

# web engineering

## **introduction**

# team



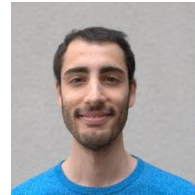
prof. moira norrie



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amir sarabadani tafreshi

[www.globis.ethz.ch/courses](http://www.globis.ethz.ch/courses)

# what is web engineering?

technologies, tools and methods to  
support systematic approaches to the  
development, deployment and  
maintenance of high-quality web sites

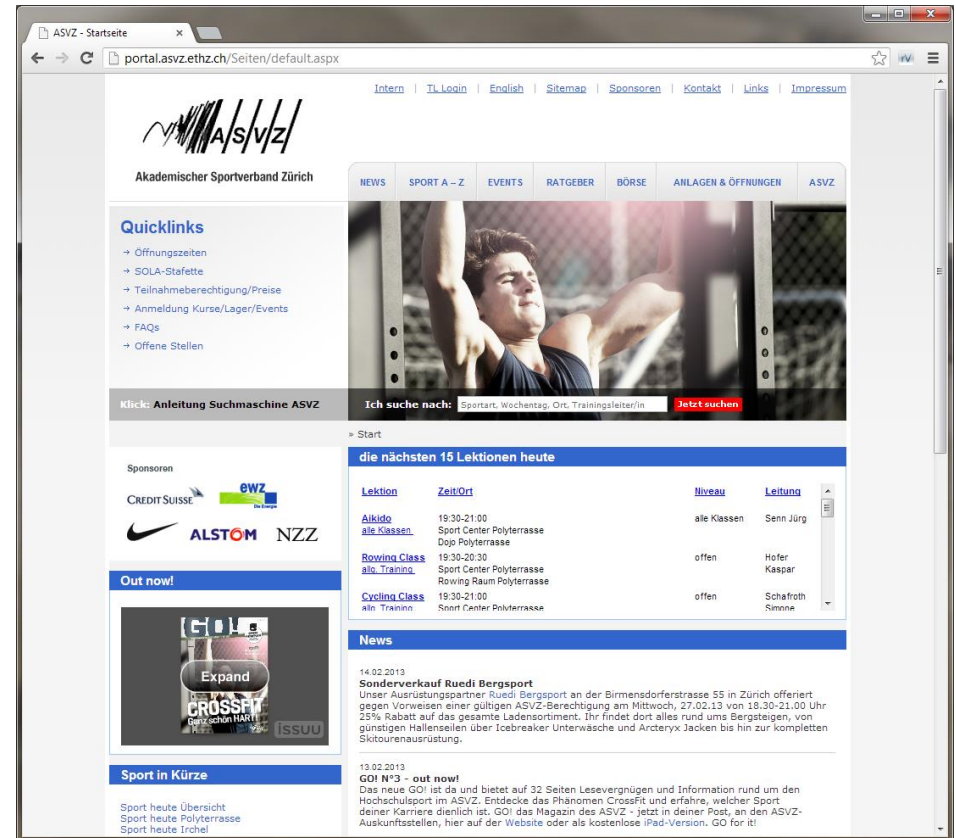
# approaches to web site development

model-driven web engineering

programmatic approach

example-based approach

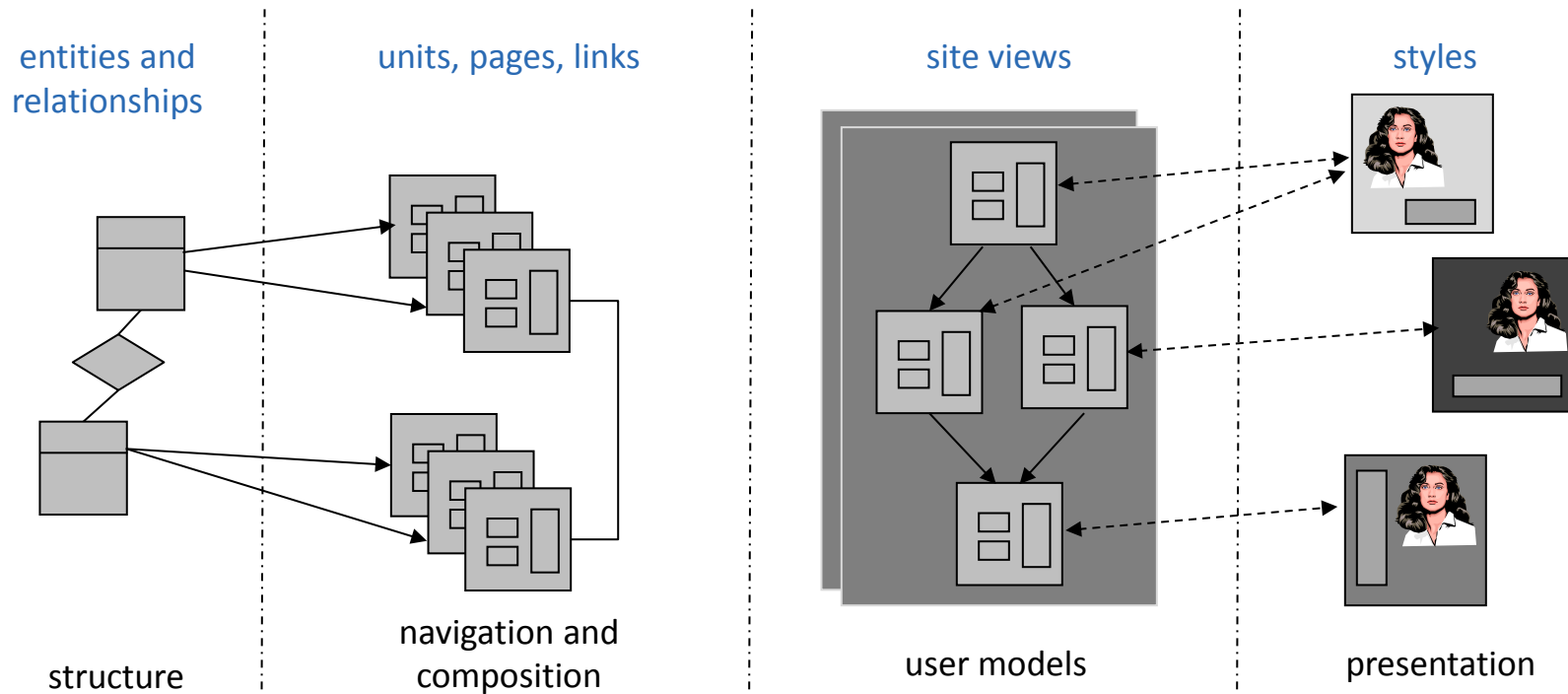
interface-driven approach



# model-driven web engineering

model all aspects of a web site and  
generate the site from the models

site = structure + composition + navigation + presentation

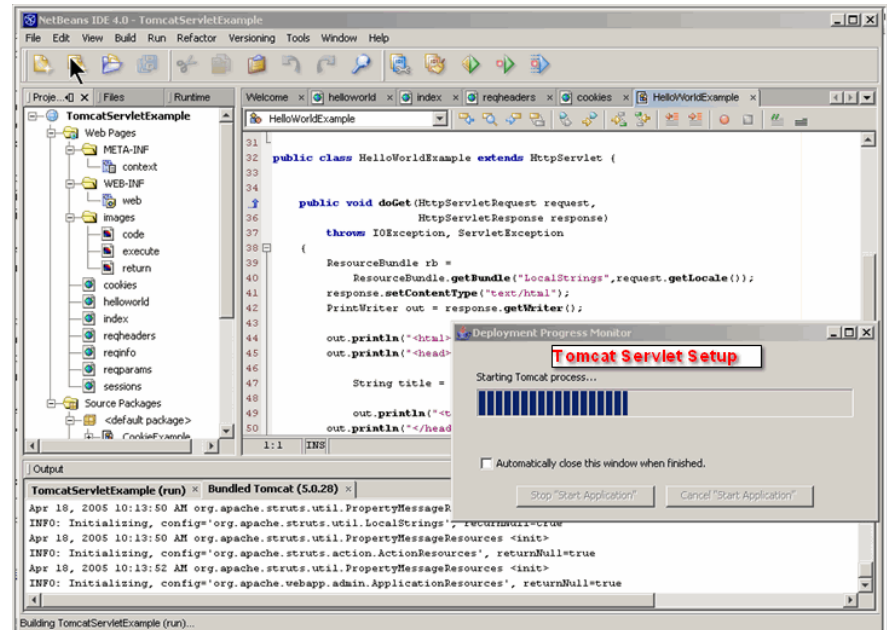


# programmatic approach

pick a programming language of your choice and start developing

could be based on a general programming language such as Java together with associated web-specific technologies such as JSP

could be a special language or framework for web development such as Ruby on Rails

