

XT-CMS

CONTENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

XT-CMS + XARA Guide & Tutorial

The purpose of this guide and tutorial is to show how to use XT-CMS with web pages exported from Xara. Either **Xara Web Designer** or **Xara Designer Pro** can be used as they are effectively the same when it comes to exporting websites. The general principles contained within this guide can also be applied to other web page editors and web design software.

Tutorial Requirements

- **XT-CMS** installed and running on your host/server
- **Xara Web Designer** or **Xara Designer Pro**

Reference Links

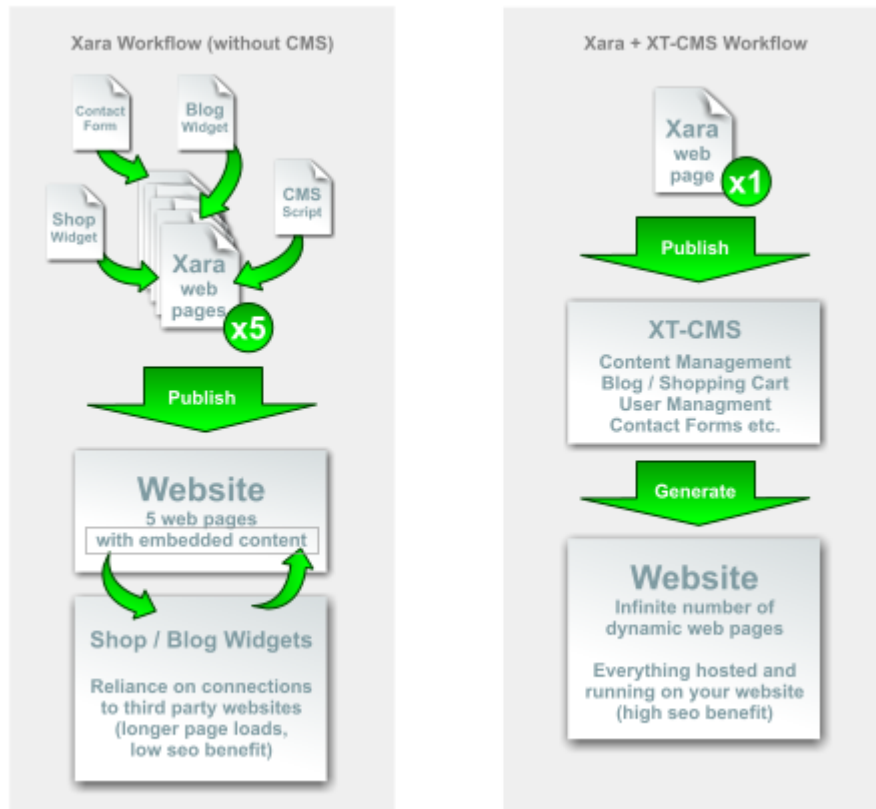
Download XT-CMS : <https://www.xt-cms.com/download/>

Xara Design Products : <https://www.xara.com/us/products/>

Overview & Approach

Adding a blog or shopping cart to a website in Xara without using a CMS is typically done using third party widgets and placeholders. XT-CMS however has this functionality (and more) built-in and can use HTML pages exported from Xara (and other design software) as page templates.

The diagrams below illustrate two different workflows using Xara. The first one shows a 5 page website with various widgets and placeholders added for extra functionality. The second diagram shows XT-CMS using one page from Xara to create a whole website with blog and shopping cart functionality.



In the second diagram Xara is used to design the look and layout of the web pages and the CMS is responsible for outputting the final result; the actual web pages. Thus adding and removing web pages and content is done through the CMS whilst page design and layout is done using Xara.

As you can see it is possible to use a single page template for all web pages served by the CMS but of course you can also have multiple page templates with different layouts for specific web pages.

