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# Improving Web Discovery with Maps

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# Improving Web Discovery With Maps

By  
Rachel  
Evans

**I**n 2014, the University of Georgia (UGA) law library's blog, *Calling All Papers!*, enhanced usability and encouraged patron discovery of an online resource by incorporating Google Maps into its revamped, responsive Drupal-based site. Find out how you too can integrate maps into your library website with the Drupal Geolocation Field and Geolocation Views modules.

## A Library Blog Receives a Facelift

As a special type of academic library, the UGA law library's primary patrons are made up of a very specific community: Georgia Law. When the law school's website—which includes the law library's webpages—underwent a CMS upgrade in summer 2014 (from Drupal 6 to 7), it seemed only natural that some related library web services do the same, including the law library's faculty scholarship blog. Aptly named *Calling All Papers!*, the blog's posts calls for papers in the field of legal scholarship to share opportunities with the school's own faculty. General web visitors in search of calls for papers related to law also stumble across the blog. This makes for an average readership of more than 3,000 views each month, with site visitors hailing from more than 74 countries across the globe.

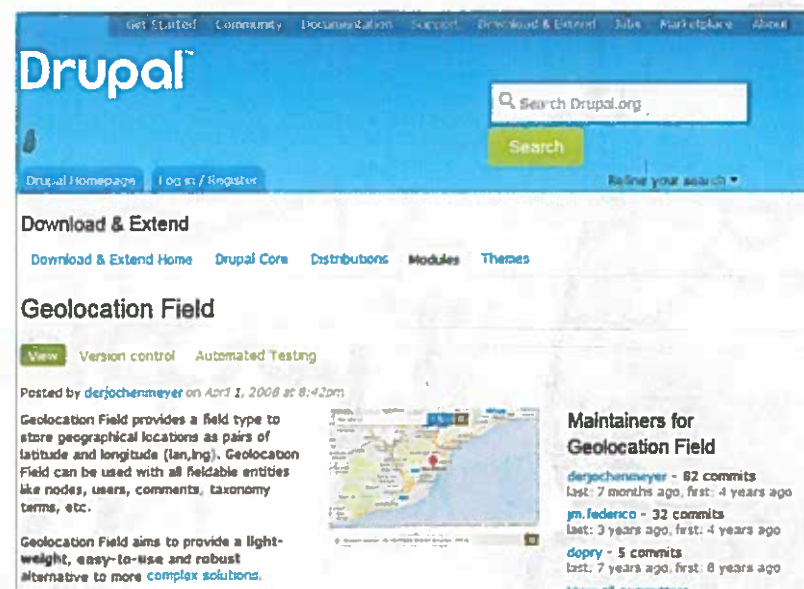
From the start, the faculty librarian suggested that the new version of the site include a map in addition to the previous search methods. I was excited about giving the blog a facelift; creating a simpler, standalone blog with the same backend as the larger institution's site would serve as an extra sandbox to play around in. The highlight of this project, for me, was definitely investigating and implementing the solution for the interactive map view that contained multiple points on one map. The map I visualized would showcase the vast range of opportunities that *Calling All Papers!* featured, and it would be the first thing site visitors saw when the homepage loaded.

### Using the Drupal Geolocation Field Module

The first thing I found when exploring the addition of a map view to this blog was that I needed a field for geolocation information. This is where the Drupal module Geolocation Field comes in. This module creates a field type for geographical locations in the form of latitude and longitude pairs, and it can be used with any fieldable entity (such as nodes or taxonomy terms).

Here's how to get started:

1. **Install the Geolocation Field module.** Go to your modules list and select



the link to install a new module. Copy and paste the correct tar.gz download link from the bottom of this webpage: [drupal.org/project/geolocation](http://drupal.org/project/geolocation).

