



Four Reasons to Fast Track Your Move to Drupal 8

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If you're running a website on Drupal 7 or earlier, here's the news: It's time for you to upgrade to Drupal 8. If you're running something other than Drupal and are considering a move, there has never been more reason to switch and it's never been easier.

But what's the benefit of switching to Drupal 8? To put it simply, Drupal 8 is more than a content framework; it's a digital hub for integrating all of your tools. It's an ideal platform for any organization that:

- Competes with other products or services
- Plans to introduce new products this year
- Needs to market across channels
- Wants to build a relationship with customers
- Can benefit from social media
- Helps sales staff and managers stay informed

“ Drupal 8 brings many improvements, including architectural refinements that help ensure content control, granularity, and reuse across digital channels and means of interaction. ”

- Gartner Magic Quadrant Report, 2016

Essentially, every organization that's interested in retaining a competitive edge is in a position to benefit from the advances in Drupal 8. Drupal 8 has been consistently rated as among the top choices for web experience management platforms and solutions by industry analysts Gartner and Forrester. Gartner placed Drupal, and Acquia's Drupal-tuned Cloud Platform, in the visionary leader category of its 2016 Magic Quadrant. The report found that Drupal 8 "brings many improvements, including architectural refinements that help ensure content control, granularity, and reuse across digital channels and means of interaction."

If your organization wants to be a market leader, if it's on a mission, or just wants to stay in business and not lose ground, it's time to switch to Drupal 8. Want to learn more? Read on to learn about industry trends and practical considerations around APIs, digital transformation, design and cost of ownership. This guide will help you understand the urgency, why a move to Drupal 8 is the right solution, and why the things you may think are blockers are actually additional incentives to make the switch.



1 First Reason to Switch: The Ascendancy of APIs

In the 1990s, every organization could be sorted into two groups: Those which understood the value of a nascent world wide web and invested early and reaped the benefit; and those that missed it completely.

Today a no less transformative trend is taking place: open APIs, which are not nearly as visible as the web was in the 90s. As a result many more organizations will miss the opportunity to lead and will be left behind.

What's an API?

APIs - or Application Programming Interfaces - have been around for a long time.

From Wikipedia,

Application program interface (API) is a set of routines, protocols, and tools for building software applications. An API specifies how software components should interact. Additionally, APIs are used when programming graphical user interface (GUI) components.

Basically, an API lets different software systems talk to each other. And the ways that APIs are being used now is a game changer. Drupal 8 ships with 30 ready-made APIs that are designed to help free your data. This enables you to develop and extend products and services far outside the bounds of the browser.

Not only does this allow organizations to better monetize their data but it makes it easy for organizations to pivot much faster and create new cost-effective customer centered iterations. APIs also make native mobile applications and the cloud a lot more fun and effective. With APIs, everything is programmable. If it's digital, there's an API for it.



Second Reason to Switch: Digital Transformation is Now

FFW started blogging and presenting about Drupal as a tool for digital transformation in the summer of 2015 when there were still very few people using the term. Watch cable news or other channels today and you can't ignore the ads from global brands like GE and Dell that reference their own transformation or their product's ability to help your brand transform.

As a free open source product, Drupal has always been transformative technology and as such has helped many organizations become trendsetters.

Now, as the Gartner and Forrester reports clearly evidence, Drupal 8 is a tool that can help organizations accelerate their transformation initiatives. Make no mistake, we have now entered the mainstream period of the digital transformation paradigm shift where a majority of enterprises, brands and organizations will begin their transformation process, or wither. Will your organization get there before its competition? Drupal 8 is the best and most accessible tool to help your organization accelerate and more fully realize its digital transformation.

Third Reason to Switch: Content First, Design Anytime

Worried about how long it'll take your team to settle on a new design? That's no longer a delay to site development. Drupal 8 has a powerful new theming engine that makes building out the look and feel of your website in Drupal 8 faster, more secure and more performant. This means that the entire time you're deciding what your site will look like, the framework that will power it is being constructed.

After all, what's the point of having a pretty site if the engine doesn't work? That's why the design of your site can be completely decoupled from the backend using Drupal's powerful ReST API. Using Angular, Ember, React, even D3, Drupal 8 is ready to connect to the front end library of your choosing.

Regardless of your scope, strategy, aesthetics, needs or preferences, you can and should begin to build out your back end in Drupal 8 right away to take advantage of its full suite of APIs and other benefits.



Fourth Reason to Switch: Strong and Stable Code

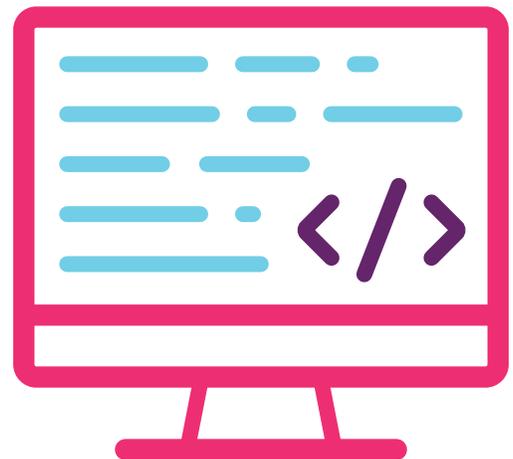
There is no other single open source project leading in any of Gartner's Magic Quadrants or Forrester's Waves. That means every other alternative among Drupal 8's leading competitors will cost you thousands and thousands of dollars to just kick the tires.

