SEO friendly CMS - why is it so hard to choose one

You can create a website on any CMS. An online store, blog, news portal, web service, or a business card will work on any engine. The question is how much effort it costs, because each CMS has its own characteristics and technical limitations. Including - for SEO. Let's talk about which CMS can help you in promoting your website, and which will crutches to do the same job. There are many subtleties here, so at the end of the article I have prepared a cheat sheet with a brief comparison of popular CMS. You can have it sent to your email as well.

Which engine is definitely not suitable

The most unsuitable CMS are self-written ones. I do not recommend them for any projects, and here's why.

- Only one developer will know what works in the engine and how it works. You will become as dependent on him/her as possible.
- As a rule, self-written solutions have no documentation, which describes the principle of operation and support. Moreover, if any problem arises or a new specialist comes to support, understanding what and how it is arranged on the website will be difficult.
- Often, self-written CMS do not have optimized code. This complicates technical optimization of the website and its fine-tuning for the requirements of search engines.
- It is difficult to train content managers and other professionals who are far from programming to work with the website. Even simply adding an article or picture to the website will be an expensive task.
- Of course, you can develop your own engine, taking into account all the recommendations for functionality and SEO requirements. However, it will cost a lot of money.

Which CMS to choose: a paid or a free one

If you plan to store more personal data than your phone, mail and name, it is better to choose among the paid CMS - as a rule, they have more security.

A site with poor security is more likely to be hacked, with hidden links built into the code, pop-up blocks with ads, and spamming the customer base. This badly affects the position in search: the behavioral activity of visitors falls, and search engines are beginning to issue warnings about the violations and drag the website down in search results.

Visual content editor

If the CMS has a visual editor, then any specialist without knowledge of HTML and CSS will cope with populating the website with content. Nevertheless, I recommend that the engine also have a code editor. For two reasons.

1. A visual editor often leaves out special characters and irrelevant tags, such as </br> instead of <p>. The result is messy code, which is a sign of a raw website. According to the search engines, such websites do not belong to the first page of search results.

2. The layout in the visual editor is not always tailored for different screen resolutions. Very often, what is beautifully configured on the desktop does not work correctly in mobile resolutions. This increases the number of bounces from mobile devices and lowers the website in search engine rankings.

Elementor editor in the CMS WordPress solves most of the content tasks. Everything works decently: the code is mostly clean; it is possible to switch modes between PC screen, tablet, and smartphone.

An example of the Elementor interface in CMS WordPress

Canonical URLs

Duplicating the content on different websites is a sign of evil for search engines. Google fights this and decreases the position of the website in search results, and in the worst case stops indexing.

This problem can be solved by using the rel = "canonical" attribute in the <link> tag. In addition, it is much more convenient if you can insert it when creating a page in the box provided for this.

For example, in WordPress, there is no such a function out of the box, and you have to install plugins. Drupal 8, on the other hand, supports canonical by default.

Managing page title and metadata

The website engine should have an interface for editing the title, description and keywords meta tags, and many CMS have this feature. But only some support batch upload and download of meta tags . However, manually loading even a hundred meta tags one by one is a large and time-consuming mechanical work.

Managing XML sitemap and robots.txt file

A SEO-friendly CMS should be able to easily create a sitemap and edit the robots.txt file. Sitemap is a file with links to the website pages that tells search engines about the actual structure of the website. Robots.txt is a file containing parameters of websites to be indexed in search.

Making robots or sitemap files for a small website manually is not difficult. It is quite different if you have an online store with a constantly updated catalog. It would certainly be useful to have the ability to automatically generate sitemap based on configurable parameters.

Optimizing images

Check how easy it is to change the size of the image, add a title, description, caption and alt attribute. The alt attribute is important for the overall index of technical optimization of the website. It also helps to get into Yandex and Google picture searches.

Integration with analytics services

Website promotion and advertising without analytics is a useless exercise.

Most CMS have built-in features to connect webmasters and Google analytics counter.

Nevertheless, to run business properly, you need to get more complete, end-to-end analytics. One that shows the full path of the buyer: from the first touch to close the deal. Therefore, it is important that the CMS can be integrated seamlessly into a CRM system and end-to-end analytics services such as Roistat.

Modx and OpenCart in the admin panel have a separate section for connecting webmasters, but in WordPress this feature is still missing out of the box, and plugins have to be used.

A letter for WP mailing

The promised cheat sheet - a comparison table from WordPress to Tilda in the ISPmanager newsletter

As promised, we are sharing some useful material on the topic - which CMS are suitable for SEO optimization. Ruslan Shabanov, our SEO expert, has collected for you the main criteria for choosing a CMS that makes it easier to promote your website in search. In addition, at the end, he prepared a comparison table of popular engines!

CMS comparison table by SEO-friendliness

I have compared popular CMS in terms of their SEO-friendliness. This table will help you to put all the functionality side by side and choose the right option. I already did this analysis in September 2022, and if you are reading this article later, the developers may have already added new tools.

Security

Availability of templates, design, plugins

General ease of working with the CMS

Easy-to-use visual editor

Optimization of images

Integration with analytics services

SEO settings: meta tags, text markup, canonical settings

Managing XML sitemap and robots.txt

Managing page title and metadata

No

Yes

Plugins required

Further study required

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