

Headless Content Management Systems

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PURPOSE

This analysis compares four headless CMS services – Contentful, Cosmic.js, DatoCMS, and Prismic – using an initial set of requirements, along with developer observations, to assist in the final CMS choice for the Wingspans project.

INITIAL REQUIREMENTS

- 10 separate content editors
- Multiple editor roles (admin, contributor, etc.)
- Draft/scheduled publishing, with some sort of editorial workflow, even as simple as limiting a role to draft-only status

These requirements eliminated the free plans for all four services. Along with cost, this analysis focuses on content editor experience, modeling options, integration potential, and other features.

				
	Contentful	Cosmic	Prismic	Dato CMS
Pricing	At least \$489/mo	At least \$299/mo	At least \$100/mo	At least \$120/mo
Minimum package that meets most requirements	Team package (\$879/mo for all 4 user roles)	Pro Package	Medium package	Professional package
Pricing Notes				
	User management API and AWS webhooks only available with Enterprise-level plan	Most confusing pricing structure	Unlimited API calls on any level pricing package	Pricing chart is shown in Euros, must convert
		Extra charges for many features unless purchasing Enterprise-level plan		
Features				
Number of Editors	25	10	25	10
Number of Roles	2	4	3	2
Translation	7-10 locals	Yes, for more \$	Unlimited	Up to 5 locals
API	REST, GraphQL, Image API, more...	REST, GraphQL, Webhooks(\$)	REST, GraphQL, Image API, Webhooks	GraphQL
Number of API Calls/mo	2,000,000	150,000	Unlimited	1,000,000
Draft/editorial workflow	Scheduled publishing, no editorial workflow unless Enterprise	Has Draft/Scheduled Publishing, no editorial workflow. Individual user accounts can be set to only allow Draft status	Has Draft/Scheduled Publishing and an editorial workflow	Has Draft/Scheduled Publishing, no editorial workflow.
Content Editor UX				
	Most configurable admin/authoring interface	"Techy" admin interface for content authoring	Most field types	Offers component building "slices" for complex content
	Nice handling of relations and content linking	Allows authors to add a field on the fly	Ad-hoc tagging on every page	Structured text fields with inline suggestions
Best For				
	Configurable, granular roles and permissions	Developer tools	Repeater and field grouping types	Hierarchical data modeling
	Media library	Developer community/support	Price	Maintenance mode
	Commenting feature	Plug-and-play extensions		
Cons				
	Price	Price/pricing structure	Limited roles/permissions	Limited field types/no repeater field
		Content model changes		
Other Notes				
	Good for large, enterprise customers	Non-standard terminology (e.g. "bucket" for site)		