A content management system that fits the way higher education thinks and works

Colleges and universities aren’t corporations. This may sound obvious, but many vendors and developers seem to assume that one size fits all. And too often, what they’re really designing to fit is the corporate world.

Reason, a web content management system developed at Carleton College, was created specifically for the needs of higher education:

- **Designed for an organization that works collaboratively**, spreading the work of web content creation to subject-matter experts all over campus.
- **Focuses on features schools want most**, including event calendars, department newsletters, faculty/staff pages, news releases, student job postings, campus A to Z guides, easy image and document management, library reference guides, foreign language support, and built-in web accessibility features.
- **Built to work smoothly with other college systems**, including full LDAP integration for authentication and campus directory support.

open-source web content management — created by and for higher ed

reason.carleton.edu
Distribute work, keep control

Reason makes the most of your resources by empowering non-technical users to update their own content—freeing the web experts to focus on projects that require more technical expertise. To prevent content chaos, this distributed publishing power comes bundled with centralized control over the design and global navigation.

- **Train new users in an hour.** That's all it takes to learn the basics and begin creating content via user-friendly templates and WYSIWYG (“what you see is what you get”) editing features. No HTML knowledge required.
- **Your code stays clean.** Content maintainers never see the HTML, so they have no opportunity to introduce malformed code. Reason includes features that encourage web best practices and enforce standards-compliant code.
- **Design stays consistent.** Site design is controlled by stylesheets (CSS), allowing you to create design themes that can be shared by all your sites for a coordinated look. You control which design themes are available to Reason sites.

Create any number of sites with a single installation

Reason requires no desktop installation for content maintainers or site administrators, so a single installation of the application can serve all the web sites you need (Carleton has more than 300 separate sites for offices, departments, committees, and student organizations).

- **Set up a new site in minutes.**
- **Assign** individual editing rights for each site.
- **Categorize** sites to create an automatic organization-wide site map.
- **Tag** sites with keywords to create a college-wide A-to-Z index.

Migrate content at your own speed

Migrating web content to a new system can be a daunting prospect. Reason allows you to do this at your own pace, co-existing gracefully alongside other sites and systems. Your old sites can be easily included in Reason navigation menus and site maps—temporarily or forever.

Offer a rich set of features without information overload

Some systems sacrifice ease of use for the sake of complex functionality. Reason offers a wide selection of tools while keeping it simple for the end user. You can plug additional features into a Reason site as they’re needed — end users only see those features they’ll actually use.

Limit duplication of effort with content sharing

Reason’s sharing feature helps all your content maintainers coordinate and share information. One group can publish an item, and any other group can use that item on their site. If the creator of the item changes it, that change instantly takes effect everywhere the item appears.

- **Add an event** to a department calendar and share it with a campus events calendar.
- **Upload a photo** on your Athletics site and borrow it for your News site.
- **Republish** news from your public relations office on appropriate department sites.

Partners welcome

Developed at Carleton College since 2003, Reason is now available as a free application under the GNU General Public License (GPL). Carleton invites other institutions to work with us as we continue to expand Reason with new features tailored to higher education. Reason is designed in a modular, easy-to-extend framework, convenient for collaborative development.

Technical specifications

- **OS:** Any Linux distribution. Reason has been tested most on Red Hat Enterprise Linux AS4 and AS5. Mac OS X and BSD should also be suitable, although they have not been extensively tested. Win32 is not yet a supported platform.
- **HTTP Server:** Apache 1.3, 2.0, and 2.2 have all been run in production without issue.
- **PHP:** The latest version requires PHP v4.x. PHP 5.x support is planned.
- **DB:** MySQL 4.0.x – 5.0.x

Learn more at [reason.carleton.edu](http://reason.carleton.edu) or [reason-support@lists.carleton.edu](mailto:reason-support@lists.carleton.edu)