
EMPOWERING FRANCHISE RELATIONSHIPS

How Webtreepro Transforms Franchising
in the Digital Economy

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MAKING RELATIONSHIPS MATTER

Digital franchising should ensure seamless operations and make it easy for a franchisor to engage with its network of franchisees. Moreover, individual franchisees can adapt a branded experience to meet their own local needs. By leveraging the Internet, digital connections remove barriers to operations, strengthen relationships, enhance autonomy, and increase profitability. Ultimately, these connections create competitive advantages for franchisors and franchisees alike.

Managing the flow of content to support branded experiences makes the difference. Success for a digitally enabled franchise depends on the capabilities of its underlying Web Content Management (WCM) platform.

WEBTREEPRO: A CONTENT PLATFORM DESIGNED FOR FRANCHISING

Optimized for Franchise Relationships

This is where Webtreepro from Primero Systems makes a difference. It is a modern WCM platform designed for digital franchising and optimized for the ways franchises work. A franchisor can rely on Webtreepro to manage all of the content it produces for its network of franchisees.

Specifically, Webtreepro promotes franchise-wide branded experiences. Using this platform, a franchisor supports multiple websites, one for each member of its franchisee network. (Each franchisee has its own microsite under the umbrella of the franchisor's main website.) The franchisor creates content once, manages it centrally, and distributes it to all franchisees.

At the same time, the franchisor ensures autonomy for franchisees, enabling them to add locally sourced content to their own sites and to manage this information within a predefined operational framework. Franchisees have the resources they need to deliver a superior customer experience.

Distributed Publishing

Let's focus first on the capabilities of Webtreepro for distributed publishing. A franchisor sets up and maintains the microsites for all the franchisees in its network. Since Webtreepro runs in the cloud, each franchisor and franchisee simply needs an Internet connection and web browser. With resources delivered through a cloud-based platform, there is no need for a franchisor to invest in its own computing infrastructure.

Webtreepro supports the multiple content types that digital marketers and business leaders expect—richly formatted text, photos, animation, and high-definition video clips. The platform dynamically

assembles these elements into predefined page displays. It supports responsive web design templates and can easily render content on both desktops/laptops (with full-screen web browsers) and mobile devices without compromising the branded experience, as shown in Illustration 1.

A franchisor has a great deal of flexibility for structuring information flows and relationships. The distributed publishing capabilities of Webtreepro allow the franchisor to define attribute-based content. A franchisee can then subscribe to content based on attributes that reflect their marketing focus.



ILLUSTRATION 1. Webtreepro dynamically assembles content about a franchise and then delivers digital experiences on multiple devices.

For example, consider a travel franchise, in which individual agencies can specialize in particular types of travel such as adventure trips, family-friendly vacations, and ecotourism. The franchisor publishes promotional travel content with an 'adventure-travel' attribute. A franchisee that subscribes to 'adventure travel' will automatically have their website populated with travel promotions related to adventure travel. Additionally, the franchisee can publish localized content that highlights their agencies' expertise and experiences in adventure travel.

Through this branded and localized website experience, customers build relationships with selected travel agents who specialize in the area of travel they enjoy, while franchisees benefit by exposing their agents to a wide range of prospects.

Maintaining an Information Hub

In addition to distributed publishing, Webtreepro also supports a centralized information hub, or web portal—a well-organized, readily searchable, and easy-to-navigate digital repository. (Search capabilities can extend into the documents themselves.) Customers expect uniform experiences when they walk into a franchised store, regardless of who owns the business. With Webtreepro, a franchisor and franchisees can solve communication and training problems, ensure replicable business processes, promote consistent services, and keep up with the speed of digital business.

Specifically, a franchisor maintains a portal containing training guides, sales promotions, marketing assets, and other kinds of operational materials necessary to ensure brand consistency across its franchise network. Franchise owners, area managers, and employees simply log onto the portal and access up-to-date information, even while they are on the go. Illustration 2 shows a branded portal using Webtreepro.

