



Enterprise Content Management

For marketing professionals

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Time to web is now a crucial imperative. Organisations cannot spend months establishing their website and intranet infrastructure, integrating it with the rest of the business systems and assets and developing mechanisms for keeping the content relevant and up to date.

Another imperative is the need to enable content contribution from across the enterprise regardless of the contributor, authoring tool or level of web technology skills.

Change is also a major challenge. Web content needs to accommodate and facilitate change. Today the pace of change and the diversity of content make web change management difficult without an automated system.

A number of organisations have traditionally taken a cautious approach to moving their business presence to the Internet. Whilst this can be successful in minimising risk, an unfortunate consequence has been a growing spread of disparate departments and divisions with differing content and marketing or communications objectives and requirements.

The problem manifests itself particularly for marketing departments in a number of key areas:

- ❑ Maintaining the company's websites with accurate and up to date content
- ❑ Maintaining brand image, customer service and customer loyalty
- ❑ Rapid deployment of relevant content and fast reaction to competition
- ❑ Maintaining effective marketing communications inside and outside the organisation

Amongst the main factors driving businesses towards reviewing their website maintenance processes are:

- ❑ The size of the site being managed and the volume of content that is published
- ❑ Diversity in the sources of information such as from departments, suppliers and business partners
- ❑ Targeting and personalisation needs
- ❑ Sophistication of customers and customer demand

The most common website maintenance issues facing marketing managers are:

- ❑ Demands on time and costs, as well as being a drain on managers' valuable time
- ❑ Keeping sites up to date. The effort required to revise and re-publish pages means that site information is frequently out of date
- ❑ Poor quality and loss of brand image. Often characterised by a lack of consistency where information is updated *I* duplicated and page links are not working following site changes
- ❑ The speed of changing the look and style of the site, or making changes to keep pace with competition or customer service issues
- ❑ Bottlenecked business processes. The responsibility for revising, testing and making the site live often rests with IT (the 'webmaster') creating further delays in the process
- ❑ Marketing loses overall control of the publishing process

Marketing managers are under even greater pressure to keep information up to date as well as having more of it to manage from product releases, marketing campaigns, dealer and partner appointments to press releases, news items and customer service activities.

There are also management and control challenges, such as maintaining consistency and ensuring only properly reviewed and authorised information is published. International companies have the added complexity of providing localised information in the site visitor's native language.

2. CONTENT IS A VALUABLE MARKETING ASSET

The problems in maintaining the company's website, and the amount of investment in automating the process, is not just a factor of the organisation's size. Even a small company, starting out with a 'brochure online' site, can soon run into the time-consuming and costly process of repeated regeneration.

For example a marketing director realises that the company site can only be successful by ensuring the content is fresh and up-to-date. Therefore a decision is made to change the content on the relevant parts of the site.

The update programme begins with requesting content from individuals and from appropriate departments. The content is collated, reviewed and passed to the design agency or relevant IT staff responsible for maintaining the site.

A prototype is produced for approval. Then after various revisions and adjustments have been made, the final version is approved for publication. The whole process has taken so much time, effort and cost that a marketing advantage could have been lost.

With the pressure this puts on the organisation's marketing department, typified by the so-called "webmaster bottleneck" it is little wonder that most websites are months out of date and remain virtually static between costly overhauls.

As a marketing professional in charge of the development of your company's sites think for a moment about all the content assets that you need to manage.

On your sites you might have:

- ❑ Product specifications, prices and benefits
- ❑ Product illustrations
- ❑ Production information
- ❑ Product categories
- ❑ Special promotions
- ❑ Terms and Conditions
- ❑ Site navigation links
- ❑ Availability

- Support information
- Press releases
- Jobs
- Office addresses, maps and directions
- Logos, photographs and diagrams

These might be sourced from:

- Internal systems
- External suppliers
- R&D
- Marketing
- Photographers
- Production
- Operations
- Site users

You then need to integrate this content into a consistent site and funnel it towards:

1. Customers, prospects, pressure groups, shareholders and other external audiences - **INTERNET**
2. Employees, including R&D, Support and Admin staff - **INTRANET**
3. Sales force, suppliers and partner companies - **EXTRANET**
4. Internal and external systems

The volume of content is increasing rapidly as is the type of content from text and html files to sound and streaming video. In addition there is an increase in the number of content contributors spanning all departments across an enterprise. These contributors tend to be business managers who

are non- technical and do not understand the standard software development practices.

