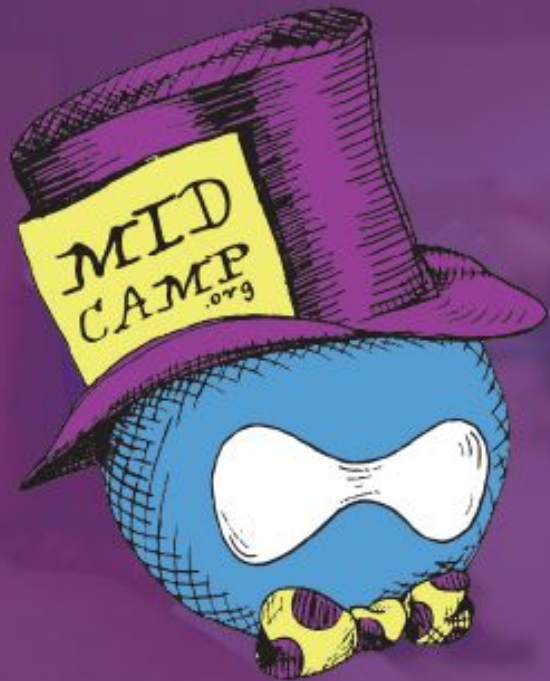


# Leveraging the best of Drupal to support the world's greatest minds



**Anne Lentino**  
Sr. Product Owner  
at Sandstorm Design



# Fun facts about Sandstorm®



Accessibility-certified,  
creative technology  
agency for 25+ years  
for **purpose-driven  
brands**

Deep expertise with  
**Associations, Global  
Non-Profits, Higher Ed &  
Healthcare**



**Certifications:**  
CPACC (accessibility), AWS  
Cloud, Pantheon, Acquia,  
Drupal, DEIB, and WBENC  
(women-owned)

15+ yrs working  
**in Drupal**



**Interdisciplinary team:**  
UX, UI, AI, strategy,  
technology, analytics

UX practice started by  
**Ph.D in human factors**  
in 2006

# Good Work for Good People

**THE  
CCIM  
INSTITUTE**

*Advancing the Commercial  
Real Estate profession*

THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**CHICAGO**

 **THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
MARINE BIOLOGICAL  
LABORATORY**

**ACG**<sup>®</sup>  
Association for Corporate Growth



**SVS** | Society for  
Vascular Surgery

**NICB** *National  
Insurance  
Crime  
Bureau*

**aleäquo**

 **UNIVERSITY OF  
DENVER**



**ENA**<sup>™</sup>  
EMERGENCY NURSES  
ASSOCIATION

 **ORTHOPAEDIC  
— TRAUMA —  
ASSOCIATION**

**AMERICAN  
PUBLIC  
POWER  
ASSOCIATION**

**CTPF**  
Chicago Teachers' Pension Fund



 **CROWN**

# Today, We'll Cover

- **Project snapshot**
- How user research **drove content strategy**
- Information architecture as a **foundation for good user experience**
- Using Drupal's strengths to manage a **complex site architecture**



OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MILKEN INSTITUTE

Milken Institute is a **global nonprofit, economic think-tank** offering a complex mix of **services, partnership opportunities, and exclusive events** across three unique pillars.



sandstorm®



1

RESEARCH

Tell Us How You Really Feel

# Who We Talked to



Project Sponsors



Stakeholders



Content Editors



End Users

# Everyone Uses Search!

But the experience was **slow**, **inconsistent**, and important functionality like **filters were hidden**.

The screenshot shows the Milken Institute website's search results for the query "best performing". At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Milken Institute logo, a search bar containing the query, and a hamburger menu icon. Below the navigation bar is a dark banner announcing the 27th annual Global Conference with a "WATCH HERE" button. The main content area shows "183 results for: best performing". To the right of the search bar are buttons for "HIDE ADVANCED FILTERS", "Sort by" (set to Relevance), and "Results per page" (set to 12). Below these are several filter dropdowns: "Content Type", "Centers and Programs", "Topics", "Tags", and "Refine by Date". An "APPLY FILTERS" button and a "Reset Advanced Filters" link are also present. The search results are displayed as a grid of six cards. The first two cards are labeled "LANDING PAGE" and feature colorful bar charts. The remaining four cards are also labeled "LANDING PAGE" or "REPORT" and contain text descriptions of various reports and methodologies, each with a "+ Read More" link and a date.

