



The State of CMS 2023: Netherlands

INTRODUCTION



Content management systems (CMSs) are at the heart of any modern business. They connect digital brands with relevant audiences and support the day-to-day operations that come with running a successful organization. As the core of a company, it's not enough for a CMS to do the bare minimum. In a world of high customer expectations, systems as well as their users must constantly evolve to create the best possible experience.

Usage habits in the Netherlands continue to develop, ranging from which types of teams interact with the CMS to how many they're juggling at once. Even the core technology itself has gone through significant developments: the once universal monolithic CMS with a tightly coupled front and backend no longer holds a monopoly over users. Headless technology – systems that separate the two ends – has changed the game, transforming what users can expect from their content management system. Keeping up with unfolding patterns like these is key to understanding the current and future state of the industry.

That's why Storyblok has compiled the State of CMS 2023: Netherlands report. We set out to take stock of the modern user's needs and behavior: what makes one CMS worth using and another worth abandoning? How has the headless revolution affected their company's performance? How are they reaching their current audience, and how will that strategy change in the coming years?

To find the answer to these questions and more, we've collected data from users around the region to understand their choices – and in turn, what role CMSs play in the constantly changing Dutch market.

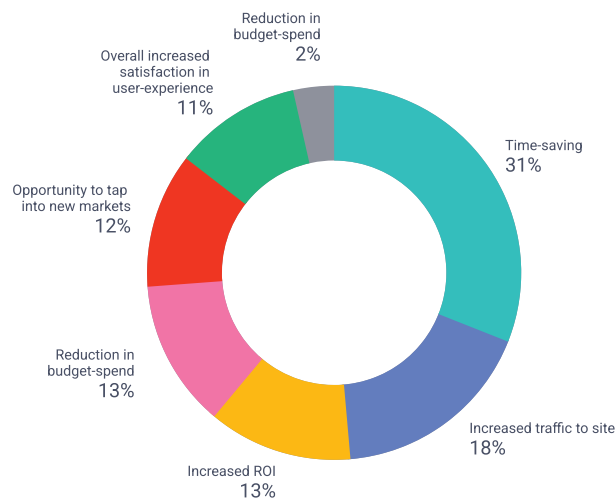
Total respondents: 153

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Executive Summary

- 1 Half of users (50%) need more than 1 CMS just to maintain their content operations, with 10% using 4 or more CMSs.
- 2 **Mimimizing delivery risk, need of a new technology stack/legacy, and omnichannel capabilities** are the main reasons behind having more than 1 CMS in place - a direct result of the legacy architecture of traditional CMS solutions like WordPress, Adobe Experience Manager, and Webflow.
- 3 **Time-consuming processes, security issues, and difficulty in needing to learn a new system/skill/tech stack** are the 3 main reasons why businesses change their CMS.
- 4 26% of respondents believe their current CMS workflows are difficult or very difficult.
- 5 In the majority of businesses (60%) multiple teams use a CMS on a regular basis, making proper workflows and collaboration capabilities even more important.
- 6 41% of businesses already use a Headless CMS to manage their content from one central hub and publish simultaneously on any channel.
- 7 **An overwhelming majority (88%) of businesses report improved KPIs, revenue growth, and productivity since using a headless CMS.**



Reported improvements since using a headless CMS

The State of CMS - Netherlands

Content management systems have been essential tools for organizations for around 25 years. As technology continues to evolve, so does the general understanding of what a CMS is and what it can do. However, knowledge and use of these systems are not necessarily universal, and not every team member comes into direct contact with them on a day-to-day basis. It's important to make sure that we're assessing the state of CMS based on the choices made by active users.

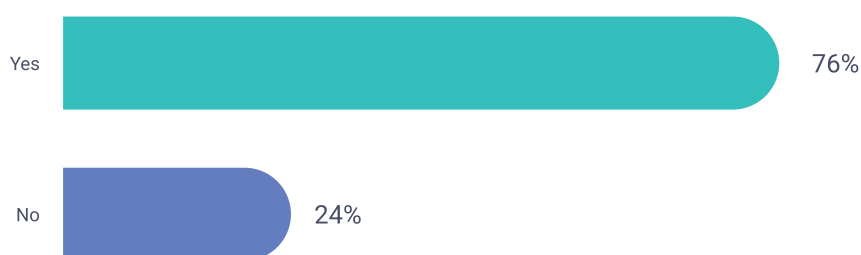
As such, we started the study with a screening question to make sure respondents were familiar with how their organization manages content:

“ A Content Management System (otherwise known as a CMS), is a software application that allows users to build and manage a website without having to code it from scratch.

BASED ON THE DESCRIPTION ABOVE, ARE YOU CURRENTLY USING A CMS AT YOUR ORGANIZATION?

Those who answered “yes” continued on with the study, while those who answered “no” were excused. This ensures that all our participants were operating within a company that uses a CMS.

