

The Drupal Category Module

An overview

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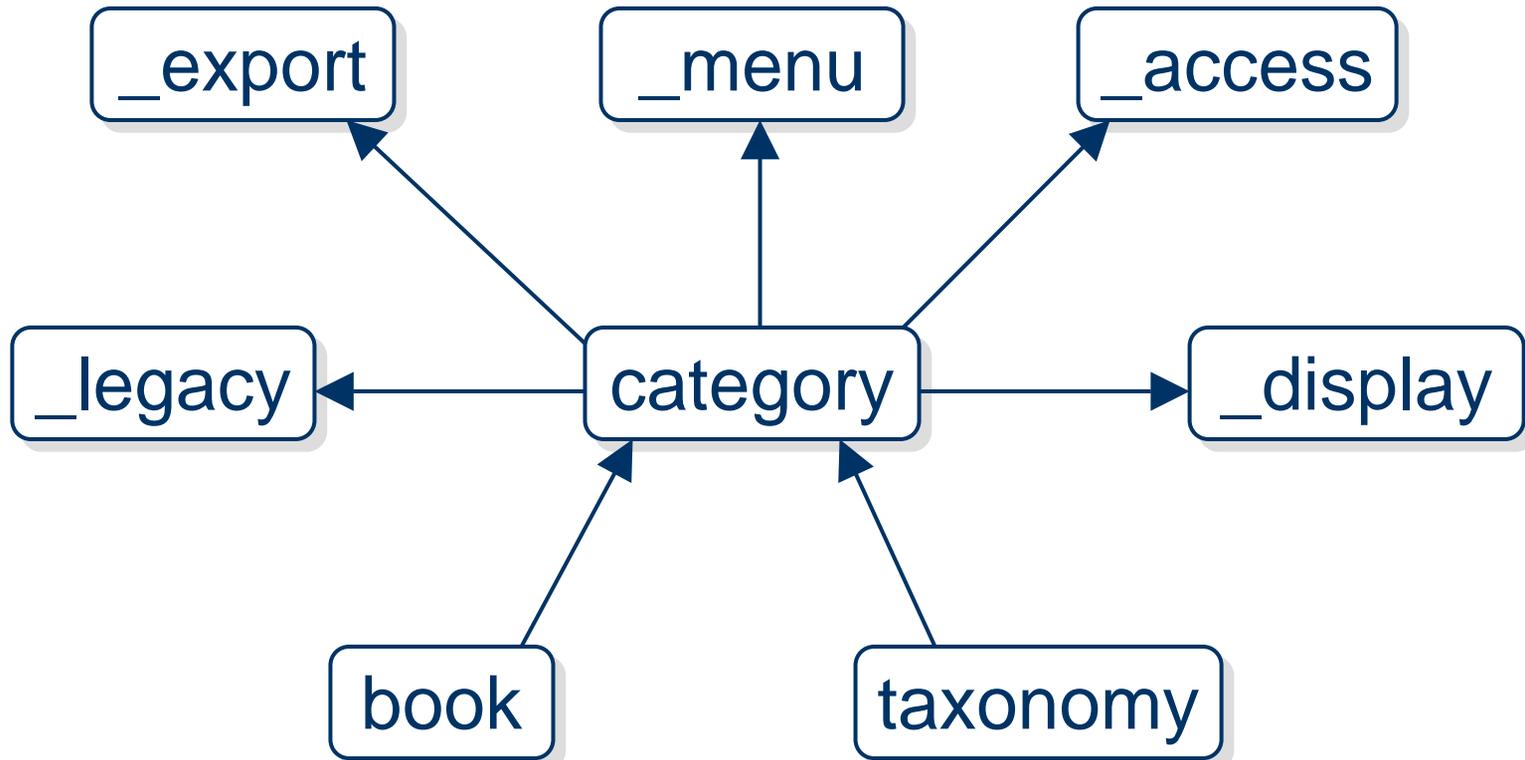
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Key aims

- Merge book and taxonomy modules
- Make classifying content and structuring a site ‘one and the same’
- Vocabulary becomes ‘container’ node type
- Term becomes ‘category’ node type
- Native distant parent support
- Extensible: additional functionality in separate modules, implemented through hooks

Module collection map



Core module functionality

- Add/edit/delete category and container nodes
- Assign content to categories
- Structure categories within a container
- Structure categories and containers anywhere
- RSS feeds for categories and containers
- Manage orphan categories
- Powerful hooks to allow extension by other modules in the package (and elsewhere)

Other modules

- E-commerce ‘package’ model:
(core module + other modules = package)
- `_menu`: auto-manage menu items to match the category structure
- `_export`: book-module exports, i.e. HTML, DocBook XML, OPML
- `_access`: taxonomy_`_access`-like permissions
- `_display`: toggle TOC, nav-links, etc
- `_legacy`: import-export from taxonomy / book

