Maximize Your Web Content Management Investment

How SDL Web Compares to Competitors and Delivers solid TCO
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Executive Summary

SDL Web, Adobe Experience Manager, and Sitecore WCM are three leading web content management (WCM) solutions on the market today. These WCM solutions allow for marketers to manage online assets, drive the consumer experience, and improve operations internally. Nevertheless, not all solutions are created equal and InfoTrends, commissioned by SDL, has looked more closely at these three different solutions to understand the differences in terms of total cost of ownership (TCO).

InfoTrends’ TCO assessment model was used to evaluate systems across three core areas:

- Customer Experience and Online Branding
  - Engaging with customers through their channel of choice is key for the success of any WCM system. Analyzing data and repurposing of content for multiple digital channels is absolutely crucial—but often difficult and costly to achieve.
  - Due to product capabilities (e.g., the centralized marketing dashboard), it was found that SDL Web users experienced higher time savings analyzing and segmenting data for deployment than Adobe or Sitecore users.

- Cost Reduction
  - This was expressed in our model as time savings through publishing efficiencies, as well as hard dollar savings related to lower IT infrastructure, integration, support, and hardware costs.
  - SDL Web has very clear benefits, especially in multi-language, multi-brand deployments. Nevertheless, it also scored high from a scalability and implementation cost perspective.

- Revenue Increase
  - Increase in revenue as result of higher web traffic, better engagement, and higher conversion is important—especially when WCM drives e-commerce applications.
  - While multiple factors can contribute to a sales increase, InfoTrends found that that SDL customers reported high conversion rates, which speaks of the strength of the solution as well as the quality of the implementation capabilities of SDL and its partners.

The assessment from InfoTrends shows that SDL Web is a formidable contender in the WCM space due to its ability to fulfill the needs of marketers by providing an enhanced customer experience, online branding, higher cost reduction, and improved revenues.
Introduction

Today’s consumer is bringing greater expectations and preferences on how they want to engage with brands. Experiences across all channels, especially the web, need to understand the wants and needs of the consumer as well as the context of a specific interaction. Those companies that can offer these types of customizations across their websites not only offer a better user experience, but are also building brand loyalty with site visitors. It is for this reason that web content management (WCM) is such a critical tool in the development of online relationships with consumers. Today, it is much more than just managing content—instead, it is about driving engaging experiences across all touches. Since WCM is a strategic platform to encourage customers to a company, it is important that companies choose wisely when looking to invest in a WCM Vendor.

Solution Comparison

For the purpose of this report, InfoTrends has chosen to highlight three market-leading solutions. The solutions and their characteristics have been outlined in the Table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Solution Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SDL Web (SDL Tridion, Media Manager, Mobile and Targeting)</td>
<td>Enterprise-class WCM system that focuses on contextual delivery via a philosophy that allows rapid distribution of content to multi-channel, multi-lingual webpages by separating content from the way it is delivered. Highly-flexible “best in class” WCM vendor that supports .NET and Java environments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adobe Experience Manager</td>
<td>Enterprise-class WCM system that benefits from being positioned in the wider marketing product line of the vendor. High flexibility, perceived to be strong in mobile, and has the ability to focus on creatives’ needs. Suitable for Java environments only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sitecore WCM</td>
<td>Turnkey WCM system focused on smaller businesses or enterprises that want to have a dedicated solution to manage microsites. Its underlying .NET framework strongly benefits Microsoft customers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Methodology

InfoTrends conducted a series of in-depth interviews with Adobe Experience Manager, SDL Web, and Sitecore users in September-October 2014 to understand benefits and drawbacks of the vendors and their products, as well as the TCO of the solutions. An in-depth description of the methodology as well as a breakdown of the respondents is presented in the Appendix.
Key Findings

In this paper, the findings of the interviews are presented in two ways. The first section shows how interviewees see their WCM solutions and rank them across a number of core attributes, such as efficiency gains, implementation complexities, and scalability. The second section highlights the TCO values that we found across three major business challenges: Revenue increase, cost savings, and higher customer experience.

Positioning of WCM Offerings

While Adobe, SDL, and Sitecore are all strong WCM contenders, they differ significantly across a number of key attributes.

![Figure 1: Positioning of WCM Vendors](image)

Publishing Efficiency Gains

Being able to manage and publish content more efficiently was mentioned by most interviewees as the key reason for investing in a modern WCM system. SDL Web is extremely efficient in publishing content to multiple brand/language websites. SDL users mentioned they were able to reduce publishing time from hours to minutes, reducing significantly amount of labor.

The research showed that Sitecore was more deployed as a secondary, turnkey WCM for landing page/microsites and had good level of efficiency, but typically on a smaller scale than SDL and Adobe.

Mobile Strategy

Adobe customers spoke highly about the breadth of Adobe’s mobile capabilities, but SDL users actually reported the highest time savings associated with publishing to mobile channels.
Vendor Support
Enterprise IT software vendors can sometimes be rigid to work with. Our research indicated that SDL customers were the most happy about their vendor (in terms of access, responsiveness, and quality), followed by Adobe and Sitecore.

