Compass Guide to WCM, Q1 2018
Evaluation of Ingeniux CMS 10.0

By: Tony White

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Ingeniux CMS 10.0
Product Evaluation

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ARS LOGICA POSITION

Ingeniux CMS 10 is a moderately-priced platform that offers an excellent balance of functionality across the range of business and technical criteria that enable effective web experience management (WEM). The product's decoupled architecture, agile content model, and formidable NoSQL repository support management of the complete content lifecycle, destination-agnostic content delivery, and first-rate ease of system administration (ranked fourth among all platforms evaluated). Ingeniux CMS also boasts among the lowest total cost of ownership (TCO) in the industry, and the vendor's customers report exceptional customer service.

NOTES & RESOURCES

Sources of Information
Some company and product information contained in this report was collected via Ars Logica's 172-item vendor questionnaire. Vendor responses were independently verified through customer interviews, implementation monitoring, product documentation, Ars Logica's knowledge base, and/or hands-on product testing.

Platforms Included
The Compass Guides include the platforms that Ars Logica considers to be the most significant in the WCM market. While scores on our business and technology scorecards vary widely, each platform evaluated will be a best-fit given the right use case, and may therefore prove worthy of shortlisting.

Customer Interviews
Ars Logica has interviewed users of every product covered in the Compass Guides, including Ingeniux CMS.

Implementation Monitoring
Since the 1990s, Ars Logica founder Tony White has kept close tabs on ongoing WCM implementations. Some of this knowledge is represented in the Compass Guide reports.

No Vendor Influence
Ars Logica retains complete editorial control over the Compass Guides and receives no funding in their production.

Ingeniux Vendor Overview

Founded in 1999 in Seattle, WA, Ingeniux is a leading small-to-midsized CMS vendor that had early success in the media and entertainment industries, but which currently demonstrates strength in a number of verticals, including higher education, financial services, life sciences, consumer brands, and technology. Ingeniux CMS's origins date back to an XML project at MSNBC, a fact which partially explains the product's early strength in media. Realizing early on, however, that their product would be a good fit for a wide range of customers with moderate budgets and high volumes of structured content, Ingeniux assiduously pursued clients in other industries, which now represent the bulk of the vendor's accounts. Although originally used almost exclusively by technologists, Ingeniux CMS's longstanding and continuous user interface improvements have attracted non-technical users. Technical users have remained loyal all along, as Ingeniux has maintained its original commitment to modular system design, recently instantiated in the fully decoupled platform architecture, best-of-breed NoSQL repository (9.0+ versions), destination-independent content delivery, and expanded options for enterprise application integration.

Company Profile

Year Founded: 1999

Headquarters: Seattle, WA

Employees (or FTE equivalents): 50

Geographies: North America, Europe

Revenue: $20 million (estimated)

Product Types Offered: CMS, Search, Portal

Commercial or Open Source: Commercial

Strategic Implementation Partners: Avalon
       BarkleyREI, Digital Wave, Meritide,
       Primacy, RealDecoy

Top Competitors: Sitecore, Episerver,
       CrownPeak, Adobe

Key Vertical Industries: Life sciences, financial
       services, higher education, technology,
       non-profit

Product Profile

Product Name: Ingeniux CMS

Version: 10.0

Next version release date: Q3 2018

Market segment: Upper mid-market

Average Sales Price (License Only): $60,000/year
       (SaaS); $90,000 (on-premise)

Technology Platform: ASP.NET MVC

Key Strengths: Breadth of WEM functionality for the
       price, decoupled architecture, ease of system
       administration, strong installed base within
       financial services and higher education

Key Limitations: Limited service partner network,
       somewhat limited geographic focus outside
       the U.S. (coverage in Europe has recently
       strengthed considerably)

Highest-Value Use Case: Decoupled, cloud-based
       digital content platform serving apps, portals,
       and multiple web properties

