Umbraco vs Agility CMS: Choosing between Open Source and Proprietary technology

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CHOOSING A CMS

CMSs can either be proprietary or open source. We explore which of these two types of platforms might be the right fit for you.

In particular, we analyse Umbraco vs Agility CMS

umbraco

Umbraco is an open-source content management system (CMS) platform for publishing content. It is written in C# and deployed on Microsoft based infrastructure. Since version 4.5, the whole system has been available under an MIT License.

Umbraco was developed by Niels Hartvig in 2000 and released as open source software in 2004.

In 2009, CMS Wire described it as one of the leading .NET-based open source CMS systems.

Agility CMS is proprietary content management system (CMS) platform for with headless API-based architecture.

It is Azure-based written in .NET and hosted on Microsoft based infrastructure.

Agilty CMS is version-less and evergreen, it does not require maintenance and updates by users, while all the customers are on the same, most recent version: all updates are rolled out automatically.

Agility was one of the first CMS in 2003

CMS Wire and G2 Crowd recognize Agility CMS as Headless CMS leader.

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Figuring out which one works best for you will depend on your CMS needs.

This document will help you decide between the two by:

- Defining both open source and proprietary
- Differentiating between the two types of platforms
- Outlining the pros and cons of each type
- Detailing how Agility CMS fits into the CMS landscape



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WHAT IS PROPRIETARY CMS?

Proprietary content management systems are built and maintained by one company.

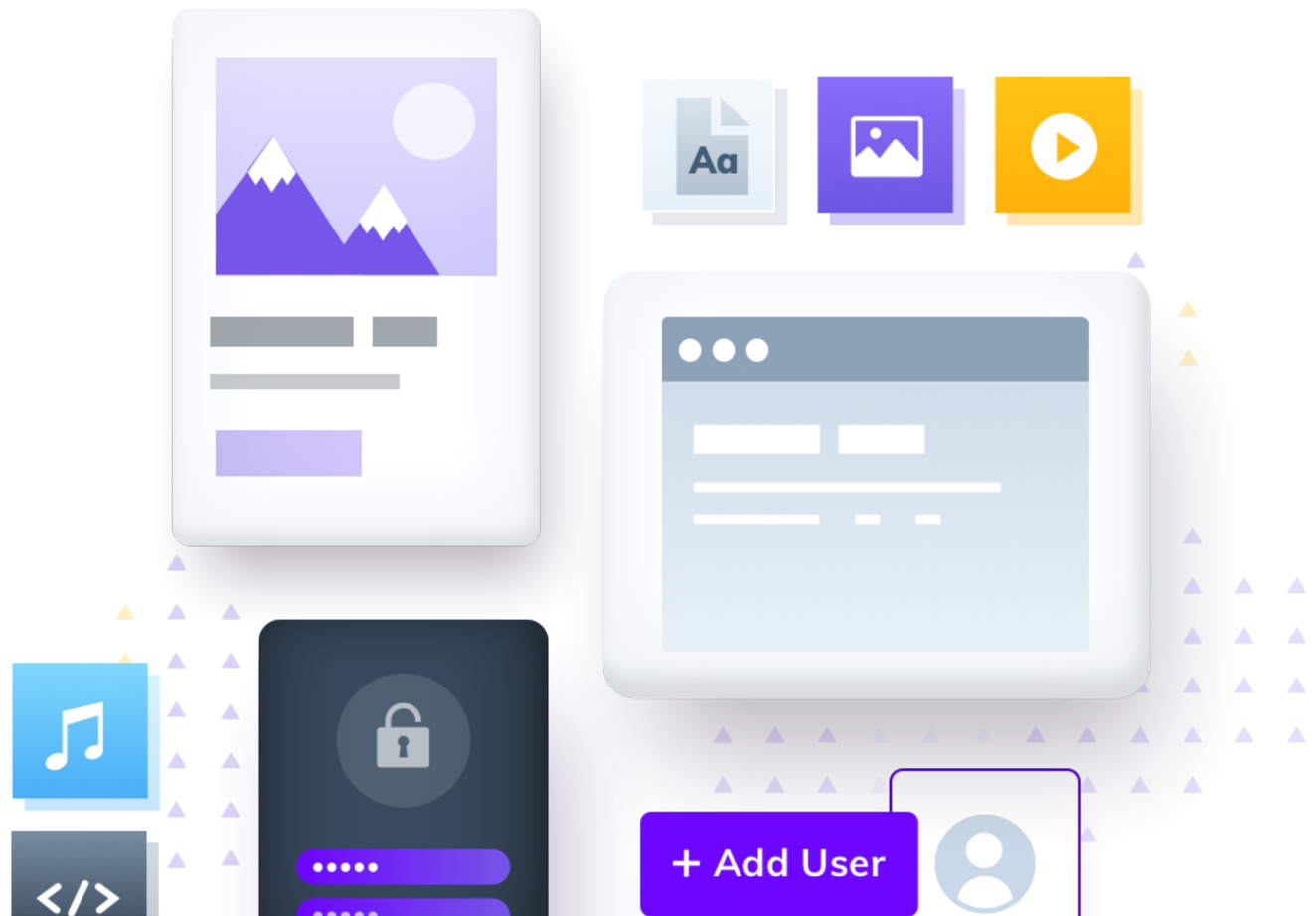
These companies typically do not grant access to their source code, but they do usually provide an open framework (API) that can be used by others.

