Ultimate Guide to Drupal

Updated for Drupal 11 as of July 2024

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Introduction

The open source Drupal content management system (CMS) is one of the world's most prevalent website development platforms. Drupal delivers a wide range of capabilities, features, and benefits that make it easy to build and maintain almost any website. Drupal also makes it easy to deliver content to other channels that are important for today's businesses, so many different stakeholders are drawn to it:

● **Developers** value Drupal's open source flexibility, stability, security, and active contributor community.

● **Marketers** value Drupal's user-friendly interface, modern content authoring experience, and seamless integration with their martech tools of choice.

● **Business leaders** appreciate Drupal's ability to help their businesses become more agile, innovative, and competitive.

As the most significant contributor to Drupal and the only certification provider for members of the Drupal community, Acquia has written this guide to help both new and longtime users better understand Drupal and its latest developments.

Before we cover those details, let's revisit why you should choose the Drupal platform over other alternatives.

7 Reasons Business Stakeholders Choose Drupal

1. Drupal Is Open Source

A considerable part of what sets Drupal apart is flexibility. Unlike proprietary content management systems, which constrain your choices of capabilities and features to those available within a particular vendor's ecosystem, Drupal enables you to apply a best-of-need approach. This makes it possible to choose the back end, front end, and delivery technologies that best meet your unique requirements.

Drupal achieves this flexibility because it is an open source solution. Since Drupal is supported by an active community of 10,000+ contributors rather than a single company or author, users have the creative freedom to innovate and solve problems — without the limitations of vendor lock-in.

Because it's open source, Drupal ensures that its users will have:

- Unlimited flexibility

- No vendor lock-in, so you can take your code anywhere

- Access to rapid and ongoing community-driven innovation

2. Drupal Features a Flexible Architecture for Modern App Development

The digital space has never been noisier or more crowded. Today's business teams must develop and publish large volumes of content — and distinguish their organizations from competitors by maintaining a visually distinct brand identity.

As one of the most composable CMSs in the world, Drupal gives developers more flexibility. Modularity is one of its core principles; individual pieces are designed to work together on the same data, making it incredibly interoperable, and its tools help you build the versatile, structured content needed to deliver dynamic web experiences. Site builders control their own code and data so that they can express the unique qualities of their brand. Drupal works for content management environments and sites that span the full range of possibilities:

- **From traditional to headless**

- **From dynamic to static**

- **From small to large**

- **From simple to complex**

- **From web to mobile**

A Closer Look at Features that Give Developers More Flexibility

Headless/Decoupled Support

Drupal ships with an implementation of the JSON:API specification, but GraphQL and other standards are also available as extensions. This allows developers to use Drupal as a central content store on a decoupled front end (mobile application, JavaScript framework, etc.).

Mobile Experience

Drupal is designed with mobile in mind, from the installer to the modules page. To support the wide range of internet-enabled devices that are available, Drupal incorporates responsive design into all of its functionality. Carefully crafted form elements provide targeted user interfaces on mobile devices for fields such as date/time, phone numbers, and email addresses.

Static Sites with Drupal

What's unique about Drupal is that it can scale from really complex interactive experiences down to static content sites. The popular Tome extension allows the use of Drupal as a static site generator with the full power of Drupal at the back end, while only the super-fast-to-serve static site content is pushed to production.

3. Drupal Offers a Marketer-Friendly CMS

Today's marketers need to keep up with their customers' ever-evolving preferences. They need to be able to act quickly to achieve better campaign outcomes. This means working to optimize digital experiences on the fly without having to wait for developers to build and implement complex components.

Drupal empowers marketers to do exactly this. Drupal can work in tandem with solutions that make it possible to deliver intelligent, personalized experiences for users across a multitude of channels. Drupal includes a plethora of SEO features, hundreds of martech integrations, visual website and landing page builders, live previews, reusable and composable content, multilingual capabilities, enterprise content workflows, rich page templates, and more.

The best part is that many of these capabilities can be implemented with little or no assistance from developers.

A Closer Look at Features that Streamline Work for Marketers

Layout Builder

The Layout Builder core module provides layout capabilities for content, including a more intuitive low-code/no-code approach where you can click together data types, listings, and pages in the interface. Layout Builder is unique in offering a single, powerful visual design tool for the following three use cases:

- **Layouts for templated content**

- **Customization for templated layouts**

- **Custom pages**

Multilingual Capabilities

Drupal comes with built-in features to make any part of the system multilingual:

- **The ability to install Drupal in 100 different languages from the get-go**

- **Translation for content items, such as nodes, taxonomy terms, menu items, and user profiles**

- **Configuration translation, such as making listings and forms multilingual**

Content Workflow

The Workflows module allows users to define multiple workflows and show the content workflow states and transitions allowed between them. The Content Moderation module allows users to create content revisions that are not live yet but have received updates since the last version.

Workspaces

The Workspaces module allows for staging and publishing multiple content changes (article text, sidebar blocks, menu entries, and so on) at once and previewing how they will look in their entirety. Users can even prepare site content around multiple "scenarios," such as sporting event results or Oscar winners, and publish the appropriate version when the time comes.

4. Drupal Facilitates Extensive Integrations

Building on Drupal gives you complete freedom to customize your site and content so that it's precisely the way you want it. This includes integrating the modules and extensions you want, regardless of who built them or what platform they run on. An excellent recent example is the ability to take advantage of new technologies like AI as they become available. Drupal was one of the first major CMSs to deliver ChatGPT functionality directly within the web interface.

More than 50,000 pre-built integrations and extensions are available for Drupal. But if none perfectly suits your needs, you can always build another one.

The broad array of integrations includes components that enable:

- **Form creation**

- **Personalization**

- **Customer relationship management (CRM)**

- **Commerce**

- **AI capabilities**

- **Digital asset management (DAM)**

- **Marketing automation**

- **Cookie management/GDPR compliance**

- **Social media marketing**

- **Analytics**

In other words, alongside Drupal, you can continue using the marketing tools your team has already invested in learning.

Drupal plays nice with your organization's existing email, analytics, and marketing automation solutions — as well as other components of your tech stack.

5. Drupal Is Scalable and Performant

Teams responsible for overseeing enterprise-level web properties know how vital scalability is. Your web applications need to deliver peak performance at the times when they attract the most traffic and attention. The demands on your technology architecture are greatest exactly when failure would do the most damage.

