

Guide

# WordPress vs Drupal

Which CMS is right for you?



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# WordPress now powers more than 40% of the top 1 million websites.

If you're currently evaluating a content management system (CMS), you're likely aware of how large the list of choices has become. There are [more than 100 CMS platforms](#) available today, and as that number continues to climb, finding the right CMS for your specific business needs can feel like a monumental task.

To help you narrow your search, this guide (and our series of guides like it) will help you evaluate different CMS solutions and how they compare to [WordPress](#), the #1 CMS in the world. WordPress now powers more than 40% of the top 1 million websites by traffic, and this guide will explore why it's become so popular, and how it compares to other CMS solutions.

Throughout the following sections, we'll take a closer look at WordPress vs. Drupal, a popular CMS typically used for larger websites with complex customizations. Read on to find out how Drupal stacks up next to WordPress with a focus on the following areas:

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# WordPress vs Drupal: An overview.

WordPress dominates the CMS landscape with more than 60% market share...



## WordPress vs. Drupal: An Overview.

WordPress is the most widely used CMS in the world, and for good reason. [WordPress.org](#), the open source, license-free version of WordPress, offers a ton of cost savings in addition to flexibility and ease of use.

Today, WordPress serves as the foundation for millions of websites spanning everything from [brand destinations](#) and [eCommerce stores](#)

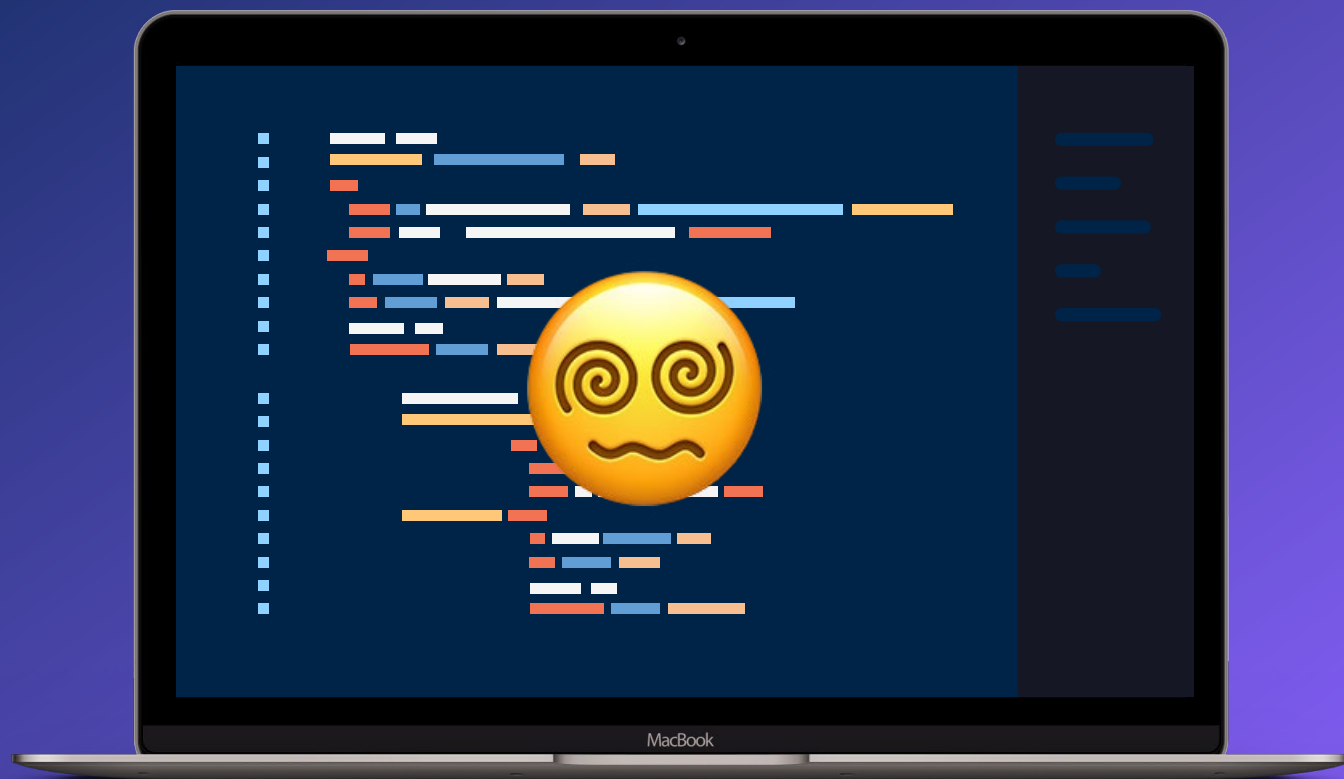
to large-scale corporate sites [for enterprise organizations](#).

Drupal, too, enjoys its fair share of popularity, although it's significantly less widespread than WordPress.

While WordPress dominates the CMS landscape with more than [60% market share](#), Drupal makes up less than 2%, with Shopify (5.8%), Wix (3.7%), Squarespace (3.0%), and Joomla (2.6%) ahead of it.



**...flexibility and low barrier to entry are significant advantages compared to Drupal, which can be limiting for users without a deep technical background (including some developers)...**



## WordPress vs. Drupal: An Overview.

Launched in 2001, Drupal was one of the first CMS frameworks ever released, and like WordPress, it's open source, free from licensing fees, and supported by an active community of loyal users.

For businesses with robust technology resources, Drupal's top-rated security, data-friendly taxonomies, advanced user permissions, and strong SEO functionality can all be attractive. It can also integrate with several popular eCommerce platforms, including Amazon Store, Drupal Commerce, and Ubercart.

That said, WordPress is hardly lacking in **powerful SEO functionality**, and it's renowned for its ability to easily integrate with a vast ecosystem of plugins and external platforms, eCommerce included.

Even more importantly, developers and content creators of all skill levels can use WordPress—ease of use is perhaps the most common reason WordPress is selected over other, similar platforms.

That flexibility and low barrier to entry are significant advantages compared to Drupal, which can be limiting for users without a deep technical background (including some developers).

