Apocalypse Soon...
When to upgrade from **Drupal 7 to 8**
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# About Me

Dan Moriarty

- CEO & Creative Director at Electric Citizen
- Web design for 20+ years
- Drupal for 10+ years
- Twitter: @minneapolisdan
- Drupal: minneapolisdan

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# About Electric Citizen

Web Agency

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- Based in Minneapolis
- Focus on civic sector (government, higher ed, nonprofits, arts, science)
- Open-source advocates, Drupal experts
- www.ElectricCitizen.com
- @electriccitizen

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# What We'll Cover

Upgrade from Drupal 7 to 8

- Current state of Drupal 7
- Plan to upgrade
- Why it's so hard
- Benefits to upgrading
- Alternatives to upgrading

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The Drupal 7
Coming
Apocalypse
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# (Sample Email Someone Sent To Our Client)

**Subject: Your Drupal site will soon be vulnerable to online threats.**

Hi ,

I saw your site is running on Drupal 7 and therefore this information might concern you.

With Drupal 7 End Of Life(EOL) being Nov. 2021, official community support for version 7 will end, along with the support provided by the Drupal Association on Drupal.org.

This means that automated testing services for Drupal 7 will be shut down, and there will be no more updates provided by the Drupal Security Team.

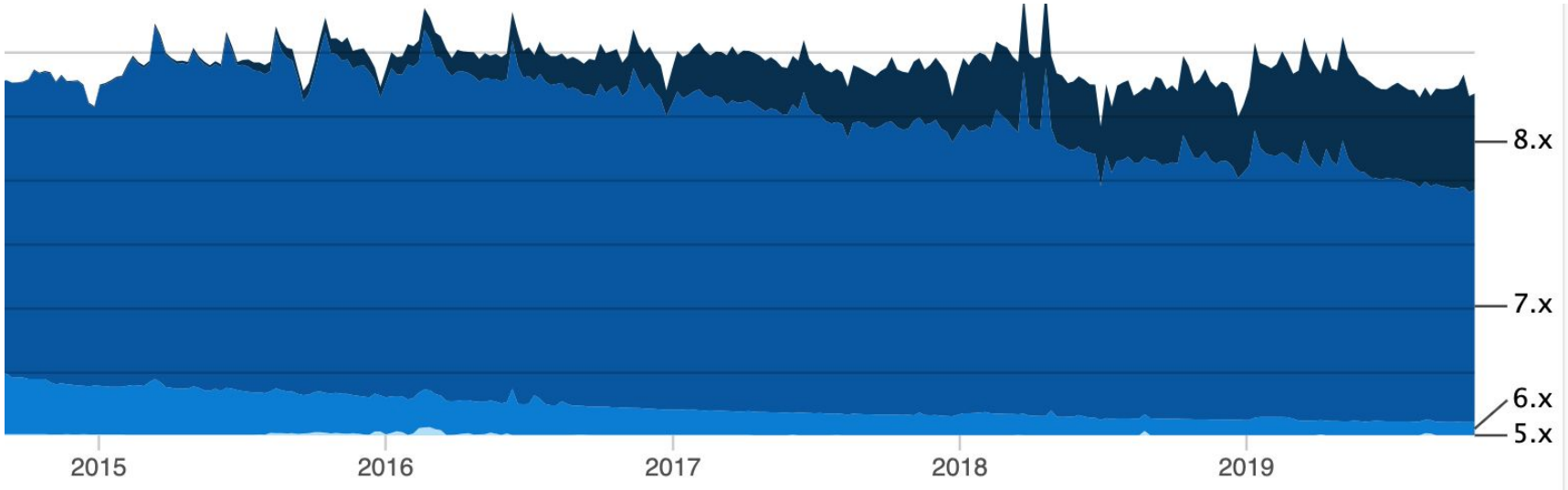
Not only your website will be vulnerable to online threats and hacks, but also data security will be at stake.

