

CoreMedia looks to NoSQL to scale social experiences for its WCM platform

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Almost every Web content management (WCM) player is becoming more of a Web experience management (WEM) player. CoreMedia, which has had some success in the US but is more of a European WCM powerhouse, is no different. As an add-on module to its CoreMedia 6 flagship product, the company is adding what it calls Elastic Social. This is a set of components that enhance its earlier social content management capabilities. With a focus on more interactive social activity and data management, a scalable NoSQL back end and flexible delivery options, CoreMedia is hoping to equip its customers with the right tools to modernize the Web experience of their own site visitors.

The 451 Take

Offering more social capabilities is a no-brainer in this day and age. We like that CoreMedia is focusing on keeping it simple in terms of creating social-enabled Web content and sites. And we like that the company understands that social goes beyond simply capturing comments to fostering interactions within these micro-social communities inside Web properties. Using MongoDB makes sense, as the scale and reliability of a NoSQL tool like MongoDB can offer far better user experiences at scale, as well as ensure greater capture of user-generated content inside these sites.

Context

CoreMedia has been in business since 1996, essentially as long as we've been using websites en masse. But the company has not had much of a US presence, only launching US operations out of San Francisco two years ago. CoreMedia has 170 customers, but notes that it has a very high retention rate of 97% over the past 15 years, which is impressive in an age of massive migrations and changing ideas about Web platforms. The company has built a strong cross-platform play with its mobile tool called Studio, which complements the CoreMedia 6 flagship product. Turning its eye on social media management inside large corporate websites, the company released an early social media tool but is now reinventing it with CoreMedia Elastic Social, an add-on module to CoreMedia 6.

Products

Elastic Social is designed with three things in mind: high scalability, flexibility in deployment and empowering highly engaging social Web experiences. For greater scalability, CoreMedia chose MongoDB as its new data back end. The company says using MongoDB enables customers to scale to millions of social users with little issues, and provides page load times of less than 500 milliseconds even if the page is loaded with social content. Also, employing MongoDB allows users of CoreMedia 6 in an on-premises deployment to scale using inexpensive commodity servers. Additionally, the company has made Elastic Social available for cloud or hybrid cloud deployments as well, with a number of high availability and failover capabilities to ensure no lost data.

Feature-wise, Elastic Social builds significantly on the previous social software capabilities. Beyond simple profiles, comments and ratings, the new version allows for a more interactive approach to social. Rather than simply capturing social data and exposing it in context on the site, Elastic Social users can now foster threaded comments, automatically email users when their comments are rated or receive sub-comments, and more effectively moderate comments with blacklists and 'ignore user' capabilities. Also, Elastic Social enables single sign-on through Facebook Connect and Twitter ID - enabling users to offer a more seamless social experience to their site visitors.

Competition

Since CoreMedia's focus is on WCM, the company says it is not looking to compete directly with a lot of the vendors out there with a social bent. CoreMedia sees social content as a subset of the entire Web experience, and understands that it will not be the only social tool used by its customers. The company looks to integrate with other social tools and business apps that are becoming more social in their own right. Thus, CoreMedia views companies like Jive Software and Lithium Technologies as integration partners, rather than competitors. Also, CRM providers like

salesforce.com and its Chatter social concept would be somewhat competitive, especially as salesforce.com is pushing its own Site.com WCM play - but the core CRM tool would be an integration point.

The other WCM players in the market, all of which are getting more and more social in their offerings, are certainly major competition. Adobe potentially tops this list of late. The company acquired Day Software to get heavily into WCM, and also reached for Efficient Frontier and Omniture to offer strong WEM capabilities as well. Adobe recently unveiled a content-driven Digital Marketing Suite that includes Adobe Social - a robust social media-monitoring and social content management tool that also offers deep community-building tools. Other WCM players in the mix include SDL Tridion, Alfresco and the open source WCM tool Drupal.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

CoreMedia has added high availability and scalability, in addition to greater interactivity, to its social content management feature set.

Opportunities

All things 'social' are hot right now - CoreMedia can leverage these new tools to make more inroads in geographies like North America.

Weaknesses

The company is still pretty well under the radar in the US market.

Threats

Adobe has upped the ante with the social capabilities in its WCM and digital marketing toolsets.

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