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OTTAWA

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MASTERING WEBFORM VALIDATION IN DRUPAL: CUSTOM SCRIPTS AND BEST PRACTICES

Steven Dagenais - Coldfront Labs - May 2 2025



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1.

Website Forms

CUSTOM FORMS

- ▶ Purpose-built, often having little flexibility
- ▶ Security is hard to gauge
- ▶ Can only be used in several places
- ▶ Requires staff time to fix and maintain
- ▶ Everything needs to be implemented in-house

WHAT ARE **WEBFORMS**?

- ▶ A flexible and actively-maintained form-building module built for Drupal
- ▶ Easy to set up in UI, and fully extensible in backend
- ▶ Import/export data, portable
- ▶ Full-time team that maintains it at no cost to you

BENEFITS OF WEBFORMS

- ▶ Consistent Formatting
- ▶ Greater Data Accuracy
- ▶ Better User Experience



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358,481 users

Active installations as of April 6, 2025

178 contributors

21 years

Created April 26, 2004



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2.

Simple Validation



VALIDATION

- ▶ Ensuring submissions are complete
- ▶ Clarifies expected formats of data
- ▶ Ensuring greater consistency for processing



REQUIRED FIELDS

- ▶ Ensures the presence of specific data
- ▶ Increases consistency between submissions
- ▶ Highlights the important information

FIELD FORMATS

- ▶ Ensures that data is formatted properly
- ▶ Provides further restrictions
- ▶ Clarifies what you want the user to provide



FIELD FORMATS

- ▶ Emails
- ▶ Phone Numbers
- ▶ Dates
- ▶ Numbers
- ▶ Addresses



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3.

Conditional Validation

CONDITIONAL VISIBILITY

- ▶ Clarifies information relationships
- ▶ Allows for greater focus
- ▶ Less wasted time in reading/filling out form

CONDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

- ▶ Alternative to visibility conditions
- ▶ Only requires certain data if other data is included



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4.

Advanced Validation



USES FOR **ADVANCED** VALIDATION

- ▶ Allows for complex cross-field validation
- ▶ Allows for the querying of other entities for further validation
- ▶ Includes compatibility with regex



CUSTOM VALIDATION COMPONENTS

- ▶ Handler Class
- ▶ Module handlers:
 - ▷ `hook_form_alter()`
 - ▷ `hook_form_validate()`

SECURITY FOR ADVANCED VALIDATION

- ▶ Must make sure the data is clean
- ▶ Must watch out for injection
- ▶ Only for the parts that you've implemented
- ▶ Overly complex validation can have an impact on the site's performance



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5.

Demo

LET'S REVIEW SOME CONCEPTS

Importance

Form validation is always a useful tool for consistent data collection.

Flexibility

Webform currently takes care of most requirements out of the box.

Clarity

Build a form flow that the user can follow with less guesswork through validation and conditional logic.

Extensibility

Webform currently allows for complex custom validation solutions that you can maintain.



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6.

Questions



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THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME!

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