TEN 7

Creating Nimble Drupal Systems: Transforming a Drupal Team in 6 Months

Ivan Stegic – 11h00 on Saturday, February 23, 2024
Florida Drupal Camp – PM & Consulting – 180

11:00 AM TO 11:45 AM

Code, Cerebral Palsy, and Compassion: My Journey into Tech ›

📁 Sessions off the "Drupal Island"   📍 Auditorium   🧠 All Attendees   👤 [Matthew Ramir](#)

2 Weeks is Too Long - On Demand Feature Deployments with Drupal ›

📁 Development & Performance   💡 158   🧠 Intermediate   👤 [John Doyle](#)

Introduction to GitHub Actions: Understanding Key Terms and Building Your First GitHub Action ›

📁 Development & Performance   💡 159   🧠 All Attendees   👤 [Paul Gilzow](#)

What Non-Developers Should Know About Content Migration ›

📁 Project Management & Consulting   💡 179   🧠 All Attendees   👤 [Jesse Dyck](#)

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📁 Project Management & Consulting   💡 180   🧠 All Attendees   👤 [Ivan Stegic](#)

Leveraging Drupal for Native Plant Databases and Interactive Signage - Presented by Acquia ›

📁 Site-Building   💡 182   🧠 All Attendees   👤 [Greg Lowenthal](#)

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Agenda

Hello!

An introduction

Nimble Drupal Systems

Say what?

Asking For Help

It's often hard to do

Why Are We Here?

What is this story about?

6 Months of Transformation

What's the secret sauce?

Q & A

You have questions?

Hello!

An introduction

I'm Ivan Stegic, I live in **Minneapolis.**

Background in Physics, R&D at Honeywell, Imation.

Been tinkering with Drupal since **2007.** Started TEN7 **inadvertently** that same year.

Serve as **CEO** of TEN7.

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We are a digital agency that builds, rescues and cares for Drupal sites and their teams.

Make Things That Matter Means...

→ No One Should Go Hungry
Second Harvest Heartland

→ Educate women to lead and influence
St. Catherine University

→ Inclusive, powerful engagement with history
Minnesota Historical Society

→ Relevant, high quality education in a collaborative and sustainable environment
Western Technical College

→ Promote economic, social, cultural & environmental progress
Oregon State University

Why Are We Here?

What is this story about?

This is the story of how we helped a closely knit team inside a state government department transform their existing Drupal site and themselves.

This is the story of how we helped a **closely knit** team inside **a state** government **department** transform their **existing** Drupal site and themselves.

we helped a team inside government transform their Drupal site and themselves

we helped
a team
transform

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To protect, maintain and improve the health of all Minnesotans.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

What does transform mean to you?

What did it mean to MDH?

Did it mean...

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… a faster site?
… one that's easier to navigate?
… or easier to update?
… one that's more secure?
… pays attentions to accessibility?
… a team that knows more?
… works faster and closer?
… has empathy?
… all these things?

Improvement lives on a **continuum** from here to better. It involves conscious iteration.

Transformation is the sum of **all improvements**.

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Nimble Drupal Systems

Say what?

Let's define things, shall we?

nimble, adj., adv., & n.

Quick and light in movement or action; agile; active. Of persons, animals, or things. Also in extended use.

nimble, adj., adv., & n.

Quick and light in movement or **action***; agile; active. Of persons, animals, or things. Also in extended use.*

nimble, adj., adv., & n.
Quick and light in action

system, n.

A group or set of related or associated things perceived or thought of as a unity or complex whole.

system, n.

*A group or **set of related** or associated things perceived or thought of **as a** unity or complex **whole**.*

system, n.

set of related things perceived as a whole.

Quick, light
Drupal related things
that work together
as a whole.

Anything that interacts your Drupal site.
Including people.
Especially people.

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6 Months of Transformation

What's the secret sauce? You can too!

"We could use some Drupal support. Can you help us?"

The first step is asking.

The second step should always be...

Leading With Empathy

This is the secret sauce.

The First Month

Kick Off!