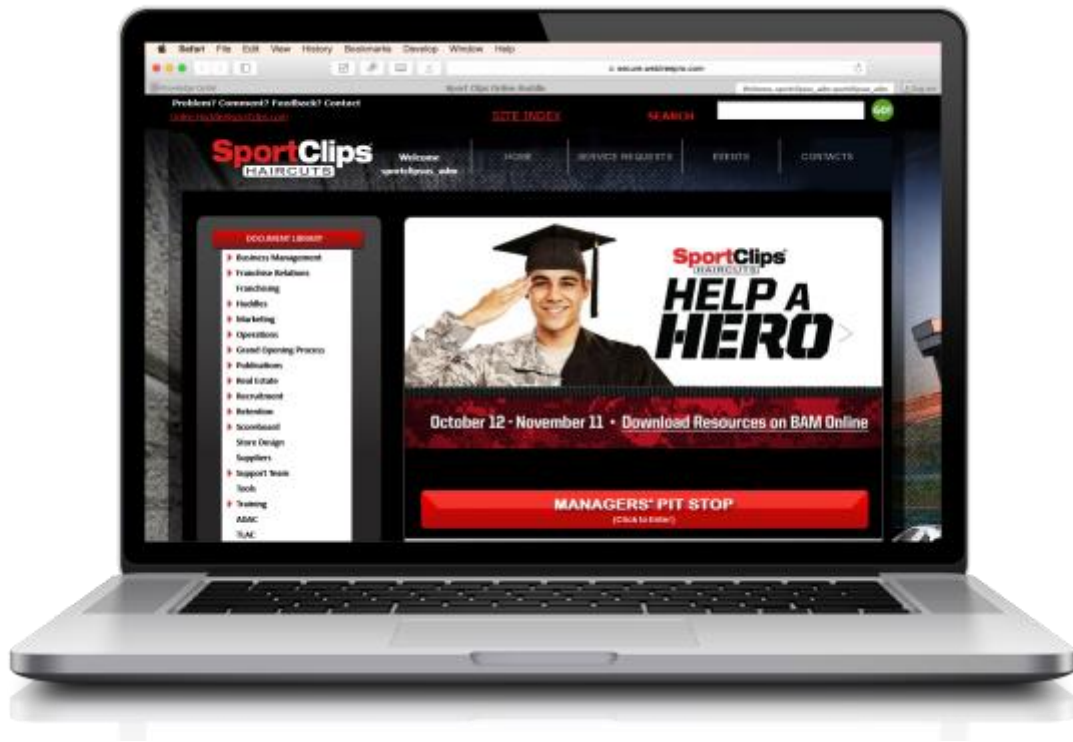


ILLUSTRATION 2. A branded portal presents up-to-date operational, training, and policy information using Webtreepro.

The portal ensures that franchise staffers have access only to information that is appropriate for their specific roles (such as area developer, area manager, and store owner) and the particular attributes of the franchise. Webtreepro manages the access controls and permissions that are so essential for sharing. The information can be indexed for relevant categories and business tasks, as well as easily displayed on all devices, including desktops, laptops, smartphones, and tablets. No longer do franchise owners and staffers need to depend on printed materials.

In addition, a franchisor can rely on Webtreepro to keep content up to date. The franchisor records the expiration dates and content owners for all of the guides, manuals, and other materials published on the portal. Webtreepro then automatically notifies owners when specific assets are approaching their expiration dates, triggering reviews and updates as necessary.

For the franchisor, the web portal becomes an essential resource for securely sharing essential business information with all of the firms in its network. Outdated information and orphaned documents are no longer problems.

Channeling Information Access

Each franchisor has its own way of doing business. One franchisor may organize activities geographically, with territorial vice presidents and regional directors responsible for building and maintaining relationships. Another may set up its organization by functional areas, such as catering, fine dining, and family-friendly meals within a restaurant franchise. Not surprisingly, people with different roles need to share different kinds of information.

Webtreepro has extensive capabilities to accommodate these different business models. Embedded within the platform are flexible capabilities to manage the multiple roles and permissions across a franchise network (see Illustration 3). A franchisor and individual franchisees can:

- Define the roles, using all the familiar terms that describe the overall business model.
- Create a robust permission set for each role, specifying when individual types of content or content collections (such as sections of websites or even entire microsites) can be created, read, updated, and deleted.
- Rely on a permission set to define multiple roles that support varying levels of content, user, and website management.
- Associate individual users (such as area managers) with one or more roles.

