ALPENA
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Rev 12-10-2025

Website Content Management System
Release Date: Wednesday, December 10, 2025
Due Date: Monday, January 5, 2026 @ 2:00 p.m. Local Time

Brief Description

Alpena Community College seeks a web content management system (CMS), web hosting, client support, and if required, content migration from our existing website design to a modern, updated design from an established company that provides reliable support.

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Institutional Background

Alpena Community College, with campuses in Alpena and Oscoda, Michigan, offers two-year degrees, one-year certificates, a 4-year bachelor's degree, customized training, and community education to all of Northeast Michigan. Each semester ACC attracts approximately 1,500 students of diverse ages, backgrounds, and academic goals; small class sizes, one-on-one affordable tuition, and the convenience of two campus locations along with online course offerings make ACC a great choice for all types of learners. Vocational/technical programs, distance learning programs, dual enrollment and early college programs, and cooperative 4-year university programs help students achieve their academic goals and gain employment in their chosen career fields.

Existing Website and CMS Background

As the primary educational institution in Northeastern Michigan, ACC needs a website that is user-friendly, easily navigable by users of varying age ranges, and makes it easy for users to find information on programs, events, and the College.

ACC currently uses Revize for their CMS provider. The current website, discover.alpenacc.edu, was built through Revize in 2015. Revize primarily deals with providing website solutions for local municipalities and while they are an effective solution for smaller websites with simpler needs, they are not as adept in the needs of higher education. Alpena Community College currently has **3** users, but is looking to expand our limits to include more content editors with varying levels of technical knowledge.

Currently, our major challenges are:

- *Outdated existing CMS*
- *Limited customization between different page types*
- *No shared calendar that campus community can contribute toward*
- *Need for a higher education-focused solution*
- *Need for approval process*
- *Content governance*
- *Features do not always work as intended*
- *Hard to use at times for non-technical contributors*

Project Scope

The purpose of this RFP is to procure a cloud-based (SaaS) website content management system (CMS) to replace ACC's current system. Procurement is to include one year of software licensing and support, and train-the-trainer and administrator training.

ACC seeks a website content management system that can support a seamless digital personalized experience for students, employees, and the community. The website is the institution's most valuable marketing tool. ACC seeks a CMS with functionality for:

- One platform with multiple capabilities for driving enrollment
- Career pathways feature that automatically identifies career opportunities related to courses and programs
- In-context WYSIWYG editing with intuitive tools for page creation, reusable content with drag and drop functionality
- Ability to add rich content such as slideshows, images, and videos with drag and drop
- Flexible, role-based permissions
- Multi-stage comprehensive workflows that provide simple content governance with appropriate reviews and approvals
- Integrated review features, including accessibility, grammar checking, and spell checking
- Reusable content (web content, plain text, source code, image galleries and forms)
- Global search with robust find-and-replace functionality that supports Regular Expressions within the CMS
- Social media integration
- Intuitive form builder
- Integrations with other systems such as Ellucian to include information including course, student, and faculty data; recruitment management systems; event management systems; single sign-on; and other existing systems
- Integrations with main campus single sign-on and identity providers
- Modern user interface
- Dashboards for customizing editing, workflows, analytics, and other tools
- Automatic CMS updates
- SaaS/cloud-hosted solution
- Mobile responsiveness
- Multi-level emergency alert function with mobile support.

- Scheduled scans and reports for website health (accessibility, SEO, etc.)
- Newsroom and blogs
- Integrated calendar function
- Faculty and staff directory
- Online and PDF generated academic course catalog
- Create, send and manage marketing email campaigns within CMS

Additionally, ACC requires:

- Development of full project timelines for development, implementation, and content migration
- Dedicated project manager
- Full service implementation
- Migration options for creating or moving content to the new site
- Robust training and documentation for ACC's unique CMS instance
- Attentive, accessible customer support
- Ongoing account management
- Active community of higher-ed CMS users

The initial contract term will be for one year with options to renew.

