

### *Cleveland Web Development, Design, and Hosting*

You may have heard some of these terms before (CMS, Wordpress, Joomla, Drupal, etc.) but what do these mean? Is this something that I want for my website? This article will explain some of these terms and why they may be a good fit for your site.

## **What is a CMS?**

CMS stands for “Content Management System” and is becoming a very popular platform for websites on the internet. They are becoming very popular due to their flexibility and scalability and are typically the first choice when developing a website.

A CMS is the platform in which all of the CONTENT for your website is contained. Content is pretty much anything you see on your site, this article is considered content as well as any other articles, pictures and general text. Typically in a CMS, each page on your website is made up of one or more of these items: Components, Modules and Articles. I will break down each of these items later in this article. Each of these items can be placed in various sections on each page called positions. Depending on the template of the site, you may have many positions throughout the page, or maybe just a few.

The management of a CMS website is one of the most attractive aspects of this platform. It is primarily a menu driven interface where you can configure almost all aspects of your website. From writing article content in a word processor-like interface, to adding and changing menu items and positions throughout the website with just a click of a button. Most have a very intuitive interface as well as very powerful.

## **Why would I want one?**

There are many reasons why a CMS would be right for your website needs. It may be easier to explain this backwards. Why wouldn't you want a CMS? Without a CMS, all content, everything you see on your website, needs to be written into the code of each web page. This requires you to have knowledge of HTML code as well as any other web programming

technology you may be using. Even a simple update to a few words on a single page requires you to update the code contained in that page. You want to add a picture on your website? Without a CMS, you will need to know how to write the HTML code to display that picture on your web page.

With a CMS, content updates are a breeze. You simply use the administration web interface, locate your article (or create a new one) and use the word processor interface to write or modify your content. You want to add a picture into that article? Simply click on the “add/edit image” button in the article composer, browse to the picture you want to add and click insert. You can even upload pictures from your PC directly into your article by using the Media Manager interface built right into the CMS.

Remember a few paragraphs above when I promised to talk about Components and Modules? Here we go. Probably the most powerful tools of a CMS is the expandability. Some of the more established CMS platforms: Joomla, Drupal, Wordpress, etc. have hundreds of extensions which can be easily installed into your CMS to enable new functionality. Extensions are available for many common purposes such as: online stores, photo galleries, appointment calendars, slideshows, and many other uses. This allows a CMS to adapt to your needs and grow with your company quickly and easily.

## How do I get one?

Anyone can sign up for a web hosting account, install a CMS and off you go... The one thing to keep in mind is that although a CMS is a very powerful web application, it also has to be set up and configured properly. As with any web technology, if the proper steps are not taken, your CMS can be a target for online hackers, viruses, and other methods of stealing online data. Work with a web development company that understands the CMS technology and can guide you down the correct path to match your needs with the appropriate technology. STB Web Services specializes in Joomla design and development and helps our clients get the maximum benefit out of their CMS environment.