IT/ business systems.
User: Qualitative Data Manager Manages the qualitative data regarding firm, strategies, people, and disclosures.	Regularly gathers necessary qualitative data. Inputs qualitative data into Assette for initial set up and as updates are needed.	Experience working with RFP systems and similar. Understanding of and access to the firm's qualitative data.
User: Author Authors/creates templates for content.	Specifies and sets up brand identity elements. Creates templates using Microsoft Office-based editors.	Experience in creating content you plan to automate. PowerPoint, MS Word and Excel **power user**. Knowledge of investment data, disclosures, and your content.
User: Sales and Client Service Represent users who will be finding and sharing content.	Use content and provide input to authors.	General familiarity with using business software. Understanding of your content.
Project Sponsor A senior business leader with the right level of authority and understanding of project goals, capable of steering and supporting the team.	Varies by firm.	

NOTE: Consider using Assette's implementation partners to fill some roles. They are pre-trained and ready to start implementing Assette software.

Step 2: Train Developers & Business/Data Analysts (System Administrators and Qualitative Data Managers)

Now that you have identified your team, training a part of your team on business/data analysis, development, administration, qualitative data management is the next step. The focus of these training sessions is understanding how data travels from your sources to your content and making this data marketer-friendly along the way.

After the training, your business/data analysts will understand how to think about investment data in relation to content, through the lens of how Assette works. Then developers learn how to build the plumbing that makes this data available to marketers.

After that, system administrators are trained on configuring the software and setting up users, and qualitative data managers are trained on how to enter information about your firm, strategies, people and even disclosures (collectively referred to as "Qualitative Data"). Remember, your developers need access to quantitative and qualitative data to create the data artifacts required for content.

Step 3: Conduct Business and Data Analysis

Before beginning the implementation work, you have already decided which modules to move forward with. Then, there are 8 general tasks.

1. **Select/finalize the asset class and strategy** (and products within each strategy) and the order you want to implement them.

   TIP: Consider "where the most pain is" keeping in mind your data readiness.

2. **Gather samples of all content** (for selected module and asset class/strategy of focus).
   a. **Identify unique pages**, keeping in mind unique vs superficially different (superficial do not need to be identified). Be sure to carefully consider the type for a page. For example, a performance page with a bar chart on top and table at bottom vs another page with the table on top and chart at bottom could be superficially unique, giving you the ability to select one variation as the unique one. On the other hand, your portfolio manager may like the chart on top when presenting to clients and your client service officer may like the table on top. In this case, both are unique. Another common reason for superficial uniqueness is having the same disclosures but said in different words.
   b. **Create Page Inventory /** Refer to Assette Component Inventory Excel file.

3. **For each unique page, identify unique shells – charts, tables, and text blocks /** keeping in mind what is unique and what is superficially unique. As an example, one performance table spells out periods such as Month to Date and Quarter to Date. Another abbreviates them as MTD, QTD, etc. You should pick one as the unique shell unless the abbreviated variation is required for a specific business reason.
   a. **Create a Shell Inventory /** Refer to Component Inventory Excel file and add to it.
   b. **Specify fields in each shell /** This is done to get a feel for types of fields and precise list may not be needed.

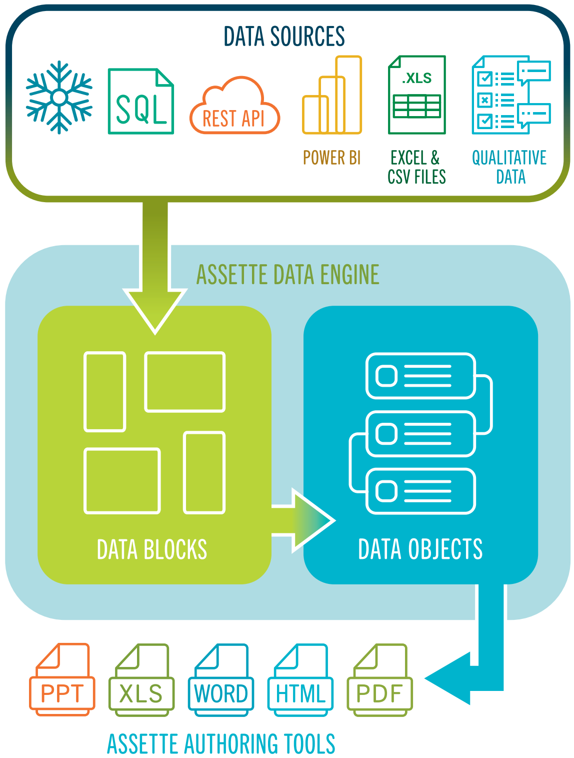
4. **Create a data map /** Use the Component Excel file to add source data fields mapping to fields in each shell. If any fields in a shell are to be calculated in Assette, specify that as well. The map should provide you where data required for shells come from.

