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Open Source CMS Market Share

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In Search Of...

The Leading Open Source CMS

What is the most popular open source content management system? It's a simple question with no simple answer. Reliable metrics in this area are few and far between, while the rhetoric is dense and unreliable - driven often by both passion and commercial interests.

Executive Summary

Three Leading Brands Emerge

The paper begins with an analysis of 19 of the most prominent open source content management systems. The systems are assessed on the basis of Rate of Adoption and Brand Strength. As direct, reliable metrics are lacking in this young market, the analysis ranges broadly over a variety of indicators in hopes of synthesizing trends and patterns.

The survey shows that three systems have come to dominate the present market: **WordPress**, **Joomla!** and **Drupal**. Indeed, the numbers indicate that these three systems have opened up a large lead on the rest of the pack and have emerged as the dominant brands in the market.

In the final section of this paper we narrow our analysis to focus more on the top three systems in hopes of discerning trends among the market leaders. We also identify systems to watch in the near to medium term.

Preliminary Matters

The Goal of This Informal Survey

Debating the relative popularity of the many open source content management systems (CMS) provides an endless source of fodder for blogs and discussion forums. People want to know who the market leaders are, not just as an academic exercise but often in an effort to help make informed decisions about product selection. While it would be great to be able to point to one system and say "this CMS is #1," the issue is complex and does not lend itself to a black and white answer.

In this paper we explore a variety of metrics with which we hope to provide insights into this typically speculative debate. Note that the approach employed here emphasizes looking at a wide variety of indicators in an attempt to synthesize them and draw some broad conclusions. We don't claim to define with absolute authority who is #1, or venture into a discussion of whether System A is absolutely more popular (or better!) than System B. Our goal is to present a variety of metrics in one easy to access document and thereby help inform our readers about what is happening in this dynamic market. (Along the way, we also make one or two predictions about what we think the future may bring...)

What's Covered?

Let's start by defining the sample group we will assess. In this paper we focus on ***open source publication-oriented content management systems in use on the web***. This selection criteria is broad enough to include both traditional web content management (WCM) systems and systems that employ wiki or blog-style approaches to publication. Our use of this criteria reflects our belief that the lines that used to separate these systems are blurring; demand for choice in content presentation is driving the evolution of today's content management systems. The CMS of tomorrow (indeed in many cases, of today!) offers publishers their choice of publication paradigms: traditional article style, blog style, or wiki style.

WordPress², for example, is widely thought of as a blogging platform, but the reality is that the **WordPress** CMS product is powerful and flexible enough to be used as a more typical web CMS (and increasingly is so used). Similarly **MediaWiki** is included in the discussion. While **MediaWiki** is clearly a wiki product, its widespread adoption provides a number of examples of creative and varied uses of the system. In a similar vein is **TikiWiki**, which started as a traditional wiki but is now promoting itself for broader WCM and Web 2.0 uses.

On the subject of Web 2.0 CMS products, we have included the two most frequently mentioned systems today: **Pligg** and **Elgg**. While we voice no opinion as to whether these two systems will come to dominate the emerging Web 2.0 CMS market, at this early stage in the game they seem to be the leading names.

>> A complete list of the projects in the survey, with URLs to their sites, can be found on the last page of this paper.

:: INCLUDED ::

- **b2evolution**
- **CMSMadeSimple**
- **Drupal**
- **e107**
- **Elgg**
- **eZ Publish**
- **Joomla!**
- **Mambo**
- **MediaWiki**
- **MODx**
- **php-Nuke**
- **phpWebSite**
- **Pligg**
- **Plone**
- **SPIP**
- **TikiWiki**
- **Typo3**
- **WordPress**
- **Xoops**

² This paper focuses on **WordPress** the open source CMS, not **WordPress** the service. As noted later in this section, the overlap between these two different **WordPress** branded product lines creates challenges for identifying appropriate metrics.

What's Not Covered?

:: EXCLUDED ::

- **proprietary systems**
- **niche market products**
- **hosted products**
- **ecommerce systems**
- **enterprise portals**
- **regional variations**

By focusing on publication-oriented systems, we have excluded commerce platforms (like the popular **osCommerce**) and enterprise portals (like **LifeRay**). By choosing to focus on open source, we have excluded popular proprietary systems like **Interwoven**, **FatWire** and **Ektron**. Also excluded from this survey are hosted solutions, like **Blogger**. All the systems reviewed here are stand-alone deployments.

Note also that some decisions had to be made to narrow the field. Accordingly, I have not included specialty products like **Moodle** or **Alfresco**, which although popular and suitable for web publishing are primarily intended for more narrow uses.

We have also not ventured into the numerous regional variations in system popularity. So, while the **SPIP** and **CMSMadeSimple** systems may enjoy greater market share in Europe, we have not given that fact special weight in our assessments.

Methodology

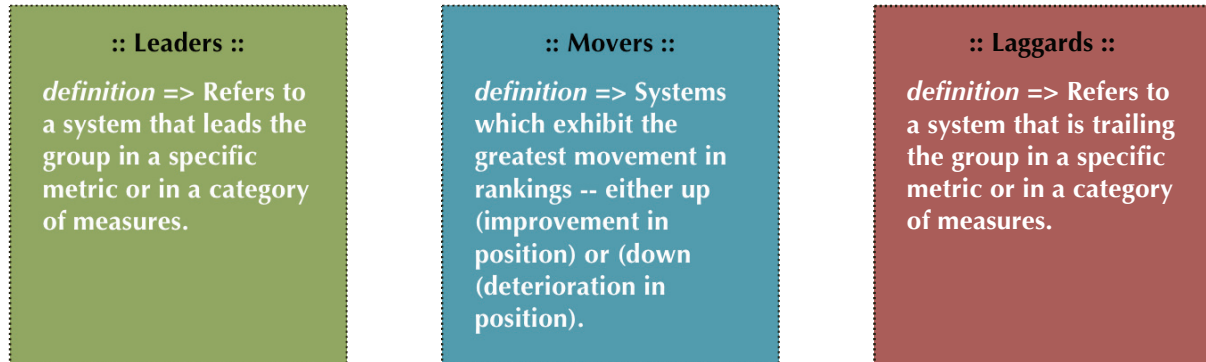
This whole exercise began by brainstorming through various methods of assessing popularity and adoption rates. The longer we looked, the more interesting the issue became. While there are a number of indicators, there is no standardized metric to gauge market share in this particular segment -- there is simply no way to get an accurate fix on how many systems are actually in use on the web right now. Despite the difficulties posed in gathering data, we felt that there were questions that needed answers.

For this survey, we have broken down the various research results into two broad categories:

- **Rate of Adoption**
- **Brand Strength**

In each of the areas, we use a multi-faceted approach. By assessing a wide variety of measures, we strive to identify broad trends and patterns from which we can draw conclusions with some degree of confidence. Among the many metrics we sample are a number of non-traditional indicators, such as Twitter Prominence and Social Bookmarking statistics.

At the end of each of the major sections of this paper, we summarize the findings and indicate which projects we deem to be "Leaders," "Movers," or "Laggards." This classification, though obviously subjective, indicates our interpretation of the data gathered in that particular area.



As a final note before we get started: Please keep in mind that several of the products in our sample group present unique challenges. **Mambo**, **WordPress**, **b2evolution** and **MediaWiki** are all problematic for varying reasons.

- In the case of **Mambo**, the difficulty flows from having an ambiguous name which could lead to erroneous results (e.g., hits for the clothing brand Mambo or the dance The Mambo). In certain metrics, the ambiguity could cause over-reporting of results. As we are only interested in the usage of the terms in relation to open source content management systems, in those areas where confusion could occur, we searched for the strings "mambo cms" and "mambo open source" then used the query which generated the larger result set.
- In the case of the CMS **WordPress**, the difficulty occurs due to the existence of the **WordPress** hosted services. As we are only interested in the usage of the term in relation to open source content management systems, we searched for the word "wordpress" with the word "cms."
- **b2evolution** tends to be over-represented in some areas. The difficulty here results from the fact that the many blogs that use the system tend to influence the search rankings, as the system name (**b2evolution**) appears on many pages. The phrase "powered by b2evolution" appears at the bottom of many templates and the **b2evolution** name is often included in the RSS feeds generated by the system. The result being that search engines sometimes include those pages in the search results. As there was no effective way to screen this out, **b2evolution** shows prominently than it should in several of the results.
- **MediaWiki** also tends to be over-representing in some result sets due to the product's association with Wikipedia. Many of the Wikipedia pages include a badge with a link to **MediaWiki** -- which results in the **MediaWiki** name and URL being indexed and the pages appearing in the search results.

Measuring Rate of Adoption

We began our examination of the open source CMS market by attempting to measure the relative rates of adoption of the systems in our sample set. For reasons discussed below, direct evidence alone is not sufficient to allow us to draw firm conclusions. As a result, we are forced to look at a variety of metrics in hopes of building a more complete picture of the current state of the market:

- **Downloads**
- **Installations**
- **Third Party Support**

Downloads

Insight into download rates should be one of the most compelling facts in assessing the popularity of a software product. Unfortunately, the download data for open source CMS products reveals much less than one would hope.

Comparing the download figures is problematic for the following reasons:

- data is not available on many systems
- the time scales covered by the data sets vary
- some download sites are mirrored and statistics are not automatically aggregated
- web host automated installation packages (e.g., cPanel, Plesk, Fantastico), are not considered in the counts
- installation packages included in Linux distros (e.g., Debian or Gentoo) are also excluded from this analysis
- download rates are not constant over time, a new release (such as occurred with **WordPress**, **Joomla!** and **Mambo** during the survey) will generate a large amount of excitement and an accelerated download rate for the period immediately following the release.³

So, with the understanding that this metric is both incomplete and potentially misleading, consider the following comparison of the download numbers for the most recent releases from each of these popular systems:

³ Across time, download rates tend to slow and eventually plateau before beginning to fade (as users delay downloading a version in anticipation of the release of the next version).

	version	released	total downloads	average weekly download rate	source of data
WordPress	2.6	15-July-08	146,847	>146,847 ⁴	WordPress Download Counter
Joomla!	1.5.4	05-July-08	75,524	37,762 ⁵	JoomlaCode.org
e107	0.7.11	01-Jan-08	101,109	4,044	SourceForge.net
Mambo	4.6.5	25-Jun-08	11,265	2,816 ⁶	Mambo-Code.org
MODx	0.9.6.1p2	13-Feb-08	57,765	2,626	MODxcms.com
php-Nuke	8.0	02-Aug-07	126,487	2,530	phpNuke.org
Xoops	2.0.18.1	16-Feb-08	35,339	1,683	SourceForge.net
TikiWiki	1.9.11	08-Apr-08	14,779	1,056	SourceForge.net
b2evolution	2.4.2	27-Apr-08	13,081	1,006	SourceForge.net
Pligg	Beta 9.9.0	31-Dec-07	18,602	620	Pligg.org
phpWebSite	1.5.2	06-Jun-08	333	56	SourceForge.net
Elgg	0.9.2	17-Jun-08	25	7	SourceForge.net
CMSMadeSimple					
Drupal⁷					
eZ Publish					
MediaWiki	no data	no data	no data	no data	no data
Plone					
Typo3					
SPIP					

⁴ This number reflects the high download rates that typically immediately follow the release of a new version (in the case ver. 2.6, released less than one week before the survey). As a result, the weekly rate shown here is not likely to be representative of download performance across time.

⁵ This number is likely inflated by the release of ver. 1.5.4, less than two weeks before the sample was taken.

⁶ This number is likely inflated by the release of ver. 4.6.5, less than three weeks before the sample was taken.

⁷ In a recent blog post, **Drupal** founder Dries Buytaert provides data indicating that **Drupal** core downloads for the month of May numbered well over 100,000. If that stat is accurate, **Drupal** would be in the #3 position, just below Joomla! and significantly ahead of e107. See, <http://buytaert.net/drupal-download-statistics-2008>

Installations

Of all the metrics discussed in this paper, the most potentially useful is unfortunately also the most elusive, that is, the actual number of live installations. To gather this data we would need a method for "fingerprinting" live installations. Sadly, a reliable method for indentifying the unique fingerprint of each of the systems is lacking. We could take a stab at isolating idiosyncratic code which might turn up in a web search, but even then the results would be unlikely to be completely accurate.⁸

Given the lack of an objective measure of installations, the only option would be to consider the data provided by the projects themselves. We rejected that approach, however, as very few project sites provide that information⁹ and where numbers were provided we were skeptical of their accuracy.

3rd Party Support

Next we look at third party support as an indicator of wider spread adoption. The idea here is that we can make inferences about a system's popularity by looking at the number of third parties who offer services specifically targeting the users of that system. For this metric we will look at two groups:

- **Developers**
- **Publishers**

Commercial developers and publishers are two of the easiest and most meaningful areas to assess. In the case of developers, the issue is how many developers are offering services for the system. In the case of publishers, the question is how many books are in print for each system. In both situations, as the parties have commercial interests, the results should give us some idea where third parties are putting their money and where they think there is market share worth capturing.

⁸ e.g. sites that were not spidered and sites where the code has been modified in such a manner as to invalidate the filter would not be included in the results.

⁹ Presumably due to the difficulties inherent in this calculation, though other motivations may be to blame.

