Site structuring and navigation in Drupal

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And anyone else who has something to say
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Structure

Anything composed of parts, that are arranged together in some way.
Parts

Pages

Menu callbacks?
Arranged

Hierarchy

- Related pages
- Directory / index
- Tag clouds
- Chronological
Navigation

*Finding one’s way on, in, or across.*

Where am I?
Navigational elements

- Menu trees
- Breadcrumbs
- Tabs
- URLs
Tools in core

• **Menu system**
  – the foundation of all page hierarchy in Drupal

• **Theming system**
  – Provides rendering system for common navigational elements

• **Book module**
  – common tool for hierarchical structuring, not built on menu system

• **Taxonomy module**
  – tagging pages, directory browsing, linking and grouping related pages

• **Path module**
  – Potentially allows for custom URLs that match a site’s structure; but only a base
Tools in Contrib

• **Taxonomy context**
  – Breadcrumbs and menu trees based on taxonomy term hierarchies

• **Pathauto**
  – Automatic URL generation based on taxonomy / book / menu hierarchies

• **Category**
  – Brings together nodes, taxonomy / book hierarchies, menu trees, and navigational elements

• **Views**
  – Breadcrumbs, menu trees, and tabs based on results of querying the site’s content

• **Many more**
Fitting them all together
Drupal’s current navigation API
Menu trees

• Generated as blocks by menu module
• Editable through admin/build/menu
• Customizable through theming system
• Some modules bypass this, and build their own menu trees in blocks
Breadcrumbs

• Generated automatically, based on menu location

• Location of page is determined at admin/build/menu, or is inferred from the page’s system path

• drupal_set_breadcrumb() and menu_set_set_location() – evil hacks, override user customization
Tabs

- Used for ‘local tasks’ (up to two levels)
- Users also generally consider primary and secondary links to be tabs
- Local tasks are fully themable, pri / sec links have some issues (e.g. active highlighting)
- Local tasks are inconsistent, not user customizable at all
URLs

- Path module allows any URL to be aliased with anything, which is great
- API is very basic, just saves aliases to DB
We can dream
Drupal’s dream navigation API
All pages linked using a unified relationship API
Every page able to have its relationship customized
Every page able to have its content customized

Possible route: *every* page as a node, and module output embedded within node pages
All navigational elements consistently reflecting the same relationships
Live the dream!