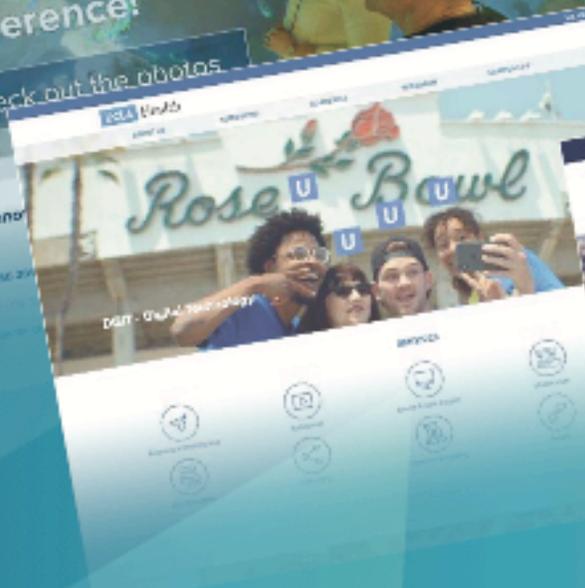




SiteFARM



# UC Code Creators Build SiteFarm and Community



## **UC Code Creators Build SiteFarm and Community**

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#### Other Contributors:

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- Brian Wood, UC Berkeley
- Derek Devnich, UC Merced

SiteFarm is the result of a collaborative effort of UC code creators from UC Davis, UC San Francisco, UCLA, and others, to explore and create a Community of Practice. The SiteFarm codebase is a shared resource for the creation of campus-wide web publishing platforms.

### **Before SiteFarm:**

Due to the independent, organic, and local campus decisions to adopt Drupal, there was very little commonality among the web installations and practices at the various campuses. Security models vary (Shibboleth vs. CAS), integrations and features are inconsistent, and there was minimal use of shared techniques and code across the system. Because of this, redundant development occurs and mistakes are repeated across the institution, costing UC both time and money.

With the release of Drupal 8, there was an opportunity to implement a shared platform across the UC campuses that use Drupal. A plan emerged to achieve the following:

1. Save the UC time and money
2. Standardize programming and communications practices
3. Create a talent pool with common skills
4. Implement a standard set of best practices
5. Create a more secure environment for web hosting
6. Provide a collaboration model for UC

The idea of SiteFarm was born, but it was only an idea until the collaboration began.

### **How the journey began**

#### May 11, 2015 – DrupalCon, Los Angeles

DrupalCon is the annual North American conference for Drupal Developers and Users to share the latest and to learn, including higher ed.

Web developers from UCLA, UC Davis, and UCSF met to discuss how to best collaborate and to establish the UC Drupal Collaboration Group. Monthly meetings to discuss vendor management, collaboration, and project governance were established at this meeting.

#### November 10, 2015

A Project Charter for SiteFarm Seed was approved by the three founding campuses - UCLA, UC Davis, and UCSF.

UC Davis secured continuous funding due in large part to the UCSF sharing financial model and cost avoidance numbers.

## **SiteFarm Project Accomplishments**

### April 2017 – UC Davis

After two years of development and collaboration with UCLA and UCSF, UC Davis launched SiteFarm as the campus-wide CMS.

### Summer 2017

UC Davis, UCLA, and UCSF collaborate to create SiteFarm Seed, a shared codebase for UC. It was released as open source.

### Summer 2017 – UCCSC at UC San Diego

Campus collaboration and idea-sharing at the UC Drupal Collaboration Group meeting held at UCCSC at UC San Diego.

### October 2017 – UC Davis

UC Davis Chancellor Gary May mentions SiteFarm by name and urges campus to adopt the CMS in order to standardize branding.

### October 2017 – UC Davis

SiteFarm codebase is released to the public under an Open Source license.

### November 2017 – UC Davis

The UCCSC planning committee creates the 2018 UCCSC conference website in SiteFarm.

### Spring 2018 – UCSF

A SiteFarm Summit is held at UCSF to discuss governance, feature enhancements, and common practices.

### Spring 2018 – UCSF

UCSF launches ~40 websites on SiteFarm including the Department of Medicine, Alumni, and Medical Education sites

### August 2018 – UCCSC UC Davis

Campus collaboration and idea-sharing at the UC Drupal Collaboration Group meeting held at UCCSC at UC Davis.

### November 2018 – UC Davis and UCLA

Released front-end development tools for branding and visual design.

### December 2018 – UC Santa Barbara

UC Santa Barbara launches the UCTech 2019 site, benefiting from shared code from UCCSC at UC Davis.

## **Technology:**

The primary piece of technology as a result of this collaboration is SiteFarm Seed, a Drupal Install Profile, sometimes known as a Distribution. Drupal Distributions are a bundle of custom code and configuration that are used upon install of a web site. It is similar to the paradigm of Ubuntu being a Distribution of Linux. In this case, it's a base-profile, from which each campus can expand and add their own customizations specific to their campus. Along with the Distribution is a starter-kit for a Drupal theme, and a branding and design pattern library.

Collaboration on the development of this project across multiple UC campuses embodies the Open Source nature of the Drupal project, and as such, all the pieces noted above have been released to the general public under an Open Source license.

## **Results:**

SiteFarm represents a huge shift in the web publishing efforts at the UC. Collaboration and adoption of SiteFarm means UCSF and UCLA have realized significant cost savings in the development of their campus web platform. In addition, common development practices, vendor management practices, and training materials have been developed and shared with all UC partners. This Community of Practice provides benefits to all participating campuses. For example, UCLA Health significantly accelerated their platform development by taking advantage of the community resources and expertise already established by UC Davis and UCSF.

As of May 2019, SiteFarm is the campus-wide web platform at UC Davis, representing 425 web sites. In just two years, it has been adopted by every UC Davis college and administrative unit.

At UC San Francisco, SiteFarm is the innovation platform for the campus with 42 web sites in production on SiteFarm, including the Department of Medicine, which represents roughly 1/4 of campus research funding.

The UCTech (formerly UCCSC) conference web site functionality was shared through this collaboration, and continues to improve each year as the host campus contributes new enhancements.

## **What's next?**

UCLA and UCLA Health are currently developing their campus-wide platforms on SiteFarm. They are working closely with UC Davis to accelerate their roadmap and adopt best practices around continuous integration and automated testing. UC Merced and UC Berkeley are participants in the collaboration and are still in the exploratory stage. Other UC campuses have shown interest as well.

Beyond UC, the University of Kentucky and University of North Carolina have both approached SiteFarm developers and are working at their own campuses to adopt SiteFarm components into their own web platforms.

In higher education, limited resources and short timelines are a way of life. The UC Drupal Collaboration - sharing the SiteFarm codebase, learning from each other, and adopting best practices - is a proven model for meeting these challenges head-on.

**Additional Resources:**

- <https://sitefarm-seed.netlify.com>
- [https://github.com/ucdavis/sitefarm\\_seed](https://github.com/ucdavis/sitefarm_seed)
- <https://sitefarm.ucdavis.edu>
- <https://medicine.ucsf.edu>