   Overall, the Component Excel should provide a picture starting from your content – pages, then shells and through to your data. In other words, this is a map of how data travels from "A to B to C".

5. **Group/cluster unique shells** into groups by data categories. Use the Component Excel sheet.

6. **Sketch out Data Objects /** For each cluster of shells, plan out how many Data Objects you may need. With proper parametrization (inclusion of data settings) a single data object could provide data for multiple shells. For example, consider a sector attribution data set. Typically, a sector attribution report would include sector, industry level and some other categorizations of attribution data. With proper data settings, you can use one Data Object to arrange data so marketers can specify if they want to show sector level only or sectors and then industries.

   TIP: While including data settings in Data Objects results in fewer Data Objects to create, the complexity for marketers authoring templates may increase. Be sure to limit your data settings, keeping marketers in mind (for example, don't create one Data Object to show sector and region attribution). Also, always use marketer-friendly terms for data settings and include descriptions (the goal is to make marketers self-sufficient).



7. **Sketch out Data Blocks /** Review the planned Data Objects and decide on what data blocks are needed to feed these Data Objects. Generally, you will see clustering around data categories. See below and the "Select your data interfacing method" as what you decide impacts the data block functionality. For example, consider a holdings data set in your data source, which contains security names, market values, cost, sector names, risk country etc. This can be used directly in a report using a data block as a "pass through" if that dataset satisfies the requirements of the client report. This interfacing method is called "Grab & Show". But if the same dataset needs to be used to construct a sector allocation Data Object, then groupings and calculations will need to be carried out within Assette. This can be handled within the Data Block layer by grouping the holdings data by sector and aggregating the required fields to capture the total market values or the weight. Here, you may decide to isolate calculations into different Data Blocks. This interfacing method is referred to as "Prepare & Show."

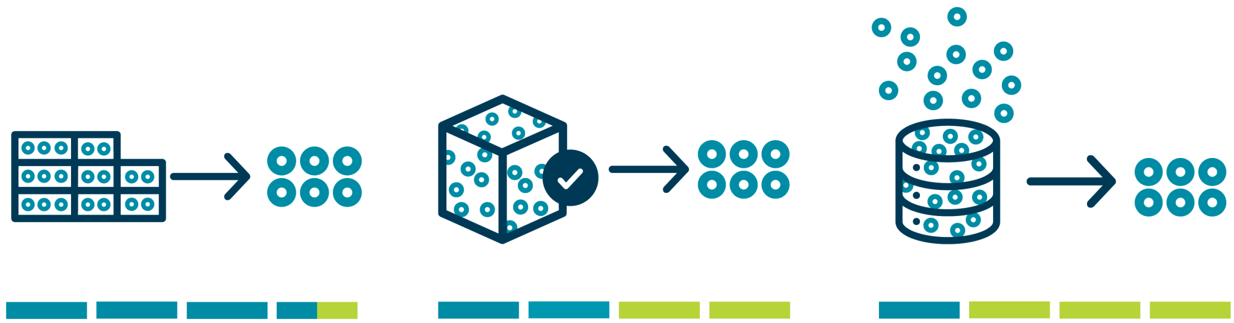
8. **Branding and Color setup /** Your brand guidelines and how they should be reflected in content should be finalized (or near final) as a part of the planning step. This includes colors you want to show for data points such as benchmarks, performance, each sector, etc. We recommend having actual PowerPoint files depicting your brand including sample pages along with representative charts, tables, and text blocks. The work you plan here will be used to author templates, including creating brand themes and specifying data colors.