	E lance	Guru
Joomla	2,281	785
Wordpress	1,844	495
Drupal	933	353
Typo3	71	34
php-Nuke	47	70
Xoops	43	27
MODx	41	12
MediaWiki	38	26
Mambo	24	117
Plone	32	34
Pligg	31	7
e107	18	10
b2evolution	14	5
TikiWiki	9	11
phpWebSite	9	4
eZ Publish	6	4
CMSSMadeSimple	6	3
Elgg	4	1
SPIP	1	3

Development Services

E lance¹⁰ provides a mechanism for buyers to locate freelance professionals. The site is focused on web, programming, writing and related professions. More than 40,000 providers are registered on the site, of which more than 25,000 claims to offer web and programming services. We visited E lance for a quick look at how many providers were offering services for each of the systems in our survey.

Guru¹¹ provides a service similar to E lance, but the focus is less on technology professionals. Guru does however claim to be "the world's largest online market for freelance talent"¹² with more than 100,000 active freelance profiles. We repeated our search on Guru.

The results of searching both sites on 20 July, 2008, are shown in the table at left.

Green indicates Leaders
Red indicates Laggards

¹⁰ See, <http://www.elance.com>

¹¹ See, <http://www.guru.com>

¹² See, http://www.guru.com/emp/about_guru.cfm

Books in Print

To gain further insights into the extent that each system enjoys support from fans and third parties, we looked at books in print. A visit to Amazon¹³ on 20 July 2008 produced the information contained in the table on the right.

For this metric we sought to learn two things: Who has the largest number of books in print and which CMS has been the subject of publishing activity in the last 12 months. The search was restricted to English language books only and includes not only books already in print but also those listed in the catalog as due for publication.

	Titles in print	Published in the last 12 months
Joomla!	25	14
Drupal	12	7
Wordpress	11	8
Plone	8	1
Typo3	7	0
php-Nuke	4	0
Xoops	3	1
Mambo	3	0
eZ Publish	2	1
MediaWiki	2	1
Elgg	1	1
e107	1	0
b2evolution		
CMSMadeSimple		
MODx		
phpWebsite	0	0
Pligg		
SPIP		
TikiWiki		

Green indicates Leaders
Red indicates Laggards

¹³ See, <http://www.amazon.com>

Summary: Rate of Adoption



An analysis of the adoption patterns data revealed no dispositive statistics, due largely to the incomplete and unreliable nature of the data reviewed. Until such time as reliable and consistent methods arise for calculating (and auditing!) downloads or until a means emerges for determining the actual number of installations in existence, these numbers remain less than persuasive.

The only thing we can say with some certainty is that both **WordPress** and **Joomla!** exhibit significant download volumes. Additionally, if statements on the blog of **Drupal** founder Dries Buytaert are accurate, **Drupal** also enjoys very strong support. Given the gap in download volumes between **Joomla!** and the nearest competitor (**e107**), it also seems possible that there exists a significant difference in the number of downloads between the top projects and the remainder of the field.

Given the lack of direct evidence on the rate of adoption, we are forced to turn to indirect indicators. The figures related to third party support for our projects showed **Joomla!** to be the big winner. **Joomla!** leads both **WordPress** and **Drupal** in the number of developers offering services for the platform. In the number of books in print survey, **Joomla!** came out ahead by a margin of 2:1/

Typo3 shows solid strength in both developer support and in terms of books in print, though no publications in the last 12 months may be sign of waning support. **e107** download numbers show the system to be one the movers in terms of rate of adoption. **Xoops** also shows solid numbers in both publisher and developer support. **MediaWiki** shows decent developer support levels and recent publishing activity.

Low developer numbers and lack of books in print mark **SPIP**, **CMSMadeSimple** and **phpWebsite** as the group laggards.

Measuring Brand Strength

In this section we turn to assessing the intangible -- brand strength. Measuring the brand strength of open source products presents challenges: Not only is this particular market lacking in maturity and commercial sophistication, but in general there is also no easy way to establish the value of the brand associated with noncommercial products used by a geographically diverse audience. In response to this challenge, we cast our net wide and tried to capture a broad sampling of data (including many Web 2.0 indicators). We grouped the results into the following categories:

- **Search engine visibility**
- **Popularity metrics**
- **Evidence of mindshare**
- **Evidence of reputation**

Search Engine Visibility

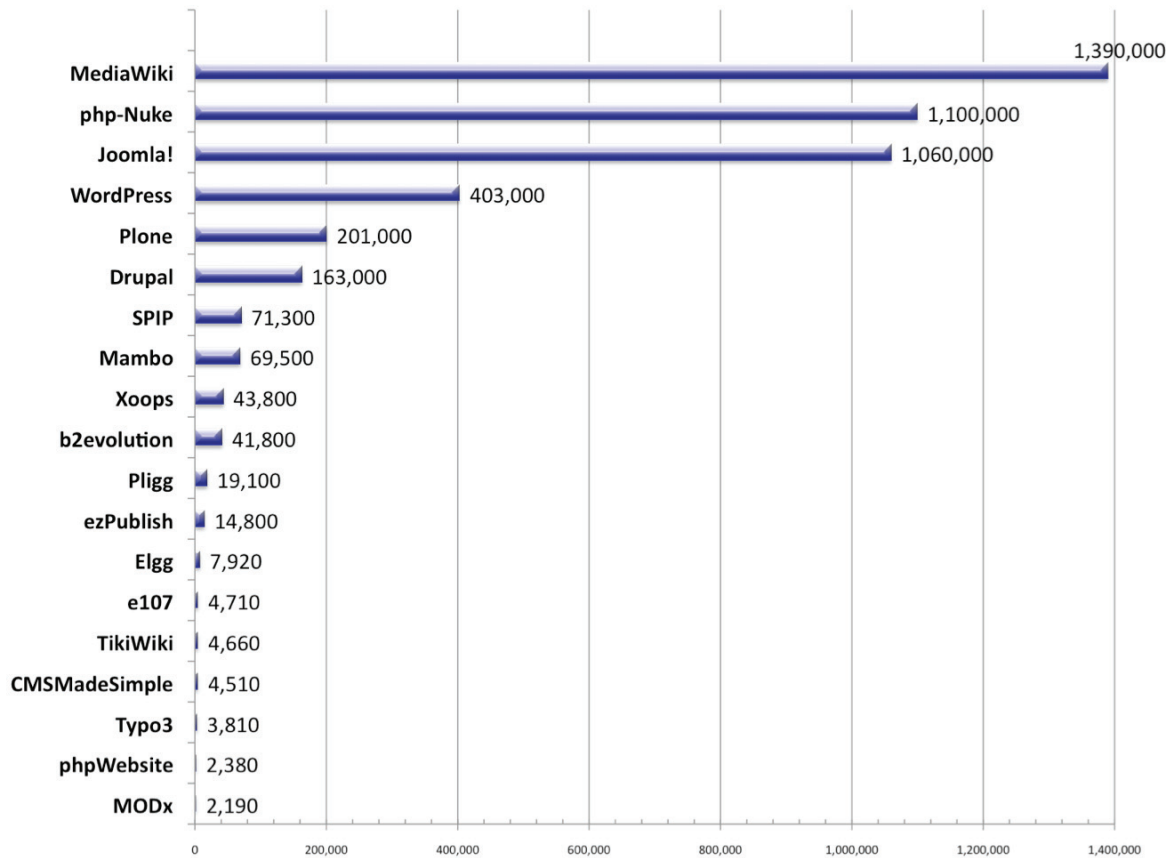
How easy is it to find each system on the search engines? How competitive is each project in terms of search marketing? Insight into these issues gives us information on the visibility and the prominence of each of the projects in our survey. We can answer these questions by looking at the following statistics:

- **Inbound Links**
- **Search Engine Ranking on Relevant Keywords**

Inbound Links

Inbound links are an important factor in search engine placement. The number and nature of inbound links impacts a site's rankings and relevance scores. As a consequence, the number is a commonly used metric in search engine marketing. The statistic provides marketers with a way to gauge the success of their efforts and provides indirect evidence of a site's perceived relevance and subject matter expertise.

Viewed from another perspective, inbound links are a measure of good will. No one is forced to add links to another site; it is done in response to a request or because the site owner finds value in being associated with the project.



Inbound links to the official websites of all systems, as per Google on 18 July 2008.

:: notes on interpretation ::

- The **MediaWiki** inbound link stats are distorted by the system's prominence in **WikiPedia**.¹⁴
 - **php-Nuke** is most likely benefitting from their longevity - once people add links they rarely update or delete them, hence across time links tend to accrue, absent extraordinary circumstances (just like other forms of goodwill).¹⁵
 - Leaders: **Joomla!** would be a winner here by our measure (discounting the relevance of the numbers for **MediaWiki** in particular and to lesser extent those of **php-Nuke**, for the reasons stated above).
 - Laggards would include **MODx**, **phpWebsite** and **Typo3**.
-

¹⁴ As mentioned in the *Preliminary Matters* section of this paper, above.

¹⁵ It would be instructive to look at trend of this metric to gain insight into this issue, unfortunately no data was available.

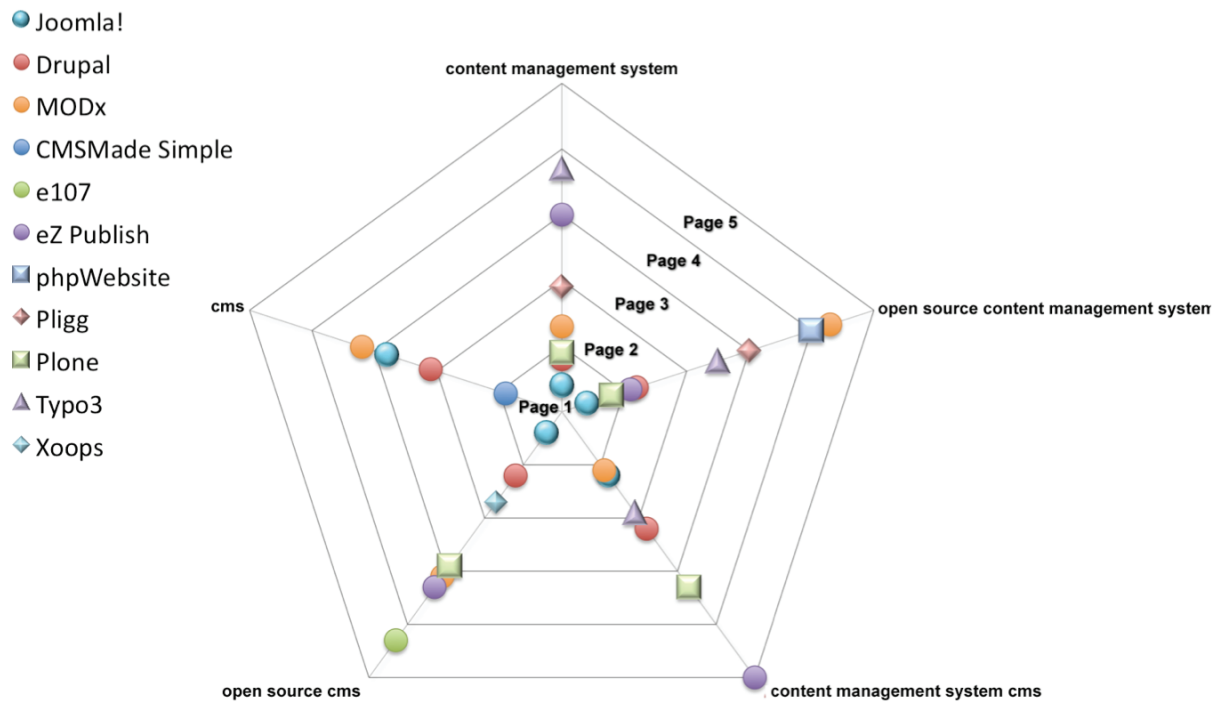
Search Engine Rankings

Search engine rankings are a competitive business and good performance in Google is often a key to driving traffic to a site.

In an effort to discern how well each of our projects is doing in this area, we queried Google with a set of likely keyword combination then checked to see which of our project systems made it into the first five page of results (top 50 results). The goal is to find out how well each of our project sites rates on common keyword phrases.

The keywords chosen¹⁶ were:

- **content management system**
- **open source content management system**
- **content management system cms**
- **open source cms**
- **cms**



11 of our 19 systems appear in the top 5 pages of Google for the given search phrases. Run 20 July 2008.

¹⁶ The phrases were selected by identifying the most common relevant keyword phrases, through the use of a keyword frequency tool. The keyword frequency data is from Google and was gathered and analyzed through use of the Advanced Web Ranking application.

