

CMS Key Questions to Ask Providers

Company

1. How long have you been in this business?
2. How many customers have you sold? How many have left your service, and why?
3. What size or types of clients fall into your “sweet spot”? Won any awards in that space?
4. What other services do you offer?

Products/Services

1. Is your solution offered as perpetual licensed software or on-demand solution?
 - If perpetual license:**
 - a. What are the hosting requirements?
 - b. What should I expect regarding upgrades (both timing and pain)?
 - c. Do you provide customization /implementation services?
 - d. Can outside third parties provide customization/implementation?
 - If SAAS/ASP:**
 - a. Do all tiers include maintenance and support?
 - b. How often are new features introduced?
 - c. What do I do if I need a feature you don’t have or plan to have soon?
 - d. What security do you provide against external intrusion and malicious manipulation?
2. What optional services do you provide as part of your solution?
3. What ROI should I expect from implementing your solution?
4. What type of training do you provide to use your solution?
5. What skills does my organization (or hired third party) need to implement this platform?
6. What technical support services are available? What is your SLA for support issues?
7. Do you have a support knowledgebase, community forum, or applications that are shared by customers?
8. Which third party product and eCommerce platform providers have you worked with in the past?
9. How can I export if I need to change platforms?
10. How do I ensure I own and control my content?

Features

1. Which types of assets can your system manage?
2. Can you manage catalog data in other applications like eCommerce or Social Media apps?
3. Please describe your content approval process.
 - a. How many levels of approval are possible?
 - b. Can different approvers to approve different sections of the same content?
 - c. Do you have organizational hierarchy in the approval chain? In other words, can a manager overrule and/or approve subordinates’ approvals?
 - d. How does your system migrate content from one server to another?
4. Do you provide version control?
 - a. Can a set of files be part of a unique build?
 - b. Can your system identify changes to the individual files/visually compare?
 - c. Can a build be rolled back? Can an individual asset be rolled back?
5. Please describe your content editing tools for all the types of content your system can manage?
6. Please describe how you can search for content and navigate through content using your tools.
7. Please describe your reporting capabilities (real-time, batch, ad hoc, etc.).
 - a. What features can you report against?
 - b. Please provide a list of standard reports.
 - c. Is it web-based, application-based, other?
8. For which applications, eCommerce, web servers, etc., do you have standard integrations available?
 - a. Which ones have you integrated with on a custom basis?

Pricing

1. Please describe your pricing model.
 - a. Are there different levels?
 - b. Why do I want to pay to upgrade to the next level?
2. How do you charge for annual support? What about maintenance?
3. Are there any hidden fees (e.g., implementation, transaction costs, revenue sharing)?

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