

# Master online presence: How a CMS can boost the growth of your SME



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## 1. Introduction

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In today's digital age, SMEs face numerous challenges and opportunities. Internet presence has become essential to **attract and retain customers**, and **efficient content management plays an important role**. Content Management Systems (CMS) have become indispensable tools for SMEs looking to stand out in the competitive digital world.

SMEs often face resource, budget and staffing constraints. For this reason, content management can become a task to which they cannot devote much time. This is where CMSs come into play as essential allies. These software platforms allow SMEs to manage, organize and publish online content effectively and efficiently. Whether it's a corporate website, an online store, a business blog or a combination of these, a CMS simplifies content management and provides SMEs with a number of competitive advantages.

The current relevance of CMSs is clearly reflected in data such as that provided by Zipper Research. In 2015, only 25% of websites made use of a CMS. However, by 2022 that number has increased significantly as 43.6% of websites employ one. This also correlates with the fact that the percentage of hand-coded websites has decreased from 76% in 2011 to 36% in 2022. [REF-01].



The following sections will explore the **advantages** of using a CMS in an SME, highlighting how these platforms can enable SMEs to compete in the digital marketplace. It will also discuss the **different types of CMSs available** and offer advice on how to select the right CMS for the specific needs of the SME. In addition, a **detailed guide for the implementation and configuration** of a CMS will be proposed, which will allow to make the most of this powerful tool.

Finally, **real examples** of SMEs that have been remarkably successful in implementing a CMS in their operations will be presented. These success stories illustrate how a CMS can transform a company's content management and online presence, generating a significant impact on its growth and visibility.



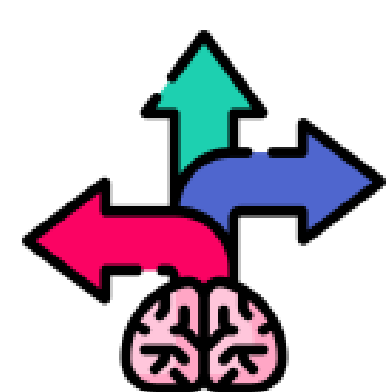


## 2. Discover the advantages of integrating a CMS

In today's digital era, the choice to implement a CMS becomes a strategic element for SMEs. Those who opt for this tool not only simplify online content management, but also gain a significant competitive advantage. Listed below are a number of advantages of using a CMS.



**Time and resource savings:** CMSs simplify content management, which translates into time and resource savings. Instead of relying on programmers or web designers to make simple changes to a site, SMB owners and their staff can do so autonomously. This not only streamlines internal processes, but also reduces the costs associated with outsourcing content management tasks. [REF-02].



**Customization and flexibility:** CMSs offer great flexibility and customizability, allowing SMEs to tailor their websites and other online channels to meet their specific needs. They can choose from a variety of templates and themes, or even develop customized content as needed. This allows visitors to have a unique and consistent experience with each brand [REF-03].



**Constant content updates:** Content renewal and relevance are essential to attract and retain online visitors. CMSs allow SMEs to keep their sites updated with ease. New web entries can be published, products can be added to an online store, or contact information can be updated in real time [REF-04].

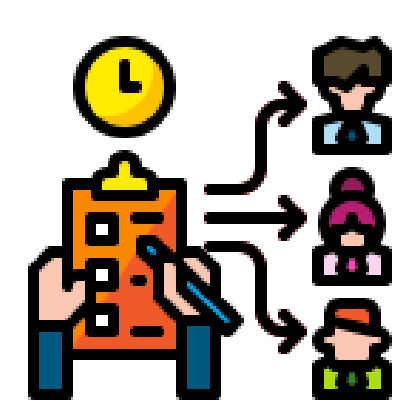




**Improving SEO:** SEO (Search Engine Optimization) plays a crucial role in the online visibility of an SME. CMSs often incorporate tools and add-ons that facilitate search engine optimization. You can optimize images so that content can be found through visual searches, make strategic use of keywords, structure content so that it can be consumed in a pleasant way to increase the time spent by users. All this contributes to better performance in search results and attracts more visitors [REF-03].



**Efficient access control and collaboration:** CMSs enable precise access control. They allow roles and permissions to be assigned to team members, which means that only authorized people can make changes to content. This is especially useful in collaborative environments, where several employees can contribute to the web site [REF-02].



**Ease of use and administration:** One of the most outstanding aspects of CMSs is their ease of use. These platforms are designed with intuitive interfaces that allow non-technical people to create, edit and publish content online. Managing a website, updating content and creating blogs become accessible tasks for any employee with minimal training [REF-05].

In summary, CMSs provide SMEs with a number of significant advantages that can improve content management, online presence and thus success in the digital marketplace.

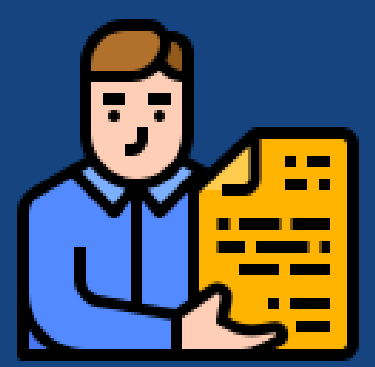


## 3. Learn about the different types of CMS

There are different types of CMSs, each tailored to different business needs and objectives. Below, we will discuss some of the most common types of CMSs that SMBs can consider to optimize their online presence.



**Open Source CMS:** Open source CMSs are usually a free product and are highly customizable as they offer complete control over the source code. This approach gives SMEs the freedom to tailor the functionality of the CMS to their specific needs. However, it should be noted that it requires certain technical skills to implement and maintain. Also, since it is created by a community of developers, in case there are problems you will depend on this community to solve the problems [REF-06].



**Proprietary or Commercial CMS:** Unlike open source CMSs, proprietary CMSs are developed and sold by specific companies. These systems usually offer intuitive user interfaces and specialized technical support. Although they often involve licensing costs, some owners may find the support and stability provided by these CMSs worth the investment. For SMEs with fewer technical resources, proprietary CMSs may offer a simpler, more service-oriented solution [REF-07].



Having understood the difference between an open source and a proprietary CMS, it is important to distinguish between **cloud-based** and **on-premise** CMSs. Both types are viable for both open source and proprietary CMSs.