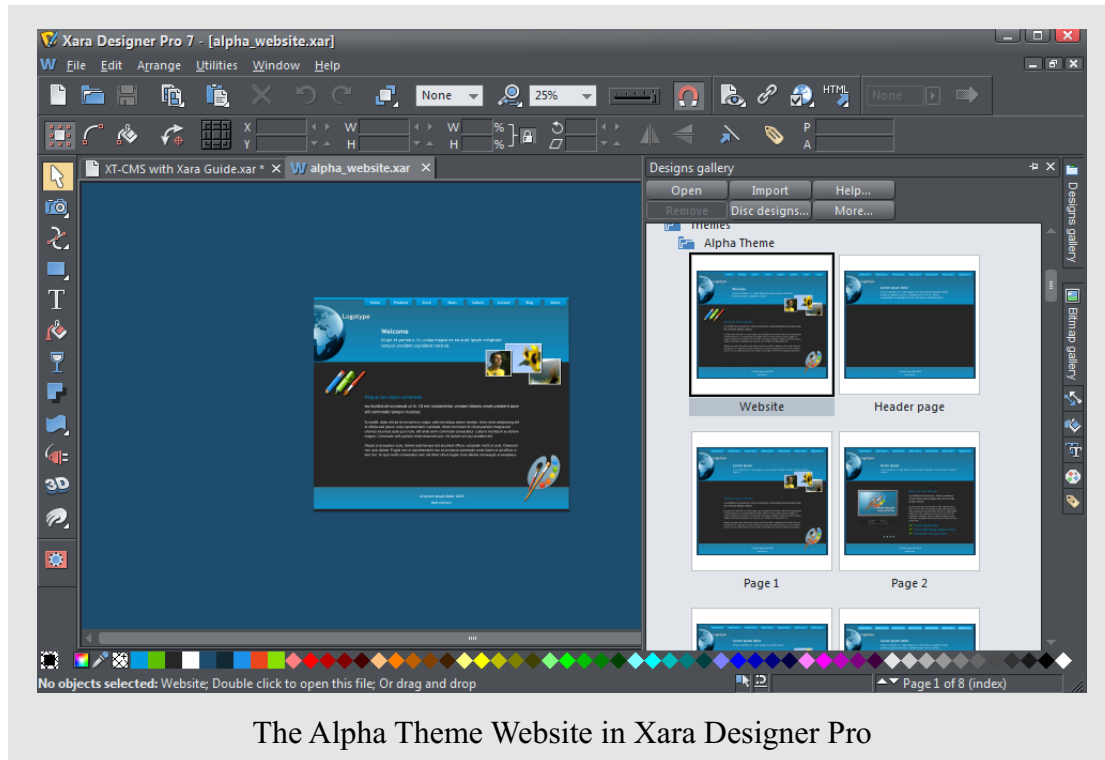
In summary think of each page in your Xara document as a page template and not an actual web page. The actual web pages on your site are controlled and output by the CMS whilst their appearance and layout is determined by the page template.

Publishing / Uploading

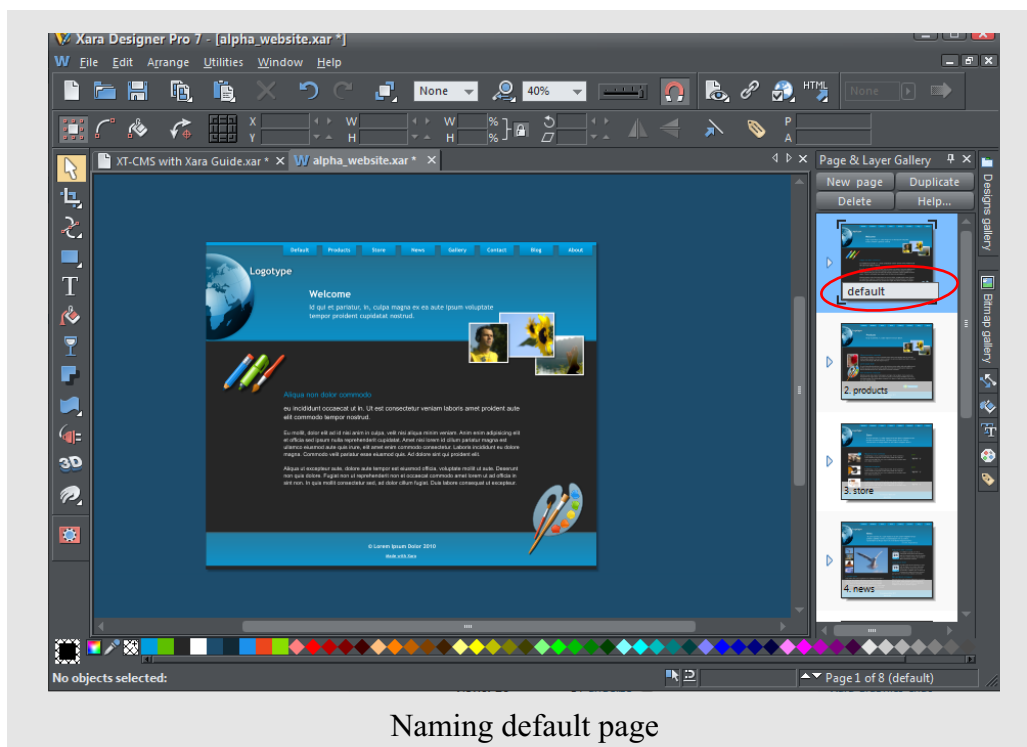
Normally when creating a static website in Xara pages are published/uploaded to your website's root directory (eg. *public_html*). However with XT-CMS pages must be uploaded to a theme folder within the CMS (eg. *themes/mytheme*) so that each uploaded page can be used as a page template.