   TIP: *If you have well branded sales materials, but client materials are not adequate, you can use the sales-related artifacts to assemble client-related templates (or the other way around).*

   NOTE: *You could start (and mostly complete) tasks above, except 6 & 7, even before signing up with Assette. This way, you will be ready to implement Assette as soon as the software is provisioned.*

Additional Tips to Keep in Mind:

- The pages you need to author in Assette should typically be fewer than pages you manually update today. Note: this is true only if you have many superficially unique pages, if not, your page count will likely be the same.
- The shells you need to wire up should be fewer than what is used today. This is because of eliminating superficially unique shells and the ability to provide “data settings” in Data Objects so one Data Object could provide data to several shells.
- The Data Objects you need should be less than the shells. An exception is DDQs, where you may need a Data Object for each shell.
- The Data Blocks count you need to develop should be lower than the Data Objects count, if “grabbing and showing” data (see below). This is due to parameterizing the data blocks to fetch data for many Data Objects. Where you “prepare and show” data (see below), this rule may not hold true or you may have more Data Blocks than Objects, depending on how you organize data blocks, especially if you decide to isolate common preparation tasks into separate Data Blocks.



IMPORT-AND-SHOW **GRAB-AND-SHOW** **PREPARE-AND-SHOW**

Select your data interfacing method.

IMPORT-AND-SHOW / Do you still use Excel or CSV files as sources for marketing? Import these files into Assette and use them the same as any other data source. Note that you can even import PDF (or any other type of file) and develop AI-based Data Blocks to extract data from these files.

GRAB-AND-SHOW / Prepare and calculate in your data platform. For example, you have calculated performance periods and annualized them in your data platform.

PREPARE-AND-SHOW / Expose foundation data to Assette, and then calculate your data in Assette (all done on-the-fly as data moves from A to C). For example, you house monthly performance factors for your accounts and indices and calculate performance periods and annualize in Assette. NOTE: Assette includes pre-created data blocks for calculating performance periods, including annualizing, as well as several other calculations.

Assette Recommendation: Organize and prepare most of the data in your data platform (or Excel files), but use Assette for performance periods calculations, certain aggregations, etc. to give flexibility to marketers.

Step 4: Develop & Test Data Artifacts

The main work in implementing Assette is to interface with your data – that is, to create Data Blocks that match your content needs. This work is done by your IT team or an ACE-trained implementation consultant.

NOTE: For "Import & Show" there is zero to minimal data block development work. This is because Assette software automatically stands up data blocks for datasets in most Excel and CSV files.

Next, you create Data Objects to arrange data provided by Data Blocks. Arranging data includes specifying which data make up header rows, details, and summary rows along with column headings, row descriptions, etc. plus abbreviations for these, if applicable. Further, you specify footnotes and disclosures that accompany your data. This work is done with zero coding (in a no-code editor).

As with any system, you need to test the data artifacts and content you created for accuracy, especially keeping edge cases in mind. We recommend selecting accounts and/or products that match criteria such as oldest and youngest account, largest and smallest, etc. and for several as of dates that show different data behaviors/market conditions. Of course, the more accounts/products you can test with, the better.

Initial testing is conducted as each artifact is developed and authored. For example, when a Data Block is created, the output of it should be tested, then when Data Objects that use the Data Block is created, test to verify data objects create accurate output, considering all possible data settings.

TIP: *Test and release on a rolling basis so authors can start building templates as soon as a quorum of data artifacts are ready for a particular content type.*

Different Tenants:

You can develop, test, and run Assette software in a single tenant or you can purchase additional tenants as required by your IT processes. For example, a separate tenant for development and another for UAT (in addition to the production tenant, which is included in your annual management fee).

Step 5: Train Authors

In this step, authors from your marketing team are trained on using Assette editors – running inside Microsoft Office as well as browser-native – to author templates. Authors use data objects to create shells, and in turn use these shells to create templates. Authors are shown how to create "auto updating" content where applicable – for example, bios that automatically update tenure at the firm and disclosures that update dates based on data that is displayed. Finally, proper setup and use of branding elements are covered.

TIP: *Get started on training authors about a week before a quorum of data objects for a content type is ready.*

Step 6: Author Templates & Test Output

Based on what you learned, authors create actual templates and then test and validate output generated from the templates. We recommend using the same account and product criteria used for data artifact testing.

TIP: *Test, validate and publish templates on a rolling basis so you realize the value of automation in small pieces and work up to complete automation during the life of the project.*

Step 7: Train Sales and Client Service Users

Towards the end of the implementation process, sales and client service users are trained on how to use Assette. This training focuses on finding content, sharing content and tracking how recipients engage with that content. In addition, they will learn how to customize content (and templates) for specific needs.

