

Meta titles: Top 11 Essential Features to Look for in a SaaS CMS as an Agency

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Client: SaaS CMS (Startup)

Client's Target Audience: [Agency owners]

Introduction

Content management system isn't just a tool for building great looking websites, it's also a tool that makes it easy to publish and manage contents across the web.

A CMS offers an interface where you can design your website and add all the elements you need without even knowing how to code.

This tool in the hands of a struggling developer is a superpower.

A SaaS CMS is ideal for agencies. In fact, study shows that:

over 70% of websites already use a CMS (source: w3tech)

Unfortunately, there are lots of SaaS CMS on the market – from Wordpress to Webflow to Drupal to Squarespace, it becomes almost difficult to choose the right one.

How do you choose the right SaaS CMS?

You can start by thinking of the SaaS CMS features your business needs, it can get overwhelming when looking for features to fit your agency.

But once you know what your agency needs, only then will you be able to find an option that checks the boxes.

In this article, you will get to know **the 11 essential features to look out for in a SaaS CMS as an Agency**

This will help you make an informed choice:

Key Features:

1. Responsive Themes for Different Screen Sizes

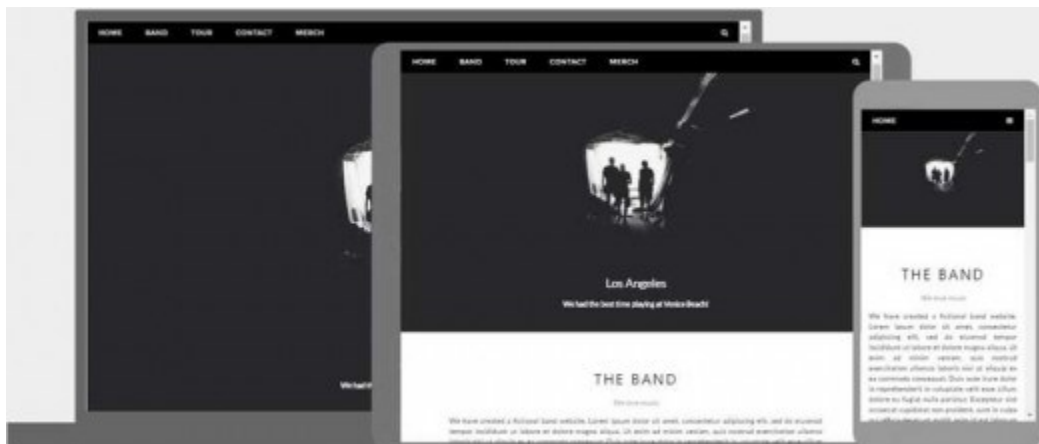
2. Content Editing and Publishing Tools
3. Built-in SEO Tools
4. Role-Based Access Control'
5. Version Control and Backups
6. Security
7. Great Support
8. Integration of External Services
9. Content Staging
10. Migration
11. Built-in Analytics

11 Key CMS Features:

1. Responsive Themes for Different Screen Sizes

This is one of the most basic features a CMS should have. Themes lets your site or your client's sites have a consistent look. A responsive theme optimizes every post for different screen sizes.

Users who visit your sites should have great experiences no matter what devices they use. There's definitely a need to make sure that your chosen CMS offers responsive themes.



