

Web development has evolved rapidly in the last couple of years and keeps on changing everyday. For many years, static or brochure websites based solely on HTML and CSS was the standard but that has changed. The need for fresh, constantly changing content and easy management of content has created a demand for content management systems. Static websites are difficult to maintain if not impossible for most people who are not tech-savvy.

In this article we will explain what a content management system is, the different types of CMS's and the benefits of using a CMS for your website.

So, What is a CMS?

I am glad that you asked. A CMS - Content Management System is a tool that enables the creation, editing, management, publishing and finally archiving of various forms of content such as text, images, documents, audio and video content and so on without the need for the expertise of a web designer.

Content management Systems enables technical and non-technical users to collaboratively and effectively manage content easily. The scalability of the numerous CMS available today simplifies their installation and customization. Most can be installed on the fly and can be used out of the box. Others have add-ons or components available to enhance the creation and management of different types of content as well as the look of the website using templates.

Types of CMS's.

There are numerous types of CMS available and the one you choose will depend to a large extent what type of content and or service you are going to be managing. But just to mention a few, these are website content management, search , portals , knowledge (Wiki) management, document management , rich media and digital asset management, archiving & document life cycle management, transactions and enterprise application extensions, teams and & collaboration , messaging and e-mail management , this by any means is not an exhaustive list.

There is a need to analyze the different kinds of CMS available, their functionality, their scalability, ease of use and suitability to determine the right one for you. The most popular free CMS on the internet today are Joomla for content management, Wordpress for blogging, and OsCommerce for e-commerce. There are hundreds of others open source CMS which means they are free but there are also commercial ones available but it is out of scope in this article to delve into them.

Benefits of using CMS

The most obvious benefit of using a CMS is that anybody can use them to manage web content. Though helpful there is no need to learn any programming language since the CMS does all the work for you.

Almost all CMS come with an easy to use WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) editor that helps you for insert, format and position content just as you would in any word processing program.

- CMS enables you to have a design consistency throughout your website.
- A CMS enables decentralized management of content.
- It enables you to organize your content from a single point.
- Collaboration and support is encouraged for multiple users.
- A CMS enables a website's content to be fresh, high quality and consistent.
- A CMS allows content review, editing and approval automation.
- A CMS enables easy control of website updating, publishing and archiving.
- Localized and multilingual content deployment is simplified.

All in all A CMS gives you ultimate control of your website and thereby allowing you to focus on promoting your product and or service. If you are serious about having a successful internet business, then you should consider using one of the numerous CMS available and take advantage of the functionalities they offer that will make your business succeed online if you are not already using one.