Vendor History & Product Evolution

Founded in Seattle, WA, in 1999, Ingeniux's proximity to Microsoft was more than just geographic. The CMS platform originally began as an XML project at a television network. In the mid-to-late 1990s, there were several initiatives within Microsoft, as well as quite a few business relationships/acquisitions, that were "supposed" to turn into Microsoft CMS -- NCompass Labs and Ingeniux, to mention two. (As an analyst at Giga Information Group at that time, it never seemed to me that Microsoft was serious about content management. The fact that Ingeniux and NCompass Labs did not evolve into Microsoft CMS supports this position.) As a result of Microsoft's having decided not to pursue development of the XML project, its original developers eventually became part of the group that founded Ingeniux, as did its CEO, who came from previous positions at MSNBC and Electronic Arts. This initial connection with media and entertainment strongly impacted the early growth of Ingeniux's customer base, but within just a few years, the vendor had adopted an aggressive strategy of pursuing clients across a number of verticals -- notably higher education, financial services, and technology. The perception in the marketplace is often that the vendor is still overly attached to the media industry. And while Ingeniux does still maintain significant accounts in this vertical, more relevant is the fact that the majority of its installed base is to be found elsewhere, including customers such as BD, AIG, Quicken Loans, Dolby, the US Army, SITA, and Nelnet. This information may seem anecdotal, but it is relevant as evidence against an oft-repeated industry opinion. Ingeniux's initial growth was primarily regional and within the technical community. Its service-partner efforts were also regionally focused in the Pacific Northwest, and a large concentration of partners can still be found there. By contrast, a plurality of Ingeniux's customers are on the East Coast, and most purchase budgets within business units rather than IT.

From the beginning, the product was always strong in its use of XML technology. This modular development approach has expanded dramatically in the post-7.0 versions, to include nearly every aspect of the platform. While Ingeniux's best-of-breed focus has not changed, the general perception of the product in the market has not adequately kept pace with the ongoing consistency and quality of functionality across the entire range of the vendor's offerings -- and across the full spectrum of WEM criteria.

Key Recent Developments

Key recent developments in Ingeniux CMS's evolution primarily include redevelopment of the platform on ASP.NET MVC and REST-based web services in version 9, and a complete redesign of the web-client user experience in version 10. Beyond the core CMS, digital asset management capabilities are brand new, as are the InSite search and Cartella unified portal solutions -- the latter boasting strong ties to a number of leading CRM and ERP platforms. Lastly, the underlying content repository has been updated using a NoSQL / JSON architecture, providing better database performance and improved content discovery and reuse.

Profiling the Ideal Buyer

Ingeniux CMS will appeal to several groups of companies. The first group includes companies looking to get started with WEM, as Ingeniux CMS 10.0 delivers respectable performance across the range of WEM functionality. The second group includes organizations in Ingeniux's core verticals (life sciences, financial services, higher education) that are looking to replace aging pure-play CMS platforms that have become cumbersome. Third are customers not looking to spend in excess of $200,000 on CMS licenses -- which has become the industry norm at the mid-market and up. Fourth are organizations with a preference for ASP.NET and NoSQL. Next are enterprises with a strategic IT focus that necessitates best-of-breed tech-nologies -- especially those with high volumes of existing structured content and those looking to impose structure where none existed before. And last are companies looking for a market-leading SaaS offering, which approximately 70 percent of Ingeniux's customers use. To recap, Ingeniux may be a good fit for:

- **Enterprises Looking to Escape Tightly-Coupled Architectures**
  Ingeniux has long placed great emphasis on architectural decoupling. The 9.0+ versions represent a significant advance in this area. "Headless" and "micro-experience" capabilities will be interesting by-products to many.

- **Price-Sensitive Companies Seeking a Good Distribution of WEM Functionality**
  At its price point, Ingeniux CMS represents extreme value across the range of WEM functionality.

- **Organizations with a Preference for a Single Technology and Services Vendor**
  More than any other vendor in the Compass Guides, Ingeniux emphasizes its strategic consulting and implementation expertise. This may well be interesting to those in the "one throat" school of thought.