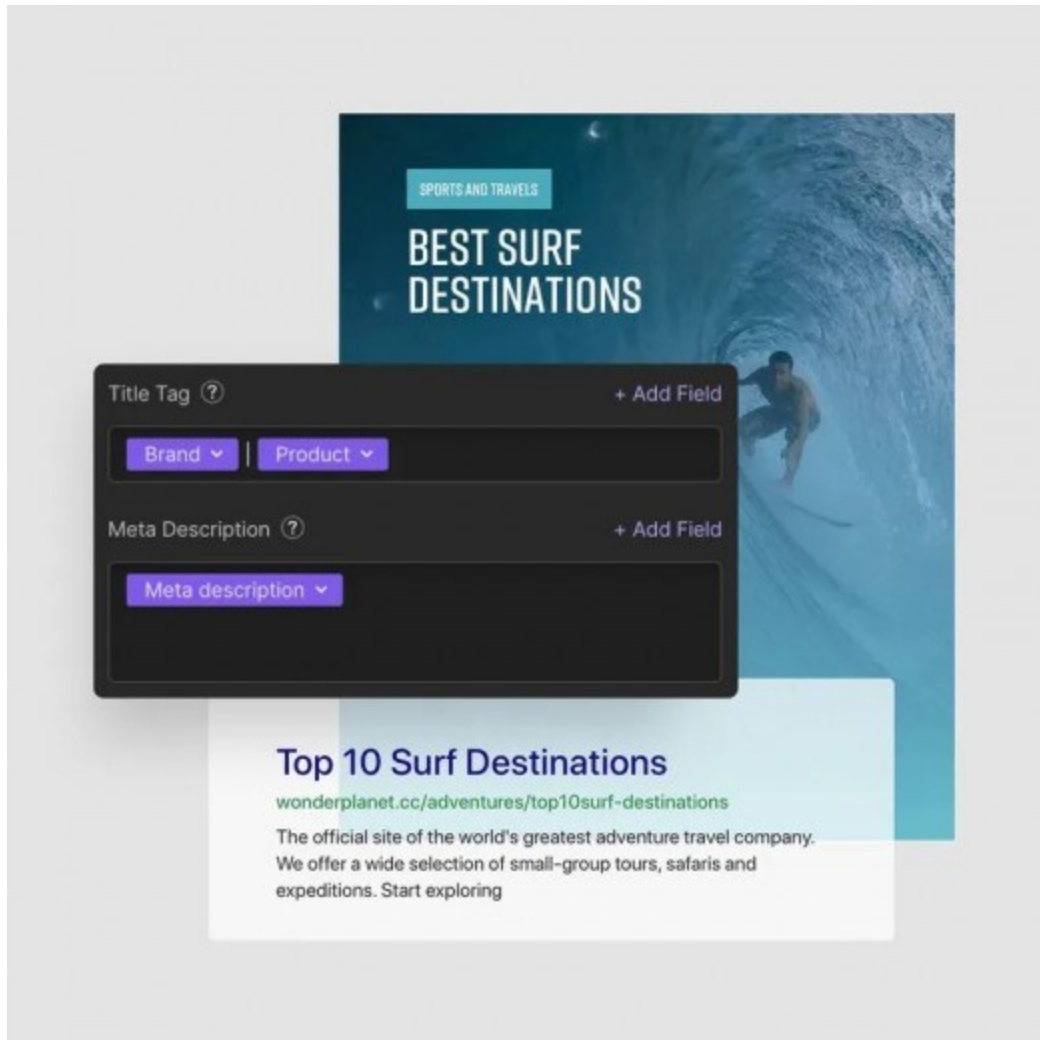
Responsive design image | Source

2. Content Editing and Publishing Tools

Whether you are designing websites for yourself or your clients, you need a powerful content editor that allows for easy creation and publishing of different types of content. Contents like blog posts with custom layouts, landing pages with embedded resources or pages with multimedia content.

There are CMS that lets you add images, videos, CTAs, forms and more to any page that you want. They also let you use an easy drag and drop interface to rearrange these elements within the publishing interface.

Many CMS platforms have a WYSIWYG (“what you see is what you get”) editor that allows you to modify a page without writing HTML code and to see changes as you make them.



Source

3. Built-in SEO Tools

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is an important aspect of every website you build. If your websites are going to be seen by humans it needs to be optimized for search engines. It's ideal to go for a CMS that has this feature built in.

Your client's webpages should follow fundamental practices to be in good standing with search engines.

