

Spinsights Presents...

Choosing the right Content Management System

The guide you need to read before choosing your CMS



Congratulations



If you're reading this then you've either started, or are thinking about, launching a new website for your business or organisation. Picking the right Content Management System (CMS) isn't easy, and we're not going to lie – a CMS is a bit like finding a good wine, it takes time to get it right!



What is a CMS?

A content management system (CMS) is an interface that allows users to create and manage the content of their websites. Whereas CMS's started out as simple software to publish content online, they have grown to become core technology platforms that support cross-organisational goals and objectives, from marketing to sales.

Why you can't avoid a CMS selection process

The CMS you choose is closely linked to your business goals and the success of your organisation. Your website is your digital estate: the online representation of your brand, your benchmark against competitors and a key driver of sales. Additionally, your website will be the destination for your marketing efforts, and a core hub of your operations.

When it comes to CMS platforms, paying more doesn't necessarily mean better. To pick a CMS that you can rely on and is right for your business needs, a considered evaluation of features and functionality requirements is crucial.

In this guide we'll take you through a step-by-step journey to choose the right CMS for your website.

How to discover what you need from your new CMS

Before researching CMS providers and platforms, we recommend working with different teams across your organisation to figure out what the CMS needs to accomplish. Website projects can be lengthy and costly, so getting buy-in from multiple stakeholders across the organisation early on in the process will pave the way for a smoother adoption of the new website.

An internal discovery process

Get the teams to identify which capabilities top their list of requirements to be supported by the CMS. Marketing teams will likely prioritise technology that supports the implementation of digital marketing campaigns, customer service teams will care about providing an experience that meets customer expectations, and communications staff will look for features that support brand awareness campaigns.

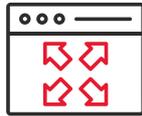
One way to bring the exercise to life and get meaningful insight is to get teams to create scenarios or use cases of how they will need to

use the CMS both now and in the future. For more information on creating use cases and examples, visit [Usability.gov](https://www.usability.gov).

Remember, when sorting the essentials from the nice-to-haves, keep your company goals in sight. An ecommerce company with a primary goal to generate sales could contrast with the informational goals of a not-for-profit or government organisation.



Example features and functionalities to consider



Scalability:

Does the CMS have the capability to grow and change with your organisation?
Does it have a reputation for adapting to new technologies and features?



Forms:

Are forms easy to add?
Are template forms included?
Can the CMS track form responses?



Cost:

How important is cost in your decision-making?
Is the CMS within the allocated budget?
Is the cost reasonable for the functions and capabilities it offers?



Language:

[If your business or organisation operates internationally] Can it support the management of multiple websites in any number of languages, all in one place?



Security:

Is the CMS secure?
What's their track record like for hacking and site crashes?
What security management features are in place?
Is there a bug fix policy in place?



Multisite Support and Hosting:

[If you have multiple sites] Does it allow you to create and manage multiple sites from a single CMS?
Does the CMS support other types of hosting e.g. cloud hosting?



Integrations:

Can the CMS integrate well and ensure high performance with third-party systems?



Online Marketing:

Does the CMS support, or integrate with, the core capabilities required by your marketing team?



Development:

Is the underlying technology (e.g. PHP or .NET) compatible with the skills of your web team?

How involved will the web team need to be in the day-to-day running of the website, for example, in maintenance and support?

Is there the expertise in-house to integrate new features and develop/maintain customisable features on this CMS platform?



Ecommerce:

If you are an ecommerce business, does the CMS support ecommerce functions, such as being able to quickly create high quality pages to sell products?



SEO:

Does it have basic SEO features: page URL editing, and space for custom meta descriptions and browser titles?



Content management:

Can content be added and edited, easily and quickly?

Are images, files and videos easy to upload?

Can the CMS be easily and quickly used by less technical roles, such as content marketers and guest bloggers?

Are pages and templates easy to create?

Are features and widgets simple to add?

Are different access levels provided?



Site usability:

Is the CMS...

Responsive across devices?

Easy-to-navigate?

Searchable?

Comprehensive CMS and online marketing platforms

Some CMS providers include online marketing platforms already integrated into the system, maximising its capabilities for core marketing features, such as content management, online marketing, ecommerce and analytics.