# Drupal 7: the end is nigh

- Released in 2011
- End of life in 2021
- 10 years of life!
- Powering hundreds of thousands of websites
- Peak Drupal?

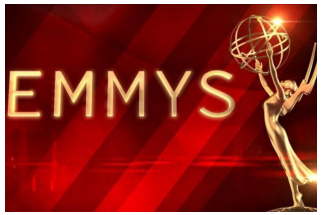
# Drupal 7 usage

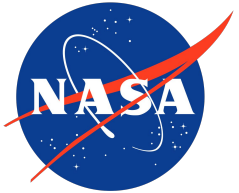
- 73% of all Drupal sites still running on Drupal 7
- 720k D7 sites vs 300k D8 sites
- Steady decrease since 2016



# Who is still using D7?

- Is it mostly smaller sites without time or budget to update?
- Probably but also...
- Some of the most heavily trafficked Drupal sites:
  - Emmys.com
  - NASA.gov
  - Australian Government
  - WholeFoods
  - Lush
  - Warner Music
  - Economist



Australian Government

LUSH

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# Is Drupal 7 already dead?

- Lack of updates, activity around major modules
- PHP updates, jQuery keep coming out
- Attention and focus all on Drupal 8 and beyond
- Drupal 9 coming in 2020
- https://2019.tcdrupal.org/session/drupal-7-dead

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# What's going to happen?

- No more security updates
- No new features
- Lack of module support
- No bug fixes

*(but don't panic!)*

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The end is near!
Plan Your Upgrade
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# Upgrade or redesign

- How old is your current site?
- Redesign recommended every 2-5 years
- Instead of just software update, consider full site refresh (content scrub, new design, new features, etc.)

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# Why redesign?

- Changing user expectations around UX and UI,
- Increase traffic, donations, sales
- New requirements for mobile, performance, privacy, accessibility
- Keeping up with competition – improved SEO, UX, design, content

Photo by Nicholas Doherty on Unsplash

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# Preparing for redesign

- Start budgeting
- Audit content and analytics
- Revisit site strategy
- Consider any branding updates
- User testing, surveys

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# Can I skip to Drupal 9?

- Drupal 9 will be released in 2020
- Previously, some people skipped from Drupal 6 to Drupal 8
- But it’s not the same with Drupal 9!
- Drupal 9 a continuation for Drupal 8, (more like Drupal 8.9)
- No reason to wait

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# Why aren’t people upgrading?

**Still 700k+ Drupal 7 sites. Why?**

- Cost
- Time
- Dissatisfaction with current site, comparing old D7 site to other contemporary options
- No compelling reason for upgrade; still works, so why bother?

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# The case for upgrading

- Websites should be refreshed every 3-5 years
- New features of Drupal 8
- Activity around Drupal 8 (and 9)
- ROI; how much value is your website bringing to your organization

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# Budgeting for Updates

- How much did you spend on current site (total, including post-launch)?
- How much did you spend on in-house staff to build or manage?
- Consider combining update to Drupal 8 with a full redesign
- “Just” a version upgrade? Not as easy as you might think...

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# Cost to upgrade

- If you have the most basic of Drupal 7 sites, and haven't added or altered a thing? Upgrade in a day
- Everyone else? Well... here's where it gets uncomfortable...

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**Upgrading from Drupal 7 to Drupal 8 is a pain in the butt.***

(*but it gets better from there)

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How to survive the
Site Upgrade
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# Why so hard?

- Web search might suggest this is easy
- Difference between the most basic Drupal 7 site and more complex sites
- Most sites, in our experience, have some level of complexities that don't migrate so easily

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# Why so hard?