As detailed in the following sections, individual developers may prefer Drupal, but its complex codebase and associated workflows can also be limiting to many users, preventing them from unlocking its full potential.

**When it comes to building beautiful digital experiences at today's rapid pace of digital acceleration, Drupal can add challenges and complexity in comparison to WordPress, especially when it comes to ease of use, flexibility, agility, and total cost of ownership.**



# Overall user experience and ease of use.

At its core, Drupal is more difficult to use than WordPress, and the user experience for anyone unfamiliar with Drupal-specific development will likely be frustrating, if not incomprehensible.



## Overall user experience and ease of use.

While WordPress and Drupal share some similarities, one key area where the two CMSs diverge is overall user experience and ease of use.

At its core, Drupal is more difficult to use than WordPress, and the user experience for anyone unfamiliar with Drupal-specific development will likely be frustrating, if not incomprehensible.

Drupal allows users to create advanced, highly customized sites, but it comes with a steep learning curve. Adding functionality to Drupal sites often requires [installing and modifying Drupal modules](#). Although Drupal can be a good fit for complicated web projects, users must have moderate-to-advanced development experience under their belt (and be comfortable working in the command line) if they're going to get the most out of it.

WordPress, however, enables developers and content creators to streamline workflows, speed up time to market, and achieve higher ROI. With a block-based visual editor built for content creators (more on this below) and a broad ecosystem of [plugins](#) and [themes](#) for fast site creation and customization, WordPress offers a simple, straightforward user experience that makes it easy for technical and non-technical users to create and edit content.

Drupal can have the opposite effect, as it requires a developer to do just about anything, adding to development backlogs and siloing content creation away from the teams that should be managing it.

This approach, in which developers end up becoming blockers in the content management process, is increasingly at odds with the fast pace of today's digital landscape. Even though WordPress and Drupal are both set apart from closed, proprietary software when it comes to upfront licensing costs, that advantage can quickly become muddled when the considerable developer resources required for building and maintaining Drupal sites are taken into account.

Despite historically finding favor with large organizations, there are very few things Drupal can do that WordPress can't match up to. Businesses interested in building advanced customizations with WordPress can work with a specialist agency such as [Illustrate Digital](#) to accomplish their goals while minimizing the extra cost associated with developer-heavy digital projects.



# Content management tools.

Unsurprisingly, one of the first things to assess when evaluating a CMS is its content management capabilities.



If creating relatively simple pieces of content such as blog posts or landing pages is too complicated when using a particular CMS, that may signal more significant problems for your digital footprint down the road.



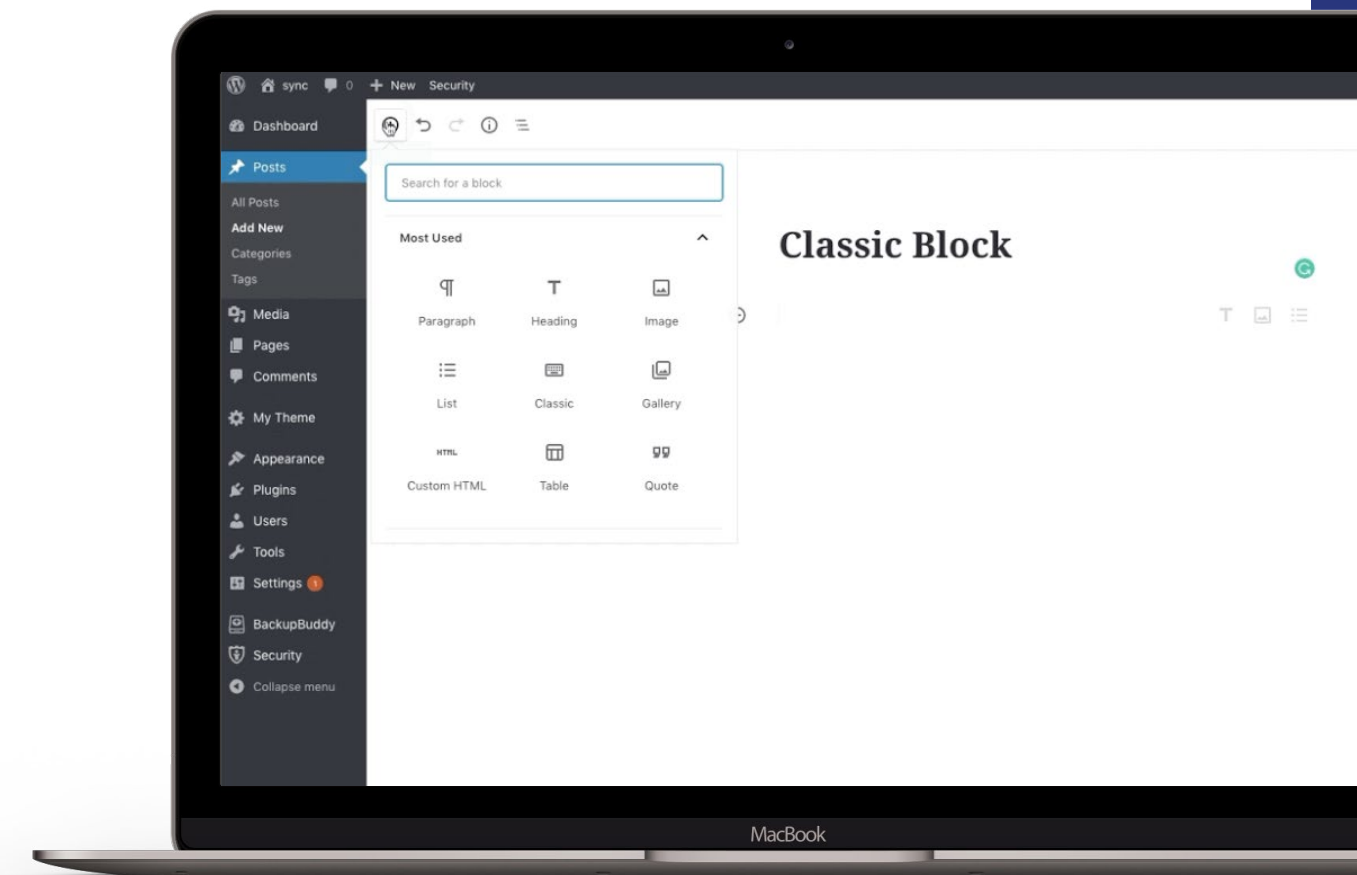
Content management tools.