Tutorial Start

In Xara open the Alpha Theme Website from the design gallery. We'll use this theme for this tutorial but you can choose a different website theme or use any website document.



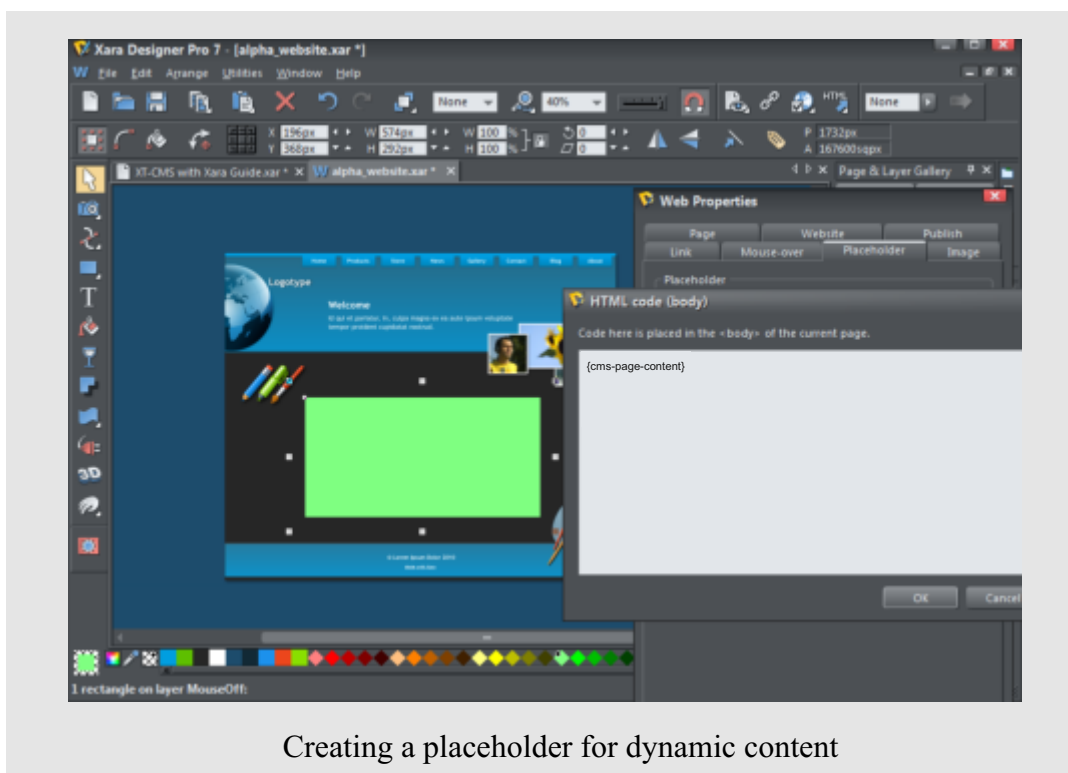
First we should define one of the pages as a default page. To do this just rename one of the pages as “default”. Let's rename the index page to default.



Next we need to define an area on the page for dynamic content to be displayed. Delete the existing paragraph of text and replace it with a rectangle. (I use green rectangles for placeholders here so they stand out on the page.) Now with the rectangle selected go to Web Properties -> Placeholder and click on the the **HTML code (body)** button and enter the following template tag..

```
{cms-page-content}
```

This special tag lets the CMS know where to output page content. There are many other template tags but we won't go into them in this tutorial.



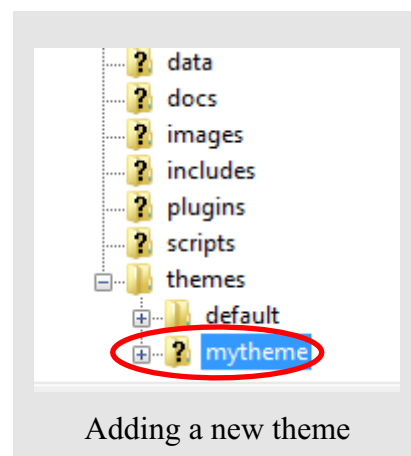
Now let's publish our website from Xara into the CMS. But before we do this we need to create a new theme directory to upload the exported files into.

