



WYSIWYGS in DRUPAL: Proceed with Caution

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Feb 26, 2009



The wysiwyg says *what!?!*

- “What you see is what you get”
- A small application – essentially a mini-version of Word/DW – sitting inside drupal
- Lots of shiny buttons
- Instead of seeing: `quick fox`, you see: *quick fox*
- Allows non-technical people to insert HTML into a node without knowing HTML
- Also known as RTE – rich-text editor.

WYSIWYGs are *hard*



- The sight of a WYSIWYG elevates expectations: “But I can do *this* and *this* in Word or DW. Why not here?”
- The WYSIWYG creator is basically trying to reverse engineer an expensive, complex, cross-platform application – inside the browser, using lots of javascript, for no pay.
- MSFT+Adobe market cap: \$160B
- Drupal market cap: \$0

Proceed with caution



- WYSIWYGs are notoriously, but understandably, buggy
- Often rely on separate, third-party, open-source projects
- Removes admins/coders from the equation. On the other hand, they give non-techies the keys to the kingdom.
- Doesn't always produce standards-compliant, CSS-friendly markup
- Ask yourself? Is HTML needed here? Can you handle it in the theme? With more fields? Is this just a great opportunity for teaching HTML literacy? (See last slide!)

WYSIWYGs in drupal



- Transitive property: Developers hate WYSIWYGs, developers built drupal, drupal must hate WYSIWYGs
- OK. Situation is not *that* bad. But not that great, either. (Especially if you're used to something like Wordpress.)
- Hope is on the way! There could/should/will be a native WYSIWYG in drupal7.
- But until then

TINYmce



- *Very, very* configurable
- Very popular
- Not without its bugs (can conflict with other modules/theming/javascript)
- Extra step: module + 3rd party app (don't forget this when you update module!)
- Cool things like: create a dropdown of CSS classes

FCKeditor



- Extremely similar to TINYmce
- 3rd party editor
- Still buggy
- Developers see it as the lesser of two evils (my impression)
- Careful when writing/pronouncing this

YUI Rich Text Editor



- The power of Yahoo!
- Probably the slickest-looking of all editors
- Requires YUI module
- Grabs editor files remotely
- Cool stuff like: insert images from flickr

widgEditor



- Very, very simple UI
- Really handcuffs the user (feature, not a bug)
- Customizable (but not easily)
- Free-standing module

WYMEditor



- A “what you mean” editor. Made for the semantically-inclined. Not ideal for your typical WYWIWYG user
- Allows you to add tags and classes (rather than color and effects).
- Not a true WYSIWYG (kinda like Word with the formatting marks turned on)
- Still has bugs
- Abandoned?
- D6 version is dev

Poor-text editors?



- BUEditor: basically a ‘reverse-WYSIWYG’
- Markdown – uses a short-hand for HTML. OK for newbies, but mainly aimed at folks who already know HTML.
- Any number of input filter modules.



Even more!

- jWYSIWYG
- OpenWYSIWYG Editor
- Editor
- xStandard
- Whizzywig
- HTMLBox

Oh yeah, one more thing: forget everything I just said



- Drupal community trying to clean up this mess
- The WYSIWYG API: one module to rule them all (+ any necessary plug-ins)
- Currently supports: FCKeditor 2.6, jWYSIWYG 0.5, markItUp 1.1.5, NicEdit 0.9.0, TinyMCE 3, TinyMCE 2, Whizzywig 55
- Much more maintainable solution.
- You can have multiple WYSIWYGs – and multiple configurations of each WYSIWYG – per site.



Tips

- Understand what's driving the user's desire to format text.
- Always think CCK first!
- Make sure all things that should be separate fields *are* separate fields (and *then* decide if you want an editor).
- Give authors the minimum amount of freedom they need to complete their job (esp. if you open up authoring to people you don't know).
- Know your filters/formats. With great freedom comes great responsibility.
- Try to get authors to write content *in* the editor. If not: PASTE FROM WORD is your new BFF!
- Try before you buy. And *share* your experiences!
- Remember any 3rd-party apps when you upgrade!

Fin

- Questions?
- War stories?