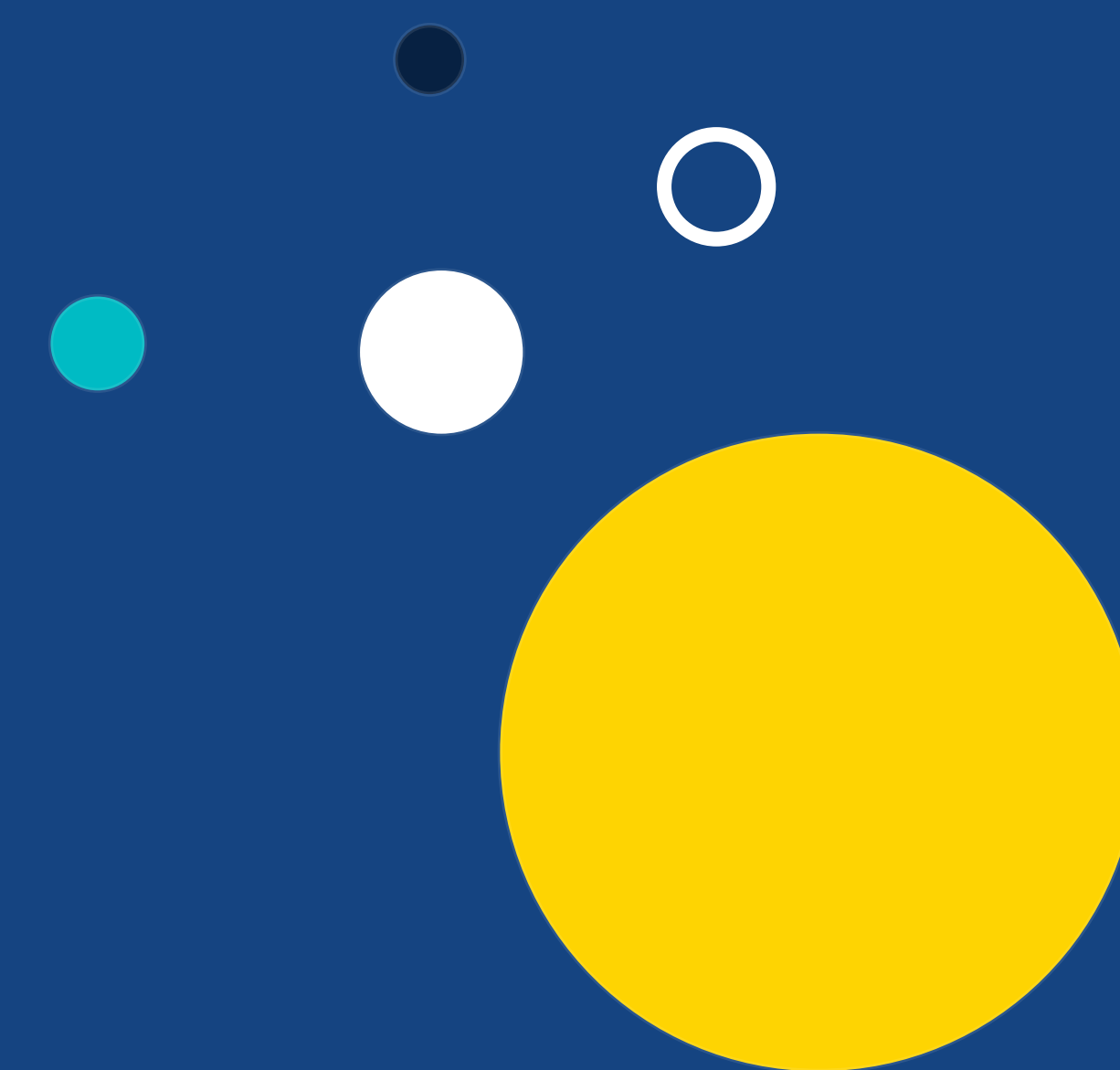
**Cloud-based CMS:** Cloud-based CMSs offer a practical and flexible solution for SMEs. These platforms **allow users to access and manage content**. They are usually affordable. In addition, **updates and maintenance are managed by the cloud service provider**, relieving SMEs of the burden of these technical tasks. [REF-08]



**On-premise CMS:** Local, or on-premise, CMSs are an ideal choice for companies looking to **manage their content in-house**. Unlike cloud-based CMSs, these platforms **are installed and operated directly on the company's local servers**. This approach offers greater control over infrastructure and data, as all information is stored and managed in-house.

One of the main advantages of opting for an on-premise CMS is the **ability to have full control over the configuration and customization of the system**, which can be tailored precisely to the specific needs of the company. Although it implies the need to maintain servers and hardware locally, this can be beneficial for organizations that require high levels of security and compliance. [REF-09]





The choice of CMS type will depend on a number of factors, such as the size and nature of the business, available resources and online objectives. Each type of CMS has its own advantages and challenges, so it is crucial that SMEs carefully evaluate their needs before making a decision.





## 4. Step-by-step guide to selecting the right CMS

The selection of a CMS by an SME is a crucial decision due to the wide variety of options available. It is essential to approach this selection carefully to ensure a choice that is optimally adapted to the specific needs of the company. For all these reasons, a guide that any SME could follow when selecting a CMS will be proposed.

- 1. Define specific objectives and needs.**  
The first step should be to clarify what the **specific objectives and requirements are for what you are looking for**: What is the primary purpose of the website or online platform; is it primarily for product sales, informational content generation, or audience interaction? Defining these objectives provides a clear framework for evaluating the necessary features and capabilities of the CMS.
- 2. Evaluate the CMS's ease of use and learnability.**  
**Ease of use is a key hallmark.** An intuitive CMS makes it easy to create and manage content without requiring advanced technical knowledge. Learnability is also essential; a system that allows users to quickly acquire the necessary skills optimizes operational efficiency. The choice of CMS will depend on the type of SME, and in situations where staff lack advanced digital skills, **incorporating a CMS that is difficult to use could be detrimental**. It is crucial to consider the technical capability of the team when selecting the most appropriate platform [REF-04].
- 3. Analyze the scalability and flexibility of the CMS.**  
The objectives and requirements of an SME are changing. It is therefore important to choose a scalable platform that can adapt as the **company evolves and expands its operations**. Flexibility ensures that **the SME is not constrained by the predetermined CMS structure**, but can mold the platform to meet its goals and requirements over time [REF-10].



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- 4.** Calculate costs and available budget.  
Implementation, licensing, maintenance and possibly custom development costs are elements that must be taken into account. **Open source CMSs often have a free part, although it is important to consider additional costs** such as hosting or adding premium plugins. On the other hand, proprietary CMSs may require a more significant initial investment, but some SMBs may see this as an investment in stability and ongoing support.
  - 5.** Evaluate support and user community.  
Evaluating the support and user community is of great importance. There are platforms with active communities and support forums that offer SMBs access to valuable resources. In addition, **open source CMSs often benefit from regular updates** driven by ongoing community input, ensuring optimal performance and the addition of new functionality. On the other hand, proprietary CMSs may offer **direct technical support**, providing SMEs with a more personalized resource [REF-06].
  - 6.** Evaluate third-party integration.  
Evaluating third-party integration capability is a key step in selecting a CMS for an SMB. Most companies rely on a variety of tools and technologies in their daily operations, from business management systems to marketing and analytics solutions. It is important to look for a **CMS with the ability to easily integrate a variety of third-party plugins** and extensions. This flexibility allows SMEs to expand the functionality of their website effectively, tailoring it to their specific needs [REF-11].



## 7. Conduct Tests and Get Feedback.

- Before finally selecting a CMS, it is advisable to conduct hands-on testing. Many CMSs offer trial versions or demos that allow SMBs to experiment with the platform before making a final decision. In addition, seeking opinions and feedback from other SMBs that have used the same CMS can provide a very useful perspective and aid in decision making.





## 5. Practical steps: from implementation to CMS configuration

Once the CMS has been selected, the next crucial step is its **implementation and configuration on the SME's website**. This implementation depends on several steps that will be outlined below:

- 1. Detailed planning of the process.**  
Before starting the CMS implementation, it is essential to carry out detailed planning. This involves **assigning roles and responsibilities within the team**, establishing a timeline with clear deadlines and allocating the necessary resources. Careful planning not only ensures a smooth process, but also prevents potential challenges that could arise during implementation. This preparatory phase, focused on the organization and efficient distribution of tasks, **lays the foundation for a successful implementation**.

In this CMS implementation process, **the use of free organizational tools such as Planner or Trello can be very helpful**. These platforms provide a space where the team can collaborate efficiently. Specific tasks can be assigned to each member, deadlines can be set and progress can be viewed in real time.



In addition, the ability to attach files and comments to each task simplifies internal communication, ensuring that everyone is aware of progress and potential challenges. With Planner or Trello, **detailed process planning becomes more accessible and transparent**, allowing each team member to have a clear view of their role in the CMS implementation.