## WordPress content management features.

One of the reasons WordPress is the world's most popular CMS is that it offers straightforward, easy-to-use tools for content creation.

The WordPress process is simple: Create a new post, input your content, and publish it. You can set categories and tags for your content, add menus to the interface to make it easier to navigate, and use whatever formatting or styling you prefer.

In recent years, WordPress has also received an update with a [block-based editor](#) called Gutenberg. In WordPress 5.0, Gutenberg became the default experience for creating and editing content, allowing for WYSIWYG content creation through the use of blocks.

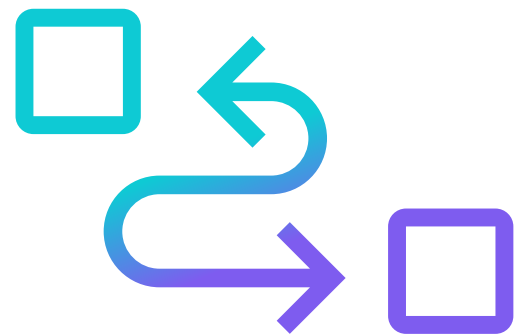


With Gutenberg, you don't have to touch a line of code to create your content. Instead, you use a corresponding block to add copy and design elements to your pages or posts and additional block options through [third-party plugins](#).

Through its approach to iterative design, [Illustrate Digital](#), one of Europe's leading WordPress agencies, provides an excellent snapshot of the way WordPress and the block-based Gutenberg editor can play a powerful role in building dynamic digital experiences and optimizing them quickly

**“The absolute beauty of blocks in WordPress from a UX perspective is two-fold,”**

Explains Scott Jones, Managing Director at Illustrate Digital.



**“The ability to change blocks on a page quickly, or create a new page with blocks in a different order, is amazingly powerful for A/B testing to change the importance of particular items.”**

Content management tools.

Content management tools.

Even more powerful, he explains, is that WordPress blocks provide users with the ability to keep content strictly as-is within the CMS and to overlay a brand-new block design (or whole site design) on top of existing blocks, post types, or the entire infrastructure of a site.

**“This is a real win for iterative design,” Jones says. “It means we’re no longer rebuilding an entire site from the ground up, but instead, we can build on already solid foundations and save marketing teams a load of time replacing or re-entering perfectly good content.”**

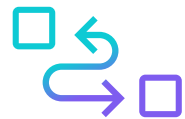
Updates and optimizations with the block editor are easier too. By analyzing and learning from user behavior, the Illustrate team can start small, adjusting simple things like the size and color of buttons, which they can update without uprooting an entire page or site. From there, the sky's the limit, and changes can be made to single posts or pages, as needed, in response to consumer demand.

## Overall, WordPress provides key content management benefits with the following:



### **Content blocks.**

WordPress offers the ability to [create custom blocks](#) or choose from a growing library of unique, pre-existing blocks for a faster content workflow that can be used multiple times on any page across your website with brand continuity.



### **Reusable blocks.**

Benefit from work you've already completed by creating a block, or group of blocks, that can be saved and reused anywhere across your site. Create once, publish anywhere.



### **Agile post management.**

Create custom post types and quickly publish new content that brings to life everything from new products, announcements, brand campaigns, and more with a dedicated, focused content UI designed for this.



### **Optimized content structure.**

The structure of content types and URLs in WordPress is geared explicitly towards usability and SEO.

## **Drupal content management features.**

Content creation with Drupal is less straightforward and offers a different level of per-page usability than WordPress (which has gained even wider usability with the introduction of [Full Site Editing](#)).

Drupal does offer a range of content management features, but it's nowhere near as intuitive to use out of the gate as WordPress. Because the primary intended Drupal user is a developer, the content creation process is less WYSIWYG-focused and more manual.

As for [CMS-specific features](#), newer versions of Drupal offer a WYSIWYG editing experience with a responsive design, mobile editing options, and content revisioning, making for a smoother collaborative post-creation process.

### **A few standout CMS features include:**



#### **Content tagging.**

Content structure within Drupal is well-defined, making it easy to tag content based on its attributes, its taxonomy, or the elements it contains.



#### **In-place authoring.**

Drupal allows you to edit content "in-place" in line with the WYSIWYG editing features. So long as you're logged in, you can view the live page or post and edit it directly.



#### **Mobile editing.**

You can modify content from mobile devices, which is a considerable benefit for team members on the go.



# Versatility and adaptability.

The different use cases and applications of both WordPress and Drupal provide some parity regarding versatility and the types of sites you can build with either CMS, although enterprise sites have traditionally favored Drupal for deeper customization and global/multi-lingual requirements.

## Versatility and adaptability.

However, the maturity of [WordPress as an enterprise solution](#) has made it an attractive, high-ROI replacement for closed, proprietary systems like [Sitecore](#) and Adobe Experience Manager, as well as developer-heavy open-source systems like Drupal.

### WordPress versatility.

Today, sites built with WordPress are used for just about everything from brand websites and eCommerce stores to learning portals and company-wide intranets.

Because it's easy to set up and intuitive for many users (not just devs), WordPress is an excellent option for creative projects in general, as it allows for more agility and flexibility without the ongoing burden on development resources.

When combined with enterprise-level expertise and a highly scalable, secure platform, WordPress can also meet the requirements of even the largest enterprise organizations, providing immediate cost savings upfront, added flexibility, and increased creative agility across internal teams.

Beyond specific use cases, where both CMSs offer particular benefits, the ability to adapt quickly with WordPress far outshines that of Drupal, particularly regarding UX design and launching new products or campaigns.

As mobile use [has already outpaced](#) that of desktop, and omnichannel strategies fuel content delivery across an even more comprehensive ecosystem of devices and touchpoints, UX is (and will increasingly become) a massively important aspect of content creation and management.

