

# HUBSPOT COS vs. WORDPRESS:

Which CMS Will You  
Choose For Your Business?



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# Getting Started

Are you deciding on a website platform for better Inbound Marketing? Are you already on WordPress and wondering if you should stay or move to the COS and be 100% HubSpot?

What motivates your decision? Your developer talent pool? Cost? System Capabilities? Support?

This is a topic that comes up over and over on calls with clients, in forums, over conversations with other agencies and HubSpot partners. They all want to know whether or not they should move to the COS if they are already are using HubSpot. They ask if they can do Inbound without HubSpot and just use WordPress.

Whatever you choose, there is no wrong decision.

**What is not ok is making that choice for the wrong reasons.**

Do you know if you are making your choice based on the correct reasons? We have worked on both WordPress and the HubSpot COS platforms, and know how to use them both thoroughly.

Often when minds get made up on the matter it isn't usually about best fit, but about what is "most comfortable." However, the most "comfortable" options may leave us "uncomfortable" when the competition is using the tools that get results.

While both platforms offer amazing capabilities, it is important to weigh the distinct benefits of each in relation to your own business, to choose the right provider. When deciding between the two, every factor should be considered, from pricing to the unique set of tools and site analytics available for each.

There is support available for each platform and, even though HubSpot and WordPress both utilize code, they are not entirely dependent on it. Wordpress and HubSpot are strong business tools, but the better option is contingent on the needs of the business in question. What is most important to your business? Do you have an idea of the most critical capabilities for running your website? Or do you have a cost in mind that suits your budget? Thankfully, here at Brand Builder Solutions, we have pulled together a complete breakdown on the key differences and considerations for this decision process.

# Let's Break It Down

## Pricing:

One of the first steps in deciding which site hosting tool to utilize is determining how much you are willing to spend.

WordPress is "free," but additional, hidden costs can add up quickly. Here is an overview of some hidden costs:

- To get rid of the wordpress.com tag, there is a fee, plus costs associated with hosting your site on a web server.
- When setting up your site on WordPress there are free design themes but if you want a custom theme, you will have to upgrade your plan.
- You may want other features added to your site that require plugins, such as improving SEO, A/B landing page testing and capturing leads. WordPress has an extensive plugin library with the average plugin costs \$100 or less. (<http://bit.ly/1EU4NYI>)
- WordPress does not have an option for email marketing, this is separate cost outside of WordPress.

Basic Great for basic blogging \$0 for life	Premium Great for pro bloggers \$99 per year	Business Great for businesses \$299 per year
✓ Free blog!	✓ Free blog!	✓ Free blog!
• WordPress.com address	✓ A custom domain	✓ A custom domain
• Basic customization	✓ Advanced customization	✓ Advanced customization
• No premium themes included	• No premium themes included	✓ 50+ premium themes included
• No eCommerce	• No eCommerce	✓ eCommerce
• No video storage	✓ Store dozens of videos	✓ Store Unlimited videos
• 3 GB of space	✓ 13 GB of space	✓ Unlimited space
• May show ads	✓ No Ads	✓ No Ads
• Community support	✓ Direct Email support	✓ Live Chat support
<a href="#">Free</a>	<a href="#">Learn more about WordPress.com Premium</a> <a href="#">Upgrade Now</a>	<a href="#">Learn more about WordPress.com Business</a> <a href="#">Upgrade Now</a>

2.

HubSpot has a 3 tier subscription plan with prices ranging from \$200-\$2,400 a month, but includes almost all of the previously mentioned features.

- HubSpot's website hosting can be expensive but there is more to it than just a CMS to get you started.
- HubSpot is a CMS, blog, and email list management platform.
- It comes with inbound marketing management, training and many other strategy tools mentioned in the tools section.
- HubSpot hosts the site with no extra charge and includes backups and revisions of all content editing and development work.
- HubSpot utilizes simple drag and drop modules. (<http://bit.ly/1EU4NYI>)

BASIC	PRO	ENTERPRISE
<b>\$200</b> /month	<b>\$800</b> /month	<b>\$2,400</b> /month
"An entry tool for those new to inbound marketing"	"An integrated solution for professional marketers"	"An advanced platform for marketing teams"
<b>100 Contacts</b> + \$100 per 1k extra	<b>1,000 Contacts</b> + \$50 per 1k extra	<b>10,000 Contacts</b> + \$10 per 1k extra
Customize Price	Customize Price	Customize Price
Up to 3 Users	Everything in Basic, Plus:	Everything in Pro, Plus:
Blogging & Landing Pages	CRM Integration	A/B Testing
Email Marketing	Marketing Automation	Custom Events
Social Inbox	Smart Content	Advanced Reporting
<a href="#">See all features...</a>	<a href="#">See all features...</a>	<a href="#">See all features...</a>

## Blogging:

The topic of blogging is most commonly associated with WordPress, however, both WordPress and HubSpot have blogging tools available.