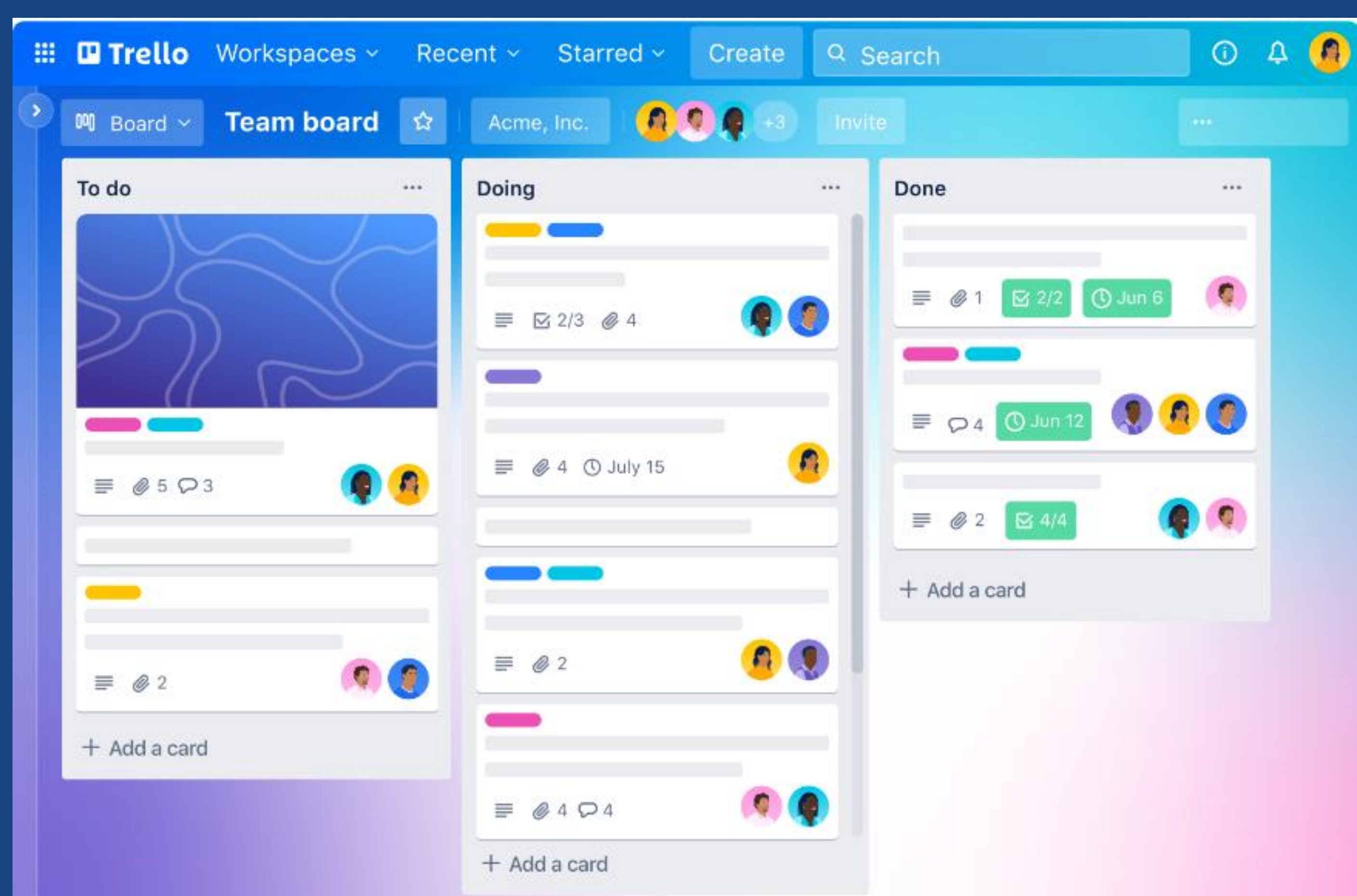


Figure 1: Trello

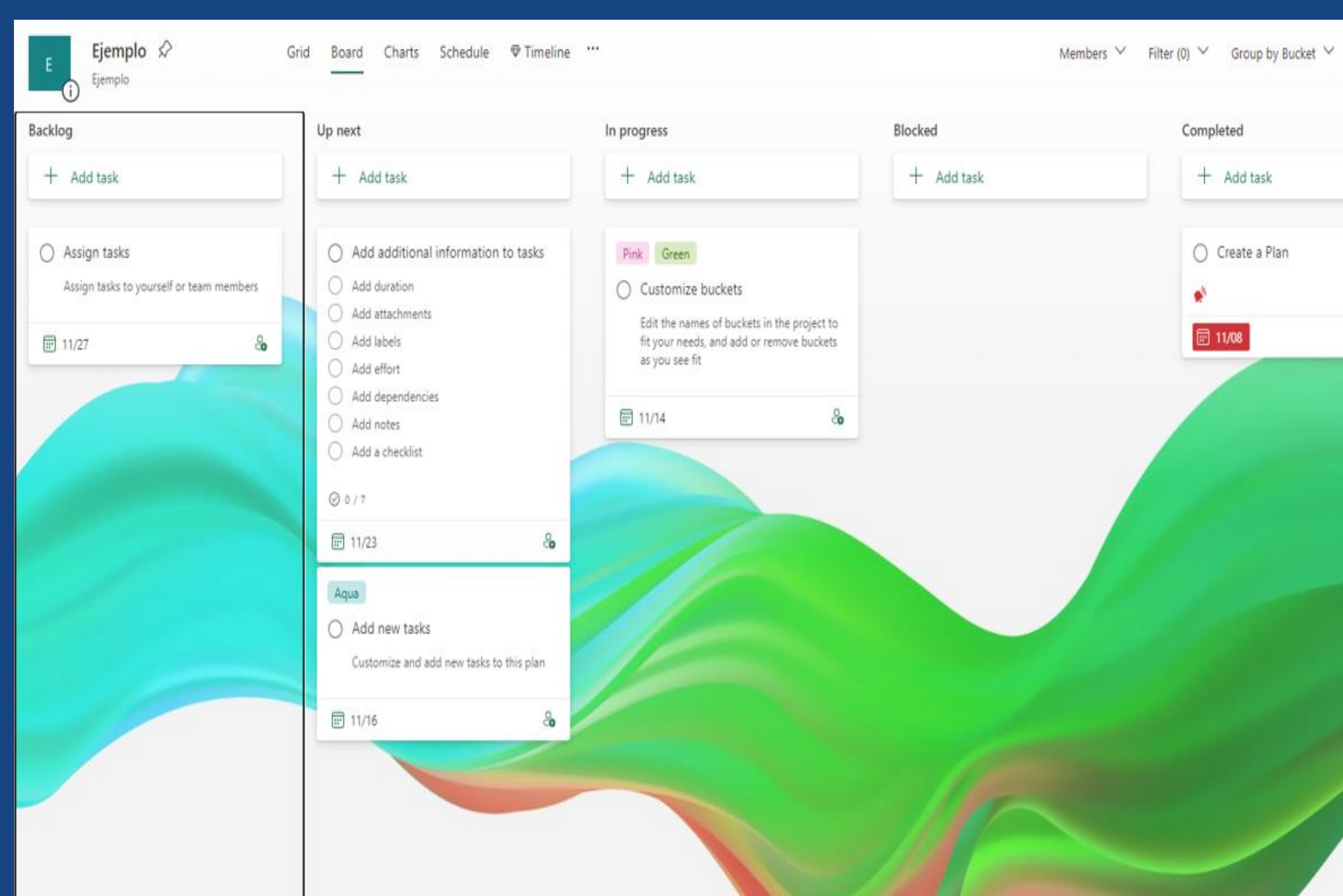
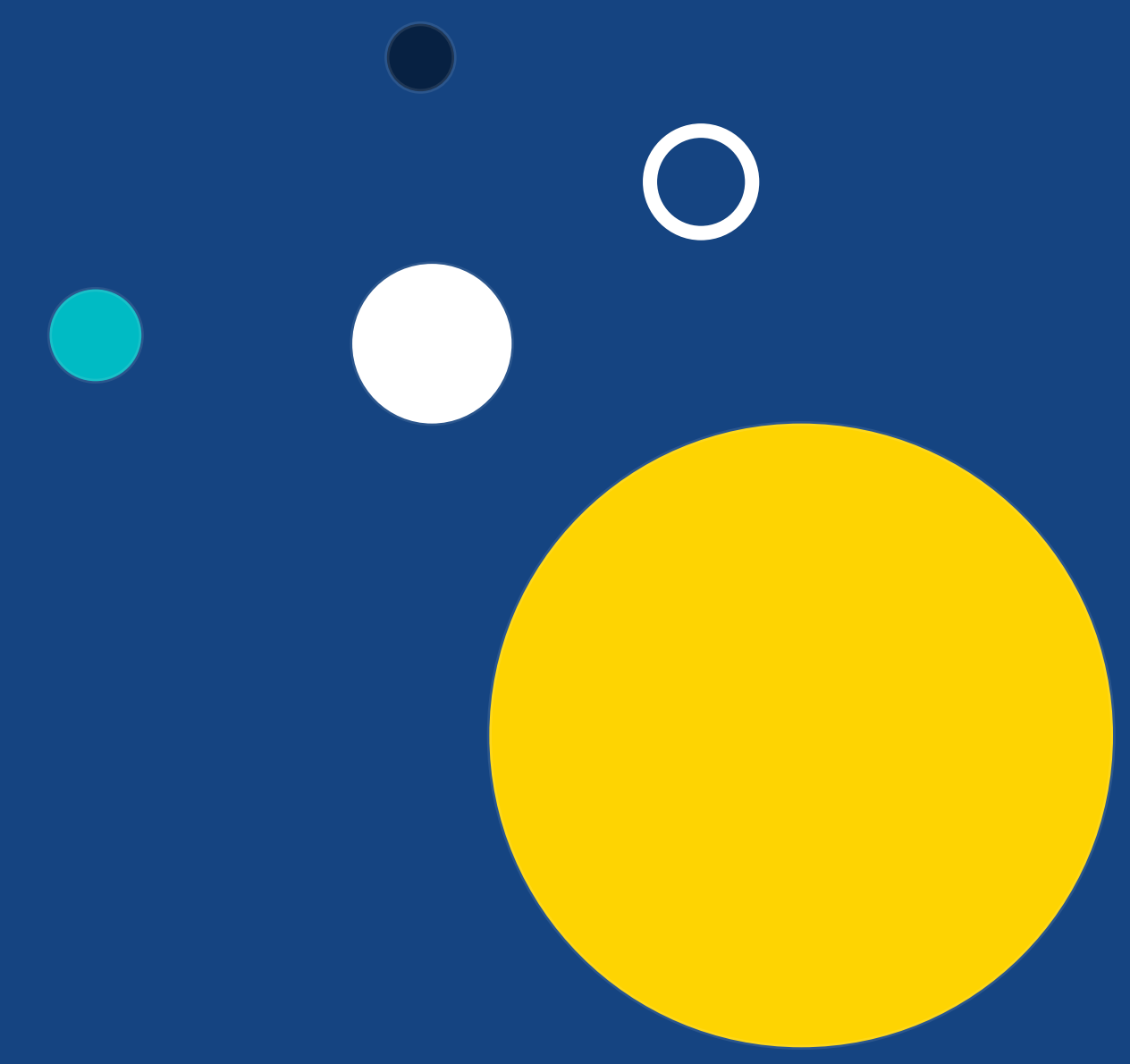