Proprietary platforms can be hosted by the company that created them, by a third-party, or in the cloud.

It is common for proprietary platforms to require a license/subscription fee. These fees are often built into hosting charges.

Fees usually include access to the company's support team that is able to fix and address issues as they arise, a big differentiator compared to open source platforms.

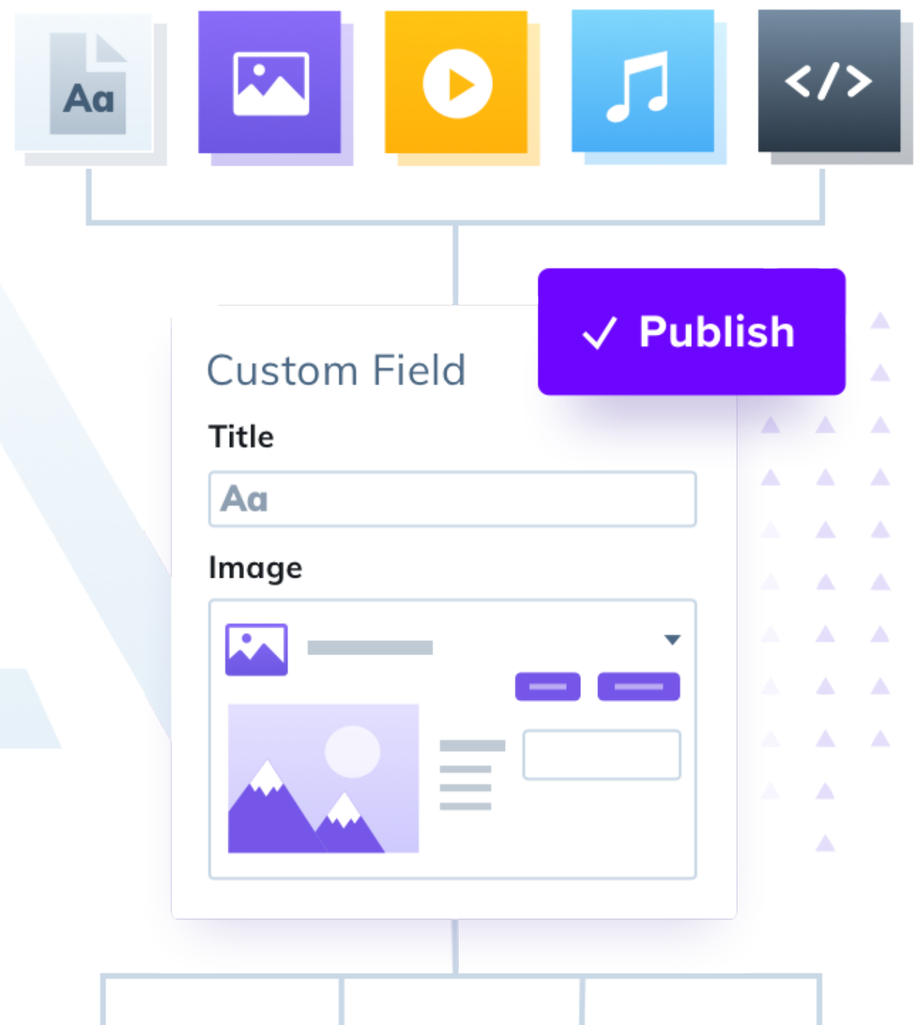
Examples of Proprietary platforms: Agility CMS, Sitecore, Kentico, EPI Server.



