



Steve Keator

Senior Drupal Developer / Technical Architect
Acquia Certified Drupal Developer

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Introducing... me!

I'm an experienced Drupal architect and full-stack web developer with over 20 years in open-source development and digital modernization.

Adept at leading projects from concept through launch with a focus on clean code, accessibility, and maintainable architecture.

Proven success delivering for federal, nonprofit, and enterprise clients under tight timelines and high compliance standards.

Past Performance

Federal Government Organization

Rebuilt and modernized a legacy CMS into a compliant, scalable platform under tight delivery timelines.

National Nonprofit Organization

Developed and deployed a CRM-integrated website to centralize outreach and data management.

Core Capabilities

Open Source CMS Builds

Expert in Drupal and WordPress, building scalable, maintainable platforms for any audience.

Migrations & Upgrades

Seamless moves from legacy systems like Drupal 7 to modern, secure builds.

Custom Development

Modules, plugins, and workflows built around your organization's real-world needs.

Architecture & Performance

Optimized systems that stay fast, stable, and easy to maintain.

Accessibility & USWDS Compliance

Modern, compliant front ends that meet WCAG and Section 508 standards.

AI & Automation

Smart integrations that simplify publishing and content management.

CRM & Integrations

Reliable connections between your CMS, CiviCRM, Salesforce, and other systems.

Consulting & Strategy

Clear, actionable roadmaps that align technology with mission goals.

Support & Maintenance

Ongoing care that keeps platforms secure, current, and performing.

Why I Stand Out

- Led multiple enterprise-scale Drupal modernizations for government and research organizations.
- Skilled at simplifying complex architectures and mentoring teams through best practices.
- Known for balancing technical precision with clear communication and collaborative problem-solving.
- Strong advocate for accessibility, open standards, and maintainable design systems.

Focus & Approach

I work with federal contractors, nonprofits, and private organizations that need secure, sustainable web systems built right the first time. Every project emphasizes accessibility, scalability, and real-world maintainability — no fluff, just results that last.



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So, you want to know the details...

The first time I used a computer, I was five years old. The year was 1984. My elementary school had a few Franklin Ace 1000s that got wheeled around on carts from classroom to classroom. I waited with great anticipation and anxiety for my weekly turn at the keyboard, and when it was my turn, every minute felt magical. I was hooked.

By the 1990s, I had a computer of my own, and I was knee-deep in creating my own computer programs, visiting online bulletin boards, getting my email from Juno, and creating web pages on GeoCities. One time, I managed to run up a \$400 phone bill dialing long-distance BBS connections. I was fortunate that my parents didn't ground me for life.

Through that nerdy upbringing, I turned curiosity into a career. My first "real" employers? Email spammers. I managed several high-volume mail servers back when CAN-SPAM wasn't yet a law, sending as many as 30 million emails per hour around the globe. The money was great; the longevity wasn't. When that company folded, I decided to get legit — and from the ashes of that first layoff, I built a career in web development.

Today, I've spent more than two decades building web platforms and applications that work — scalable, accessible systems that make life easier for the people who depend on them. My path wasn't linear; it grew out of curiosity, persistence, and a love for solving hard problems with clean, sustainable code. My work is about impact — empowering teams, improving systems, and leaving things better than I found them.

Core Competencies

CMS Architecture & Development

Expert in full stack Drupal (7-11) and WordPress builds, migrations, and maintenance. Adept at creating scalable, secure systems that balance performance with long-term sustainability.

Custom Module & API Development

Extensive experience developing Drupal modules, custom integrations, and RESTful API endpoints to connect diverse systems — including CiviCRM, Salesforce, and OpenAI.

Not Just A Drupal Developer

My professional and personal experience spans a wide range of languages, frameworks, and methodologies. I approach programming like learning a new language: the syntax may change, but the concepts and logic remain universal.

Accessibility & USWDS Implementation

Deep experience with Section 508 and WCAG compliance, USWDS implementation for federal agencies, deep-level evaluations and solutions, and development with an a11y-first mindset.

Content Migration & Data Modeling

Architected custom migration pipelines for thousands of legacy records, from simple pages to complex structured data.

