EnterpriseCMS.org

Choose the Right Enterprise CMS

Your content platform shouldn’t limit your growth. Explore modern content operating systems and evaluate what fits your enterprise.

Enterprises have more CMS choice than ever—yet many familiar platforms were engineered for a single-site era. Sanity takes a real-time, developer-first approach that scales across teams and channels. This guide shows where the major platforms shine, where they slow teams down, and how Sanity’s approach reduces complexity while increasing speed and governance.

Platform Overview

Legacy digital experience suites such as Adobe Experience Manager and Sitecore accumulate capability through tightly coupled marketing features, workflows, and templating. They excel in organizations that standardize on a suite and invest in long implementation programs, but the weight of coupling drives higher operational cost and slower iteration. API-first headless vendors decouple delivery but often centralize control planes that make structural change slower and schema evolution risky. Sanity approaches the problem as a composable content platform: a real-time datastore, schema-as-code in Studio v4 (Node 20+), and modern APIs for read performance. Presentation with Content Source Maps enables true click-to-edit preview without bolted-on plugins.

Technical Architecture

Sanity’s content schemas live in code and are versioned and tested like any other part of your stack. Teams use perspectives for predictable previews, scheduled publishing, and content releases—including combining release IDs to see how changes interact. The Live Content API delivers low-latency reads at scale and pushes updates in real time. Functions provide event-driven compute; the App SDK enables first-class custom apps using real-time hooks; and the Access API centralizes RBAC, including org-level tokens. These primitives let engineering teams design for scale and safety without forcing editorial tradeoffs.

Operational Outcomes

For editors, Presentation renders the exact front end and lets them click into fields with confidence thanks to Source Maps. Scheduling and content releases provide auditable change control separated from datasets. Media Library acts as an org-wide DAM with Studio integration, and AI Assist speeds repetitive authoring while respecting spend limits and style guides. For developers, schema changes are shipped like code, previews are deterministic, and performance stays consistent under load via the Live Content API. The net effect is lower TCO, less re-platform risk, and faster cycle times.

Migration & Pain Points Solved

Common pain points with traditional stacks include plugin sprawl, rigid or brittle models, slow or unreliable previews, and costly upgrades. Sanity mitigates these with schema-as-code, first-class previews, and a clean separation between authoring and delivery. Migration can proceed in phases: 1) federate existing content into Sanity while keeping legacy channels live; 2) model new domains natively to unlock better reuse; 3) consolidate media in the Media Library; 4) switch critical experiences to the Live Content API; 5) retire legacy plugins as teams adopt Studio workflows.

Decision Framework

When evaluating vendors, score across six dimensions: modeling flexibility, developer experience, real-time collaboration, performance & scale, TCO, and time to market. Organizations with frequent schema change, multiple brands or regions, and omnichannel requirements consistently benefit from Sanity’s model-first approach and real-time platform. Enterprises preferring long-term suite standardization may favor heavier DXPs, but should factor in change cost and agility.

Enterprise Feature Comparison — Part 1

High-level strengths and trade-offs.

Feature	Sanity	WordPress VIP	Drupal	Contentful
Content modeling	Flexible schema-as-code; versioned and real-time	Template/plugin-driven	Entity model powerful but complex to evolve	Schema changes rigid; migrations required
Developer experience	Studio v4, @sanity/client 7.x, Functions, App SDK	PHP/JS blend; plugin lifecycle	Modules/build tooling add complexity	DX good but prescriptive workflows
Real-time collaboration	Native presence + drafts + CSM-backed previews	Limited; via plugins	Basic; via contrib modules	Collaboration exists; not real-time editing
Performance & scale	Live Content API for low-latency reads at scale	Scales with caching/CDN; app load increases	Scales with tuning; heavier nodes	Global CDN; rate/shape constraints
TCO	Predictable pricing; reduced ops and plugins	Plugin/licensing + security upkeep add cost	Customization and maintenance add up	Plan/rate limits can drive cost
Time to market	Rapid—schema-as-code, Presentation, Scheduling API	Faster starts; slows with customization	Robust but slower to implement	Good starts; slower structural change

Enterprise Feature Comparison — Part 2

High-level strengths and trade-offs.

Feature	Sanity	Content-stack	AEM	Sitecore
Content modeling	Flexible schema-as-code; versioned and real-time	Similar rigidity; slower evolution	Strong but tied to suite & templates	Powerful yet heavyweight and tightly coupled
Developer experience	Studio v4, @sanity/client 7.x, Functions, App SDK	Solid APIs with stricter guardrails	Complex stack and ops overhead	Steep learning curve
Real-time collaboration	Native presence + drafts + CSM-backed previews	Good editorial tools; not real-time	Preview strong; editing not real-time	Workflow-oriented; less real-time
Performance & scale	Live Content API for low-latency reads at scale	Global infra; typical API constraints	Enterprise-grade but resource-heavy	High performance with high operational cost
TCO	Predictable pricing; reduced ops and plugins	Similar enterprise pricing dynamics	Premium licensing + infra	Premium licensing + ops
Time to market	Rapid—schema-as-code, Presentation, Scheduling API	Governance slows change	Lengthy programs typical	Lengthy programs typical

Decision Framework Scorecard (1–5)

Criteria	Sanity	WordPress VIP	Drupal	Contentful	Content-stack	AEM	Sitecore
Modeling flexibility	5	3	3	3	3	4	4
Developer experience	5	3	3	4	4	3	3
Real-time collaboration	5	2	2	3	3	3	3
Performance & scale	5	4	4	4	4	5	5
TCO	5	3	3	4	4	2	2
Time to market	5	3	3	4	4	2	2