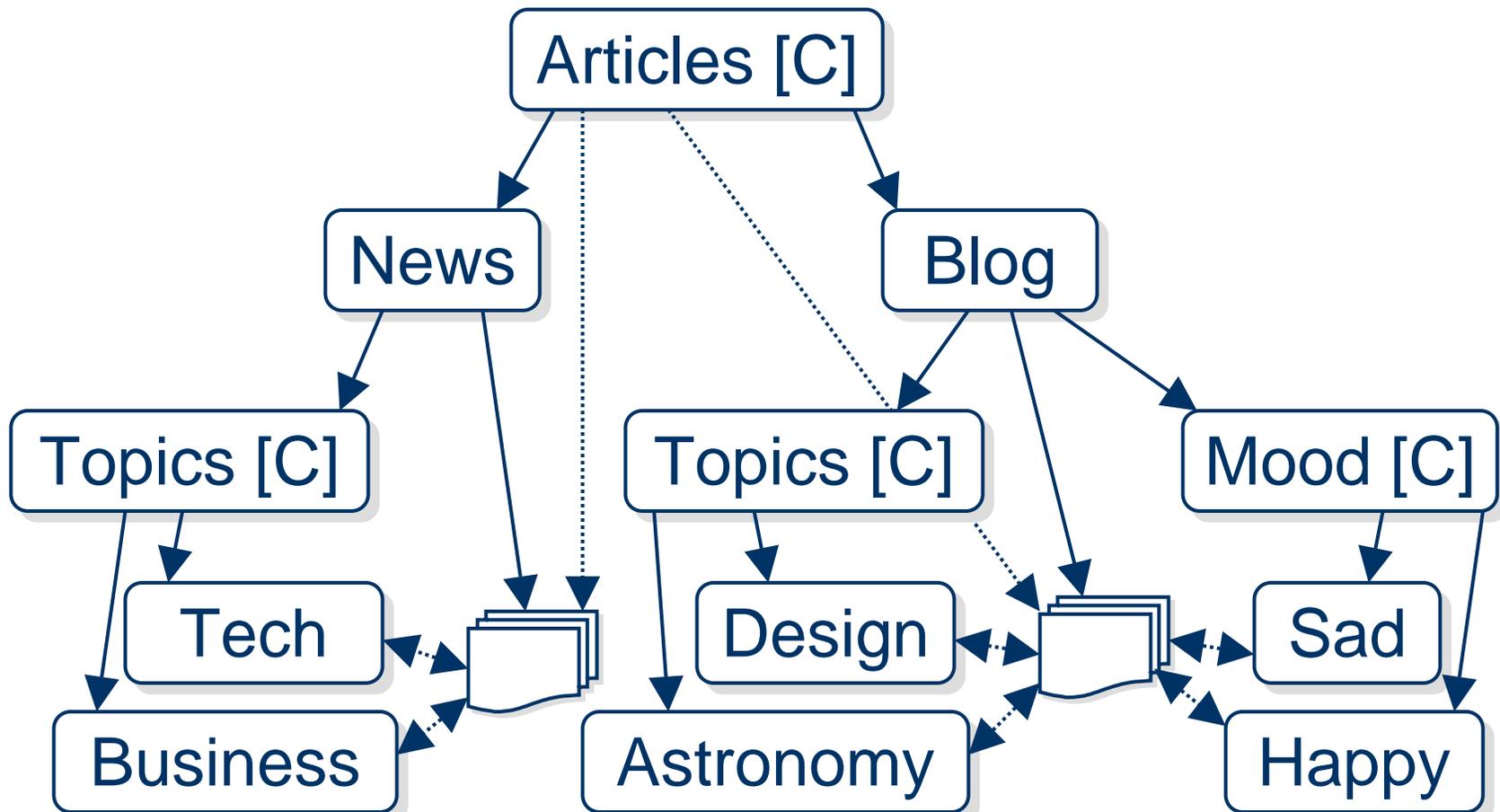
Backwards-compatibility

- All API functions will have an identical (or very similar) signature to taxonomy and book equivalents
- Replacement taxonomy and book modules, consisting of ‘stub’ functions that act as wrappers, and call the category module funcs
- Ideally, will allow existing taxonomy (and book) dependent modules in contrib to still be used (e.g. glossary, image, taxonomy_browser)

Possible structures

- Taxonomy-like: flat / hierarchical / complex set of categories in each container, with content assigned to categories
- Book-like: hierarchical sets of pages, no assigned content
- Basic hybrid: hierarchical pages, with containers and categories underneath, and content assigned to lower level categories
- Other: who knows? Many possibilities

Example basic hybrid structure



Notes on the diagram

- [C]: node is a container
- : dynamic content
- →: menu parent-child link
- ⋯→: content listed or referenced
- 4 levels in this hierarchy: 3 of those have node listings, all (except bottom) can have TOC
- Breadcrumbs reflected all the way through
- 3 out of 4 containers have categories in other containers as parents

Shortcomings

- Containers have to exist as nodes, even if they're not used and aren't visible to the user
- Categories must be nodes, even if they have no content, are not commented on, etc
- Complex (i.e. multi-parent) structures cannot be reflected in menu and breadcrumbs
- Users must choose a 'menu parent' for dynamic content, even if only one choice available (note: menuauto will fix this)

Current status

- All core module functionality (see earlier slide) is now done (but needs testing, and code is not as clean as it could be)
- Hooks need to be improved to increase extensibility
- Other modules in the collection need to be done (`_menu` and `_export` on the way)
- Taxonomy and book ‘wrapper modules’ still to be coded

Further reading

- Category module proposal + user comments:
<http://drupal.org/node/23730>
- Tutorials on hybrid structuring using taxonomy in Drupal 4.5:
http://www.greenash.net.au/posts/thoughts/basic_breadcrumbs_and_taxonomy ↩

Coming soon to a Drupal near you!

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