

## Web sites should be more like airconditioners

You want to build things that help you do your job better. Tools are items that help you in your work. Part of the value of any designed product is that the object or environment is MORE pleasant, not less, than how you were doing things before.

Air conditioners perform a similar function, especially in places where people congregate, like, ideally, your web site.

You want an air conditioner that keeps the humidity and temperature comfortable, some of that increased heat caused, ironically, by the incredibly inefficient information infracture, that heats everything up. (note: Cloud Computing is Green Computing) You also don't want to spend too much on it, to install, maintain or power. You have to pay for the installation. That's a cost. You need to pay for ongoing maintenance. Another cost. And it costs money to operate.

So, it's a great tool, right? It keeps everyone comfortable, but there is a level of investment in the decision making process itself, and in the ongoing use of the tool, that is one of the most basic business decisions we make every day of our lives.

We're also learning that are much more efficient ways of operating buildings, some of which involve learning some basic interfaces, whether it's a manual, pull the cord, turn the knob, or use of a remote control.

Web sites aren't a whole lot different.

Really.

They should make your lives more comfortable, not less.

And the opposite is too often the case.

You're sweating because the brown CSI grad student you had helping you with your web site just got a job with Google and left town. Or the site your graphic design firm set up in dreamweaver is too hard to operate, or you can't afford to buy the latest Contribute license you need to work with the version of Dreamweaver that is on the one computer that is fast enough to run both at the same time.

Or you are freezing because the hosting provider you hired just disappeared. These are all real stories, folks. The stuff that instead of making your lives easier, made them more painful.

It's as often true that people spend too much on technologies, like buying an airconditioner that cools a building 10 times your size, or one that you never really use.

If you measure utility of a tool you use

The problem you run into in making a decision about investing in a new technology or approach is that you often trust the wizard to tell you what you need.

And I'm going to try to sell you whatever solution I'm peddling. Whether it's Wordpress, or Drupal, or our even better in house solution.

Again, if you're looking for a way to manage your interior climate, don't you know best what you need? Shouldn't you be telling the web guy or gal what you need, and have them help you find a solution within your budget?

Shouldn't you be able to get an airconditioner that you can afford, that meets your needs, that you can operate within your systems?

That's one of the driving decisions for us in why we use Joomla. We know how it operates. It can be customized to your individual needs. You use it how you want to use it. It's incredibly efficient. You can easily measure what's getting you the most bang for your buck.

Obviously, this isn't a one to one correlation, but the basic business lesson is to think about your technology, whatever it is, the device you use for keeping your hair neat, your CRM (which is a fancy way of saying online rolodex), your web site, to meet your needs.

And just like buying an airconditioner, there is an investment in researching what your needs are, being clear on what you need, what you can do without, and operating accordingly.

Joomla also allows you to get a window unit if that's what you need. Something that is more efficient, in its web equivalency right now, than window units generally are compared to central air (changing though, with some of the bright ideas coming out of betaspring), but unlike window units, as your needs grow, so the tool can grow with your needs.

It can be a really simple tool, that you can still make malleable, or a complex fire breathing integrated constituent management content machine.