- Drupal 8 is a complete re-architecture of Drupal (Symphony)
- Different template system (Twig)
- Composer based
- Object-oriented programming
- Hundreds of modules not available (or no longer needed)
- Views in core (rebuild)
- Media in core (rebuild)
- Layout builder in core (rebuild)
- Replacing Features with Config Management (rebuild)
- Removing field collections (rebuild)

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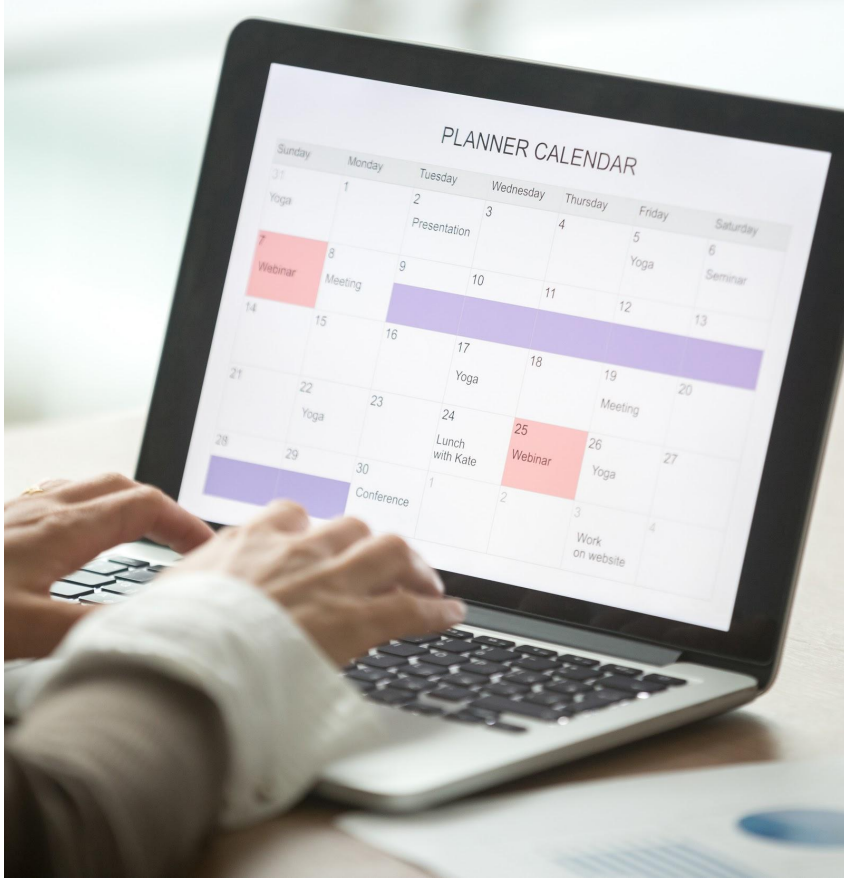
# Process to upgrade

- Before running any scripts or update commands, you need to plan
- Not only did modules change, so did best practices
- Sites in D8 are built differently. You need to change your site building approach!

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# Step 1: Deep analysis of current site

- Content inventory
- Module review
- Architecture review
- Pattern review (media, files, embeds, layouts)
- Detailed documentation of all potential problem areas
- Comprehensive migration spreadsheet
- Final migration plan

