



CelerantCommand™
RETAIL

How CMS Drives Traffic And Improves The Retail Experience

A Celerant Technology Corp. White Paper
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Executive Overview:

Consumers have come to expect retail Web sites to serve a purpose in *advance* of – and well *beyond* – the sale, especially in boutique and specialty retail. Detailed product reviews and information, relevant and timely blog entries, and announcements of sales, events, and shipping offers are just a few examples of the non-transactional information consumers expect to encounter on a retailer’s site.

While the site usability and customer experience benefits of building dynamic content into an e-commerce site are profound, the SEO (search engine optimization) benefits are perhaps even bigger. Dynamic content enables retailers to build and modify site features that are keyword rich, loaded with properly-formatted URLs, title tags, descriptions and image alternate text, all of which are loved by the major search engines.

These dynamics are most easily afforded by an integrated CMS (content management system), which can go a long way toward transforming an e-commerce *site* to an e-commerce *destination*. Still, research from W3Techs suggests that close to 70% of site operators don’t use a CMS. This creates an opportunity for online retailers to leverage an inexpensive technology that results in substantial differentiation in the forms of SEO and user experience.

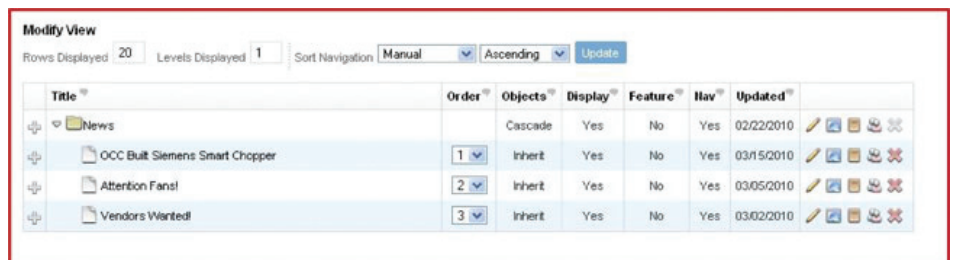
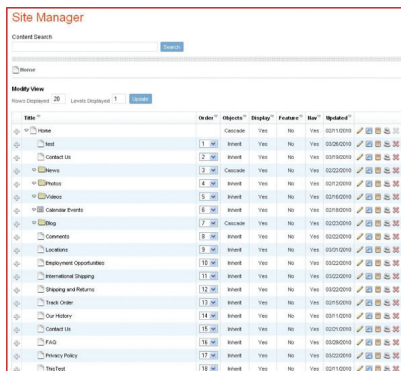
A CMS For Retail

At its most basic level, a content management system gives site operators the ability to manage the posting of news, images, video and other online content. For retailers, the content control afforded by a CMS supports the

tactical agility necessary to move merchandise via promotions and sales, meet the needs of information-hungry consumers, and manage day-to-day outreach to a consumer base via the site and social media integration. This is to say nothing of the underlying SEO benefits, which we’ll discuss herein. That said, the choice and implementation of a CMS is fraught with opportunities for failure. Some key up-front considerations include:

- How intuitive to use and well organized the interface is. The CMS should be designed for use by merchandisers or content managers with little-to-no reliance on IT or vendor personnel.
- How the system handles rules for editing and approving content. Be sure to choose a system that provides restricted access for edits and an additional layer of security for approvals.
- Knowing before deployment what can be modified in your CMS and what can’t. A CMS does not, and should not, enable modification of any more of the site than is strategically or tactically necessary.

There are hundreds of CMS options on the market, including stand-alone applications that require integration with e-commerce sites and “baked-in” options such as that offered in Celerant Command Retail. The advantages of the baked-in approach are many. The CMS module included in the Command Retail Management System, for example, was custom-built for retailers to serve the needs of non-technical users. As users of the software increasingly expressed a desire to manage promotional banners, hours, job postings, blogs, and more on their own,



In the Celerant Command CMS, intuitive menus walk users through the CMS hierarchy to access and edit dynamic content on the site. Celerant Command customer Orange County Choppers (OCC) is one of many retailers that use the Celerant Command CMS module. These graphics and those on the following pages will illustrate the tool’s simplicity and functionality using an example from OCC.

Celerant developed an open-source CMS that enables users to “freshen up” their sites without knowledge of HTML (hypertext markup language) or CSS (cascading style sheets).

Of course, nowhere online are rules and schedules more important than e-commerce, and this is where the Command Retail CMS module differs from most. Using a proprietary utility, Command Retail CMS users can create and store content, then apply parameters that render that content only at certain times or in association with certain products that display specific attributes. Let’s consider just two examples that illustrate the importance of these features in retail e-commerce.