Ingeniux Will Not Be a Good Fit, If...

Organizations managing a single website or looking for a bundled solution with e-commerce and market-ing automation functionality may be better served on other platforms. Ingeniux takes a best-of-breed approach in these areas. Because of the vendor's heavy focus on North America and just-recently sig-nificant presence in parts of Europe, customers should carefully assess their local and/or regional service options. There are also likely better options for customers with a preference for Java or PHP (or any pure LAMP-style solution stack) at the staging-server level. The product can, however, deliver content in PHP, and the Ingeniux version of .NET can run in a Java environment without the use of Mono. These facts account for the 20 percent of Ingeniux customers who develop and maintain their implementations in non-.NET languages (not true for most other ".NET" vendors).

Key Product Strengths

There are a number of specific areas in which Ingeniux incorporates market-leading technology, but perhaps the most compelling strength of the product is its wide range of respectable functionality across the areas that enable effective digital experience management. These include core content management (workflow, versioning, site layout, site management, lifecycle support, and so on), digital asset management, personalization, analytics, enterprise search (InSite, one of the industry's best offerings, is integrated throughout the platform -- not the case with most leading products -- Sitecore, e.g.), robust CRM and ERP integrations, and destination-independent content delivery based on a decoupled repository. To be sure, there are products that perform better in some or all of these categories, but Ars Logica knows of only one other platform at this price that rivals Ingeniux CMS's balance of functionality. With CMS 10.0, it is possible to implement effective WEM -- based on a decoupled architecture that also underpins content delivery to apps, portals, and search-dependent solutions -- at an annual SaaS license cost of $60,000.

"Agile content delivery" and "intelligent content" are terms that Ingeniux self-reports as distinguishing characteristics of its platform. At first glance, these terms may seem either salesy or pedestrian, but in fact they prove to be seminal concepts upon which the platform was reconceived and rebuilt in its 9.0+ versions. The Ingeniux CMS platform functions by making heavy use several key technologies: (1) Dynamic Site Server, an ASP.NET application that controls content delivery and business logic; (2) a NoSQL/JSON repository; (3) XML; (4) REST-based APIs; (5) true enterprise search; and (6) SaaS.

FIGURE 1   Ingeniux CMS 10.0, Key Product Strengths and Limitations

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Below are several key product strengths and limitations that potential buyers should keep in mind when assembling vendor shortlists.

KEY STRENGTHS	KEY LIMITATIONS
Excellent ease of system administration (co-ranked fourth among all platforms evaluated)	Limited services partner network
Low TCO (long-term cost of product licenses, support, and maintenance)	Somewhat limited geographic coverage
Decoupled architecture	ASP.NET environment will not appeal to Java- or PHP-centric customers
Strong integration with Salesforce.com	
Very high customer-service ratings	
Excellent value (ratio of functionality to price)	

Source: Ars Logica, Inc.

Sources of information: product testing, product updates, customer interviews, vendor questionnaire

Taken together, these technologies form a platform structure consisting of decoupled layers that provide: (1) effective management of the complete content lifecycle (creation, editing, workflow, publishing, expiration, retention); (2) dynamic, scalable, and destination-independent content delivery; (3) structure; and (4) options for enterprise application integration. It should be noted that the combination of this broad feature-functional set can likewise be exposed in secure portal environments (extranet, customer support portal, training portal, partner portal, employee workplace portal) with Ingeniux's DXP solution.

An important consideration to many potential buyers is the fact that Ingeniux CMS has among the lowest long-term TCO in the industry -- for a few reasons. First, the license cost is low compared to competitive products. We believe that it is fair to say that the product sells at roughly a 40 percent discount compared to most equally functional applications. Because maintenance and support contracts are based on a percentage of license costs, these are also relatively inexpensive.

