

# ***Rapid Wordpress Theme Development***



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Spoke 6 *June 22, 2010*

# Audience

- Theme developers
- Web Designers who want to build their own website.
- Developers coming from other platforms.

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# ***What's a theme?***

Themes are files that give any WordPress website its look and custom features. Themes are nice because they don't alter any of the core files WordPress needs to operate.

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ELMER COLLINS

# *How can we build themes faster?*

- Use child themes (introduced in WordPress 2.7).
- Use a someone else's theme and change it a bit.
- Build a custom framework.
- Other options?

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# Child Themes

- Themes that inherit a parent theme (can be simple or advanced).
- Only requires 1 CSS file (can't get much easier).
- Extremely quick for small customizations.
- You get new features when your parent theme gets them.
- If something is broken you can always delete your code and fallback on the parent theme.
- If you need to overwrite every file, it's probably not the best choice.

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# ***Using Someone Else's Theme***

- Quick and easy for minor changes.
- Free or not too expensive.
- Good for beginners.
- Possibly bloated and buggy.
- Future support for new features aren't guaranteed.
- Licensing issues.

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# ***Building Your Own Framework***

- Get a better understanding of how WordPress works.
- Use it to make child themes from or customize each theme.
- Write your own markup and CSS.
- You won't inherit someone else's bugs.
- You can (or rather need to) add support for new features as soon as they come out.
- Takes longer
- 

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# ***Popular Frameworks***

- YUI <http://developer.yahoo.com/yui/>
- 960 grid - <http://960.gs/>
- Blueprint CSS - <http://www.blueprintcss.org/>

# ***WordPress Specific Frameworks***

- Thematic - <http://themesaper.com/thematic/>
- WP Framework - <http://wpframework.com/>
- Sandbox - <http://www.plaintxt.org/themes/sandbox/>
- Carrington - <http://carringtontheme.com/>

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# ***A General Framework***

- Reset CSS.
- General typography.
- Commonly used Styles.
- CSS properties targeting WordPress specific classes and ids
- Logically structured and meaningful markup.
- Common functions in your functions.php file.

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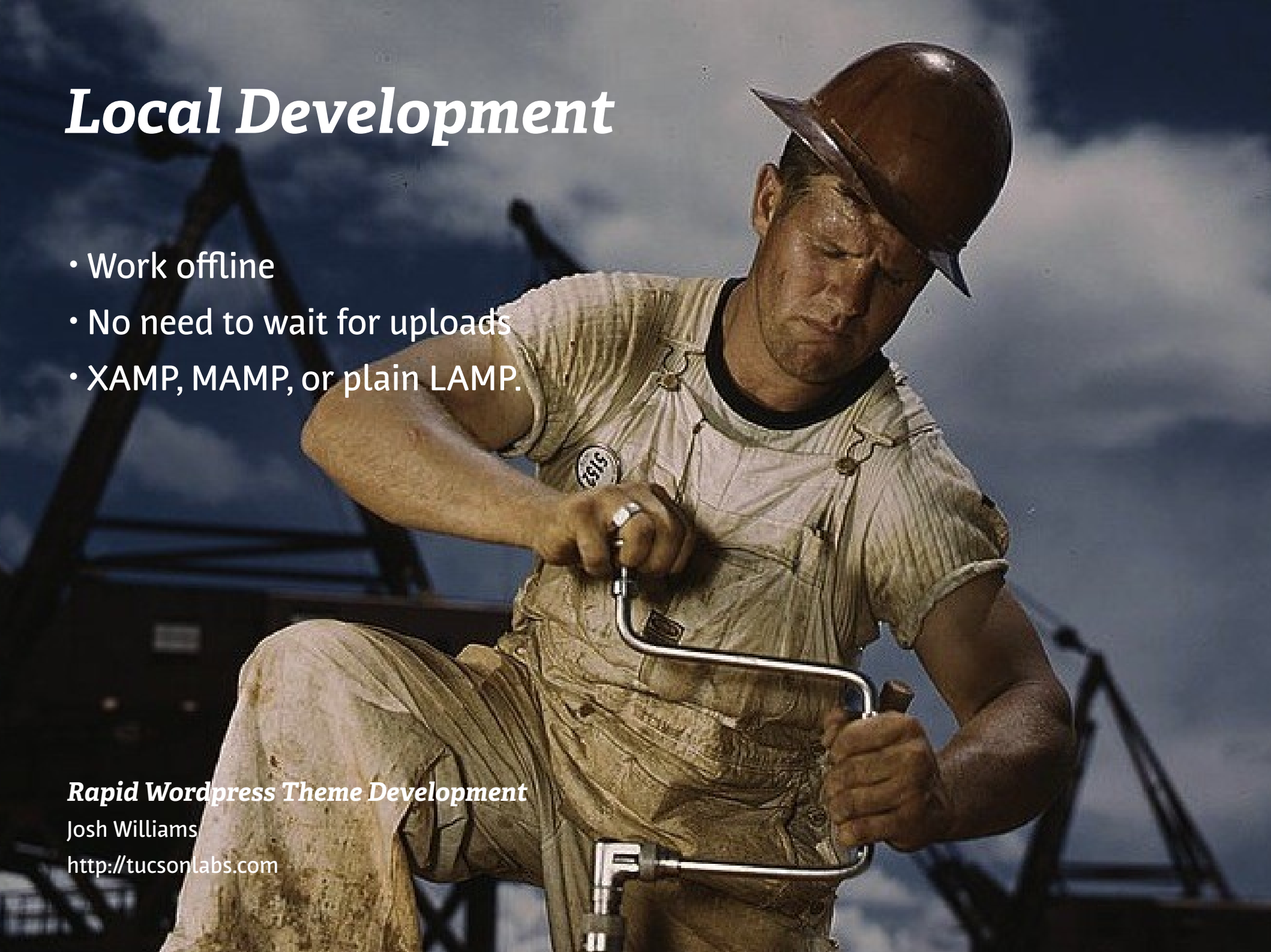
# ***Local Development***