Requirements and Expectations of CMS Vendor

The system provider must provide a best-in-class solution for higher education marketing, recruitment, and student engagement. The vendor must be an established, stable vendor with an existing higher ed-focused client base. The proposed website/system must be fully tested and proven to be functional and reliable.

The selected vendor must be a demonstrated thought leader in the education industry, focused on serving the needs of higher education, financially healthy, and committed to long-term client relationships and ongoing support. The vendor must have a proven record for providing fully tested and stable CMSs, including well-documented implementation and support procedures.

ACC expects the selected vendor to provide a dedicated project manager during implementation stages, as well as functional and technical documentation post-implementation support, training, and project management. The vendor is also expected to provide on-going maintenance services such as priority help support, system and user documentation, web access to product information and software upgrades. The vendor must have a healthy, active, and engaged network of clients.

Proposal Submission Guidelines and Questions

Clarifications & Questions:

All inquiries and other communications shall be directed to Jess Haselhuhn, Communications Technician. Please send Jess Haselhuhn any questions you may have about the bid, findings of inconsistency, omissions, or for clarification in writing by 4:00 p.m. on Monday, December 22, 2025. The College's intent is to answer all questions in writing to all potential bidders by the end of the day on Wednesday, December 23, 2025.

ACC will address any clarification, correction or change of contract and will share with all potential bidders.

Telephone No: 989.358.7276
Email: haselhuj@alpenacc.edu

Interested firms should submit **bids**, by 2:00 P.M., January 5th, 2026 to:

kowalewl@alpenacc.edu
Alpena Community College
665 Johnson St
Alpena, Michigan 49707
Attention: Lyn Kowalewsky
Controller - VLH 110

Evaluation Process

Proposals will be evaluated and awarded based upon the criteria noted in the RFP. All information must be legible, in order, and easy to understand. All questions or requests from the vendor for information must be submitted before the due date and all responses related to

the RFP must be complete. Pricing and the ability to meet the College's needs should be clear and concise. In ACC's sole discretion, incomplete packages may be rejected.

The vendor understands that this RFP does not constitute an agreement or contract with the vendor. The final contract will be executed by both ACC and the vendor upon award.

Selection Criteria

Based on a consensus scoring method among the Evaluation Committee members, the proposals will be ranked highest to lowest with a total maximum score of 100.

SELECTION CRITERIA	POINTS
Responsiveness to requirements of the RFP	10
CMS product specifications	20
Ability to provide training and support	20
Detailed plan for implementation	20
Vendor's experience in higher education and quality of references	20
Pricing	10

Proposal Format

Section 1 – Cover Letter

Briefly explain why your solution and company are good fits to meet the ACC needs as specified in this RFP. The letter shall contain the title of the solicitation.

Section 2 – Company Information

Please provide an overview and history of your company, including at least the following information:

1. **Name:** Provide the legal company name, address, and telephone number of the legal entity.
2. **Experience in Higher Ed:** What is the history of your company in serving the higher education community? Describe your history of working with similar institutions in size and complexity.
3. **Value Added:** What value can your company/solution bring to Alpena Community College?
4. **Key Differentiators:** What are key differentiators of your company/software/services?
5. **Fit:** Explain why your company is uniquely qualified to fulfill Alpena Community College's needs.
6. **Project Collaboration:** Provide an overview of your company's engagement with us. What are the different stages?

Section 3 - Overview section

So that ACC may have a clear understanding of the proposed solution and services associated with the project, please provide overviews if applicable:

- CMS solution
- Services provided by vendor
- Implementation
- Migration options
- Training options
- Support

Section 4 - Questions about CMS

Accessibility

1. Does the CMS ensure all web visitors can use the site regardless of abilities?
2. Does the CMS include built-in accessibility tools?
3. Does the CMS evaluate web pages for current guidelines such as WCAG 2.1 (level A through AAA) and prescribed fixes?
4. Are your public-facing interfaces WCAG 2.1 Level AA accessibility compliant?
5. Does the CMS support identification and notification for any and all broken links, including links outside the institutional domain?