Card Type	Title	Description	Date
LANDING PAGE	Best-Performing Cities	About Best-Performing Cities Welcome to the Best-Performing Cities (BPC) webpages., To ensure that	Mar 15, 2023
LANDING PAGE	Methodology   Best-Performing Cities	The Best-Performing Cities (BPC) report and rankings use the geographic boundaries of cities defined	May 15, 2023
LANDING PAGE	Methodology - Best-Performing Cities 2020	We employ the geographic terms and definitions used by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), mo	Apr 20, 2021
LANDING PAGE	Best-Performing Cities Contributors		May 15, 2023
LANDING PAGE	Best Performing Cities China 2021 Rankings	Rankings (English)	May 25, 2022
REPORT	Best-Performing Cities 2014	The Milken Institute's annual "Best-Performing Cities" index shows that technology and shale energy	Jan 8, 2015



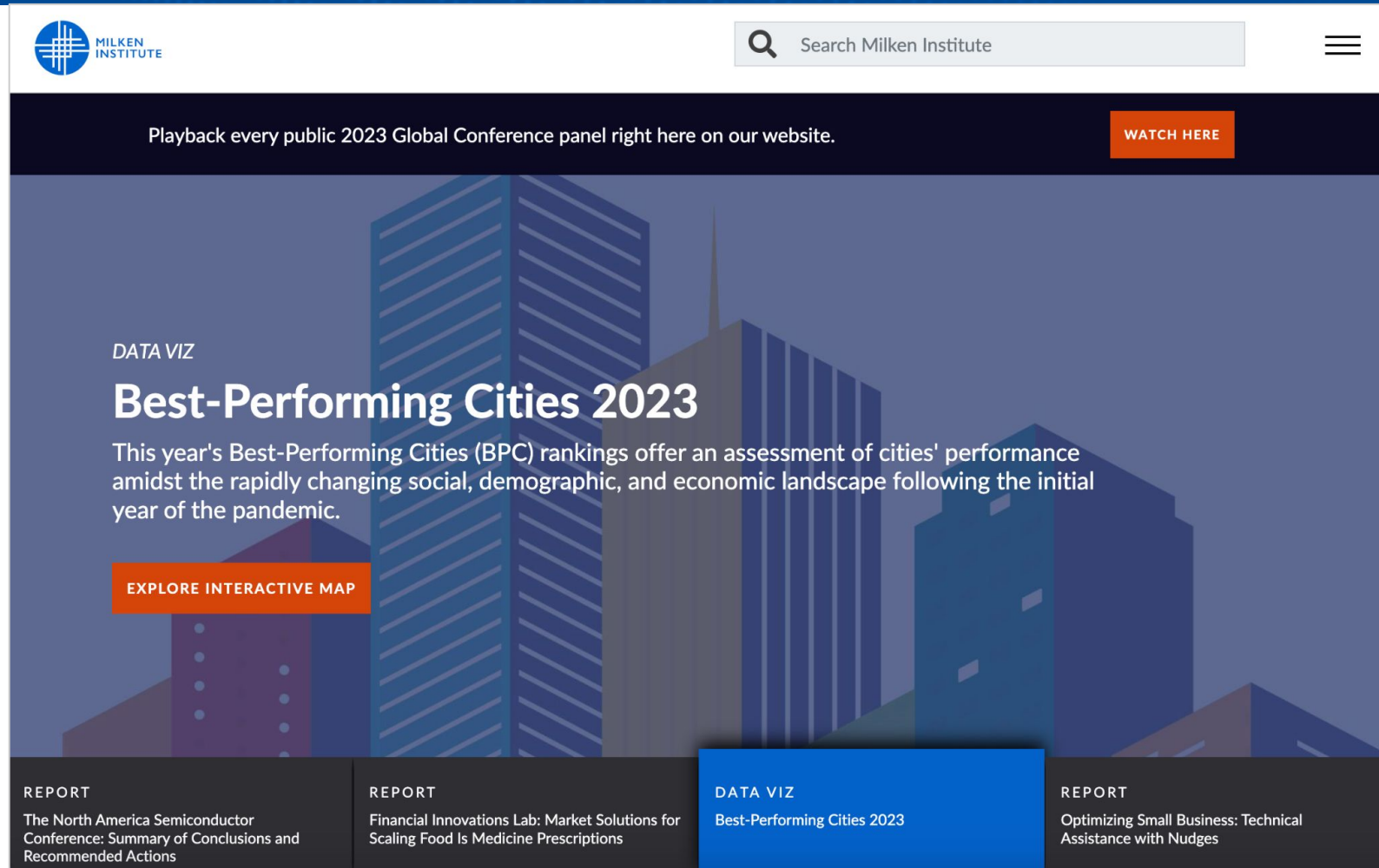
# Don't Leave Me Stranded

Users were used to finding content organized by topic. **Related content is a must** — if they want more, let them have it!