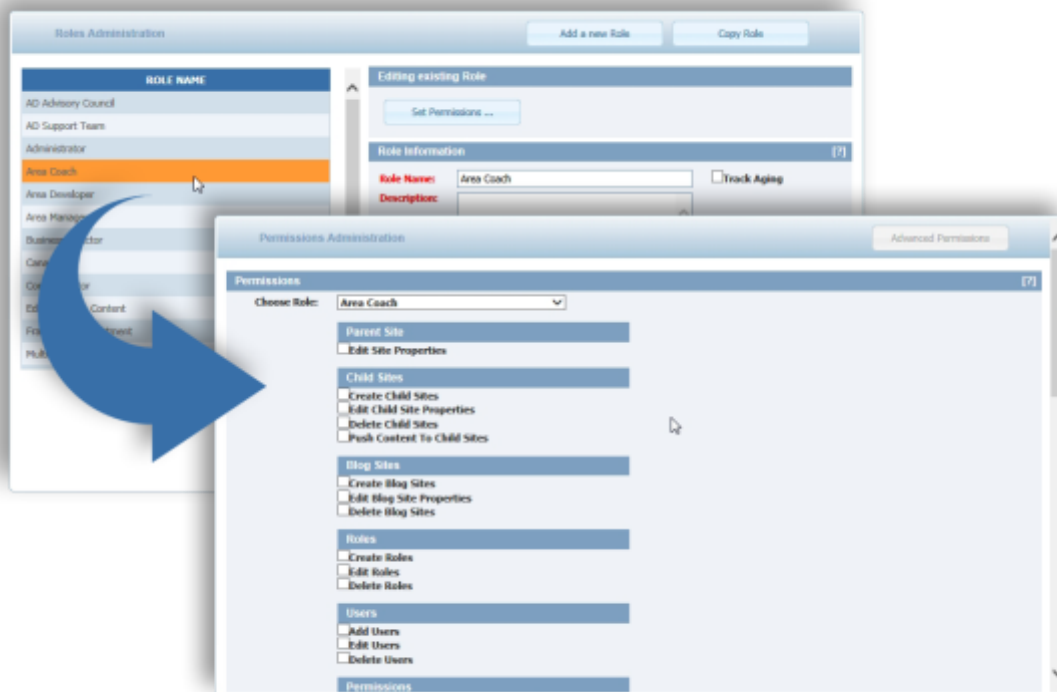


Illustration 3. Webtreepro features extensive capabilities for defining roles and permissions across a franchise network.

By defining these roles and permissions to match its operational structure, a franchisor controls certain tasks centrally, while enabling franchisees to take responsibility for other activities.

For example, a franchisor can set up a business environment where:

- Area managers can view all franchise-related content and only have permissions to edit content that is related to their particular areas.
- Store managers can define roles by the ways they want to operate their business. One store manager might specify roles for “team leaders” and another for “product experts.”

In short, Webtreepro delivers a flexible yet focused framework for defining roles and permissions across a digital franchise. The content platform accommodates the ways a particular franchise expects to function.

Integrating with Enterprise Applications

Many franchises already have operational systems in place for running key aspects of their business. For instance, a travel franchise may have a preferred booking system for making hotel, cruise, airline, and event reservations. A restaurant chain may use a particular staffing system for scheduling employees as well as a marketing automation system for emailing promotions to customers.

Webtreepro has the flexibility to connect with these existing applications in multiple ways. It can provide a web-based interface for opening an application and can also add single-sign-on capabilities (where end users need to authenticate themselves only once to access the all applications within the environment). It can add promotional landing pages to track results of email campaigns.

Webtreepro’s architecture integrates easily with existing enterprise applications. It can access content within remote systems, launch queries as needed, and incorporate results within sections of web pages. Integrating information from remote applications is part of a branded experience.

A franchisor specifies integration capabilities with enterprise applications and the resulting content flows when implementing Webtreepro. Franchises thus protect their IT investments, while also adopting the web-based capabilities needed to compete in the digital age.

Extending Branded Experiences

Franchisors and franchisees alike seek recognition among the cacophony of competing offers available on the web. Beyond a branded website, findability and discoverability are critical to success for digital franchising.

All too often, customers rely on Google and other search engines to locate the information they need. A WCM platform must help enhance search rankings as part of a branded experience.

Webtreepro’s capability for fine-tuning findability includes a search engine optimization (SEO) center designed to promote the branded experience across the web, as shown in Illustration 4.

Specifically, the SEO center maintains the tags and descriptors for all content and media assets within the franchise website.

