

# TRACENT TECHNOLOGIES, INC.

## White Paper on *Content Advantage*<sup>SM</sup> (Web Site Content Management System)

### Executive Summary

Web development is in crisis. The need for web-based marketing is firmly established, but the demand for flexible solutions will never be met using the technologies and practices currently in vogue. Business needs to step back from its frenzied technology buying to look at the whole picture, as it is now and as it is likely to unfold, and choose technology designed with change in mind. This paper specifically focuses on this business problem and the opportunities afforded by the Web. Together with our customers, we have created an architectural base and real-world system designed to empower business users now, and to protect business technology investment for change in the future.

### Business Issues

To adequately respond to customer needs, market-driven companies need market-driven web sites. Ongoing business issues demand that companies constantly change their web sites to include:

- New product releases
- Press releases
- Key Technical Support documents and FAQs
- Software upgrades and maintenance plans
- Updated product documentation

Traditionally, this has been an expensive and time-consuming process. First the specific changes need to be accumulated and documented. Next, these changes are given to a web designer or other individual with knowledge of HTML. The web designer must then find time to schedule these changes and review the impact to the overall site design.

The problems with this process are:

- Both formal and informal communication between the user requesting the change and

the web designer is time consuming and confusing.

- Web designers typically prefer to concentrate on the graphic elements of a web site, and view content as secondary.
- Paying a web designer to convert text-based documents to HTML is expensive, redundant, and error-prone.
- The time lag between identification of a needed site change and when that change is actually posted can be inordinately long.
- As multiple people maintain a traditional web site, the construction has the tendency to evolve into a site that has an inconsistent look and is not cohesive.

### Business Responses and Solutions

The response by business managers and IT professionals has been very predictable. As business managers demand more information and performance from the website, programmers generate more unique code. As more customers interface with the business through the website, sales and marketing responds with new content that must be integrated into the site. This eventually leads to hiring more HTML designers to redesign (or rebuild) the site's user interface. The professionals in IT then respond by hiring more HTML designers, rationing web design services or spending up to \$1 million purchasing a content management system.

### Introducing Tracent Technologies' *Content Advantage*<sup>SM</sup> Content Management System

The solution to all these issues is the *Content Advantage*<sup>SM</sup> Content Management System. The primary goal for *Content Advantage*<sup>SM</sup> is to permit non-technical content owners to easily add or maintain their content on the company's web site. For example:

- Marketing should post announcements for new products and product retirements.
- Corporate Communications should post new press releases.
- Technical Support should maintain Frequently Asked Questions (“FAQs”) about products they support.
- Engineering or Software Development should post software upgrades or other product technical bulletins.
- Technical Writers should post product documentation updates.

Web Designers can focus on what they do best, which is creating graphics and stitching them together to produce an appealing, consistent look for the web site. This “look” is converted to a template (or series of templates), which separates the look from the content. A password-protected administration system permits users without any knowledge of HTML or other web technicalities to publish their own web site content. *Content Advantage*<sup>SM</sup> “divides and conquers” web site management with four simple steps:

### Step 1: Identify A Need for Change

Business evolves and the website must be changed. This may be important additions such as a press release or product launch; or small changes such as a new entry on a FAQ page.

### Step 2: Content Creation & Update

The person or group responsible for the affected content (the “information owner”) creates or updates the new content. This step includes:

**Content Entry.** Using simple web-based forms, the information owners add the content directly to the content database. Often the information is simply cut-and-pasted from existing word processing documents.

**Relevancy.** During entry, the information owner can also designate “keys” for the content

that ensure the information is categorized and indexed correctly for easy retrieval.

### Step 3: Content Staging

Staging the content is where the various page elements are tied together to produce a preview of the final page. This involves choosing the desired format template, as well as selecting optional graphic elements (either from the existing site library, or an image stored locally on the information owner’s computer).

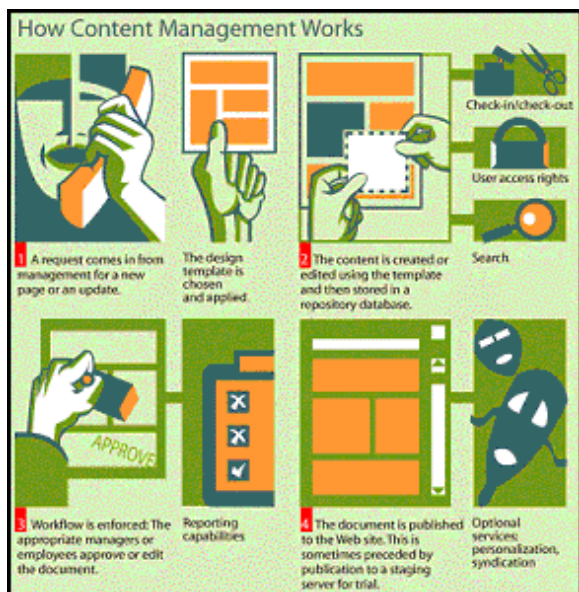
Display rules can also be defined for the page based on relevancy information such as targeted audiences and site area. Applying rules enables display control features such as revisions, expiration dates, timestamps, access restrictions, etc.

