

KNOWLEDGE BASE · PUBLIC DOCUMENT

What a CMS is, and which one to choose for what you want to build

WordPress & CMS

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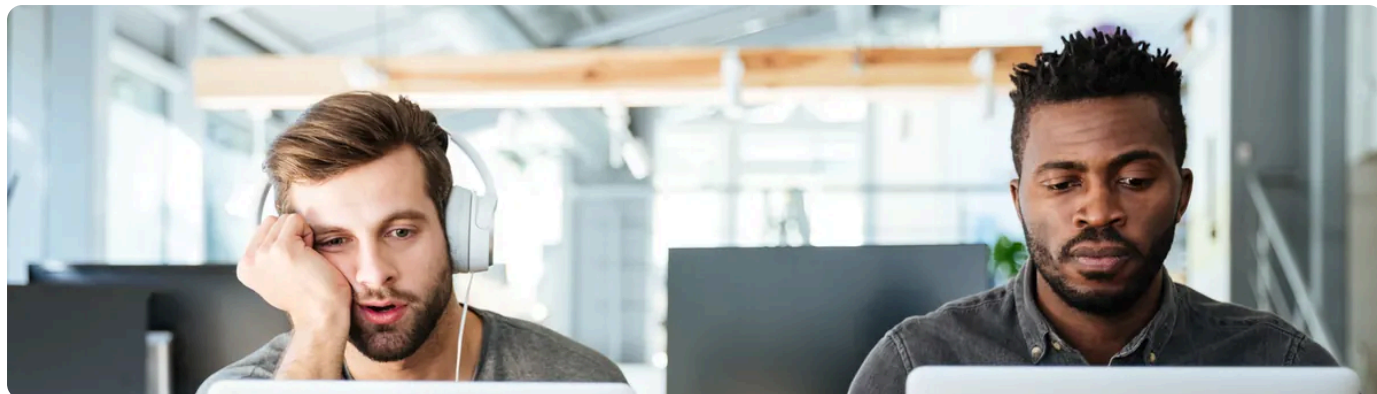
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A **CMS** is a *content management system*: a program that lives on your hosting and gives you a panel, inside your browser, where you write pages, upload photographs and rearrange menus **without touching code**. You type; it builds the page and keeps everything in a database.

Without one, every change means editing a file by hand and uploading it again. With one, it is a button. That is the whole difference, and it is why nearly every site you visit runs on top of one.

What actually changes

Task	Without a CMS	With a CMS
Publish a news item	Copy a page, edit the HTML, upload by FTP, fix the menus by hand.	Write it, pick a category, publish.
Change a price or a sentence	Find every file it appears in and edit each one.	Open the record, change it, save.
Give a colleague access	Hand over the FTP password and hope.	Create a user with exactly the permissions you want.
Add a feature	Write it yourself.	Install an extension and configure it.
Security updates	There are none: the code is yours.	They are published and installed from the panel.

A CMS is code too, and out-of-date code is how almost every compromised site we see got compromised. A CMS left alone for months is more dangerous than a set of plain HTML pages. Whoever installs it takes on the job of updating it.

The ones you can install here in one click

Your cPanel has the **Softaculous Apps Installer**, under **Software**. On the day this article was written it carried **485 applications** ready to install. These are the ones most people will care about:

Application	What it is for, and who it suits
WordPress	Company sites, blogs and small shops. The most widely used, and the one most people already know. See how to install it .
Joomla	Sites with many sections, several languages and users in different roles. More structured than WordPress out of the box. See installing Joomla .
Drupal	Large sites with content types you invent yourself and permissions down to the field. It asks more of whoever builds it, and pays that back. See installing Drupal .
OpenCart	A simple, light shop that goes up quickly. See installing OpenCart .
PrestaShop	A shop with richer catalogue and promotion tools than OpenCart. See installing PrestaShop .
Magento	A big shop, many products, many rules. The heaviest of them all. See installing Magento .
Moodle	Distance learning: courses, cohorts, quizzes, grades. Also heavy. See installing Moodle .
Flarum	A modern, light discussion forum. See installing Flarum .
Mautic	Marketing automation: campaigns, segments, forms. See installing Mautic .
Laravel	Not a CMS: the foundation for writing your own PHP application. See getting Laravel running .

Choosing without regretting it

1

Start from what you will publish, not from the technology. Pages and news? WordPress. A catalogue with a basket? A shop. Courses with students and grades? Moodle. Conversation between members? A forum.

2

Count the people who will touch it. If it is only you, take the simplest. If it is five people with different jobs, Joomla and Drupal already solve that for you.

3

Check who can help you later. An obscure CMS means fewer tutorials, fewer extensions and fewer people willing to quote for work on it next year.

4

Weigh the weight. Magento and Moodle use far more memory, processor time and files than the rest. On a small shared plan you will notice quickly.

5

Install somewhere that is not live. A test subdomain costs you nothing and stops you learning on top of a client site.

Trying is cheap; switching later is not. Install two candidates on a subdomain, load half a dozen real pieces of content into each, and decide by the end of the afternoon. See [how to set up a test site](#), then delete the loser.

What each installation costs your account

A CMS does not only take disk space. It takes **files**, and the number of files in an account (its *inodes*) has a ceiling. Magento and Moodle each arrive with tens of thousands of files. Three heavy installations in one account reach that ceiling while the disk still looks half empty. Read [the limits of your account](#) before filling a plan with experiments.

If the project is already large on day one, a shared plan is not where it should start. See [how to choose](#) and compare with our [hosting plans](#).

Tell us what you want to publish and for how many people. We will tell you which of these fits, and on which plan.

[Open a support ticket](#)

SEE ALSO

[Hosting plans and what each one includes](#)

[Pricing](#)

[Frequently asked questions](#)



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