:: notes on interpretation ::

- **Joomla!** is in the Top 50 for all phrases, with three Page One results.
 - **Drupal** is in the Top 50 for all phrases, with one Page One result.
 - **MODx** is in the Top 50 for all phrases.
 - **Plone** places on Page One for two phrases, but fails entirely to place for the query "cms".
 - 8 of the systems in our survey failed to make the Top 50 for any of the phrases.
-

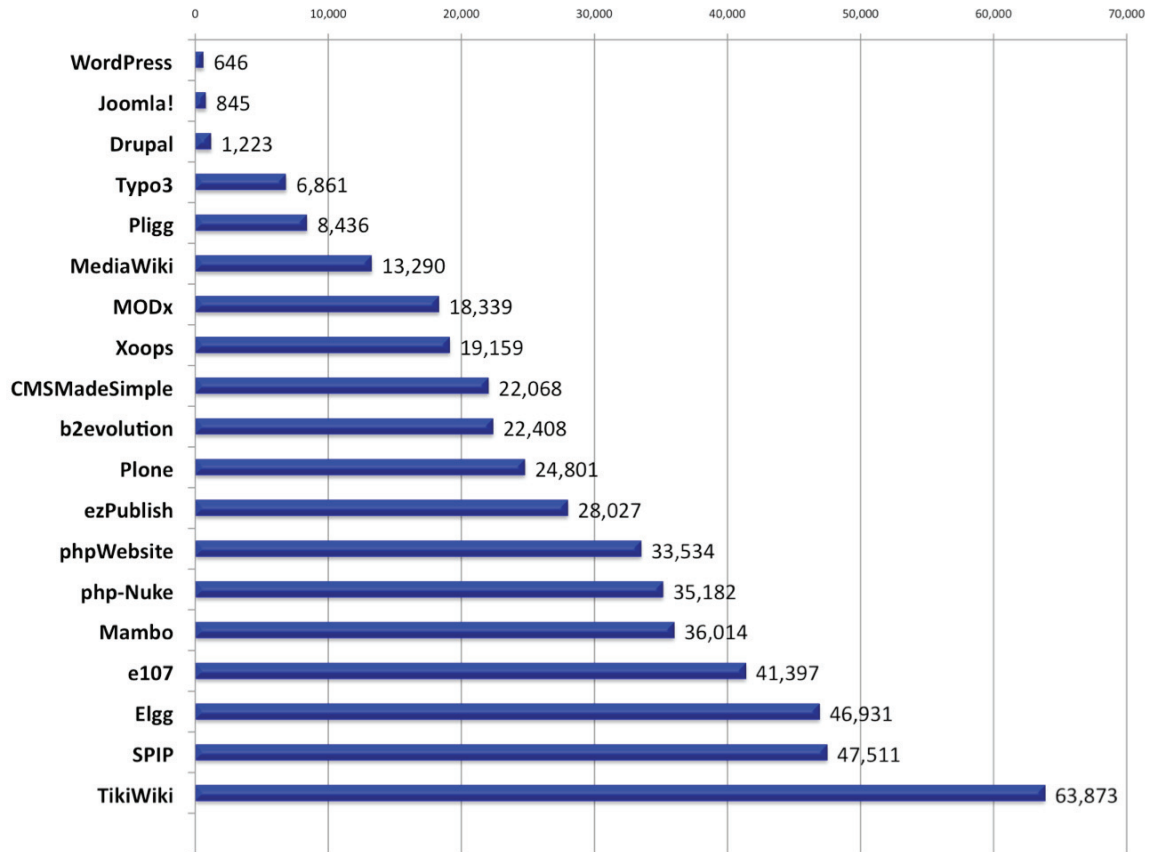
Popularity

One of the services provided by Alexa¹⁷ is a ranking of all sites on the web. The Alexa ranking, therefore, provide us with a measurement of a site's popularity relative to other sites. The Alexa metric is not 100% accurate, but it does provide a convenient tool with a standardized approach to comparing site popularity.¹⁸

We sampled the Alexa rankings data twice: Once in February of this year and again in July of this year. On 13 February 2008, the Alexa rankings of the most popular open source CMS showed the following (ed - remember when you look at this the lower the number the better – the number is a ranking where a ranking of “1” is held by the most popular site on the Internet):

¹⁷ See, <http://www.alexa.com>

¹⁸ Note that the Alexa rankings can change on a daily basis, so these numbers above are representative of the sample date only.

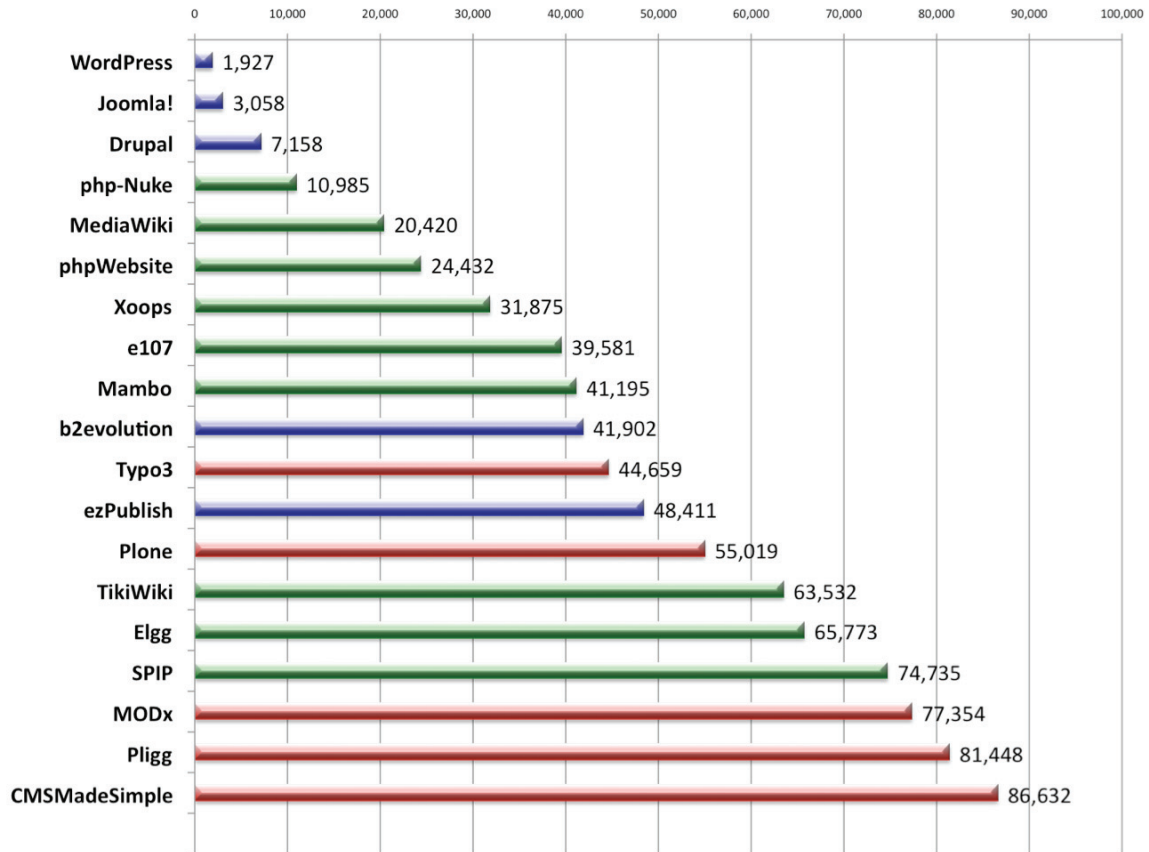


The Alexa rankings on 13 February 2008.

:: notes on interpretation ::

- **WordPress, Joomla!, and Drupal** lead the group by a substantial margin.
 - Note the significant gap between the #3 site (**Drupal**) and the #4 site (**Typo3**).
-

On 17 July 2008, the Alexa rankings for our sample group showed the following, where **blue** indicates **no change** in position since Feb 08, **green** indicates **improvement** relative other systems since Feb 08, and **red** indicates a **deterioration** in position since Feb 08:



Alexa ranking for all systems, as of 17 July 2008.

:: notes on interpretation ::

- **Wordpress, Joomla!** and **Drupal** retain the top 3 position.
 - The rankings on 17 July show quite a bit of movement outside the Top 3, with large changes in position showing for several systems.
 - **MODx** drops from the 7th all the way down to the 17th position.
 - **Mambo** and **e107** show significant improvement in position
 - Note that the results for **php-Nuke** are deemed to be inaccurate and should be largely discounted. An accurate ranking of **php-Nuke** would be unlikely to show improvement over the February data.¹⁹
-

¹⁹ The Alexa **php-Nuke** stats are most likely inaccurate - at least as an indicator of valid traffic. View the site's internal stats, which show no appreciable gain in traffic over the same period. See, <http://phpnuke.org/modules.php?name=Statistics&op=Stats>

Mindshare

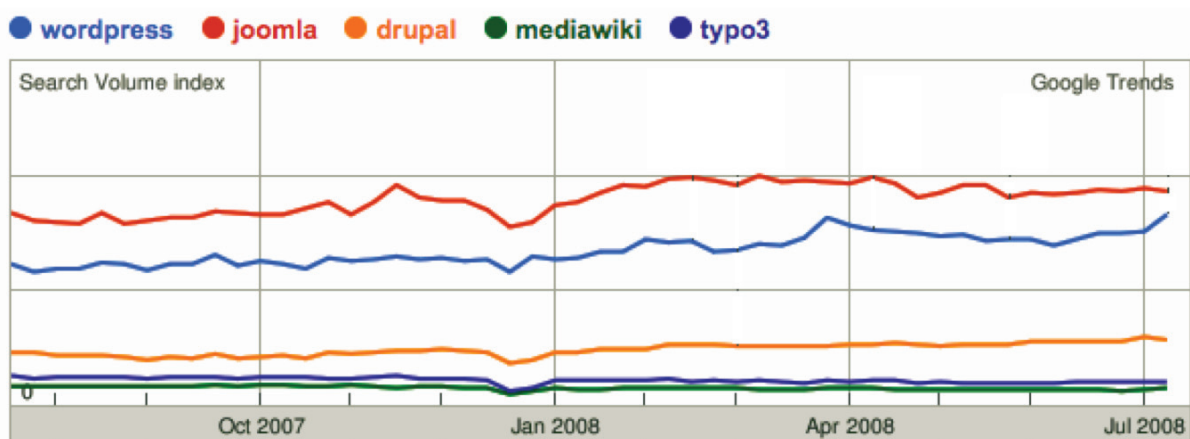
What systems are people talking about today? Which systems are part of the conversation that is Web 2.0? To gain insights into these issues we looked at a mix of metrics:

- **Search engine query volume**
- **Twitter prominence**
- **New & blog mentions**
- **Demo site traffic**
- **Fan Activity**

Google Search Volume

Google Trends provides the ability to check the frequency of the occurrence of terms submitted in Google search queries. We used Google Trends to investigate terms specific to each of the systems in our matrix in hopes of gaining some insight into the levels of interest in the various systems under discussion.

Across the last 12 months, the Top 5 systems, in terms of Google search volume are:



The Top 5 projects by search volume over the last 12 months, as per Google on 24 July 2008. For more detail, please view the live chart online.²⁰

²⁰ See, <http://www.google.com/trends?q=wordpress%2C+joomla%2C+drupal%2C+mediawiki%2C+typo3&ctab=0&geo=all&date=ytd>

:: notes on interpretation ::

- The other 13 systems in the survey all registered significantly below the Top 5 (the gap is not shown here).²¹
 - **Joomla!** dominance of this metric is a strong indicator of mindshare. People are searching more for "joomla" than for any of the other systems -- and have done so consistently for the past 12 months.
 - Note the increase in **WordPress** activity near the end of the period - this seems linked to the release of an iPhone application for **WordPress**; a brand association that will certainly benefit **WordPress**.
-

Twitter Prominence

Twitter²² is a micro-blogging platform. Users post short messages about activities or interests. The messages are delivered to multiple recipients who can reply to messages and initiate dialogues, or forward the messages to others. Twitter resembles in many ways instant messaging but with the added advantage of being a one-to-many medium.

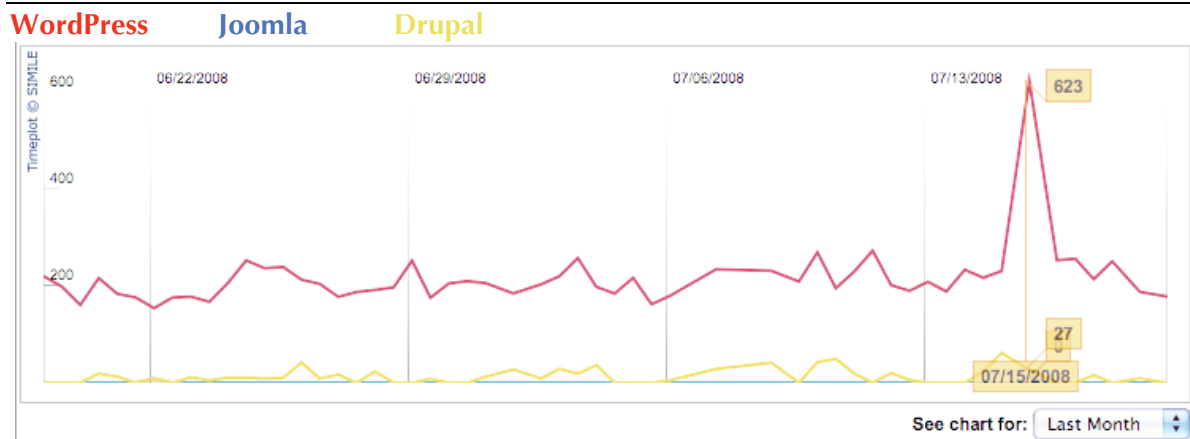
Twist²³ is a third party service which relies on the Twitter API to facilitate searching the Twitter system for trend data. Twist provides a search interface and gives output in the form of a chart displaying the daily frequency that a term appears in the Twitter system.

We used the Twist search service to query the Twitter system for mentions of the projects in our sample group. Of the 19 members in our group, only 3 showed Twitter activity during the past 30 days. The three systems were: **WordPress**, **Joomla!** and **Drupal**.

²¹ Google Trends limits you to searching for a maximum of 5 terms at time, making it difficult to display in a useful fashion the data for more entries.

²² See, <http://www.twitter.com>

²³ See, <http://twist.flaptor.com>



The Top 3 projects by frequency of presence on Twitter over the past 30 days, as per Twist on 19 July 2008.