# Where Do I Look?

**Too many content priorities,** no clear hierarchy.





# The Good News?

**There's a  
taxonomy  
for that!**

- Robust faceted search
- Sophisticated architecture strategy
- Strategic placement of “Featured” content
- No dead ends



2

INFORMATION ARCHITECTURE

Measure Twice (Migrate  
Once)

# Using “Yes, And”

## Our new sitemap needed to:

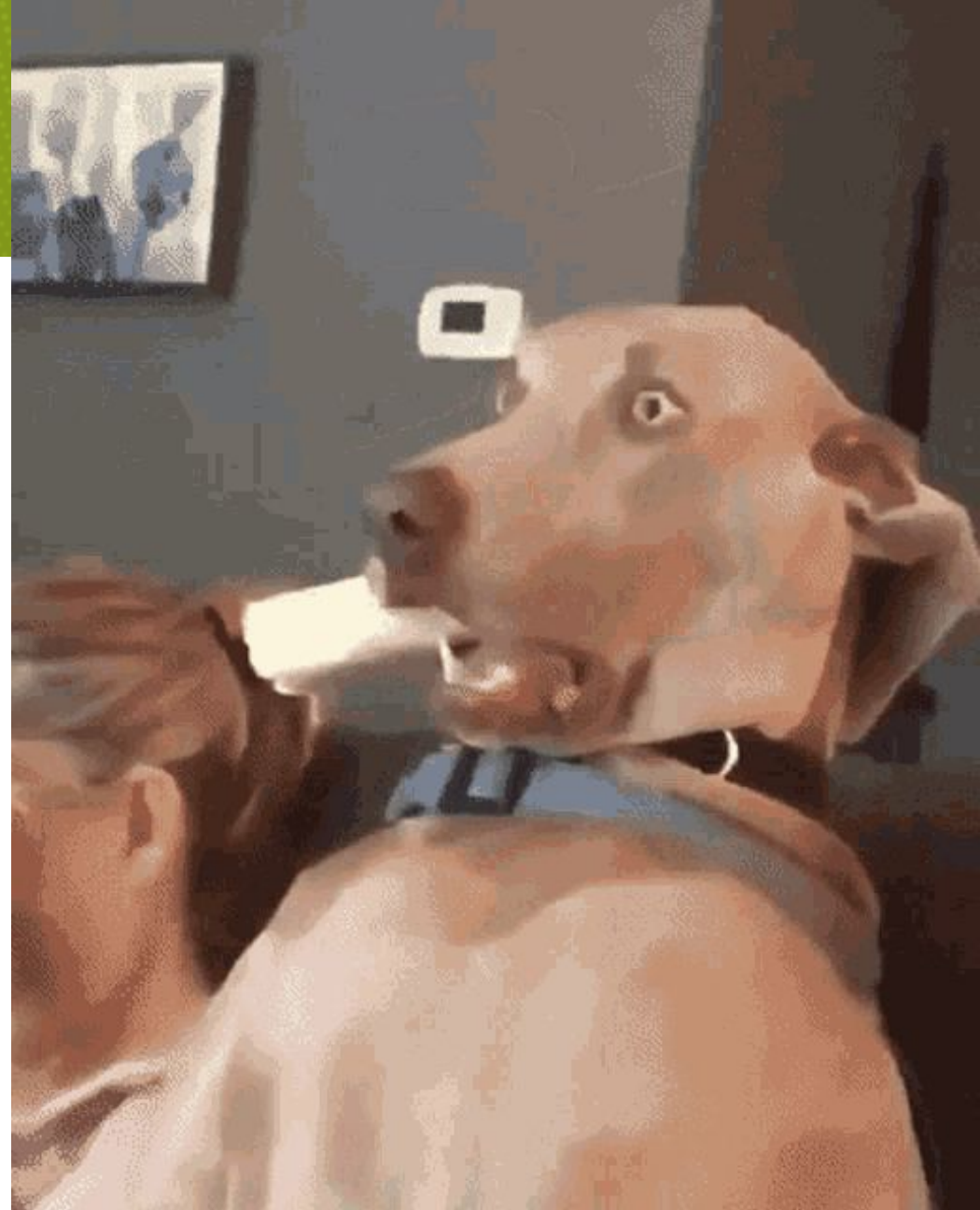
- Make **topics** a priority
- Create a **hub** for published content
- Have a home for **events**
- Highlight the **Pillars** (and everything under them)