→   Let's get started!

→   Hit the ground running!!

The First Month

~~**Kick Off!**~~

→ ~~Let's get started!~~

→ ~~Hit the ground running!!~~

The First Month

A Contract and Statement of Work

→ Legal things out of the way

→ It always takes longer than you expect it to

→ **Be Mindful.** Plan for the additional time.

Access to The Things

→ Accounts, credentials, MFA, VPN, Ohhhh myyyyyy.

Kick Off!

→ Finally, everyone is here. Let's get started!

This was their team's first Drupal site 🎉

MDH migrated to Drupal from Lucee, and from Coldfusion before that. 😮

It **all** came over. Launch in 2022.

The Second Month, Or So...

Listening, learning, discovering

→ We do a lot of listening. There are walkthroughs.

→ They discover things they didn't know. As do we. **Be a Team**.

Audits

→ Technical, User Experience, Accessibility. **Be Mindful**.

Access Issues

→ There are always access issues! **Lead with Empathy**

Recommendations

→ Reports, priorities, a roadmap and iteration

For the remaining four months, we **slowly improved** many little things.

We were conscious of being **empathetic** in every line of code, in every meeting, in every interaction. **We modelled behavior.**

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Be Inclusive, At All Stages

Check-ins

→ Regular check-ins, **don't miss them**, record them (if possible)

→ Use the tools that work for everyone, **least amount of friction**

→ Keep good notes that are easily accessible to everyone

Workflows, Security, Environments

→ Internally managed, hosted at Amazon's AWS

→ Strict security requirements, force best practices for DevOps 💜

→ Ease and speed of use for multi-developer and multi-branch work

→ These are still Drupal systems!

Nimble Drupal Systems, Go!

Technical Drupal Systems Implementation

→ Updated build pipeline while keeping MNIT security requirements

→ Retire the Bitnami image in favor of lighter, more performant containers

→ Scale Drupal at AWS with local developer tooling in mind

→ Reduce unused number of languages, scripts, general deep clean

→ Major file migration of all PDFs from an old server into Drupal

→ Documentation is critical. Write about everything you do. **Be Inclusive.**

Systems working together for people to shine. Also, Drupal.

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More Than Code

UX Systems Implementation

→ Sticky search elements

→ Created custom blocks to standardize CTAs globally

→ Update and streamline accordion usage

→ Align font usage across the site to brand standards

→ Reviewed and improved text hierarchy and clarity

Content Moderation Strategy

→ This is a human problem. That requires a human solution. **Be Inclusive**

→ We build the Drupal System to solve the human problem

→ We **don't change the problem** to fit a Drupal module

Workshops and Accessibility

Tag Strategy Workshop

→ Inventory of tags. From 1000s to less than 100

→ Optimize tags, use primary and secondary

→ Moderate access

→ Move away from a single basic content type, manual updates

Accessibility

→ Audit of production site - **Be Mindful**, **Be Inclusive** for user, but admin too!

→ Each issue categorized into Critical 🔥 and Non-Critical 🛑

→ Tweak Drupal settings for better WCAG compliance, e.g. ALT tags

→ Fine tune image size and clarity settings

Transformation was a multi-faceted approach to improving as many systems as possible. People and Drupal.

Asking For Help

It's often hard to do

Asking For Help Is Hard Because...

"It didn't even occur to me!"

→ Community! The more eyes we have on things, the better it becomes.

"I would be embarrassed to show my code."

→ Lead with Empathy. We've been there too. Imposter syndrome.

"Can I even afford it?"

→ Probably. Even if it's just a short audit engagement.

"It's so bad, we just need a new site."

→ You probably don't. There's likely lots to do without starting from scratch

"Urgghhh, but bureaucracy. RFP. Competitive bid."

→ There's always a way to figure it out. Ask! You're not alone.

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Thank you!

My **deepest gratitude** to all of you for attending, to the **volunteers** that make **Florida Drupal Camp** happen, and to the **Drupal Community** at large without which none of what we do is possible.

Ivan Stegic

ivan@ten7.com