:: notes on interpretation ::

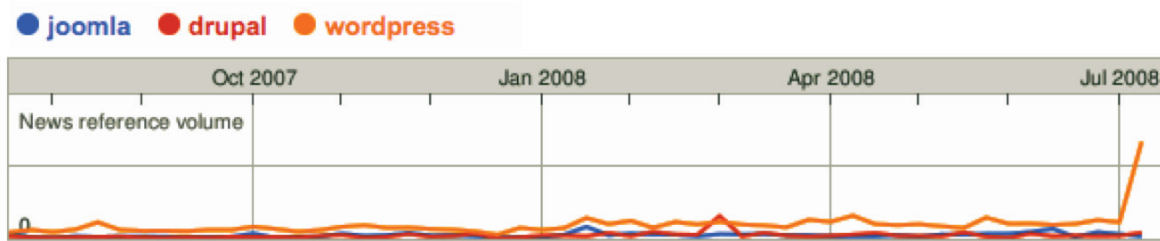
- The clear winner here is **WordPress**, with **Drupal** also showing measurable activity levels.
- **Joomla!** lagged significantly here, with almost no mentions registering in the last 30 days.
- Note that "623" and "27" indicate the number of mentions on the date in question (07/15/2008)

Media Mentions

Traditional media metrics looked to column inches to gauge press coverage. To determine media exposure today, particularly in light of the increasing emphasis on social media, we need to look instead at mentions. In this section we try to discover which of our systems is receiving the greatest number of mentions. We looked to measure mentions in news stories, press releases and the blogosphere.

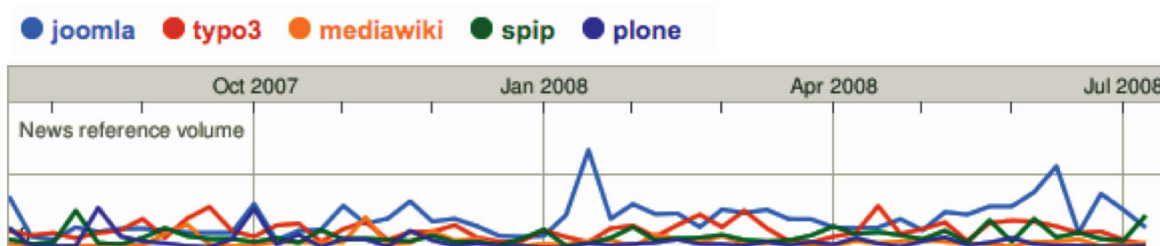
News Mentions

Let's look first at Google Trends for information on news and press release activity. For this survey, we checked the number of mentions during the last 12 months. Due to the limitations in the Google Trend system we had to split this into two queries. First, we checked the Top 3 systems: **WordPress**, **Joomla!** and **Drupal**:



The Top 3 projects in terms of news & press release mentions over the past 12 months, as per Google Trends on 19 July 2008.

Next, we used **Joomla!** as the baseline to show the next four most mentioned systems:



The 3rd, 4th, 5th 6th and 7th projects in terms of news & press release mentions over the past 12 months, as per Google Trends on 19 July 2008.

:: notes on interpretation ::

- **WordPress** is consistently in the news more than any of our systems.
 - **Drupal** comes in second, with **Joomla!** a very close third
 - Of the remaining systems, only **Typo3** seems to be making consistent impact in the media
 - Activity for the remainder of the sample set was well below the levels shown in the chart immediately above.
-

Blog Mentions

To sample blog activity, we searched three popular indices: Technorati, BlogPulse, and IceRocket. Technorati²⁴ covers more than 112.8 million blogs and 250 million pieces of tagged social media.²⁵ Nielsen's BlogPulse²⁶ is another means of researching blog activity. With an index of more than 78 million blogs, the service provides good reach into the blogosphere. IceRocket²⁷ is a popular blog search engine. Their index seems quite exhaustive, unfortunately, there is no data available on the number of sites they cover. Nonetheless, given the generally

²⁴ See, <http://www.technorati.com>

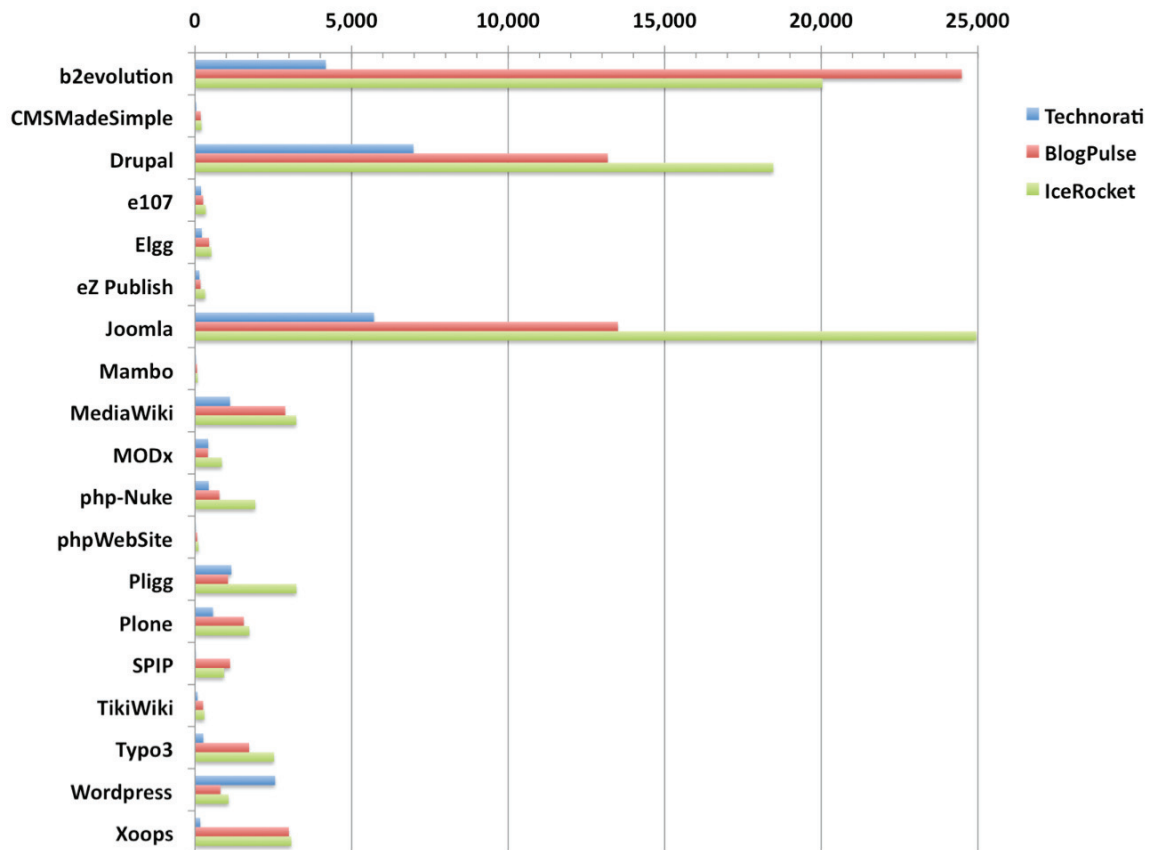
²⁵ See, <http://technorati.com/about/>

²⁶ See, <http://www.blogpulse.com>

²⁷ See, <http://www.icerocket.com>

good quality of their result sets, we included them to give us a third viewpoint. To obtain a snapshot of blog activity related to our set of systems, we visited each site and ran searches for the brand names.

(Note that gauging mindshare by counting blog mentions is somewhat problematic: The mere existence of a blog mention tells us nothing about the nature of the posting -- is it positive? Negative? Neutral?)



Number of mentions of each system in the blogosphere, as reported by various blog search engines. Report run on 20 July 2008. Data arranged alphabetically.

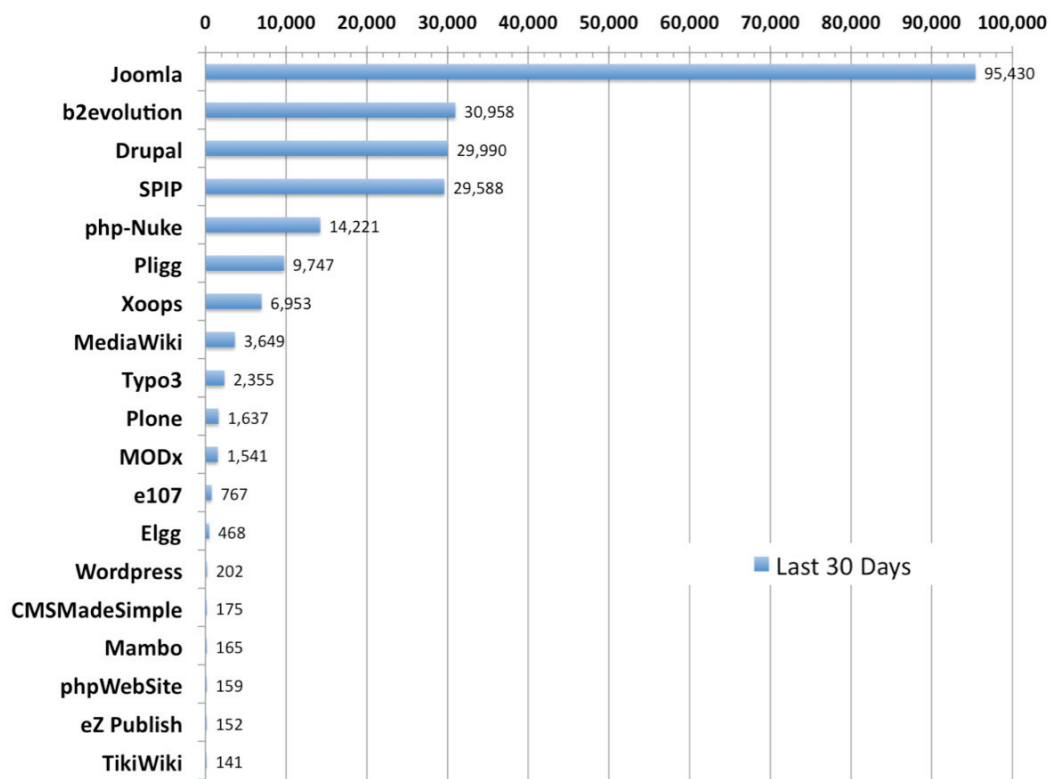
:: notes on interpretation ::

- All three indexes returned largely consistent data for each of our systems. The only real anomaly here is the prominence of the **b2evolution** system, which is unreliable for reasons mentioned earlier.²⁸
- Leaders in this metric (by a large margin) are **Joomla!** and **Drupal!**

²⁸ See, comments in the Preliminary Matters section of this paper, above.

- In the middle of the pack we find **MediaWiki**, **Pligg**, **Typo3**, **Xoops** and **WordPress**
- Laggards are **CMSMadeSimple**, **eZ Publish**, **Mambo**, **phpWebSite** and **TikiWiki**

Google's new Blog Search²⁹ facility includes the ability to search blogs entries and filter the results by date. We decided to use that feature to see which of our sample set showed the most activity in the last 30 days. We hoped to gain insight into answer the question: What systems are people talking about now? The results are contained in the chart below:



Number of mentions of each system in the blogosphere in the last 30 days, as reported by Google Blog Search. Report run on 23 July 2008.

:: notes on interpretation ::

- **b2evolution** hits are over-reported.³⁰
- **SPIP** hits are over-reported due to the presence of the "SPIP" tag on the footer of many site templates.
- **Joomla!** received a disproportionate number of mentions during the reporting period due to the release of a new version of the software,

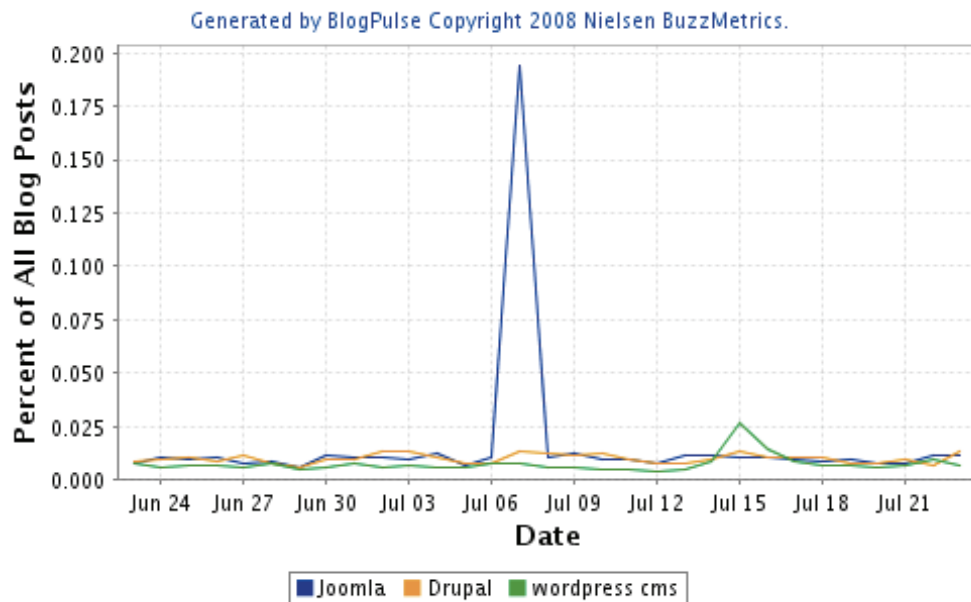
²⁹ See, <http://blogsearch.google.com>

³⁰ See, comments in the Preliminary Matters section of this paper, above.

which caused a flurry of blog activity. (See the next chart, immediately below).