Fortunately, Drupal is known for its ability to deliver world-class performance and scalability. In fact, some of the most visited websites in the world run on Drupal, including those supporting events like the Olympics and the Super Bowl.

Drupal's performance-enhancing features include:

- **Powerful caching with fine-grained cache clearing** (Cache Tags)

- **BigPipe for smoother page loading** (Here, the main content of a page populates quickly while auxiliary content, like sidebars, is still being generated.)

- **Horizontal scaling to dozens of servers**

- **Deep CDN integrations for global 24/7 availability**

- **Multi-region failover support for high availability**

- **Optimized HTML generation**

- **JS/CSS aggregation**

- **Support for lazy image loading**

- **Support for modern image formats**

6. Drupal Is Highly Secure

With data breaches making headlines almost daily and online attacks costing global businesses and consumers billions of dollars each year, today's consumers are more concerned than ever about the privacy and security of their data. Modern cyberthreats never sleep. Instead, they continue to evolve, always seeking the weakest link in an organization's digital ecosystem.

Drupal was designed to be highly secure. Trusted by governments, nonprofits, and many of the world's largest enterprises, the platform is home to numerous mission-critical websites. It's protected by a 30+ person internal security team, plus the efforts of more than 10,000 contributors.

This means that bugs have nowhere to hide, making Drupal one of the most stable and secure CMSs that exists.

7. Drupal Prioritizes Accessibility

Drupal has also earned a reputation as one of the most accessible CMSs available. Building optimally accessible sites does require work, but Drupal has prioritized features and capabilities that make it easier.

These efforts support Drupal's vision for optimizing digital experiences and helping site builders deliver more inclusive and accessible digital solutions.

In fact, automated accessibility testing (via Nightwatch Axe integration) was recently added to Drupal core, so accessibility issues are often caught before developers even scan for them. Additionally, although a small number of edge cases would make it difficult for any platform to claim full compliance with the WCAG 2.1 AA standard, Drupal contributors consistently aim for best-in-class status.

How Drupal Continues to Evolve

The Drupal community continues to build upon the successes that have made Drupal the CMS of choice for ambitious site builders worldwide. Through the latest version (now 11), Drupal sets the stage for continued innovation well into the future, including the Drupal Starshot project (which we include more about later in this guide).

Drupal remains highly secure, powerfully configurable, flexible, and integration-rich. These qualities enable brands to express their unique visual identity in ways that set them apart from competitors.

Setting up for Long-Term Stability

What's more, Drupal 11 leverages newer technology to provide the foundation for innovative new features that will augment the content authoring experience and greatly extend the capabilities of Drupal for editors. A primary example is PHP 8.3, which helps improve the security, performance, and supportability of your sites. Since older versions of PHP are not supported by Drupal 11, you'll want to ensure your code is PHP 8.3 compatible now. But, a big upside here is that PHP 8.3 is much faster than PHP 8.1 and 8.2.

Here is the list of updated requirements for Drupal 11:

- **MySQL/Percona 8.0**
- **MariaDB 10.6**
- **SQLite 3.45**
- **PostgreSQL 16**
- **PHP 8.3**
- **Composer 2.7.0**

Deprecated Code Has Been Removed

In addition to the new infrastructure requirements for Drupal 11, various modules have been removed from core and moved to contributed projects, including:

- **Action UI**

- **Activity Tracker**

- **Book**

- **Forum**

- **Statistics**

- **Tour**

Popular Enhancements Continue to Evolve

A few Drupal features and capabilities are no longer brand new but still worth mentioning. For example, the front-end theme Olivero is flexible and highly accessible, the administration theme Claro delivers an improved user experience, and Starterkits enables front-end developers to build a new theme from a copy of a base theme.
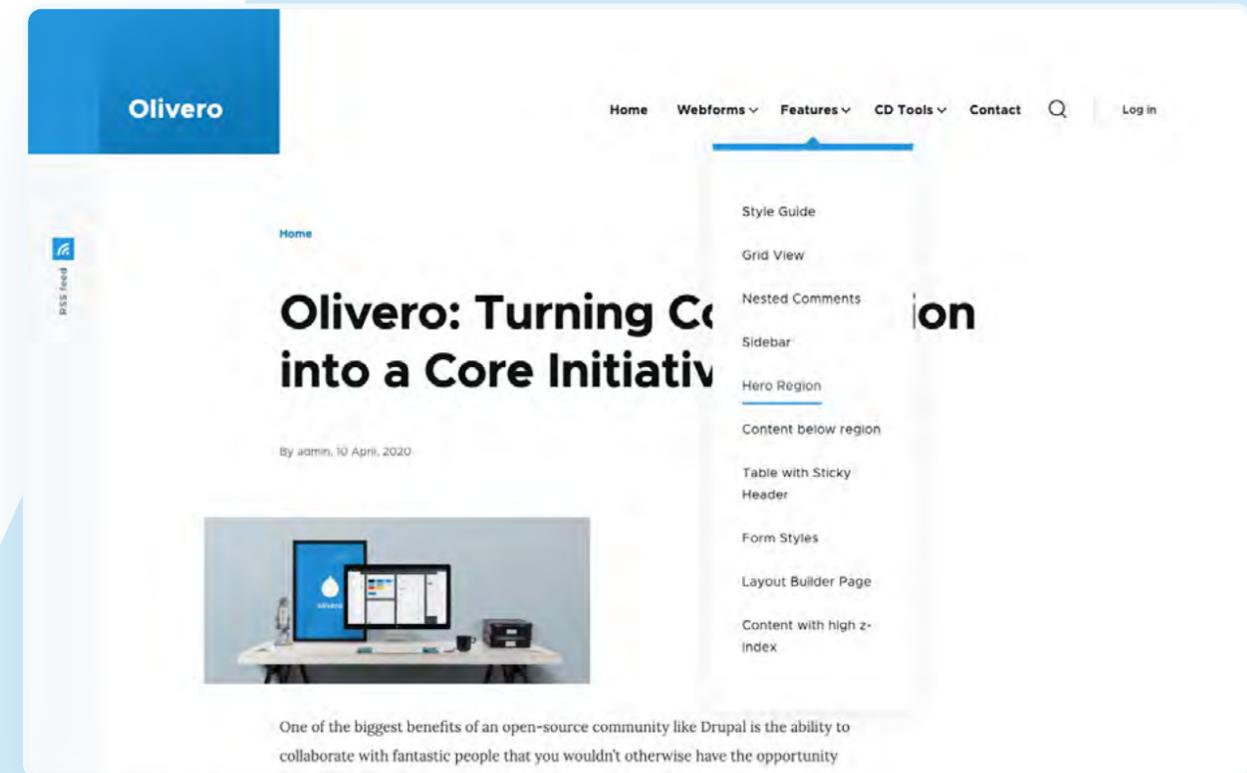
Leverage the Latest Drupal Enhancements to Deliver Outstanding Digital Experiences

Improved Administration Back End

The administration toolbar renders faster on back-end and front-end pages so that you can get to your tasks more efficiently. A new option within Views lets you create pages that appear in the administration theme regardless of their path.