Photo by Carlos Muza on Unsplash

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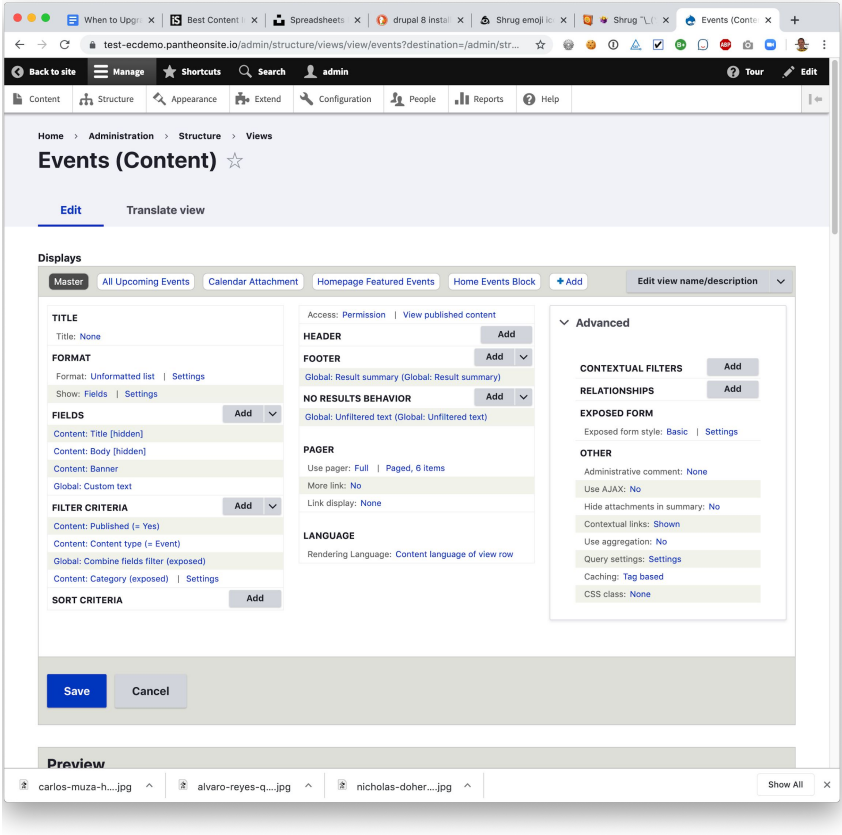
# Step 2: Build new Drupal 8 website

- Rebuild your Drupal theme
- Rebuild your Views
- Rebuild how you manage layout
- Some automation possible, depending on complexity and content architecture
- Consider switching to more modern best practices (Media, Layout Builder, Configuration Manager, etc.)

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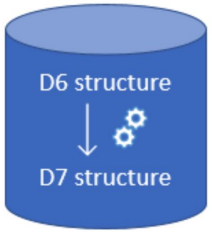
# Step 3: Migrate content

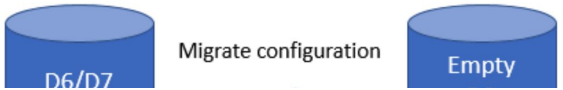
- From Step 1, you should have a plan for what and how the content will migrate
- From Step 2, you now have a site to migrate TO
- Selectively automate migration of some content via the Migrate API and Migrate Update command
- For most projects, there will still be a lot of manual migration into the new build
- Review documentation on Drupal.org, https://www.drupal.org/docs/8/upgrade

## # Upgrading to Drupal 8 uses a migration approach

Upgrading your site from Drupal 6 / 7 to Drupal 8 uses significantly different approach than previous versions of Drupal. When Drupal 6 site was upgraded to Drupal 7, the same database was upgraded from Drupal 6 structure to Drupal 7 structure as illustrated in the image below.




When upgrading a Drupal 6 / 7 site to Drupal 8, you first need to install a clean Drupal 8 site. You will then *migrate* your site *configuration* and site *content* to your new Drupal 8 site. Your existing Drupal 6 / 7 site remains completely unaltered and intact.

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# Why bother?

- Do I really need Drupal 8? This is a lot of work and cost!

