

The Changing Landscape of Content Management Systems

The world of content management systems (CMS) is diverse, with hundreds of products serving a wide variety of users and sites. Think of “CMS” as a category like “vehicles” – it includes many segments, and the products in one segment generally don’t compete with those in another, any more than motorcycles compete with trucks.

Content management systems can be divided into two broad types: hosted (SaaS) and self-hosted. Self-hosted software can be further divided into open-source and commercial products. And within each of these types, shown in the rows below, different products serve different kinds of customers, both in terms of who is building the site and who the site is for.

Table 1. Overview of the CMS Landscape

		Non-technical users	Web designers	Web developers	Enterprises
Hosted (SaaS)		Wordpress.com SquareSpace Yola Wix Weebly Google Sites Intuit Sites OfficeLive	Webvanta LightCMS CushyCMS PageLime Sitemasher Business Catalyst	Drupal Gardens	Clickability Crown Peak
Self-hosted	Open Source		Wordpress (.org) Joomla!	Drupal DotNetNuke ModX	Alfresco
	Commercial		Expression Engine	Ektron	SiteCore Vignette Interwoven SDL Tridion

Hosted Systems for Web Designers

Webvanta provides an exceptionally powerful hosted CMS, tuned for the needs of web designers, that makes custom databases simple. It is one of the first affordable hosted solutions that provides enough power and flexibility for demanding business sites.

Currently, most hosted systems are limited to simpler sites. Designers are predominantly using open-source, self-hosted CMS software. This approach pushes the web designer into a variety of programming and system administration tasks they don't enjoy and are typically not very good at.

As a result, we believe that the hosted segment is poised for dramatic growth, as hosted solutions provide all the capabilities designers need, give designers more control over their projects, reduce the cost of building sites, and eliminate all the headaches of software updates and backups.

A few hosted CMS offerings for designers, such as LightCMS, are starting to address this niche, but they lack the custom database support required for sophisticated sites.

Webvanta is not attempting to displace WordPress and other simple solutions for basic, blog-like sites. Webvanta is optimized for more sophisticated sites that demand a richer information architecture, yet cannot justify the cost of custom server programming.

Table 2. Comparing hosted CMS offerings for web designers.

Full CMS with custom database capability	Webvanta Business Catalyst Sitemasher
Simple CMS for sites without database needs	LightCMS
Originally a blog system, extended to support static pages and non-blog sites	Wordpress SquareSpace
Limited content editing service for existing sites	CushyCMS PageLime InContext