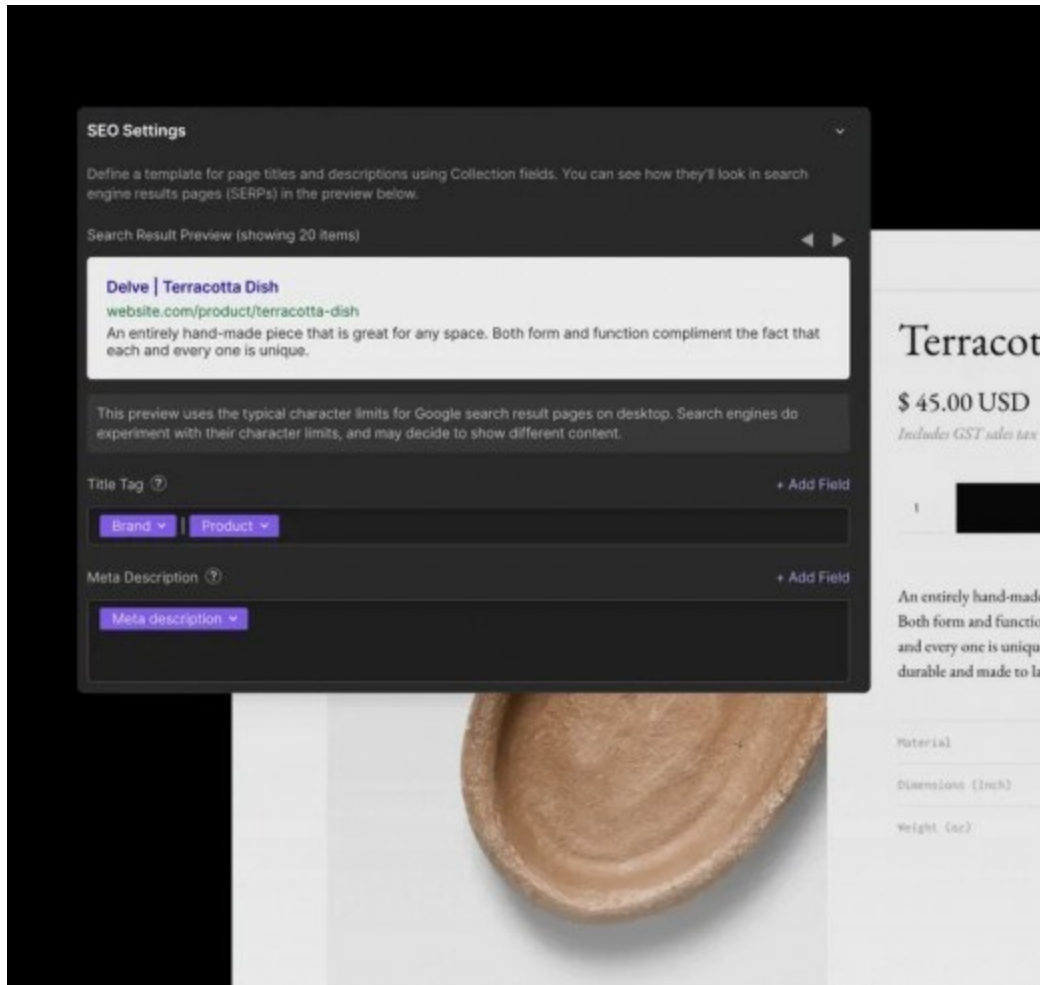


Image showing SEO settings | Source

4. Role-Based Access Control

Assigning different roles and levels of access helps your agency to establish a workflow for creating, editing, approving, and releasing different creative assets.

Go for a SaaS CMS that has a role-based access control, these can enable your team members publish posts, edit content and have access to design elements. You might also have authors responsible solely for creating drafts, editors for reviewing those drafts, and administrators for scheduling and publishing them.

This feature can be important to avoid problems especially when you're working on a project with a lot of people.

Role

Administrator

Full power over the site: can invite people, modify the site settings, etc.

Editor

Has access to all posts and pages.

Author

Can write, upload photos to, edit, and publish their own posts.

Contributor

Can write and edit their own posts but can't publish them.

