

when we say “think outside the box,” we don’t mean “think out-of-the-box.”

not even when that’s what you’ve been sold.

managing content management
a white paper by **page10**
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More than just changing how you manage content, a content management system changes the way you do business. Content management might start with the technology of a system. But it goes far beyond that, reaching internal operations, compliance and workflow management, online channel development, organizational strategy, document management – nearly every aspect of your business. After so many angles and elements to consider, the question becomes: are you managing the system, or are you letting it manage you?

As the need for tools to manage content has increased, and the sophistication of those tools has evolved, many organizations have focused a lot of time and energy on technology: what the content management system (CMS) can do, how the system should be implemented, and what level of ROI the system will deliver.

more than a machine

the question becomes: are you managing the system, or are you letting it manage you?

A good CMS can help keep your content clean and organized, reduce redundancy, enhance security, make audits simple, provide reporting and metrics, and smooth the flow of content creation, approval, and publishing. Maybe you are considering implementing a CMS and want to make sure you get significant ROI. Or maybe you have already invested in a solution but aren't receiving the return you had hoped to receive.

Yet despite the sophistication of the CMS itself, many organizations continue to face some basic issues:

heavy reliance on IT for implementation and changes: the work effort to implement a CMS is often larger than people think. Once in place, existing IT processes can make system modifications and enhancements complicated and slow.

resistance to change: while the sponsor of a CMS project may understand the value that such a system can bring, key stakeholders and end users too often do not. Changing how they do their work can be a major roadblock – as well as a political minefield – on your CMS project.

buying the over-promise: the system promises to solve all your content management issues, but do you really understand what those issues are? Or whether the configuration you're spending money on meets your needs in a cost-effective way?

plan for the ripples

Content management is change, no matter what content management stage you are in. If you are still evaluating and planning, broadening your plan can account for the ripples of change before they rock any unwary boats. The key is to recognize that you will be introducing more than a new piece of technology. You will be proposing changes to some of the fundamental ways in which your organization operates: changes that will ripple beyond the immediate scope of the CMS.

For those in the planning and evaluation phase, the following question-and-answer approach offers advice and areas to consider as you move forward. For those who already have content management in place, this approach can help you fine tune your solution and navigate it into calmer waters.

understand the business goals of a CMS

not all businesses
will gain the same
types of value in
the same areas.

what?

When implementing a CMS, you are looking for a more efficient way to manage the creation, production, and organization of content. Make sure that you thoroughly understand the business drivers and desired outcomes so you can make the best use of the CMS.

how?

Content management systems can fulfill a number of different needs. To fully understand what your organization needs from CMS, evaluate the importance of each need within the context of your business:

- Authoring, editing, updating, and owning content
- Meta-tagging (describing)
- Collaboration between content contributors
- Review and approval workflow(s)
- Security
- Versioning/version control
- Content display control
- Template creation
- Content syndication and reuse
- Audience/content personalization

Not all content management systems will handle all needs efficiently. Conversely, not all businesses will gain the same types of value in the same areas. To ensure you really get the most from CMS, take the time to understand which needs apply to your business and will bring the most value when met. Even then, focus on the 80/20 rule: if CMS can add value by meeting 80% of your business needs, start there. Solve for the other 20% as you become more proficient in configuring the CMS and as you become more efficient with the development of offline processes that supplement the automated ones.

understand the scope of organizational change

it's important to fully understand what areas of the business a CMS will affect.

what?

Once you clearly understand which business needs will be met by the CMS and how much value the solution can add to your business operations, the next step is to fully understand what areas of the business it will affect. If you already have CMS in place, doing a little more analysis can help you understand how the system could better serve your audiences or how to extend its functionality to new areas of the business. Taking the time to understand which departments will be affected and what their current processes are can help build consensus and save you a lot of headaches – whether you are rolling out a new solution, or you are working with one that's already in place.

how?

Start by looking at your list of business goals and asking some questions in relation to those goals:

- Who owns the content that will be managed? Often there will be a number of content owners for different elements of content.
- What are the current processes to manage content? How is it produced, edited, approved, published, archived, and reported on?
- How do these processes differ from one department to another?
- How much of the process does it make sense to automate, and how much should stay offline? Often, process automation through a CMS requires a high level of system configuration and fundamental workflow change.
- What are the various relationships within and outside of the content publishing team?

increase adoption through communication

at the end of the day, the best CMS is the one that meets your business goals.

what?

Perhaps the most overlooked element of implementing a CMS is preparing your organization for the change by marketing the initiative internally. Simply implementing a CMS without building consensus or “selling” it opens you to the risk of your target audiences not utilizing the system to the degree they could or not using it at all. Spending the time needed to thoroughly prepare for a CMS implementation beforehand will smooth the entire configuration and adoption process. If your CMS is already in place, analyzing it in terms of the following areas can provide insight into improving and extending its use.

how?

- First, realize that you are taking on the role of change agent within your organization.
- Working from that standpoint, figure out the business stakeholders: who are the people who must buy in, to help you achieve your list of business goals?
- Identify the IT managers whose systems and processes will be affected, and get buy-in from them so you don't stumble into the quagmire of incompatible technologies, complex change management processes, or simple resistance to the change.
- Also know the end users: the people who will be using the system once it is in place. Research their current processes and observe them at work. Make sure your CMS is going to improve on their processes, and gain insight into how to make the CMS usable for these end users. Engage them in the definition and roll-out process, and educate them along the way.
- Work with your marketing team to communicate the value of the CMS to the organization and to your various audiences.
- Assess training needs and prepare appropriate sessions and/or materials. If you have engaged your end users well, this will be a smaller effort, but good reference materials are important for any user who won't use the CMS frequently.
- Leverage partnerships and industry experts who have proven patterns for CMS implementations.

the bottom line

At the end of the day, the best CMS is the one that meets your business goals. Driving content management system evaluation, implementation, and configuration out of business needs will help ensure that your CMS is the right technology. But understanding how your organization will need to change, planning for that change, and achieving the buy-in to make it happen will help ensure that your CMS is the right business solution.

page10 summary

We specialize in the business of content management. Whether you are starting from the ground up, or working with an existing solution, page10 will align business needs and goals with the technology to help you get the most out of content management.

evaluation: we remain technology-agnostic as we help you understand and evaluate your options. We will walk you through selecting a relevant solution that truly meets the needs of your organization.

implementation: we offer a thoughtful, proven approach to designing and implementing solutions that meets business needs, integrate with the available technologies, and ensure the intended ROI of your project.

assessment: we offer an affordable quick-hit assessment of your CM solution. The assessment is designed to help you understand how your current solution – or your current need for one – can help increase the efficiency and success of your organization. **Call us for more information: 952.567.2397.**

about page10

page10 provides user experience design, visual design and development, along with full technical implementation and support, with a striking commitment to quality.

page10 is a division of Page, Inc. Since 1997, Page, Inc. has developed a proud history of partnering with an array of regional and national clients to streamline business processes and build credible and efficient Information Systems. As a leading business strategy and information technology consulting firm, we bridge the gap between business and technology.

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