Figure 2: Planner





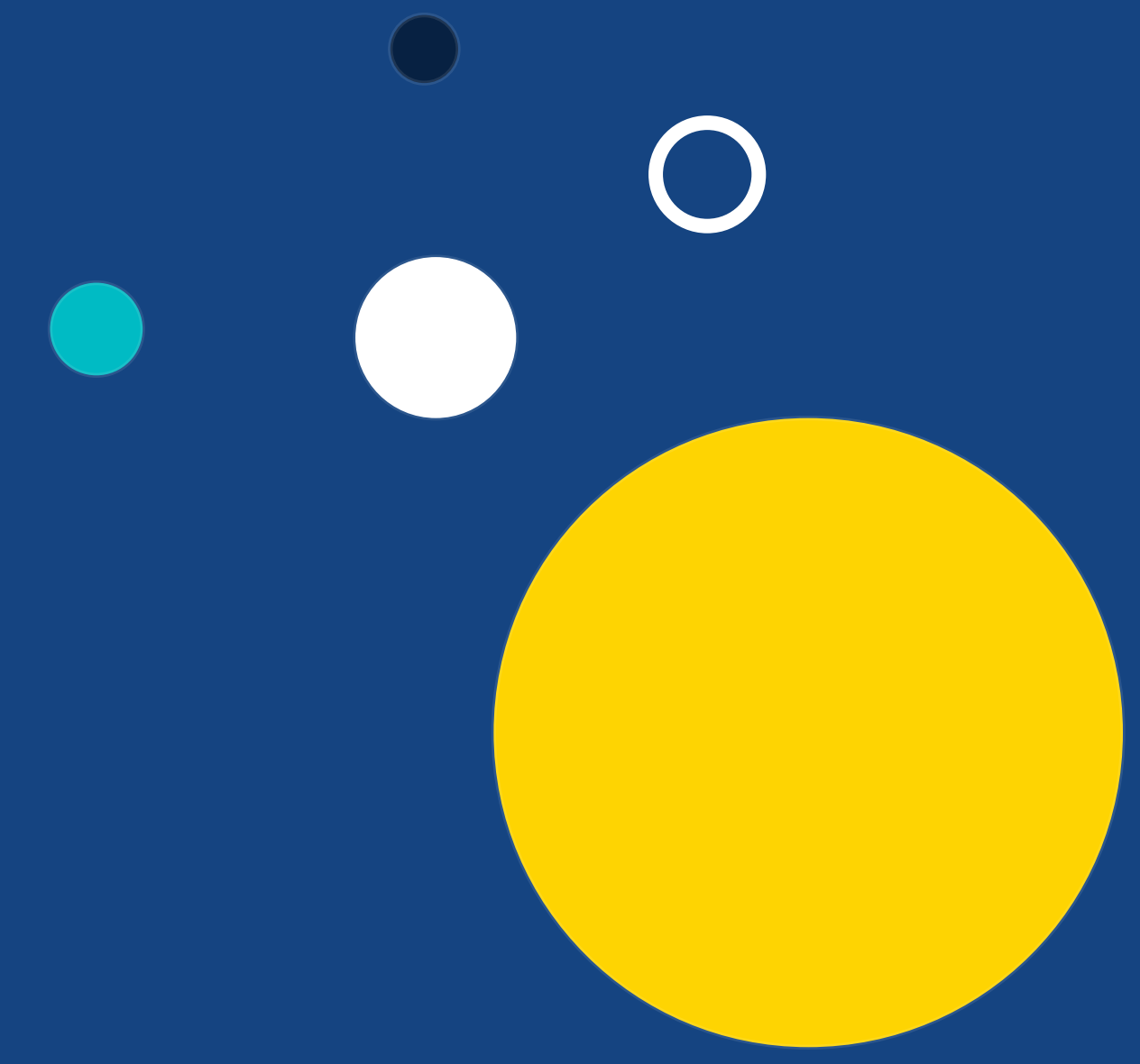
**2.** CMS installation and basic configuration. The second key phase in the implementation of a CMS involves the **installation and basic configuration**. Initially, the CMS is installed on the selected web server. Some CMSs provide clear instructions that allow users, even without advanced technical experience, to complete the installation efficiently.

After installation, the basic configuration of the CMS is performed. This step includes **selecting the site language, time zone settings and creating users with access privileges**. These first settings are fundamental to establish the operational basis of the CMS, ensuring that the team can work collaboratively and that the site is configured according to the specific needs of the SME.

These steps ensure that the platform is ready for customization and that the team can start working on building and effectively managing the SME's online content [REF-12].







### 3. Design customization and templates

The third step focuses on design customization and template selection. After installation and basic configuration, design customization allows the **SME to reflect its visual identity on the website**. CMSs typically offer a variety of customization options, **from colors and fonts to the layout of elements on the page**. Templates provide the visual structure of the site and affect the user experience.