In interviews with Ingeniux's customers, Ars Logica found that they all shared positive opinions of the vendor's customer support. These reports are in line with our previous interactions with Ingeniux customers, and also in line with periodic anecdotal information we've come across at industry events.

Key Product Limitations

There is normally a trade-off between the complexity and scalability of a technology platform on the one hand, and ease of system administration and long-term TCO on the other. Extreme performance on either side usually adversely impacts the other. Ingeniux takes a remarkably balanced approach. Offering uncommonly good ease of system administration (ranked fourth of all platforms evaluated), Ingeniux also performs respectably and evenly across the technical categories of Scalability, Flexibility, and Development Tools – varying by only +0.5/-0.4 from an average score of 6.6. In categories of importance to business users – Usability and Interface Quality, Content Marketing Tools, and Enterprise Tech Stack Leverage -- Ingeniux demonstrates the same consistency. From an average of 6.3, scores vary only by +0.2/-0.1. The key takeaways here are reliability and balance.

A second shortcoming is that the services partner network is limited. While the quality of partners is in fact above average, their number is relatively low. This will not be a problem for companies whose specific integrators are already known to have Ingeniux expertise, but may be a concern for those looking for uniform local expertise across geographies.

Next, Ingeniux's geographic focus is primarily on North America, secondarily on Europe -- and practically nowhere else. Less than 5 percent of the vendor's revenue comes from other regions. Again, this may not be a problem for some, but potential buyers should be aware of this reality.

Vendor/Product Report Cards

The features, functions, and technical underpinnings of WCM products vary considerably, as do the customer requirements they are intended to satisfy. For this reason, the only reliable way to assure the best product fit for a particular client is to spend anywhere from several weeks to several months assessing the client's specific needs and analyzing product capabilities line by line. Still, Ars Logica is frequently asked to rate products in categories such as those in Figures 2 and 3. In using these ratings, please take care to weight each category in accordance with its importance to your needs. While the average scores across these categories might be the same for two products, proper weighting will likely cause the scores to diverge -- often significantly.

**FIGURE 2**   Ingeniux Report Card for the Business User

Figure 2 shows Ars Logica's rating of Ingeniux CMS 10.0 in four WCM categories of critical importance to business users. Refer to Page 11 for an explanation of the evaluation criteria.
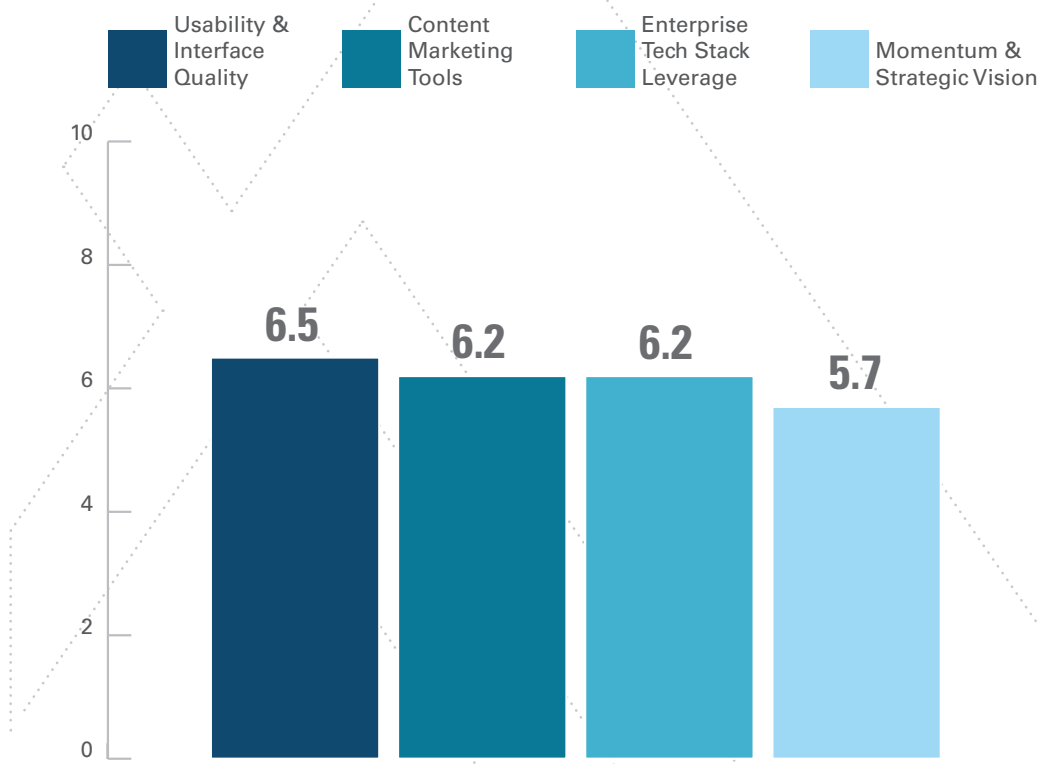
Sources of information: product testing, product updates, customer interviews, vendor questionnaire

