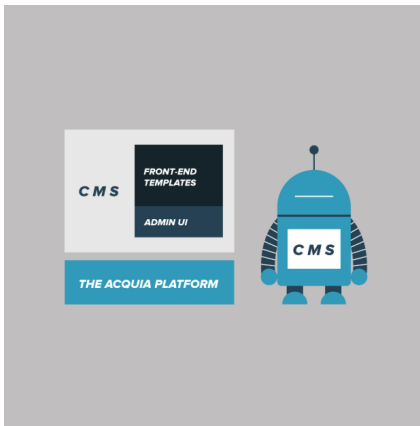# Decoupled Drupal Delivers Flexible Approaches to Web Development

Meet new experience mandates across channels and devices with flexible decoupled development modes provided by Acquia and Drupal

Digital visitors demand stellar experiences across multiple channels. Building dynamic applications for devices and channels today, and anticipating tomorrow's needs, requires a flexible web content management (WCM) system. It needs to minimize risk, maximize investment and enable organizations to utilize the skills of front- and back-end developers without eliminating capabilities for content creators.
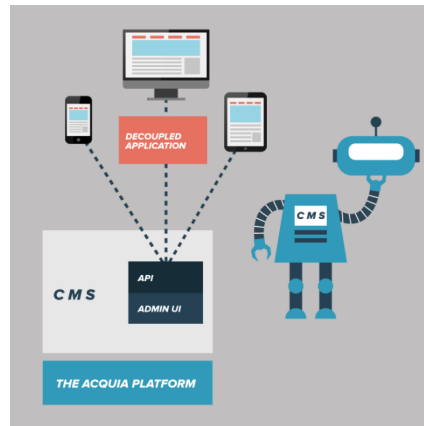
Drupal's Three Modes of Development

Acquia's Drupal-based platform delivers universal content flexibility with 3 modes of development.
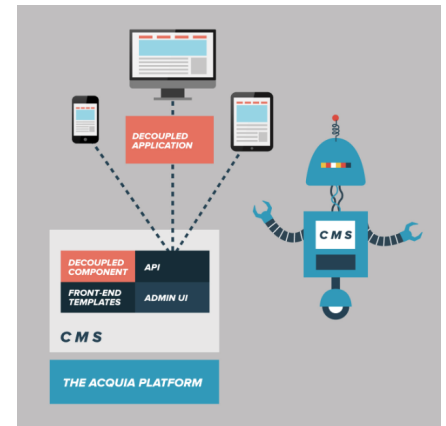

1) Traditional Mode:

A traditional approach for building sites, with a tightly coupled content management front-end and back-end that retains full editorial capabilities for non-technical content authors, built into Drupal.

2) Decoupled Mode:

A decoupled mode for creating sites & applications that lets developers write a custom front end against a content API. This approach eliminates typical CMS templates and other CMS-based tools that control authoring, layout and display.

3) Hybrid Mode:

Drupal's hybrid approach offers the best of all worlds - allowing devs and content creators to retain Drupal's editorial capabilities (authoring, workflow, preview), while also offering the ability to use Drupal as an API-based content repository where devs create JavaScript UI components on top of the existing Drupal front end.

Gain Development Freedom of Choice

Acquia serves the best of all development worlds. Acquia's WCM Drupal is API-first (unlike many other WCM's that are API-only) and therefore permits multiple modes of development. This includes a traditional "coupled" web content management paradigm; decoupled (or headless) mode; and a hybrid decoupled approach — a highly flexible mode unique to Drupal. Each plays a role in meeting new expectations for developer and content creator freedom and delivering universal content flexibility.

Drupal's support for multiple development modes enables the creation of a diversity of experiences.It can allow developers technical independence from the display mandates of traditional WCM templates, in favor of using standards-based APIs (like JSON:API and GraphQL) to access content from a decoupled back-end, and JavaScript libraries and frameworks (like React, Angular, and Vue) to create engaging front-end experiences. Yet at the same time Drupal can preserve content management capabilities for non-technical users.

Universal Content Flexibility

Drupal's hybrid option allows developers to choose to combine the strengths of traditional and decoupled. This is an essential strength of Drupal: It can deliver no presentation, all the presentation, or part of it, by enabling developers to build hybrid, or progressively decoupled, applications. This mode of development allows JavaScript components, or mini-applications, to be embedded in a page with some presentation still controlled by the WCM. Developers can mix and match these to create whole new experiences. Sometimes, the component is complex and takes up most of the page; or there are multiple small components that work together to extend and augment content; or the WCM manages the whole page without any components.

A Spectrum of Possibilities

Acquia's WCM isn't just for developers; non-technical content creators can still gain access to editorial tools to create the content that builds great experiences. Because Acquia's WCM can be deployed not just in decoupled modes, but also in a traditional (coupled) WCM mode and hybrid mode, developers can cede as much traditional, front-end content management control (i.e., authoring, workflow, preview, publish) to business users as is necessary. This flexibility enables organizations to operate on a spectrum that diffuses power to developers, content editors or both.

With Acquia, developers have the flexibility to choose the mode of development and deployment that most makes sense — choosing to tightly integrate front-end experience with back-end content infrastructure; to operate completely independently; or to adopt a hybrid of these two approaches. As a result, developers have full flexibility and creativity, and content creators have full content management control.

Only Drupal provides this flexibility to all stakeholders, minimizing future risk when new needs arise, with an open source approach to development. Acquia's solution delivers universal content flexibility to maximize your team's ability to realize value quickly, while using the core content management benefits of a battle-tested WCM.

For more information, visit: **acquia.com/drupal/decoupled-drupal**

ACQUIA