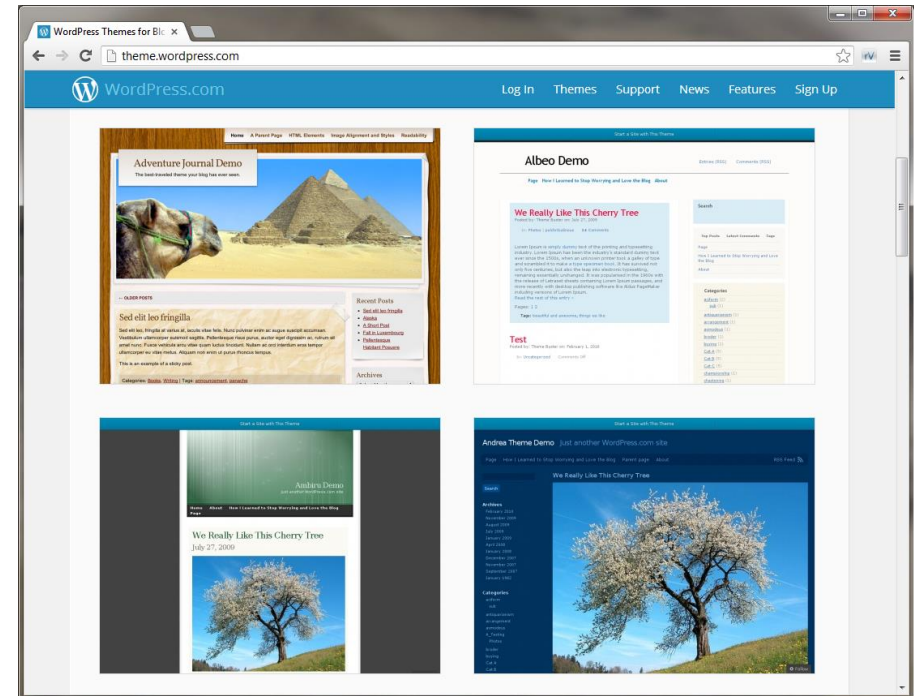


# example-based approach

platforms such as WordPress allow end-users to develop web sites by selecting themes and supplying their own content

these platform support extensibility through plugins

power users can also create their own plugins and themes



WordPress 4.1 > 13 million downloads

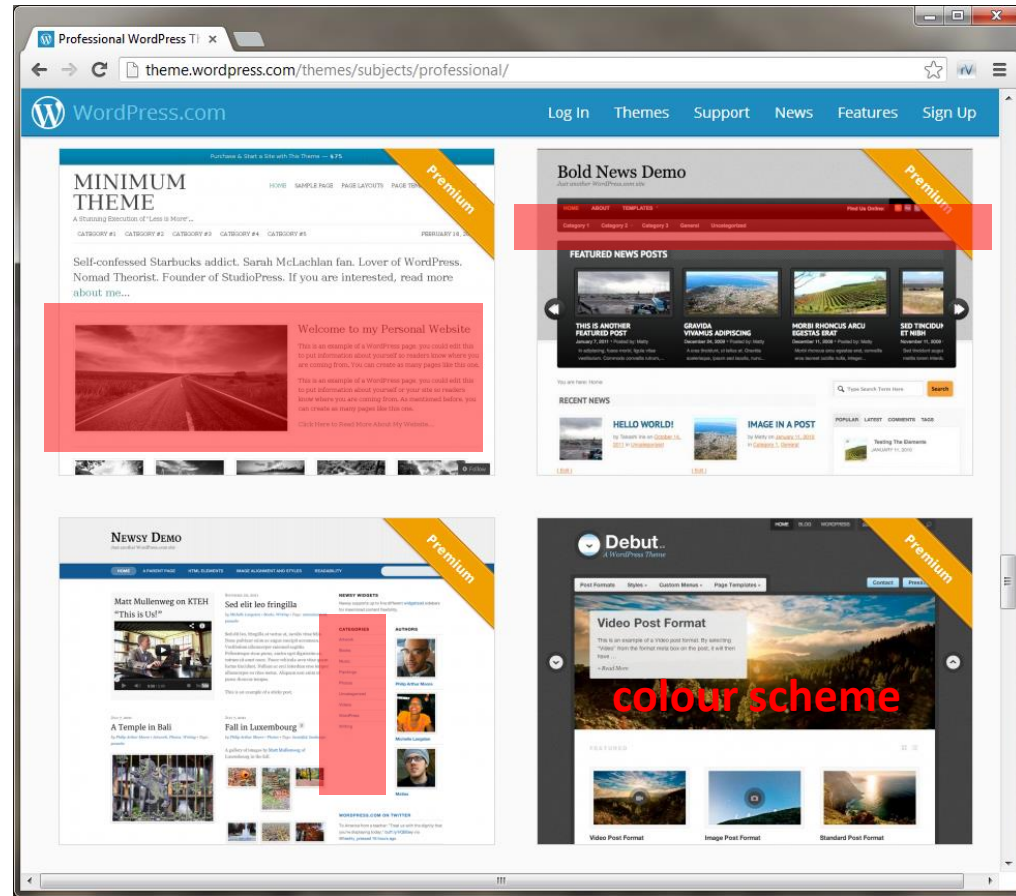
estimated that 23.4% of top ten million web sites running on WordPress  
w3techs.com 11 Feb 2015

# our vision – designing by example

example-based approaches  
currently limited as it is not  
possible to mix-n-match themes

wouldn't it be good if we could  
build a web site by selecting and  
reusing components from existing  
web sites?

proposed by HCI researchers but  
they don't address the technical  
challenges of realising such an  
approach





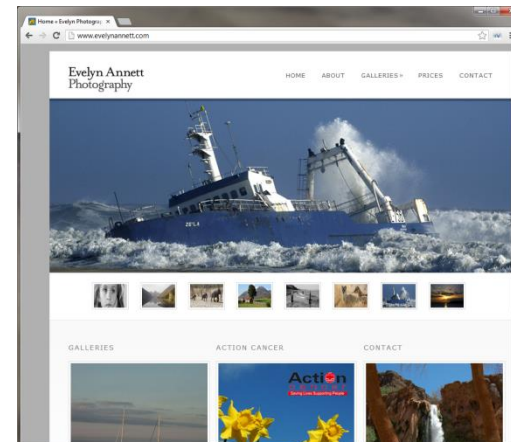
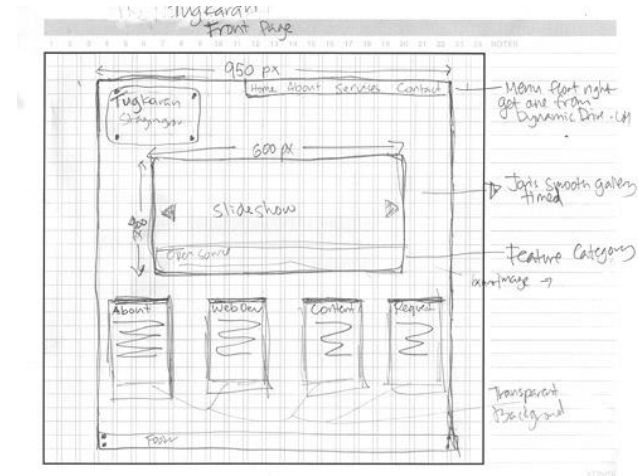
# interface-driven approach

start by designing the interface

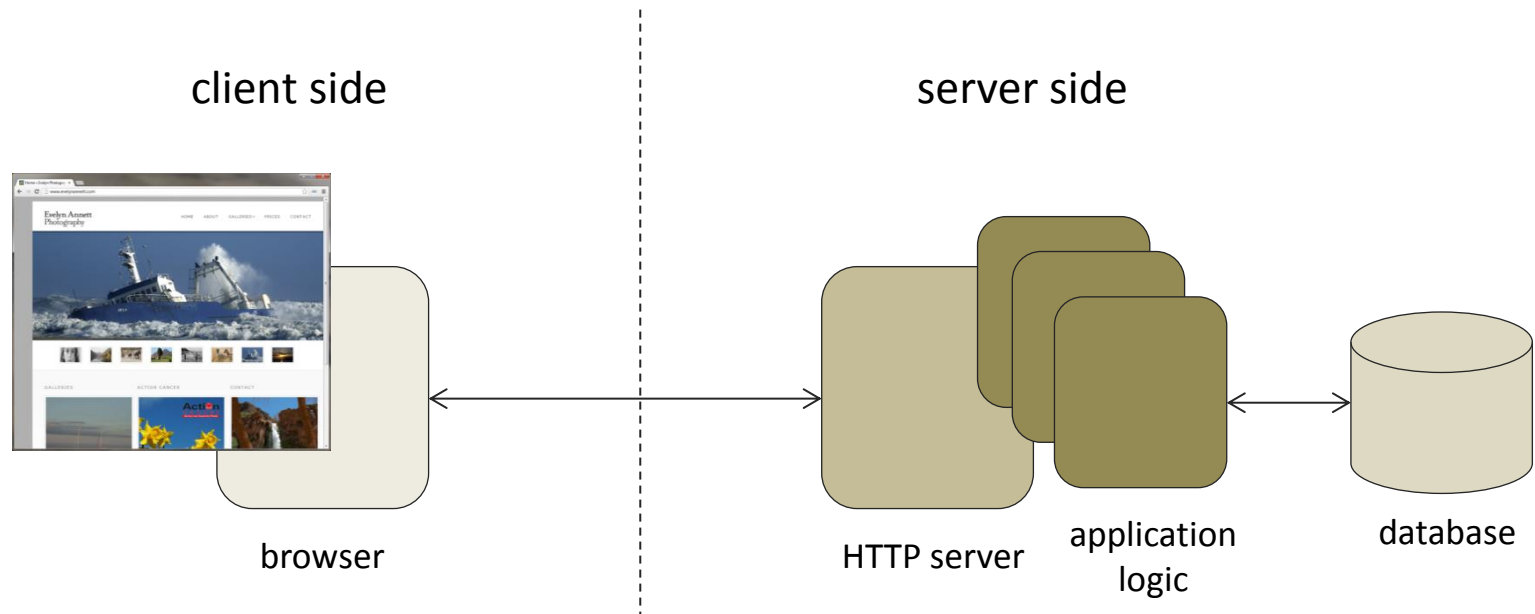
implement a mock-up web site  
using HTML/CSS based on the  
design with sample content