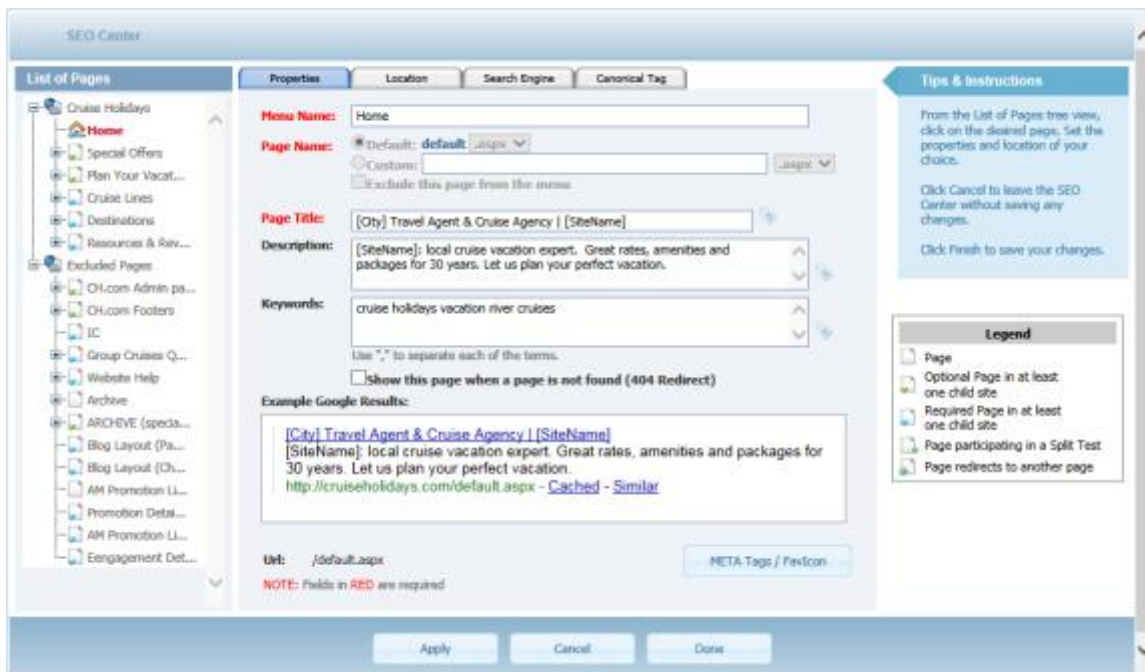


Illustration 4. Webtreepro feature an SEO center to enhance findability by Google and other search engines.

A franchisor centrally manages the keywords, page titles, descriptors, and other types of metadata that search engines use to compile their result sets. The SEO center supports canonical tags, through which the franchisor identifies content duplicated on multiple microsites and ensures that search engines rank the information appropriately. Moreover, a franchisor can distribute SEO responsibilities to local franchisees. These individual firms can then use the SEO center to extend the search optimization criteria set up by the parent company.

Finally, Webtreepro reliably helps franchisors and franchisees assess the success of their branded experiences. Webtreepro integrates Google Analytics into its content delivery capabilities, providing the ability to track the flow of content through a network of affiliated sites. Both franchisors and franchisees can thus identify which popular items (stories, videos) lead to increased traffic and click-throughs. With consistent metrics implemented across multiple sites, all parties are able to determine content bottlenecks and ways to optimize the digital franchising experience.

ENABLING NEXT-GENERATION FRANCHISING WITH WEBTREEPRO

A Complete Solution for Digital Connections

Certainly, digital franchising relies on the capabilities of an underlying WCM platform. But delivering on the promise of the Internet takes expertise and insight—knowing how a franchise network works, understanding where digital experience can make a difference, and having the skills to produce tangible business results. Both subject expertise and know-how are required. In many cases a third-party firm, such as a systems integrator, can make a valuable contribution.

Webtreepro gives Primero Systems a leg up on its WCM competition. Drawing on more than two decades of experience as a custom software developer and integrator, Primero Systems delivers Webtreepro as a best-of-breed solution for digital franchising. In addition to the WCM platform, the company provides implementation services and ongoing support. Primero Systems works with franchisors directly through its consultative process, first to identify opportunities for digital branding and next-generation experiences and then to produce an economical solution. Primero Systems has the technical expertise and IT resources to customize Webtreepro to a franchisor's unique requirements.

Best Practice Expertise

Primero Systems specializes in the franchise marketplace. It has developed best practices expertise to rapidly deliver digital solutions by deploying Webtreepro through an agile development methodology.