2. **Enable the module.** Go to the modules list again, scroll down to the Geolocation section, and check the boxes to enable the Geolocation module. Save the configuration when you are done.
3. **Add a new field to your content type.** Edit your content type. You will now have a new field type option for geolocation. Choose geolocation as a new field type.
4. **Choose the widget for your new geolocation field.** The geolocation field type allows for three widget options to select from for user input: 1) latitude and longitude pair in the form of plain text, 2) HTML5 widget, and 3) Google Maps widget. I used the Google Maps widget, which gives you three choices for adding a location when you create and edit the node. The Google Maps widget lets you set the latitude and longitude pair by 1) entering the location using an address or a Google map URL, 2) clicking on the map to set a marker, and 3) using your browser geolocation system by clicking a link provided. Finish creating the new field and save the content type.
5. **Manage the display.** Under the display settings for your content type, you can choose the map format that is displayed. For the nodes, I chose the Static Google Map. Other options include a Dynamic Google Map and an HTML5 Map Image.
6. **Edit the settings for map format.** If you click on the gear icon to the right of the format, edits you can make for the specific type of map are displayed. For the Static Google Map, you can set map width and height, the path for a custom marker icon, and image format (PNG, GIF, or JPEG); add a link from your map to Google Maps; select map type (roadmap, satellite, terrain, or hybrid); and set your zoom level (from one to 19).
7. **Inspect your content example.** Double-check using example content to ensure everything shows up correctly, and tweak settings as needed. Here is an example of what a node looks like for our final content type on *Calling All Papers!*: [law.uga.edu/calling-all-papers/node/175](http://law.uga.edu/calling-all-papers/node/175).



## Adding Multiple Points on a Single-Map View

Once you have created content that contains locations using the geolocation field, you can then pull from that content to create a view to display multiple points on a single map. You will need more than one module to make this happen, but if your Drupal website is already up and running, chances are you already have two of the modules you will need (Views and Chaos tool) and will only have to install the sub-module Geolocation Views.

Follow these 10 easy steps:

1. **Install and enable the Views module and Chaos tool suite (ctools).** If you are using Drupal 8, Views is part of the core modules your Drupal installation comes with. If you are using Drupal 7, you will need to install and enable the Views module as well as ctools, which Views is dependent on. You can find the link for Views at the bottom of this page: [drupal.org/project/views](http://drupal.org/project/views). The link for ctools is at the bottom of this page: [drupal.org/project/ctools](http://drupal.org/project/ctools). Once you have installed each, enable them and save the configuration.
2. **Install and enable the Geolocation Views submodule.** You can find the link for the Geolocation Views module at the bottom of this page: [drupal.org/project/geolocation\\_views](http://drupal.org/project/geolocation_views). This submodule of Geolocation Field enables you to create a map view using the geolocation field from your site content. Once you have installed the module, enable it and save the configuration.
3. **Create a new view.** Navigate from Structure to Views and click to create a new view. Check the box to create both a page and a block view. The page view will allow you to test your view before making the block view visible. Give each a title, give your page view a path, and select your display format to Google Maps (Geolocation

## The Psychic Librarian and the Aha Moment

When it comes to web design for libraries, I propose we channel our mind-reading abilities to hypothesize about what our patrons might desire from our web service interfaces. Gone are the days of responding to a patron's complaint about website improvements after the fact. Instead, we should look ahead to visualize and concoct an online user experience with features that patrons are not only able to use efficiently, but also enjoy interacting with on their devices of choice. An added bonus comes from features that get site visitors excited about the searching and finding process. You don't have to be a mind reader to understand why your patrons love images and maps.



Images add a visually stimulating accent to any website, and images of maps can evoke a certain curiosity. Maps themselves can hint at themes of exploration, pioneering, and even the aha moment when you unearth something new that you may or may not have been looking for. The majority of people today are quite familiar with Google Maps, which is ubiquitous for finding locations and getting directions with current technology. It should come as no surprise then that interactive maps included in a website's makeup could create moments of exhilarating discovery for site visitors.

The screenshot shows the Drupal.org website interface. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for 'Get Started', 'Comments', 'For Librarians', 'Support', 'Download & Extend', 'Join', 'Site Update', and 'About'. Below this is the 'Drupal' logo and a search bar with the text 'Search Drupal.org' and a 'Search' button. The main content area is titled 'Download & Extend' and includes sub-links for 'Download & Extend Home', 'Drupal Core', 'Distributions', 'Modules', and 'Themes'. The 'Views' module page is highlighted, showing a 'View' button, 'Version control', and 'Automated Testing' options. The page is posted by 'merinofchaos' on November 25, 2005 at 8:34pm. A section titled 'You need Views if' lists several use cases, such as wanting to sort content differently or using a tracker. A 'Maintainers for Views' section lists users like 'celan', 'davehner', 'dww', and 'merinofchaos' with their commit counts and last activity dates.