- Leaders in this assessment are **Joomla!** and **Drupal**, with surprising strength shown by **php-Nuke**.
- Laggards include **TikiWiki**, **eZ Publish**, **phpWebsite**, **Mambo** and **CMSMadeSimple**.
- Note the chart below for another perspective.

The Google Blog Search data, above, provides no insight into trend. The data is simply the number of mentions during the 30 day time period. Nielsen's BlogPulse, however, gives us the ability to view daily activity during the same period. We searched BlogPulse for frequency data on **WordPress**, **Joomla!** and **Drupal**.



Shows blog mentions for **WordPress**, **Joomla!** and **Drupal** during the last 30 days, as reported by Nielsen's BlogPulse. Report run on 23 July 2008. You can view this chart live online.³¹

:: notes on interpretation ::

- The spike in "joomla" mentions on July 7 and the spike in "wordpress cms" mentions on July 15 both correlate with the release of new versions of the two systems.
- There was a **Drupal** release on July 10, yet in contrast to **WordPress** and **Joomla!**, no meaningful spike appears in blog activity.

³¹ See, <http://www.blogpulse.com/trend?query1=joomla&label1=Joomla&query2=drupal&label2=Drupal&query3=wordpress+cms&label3=&days=30&x=18&y=6>

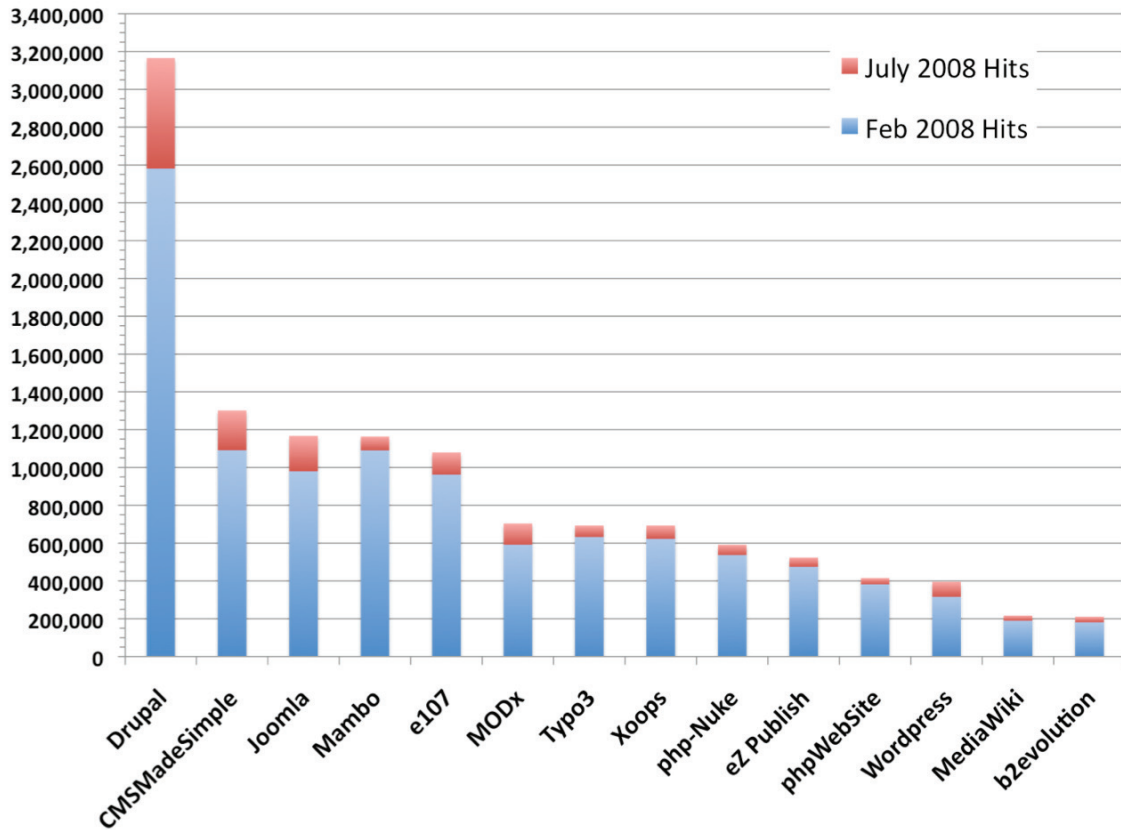
- Aside from the release announcement spike, **Joomla!** and **Drupal** are very closely matched during this period.
 - The disparity between the Joomla! release date spike and **WordPress** release date spike provides insight into the relative mindshare of the two CMS products. The complete lack of a spike on the **Drupal** release date during this period is also telling.
-

Demo Site Traffic

In the open source world, users often "test drive" products as part of their decision process. The website Open Source CMS³² provides sample installations of all the most popular open source content management systems, as well as a variety of related content. The sample installations allow users to try out both the front end (public view) and the back end (administrator's view) of each system. The site is a popular destination for those evaluating various open source CMS solutions. Open Source CMS tracks the visitors' level of interest in each CMS system by counting the number of times the system was viewed on their site. This information is published via a cumulative "hits" chart.

We looked at the hits received by each sample installation in February and compared it with the number of hits shown in July, in an attempt to assess any trends in interest levels. The following chart shows the cumulative total of hits in February and again in July, with the difference being highlighted in **red**.

³² See, <http://www.opensourcecms.com>



Shows total views for each system at OpenSourceCMS.com. Note two periods are compared here, February and July, with the difference being shown in red.

:: notes on interpretation ::

- **CMSMadeSimple, Drupal and Mambo** are likely to be over-represented in the chart above, as those projects direct all their demo site traffic to the installation on OpenSourceCMS.com (most other projects, like **Joomla!** host their own demo site).
- There was no, or incomplete, data available on the following systems: **Elgg, Pligg, Plone, SPIP and TikiWiki**.
- **CMSMadeSimple** and **e107** both show good strength.
- **MediaWiki** and **b2evolution** are laggards by a significant margin.

Fan Activity - Facebook, MySpace & Google Groups

Facebook, MySpace and Google Groups all provide users with an easy way to share common interests. As a result, the sites have become popular places to create fansites and special interest groups. We took a survey of these sites to see how well our sample group was represented.

The Facebook³³ numbers are the result of searching Facebook for topical groups, then aggregating the member numbers. The Google Groups³⁴ figure is a straight count of the groups that include the project in their name or description. The MySpace³⁵ figure is obtained from the MySpace search provided by IceRocket.

Green indicates Leaders
Red indicates Laggards

	Facebook		Google	MySpace
	Groups	Members	Groups	Mentions
Wordpress	60	3,212	336	277
Joomla!	56	2,452	197	4,960
Drupal	41	2,451	76	2,630
Plone	8	513	72	1,700
Typo3	5	233	33	229
TikiWiki	2	154	4	152
SPIP	2	151	7	2,760
Elgg	3	128	0	115
Xoops	3	97	41	165
eZ Publish	1	88	2	9
Mambo	1	44	59	8
e107	3	41	7	811
MediaWiki	1	38	19	302
b2evolution	1	22	2	17
php-Nuke	2	21	69	192
MODx	1	18	5	1,790
Pligg	1	12	4	120
phpWebSite	1	11	1	26
CMSMadeSimple	1	2	1	5

³³ See, <http://www.facebook.com>

³⁴ See, <http://groups.google.com>

³⁵ See, <http://www.myspace.com>

Reputation

For indicator of project reputation, we looked at:

- **Awards received**
- **User ratings**
- **Social bookmarking activity**

Awards

A number of organizations run awards competitions for software applications. While the Packt Open Source CMS Awards is perhaps the only event focused specifically on open source CMS applications, others like the CNET Webware 100 and the LinuxWorld awards, are more widely known.

We looked at awards history for two reasons: First, a central component to many of these awards is popular vote, hence, the awards give us some insight into popularity and community strength. Second, historical patterns may also give us insight into who is hot right now, and whose day may have passed. Here's is a listing of all the systems that have won awards since 2005, organized alphabetically.

Drupal	
• Webware 100 (CNET)	2008
• Webware 100 (CNET)	2007
• Best Overall Open Source CMS (Packt Publishing)	2007
• Best Social Networking Open Source CMS - 2d Place (Packt Publishing)	2007
• Best PHP Open Source CMS - 2d Place (Packt Publishing)	2007
• Best Overall Open Source CMS - 2d Place (Packt Publishing)	2006

Elgg	
• Social Networking Open Source CMS - 2nd Place (Packt Publishing)	2007
• Best Other Open Source CMS - 2d Place (Packt Publishing)	2007

Joomla!	
• Best PHP Open Source CMS (Packt Publishing)	2007
• Best Overall Open Source CMS - 2d Place (Packt Publishing)	2007
• Best Overall Open Source CMS (Packt Publishing)	2006
• Best Linux / Open Source Project (LinuxWorld UK)	2006
• Best Linux / Open Source Project (LinuxWorld UK)	2005

Mambo	
• Best Open Source Solution (LinuxWorld Australia)	2006
• Best Open Source Solution (LinuxWorld San Francisco)	2005
• Best of Show - Total Industry Solution (LinuxWorld Boston)	2005
• Best Open Source Solution (LinuxWorld Boston)	2005
• Best Linux or Open Source Software (LinuxUser & Developer)	2004
• Best Free Software Project of the Year (Linux Format Magazine)	2004

MODx	
Most Promising Open Source CMS (Packt Publishing)	2007

Plone	
Best Other Open Source CMS - 2d Place (Packt Publishing)	2007

Typo3	
Leader Award for Community CMS (BNP)	2006

WordPress	
Best Social Networking Open Source CMS (Packt Publishing)	2007

Xoops	
Peoples' Choice Awards - 2d place (SourceForge)	2006

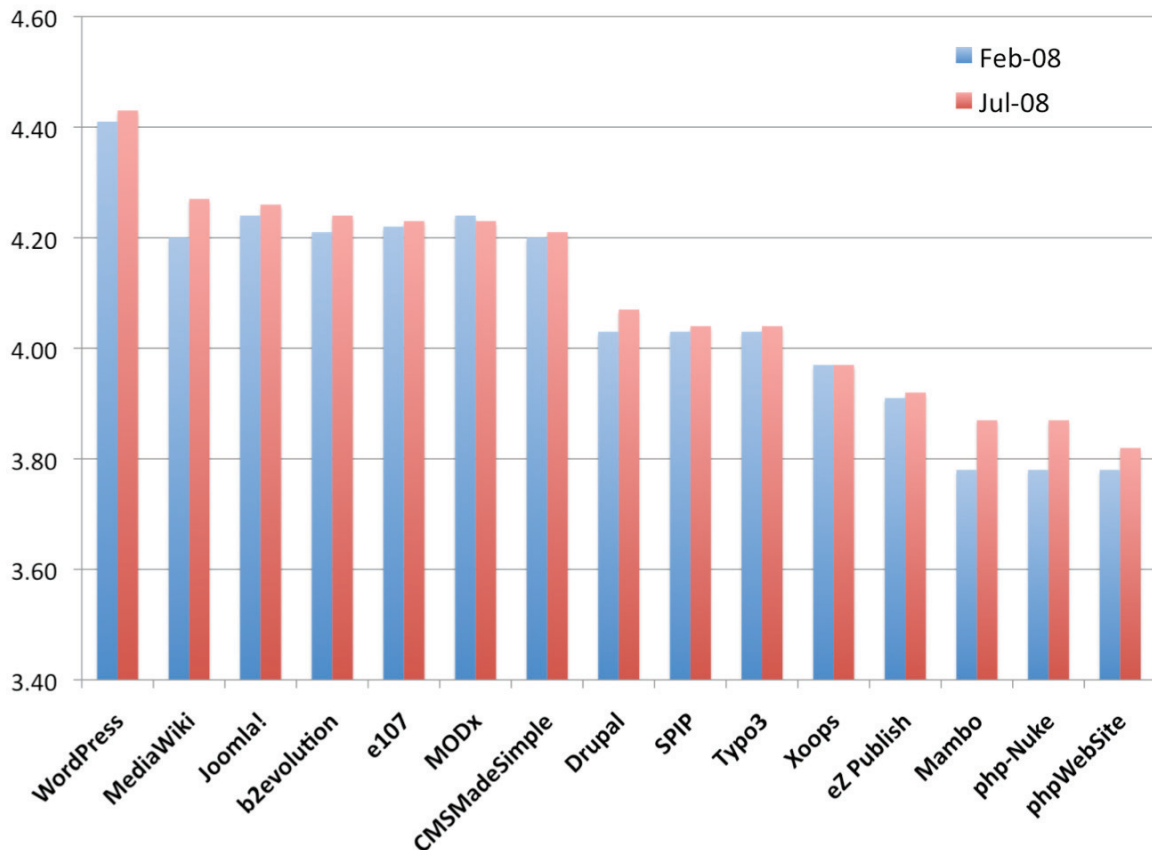
:: notes on interpretation ::

- **Drupal** and **Joomla!** are the clear leaders in the awards category, showing significant recent activity.
 - **Mambo**, which dominated the awards over the years, has received no recognition since 2006 -- essentially since the rise of **Joomla!**
-

Ratings

The website OpenSourceCMS.com is best known for its collection of CMS sample installations, however, the site also provides a ratings system that allows visitors to rate each of the content management systems listed on the site.

We looked at the ratings produced by Open Source CMS for each member of our sample group. The chart below shows the data at two different points in time: February 2008 and July 2008. (The data is sorted according to the July 2008 ratings.):



Ratings of each system from visitors to OpenSourceCMS.com. Note samples from two dates, February and July.

