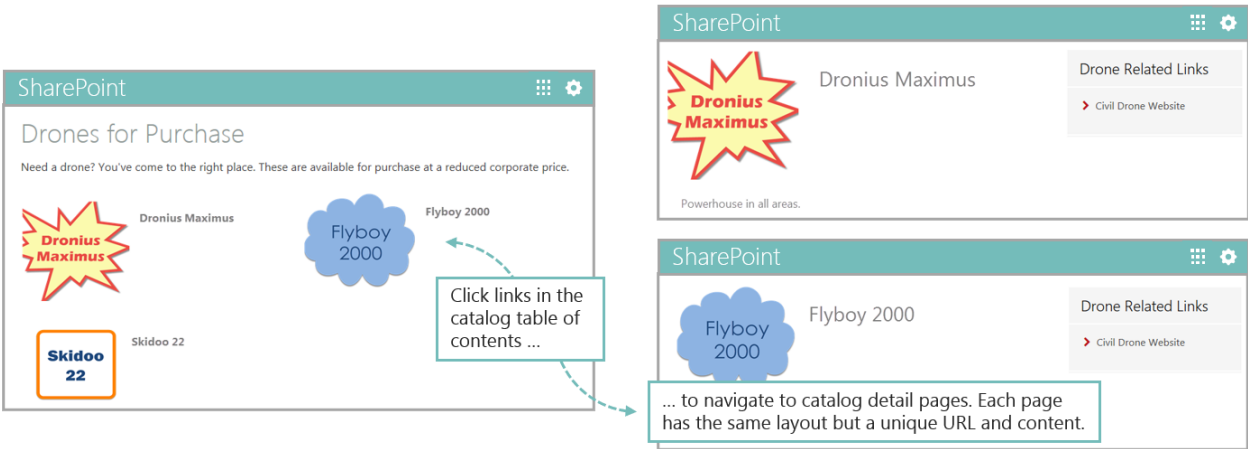# Understanding the SharePoint Catalog Framework

What is a Catalog Framework?

A catalog framework is a structure you can set up to support multiple pages with the same layout but different data. You maintain your data using a custom list. You don't need to create multiple pages and multiple lists.

To help you understand, let's look at a simple example.
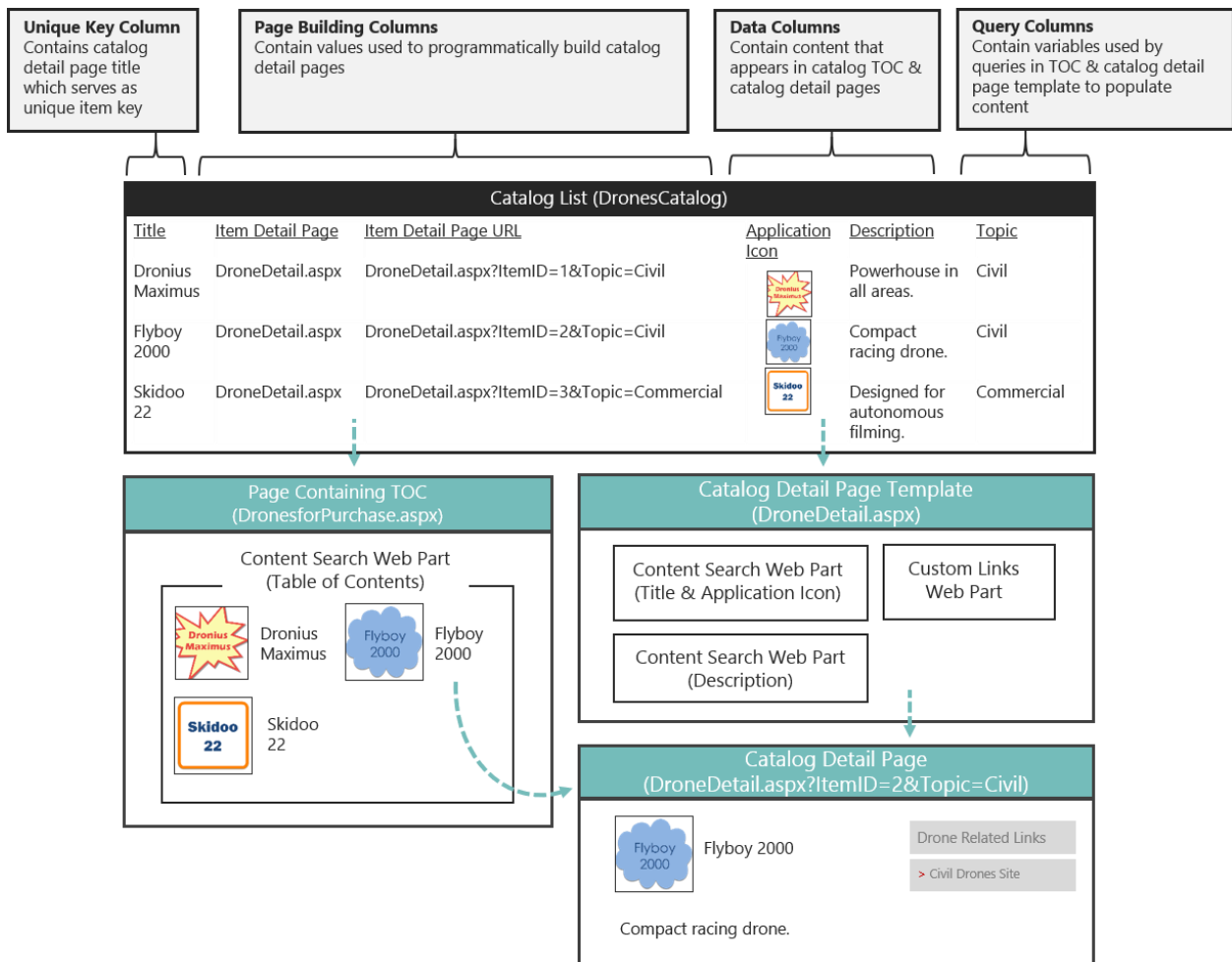