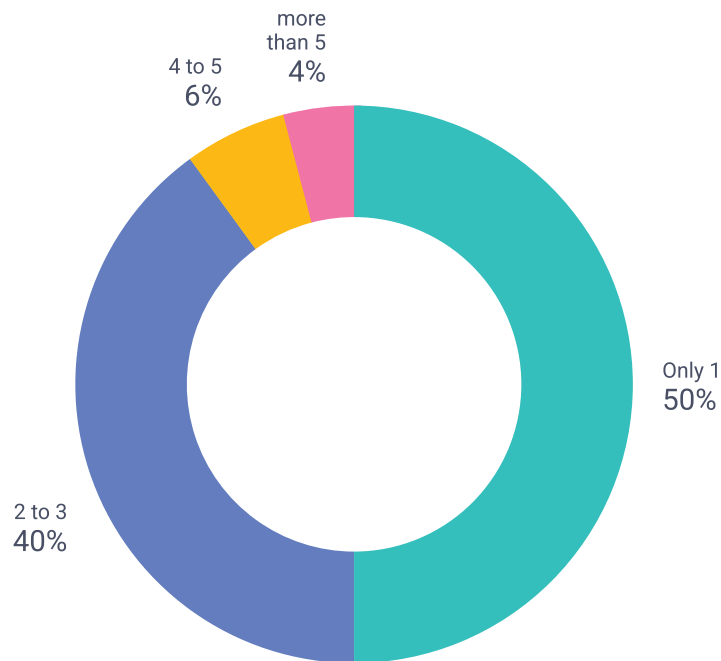
Our results revealed the following:



A majority of respondents (**76%**) indicated that they currently use a CMS at their organization and thus could accurately respond to the following questions. This brought the qualifying sample from 153 to **116**.

Survey Results

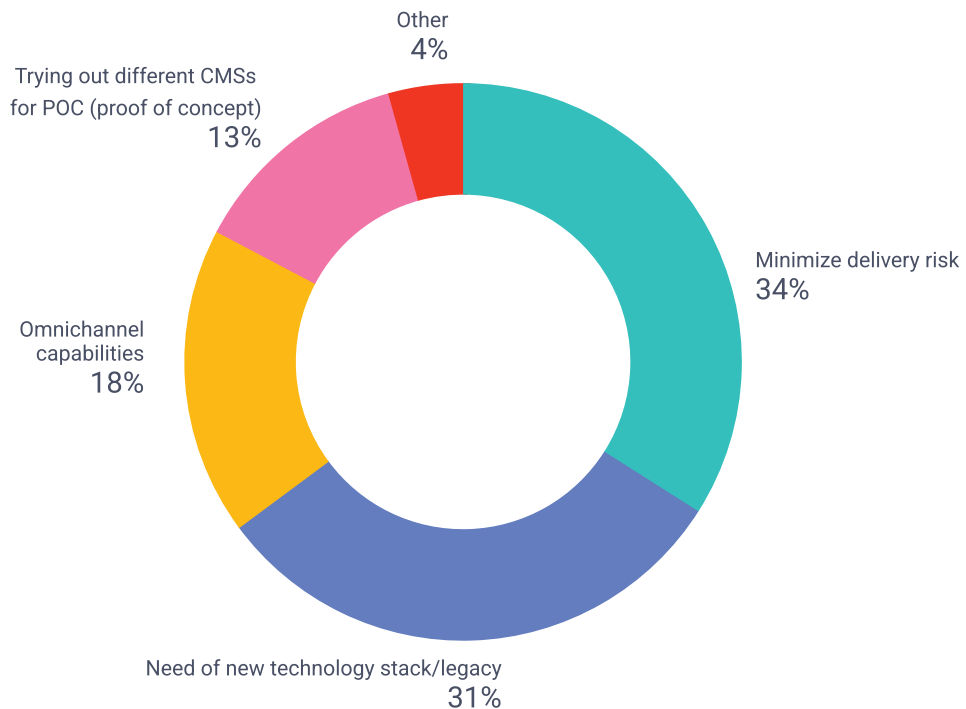
1 How many CMSs do you currently use at your organization?



Half of respondents (50%) used only one CMS in their organization. The percentage of respondents using 2-3 was **40%**. **10%** of respondents reported using 4 or more CMSs, proving that many companies still struggle with a central solution to their content management strategy.

2

If you use more than 2 CMSs at your organization, please select reasons why you are using more than 2 CMSs at your organization:



The use of multiple CMSs is not always wise: it can lead to issues such as disorganized workflow, content siloing, and communication issues. Thus, it's important to understand why some users continue to operate several CMSs regardless of these downsides.

