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Content Management Companies Can Learn From Social Networkers

Posted by [George Dearing](#), Mar 19, 2008 11:45 AM



I continue to be impressed with how vendors outside the CMS space are helping companies manage content, and lots of it. One in particular is [Neighborhood America](#), the Florida-based company that provides social networking capabilities to companies such as CBS Networks, Kodak, and Fox News.

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It isn't managing terabyte repositories of structured content; Neighborhood America would rather help you manage the content needed to establish an enterprise social network (ESN).

Its CTO, David Bankston, makes it sound so simple.

"Content management has to be easy, light, and nimble, to where anyone can edit," said Bankston.

And [Neighborhood America](#) is walking the walk, pointing me to several examples where its tools were being used on highly trafficked sites such as HGTV and Fox News. In both instances, its [Elavate platform](#) is the on-ramp for user-generated content (UGC), helping visitors contribute content and interact with each other in real time.

Bankston says it's that type of expertise that sets it apart from some of its competitors. "It's a little different dynamic when you're collecting and moderating live community content," added Bankston.

One of the things that struck me were the number of modules Neighborhood America calls its own, from video conferencing and chat to publishing mechanisms such as blogs and wikis.

But as vendors on the periphery of the WCM industry tend to do, Bankston diplomatically described Neighborhood America's approach to managing content as a friendly handoff.

"We want to be their friend," said Bankston. "Our API structure has to be flexible enough to hand off content into an OpenText or Vignette."

But what if those friends suddenly turn on you, pressured by a client's desire to whittle down the vendor list?

"They'll (competition) find they've got a lot of work to do to supplant us. We're entrenching

ourselves into our customers' infrastructure," said Bankston.

At some of its larger sites, Bankston pointed out that its Elavate platform has hooks into key enterprise pieces like authorization, and API-level integration with customer databases. In some instances, Neighborhood America has more than 50 links throughout an organization's Web properties.

Let the games begin.

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