This means any CMS must be highly adaptable to allow designers to test, learn from users, and quickly implement changes to user journeys and user interfaces—or risk losing audiences to businesses that provide better digital experiences.

## Drupal versatility.

While Drupal can be used to create many different types of sites, it's not as versatile as WordPress in that there are a few specific types of sites Drupal is ideal for (data-heavy sites with numerous customization requirements).

Again, Drupal is not as intuitive to use as WordPress and doesn't claim to be. Drupal even offers a [usability page](#) that states upfront:

**“In general people expect a much richer user experience around content creation than Drupal offers, much of the functionality that people consider standard for a CMS is simply missing.”**

If you know what you'd like to create—especially something big and complex—and have little plans to adapt and change it over time, then Drupal may be your ideal platform. However, its missing functionality makes Drupal less versatile than WordPress, and its complex interface means it's not as adaptable in terms of UX design.

That said, Drupal provides excellent flexibility for creating large sites, and it offers greater security and reliability since it's not the target of malware injections and hacking attempts as often as WordPress.

Ultimately, you can create any type of site you want with Drupal, but it will most likely require more customizations than WordPress, from developers with Drupal-specific experience.

Versatility and adaptability.

## Security.

**Security should be top of mind for any business evaluating a CMS.**

While WordPress has historically (and somewhat unfairly) been labeled as unsecure, [this misconception](#) is mainly due to the wide use and popularity of WordPress and the fact that it's well-known to hackers and other nefarious actors online.

Like any software, CMS security is most often in the hands of its admins. With WordPress, updating plugins and themes is one of the best ways to significantly reduce security vulnerabilities.

Similarly, Drupal requires regular updates and maintenance, and keeping it secure requires the attention of developers or additional security engineers.

## WordPress security.

### ...It offers features like Global Edge Security and Smart Plugin Manager, ensuring WordPress sites stay incredibly secure.

While WordPress does indeed remain a target for many hackers due to its broad market popularity, ensuring good processes for consistent maintenance is the key to keeping bad actors at bay.

Plugin vulnerabilities alone represent more than half of the known entry points for attacks on WordPress sites, and keeping plugins up-to-date can effectively nullify those vulnerabilities. If regular updates to WordPress Core are performed with ongoing plugin and theme maintenance, WordPress is just as secure as any other CMS.

Furthermore, the WordPress developer community is incredibly active. In addition to providing ongoing support and feature updates to WordPress Core, community developers serve as an invaluable front line against security threats and vulnerabilities. This includes everything from monitoring unfolding security issues to patching bugs! As part of this line of defense, the

WordPress Foundation incentivizes security professionals to identify security issues.

While a managed host should equip its customers with a secure environment and active threat detection to prevent potential attacks, others go beyond that with additional security features and precautions.

WP Engine, for example, has completed a SOC 2 Type II examination for its customer environment and User Portal. It offers features like Global Edge Security and Smart Plugin Manager, ensuring WordPress sites stay incredibly secure.

Meanwhile, service providers such as Illustrate Digital offer ISO-certified implementation projects for WordPress with bank-grade security and an additional level of reassurance with comprehensive, hands-on protection via dedicated support and maintenance services.

## Drupal security.

By all accounts, Drupal is one of the most secure CMS options currently available—it's one of the CMS's top-selling points and is evidenced by its popularity with government institutions and other security-minded organizations.

Security is a critical component of Drupal's underlying software development, and it comes with integrated support for two-factor authentication, SSL, access controls, and full security reporting.

Like WordPress, Drupal modules (akin to WordPress plugins) are also peer-reviewed by the Drupal community to ensure they are safe and secure.

Drupal also publishes detailed security reports and the community tends to be highly transparent about its security—more so than other CMSs, including WordPress.

### That said, Drupal has experienced its share of vulnerabilities, and much like WordPress (as well as other CMSs), Drupal's software must be maintained and best practices adhered to to maximize its robust security settings.



# Scalability.

## Drupal and WordPress both offer a lot of options for building scalable sites.

Drupal and WordPress both offer many options for building scalable sites.

While Drupal has traditionally been relied on for enterprise and government sites, WordPress is also relied on for highly scalable sites, including the [UK's National Archives](#), [Sony Music](#), and [The Walt Disney Company](#).

If appropriately configured, WordPress sites can serve millions of views without issue. Like any high-traffic site, serving visitors with a fast, seamless digital experience requires greater server resources/higher pricing tiers.

A large part of scalability comes down to your hosting plan and provider—not necessarily your CMS—and opting for a specialized host with a dedicated server is your best bet if you expect rapid growth.

## Scalability.

### **WordPress scalability.**

WordPress is highly scalable and can suit enterprise-level websites, full directory databases, and eCommerce stores featuring thousands of products. Again, it all comes down to the hosting you select and the server configurations you put in place. Given that these circumstances are met, WordPress can scale to meet any level of user traffic.

The most significant appeal here is that WordPress can be tiny, too. You don't have to launch a site with the knowledge that it'll be a giant web store. Instead, you can pick a small hosting plan with a free theme, launch a simple website, and scale up as traffic grows later.

Enterprise-level businesses benefit here, too, particularly in today's rapidly changing digital landscape, where micro-campaigns and brand launches must go to market faster than ever.

## Complicated, slow content management processes hinder large-scale organizations, and WordPress offers agility alongside scalability that other solutions do not.

### **Drupal scalability.**

While WordPress can be built to scale, Drupal is known for its incredible growth ability. It's one of the reasons why developers for more complex sites often gravitate towards it.

However, if you want the flexibility of starting small and growing over time, Drupal can be intimidating, and you may need a different solution.