add client-side functionality

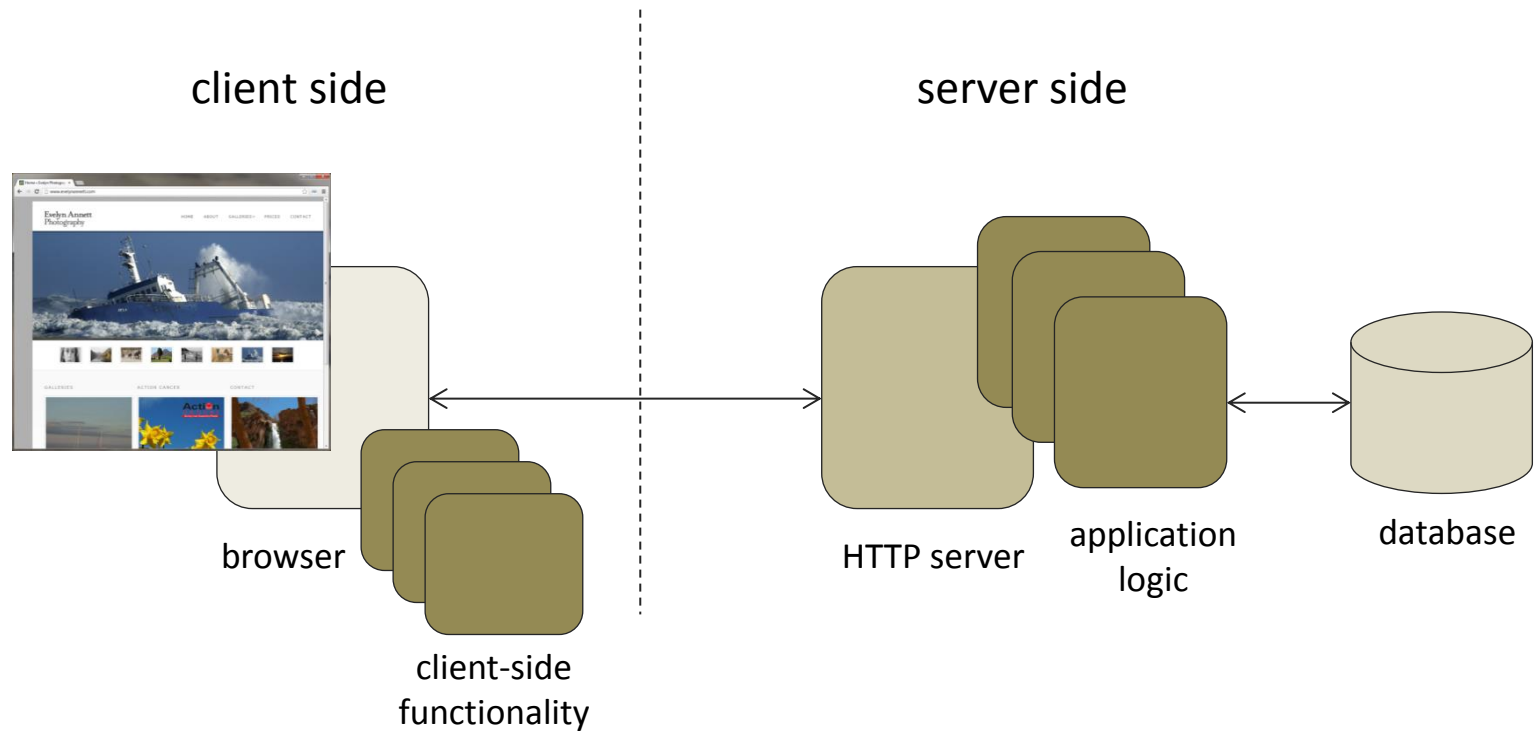
implement server-side possibly  
using a content management  
platform such as WordPress or  
Drupal



# inside-out



# outside-in



# outside-in

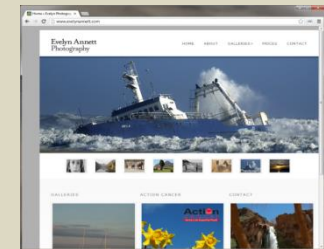
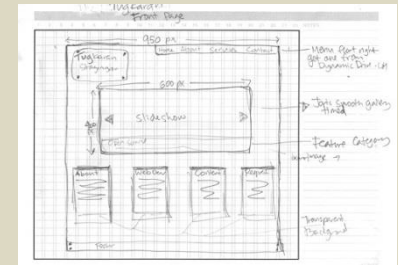
good basis for discussing requirements with customer

can be considered as “agile method” in web engineering

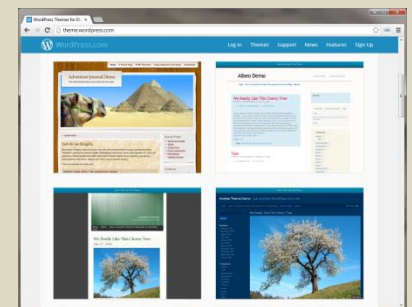
- move quickly to a prototype
- gradually add functionality and refine design

state-of-the-art in terms of practitioners

fits well with powerful platforms such as WordPress



interface-driven



example-based

# state of the art

interface-driven approach most commonly used by professionals

model-driven approaches are mainly promoted within the research community

platforms like WordPress and Drupal have meant that programmatic approaches less frequently used

example-based approach most commonly used by endusers

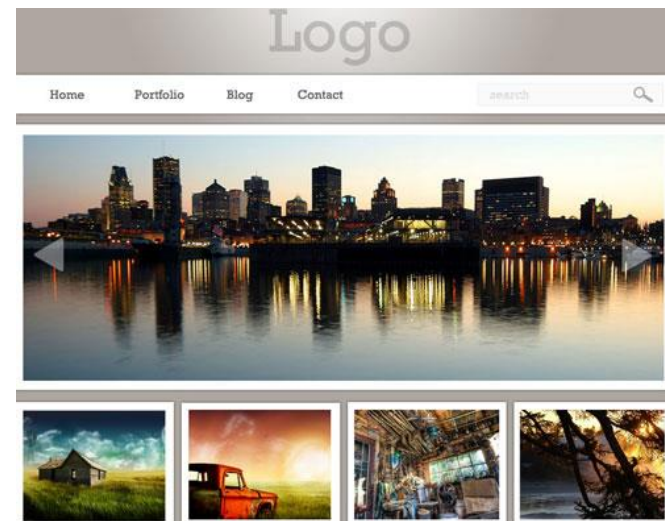
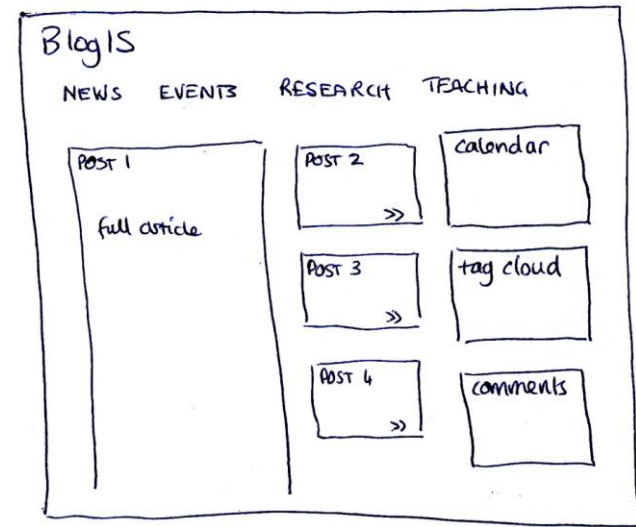


# web design

create an initial mock-up of the web site

usually first involves sketching on paper

designers will often produce a mock-up in Photoshop





# tools to help sketch



[www.uistencils.com](http://www.uistencils.com)

# mock-ups in Photoshop

good basis for reaching agreement  
between designers and clients

but it's possible that designer  
produces something that is later  
found difficult to implement

can give clients the impression that  
the main work has been done





# the dangers of the outside-in approach

if you show a non-programmer a screen which  
has a user interface that is 100% beautiful they  
will think that the program is almost done

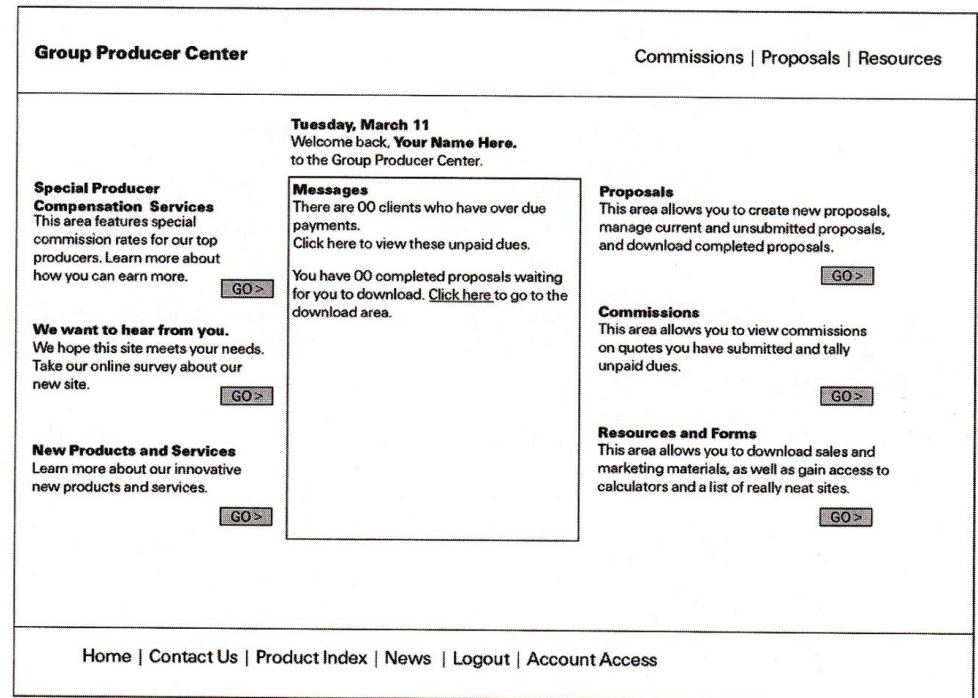
excerpt from “The Iceberg Secret” by Joel Spolsky,  
13 February 2002, [www.joelonsoftware.com](http://www.joelonsoftware.com)

