



Tips for Selecting a Cloud Content Management Systems

Free or Paid:

The first step in determining what type of CCM to leverage for your business is to determine if your business can utilize the free versions of some of the applications, or if a paid version will be necessary. Typically, free accounts can be selected if you do not have any information that needs enhanced security, reporting capabilities, or central management of data or other users. Additionally, most free accounts have restrictions on storage (10-50GB), and single file size limits (25-100MB). Restaurants that simply need to keep menus and photos of their business is a great example where free accounts make sense. If security, advanced user management, reporting, large quantities of data or large files need to be stored, free accounts will not suffice.

There are 3 main pillars used to determine which paid system to use:

- Security
- Manageability
- Usability (end user adoption)

Avoid purchasing a solution that is really strong in one of these three areas, but weak in the other two. The goal is to find the right balance between these 3 pillars for your specific use. For example, do not use system that is incredibly secure, but difficult or aggravating for employees to use. They will find different, likely unsecure ways to collaborate on content if the system you choose adds complexity to their environment.

Most quality CCM's cost about the same once you consider all factors: the cost of any needed hardware, support, integrations or custom integrations. Expect to pay between about \$15-\$40 per user per month. Many CCM organizations provide discounts when you choose the annual payment option. It is also possible to negotiate discounts when buying in bulk (usually over 10 licenses/users), so be sure to ask.

Security:

Security is one of the most important aspects of selecting a cloud content management system. Most offerings have some basic encryption, however it is important to determine the level of security needed.



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Considerations:

Is the content you are storing bound to any federal regulations like HIPAA/HITECH, FINRA, FedRAMP, FERPA, SEC, ISO, etc.?

Are you protecting intellectual property?

What is the fall out if the content is lost or stolen?

If any of the above is a priority, basic security is probably not enough. You will want to ask your sales rep how their product addresses advanced security and provides the compliance required.

Security Check-Boxes:

Encryption

What level of encryption do they provide? 128 bit, 256 bit, higher? The higher the number the better if security is important. 256 covers just about every potential for an outside hack.

Is the content encrypted in transit and at rest? This means while the content is being uploaded or downloaded, or while being stored in the data center. It's important to have both. If the product has a desktop sync tool, find out if the content is encrypted while stored inside the desktop sync folder.

Reporting

Does the tool have the ability to run reports on what is happening to content? Is it easy to find out who is downloading, deleting, or sharing content? If this is important to your work environment or security protocol, make sure the company demonstrates their reporting capabilities firsthand. It should be very easy to run, have the ability to track at least a dozen actions on your content, and be very easy to read or download.

User Management

A critical aspect of securing your data in a cloud is how easy and quickly access can be changes shut down. Make sure the administrator can quickly change or remove access to people that can touch your content. It should only take a couple clicks, and the interface should be intuitive and easy to use. A lot of the cloud systems also integrate with 3rd party identity management systems (i.e. Active Directory, Okta, and Air Watch).



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Manageability:

Cloud content systems should not be a burden to manage, nor should it require the hiring of additional staff to help control it.

Global Control:

Depending on how many users a business has accessing the system, something to consider is how much control software provides over users both as an administrator, and as an end user. If having control over your account and content is important, make sure to find a solution that has a robust administrative console.

The ability to quickly add and remove access from users is important. Think about scenarios where someone leaves the company. Admins want to be able to remove the employee's access quickly and efficiently, without losing the content the employee owned in their account. Also, look into solutions that allow for centrally managed user access to content. It can be important to quickly add and remove access, or change access levels to specific folders from a centrally managed console. Lastly, look for the ability to manage things like password security settings, deletions, and notifications. If you want everyone to change their passwords every 6 months, make sure the tool enables this capability on a global level in addition to the user level. Global abilities like this will save time when needing to make changes to your entire organization.

From an end user perspective, look for solutions that enable the end user to have a similar amount of control over content they own. If they share content with a vendor or client, make sure they have the ability to modify or remove that access quickly and easily.

Usability:

Usability is a very important aspect of the product selection process. A product that is hyper secure and very easy to control end users, but has a poor end user experience almost guarantees the system will fail. Not only will the users not use the system, but they will find other systems to use outside of your sanctioned solution. This leads to content being lost or inaccessible digitally, or being stored in solutions that do not meet security guidelines your business may held be accountable for.

We're in an era where blending of personal and business technology occurs regularly. If employees find workplace technology to be too difficult or cumbersome to use, they will find a way to circumvent it to get the job done in a manner they find easiest. This environment has created applications that are very user friendly. Unfortunately, there



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Usability:

are many applications that do not belong in the work place, and a business can lose control of content in the process. The solution is to select a product that not only hits all the feature and security needs a business has, but is also very easy to use. When deciding on what tool to adopt, reach out to trusted employees and see what they are already using, chances are there are some free content management systems already in play. Start researching the enterprise versions of those tools and their competitors. When the list is compiled, it should be easy to eliminate some based on lack of security or user management tools which can be found on any of their websites.

The best part about this process is the tools are very easy to test. Most content management platforms provide free trials of their paid software. Get a team of your trusted employees together and have a bake off of free trials between the narrowed list of tools simultaneously or back to back. Whichever solution covers the most important functionality needs while maintaining ease of use in actual practice will be your winner. Just remember, you must have a tool that the end user will find intuitive and easy to use.

Other Considerations:

Lastly, look for a content management system that is not trying to attack multiple types of technology. The content management system you select should play well with other brands of software like DocuSign, MxHero, Microsoft, Google, etc. and should not lock you into one brand of software. The best modern technology platforms are built to be the best at a very specific functionality, and are designed to integrate cleanly with other tools in the cloud space. This will be covered more in depth in our free “Building Your Cloud Ecosystem” knowledge sheet.

Also, make sure the company that builds the product you are evaluating is reputable. The cloud space has been active for well over a decade, be sure the product has been around for at least 3 years and the company has stable backing from either venture capital, private equity, a major corporation, or is publicly traded.

If you think you need additional assistance during this process, please reach out to Dash Data directly at info@dashdata.com or [844-746-3274](tel:844-746-3274) (844-7-GO-DASH)

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