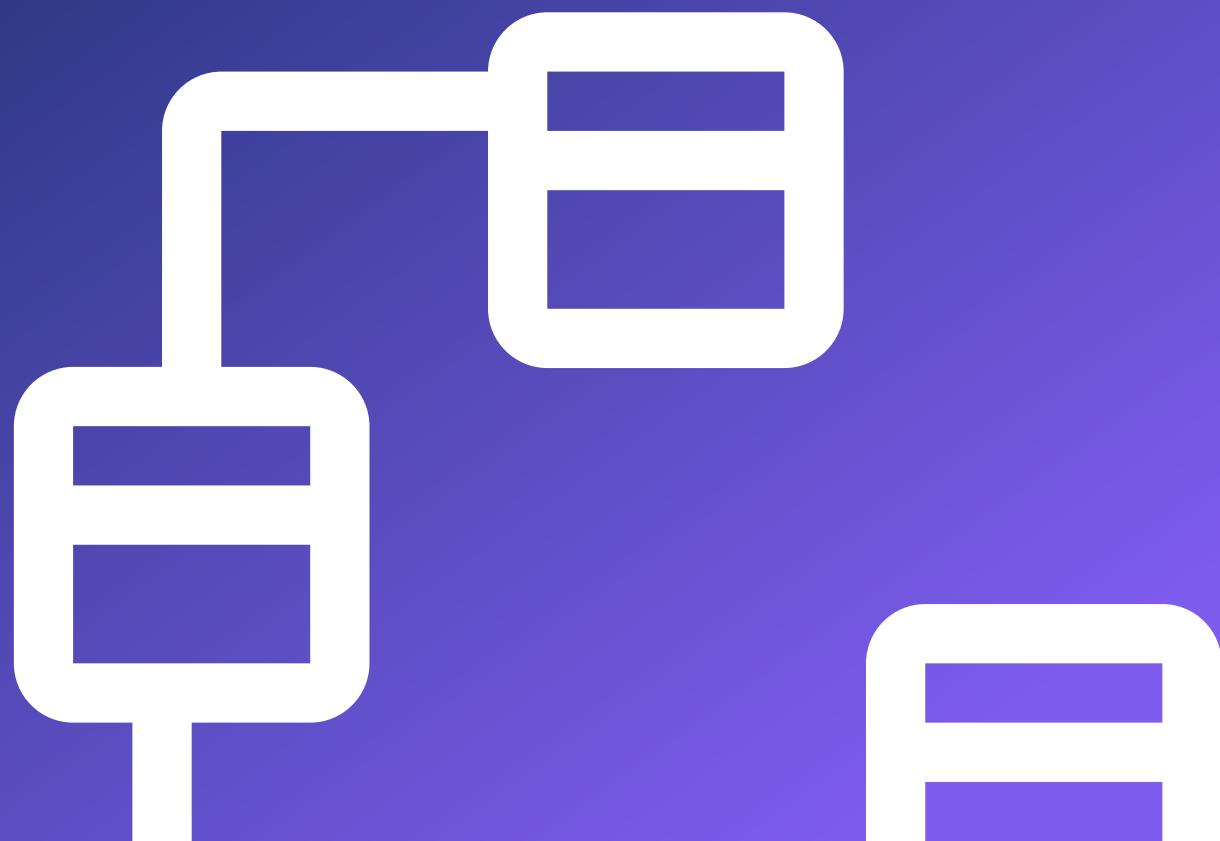
That said, Drupal does allow you to build an extensive site with a first-rate underlying structure, support, and security.



# Integrations.

## Integrating well with third-party services and software is another key consideration when evaluating a CMS.

While out-of-the-box functionality is undoubtedly beneficial as you start building your digital presence, making sure you have clear options for adding new functionality, extending features across your site(s), and connecting with a growing ecosystem of sales and marketing tools will be an essential factor as your digital footprint grows.



## Integrations.

### WordPress integrations.

Although fewer integrations might make sense for some users, WordPress offers far more flexibility here, as its open source code base means users can integrate with an exhaustive list of solutions in today's [growing martech landscape](#).

From integrating with external, third-party platforms like [Salesforce](#) or [Microsoft Dynamics](#) to bringing functionality into your WordPress environment via the massive [ecosystem of plugins](#), WordPress is well-known for its ability to integrate with just about any platform or software you could imagine.

The growing focus on [headless solutions](#) and the increasingly

prominent role WordPress plays as the backend in headless deployments is yet another reason WordPress comes out on top concerning integrations.

Using a JavaScript application for the frontend, a headless solution pulls specific WordPress data via APIs such as the [WordPress REST API](#) or the [WPGraphQL plugin](#) for highly personalized, omnichannel experiences with speeds as fast as static sites.

Headless provides developers with the “right tech for the right job,” including easy integrations with other software, additional layers of security, and the ability to future-proof WordPress with a new level of flexibility and control over content.

### Drupal integrations.

The primary mode of integration for Drupal is through the use of modules. There are [thousands of modules](#) available for Drupal for performing various tasks. For instance, many allow you to [connect Drupal with third-party services](#). Others add advanced website features like forms, slideshows, and social media sharing buttons.

