



**Customer:**

Word of Mouth Marketing Association

**Location:**

Chicago, Illinois

**Industry:**

Nonprofit

**Business Challenge:**

The Word of Mouth Marketing Association, a start-up organization, needed an easy-to-build and maintain, website that would give it the credibility it needed to get off the ground.

**Results:**

Movable Type has helped WOMMA:

- Publish and maintain a website without any technical people or costs.
- Build a community of 350 members.
- Grow from one employee with a computer and an idea into an industry-leading organization.

For more information, visit:

**Word of Mouth  
Marketing Association**

[www.womma.org](http://www.womma.org)

**Movable Type**

[www.movabletype.com](http://www.movabletype.com)

**Contact Us:**

Marissa Levinson, Director of Sales  
[mlevinson@sixapart.com](mailto:mlevinson@sixapart.com)

**“Organizations customarily spend over \$40,000 for a website, plus more for a CMS. With Movable Type, our initial web development costs were close to zero.”**

— Andy Sernovitz, Founding CEO, Word of Mouth Marketing Association

## Movable Type Provides Robust, Flexible Web Site Content Management

The Word of Mouth Marketing Association created and maintains its website with Movable Type, including a job board, events calendar, membership directory, several blogs, a membership application and more.

## Customer Profile

The Word of Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA) is a nonprofit marketing organization that promotes word of mouth as an effective marketing tool. WOMMA hosts conferences throughout the year for its member companies, which include Dell and Dupont. It also sets standards to encourage companies to use new web technologies to connect with customers.

## The Challenge

In October of 2004, founding CEO Andy Sernovitz needed to build his new company’s website. Most available options were outside of his budget as they required external programming expertise to build and maintain the site. Sernovitz’ ideal solution needed to be simple, fast to deploy and allow WOMMA to regularly update the site without calling on external help. “We were a small and unfunded organization back then,” he says.

## The Solution

Sernovitz selected the Movable Type platform, because it offered the ability to publish high quality and customizable pages that could be easily updated by non-technical WOMMA employees. It took Sernovitz only a week to create WOMMA’s entire website using Movable Type. “I hired a designer to build the first template,” he says, “but that was really all the external help I needed.”

## Eureka Moment

Sernovitz’s eureka moment was when he realized he could use the Movable Type platform to build his entire site with unlimited creativity. Using several Movable Type features, Sernovitz was able to create multiple types of pages each with their own unique design.

“Movable Type enabled us to put up a world-class website that gave us the credibility we needed to get started”, says Sernovitz. “Movable Type went far beyond our pre-conceived notion of what blogs were. We built our whole website on the platform,” he says. “When we needed a job board, we created a job board page, posted a new blog for each different job, and used the summary page to show the full listing. When we held an election, we created a category for that, and posted profiles of each candidate in individual entries.”





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As WOMMA's business and web needs grew, they discovered that Movable Type's advanced features would support activities and uses beyond the original project—still without external development work. For example, in addition to using Movable Type to manage content, WOMMA has launched several blogs for news, research and trends, where both the staff and guest bloggers post. By giving its guests time-limited permissions and publishing rights, WOMMA has been able to engage industry experts and its members, providing an online meeting place for conversation and idea exchange. WOMMA has also started using blogs to generate buzz leading up to its events. “We had a conference called Measuring Word of Mouth,” explains Sernovitz. “To get attendees excited and thinking about the topics in advance, we launched the Word of Mouth Research blog and invited all our speakers to be guest bloggers.” In addition, WOMMA conducted podcast interviews with every speaker before the conference. “It was a great way to drive attention to the event,” says Sernovitz. “I think that was the first time anyone did anything like it. We then absorbed those blogs back into our site.” WOMMA also transferred both its fast-growing HTML member directory and events calendar to Movable Type, obviating the need for a HTML coder to update these lists.

## The Bottom Line

For the two years, WOMMA's web development costs were close to zero. “Movable Type is so easy to use that we got through two years without hiring any full-time web people,” says Sernovitz. “We didn't write a single line of code until August of 2006 when we hired Web Producer Adam Wesel.” “Organizations customarily spend \$40,000-\$50,000 for an initial website, plus more for a content management system,” says Sernovitz. “Without Movable Type, we could not have afforded the marketing, communications, and community building we achieved in the last two years. It would have been impossible.”

“Movable Type is incredibly flexible,” says Wesel. “Right now, we have about 40 static pages and 12 blogs on the site. The blogs are really the power behind the site, and provide the critical content management function.”

## Support and Plug-Ins

Whenever Wesel or Sernovitz have questions, they've found the information and plug-ins they needed online. “That's another reason why we like Movable Type,” says Wesel. “The community is active, and very good at responding to questions. When I've posted questions to the community forums, I usually get a response within 15 minutes.”