

THE COMPANION TO
THE COMPLETE WEB DEVELOPER COURSE



How to make **\$10,000**
while learning to code

By Rob Percival

Foreword

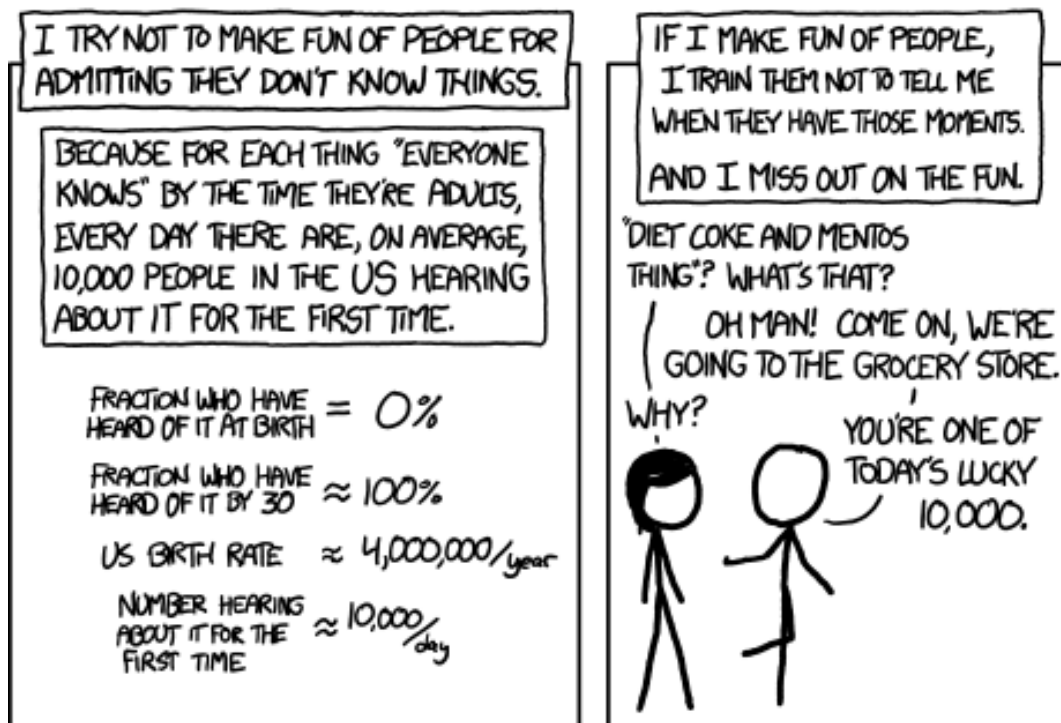
Learning to be a developer was one of the best decisions I've ever made. It's given me the freedom to quit my job, start my own businesses and pursue my hobbies. I can work anywhere in the world, and in the last few year's I've travelled to Morocco, Namibia, China and spent 3 months backpacking through Kenya, all paid for by revenue from my online systems.

The beauty of learning to code is not just that you can learn very cheaply, but that you can start making money almost immediately, if you know the tricks of the trade. This book contains everything I learned during the early years of my web development career, and if you follow the step by step guides you'll be earning money much quicker than I ever did.

This book is designed as a companion to The Complete Web Developer Course (www.completewebdevelopercourse.com), but you can use any method of learning to code you like. The course is the best way I know to learn the basics of web development, and I guarantee that you'll earn the course cost (\$199) back within 6 weeks, or I'll give you a full refund. You'll also get free web hosting, and I'll be there to help you out in the forums.

You won't need any pre-existing skills or experience, and you don't need to have a large following or mailing list (although I'll show you how to make the most of these if you do have them).

The book contains over 20 'challenges', some of which will directly make you money, and others will just move you in the right direction. Each are clearly explained, and I'd recommend trying out all the challenges before you move on to the next section.