For instance, when one franchisor who needed to upgrade an aging WCM system selected Webtreepro for its next-generation solution, Primero Systems was easily able to convert key elements of the information architecture—the criteria for organizing and displaying information on static web pages—from this legacy environment directly into Webtreepro, leveraging existing investments in a first-generation website. Primero Systems then extended and enhanced this architecture to accommodate digital operations across the entire franchise network. The Webtreepro-powered solution not only centralizes content management and delivery for certain types of content but also features a network of approximately 200 branded microsites, where independent businesses manage their own content locally within a framework supported by the franchisor.

In another example, Primero Systems worked with a brick-and-mortar franchisor to deliver an online portal, organizing and publishing a collection of over 4,000 franchise-related documents. Primero Systems upgraded an existing intranet repository and imported content related to franchise operations into Webtreepro. As part of the upgrade, Primero Systems advised the franchisor on steps for conducting a content audit to identify outdated items and cull them from the collection. Primero Systems was able to introduce a well-defined information architecture and implement an integrated search function. Primero Systems worked with the franchisor to define the role-based access controls for various groups of franchise workers within the overall franchise ecosystem.

In short, Primero Systems leverages the capabilities of Webtreepro to forge digital connections across an entire franchise network.

An Environment Designed for Franchising

Primero Systems delivers a franchise-savvy computing environment that takes advantage of a modern IT infrastructure. As Webtreepro is deployed as a subscription service within a public cloud environment, a franchisor and its network of independent franchisees need only an Internet connection and desktops/laptops or mobile devices to exploit the online environment. There is no need for a substantial up-front investment in systems or software licenses.

This cloud infrastructure includes elastic performance and accommodates the peaks and valleys of online activities. Through the digitally empowered franchise network, Webtreepro automatically adapts to busy periods when many customers are online. A franchisor need not worry about performance, response times, and the quality of the customer experience.

Moreover, once deployed, a Webtreepro solution is easy to maintain. Primero Systems designs and delivers the solutions for an organization with no special IT expertise. The marketing and business teams can manage and maintain content across the franchise network. When launching a solution, Primero Systems advises clients on best practices for staffing roles and responsibilities.

WHEN WEBTREEPRO MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Network relationships matter in the digital economy. Facing a rapidly changing environment, franchises need to evolve and adapt. Thriving franchises are going to embrace the Internet and channel digitally enabled connections to deliver competitive results. They are going to blend the conventional ways in which they have traditionally done business with the agility of the web to deliver consistent branded experiences. Franchises are going to identify competitive opportunities that reduce the cost of doing business, deliver innovative services with value-added margins, and/or mitigate business risks.

To succeed as a digital franchise, it is essential to rely on a comprehensive WCM solution designed for franchising. Webtreepro is just such a solution. Delivered by Primero Systems, Webtreepro becomes the change agent for savvy franchisors to embrace, extend, and expand the digital experiences of their franchisee networks.

Geoffrey Bock, principal of Bock & Company, focuses on strategies for content management, mobility, AI, and digital transformations. A technology analyst and consultant, he has authored hundreds of in-depth reports, case studies, and articles on the business impacts of content technologies. He is a frequent contributor to the Search and Content Management channel at TechTarget.

Working with development and marketing teams, he has helped launch several successful software products. He advises enterprises and software firms on the essential activities for creating, curating, and publishing digitized information to shape customer experiences and drive revenue.

For more information see Bock's [LinkedIn profile](#).

About Primero Systems

Primero Systems Inc. brings people, processes, content and ideas together to produce better business experiences. For more than 20 years, Primero has been helping businesses achieve their goals and their potential through the infinite capabilities of software. From their award-winning Webtreepro content management system to their mission-critical, enterprise-grade custom software, Primero Systems' solutions improve efficiency, accuracy and contribute to the bottom line.

About Webtreepro

Webtreepro is an elegantly simple and powerful web content management solution for marketers seeking to maximize brand presence throughout a network of websites. Designed to publish content across one or thousands of sites instantly, Webtreepro addresses the needs of franchises, associations or any multi-location business. Webtreepro is distinguished by its flexibility to deliver relevant content based upon a nearly unlimited set of criteria. As an Intranet/Extranet, Webtreepro is equally powerful – providing a central site for content that can be accessed according to any number of criteria.

Contact Primero Systems to [learn more](#) or request a [demo of Webtreepro](#).