# Audit and Inventory

## **We documented it all:**

- Current state sitemap
- Content types
- Taxonomies
- Paragraphs
- Media types





# Gave It a New Home

- Elevated the valuable content (2 ways)
- Highlighted experts and events
- Gave Pillars their due
- Kept a tidy utility nav

# And a Fresh Coat of Paint

## To mega menu, or not to mega menu?

- Evaluate content breadth & depth
- Reduce overwhelm
- Offer a path backward





# One Nav to Help Them All

The screenshot shows the Milken Institute website. At the top left is the Milken Institute logo. To its right is a search bar. Further right are links for 'Insights', 'MCAAD', 'About' (with a dropdown arrow), 'Partner', and a 'LOG IN' button. Below this is a dark blue navigation bar with links for 'Topics' (dropdown), 'Events' (dropdown), 'Experts', 'Content Hub' (dropdown), 'Health' (dropdown), 'Finance' (dropdown), 'Philanthropy' (dropdown), and 'International' (dropdown). A dropdown menu is open under 'Topics', listing 'All Topics' (with an 'EXPLORE ALL' button), 'Government and Policy Engagement', 'Climate and Environment' (with a right arrow), 'Finance' (with a right arrow), 'Health' (with a right arrow), 'Inclusivity and Human Capital', 'Opportunity and Education', 'Philanthropy' (with a right arrow), and 'Technology and Innovation' (with a right arrow). Below the navigation bar is a video player showing three men in suits on a stage. Above the video is a text overlay: 'from Global Conference 2025. REWATCH PANELS' with a close button (X).

This block shows a detailed view of the navigation menu on the right side of the website. It features a dark blue background with white text. At the top are links for 'Health' (dropdown), 'Finance' (dropdown), and 'Philanthropy' (dropdown). Below these is a 'BACK TO HEALTH' link with a left arrow icon. The main section is titled 'FasterCures' with an 'EXPLORE' button. Below this are several links, each with a right arrow icon: 'Accelerating Innovation', 'Advancing Health Around the World', 'Changemakers', 'Engaging Patients in Research and Health', 'FasterCures Advisory Board', 'FasterCures Business Council', and 'Improving the R&D Environment'.

# 3 MIGRATION + TRANSFORMATION

## Make the Magic Happen



# Guiding Principles

**1/**

Keep what can  
be repurposed

**2/**

Be selective with  
new content  
types

**3/**

Be kind to your  
content admins



1

# Taxonomy Strategy

Taxonomies  
can become  
overwhelming  
and  
duplicative

- Round up **similar vocabularies**
- **Consolidate:** remove duplicates, remove vague terms
- Transform: Update terms for accuracy, **nest**

# Need an Arbitrator? **AI to the Rescue!**

- Begin with cleaned-up list
- Compare with high-priority SEO keywords
- Use AI to refine



# The Result

**Condensed 17  
vocabularies  
(11 unused) to 6.**

Nesting vocabularies allowed us to accommodate volume AND specificity — and set the groundwork for our related content needs.