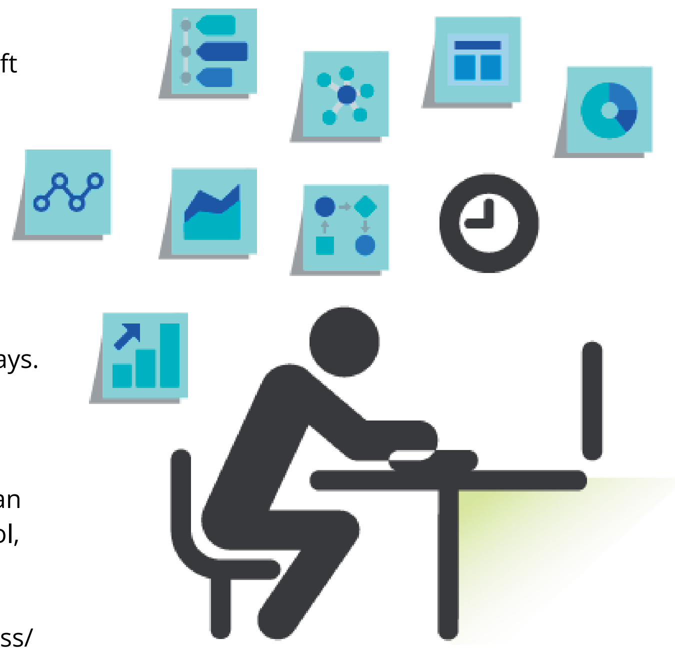
Step 8: User Acceptance Testing (UAT) & Go Live

In this final step, representative users across all user roles would acceptance test the entire system, provide feedback, resolve any issues, and then prepare to go live. If you used different tenants for development and/or UAT, to go live, you use the Tenant Manager feature in Assette to promote the artifacts you developed and authored (and user accepted) from one tenant to another.

Now, your sales and client service users can easily find and share content and track how your clients and prospects engage with the shared content.

Tools we Recommend:

- **A project management tool /** This tool will track tasks and dependencies for the entire project – this could be a tool such as Microsoft Project, JIRA, Azure DevOps, or Excel. Your project manager will own this.
  a. How you organize and use the project management tool matters more than the tool type.
  b. The tool should be able to produce an executive summary of project progress, especially outlining any blockers and delays.



- **Requirements analysis and functional specifications documents /** These are particularly important for Data Blocks. You can use features in your project management tool, an internal Wiki or Word documents. Writing clear specifications, reviewing, and following what is written is key to success. Your business/ data analyst should own these documents. Remember, for Import & Show, there is zero to minimal data block development.

Delivery Approach

- After conducting business and data analysis, we recommend an Agile project implementation approach such as Scrum/Kanban that will ensure continuous delivery in iterations. The overall project is a hybrid of waterfall and Agile – analyze across content and plan out required artifacts, but then implement automation in an Agile manner.
- Agile ceremonies will also allow any impediments to be surfaced on an ongoing basis, pull the right people to resolve them and make course corrections that will help meet your planned timelines.
- Release by data category and aim to complete a particular content type.
- Understand the definition of done (DoD). What constitutes completion for each artifact, and overall readiness to move to live.

The Assette Team is here to help:

Assette Role	Description
Client Consultant	This is your primary liaison. Leads the set-up process, coordinates training, provides oversight during implementation and facilitates the overall relationship between Assette and your firm.
Developer Trainer	Conducts training for developers on the theory and use of Data Block Editor and Data Object Editor.
User Trainer	Conducts training for your users on application functionality, including authoring and administration.
Developer Coach	During development work, provides support and guidance to your developers.
Client Support Team	As the implementation phase approaches the finish line, the Assette Client Support team will begin engaging in the project. On a mutually agreed upon live date, the Client Support team will be the primary contact point for user and developer support. They will: • Manage support tickets, including resolution within SLAs. • Manage client queries and provide required guidance. • Coordinate with product management and development teams for any client reported issues and enhancements.
Subject Matter Experts	Throughout the process Assette SMEs may be brought in to assist.

NOTE: *One person may play multiple roles depending on type skills needed to support you.*

Appendix A: Detailed Breakdown of Time and Effort by Role

The following graphs highlight the anticipated hours (in white text) by role for each phase of the implementation and the overall expected role utilization.