Permission management is easier thanks to a simple filter that allows you to quickly find the right permissions to adjust.

A new Announcements Feed module was also added to new Drupal installations by default to inform site owners and administrators about project news.

In the new experimental Navigation module, the classic toolbar was redesigned from the ground up. Now it features a left-aligned, collapsible vertical sidebar that enables easier navigation in the depths of the administration menu.

It is also highly customizable; you can configure the included blocks or add other menu blocks.

Though not part of Drupal core, a popular add-on theme, Gin, is also available. Gin is built on top of the Claro theme, providing additional options for the admin interface. Gin includes customizations that are out of scope for Claro but serve as a foundation for future experimentation.
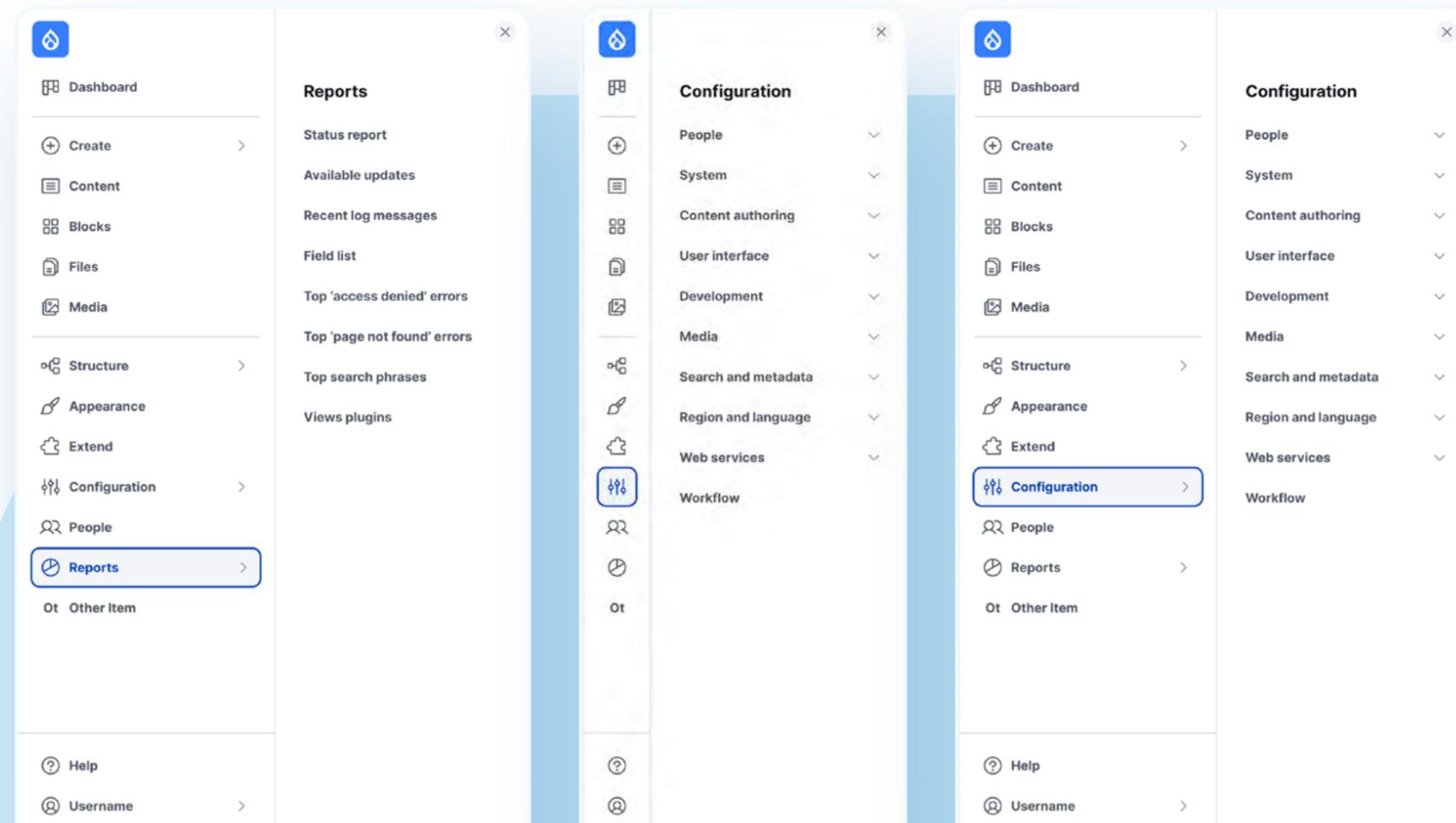
Single-Directory Components (SDCs) for UI Component Creation

The Single-Directory Components module, which makes theming easier, is now included in Drupal core, so you no longer need to add the contributed module. With everything you need for your component in a single directory, components are easier to find, can be reused on the site in different places, and are easier to write on the front end. With SDC, front-end developers don't necessarily need to know much about Drupal to work with it, so this feature has proven popular.

Decoupled Navigation Made Easier

Drupal was already a great component in a decoupled content setup. However, managing navigation between content elements in a decoupled scenario previously could have been difficult. Dedicated endpoints using the Linkset standard help simplify navigation between content elements in decoupled scenarios. This makes it easy for a front-end developer to consume menu data in order to render navigation instead of hard-coding it. It also means that non-developers can manage application menus without writing code.

Improved Menu Creation

The ability to create menus has also been improved. It's easier to edit menu items and add child menu items directly.

