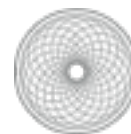


EXCERPTS

Choosing the Right Content Management System for Your Web Site(s)

Plus: When and How to Build Your Own

EXCERPTS



About This Paper

BGV Media Consulting is a vendor-neutral partnership of media consultants who specialize in developing strategies for digital content creation and delivery to meet specific business objectives. This report has been produced without outside funding or investment from any content management company, and was created only for those wishing to learn more about content management systems or those who need assistance in selecting a CMS solution.

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It is also available from our Web site, BGVMedia.com.

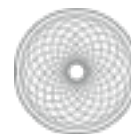
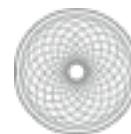


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Publishing has changed dramatically in the years since the launch of the World Wide Web. In the early days of the Web, most Web sites contained just a few pages. Making updates or changes required only a few lines of code.

Today, with consumers expecting an ever-increasing volume of on-demand digital content from a variety of sources, no one person could possibly undertake the management of all digital content on modern Web sites. Instead, behind nearly every site is an automated series of tools and code that enables digital content to be managed sensibly.

There are hundreds of such content management systems to help power Web sites. But with so many solutions, it can be difficult to determine which CMS best fits a particular organization's expectations and real-world needs.

The challenge is to find a CMS solution that will meet your current digital content needs, enable your company to grow and expand, and enable you to adapt to the inevitable changes and developments on the Internet.

This detailed report offers you a comprehensive examination of content management systems, products and solutions, as well as best practices and common pitfalls.

Here's what you'll find inside:

- A detailed evaluation of 14 vendors with objective summaries.
- Web access to a list of 100 other common content management systems.
- A three-page resource guide listing the necessary terms and definitions for learning more about CMS solutions.
- A checklist your company can use to help determine what your content and technical needs are before searching for a content management system.

Using this report, your Web team will:

- Learn the lexicon and gain a general sense of how CMS's work so that you may have an informed discussion with potential vendors.
- Assess the CMS you currently have and determine if that system best meets your company needs.
- Create a working, realistic technology budget that will better help you allocate your available resources towards existing CMS solutions.



- Create a vendor shortlist, determining quickly which vendor categories and CMS products will and will not work for your site(s).
- Work towards implementing a new CMS solution within a reasonable timeframe
- Avoid common mistakes and unforeseen pitfalls during selection and implementation.

Excerpts

CHAPTER TWO: Assessing Your Needs

Before selecting a vendor, we advise you to take inventory of your current content production and publication methods.

It's critically important to first complete a self-evaluation within your company. This process will help to ensure that all of the decision makers and those charged with implementing any changes have input. Virtually everyone in your organization has a different perspective on how and when to use Web tools. Some staff may have innovative ideas and will be ready to help develop your organization's Web site. Others in your group may want your CMS to accomplish the arduous task of managing workflow, ensuring that content is being checked and vetted. Some may want your Web site to manage events or membership. All need to be taken under consideration. ...

Ten key organizational questions to consider before you research a CMS:

1. How much content does your organization produce daily? Do you need to publish throughout the day, every day or just a few times per week?
2. What does your workflow entail? Does just one person publish your content to the Web, or can multiple people publish?
3. Who is providing your content? Does it come from within your company? Via freelancers? From a user or community group? Do you bring in content feeds from elsewhere, such as blogs?
4. Who is your audience? How technologically savvy are they? Would they take advantage of new Web tools as they become available?
5. Do you have in-house technical staff, or do you outsource technical tasks?

...



Use the following Technology Assessment Worksheet during a staff meeting to help facilitate discussion about your organization's technology needs. Consider sending a copy to each of your team members individually and then synthesizing their answers into a short report. That way, you may find it easier to keep dialogue free and open.

Once you have assessed needs and resources across your organization, you can begin to vet possible CMS vendors and solutions.

...

Technology Assessment Worksheet – page 1

1. Does your staff have programming knowledge? Who are those staff members?
2. If yes, what programming languages do they know?
3. If not, will your company commit to filling a permanent Web developer position?
4. If not, will your company also commit to paid training for current staff members?
5. Is your office a Windows or Mac shop? Which system takes precedence?

...



CHAPTER THREE: Evaluating Possible CMS Solutions

In this section, you'll find a detailed description of how content management systems work and various items to consider as you make your technology decisions.

A. How It Works

Producing content for the Web, at least in terms of technology, usually entails four stages: content creation, content management, publishing and archiving.

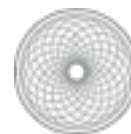
Content Creation – Most CMS products are Web-based. To access the CMS, a user goes online and logs in to an entry screen that may look like a friendly, easy-to-use database. This database represents the “back-end” of a CMS where documents, images, information, etc., are collected and organized). Meanwhile, the “front-end” refers to the simple graphics and buttons that guide your staff as to where to enter that text, photos, etc. (The front-end is also known as the “user interface” or “UI.”) Here, text, photos, audio and video can easily be entered, edited and filed for later use. Many CMS products offer an easy-to-use WYSIWYG (“What You See Is What You Get”) editor, along with buttons to enable hyperlinks, formatting and more.

