

Why You Need a Content Management System - CMS

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In a nutshell, solid content is the key to a successful website and this requires superior organization and quality management. Each business or organization has its own strategies for collecting, organizing, storing and maintaining the information intended for consumption by an audience. These strategies will change from time to time to go along with ever-changing technology. This transition is the key; which technology to implement to stay competitive and operate more efficiently without losing the existing resources, databases and practices businesses built since the inception. This is why you need CMS.

What is it?

CMS is a set of processes, applications, and databases that help businesses create, store, coordinate, and publish information with a consistent method in a useful format and in a timely fashion. Companies need to spend considerable amount of time evaluating CMS platforms and their use based on the requirements set forth by each company. One important thing to consider is the skill level of the people who will be directly involved with the chosen platform on the daily basis.

Types of CMS

There are several different types of products and styles within the CMS world. Most CMS tools in the market are fine tuned to target one of the CMS sectors. Different front ends are available depending on the content type. Elements of various CMS styles can even be mixed and matched.

Web Content Management Systems (WCMS):

WCMS is used to author and manage HTML content. It is used to administer and control a large, dynamic collection of web content such as HTML documents, images, and Cascade Style Sheets (CSS). This subset of CMS emphasizes managing only web content. Products vary in functionality, complexity, and range.

Enterprise Content Management Systems (ECMS):

ECMS manages content on an enterprise level of organization's information, company templates and logos, including web, print, and any alternative outputs. This type of ECMS emphasizes comprehensiveness. The products offer a good amount of functionality, complexity, and range. It is designed to capture, manage, store, preserve, and deliver content for the following main categories:

- Document management
- Software
- Web content and portals
- Records management
- Workflow management

Document Management Systems (DMS):

DMS is a specialized content management system for technical documentation. Main focus is on documents (such as Microsoft Word files), and are more for internal use than for presenting content for public consumption. They vary broadly in functionality, complexity, and range.

Digital Rights Management Systems (DRMS):

DRMS are parallel or complementary to CMS. These systems only manage intellectual property rights information for any content that exists. They vary broadly in functionality, complexity, and range, but tend to specialize in areas where Digital Rights are a priority (such as music or video). The content in CMS also may refer to abstract information and not necessarily physical documents, such as semiconductor or smart card configurations.

Asset Management Systems (AMS):

AMS systems manage so-called content "assets" (images, video, audio, and other binary, non-textual content). They vary broadly in functionality, complexity, and range, but tend to be used in organizations where assets like these are numerous (such as photo agencies or graphic design firms).

Mobile CMS:

Mobile CMS is a system with the ability to deliver managed content on mobile devices and Smartphone.

CMS Styles

Hosted:

With hosted CMS, CMS vendor hosts, administers and maintains the CMS. In this scenario all responsibility lies on the vendor.

Commercial:

With commercial CMS, a vendor builds a CMS application and sells it to the client, who is in turn responsible for the maintenance. The client has more control, but more responsibility as well.

Open Source:

As with any Open Source software, there is no cost to acquire the software. The client has all of the control and responsibility, with full dependency on the Open Source community for support. More often than not, open source products tend to be poorly documented, with a narrow focus in their features.

Nonprofit:

These styles may be hosted or commercial, but they tend to include features that many nonprofits find useful.

It is important to evaluate the state of your content. Is your content well organized? Is the information easily found on the website? Is the information searchable? How often is it updated? Is feedback readily available on your website? All these questions should provide an insight into the state of your web content, its organization or lack of it. With the right CMS platform, companies are able to standardize their processes and save time by having a better organized content. Whether it is starting a website from scratch, or updating your web structure and building extra functionality, using CMS can help you move towards your goal faster. Keep in mind that CMS platform is only a tool which helps businesses to operate more effectively. To have a successful website requires commitment and daily work. Having the right tools to operate your online business gives companies that competitive edge against their competitors.

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