### HubSpot

HubSpot's blogging tools come as a part of a full featured marketing platform, which includes training and support. HubSpot has the ability to set up multiple blogs with one click. Following setup, HubSpot's blog is ready to go. Some coding can be involved with HubSpot for styling, but is not always necessary. (<http://bit.ly/1FkU73E>)

### WordPress

Wordpress is a stand-alone blog and CMS tool, with limited analytics (as explained in the analytics section). (<http://bit.ly/1Bfnjlt>).



Both HubSpot and Wordpress come with one major drawback for blogging. Neither let the user have the ability to reply directly to a comment, sending an email to that person with the reply. HubSpot requires you to click, "Subscribe to All Comments," while Wordpress requires another plugin called, "ReplyMe."

## Development:

Coding can be very intimidating for some people. No matter what amount of coding skills you have, WordPress and HubSpot can accommodate your degree of expertise.

### HubSpot

HubSpot's code consists of HTML, CSS, JavaScript, and its own language called HubL. There are plenty of resources and documentation for HubL, but most of your site will not have to be coded in HubL. Depending on what you want to accomplish, it is likely that you will not have to use HubL at all.

HubSpot uses a drag and drop template editor to move the modules to your desired location. If you don't have experience with CSS, you can modify the content within the modules, as you would in text editors like Microsoft Word. (<http://bit.ly/1FkU73E>) HubSpot is also optimized for mobile, using responsive design built-in.

### WordPress

WordPress is built using PHP, HTML, CSS and JavaScript. WordPress, unlike HubSpot, is open source, this means that WordPress is designed by the user, for the user. Unfortunately, WordPress plugins are created by developers, as a result, potential errors, changes, and updates are all in under the developer's control.

WordPress is not always responsive. Not all of their themes can handle being viewed on smaller screens. If you want your theme to be responsive, there is a plugin available to achieve that functionality.

## Analytics:

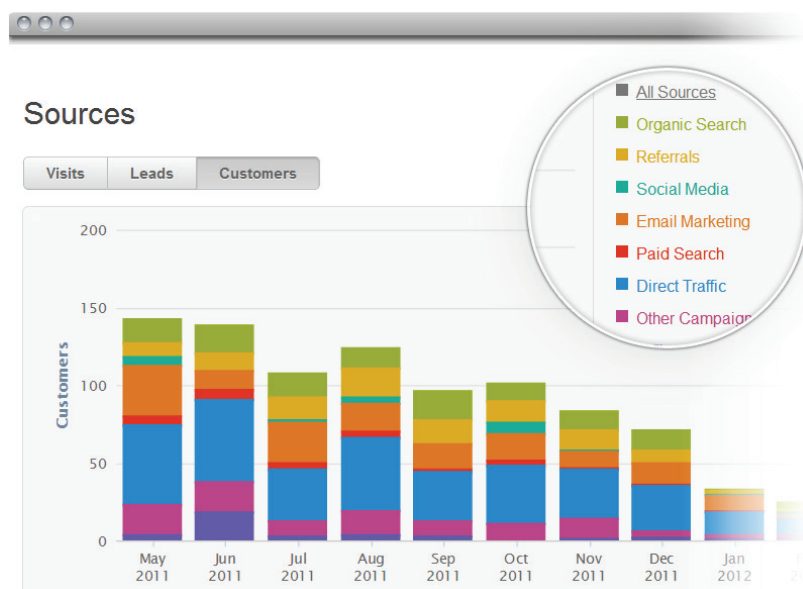
Analytics are essential for monitoring and managing business operations, making them another focus in the Wordpress vs COS debate. Receiving up-to-date and accurate information keeps the major players in the company aware of their opportunities and the shortcomings of current operations.

### WordPress

WordPress offers metrics like the number of views, visitors by day, week or month. You can also see top posts and top pages by country. There is a feature that lets you see where clicks are coming from, as well as a feature that lists the most popular topics on your blog. All the rest of your analytics are available in a WordPress plugin.

