

Expanding Your Web Presence

Three Website Development Platforms

There are 3 different website development platforms:

- Static
- Dynamic
- Rich Media

Static website development is the traditional approach of building individual HTML pages and joining them with links. An Internet hosting server simply delivers a complete page to a browser for rendering. The page is said to be "static" because it is available on the hosting server in its complete form. Therefore, edits to menu or color scheme must be made to each page of the website.

In contrast, dynamic website pages are not created as single files. Rather, the hosting server pieces together several page elements from either separate files or a database to form a single HTML page. Editing a single element affects every page using that element. The most popular form of dynamic websites is the Content Management System (CMS) design.

Rich Media includes several technologies:

- RealPlayer
- Microsoft Media Player
- Quicktime
- Adobe Flash

But only Adobe Flash can function as a website development platform. A flash website is a movie or series of movies linked together, and called as an object in a simple HTML page.

Flash websites are graphic intensive and require special Webmaster skills. Even simple changes can be very time consuming and complex.

Static Website Cost of Ownership

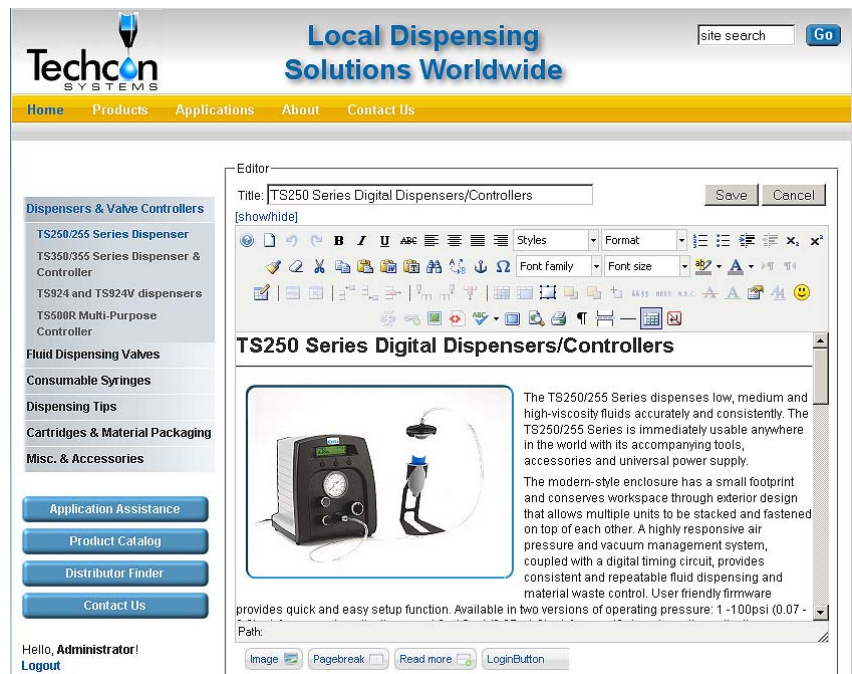
When a website development project is complete, the content is current. However, over a period of time, content may become outdated. Contact names and email address may change. Product and service descriptions may evolve or become discontinued. New **Calls To Action** may need to be added.

For simple changes to static website pages, a Webmaster needs to be hired for a few hundred dollars per page. As a consequence, many of these routine changes do not make it to the website because of the incremental cost involved.

On average, a 20-page website may require 1 edit per month. At \$150 per edit, and over a 3-year period, the incremental cost to maintain a static website is \$5,400 – which may be more than the initial development cost.

Content Management Systems (CMS) Cost of Ownership

As the name implies, Content Management Systems offer owners an effective way to manage website content. Unlike static pages, CMS platforms keep website content in a database for easy access and modification. Owners have 100% control over the content and can modify or edit content without hiring a Webmaster – no special training or skills required.



Additionally, website owners can assign different editing rights to different employees. Employees may then access a web browser editing screen that is similar to MS Word (see above image). With basic Word-like editing skills, employees can make changes and additions instantly.

Content Management Systems Make More Sense

CMS platforms allow website owners to reduce the cost of owning a website while keeping the website current, and they make it possible for a several employees to collaborate in the content creating and editorial process.