



Configuration Management

Whitout Problems!

Fabian Bircher

fabian@nuvole.org

web: nuvole.org

twitter: [@nuvoleweb](https://twitter.com/nuvoleweb)



Our Distributed Team

Nuvole: a **100% Drupal company** with a distributed team in:



Italy



Belgium



Czech Republic



Our Clients

- International organisations
- Institutions
- Fast delivery: several developers working simultaneously on the same project
- Frequent configuration changes: need for safe updates



Can I deploy configuration?

- Can I develop/test configuration on a development copy and keep the production site online all the time?
- Can I export configuration changes from development and import them into production?



Configuration Management

- One of the most important improvements in Drupal 8.
- A new and complete solution to an ancient problem.
- Reference use case: export the configuration changes from development and import them into production.

 The reference use case: step 1 of 6

Clone Site to Dev

Production

- Install Site
- Make a full backup
- Database
- Files

Development

- Clone production site by restoring the backup

...or the other way round.

 The reference use case: step 2 of 6

Modify Configuration

Production

Site operates normally:

- new users.
- new content.

Development

- Configuration changes...

 The reference use case: step 3 of 6

Export Configuration

Production

Site operates normally:

- new users.
- new content.

Development

```
$ drush cex  
Collection Config  
system.site update  
The .yaml files in your export  
directory (config/sync) will  
be deleted and replaced with  
the active config. (y/n): y
```

Then

```
$ git commit && git push
```

 The reference use case: step 4 of 6

Stage Configuration

Production

```
$ git pull
```

Development

- Development goes on normally.

 The reference use case: step 5 of 6

Review Changes

Production

```
$ drush config-import \  
  --preview=diff  
  
...  
uuid: d1329a45-acab-4599...  
-name: 'localhost'  
+name: 'Drupal 8'  
mail: info@example.com  
slogan: ''  
page:  
Import changes? (y/n):
```

Development

- Development goes on normally.

 The reference use case: step 6 of 6

Apply Changes

Production

```
$ drush cim  
Collection Config  
system.site update  
Import changes? (y/n): y
```

Development

- Development goes on normally.



Production deployment

- Pull code and configuration from master branch.
- Run updates: `$ drush updatedb`
- Import configuration: `$ drush cim`
- **Important:** the order must be respected. Issue [#2628144](#) will enforce it.



Problem solved?

- Configuration Management works perfectly for its use case.
- But the reference use case scenario is very narrow.
- In real life we need to cover many more scenarios.
- ...And weren't we supposed to get rid of database dumps, by the way?

Chapter 2



Can I install a site from existing configuration?



Bootstrapping production

- Deployment is nice but how do get production up and running for the first time?
- Did you say database dump?    



Configuration Installer

- Usually running the installer creates a "new site".
- The Configuration Installer is an installation profile that takes over the Drupal installer and allows sites to be created from existing configuration.
- It is an installation profile and needs to be put in `/profiles` in order to work.
- Should be on every site (and in core)



Configuration Installer UI

Drupal ^{8.x-1.3}

Choose language

Choose profile

Verify requirements

Set up database

Upload config

Install configuration

Configure site

Configure configuration import location

Synchronisation directory *

Path to the config directory you wish to import, can be relative to document root or an absolute path.

Select your configuration export file

No file selected.

If the sync directory is empty you can upload a configuration export file.

Save and continue



Configuration Installer in core

Allow a site to be installed from existing configuration:

<https://www.drupal.org/node/1613424>

Chapter 3



Can I override local configuration?

- Can I have verbose error logging enabled on the development copy only?
- Can I customize API keys in development without committing them?



Overriding

- In development, it is convenient to have a different configuration than on the production site.
- Examples: different error reporting, different API keys for services, different site name or site mail.
- These customizations are **not** to be exported.
- Not covered by the reference use case.



Using `$config`

The `$config` array allows run-time overriding: configuration is still there, but it gets overridden.

Example: add to `settings.php` (or `settings.local.php`) in the development environment:

```
$config['system.logging']['error_level'] = 'verbose';
```

This enables verbose error logging on that instance.



`$config` and editing

Even after the override `admin/config/development/logging` shows the original (non-overridden) settings. **This is wanted:** Drupal prevents you from submitting overridden configuration.

Logging and errors ☆

[Home](#) » [Administration](#) » [Configuration](#) » [Development](#)

Error messages to display

- None
- Errors and warnings
- All messages
- All messages, with backtrace information

It is recommended that sites running on production environments do not display any errors.



`$config` and exporting

- Even after the override, `$ drush cex` exports the original settings.
- This is wanted too: Drupal will not let the override slip into the export.



Mutable and immutable configuration

Drupal can retrieve configuration as mutable or immutable.