...

What to Expect: Hidden Costs

There may be many hidden costs associated with your CMS choice. We advise that you read all documentation, contracts and discussion forums about the CMS vendor thoroughly before finalizing any agreements. Here are some of the possible unexpected costs:

- If you decide to change part of your initial build-out design during the process, will your company be charged?
- Is your CMS provider charging you to host the CMS in addition to charging a license fee?
- Is there an additional charge for items such as:
 - email newsletter or email blast applications?
 - tools such as ...



CHAPTER FIVE: The Vendor List

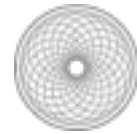
Different vendors and CMS solutions offer various price points, breadth of services and access to support. We have chosen these 14 leading providers and evaluated them based on multiple criteria.

This sample is not meant to be comprehensive nor to steer you towards the purchase of one particular product. Rather, we selected a few examples each of the most commonly used enterprise, mid-market and open source platforms within North America. This vendor list provides a snapshot and summary and should help enable you to evaluate further content management systems when your organization is ready for that step.

We have also created a key (on the following page) with a list of 56 criteria used to evaluate the vendors. Next to each criteria, you will find a simple definition. For broader definitions, please see the Web/ CMS terms glossary at the end.

If your organization is interested in a CMS not included within this report, the authors are available to vet and quantify additional CMS products by request.

(Continued on following page)



SAMPLE: Alfresco Enterprise + Community

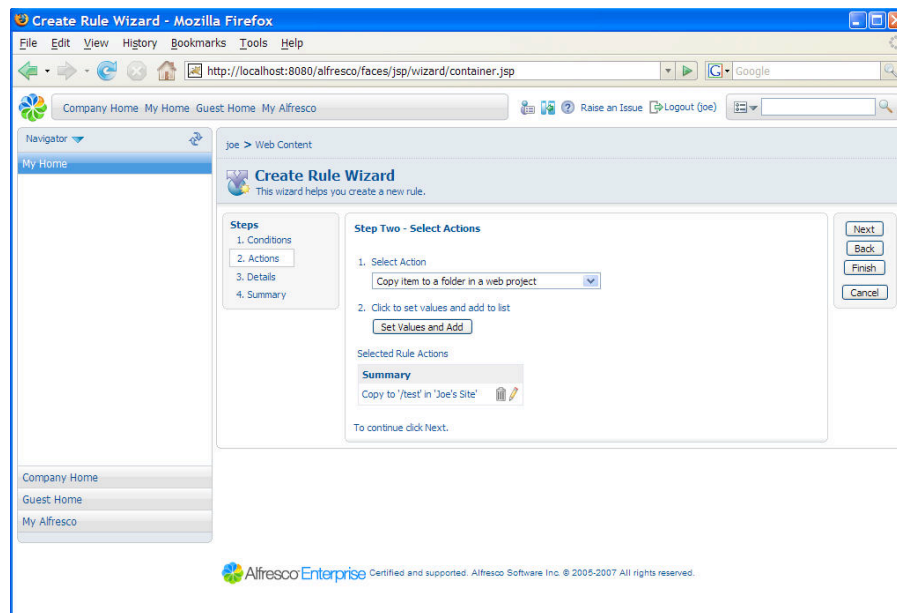
CONTACT: <http://www.alfresco.com>

USERS: Christian Science Monitor, MIT, Knight Ridder Digital, McGraw Hill

SUMMARY: Open source alternative for enterprise content management.

APPROX. COST: \$10k/ year (supported)

LICENSE TYPE: Open



Alfresco.com allows users to upload and convert documents to new formats via a Web-friendly interface.

System requirements: server	Any with Java 1.5+
Operating system	Any
Programming language	Java + PHP
Users have root access?	No
Users have shell access?	No
Security – audit trail?	Yes
WYSIWYG editor?	Yes
Spell checker?	Yes
Workflow management?	Yes
Edit cycle within the system?	Yes



SSL compatible?	Yes
SSL logins?	Yes
Support – Manual to read?	Yes
Support – Available on phone?	Yes
Support – In-person training available?	Yes
Support – Developer community?	Yes
Support – Online help?	Yes
Drag-n-drop content?	Yes
Easy image resizing?	Yes
Edit code directly?	Yes
Advanced caching?	Yes
Page caching?	Yes
Content scheduling?	Yes
Web statistics?	Yes
Style/template management?	Yes
Translation management?	Yes
RSS?	Yes
FTP support?	Yes
Microsoft Outlook, iCal or other calendar application support?	Limited
Multilingual content support?	Yes
Blog?	Free Add On
Chat?	Free Add On
Classifieds?	No
Discussion/Forum?	Yes
Document management?	Yes
Events management?	Free Add On
Job-posting boards?	Free Add On
Mail form?	Yes
Customizable user page?	Free Add On
Newsletter?	Yes

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