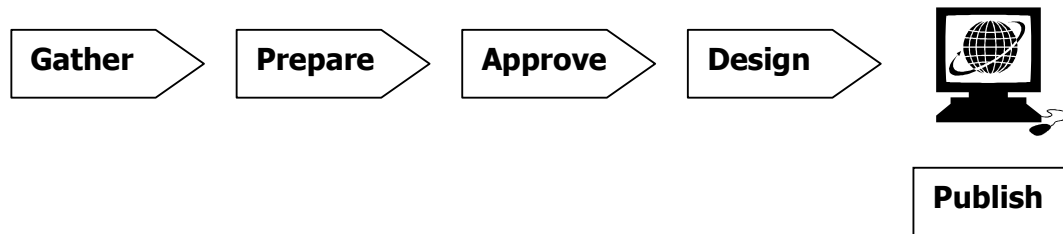
Each audience group needs to receive the appropriate content in the correct format and this can lead to extremely complicated production processes.

The website is now at the heart of business interaction. Static pages and “brochureware” are no longer enough to satisfy the user. Websites need to be a sophisticated and interactive application that is designed to reach target users with timely and accurate content.

3. CONTENT MANAGEMENT

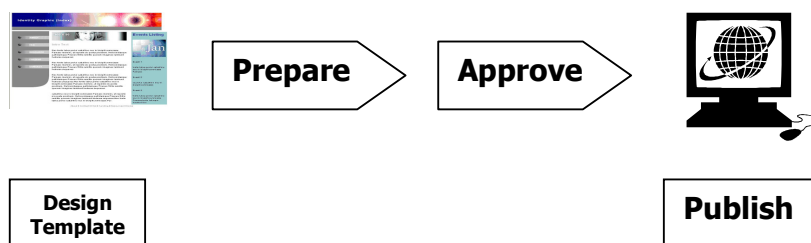
If you are maintaining your websites manually you will be aware how difficult this can be. Contributions must be found and then they must be converted into a suitable form for web presentation and publishing.

This is often outsourced to a design agency and can involve a long cycle of proof reading, activity chasing and reviews. Final publication is the responsibility of a web master and since this requires technical skills it can become a bottleneck.



As a result of the effort and expenditure required, updates are often handled as a total rebuild for the site or a section. It is for these reasons that many websites remain static for months on end.

A content management system addresses these problems by automating the entire process. The key is to separate the content from the way it is presented. Content such as text and images is entered into page templates that define how the page will look, including page headers and navigators.



Until recently the creation of document based content was informal in most companies. Now with the very widespread use of word processing software any PC user can create content easily. Combine this with an email system that supports file attachment even the most casual user is a potential publisher to the enterprise.

This can result in documents being distributed throughout an organisation without any real publishing control. As it is easy to distribute an attached file

to a large number of people we rarely think about the best way to manage the information contained in the document.

All over the Web, marketing and sales managers are realising that manual systems for managing their online offering could leave them vulnerable. And this isn't just spin - last year one US based online retailer received 6,000 orders for a £360.00 monitor it accidentally advertised for £154.00!

If that doesn't keep you awake at night, consider the following situations, all drawn from actual events:

- It takes a month to sign off the site's Terms & Conditions because every time any one of your organisation's lawyers changes a full stop, all the other ones need to sign it off
- You realise that your site's visual design isn't working, but it will take a month to wrap a new design around the same words
- Your web design agency insists on all content being signed off two months before it goes live... and then transcribes it incorrectly
- In a parting gesture, the Web publisher you fired replaced photos of board members with sheep
- You can't update one section of the site because another section has a major overhaul underway. You can either publish the entire site, with both complete and incomplete updates, or hold until both are completed
- You have to work through the night to publish the company's results at market opening time because you don't have a secure area to develop them in advance
- You send email promotions about 'upgrading' to Windows 2000 to registered Mac users
- You're employing an army of expensive skilled webpublishers just to update the site

Make no mistake - if you are running an enterprise website without a Content Management System, you will hit a wall where your e-business is no longer sustainable because you can't update your site reliably or quickly enough.

