

Reduce Content Production Costs: the SaaS Alternative for Creating, Translating, and Publishing Content

Really Strategies, Inc.

2570 Boulevard of the Generals

Suite 213

Audubon, PA 19403

www.reallysi.com | www.doczone.com | <http://blog.reallysi.com>

Contents

Four Keys to a Successful CMS Implementation	3
SaaS: What is it, and Why should I care?	4
Show Me the Money – Where Can I Find the Cost Savings from XML Content Management?	5
Example of a SaaS CMS: DocZone.com®	6
Summary	6
About Really Strategies, Inc	7
About DocZone	7

Companies large and small are looking for all possible means to reduce costs and maximize revenues. One area that is always a strong candidate for cost savings is the creation, management and delivery of content deliverables – in the form of product documentation, online help, training materials, and marketing collateral. In many cases, there is significant duplication of effort and high administrative costs associated with producing information products, especially when delivering multilingual content to a global marketplace.

Content professionals have come to recognize the value of utilizing XML and standards such as DITA to attain the benefits of content reuse, reduced localization costs, and single-source publishing. But, many of these organizations have never been able to justify the high cost and long implementation cycles required to purchase and implement an in-house XML content management system (CMS).

Over the last few years, a new alternative has emerged – the "Software as a Service (SaaS)" model, which offers a hosted XML content management environment on a subscription basis. According to leading research firm InfoTrends, over 40% of their survey respondents would either "prefer" or "definitely consider" a hosted content management solution.

This white paper will:

- provide four important criteria for successfully implementing a CMS in the most cost-efficient manner
- compare and contrast the differences between a SaaS hosted application model and the traditional in-house CMS implementation
- highlight the potential cost savings associated with implementing an XML content management system
- spotlight some success stories of customers who have implemented a SaaS environment with the DocZone solution

Four Keys to a Successful CMS Implementation

Typically, a content management implementation is an expensive venture, both in terms of actual costs (for hardware, software and services), as well as the amount of time and effort required by your staff to successfully migrate over to the new system. Another not-so-well-known fact is that the majority of CMS implementation projects fail.

If you are considering an investment in a content management system, you may want to consider these four keys to success:

1. Pick the right type of CMS to meet your business objectives. The term “content management” is one of the most ambiguous terms in the industry. There are many different types of systems out there that purport to do “content management,” but are designed for completely different purposes. Before you can select a CMS, you must first ask: “What business problem are we trying to solve?”

Do you want a system to enable the dynamic update of your corporate website? Are you looking to manage your corporate digital assets and marketing/brand information? Are you looking to streamline your editorial and localization process? Determine your business problem and then look for solutions that are designed to solve that problem. For example, a web CMS or Digital Asset Management system will not be well-suited to manage an editorial/localization workflow.

A corollary to this rule: if possible, don't just implement a solution because it is the “corporate approved standard” for content management. You may end up spending more time and money trying to force-fit a system to go beyond the limits

of what it was designed for.

2. Always look for a solution that conforms to international standards. The biggest danger with most traditional software applications is their reliance on a closed, proprietary architecture. If the software you are depending on becomes obsolete, you face a nightmare as you attempt to migrate your proprietary content format into a new system. (Just ask anybody who used Interleaf for electronic publishing in the early 1990s. Or, for that matter, anyone who just tries to stay current between releases of MS-Office!)

Whenever possible, a CMS solution should conform to international standards approved by well-regarded industry groups such as OASIS and the W3C. This will reduce your reliance on specific tools, making your content the most important thing and pushing technology applications into the secondary supporting role that they should have. As a side benefit, this will also prevent “vendor lock-in.” If you decide to switch tools at a later date, migration will be much easier (as long as the new system also conforms to standards).

In the world of publishing and technical documentation/training/help, XML and DITA have become the gold standard for creating and managing content. The benefits of having your content in XML are numerous, and include:

- Separation of content structure from the content format
- Ability to add metadata to increase content intelligence (e.g., better search results)
- Unicode compliance, which ensures support for all target languages
- Ability to reuse content at the “component” level

- Facilitation of true single-source publishing to multiple output formats

3. Keep customizations to a

minimum. A typical CMS implementation involves the integration of several types of tools, including authoring, database, workflow, translation, and publishing applications. It is rare that all of these features can be found in one product; therefore, there is usually some level of custom integration and development required to fully meet a client's requirements. To make matters even more complicated, virtually every company feels that their process is highly unique and that a complete CMS implementation must support every aspect of their environment. This is a misguided outlook that can lead to problems and unnecessary costly mistakes:

- Integration and customization can be extremely expensive and take many months (or even years) to fully implement.

