PHP (PHP:Hypertext Preprocessor)

PHP is one of the most (if not the most popular) server-side programming language on the web today, with more than 240 million websites using it (as of January 2013 — according to Wikipedia). Websites like Google, Apple, Facebook and YouTube utilize PHP as well as popular Content Management Systems (CMS) like WordPress, Drupal, Joomla and Expression Engine all rely on PHP.

PHP can be used as a stand-alone programming language to create robust applications, or it can be used within HTML code to create dynamic websites (which is the goal of this course).

PHP runs on a "server", and in order to use PHP on your own computer when developing a website, you'll need to have a server installed on your machine — don't worry about this part, it's quick & painless to get set up, and it doesn't cost you a penny.

What does PHP do?

PHP can do a whole bunch of things, such as:

* Access information typed into a web form and do something with it, like: Send an email, navigate to a specific page based on the info submitted in the form, create a user account, log a user in, etc.
* Find out what browser and operating system your visitors are using.
* Display alternate versions of a web page to users who are using mobile devices, or specific browsers (like Internet Explorer).
* Do math!
* Create templates for your website so you don't have to hand-code your headers, footers, and sidebars for every single page!
* Allow creation of shopping carts for e-commerce websites.