DO I NEED A PROPRIETARY CMS?

Proprietary May Be Your Best Bet if You:

- Need to focus entirely on your online content and not supporting and updating the technology that supports your frontend.
- Require a platform that is backed by a support team to fix and address any issues that arise (like outages and slowness).
- Don't have the resources or know-how to deal with updating software, fixing bugs, and security issues.
- Don't want to choose from a large number of modules/plug-ins to decide which ones will work best with your site, and instead want to choose from a library of modules that are guaranteed to work with your platform of choice.
- Want a solution that can run in the background for several years, but stay up to date.



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ADVANTAGES OF AGILITY CMS OVER OTHER PROPRIETARY CMS

1 | RELIABILITY

- With Agility CMS, that's not an issue. We're here to stay, and we aim at supporting you and your business for as long as you need.

- Agility CMS has been around for nearly two decades. Agility also includes in its license the ability for you to get all platform code in the case of any issue with the business.

- ANY proprietary business should have this, but not all of them do.

- Agility is growing more than ever and has doubled down in the last few years, including raising money to grow.

2 | CUSTOMIZATION

- With Agility, customization is easy. We help you build your content architecture from the ground up. That way, you don't have to plug holes and look for functionalities at a later stage of your project.

- You CONFIGURE Agility CMS with your content architecture, allowing you to quickly capture the content that's most important to your organization. Because Agility CMS is headless, which means that you don't customize, you configure.

- This is actually MUCH better in a CaaS system, where you can configure but you retain the "upgradability" which you can't usually do in open source. Configuration is cheaper with Agility because we provide support to help youpeople do things faster.

ADVANTAGES OF AGILITY CMS OVER OTHER PROPRIETARY CMS

3 | AGILITY

- Lower-end proprietary platforms haven't kept up with industry changes like Google's search algorithm updates and social networking.

- With a Content-First platform like Agility CMS, you are able to create and update the SEO friendly content on your website more consistently and more often. What we've seen is that Google always favours better content that's updated on a regular basis.

- Googe is about to announce Page Experience as a new factor, and this is why we have Page Management built-in - for marketers to easily perfect their pages.

- Agility focuses heavily on R&D. We're betting on JAMstack and we're supporting new integrations with Static Site Generators (SSGs) and Content Delivery Networks (CDNs) as they come out.

4 | INTEGRATION

- We take integrations and integrability very seriously. Your business is going to need integrations with your tools, and a headless CMS like Agility CMS should be integrated into all of your workflows, and that includes content.

- By using a SaaS system like Agility, the system has to be built to do all the same things WITHOUT changing the base code so the architecture itself it just built with integrations and extensibility in mind.

- Agility CMS has APIs, Webhooks and Custom UI functionality to allow "extending" the platform without breaking or ruining the upgrade path.

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WHAT IS OPEN SOURCE?