# 2 Architecture Considerations

# Consider the **Content Types**

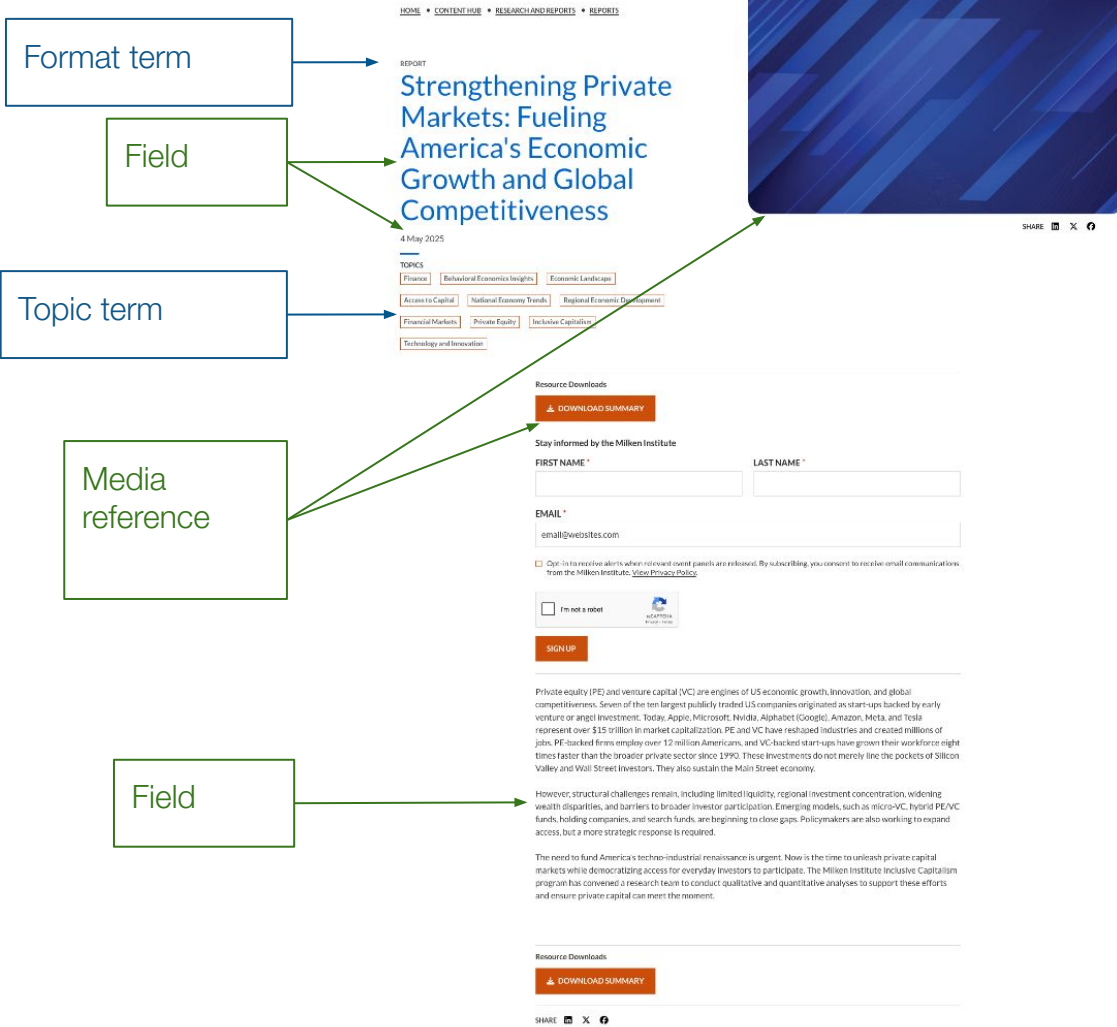
- **Reuse** where possible
- **Transform** where applicable
- **Migrate** when needed



# Use **Structured Content** as the Workhorse

- 1 content type for 1,000s of (similar) nodes
- **Taxonomy-driven** everything
- Let the **fields** be the **outline** for editors

# Give Editors a Map






### Related Content

**COMMENT LETTER**

#### 2025 Digital Assets Market Structure Discussion Draft

The Honorable French Hill Chair, Committee on Financial Services US House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515 The Honorable G.T. Thompson Chair, Committee on Agriculture US House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515 The Honorable...