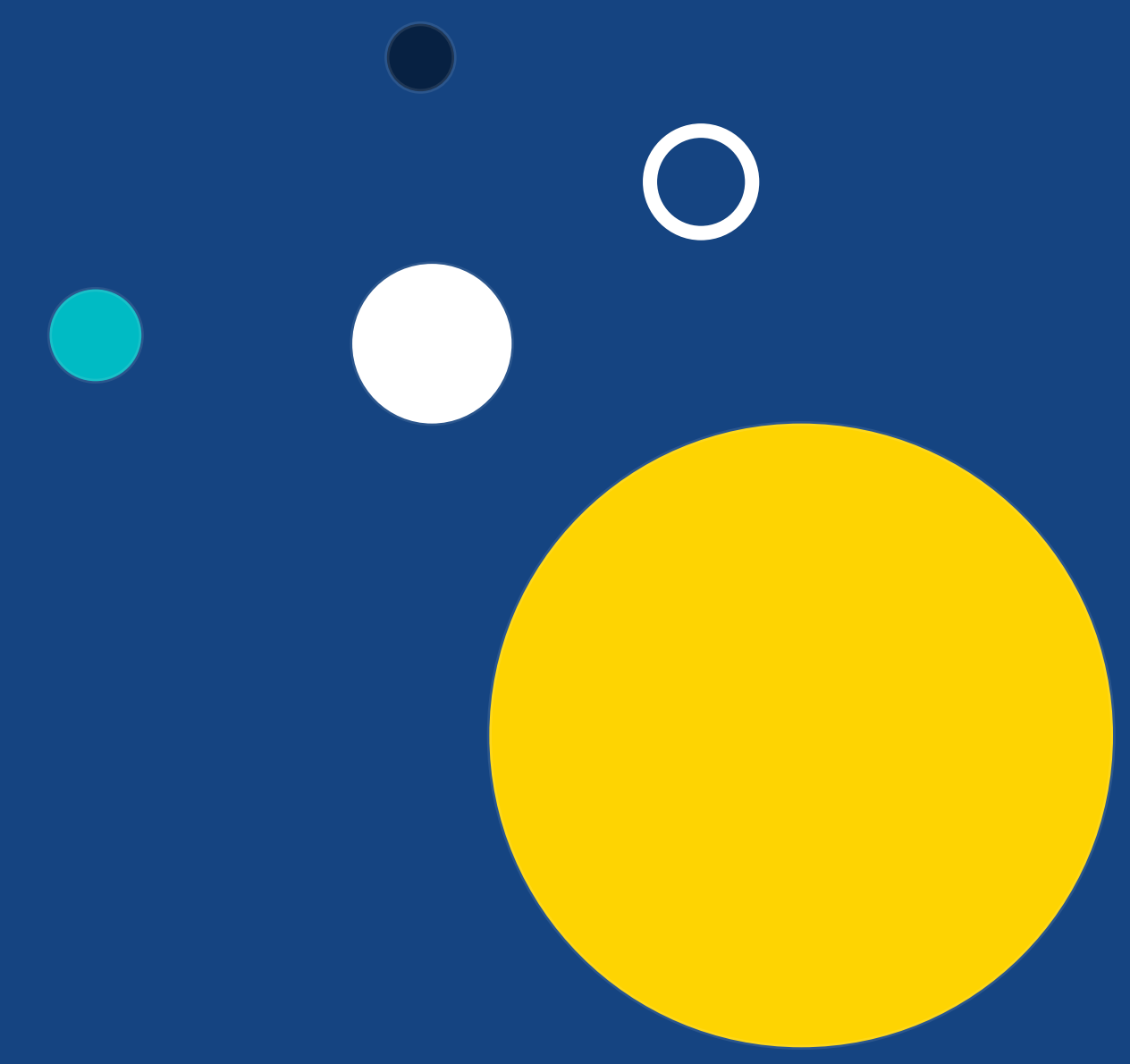
It is important to note that a web content manager that does not provide access to customization of the web page, sidebar or other frequently updated elements will significantly limit the options available [REF-13].

### 4. Menu configuration and navigation.

Menu configuration is essential to organize content and facilitate navigation through the web site. **Clear and logical navigation is essential for an effective user experience**. Navigation setup focuses on ensuring that site visitors can move easily between different sections. This involves creating consistent and logical links that connect the different parts of the site.

In addition, categories and subcategories should be created that intuitively reflect the organization of the content, making it easy for visitors to find the information they are looking for.



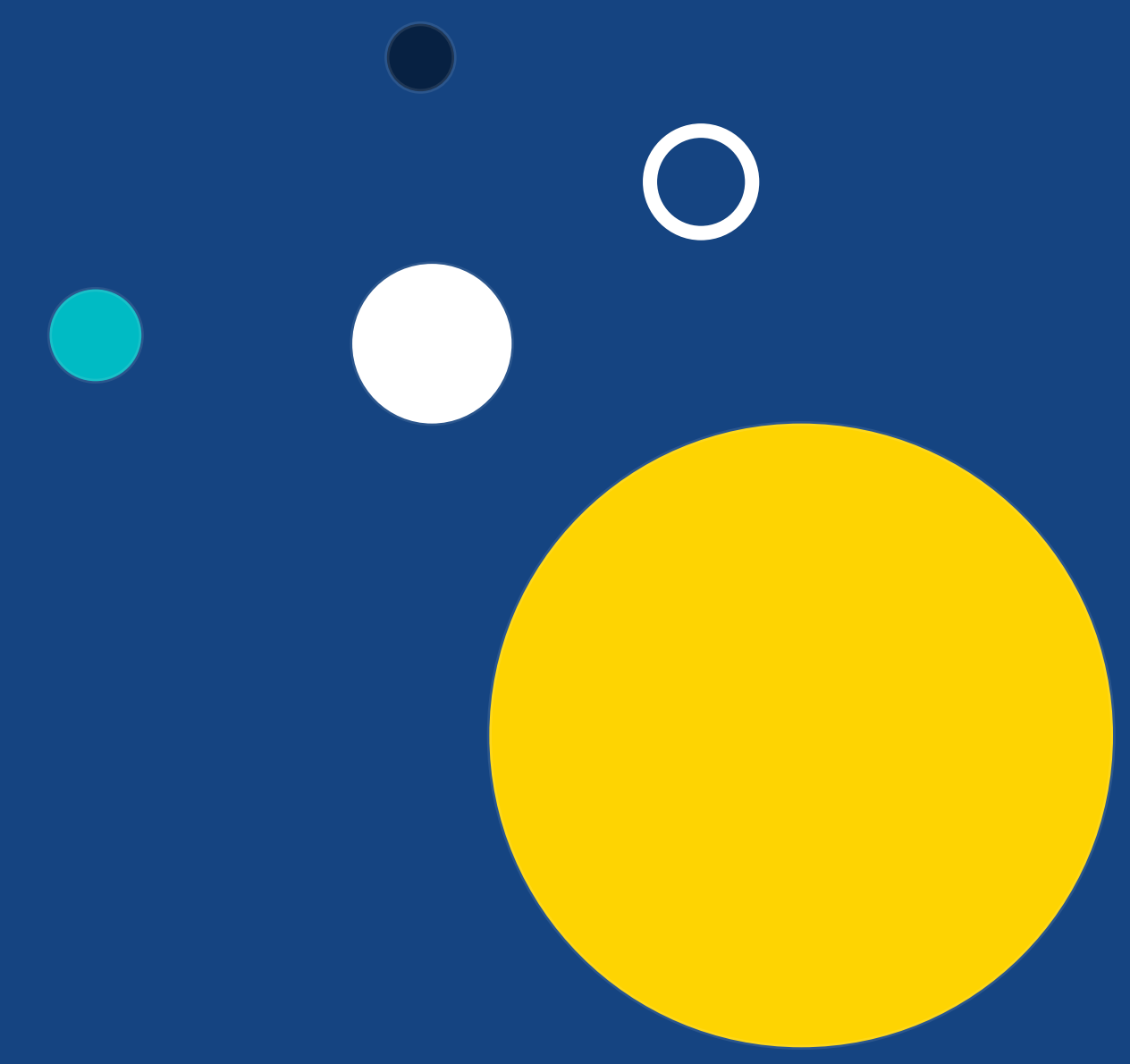


- 5.** Integration of specific functionalities.
- This phase involves adding tools and features that are fundamental to the SME's objectives. Depending on the needs, contact forms, image galleries, e-commerce tools or other customized functions can be incorporated to improve interaction with visitors.

The integration of these functionalities is generally done through the installation of plugins or extensions, depending on the CMS chosen. These elements add layers of functionality without the need for custom development. For example, the inclusion of contact forms simplifies communication with customers, while the integration of e-commerce tools facilitates the sale of products or services directly from the website [REF-06].







