Twenty Questions to Answer When Buying a CMS

The following twenty questions will help you evaluate how your organization currently operates, and how it could operate more efficiently with a CMS in place. These questions are meant to guide your thoughts and help you plan for a successful CMS implementation.

**How is your content currently managed?**

1. How many websites does your organization manage (Internet, intranet, extranet)?
2. How many pages of online content do you currently manage?
3. Who in your organization currently manages/updates content?
4. How do you currently update your information online?
5. What types of content will be updated frequently (e.g. press releases)?
6. What types of content will be updated infrequently (e.g. contact info)?
7. What is not working about your current method of managing content?

**What do you hope to achieve with a new CMS?**

8. Who in your organization will use the CMS?
9. What would your workflow steps look like for publishing content?
10. What is the projected timeline for purchasing a CMS?
11. What are some of the short-term goals to be achieved with a CMS?
12. What are some of the long-term goals to be achieved with a CMS?

**Technology Considerations**

13. What type of client computing environment do you have (Windows, Mac, etc)?
14. What type of server computing environment do you have (Windows, Linux, etc)?
15. Are your websites hosted in-house or are they outsourced to a hosting company?
16. Do you have web programmers in-house, or do you use an outside firm?
17. Do you have other web applications that should interface with the CMS?
18. Where are your business users located (single office, distributed offices, home)?
19. How are your pages laid out? Are you happy with the look of the websites?
20. How are your websites organized in terms of sections and sub-sections?

Once you have answered these questions, you should have a feel for how a CMS will work inside your organization, and give you a better understanding of the issues involved.