The added advantage of a combined CMS and online marketing platform is that the technologies are integrated on launch, improving its ease of use for marketers and keeping the costs of the website launch and ongoing maintenance lower. Alternatively, separate marketing platforms would need to be purchased and integrated separately.

Consider if:

- Customer experience, communication and the production of high-quality content is the core of your marketing activities, and
- Your team relies on high quality marketing technologies, including content management, ecommerce and other online marketing capabilities

CMS requirements checklist

Once you've established your CMS needs and wants, it's time to weigh up the different CMS products on offer. Add your bespoke requirements to the checklist below and for each of the criteria, give each CMS platform a **score out of ten**. Follow our research techniques on the next page to find the right CMS.

Criteria	Umbraco	Kentico	WordPress	Other
Site usability	E.g. 7			
Security				
Content management				
SEO				
Development				
Forms				
Scalability				
Multisite support and hosting				
Integrations				
Online marketing				
Ecommerce				
Language				
Cost				
Total				



Shop different CMS platforms

Once you've narrowed down the essential capabilities your CMS must have, you're ready to find the platform best suited for your website and marketing needs. Here at Spindogs, we work with three types of CMS platforms: Kentico, Umbraco and WordPress.



Meet Ken... Kentico

Known for:

Third-party integrations and in-built marketing capability

Technology:

ASP.NET

Key features:

Kentico's big plus is its all-in-one solution, meaning you can opt to include the following solutions, in addition to the CMS, without dealing with separate suppliers:

- Ecommerce
- Online Marketing
- Intranet and collaboration
- Online Communities

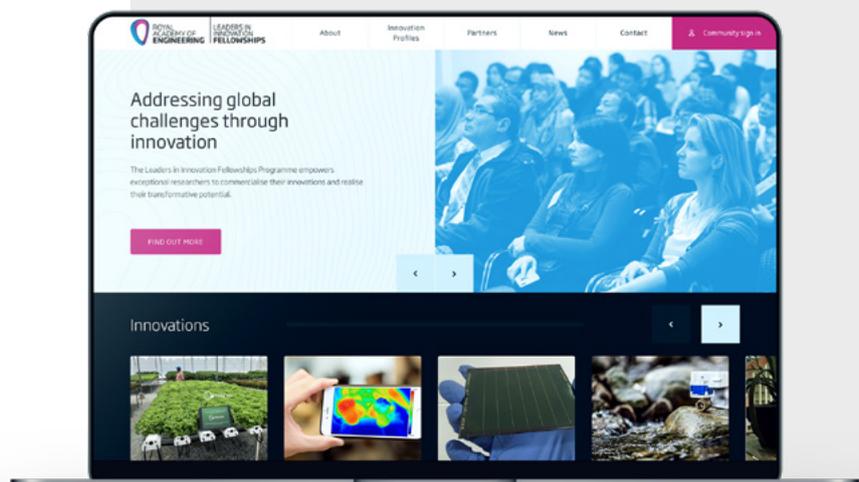
USPs:

- Easy-to-use
- High levels of customisability
- 50% more out-of-the-box functionality than comparable CMS's*
- Advanced SEO features, such as smart URL's, custom URL's, automatic Google SiteMap format, HTML code optimisation
- 24/7 support and 7-day bug-fix policy

Source:

*Kentico

Websites built by Spindogs on Kentico:





The CMS superstar, Umbraco

Known for:

Microsoft integrations, customisable designs

Technology:

.NET

Key features:

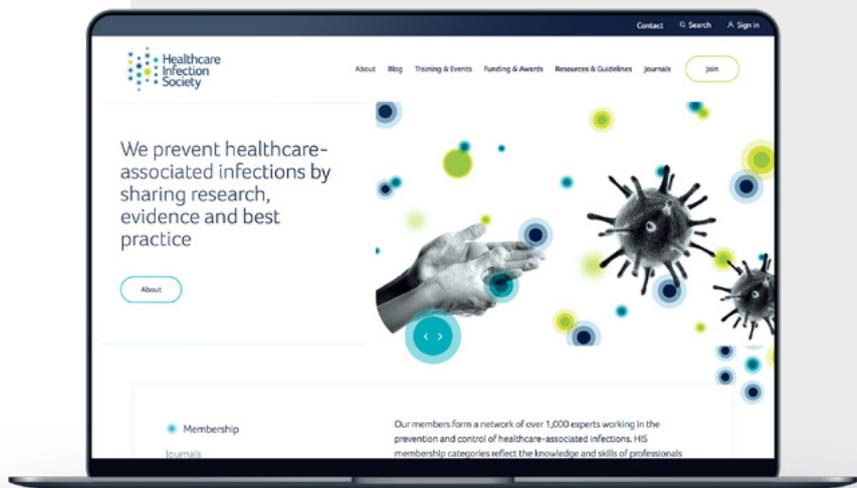
- Easy-to-use
- Template free and fully customisable for a fully bespoke website
- Designed with marketers in mind
- Suitable for the full range of websites, from small business brochure sites to large-scale enterprise sites

USPs:

- Fully customisable web build and design
- Comprehensive features for marketing personalisation, campaign management and lead generation
- Open source
- More than 443,450 CMS clients, making it one of the most popular .NET CMS platforms
- Leading open source Microsoft .NET CMS, perfect for Microsoft integrations

Websites built by Spindogs on Umbraco:

Acorn





The Marketer's best friend, WordPress

Known for:

Ease of use, quick to set up

Technology:

PHP

Key features:

- User friendly for content editors
- Easy to create attractive content blocks
- Templates available, however at Spindogs we build and design bespoke flexible blocks for WordPress
- Integrates with popular third party platforms
- Open source

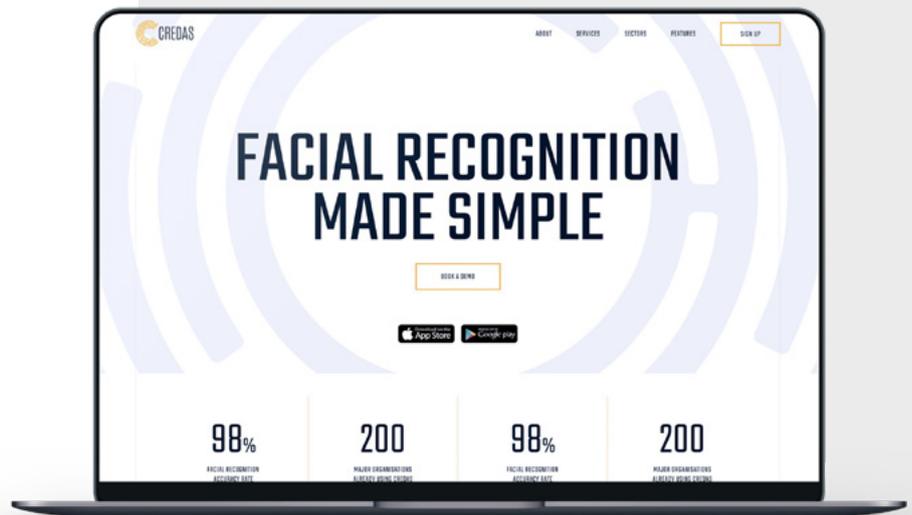
USPs:

- Most popular CMS platform
- Highly customisable
- Designed for anyone to use, not just developers
- Lower maintenance costs
- SEO friendly

Websites built by Spindogs on WordPress:



Coffee#1



How to research which CMS platform is right for you



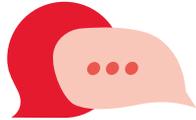
CMS websites

Find the corporate website of the CMS platform and read through their product information, case studies, and customer testimonials to learn more about their CMS product. Look for evidence of its commitment to performance. Has it grown with technological trends and incorporated new digital capabilities over the years? Is it financially secure? Does it have reputable and long-standing clients?



What the customers say

Research what other clients say on review sites such as Gartner, G2 Crowd or TrustRadius to get a feel for the features in practice. Look out for reviews from companies in a similar sector. Try and differentiate between comparisons based on experience of the CMS features and an experience of a site poorly built in a CMS (there's a huge difference!)



Expert opinion

Industry expert blogs are often a reliable source of information on CMS platforms. Look out for reviews of the specific features and functionalities that are core to your list of requirements.



Test in Sandbox

Where possible, install the CMS in the sandbox environment (a virtual space in which new or untested software or coding can be run securely) and experiment with its features and functions.