Dynamic Content For Specific Product Attributes

A sporting goods retailer determines that a free shipping offer on orders that exceed \$100 will create a profit-building sales lift. However, gun safes – all of which would qualify and all of which weigh between 300 and 1,000 pounds – are exorbitantly expensive to ship. Using the CMS in Command Retail, eligibility standards can be applied to specific merchandise. In the case of the gun safes, a pop-up window will inform the consumer that free shipping is not an option.

Scheduled Content For Time Sensitive Events

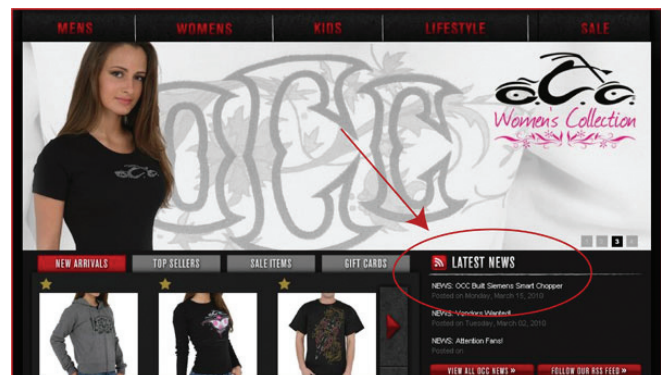
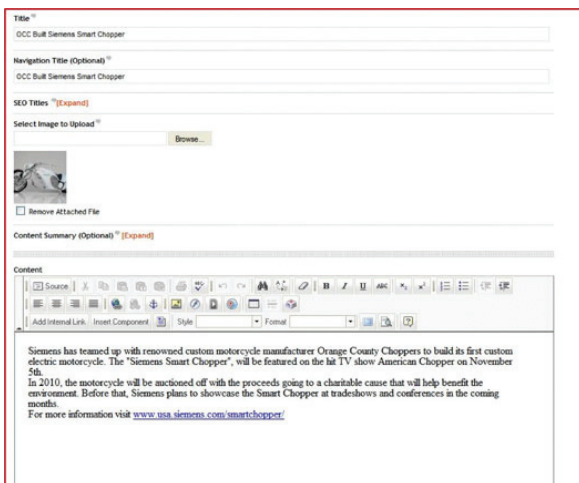
An electronics retailer determines that a certain low-cost, high margin tablet computer will drive traffic and sales on Cyber Monday. Using a time-based promotion feature,

dynamic content promoting the sale can be scheduled to sync with the specific merchandise available for that sale, triggering a change in the price of the tablet concurrent with the automatic start of the promotion without requiring or enabling access to the product catalog. When the promotion is over, the corresponding promotional content is disabled and the pricing scheme returns to normal.

It’s this level of manipulation that makes an integrated CMS that’s built for retail a better choice than off-the-shelf solutions, which don’t afford the same automated controls.

Security Features Safeguard Content From Unauthorized Change

As Ben Parker once said, with great power comes great responsibility. Without proper controls, the powerful ease with which users can create and edit content in the Command CMS can also make it easy for errant or even malicious change to occur. That’s why it’s important for retailers to apply security protocols that match their organizational structure. The flexibility of the access and usage parameters in the Command CMS can facilitate multiple levels of security. For example, the solution can facilitate an administrative level with full control, user levels with content creation control, and managerial levels with approval control. This could enable store managers, for instance, to create site-specific content, and then submit it for approval prior to publishing. Opening up content creation permission while limiting publishing authority



The image on the left depicts the Windows-style interface that allows users to access editable content and place images with little or no understanding of HTML or CSS. On the right, a link to the updated content appears on the home page upon it’s approval and publication.

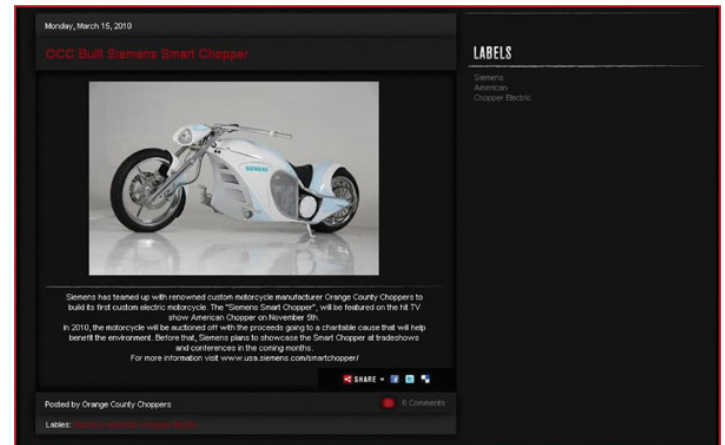
helps site owners overcome the common challenge of developing good content. Because the solution is Web-based, the amount of content that can be created and stored, or used and archived, is virtually unlimited.