- Heavily customized environments are difficult to support. If you have an integrated environment with a mix of products, it is difficult to troubleshoot and resolve issues. (Vendors will often blame another application for unexpected behavior. When you have an environment with several products, it is difficult to assign responsibility and get issues resolved.)

- An upgrade to one product may impact other products in the mix. Similarly, a change to one product's API could affect some of the custom integration code that is necessary to make your environment work seamlessly.

- An upgrade to the standard you are using, such as DITA, may require you to upgrade all of your tools. You are usually responsible for managing this

"The on-demand model isn't about delivering software per se. It's about delivering the results of successfully using the software." (Phil Wainwright, zdNet)

upgrade effort.

- Due to the expense and complexity of the environment, there is a high probability that you will be required to maintain the integrated system well beyond its useful (and even usable) life expectancy.

4. Look for the quickest return-

on-investment. Here are two other suggestions that will help you to achieve the most rapid return on your investment in a CMS:

- Start with a representative pilot project. Find a subset of your full content suite that suitably represents the challenges of your production cycle, and get that portion implemented quickly in a production-quality pilot environment. This will enable you to quickly demonstrate the benefits of the new system, work out any kinks in the process before you load all of your legacy data into the system, and get some real value out of the system early. Look for a way to get a production-quality system in place in 90 days or less.

- Consider the "Software as a Service (SaaS)" subscription model as an alternative to software procurement.

We'll talk about this more in the next section, but a typical SaaS solution costs less money, provides all of the required functionality from one vendor, and reduces/eliminates risk (because you usually do not have to pay any license fees until the system is production-ready).

Software as a Service: What is it, and Why should I care?

The SaaS business model is essentially designed to offer a full-featured solution in a hosted environment. The software application sits in a centralized, secure data

center and is served up to end users completely via a browser. Rather than buying and implementing an expensive in-house solution, the customer pays a subscription fee to use licenses on the system. The vendor has to perform to the specifications of a Service Level Agreement (SLA), or there are typically financial penalties to pay. SaaS is gaining acceptance as an alternative business model, led by the popularity of applications like WebEx and Salesforce.com.

Any organization can benefit from a SaaS business model, regardless of their size:

- **Small to Midsize Business**
For small to midsize businesses, SaaS allows access to software that might otherwise be too costly or complex to implement or support.
- **Enterprise**
For larger organizations, SaaS allows departments to avoid having to make large capital expenditures and having to pay for internal IT support costs. Large corporate environments typically turn to SaaS to support short-term projects, software that will only be used occasionally or by a small number of employees, and for applications that need to be available outside of a firewall to partners, contractors, suppliers, or customers.

How does a SaaS vendor differ from a traditional software vendor?

Traditional CMS vendors typically charge most or the entire purchase price at the time a contract is signed, before the system is even installed. Usually, the customer is responsible for the system deployment (often working with a consulting/integration firm). The vendor usually charges 18-22% annually for software support, and is not accountable for implementation failure, even if the system is never actually used in production! Further, most system vendors charge 30-50% of the software price for major upgrades when

under a maintenance contract. Most vendors have at least one major upgrade during the 5 year period of many SaaS contracts.

By contrast, a SaaS vendor is responsible for configuring the environment and delivering a "turn-key" application. License fees to a SaaS vendor do not start until the system is production-ready, and there are financial penalties for failure to meet the metrics in the Service Level Agreement.

Many "traditional" CMS vendors are considering (or announcing) that they will now support a hosted model as an alternative delivery mechanism. Most of these companies will struggle, because they will now be held more accountable for a successful production implementation and will have a difficult time adjusting to having to wait for payment. It will also be very hard for these companies to give up their ongoing profitable maintenance revenue. (For example, 45% of Oracle's revenue comes from maintenance!)

Show Me the Money – Where Can I Find the Cost Savings from XML Content Management?

There are several key areas where technical publications and training organizations have recognized real cost reduction and elimination of duplicate effort. Examples include:

- **Storing "chunks"** of reusable content (e.g., a "topic," a "task," a "concept," a "warning") that can be shared by multiple documents eliminates the inefficiency of copying/pasting content. It also helps ensure consistency of information across multiple deliverables, because you can change a component of shared content in one place, and everything that points to it will automatically be updated and accurate. We have seen metrics from our customers ranging from 70-90% reuse of components that were previously copied/pasted.