ARS LOGICA   9

FIGURE 3   Ingeniux Report Card for Technologists

Figure 3 shows Ars Logica's rating of Ingeniux CMS 10.0 in four WCM categories of critical importance to technologists. Refer to Page 12 for an explanation of the evaluation criteria.
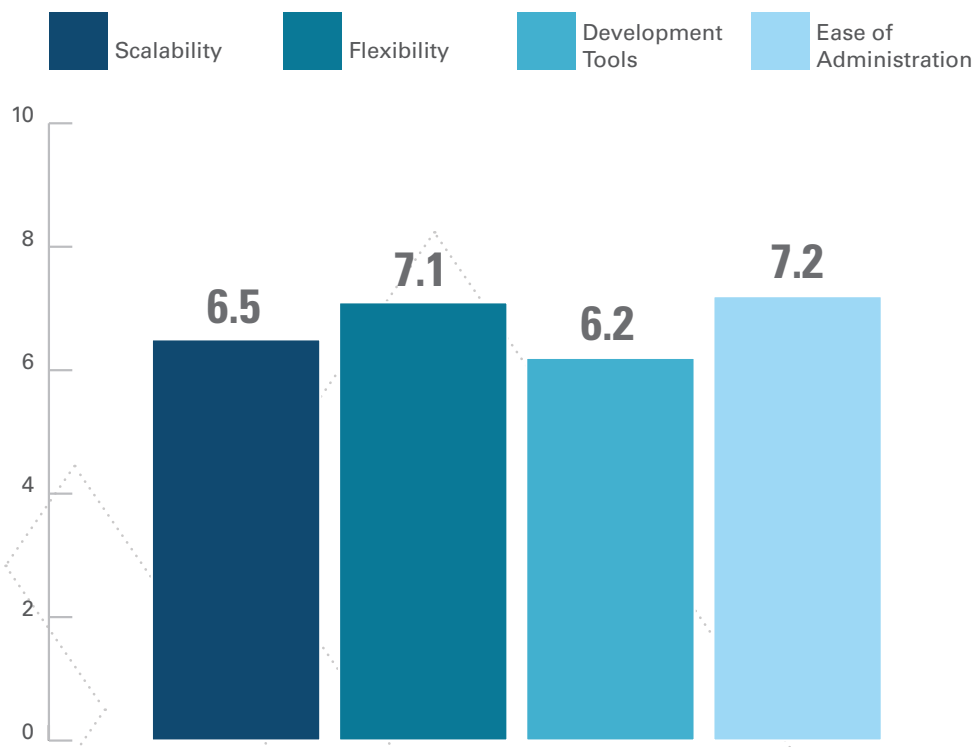
Sources of information: product testing, product updates, customer interviews, vendor questionnaire

Report Card Evaluation Criteria

In the process of analyzing WCM solutions, Ars Logica has established a set of evaluation criteria, which at the highest level can be separated into four categories for non-technical business users and four categories for technologists. Scores in these categories represent averages of a large number of detailed criteria, and are meant to be used as a means of quickly comparing products within the same market segment.