# wireframe mock-ups

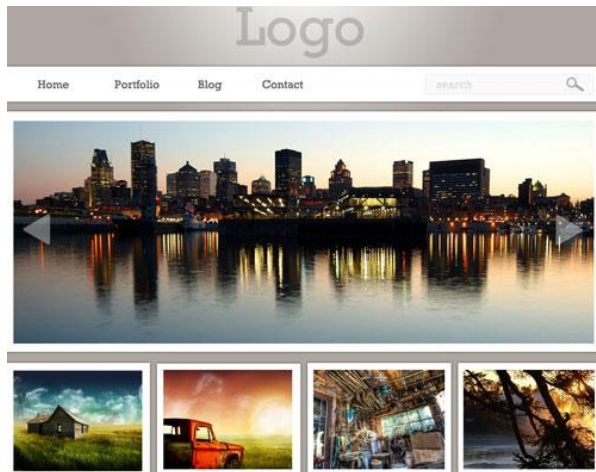
wireframes focus on the elements and layout rather than presentation

can be produced on paper or digitally and there are tools to support this

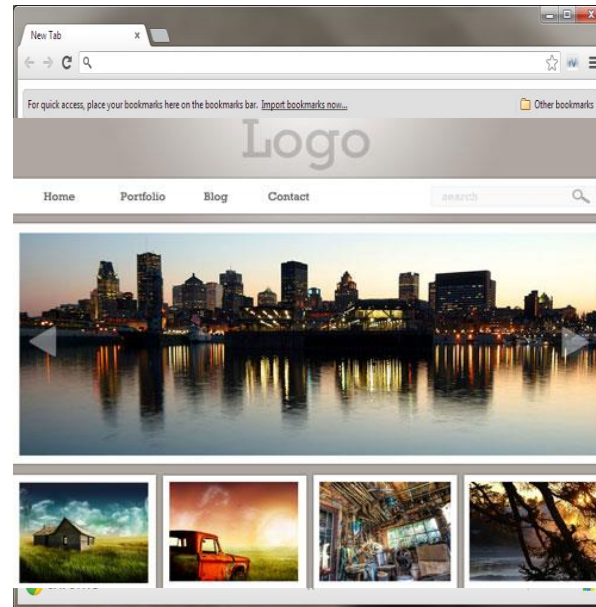
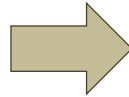
content can be nonsense – but better to use real examples



# from design to implementation



produced by designer



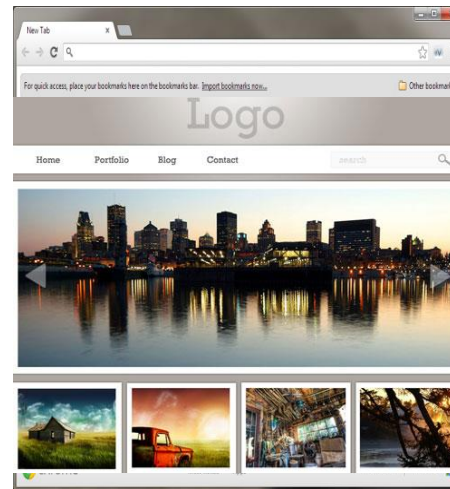
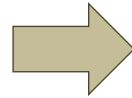
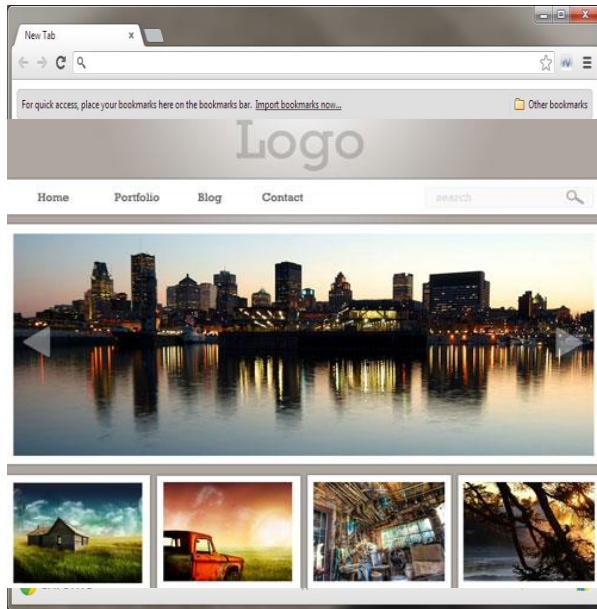
1

developer implements first prototype in HMTL/CSS

2

implement client-side functionality in JavaScript/jQuery

# from design to implementation . . .



WordPress model  
PHP

mock-up in HTML/CSS/  
JavaScript/jQuery

3

generate WordPress theme  
to create database-driven  
site that allows content to  
be created and managed

# responsive design

in addition nowadays it is important  
to support access from the wide  
range of devices in common use

web sites should be designed to  
adapt to particular viewing contexts  
and modes of interaction



# structure of course

start by taking you through these development steps covering the various technologies and their use

HTML/CSS  
JavaScript/jQuery  
HTML5/CSS3  
WordPress/PHP

think beyond the mouse and keyboard

interaction frameworks  
based on jQuery

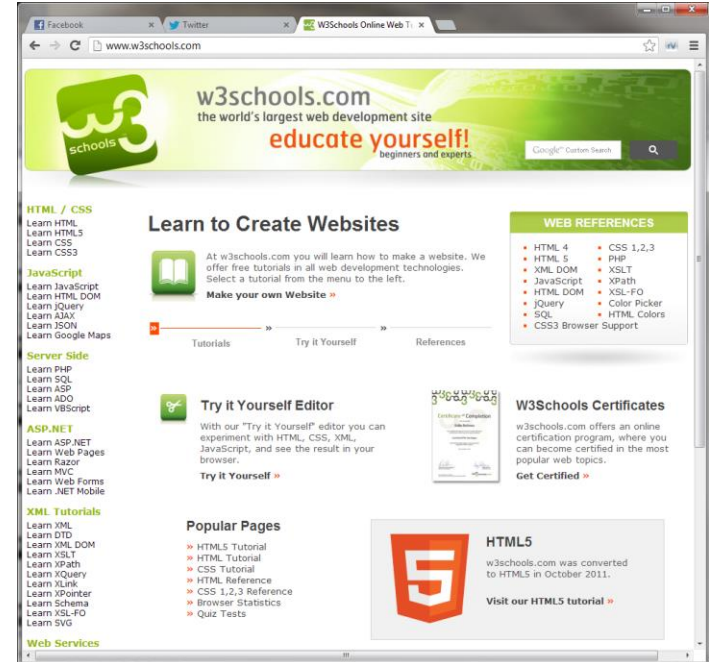
then look at alternative approaches based on programming frameworks

client- and server-side  
frameworks  
real-time web applications

# tutorials on basic web technologies

we will focus on the use of basic web technologies such as HTML, CSS and JavaScript rather than providing details of the syntax and semantics

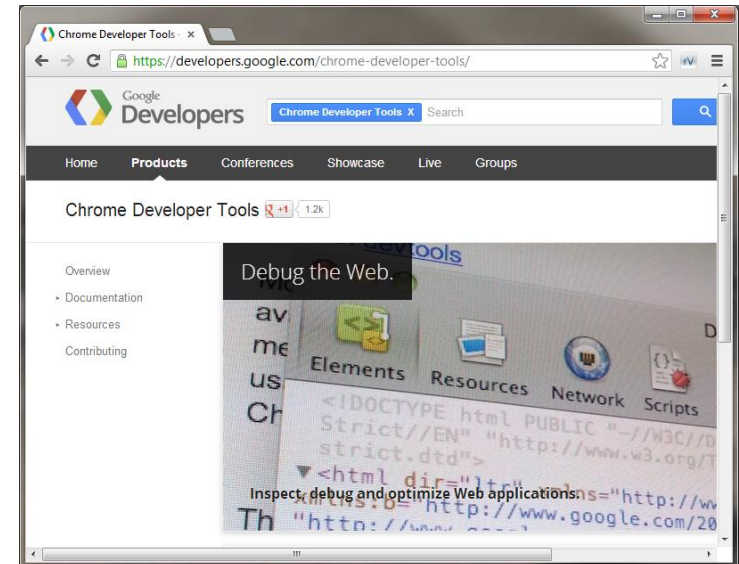
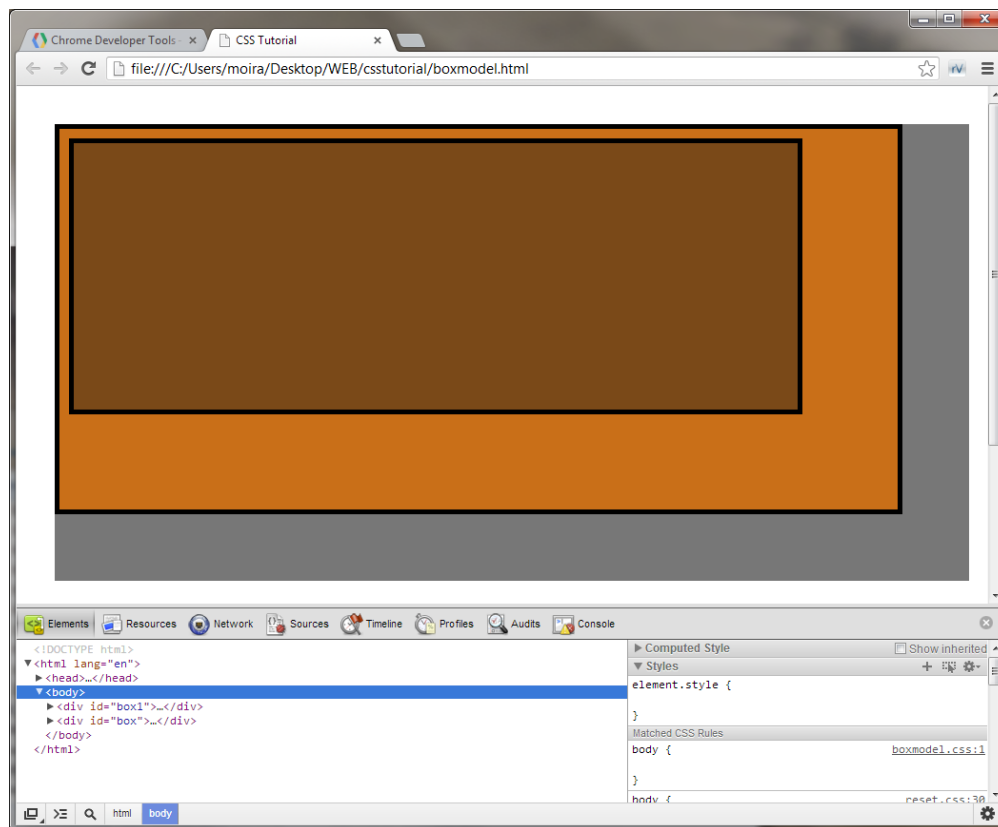
W3Schools provides excellent introductory tutorials and references to these technologies as well as HTML5, CSS3 and jQuery