Immutable

Retrieved in read-only mode (to apply/display; overrides are considered)

```
\Drupal::config('system.site');
```

Mutable

Retrieved in read-write mode (to set/export values; overrides are ignored)

```
\Drupal::configFactory()  
->getEditable('system.site');
```



Finding keys and values: mapping

Keys/values for `$config` are mapped from the YAML files.

```
--- a/sync/system.logging.yml
+++ b/sync/system.logging.yml
@@ -1,3 +1,3 @@
-error_level: hide
+error_level: verbose
_core:
  default_config_hash: u3-njszl92FaxjrCMiq0yDcjAfcdx72
```

becomes:

```
$config['system.logging']['error_level'] = 'verbose';
```



A satisfactory solution?

- `$config` covers our need for differentiating configuration between environments but...
- You can only alter existing configuration.
- You can't add new configuration using `$config`
- You can't completely "unset" existing configuration using `$config`
- You can't override which modules are installed.
- You can't override the color of Bartik and other details.

The contrib module `Config override` has the same limitations. But it is great for run-time overriding configuration from modules.



Can I exclude modules from getting deployed?

- Can I have development modules enabled on a development environment but not deploy them to the production site?



Method: Configuration split

- Configuration override not at runtime but at import/export time.
- Split off some configuration to dedicated folder
- Blacklist configuration
- Ignore set of configuration
- Configured by configuration entities

```
drush config-split-export  
drush config-split-import
```

```
drupal config_split:export  
drupal config_split:import
```



Method: Configuration split

Edit *Development config* ☆

[Home](#) » [Administration](#) » [Configuration](#) » [Development](#) » [Synchronize](#) » [Configuration Split Setting](#)

Label *

Machine name: development

Label for the Configuration Split Setting.

Folder

The folder, relative to the Drupal root, to which to save the filtered config.

Configuration related to the "filtered" items below will be split from the main configuration and exported to this folder by drupal config_split:export.

Modules

Select modules to filter.

Blacklist

Select configuration to filter.

Graylist

Select configuration to ignore.

Weight



The weight to order the splits.

[Delete](#)



Other Methods

drush: Drush can ignore the enabled states of extensions when synchronizing configuration.

```
drush cex --skip-modules=devel  
drush cim --skip-modules=devel
```

Has issues, as it still exports devels configuration. Will be deprecated/removed!

drush_cmi_tools: https://github.com/previousnext/drush_cmi_tools

Operates with a list of configuration to ignore, own drush commands.



Config split future

- Make method extensible for other modules.
- Work with default drush commands. (pr merged)
- Move the extensible method to core.

Chapter 5



Can I work in parallel with a colleague?

- Can two or more developers work simultaneously on the same project?
- How do I ensure that my work is not lost?
- Can I assume that Git will always do the right thing when merging?

Git to the rescue

- Configuration Management is based on having **two** instances of the same site (development and production).
- Multiple instances are not considered.
- On the other hand, configuration is exported to text files.
- And for text files we have Git!

Working as a



Team of developers

- Share a Git repository for both code and configuration.
- Install site starting from initial configuration.
- Adopt “A successful Git branching model” (cit.)



Project bootstrap



First developer:

- Installs site locally.
- Exports configuration to sync
- Commits and pushes to shared Git repository.



Other developers (and prod):

- Clone code.
- Have `config_installer` profile available.
- Install site starting from exported configuration.



Parallel development



First developer:

- Own branch:
`checkout -b feature-a`
- (code, code, code...)
- Commits and pushes to shared Git repository.



Other developer(s):

- Own branch:
`checkout -b feature-b`
- (code, code, code...)
- Commit and push to shared Git repository.

...but careless merge is dangerous and problematic.

Collaboration issues

A careless workflow may result in:

- Losing all uncommitted work.
- Accidentally overwrite work by others.
- A configuration that looks OK at first sight but that is actually invalid for Drupal.



The safe sequence

1. Export configuration: `drush cex`
2. Commit
3. Merge: `git pull`
4. Import configuration: `drush cim`
5. Push: `git push`



If you do it wrong...

- Import before Export: Deletes your work, no backup.
- Merge before Export: Export deletes previous work, solved by git.
- Merge before Commit: Manual labour on conflicts.
- Forgotten Import: Next export will not contain merged config, more difficult to solve in git.

Breaking configuration with Git

- Setup: Installed `standard` profile
- Developer A on branch `feature-a` deletes Tags from 'Article'.
 - Resulting configuration change: 2 files are removed (field instance and field storage)
- Developer B on branch `feature-b` adds Tags to 'Basic page'.
 - Resulting configuration change: 1 file is added (field instance)
- Git will happily merge `feature-a` and `feature-b` into `develop`
- The resulting configuration is invalid:
 - Tags has a field instance but no storage.

Takeaway: when merging check that the configuration is still valid by importing it.

Chapter 6



Can I package configuration and re-use it?



