

# Video Hosting and Integration in Drupal

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**A summary of options for hosting video in Drupal web sites, from free self hosting to enterprise-level integration and delivery.**

Drupal is a powerful open-source content management system that offers many powerful features for building and community web site. However, hosting video in Drupal requires extending Drupal's core capabilities with external modules tools.

There are many options available to integrate video into a Drupal web site. The options range from free public sites to private professional hosting. Before searching for a video option it's helpful to first identify your key requirements.

When evaluating options to host video in Drupal it's important to consider:

1. Budget
2. Data backups
3. Exit options
4. Ease of site migration
5. Player customization
6. Simplicity of user interaction with site

**Budget** is likely the most important factor when considering your video hosting strategy. It's also important to remember that free or low cost options are rarely free, as support is likely to be needed during the lifetime of the project and will need to be provided by an expert.

When considering **data backups**, remember that if you store the video files on your own system you are likely to need more hard drives on your server than normally would be needed. Whatever tool you use to backup your data will take longer to run (as the video collection grows) and will require additional storage space. In a hosted service, backups are typically provided by the service provider.

It's also important to consider your **exit options**, should you choose to migrate to another platform in the future. Your options to extract and migrate content at a later date from one service to another will vary greatly depending on the particulars of the platform you adopt.

What about **feature set**? Video is (or should be) a simple experience for the user: Play the video, or don't. It's likely that the key requirements for the project will be player customizability and branding.

- Does the project require a custom, themed player designed to match the theme of the site?

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- Will a link or logo to the video hosting site be tolerated?
- Should the player try to use the new HTML 5 in-browser player first? (HTML 5, the next version of HTML, includes built-in support for playing rich media files, such as audio and video.)

Lastly, understanding the capabilities of the site editor(s) or administrator(s) who will be adding the video to your website is key to the evaluation process. For example

- Do you want site editor to remain within the Drupal interface for the entire process of adding the video to the website?
- Will the site editor user be comfortable cutting and pasting embed code into a node body in Drupal?
- Where will video editing take place?

### Drupal Video Options

Out of the many options available for hosting video in Drupal, we selected four platforms that represent a full spectrum of integration, cost and user experience options:

1. [FlashVideo](#), a Drupal module that provides self video delivery?, with local or [Amazon S3](#) storage options. This options is the most do-it-yourself of the choices.
2. [Blip.tv](#), a video sharing site like YouTube that offers greater privacy control to customers with paid plans. Video is embedded in Drupal and hosted by Blip.tv. This is the lowest cost option (other than FlashVideo with self storage) at \$8/month for unlimited video storage and bandwidth.
3. [Viddler](#), an enterprise-level video hosting platform offering fast content deliverability and limited integration with Drupal.
4. [Kaltura](#), an enterprise-level video hosting platform that offers extensive Drupal integration and enterprise-level scalability. This is the most expensive option for video hosting in our evaluation.

### Findings Summary

Below is a summary of the primary differentiates between the services.

	FlashVideo	Blip.tv	Viddler	Kaltura
<b>Description</b>	A <a href="#">Drupal module</a>	A <a href="#">video sharing</a> site, like YouTube	A <a href="#">hosted</a> video platform	A <a href="#">hosted</a> video platform
<b>Video storage</b>	On the Drupal site or on <a href="#">Amazon S3</a>	Hosted on Blip.tv	Hosted on Viddler	Hosted on Kaltura
<b>Site editor experience</b>	Integrated upload; user stays in Drupal for single uploads	User uploads video to service and then points Drupal node to video for automatic integration	Integrated recording and upload; user stays in Drupal for single uploads	Integrated recording, upload, import from Flickr/YouTube, editing, bulk upload; user stays in Drupal