## 6. Migration of existing content.

If the SME already has an existing website or content, the migration of this data to the new CMS is a critical phase. This process involves meticulously transferring text, images, documents and other digital assets to the new CMS. The migration can vary in complexity depending on the volume and diversity of the content. For simple text, the task can be relatively straightforward, but when it comes to images, videos or specific formats, careful planning is required.

This process involves not only transferring files, but also adapting the content to the new digital environment, taking full advantage of the capabilities and features of the new CMS [REF-14].

In summary, implementing and configuring a CMS for an SME or freelancer are strategic processes that require a lot of attention to detail. From initial installation to customization and content migration, each stage plays a crucial role in the ongoing success of online content management.





## 6. Examples of efficient and cost-effective CMS for SMEs

When it comes to choosing a CMS for an SMB, it is essential to consider **affordable options that offer good functionality**. Here are four popular CMSs known for their efficiency that are ideal for SMBs.



### WordPress [REF-15].

WordPress is one of the most widely used CMSs worldwide, **known for its versatility and ease of use**. Although often associated with blogs, WordPress has evolved to accommodate a wide variety of websites, from business blogs to online stores. Its **intuitive interface** allows users to **easily manage content**. With an active community and a variety of free and premium themes, **WordPress is an affordable option that is well suited to the needs of an SMB**.

There are several plans available, ranging from a free option to one costing 45 euros per month, depending on the features included.

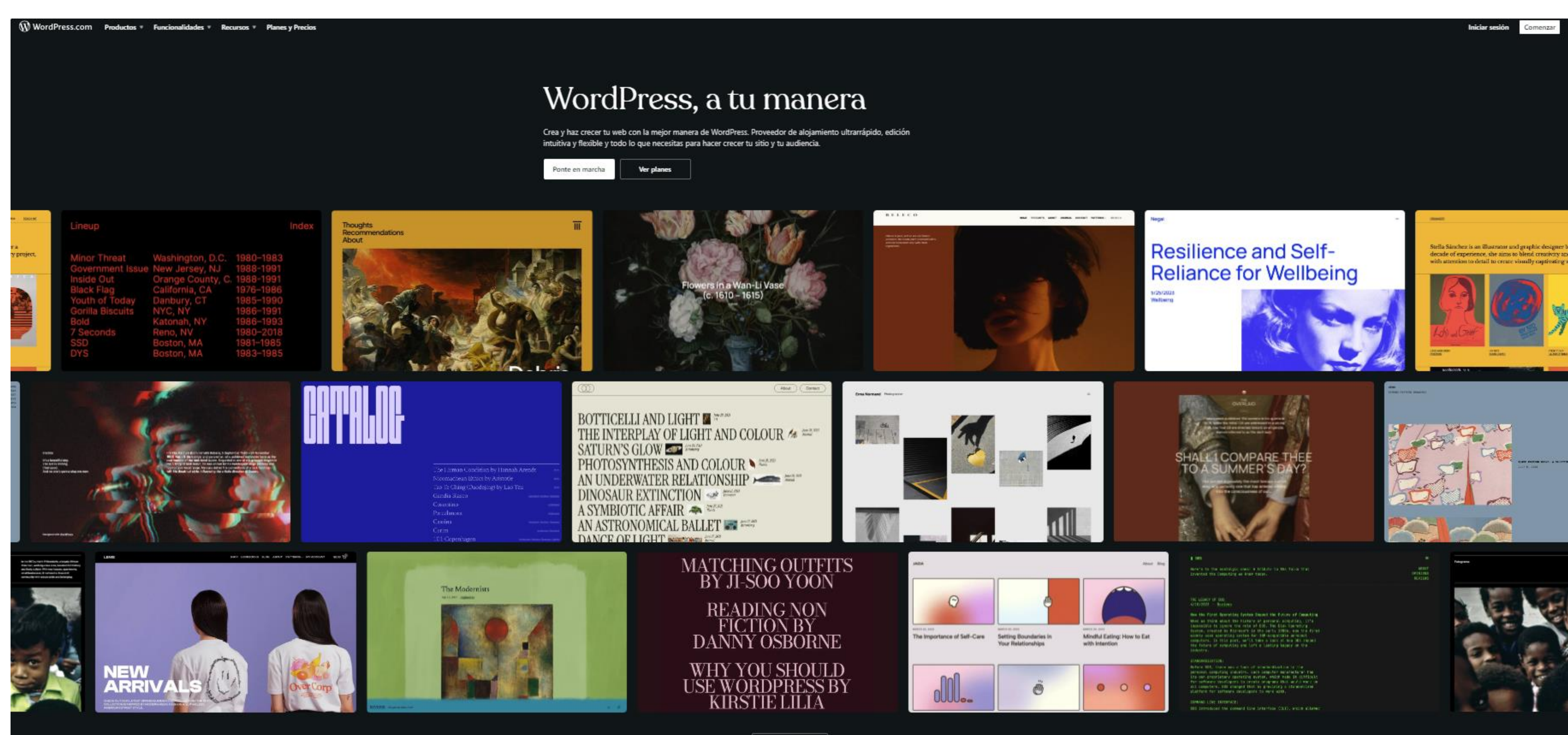


Figure 3: WordPress





Joomla [REF-16].

Joomla is another popular CMS that combines power and scalability at a reasonable cost. It offers a framework that is especially useful for more complex websites, such as online communities or news portals. Joomla provides advanced user management, making it suitable for sites that require user profiles and restricted areas. Its flexibility and expandability make it a solid choice for SMBs looking for a CMS with more advanced features.

Joomla also offers free plans. For a simple website with few pages and basic functionalities, the cost could range from 500 to 1,000 euros. However, if a more complex and customized solution is required, with extensions and database management, the cost could exceed 5,000 euros per year.



Figure 4: Joomla





Acquia [REF-17].

Acquia is a company that stands out for offering specialized solutions and services around Drupal, an open source CMS. Its main platform, Acquia Cloud, is designed to facilitate the implementation and scalability of Drupal-based websites by providing a cloud hosting environment optimized for this CMS.

With a focus on performance and security, Acquia Cloud offers tools that ensure efficient and secure website operation. Acquia stands out as an outstanding choice for growing companies that manage multiple brands and need to deliver content on a large scale. It is especially suited for organizations with in-house development capabilities or agency support, as it offers the flexibility to continually improve the platform and adapt it to changing business needs.

Acquia's platform also stands out for its ability to facilitate the ongoing development and deployment of Drupal-based web applications, allowing users to take advantage of the flexibility and scalability inherent in this open source CMS.

This platform offers you a free trial and has up to four different plans that adapt to the characteristics of each company.