:: notes on interpretation ::

- Leaders: **WordPress, MediaWiki, Joomla!**
- Movers: **Mambo** and **php-Nuke**, (+2.38%).
- Laggards: **MODx** (-0.24%) and **Xoops** (0.00%)
- There was no, or incomplete, data for **Elgg, Pligg, Plone** and **TikiWiki**.

Social Bookmarking Activity

Social bookmarking is the sharing of URLs with others via a web-based software system. Social bookmarking, like inbound links, is an expression of goodwill. People who elect to share a URL do so voluntarily and because they wish to help bring something to the attention of others.

Three of the most popular social bookmarking systems are Del.icio.us,³⁶ Digg³⁷ and Reddit.³⁸ We looked at all three sites in an attempt to gauge the relative popularity of each of our project sites. The results are in the table at right.

	Del.icio.us	Digg	Reddit
b2evolution	984	8	0
CMSMadeSimple	1,208	0	0
Drupal	12,270	6	20
e107	724	16	0
Elgg	2513	8	2
eZ Publish	919	1	0
Joomla	8,987	4	10
Mambo	143	4	0
MediaWiki	4,602	7	0
MODx	2,265	18	0
php-Nuke	458	0	0
phpWebSite	386	0	0
Pligg	877	1	5
Plone	4,694	2	2
SPIP	325	0	0
TikiWiki	362	1	0
Typo3	1,457	1	0
Wordpress	12,818	16	20
Xoops	1,555	13	0

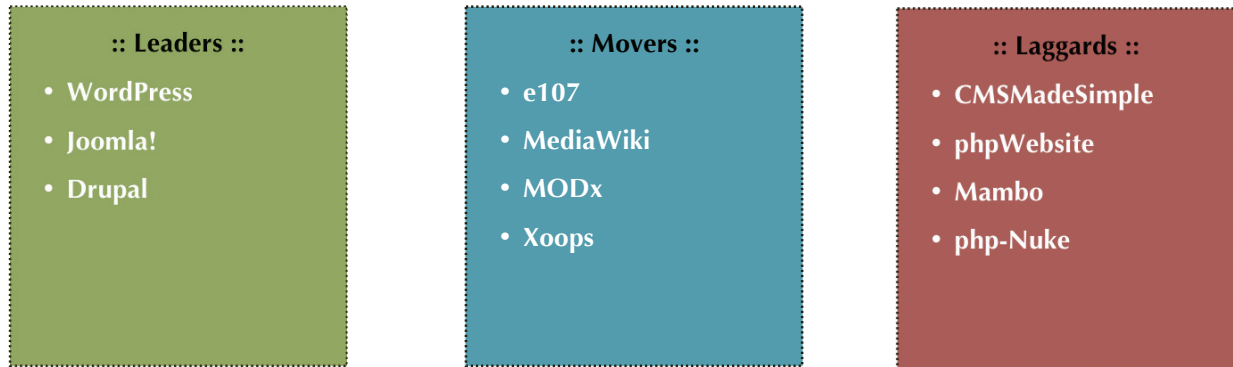
Green indicates Leaders
Red indicates Laggards

³⁶ See, <http://www.del.icio.us>

³⁷ See, <http://www.digg.com>

³⁸ See, <http://www.reddit.com>

Summary: Brand Strength



The open source CMS market is maturing and, with the increase in competition, the competitive landscape is changing. The historical leaders have been supplanted by new names. The data collected in this portion of the survey shows that in almost every way the mind share in today's market is dominated by just three brands: **WordPress**, **Joomla!** and **Drupal**.

The clear leader in brand recognition is **WordPress**. The brand is benefitting massively from the existence of two complimentary product lines: the hosted blogging service and the CMS software product. The strong market presence of the hosted blogging service helps promote the **WordPress** brand and thereby also benefits **WordPress** the open source CMS product. Given the brand's dominance of almost every metric in this section of the survey, we think that **WordPress** will maintain strong market presence for the foreseeable future and is well positioned to leverage the value of the brand - what they will make of this opportunity remains to be seen.

Joomla!, **Drupal** and **MODx** all show solid growth in their brand prominence. In terms of a pure CMS offering, **Joomla!** is the star player here, with a strong performance across many metrics. The **Joomla!** team has done a good job building brand recognition, with their success shown clearly in their dominance of key categories like the search engine metrics. Alexa rankings support the conclusion that **Joomla!** is one of the most recognizable brands in this area.³⁹

³⁹ Even more impressive when you realize they managed to achieve this in just three years - the project began in Q3 of 2005.

Drupal brand strength exhibits steady improvement. While the brand is not yet set to challenge **WordPress** or **Joomla!**, there is little doubt that the influencers in the technology community are aware of this brand and that a wider audience is growing.

MODx is one of the movers in this category. Though **MODx** is relatively new on the scene, the brand has managed to pick up some industry recognition with the Packt Awards and shows excellent search engine placement, both positive factors in building brand recognition.

On the negative side of things we find two of the oldest projects in the survey: **Mambo** and **php-Nuke**. While both continue to retain brand recognition, as laggards in both the adoption rate and popularity metrics, **Mambo** and **php-Nuke** will have to work hard to stay in the race. Indeed, given both brands poor showing in the mindshare metrics, we think it is fair to say that they have a very hard battle ahead of them to retain market share, much less return to prominence.

Conclusions

In this final section of the paper we state our conclusions based on the data derived during the survey. The discussion, below, is broken into two parts:

- **The Market Leaders**
- **Systems to Watch**

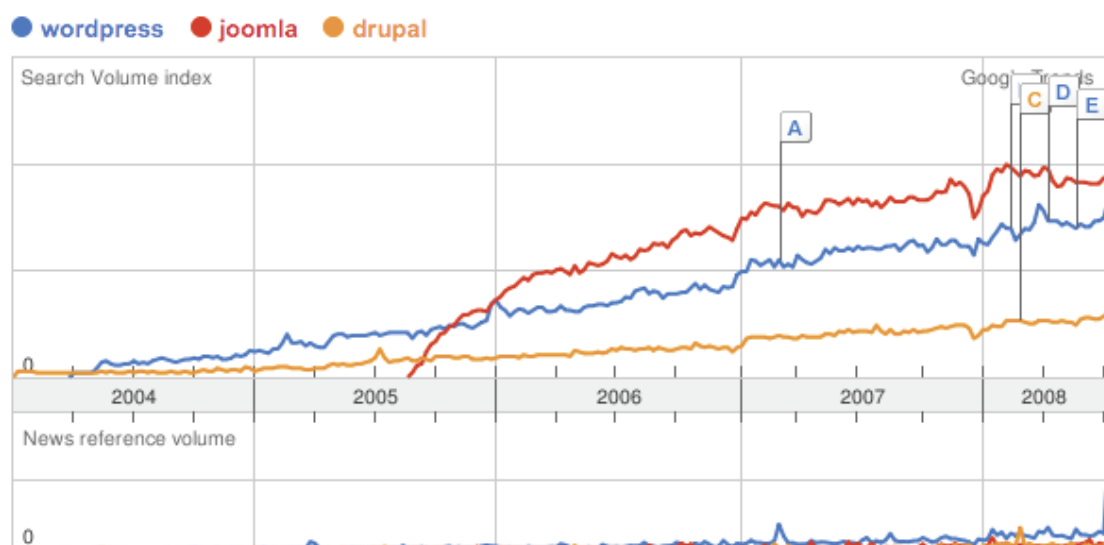
The Market Leaders

The data gathered during this survey makes a persuasive case for the identity of the Top 3 leaders in the open source CMS market. In almost every metric, the Top 3 spots were held by **Drupal**, **Joomla!** and **WordPress**. Moreover, not only did these systems consistently finish at the top of the comparisons, in many cases the gap between those three systems and the rest of the pack was significant. In key Adoption and Brand metrics these three names showed not just strength, but dominance.

In this section, we take a closer look at the three leaders. The big question here is not whether **WordPress**, **Joomla!** and **Drupal** are the top 3 systems (they clearly are); the question is how are they performing relative to each other?

Historical Search Performance

Let's look first at the historical context. How have **WordPress**, **Joomla!** and **Drupal** performed over time?



Historical Google search query volume for the Top 3 systems.

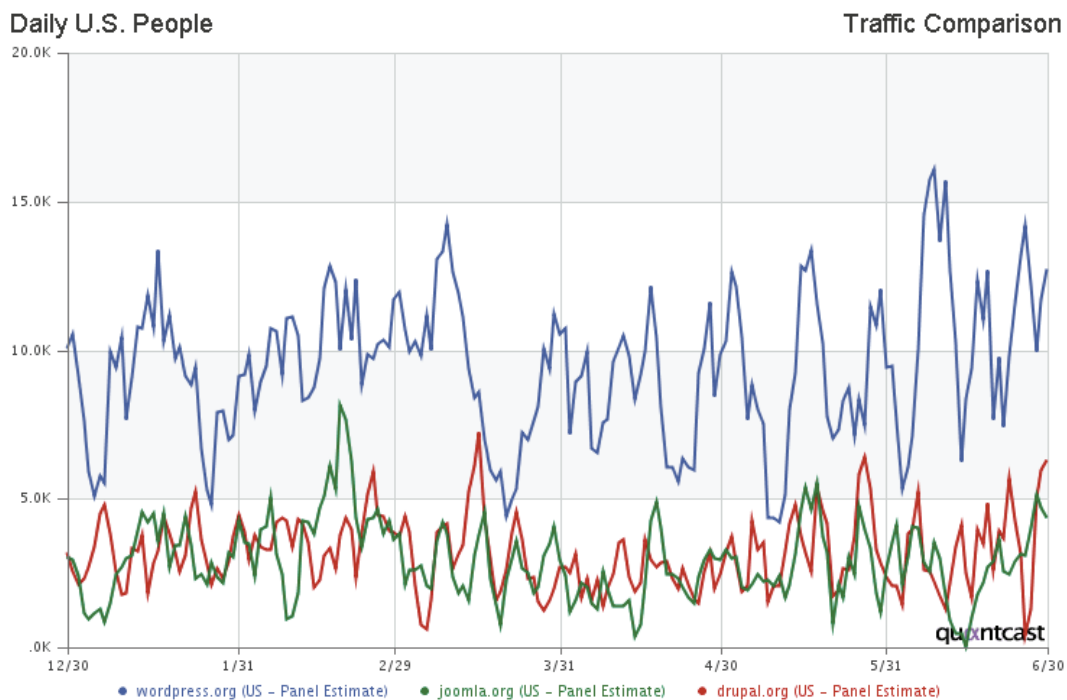
:: notes on interpretation ::

- **Joomla!** took the lead in this metric early on and has never looked back.
 - Q2 of 2008 sees **WordPress** narrowing the gap on **Joomla!** and, at the close of the period, pulling away from **Drupal**.
 - **Drupal** shows consistent growth over the past four years.
 - Note that news reference volume (the lower portion of the chart, above) shows **WordPress** consistently outperforming both **Joomla!** and **Drupal**.
-

The Google Trend data makes a compelling case for the strength of **Joomla!**, but our brand metrics gave the advantage to **WordPress**. How close is this race for market share? Our conclusion is that the race is much tighter than it might initially appear.

Project Site Reach

The service Quantcast⁴⁰ provides U.S. market data on website traffic. Running our three leading systems through the Quantcast system produces the following data on the reach of each project site in the key U.S. market:



Daily U.S. Market Reach for the Top 3 sites for 2008, as per Quantcast on 30 June 2008.

⁴⁰ See, <http://www.quantcast.com>

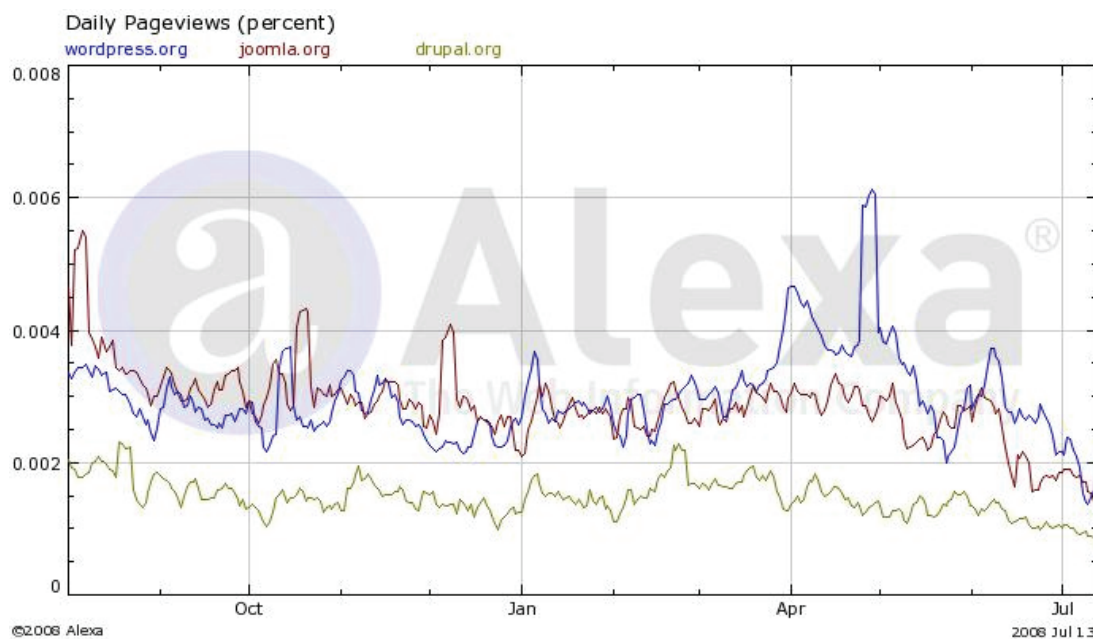
:: notes on interpretation ::

- **WordPress** enjoys a clear lead in U.S. market reach in 2008.
 - Note the back and forth battle between **Joomla!** and **Drupal** -- with **Drupal** enjoying a slight (though not sustained) advantage.
-

The reach data shows the battle for second between **Drupal** and **Joomla!** to be very close - at least in the U.S.

