

case study

**FULL SAIL UNIVERSITY:
FLEXIBLE WEB CMS
SOLUTION ENABLES
INNOVATIVE
EDUCATION SITE**

rivetlogic

Rivet Logic's implementation of a robust Web content management solution, based on Crafter CMS, gives Full Sail Web developers and editors unsurpassed flexibility in creating and managing content for an engaging new online presence.

For Full Sail University, a new content management solution enhances three decades of innovative education.

More than 30 years ago, Full Sail began as a dream to create a place where people could learn how to take their passion for entertainment and turn it into a career. It started with music and sound, but quickly grew to incorporate film, design (Web and graphic), production, games and animation, offering an innovative style of education that addresses the career opportunities available in the ever-growing and constantly evolving fields of entertainment media. The educational experience is delivered via immersive teaching methods, both in Full Sail's real-world production studios and classrooms in Winter Park, Florida, as well as through an online learning environment.

After several years on a legacy, homegrown Web content management system, Full Sail began formulating plans for a substantially richer, redesigned website (fullsail.edu) featuring a much broader scope of content, including complex media and sophisticated visual elements. For this, Full Sail realized that its homegrown content management system (CMS) was not up to the job. The legacy CMS required heavy IT involvement for site adjustments and alterations, and restrictive content modeling and templating features limited flexibility. In contrast, Crafter CMS provided complete flexibility with regard to content modeling and presentation-tier delivery, along with a robust set of content services for next-generation Web content and experience management.

at a glance



- 49 Degree Programs
- 191-acre Campus
- 110+ Studios & Production Environments
- 36,000+ Graduates
- 16,000+ Students

As a result, Crafter emerged as the clear choice to serve as the foundation for Full Sail's next-generation content management platform. During this decision-making process, Full Sail scoured the Internet for guidance, recommendations, best practices and potential partners. Rivet Logic surfaced as the premier provider of professional services and consulting for enterprise-grade open source content management systems, including Crafter .

Open Source Presented a Perfect Fit

"Open source technologies are moving forward at a pace that matches our own," says Chris Rediske, Full Sail Web Producer. Unlike many other content management systems that constrain how information is managed, or even constructed, Crafter presented the most extensible approach to quickly and effectively accomplish Full Sail's new website objectives. "We wanted to make use of rich Web media, and Crafter did not limit us in any way," explains Rediske. "No matter what we came up with during the site redesign process, Crafter was able to accommodate it easily."

Another crucial aspect of the Web CMS implementation was the wide range of proven options available to Full Sail for the website content delivery architecture. Crafter supports a decoupled architecture, in which content management is separate from content delivery (see illustration on page 4). Some of the advantages of such an architecture include strong support for multi-user content production, rich and flexible content modeling, multisite and multi-channel publishing, and better scalability and performance.

Full Sail already had a significant investment in Cold Fusion presentation-tier technology that it wanted to leverage in skills and assets. Crafter provided the perfect match, allowing Full Sail to utilize its own choice of Web application framework (in this case, Cold Fusion). Furthermore, Crafter delivers the proven performance and integration flexibility required to quickly and effectively deploy sites with dynamic Web functionality.

While Full Sail's talented and progressive internal Web team can still build customized tools for the university site, it became evident that open source tools like Crafter CMS would give Full Sail content authors, editors and producers the flexibility to do

"With our old CMS, more than 85 percent of the site content required IT support. Now, 95 percent of the content resides within Crafter CMS, eliminating the need to go to IT for site updates."

*- Mark Gilbert
Vice President, Information
and Media Technologies
Full Sail University*

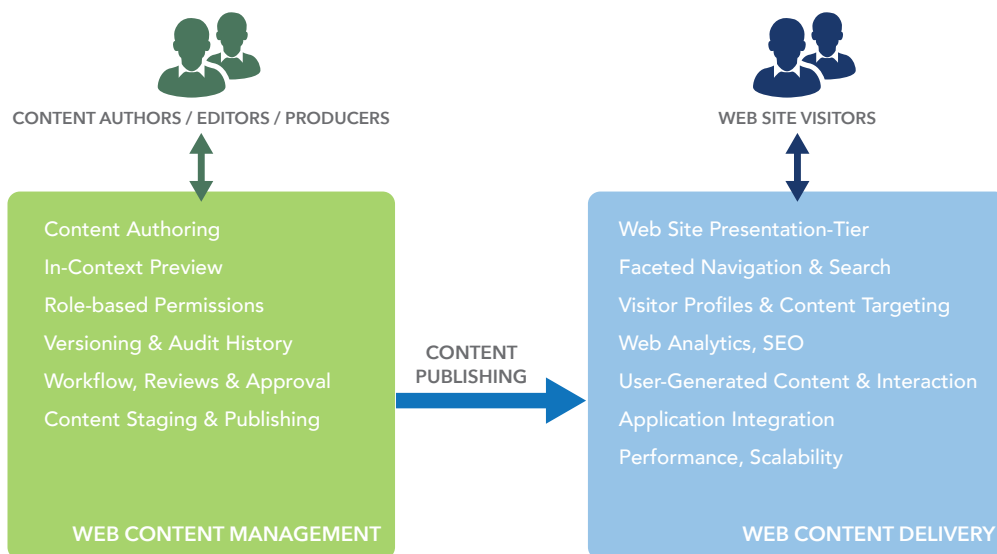


Figure 1. De-coupled WCM System Architecture

“Crafter CMS gave us increased flexibility to create and modify document types, and scale with relative ease. It was easy to distribute our content across multiple products and servers, which, in turn, reduced our software’s dependence on database uptime and our overall database loads.”

