



Upgrading to ektron 9.0 - Why and How!

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“ Version 9 isn’t just a software release; it’s a sign that Ektron’s changing the way we think about web content management. Ektron is streamlining authoring experiences so that in the future, content authors will have a single starting point whether they’re creating a press releases, a blog post, a landing page, or any other type of content. ”

Ektron.

With Ektron moving on to version 9.0, a lot of web admins, website owners, designers, programmers and just plain technology enthusiast are curious as to what it means for them. But, perhaps the most interested of the lot are those who already swear by Ektron, and have an Ektron website of their own. Most of them are probably mulling what they will lose out, if their competition moves up to the latest version.

In this white paper, we first look at the most significant upgrades in Ektron 9.0. Then, we point out the additional coding work that would need to be done, to ensure that the upgrade is implemented to full potential.

ENHANCEMENTS IN EKTRON 9.0

The three most significant enhancements in version 9.0 are:

- Search Engine Improvements – Apache Solr Search Integration
- Personalization – Persona Management
- Increased Support for Mobile Devices – Responsive Design

SEARCH ENGINE IMPROVEMENTS – APACHE SOLR SEARCH INTEGRATION

Along with continued support for the integration of Microsoft Search Server, Ektron 9.0 allows the integration of Apache Solr as well. This offers the developer the option of quickly adding faceted search capabilities to their Ektron 9.0 powered websites. With this users get a list of facets to either limit or



expand their search, as per the requirement.

This development is especially significant considering that buyers on eCommerce sites most often use the search button to navigate their way to the product they are searching for. And typically, if the visitor cannot find the product of their search in a search or two, they leave the site and head straight to the competitor.

The benefits of Rich Site Search:

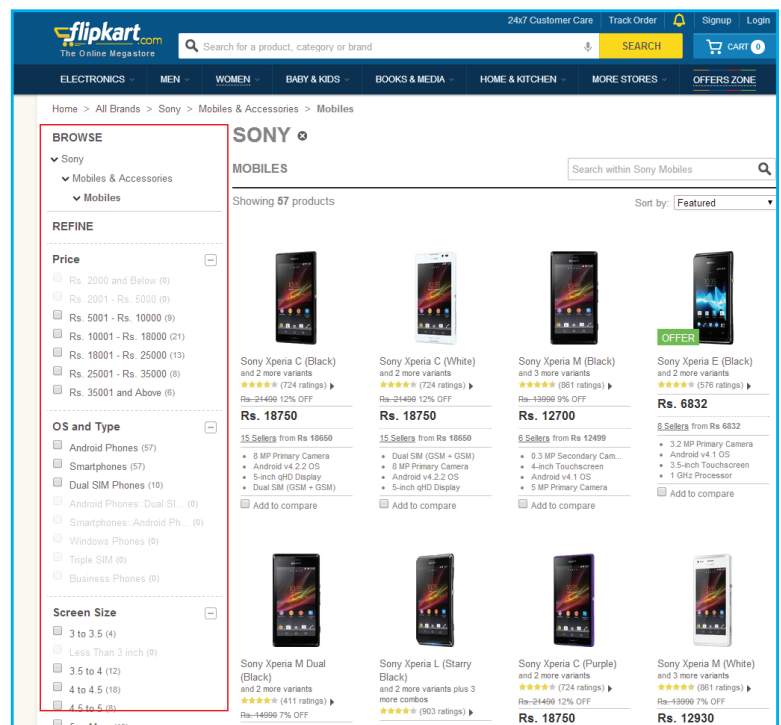
- ➔ Delivers a rich, faceted search experience with Solr
- ➔ Fast installation and easy configuration
- ➔ Provides suggested as well as "Did You Mean" results

Solr™ is the open source, highly scalable, super quick and ultra popular enterprise search platform from Apache Lucene™.

For more details please visit <http://lucene.apache.org/solr/>



Faceted Search, is also referred to by the terms faceted browsing/navigation. Here, information is structured in a hierarchy, known as a faceted classification system. It allows users to enter in a simple search term, and then go deeper into the specifics of what they are looking for, by choosing from the options presented in the afore mentioned hierarchy. While in the background, there is an advanced search under process, the user has it easy – one search is usually enough to set her on the path to getting what she is looking for.



The above screenshot of flipkart website gives a clear indication on what is faceted search. When the user searched for “laptops” she gets the numerous laptop models available. She can then easily narrow down the search using these facets to the models she would prefer to buy. The best part of Ektron 9.0 is that there is no need for a programmer to build these facets. Marketing personnel can easily do it themselves.

