



# Selecting a Web Content Management Implementation Partner

Tools For Success

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Choosing a partner to implement your Web content management system is the single most important decision you will make – even more important than selecting the software itself. Many companies feel they have the capabilities internally to successfully implement software systems. However, research shows that less than 5% of companies who choose to implement critical technologies on their own meet the challenge. Choosing an experienced implementation vendor can exponentially increase your chances of success.

So how do you select the right partner?

Use the following guidelines to select and evaluate potential implementation partners.

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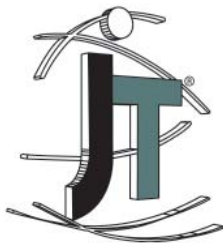
## *Company*

- *Stability:* Do they have the financial backing to stick around, or are they a small shop that may go away and leave you holding your unfinished project?
- *Flexibility:* Are they small enough to be flexible to your needs? If you change directions, can they change with you quickly?
- *Experience:* Have they been around this technology for 5 months or 5 years? Have they worked with companies your size, your industry, and on projects of similar complexity? Do they have reference stories or case studies?
- *Depth:* How many people do they have with the skills required for your project? Is the partner large enough and skilled enough to support a project of your scope? What is the partner's relationship with the software vendor? How long have they worked together?
- *Chemistry:* Does the partner complement your company and your staff? Can you work effectively together? How do you know? Have you met the members of the implementation team? What skills and resources do you bring to the project? Does the implementation team fill those gaps? Can they help you bring multiple perspectives together to get organization-wide buy-in?
- *Industry Knowledge:* Do they understand your needs, your language, and your industry? Do they understand your business model and processes?
- *The "Get It" Factor:* Does the partner make you feel at ease? Have they done an implementation like this before? Can they show you a roadmap to success? Do they understand best practices around implementing a CMS?
- *Additional Services:* Does the company provide the additional services your project needs at an expert level? Do you need creative services such as Web site design, content development, usability training, search engine optimization, training and support, and work flow design?



## *Technology*

- *Integration:* What solutions have they integrated with? Can they integrate with your system? Do they understand the big picture of your technical architecture? Can they scale to other solutions as your company and your marketing department's technology needs grow?
- *Database:* You don't want to know what the database attributes are, you just want the information. You want clean reports – dynamically, as it happens. You don't care how it got there. Do they have experience with your database management system? Are they able to create the kind of reporting that you require – even if it is across multiple systems?
- *Hosting:* Do you want to host the CMS solution or would you like it hosted for you? If hosted off-site, how reliable are servers? What are server performance statistics? How secure is the hosting environment? Can it handle a project of your size and complexity? Can they provide the data you need to make good decisions?
- *Certification:* Is the system integrator a certified partner of the vendor? What type or level of partner are they? How well do they understand the CMS software? Can they create and develop custom applications, if needed?



James Tower is a technology and marketing solutions provider offering customized and innovative business solutions for Fortune 500, medium, and small companies across the country. With offices in North Mankato, Minn., Milwaukee, Wis., and Omaha, Neb., James Tower has helped its customers use technology to drive down costs, improve efficiencies, and increase growth. James Tower's extensive knowledge in bridging marketing and technology, along with its intimate customer focus, allows them to deliver superior results while forging lasting partnerships.

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