Technical Leadership & Mentorship

Lead and manage small, focused development teams. Known for calm leadership, clear communication, and empowering developers to do their best work.

Performance & Security Optimization

Hands-on experience with caching, code review, and infrastructure optimization using Pantheon, Acquia Cloud, and custom environments.



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Employment History

Technical Architect / Senior Drupal Developer **BLN24 — McLean, VA · Oct 2024 – Apr 2025**

- Directed technical analysis and optimization of high-visibility government Drupal 10 platforms
- Strengthened accessibility, performance, and compliance with Section 508 / USWDS 3.8 standards
- Improved platform sustainability through architecture documentation and code-review processes

Technical Architect **Arch Systems / Independent Contractor — Missoula, MT (Remote) · Jun 2024 – Oct 2024**

- Led an eight-person team delivering a full Drupal 10 redesign and migration under tight timelines.
- Managed all aspects of project development from beginning of build to launch; reported to main stakeholders.
- Produced end-to-end written docs, video tutorials, and admin training for NIH staff.

Developer / Technical Consultant **BackOffice Thinking — West Chester, PA (Remote) · Apr 2023 – Jun 2024**

- Delivered full-stack builds and website enhancements using Drupal, Backdrop CMS, WordPress, and CiviCRM
- Created custom modules, Salesforce integrations, and a repeatable D7 to Backdrop migration process
- Automated DevOps pipelines on Pantheon and custom Linux stacks to reduce deployment time

Senior Developer **Elevated Third — Denver, CO (Remote) · Mar 2022 – Feb 2023**

- Led full-cycle Drupal development projects, including PHP 7 to 8 upgrades and custom solution development.
- Provided mentorship to junior developers and facilitated project planning/communication with clients.
- Collaborated in the hiring process for new developers, contributing to team growth.

Engineer / Contract Developer (Select Roles 2016 – 2022) **Hathway · Esteemed Inc. · Apex Systems · Fruition · Chronos Interactive · UBM**

- Delivered high-impact Drupal and JavaScript builds for national brands and agencies
- Integrated REST/JSON:API back ends with React and Vue front ends for dynamic experiences
- Led Panda Express website rebuild: pixel-perfect responsive design, custom API integration and development
- Led in-house development for Charles Schwab's custom Drupal LMS, used for training by over 25k employees

PHP / Drupal Programmer **New York State Senate — Albany, NY · Nov 2014 – Oct 2016**

- Developed and launched new Senate CMS; led large-scale data migration and automation
- Managed data migration of 100k+ content nodes from Drupal 6 to 7
- Built in-house content-comparison tool to streamline editorial workflows

Experience beyond November 2014 available upon request.



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Looking Forward

The Robots Have Arrived, and We Must Embrace Them

AI technology has become a natural extension of my workflow. I use it to move faster, think broader, and stay curious. It helps me explore new approaches to architecture, prototype smarter, document better, and even build custom code.

While this technology has become mainstream — and, let's face it, it's great at a lot of things — it's still missing something. What's required is a partnership: AI systems that can handle most of the heavy lifting, and a human who knows how to guide them. I treat AI as a collaborator — a thought partner that amplifies my experience rather than replaces it. Together, tasks that once took weeks or months can now be accomplished in hours or days.

What matters most to me is the balance between speed, intention, and cost versus value. AI can help solve a problem in seconds, but it's human intuition and empathy that make a solution *right*. My goal is to keep blending both: the intelligence of machines with the craftsmanship of people who care about what they build.

My Professional Focus & Goals

- Continuing to integrate AI into day-to-day development tasks
- Building secure, sustainable, and human-centered systems for real-world use
- Turning complex problems into solutions that feel simple, stable, and intuitive

Personal Ethos

At the end of the day, I build things because I love “connecting dots.”. The puzzle-solving. The storytelling. The way design and engineering can meet in the middle to make something that works — not just in code, but for the people who need to regularly use something that I've built for them.

I believe great development lives at that intersection: where logic meets empathy; where human connection leads to solid results.

**References, portfolio, code samples, and case studies
available upon request.**