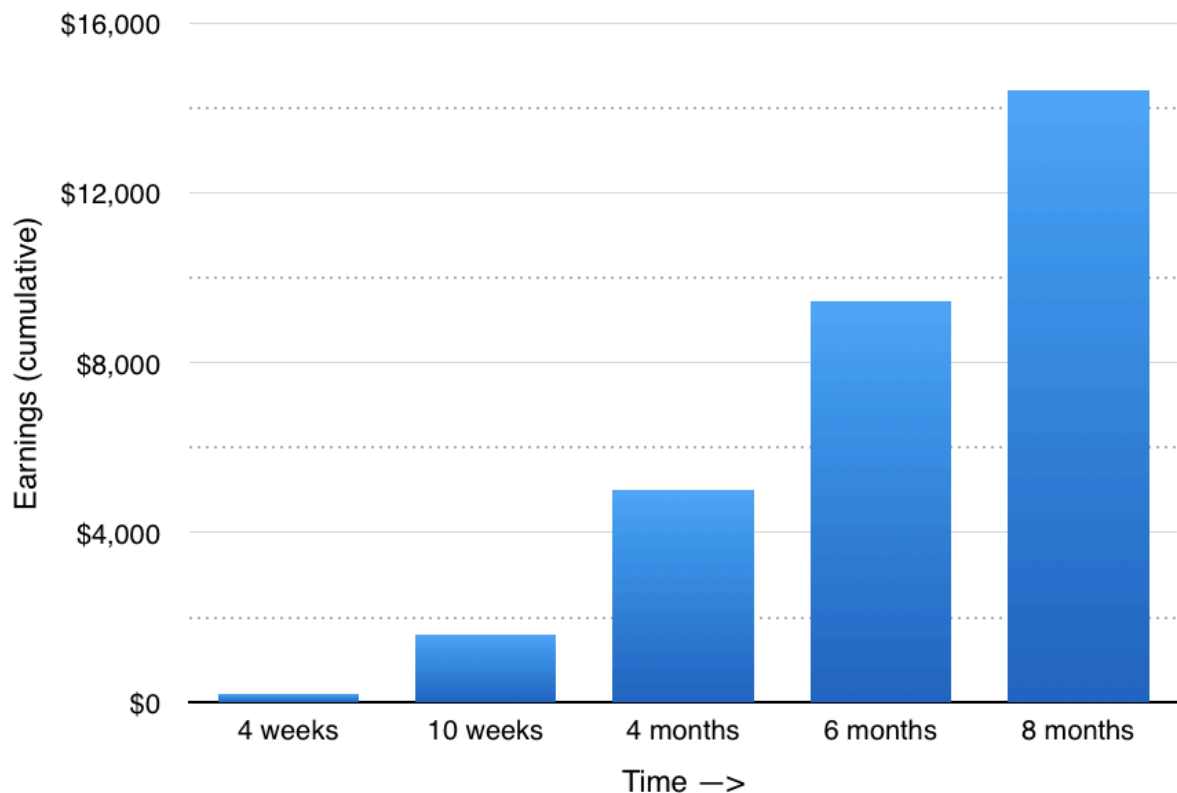


Learning is fun! xkcd.com/1053/

It's worth adding that although following the advice in this book is *simple*, that

doesn't mean it will be *easy*. You will earn money from day 1, but your 'hourly rate' might be devastatingly low. Just remember that what you earn in your first month will be nothing compared to what you will earn in future months, and the growth will continue year-on-year. In your first few months your main goal is to *learn* the principles and practices of being a web developer, and the fact that you can earn a decent amount of cash on the side is fantastic, but secondary.

Here is a graph of your projected earnings:



A quick word about what this book is *not*: I won't teach you to code in this book. For that, I'd obviously recommend The Complete Web Developer Course, but you can learn using any method you like.

So, without further ado let's get started - congratulations on starting this exciting journey, and I look forward to catapulting you into becoming a professional web developer.

— Rob Percival, Cambridge, UK.