<b>Video editing capacity</b>	None	None	None	Yes. Editing performed within Drupal interface.
<b>Player support</b>	Various open source players	Blip.tv player only	Viddler player only	Kaltura player only
<b>Player customization</b>	Varies; some players offer full customization	Light branding	Light branding	Full; player source code available
<b>CDN<sup>1</sup></b>	Yes, if hosted on S3	Yes	Yes, Edgecast	Yes, Limelight& Akami
<b>Supported Drupal versions</b>	4+	5+	6	5+
<b>API</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>HD videos</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes (beta as of 2010)	Yes
<b>Support</b>	None (self)	Email only	Email, telephone	Email, telephone
<b>Exit options</b>	Download from S3 or server via FTP	Individual file download from web site interface	Download from dashboard	Download from dashboard
<b>Pricing Model</b>	Free if self-hosted; Approx \$0.01 - 0.15 per GB for Amazon S3	Free; \$8/month professional plan for unlimited storage and bandwidth	~\$100/month for 50GB traffic (includes up to 50GB storage)	~\$200/month for 100GB storage & traffic
<b>Other plans</b>	10TB-500TB	Only 1 paid plan	50GB- 5TB	100GB-10TB plans

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<sup>1</sup> CDN stands for "content delivery network", which is an approach to video hosting where you distribute servers around the world so viewers can load videos faster from servers that are physically close to them.

## Screenshots

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the Reporting on Health website, including the University of Southern California logo, the Annenberg School for Communication, and a search bar. Below the navigation bar is the main heading "Submit Lesson Video". The form is divided into two sections: "Video Upload" and "Video Image". The "Video Upload" section includes instructions that videos are not transcoded until submission and provides a progress bar for the upload. The "Video Image" section includes instructions that images are not saved until submission, a "Choose File" button, and a list of allowed extensions (jpg, jpeg, png, gif). Below these sections are input fields for "Title" and "Video Duration".

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### Submit Lesson Video

**Video Upload**

Videos are not transcoded and thumbnail generated until the form is submitted.

After your file is uploaded you can click the edit tab, return here, and set a title and description for your video.

Uploading file

**Video Image**

Images are not saved until the form is submitted.

Upload a new image:

Choose File No file chosen

Allowed extensions: jpg jpeg png gif

Upload

Title: \*

Video Duration:

Figure 1: FlashVideo offers a standard file upload form to import video into your site (Source: ReportingOnHealth.org)

## Dashboard : Urban Insight

Overview	Episodes ▾	Players ▾	Distribution ▾	Advertising ▾
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### Upload

Step 1 of 2

<input type="button" value="Choose File"/> No file chosen	<input type="text" value="Master"/>	<input type="button" value="X"/> Remove
This is the master file for conversions (like Flash).		

<b>Add an additional format</b> Select a additional files to use for this episode.	<input type="button" value="+"/> Add format
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<b>Add a thumbnail</b> <input type="button" value="Choose File"/> No file chosen	<input type="button" value="X"/> Reset
Select an image to Replace the thumbnail we automatically create for you.	

↑ Your upload will start while you fill out some information in the next step.

Figure 2: Blip.tv offers multiple ways to upload video into your site (Source: Blip.tv)

