

## POINT OF VIEW

# What Marketers and Digital Teams can expect from Drupal 9?



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## Introduction

With over 570,000+ sites, 1.3 million community members and capturing 2.9% market share, Drupal, the much-loved open source CMS needs no introduction. Evolving from Drupal 1.0 in 2001 with limited functionality and few modules to Drupal 9 today, it is a highly flexible and secure platform that delivers seamless digital experiences, with features ranging from easy content authoring and multilingual capabilities to headless CMS.

Although Drupal 9 was released in June 2020, a large number of websites today run on Drupal 8 and a whopping majority run on the even older Drupal 7. Around 69.5% (or close to 400,000) sites run on Drupal 7 while 24% (or close to 138,000) sites run on Drupal 8.



## The wait for Drupal 9 is now over!

It may seem strange that with newer versions of Drupal, developers and businesses continue to bank on Drupal 7. However, it is easy to understand why:

- Drupal 8 was a radical re-architecture of the widely used CMS platform.
- Many Users (and Drupal developers) were left with a dilemma as they faced re-building an entire site because upgrades were more time-consuming and difficult than they had been in the past.

Although it boasted of a great feature set, a thoroughly-tested core codebase, is excellent as a general site-building tool, and is primed for building great (and 'ambitious') digital experiences, Drupal 8 failed to gain traction.

Savvy users, however, understood the massive benefits that came with the different framework and platform that was in Drupal 8. At Ameex, we helped numerous clients build next-generation digital experience platforms on Drupal 8, taking advantage of the easier to use modern programming paradigms, dependency management tools, and site architecture. These benefits are huge for new site builds or migrations from outside the Drupal ecosystem, into Drupal.

The arrival of Drupal 9 promises enhanced security and an easy up-gradation process on top of everything that Drupal 8 has to offer.

Drupal solution providers are innovating with Drupal 9 by integrating conversational UI, video streaming solutions, ecommerce, and data platforms, to deliver powerful customized experiences.

With Drupal 8 and Drupal 7 reaching end of life in November 2021 and November 2022 respectively, it is time for users to switch gears and move into the Drupal 9 lane.

## Why should Drupal 9 be part of your MarTech Stack?

Drupal 9 comes with an easier upgrade, reliable performance and security, enhanced content authoring experience, and optimized content workflows. Drupal 9 appeals to both technical Users and Marketers alike. Supporting integrations with over 40,000 modules, here are four reasons why Drupal 9 should form a vital part of your MarTech stack:



### Marketing Automation:

There are many modules on Drupal including HubSpot, Marketo, Pardot, Google Analytics and Mailchimp to streamline your e-mail and social media campaigns, lead generation, tracking etc.



### Personalization:

Through personalization modules, Acquia Personalization (formerly Acquia Lift) or any other third-party personalization engines, Drupal can deliver customized experience for your users, segment visitors across devices, track and report with A/B and multivariate testing.



### Single View of the Customer:

Drupal can easily integrate with Acquia's AgileOne or any other external Analytics tools, CDPs, DMPs, CRM or any other data platforms to deliver consistent experience across all channels.



### Commerce:

Drupal has modules for seamless integration with E-Commerce platforms like Elastic Path, Shopify, Magento and BigCommerce. The products from the E-Commerce sites can be synced as Drupal entities on Drupal sites to deliver content-driven commerce experiences.



### Easily integrates with DAM & PIM:

Using its excellent API capabilities, Drupal helps in centralizing and optimizing key digital assets and product information to manage companies' increasing online presence.

# Drupal 9 is built keeping Marketers, Content Authors and Business Users in mind

Recognizing digital experience as the linchpin in its development strategy, Drupal now has Marketers and Content Authors at the center stage. Drupal 8, and by extension Drupal 9, is a powerful tool for marketing and content management, requiring little to no prior technical knowledge for a seamless content authoring experience.

## New content authoring experience with Layout Builder:

The biggest complaint with Drupal 7, the content authoring experience, is now resolved with Drupal 9. With drag and drop elements to assist Content Creators, Drupal 9 eliminates the dependency on Drupal developers and makes content creation more agile.