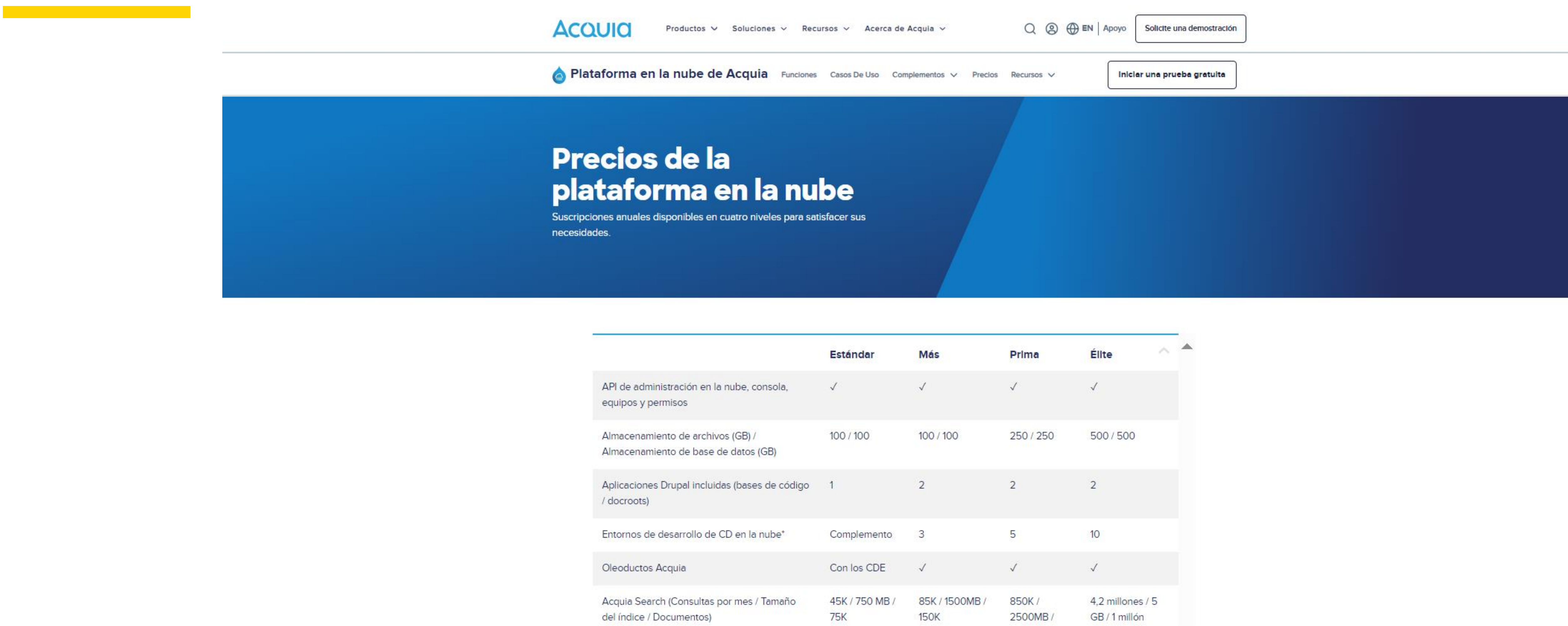


Figure 5: Acquia



WIX [REF-18].

For SMBs looking for **simplicity** and a focus on **aesthetic design**, Wix is an attractive option. Wix is known for its drag-and-drop interface that makes it easy to create **visually appealing websites without coding skills**. It offers a **variety of modern, customizable** templates, allowing SMBs to highlight their brand identity. Wix also includes e-commerce options, making it a comprehensive solution for SMBs looking to sell products online at an affordable cost.

Various plans are available, ranging from a **free version** to one costing 150 euros per month. The price is adjusted according to the **number of collaborators and available storage space**. It is advisable to carefully review the features of each plan to choose the one that best suits your specific needs.



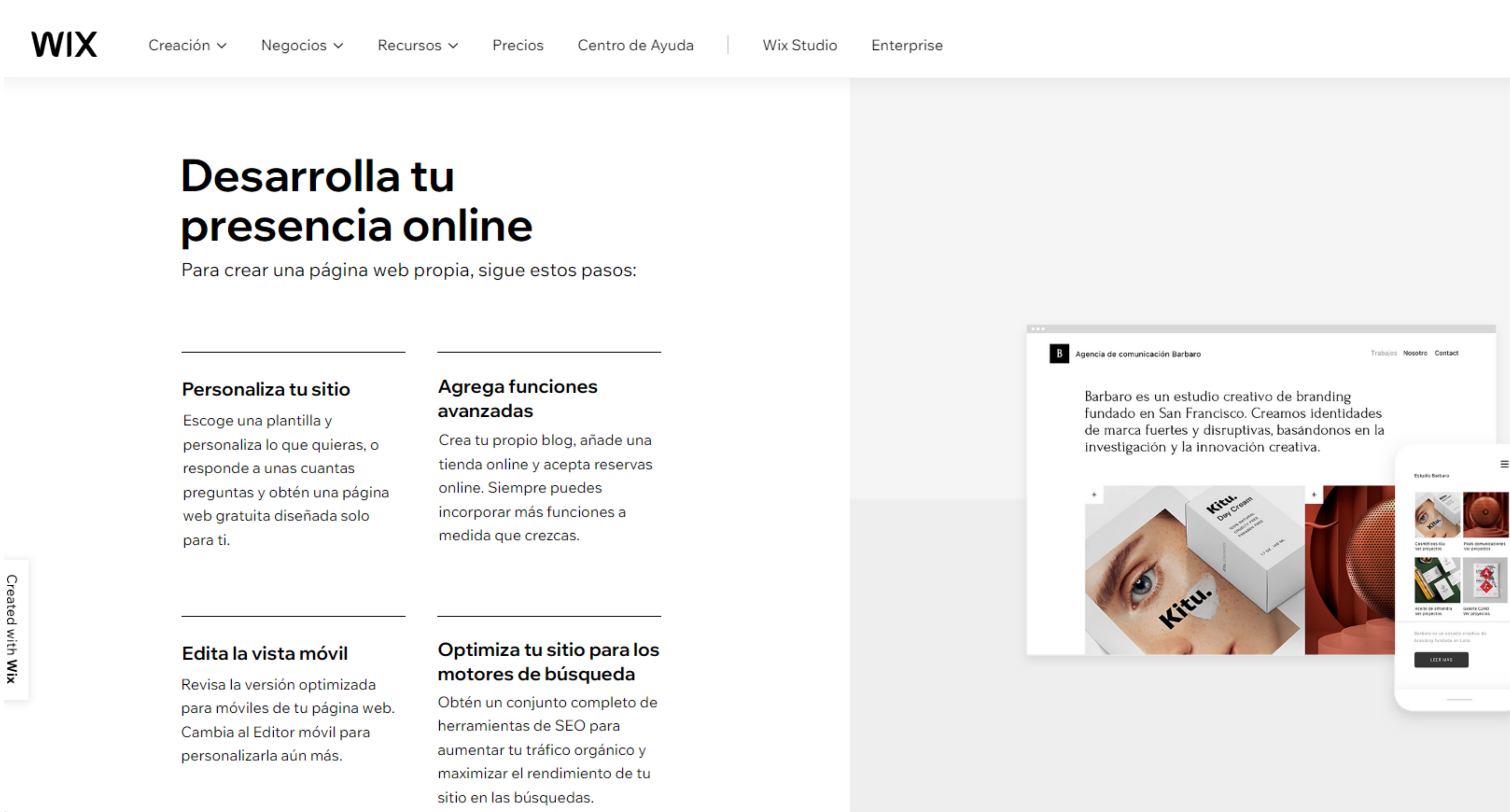


Figura 6: Wix

These examples demonstrate that there are **diverse and affordable options in the CMS market**, each with its own strengths. When choosing a CMS for an SMB, it is crucial to consider the specific needs, budget and experience level of the content management team.



# 7. Success stories on the use of CMS in SMEs and freelancers

## LE COCÓ [REF-19].

Le Cocó, one of the most prominent and popular restaurant groups in Madrid, has chosen WordPress as the main platform to develop and host the websites of its restaurants. First of all, the ease of use of WordPress has been fundamental for Le Cocó, allowing an efficient management of its web content without requiring advanced technical skills.

In addition, WordPress offers the flexibility needed for Le Cocó to manage multiple websites centrally, which is crucial for a restaurant group with multiple corporate brands. The ability to maintain different visual identities and unique content for each brand facilitates the individualized representation of each restaurant online. Likewise, the ability to display high-quality, high-definition images on Le Cocó's websites is an essential aspect, as visual presentation plays a crucial role in the restaurant industry, attracting customers and highlighting the dining experience offered by each establishment.

