

# Managing a Large Drupal Multi-Site

Bay Area Drupal Camp 2013

Presented by:  
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# My Background

- 25 years of software development
- Coding and managing
- <http://www.linkedin.com/in/kenswolf>



University of California  
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# This Presentation

- Managing Drupal multi-site based product platform for three years has been educational
- I will discuss my experience managing a large dynamic Drupal multi-site



# Disclosure & Business Wire

- Publicly traded companies regularly disclose information that influences their share value
- How they disclose information is subject to laws and the stock exchange rules
- Business Wire offers a full suite of mandated disclosure services by distributing press releases, filing with govt agencies, and hosting company newsrooms and investor centers



# Why a Drupal Multi-Site ?

- Drupal was selected based on functionality, community and price
- Each site with own code is too difficult
- A Drupal multi-site was used to enable a single code line to support many highly configurable public web site
- Each Site theme matches corporate site



# Drupal Versions

- Using Drupal 6 because Drupal 7 was not ready
- Later, ROI for moving to Drupal 7 was not compelling
- Moving to Drupal 8 for security support and responsive design



# Pressflow

- A distribution of Drupal with integrated performance, scalability, availability, and testing
- <https://pressflow.atlassian.net/wiki/display/PF/Comparison+-+Pressflow+versus+Drupal>



# Aegir

- Allows you to deploy and manage many Drupal sites
- Built on Drupal and Drush
- Some Drush cmds, that Aegir uses, can be invoked directly
- <http://www.aegirproject.org/>



# Managing Improvement

- Taking the parts of 'Agile' that fit our situation means a managed backlog, weekly deploys, on-going dialogs between the product participants, and keeping everything as simple as possible
- We follow a standard SDLC with 4 tiers & Jira
- Automated code review, smoke, regression, and status testing





# Prioritizing

- Backlog is a prioritized list of work for client requirements, market driven features, and business plans
- Backlog is balanced by technical work for scaling, reliability, and security



# Adaptive Design

- We already have a lot of JavaScript work, with client scripts and multiple versions of JQuery
- Our JQuery based approach to adaptive design increases JavaScript work for some sites



# Hosting

- Hosting services were expensive for multi-site
- AWS without dedicated servers was too slow and unreliable from our experience
- Stack patches and upgrades are required
- Full redundancy (HA, bi-coastal)
- VM and Puppet
  - simplify provisioning
  - complicate control





# Scheduled Tasks

- Many sites → Many tasks
- Elysia cron controls frequency
- Dedicated server for load
- Homegrown control scripts
- Drush and wget



# Some Random Issues

- Drupal on Solaris was difficult
- Our auditor prefers Red Hat
- Drupal 6 - PHP 5.3 warnings
- MySQL 'strict' mode issues
- Memcache key server specific
- Varnish pass through logic



# Building a Team

- Team is everything
- Teams require a mix
- Hiring experience vs potential
- Finding candidates
- Retaining employees

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