[Read Letter](#)

Michael Piwowar, PhD, Nicole Valentine, and Maxwell DeGregorio

13 May 2025

**POWER OF IDEAS**

#### AI and the Future of the American Dream

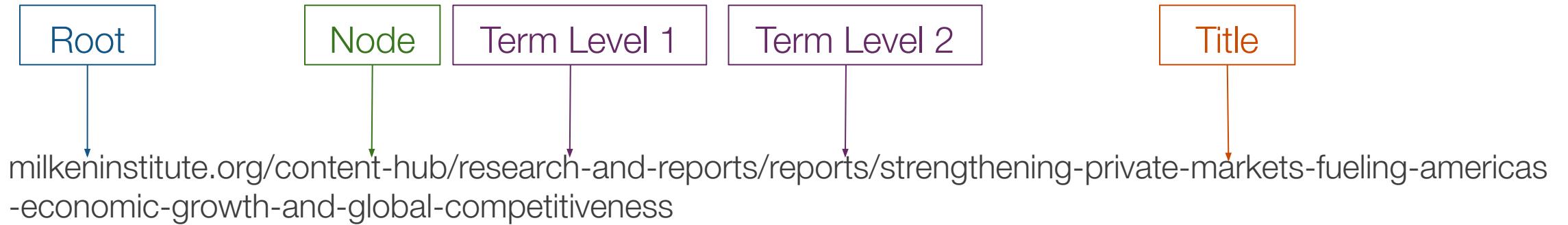
The American Dream—the idea that every person has the freedom and opportunity to attain a better life—has been a cornerstone of the American ethos for over a century. This dream encompasses

**POWER OF IDEAS**

#### Empowering Growth Through Technology and Global Capital Markets

We live in an era of unprecedented technological innovation. Yet, despite the immense wealth being created, financial inequality continues to widen,

# Leverage Taxonomy for Menus and Aliases





Title \*

Strengthening Private Markets: Fueling America's Economic Growth and Global Competitiveness

Index Weight \*

5 ▾

Specify how high on the search results this item should be, where 0 is at the top of the list, followed by 1,2,3,....

Article Content

Authoring

Tags

Promotion

Format

-Report ▾

Topics

Finance ✕ -Behavioral Economics Insights ✕ -Economic Landscape ✕ --Access to Capital ✕ --National Economy Trends ✕ --Regional Economic Development ✕  
-Financial Markets ✕ --Private Equity ✕ -Inclusive Capitalism ✕ Technology and Innovation ✕

Pillars

Finance ✕ --Inclusive Capitalism ✕ --Economic Development ✕ ---Emerging Technologies ✕