Content Management is required to provide a structured editorial process to bear on unstructured content. The tools include editorial workflow, version control, scheduling and format conversion for multiple viewing devices.

Every kind of enterprise is now looking towards Content Management to gain control and manage the technology to get the best commercial results.

4. CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Do you need a Content Management System?

CMS Works Inc. is an independent source of news, information, opinion and analysis with reference to web content management. . They have devised the following scoring system to ascertain the necessity of investing in a CMS.

Please tick the statements that are true for your organisation from the list below:

- Content bottlenecks with a web master, IT department or other gatekeeper
- Site visitors have difficulty finding what they want
- Some content is inaccurate/outdated/redundant/unauthorised
- The home page does not provide a full, up to date portal to the rest of the site
- The website exhibits inconsistent design and navigation schemes
- Contributors overwrite content/files accidentally
- Content contributors are unable to pre-publish content to appear at a specified later date or time
- Website managers cannot associate the company's products and services to articles or news on the site or vice versa
- Content has feet of clay: web managers cannot easily reuse/share/distribute/import it
- An inability to protect or control access to content keeps good material offline
- Marketing and product managers cannot customise content for customers, partners and other important visitors

According to CMS Works Inc. any companies that agree to 7 or more of the above points on the checklist are most likely to have a content management problem.

What is a Content Management System?

Content management as a discipline is a set of processes, technologies, concepts and practices to facilitate developing, collecting, managing and publishing content in an easy to use set of software tools that constitute a sophisticated Content Management System.

Content Management is one of the most important budget items in the Total Cost of Ownership of a web site. Content Management is the task of gathering the information from the Content Owners, getting approval, creating the pages, adding content to the site, editing, and updating it simply, effectively and quickly.

Typical basic trends have emerged over the past 5 years that are directly related to maintaining and evolving a successful commercial web site. These include:

- The amount of information and functionality on the site is expanding rapidly
- There are requirements for expanding the site to service new areas such as B2B relationships, multilingual content and integration with suppliers and partners
- The content needs constant updating and the update process needs to be more efficient and involve departmental managers
- There are even more content contributors to the site many of whom have different content authoring and delivery processes
- Expectations for the reliability and quality of site performance are rapidly increasing. Broken links, missing images and invalid email addresses are not acceptable
- Consistency of branding and presentation must be maintained
- There are growing requirements for content to be published not just to other digital channels but also offline channels
- There is a growing number of different types of media assets and content that have to be managed over and above text and imagery
- There is increasing pressure for solutions to be accountable. Their performance must be measurable and auditable for a variety of commercial, legal and other reasons

The key to handling these issues is to endeavour to put the control of content publishing with the marketing department and the business units. Using IT as the vehicle to manage content wastes valuable skills on basic tasks.

Whilst IT is ultimately responsible for the website, Content Management strikes a balance between empowering business users and maintaining control. Content Management allows non-technical contributors to put content into production without using IT staff resources thus saving valuable IT resources.

IT is responsible for building the infrastructure to support effective business processes. The Content Management System provides the templates, tools and workflow management to create the ability for deployment, change and asset management. The result is control for IT, website management for marketing, freedom for content contributors and a cost effective bottom line for the business.

The Content Management System ensures that posted content has been through workflow and version control processes, so that only the latest version is seen by content approvers and only the approved version is posted to the website.

Content authoring and design costs are reduced because centrally stored and easily accessible content can be reused. The use of templating enables the reuse of a single page layout and design for multiple pages across a site. IT operational costs are reduced because of the Webmaster's decreased role in the publishing process.

Templating, a major Content Management feature, allows authorised members of an organisation to contribute content to a site without concern for formatting, using pre-established templates developed by a web page designer. By developing templates, the web page designer controls the look and layout of the web page and designates the area that can be used for the publishers content. For example the template could lock down the banner and navigation parts of the page but allows the end user to contribute a section designated for page specific content.

In addition to providing a consistent look and feel, templating offers marketing the ability to reuse page templates to create multiple pages on the site. The Content Management System provides the ability not only to develop templates, but also to manage the templates as content. With page templates a non-technical user can use a familiar desktop application such as Microsoft Word to create or update pages.