Features for Drupal 8

- The Features module: a configuration packager.
- Entirely new for Drupal 8, to take advantage of Configuration Management.
- Offers automatic packaging: Features analyzes your site and automatically packages up site configuration into a set of features.



Features for Drupal 8

- Focuses on packaging configuration for reuse purpose only.
- Is meant to be a development module: generated features do not depend on the Features module.
- The resulting features are modules: just enable to activate their configuration.



Using Features

- Enable the Features module - only in development, not needed in production.
- Enable the dedicated Features UI module too.
- Generate the Features at `admin/config/development/features`
- Enable the Features modules you generated; these are portable between sites.



Using Features: Example

[Blog](#)

blog

Provides Blog content type and related configuration.

Not exported

▼ [Included configuration](#)

Content type

Blog

Dependencies

Field

Menu UI

Node

Path

Text

User

Entity form display

node.blog.default

Entity view display

node.blog.default

node.blog.teaser

Field

Body

Topic

Field storage

node.field_topic



Features workflow

- If you use Features 8.x for deployment: **You are doing it wrong.**TM
- Re-use *partial* configuration between **different** sites.
- Use Features in development environments only.
- Use for distributions rather than individual projects.

Chapter 7



**Can I handle a client messing
with production configuration?**



Changes on production

Imagine the ideal situation:

- Configuration is correctly exported, versioned and deployed
- Development team adopts a solid GIT branching model

BUT...

Configuration on production is changed
by your **Geeky Client™** overnight, without notice.



Option 1

Lock configuration on production

Don't allow config changes on the production site if ever possible by installing the `config_readonly` module.

Note: add this to `settings.php` in production:

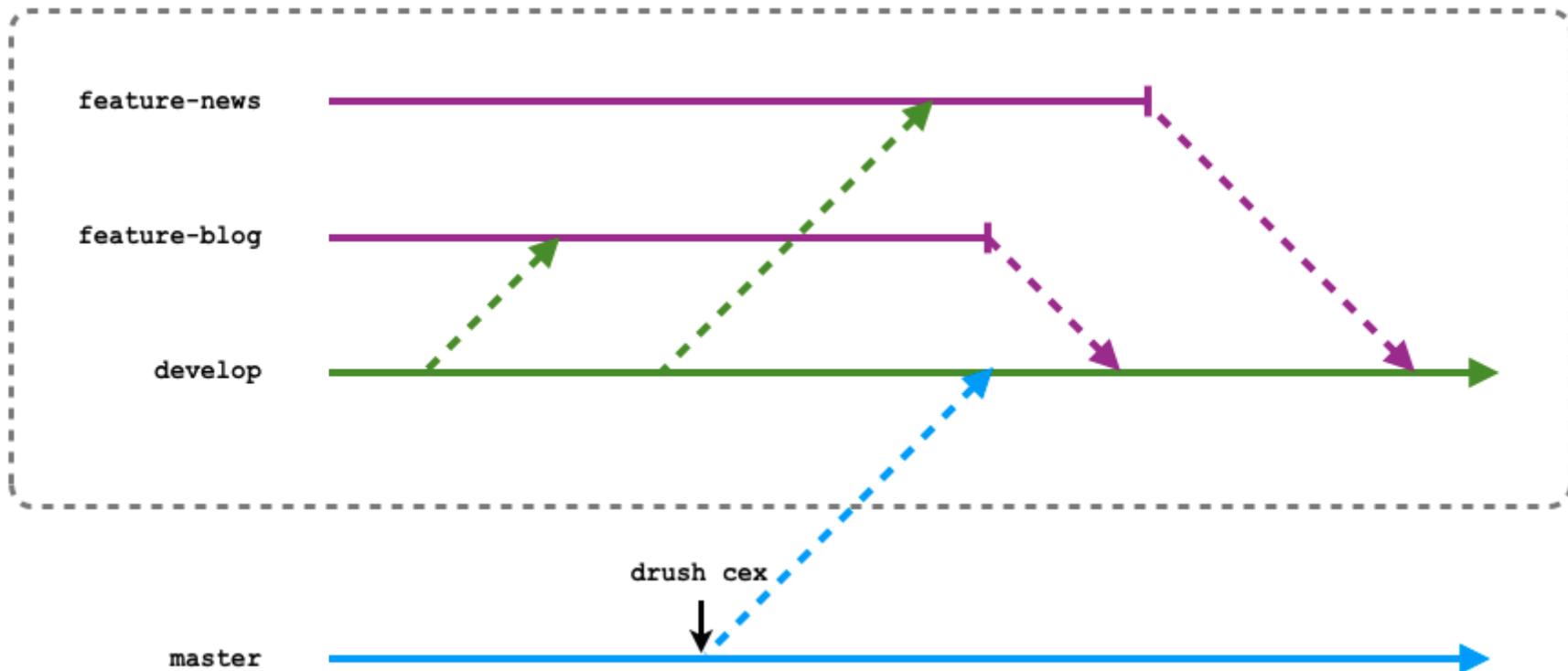
```
$settings['config_readonly'] = TRUE;
```



Option 2

Export to a dedicated branch

Have a person responsible for merging prod and dev configuration.