Chapter One: Rebrand Yourself

Earnings Summary

Before This Chapter	After This Chapter
TOTAL EARNED: N/A TOTAL TIME SPENT: N/A	TOTAL EARNED: \$0 TOTAL TIME SPENT: 1 week

It sounds cheesy, but the first step toward becoming a web developer is believing that you *are* a web developer. Like with any new skill or profession, you're likely to feel something of a fraud until you've been doing it for several years. There's a great TED talk by Amy Cuddy entitled 'fake it till you become it' (www.tinyurl.com/fakeitbecomeit) which describes this feeling perfectly.

I was a teacher before I became a developer, and it took several years before I could confidently tell someone that I could develop websites. This was well after I had been paid to make several sites, and had a number of income-generating sites of my own.

I'm not saying you should lie about your capabilities, and I definitely wouldn't recommend taking on jobs that you don't have the skills or time for, but it's absolutely critical that from day one you start believing that you are a coder, programmer, software developer, or whatever you want to call yourself. Put the work in, and it really won't be long before your bank statements start to back up your belief.

I'd recommend focussing on the activities in this chapter whilst completing the first few sections of The Complete Web Developer Course. Aim to spend around a week doing this, and then you'll have the beginnings of an online rep as well as basic web development skills. Not a bad start!

Challenge: Change Careers In A Day

The great thing about the challenges in this chapter (unlike all the others in this book) is that you don't need to know how to code at all to complete them. For this

challenge I want you meet someone new. Talk to the person next to you on the train, or in a bar, or at a football match. And when the inevitable question ‘what do you do?’ is asked, respond ‘I am a web developer’. Obviously you’ll need to be a little bit careful that the person you’re speaking to isn’t best friends with your boss, but the odds of that are fairly low. The goal of this challenge is primarily to make you feel like a web developer, and to start having the sorts of conversations web developers do. You’ll almost certainly know much more about the web than the person you’re speaking to, and if you get rumbled you can always say that you still have a ‘day job’ .

Once you’ve done this a few times, share your experiences on my course forum
- I’d love to hear from you!

Choosing A Niche

As I’ve mentioned, I was a teacher before I became a web developer. This means I’ve got a lot of insight into how schools work, how teachers think and what makes students tick. I’ve also got a lot of contacts in local schools and universities. This gives me a big advantage over other web developers when pitching for jobs at educational institutions, and several of my highest-paying gigs have come from these areas.

If you have experience or expertise in a particular area, I’d recommend thinking

about how you can brand yourself to match these skills with your web development work. Increasingly, developers are required to do much more than just build a website to a specification. You need to be able to suggest how a website or app will benefit an organisation, how it should work and even train people on how to use the site. If you have knowledge or experience of working in a particular area, this will be extremely valuable.

Of course, this isn't a necessary precursor to becoming a web developer, but it can be much easier to find work, particularly in the early days, if you focus on a particular niche.

Build An Online Reputation

As a web developer you're going to need an online rep. Some of you may already have 5,000 Twitter followers and a blog with a million hits a month, but for the rest of us, now is a great time to get started.

Very simply, at this stage you need to do two things - buy a domain name for yourself and join Twitter. There are obviously a lot of other things you can do to build your reputation, and we'll examine some of them later on in the book, but this will do for now.

Buying A Domain Name

Your first domain name will be your own online space. Unlike your Twitter account, Facebook or even your wordpress.com blog, you will completely own your content, you can post what you like and will be able to export it at any time. This can be critical down the line - other providers may go bust, start charging high fees or ban you for some reason, but your domain will always be yours to do with as you like. Whenever someone writes about you, or you build a website for them, ask them to link to your main site. This will likely bring in a trickle of traffic, but will definitely boost your results in Google and the other search engines.

I won't go into choosing a domain name in great detail (there are a few links in the bibliography at the end of this chapter for this). Suffice to say, try to go for a .com if possible, and a domain name that features your name prominently. If you have a particular username that you use widely on the web, using that instead can work well, making that your personal 'brand'. Alternatively, you can build your name into a pun, such as automattic.com by Mat Mullenweg, the founder of Wordpress. Don't spend ages over this decision - the content of your site is much more important than your domain name.