w3schools.com

# developer tools

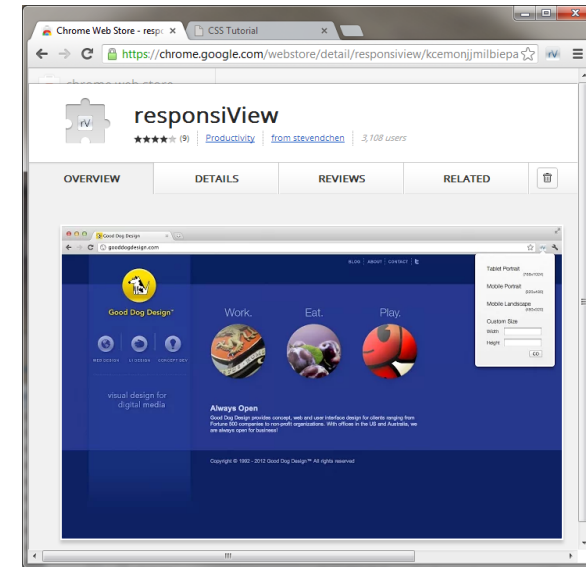
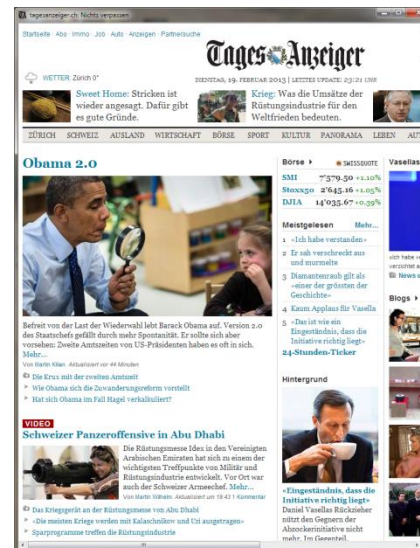
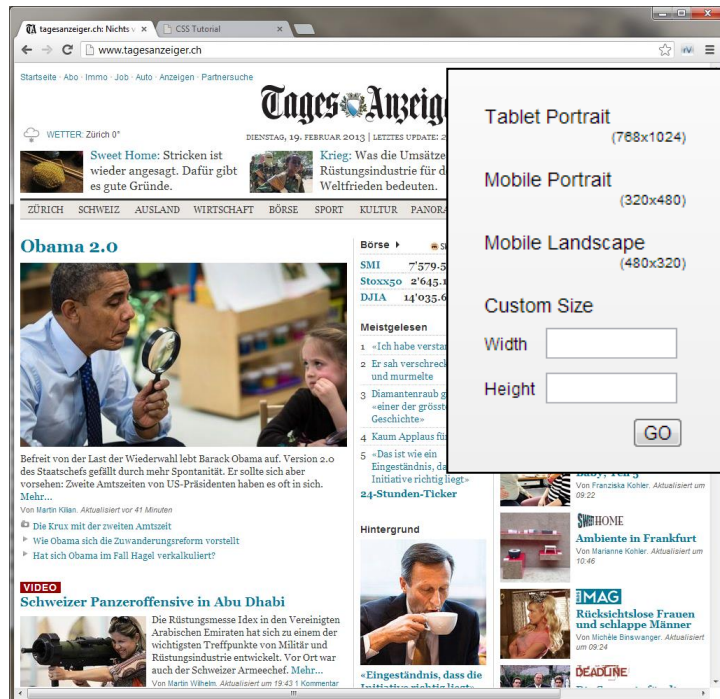
various developer tools for different browsers



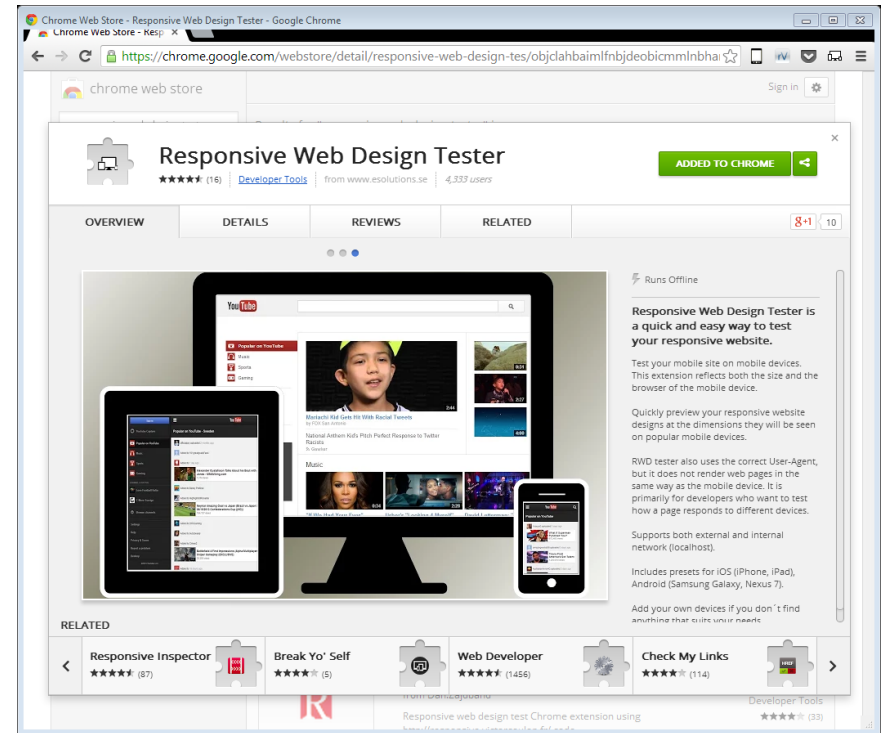
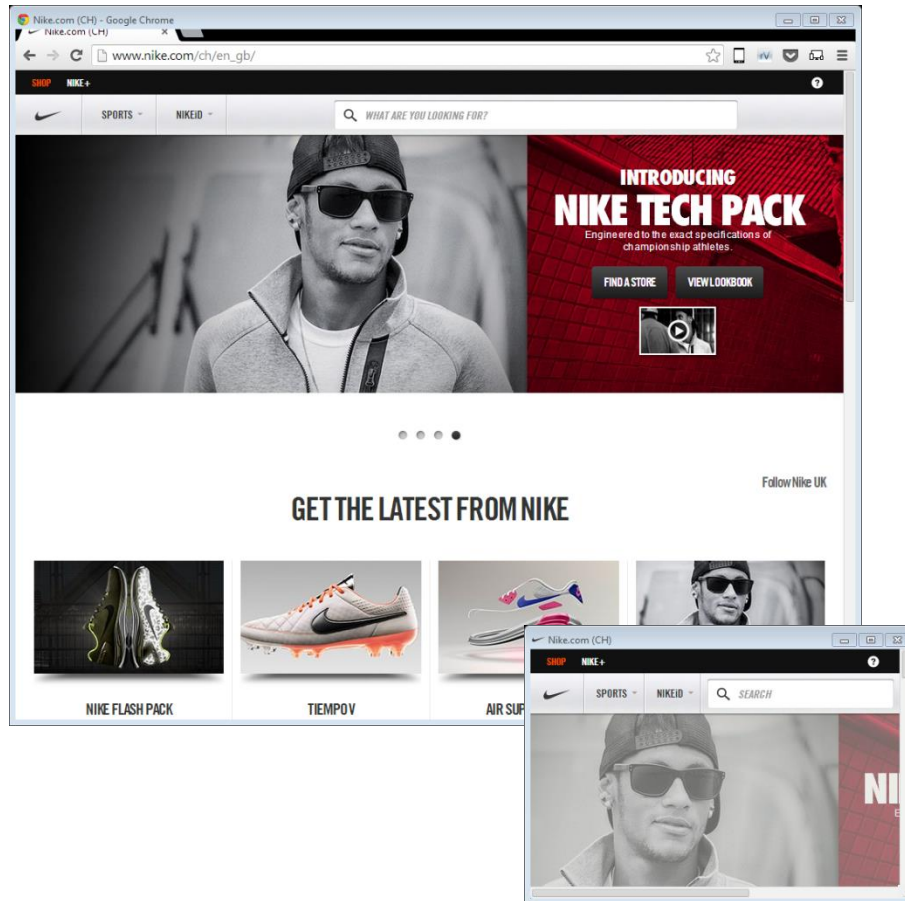


