



June 2010 | By Dana Blankenhorn

Webiva says it is a step beyond Drupal

A newly open sourced site creation program called Webiva claims to be a step beyond Drupal in functionality and in freedom.

In terms of functionality, Pascal and Martha Rettig write that their Ruby-based package offers more flexibility than a Content Management System that just lets you “dump in content.”

Site developers can create their own menu structures, so flexibility extends to both content and a Web site’s appearance. (Picture from Webiva.com.)

The Rettigs have coined the term “Website Building System” for their package, a Web 2.0 system that enables WYSIWYG creation of social networks. It features a WYSIWYG page editor built with MoxieCode’s TinyMCE. An attractive developer tutorial and documentation are also online.

All this shows an advantage the Rettigs are not talking about. Webiva appears to be a mature package at launch, complete with documents and a firm development roadmap. Older CMS projects grew organically and took years of open source development to reach the level of sophistication Webiva has now.

In terms of licensing, Webiva uses the Affero 3.0 license, a license Google has explicitly rejected because it exposes code that is the basis of services to sharing. Affero is definitely at the base of any open source incline for software meant to be used online.

This is not all new code, either. As Cykod, the Rettigs had been working on the system since 2007. Among Cykod’s other projects is a locality engine enabling location-based blogging. The software has been rewritten to use the latest version of Ruby on Rails and to be more modular.

I assume Cykod’s blog has some of the look-and-feel available in Webiva. It also has Pascal’s interesting opinions.



So what can I say that's negative.

Only that with the CMS and standard Web site space well-established it may be difficult for Webiva to gain traction. I might also suggest Pascal not be so Apple-phobic and perhaps push the software toward development of sites built for iPhones and iPads. That would be more 2010.

But as with so many technologies, my general view is I wish this were around 5 years ago.

