

KONTENT.AI®

Ebook

Choosing a headless CMS: Four steps to the perfect fit

by Kontent.ai Team



Introduction

The content landscape is changing and it's more crucial than ever to have an adaptable and agile content strategy to stay ahead of the game. The success of any strategy will depend on the range of content management system (CMS) capabilities you opt for and how well those capabilities work together.

For your content to be easily maintainable and future-ready, you need a CMS that promotes operational efficiency and adapts to evolving needs. Choosing a headless CMS solves many of the complexities associated with achieving this. It allows organizations to deliver ground-breaking, personalized consumer experiences at speed and scale.

If you're considering a headless CMS, such as Kontent.ai, you need to understand how it works. To make it easy, we've broken down the four key elements to consider and how they influence your business outcomes. Let's explore each one in turn.

1. Future-proofed content structure and capabilities

Traditionally, content was primarily intended for websites, but modern organizations need to cater to a variety of channels. Your ability to deliver different types of omnichannel content and experiences depends on how that content is structured and the level of control you have over that structure.

With a headless CMS, content is detached from the layout. This highly adaptable content structure grants you complete control over the type of content you can deliver, eliminating the reliance on templates. Content can be defined independently of UI design, allowing for a more accurate reflection of business priorities.

A headless-native CMS organizes content types and establishes relationships between content pieces. You can combine modular content in various ways and easily reuse it across different channels. Both authors and developers can easily understand the content's structure, which fosters transparency. And, because content is structured using a unified enterprise content model, it can be future-proofed and remain platform independent.



2. User-friendly, accessible authoring tools

While the tools for multichannel support exist, it is essential that these tools are easily accessible and user-friendly. You need to find a tool that aligns with your strategy. For optimum productivity, quality, flexibility, ease of use, and consistency, you need to consider the type of page, text, and content editors you are using.

This decision influences what you can do with your content once it's created. If all staff across all teams use the same authoring environment and can access support for those tools within the CMS itself, the process becomes much more efficient and user-friendly, without the need for additional training or hosting.

With a headless platform you get a default authoring environment that supports the creation of structured, modular content. All CMS users access the same authoring environment, regardless of the type of content being created.