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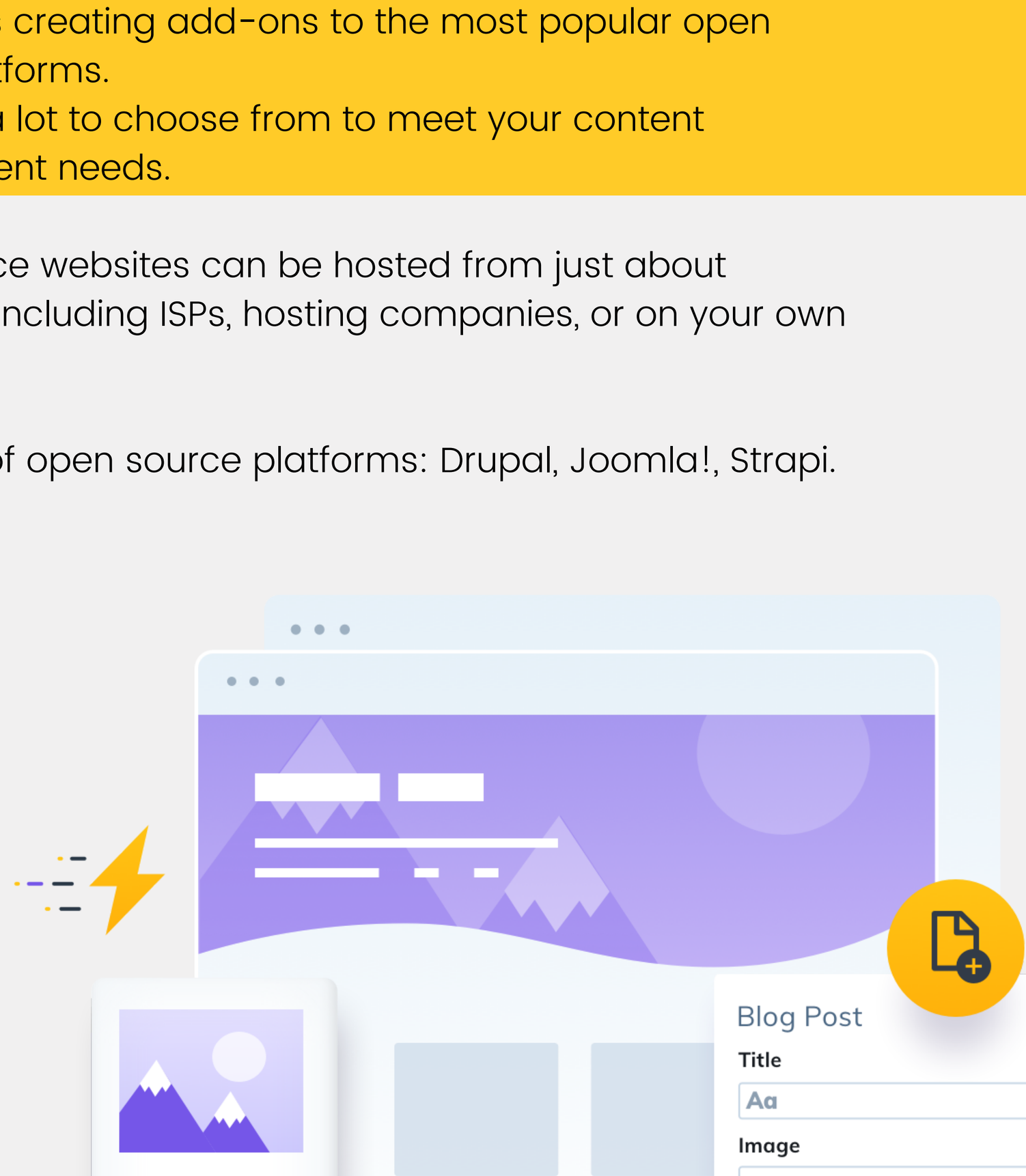
Open source content management systems are built and maintained by groups of interested people (independent developers and companies).

These platforms are typically governed by a single controlling body, but don't actually belong to anyone. Since open source platforms make their source code available publically, anyone (with the required skills) can extend the platform's code to create new features and functionality.

There are hundreds of independent developers and companies creating add-ons to the most popular open source platforms.
There are a lot to choose from to meet your content management needs.

Open source websites can be hosted from just about anywhere, including ISPs, hosting companies, or on your own server.

Examples of open source platforms: Drupal, Joomla!, Strapi.



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OPEN SOURCE MAY BE YOUR BEST BET IF YOU:

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- Require a simple solution that is inexpensive (sometimes free) and quick to set up (alternately, more complex websites will take longer to set up and launch).
- Are not bothered with using a basic templated design, which is common for open source solutions.
- Possess the technical resources and expertise to create and manage your own website.
- Are comfortable deciding which add-ons, enhancements, features and hosting environments are right for you.
- Will be able to invest a lot of time enhancing, improving and making changes to your website and CMS to keep the platform and all widgets working properly.
- Are able to maintain content management software and update it for bugs, security issues and enhancements (generally require PHP).

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9 COMMON PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED USING AN OPEN SOURCE PLATFORM

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1) While basic templates are fairly inexpensive, they don't look so great; also, they're not always very well designed, unique templates are often quite costly.

2) If using a template, your design will likely not belong to you, and it's also not likely that you will be able to take the design with you when moving to another host or platform.

3) Software upgrades and support are typically not included, and if not manually maintained by a developer, your site will remain installed on the version it was built on.