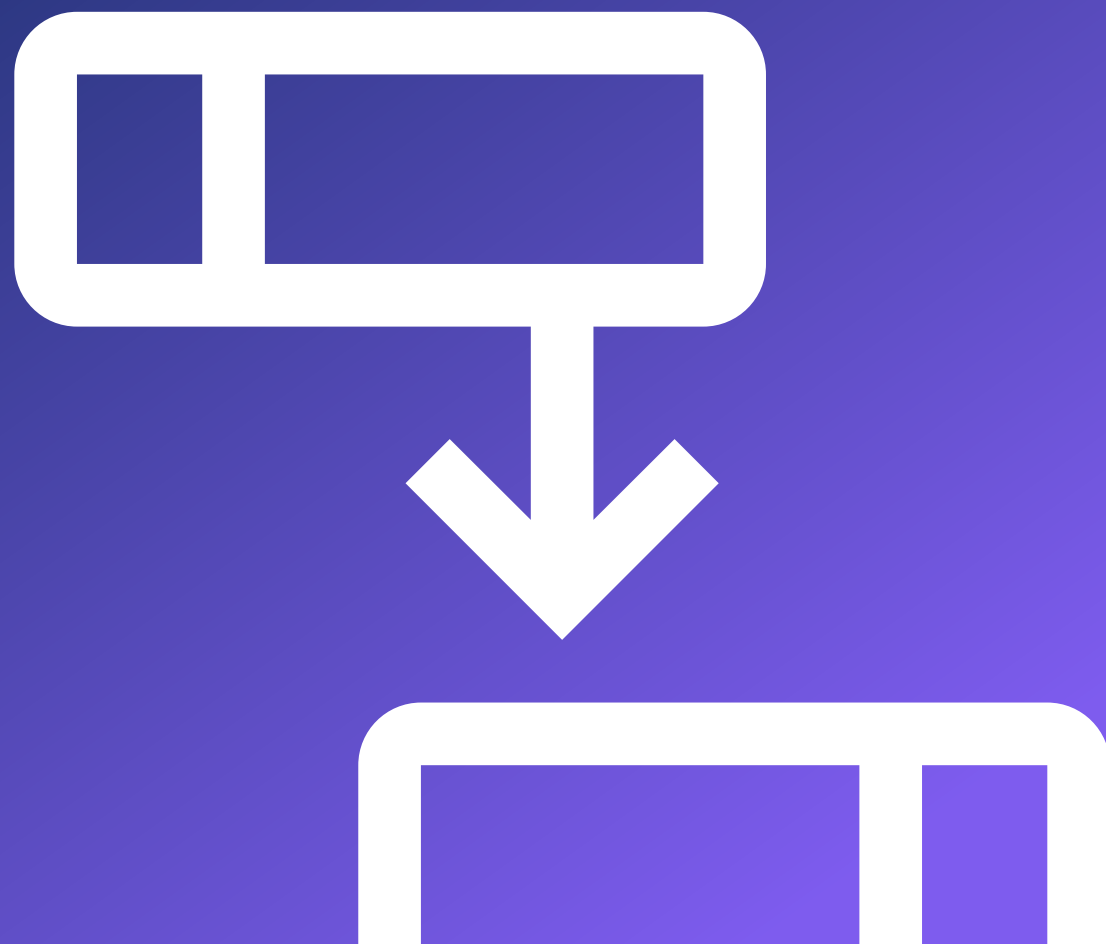
While modules act similarly to WordPress plugins, they are more challenging to find, download, and implement.

That said, Drupal's open-source codebase—like WordPress—makes it a highly flexible CMS for integrating with external platforms for added functionality.

Drupal is also a popular choice for headless deployments. However, its developer-centric nature removes one of the central benefits of headless, which provides developers and content creators access to the tools and systems they prefer.

# Migrations.

Moving away from an existing CMS and transferring legacy sites to a new solution requires careful consideration and planning for several elements.



## Migrations.

While selecting a new solution is step one in the process, any migration from one CMS to another should also include these recommended preparatory steps:

### Project planning.

Kick off your migration project by assembling the team you'll need to make it a success. This team may grow as you perform initial audits of your data, site content, and security requirements.

### Data mapping.

Before any migration, it's crucial to map out your data, understand its complexity, and determine what will be required to transfer as much of it as possible without losing or deprecating anything. As a result of this process, remove data or content that would otherwise slow down the CMS migration.

If you're migrating from Drupal to another CMS, consider that some Drupal data may add complexities to the migration process. Suppose you're migrating from Drupal to WordPress. In that case, data mapping allows for compatibility with specific WordPress elements, including [Advanced Custom Fields](#), [Gutenberg blocks](#), and the relationships between nodes, referencing, and related content.

### Hosting.

Before migrating a site from one CMS to another, check with your hosting provider to ensure it supports your new CMS. Suppose you're moving from Drupal to WordPress. In that case, [WP Engine](#) provides industry-leading hosting for WordPress on top of worldwide data centers, infrastructure built for speed and security, and 24x7x365 technical support at any point, should you need it.

### Specialist expertise.

For a migration from Drupal to WordPress, working with a specialist agency such as [Illustrate Digital](#) will ensure your new WordPress site benefits from strategic UX design and prototyping while enabling effortless content editing to accomplish your goals.

## Migration to WordPress from Drupal.

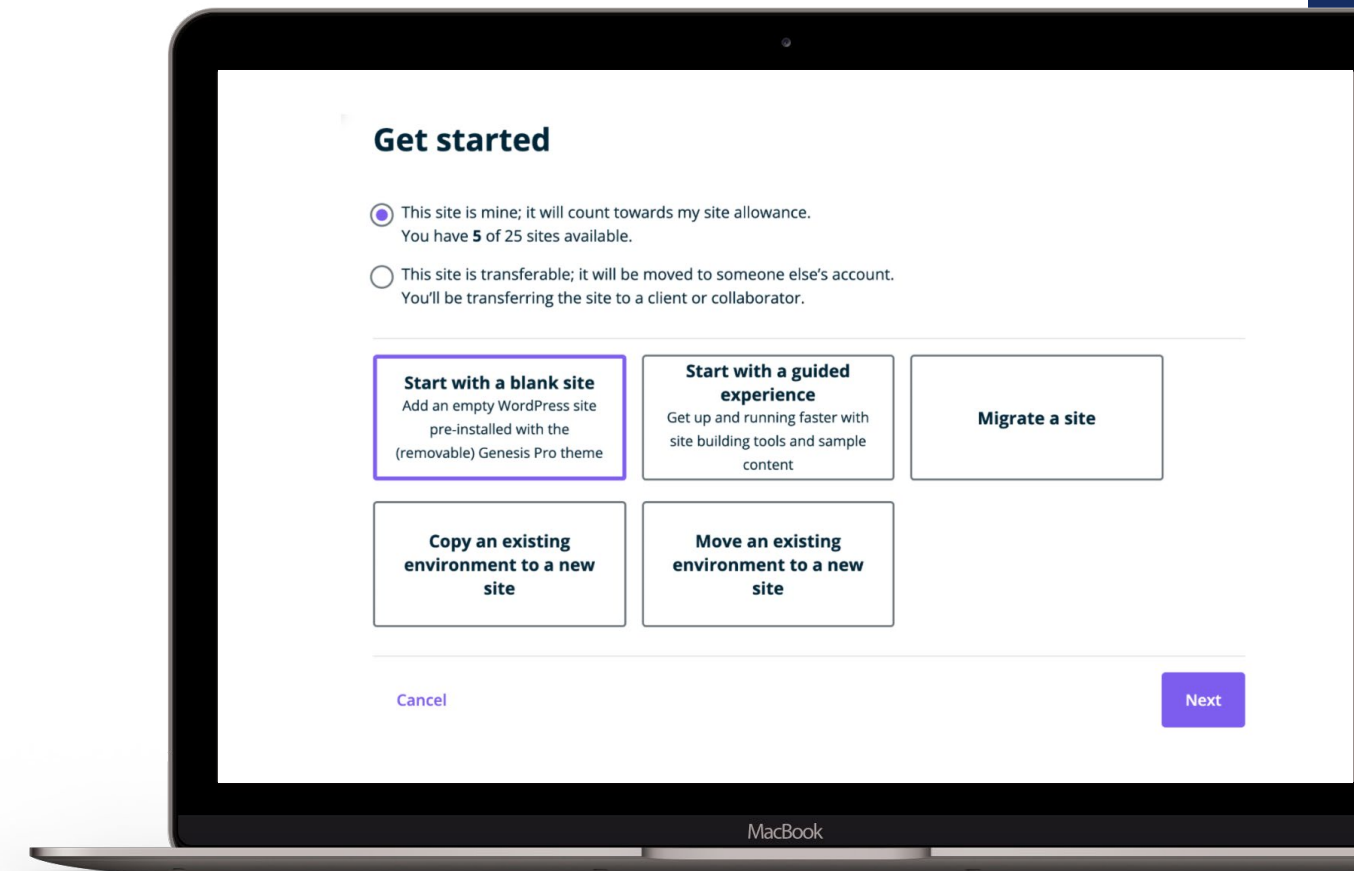
[Migrating to WordPress](#) from Drupal is more manageable than moving away from a closed, proprietary system, although it ultimately depends on each unique migration's scope.

