



Market Driven Recruiting; Affinity Hiring, Train as Needed

A Drupal Career Online Case Study

The truly unique market segment that Rosewood Marketing serves helps bring new talent into the Drupal Community

Like their arboreal namesake, [Rosewood Marketing](#) is amazingly sound and particularly suited for very specific applications. Where the Rosewood tree serves to form the structure of certain fine musical instruments, billiard cues and chess pieces, Rosewood Marketing serves as a bridge for dozens of Amish and Mennonite small businesses to mainstream society. Their growth and development over the 22-year span of their success is not just in their marketing prowess, but in their inherent, sincere understanding of their client culture.



If you really think about it, Rosewood has perhaps one of the most focused and secluded market segments in the US, which interestingly enough allows them to bring a type of diversity to the Drupal Community we don't often consider. They do this amazingly well in their approach to business development and hiring. They first truly match new employees to their market and their company culture, and then leverage training programs to ensure the team has the skills and best practices in technology and communications to meet their business standards. A person hired as a graphic designer receives training in tools such as Photoshop, InDesign, design principles and customer service. An online marketer receives training in analytics, SEO, and PPC, while a new manager learns time management.

Others become web developers, and as our luck would have it, DrupalEasy students and graduates. Of Rosewood's 16 member staff, two are [Drupal Career Online](#) graduates and one new hire has just been enrolled in the upcoming Fall 2018 session. Our new Rosewood student already has experience in Drupal 7, but needs to move forward in Drupal 8. Adrian Nolt, a 4-year employee of Rosewood and a Fall 2017 DCO graduate, explains, "Even though Stephen has...Drupal site-building experience, I recommended that he take DCO in order to acquire a common training foundation as our other Drupal developers...For me as a primarily self-taught Drupalist, DCO filled in knowledge gaps, and I would like for Stephen to experience the same joy."

Stephen Ebersole, who was hired recently, works remotely for Rosewood, with his primary residence in Georgia, and currently living in Honduras serving his church. He, like most Rosewood employees, is a member of a Mennonite community. Adrian explains, "Since Rosewood's target market is businesses run by members of the Plain Communities...besides the native understanding of our target market, we feel that while Drupal may be hard to learn, it is easier to pick up than people skills and a solid work ethic."

Adrian highlights the importance of this native understanding by explaining, "Many members of the Plain Communities are devout Christians with strong convictions...If a Rosewood team member does not...appreciate why his or her client will, for example, give up internet access in order to free himself from unnecessary temptations, he or she will not be able to make recommendations that align with our client's values. This understanding is more important to our ability to serve our clients well than expertise in a specific technology."



Adrian continues, "...as soon as an employee has sufficient proficiency to perform basic tasks, he or she begins working on paid work, even if it means billing our clients at a reduced shop rate for a time. We believe that learning by doing is one of the most efficient ways to learn... though... can leave holes in a person's knowledge. For some of us, taking DrupalEasy's DCO course is about filling in the gaps and providing a common foundation for working together. However, it is also one of the fastest ways I know to get a Drupal beginner up to speed and productive with Drupal."

The team at Rosewood has used video courses, but they have found for their purposes, says Adrian, that "...many are too basic or not opinionated enough to apply to most real-life Drupal development practices." He continues, "For example, they may teach installing Drupal 8 from a tarball, but we had already committed to a composer-driven workflow for Drupal 8 as the safest long-term bet, and I was looking for a course that teaches a professional development workflow. DrupalEasy DCO has proven to be the well-rounded, just-deep-enough training we were looking for, and as long as Drupal remains one of our specialties, we expect to consider it as part of our Drupal training regimen."

Adrian feels the most valuable aspects of the DCO include clarifying the intersections of fields, blocks, entity types, content types, and relationships, which he says can be an "ah-ha" moment to someone just getting started. He also appreciates becoming familiar with command-line, git, local development, and views, as it is a must for success in Drupal 8, which he feels is a huge hurdle for those getting started. He adds "...the value of DCO lies in how it connects all the pieces, such as workflow, data architecture, module development, theming, and the business of Drupal, together into one comprehensive introduction to the Drupal ecosystem."

Rosewood's clients are primarily in the agricultural industry, or are builders, retailers, craftsmen, and small manufacturers, including small businesses such as [Vierbike](#), [MM Weaver](#) and [Blue Ridge Furniture](#). The company is now going with other CMS options for simpler sites, but Adrian emphasizes, "Drupal continues to excel at use cases that require structured data and over 30 pages. We feel that having Drupal in our tool bag allows us to provide outside-the-box marketing solutions to our clients simply by combining modules and configuring the user interface. On other platforms, competitors may need to resort to custom code or make compromises in order to use an out-of-the-box solution."

As far as their training philosophy, that is evolving as well, according to Adrian, "In the past, we prescribed training when a person was hired or when they needed to learn something new. However, we have begun budgeting training dollars and time into our annual budgets in order to continually grow as professionals and as a company." He continues, "Hiring and training people is a way to scale our service-based business to serve more clients. Continued education adds to our in-house skill set to allow us to serve them in more ways and more efficiently. Happy clients = successful Rosewood." He adds, "We don't know the future, but judging by the past, we will continue to hire and train employees."