- **Automatic link validation** greatly reduces the time and effort required in the quality assurance process – no more time spent manually checking that all of the links in your help file point to something (or point to the right place)!
- **Version control** can help reduce the time spent moving files back and forth between different locations, and helps eliminate the possibility of multiple people making updates to the same content at the same time. One customer estimated that they reduced time spent searching for files by more than 50%!
- **Automated workflow** makes it more efficient for management to track project status and overdue tasks.
- **Single-source publishing** allows you to update your content once and automatically publish to all required output formats, such as PDF, HTML, and online help. Since authors no longer have to worry about the formatting of the content they are writing, they can spend their time increasing the richness and usability of the content. Based on analysis of our customer metrics, we have been told that writers have reduced time spent on troubleshooting their files by an average of 75%!
- **Dramatic reduction of localization costs** – an average of 70% cost reduction, according to discussions we have had with some of our customers – is achieved because of the efficiencies of reused content components
- (which only have to be translated once) and the automation of single-source publishing (no more payments to translation vendors for

desktop publishing of difficult languages, such as Asian or bidirectional languages).

Example of a SaaS CMS: DocZone.com®

DocZone.com, provides the first commercially available XML content management platform available exclusively with the SaaS “on demand” business model. Our customer base spans many industries, from automotive to hardware/software manufacturers to healthcare solution providers to utilities. Some examples include:

- A European automotive company is using DocZone to facilitate the creation, localization, and automated publishing of glove box manuals in up to 30 languages, including bidirectional languages such as Arabic
- A global healthcare company is using DocZone to manage the editorial, localization, and single-source publishing of technical manuals, web-based training materials, and HTML help from the same set of source content
- A high technology manufacturer is using DocZone to facilitate the creation and translation of user manuals and online help in over a dozen languages

Summary

Implementing or upgrading a content management environment is a significant and risky undertaking, and there are many options available for consideration. But if you properly define your business needs, stick with solutions that conform to standards, start with a small pilot project, and look for rapid ROI models (such as SaaS), and your chances for success will increase dramatically. Choose wisely – the rewards are well worth it.

About Really Strategies, Inc

Really Strategies, Inc., is a privately held company that was founded in 2000 to provide world-class content solutions and services to publishers, media companies, and other content-centric companies. From content creation to delivery, Really Strategies helps bring strategy, content, and technology together to analyze, architect, and implement appropriate tools and technologies. Really Strategies' flagship product RSuite is an award-winning content management system that facilitates the creation, management, re-use and distribution of XML, media files, and other document formats (Word, InDesign, or PDFs). In 2009 Really Strategies acquired DocZone, the industry's first SaaS XML content management system platform, including browser-based XML authoring, content management, automated workflow, translation memory, and single-source publishing in 68 languages.

As a recent recipient of The People's Choice Award for Top Consulting Service and Top Content Management; KMWorld's Trend-Setting Product of 2007 [RSuite], 2009 [DocZone] Award; KM World's 100 Companies that Matter in Knowledge Management; the Deloitte and Touche Fast 500 Award; Benjamin Franklin Emerging Business Award; Deloitte and Touche Rising Star Award (Delaware Valley); the Philadelphia 100 Award; and one of the "Best Places to Work" in Philadelphia Award by the Philadelphia Business Journal; Really Strategies is committed to building the premier content solutions and services firm. For more information about Really Strategies, Inc., please visit www.reallysi.com. For more information, please visit one of our websites: www.reallysi.com, www.rsuitecms.com, www.doczone.com or call (610) 631-6770.

About DocZone

DocZone provides the industry's first "Software as a Service (SaaS)" XML content management platform, including browser-based XML authoring, content management, automated workflow, translation memory, and single-source publishing in over 70 languages. DocZone.com also delivers the industry's most rapid deployment methodology, designed to bring customers into production within weeks. DocZone was selected by KMWorld Magazine as a "Trend-Setting Product" for 2006, 2007, and 2009. DocZone.com was also named as one of KMWorld's "100 Companies that Matter in Knowledge Management" for 3 consecutive years (2007-2009). For more information, please contact DocZone.com at info@doczone.com, or visit www.doczone.com.

Contact Information

Address	Web	Email	Blog
2570 Boulevard of the Generals Suite 213 Audubon, PA 19403	www.reallysi.com www.doczone.com	info@reallysi.com (consulting) info@doczone.com (DocZone) mcailhanna@reallysi.com (press)	http://blog.reallysi.com/