# developer tools . . .

various tools for supporting responsive design by allowing you to view sites at different viewport sizes



# developer tools . . . . .

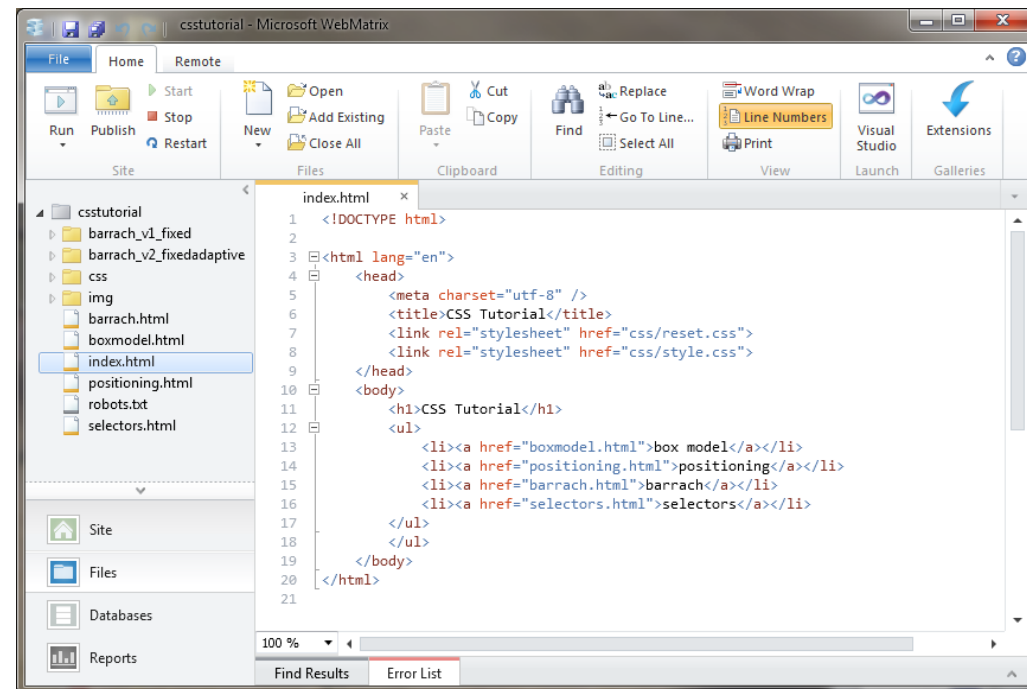
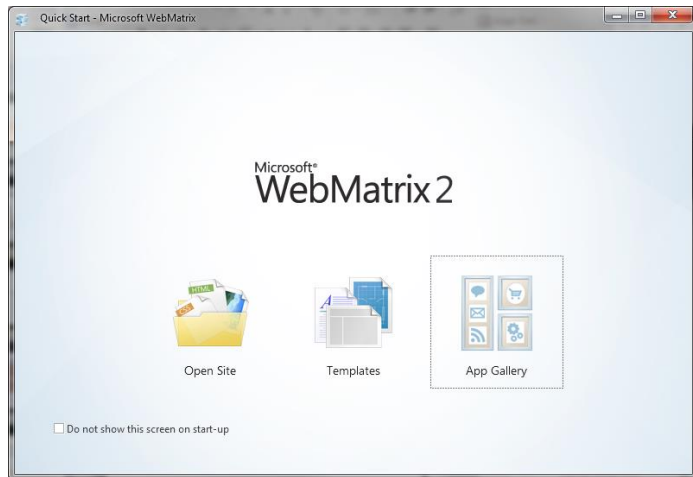


choice of whole range of specific devices

# developer tools . . . . .

WebMatrix is a free, lightweight development environment

- HTML, CSS, PHP editors
- server
- integrated development environment for WordPress together with database



# schedule

week	date	lecture	
1	19 feb	introduction	
2	26 feb	basics of CSS	web documents
3	05 mar	responsive web design	
4	12 mar	JavaScript and jQuery	
5	19 mar	HTML5, CSS3 Animations and Flexbox	
6	26 mar	WordPress model	content management systems
7	02 apr	extensibility in WordPress	
8	09 apr	<i>easter holiday</i>	
9	16 apr	beyond mouse and keyboard	
10	23 apr	server-side frameworks	programming frameworks
11	30 apr	client-side frameworks	
12	07 may	real-time web applications	
13	14 may	<i>ascension day</i>	
14	21 May	future trends	
15	28 May	review	

# course assessment

grade will be determined by

25% coursework based on major exercises to be presented

75% two hour written exam (no materials to be brought to exam)

the first set of exercises will take you through the steps of  
web site development

the solutions to all exercises have to be presented and each  
exercise will be graded

# exercise groups

exercises should be done in groups of 3

you can form yourselves into groups and register these groups at the end of today's lecture

we recommend that all group members are there to present a solution



if only one group member there, then they will have to answer questions on all parts of the solution

their performance will determine the grade of the entire group

# exercise sessions

two 45min sessions

first hour general session often used to introduce exercises and for students to give presentations of exercises as well as for demos and tutorials

second hour is an opportunity for students to individually get help with exercises or any material covered in the lectures

# evolution of the web

conceived in 1989 to allow geographically dispersed people to share information

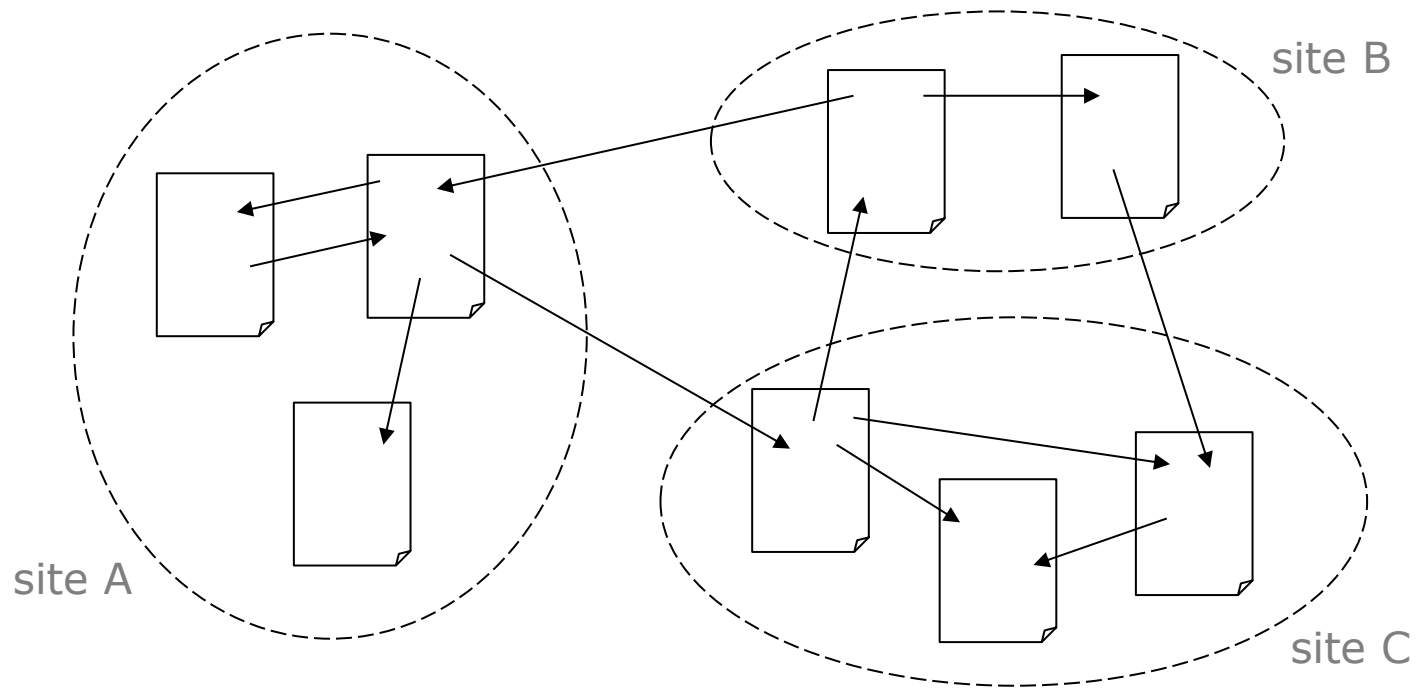
information stored on different servers

information retrieved and viewed by means of a single browsing interface

information consisted mainly of text documents inter-linked based on hypertext model



# web-based hypertext model



# the web today

environment to deliver all kinds of  
information and services

multimedia of different types (images,  
video, animations, audio)

software distribution

applications (search engines, calculators,  
design tools, ... )

complex systems (e-Commerce,  
enterprise planning, ....)