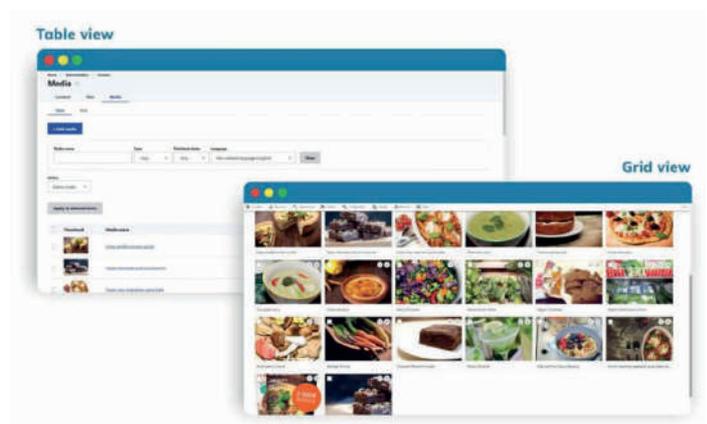
## Quicker time to market:

A self-reliant authoring experience also means a quicker time to market for your digital assets, driving up sales and conversions. At Ameex, we recently helped a global pharma giant bring down their time-to-market from weeks to hours by eliminating developer dependency and increasing reusability.



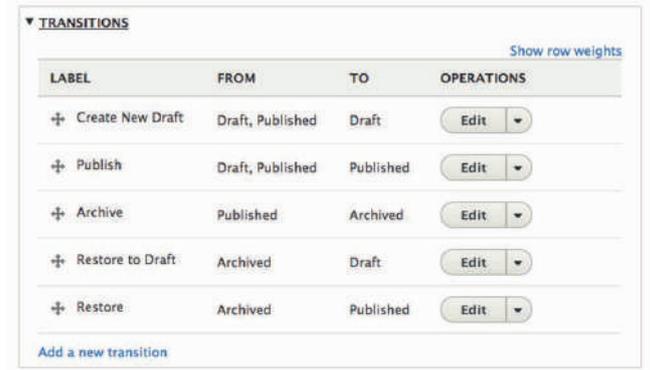
## Better media management:

In addition to easy-to-use tables, grid views, and bulk-upload capabilities, the Media Library has features to assign different roles with different access permissions for Creators.



## Content workflow:

The latest version of the Content Workflow module included in Drupal 9 core provides options to create transitions between different states and label them, helping website managers and publishers keep track of the flow of tasks.



▼ TRANSITIONS <span>Show row weights</span>			
LABEL	FROM	TO	OPERATIONS
+	Create New Draft	Draft, Published	Draft <span>Edit</span>
+	Publish	Draft, Published	Published <span>Edit</span>
+	Archive	Published	Archived <span>Edit</span>
+	Restore to Draft	Archived	Draft <span>Edit</span>
+	Restore	Archived	Published <span>Edit</span>

[Add a new transition](#)

# Digital, Web & IT Teams will love Drupal 9 for its flexibility, efficiency, and high secured standards

With enhanced performance, a cleaner code base and a continuous innovation cycle to look forward to, there is a lot to love in Drupal 9 for digital experts. Here are a few:

## Performance

Drupal 9 promises enhanced performance through an improved caching mechanism, Big Pipe, Page caching, Block caching & Views caching available by default in core.

## Backend CMS User Interface

The improved UI and Admin Navigation System in Drupal 9 allow management of contents, taxonomy, users, blocks, and themes with a mobile first approach, providing the ability to manage updates to CMS on the go.

## Optimized Code Structure

As opposed to the Require statement in Drupal 7, in Drupal 8 and Drupal 9 the Autoload feature default at the core, allows modules to inherit the dependencies which will be loaded only when required.

## SEO - Organic User Traffic

SEO is much easier to perform with Drupal 8 and 9, with the taxonomy feature now available by default at the core. Moreover, the TWIG template engine helps render the meta information of the contents, helping improve organic SEO ranking.

## Custom Feature Development

Creating custom features using widgets becomes much simpler in Drupal 8 and 9 by using several existing modules and creating a block Plugin to integrate the widget, instead of using third-party modules.

## Built-in JSON API

Provides seamless integration with CRM, CDP, ERP with ease, considerable savings, and secured integration.

## Coding Best Practices

Your codebase is going to be cleaner with a better templating process using TWIG template engine, which does not allow PHP or other code in theme templates.

## Should we switch to Drupal 9 Straight Away?

With many sites still running on Drupal 7 and a considerable number on Drupal 8, the migration to Drupal 9 presents complexities of its own. Here is a step-by-step guide on which route you should take and what you would need to consider while making the switch.

### From Drupal 7

If you are still on Drupal 7, there are two routes you can take to switch to Drupal 9.