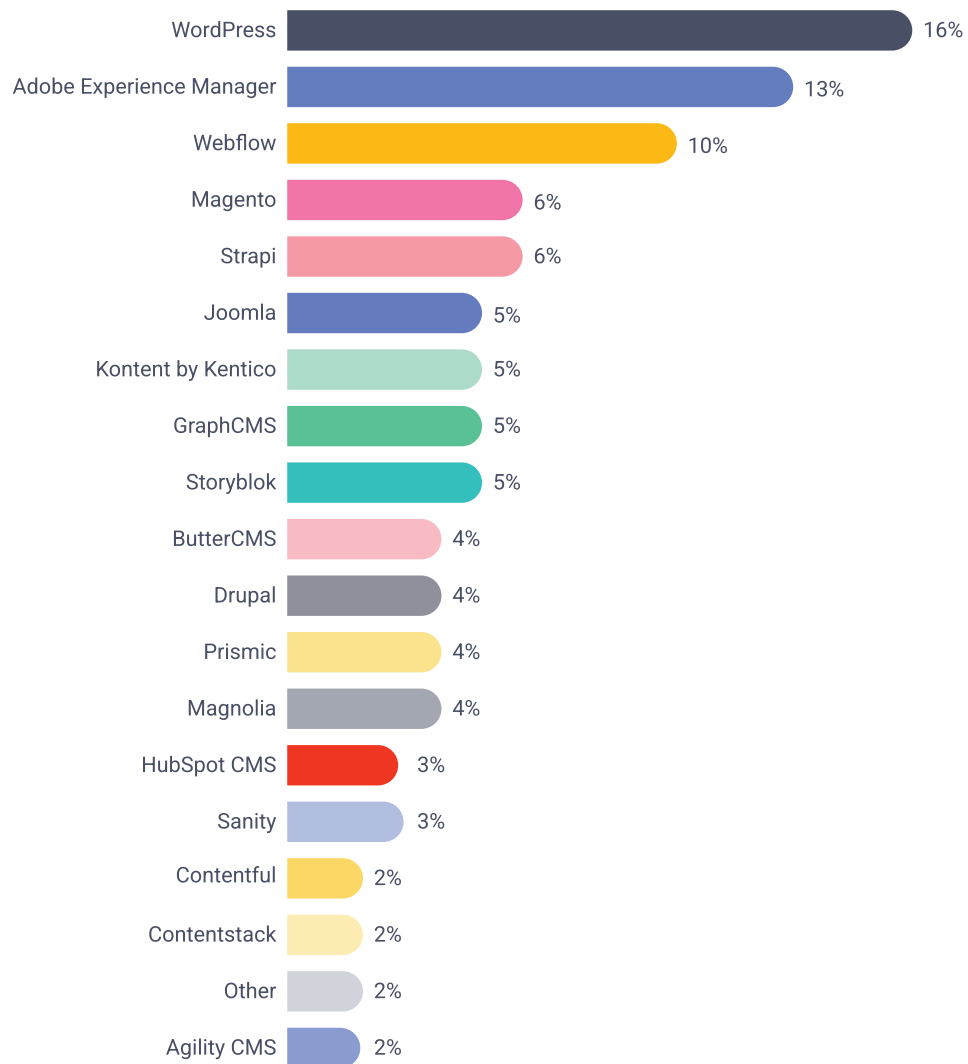
The top-listed reason for using more than 2 CMSs was to **minimize delivery risk**. This could be the result of having backups, or perhaps using multiple CMSs to serve multiple frontends.

The second reason behind using more than two CMSs was to satisfy the **need for a new technology stack/legacy**. Monolithic systems are not built to be adaptable. The all-in-one, tightly connected nature of the technology makes it hard to change things or add new programs. It can be a costly, difficult process that carries the risk of crashing the entire system should a failure occur. As such, users who need additional capabilities may find it easier to simply use an entirely new CMS. Unfortunately, this is not a sustainable solution.

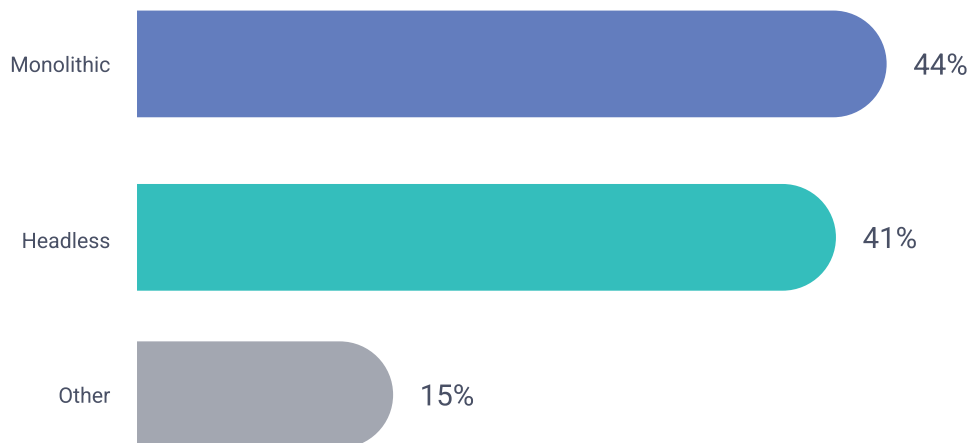
Further down was the need for **omnichannel capabilities**. Omnichannel strategies are an essential part of modern marketing. Customers expect to be able to access content across a huge number of channels, one that will only continue to grow. However, monolithic systems are not suited to providing omnichannel experiences: the backend is tied to a single, inflexible frontend, meaning getting content on multiple platforms is extremely difficult. This may be one reason that users resort to a multi-CMS ecosystem.

