

Save Yourself Time With Content Management

FIND OUT HOW A CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM CAN SAVE YOU TIME AND TROUBLE WITH MANAGING YOUR WEBSITE.

Do you cringe at the thought of needing to add new information to your website? If so, you may want to consider content management for your next upgrade.

A content management system (CMS) is a container for your website. A CMS lets you set up predefined page layouts (templates), establish work flow rules, categorize your content and use a word processing editor to edit content. Let's discuss each of these a little more.

On a typical web page, you generally see some kind of graphic at the top along with navigation buttons across the top and/or down the left side of the page. The rest of the page is pretty much up for grabs – maybe one or two columns of text, some graphics and some buttons to let the user request more information or post a comment to a blog.

Typically, web pages have certain items that are consistent throughout the site (headers and navigation, for example) and other items vary (graphics, text placement, etc.). Within a CMS, you can establish templates to manage those layouts, making your life much simpler when you want to add another page or change the format of a page.

A CMS makes it really easy for just about anyone to add or change content rather than needing an IT guy to make the changes. It can be a little scary though, if someone accidentally updates something he maybe shouldn't. Work flow rules control who can do what within your site. At TDK, for example, several people can add and modify content, but we are the only two who can push those changes out onto the website. Work flow ensures a second set of eyes sees changes and helps make sure

people aren't changing things they shouldn't.

Within our website, we have a variety of types of content. We have articles we've written on topics in the industry, quarterly newsletters, descriptions of the type of work we do and so on. By categorizing these within our CMS, we can use our work flow rules to control who can update what and give ourselves visibility to where we may need to add more content.

The best part of a CMS for a business owner is the ease of editing. We overhauled our website a year ago; prior to that we didn't have a CMS in place. To make updates, we had to update the HTML code and do a lot of manual publishing of the changes, which required a software developer. With a CMS in place, anyone in our office can make updates through an easy-to-use editor similar to Microsoft Word, and the work flow rules allow us to make sure the changes are appropriate. Our developers are out of the content business, which keeps them happy too!

There are many content management systems on the market, including several open-source (free) solutions, and they offer a variety of capabilities. The only downside is that you will most likely need an IT professional to implement a CMS solution for you (they generally require configuration and some development to build templates, work flow, etc.). If you've been considering an update to your website though, ask your IT partner about implementing CMS – we think you'll be glad you did. ■

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Content Management Systems Help With:

- **Website page layouts**
- **Establishing work flow rules**
- **Categorizing your content**
- **Editing your content**



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