

Open Source

What is open source? Open Source software is freely available software created by communities of programmers and users for use generally by anyone for any purpose. Unlike commercial software, Open Source software is often in a process of being constantly developed with stable releases appearing very often particularly for popular or very active open source projects. Open source projects cover a whole range of software solutions from e-commerce through to content management systems.

How Can it Help Me? The first major saving with Open Source software is that it is completely free. A developer can download a complete software solutions and start configuring the system and then modifying it without the need for expensive licenses. The most popular and widely used open source solutions have a very active support community allowing speedy answers to technical problems and help modifying the source code. There are also many extras that the community provide freely to users of Open Source software maintaining high standards through collaboration. Access directly to the users who have helped shape and develop the core systems also allows long term relationships to develop that can be more future-proof than using commercial offerings or bespoke systems. One of the most important aspects of open source is that the code is not locked to a provider and is freely accessible to any developer enabling the freedom and ownership to take your system to different development companies without being tied to the supplier. While you will need a company such as Gamma Media to install, configure and host the system the cost of using open source compared to bespoke systems is much reduced.

Is an open source solutions for me? Below we have some guidelines as to whether open source would be suitable for you. What do you require? Finding the correct system for your requirements is key. However, most requirements are extremely similar and so we have listed below types of systems that are currently available as open source.

Content Management Systems (CMS) Content Management Systems allow you to control the layout and content of your website without any deep coding knowledge. Content management also allow community and user management as well as image and video uploading. CMS systems will save you money in the long run particularly if you have a website that needs updates often. We currently specialise in the most popular Content Management System - Joomla. This very website was created in Joomla. For more information about Joomla CMS please click [here](#).

E-Commerce OS Commerce and Joomla both provide a platform for you to sell products and deal with the variety of stock and customer management processes that are required when running an online shop. We can also provide subscription based services and content restricted websites allowing full flexibility of sales processes. For more information about our E-Commerce offering please click [here](#).

Social Networking Social Networking is still fairly new to Open Source. If you need a website that will allow a Facebook or MySpace style of social interaction there are currently two open source packages, Dolphin and Elgg. Both have their strengths and weaknesses. For more information please click [here](#).

Do you need a bespoke system? There are occasions when the only solution is a complete build from the ground up. This could be because you have specific requirements that open source can not provide, or you want to have complete control over every feature of the website. Gamma Media can provide a range of bespoke E-Commerce solutions to fit your technology platform or aspirations for the website. We can build sites on a number of different platforms such as PHP/MYSQL, MSSQL/ASP, Ruby on Rails. For more information please contact us outlining your requirements.