

Preface

The Internet is arguably one of the most profound achievements in human history. It has become so pervasive in our lives that we hardly even notice it—except when it happens to be unavailable! It's one of those things that make you sit back and wonder how people got along without it in the *old days*. Without the ability to surf the Internet to order groceries, do our banking, book flights and make travel arrangements, meet friends, meet partners, download music and videos, study, run businesses, trade shares, run campaigns, express views, share ideas, learn about other people... where would we be?

Fundamentally, in a world of so many people, where the sheer vastness of our societies is a hindrance to communication, the Internet has stepped up to the plate and brought everyone that little bit closer together. Utilizing a stunning array of technologies, spread out over the entire globe, the Internet has simply dropped the barriers of time and geographical distance to turn the entire world into a local community center.

Lately, the all-encompassing focus of commerce on the Internet has begun to shift slightly. Millions upon millions of people are waking up to the possibility of sharing their lives and experiences with others through the medium of weblogs (blogs for short). Others simply want an online presence to show off their work, art, or music. Still others have important causes and need the Internet to disseminate information or provide a meeting point for like-minded people. Whatever the demands, the Internet has to find a way to efficiently meet these needs or face being superseded by something else in the future.

What the Internet needs is something that makes it easy for people to do whatever it is they want without having to pour intellectual resources into understanding the technologies on which the Internet is based. What the Internet has got is precisely this—Drupal!

Drupal is what you need to use to build anything from a static homepage, to a fully-fledged, customizable, and interactive website in several languages, with tens of thousands of users all over the world. Assuming you fall somewhere between these two extremes, this book is what you need to guide you on your way.

This book will help cut down your learning time by providing precisely the information you need when you need it. It will help to reduce the trial and error associated with learning any new technology and provide you with a methodical and efficient learning process so that you become a knowledgeable and competent website creator and administrator.