Challenge: Get Your First Website Live

1. Purchase Your Domain Name

Once you've decided on a domain name, get out there and purchase it. You can do this on my site, www.ecowebhosting.co.uk (£6.99+VAT per year for a .com domain) if you like, or any one of many domain name providers.

If you don't buy it with Eco Web Hosting, you can link it to your free web hosting by putting in a support request to your domain provider asking for the nameservers to be changed to

ns1.ecowebhosting.co.uk

ns2.ecowebhosting.co.uk

This will link the domain to our servers and allow you to run your website and email through us.

2. Create Hosting And Set Up Email

Once you've purchased the domain name, create a hosting package for it at ecowebhosting.co.uk/adddomains. Then, set up an email address in the control panel

(there are video guides for this in the first section of the Complete Web Developer Course).

3. Edit The Home Page

Finally, go back to cpanel.ecowebhosting.co.uk, click File Manager to view your website files and then double-click on public_html to view the HTML files on your site. Right click on index.html (the home page for your site), select Edit and add a couple of paragraphs of content.

This content is primarily for Google, so that when they index your site they won't find it empty. The content could be a brief bio, perhaps explaining why you're planning to be a web developer. If you know some HTML, you could add in some links to your Twitter account and anything else about you online. If not, just put a single paragraph of text about yourself.

Congratulations! Your first site is live! Drop a link in the forum and I'll take a look!

Joining Twitter

Twitter is an increasingly useful place to build a following and connect with people online. It's free and takes no time at all to set up. If you have an unusual name,

you can probably use that as your Twitter ‘handle’, but if not you’ll have to get creative. You might want to use the name of your particular niche to immediately alert potential followers to what you’re about (my Twitter handle is @techedrob). If you’re having problems picking a username, check out some of the links at the end of this chapter.

Once you’re online, you need to start building followers. I’ve linked to a number of guides at the end of the chapter, but here’s a few tips to get you started:

1. **Connect with people you know.** Twitter already does a good job of this by importing your email contacts, but search for anyone else you know, follow them and send them a quick personal tweet (something like ‘@techedrob Hi! I loved your book!’).
2. **Start tweeting.** You’ll want to get a few tweets on your timeline before you can expect people who don’t know you to follow you. Try to stay ‘on message’ - tweet about interesting articles you’ve read about web development, or useful resources that you’ve found. Aim to tweet at least once a day - bufferapp.com is an easy way to keep up the flow of tweets when you’re busy.
3. **Follow others.** Search for people similar to yourself, ideally from the same geographical area, who post regularly and have less than 500 followers. Follow them and favourite a couple of their tweets. Reply to one of their tweets if you have something useful to add. You should find that over half follow you back.
4. **Join the conversation.** Keep an eye on your Twitter feed and spend 5 minutes a

day favouriting and replying to tweets. Be constructive, helpful and positive, offering advice and encouragement.

Challenge: Get 50 Twitter Followers

This challenge is simple. Using the tips above, and the ones linked to at the end of this chapter, try and get 50 Twitter followers in a week. Post about your progress in the course forum (you might even get a few more followers there!).

Other Branding Ideas

Here are a couple of other things you can do to alert people to your newfound skills.

- **Update your LinkedIn profile.** This will depend on your current professional status, but updating (or creating) your LinkedIn profile with links to your website and Twitter feed, as well as a (regularly updated) list of any websites you have worked on or created, can be a useful exercise.
- **Create an email signature.** A simple statement such as “Need a website? I can build one for you” can bring in all sorts of interest.

Yourself. Rebranded.

By now you should have completed the HTML, CSS and Javascript chapters of The Complete Web Developer Course, as well as got your own website up and running, and built a small Twitter following. Not bad for a week's work!

You should continue to engage in Twitter throughout the course, and keep adding to and improving your own website as your skills increase. These are ongoing tasks that won't earn you money directly, but will give potential clients and partners something to look at when they search for you, and an opportunity for you to showcase your (increasingly sophisticated!) work.

In the next chapter we'll dive straight into earning some cash through freelance websites.