Project Site Page Views

Alexa's page views measure shows narrowing gaps among the three leading systems over the last 12 months:



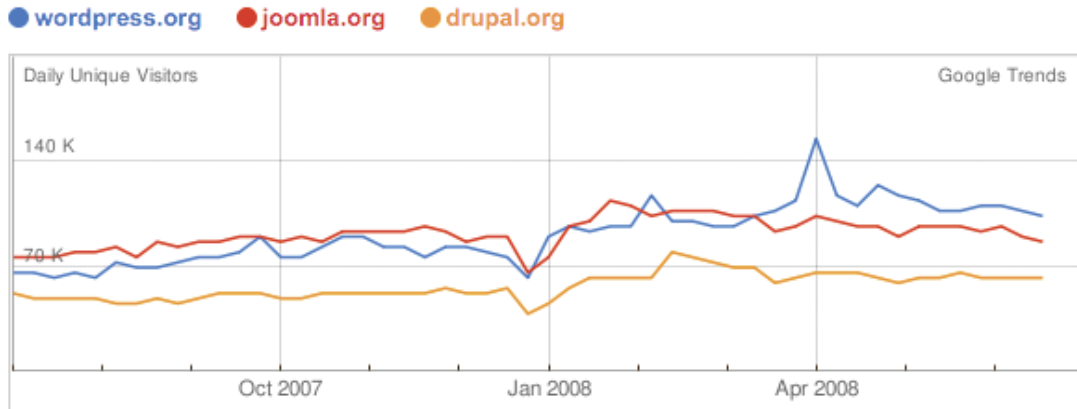
Daily Page Views for the Top 3 sites over the last 12 months, as per Alexa on 13 July 2008. Note **WordPress** moving ahead of **Joomla!** in 2008.

:: notes on interpretation ::

- **WordPress** moved ahead of Joomla! at the end of the first Quarter of 2008.
 - **Drupal** appears to be narrowing the gap with both **WordPress** and **Joomla!**.
-

Project Site Visitors

Let's look at one final metric: Site Visitors. The Google Trends chart, below, shows daily unique visitors to the project sites over the last 12 months.

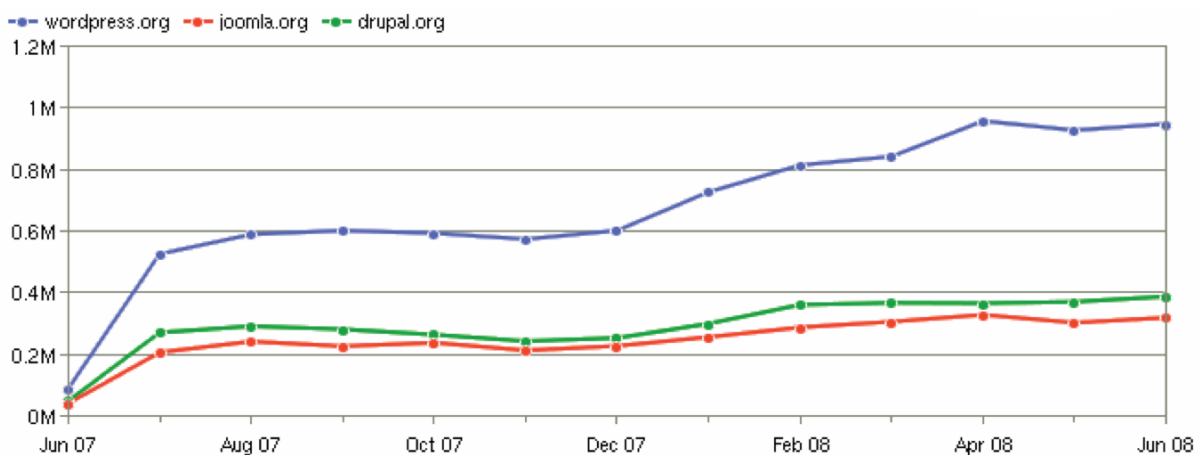


The Top 3 project sites by daily unique visitors over the last 12 months, as per Google on 18 July 2008.

:: notes on interpretation ::

- Consistent with the Alexa stat, above, **WordPress** moved ahead of **Joomla!** at the end of the first Quarter of 2008.
 - The gap between **WordPress** and **Drupal** is increasing.
 - The gap between **Drupal** and **Joomla!** is narrowing (slightly).
-

Compete⁴¹ provides site analytics services. A look at their stats for our top 3 project sites indicates some interesting movement. Here is their report on site visitors per month, over the last 12 months:



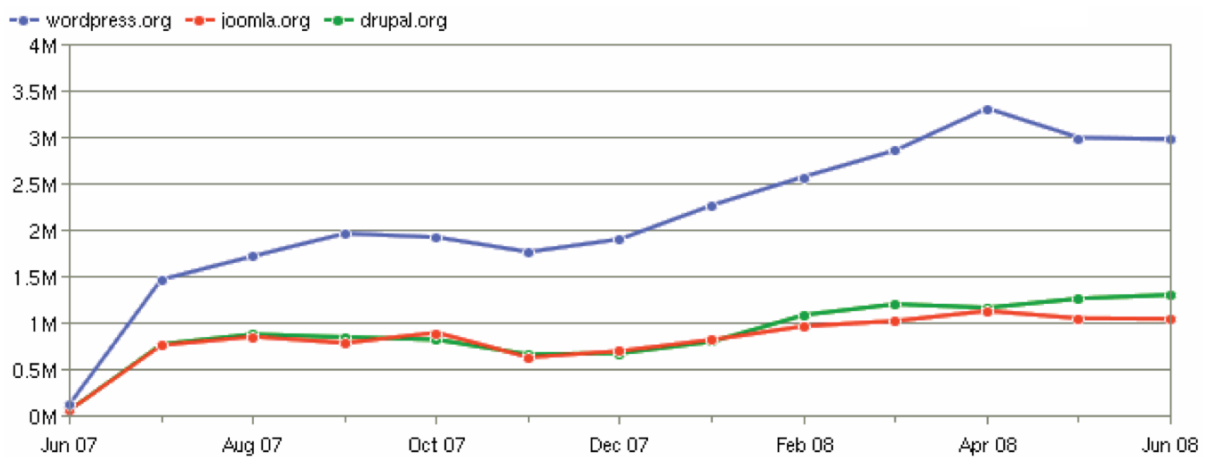
The Top 3 projects by monthly visitors over the last 12 months, as per Compete on 30 June 2008.

⁴¹ See, <http://www.compete.com>

:: notes on interpretation ::

- **WordPress** continues to increase their lead.
 - **Drupal** and **Joomla!** wage a close battle, but notably, **Drupal** is in the lead the entire period.
 - Note also the chart immediately below.
-

If you slice the data for the same period but this time analyze it for number of visits, you find the following:



The Top 3 projects by monthly visits over the last 12 months, as per Compete on 30 June 2008

:: notes on interpretation ::

- **WordPress** retains a significant lead.
 - **Drupal** and **Joomla!** fight a pitched battle but note that **Drupal** takes the leads in early 2008 and is now opening a gap over **Joomla!**
-

Alexa, Quantcast, Google and Compete show **WordPress** holding the lead, though several show a close battle with **Joomla!**. The Compete data indicates a close battle between **Joomla!** and **Drupal**, a pattern echoed in the Quantcast data for the U.S. market.⁴²

⁴² It should be remembered that the data discussed immediately above concerns the popularity and traffic patterns relative to the primary projects sites for each system. While useful to show trends, these figures are not, in and of themselves, sufficient to allow us to draw firm conclusions as to which project has the largest market share.

At this point in time, the only thing we can state with confidence is that the battle for market dominance has yet to be settled. Indeed, it rather looks like the battle is just about to heat up! **WordPress, Joomla!** and **Drupal** share a significant lead over the other products in the open source CMS market. We do not expect that to change in the near to medium term. Whether one will emerge as the market leader remains to be seen.

Projects to Watch

The survey revealed a number of systems that deserve to be watched in the near to medium term. Several of the systems in our survey group showed significant weakening in market share over time and may be threatened. Several other systems show signs of weakness and force us to ask whether their day has passed. At least two of the newer systems in our survey showed increased brand recognition and engagement together with signs of improved market share.

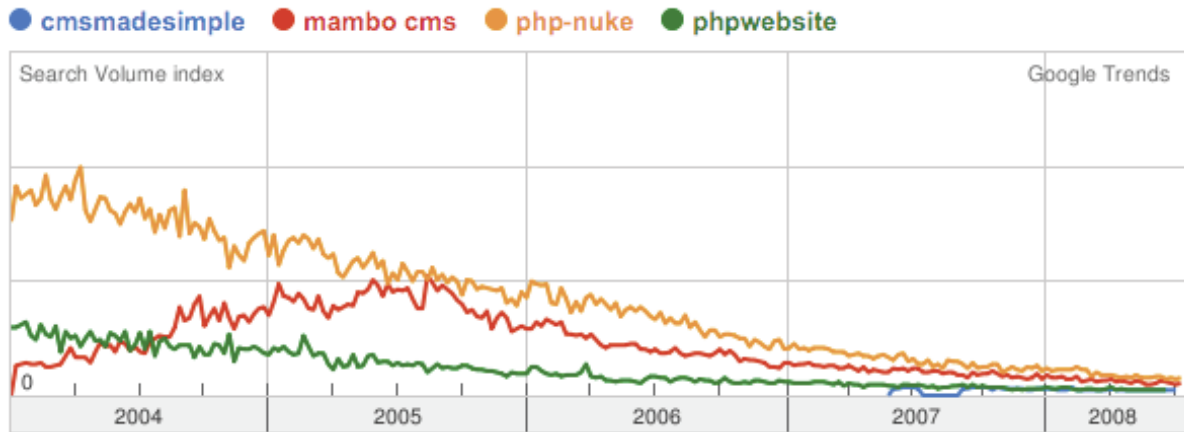
We discuss briefly each of the three categories, below:

- **Projects at risk?**
- **A closing window of opportunity?**
- **New names worth watching**

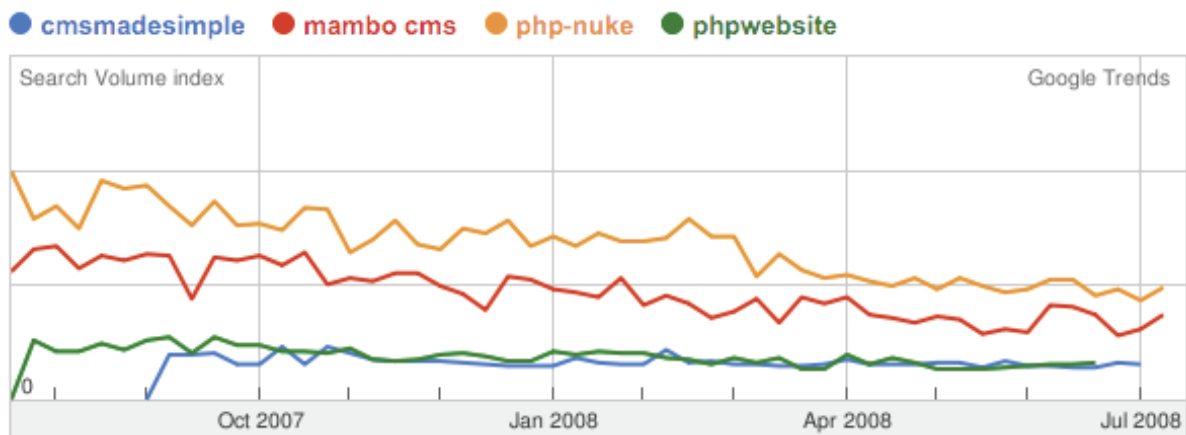
Projects At Risk?

The results we obtained for this group of systems are cause for concern regarding their market share and ongoing relevance. Below, we look briefly at:

- **CMSMadeSimple**
- **Mambo**
- **php-Nuke**
- **phpWebsite**



Search query volume since 2004, as per Google Trends on 26 July 2008. See chart live online for more details.⁴³



Search query volume for last 12 months, as per Google Trends on 26 July 2008

CMSMadeSimple

CMSMadeSimple fared worse than possibly any other system in our survey. It was a laggard in the vast majority of the categories discussed. Still there were bright spots for the system, user ratings placed the system right in the middle of the pack and the system does manage some visibility in the search indices. Given a poor showing in both the Adoption and Brand categories of our survey, we feel this project has a difficult struggle ahead.

Mambo

The appearance of a direct competitor -- **Joomla!** -- in late 2005 corresponds with the **Mambo** project's steep decline in market share. Despite numerous changes in the **Mambo** team over the last several years, the trend has not reversed, or even slowed. While the survey showed

⁴³ See, <http://www.google.com/trends?q=csmadesimple%2Cphp-nuke%2Cmambo+cms%2Cphpwebsite&ctab=0&geo=all&date=all&sort=0>

some promising signs for **Mambo**, like increased user ratings and continued brand strength, the mindshare numbers indicate that **Mambo** is not succeeding in capturing user attention.

php-Nuke

Once the powerhouse of the open source CMS movement, **php-Nuke**'s early mover advantage has not translated into staying power. Increasing competition over the years has chipped away at **php-Nuke**'s market share. While the numbers seem to indicate that the project maintains significant brand strength, one has to question whether that data reflects the reality of today, or is merely a testament to past glory.

