

Introduction of Content Management System

If you want a number of people (even as few as three) to share in the development of your website, it gets confusing if you use normal HTML publishing methods such as FTP. You have conversations like this...

Aaron: "Babar, did you update that file of meetings on the server?"

Babar: "No, I was going to, but I forgot."

Aaron: "Anyway, it's changed, but I think it's wrong. It says the next meeting is on the 29th, but shouldn't it be the 28th? Did somebody change the date?"

Babar: "Maybe Cacafofo did it. He was here yesterday. And that link to the venues page has changed back to last month's problem. Did you edit that?"

When this sort of thing keeps happening, you know you need a content management system - often called CMS for short. A CMS is a piece of software that manages website development. It can keep track of all changes to a website. It will record who changed what, and when, and can allow for notes to be added. A writer can create a new page (with standard navigation bars and images in the same location on each page) and submit it, without using HTML software. An editor can receive all the proposed changes, and OK them, or send them back to the writer to be corrected. If you are working in an organization that's changing its website more than once a day, with several people working on it, using a CMS can bypass a lot of annoying problems, and save a lot of time.

That comes at a cost, of course: a possible cost in money, and a big cost in time - for everybody to learn how to use the system. The up-front cost of content management systems ranges from zero to a million dollars or more. But if your organization is a large one, perhaps with hundreds of web developers (such as a university) the cost of the software is a small component of the total cost of the system.

There are hundreds of CMS to choose from - partly because it's not very difficult to write one. Partly because of this range of choices, what *is* difficult is to find a system that suits the organization well. Though a CMS is meant to make life easier, in several organizations we've worked with, the adoption of a CMS seems to have had the opposite effect - by creating new rigidities that need their own work-arounds. Sometimes, a huge amount of effort in a CMS seems to have gone into devising ingenious ways of stopping people from doing things that they want to do. When this happens, a CMS can end up wasting more money (in the form of staff time) than it saves. And because IT people are defensive about systems they've spent a lot of time developing, and situations are constantly changing, it's very hard to be sure that a CMS has improved efficiency.

What is Content Management System (CMS)

A **content management system (CMS)** is a computer application that supports the creation and modification of digital content using a common user interface and thus usually supporting multiple users working in a collaborative environment. CMSes have been available since the late 1990s.

CMS features vary widely. Most CMSes include Web-based publishing, format management, edit history and version control, indexing, search, and retrieval. By their nature, content management systems support the separation of content and presentation.

A web content management (WCM) system (or WCMS) is a CMS designed to support the management of the content of Web pages. Most popular CMSes are also WCMSes. Web content includes text and embedded graphics, photos, video, audio, and code (e.g., for applications) that displays content or interacts with the user.

Such a content management system (CMS) typically has two major components:

- A content management application (CMA) is the front-end user interface that allows a user, even with limited expertise, to add, modify and remove content from a Web site without the intervention of a webmaster.
- A content delivery application (CDA) compiles that information and updates the Web site.

Digital asset management systems are another type of CMS. They manage such things as documents, movies, pictures, phone numbers, scientific data. CMSes can also be used for storing, controlling, revising, and publishing documentation.

Features Content Management System

- SEO (search engine optimization)-friendly URLs
- Integrated and online help
- Modular and extensible
- Easy user and group management
- Group-based permission system
- Full template support, for unlimited looks without changing a line of content
- Easy wizard based install and upgrade procedures
- Minimal server requirements
- Admin panel with multiple language support
- Content hierarchy with unlimited depth and size
- Integrated file manager w/ upload capabilities
- Integrated audit log
- Friendly support in forums and IRC
- Small footprint

How Content Management Systems Work?