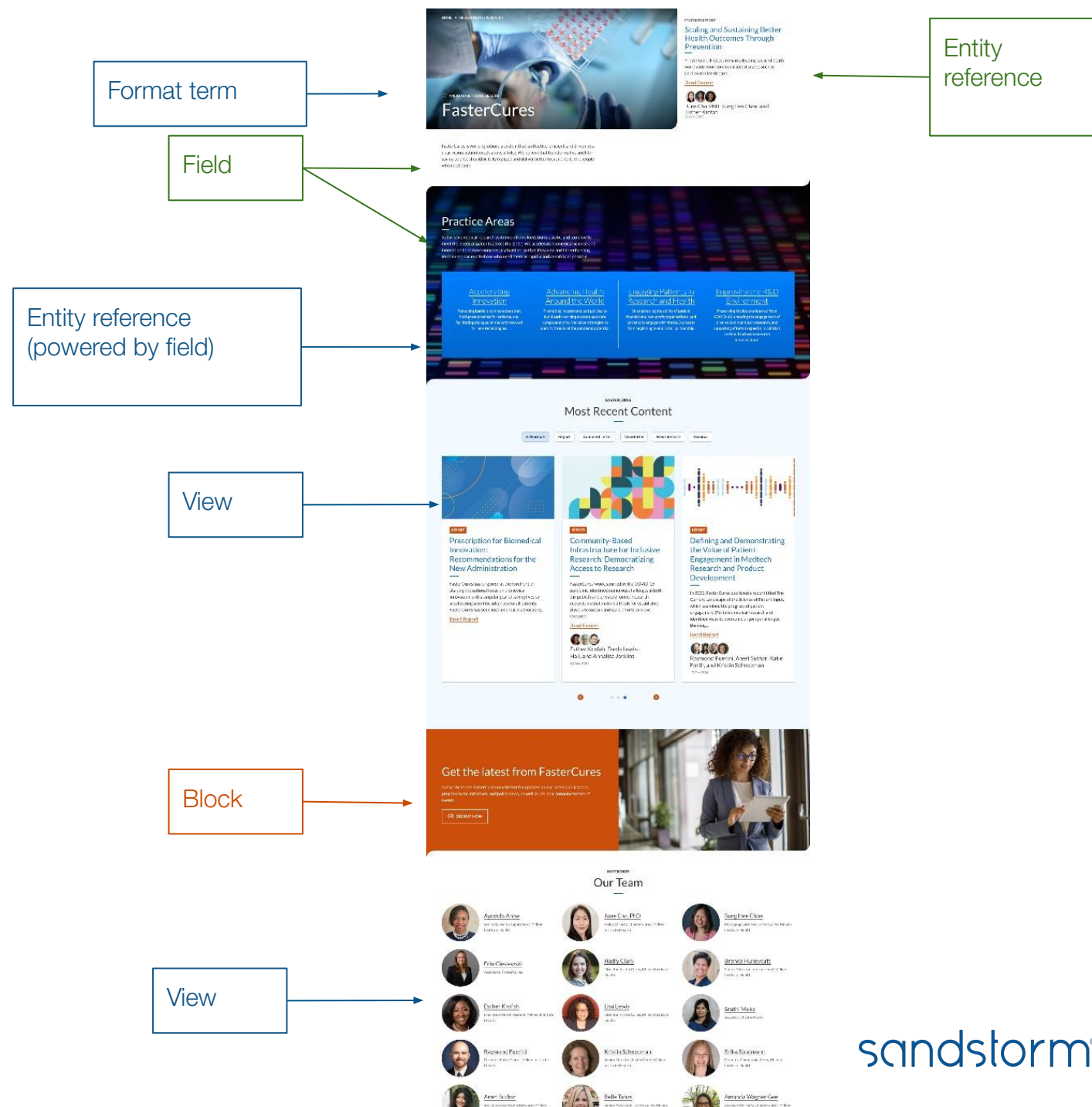
Region

-United States ✕

# Set a **Default Layout** for Consistency

- **Layout builder blocks** for frequently-updated nodes
- **Reference available terms** to power views

# When Our Powers Combine....





# It All Powers Search

## Search



Showing 1-10 of 1566 results

SHOW PER PAGE

10

SORT BY

Relevance

### Filter

#### Types

- ☐ Collection
- ☐ Article
- ☐ Government and Policy Engagement
  - ☐ Comment Letter
  - ☐ Congressional Testimony
  - ☐ Letter of Support
  - ☐ Policy Brief
  - ☐ Statement of Support
- ☐ Insights
- ☐ Newsletter
  - ☐ Article
- ☐ News Release

+ VIEW ALL

#### Experts

#### Region

- ☐ Americas

### Climate Resilience Measures

<http://milkeninstitute.org/topics/climate-and-environment/climate-resilience-measures>

13 Jan 2024

... Climate Resilience Measures ... Body We conduct research and promote strategies to ...

### Climate and Environment

<http://milkeninstitute.org/topics/climate-and-environment>

13 Jan 2024

... Climate and Environment ... Body We work to develop strategies ... that protect and restore planetary health. Term Climate and Environment Trending No ... Climate and Environment ...

### Capital Deployment for Global Climate and Economic Resiliency

<http://milkeninstitute.org/topics/climate-and-environment/capital-deployment-global-climate-and-economic-resiliency>

23 Apr 2025

... Capital Deployment for Global Climate and Economic Resiliency ... Masthead Image ... Impact Body Despite growing urgency, the global climate response remains fragmented, with capital and ...

# Takeaways

- **Start with research.** Findings will help ground future decisions.
- Invest time in **auditing and documentation.** It will save time in the long run and help catch some of those tricky edge cases.
- Think of **every page as a side door** to the website.
- Make sure the **content strategy is clear** and the **architecture supports it.**

# Sandstorm® Championing Drupal



## DrupalCon 2025

Session 1:

[Analytics and Custom GA4 Reporting](#)

Session 2:

[Bridging Design and Development with Storybook & Drupal](#)



## DrupalCon Global

**10 Design Principles** for Better UX and Accessibility:  
<https://youtu.be/f7GoQ5tLwSU>



## Drupal MidCamp 2025

Session 1:

Back-End, Front-End  
[Unlocking the Hybrid Drupal Solution for Custom Software Development](#)

Session 2:

[Leveraging the Best of Drupal to Support the World's Greatest Minds](#)



## DrupalCon 2024

[Milken Institute + Sandstorm – Hitting ‘Save As’ & Transforming UX, Taxonomy & Search for a Think Tank Website](#)



# Access the Presentation

<https://www.sandstormdesign.com/midcamp-2025>

## **Anne Lentino**

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