With the optional workflow module, the staging process can also include management approval of pages before they are released for public viewing.

### Step 4: Content Delivery

This is where the final product is delivered in a polished, professional manner to your publishing audience. Using *Content Advantage*<sup>SM</sup> this can occur literally minutes after the initial need for change is identified.

Delivery is accomplished by dynamically rendering pages with up-to-the-second data from the content database. Changes are immediately available to the users as page updates are released – each page being fully indexed, searchable and consistently formatted.



*Content Management Workflow*

### Some of the features of *Content Advantage*<sup>SM</sup> are:

- **Web Site Updates Can Occur As Soon as the Need is Discovered.** Anyone that can use a browser can use *Content Advantage*<sup>SM</sup>. Departmental users can post or update their own content to the web site immediately, as soon as the need arises.
- **Minimal Training Required.** Users learn to use *Content Advantage*<sup>SM</sup> in just minutes, using the browser they already know. Site changes no longer require the skills of technical users or programmers.
- **Flexible Security.** User IDs and password may be assigned either to individuals or groups to tailor access to the various content areas.
- **Easy to Update Entire Web Site “Look”.** Complex web sites may be created with a minimum of templates (usually four or five). As a result, the look for the entire web site may be updated quickly by changing those few templates. Existing content will flow immediately into the new templates without any intervention required on the part of content owners.

- **Web Site Can Have the Look YOU Want.** Templates can specify the existence and location of images, link lists, menu items, and other major components that web sites typically require. You are not limited to one of four or five “canned” appearances that may each look like a hundred other web sites. You can also create special purpose templates or use static HTML pages as the need arises.
- **You Already Have All the Required Software.** The entire system is managed and controlled using the browser already on your computer. In addition, integrated upload capability allows images and other files to be transferred from a user’s local hard drive to the web server without the need for clumsy FTP programs or other client software.
- **Staging Capability Permits Internal Review Before Release.** Staging capability permits proposed changes to content or templates to be reviewed and approved internally before being released to the web site for public viewing.

### Summary

As the web evolves, companies are finding that they are no longer able to keep their web sites current and fresh due to increased site complexity, limited technical resources and the high cost of external web talent. For example, a site developed solely on an advanced technology such as Macromedia’s Flash® can quickly become unsustainable. While the site may look great, it is impossible for the average power user to make even the most minor changes. This can leave a company vulnerable to the limited availability, long lead times and high cost of external experts. The result is a stale and outdated web site.

*Content Advantage*<sup>SM</sup> can empower you to achieve a truly dynamic web site while allowing the continued use of advanced web technologies. Your web expert can easily embed Flash® and other products into your core templates, making

them available for all of your site's ever changing, vibrant content.

The *Content Advantage*<sup>SM</sup> architecture provides a solid core around which a business can grow its information infrastructure with the assurance that the content it collects today will be manageable tomorrow.

### System Capacities and Functions

Package	Article (Page) Capacity	Management Tools
SOHO	30 Articles	5 Templates 3 Users 3 email accounts
Bronze	100 Articles	10 Templates 10 Users 10 email accounts
Silver	250 Articles	25 Templates 25 Users 25 email accounts
Gold	Unlimited Articles	Unlimited templates 50 Users 50 email accounts

### About the Publisher

Tracent Technologies has been providing practical, reliable and effective information and communications solutions since 1990. We recognize that most business people do not have the time, money or inclination to become experts on state-of-the-art information technology. Therefore, we have developed methodologies and products that enable entrepreneurs and managers to utilize the vast potential of the Internet and Intranets with a minimum of complexity or cost.

From its primary data center in the Richardson, Texas "Telecom Corridor", Tracent hosts and manages a large number of Internet sites. Many of these sites take advantage of the Tracent E-Commerce, Content Management and/or Membership Services systems.

Tracent can also provide custom technology solutions and infrastructure designs to meet the challenges of complex and rapidly changing business environments.

Please contact one of our representatives for more information on how we can help you achieve your goals with technology.

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