

Chapter I

Library Web Content Management: Needs and Challenges

Holly Yu

California State University, Los Angeles, USA

Abstract

Rising demands by library users for customizable Web function and by library Web administrators for streamlined workflows call for better solutions to Web content management. This chapter begins by defining the content and scope of Web content management. Needs and benefits are addressed based on aspects of library Web content management from content creation, updating, delivery, and re-use to the “look and feel,” workflow management, quality control, as well as cost-benefits. Issues and challenges associated with implementing a Web content solution including strategic planning, selection of Web content management tools, impact of meta-searching, and the organizational culture of the library are discussed.

Introduction

This chapter discusses the needs of and challenges to libraries of all types and sizes in developing Web content management strategies and solutions. Rising demands for user-centered and customized Web functions, and streamlined internal workflows call for better solutions to Web content management. The entire life cycle of the Web site from its initial definitions of content requirement, tool selection, workflow management, and rollout, to ongoing updates and upgrades involves content management. The author believes that successfully addressing these challenges will significantly contribute to developing user-centered Web sites and more effective workflow for internal Web site management.

What is Web Content Management?

Definition of Content Management

Content management, or CM, can be simply defined as a process of collecting, organizing, categorizing, and structuring informational resources of any type and format so that they can be saved, retrieved, published, updated, and repurposed or reused in any way desirable. Today's content management solution is either a sophisticated software-based system or a database-driven application. A full-featured content management system "takes content from inception to publication and does so in a way that provides for maximum content accessibility and reuse and easy, timely, accurate maintenance of the content base" (Warren, 2001).

Theoretically, content management encompasses a broad spectrum of areas such as document management (DM), knowledge management (KM), records management (RM), electronic content management (ECM), financial content management (FCM), and Web content management (WCM). Web content management is one of the branches of content management.

Content management gained importance during the explosion of Web sites in the mid-1990s. The Web has dramatically changed the way published content is used. The value of published material goes beyond its finished physical form, and the true added value of content becomes evident "if it can be re-purposed

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