### HubSpot

HubSpot's analytics are included with your subscription. They follow the complete contact life cycle. It records events continuously from the first interaction to the most recent interaction. For example, if your business is offering a piece of content, HubSpot will track the amount of visitors that see your offer and the amount of people who fill out the form for the offer. Once they fill out a form, HubSpot tracks whether or not a visitor actually downloaded the content and turns the visitor into a lead.



HubSpot targets and contextualizes your contacts by creating an individualized profile for each. You can follow the number of views, CTA clicks, and CTA conversions. If all of these analytics aren't enough, they offer even more information on your CTA's, landing pages, site pages and blogs. (<http://bit.ly/18XyoVg>)



## Tools:

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HubSpot and WordPress offer a distinct set of features for the user's website creation. HubSpot provides tools that are built right into the web platform and are accessible immediately after signing up for a subscription. WordPress has a wide range of tools for effective website creation, however, many of these features are plugins that must be installed. Either way, each platform will have plenty of tools to get you started with your website build.

### Plugins

On WordPress, some plugins are free, but as we mentioned before, the average plugin costs \$100. If you need to use a lot of plugins, you might want to look into HubSpot for your extras.

Think about which plugins your business would need and if there is a cost associated or not. If you don't need any of the features HubSpot provides, such as lead tracking, social media management, and competition monitoring, then WordPress could be the right choice for you.

In HubSpot, it is not possible to change a lot of the raw code for tools, which helps keep you from damaging your site. For some developers wanting access to the raw code and tailor the tools to their own needs, this is a drawback. Ask yourself, "Would I want this capability?" If so, you might want to reconsider switching to HubSpot.

### CRM

Customer relationship management (CRM) systems are important to online business growth. The HubSpot CRM has an easily customizable dashboard so you can see where all of your leads fit into the sales funnel and effortlessly move them through the different stages with a drag and drop functionality. Additionally, you can create and assign tasks to yourself and your team, send and track emails directly from the contact record, and log calls and activities in a single location.

While WordPress does not have a CRM as part of the standard offer, there is a free plugin you could use developed by HubSpot, called LeadIn. You easily can track contact behavior and interaction with your website, however, LeadIn is limited. LeadIn is more used for monitoring website interaction than to be used as a traditional CRM.

## Social Media

Another important tool to keep in mind is the integration of your social media accounts to your site. In WordPress, you can monitor the latest from your social media profiles by simply downloading the [Social Media Manager plugin](#). With the HubSpot platform all of your social media is in one place. You can automatically manage these accounts, linking to your blogs and emails to increase the reach of your business.

## Competition

Monitoring your business's competition is the best way to discover your own brand's weaknesses and identify opportunities for growth. WordPress, unfortunately, does not have an extensive selection of plugins for this. [Blog Watch](#), however, can be downloaded to get the latest updates on what your competitors are discussing on their blogs to keep you from falling behind. HubSpot's Competitors Report allows you to track and compare your activity to the competition and shows traffic ranks, marketing grades, plus more.



## Leads

Lead tracking provides quick and meaningful insight about a company's business activity. There is a feature in HubSpot that helps the user understand the behavior of those visitors that have filled out a form on your website. Knowing all of the data, such as time on site, date of previous visits, etc, can help the marketing and sales team develop a better understanding of the quality, which then enables better closing rates. Similar features can be obtained in Wordpress through the plugin [Wordpress Leads](#).

## SEO

Having a successful website requires a good SEO strategy so that it is easily found by potential buyers. Many SEO tools, including [SEO Wizard](#), [SEO Ultimate](#), and [Stallion Wordpress SEO Plugin](#), can be downloaded to make this possible for Wordpress users. HubSpot offers SEO optimization features to ensure strong SEO, page by page.

## SMART Content

A benefit of HubSpot, in terms of content is the availability of SMART content. SMART content allows for the personalization and customization of content depending on a lead's personal information (that has been stored in your emailing list or from the Inbound Database.)

## ROI:

ROI (Return on Investment) is a metric that takes into account how many visitors, leads, customers, and revenue are coming through the business to assess how well the company is doing. ROI indicates whether or not a website is earning money based on the design and marketing efforts. Leads may seem intangible, but ROI numbers, turn the intangible into a measurable metric for business success.