[Learn more about roles](#)

This user is a contractor, freelancer, consultant, or agency. ⓘ

Image showing different roles | Source

5. Version Control and Backups

When CMS handles backups, they are most times automatic. These means that if a customer (or you) destroys something, a backup can be restored within seconds.

But not all CMS does automatic backup, some of them require you do them manually to be on a safer side.

Most CMS have this feature as native and others would require you to install an extension for them. You can find this out when you are choosing a SaaS CMS for your agency.

Aside CMS providing you with backup services, your web host may also provide same services for your site.



Source

6. Security

Taking into account the security of your site will protect your data, visitors and brand reputation.

Here are a few questions you might ask when evaluating the security of a SaaS CMS:

1. Is SSL included, or must you purchase an SSL certificate separately?
2. Does it come with a content delivery network (CDN) to help prevent DDoS attacks?
3. Does it have a Web Application Firewall to prevent hackers from accessing your site?
4. Does it have a security team? If it does, is this team comprised of community members or employees?
5. How often are static code analysis and vulnerability scans run? Are these integrations that can do this for you?
6. How difficult is updating the software when a security patch has been released?
7. Is SSL included, or must you purchase an SSL certificate separately?

7. Great Support

Great Support depends on the type of CMS you go for. The most common CMS are open source and Proprietary CMS. Most open-source CMS do not have customer service departments that you can call and ask questions. Instead, they provide extensive documentation or support guides and then rely on an engaged community of users to create and run wikis to fill in the gaps.

WordPress, for example, is an open-source CMS and has community members who regularly engage with each other in the WordPress public forums to discuss the software and their challenges.

Open-source communities can be a reliable source of information that enables you to resolve issues by yourself. However, you may not have all the time to look through the resources or wait for an answer in a support forum.

In that case a Proprietary CMS appeals, these type of CMS offers live support to its users.

An example of Proprietary CMS is Webflow.

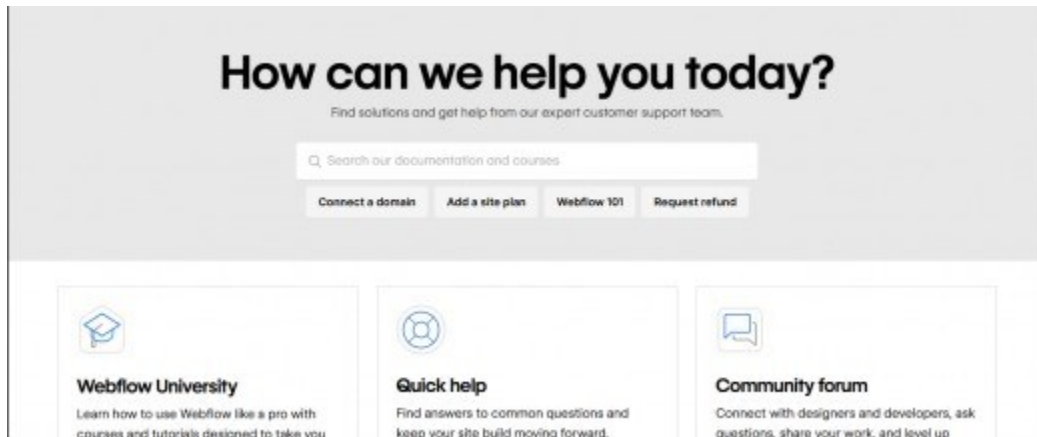
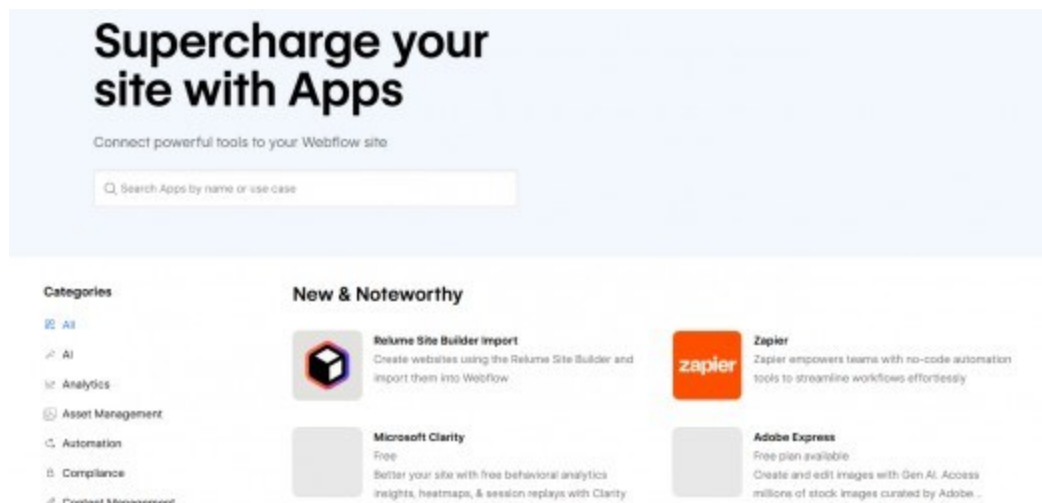


