

Open Source Research Guide Tools

A comparison of Drupal, Library a la Carte, and Moodle

Common features:

Content publication process is entirely web-based; Web 2.0 features – tagging, feeds, embedded media, group interaction, and more;

	Drupal	Library a la Carte	Moodle
Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strong taxonomy system with many features ▪ Rapidly create extended user profiles ▪ Group interaction features ▪ Growing community of library participants and add-on contributors ▪ Can serve as web services framework ▪ Easiest to install ▪ Add-on modules provide “MyLibrary” features ▪ Highly extensible (for advanced users) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Created by librarians for libraries ▪ Backed by usability testing and developed specifically for creating research guides ▪ Built on model of interchangeable and re-usable content modules ▪ Highly responsive development team ▪ Interface is easy to use: e.g. drag and drop module arrangement, on-the-fly tab editing, and rapid sharing of modules with other librarians ▪ Application settings are the easiest of the three ▪ No programming skill required to start creating guides 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sophisticated instructional activity modules – quiz banks, multi-choice questions, assignment drop-boxes, surveys, and more ▪ Interfaces with SCROM (Shareable Content Object Reference Model)-compliant content - e.g. Adobe Captivate Screencasts ▪ Large, well-established user community ▪ Easy to install ▪ No programming required to start creating guides
Less Desirable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Requires a lot of configuration (PHP programming knowledge is a big plus) to create a system similar to Library a la Carte ▪ Configuring modules, templates, and other settings may not be worth the time unless you are planning to use Drupal in other contexts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ While initial setup is easy, a longer-term installation requires intermediate understanding of Linux-based web servers ▪ Limited user group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Additional planning required in order to take full advantage of instructional features ▪ Application settings and template modifications are complex

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Installation Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PHP (5+ recommended) ▪ MySQL (4+ recommended) ▪ Apache HTTP server ▪ Additional Linux or Apache modules may be required depending on add-ons selected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ruby (1.8.6) ▪ RubyGems and Rails (gem) ▪ MySQL Database ▪ Apache HTTP Server ▪ RMagick Graphics Interface ▪ ReCaptcha Key <p><i>“Library à la Carte is built on Ruby on Rails, a lightweight, yet powerful open-source framework for web development.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PHP ▪ MySQL (4.1.2+) ▪ Apache HTTP server ▪ Additional Linux or Apache modules may be required depending on add-ons selected
Helpful Reading	<p><i>Drupal in Libraries</i> by Andy Austin and Christopher Harris <i>Library Technology Reports, 44(4)</i></p> <p><i>Drupal and Libraries</i> Ellyssa Kroski <i>Presentation at Computers in Libraries, 2008</i> http://www.slideshare.net/ellyssa/drupal-and-libraries</p>	<p>Mellinger, Margaret and Kim Griggs. 2008. <i>The ICAP (Interactive Course Assignment Pages) Publishing System</i> Code4Lib Journal. Issue 2, 2008-03-24 http://journal.code4lib.org/articles/63</p> <p><i>Research Guides Remixed</i> Mellinger, Margaret <i>STS Science Librarians Discussion Group, ALA Annual, June 2008</i> http://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/dspace/handle/1957/8950</p> <p><i>And much more at...</i> http://wiki.library.oregonstate.edu/confluence/display/ICATeam/Papers+and+Presentations</p>	<p><i>Moodle: Why? Where? When? How?</i> University of Minnesota http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/MWR07093.pdf</p>

For all of the above, demos, discussions, and continuing research, please visit <http://biblio.csusm.edu/guideswiki/>.