

## Definition

Content Management (CM) encompasses the techniques and tools for managing large and complex bodies of digital content for the purpose of publishing to multiple channels. The bodies of digital content most often implied are web sites. With the Internet growing at a rate of many million published pages per day, CM is relevant.

Some problems CM typically tries to solve are:

- Content is not up to date.
- Content is published late or early.
- Content authors are not always part of the web publishing process
- Centralized publishing creates 'webmaster bottlenecks'
- Opening a new channel is very costly.
- The cost of synchronizing many configurations/variants of the same body is prohibitive.
- Amateurish methods and tools discourage authors and editors.
- The published product has become unwieldy and difficult to change.
- Navigational widgets need to be created manually.
- Consistency in design is hard to enforce

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## History

CM was clearly identified as a separate problem/solution no more than two years ago. CM is related to, but different from Knowledge Management and Document Management

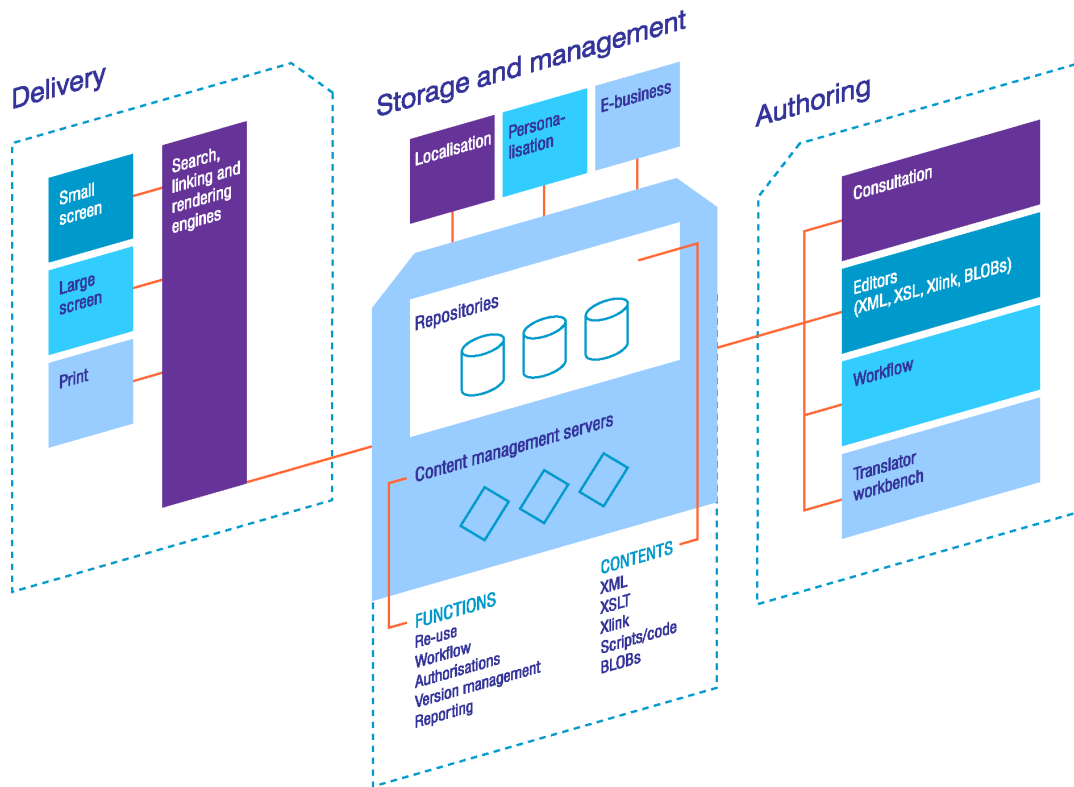
- Knowledge Management is cultural/informal and helps in creating knowledge, while CM is quite formal and deals with publishing acquired knowledge.
- Document Management deals with rendered documents (BLOBS, binary large objects) as entities, while CM deals with smaller fragments of information, which are not yet rendered *per se*.

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## Applications

CM applies to following domains, among others:

- E-commerce sites with 'transactive content', where transactions and content are mixed
- User documentation in different configurations, such as locale, site, group or individual
- Publication of references works, catalogues and service documentation
- 'Knowledge bases' for Customer Relationship Management (call/contact centers, customer care)




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## Issues

A few of the hot issues in CM are:

- *Authoring*: What tools can you offer content contributors: XML editors, DTP tools, Word, Word with add-ons, HTML forms, ... ?
- *Linking*: How to maintain referential integrity between linked pages when content is generated?
- *Multi-channel*: How ignorant can content really be of the ultimate publication channel?
- *Storage*: Which type of medium is best suited for storage: Office, HTML, XML or database (relational or object-oriented)?
- *Opportunity*: If fully-fledged CM is not opportune (too expensive) now, what must be done now to prepare its eventual arrival?

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## Tools

Deploying Content Management Systems (CMS) tends to be expensive, costing many hundred thousands of Euros. This is not what most organizations are looking forward to. A good understanding of requirements combined with some hard-headed decision making can lead to a CM solution that does 80% of what is needed for 20% of many hundred thousands of Euros.

XML is an obvious standard for a CMS where content is dynamic, being publishing to multiple channels, frequently updated, long-lived and connected to external systems.

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## References

Listed below are a few references to CM related sources on the Internet.

### Introductions

[http://idm.internet.com/articles/200004/im\\_04\\_18\\_00a.html](http://idm.internet.com/articles/200004/im_04_18_00a.html)

Discusses criteria for choosing a tool. Surprise: does not mention XML; mostly functional

<http://www.rpbouret.com/xml/XMLAndDatabases.htm>

About using XML with databases; mostly technical

<http://www.evolt.org/article/rating/20/5127/>

Why consider a CMS?

<http://www.cmswatch.com/>

A CMS portal

[http://dcb.sun.com/practices/howtos/selecting\\_cms.jsp](http://dcb.sun.com/practices/howtos/selecting_cms.jsp)

Ten things to know about selecting a Content Management System

### CMS listings

<http://www.xml.com/pub/a/2000/07/17/heterogeneity.html>

Discusses XML syndication

[http://www.imagingmagazine.com/db\\_area/archs/2000/04/img0004f1.shtml](http://www.imagingmagazine.com/db_area/archs/2000/04/img0004f1.shtml)

<http://idm.internet.com/tools/cm/index.html>

### Weblogs / CMS listings

<http://www.camworld.com/cms/>

<http://cms.filsa.net/>

### Reviews

<http://www.zdnet.com/eweek/stories/general/0,11011,2329627,00.html>

9/99 -- probably a bit stale

### White papers

[http://www.intranetsolutions.com/groups/public/documents/translatedpage/pub\\_a\\_metawhite.pdf](http://www.intranetsolutions.com/groups/public/documents/translatedpage/pub_a_metawhite.pdf)

<http://www.interwoven.com/developer/products/>

Choose a topic of interest: XML is there, as are personalization and syndication.

<http://www.metatorial.com/Papers/papers.htm>

Various papers and articles on CM

### Notable and new

<http://www.microsoft.com/servers/sharepoint/default.htm>

Sharepoint Portal is the Microsoft server for Intranet portals; see 'Managing Content Guide'

## Linking

<http://www.xml.com/pub/2000/10/04/linking/index.html>

For linking enthusiasts; technical

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