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The upcoming Drupal 4.7

Drupal's biggest release yet gives users more power and control

By [Robin Monks](#)

Content management systems (CMSs) are everywhere, and whether you notice or not, most every site is powered by one. But there is one PHP script that has begun to lead the CMS pack in features, customizability and power; in fact, FreeSoftwareMagazine.com runs on it, it's called [Drupal](#).

Where did Drupal come from?

Drupal was created by [Dries Buytaert](#) in 2000 as a webboard for a small group of friends sharing an ASDL line at the University of Antwerp. After graduation, the group moved the site to the internet and Dries choose the URL drop.org (a typo based on the Dutch word for "village", Dorp).

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On January, 2001, Dries released the software to the internet community at large and dubbed it "Drupal". Drupal, pronounced "doo-puhl", is derived from the English pronunciation of the Dutch word "druppel" which stands for "drop".

Today, Drupal.org serves out thousands of copies of Drupal to webmasters and developers worldwide. You can read the complete history of Drupal in the [Drupal.org handbook](#).

Book Competition!

This week we are giving away a copy of [The Business and Economics of Linux and Open Source](#) by Martin Fink.

All you need to do to enter is check out the [latest book competition announcement](#) on our blogs page.

GOOD LUCK!

Thanks go to [Prentice Hall](#) for providing this fantastic prize.

Drupal's future

Drupal is once again making history with its 4.7 release. Due out this month, Drupal 4.7 will bring a new level of functionality and expandability.

The upcoming Drupal 4.7

Drupal 4.7 is powerful enough that every element displayed to the user can be themed. Drupal 4.7 also includes a new FormsAPI that gives developers even more power when creating custom modules.

This next version of Drupal will also include AJAX features that will allow administrators easier control over their sites users, content and functionality.

There will also be many enhancements to the core modules, including a more robust menu and links system, as well as an expanded aggregator module. Most every feature of Drupal has been expanded in the 4.7 release, and many new features have been added since Drupal 4.6.

Drupal's community

Dozens of free modules have been developed by the Drupal community for Drupal 4.7 already, and more are being made all the time. Community created modules can be easily added to Drupal 4.7 after it's installed by dropping them into the modules folder and following the directions.

Drupal's community is one of the factors that has made Drupal a premiere choice for webmasters around the world. Many famous websites such as SpreadFirefox.com, KernelTrap.org and NASA's APPEL website are using Drupal to enhance their online presence.

Drupal also has many vendors in its community who will create themes, modules and entire websites for a fee (a list of these vendors is in the [Drupal handbook](#)).

Drupal is customizable enough to be used for a CMS, as a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, a mailing list manager, a blog or all of the above

Drupal for development

As I mentioned before, Drupal has an advanced API that goes far beyond your household CMS. The Drupal APIs can let you write a custom module in very few lines of PHP. There are many examples and loads of well maintained documentation if you decided a custom module is the way to go. Of course, it's possible to use Drupal without writing a single line of code, that's the power of Drupal.

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Conclusion

Release candidates of Drupal 4.7 are already available at Drupal.org and contain all the features the final version will have. If you're interested in trying out all the cool features Drupal 4.7 has to offer, the latest RC is the best way to do it.

So go on, try out Drupal. Chances are good that you won't be disappointed.

Bibliography

“Where did Drupal come from?” adapted from the [Drupal.org handbook](#), used with permission.

Biography

Robin Monks (/user/35" title="View user profile.): Robin Monks is a volunteer contributor to Mozilla (<http://mozilla.org>), Drupal (<http://drupal.org>), GMKing (<http://gmking.org>) and Free Software Magazine and has been helping free software development for over three years. He currently works as an independent contractor for CivicSpace LLC (<http://civicspacelabs.org>)

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