Analytics/SEO

1. Can CMS users define keywords for individual pages for search engine optimization (SEO)?
2. Does the CMS automatically and instantly enforce URL structure for all sites?
3. Does the CMS allow for URLs that are search- and human-friendly for SEO?

Content Creation and Editing

1. Is there an editing option that allows administrators to create forms-based templates that present users with a guide for adding content to a structured layout?
2. Are there scheduled publish capabilities for the publication of content to the live site that can be scheduled to occur at a specific hour on a specific date, anytime in the future?
3. Is there a recycle bin for files removed from the CMS that can be recovered if needed rather than being permanently deleted?
4. Does the CMS generate PDF versions of web pages?
5. Can the CMS alert site administrators about pages that have not been updated in a certain number of days, weeks, months, or years?
6. Does the CMS present users with the complete look and layout of a page, with permission to edit selected regions of the page?
7. Can users see a preview of a page before publication that includes all files?
8. Does the CMS support content editing in both WYSIWYG and HTML modes?
9. Is there an image editing tool that allows images to be cropped and resized without use of an external image editor?
10. Is there a tool to build form elements such as text, radio buttons, checkboxes, drop-down menus, and lists for use on any web page?

Design and Templates

1. Does the CMS support multiple landing page templates and forms for calls to action?
2. Is there a point-and-click forms builder tool that allows users to build custom forms, surveys, and polls?
3. Does the CMS support responsive design and publication of content to all devices?

Development

1. Can the CMS backend be accessed by campus developers?
2. Do developers have the ability to create new templates independent of the CMS vendor?

3. Is the CMS written using the most up-to-date WCAG 2.1 language/standards, or is it using a retired language/version? Can web developers shape the CMS to fit the needs of your institution with full access to all HTML, CSS, scripting, and templates?
4. Does the HTML/XHTML validation tool ensure compliance with current W3C standards and enhance SEO? Does the tool display any non-compliant code and suggest corrections?

Implementation

1. Does the CMS include a tool to expedite the migration of content from an institution's current website?
2. Does the implementation process include migration if needed?
3. Upon completion of implementation, does the vendor provide a site map and an integration of Google custom search?

Integration

1. Does the CMS integrate with other systems such as Ellucian, course, student, and faculty data; recruitment management systems; event management systems; single sign-on; and other existing systems
2. Does the CMS integrate with main campus single sign-on and identity providers?

Marketing

1. Does the CMS offer the ability to produce, edit, and publish newsletters and email marketing campaigns directly from the CMS with an analytics tool to track opens, link activity, and more?
2. Is there an "app" interface for administrators to access or activate new CMS functions, modules, and plug-ins?
3. Does the CMS provide a variety of digital marketing tools and options?
4. Can the CMS automate publishing content to social media channels?

Modules

1. Is there a calendar of events that supports multiple calendars, user submissions, repeating and multiple-date events, and does it have the ability to add contacts, locations, tags, and attachments?

2. Is there a global find and replace tool that uses literal text or regular expression searches to locate, preview, and replace plain text, HTML, CSS, XML, and other underlying code across all sites or selected directories?
3. Does the CMS support the ability to display dynamic academic program listings from external systems in a highly customized catalog?
4. Does the CMS support the ability to dynamic employee directory information from external systems in a highly customized listing?

Navigation

1. Does the CMS dynamically create menus and breadcrumbs based on page hierarchy?
2. Does the internal search engine give users the ability to find content within the CMS?
3. Is there a robust search tool for web visitors with a customizable interface that can generate search activity reports for administrators?
4. Does the CMS allow users to dynamically generate a site map?

Roles and Users

1. Can permissions be set at the site, directory, file, and page-element level?
2. Does the CMS support various user authentication methods?

Reusable Content

1. Does the CMS support repurposing text, images, media, code blocks, managed forms, image galleries, polls, and more for COPE (Create Once, Publish Everywhere)? Are updates to master instances propagated site-wide?

