

## Datasheet 001. Content management

### What is content management?

As the Web matures as a communications medium and as intranets become an indispensable part of working life there is an inexorable drive to make services more "content rich". Additionally, providers of these services realise that it is vital to keep the material up to date and to allow the content to be personalised for individuals or groups within the audience.

Traditional methods of building web services using conventional HTML editing software just can't cut the mustard anymore. What is needed is a method of creating, organizing and publishing material that is easy enough to turn non-technical people into contributors to the sites and that enables the content to be made available to those people that need it right on time.

And so content management systems are grabbing the spotlight. These systems treat all the material to be published through the website or intranet as data that can be stored in structured data files. The publication, structure and formatting of the information is controlled by a "back end" system that automatically collates material and presents it in the familiar form of web pages in the user's browser. The difference is that the content management service ensures that the material is right up to date and targeted for each individual user of the service.

North Star Solutions Content Management Systems allow us to create a tailored system for you using our own proven set of software modules and industry standard server technology that scales from simple marketing focussed web services to enterprise class interactive systems. The system also provides the perfect platform for online sales channels and other e-commerce services.

### So you're probably wondering what will content management do for me?

You have probably wished that you could keep your websites and intranets more update and make them easier to grow. Increasingly you are wanting to link your web services into your in-house systems to enable controlled access to information stored in your stock catalogues, order processing workflows, expert systems, information and support libraries and spaces designed to facilitate collaboration on projects in conjunction with external organisations.

You probably want to enable lots of your people to be active contributors to your sites by making it easy for them to provide material without the publication bottlenecks that old style web authoring software created. You want to be able to prepare news items, stories about events, case studies and projects in advance have the material automatically published on the right day without any further intervention. And you really don't want them on the site when they're out of date.

When it's done properly, content management allows you to have this level of control without needing a bunch of web gurus skateboarding around your offices. Our Content Management System also has a number of extras that we provide as additional benefits such as our astonishingly simple to use Content



Editor system and our automatic Search Engine Director which allows the search engine "spider" systems to index the whole of the publicly available material.

If you would like to talk about how this technology and our experience can help you why not call us now on 0870 803 4687 or email us at [mail@north-star-solutions.co.uk](mailto:mail@north-star-solutions.co.uk) and we'll get in touch with you surprisingly quickly.

## Content Management Features

### Document Approval

All sections have the facility for customisable approval stages before content is published. Email notification alerts may be generated at different stages of the approval process to keep authors up to date with the approval of the document.

### Content Scheduling

All sections feature automatic date embargo and archiving for time sensitive publishing, useful for press releases, news, and new product announcements. Using scheduling a user can prepare news or documents ready for release or archiving over a holiday period.

### Document Locking

When a user edits a document, it is locked and no other user may edit it until it is saved. Records may also be edit or delete locked indefinitely.

### Dependency Checking

Before a document is deleted, a check is made on all other pages for links to that document. This helps warn users about potential broken links. There is also a link verification facility.

### Search Engine Friendly

Some search engines won't index links that contain ? and &. North Star Solutions supports search engine friendly linking to optimise search engine spidering.

### Document Metadata

To assist with searching for documents within the administration section of the site and to assist with search engines optimisation, each document supports title, meta-description and meta-keywords.

### Site Search

Site wide searching of all content including Word, PDF, and HTML documents.

### Flexible Integration

Tie into existing databases e.g. ordering systems, accounts systems, stock systems. Support for many database servers including MS-SQL and MySQL. Data may also be imported or exported to other applications using CSV files.

### Multi-lingual capabilities

The content manager also supports foreign languages. This facility checks on a users language setting and displays the language specific version of the document they have requested.

### Audit trail

Any additions, changes or deletions a user makes may be logged in the audit trail.

### Integration with North Star Solutions e-commerce module

The North Star Solutions e-commerce module may be 'plugged-in' to the North Star Solutions Content Manager.

## Web Based WYSIWYG Editor

The Content Editor is a 'What You See Is What You Get' HTML editor to allow pages to be formatted on-line using only the web browser. This means that there is no need to install additional editing and FTP client software, keeping deployment costs to a minimum. The added benefit of this is that the site may be updated from literally anywhere in the world where an Internet connection is available.

### Content Editor Features

Copy and Paste data to/from other applications e.g. Microsoft Word. Code Cleaner is useful when pasting data from other applications e.g. Word where the HTML pasted is untidy. The Code Cleaner strips XML and formatting for improved cross browser compatibility. Create tables; change font sizes, styles and colours; add bullets, ordered lists, lines, add and upload images, create hyperlinks and bookmarks. Create folders on the server to organize images. Easily create links to documents on the web server or to external sites. Create new documents from pre-designed templates to save time in formatting. The Content Editor may be configured so only approved images may be inserted into documents.

### Dynamic Navigation

Using dynamic navigation the structure of the site may be expanded or altered without having to edit html. The navigation may be generated from the central database, which will also dynamically generate a site map. Navigation links may be created to internal or external documents. In addition, multi-lingual navigation may be produced depending on the user's language settings. Different navigation structures may be created for different end-users, e.g. customers, registered users, non-registered users etc.

### News/Events

Create news articles categorised into different business areas. The news article may be set to become live on a particular date and was automatically archived at another date.

### File Uploader / Manager

Upload, delete and manage downloadable files including image files, PDF, Word documents, Excel, Zip files and other media. Create folders to help organize file/document areas.

### Workflow Manager

The workflow manager centralises the approval process to simplify the workflow process. The approval process for each document may be customised depending on the approval requirements. Email notifications may be sent to relevant people at different stages of the approval process. The workflow process may be configured so all documents are proof read before approval.

### Form Creator (New)

The Form Creator allows users to create their own customised forms suitable for surveys, contact forms, booking forms etc. Forms may be easily created using the menu driven interface. Add text boxes, radio buttons, checkboxes, text areas, select lists, submit and reset buttons. Each form may be configured to add the data to a database, which may be exported at a later date, and/or forward the contents of the form to the email address specified. Individual form fields may be designated as mandatory if required.