A typical CMS works like this:

1. A professional web developer designs a web page format - typically with a logo at the top, and standard navigation options across the top, down the left hand side, and/or at the foot of the page.
2. This new format is used to create a master template.
3. All the web developers in the organization get to use special software that lets them add text and images to web pages, automatically using the master template.
4. Each completed page is submitted to an editor, who might make changes or send it back to the writer for revision. When the page is OK, the editor clicks an on-screen PUBLISH button and uploads the page to the web server, so that the world can read it.
5. Each page is usually saved on a text database. Most web pages have file names that end in .htm (usually implying Microsoft origin) or .html (usually implying Unix), but sometimes you will see pages ending in other file extensions, such as .php or .cfm or .asp. These are often generated by content management systems. However, some CMSs will generate plain .html pages, which are more easily found by search engines.
6. The CMS also generates indexes, showing what files have been changed when, who updated which file, and so on.

The more elaborate CMSs perform a lot more functions (such as archives, built-in search engines, permission control, and workflow management), but the above ones are basic.

Advantages of Content Management System (CMS)

Self Control: You know your business better than any designer or developer and if you are getting chance to explain your business or edit your content yourself then it would be like getting golden egg. CMS gives you facility to manage your content yourself without paying a single penny to developer.

Daily Update: If you want to stay in the market then you have to fresh content or your content should be changed on a regular basis. If you don't have time to write fresh content daily then there is no big deal some CMS provides you facility like Joomla and Wordpress to schedule your content so that you can write 10s article and schedule it for next 10 days so your content will be fresh daily and this will really generate traffic.

No Page Limit: If you have your CMS rather than Static Website then you can create UNLIMITED number of page there is no such kind of limit.

Better Communication with your clients: Whether you're a retailer with an on-line catalog, a small business owner looking to grow, a writer looking for exposure, or any business or organization seeking to maximize chances for success, a CMS opens up new ways to communicate with your audience. Especially as e-mail systems become more and more clogged with useless junk mail, your customer can rely your content and get their useful information directly.

Show what you want: You can create restricted content so only authorized user can view your pages. There is complete user manager in various CMS so you can choose which page you want to public and which one not.

Security: There are different kinds of storage mechanism for different CMS some uses Flat file system some uses Database system. Database system can be easily restricting access to your content so your content is secure form standard website attacks. Even your file may be hacked but your database will be safe and in term of CMS you get very tight security for editing any file.

Collaboration: A content management systems can also incorporate a work flow engine and facilitate the collaborative efforts of your staff in creating, editing, and approving content before it gets published.

Your Ranking is in your hand: A CMS allows you to make changes to your site in real time if you wish, and these changes will be reflected in your search engine rankings. You can more easily stay on top of your success and make quick adjustments when needed to continually improve your site's effectiveness.

Change layout yourself: You can change CMS website layout yourself. You can change module position, enable/disable them it's very user friendly so need to worry about single line of HTML code.

Save, Save and Save more Money: Plain and simple, in the long run you'll save money versus paying someone, whether they're a member of your staff or an outside consultant or service, to make all your changes and updates by hand.

Disadvantages of Content Management System (CMS)

- **Potential to break your websites look and feel if not used properly.**

So many things can go wrong, formatting errors, incorrect preperation of images, no image compression, inconsistant resizing resulting in out of proporation photographs, breaking away from the 'style guide' of your website that you may have paid a designer a

lot of money to create for you, thereby effecting the consistency of your brand. Most of this can be mitigated by proper training or indeed good advice on which CMS to use and as they say time heals all things. After some initial teething trouble most of these issues can be ironed out eventually.

- **You may not have the resource to update website regularly**

(By resource I mean the trained, motivated staff with time in the day, on top of all their other duties, Note: do you plan to pay them more to take on this extra responsibility or if you plan to do it yourself are you aware of the time involved to do it properly) , there is no point paying for a CMS to be implemented, that you don't intend to use very often and more importantly one that you don't have the resources; time, staff and skills to use effectively.

- **Using a CSM effectively can require certain computer skills that you or your staff may not have**

Taining will cost money so think about offsetting this against a retainer on your developer. Both options are well worth consideration.

Conclusion

A content management system really can save you a lot of money, sometimes even in just a short time. From simply being able to find your content and understanding how it's all being used, to being able to version and branch when needed, a CMS can provide much needed functionality to help you leverage your information assets and get your tech writers collaborating on a fundamental level. Now that you understand the basics, it's time to build up your list of requirements and start getting demos.

REFERENCES

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