Pricing Flexibility
Pricing flexibility—identified as having the right pricing structure (in terms of components) as well as the ability of vendors to meet customers’ licensing requirements—is an area where SDL scores high. While there are pricing benefits for Adobe customers running on Java environments, there were also some Adobe customers that found the company’s pricing model to be too rigid.

Ease of Use
Adobe customers were generally most appreciative about the user interface of their solution, followed by Sitecore. SDL customers recognized that SDL is a very flexible solution and getting the most out of the solution requires user training.

Implementation
It is difficult to generalize implementation findings as each implementation stands on its own. Nevertheless, the interviewed Sitecore users mainly use Sitecore as a turnkey microsite solution, which results in lower implementation complexities compared to enterprise systems like SDL and Adobe. Nearly all of the interviewed Adobe customers commented on very sizeable implementation costs; also, many thought this because integration with other Adobe suite products is typically not out-of-the-box.

Scalability
Cloud deployment is a key consideration in WCM as IT departments no longer need to scale to maximum peak performance. Even though most Adobe and SDL users we spoke with run their software on-premise, they see scalability in the cloud as a big strength of their solution because it gives them confidence that their solution can easily scale up in case of business growth.
Total Cost of Ownership

Understanding and capturing a total cost of ownership (TCO) model is critical before the investment of a web content management system since it sets the groundwork for understanding the return on investment (ROI) and enables a comparison of products by metrics that are most important to your organization. InfoTrends has developed a model that captures the cost and benefits of ownership to lend perspective to this evaluation process—specifically showing the market position of the researched products.

Key elements in the model include:

- **Customer experience and online branding**: WCM solutions can also drive multi-channel management savings, personalization gains, and content delivery improvements; this section addresses the overall effectiveness of all three solutions in relation to these key functionalities.

- **Cost reduction**: This section deals with quantifying operational benefits, such as publishing improvements, language, IT infrastructure, training, support, and hardware cost reduction.

- **Revenue increase**: This section of the model deals with how the WCM solution has helped to increase traffic, customer engagement, sales conversion, and lift engagement of the end user through channel expansion.

**Figure 2: WCM Assessment Model**

- **Revenue & Profitability Growth**
  - Key Indicators
    - Time spent on publishing content
    - Enablement of business users
    - Scalability, hardware, integration

- **Cost Reduction**
  - Key Indicators
    - Repurposing of content for multiple (mobile) channels
    - Ease of customer segmentation & analysis

- **Better Customer Experience**
  - Key Indicators
    - Number of site visitors
    - Engagement on website
    - Conversion rate
Customer Experience

At the end of the day, one of the key reasons for investing in WCM is to provide a better overall end user experience and improve online branding and consistency. One of the ways in which WCM allows for this is the ability for marketing departments to repurpose content and publish to multiple digital channels. In this section of the assessment model, all three vendors were assessed on their ability to handle multiple channels, content for personalization, and content delivery to understand how each vendor is able to effectively handle these functions for improved overall experience.

Two areas of the model that were critically important to all interviewees was the ability to push content out via mobile channels and the ability to analyze and segment data to provide for more personalized experiences. One Director of Operations in higher education stated that mobile and personalization was critical to reaching his target demographic. “Being able to have our online channels meet the needs of our perspective students on their terms is of the utmost importance,” he said.

WCM solutions allow for better analyzing and segmentation of data, as well. Personalization of content not only depends on the accuracy of the data, but also the ability to allow marketers to quickly analyze and improve upon segmentation to ensure users are having the most up to date experience possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Findings</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
<th>SDL vs. competition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Analyzing &amp; Segmenting Data for Personalization</td>
<td>Reduction in time by 10% to 46%</td>
<td>Dependent on WCM’s ability to easily generate insightful reports</td>
<td>SDL customers saw a 46% time saving vs. 10% by Adobe and 13% by Sitecore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pushing Content Out by Channel (Mobile)</td>
<td>Mobile templating capabilities enable interviewees to obtain time savings ranging from 6% to 40%</td>
<td>Findings are dependent on the size and complexity of operation</td>
<td>SDL customers obtained 40% time savings vs. 25% by Adobe and 6% of Sitecore customers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“We partner with Google, so there is an acceptance rate metric that we track and which has been higher from using this product. This means there is more [website] views, it’s more user friendly, and customers are having a better experience.”

Senior Systems Manager, Media, SDL Web

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Senior Systems Manager, Media, SDL Web
Cost Reduction

In comparing the cost reduction each solution brought to the table, both operational and IT costs were considered within the model. Especially for large organizations, bringing down the time that is spent within the publishing process can be a large cost saver. One user noted that their WCM brought down content publishing from “a matter of days to minutes,” since it enabled them to automate the process and move away from multiple, repetitive workflows.

Another important factor for many marketing departments when investing in a WCM is the ability to relieve IT from website duties that should not really be part of their department. This enablement of business users is a big trend in the IT industry and plays an important role in WCM, as well.