PERSONALIZATION – PERSONA MANAGEMENT

Content targeting, which was introduced in earlier versions of Ektron has now been taken to a whole new level, with Persona Management. Earlier, content could be targeted to specific user or member groups in Ektron CMS. At times, even the groups in 3rd party applications like salesforce, ExactTarget etc. could be reached out to. But now, Personas allow the grouping of customers according to their common characteristics. Moreover, personas can contain segments which bring the capability of targeting the content at granular levels.



Persona Management, which comes above the Digital Experience Hub (DXH), is an application that permits marketers to develop personas based on data taken from Marketing Automation Systems as well as a CRM. Marketers can generate personas that match with the typical sets of buyers that visit the site. Not only is this process of defining as well as identifying site visitors easily done, but the next step of developing and then delivering the right content to each persona is also simple to accomplish.

Marketers who pursue their visitors with the help of tools like Marketo, HubSpot , or Salesforce can analyze the prevalent persona norms, and then decide on who the persona is. After this it should be easy to deliver an experience they will not forget.

Ektron enables seamless connections with third party marketing tools, and allows the easy creation of personas utilizing data from them. What’s more, Ektron 9 intuitively grasps a site visitor’s context and weighs the options as to which persona she is associated with. As a result, marketers can deliver relevant content to their buyers as well as prospects, resulting in a personalized buying experience. In a hyper competitive marketplace, this is not just an advantage, but also a must.

INCREASED SUPPORT FOR MOBILE DEVICES – RESPONSIVE DESIGN

The major challenge faced in responsive design is in dynamically resizing the images according to the different viewports. From Ektron versions 8.7 onwards, dynamic server side image resizing has been made available to tackle this problem. Taking this further, Ektron 9.0 comes with an added feature of including different images for different viewports.

Adaptive images is the new buzzword, vital for a awesome experiences across devices, be it tablets, smartphones and desktops. It makes for intensely relevant experiences on mobile devices, by changing the images that are displayed, based on the device. **Smaller images can be displayed on smartphones, as compared to tablets. Areas with low bandwidth can be sent low-res images, while places with higher bandwidth can receive sharper images.** Marketers can leverage these technologies, to create a device adaptive performance that sharply targeted, and creates a bigger impact than ever before.

A contemporary, responsive framework like Bootstrap ensures faster delivery, by speeding up the design and development process. Because custom elements and templates need not be built, marketers can save time and money. And besides the monetary gains, these factors can also be incorporated into the content creation and delivery strategy. Together with other digital strategy enhancement supported by Ektron, like content targeting, multivariate testing and inbound marketing, smart marketers can increase conversion rates as well as ROI.



IMPROVED USER EXPERIENCE – FOR THE MARKETER

It's not just the end user that gains from a hassle-free and enhanced user experience. The redesigned and refurbished user interface makes it improves ease of use, and increases productivity. Images can be dragged and dropped into content. It is extremely easy to find content, or even filter to exactly what the user is looking for. There also is additional control over the formatting of content, as well as content types. **In all, it makes for a hassle free and simple content creation, management and delivery experience.**



WHAT YOU NEED TO DO, AFTER BUYING INTO EKTRON 9.0

So, is the upgrade a simple plug and play affair. Mostly, yes. But there are certain processes which would need to be expedited after running Ektron's site upgrade utility, before the site is fully functional Ektron 9.0 site. They are:



Migrate the already available third party integrations to DxH framework.



Configure approval chain/content creation workflow



Make the website responsive and discard the separately maintained mobile versions of the website.



Fine-tune the Page Builder pages for CSS fixes after upgrading.



Migrate search from Search Server to SolR.



Fine-tune the multi-site configuration after upgrading.



Replace the use of deprecated APIs with the new and recommended ones.



Fine-tune the multivariate testing setup after upgrading.



Reconfigure eSync with security certificates.



Safe upgrading as the whole upgrade process will be performed with proper backups.

Ektron 9.0 not only delivers a targeted and enhanced user experience to the end customer, it also makes life easier and more profitable for marketers, designers and developers alike. Ektron's 9.0 marks a subtle shift from a being Content Management System to a Content 'Marketing' System, and augurs well for both the company and marketers alike.



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SUYATI TECHNOLOGIES

Suyati is a young, upwardly mobile company focused on delivering niche IT services to support myriad Digital Engagement strategies. Our expertise also includes integration and delivery of CRM, CMS and Ecommerce solutions.