JavaScript Modernization

Modern JavaScript components have replaced some uses of jQuery UI. And now, on-the-fly JavaScript file minification makes it easier to develop for Drupal without additional build steps.

Better Authoring, Editing, and Support with CKEditor 5

CKEditor 5 is Drupal's built-in WYSIWYG editor and now includes an autoformat feature that recognizes when you are typing a list or a header and automatically formats it accordingly.

The modern editing architecture of CKEditor 5 makes it possible to add premium features, such as Google Docs-like collaborative editing. This feature requires a CKSource subscription and is available with the CKEditor 5 Premium Features extension for Drupal.

Rich text editor loaded with features

Flexible tools for content creators

Variety of editor types for easy integration
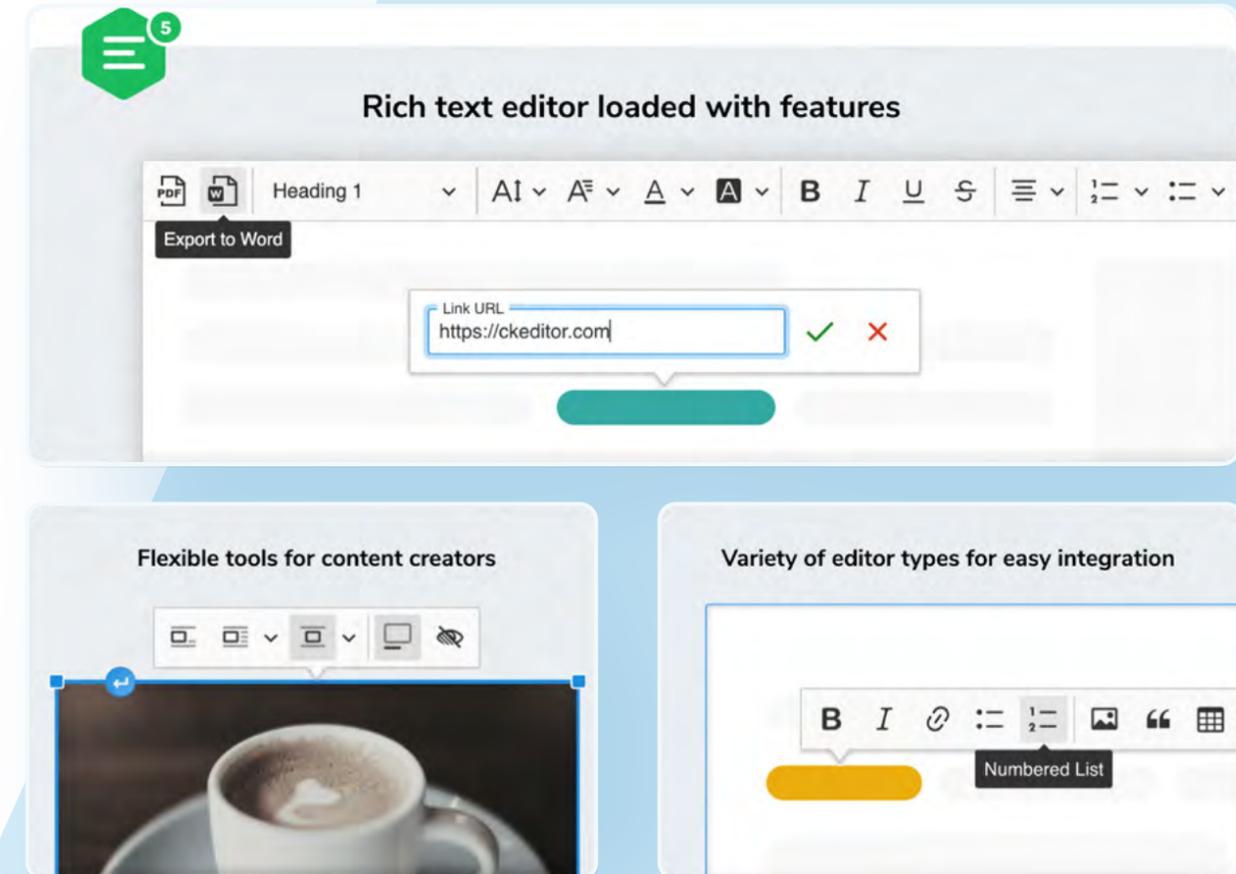
Content Modeling and Management Is Easier

Improvements to the user interface have been very well received among Drupal users. For example, you can now reuse existing fields, making it easier to create consistent content models.

Text fields can now enforce a specific text format, streamlining the experience for content editors. A unified entity revision editing experience now makes prior versions of content easier to manage, regardless of whether they are in content blocks, nodes, or other entity types. Functionality for bulk operation lists now features a floating action bar that enables users to launch actions on multiple selected content items

quickly. It's also easier than ever to create new fields; you can select the field type visually and combine multiple settings forms into one.

File and Media Management Is Improved

Filename sanitization and transliteration settings are now available for file uploads out of the box. This includes whitespace replacement and lowercasing options, among others. Media entities now also have support for revision editing, and the default image styles installed by Drupal core now use WebP, which reduces image sizes by roughly 25%-34%.

Block Management Is More Flexible

You can now create custom blocks directly under Structure in the administrative interface. Thanks to more granular permissions, users can have different access to blocks based on type, and revisions applied to block content can be reviewed and rolled back if needed.

Users can also show or hide blocks on pages based on response status ("success," "access denied," or "not found").

Workspaces to Stage Content Updates

Through the Workspaces module, users can prepare and stage content updates all at once. For example, you can work on alternate content updates, such as after sporting event results become available or when publishing new content requires updates to multiple pages on the site at once, necessitating content review up front.

New Taxonomy Features

Taxonomy now provides a visual UI that can be used to view, revert, and delete revisions. It is also now possible to apply a content moderation workflow to taxonomy terms.

Composable Site-Building With New Recipes APIs

New Recipes APIs now pave the way for even more composable site-building. Recipes are automated site-building steps that can be applied to a site. They can rely on other recipes and allow users to apply multiple recipes to a website after each other. Unlike install profiles and distributions, which used to solve a similar problem, recipes do not linger on the site after they're applied.