- Work offline
- No need to wait for uploads
- XAMP, MAMP, or plain LAMP.

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# ***Import testing data***

Don't waste time uploading client content to your desktop development environment. Import test data to your local WP installation and use this as your development environment.

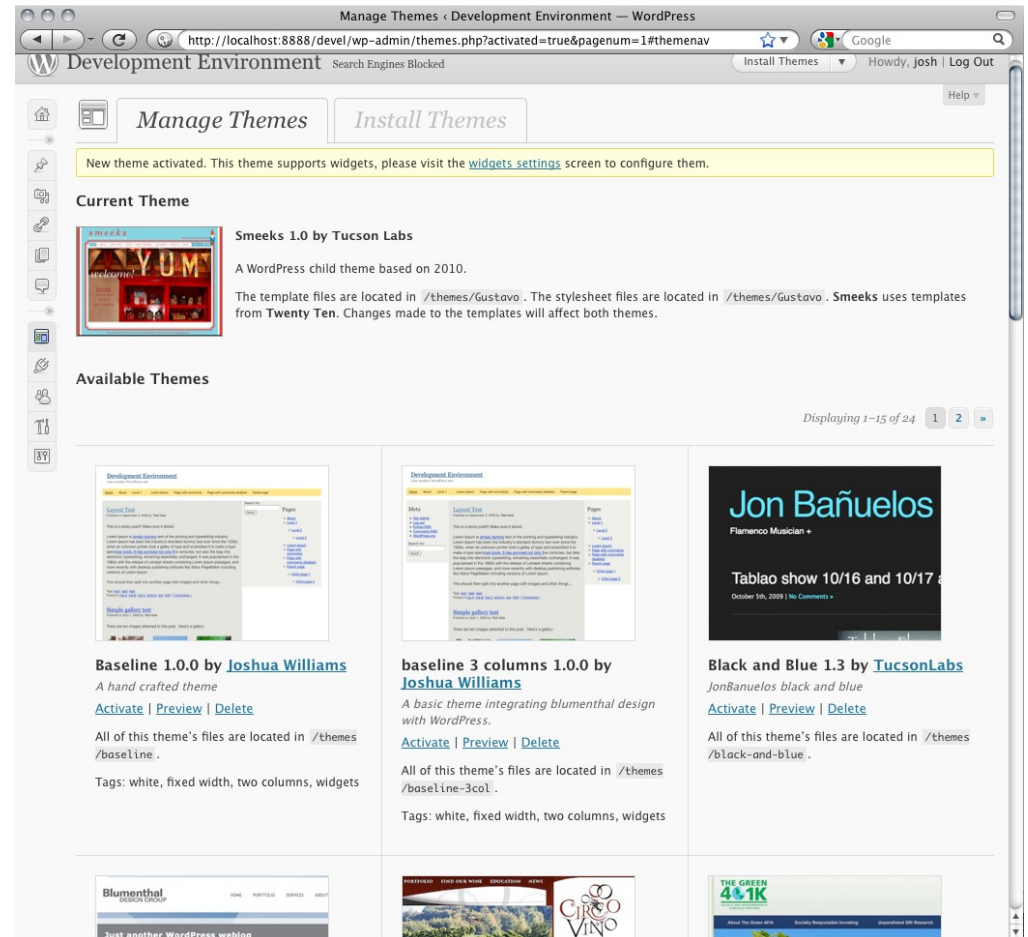
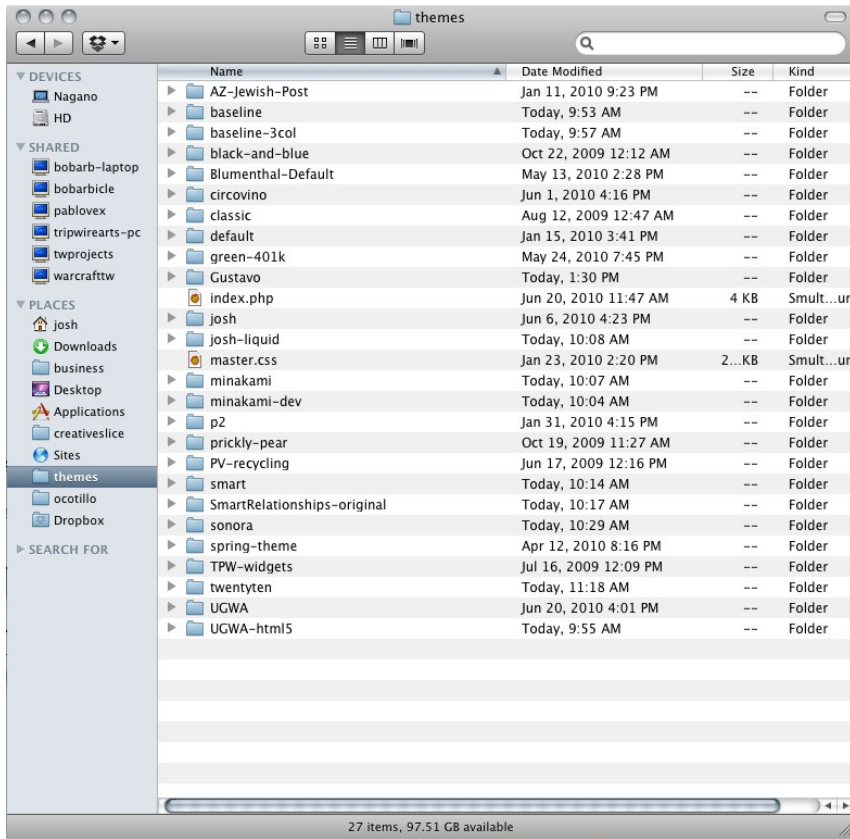
- Saves time – unless you really like copying Lorem Ipsum
- Have a ton of projects? Build a ton of themes.
- Use home.php if your developing a custom home page and your developing more than one site at a time.
- Go here: [http://codex.wordpress.org/Theme\\_Development\\_Checklist](http://codex.wordpress.org/Theme_Development_Checklist)

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# Theme Folder



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# Develop and Test Locally

- Have a few different browsers open when you're building your theme. This makes CSS problems easier to debug.
- Get <http://www.virtualbox.org/> for installing multiple OS.
- <http://winebottler.kronenberg.org/> For quick ie6 testing.
- Use Android and Iphone emulators (they do render differently).

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# ***Content Development Environment***

If you're developing for a client and they don't have a WordPress driven site, then set them one up with the 2010 theme to get them started on publishing their content.

- Use a sub domain like *<http://subdomain.tucsonlabs.com>*
- Block this site from search engines in the WP admin area

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# Custom Templates & Body Class

Custom page templates allow you to make certain pages different from the default. This is very handy for making changes to markup.

```
<?php
/*
Template Name: Your Custom template-name-goes-here
*/
?>
<body <?php body_class(); ?>> // ads a class to the body tag (since 2.8)
<!--[if lt IE 7]> <body <?php body_class('ie6');?>> <![endif]-->
```

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# ***Upload To Your Server and Test***

When you're finished, backup the database and import it to the live website. site.

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# Thanks!

## Credits

*Hubcap building* - <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usnationalarchives/3887548891/in/photostream/>

*Farmer with beer* - <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usnationalarchives/3925999201/sizes/l/>

*Aircraft Tester* - [http://www.flickr.com/photos/library\\_of\\_congress/2179930812/in/set-72157603671370361/](http://www.flickr.com/photos/library_of_congress/2179930812/in/set-72157603671370361/)

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