Using an FTP client go to the cms root directory and create a new directory under themes. Name it *mytheme* or whatever you like.

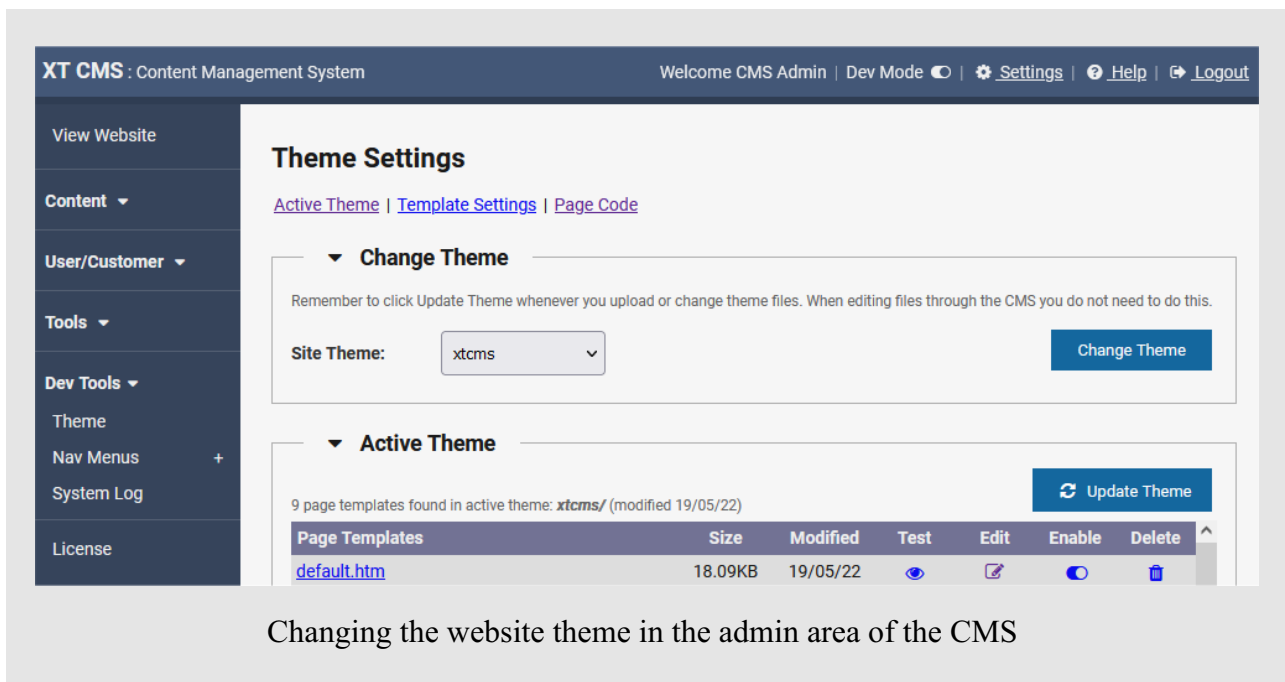
Next you need to set publish settings in Xara so that it publishes into the new theme directory that you just created.

Once this is done publish your website from Xara.

Alternatively you can export the website from Xara to a local folder on your PC and then upload into the theme folder via FTP client.



Once Xara has finished uploading the files, login to the CMS and go to Theme in the admin menu. Select the theme you just created and click **Change Theme**.



The CMS will use page templates from the active theme and when you add new web pages via the CMS you can choose which page template to use for that particular web page. You can use Add Category to add new web pages in the CMS.

Changing & Updating Page Templates

Whenever file changes are uploaded to the active theme you will need to refresh it by clicking the **Update Theme** button in the admin area or by clicking the update/refresh icon on front-end admin panel. If you are editing page templates in the CMS admin area it will refresh automatically however it is recommended with wysiwyg editors such as Xara not to edit exported page templates and instead make the changes in Xara and publish/upload back into the CMS, otherwise changes made to exported page templates would be lost/overwritten.

In this tutorial we only added a placeholder to the default page but you can add placeholders to the other page templates too, or leave them as they are and the CMS will just show the page as it is in Xara without dynamic content.