There are many practical use cases for recipes. Let's say you want to streamline the process required to facilitate event signups, for example. A recipe could help you get the right

modules and configure them for that use case. In addition to helping promote composable components, recipes reduce the site building required and eliminate the need to find all the individual modules.

Drupal 11 still contains support for and has its built-in Standard and Minimal install profiles, but the features of the Standard profile were also made available as recipes. Drupal can now install without a profile, using recipes only, which will be the future of composable Drupal site building.

It is now also possible to uninstall the install profile on an existing Drupal site, which makes it possible to leave profiles behind for the first time.

New Access Policy Capabilities

The new access policy API supports the implementation of access granting and checking solutions that go beyond permissions and user roles. Other conditions and contexts may be taken into account, like whether the user employed two-factor authentication or whether they reached an activity rate limit. Drupal's existing permissions and roles-based access control have been converted to the new API, and custom or contributed projects can add more access policies.

Enhanced Lazy Loading Capability Improves the User Experience

Through BigPipe, Drupal enables web browsers to dynamically load more page information after loading the initial page, therefore reducing initial page load times. BigPipe also supports interface previews for delayed content, which helps reduce page reflows and streamlines the user experience. Now, responsive images can be lazy-loaded, and oEmbed content can be configured to be lazy-loaded so it doesn't hold up the initial page load.
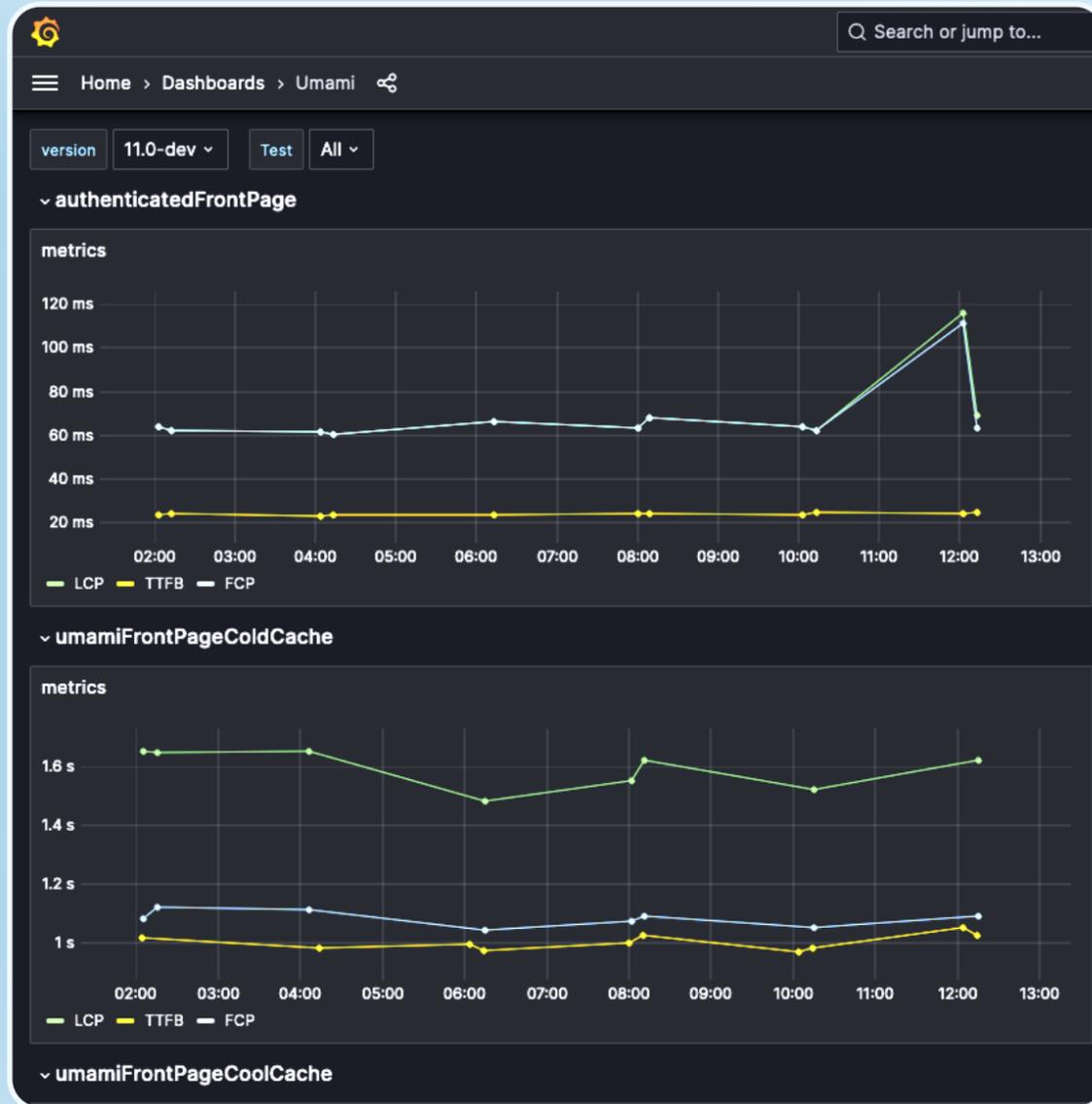
Improved Core Code Performance

Substantial effort was invested to make Drupal's core smaller and leaner for Drupal 11. Contributors have extensively cleaned up and streamlined the code to emphasize Drupal's strengths and core functionalities, including security and performance. In many instances, contributors have rewritten code to be more efficient. All code that was deprecated in Drupal 10 has now been entirely removed. This helps reduce confusion and redundancy in Drupal's APIs.

To help track the performance of core, users can tap an automated testing framework called Gander. Gander allows users to monitor performance across time to ensure performance regressions aren't unknowingly introduced. With a dashboard available to visualize key metrics, it has become easier to fix issues based on that data.

In addition, several other modules remain available as contributed projects but are no longer included in Drupal core. Modules that were removed are those that are less used, aren't part of an ecosystem, or weren't built on in other modules.