3

Which CMSs are you currently using?



The most commonly used CMS platform in the sample is WordPress. With one exception, the top 6 CMSs by the number of users alone in the sample were all monolithic solutions: WordPress, Adobe Experience Manager, Webflow, Magento, Strapi, and Joomla.

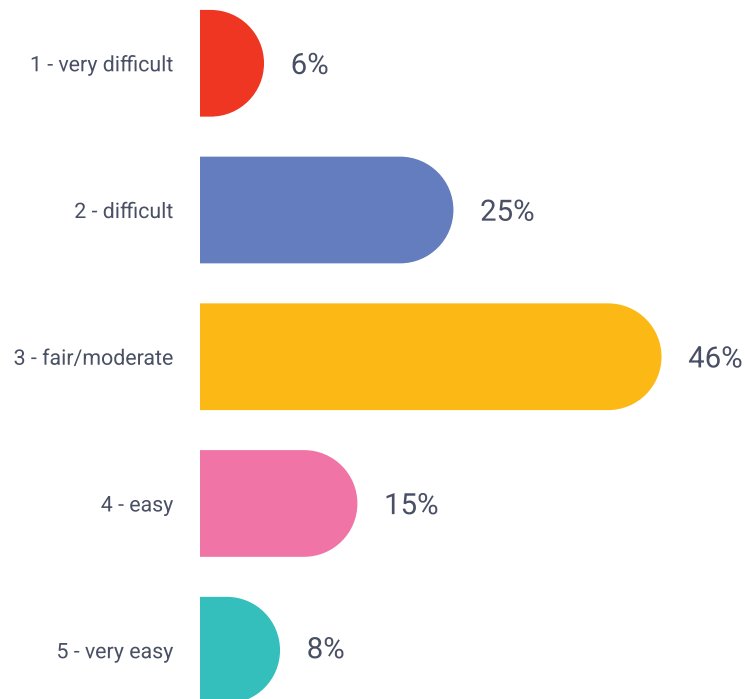


While monolithic systems made up the majority of the sample at 44%, **headless systems were close behind at 41%**. Other choices (such as page builders, web apps, and custom CMSs) were used by 15% of respondents.

The fact that many users have opted for monolithic alternatives may indicate a growing dissatisfaction with traditional systems. Dutch users in particular seem to be recognizing the limits that monolithic systems can impose on their organizations, especially when compared to the global State of CMS 2023 which showed the comparatively lower 36% of international respondents using headless systems.

4

How would you rate your team's/organization's processes prior to using a CMS? - 1 being very difficult and 5 being very easy



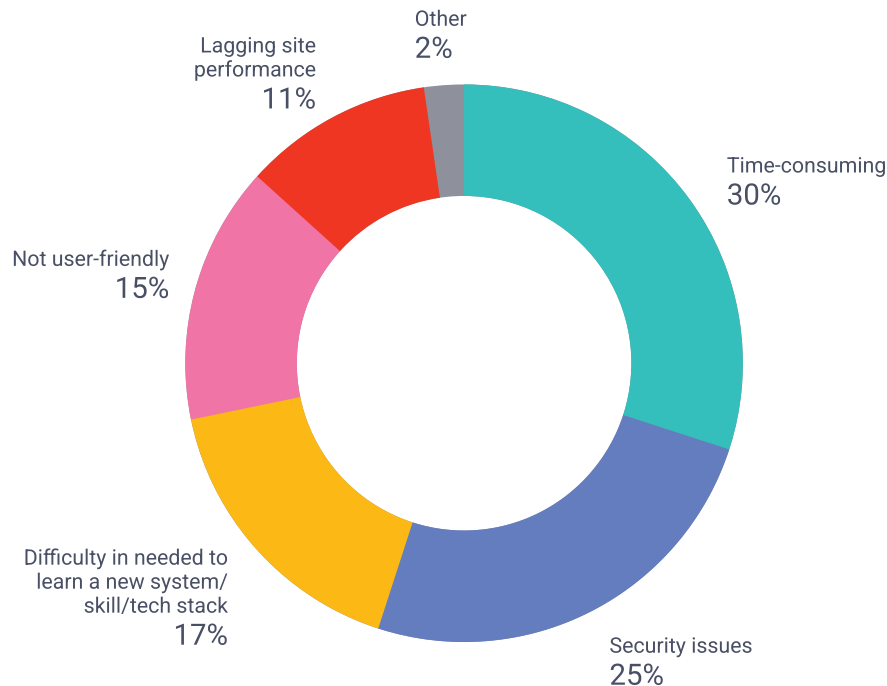
CMSs often bring big changes to organizations, making the contrast between the prior and current experience interesting to investigate.

In this case, the majority of respondents reported that their organizational processes prior to using a CMS were Fair/Moderate. 31% cited that it was either difficult or very difficult.

Overall, only a small minority of 23% saw their processes prior to using a CMS as either easy or very easy.

5

What were the pain points and/or missing features that made you migrate to a platform?