- Migrate directly to Drupal 9 – This is an ideal option if your site is simple or is a brochure-ware site.
- Migrate to Drupal 8 and then upgrade to Drupal 9 – This is an ideal option if your site is complex.

### From Drupal 8

Before you decide on upgrading to Drupal 9, we would recommend the following steps first:

- Install & enable the Upgrade Status module.
- Scan the Contributed and Custom Modules (Looks for deprecated code / incompatible code).

The path to upgrade to Drupal 9 depends on the scan result and whether you have caught-up with the latest updates

- If you are not up to date with Drupal 8 updates (8.8/8.9), then first update to Drupal 8.8/8.9.
- Remove deprecated code (as per the scan recommendations) before upgrading.
- Once you have the latest updates, upgrade to Drupal 9.

**“Once you upgrade to Drupal 9, you don’t have to re-platform again – even for major version changes. All future updates are easy and you are benefitted from all the technological innovations released every six months.”**



## Preparing for Drupal 9

While the migration process may appear daunting and complex, it does not necessarily have to be. The key is to begin having a conversation and start creating a migration plan right away to ensure a smooth Drupal experience.

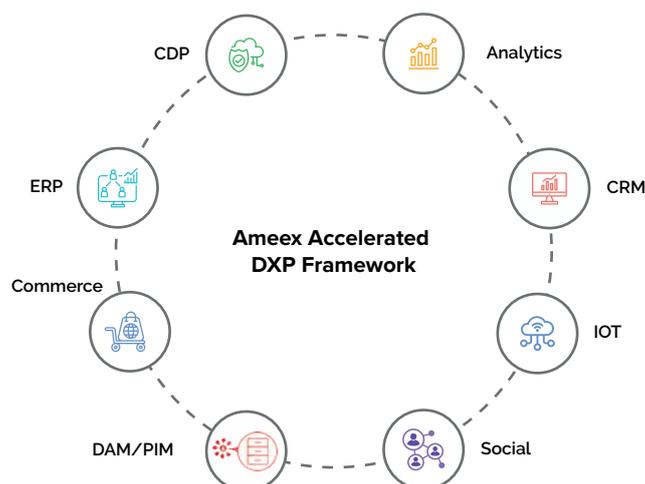


## Jump-start your Drupal 9 projects with Ameex's Accelerated DXP Framework:

Web developers and experience creators play a big part in creating and delivering amazing digital experiences. They need the ability to easily build faster and better experiences. Leveraging 13 years of experience reviewing, auditing, fixing and re-engineering Drupal systems, we have developed our own Accelerated DXP Framework at Ameex, a flexible and powerful framework that can get your Drupal projects running in no time. Some of the leading brands are using this framework as their digital core to support their current and future business needs.

## Here are a few benefits that our clients have experienced through this framework

- 50% reduction in time and cost.
- Seamless and intuitive content authoring experience.
- Ability to quickly create a landing page.
- Efficient and re-usable code base.
- Powerful taxonomy structure.
- Ability to quickly integrate with other systems and data platforms.
- Features of your choice like PWA, AMP.
- Advanced security features and more.



The added advantage is all of this can be delivered through our Outcome Driven Engagement Model. Here, we commit to meeting certain performance benchmarks such as page load time, stability, security, scalability and more.

### Assured Performance Benchmarks

Items	Agreed before start	Delivered
Total Development time	✓	✓
Maintenance Cost	✓	✓
Quick time to market	✓	✓
Localize a site	✓	✓
Total cost of ownership	✓	✓
Page load time	✓	✓
Google page speed	✓	✓
Stability testing	✓	✓
Security testing	✓	✓
SEO metrics	✓	✓
Personalization	✓	✓
Analytics Maturity	✓	✓
Data Management & Cloud Implementation	✓	✓
CSAT Score		
• Content Authors	✓	✓
• UX Team	✓	✓
• Business Users	✓	✓
• IT Team / Architecture	✓	✓
• Marketing Team	✓	✓



#### About the Author

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Delona is the Director of Partnerships and Customer Success with Ameex. She has more than 10 years of experience in helping clients deliver Drupal-based digital solutions and has been an integral part of the Drupal Organization for over five years.

## Plan your move to Drupal 9 with us

# Get a Pre-Migration Assessment at No Cost

Email: [consult.drupalgeeks@ameexusa.com](mailto:consult.drupalgeeks@ameexusa.com)

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We look forward to  
hearing from you.

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