- Mark Gersting, Senior Application Developer / Team Lead, Full Sail University

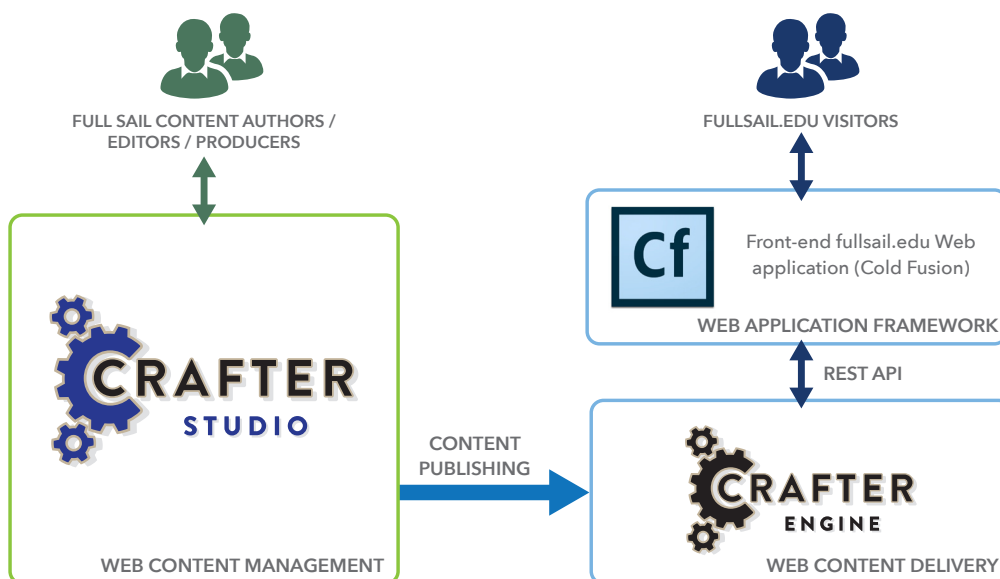


Figure 2. Fullsail.edu WCM Technical Architecture

what they do best—create engaging site visitor experiences. Since there are so few rules imposed on the editorial team when they create page layouts, produce content, add dynamic widgets, or incorporate rich media, they are free to make Full Sail online anything they want it to be.

Almost everything a site visitor sees at fullsail.edu is entirely managed within Crafter. At least 95 percent of all site artifacts—including page templates/layouts, images, videos, widget functionality, editorial content, navigation structures, Javascript, CSS, etc.—live in Crafter CMS. This makes site changes easy and fast. Crafter also enables a clean separation of code and content, giving the Full Sail Web team complete editorial control over any and all types of content on the site. For example, new navigation structures are automatically generated when content is created. There's no need to initiate code deployment or involve IT to make day-to-day updates. This frees up developers to add value in more important areas that leverage their expertise—like innovating on the support infrastructure.

In-Context Preview and Search Engine Optimization Deliver Added Value

Crafter's ability to virtualize any type of Web application provided Full Sail with a complete In-Context Preview capability, which allows Web team members to view all content changes before submitting them

benefits

- Increased productivity
- Better return on investment for IT resources
- Flexibility to build wide variety of content types
- Timelier, fresher and richer content
- Increased site traffic
- Improved collaboration and expedited publishing cycles with In-Context Preview
- Maximized uptime due to system reliability
- Content control shift from IT to editorial team with Web authoring interface
- Improved organic search rankings as a result of SEO-optimized URLs



FILM & Television

Figure 3. The engaging, content-rich Full Sail site is made possible by the flexibility and control provided by the Crafter solution.

through workflow for review and approval. As a result, Full Sail now has a significantly streamlined process for content authoring, editing, and publishing.

Once content changes are approved, they may be published to the live site immediately, manually at a future time, or automatically on a scheduled later date. Approved changes are reflected in every user's preview of the site, so everyone is always working with the latest approved content—regardless of whether or not content is published to the live site. This powerful capability of Crafter dramatically improves productivity and allows editors to spend more time on visionary creative content development and less time on more mundane revision tasks.

In addition, Full Sail's implementation takes advantage of Crafter's native support for search engine optimization, which includes user-friendly URLs and editorially controlled URL redirects. Accordingly, organic search rankings have improved since the site launch. Combining these technology best practices with Full Sail's fresh and relevant content has resulted in bottom-line benefits, including more site visitors, more unique page views, and more engaged visitors.

Since going live with the new site, Full Sail has sustained 100 percent uptime since day one, proving the stability and reliability of the Crafter solution. Full Sail is now contemplating how it can leverage the solution by implementing it in its sister schools—The Los Angeles Film School and the Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design in Denver. “The more we learn about this Rivet Logic solution, the more we realize how much we can do with it. We’re excited about devising even better approaches to building content now that we have this flexible and reliable Crafter Web content management solution in place,” explained Mark Gilbert, VP of Information and Media Technologies.

To learn more, call Rivet Logic.

For more information about our enterprise-grade, open source content management solutions and how they can benefit your business, call Rivet Logic at 703.955.3480, or visit rivetlogic.com.

About Rivet Logic

Rivet Logic is an award-winning consulting, design and systems integration firm that helps leading organizations build riveting digital experiences, and the solutions to manage and optimize them. Digital experiences that engage all types of users – customers, employees, all stakeholders. Digital experiences driven by content, and optimized with data. Most regarded for its deep technical expertise, Rivet Logic enables organizations to fully leverage the power of industry-leading open source and cloud software such as Alfresco, Liferay, Crafter CMS, MongoDB and more. With offices throughout the USA, Rivet Logic serves clients across a wide range of industries. Visit us at <http://rivetlogic.com>