**Certain aspects of a site migration are necessary and will remain when moving to either platform. Project planning and data mapping are crucial early steps, as is creating a new WordPress installation where your new site will live.**

Depending on your hosting provider, you can [easily create a new site](#) and begin extracting and reloading data. WP Engine users, for example, can create a site that's specific to their needs in just a few clicks, and each site comes with a production, staging, and development environment.

This allows migrations to occur on a development or staging site before pushing it live, and it provides flexibility to customize your development workflow or troubleshoot issues separately and safely during and after the migration.

**Creating a new site is easy at WP Engine, where users can quickly select the type of site they need to get started.**



Once you have a new WordPress site up and running, you can begin migrating content from your existing site. You can use numerous manual methods, as well as plugins like [FG Drupal to WordPress](#) or [WP Migrate](#).

While migrating existing content can be a challenge with any CMS, the process will invariably require substantial support from in-house developers or the help of a specialist agency to ensure your new WordPress site mirrors (or expands on) your existing site's functionality.

Illustrate Digital excels in these migrations, providing end-to-end planning and execution from the preliminary steps outlined above to UX and content optimization to ongoing maintenance and support, allowing you to get the most out of your new WordPress site.

# Maintenance and support.

As mentioned above, maintenance is a crucial component for ensuring website security, but it also contributes to website performance and functionality.



## Maintenance and support.

While a CMS may be feature-rich, it might be out of reach for some based on the required maintenance. Here are a few ways Drupal and WordPress differentiate regarding maintenance.

### WordPress maintenance.

The freedom and flexibility that comes with WordPress also means you're in charge of keeping it up-to-date. Ensuring that you're using the most recent version of WordPress and that your themes and plugins are secure are all areas WordPress site owners must stay on top of to prevent performance and security issues down the road.

Keeping WordPress well-maintained is one of the reasons businesses choose a managed WordPress provider when moving over to WordPress. With the right WordPress host, site maintenance is manageable and out of sight, allowing you to focus on your business while taking advantage of all the benefits WordPress offers.

Equally, there's a lot to be said for properly maintaining a WordPress website. Choosing a specialist WordPress agency is a surefire way to ensure this is done well, and that standards are met on an ongoing basis. A good WordPress agency will be looking after this in the background, so you can focus on what you do best—the things that matter to both you and your clients.

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### Drupal maintenance.

Drupal is also a hands-on CMS, and maintenance tasks include viewing your site's Status Report and ensuring Cron is running regularly to perform maintenance tasks—a far more complex process than is needed to maintain WordPress sites.

You're also responsible for maintaining caching, setting up the security module, configuring monitoring alerts, and more.

Drupal's maintenance is entirely on you, and unless you go the managed hosting route, you will need to regularly set aside time and resources to keep Drupal up-to-date, functional, and secure.



## WordPress support.

While WordPress itself, as an open-source platform, does not have “dedicated support” in the form of a phone number or 24/7 live chat, the [WordPress community](#) is an incredible, open resource for any users of the CMS.

Bugs and support issues are answered constantly across WordPress forums, and if you encounter a problem with your site, there’s likely existing documentation for whatever the culprit may be.

Beyond the vast open-source world of WordPress developers and others who freely give of their time in the ongoing support of the CMS, a managed provider here, too, can make all the difference in the world.

WP Engine, for example, provides 24/7 access to an award-winning support organization for our WordPress customers. From live chat to email to phone, support at this level means you can resolve any issues you may encounter with WordPress, with a live agent, at any time of day or night.

For teams looking to take the burden off their developers and IT department,

managed hosting can unlock the promise of a more agile, easy-to-use CMS while providing the invaluable peace of mind that comes with knowing someone is always there to help should a problem arise.

Adding the services of a specialist agency like Illustrate Digital can provide even deeper and more direct support. Having a relationship with a provider that takes a personalized approach to support and understands your organization’s strategy can make all the difference to how you operate on a day-to-day basis.