platform for collaboration

discussion forums

social networking sites

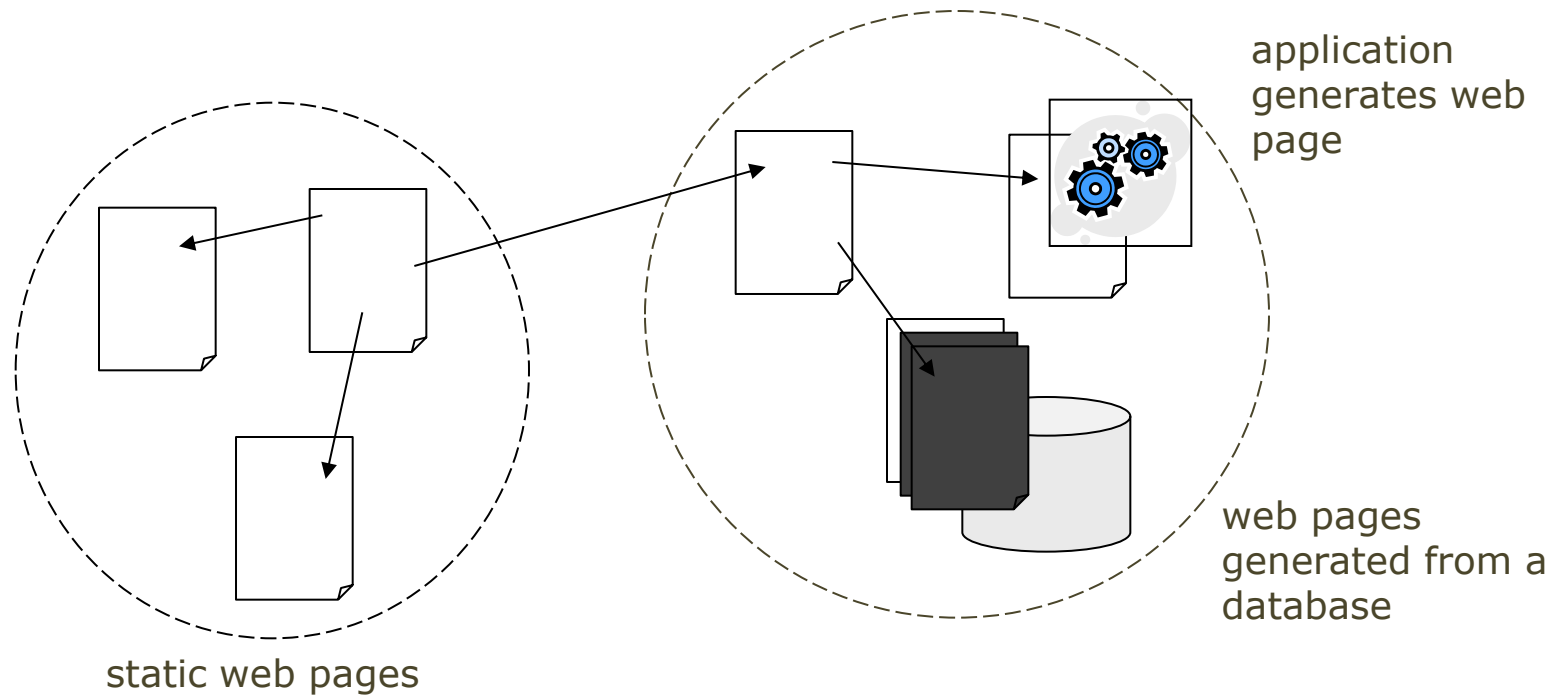
collaborative authoring (wikipedia, .... )

web conferencing and meeting systems

.....

# the web nowadays . . .

increasing number of documents  
generated dynamically rather than  
being stored statically



# need for web engineering

private individuals, businesses, governments and all sorts of organisations have come to rely on the web

web-based systems and applications now deliver a wide range of information and application services to a diversity of users

web technologies increasingly being adopted as a universal platform for all kinds of applications

large-scale commercial sites developed by multi-disciplinary teams of people with diverse skills and backgrounds, using cutting edge technologies

in many ways, the development, deployment and maintenance of web sites more complex than traditional software development

# differences to software engineering

variety of user roles

programmers, database experts, designers, content providers, ...

typically developed for unknown set of users with no training

intrinsic characteristics of web applications

hypertext-based interaction (non-sequential)

range of technologies

multi-platform accessibility

speed of development and evolution

# users

## generally unknown

expectations and behaviour patterns not known at development time

more difficult to design interface

no training

dealing with globalisation - different cultures, languages, etc.

## nowadays covers a variety of roles

browsers

content providers

editors

.....

# coping with diversity

web developers must work with multiple technologies in parallel

HTML

CSS

JavaScript/jQuery

WordPress

PHP

.....

made even more difficult because of the rapid development of new technologies and standards

HTML5/CSS3

while supporting multiple devices, multiple browsers and multiple versions

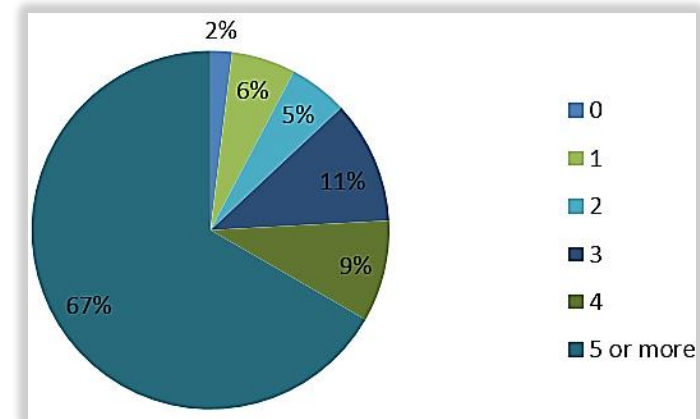
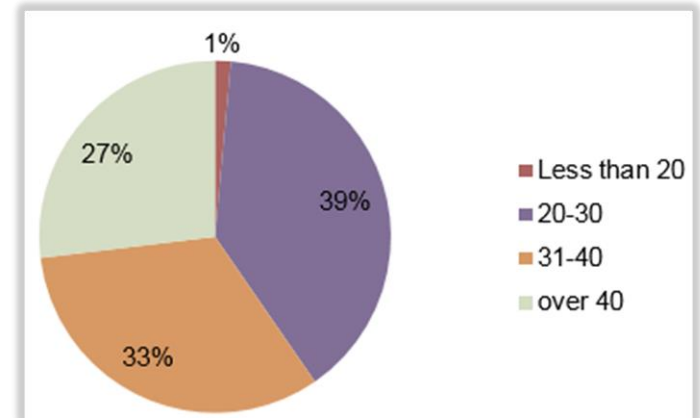
Internet Explorer, Safari, Google Chrome, Firefox

# online survey 2014

208 participants  
(83% male, 17% female)

24 different countries

majority from  
US/Switzerland/Germany/UK



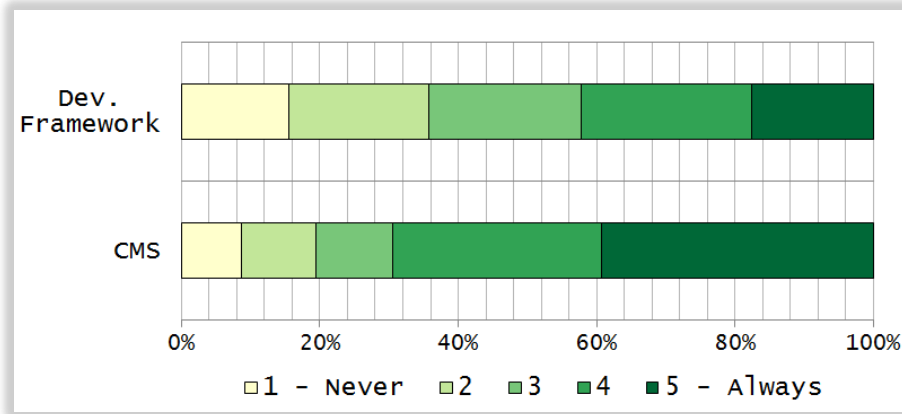
The Forgotten Many? A Survey of Modern Web Practices

*Moirá C. Norrie, Linda Di Geronimo, Alfonso Murolo, Michael Nebeling*

*in Proc. 14th Intl. Conf. on Web Engineering (ICWE), Toulouse, France, July 2014*