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A new beginning:
Benefits of upgrading to D8
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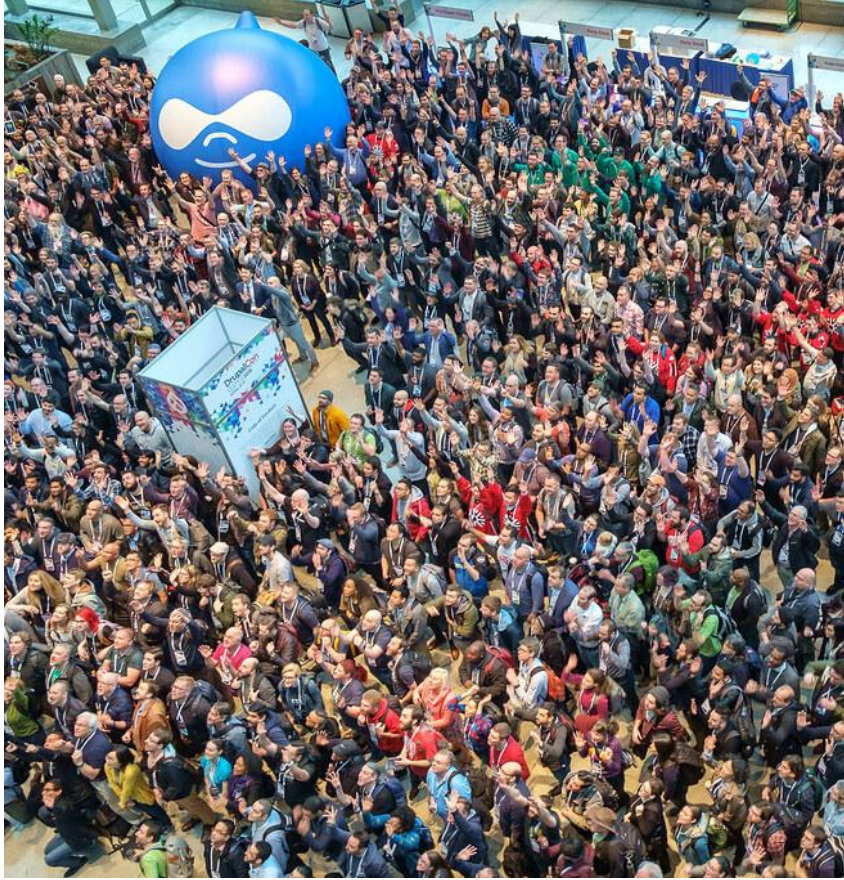
# Same Drupal benefits

- Same community, still open source
- 46,000+ Developers with 1.3
- million users on drupal.org
- 8,000 code contributors from 1,000 different companies in the past year
- Strong commitments to accessibility, diversity
- Familiarity with Drupal
- Drupal 8 is growing!



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# Drupal 8 comes with benefits

- ★ More in Core! Views, Media, WYSIWYG, Layout Builder and more
- ★ Improved Editorial Experience – CKEditor, drag and drop, inline editing
- ★ Improved Media Management – including new Media library tools
- ★ Data integrations – API-first platform with RESTful services and JSON:API in core
- ★ Accessibility improvements
- ★ HTML 5, mobile-first and responsive
- ★ Configuration Management – easier and faster for developers
- ★ Improved multilingual support for over 100 languages
- ★ Security and performance improvements

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# Future updates are so much easier!

- Drupal 8 changes update process
- Regularly scheduled releases
- Many modules already ready for D9

Photo by Sagar Patil on Unsplash

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# Be part of the future

- Drupal 9 release in 2020
- Major Initiatives Ongoing:
  - API-First
  - Admin UI and JavaScript Modernization
  - Automatic Updates
  - Layout, improvements
  - Media, improvements
  - Workflow, improvements
- drupal.org/about/strategic-initiatives

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Other worlds:
Alternatives to Upgrading
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# Option 1: Stay the course

- Still have 2 years of Drupal 7 support
- Find approved vendor for EOL support after 2021

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# Option 2: Migrate to different CMS

- Dozens of options, including other CMS, JAM Stack, SaaS options
- Let's look at two for now:
  - Backdrop
  - WordPress

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# What is Backdrop CMS

- Started as fork of Drupal 7
- Similar features, but improved over time
- Many popular modules added to core
- Other popular D7 modules available as add-ons, or can be ported

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# Moving to Backdrop CMS

- Rebuild theme
- Remove modules not supported (blog, forum, poll)
- Install Backdrop, update settings, run updates in browser (GUI)
- Test and adjust blocks, layouts, views
- If needed, find alternative to contrib modules not supported

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# Backdrop: Pros and Cons

- **Pro:** Much less effort to migrate than Drupal 8, cheaper cost to maintain
- **Pro:** More familiar experience to Drupal 7 users, with many same features or improved features (Views, etc.)
- **Con:** Vastly smaller base of contributors, users, and clients using Backdrop
- **Con:** Missing out on new features, initiatives offered by Drupal 8 and 9

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# What is WordPress

- World’s most widely used CMS
- WordPress.org
- You know, right?