### HubSpot

HubSpot offers an ROI tool that lets you track how many sales your keywords and content bring through your website. With HubSpot's thorough analytics, you are able to see exactly how much money your company is making. (<http://bitly.com/HE8dh7>)



### WordPress

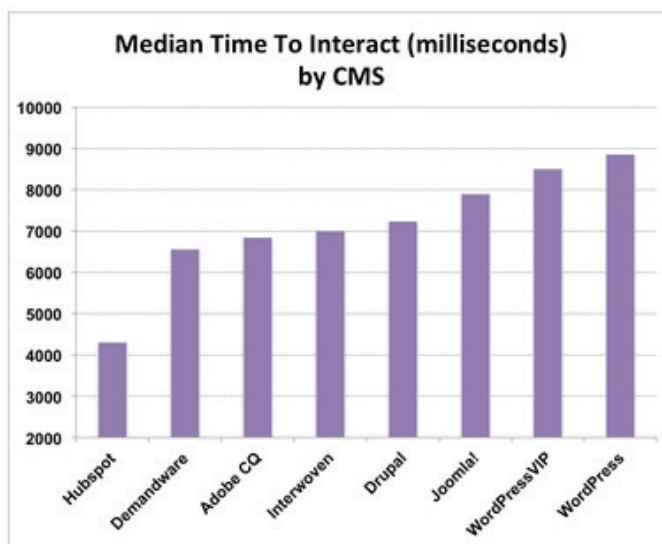
WordPress also has an ROI tool. There is a plugin for ROI, called TrenDemon (<https://wordpress.org/plugins/trendemon-revenue-booster/>). This plugin is crucial for effective cash flow tracking.

"TrenDemon helps you automatically boost revenue, page views and conversions from site. Once you set your goal, TrenDemon identifies which posts on your site have the highest impact. Then using personalized content recommendations and call to actions, TrenDemon drives more traffic to those posts and pages automatically."

## Speed:

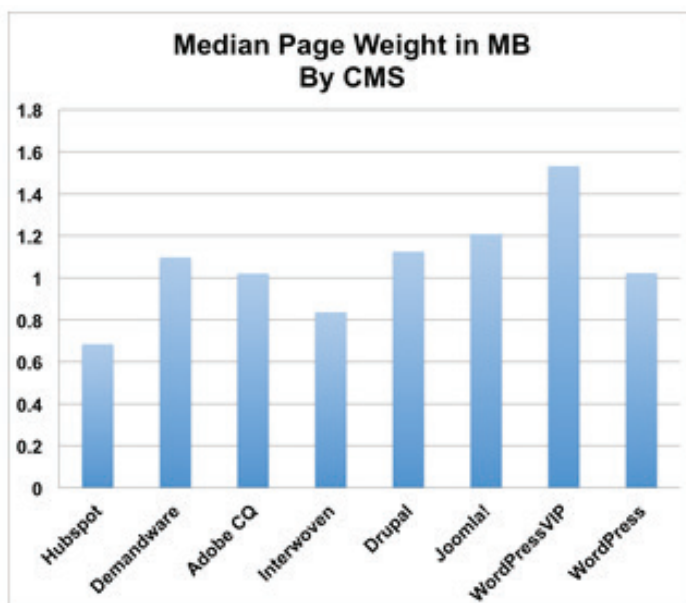
Load time is another extremely important factor to consider when deciding where to host your site. "Users will abandon your page if it takes more than 3 seconds to load," according to HubSpot. When it comes to speed, Hubspot seems to emerge the winner, but this could be deceiving.

Yottaa did a study on speed, with regards to different CMS (<http://bit.ly/1GrpWYL>). They found that HubSpot was the fastest CMS to load by 3 seconds, but that is still enough time for someone to abandon your page. Below are the other sites they tested. You can see, WordPress is last and takes the longest time to load.

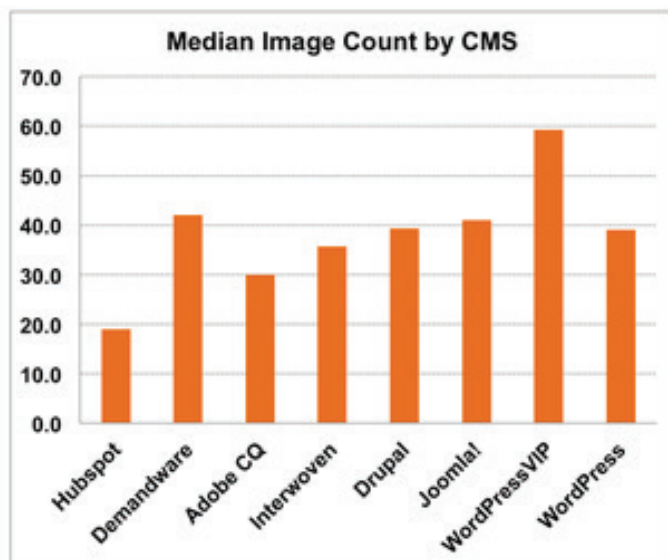


WordPress takes, on average, 4 seconds longer to load than HubSpot, but there are several reasons as to why this is happening.

