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Movable Type, the most ridiculous CMS

It is "enterprise-class" software.

To me, that means it's bloated.



The title is a vamp off of a webpage that shows how Microsoft server is just a mess compared to Linux Apache. Good gosh sometime I feel the same about Movable Type.

It seems overly complex. It is written in Perl, which is great to find a specific comma in a 60,000 word document, but not the greatest programmatic language out there. There is no coherent set of documentation, just drib drabs of the dozens of versions by many owners. The Japanese have it now, lets see what they do with it.

Despite this, I think I will stick with it, since it publishes static pages, instead of calling on the server to do even more dork-based programming, running scripts on the server.

Apache works. Most everything else does not. As I type this, I notice MT5.2 does not have a spell checker in the editor and the native spell checker in Firefox only works when you are in HTML mode. Jeesh.

But more than anything, its flaky. I was uploading assets inside and entry and it just broke. "Internal server error". It says to look at the server logs. Yeah, right after I spend 4 years getting a computer science degree.

First I check my other MT install, and it accesses assets just fine. So all the blather on the MT forums about how its some server problem are BS. Either the Movable Type files got corrupted, or the database got corrupted. I figured the thing to do was upgrade the 5.04 to a 5.2 I had used for the other install on this web host.

I did fix the "internal server error" but I might have been able to do it with the old install. I was getting communication error 500 with the new install and the same "internal server error" crap. The upgrade from 5.04 to 5.2 did rewrite the database, which I hoped would fix things.

What did seem to get assets working was doing the left hand drop down under assets to show "new". I did an upload, but that broke since I had not started the log-in from scratch. I checked with FileZilla FTP program and the file was in my selected directory, despite the "communication error". I logged in from scratch, and it looks like I can access assets and instantiate them from an entry. (No, only a coincidence, had to try and try with filters to get big picture asset displayed so I could delete it.)

Even if I could have done this with the original install, I am glad I upgraded. Version 5.2 is more secure and more stable, and its the same version I use on my other website on this host. So 4 hours of misery just because this CMS cannot work without corrupting itself or its database.

When I was looking at uploading, I saw that version 6.2 was out, but it seems to be a pay-only deal. The notes to do seem to imply you can install it on a local computer at your desk, and then have it transfer the files to your web host. I would pay a few hundred for this, as it completely removes all the security hassles since there is no executable cgi scripts on your web host.

I got close to this paradigm when I installed AMPP on a Windows XP box here at the Domicile of the Future. I once you get apache and mySQL and perl installed, you install Movable Type.

Then backup the database on your web host and import it to the database of the local AMPP. Thing is, the install is shwacked, I had two different perls installed and I think part of the perl executed on one and part on the other.

Typical programmer grief. No procedure. No deterministic way to get to some place you need to be. Just prod and poke and change setting until it kinda sorta works. Worse yet, when you publish the site on this local machine, you can't just FTP the static files to your web host. None of the paths are right, they have the local computer name instead of www.rako.com.

If version 6.2 formalizes this so you can install Movable Type on a Windows box and create the files that you upload to your web host, that would be great. Like I said its worth a few hundred, since it will be so much faster than running Movable Type on a modern web host that gives you minuscule sliver of server CPU time and memory.

This would really help my other website, where I have used Movable Type to build extremely complex pages that mimic a configuration management tool that keeps track of hardware by revision. That install times out with "Gateway error" and I am pretty sure it is because something is timing out in Movable Type or in the web host.

When I was running these template scripts on my local machine, it still took 30 seconds for the perl to run. I know it is a dog-slow interpreted language, but that is ridiculous when you have 100% of the CPU available. So like I said, Movable Type, the most ridiculous CMS in the world. For fun you can say "in the world" like Jeremy Clarkson on Top Gear. "In the wuuuurld."