At the basic level the Content Management System must provide universal access to content and features via a browser interface. Content contributors in the organisation will range in profession, resources and skills. Consequently anything other than browser access is a significant barrier to use of the Content Management techniques but non-technical staff.

Content Management facilitates communications between managers, developers, and authors and across departments, who now have access to the same up to date information. In addition it becomes very difficult for content assets to be on the site accidentally. Any updates must pass through commissioning, creation and one or more predefined signoff steps before the system will publish it. The resulting audit trail provides accountability for each action.

A primary Content Management System benefit is that the organisation and the business managers gain control of the content. When they want to post content they value the control of the content creation process and the rapid deployment that can be achieved.

To sum up, the most likely indications that you need to deploy a content management system are as follows:

- ❑ You have a number of content contributors and you are finding it difficult to effectively manage how they contribute content and ensuring the quality of the content
- ❑ Most of your content contributors do not have HTML skills and need an easy interface to submit content
- ❑ You use informal processes for getting content on and off site and these are causing detriment to the site and extra cost to correct
- ❑ Automation of content publishing to the site would save time and cost and would improve the user's experience and perception of the site
- ❑ There are regulatory obligations to store past versions of your site and re-create versions of the site from the past
- ❑ There would be a benefit from having greater control over the design of the site for branding consistency
- ❑ There is a need to publish different forms of the same content to multiple channels dynamically from a single source
- ❑ There is a need to syndicate large volumes of content either into your site or out from it

Content Management can provide the marketing manager with:

- ❑ Efficient workflows are established for distributing tasks
- ❑ An efficient use of resource and firm management control
- ❑ Providing assured quality
- ❑ The use of preset templates promotes consistency
- ❑ Automatic page linking and validation of links
- ❑ Enforcing authorisation at appropriate stages
- ❑ Change control of versions and releases

5. CONTENT MANAGEMENT BENEFITS

Company benefits

- Increased involvement in website publishing throughout the company
- Reduced risk of losing customers or disengaging staff because of dated or inaccurate content
- Reduce time consuming and costly enquiries to company departments to answer common questions not addressed on the site
- Increased productivity resulting from employee's faster access to essential information and documents
- Easier access to latest and accurate information and content 24x7 (particularly important to offsite employees and partners)
- Increased savings by empowering non-technical business users to self publish
- Improved communication with staff, agents, partners and customers
- Visitors have access to timely and accurate content
- Encourages repeat site visits because of fresh content i.e. current product selection, new pricing, new products, special offers etc.

Business user benefits

- Zero learning curve: Allows update of content using standard Windows type toolbars and standard web browser interface
- Access to instant self-publishing: Empowers people from marketing, sales and other departments to make their own changes and publish live within minutes or hours, instead of the typical turnaround of days or weeks
- Site consistency: Enforces compliance with corporate publishing standards such as layout, font size, background colour etc.

IT benefits

- Enforces controlled changes in accordance with pre-determined procedures and role based security
- Eliminates workflow bottlenecks by shifting responsibility from overworked IT staff to non-technical personnel
- Provides “anytime & anywhere” access for the administration of content management

6. THE BUSINESS CASE FOR WEB CONTENT MANAGEMENT

Cost savings

Below we have listed the cost implications at each stage of the Content Management process that we have discussed in this white paper.

Activity	Manual Expenditure	Content Management Saving
Gathering contributions	An administrator would be generally employed to gather and collate the content contributions.	Content is entered directly by authorised business users without the need for additional resource.
Preparation	The content needs to be converted into a form suitable for web presentation. This is done by IT or an outside agency.	Content is applied to pre made templates by non-technical staff and is an automated process. Savings on outsourcing costs or costs of IT are considerable.
Approval	Content reviewing, proof reading, activity chasing, version tracking etc. is disruptive and demanding of management time.	Workflow control results in a fast and efficient process for tracking progress. It greatly reduces management time and effort and speeds time to web.
Publication	Any technical; maintenance such as navigation controls, metadata, page linking etc could result in a bottleneck. Internal or external web specialists generally carry out this process.	Business users can make their own changes, preview the impact and publish without technical intervention. This frees up expensive IT resource.
Administration	Managing and maintaining the website resources and user access security.	Resources are placed in a repository under version control and user enrolment functions simplifying security maintenance.
Access to information	The cost in time for employees, partners and customers to find timely and accurate information.	Collating content and automating navigation and search facilities achieve fast and efficient information retrieval.
Organisations require easy to use solutions to cut cost and increase effective web content publishing.	Currently the publication of web content is in the hands of IT and web based professionals. This is costly and can waste valuable IT resource and result in bottlenecks.	Content management provides easy to use browser based interfaces that allow non-technical staff to effectively collate and publish relevant content.