First, the weight of the page gives insight as to why HubSpot is winning. HubSpot's pages are the lightest compared to the other platforms tested.



Page weight is determined by the number of bytes used on your page. The more bytes, the more work for the browser. Looking at this graph, it is clear that HubSpot is the lightest.



This study takes into account the median weight. WordPress VIP is in the bottom 20% for all sites on the internet for heaviness. This study shows that half of WordPress VIP sites are in the heaviest quintile.

Part of this weight can be attributed to the image count and the plugins needed on your WordPress site. Besides bytes, images also go into the page weight. Large image files and too many images can cause your page to lag.

WordPress VIP and WordPress are 2 of the top 5 sites with the most images. HubSpot wins again with fewer images, leading to faster load time. The median image counts for WordPress VIP and WordPress are almost 60 and just about 40, respectively.

Plugins slow down WordPress sites, they create more work for your browser, running several tasks at once. Many tools offered by WordPress plugins are already integrated into HubSpot's platform, therefore a HubSpot site loads quicker.

## Training/support:

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Training and additional support make all the difference if you are experiencing problems with your site. They make it easy for you to find a quick, effective solution.

### WordPress

WordPress's help button takes you to a page with forums. There is no official WordPress support page because a lot of WordPress' features are a result of open source development. The opportunity for your issue to be resolved, is only as great as the potentially helpful posts in a forum. There is no guarantee that you are going to be able to solve your problem.

### HubSpot

With HubSpot, there is 24/7 support by phone or email and an unlimited amount of training to guide you through their platform and Inbound Marketing.

HubSpot is not just a website platform. They are the founders of Inbound Marketing. When you subscribe to HubSpot, you not only get the Content Optimization System (COS), but you also gain access to the HubSpot training, support, and network. HubSpot gives you the opportunity to learn how to create workflows, lists, email, templates, and blogs. HubSpot also offers training on how to market to your audience, how to blog effectively, how to set up campaigns, and more.

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## The Outcome

The answer in the great HubSpot vs Wordpress debate is not the same for every company or individual. It, ultimately, all boils down to what your business needs at this particular time. Are you just looking for a website hosting tool to get your business online? ...Or would you benefit more from a web platform that gives you the opportunity to revamp your marketing strategy to fit the Inbound methodology?

Hopefully our analysis helped you weigh the pros and cons of each platform to make the best possible decision.

Need some additional guidance?

Try our questionnaire (pg.13) to determine whether HubSpot or Wordpress is best for achieving your company's goals!

# Questionnaire

When deciding whether Wordpress or Hubspot is appropriate for your business' needs, you will want to consider your answers to the following questions:

- 1: Do you have knowledge of web coding languages or a team to help you?**
  - a. Yes, we have the coding down.
  - b. No, I need more help.
- 2: Do you need a support team 24/7?**
  - a. Absolutely!
  - b. No, I mostly "fly solo" and figure it out on my own.
- 3: Are you very focused on efficiency and your site's load time?**
  - a. Yes, speed and efficiency are my main concerns.
  - b. No, I am devoted to creating a great looking website, first, even if it lags.
- 4: Is website optimization a priority for your company?**
  - a. Yes, website optimization is very important to our company!
  - b. Not currently. We're not ready for it.
- 5: Are your visitors coming mostly through mobile?**
  - a. Yes, they are using their phones to find us now, more than ever!
  - b. No, most of our visitors rely on desktops.
- 6: Do you carefully measure cash inflows from your visitors and offers?**
  - a. Yes, we are very dedicated to these analytics.
  - b. We would not know how to calculate this number and/or are not too concerned.
- 7: Would you appreciate a strong email marketing strategy?**
  - a. We would definitely like to improve our email marketing!
  - b. No, at this time, we are only focused on our website and/or blog.
- 8: Do you have a strong marketing strategy in place?**
  - a. Yes, but we are always looking to enhance our marketing efforts.
  - b. We are still unsure of our marketing strategy and we are not planning to make this a priority in the near future.
- 9: Are you hoping to form content that will increase your number of visitors?**
  - a. We would love to create tailored content to acquire more visitors.
  - b. We have content available, but we aren't concerned about increasing our visitors.
- 10: Do you need multiple blogs to satisfy multiple users?**
  - a. Yes, we have different buyers with different tastes and concerns.
  - b. No, we essentially have a "one-stop-shop," for consumers' content needs.

