

Understanding CMS Systems

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The Foundation of Digital Ownership

A Content Management System — or CMS — is not just software. It's the **infrastructure of digital ownership**. It's the difference between renting space on someone else's platform and owning your own plot of the internet.

For decades, the web has been built on content management systems. WordPress powers over 40% of all websites. Webflow, Squarespace, Wix, and dozens of others have democratized website creation for millions. But here's the uncomfortable truth: **these systems were not built for The Pillars.**

What a CMS Actually Does

At its core, a CMS separates *content* from *presentation*. You write your words, upload your images, and the system handles the code, the databases, the servers, the security. It's supposed to be liberating.

A typical CMS includes:

- **Content Creation Tools** — Text editors, image uploaders, media libraries
- **Design Templates** — Pre-built layouts you can customize
- **User Management** — Roles and permissions for teams
- **Publishing Workflows** — Draft, review, schedule, publish
- **SEO Tools** — Meta tags, sitemaps, structured data

The Problem with Traditional CMS

Here's what the marketing materials don't tell you: traditional CMS platforms assume you have a desktop computer, reliable internet, technical literacy, and time to learn complex interfaces.

They assume you speak English. They assume you can afford monthly subscriptions. They assume you're not creating from a phone on a bus in Lagos or São Paulo or Manila.

In other words, they assume you're not part of The Pillars.

The Rise of Headless and Composable

The industry is shifting toward "headless" CMS — systems that separate the backend (where content lives) from the frontend (how it's displayed). This offers flexibility for developers but adds complexity for everyday creators.

Composable architectures let you mix and match best-in-class tools. Great for enterprises with engineering teams. Irrelevant for a queer artist in Kingston trying to build a portfolio site.

What We Need Instead

At Pillar Media, we believe the future CMS must be:

- **Mobile-native** — Full editing capability from any device
- **AI-augmented** — Intelligent assistance without replacing human creativity
- **Multilingual by default** — Not as an afterthought
- **Ownership-first** — Your content, your domain, your data
- **Built for The Pillars** — Designed with, not for

Understanding CMS is the first step. Building something better is the mission.