Modules Moved
Action UI
Activity Tracker
Book
Forum
Statistics
Tour

Continuously Improved Developer Experience

Several developer experience improvements have been made:

- **[DeprecationHelper](#) makes it easier to write code that is compatible with multiple major Drupal versions.**

- **To help generate pages faster with async operations, the BigPipe module and the Renderer now have PHP Fiber support.**

- **The API for configuration forms is now directly compatible with configuration validation, making it easier to write consistently validated forms.**

- **Native PHP attributes were also adopted for plugin annotations while keeping Doctrine annotation support.**

- **Developers can now leverage the new Recipes and default content APIs to roll out the same set of changes to many sites at once.**

- **Symfony 7, jQuery 4, jQuery UI 1.14 and PHPUnit 10 are the new versions of key dependencies of Drupal.**

These incremental improvements make Drupal development easier.

How to Prepare for Your Drupal Upgrade

Ever since Drupal 8, upgrading Drupal versions became much more streamlined, so site rebuilds are largely unnecessary.

A Detailed List of Changes to Platform Requirements

Earlier in this guide, we listed some significant changes, but here is more specific information.

💧 **PHP**

Drupal 11 requires PHP 8.3 with the zlib extension enabled. Most systems will already have this extension enabled by default.

💧 **Drush**

If you use Drush, make sure you update to Drush 13.

💧 **New Database Requirements**

The requirements for the database drivers supported by Drupal 11 are as follows:

💧 **The MySQL database driver requires MySQL 8.0.**

💧 **The MariaDB database driver requires MariaDB 10.6.**

💧 **The PostgreSQL database driver requires PostgreSQL 16.**

💧 **The SQLite database driver requires SQLite 3.45 with the json1 extension.**

💧 Drupal 11 does not directly use MySQL 8 and MariaDB 10.6 specific syntax yet, but it will in future versions. If you can't yet upgrade to these versions, there is a MySQL 5.7/MariaDB 10.3 backport module that you can use temporarily.

💧 **Web Server**

Support for IIS is removed. Sites using IIS are encouraged to change to a supported web server. Drupal 11 does not provide a web.config file. If you encounter bugs, we encourage you to report them in case they affect web servers other than IIS.

Getting Started with Drupal 11 If You're New to Drupal

Installing and running Drupal is completely free. This includes the 50,000+ modules available to extend site functionality and the 2,500+ themes used to modify site appearance. If you're running the site locally, you may also need to install server software, database software, and software to interpret the PHP programming language (in which Drupal is written).

You can also test-drive a newly installed Drupal site on your own in just a few minutes at SimplyTest.me. This site gives you access to a full Drupal installation to evaluate and customize. (Note that the evaluation site will expire after 12 hours.)

For Drupal 10 Users

Drupal sites running 10.2.x or earlier versions must first update to 10.3.0 or later because all core updates added prior to 10.3.0 have been removed from version 11. In general, sites should update to the most recent release of their current major branch before updating to the next major release. The tools only support code compatibility checking toward the next major version, so you must be on Drupal 10.3 for accurate upgrade status information.

🔵 **Install Upgrade Status**

Once you are on 10.3.0 or later, it's a good idea to install Upgrade Status on your development site to help with the move to Drupal 11. Upgrade Status helps "gamify" the process to a certain degree, giving you a checklist of the next steps you might need to perform.

This module can run either on the Drupal back-end UI or on the command line interface with Drush. Upgrade Status examines your environment to help you update your database server, PHP version, and more, to those compatible with Drupal 11. It identifies extensions that are not used on the site that likely can be removed. It scans your

contributed modules for compatibility issues and uses of deprecated code. When compatible versions are available from Drupal.org, it will help you update them. When the updates are not yet available, it guides you to collaborate on issues on Drupal.org to make the projects compatible. For custom code, it will also provide guidance on where to use Drupal Rector in order to significantly speed up updating them.

```
@@ -73,9 +82,13 @@ class BulkFormTest extends ContactStorageTestBase {
    $this->drupalLogin($this->drupalCreateUser(['administer contact forms']));
    $this->drupalGet('test-contact-message-bulk-form');
    $elements = $this->xpath('//select[@id="edit-action"]//option');
-   $this->assertIdentical(count($elements), 1, 'All contact message operations are found.');
-   $this->drupalPostForm('test-contact-message-bulk-form', [], t('Apply to selected items'));
-   $this->assertText('No message selected.');
+   $this->assertSame(count($elements), 1, 'All contact message operations are found.');
+   $this->drupalGet('test-contact-message-bulk-form');
+   $this->submitForm([], t('Apply to selected items'));
+   // TODO: Drupal Rector Notice: Please delete the following comment after you've made any necessary changes.
+   // Verify the assertion: pageTextContains() for HTML responses, responseContains() for non-HTML responses.
+   // The passed text should be HTML decoded, exactly as a human sees it in the browser.
+   $this->assertSession()->pageTextContains('No message selected.');
  }
```

● **Leverage Drupal Rector**

Drupal Rector will automatically generate fixes to help address compatibility issues. This is simpler and easier than starting the code updates manually. The most common deprecated APIs are covered by Drupal Rector, so it can give you a good head start. Any remaining issues identified by Upgrade Status will need to be fixed manually, but the module will direct you to documentation about the required changes.

● **Ensure Contributed Projects Used Are Compatible**

Contributed projects receive help from the Project Update Bot to be compatible. If a contributed project is not yet Drupal 11 compatible, Upgrade Status will guide you to contribute to fixing it. In the meantime, use the Lenient Composer plug-in to update the project on your site. If uncommitted patches are available to said project, you can use cweagans/composer-patches to apply patches where necessary and provide feedback to the patch authors and module maintainers about your experience with them. This will result in a site that still runs on Drupal 10 while its extensions are also compatible with Drupal 11. Then, all that's left to do is update Drupal core.

● **Prepare for Site-Owner-Managed Files**

The default .htaccess file has changed to remove support for the Statistics module, which has been moved to a contributed module.

For Drupal 9 Users

Drupal 9 reached its end of life on November 1, 2023, so users should upgrade to Drupal 10 at a minimum. Remember that if your goal is to upgrade to Drupal 11, you must first upgrade to Drupal 10.3; that step can't be skipped. Make sure your Drupal 9 site is up to date on Drupal 9.5.x before starting the Drupal 10 upgrade.

Also, as outlined above, there is no great urgency to move to Drupal 11 immediately. But you can leverage the same tools and steps in the "For Drupal 10 Users" section to upgrade your site from Drupal 9 to Drupal 10. Once your site is current with Drupal 10, you are in a better position to move to Drupal 11 at a time that best suits your organization.