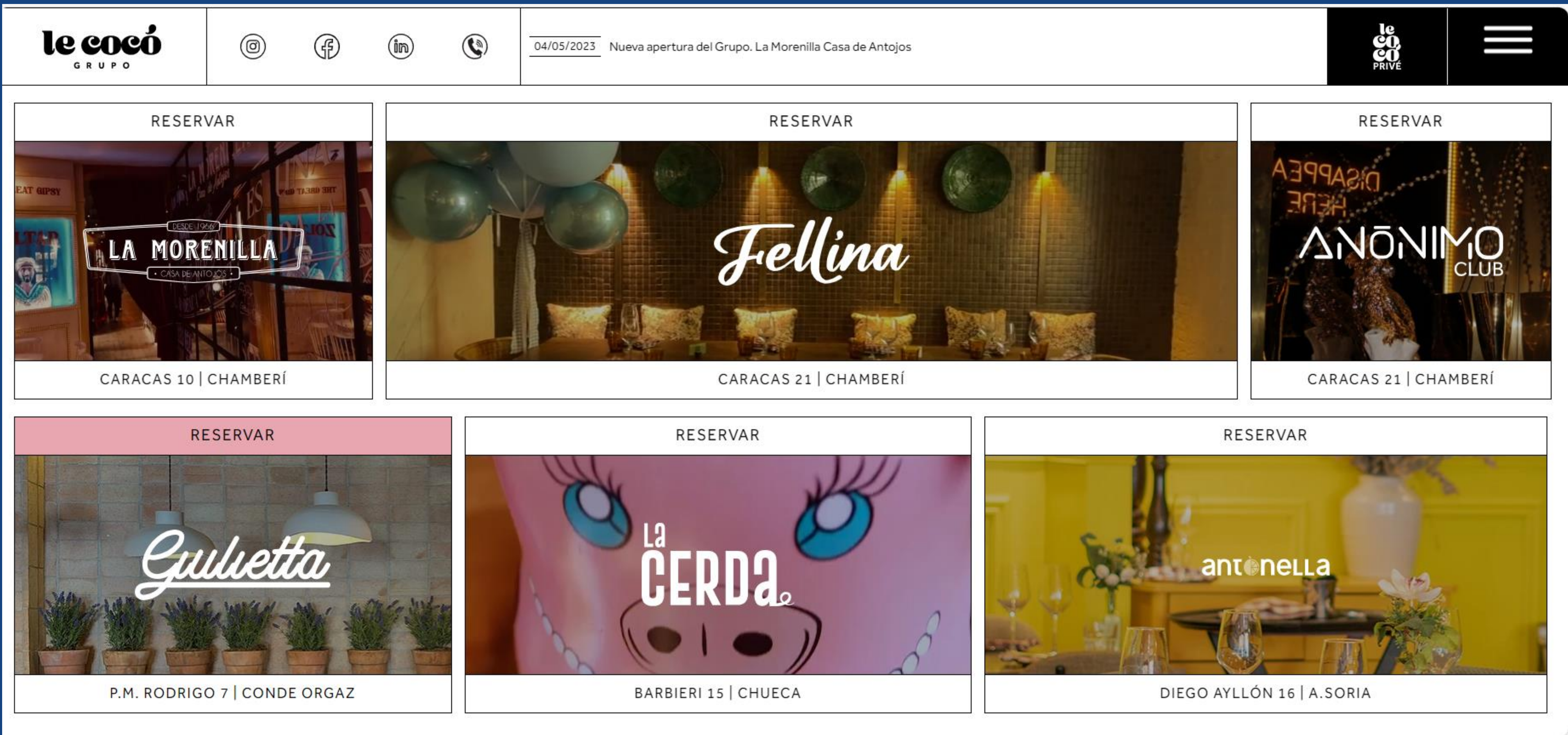


Figure 7: Le Coco



## FESTELA [REF-20].

Festela, a Barcelona-based clothing brand has opted for WIX CMS for its website. Wix offers Festela the flexibility needed to effectively embody the brand's ethos and mission, which focus on creating handcrafted and unique prints. The choice of WIX provides Festela with an intuitive and visually appealing environment to highlight the uniqueness of its designs.

On Festela's homepage, the header prominently features the most important sections, such as its online store, where visitors can purchase the brand's exclusive designs. In addition, the inclusion of an online course to learn how to print on textile screen printing with stencils demonstrates the versatility of the WIX platform by allowing the integration of different functionalities in the same space.

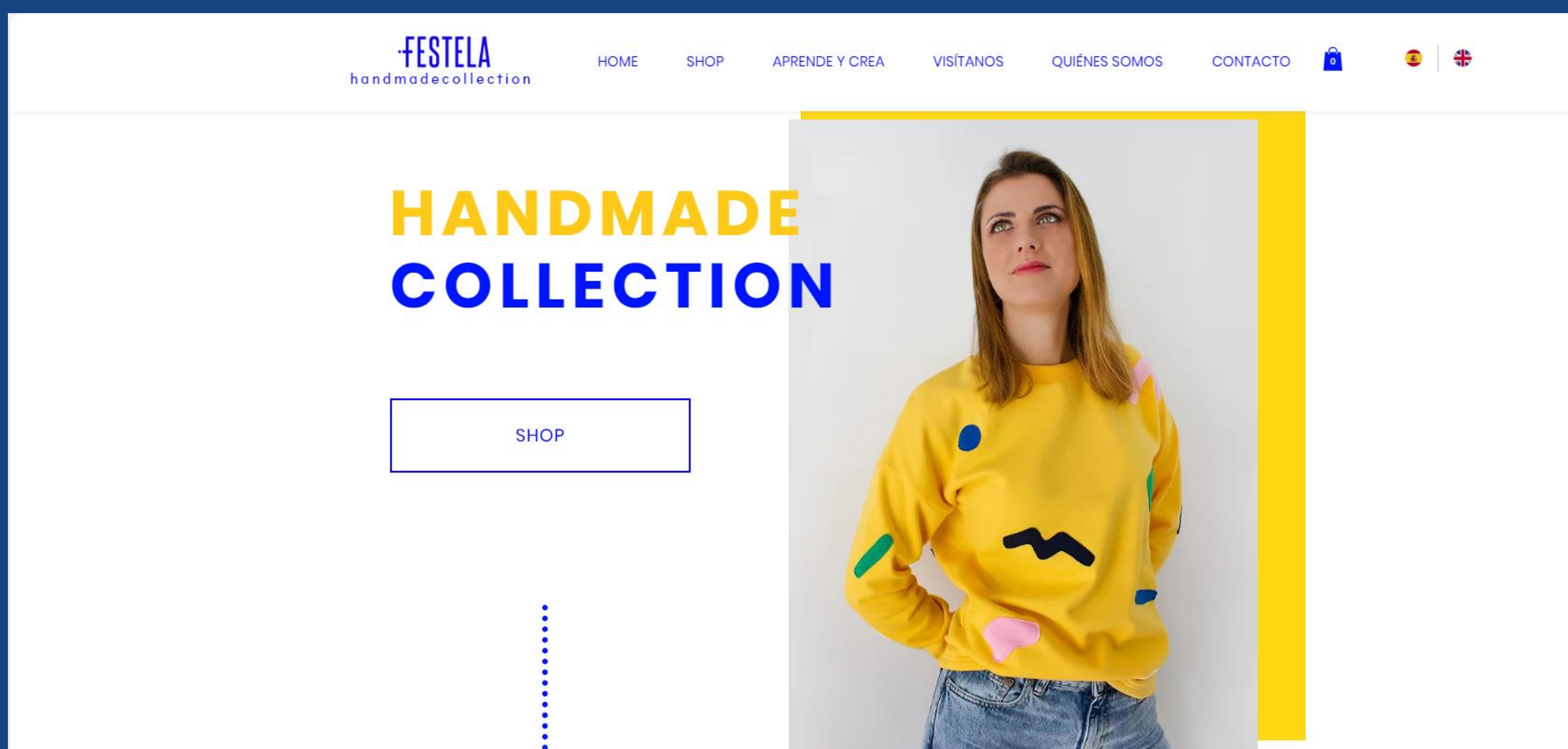


Figure 8: Festela



## 8. Conclusions

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In this monograph, the role of CMSs in the transformation of the digital presence of SMEs has been discussed.

CMSs, by facilitating the **creation and management of content in an efficient way**, are established as a key element to improve interaction and connection with the audience.

The advantages of adopting a CMS in an SME have been seen, highlighting the ease of use, time savings, customization and improved SEO fundamental. These **advantages translate into more effective content management, allowing SMEs to stand out in a competitive digital environment.**

The CMS selection process has also been broken down, providing guidance on defining objectives, assessing scalability, considering costs and ensuring compatibility with existing technologies.

In the implementation and configuration section, the **essential steps** from initial installation to content migration are detailed. With specific examples of **affordable and functional CMSs**, it is mentioned that there are diverse and accessible options for SMBs with different needs and preferences. In conclusion, by adopting an efficient CMS, SMBs can **stand out and thrive** in this ever-evolving market.



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