# CMS or framework?



39% of CMS developers always use a CMS

18% always use a development framework

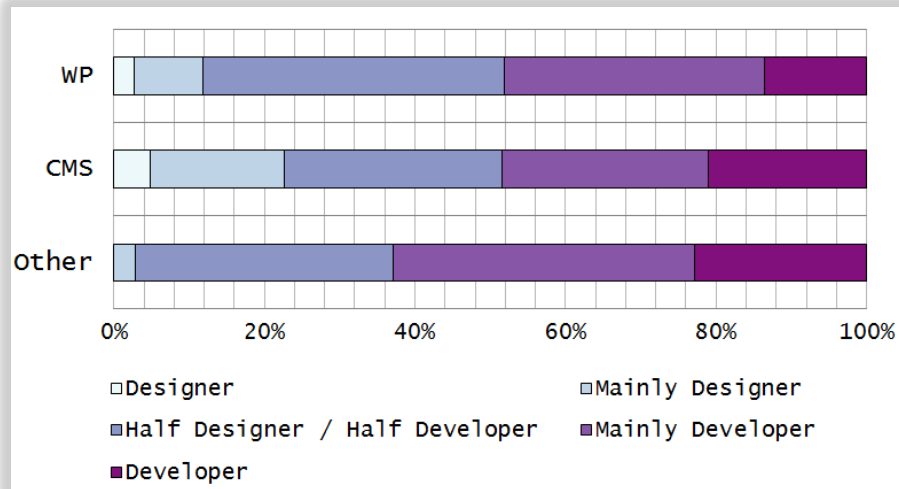
# categories of developers

WP WordPress developers

CMS often use a CMS other than WordPress

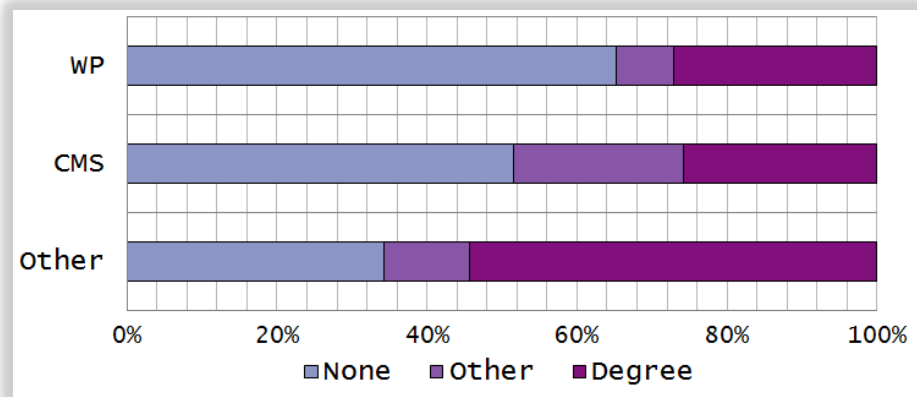
other rarely use CMS

# designer or developer?



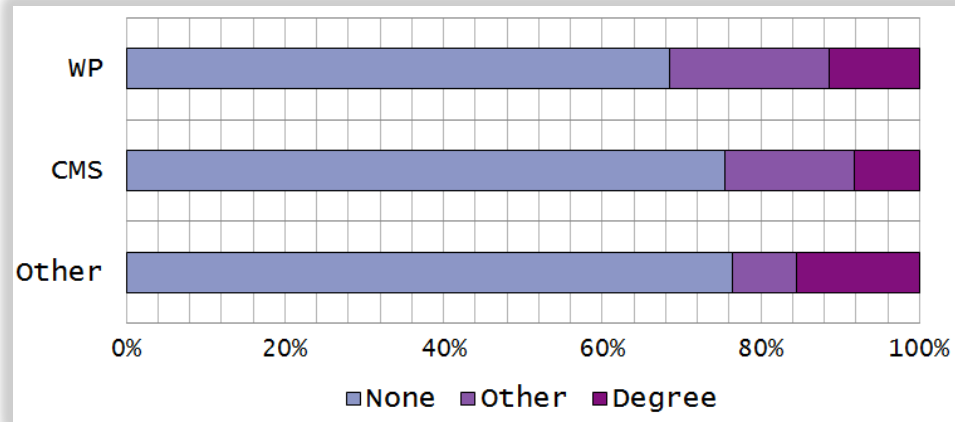
40% of WordPress developers classified themselves as half designer/half developer

# cs education



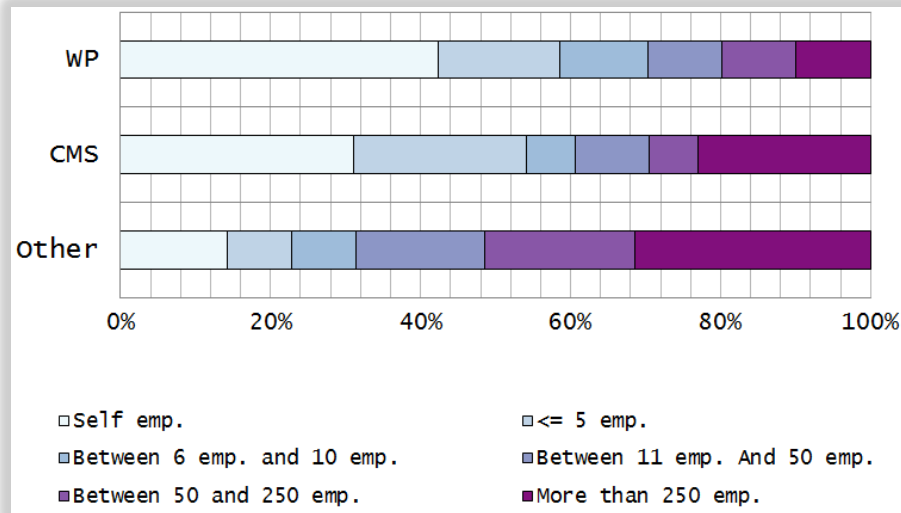
65% of WordPress developers have no formal education in computer science

# design education



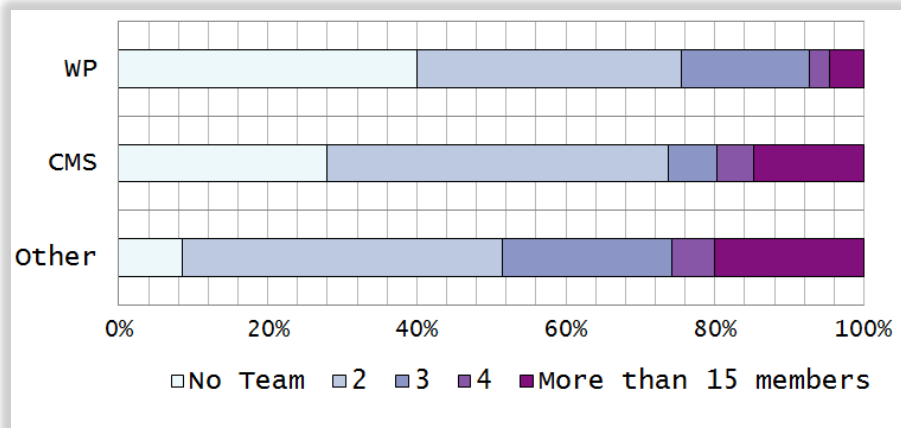
31% of WordPress developers had some form of qualification in design

# size of organisation



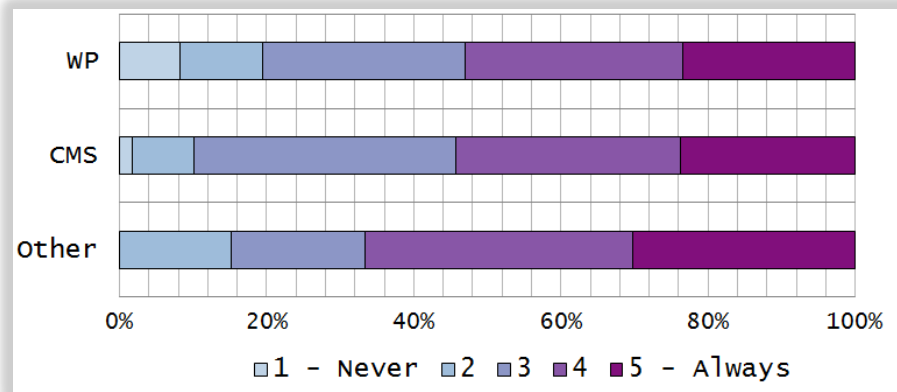
42% of WordPress developers are self-employed or working in organisations with 5 or fewer employees

# size of team



75% of WordPress developers work in teams with 5 or fewer members

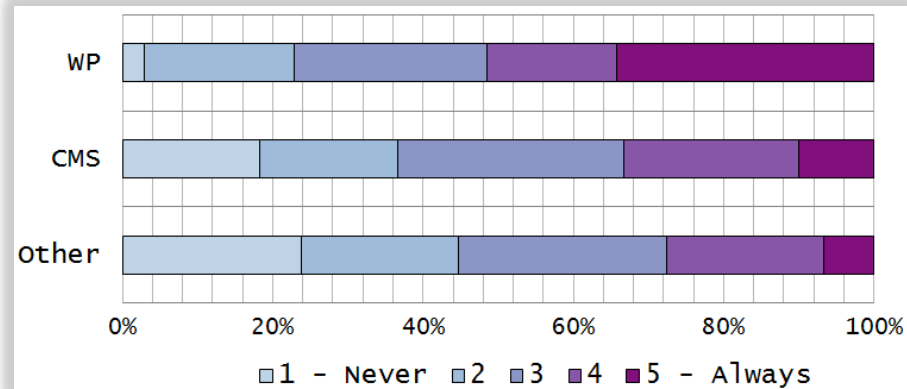
# inspiration from other sites



more than 50% of all developers often inspect web sites for inspiration

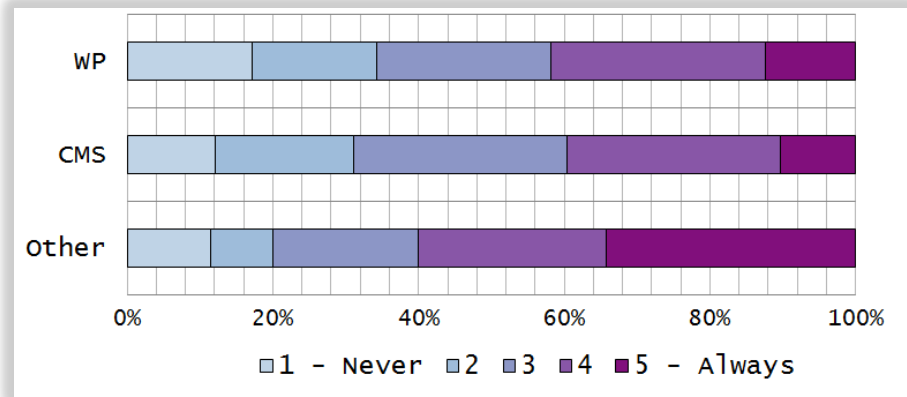


# modelling data



28% of WordPress developers stated that they always or often model data

# modelling functionality



42% of WordPress developers stated that they always or often model functionality

# modelling tools

“text documents”

“spreadsheets and/or  
code editors”

“Django to create  
prototypes”

“brain and text editor”

“not sure if I misunderstand  
this, but I usually just write  
some requirements out”

**only 11% listed modelling tools**

**5% stated paper or whiteboards**

# recent trends

heavier focus on mobile

simplified content

flat design

dropping the sidebar

background images & video

single-page web sites

typography is big