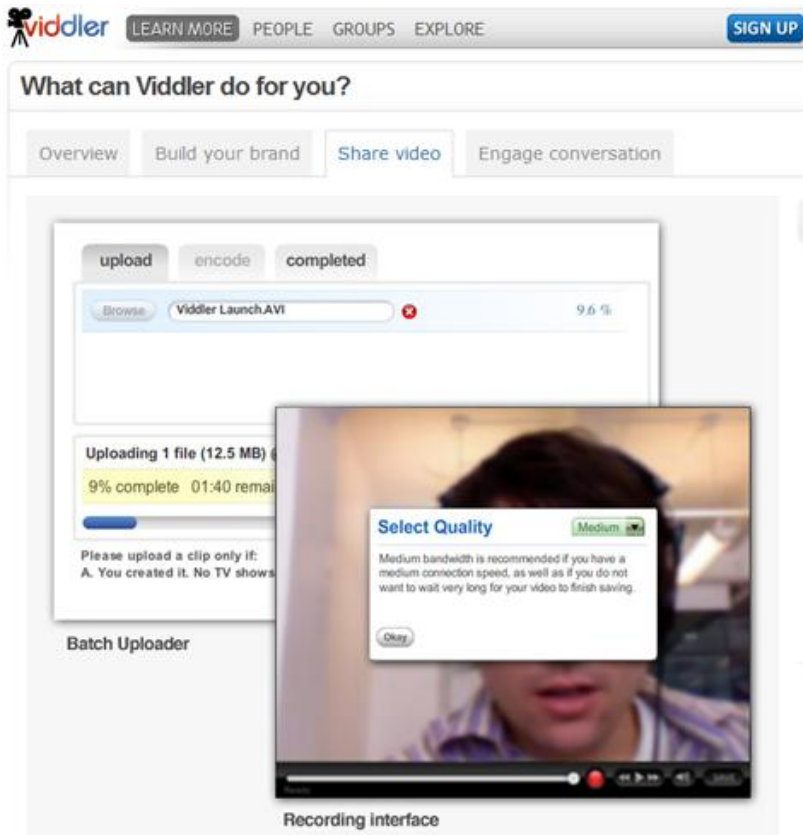


Figure 3: Viddler bulk upload tool (Source: Viddler.com)

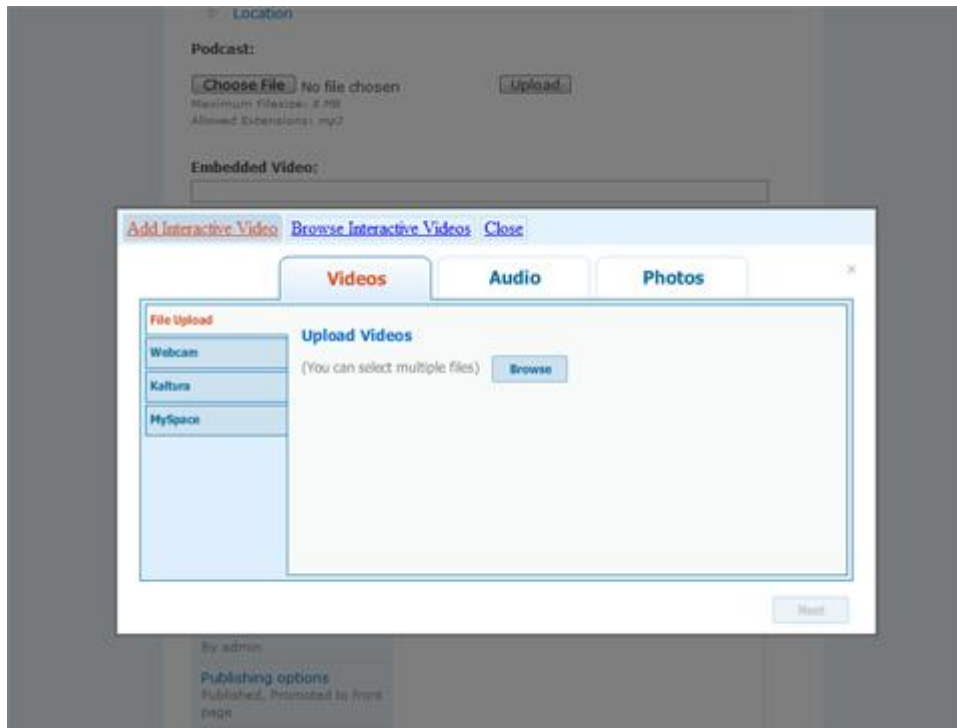


Figure 4: Using the Kaltura Drupal module users can upload video files directly to Kaltura for later conversion without leaving your site (Source: Kaltura Drupal module)

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