

With many High Level Organizations and Fortune 500 Companies Adopting Drupal Technology to Build Massive, Robust Websites with Enormous Contributed Modules and Feature, Drupal Connect is in the Right Market at the Right Time Offering Development, Training and Staffing Services

**Technology
Drupal
(Private)**

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John Florez
President and CEO

BIO:

John Florez is an American entrepreneur who has created numerous profitable ventures. He began his career on Wall Street after graduating from Binghamton University with a bachelor's degree in psychology. In 2003, John founded The Florez Group, a successful nationwide technical recruiting company. He also founded the Web's first video-only classified site, iMoondo, which was featured in the Boston Globe, the Los Angeles Times, and the BBC.

In 2009, at the peak of one of the nation's worst economic recessions, John founded Drupal Connect, a full-service Drupal development company. Today, Drupal Connect is one of the fastest-growing companies in the U.S. and one of the largest in the Drupal space.

In addition to creating successful businesses, John has many passions outside of work. He started the Newport Junior Tennis League, a free tennis program for children of low-income families, and is active with other charitable groups, including the Potter League. He is an avid tennis player and a member of the International Tennis Hall Fame. He lives in Newport, R.I. with his wife Karen and their two dogs, Sonny and Franklin.

Company Profile:

Headquartered in New York City, Drupal Connect is a full-service Drupal firm offering Drupal development, training and staffing services. The company is engaged in projects worldwide including Sony Music Entertainment, Waste Management Inc., General Electric Co., A&E, the New York Stock Exchange, NBC Universal, Yale University, Stanford University and the Carter Foundation. Drupal Connect was founded in 2009 by John Florez, who previously owned Drupal Staffing.

**Interview conducted by:
Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor**

CEOCFO: Mr. Florez, you were named in the Inc 5000 list and we congratulate you. Would you tell us about the Drupal Connect?

Mr. Florez: Drupal Connect is a full-service Drupal development company. We offer Drupal development and Drupal support services to mid-sized and Fortune 500 companies. We work with some smaller companies but our niche tends to be in the mid to larger sized company, organizations like AOL, GE, NBC, NYSE, Sony Music, Yale, and Stamford to name just a few. We have over 300 clients across North America. We also have some clients in Europe as well as Australia. Basically, what we do is build and support the large websites using the Drupal CMS system.

CEOCFO: Drupal Connect started in one of the worst economic recessions; why did you decide that was the time to start and how has it grown so quickly and successfully?

Mr. Florez: My wife and I owned a technical recruiting business, we started it back in 2003 and it was pretty successful. When the economic downturn hit, it really just shook the core of our business and we were struggling just to get by. One technology kept coming up on our radar, Drupal. We reached out to other Drupal development companies and within a week we generated probably about a dozen new clients. Pretty soon we knew that there was something very viable here and within a few weeks through calculated impulse we pretty much shut down our entire recruiting operation and put all of our proverbial eggs into this one basket of Drupal. We decided to start drupal-staffing.com which was basically a staffing company that caters to other Drupal development companies. This was back in February of 2009. Prob-

bly within a year's time, it started to grow and it just occurred to me at some point that I have this enormous pool of amazing developers. In working with many of these development companies, the companies typically will have two or three rock star developers. I wanted to start a company made up of a rock star Drupal developers. I have a recruiting background, I know how to bring on board quality talent. I set out to create an organization that hires the best people in the Drupal space, so I looked at Drupal developers that had experience working on large-scale Drupal web applications, experience working with Fortune-500 companies, and I built a foundation for what is our current team which is now comprised of about 45 expert level Drupal developers all across North America.

CEO CFO: What are the advantages when using Drupal itself?

Mr. Florez: Any car can get you from point-A to point-B, however, a Bentley will also get you to the same place but it's far more robust, it has more features and options. It is just sexier and that's Drupal. It allows you to build these massive, robust websites that have an enormous amount of contributed modules and features.

CEO CFO: What are some of the more standard things that your highly skilled developers can get up and running easily, and what are some of the

more obscure things that your people are able to work on as well?

Mr. Florez: What sets our team apart from our competitors is that we hire developers that are not just technical. There are many people that can write clean code. However, what sets our we team apart is that we strive to hire people that have this dual component of technical and business savvy because when clients come to us with an idea, part of the challenge is translating some of these technical concepts into real life business initiatives. You need somebody that has great communications skills, someone that understands the needs of the very comprehensive and complex business

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- John Florez

needs that these clients have. Every client we work with has a different set of initiatives and we have to really be on our toes and understand what the client wants.

CEO CFO: How do you absolutely ensure user-friendliness?

Mr. Florez: It is all about the user experience and that is part of our foundation and mantra. Some of these websites cost several hundred thousands of dollars and more. There is a great deal of junk out there. Our rates are at a premium but you get

what you pay for. There are far more inexpensive options out there. But the quality will not be anywhere close to what we're able to accomplish.

CEO CFO: How do you reach perspective clients?

Mr. Florez: They reach out to us; we have a comprehensive pay-per-click campaign and we also have a very aggressive SEO campaign of search engine optimization, so for all the major key words, we maintain the top three positions in most of our key words. We are still working on enhancing that and constantly improving it even more so. Drupal is popular, 100% of the Ivy League universities use it, 36% of all universities. I read a report recently that 25% of all Fortune-500 companies have some component of Drupal in their websites. So we're very lucky that people come to us.

CEO CFO: Why people in the business and investment community look at Drupal Connect?

Mr. Florez: It is a lot more than a technology fad, it is going to be here for a long time. It is cutting-edge technology and the fact that so many high level organizations have adopted to it and use it I think speaks for itself. When you have clients like AOL, GE, NBC, Yale, Stanford, A&E, Sony Music it communicates to perspective clients that there's something compelling about this technology.



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