



White Paper

SharePoint Online Web Content Management: Highlights & Insights

Authors: Aseem Pandit and Prateek Bhargava





Switching to SharePoint Online? Here's what you need to know

SharePoint Online could be the next upgrade to the SharePoint On-Premise solution that you've always had. Yes, it will reduce your maintenance, time and effort, but will it cover everything you're accustomed to and meet your growing needs? We're happy to share some information here that will help you make an informed decision to go with SharePoint Online or start your search for other options.

In this installment of our series, we'll discuss the SharePoint Online features that relate to web content management. We'll explain SharePoint Online's out-of-the-box features. We'll also share what features it is lacking and some "work-arounds" to fill in the gaps to meet your company's needs.

Where SharePoint Online Shines:

Mobile and Device Rendering

With SharePoint Online, designers can now create channels that allow a single publishing site to be rendered in multiple ways, using different designs that target different devices. This helps the designer filter content that is not relevant or functional for a particular device. Mobile and device rendering is a very useful feature that helps deliver a more intuitive, device-specific design, which results in a better end-user experience. This feature is also available in both SharePoint Online and SharePoint On-Premise.



Image Renditions



If your content has a lot of images, you'll need to deliver smaller, lighter images to smaller screen sizes and you'll want to save on bandwidth and server time. SharePoint Online lets companies keep large source

images on the SharePoint site and have a site where pages only use smaller versions. This means you can use image renditions to have an image displayed in different ways based on the viewer's screen or the device being used. This feature is available on all versions of SharePoint, including SharePoint Online.

Where It Falls Short:

The following are some features we wish SharePoint Online had out-of-the-box, however, there are work-arounds to consider. Read on for what you may need to do to accomplish your desired tasks, when the feature is not readily available in this version of SharePoint Online.

Analytics

Analytics help SharePoint administrators increase their search engine optimization (SEO). The tool also helps identify content that users or readers find relevant, and optimizes this content for better positioning in future searches. Ideal analytics use an internal process to match content with user interaction to identify what is more pertinent to the audience, and you can automatically improve the search relevancy of your content over time based on the usage patterns identified in your analytics.



Work-Around

Because analytics are not available in SharePoint Online, one way to work around this is to use an app-based approach and integrate a third-party analytics engine in the public-facing sites on all your pages. This helps to gather a good amount of information, which then can be used for improving your SEO and organizing content on your website.

Cross-site Publishing/Product Catalog

Cross-site publishing is a publishing method that lets you create and maintain content in one or more authoring site collections. Using this method, you should be able to publish that content across one or more publishing site collections using Search Web



Parts. A catalog is a library or list that is shared across other sites and site collections using the cross site publishing feature. This is a very useful feature in keeping the department/functional division of site collection working together cohesively.

Work-Around

Because this feature is not available in SharePoint Online, you'll need to develop a custom app-based approach combined with SharePoint Online's new search features, to meet this requirement. This work-around can mimic the behavior of consuming and presenting information from across the site collections in Office 365 cloud-based sites.

Faceted Navigation



Faceted navigation helps users browse for content easily by using query refinement features. This means administrators can define the terms or fields to be used as refiners, which help the end user to browse or drill-down content based on more appropriate filters than to type their own. This eliminates the need to create new pages for each category, because the same page is used for showing content for several different categories.

Work-Around

Because faceted navigation is not available in SharePoint Online, administrators can work around this issue by creating a custom, filterable page, but the process requires skillful coding. Another work-around option is to create a new page for each facet.

So there you have it. There are some very useful features SharePoint Online has to offer, and a few features we wish it had out-of-the-box. As you can see, there are still ways to accomplish the purpose of those missing features by integrating SharePoint Online with SharePoint 2013, Office 365 and other platforms. Weigh the options for your company carefully, and make the decision that will work best for your company's goals.



About the Authors

Aseem Pandit, Practice Manager and Solutions Architect at AgreeYa Solutions: Aseem has over 15 years of experience in the software world and is passionate about helping organizations design and build solutions to address their business needs. He has worked with numerous customers across the globe, and has experience with multiple technologies and frameworks around Open Source, J2EE, Oracle and Microsoft, most recently focusing on Microsoft technologies with SharePoint, BI and BPM. Aseem loves to talk about technology and is always eager to learn more and share his knowledge with others.

Prateek Bhargava, Senior Consultant at AgreeYa Solutions: Prateek brings more than nine years of experience in product development for clients spread across the globe. He has been part of the full product life cycle starting from conceptualization to release for multiple Microsoft based products, specifically SharePoint. At AgreeYa, he puts his hands-on technology development experience to work helping clients build better, more practical technology solutions for their companies.

About AgreeYa Solutions

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