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# Moving to WordPress

- Still need to plan for content migration
- Try a plugin? Many 3rd party services promise helpful tools (FG Drupal to WordPress, CMS2CMS)
- Recreate theme
- Recreate content types
- Recreate Views
- Replace modules with comparable plug-ins

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# WordPress: Pros and Cons

- **Pro:** Huge base of contributors, vendors, tutorials, etc. Still open-source.
- **Pro:** Premade templates, 1000s plugins
- **Con:** many plug-ins have annual fees
- **Con**: security concerns
- **Con**: Similar cost to migrating to Drupal 8, unless site is very basic
- **Con**: not Drupal :)

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The end is not the end:
Final Takeaways
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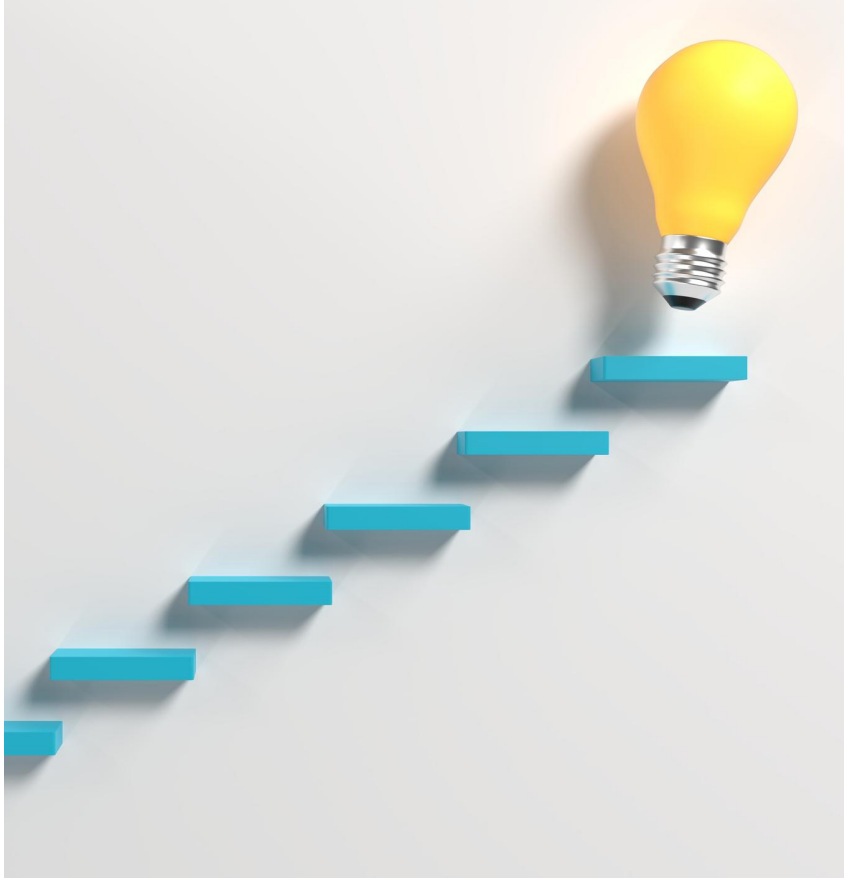
# Start planning asap

- Still have 2 years of official Drupal 7
- Consider a full redesign as part of the version upgrade
- Budget annually for future upgrades
- Take advantage of Drupal 8 (and 9)
- Weigh the alternatives, what makes the most sense for you



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Thank you!

# Question Time

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