For Drupal 8 Users

Drupal 8 reached its end of life in November 2021. To upgrade to Drupal 11, you must first update your site to Drupal 9, then to Drupal 10. Use the Upgrade Status Module to analyze your site. Most necessary custom code updates can be completed automatically using Drupal Rector for this upgrade too.

For Drupal 7 Users

Drupal 7 will reach end of life on January 5, 2025. Drupal 11 includes migration tools that make it possible to migrate directly from Drupal 7 and a significant number of contributed projects are expected to become compatible with Drupal 11 by the time of Drupal 7's end of life.

Acquia open sourced our Migrate Accelerate product so anyone can use it now to dramatically speed up the migration process using an easy-to-follow user interface.

If you are using custom modules, Drupal Module Upgrader helps identify where code needs to be changed to be compatible with Drupal 8, 9, 10 or 11. At the moment, it can't convert code to work with Drupal 11 automatically, but the analyzer function is still useful. Other community add-ons in the Migrate Tools and Migrate Plus projects will help streamline the upgrade.

The Future of Drupal

Drupal 11 — built on Drupal 10 — was released the week of July 29, 2024. This means that besides long-term support (LTS) versions, Drupal 10 will not have any more minor releases.

Following Drupal's six-month release cycle, Drupal 11.1 will be released in December 2024. However, there's no immediate need to update to Drupal 11, as Drupal 10 will be supported until Drupal 12's release in mid- to late 2026.

Since the two major versions (Drupal 10 and Drupal 11) will have two years of overlapping support, it will be possible to move from the long-term support version of Drupal 10 to Drupal 11. Developers and business leaders alike tend to value the long-term stability this provides.


Key:
- LTS
- Non LTS
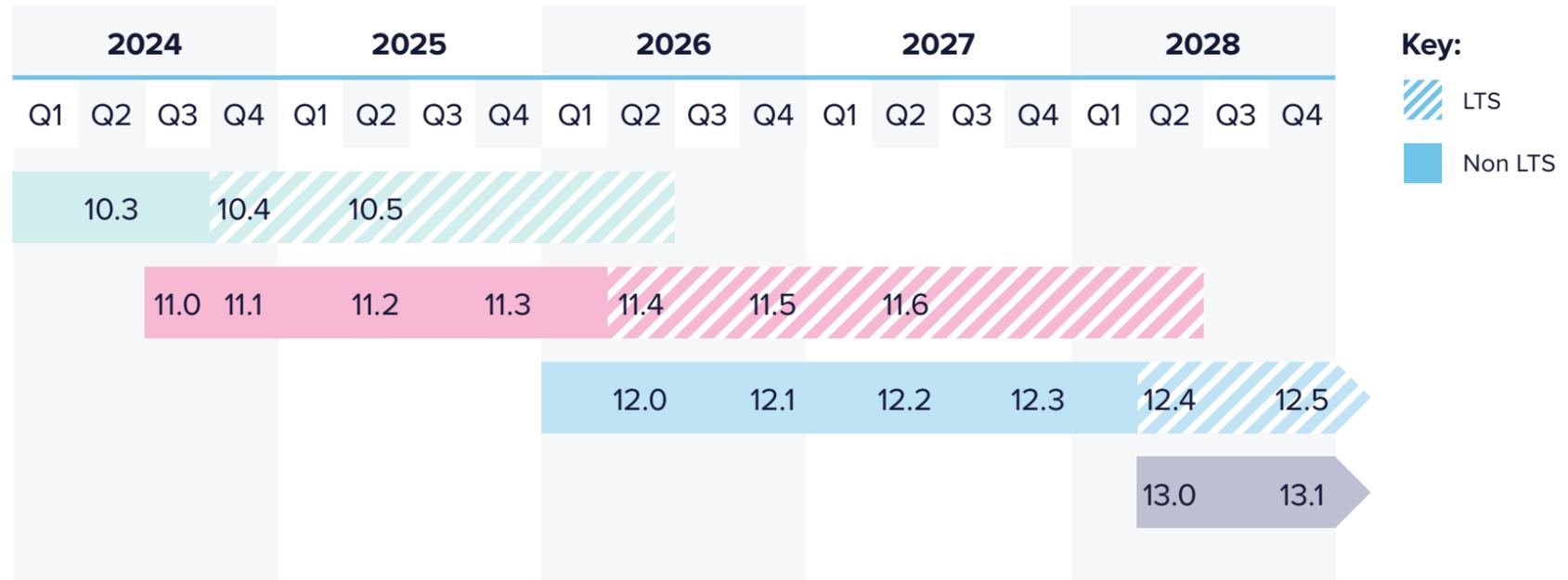
Planned Drupal Releases Set the Stage for a More Reliable Future

As announced in late 2023, a major new version of Drupal will be released every two years. All current and future releases of Drupal will be staged to deliver overlapping support.

So, since Drupal 11 was released in 2024, Drupal 12 will be released in 2026. Each major version will receive active support for about two years, followed by maintenance support and security coverage for about two more years.

This means that long-term support for Drupal 10 (as a 10.4 and 10.5 LTS) without disruptive changes will begin in late 2024. The plan for Drupal 11 is for it to advance to its own LTS version (11.4) in mid-2026. And in 2026, when Drupal 12 is released, that major version will have the same amount of long-term support.

A Smoother Upgrade Path

Both developers and business leaders appreciate this schedule with predictable support because they can move from one super-stable version of Drupal to another, gaining many benefits each time while minimizing impacts on their organizations. So, even late adopters get long-term support.

As mentioned earlier in this guide, upgrading to Drupal 11 is not urgent, but staying up-to-date with the latest version of Drupal 10 will better position you to move when the time is right for you.

The Drupal Starshot Initiative

Drupal project lead Dries Buytaert announced the Starshot initiative at DrupalCon Portland 2024.

As useful and powerful as Drupal is, one key reason it hasn't been adopted more widely is that it's been harder for the average website builder to get started with it. The Drupal Starshot project aims to build a new default download of Drupal designed to remedy that.

The package will be built on Drupal core, but won't replace it. The new download will include refined common features from the contributed project ecosystem to create a great user experience, even for those with limited technical knowledge.