Establishing Best Practices For CMS Users

The success that retailers enjoy as a result of creative use of integrated CMS systems – which empower non-technical users to manage Web content – is well documented and easily measured. To achieve that success, users should be familiar with how to use the software interface in a way that has the highest SEO impact. At a minimum, content authors should understand the importance of:

- **Good meta tags.** The HTML code that search engines use to determine what page content is about is important for SEO. Your static content has this code “baked in,” but dynamic content needs a little bit of attention to ensure it gets recognized. Users should be trained to assign relevant title and description meta tags to the content they create to boost page recognition.
- **Keyword rich URLs.** Carefully building keywords into URLs – without building junk into them – will help optimize pages to rank well in search engines. CMS authors who create links within the content they produce should be trained on how to properly building keywords into URLs without creating “junk” code.
- **Clean URLs.** Blogs and social media interfaces present content authors with an opportunity to create links within and beyond their sites, which is good. However, search engines will limit the number of dynamic pages they index, and the first things they look for to determine whether a page is dynamic are URLs with special characters, such as ampersands, equal signs and question marks. Clean URLs will perform better.

While the underlying code in the CMS is out of the user’s hands, it’s an equally important consideration for retailers who are pondering their CMS options. Two Web pages that look and behave identically can score radically different search engine ranks based on the source code. The Command Retail CMS optimizes the consumer experience



As you can see here, the content that can be manipulated in the Celerant Command CMS flows seamlessly with the look, feel, and brand elements of the static site. This page was created and published in just a few screens and a handful of clicks.

by integrating seamlessly with the look and feel the retail brand presents on its site while mitigating the risk of junk code blocking the valuable and relevant content on the page.

Keeping Web Content Fresh And Relevant With CMS

Designed from the ground up for retailers, the Celerant Command CMS simplifies the task of editing Web content, enabling quick and easy content creation and publishing with little technical knowledge.

The system is integrated with the Celerant Command E-commerce solution and can be accessed via any Web browser. The publication of news, announcements, unlimited media files, brand-specific Web pages, blogs, job postings, event calendars, and more is now within reach for any Command E-commerce user, and with minimal training, content authors can create browser titles and SEO tags that help improve search engine performance.

Visit www.celerant.com or contact your Celerant representative today to see how simple and inexpensive it is to bring the power of CMS to your e-commerce site.

About Celerant

Celerant Technology is a privately held Corporation, providing high quality, advanced retail management software systems to retail organizations. Celerant CEO, Ian Goldman, comes from a retail management software background and founded Celerant Technology to build an entirely new type of retail system from the ground-up. The software that resulted uses Java technology to solve data integration issues with an all-in-one system, seamlessly integrating all areas of retail, in real-time.

Celerant Technology is atypical when it comes to comparing it to other enterprise-solution companies. Our approach is more individually focused rather than mass-produced. In addition to traditional planning, implementation, training and support services, Celerant provides a range of customized services designed to serve the more complex retail enterprises. These services include custom development, integration with ERP and legacy systems, and integration with alternative points of presence. Celerant Technology's headquarters are located in Staten Island, New York with satellite offices in Georgia, Oklahoma, Florida, and Washington State.

Our real-time management system, Celerant Command Retail, integrates all channels of a multichannel retail enterprise, including POS, warehouse, inventory management, sales back office, datamining, open-to-buy, mail order/catalog and e-commerce. Celerant's custom, sophisticated websites expertly manage and market inventory, directly from your Command Retail system, eliminating the need to re-enter data, including product descriptions, customer information and online orders. Celerant's flexible catalog/mail order module, also built within the system, allows you offer multiple catalogs simultaneously and track the different codes, along with varying price levels. Our advantage is the flexibility of our Java platform and the tight integration, allowing retailers to manage all channels of their business with one, scalable, real-time system.

Our Mission

Celerant Technology promotes business growth and efficiency through innovation and technology.

We understand the unique challenges and demands retailers face each day. As a result, our in-house programming team has created an advanced retail management system which exceeds these needs. The fact that our software is developed in-house, allows us to specifically focus on each individual retail business. Our extensive, customizable software provides retailers with sophisticated tools to manage every area of their business operation as efficiently as possible.

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