

The Headless CMS Decision Worksheet

Headless is not automatically the right choice, and for plenty of teams it is overkill. Twenty minutes here will tell you whether the flexibility is worth the added build.

Score each statement from 1 to 5

1 means not true of us. 5 means very true. Higher totals point toward headless.

Multiple channels

Our content needs to reach more than just one website.

1

2

3

4

5

Developer capacity

We have developers who can build and maintain a front end.

1

2

3

4

5

Replatform ahead

We expect to redesign or replatform and do not want content held hostage.

1

2

3

4

5

Content is structured

Our content is, or can be, stored as clean labelled fields rather than pages.

1

2

3

4

5

Marketing independence

Our marketers can work without building pages themselves, or we will invest so they can.

1

2

3

4

5

Reading your score: 20 or above, headless is likely a good fit. 13 to 19, look at a hybrid or decoupled CMS that gives you API delivery plus visual editing. Below 13, a traditional CMS will serve you better and cost far less. There is no prize for the more sophisticated architecture if you do not have the problem it solves.

The three costs people underestimate

Cost	Our situation
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Before you decide: if you go headless, confirm how content preview works and how the front end renders for search crawlers. Both are solvable, and both are where headless projects quietly go wrong.