Once you've laid out your cash, you still don't own anything and if profit centers drop you're left with a useless software license for a project that will sunset long before you get the return on your investment that you promised your stakeholders.

Drupal 8 offers every organization the opportunity to become the master of its own destiny by enabling them to work with programmers and vendors that understand the technology and have a vested interest in its success beyond the term of a license agreement.

“ There are thousands of developers worldwide that contribute to Drupal 8, building new solutions, and reviewing existing code to make sure it's secure. ”

Drupal 8 will empower you to have strong, stable, and secure code. While it might seem like closed source software would be more secure because the code isn't visible, that's actually not the case. Open source projects like Drupal have thousands of people working on the project, building new solutions, and reviewing existing code to make sure it's secure. If there's a vulnerability or security flaw in open source code, it's certain someone will catch it; but with closed source code, the contribution and development teams are smaller, which means there's more of a chance for mistakes to slip through.





There Are No Real Blockers to Moving to Drupal 8

Still have a few hesitations? Worried about potential blockers? Have a few questions? Here are some things we've heard from clients who weren't sure about making the switch to Drupal 8 - then did it, and loved it.

WE HAVE TO WAIT TO SEE WHAT XYZ AD AGENCY SHOWS US.

Actually, no: you don't have to wait, and you shouldn't. Drupal 8 front-end systems are so flexible they can be adapted to anything your creative agency throws at it. See reason three.

D8 IS EVOLUTIONARY. THERE'S NO BIG REASON TO SWITCH.

Yes, Drupal 8 is an evolutionary step from previous versions of Drupal. But Drupal 8 is also revolutionary. The evolutionary steps taken in developing Drupal 8 are revolutionizing web experiences. Drupal 7 cannot do what Drupal 8 can do. Chances are there are things Drupal 8 can do that you need now.

OUR IT TEAM IS TOO SMALL AND TOO OVERWORKED TO HANDLE A BIG SWITCH.

If your IT team is overworked now it's not going to magically get easier. Unless your organization takes steps to help IT teams converge around unified modern technologies, their workloads will continue to expand even as budgets shrink.

More than any other previous version, Drupal 8 represents an opportunity to cut back on the number of stacks your IT team needs to support. Regardless of whether it's an Intranet, corporate communications site, digital asset management portal or application services hub, Drupal 8 is a unified solution that can run on one secure cloud based stack.

MIGRATION IS REALLY HARD.

No. Migrating from one Drupal version to another has actually become pretty easy and it's getting even easier. Migrating from other systems has become a lot easier too. Here's how.



How to Migrate to Drupal 8

Drupal 8 has built out a very effective suite of Migrate modules and included it in core. Drupal 8 out of the box now includes:

- Migrate
- Migrate Drupal
- Migrate Drupal UI

The inclusion of these modules now provides on the spot support for data migrations in the user interface for moving key architectural components and their data from earlier versions of Drupal. The Migrate module suite can help you easily move content types, fields, taxonomy terms, users, comments, and more.

“ The ease of migrating your data into Drupal 8 means there’s no reason not to switch. Once you’ve made the change, you can take advantage of all the many benefits Drupal 8 has to offer. ”

This means that instead of manually recreating the structure of your Drupal 7 or Drupal 6 site, you can connect the two databases using Drupal 8’s Migrate Drupal UI. Then, all it takes is a simple flip of the switch to import the old site’s content types along with custom fields, taxonomy, user roles, users, nodes, blocks and more into your new Drupal 8 site.

Instead of taking days to rebuild your site structure and even more time to migrate your data, you can now use Drupal 8’s core features to migrate your data within hours. Of course this will not address custom themes or functionality created by custom modules but being able to wholesale migrate your data into Drupal 8 is perhaps the biggest value add for moving to Drupal 8.

The ease of migrating your data into Drupal 8 means there’s no reason not to switch. Once you’ve made the change, you can take advantage of all the goodness of Drupal 8’s APIs including the ability to build your front end out on your own timetable using the software’s HTML5 compliant templating engine or the front-end library of your choosing.

If you aren’t moving from an earlier version of Drupal the Migrate module included in Drupal 8 core enables you to create your own custom data migration path from other systems like Wordpress.



In a Nutshell...

Maybe you're sold on switching to Drupal 8, and now you need to convince your boss. Here are just a few of the key reasons why it's time to switch:

- Drupal 8 includes support for migrating from earlier versions of Drupal that makes upgrading your data almost routine.
- Drupal 8's powerful suite of APIs will help you free your data so you can extend your products, monetize your data, innovate faster and build relationships with partners.
- You don't need to budget for an ad agency to start to take advantage of Drupal 8's bottom line boosting capabilities. Drupal's back-end will play nice with any front-end technology or strategy you eventually go with.
- Digital Transformation trends are accelerating and Drupal 8 will help your organization realize its own potential.
- No one can take Drupal away from you. If you're not already using open source, you are not controlling your own destiny.



How to Get Started

Ready to make the switch? Contact FFW for information about how we can help you migrate your site to Drupal 8. Our team would love to hear from you, and is here to provide you with a seamless transition to Drupal 8.

[Contact Us](#)



About Us

FFW is a digital agency focused on creating digital experience platforms that ensure our clients' success, always moving forward at the speed of digital innovation.

Since 2000, the world's largest brands have relied on us to build accessible, creative, and user-friendly digital solutions that deliver results. We are more than 375+ people across 10 countries, with a track record of over 1,000 digital solutions delivered.

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