



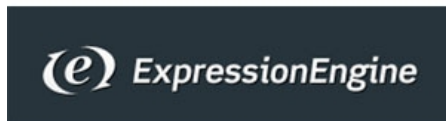
Software Electronics Services Mobile Appliances Business Auto Tech Science Tech Video

Software » Internet / Ecommerce » Content Management System Software Review » ExpressionEngine

## ExpressionEngine 2.2

Print/Email

\$299.95



### Pros

Expression Engine [offers](#) extensive add-on capabilities like wikis, photo galleries and RSS feeds.

### Cons

Due to the numerous features and [support](#) offered, a commercial license for this product can get quite expensive.

### The Verdict: 9.28/10

Despite the [cost](#), this CMS will enable you to create truly amazing [websites](#) through easy-to-use features and a large contributing community.



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2



ExpressionEngine [content management system software](#) is proprietary software designed to create stunning websites and simplify the content creation process, thus earning our **TopTenREVIEWS Gold Award**. Developed by EllisLab, Inc., it's a beautiful, authoritative system that is popular with individual users, companies and non-profits that create content-driven sites. This application offers a wide range of capabilities that will suit your diverse needs, while also creating a visually stimulating online storefront.

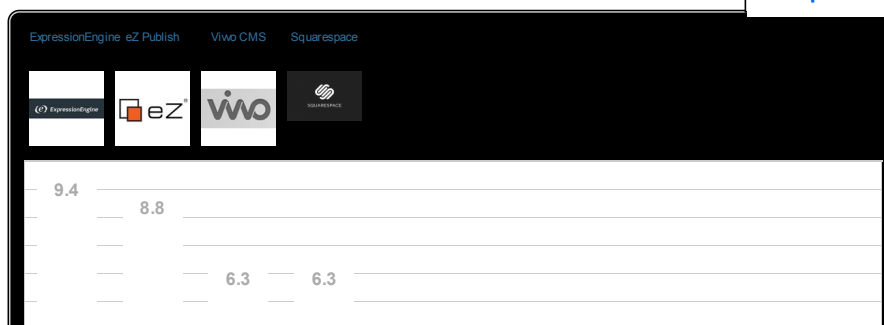
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### Built-in Features: 9.4/10

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A common question that new users ask when they discover Expression Engine is whether to use multiple weblogs or categories to organize their site. You will need to consider this carefully before you set up your site, and the answer depends on how you want your site to work. For example, if your site might require custom data fields, you should use a weblog to organize it. You should also use the weblog format if you need to create multiple user groups with granular rights, since you can't restrict users' access to categories.

One feature that Expression Engine is particularly proud of is its combination of a commercial product with an open-source framework. The funding they receive by offering a commercial product enables them to put more resources into developing professional material and extensions for your site. In addition, the open-source capabilities of this CMS mean that you can add to and create extensions for your own site. This must have been a precarious balance for Expression Engine to achieve because most of the top content management system software apps are offered free of charge.

## Add-on Features: 8.8/10

[Compare](#)

Expression Engine offers many great applications that are built into the core files. You can increase the capabilities of your site by installing one of the many modules available for download, such as an RSS feed, photo gallery and wiki. The wiki capabilities are quite spectacular and full of possibilities, depending on your site's needs and community.

Additionally, you can install plugins that make your site even more suited to the diverse needs of your audience. We found plugins for removing HTML formatting from text, viewing inbound links for your URL through Technorati, and displaying the top authors on a page.

## Management: 10/10

[Compare](#)

The software's administrative features include admin logs, site membership, searchable (and search-and-replace) content forums, data export, a blacklist/whitelist module, SQL and extension manager, which are all tools that come standard with this content management system. In fact, Expression Engine is equipped with the full complement of management elements we looked for in CMS software. This stands as a testament to how successful open source software can be. A site is only as strong as its ability to manage content, data and users, which ExpressionEngine accomplishes with flying colors.

We noticed extensive capabilities in the area of user management. The application allows for multiple administrators so that work can be spread out through multiple resources at a company rather than bottlenecking with the web developer. You can create member groups, customize fields, manage user profiles, require member activation and more. We were quite impressed with the array of management features offered here.

## Security: 8.8/10

[Compare](#)

ExpressionEngine allows you to create a truly secure site where you can trust that the data you handle will be safe. The built-in framework of Expression Engine's CMS offers you an audit trail, Captcha verifications (a plugin to determine if a comment or response is not generated by a computer), content approval and email verification. Login history is also included, and the system is SSL compatible.

ExpressionEngine already boasts a secure and stable system, one which has not been victim to a major security breach in the 10 years it has existed. Spam blockers are already in place, which means you can avoid unwanted attention from the malicious forces of the web. The security features offered here are quite comprehensive and include the most advanced of protective features offered among the CMS products we reviewed.

## Ease of Use: 10/10

[Compare](#)

ExpressionEngine has gained a significant following through its high level of customization and ease of use. The interface is straightforward and offers easy access to both front-end and back-end editing. Because this CMS software is open source, you get the best of both worlds. You can add to your website's functionality through the use of PHP, which means the functionality you desire from a website is easily within reach. For the non-technical user, you can simply work on your site from a simple front-end interface with a simple navigation.

We feel ExpressionEngine has gained its substantial community of customers not only because it's an open source application, but also because of its overall ease of use. From a programmer's perspective, this product is extremely flexible and unlimited in potential. Overall, we felt this was an ideal program for technical users.

After testing the CMS's developer capabilities, we explored it from a more non-technical user's viewpoint. Due to the simple nature of the interface, we were immediately able to grasp the navigation. Creating a page entry

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was as easy as clicking a single button. The site followed a simple structure similar to that of most weblogs, only with heightened levels of customization. For a simple article entry, we had to enter a title and body, but you can also create page URLs for an added advantage in the SEO arena in addition to article summaries for increased convenience to site visitors.

From a usability standpoint, we feel ExpressionEngine can act as a simple tool for non-technical users, while also allowing for extensive customization for users with a background in programming.

## Help & Support: 8.8/10

[Compare](#) 

One thing we noticed while using ExpressionEngine is that Ellislab has an impressive staff of technical support personnel. If you have any questions or issues, you can easily contact them via email. The support staff has worked to provide its users with additional troubleshooting and instructional tools to help familiarize both new and experienced users with the many capabilities available. For example, they offer a comprehensive wiki with detailed explanations of the various functionalities and terminology. This knowledgebase also details step-by-step instructions on how to do your own coding to increase the capabilities of your website as well as troubleshooting tips for common problems.

ExpressionEngine has a thriving community base filled with veteran CMS users who can help you with questions through the community forum. For the programming-savvy individual, you have access to a developer portal complete with documentation, forums and tips for increasing your knowledge of the software. They discuss not only how to create extensions to the software, but also how to add PHP elements throughout a site.


## Summary:

For functionality and flexibility, **ExpressionEngine** content management system software is a versatile option for operations large and small. It has obviously extended its reach to many professional websites, which is evidenced on the front page of their product site. If you're not completely sold on the software itself, then you can visit their website to see a comprehensive showcase of popular websites that were created using this content management system software. It may seem a bit pricey, but through its ease of use and expandability, it is a force to be reckoned with. This CMS is certain to help bring your website from the far reaches of obscurity and, with the right tweaks, put your business in the limelight.

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