Option 3

Configuration split

- Review changes done by the client on production and choose what to keep
- Export production changes via `drush config-split-export` to `../config/client`
- Pull new configuration: business as usual
- Import previous configuration changes via `drush config-split-import`
- Configuration is imported from both `../config/sync` and `../config/client`

Chapter 8



Can I deploy the content my configuration depends upon?

- What about a view that depends on a taxonomy term?
- Can I have default content on my site?



Deploying content

- **Scenario:** Deploying configuration that depends on content such as nodes, blocks, taxonomy terms, etc.
- **Problem:** Content is not exported along with configuration.



Option 1

Handle missing content event

- When content required by configuration is missing Drupal fires a `ConfigEvents::IMPORT_MISSING_CONTENT` event.
- You could subscribe to that event via an event subscriber and, for example, perform a run-time migration using `Migrate` (now in core).
- If nothing happens Drupal will handle it for you on `\Drupal\Core\Config\Importer\FinalMissingContentSubscriber` which will just remove content dependencies, run-time.



Option 2

Use `default_content` module

- Any module that requires default content can provide hal+json versions of the entities inside `{module_name}/content/{entity_type}` folders.
- Entity references are respected by Drupal 8 core thanks to the HAL core module and content entities having `UUID` by default.
- Content is imported when the module is installed.



Option 2

Use `default_content` module

- ▼ content
 - ▶ block_content
 - ▼ menu_link_content
 - ▼ menu_link_content
 -  9adf04b3-1e43-4197-a141-657b3ab69f2b.json
 -  34ed8934-6149-4bb8-a150-80fcfe3f6402.json
 -  1749fb62-8b74-4b1f-9f00-c55b3c3de11f.json
 -  b741cb00-86d0-4ba3-a000-b8ddf934b1a3.json
 - ▼ node
 - ▼ organisation
 -  0bf245d8-6e52-4e99-b530-649ea864c53b.json
 -  0c2acb8b-ace5-439a-b921-9299837f8d41.json
 -  0cbbfe21-97f9-4b1d-9500-d0be6098cb3e.json
 -  0d5df9ed-4c08-42e8-880f-156768603b2a.json
 -  0de59d17-8368-4a10-8707-97e9bf402fb7.json
 -  1be7101b-808b-4c33-9400-ff8a8d22c4dd.json
 -  1cfbc12a-da90-4b2b-92b8-db73dc6ca577.json
 -  1f69ce1b-56d1-4026-ad57-8706cb68836d.json

```
25 | }
26 | "uuid": [
27 |   {
28 |     "value": "0bf245d8-6e52-4e99-b530-649ea864c53b"
29 |   }
30 | ],
31 | "type": [
32 |   {
33 |     "target_id": "organisation"
34 |   }
35 | ],
36 | "langcode": [
37 |   {
38 |     "value": "en",
39 |     "lang": "en"
40 |   }
41 | ],
42 | "title": [
43 |   {
44 |     "value": "Drupal Association",
45 |     "lang": "en"
46 |   }
47 | ],
```



Option 3

Use **deploy**

From the module's page at <https://www.drupal.org/project/deploy>

```
The Deploy module is designed to allow users  
to easily stage and preview content for a Drupal site.
```



Working with content updates

In Drupal 8 there is a post update hook specifically designed to work with content.

```
/**
 * Executes an update which is intended to update data, like entities.
 *
 * These updates are executed after all hook_update_N() implementations.
 * At this stage Drupal is already fully repaired so you can use a
 * as you wish.
 */
function hook_post_update_NAME(&$sandbox) { }
```



State of the art

Can I deploy configuration?



Can I install a site from existing configuration?



Can I override local configuration?



Can I exclude modules from getting deployed?



Can I work in parallel with a colleague?



Can I package configuration and re-use it?



Can I handle a client messing with production configuration?



Can I deploy the content my configuration depends upon?





Related contrib projects

- `config_installer` install site from existing config.
- `config_split` import time config override.
- `config_readonly` locks any configuration changes via UI.
- `config_update` report changes between original and active config of a module.
- `config_devel` module helps with developing configuration.
- `config_tools` automatically commit config changes to git.
- `features` bundle config for re-use on different site, ideal for distributions.
- `config_sync`: provides methods for safely importing site configuration from updated modules and themes.

Questions?

Thank you



THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS



Social event Sponsor

Contribution Sponsor

Website Hosting provided by



Individual Sponsor Fabian Dennler

amazee.io