Image showing support interface | Source

8. Integration of External Services

The reality is there's no CMS that has every feature your agency wants, No CMS has all the features out of the box. This is where plugins come in. When you choose a CMS, you should look out for how well it integrates with third-party software.

There are some integrations that work with a CMS, such as Social media integrations, marketing automation, CRM amongst others.



Images showing external services | Source

9. Content Staging

Change is always inevitable whether you're launching a new product or completely renovating your site's design, you'll need to make changes. Ideally, you want to see what those changes look like before you permanently add them to your design.

That's why staging sites matter. Staging allows you check and confirm that everything is working well before users could see it.

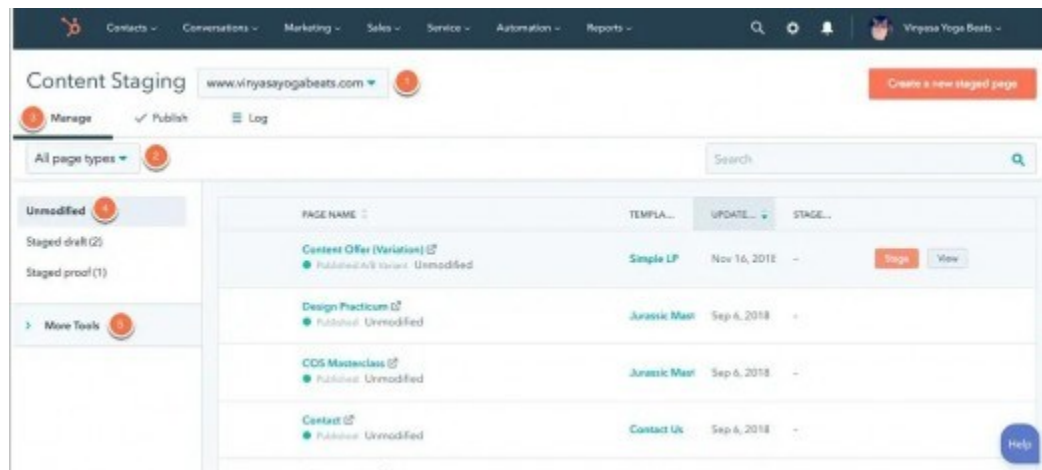


Image showing content staging interface on hubspot | Source

10. Migration

While Migration doesn't happen daily, because it can often hurt site traffic along the way, you still need a content management system with this features to help with migration process. Some even offer secure migration services if you're moving from another CMS.

11. Built-in Analytics

Ideally, Content management systems should have built-in analytics to measure performance indicators. If you find out the CMS you opted for doesn't have this feature built-in, you can check for any offer of integration with analytics tool by the CMS.



Image showing google analytics interface | Source

Choosing the Right SaaS CMS that Caters to your Agency Needs

There are different content management systems each with their unique selling points. When choosing, always focus on the features your agency needs.

Take the time to audit your business, determine what you need and choose a CMS that's right for you.