Migrating Web and Intranet systems

How to migrate and tips to ensure success

This white paper explores the options and key issues facing organisations when deciding to migrate content form an existing Web or Intranet into a new Content Management System (CMS). Organisations are often surprised about the volume of content they own and find it difficult to imagine a way of achieving a successful migration to a new managed content solution. CMS vendors rarely mention the complexities involved in content migration and the process is often perceived as difficult. Vendors compound this by providing only the most basic of content upload tooling. Content migration does not have to be difficult. This document looks at some of the challenges and outlines some of the best practices available to help organisations move to a new CMS platform.

What are the reasons for migrating a Web and Intranet system?

It is important to understand content migration concepts and why organisations need to migrate content to a new CMS. Typically they are facing one of the following scenarios:

· moving from on-premise systems to the Cloud or hybrid environments
· moving from the Cloud back to an on-premise or hybrid system
· integrating intranet and internet sites into a common platform
· upgrading of the current CMS to a new platform or a platform with no upgrade path

Irrespective of the reason for migrating the key factor is that the existing content is a valuable asset and usually requires to be migrated to the new target platform.

How do you go about migrating all of this content to the new environment?

There are usually a number of options available to move the content and data to the new environment. You could get your existing members of the sites and communities to manually move their content. However, are these people going to have the time, along with their existing responsibilities, to do this migration of data to the new system? The answer to that partly depends on how much content there is in the existing platform. If the answer is no, they can't, then you could look at outsourcing the manual migration to another team or company that specialises in data entry. Another option is to look at what the vendor of the new platform offers. There is sometimes an import method or a way to upload your data in bulk provided as part of the new system. The final option is to use an automated migration tool, like Vamosa's Migration Architect.

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Migration Process

Ultimately all of the migration approaches above should follow the same simple principles:

· Extract the data from the source systems
· Transform the data to fit the new system
· Load the data to the new system

The key step in the process above is the Transform step. You need to ensure that you transform the data in the source system to work with the target system. Often when migrating to a new content management system there will be a number of changes made to the content types, presentation templates, and the information architecture of the site. These changes will determine the amount of transformation that is required for the existing content. The transformation task needs to account of these differences, are there new metadata fields that are mandatory in the target system? How should these new fields be populated, can the values be found somewhere in the existing content or will they need to be generated somehow? These decisions will be made by the business using insights gained by analysing the source content and understanding the new structures in the target. Once it is understood what is available in the source and what is required in the target, a process that will transform the existing content can be defined. The differences between the source and target content management systems are the key to getting the transformation process correct.

Another key transformation activity is the translation of all of the links in the content that is migrated to ensure the link points to the correct location in the new content management system. This link translation step is not something that is easy to achieve with a manual migration approach. Using an automated approach, you can design the migration to ensure that you track all links and know where the corresponding items have been moved to in the new target system. This allows for the updating of all links in the new CMS to allow for the content to function as it did in the legacy CMS.

Vamosa's Migration Architect manages link translation for migration to all CMS systems. It also has the ability to easily transform your source content into the required shape for your chosen target CMS.

How we migrate Web and Intranet systems

We have extensive experience of migration of Web and Intranet systems. At Vamosa, we have migrated customers to IBM Connections, Microsoft SharePoint, Microsoft Office365, Sitecore, EpiServer and many other content management systems. These migrations can be to on-premise systems, Cloud installations or hybrid environments.

The key step, as explained earlier, is to understand the difference between the two systems. We do this by automatically analysing the source content to understand the definitions and the structure of the content and information.

This information is then used to determine the differences, if any exist, to the content model and information architecture in the new CMS. We then discuss with the business the best way to transform the content for their specific needs in the target platform. This results in a design for the migration and we can then select the appropriate rules to use to transform and migrate the data.

Vamosa Migration Architect is configured to perform the transformations required to the source content and then load the content to the target CMS. The loading of the content is performed by using connectors, which utilise the target system API to load the content. All of the links are automatically updated as part of the process to ensure that the new content functions as it should in the new environment.

How T-Systems can help

T-Systems provide industry proven migration and archiving solutions using best of breed software backed up by consultants experienced in all aspects of designing, managing and delivering successful enterprise migration projects.

Content migration
- Migration of data between any source and target content management systems
- Full support of on-premises, cloud and hybrid solutions

Data archiving
- Archiving of web and social media data
- Legally defensible capture, preservation and analysis of content for eDiscovery, Compliance, and Risk

Merger and acquisition solutions
- Day one collaboration solutions
- Post-merger collaboration solutions

Cloud Email solutions
- Microsoft Office 365 migration
- Microsoft Office 365 tenant integration and migration
- Microsoft Office 365 managed services

Email modernisation solutions
- Microsoft Active Directory modernisation
- Microsoft Exchange Modernisation
- IBM Notes migration
- IBM Domino retirement

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