Support

1. Is there an active network for knowledge exchange and collaboration with other CMS users?
2. Does the vendor provide annual support plan options appropriate to the client's context, with freedom to change plans when needed?
3. Is there ongoing support for software upgrades and maintenance performed by the vendor?
4. Does the vendor provide metrics demonstrating their track record in providing timely support issue resolution?
5. Did the vendor provide a list of customer satisfaction levels?
6. Can the vendor provide comprehensive support site with 24/7 access for users?

7. Does the vendor provide a learning management system where users can take courses to enhance their CMS skills?
8. Does the vendor provide dedicated live customer support during College working hours from US-based personnel?

Training

1. Are there web-based training sessions included with implementation services?
2. Does the CMS vendor provide train-the-trainer, administrator, or template training sessions at no additional cost?
3. Does training use the institution's specific CMS instance (website and templates) for training?
4. Are the train-the-trainer, administrator, and template training sessions recorded and supplied at no additional cost?

Vendor Details

1. How many years in business?
2. What is the number of higher education clients (provide list).
3. What is the number of years the vendor has supplied web content management systems to higher education institutions?
4. Provide five higher education customer references.
5. List three site references (URLs) showcasing sites managed by the vendor's product.

Workflow and Governance

1. Does the CMS maintain an audit trail of content changes including capture of the publish date and the identity of the editor?
2. Is there a workflow manager tool that allows administrators to control what access and functions are available to users or groups of users?
3. Is there a mobile-friendly version of interface that allows administrators to access key CMS functions?
4. Can the CMS manage unlimited sites hosted on different web servers, with the ability to share templates and content across sites?
5. Does the workflow tool prompt users to update content and deliver notifications via email?
6. Can an editor roll back to previous versions of a page and compare the page's changes with previous versions?

7. If a user renames a page or moves it, can the CMS automatically update the URL in associated pages?

Section 5 - Client References

Provide at least three (3) higher education client references. For each client reference provide at a minimum:

- The school/customer name
- Contact name
- Title
- Address
- Email address
- Phone number
- Project overview

Section 6 - Costs

Please respond to the following statements and questions. NOTE: All costs for all products needed to make the proposed solution fully functional should be included in this section.

1. Describe your pricing model and methodology.
2. What billing term options are available (monthly, annually, etc.)? What are your proposed payment terms?
3. If you have pricing levels or tiers that are based on certain numbers, features or terms, provide the tiers and the pricing associated with them.
4. If there are discounts available for multiple-year contract terms, please provide them.
5. Please describe any and all optional modules/services and their associated costs.
6. Based on the following assumption, please provide **complete and transparent** pricing. Pricing should be divided into three sections, one-time costs, annual costs, and optional modules and services. Include the following if applicable:
   - All one-time costs to include implementation, migration and any others.
   - Costs associated with any features that can be added on as additional options.
   - Training cost estimates including any travel or other expenses.
   - All annually recurring costs including proposed License and Support levels.
   - Production web server hosting.

Section 7 - Service Level Agreement

Vendor should include the Service Level Agreement (SLA) or Master Service Agreement (MSA).

Section 8 - Statement of Work

Delineate the scope and detailed descriptions of all work the vendor will perform to fulfill the contract.

Section 9 - Proposed Project Plan and Schedule

Provide a detailed overview of key stages in the implementation process and how they will be accomplished. Please outline milestones/timeframes with rough estimates.

Section 10 - Detailed Training Options

Describe in detail your approach to providing and implementing training for users of the CMS tool.

Section 11 - Customer Service and Support

Provide a detailed description of the ongoing customer service and support services that will be provided to ACC as part of its ongoing maintenance agreement.

Section 12 - Additional Considerations

Provide a detailed description of additional tools and features offered by your company that may be purchased separately to complement the CMS. This could include continuing education, non-degree student information systems, or conference and event management features.