Talk to your agency

Talk to your website development agency. If you've already assigned an agency to develop your website, speak to your project manager who should be able to advise you on the best CMS for your business.



Conclusion

We hope we've convinced you of the importance of starting any web project by taking the time to select a CMS.

Your CMS should be chosen based on an evaluation of your organisational needs and goals. Choosing the wrong CMS will have implications

for operations further down the line and become an unnecessary hurdle in future website development and business growth. With this at stake, don't be afraid to call a CMS provider to discover how their solution will work best for you and, of course, you can always chat to the team here at Spindogs.

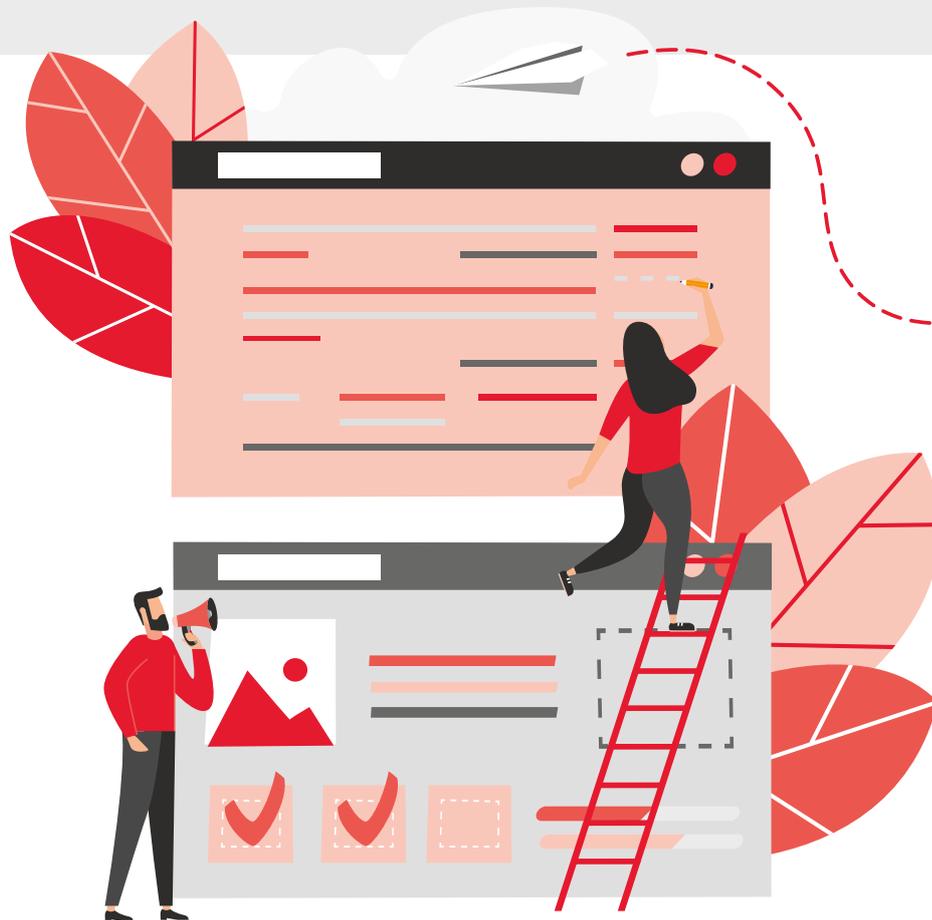
Related links and sources

Web Development Services at Spindogs:

- > [Kentico](#)
- > [Umbraco](#)
- > [WordPress](#)



Click to learn more



About Spindogs

A full-service digital agency helping organisations with marketing both online and offline. We love delivering great website design & development, marketing and brand solutions for our clients, so whether you're looking to drive more value from your digital marketing budget or bring your

business to life with a visually stunning website, we have the full package to take your online presence to the next level. That's how we've built successful, results-driven relationships with clients for over 14 years.

Websites

- > [Web Design & Development](#)
- > [eCommerce](#)
- > Multiple CMS platforms including [WordPress](#), [Umbraco](#) and [Kentico](#)
- > [Intranets & Extranets](#)

Creative

- > [Brand Consultancy](#)
- > [Logo Design](#)
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Get in touch

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