Views) of titles (linked). You can also choose to limit the number of items that will appear on your map. When you are done, click to continue and edit.

#### 4. Customize your view's format.

In the edit window for your new view, click on the link for settings, found under format. Here you can set the map type, width, height, center, zoom, marker icon, and other settings. Ensure that your new setting applies to all displays before saving (this way, your test page view and your block view will be identical, therefore making certain that your test page is an accurate test), and click to apply the changes. Once you are back to your edit window, under show for format, make sure fields is selected as what you want to show on the map.

#### 5. Customize your view's fields.

Click the add link next to fields and choose *content: title* and *content: location (map)* as the two fields you want to display on your map. For *content: title*, check the box to link the field to the original piece of content, and adjust other settings as you wish. For *content: location (map)*, select the settings you prefer. Once you edit each of these, again make sure that your new settings apply to all displays before saving.

#### 6. Customize your view's filter criteria.

In the same way that you just added new fields, add new filters to your view. The selections here will vary based on the type of content you want to display and your map type and purpose. For the Calling All Papers! map, I chose to filter by *content: type* and selected the custom content type created for the blog so that only that particular content will show on the map. I also chose to show only published content, so I decided to add *content: published (yes)*. Additionally, I chose to filter by another field in the content

type, which is the deadline of the calls for papers. This way, only items with a deadline that is approaching show on the map, and items with a deadline in the past automatically disappear from the map.

#### 7. Edit your pager settings.

Under the pager section, you can select for a certain number of items to display or for all items to display.

#### 8. Save and preview your view.

Save your changes and preview your

view test page by opening a new window or tab with the path to your page view. Go back to the view if you need to make any changes based on your preview.

#### 9. Make your block view visible.


Once you are finished making changes, navigate to Structure then Blocks to view a list of your site's blocks and regions. Depending on your site and theme, the regions available to you may vary. Scroll to the bottom to find your new block view; it



should have the title of the view you created. Click the configure link to set up your block view. If you would like your block to display with no title, use <none> in place of the title. Choose the region from the drop-down menu for the theme you are using. This will allow the block view to show up in the right location for your site's layout. For the Calling All Papers! site theme, we chose to display the map in the region intended for a slideshow, putting it at the top and center of the page. Next, select for the block to be visible on all pages or only pages you choose. If you select only pages you choose, you must enter the path(s) for the page(s)

you wish your block view to show on. You can also limit so it only shows for certain content types and for certain users. For Calling All Papers!, we wanted it to only appear on the homepage of the site and to show for all users. If you want it to show only on your front page or homepage, enter the path <front> in the space provided. Click to save the block.

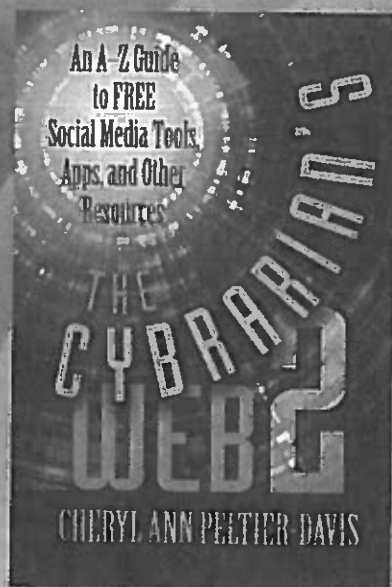
10. **Visit your new map with multiple map points.** Navigate to the page(s) where your new block view should be and click on map points. You should be able to drag the map around by clicking on it, use the zoom in and out feature, and click on map points

for the linked title of a node to become visible. 

### About the Author and the Illustrator

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By Cheryl Ann Peltier-Davis  
Foreword by David Lee King

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—David Lee King, from the Foreword

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