Criteria for Business Users

- **Usability & Interface Quality**
  Usability refers to the relative ease of learning and using a WCM application. For non-technical business users, factors contributing to high scores in this category include intuitive and consistent user interfaces, streamlined task completion (i.e. minimal number of steps to complete a task), integration with the desktop and between product modules, contextual editing capabilities, and documented high user adoption rates among a vendor's customers.

- **Content Marketing Tools**
  Marketers needs tools within WCM platforms to improve sales conversion rates, increase average transaction amounts, draw customers back to their websites, analyze online behavioral patterns, and deliver unique customer experiences. This category rates the presence and quality of such tools, including segmenting, targeting, testing, personalization, site optimization, and mobile support.

- **Enterprise Tech Stack Leverage**
  This category assesses a product's ability to integrate with and leverage the data and functionality of essential enterprise technology platforms such as CRM, ERP, marketing automation, e-commerce, portal, analytics, and social media management.

- **Momentum & Strategic Vision**
  This category represents a combination of a vendor's market momentum (current market share adjusted for accleration or deceleration over the past 24 months) and the completeness of its market strategy, which includes commitment to technology and implementation partners, meaningful evolution of WCM products, and support for marketing programs.

Criteria for Technologists

- **Scalability**

  Scalability refers to the ability of a product to function well as system demands increase. Factors contributing to scalability are database size, query efficiency, bandwidth consumption, ease of system management, caching efficiency, load balancing, and mass content deployment capabilities.

- **Flexibility**

  Flexibility denotes a product's ability to integrate easily with existing enterprise infrastructure, including operating systems, Web servers, databases, directories, development tools, and other enterprise applications such as ERP, CRM, e-commerce systems, search, portals, and so forth.

- **Development Tools**

  This category describes the quality of a product's integrated development environment (IDE), the technologies that the IDE incorporates, and overall ease of customized application development. Although this category refers primarily to development frameworks, other ad hoc tools are also included, such as page- and site templating, alternate interfaces, scripting tools, configuration utilities, pre-defined coding functions, mobile development accelerators, and any other functionality that enables or eases the installation, development, and customization of WCM implementations.

- **Ease of Administration**

  Some WCM products require significantly more work to administer than others. This category rates the relative resource intensity required to keep the system running smoothly, where higher scores reflect less work. Roughly speaking, higher scores also indicate better coordination of application components due to more methodical system design.

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SERVICES

Advisory Services

Ars Logica is a vendor-neutral analyst firm helping companies evaluate their digital experience requirements and select appropriate software. To address clients' questions and concerns that arise throughout the year, Ars Logica offers unlimited direct analyst access through its Analyst Anytime advisory services. These annual, subscription-based services provide guidance by phone or e-mail within 24 hours on a wide range of issues. The number of inquiries submitted throughout the year is not limited.

Software and Technology Selection

In our technology selection engagements, Ars Logica maps clients' functional, technological, and strategic requirements to potential software solutions and identifies the vendors whose products best satisfy these requirements. We maintain a continuously-updated comprehensive matrix of the feature-functionality of most digital experience vendors' products and solutions. We receive frequent briefings from these vendors and have in-depth conversations and consulting engagements with their customers, ensuring that we always understand the actual state of vendors' offerings as well as their forward-looking strategic directions.

Custom Engagements

Ars Logica's expertise in technologies such as web content management, digital experience management, digital asset management, marketing campaign management, enterprise search, and portals, gives us the open-ended ability to help clients on a wide range of projects, including: building internal business cases, assessing technology requirements, analyzing software products and vendors, selecting and assembling software solutions, crafting digital strategies, and running corporate educational seminars. We also assist vendors in developing strategic roadmaps, and we present our view of the digital experience market at industry conferences and end-user events.

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