It's unlikely that users switching to a new platform have only a single pain point to cause such a change. As such, users were able to choose multiple options for this question. **The most common pain point by an impressive margin was that the old platform was time-consuming.** Better time management impacts every part of the content pipeline and improving it can be an essential way to optimize an organization's performance.

The second most common pain point was **security issues**. Security threats to a CMS can lead to serious consequences for the organization: lost revenue, stolen data, and a huge blow to customer trust. This is one reason why many users choose a headless CMS. The use of APIs means that each program is naturally quarantined, so a security risk in one area cannot spread to another. Threats are contained immediately. This is opposed to a monolithic system, where one security breach has the potential to take down an entire system.

The third most commonly cited pain point was **difficulty in needing to learn a new system/skill/tech stack**. Keeping up with constantly evolving markets means keeping up with technology as well, and systems that make it hard to swap and integrate programs can be a major issue. It may cause users to fall behind as competitors are able to be more agile.

How Storytelling Scales

Storyblok is the headless content management system that empowers 110,000 + developers and content teams to create better content experiences across any digital channel.



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WÜSTHOF

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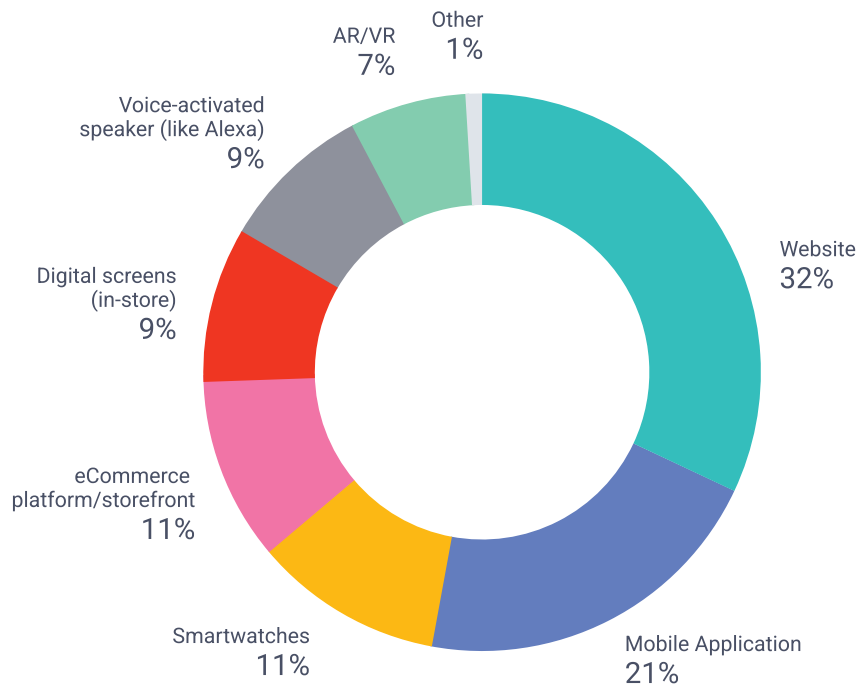
3x

faster website
performance

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6

Which platforms and channels do you currently serve with your CMS?

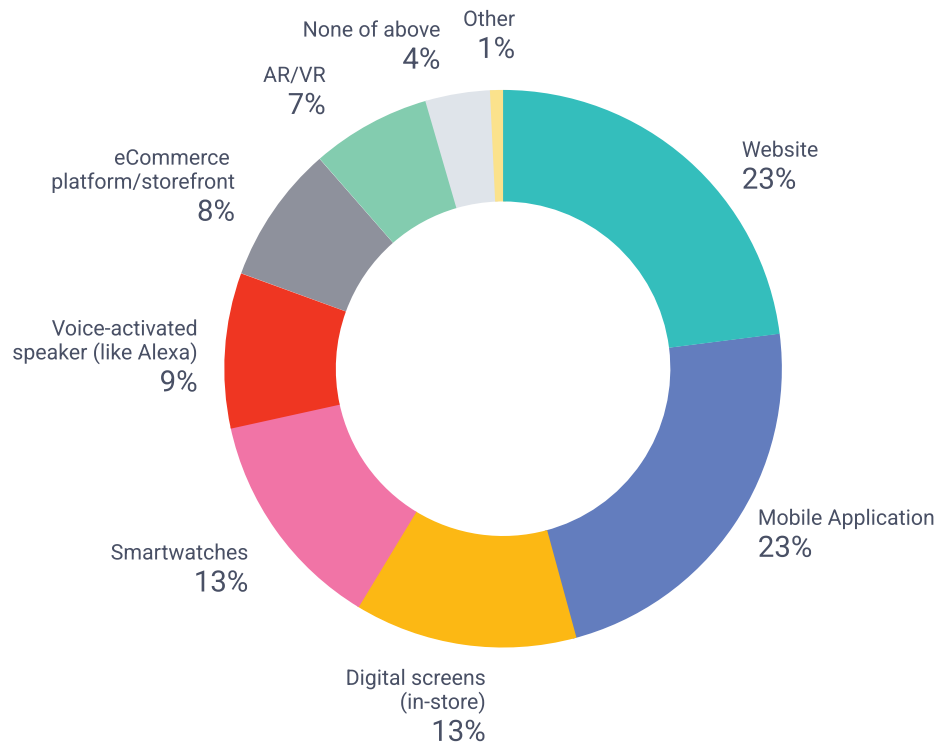


The most commonly reported channels served by CMSs were **websites, mobile applications, and eCommerce platforms/storefronts** in that order. Given that these are typical channels for modern organizations, this is not surprising.