Reducing risks

Security is a major concern for Internet sites. However marketing departments can reduce business risks due to insufficient content management such as wrong product pricing, accidental publication of sensitive data or poor navigation for customers. The table below highlights the main risks and common issues with regard to website management:

Risk	Implications	Content Management Risk Avoidance
Incorrect or unauthorised publication	Major effect on company credibility and damaging to potential business.	Workflow management ensures changes and publications are subject to pre defined authorisation.
Failure of link integrity	Poor navigation – customers rarely return to sites that fail to function correctly.	Automated linking, link validation and preview ensure accurate links prior to content publication.
Out of date content	Customer sees superseded information. Websites unable to keep pace with competitive changes will not succeed.	The ability to publish content quickly removes the barriers to keeping content relevant and up to date.
Slow error recovery	Slow recovery from errors can disable the site.	Version control facilitates swift rollback to previous page or site release versions.
Poor quality or inconsistent content	Site branding and corporate image are affected. Dilution and confusion of marketing messages	Content is published using a set of pre formed page templates and site navigators to ensure consistency.
Organisations need to react quickly to rapidly changing market conditions, legislation, competition and customer demands.	Increasingly non-technical staff and managers need to be directly involved in the content publishing process	Content management empowers more people in the organisation to contribute resulting in improved content and relevancy and greater team ownership of site.

Taking the business forward with content management

Marketing managers are being constantly tasked with ensuring the infrastructure of the company's web site, intranet and extranet can support the future strategies of the organisation.

The table below indicates how content management can help facilitate the achievement of the business needs in the future:

Business Driver	Business Need	Web Content Management Advantages
Competitive opportunity	Rapid deployment of new web content	Time saving through automation of the process from start to finish.
Internet marketing	Requirement to make continuous site changes and update content.	The ease of making changes and publishing new content.
Targeting and personalisation	Site, zone and page versions tailored for specific types of visitors.	The same content, or portions of the content, can be presented in a variety of ways without duplication.
Mergers and acquisitions	Presenting a consistent and co-ordinated online presence from existing disparate websites.	All content can be co-ordinated through workflow control and can be presented in a standardised manner using templates.
International operations	Localised versions taking account for language, cultural and legal differences.	Support for country site versions. Automatic routing of content via workflow control for translation and subsequent review by overseas partners.
Wider sharing of knowledge	Ability to share knowledge throughout an organisation.	Authorisation controls and permission settings provide safe and secure access to information.
Improving access to information	Reducing the time for employees, partners and customers to find relevant and accurate information.	Fast and efficient information retrieval is achieved through collating content and automating navigation and search facilities.
There is a requirement to maintain the legacy IT systems but also ensure that any web based solution is "future proofed".	Any systems must be able to function with the existing infrastructure and adhere to industry standards.	ActiveWeb Content Management System is built using Microsoft's .NET Technology, an approach that is fast, flexible and future proofed whilst utilising legacy systems.

7. CONCLUSION

Content Management can provide the marketing manager with an efficient use of resources to enable the organisation to effectively achieve its' web strategy:

- ❑ Through the wider involvement of non-technical business users the bottleneck on the Webmaster is removed
- ❑ By ensuring efficient workflows are established for distributing tasks
- ❑ By providing assured quality
- ❑ Ensuring the use of preset templates promotes consistency
- ❑ By providing automatic page linking and validation of links
- ❑ Ensuring firm management control
- ❑ Enforcing authorisation at appropriate stages
- ❑ Change control of versions and releases
- ❑ Improved productivity