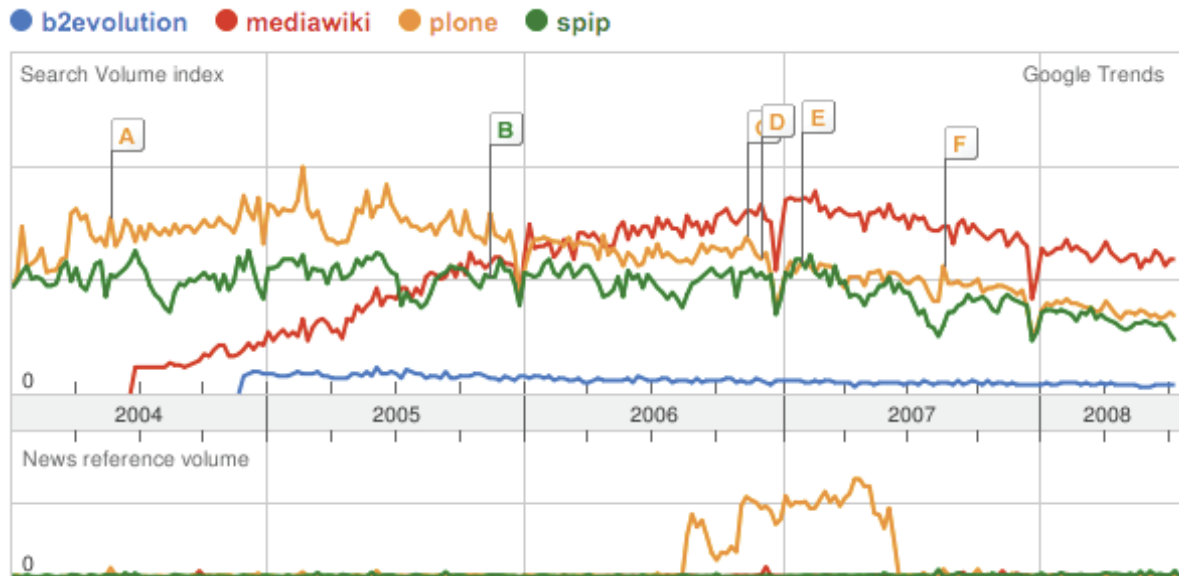
phpWebsite

The survey showed few encouraging signs for **phpWebsite** and it is hard to put a positive spin on the data as it relates to the project. The system was a laggard in nearly every category excepting Alexa ranking and search engine visibility. Real weakness across the entire range of mindshare metrics presents a major challenge for this project.

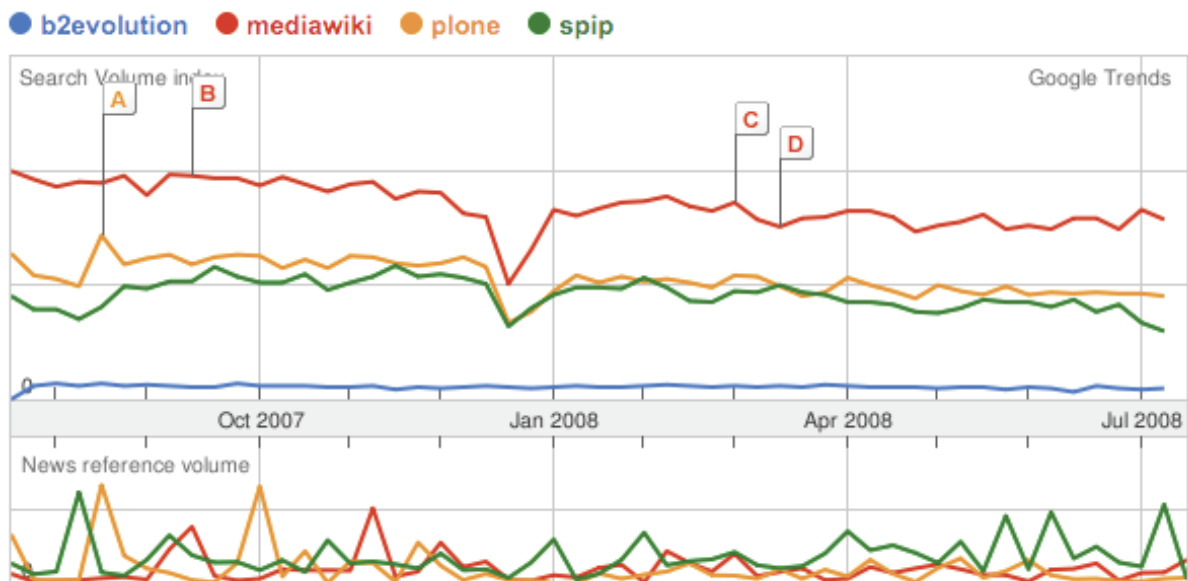
A Closing Window of Opportunity?

Survey data indicated that several systems were struggling to maintain market share. In the section we look briefly at:

- **b2evolution**
- **MediaWiki**
- **Plone**
- **SPiP**



Search query volume since 2004, as per Google Trends on 26 July 2008. See chart live online for more details.⁴⁴



Search query volume for last 12 months, as per Google Trends on 26 July 2008.

⁴⁴ See, <http://www.google.com/trends?q=b2evolution%2C+mediawiki%2C+plone%2C+spip&ctab=0&geo=all&date=ytd&sort=0>

b2evolution

b2evolution's use of a system badge⁴⁵ on it's sites and the inclusion of the name in RSS feeds brings **b2evolution** a prominence in several metrics and certainly shows the advantages of using your distros to build brand. Unfortunately, aside from strength in that area, the system shows mediocre performance across a wide range of other metrics. There is one notable bright spot: User ratings at OpenSourceCMS.com place **b2evolution** in the number four position -- right behind **Joomla!**. Between solid brand strength and good user satisfaction, the system has the possibility to rise in prominence, but will they capitalize?

Plone

Plone shows strong performance in both fansites and in books in print. A look at traffic patterns, mentions and queries, however, shows that the system's market share has been in a slide since mid-2007. Goodwill indicators are mixed and at this time we wonder whether **Plone**'s window of opportunity is closing, at least in terms of market share. As we have no doubt about the **Plone** project's vitality, perhaps what we are seeing **Plone** moving away from a mass market offering and to a niche market position(?).

MediaWiki

While MediaWiki came on strong from 2004 through 2006, Google search query volume for **MediaWiki** has been in a slide since the beginning of 2007. The sustained 18-month decline in query activity causes us to place **MediaWiki** in this category. Another reason for our concern was the interest level indicators, which showed lower than average performance for **MediaWiki**. These trends are particularly troubling given that **MediaWiki** brand indicators show strong recognition; the system receives a lot of exposure courtesy of its association with Wikipedia. It would seem, however, that **MediaWiki** may be having problems translating brand prominence into market share. A large number of other systems are now offering wiki publishing as part of their offering -- is **MediaWiki** suffering from the increase in competition?

SPIP

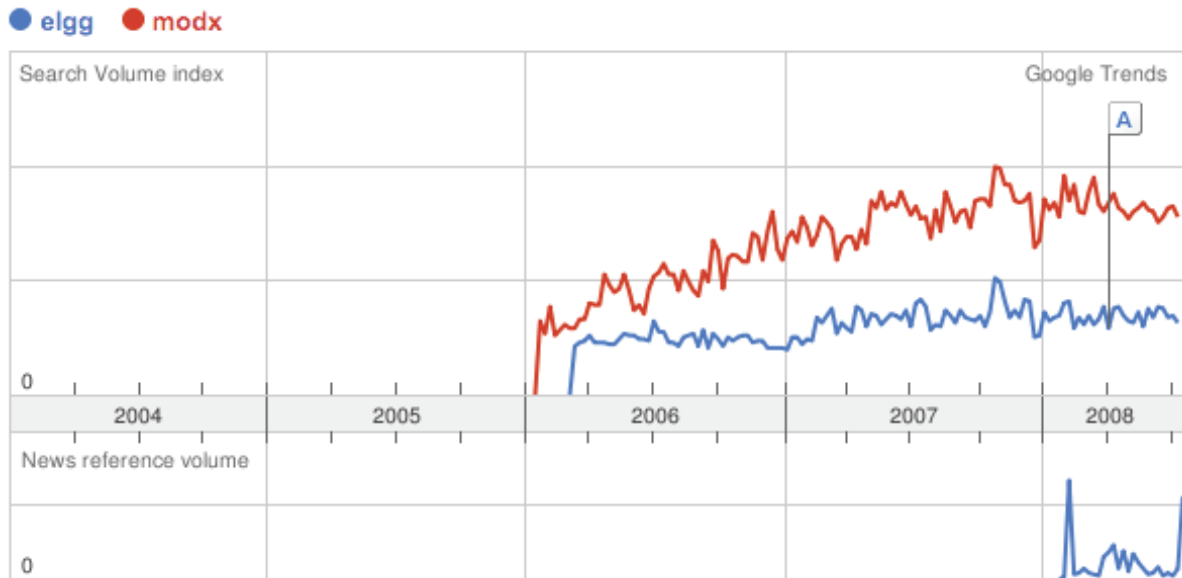
SPIP's search query volume has been in decline since early 2007, with 2006 showing weakness as well. Alexa rankings place **SPIP**'s project site at the bottom of the survey group. Another troubling stat is the lack of third party support, with **SPIP** finishing dead last in both

⁴⁵ The phrase "powered by b2evolution" appears in the footer of many templates, as discussed in the Preliminary Matter section, above.

stats measured. Nonetheless, **SPIP** still shows signs of life with recent activity in the blogosphere, so we cannot count them out of it yet.⁴⁶

New Names Worth Watching

Elgg and **MODx** arrived on the scene in 2006. Both systems fared relatively well in our survey, showing some surprising strength in several areas.



Search query volume since 2004, as per Google Trends on 26 July 2008. See chart live online for more details.⁴⁷



Search query volume for last 12 months, as per Google Trends on 26 July 2008

⁴⁶ SPIP also enjoys greater support in Europe.

⁴⁷ See, <http://www.google.com/trends?q=elgg%2C+modx&ctab=0&geo=all&date=all&sort=0>

Elgg

The **Elgg** project has shown increasing mindshare and brand strength since inception. Recently publishing activity and awards can only boost name recognition. The evidence shows in the social bookmarking metrics, where **Elgg** finished near the top of the list. Yet despite those positive signs, engagement in the blogosphere is sadly lacking -- a troubling statistics given that this system is focused on Web 2.0 social interactivity. **Elgg** also faces challenges in terms of developer support, though this is perhaps not yet a source of concern given the relative youth of the project.

MODx

This system showed more mixed metrics than any other in the survey. **MODx** picked up the "Most Promising CMS" nod at the Packt Awards in 2007; yet oddly, outside MySpace, **MODx** has been unable to build much show of support. Moreover, while the system has solid search engine rankings, it was the big loser in the Alexa rankings in our survey. Perhaps even more disturbing is that **MODx** was the only system in survey whose user ratings declined during the test period. It looks to us like **MODx** is managing to attract attention but failing to convert the attention into users. Does **MODx** risk slipping into irreversible decline or will they manage to capitalize on the many advantages they have in placement? If they are to make a go of it, they will need to repair their user ratings and improve their performance in goodwill indicators.

About the author

Ric Shreves is one of the founding partners of water&stone. He has been building websites and working with content management systems since 1999. Ric writes and speaks frequently on web applications, particularly open source content management systems. In 2006, he published *Mambo Visual Blueprint* with Wiley & Sons. In 2007, he authored *Drupal 5 Themes* for Packt Publishing; the follow up title, *Drupal 6 Themes*, will appear in print the last quarter of 2008. When not on the road for clients, Ric lives in Bali.

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About water&stone

water&stone is a boutique web development agency located in Bali, Indonesia. The company specializes in open source content management systems, particularly **Drupal**, **Joomla!**, **Mambo**, **osCommerce** and **WordPress**.

water&stone was formed in 2003, specifically in response to the growth and maturation of open source CMS solutions. Since that time, the team has delivered more than 400 web projects to clients located all over the world. As an indication of their expertise, many of the firm's clients are other web development and design studios located in Australia, the UK, North America and Europe.

In addition to design and development, water&stone provides web applications development consultancy services and search marketing. Learn more about water&stone by visiting the company website: <http://waterandstone.com>

Project Sites

System	Primary Project Site
b2evolution	http://b2evolution.net
CMSMadeSimple	http://www.cmsmadesimple.org
Drupal	http://www.drupal.org
e107	http://e107.org
Elgg	http://elgg.org
eZ Publish	http://ez.no
Joomla!	http://www.joomla.org
Mambo	http://www.mambo-foundation.org
MediaWiki	http://www.mediawiki.org
MODx	http://modx.com
php-Nuke	http://phpnuke.org
phpWebSite	http://phpwebsite.appstate.edu
Pligg	http://www.pligg.com
Plone	http://plone.org
SPIP	http://www.spip.net
TikiWiki	http://tikiwiki.org
Typo3	http://typo3.com
WordPress	http://wordpress.org/
Xoops	http://www.xoops.org