Interestingly, eCommerce platforms tied with **smartwatches**. Moreover, other Internet of Things (IoT) options were not far behind, with digital screens and voice-activated speakers just 2% behind. While these IoT options were still far less popular than websites and mobile applications, their relative popularity is worth noting.

7

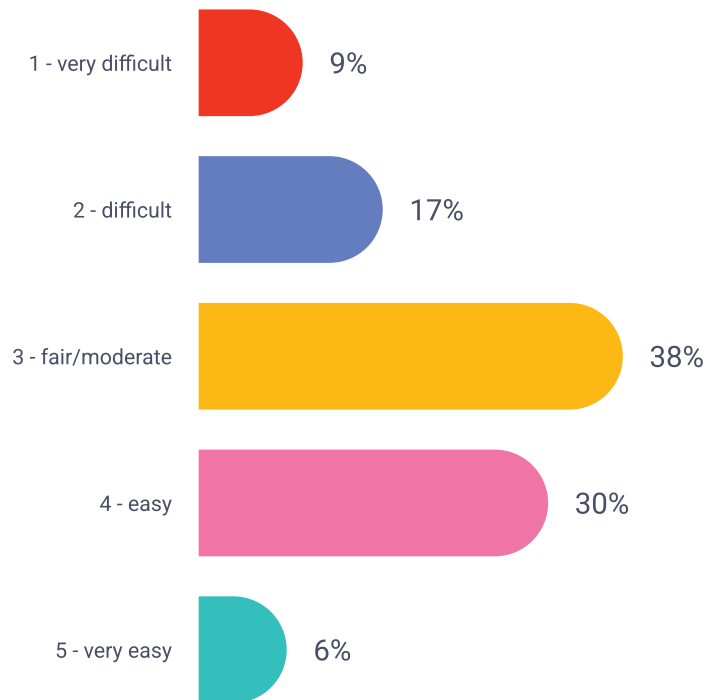
Which new platforms and channels do you plan to serve with your CMS in the future? (Check all that apply)



This question took the previous one and applied it to future plans. While websites and mobile applications remained the leaders, respondents indicated that they were more likely to use digital screens and smartwatches in the future. By contrast, eCommerce platform plans decreased by 3%, now behind digital screens. This may indicate a growing priority of serving in-store customers in the Netherlands.

8

Rate your satisfaction with your current workflow process with your CMS on a scale of 1 to 5 - 1 being very difficult and 5 being very easy

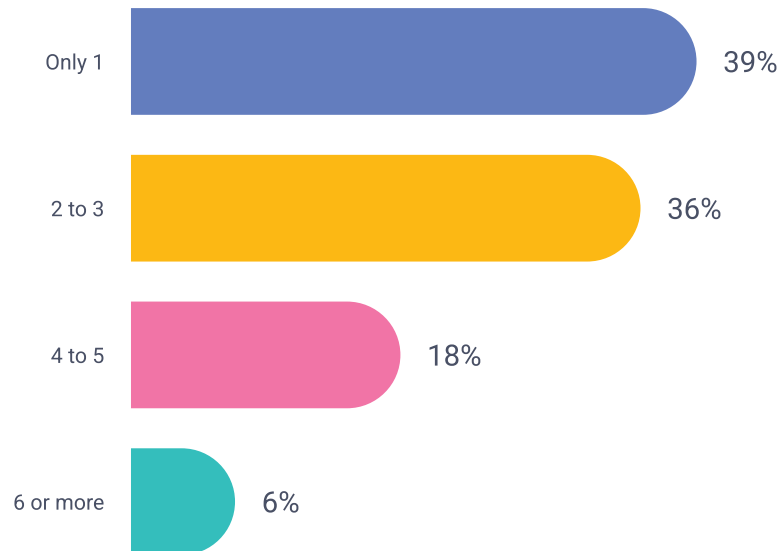


The satisfaction rate for CMS workflow processes presents as a bell curve, though it favors the easy end over the difficult one: **26% stated it was very difficult or difficult, 38% that it was fair/moderate, and 36% that it was easy or very easy.**

It's worth noting that while not an exact match, this distribution is similar to how people ranked their organizational processes before using a CMS. However, there are more easy/very easy answers than difficult/very difficult ones in this chart. **This indicates that CMSs improve ease of use across the board when compared to organizations that do not use one.**

9

How many different teams currently use the CMS at your organization?