The result of Starshot will be a fast-moving open source product that enables site builders without Drupal experience to easily create a new Drupal site and extend it with prepackaged recipes, all through their browsers. It will guide site builders to install recipes for common use cases and innovative capabilities that are immediately useful for production. It will focus on getting people from install to launch quickly and will bring new people and contributors into Drupal and the Open Web.

In addition to the Recipes functionality that is already in Drupal 11, the following three key initiatives form the basis of Starshot:

- **Automatic Updates**

  Automatic Updates applies updates to Drupal core and contributed projects in a separate, sandboxed copy of your site. This keeps the site up and running until the version is ready to be deployed. Automatic Updates can detect and report problems at every stage of the update process. The module automatically detects database changes in an incoming update and helps you run them during the process. It currently supports patch-level updates, but minor version updates are also implemented in an experimental submodule. The module also includes Package Manager which is a Composer API module for Drupal components.

◆ Project Browser

Project Browser makes it easy for site builders to find modules, recipes, and themes. Once a project is selected, it is installed with Package Manager. The browser lives inside the Drupal site itself on a new Browse tab under Extend. This means you don't need to leave your site in order to use it.
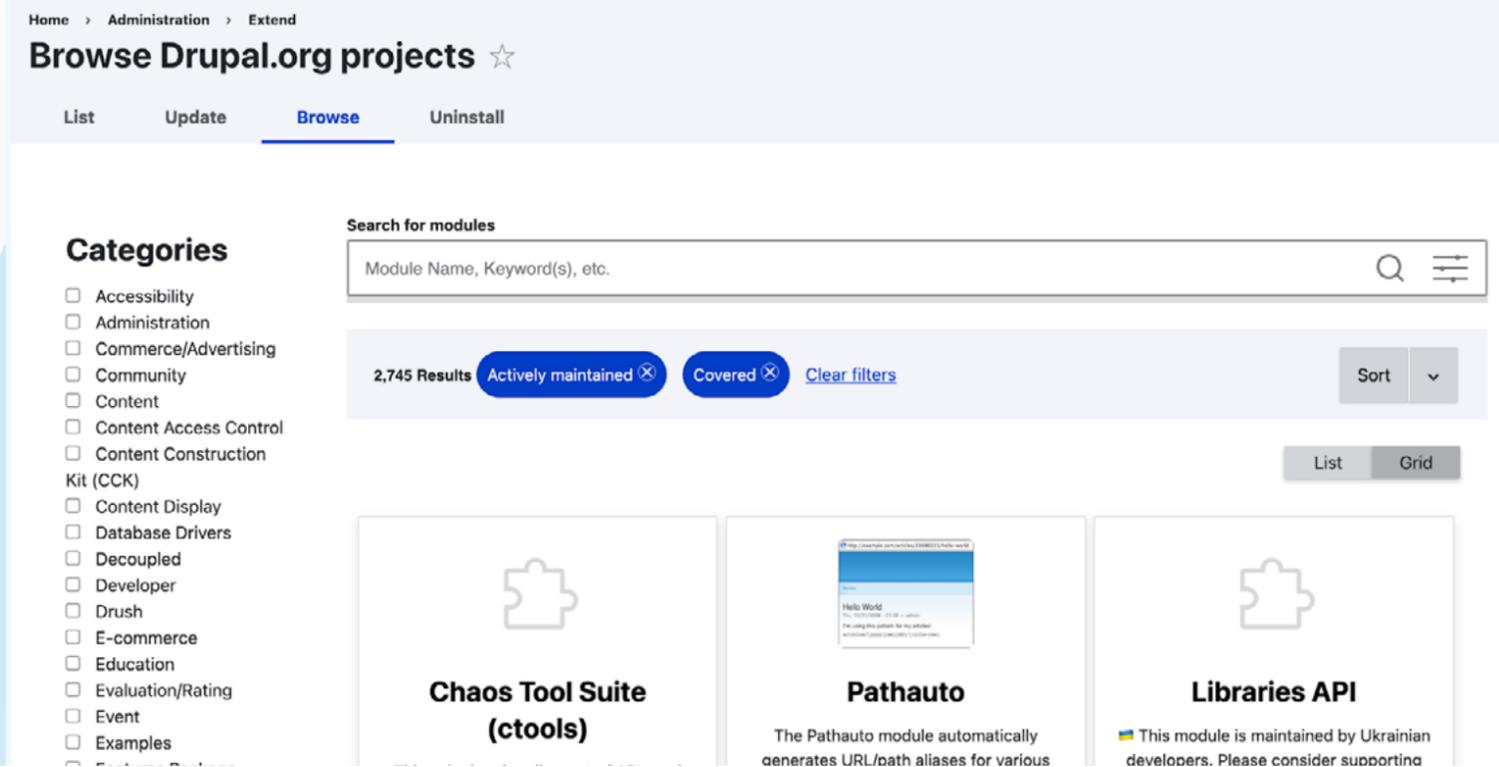
◆ Experience Builder

The Drupal Experience Builder module will enable site builders without Drupal experience to easily theme and build their entire website using only their browser and basic HTML, CSS, and templating markup (e.g., Twig). Experience Builder will also

enable content creators to compose content on any part of the page without relying on developers.

Unlike competing tools, Experience Builder will make it easier to re-use content across channels. Managing large-scale content will also

be easier because the module leverages Drupal strengths (like structured data and fine-grained access controls) to achieve data and design consistency.

With Drupal, content creators will be able to use a single CMS to manage content

across headless and coupled contexts. Meanwhile, site builders will be able to make large-scale design changes, like rebranding, and perform large-scale content operations, like imports, exports, and migrations.

Need help with your next Drupal project?

No matter what you want to accomplish with Drupal, Acquia is here to support you.

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To stay up-to-date on Drupal, you can also check out the following resources:

dev.acquia.com/drupal11 ⧉

twitter.com/drupal ⧉

twitter.com/dropismoving ⧉

drupal.org/about/core ⧉

drupal.org/about/starshot ⧉

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Acquia empowers ambitious digital innovators to craft productive, frictionless digital experiences that make a difference to their customers, employees, and communities. We provide the world's leading open digital experience platform (DXP), built on open source Drupal, as part of our commitment to shaping a digital future that is safe, accessible, and available to all. With Acquia DXP, you can unlock the potential of your customer data and content, accelerating time to market and increasing engagement, conversion, and revenue.