Once you are done, tally the number of questions answered with, "a" and compare this to your number of "b," responses. If the majority of your answers were "a," your company might need HubSpot as your platform. On the other hand, if you chose mostly "b," you could be better off using Wordpress.

If you have an even number on both you might want to do some more research about each platform.

# Wordpress or COS?

## Sound Advice From a Client Who Has Experience With Both

A client of ours, with experience using both Wordpress and COS, offered to give us their perspective on this debate.

Here, are the responses we received:

### What do you get from HubSpot that you didn't get from WordPress?

HubSpot is more user friendly for those who are not as experienced with managing a website, such as myself. We can easily build and modify templates for different channels of marketing that are pre-configured for desktop to mobile.

### Why did you switch from WordPress to HubSpot?

Our company is still in a start-up phase and when our product became ready, we decided to take an inbound approach to marketing. HubSpot allowed us to start up with a "one-stop shop." We have a small team and HubSpot has been able to replace some the outsourcing that we needed in the beginning.

### What are your favorite features on HubSpot? Why?

#### Reporting:

1. We can see where our traffic is coming from and where we should focus our marketing activities.
2. We can analyze how successful/unsuccessful we are in certain areas and create targeted campaigns to improve these areas.
3. We can set up realistic goals and know how to go about achieving them.

#### Design Manager:

1. COS
2. Templates and modules are easy to create and customize.

#### Emails & Workflows:

1. They are automated. Again, being a small team, this is super powerful for us.
2. The ability to review an email's performance.
3. The ease of creating emails from templates or cloning.

### What did you like about WordPress?

I did like the UI, it was simplistic and easy for someone unfamiliar with managing a website.

### Do you prefer HubSpot over WordPress? Why?

Yes, because it's allowed us to hold off on hiring a full-time web designer and marketing manager. ;)

14.



# HubSpot Customers: “Delighted” or Not?

Our team at Brand Builder Solutions has searched for real HubSpot reviews from unhappy customers. We have read through some of common complaints and written rebuttals. These counterarguments have been compiled below for your review.

## Customer A:

“These people at bubspot or hubstuff or whatever are either liars, or morons, or both. They claim to be these awesome PR/marketing gurus, but what they promise to deliver is a web page platform from which you would do your marketing. Well. IT IS THE MOST HORRIBLE AWFUL EVIL USELESS JUNKY MESS I have ever encountered in my life. Pretend you have, say 50 brochures, that you uploaded at some point as collateral for your campaigns. Now try to sort them into folders. Forget it. They have 2 so called File Managers that do not talk to one another, create ghost folders, lose links, and make everything take FOREVER. I **\*\*HATE\*\*** hubspot ever so more that I am stuck using it per company HQ choice.”

## Counterargument A:

There was a brief period of time where some HubSpot users were on the old content platform (CMS) and others were on the new platform (COS). There were also customers using CMS for their main site pages, but COS for Landing Pages and Blogs. While this may have been the cause of some confusion and frustration, this is not really an issue anymore. New customers are automatically setup with the COS and existing clients have been and are being migrated to the COS. Upon migration, there is a single File Manager to work out of.

Another thing to note is that the software is constantly improving and HubSpot takes users requests and feedback very seriously in improving their tool. We have spoken with Support Reps, posted ideas to the forum, and seen those requested changes implemented or already being addressed.

## Customer B:

“Don’t move your site to HubSpot unless you are absolutely committed to staying with them FOREVER!!!!... and absolutely don’t move your site to HubSpot if you are not HTML or technically savvy ‘cause you’ll never get it back they way they claim. I was on HubSpot for 6 months with zero return. I canceled and used their recommended HTTrack to export my site. It is a mess now to work with - a lot of garbage HTML code. If they offer a way to export as well as they import then you would be good to go. Why don’t they offer an export - seems to be the right thing to do with all the hype they give it. Disgusted and disappointed and frustrated!”

## Counterargument B:

Again, this comment may be a bit outdated as the tool is constantly improving. You can now export the Site Pages, Landing Pages, Blog Posts, Files, etc. The main drawback is that HubSpot allows you to serve certain content dynamically. Since the dynamic content resides on HubSpot’s servers, it will not be included as part of the static export.

A SPECIAL THANKS TO



For sharing their insight on each platform

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