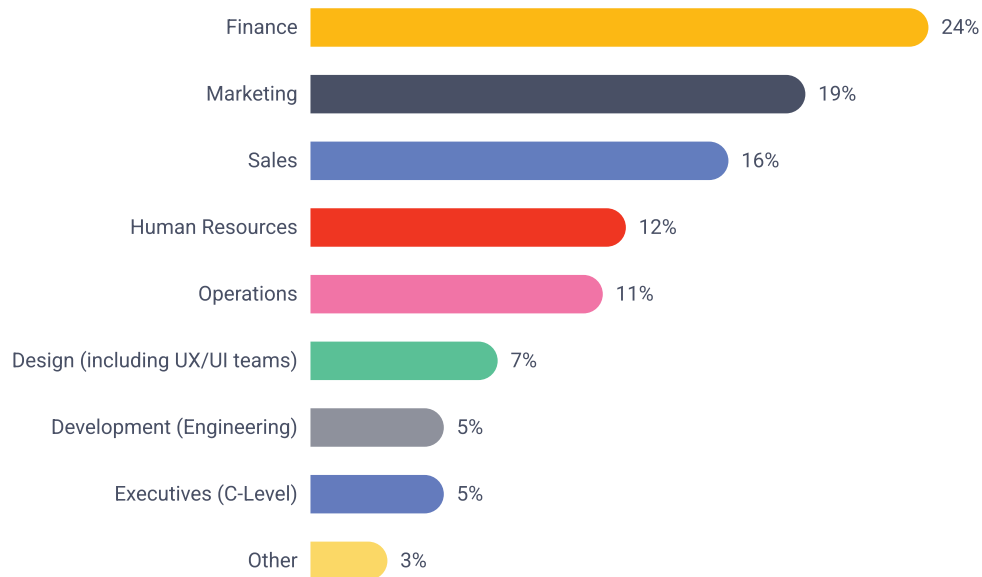


36% of users stated that 2 to 3 teams currently use the CMS at their organization. 6 or more teams using a CMS was the least common choice, with only 6% indicating that they do so.

As for the 27% of respondents using only one team with their CMS, this may be explained by the type of system. Monolithic CMSs often present issues where they're trickier for non-technical teams to use. This may lead to only one team – perhaps developers – using it. However, this may also mean developers have to handle content responsibilities such as uploading and editing, which can be an inefficient use of their time and make the lives of content creators harder.

10

Please tick which teams are currently using a CMS at your organization

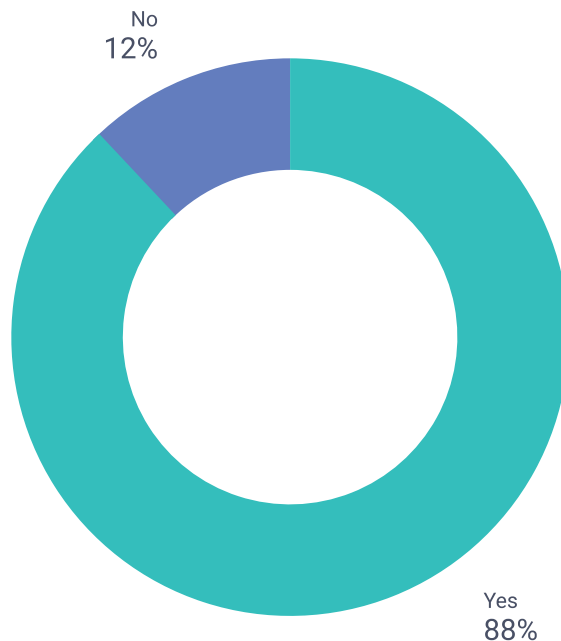


Finance was the team most likely to use the CMS, followed by Marketing and Sales. The two teams least likely to use an organization's CMS were Developers and Executives.

Interestingly, **developers only made up 5% of the sample**. One reason for this might be that monolithic CMSs – still a majority of the Netherlands sample – often lack robust collaboration tools. Without proper communication in-engine, developers might find it easier to work with each other and content creators through external tools. Unfortunately, this adds unnecessary steps and roadblocks to the workflow. This theory is further supported by Question 5's indication that time-consuming processes were the most commonly cited pain point.

11

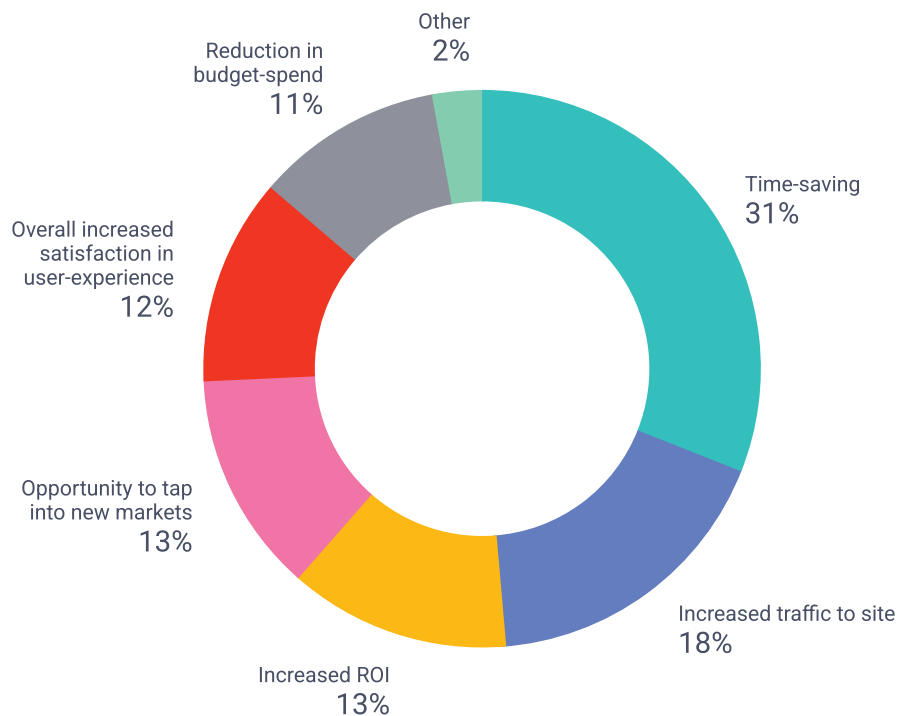
Would you say there have been improvements in terms of time-saving, budget, productivity, increased revenues/growth, meeting your KPIs since using a headless CMS? Have you seen any improvements?



