The Complete Nonprofit Website Toolkit
Lets Get Technical
August 2013

Logistics
Ask questions! Otherwise I’m speaking to a black hole!

Logistics
#7 to Un-mute
#6 to Mute
Wait for the recording to begin…

The Complete Nonprofit Website Toolkit
Lets Get Technical
August 2013

Introductions

Laura Quinn
Executive Director
Idealware
It’s Time to Get Technical

• You’ve got a plan
• You’ve got your content
• You’ve designed your pages

...now it’s time to think about the infrastructure that makes it all possible.

Including...

• A Content Management System
• Supporting Mobile Devices
• Integrating Other Tools
What Does a Content Management System Do?

Content Management Systems

Your CMS is the core of your infrastructure – deciding whether or not yours is working for you is a critical decision.

What is a CMS, Anyway?

A software package that allows non-technical folks to update the text and images on a website – and possibly build one from scratch.
There's Two Models of Websites

**Static Pages**

Update with HTML, DreamWeaver, or Contribute

**HTML**

HTML is a relatively simple scripting language.

**Editing in Dreamweaver**
Dynamic Pages

Style and Design

Page Layout

Database of text, images

Update within the CMS

CMSs Let You Update Text...

Almost all have a “WYSIWYG” editor

... Update Photos

You can upload images, and choose where to put them.
...Define the Look of a Site

Many let you pick from existing graphic designs; many let you design your own.

...Create Pages

They'll let you add new pages and place them in the website.

...Create Content Objects

They let you manage news items, events, grant listings, blog posts and other items separate from an actual page.
Some Will Include a Constituent Database

But You Might Not Need Tight Integration

If you just need to include forms that save to your database, that can likely be accomplished by an easy integration with another tool.

More on this later!

No CMS Can Build Your Site For You!

It can’t:
- Design a site that is useful to your visitors
- Ensure a functional and usable site
- Make sure the site enhances your brand
- Write your text and take your pictures
- Provide timely content updates

Only a human can do those things!
Key Question

If you're using a static site, is it worth thinking about a dynamic one?

Considering Moving CMSs

It's Difficult to Move CMS

So what kind of CMS you're using is really important, but unfortunately, it's complicated to move between systems.
It's a Big Project Upfront

In most cases, you'll need to do a substantial project to get the new site designed and configured.

And Then You Need to Move the Content

Then you’ll need to budget for moving the content as if you’re copy and pasting each page of text.

But it Might be Worth It in the Long Run

It's no small feat, but it will set you up for the long term.
Key Question

Do you think moving
To a new CMS is likely
to be worth the effort?

Choosing A CMS

Ease of Setup

- Do you need to setup your website yourself?
- Can you use an existing graphic design?
- Can you understand how to structure a site in a reasonable amount of time?
Ease for Your Content Editors

- Can your communications staff figure out how to use it?
- Is it easy for them to format articles and images?

Power and Flexibility

Do you need to support:
- a complicated site structure?
- a complicated work flow?
- A multi-language site?
- A multi-site structure?

If you don’t know what these mean, this probably doesn’t apply to you!

Integrating with Constituent Data

- Can the system integrate with your current constituent database—out-of-the box? With some work?
- Or is it worth switching constituent system to have an integrated solution?
### Cost

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Upfront License Fees</th>
<th>Cost to Implement Your Website</th>
<th>Ongoing License Fees</th>
<th>Additional Ongoing Support Costs (yr)</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A Possible Open Source System</strong></td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$20K</td>
<td>$20K</td>
<td>$40K</td>
<td>$5K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A Possible Vendor Supported System</strong></td>
<td>$65K</td>
<td>$5K</td>
<td>$20K</td>
<td>$45K</td>
<td>$5K</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Extensibility

- Can you get add-ons to do what you need?
- Can you create custom structures in the system?
- Can you adapt the code to do anything you want?

### Support for the System

- Who is in charge of system development?
- Where can you go for help?
- How likely is it to be around down the road?
Key Question

What are likely to be the determining factors for your CMS?

A Look At the Options

Open Source vs. Proprietary?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Open Source</th>
<th>Proprietary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Expensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Expensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Vendor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Vendor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extensibility</td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Complete</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It’s not a simple question. Each system has a different profile on the criteria often associated with open source tools.
Joomla

Polished and friendly. Not as flexible as some, but easier to setup and a great utility player. Open source.

Drupal

Powerful and flexible, but not as user friendly to learn as some. There’s a huge community to support it. Open source.

Wild Apricot

Integrated CMS and membership management system. $25-$300 per month.
Supporting Mobile Phones

How Does Your Website Look on a Phone?
A web-compatible phone can see almost any site, but some look better than others.

www.mobileread.eu

Consider Responsive Design
If you’re building from scratch, you can create a site that adapts itself to different devices. Often content management systems can provide this.
Making Your Current Site Work Better
Plan for those who only see the top left, or a full but tiny site

Creating a Mobile Site
Or you can think about a mobile site built particularly for phones.

Key Question
What option makes the most sense for supporting browsing on mobile phones?
Integrating Other Tools

If you’re not using a CMS already integrated with a constituent database, you’ll want to think about integrating other tools – like your email newsletter signup, or online donations, or constituent database.

This is Often Simple

It is common for things that appear to be part of your website, to actually be hosted by a vendor.
Like Email

You can add a sign up box to your website for most email services (like ConstantContact) by adding in a snippet of code that they provide.

Name: 
Email: 
Sign Me Up!

Online Donations

There’s also a number of services that help you set up a donation or payment form that look like a part of your website.

For Example

Ensure your donation form is friendly and professional. Images and other small details can be effective in increasing conversion.
Getting Forms into Your Database

Setting up a form that will submit directly to your database might be trickier. An easy option would be to something like Google Forms or FormBuilder, and import the data in by hand.

Getting Info OUT OF Your Database

Pulling data – for instance, member information – out of your database is likely to take a considerably more substantial integration.

Integrating with Other Data

There are three basic approaches to integrating eNews data with other data (grants, donations, etc)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Manually synch via import/export</th>
<th>Use an integrated package</th>
<th>Create a feed via API</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pros</strong></td>
<td>Least up front investment</td>
<td>All data is in one place and easy to access</td>
<td>Can create “best of breed” approach; can use existing systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cons</strong></td>
<td>Time consuming, ongoing, especially if high volume</td>
<td>Bigger investment up front. Must replace existing systems</td>
<td>Requires skilled programmer and investment up front</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look for...</td>
<td>Flexibility of import and export tools</td>
<td>A tool that can support all your constituent tracking needs</td>
<td>A tool that allows programmatic access to data</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Question

What needs to be integrated with your website that isn’t currently? What’s the best way to approach it?

Making the Hard Infrastructure Decisions

Infrastructure Changes are Expensive

Even a free software will have implementation and training costs associated.
Don’t Go Into them Lightly

Do your research and make the tough decisions with confidence.

But Might Be the Right Investment

If your infrastructure is out of date, it’s not going to get any less so over time.

Questions?