Illustrate Digital, for example, provides direct support when there’s an aspect of WordPress you’re unfamiliar with or when you have questions about the most user-friendly or most secure way of doing something, whether that’s how you publish your content, the plugins you choose to install, or the ways you continually develop on the WordPress platform. This is all about enabling you to maximize your digital footprint with frustration-free, engaging websites that provide a seamless user experience.

## For teams looking to take the burden off their developers and IT department, a managed WordPress host can unlock the promise of a more agile, easy-to-use CMS...

## Drupal support.

Like WordPress, Drupal doesn’t offer 24/7 live chat or ticketed support. It does come with a fair amount of official resources, forums, community-written documentation, and an issue-reporting tool so developers can make improvements over time.

Plenty of third-party websites are dedicated to Drupal, but not nearly

as many as WordPress. Much of this has to do with the fact that WordPress is simply a more popular platform.

Even so, sites like [Acquia](#)— a cloud platform for Drupal—and [Nuvole](#) offer in-depth Drupal news, tutorials, and guides that serve as community support.

# Cost.

While the overall cost of using either Drupal or WordPress will vary depending on factors such as web host, needed functionality, and other additional/bespoke requirements, looking at the initial price of each platform is an excellent place to start the comparison.



## Cost.

### WordPress.

As noted above, WordPress is free from upfront licensing costs and entirely open source, meaning anyone can start using it with no initial setup fee (hosting and domain purchase excluded).

While WordPress offers some 60,000 free plugins, other “premium” plugins require a fee, and adding other customizations may require additional developer or technical assistance, likely at some cost. As with Drupal (or any other CMS), ongoing maintenance will also be required.

Users of both CMS options must factor in build costs, usually with a development agency, as well as support fees and hosting costs. You can find more about WP Engine’s hosting costs [here](#).

Even with the significant difference in upfront cost, Drupal can still work for medium or large businesses, just as WordPress can now be considered competitive at the enterprise level.

What’s important to remember is that Drupal was built for developers, and unlocking its powerful functionality requires specific dev knowledge and skills. WordPress, on the other hand, offers a lower barrier to entry and a faster starting point for a wide variety of users (with the need for an experienced agency as you grow/your site requires deeper customizations).

### Drupal.

Drupal is also free from upfront licensing costs and entirely open source, which means you could spend a small monthly amount on hosting and a domain name to run a basic website.

However, this differs from a typical use case for Drupal sites, as implementation is more of a challenge than WordPress. You’re more likely to need outside help setting up Drupal, making customizations, or performing maintenance, which you could spend [thousands of dollars](#) on.

While WordPress specialist developers and agencies are easy to find, given the widespread popularity of the CMS, it takes more work to find and retain talent with Drupal-specific expertise, leading to another cost equation that should be accounted for when evaluating both CMSs.

## Enterprise TCO comparison: Drupal vs WordPress

Cost	Drupal	WordPress
License fee	\$0 / year £0 / year	\$0 £0
Example build cost	\$165,000 - \$250,000 £120,000 - £180,000	\$100,000 - \$200,000 £80,000 - £150,000
Example maintenance cost	\$15,000 / year £11,000 / year	\$11,500 / year £8,400 / year
Example hosting cost	\$5,000 - \$10,000 / month £3,500 - £7,000 / month	\$5,000 - \$7,000 / month £3,500 - £5,000 / month
Example ongoing development cost	\$1,500 - \$2,000+ / month £1,000 - £1,500+ / month	\$1,500 - \$2,000+ / month £1,000 - £1,500+ / month

## Return on investment (ROI).

Tracking the return on your investment is clearly a strategic priority. When evaluating Drupal and WordPress, WordPress stands out as an attractive investment option for several reasons.

As noted above, Drupal's heavy reliance on developers constitutes a variable cost you won't encounter with a user-friendly CMS like WordPress. But other costs, from site build to ongoing site maintenance, are also areas where WordPress offers lower costs and, in many cases, higher rewards.

Cost.

Cost.

## WordPress ROI.

**While both WordPress and Drupal offer the upfront open-source benefit of no licensing fees, WordPress tends to provide lower costs across the board, leading to a higher ROI potential.**

From building a great website to ongoing maintenance, security, and backups, WordPress offers a lower cost for rival outcomes and, in many cases, outperforms those built on Drupal.

This is due in no small part to the massive WordPress Economy, the large pool of talent businesses can leverage for development, design, maintenance, and hosting, and the vibrant ecosystem of plugins and themes that make WordPress such a flexible CMS option.

When all of these factors are combined into the final price tag of any given WordPress project, it will typically be far lower than that of a similar project built with Drupal. Add to that the ease with which you can continue growing and integrating your digital footprint with WordPress, and the long-term investment is clearly advantageous to that of more complex, developer-reliant solutions like Drupal.

## Drupal ROI.

While it presents challenges, achieving positive ROI with Drupal is certainly attainable. Large businesses have deployed highly successful sites using this CMS, and those sites have impacted top-level metrics, including conversions and revenue.

**But the two areas outlined above—site build and ongoing maintenance—represent areas where Drupal incurs higher costs, often due to the specialized developer talent Drupal requires.**

Finding suitable talent for your Drupal needs is more complex than working with WordPress, which means paying a premium when that talent is identified and needs to be retained. Additionally, the complexities of a system like Drupal mean developers and engineers spend more time on the initial build and ongoing maintenance or additional customizations.

All in, the website you build may indeed require capabilities that are more suited to a Drupal site, but even if that's the case, the long-term value of your site compared to the ongoing costs you'll incur with Drupal may also be a limiting factor in your ability to realize positive ROI.

Cost.

Cost.

**If you're currently using Drupal and considering a migration to WordPress, it's important to note that within the next nine months, you could be fully migrated to a WordPress deployment and no longer incur the high development, maintenance, and support costs that directly affect the ROI for Drupal sites.**



# Conclusion.

The CMS you choose will come down to your skill level and/or your comfort with learning new technologies.

Your decision might also be based on your preferences in terms of user experience, your budget, and your need for flexibility.

Though WordPress is our preference here, Drupal is a powerful platform many developers have used to create incredible digital experiences.

Hopefully, this has helped you narrow down your CMS selection.



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