When to Use a Catalog Framework?

We suggest you only use a catalog framework when you at least five pages using the same layout. This is because there is a lot of work setting up a catalog. However, if you have a lot of pages using the same layout, it's worth it because you can maintain content using just a list. Also, be sure to consider your site's current and future needs and how they impact the consistency of your page layout.

How Does It Work?

A catalog framework consists of the following components:

- The catalog detail pages. There is one detail page for each item in your catalog. These pages have the same layout, but different URLs and content.

- The catalog detail page template. This is the page that supplies the layout for your catalog detail pages. Note that it's possible to create multiple templates if your catalog detail pages require different layout. However, if you require many different layouts, consider creating individual pages rather than using a catalog framework.

- The catalog table of contents. This is a list of links that navigate to the catalog detail pages. You can create a new page to contain this table of contents or insert it on an existing page.

- Catalog list. This is the list that supplies the content for the catalog.

The following graphic illustrates how these components work together.

Unique Key Column	Page Building Columns	Data Columns	Query Columns
Contains catalog detail page title which serves as unique item key	Contain values used to programmatically build catalog detail pages	Contain content that appears in catalog TOC & catalog detail pages	Contain variables used by queries in TOC & catalog detail page template to populate content

Catalog List (DronesCatalog)

Title	Item Detail Page	Item Detail Page URL	Application Icon	Description	Topic
Dronius Maximus	DroneDetail.aspx	DroneDetail.aspx?ItemID=1&Topic=Civil		Powerhouse in all areas.	Civil
Flyboy 2000	DroneDetail.aspx	DroneDetail.aspx?ItemID=2&Topic=Civil		Compact racing drone.	Civil
Skidoo 22	DroneDetail.aspx	DroneDetail.aspx?ItemID=3&Topic=Commercial		Designed for autonomous filming.	Commercial

Page Containing TOC (DronesforPurchase.aspx)

Content Search Web Part
(Table of Contents)

- Dronius Maximus
- Flyboy 2000
- Skidoo 22

Catalog Detail Page Template (DroneDetail.aspx)

- Content Search Web Part (Title & Application Icon)
- Custom Links Web Part
- Content Search Web Part (Description)

Catalog Detail Page (DroneDetail.aspx?ItemID=2&Topic=Civil)

Flyboy 2000

Drone Related Links
> Civil Drones Site

Compact racing drone.