Oct 6 IM VTC – No dead ends website

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Systems we use for information delivery could be improved. Best to treat everything as content that can be related to each other (data, bibliography, publications, photos, etc).   Everything should be organized at the most basic level.   For example, Metacat gets to a "dead end" after three clicks, where the user can't find links to related information. Similar problem with Ecotrends website.

SEV and LUQ are using a system developed by Marshal and Inigo at LNO for content management. marsh2.lternet.edu is demo for SEV website. Has links to related information Data→Investigator→Projects→Etc. Relationships between "content types" created via graphical interface.   Drupal allows for different content types. New fields easy to create. Would like to integrate site databases with network database for personnel and bibliography. What data is displayed, and how, on a website is set via a GUI with numerous options.   Uses AJAX, so nothing is saved until "Save" clicked. Can create various views with output available in different formats and feeds. Keywords can be applied to all types of content.   Can be used to create Level 5 EML from content entered through forms. Good for controlled vocabulary. Forms have some built-in tests for missing information.   Inigo uses PERL script to create compliant EML files.

Everything in Drupal is controlled in browser. This allows admins to control their site from any computer easily. Modules available to export various site-specific systems to web services. Does this interest individual sites?

How do you build framework? What is the workload? How much knowledge do you need to have? Need to be able to install software. Need to create content. Can import content types and/or fields from other sites.

Field level permissions can be implemented. Versioning is built into content types. When changes are saved, new version created, old version sill available. Workflow settings for default options.

Strong developer community. Good videos for learning to use Drupal. Learning curve is not too long with big payoff. Not necessarily about technology, though. Want to capitalize on open source in a way that allows network level support. Focus on vision, not Drupal specifically. Drupal has many different skins, allows quick change of look for individual sites.

Can this be done in a VTC assisted way? LNO would like to have IMs come to network office for training. Also online videos are very useful. Could set up training at various sites. LNO looking at creating training package.

Takes time to move from legacy systems to new content management scheme. Two sites close to going live with Drupal. Questions of how to integrate current scripts into new system.