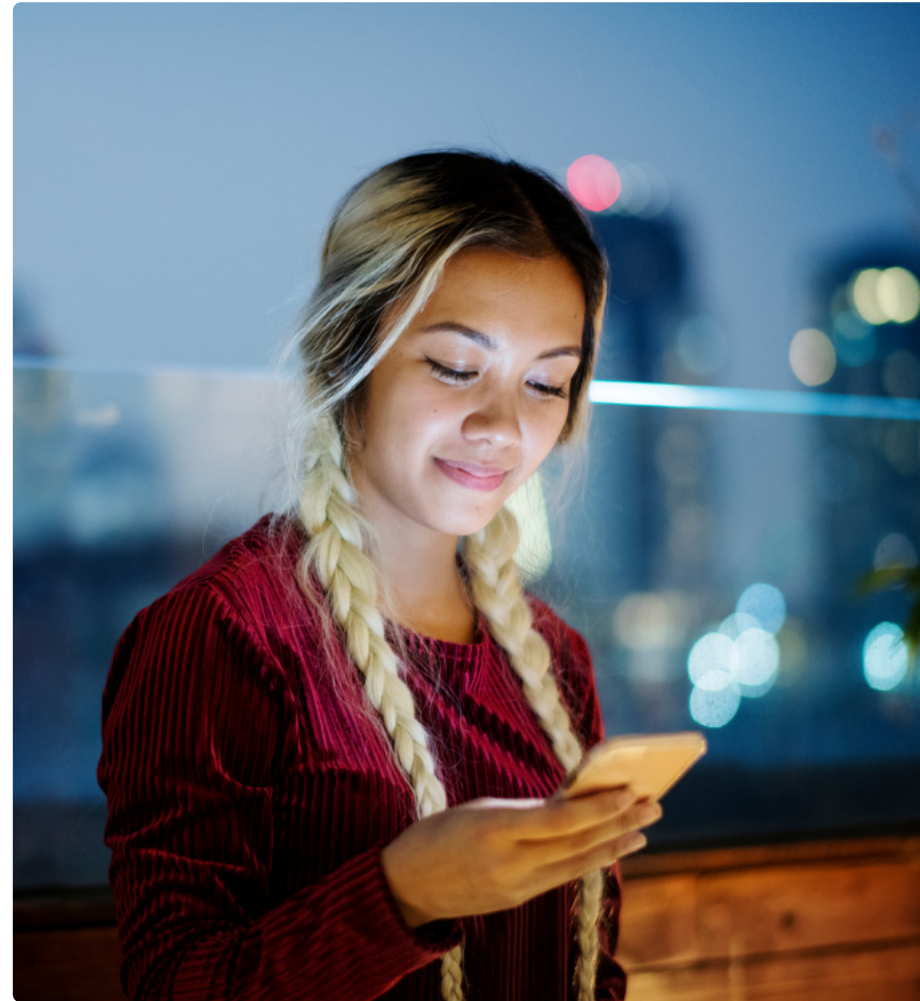
3. Anytime, anywhere content delivery

Once content is created, you must put it to use in a way that supports your business priorities. APIs provide the capability to search, retrieve, and deliver specific content in a way that best fits your strategy. Through an API query, you can specify the content's subject matter and indicate which parts of the content are required at any time.

Most CMSs have APIs but not all offer the same level of flexibility, whether that's in the type of content that can be made available or the granularity of the information in a query. Flexibility depends on the structure and organization of content stored in the CMS.

An API-first approach means the content that's available is independent of how it is stored, managed, and processed in the CMS. It can also be refreshed and updated immediately.

A headless native CMS excels in delivering content to any destination, supporting the distribution of various content types, and prioritizing an API-first methodology.



4. Flexible, tailored enhancements

In addition to the three core CMS capabilities of content structure, authoring tools, and content delivery, there are new tools that enable you to enhance and customize your CMS set up so you focus budget on what is most useful to your organization.

By fostering flexibility within a CMS, you can make use of these tools as they become available, upgrade existing tools easily, and ensure content strategy continuously matches business priorities and operational evolution.

With a headless CMS you can integrate with a wide range of tools from different vendors to help with content delivery, optimization, personalization, and translation. You can easily swap out tools as your needs change, and as you need to scale up, without running into compatibility or training issues.





CMS architecture: The glue that holds it all together

Now we've explored the core capabilities of a CMS and the tools that allow you to customize them, let's look at how to ensure your CMS architecture enables them to work together cohesively.

Without a common design approach, content publishers and developers might struggle to use a CMS in a seamless, efficient way, leading to glitches, delays, and spiralling maintenance costs.

Rather than using disparate systems to create, manage, and deliver different kinds of content, a unified content platform uses a common platform for all three capabilities. This creates alignment between authoring and delivery, allows for full content portability, and gives users a single view of the content.

A headless CMS such as Kontent.ai ensures that not only are content operations efficient and seamless today, they are also future-proofed for the arrival of new channels, new tools, and new design frameworks tomorrow.

To understand more about the differences between headless and other CMS options, read our whitepaper, "[How to Compare CMS Options](#)".

About Kontent.ai

Kontent.ai's mission is to help the world's leading organizations achieve an unparalleled return on their content. In the industry's first AI-powered CMS, content teams plan, create, and optimize content and deliver it to any channel—quickly, securely, and flexibly. Kontent.ai is designed to support organizations with exacting governance requirements, often in highly regulated industries and with complex content value chains.

Tight permissions control all operations; enterprise-grade security and privacy keep content safe. With a demonstrated ROI of 320%, Kontent.ai customers, including PPG, Elanco, Zurich Insurance, Cadbury, and Oxford University, benefit from a measurable step change in how their teams operate, increasing content velocity, mitigating risk, and maximizing yield. Kontent.ai is a Microsoft partner, MACH Alliance member, and recognized vendor by Gartner and Forrester. Learn more at: kontent.ai.

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