# The web developer

Meet Scott, Larry’s ‘boss’. To understand what makes Scott the kind of web developer he is today, it’s important to understand his context.

When Scott decided to build his own CMS software, the internet was in a state of transformation (namely, the early 2000s). This was the era in which every printed publication decided to build a digital counterpart. The era in which users started feeling restless in their reading mode, in their ways of getting informed. The era in which new experiments in graphic design were not impactful enough for the users to feel connected, because the users longed for their own voices to be echoed back to them during their consumption of digital spaces. It marked the rise of social media platforms; this rise in turn marked the enforcement of preserving the traditional web formats.

Back then, Scott was smart enough to sense where one particular group of internet thinkers was going: to build accessible products now, and charge for interactions later. This strong impression led Scott to embrace a change users didn’t necessarily *want* to see in the world, and to become part of building it anyway.

In the midst of this personal as well as worldwide transformation, Scott knew exactly what to do: acquire all talents needed for a properly organized system; a content management system. An urgent, still to be defined plan erupted in his mind. This is approximately what Scott’s plan looked like:

## Step one: Understanding the machine[[1]](#footnote-2)

The first three years are the most important ones, during which I am to shape the foundation of my practice. To gain a better understanding of the machine, I shall not take myself too seriously.

I shall remember that it’s important to have fun coding and that overconfidence may lead to blind self-destruction. At times, when I feel smarter than the machine, I shall pull myself out of the expert’s skin, for the machine would take advantage of the consequential confidence,

and crash *me*.

I shall not feel smarter than the machine.

Our relationship shall feel like research to me: a testing ground where I’ll meet the programming language I wish to become fluent in, ‘the frameworks’ I will of course want to master. In the first three years of my quest, I shall continue my research in the hours available to me after those spent on commissioned work.

In the third year, I shall settle for my techne-pack: my favourite programming language, my favourite tools, my favourite technologies, my favourite commands.

Step two: Becoming the machine

I shall enter the fourth year of my life as a coder with skills sufficient enough to build a product, and an imagination wild enough to visualize said product. I shall build my own Content Management System. I will let the product’s functionalities list themselves in my mental to-do list; I will let the design shine through my gut naturally and become alive before my eyes; projected on my big screen.

Despite the ongoing sounds of the machine’s gibberish, I shall not get mad anymore.

I want my clients to say *yes* to my product already halfway through the product’s build-up. Let them come to me once they’ve decided to finally dissociate themselves from WordPress.

Step three: Beating the machine

It is now the seventh year of my life as a coder. I understand absolutely every syllable of gibberish the machine utters and when I don’t, I am able to give it commands to switch to *my* language.

My product is ready to be launched and my clients are waiting in line.

No client’s demands, complaints, or deadlines, shall make me build in WordPress, ever again. Between my product and my client, I shall always—*always* choose my product.

The Client agrees to the terms and conditions set forth above as demonstrated by their signature as follows:

Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Location:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

All other steps: A Stoic Man[[2]](#footnote-3)

After ten years of my life as a coder, I shall start charging for all unpaid hours spent on building the software after hours. My clients will not doubt my expertise and will pay as much as I myself charge for doing the work my software disables them to do.

I will cause the problem, and once they recognize it, will offer my solutions.

Since most of this kind of web-maintaining work will be debugging and documentation work, which I will not want to do, I shall get an assistant.[[3]](#footnote-4) A freelancer who is willing to learn really fast.

Oh, and, I shall not get mad. *At all.* Not at my product, the machine’s gibberish, and especially not at my partner. That’s not what stoic men do.

Thus ends the vague-not-so-vague plan Scott has made for himself. Without further ado, he decided to change his company name by adding *Studio* in front of his name. Now all he needed was to get a new address where he could be all by himself, install a server, and welcome Larry. As he was seeking for a way to never lose sight of his dense, mental forest, this long-term commitment seemed to be exactly what Scott needed.

1. ‘How truly sad it is that just at the very moment when the computer has something important to tell us, it starts speaking gibberish.’ — Gerald Weinberg, *The Psychology of Computer Programming* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. ‘The other side of the coin of humility is assertiveness, or force of character. A programmer’s job is to get things done, and getting things done sometimes requires moving around obstacles, jumping over them, or simply knocking them down. The humble person is acutely aware of the ways in which he may be wrong; his critical mind tends to dominate his force of character. Now, although it is true that force of character without a critical mind is like a safety valve without a steam boiler. There is no danger of explosion, but then there is no possibility of getting any work done, either.’ — Gerald Weinberg, *The Psychology of Computer Programming* [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. ‘The job of system design calls for an eye which never loses sight of the forest, whereas the job of debugging may require that every tree—even every branch or left—be seen with utmost clarity. The job of coding often requires squeezing out every drop of redundancy, and the job of documentation may require that simple sentences be plumped up to a paragraph size.’ — Gerald Weinberg, *The Psychology of Computer Programming* [↑](#footnote-ref-4)