

INSIGHTS

Open Source CMS solutions: Why WordPress?

11/01/2011



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From left to right; WNDC - wndc.co.uk, Baby Zilli - zillibaby.co.uk and Opportunity Peterborough - opportunitypeterborough.co.uk

WordPress is a blogging platform developed in the true Open Source tradition. Supported by an enormous community of users, developers and contributors, WordPress is constantly developing and growing.

A recent report recognised WordPress as one of the “big three” Content Management Systems (CMS) with one of the strongest brands of any Open Source project, an enormous market share and most importantly a lot of love from its users.

Originally designed as blogging software, WordPress is focused on providing a simple and elegant interface for publishing web content. WordPress has built-in file uploading and a media manager, an image editor, a full set of Office-style text formatting options, draft, preview and publish workflow tools and a flexible categorisation and tagging system. Whether you are creating “news” or “page” style content, the image manipulation, text formatting and workflow tools provides support rather than hinder the content creation process.

Intuitive

WordPress has a comprehensive toolset packaged into an extremely easy-to-use interface. Many of our clients have described it as “intuitive” and this is what WordPress is renowned for – a user experience that makes publishing a pleasure.

Extensible

WordPress was designed to be customised and expanded upon. The library of almost 8,000 custom plugins means WordPress can do almost anything you can think of. If you can think of something WordPress can't yet do, its flexible framework means we'll be able to create additional features and functions for you.

Future-proof

WordPress is structured such that your content, its design (the theme) and any additional functionality (plugins) are separated. That means if you want a redesign in the future your content can stay as-is and if a cool feature comes along it can quickly and easily be added without changing the design. This separation makes your site future proof and easy to maintain and update.

WordPress has a massive share of the open source CMS market. Popularly used for personal blogs WordPress is also becoming a common tool for government and education sites. The UK government has released an “Open Source Action Plan” and there is a dedicated group for people involved in WordPress for education.

Many well known brands have adopted WordPress for their news sites or blogs such as Mozilla, eBay, Yahoo!, Ford, and Samsung. Whilst other companies

and organisations have used WordPress in more unsuspecting places: Number 10, Spotify, University of Colorado, University of Leipzig, Instabox, Falcon Motorcycles, Airroom. Engine Creative has developed a number of WordPress systems for local government and other organisations: Thirdfield, Moat Lane, Construction Futures and Northants Culture.

Large proportions of the proposal, pitch and planning stages of projects taken on at Engine Creative are spent analysing a clients requirements. It's important we make recommendations that not only serve our clients now but will also grow and adapt with their needs. WordPress being flexible and future proof often make it a perfect solution.

There are a number of key factors which influence whether or not WordPress is the right tool for the job, the most important of these being the complexity of a website's content model. A website intended to provide simple page and news-based content will fit WordPress perfectly, whilst a website which largely features custom or complex content such as products or services will not. If you are looking to build a website aimed at informing an audience, connecting with or building a community or leveraging social media – WordPress is probably your beast. If you are looking to set up an e-commerce website or create a web application then there are much better suited tools for you.

One of the deciding factors for the migration to WordPress is often usability. Many organisations struggle with updating their websites because the administration systems are unnecessarily complex, unwieldy or non-existent. The intuitive nature of the WordPress backend makes it easy to work with and we provide support and documentation to help ease our clients through the change process.



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Thank you for your time.

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