An overwhelming majority of 88% found that switching to a headless CMS improved their content operations. This is despite the fact that the top 4 CMS choices in the sample were monolithic systems. This may suggest that the comparably lower number of headless CMS users in the sample is not tied to its performance, but possibly other reasons such as a lack of awareness of the technology and its benefits.

12

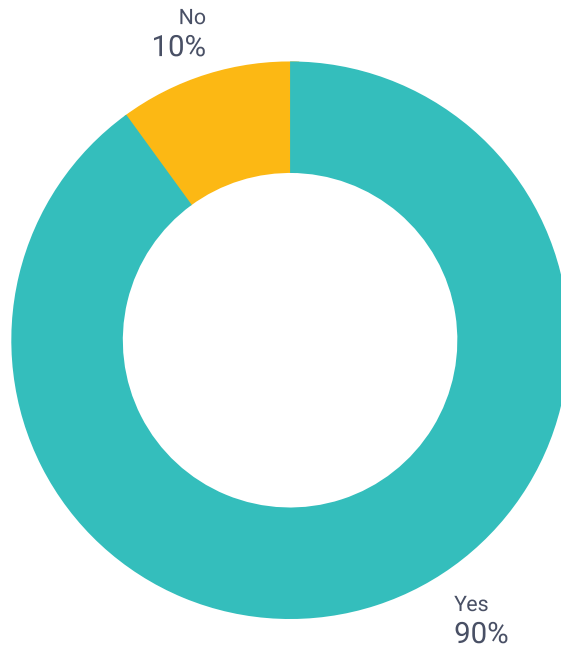
If yes, please choose one or more following improvements you have seen since using a headless CMS



After switching to a headless system, **31% of people saw time-saving improvements**. Considering that this same sample demonstrated time-consuming operations as the main pain point leading them to seek out a new system, this suggests that **switching to a headless CMS can be the solution to the most common content problem**. Additionally, **18%** saw increased traffic after adopting a headless system, and **13%** saw increased ROI.

13

Do you think your current CMS will be effective for the next several years?



An impressive **90% of users believe that their current CMS will remain effective in the coming years**. This reduces the likelihood that they will consider switching for future-proofing reasons. However, this does not mean that they will not switch: earlier cited pain points may still affect this decision.

Key Takeaways

The content management industry in the Netherlands is in a period of impressive growth. This is perhaps best illustrated by the rise of one CMS type in particular: headless. With respondents showing an increasing interest in expanding to new channels and fixing common issues such as time-consuming processes, security, and user experience, it seems that the commonly used monolithic systems may not be up to modern challenges.

This is further illustrated by the overwhelming majority of respondents who have switched to headless seeing benefits to their organizations, a number that exceeds the international average. Despite this, most of the sample was made up of monolithic CMS users. When this comparably lower usage rate of headless is compared to the high satisfaction rate, it begins to appear that the thing holding this type of system back is the awareness of the benefits it can offer.

Overall, the state of CMS 2023 in the Netherlands is one that suggests more and more users will turn to headless systems in the future. While the use of monolithic systems remains high, so does the awareness of their shortcomings. The CMS market seems to be on the precipice of a turn toward the limitless possibilities offered by headless CMS.

ABOUT STORYBLOK

Storyblok is a next-generation headless content management system revolutionizing how storytelling scales. With an API-first approach, it helps users create and scale content to any digital channel. Features like the visual editor and digital asset manager mean content creators can work independently. The power of headless's best-of-breed approach also means that developers can build a perfectly customized tech stack, all protected by Storyblok's ISO 27001 security certification. Add the benefit of Storyblok's advanced collaboration suite, and all these teams can come together to work together directly within the CMS.

In a constantly changing world with more user experience demands than ever before, brands such as Netflix, T-Mobile, and MindValley trust Storyblok to provide secure, personalized experiences to their users.

Ready to see how Storyblok can take your content management to the next level?

TALK TO ONE OF OUR SPECIALISTS



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