Finally, scalability is an important consideration for WCM investments. Companies that are investing in WCM should think about the stability of their business, the likelihood that requirements will change, and the level of traffic fluctuations. In addition, depending on your industry, deployment in the cloud may not be possible or heavily restricted.

Table 3: Cost reduction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Findings</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
<th>SDL vs. competition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Publishing Improvements</td>
<td>Between 15% and 90% reduction in hours spent on publishing content</td>
<td>The larger and more international the business, the better the savings by switching over to a WCM system</td>
<td>SDL customers reported 50% decrease in time spent on publishing from hours to minutes vs. 20% for Sitecore and 15% for Adobe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction of IT Strain by Enabling Users</td>
<td>Between 10% and 15% reduction in IT support time</td>
<td>Many businesses have already moved web content away from IT but a modern WCM allows more areas (e.g., SEO, metadata/tagging) to move over</td>
<td>SDL customers report a 15% decrease vs. 13% for Adobe and 10% for Sitecore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall IT Savings</td>
<td>Between 9% and 18% of overall IT savings</td>
<td>Support required to internally run the WCM through staffing of IT</td>
<td>Adobe customers reported a decrease by 18%, followed by 10% of SDL and 9% of Sitecore users</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Revenue Growth

For interviewees, revenue increase was top of mind when looking to purchase their solution. Revenue for interviewees included how the WCM solution has helped to drive customer engagement, which means more discoverability, unique site visitors, time spent on site, and mobile interactivity. Interviewees were asked to note these increases that were driven only by the implementation of their WCM and to try to exclude the influence of other marketing activities.

One area that is of particular consideration for interviewees was the ability to drive mobile experiences. As the proliferation of mobile continues, the ability to drive traffic and get conversion from mobile channels will become more critical than ever before.

**Table 4: Revenue Growth**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Findings</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
<th>SDL vs. competition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Site Visitors</td>
<td>Between 10% and 15% lift in visitor growth after implementing WCM</td>
<td>Success dependent on skills of SEO teams and quality of implementation. May be difficult sometimes to isolate other marketing activities</td>
<td>SDL customers reported an average 15% increase vs. 11% for Adobe and 10% for Sitecore</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile Engagement</td>
<td>Up to 16% growth in traffic as result of implementing mobile websites; conversion from mobile lower than desktop</td>
<td>Mobile traffic often originates from social; tried to isolate those factors. Conversion represents taking an action such as downloading or creating an account for site.</td>
<td>SDL had highest increase in mobile interactivity (16% vs. 4% and 5% for the others), but had lower mobile conversion (6%) than Adobe (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Conversion Rate</td>
<td>Between 10% and 20% increase in conversion rate as result of implementing a WCM system</td>
<td>Defined as percentage of traffic that converts into customers</td>
<td>SDL customers saw 20% increase vs. 11% for Adobe and 10% for Sitecore</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
InfoTrends’ Opinion

With consumers expecting more from their digital experience than ever before, WCM remains a critical piece of the marketing operations by keeping experiences relevant and within the correct context, while providing the operations needed to keep digital channels fast, agile, cost effective, and engaging. Marketers must have WCM solutions provide interactive experiences and personalization to visitors when entering a website. Marketers who provide these optimized experiences to their customers see increased engagement and overall ROI.

When looking to add a vendor to the mix, it is important that they can offer the benefits of revenue growth, reduced operations cost, and customer experience. SDL is one such vendor that, from the assessment performed by InfoTrends, has the ability to perform these three key needs in an effective and complete way. It is also important to not look for the quick fix when it comes to WCM, but to select a solution that can carry your company forward into the future and into the next media shift.
Appendix: About This Research

The methodology for this research consisted of 11 qualified respondent interviews with individuals who influenced the purchase of web content management solutions in their organizations. Those that could not speak to the metrics of their WCM were not included in the final assessment. Interviews took place from end of August 2014 to October 2014, and were recruited via a third-party following an intensive screening process.

Interviewees were found to work across several different verticals, representing a wide mix of customers who would look to purchase a WCM solution.

Products and services varied by company type, but the major industries that respondents represented were finance, insurance, retail, education, and healthcare; while the type of industry varied by respondent, almost all interviewees served the general public. All interviewees also had to have a role in which they were established (see below for full demographic information) and interviews took approximately 45 to 60 minutes.

Interviews covered four main areas that, when combined, created the areas developed to form the TCO. It should be noted that interview questions varied based on how the respondent had implemented the solution.

Of those surveyed, 54% were in an IT directorial role with influence in the buying decisions of marketing technology hardware and software. Other job titles included project manager, e-Commerce Director, Operations Director, and Logistics Director of the organization.

Figure 3: Job Role of Respondents

N = 11 Respondents
Most of the respondents (83%) came from the enterprise business class size, with other respondents coming from the mid-market enterprise (17%) business class size; on average, companies had around 12,250 employees.

For confidentiality reasons, all identities of interviewees were treated anonymously and respondents were compensated for their time.

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