4) Many plugins do not upgrade properly as they are built for specific platform versions.

5) When it comes to developers, the majority of those using open source solutions are not experienced software developers (while they can customize designs and configure modules, they may not be able to develop custom software or fix bugs; instead, they will need to rely on the platform's surrounding community for these issues).

6) If you ever want to move on to work with a new developer, you may run into issues regarding ownership of design, customisations, and modules.

7) There are no development standards for open source platforms, and developers have unique preferences and knowledge about platforms so it's likely that moving on to a new developer will require a rebuild/redesign.

8) Open source projects also run the risk of the platform's community of developers and users moving on and abandoning the product.

9) Security is a huge concern when it comes to open source platforms as source code is open and available leaving websites susceptible to hacks.

HOW DOES AGILITY CMS STACK UP AGAINST OPEN SOURCE CMSS?

12 Features That Define Agility CMS' Proprietary Platform

1) A cloud-based SaaS CMS built on the Microsoft platform

2) Equipped with a strong standard development framework (ASP.NET MVC support, as well as ASP.NET Webforms support)

3) Easily accessible as open APIs make it possible to access all content within the CMS (Rest, OData, RSS)

4) Specifically built and optimized for app development

5) One multi-tenant solution, all users are on the same version

6) Continually and automatically updated with product releases that are built off of customer and partner requests

7) Able to seamlessly handle scaling to an unlimited number of web servers

8) Unrestrictive in regards to design or integration

9) Backed by a dedicated support team ready and available to solve issues

10) Easy-to-use and intuitive user interface for content editors

11) Streamlined for moderating user-generated content
Able to support and adhere to search engine optimization best practices.

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PROPRIETARY VS. OPEN SOURCE: THE VERDICT

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Both open source and proprietary content management platforms have their strengths and weaknesses.

The decision to choose between the two types of platforms depends on your CMS needs.

Open source content management systems are fine for online teams that are looking for a simple and cost-effective digital solution.

Alternately, open source platforms can also work for elaborate and complex solutions when backed by the substantial development resources required to maintain the software.

Proprietary platforms, like Agility CMS, are perfect for digital solutions – both big and small – for teams that put great importance on their online properties but are not equipped with the resources to continually upgrade and enhance content management software.

These platforms are typically feature-laden, fully supported systems that require little upkeep from the user-end.

Most importantly, we combine the best of both worlds, proprietary and open source, to provide marketers and developers with solutions that are perfect for teams that require a platform that comes with a readily available support team that is able to fix and address any and all issues.

However, before you choose one, it's important to understand the full scope of what you require from content management software, as moving from one platform to another can be an arduous and expensive task for all involved.

We wish you the best of luck. Don't forget that we're here to help you.

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AGILITY CMS + DOTFUSION: 3 REASONS WHY THEY CHOSE US

Agility CMS is backed by a network of web development partners that use the platform to build digital solutions for some of North America's biggest brands.

Dotfusion an experienced company consisting of creative and multi-talented web designers and web developers.

The company provides a wide range of services including web and mobile app development, eCommerce, web design, application support and maintenance, training and consulting.

Dotfusion's team of agile experts is composed of critical thinkers, industry leaders and people who take ownership of their clients' success.

They are a long-time Agility CMS partner that provides strategic digital solutions based off of unique business models, challenges and needs.

We asked **Chris Bryce**, Dotfusion's Chief Strategy Officer, why he prefers working with Agility CMS over open source platforms.

These are his reasons:



1) Development Time

"We can build an Agility CMS-powered website in 75% of the time it takes on Joomla, Drupal, SiteCore and WordPress due to its very clear development environment."

Chris Bryce, Dotfusion's Chief Strategy Officer

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2) Support

“With Open Source CMS, you have to rely on forums/discussion groups to find answers if something goes wrong or is not understood. With Agility CMS, you just pick up the phone.”

3) Development Resources

“We have adopted many open source projects and have found that the majority of them have been poorly coded because there are no specifications/standards that all developers use. While this is not directly related to the quality of the CMS, it poses a problem when a developer moves on and their replacement does not understand how the site was coded. Agility CMS is based on .NET so we know that when we hire a certified .NET developer, they will have a baseline standard understanding of development methods.”

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Curious about how Agility CMS can help you build better, faster, and stronger websites and apps?

Contact us.

www.agilitycms.com