

Hi

My name is Dee Teal, I'm known around these parts as, The Web Princess, I'm a freelance, front-end, web developer, based in Sydney. I have been working in web development since 2004, and have been full time, freelance since 2009. I'm not a designer, I work primarily for designers and agencies, developing their designs into code, and in that role have had the chance to work on digital marketing materials for some great companies like Adobe, Symantec, EMC and Oracle.

My association with WordPress started in 08 when I moved my personal blog from Moveable Type to WordPress, and I've working with Genesis a lot of this year after a client purchased a Genesis Child Theme and needed me to customise it for her.

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The purpose of this talk is to introduce Genesis, to talk a little about what it is why you might like to use it, and introduce how you do a few of the basic things you're likely to want to do when developing themes using the framework.

So, let's start with What Genesis is.

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- it's a framework on which to build child themes for WordPress
- it's a container that holds all the scripts and code you're likely to need for creating a theme.
- it's a foundation on which to build sites that are secure, seo ready and easy to put together efficiently and quickly.
- in fact, building on Genesis is almost like building sites with Lego.

So, before we go any further, is there anybody here who's not sure of what I mean by a child theme?

"A WordPress child theme is a theme that inherits the functionality of another theme, called the parent theme, and allows you to modify, or add to, the functionality of that parent theme."

A child theme preserves the parent, it's a non-destructive way of modifying the look and feel of a theme so that when the parent theme is upgraded, the changes you've made to it via the child theme won't be affected.

Genesis, is in fact, a parent theme. It will work as a stand alone theme, but best practice is to install a child and make any edits and mods to that and studiopress make the child theme available for free on their dev site. Also there are an increasing number of both premium and free Genesis child themes available if you go searching.

There'll also be a list of where to find some of them over at the blog once today's session is over.

So at the risk of sounding like a sales person for Genesis, let's talk about why you might want to try it out.

A few of the reasons you might consider it as a quality parent theme are that -Genesis' code is clean and lightweight, built with SEO as a top priority and it includes SEO components in the theme options

- From the ground up its code is built with security in mind
- It has custom widget and layout options built in and,
- I've found, that it has a really great support network!

They're all great reasons, but for me the primary one is that using Genesis has made a huge difference to my work flow.

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Here's a brief run through of how my workflow has evolved - I'm not expecting anyone else's to be the same - but here's how I arrived at the place where I'm using Genesis for about 60-70% of the theme builds I'm building.

1. I started with taking an existing theme and customising it to suit the client - Now, I'm hoping at this point those of you who are doing the same but aren't yet developing with child themes, will go home and look into it, the same way I did after WordCamp Melbourne earlier in the year... because I think it's really important that if you're developing this way, modding existing themes, that you should be doing it as in a parent/child relationship.

2. Slicing and Dicing - this is where I really started to feel like I was getting into the big time... (and I use that term VERY loosely) - Developing php files from provided Photoshop Designs and coding everything from scratch. I'm aware that there are no doubt, a few ways to skin this particular cat, but I used to do it the HARD way... everything from ground zero. No wonder I was so sloooooow. I'd probably do it differently now, with lots of code snippets and a basic theme to start from every time... but I got hit with the Genesis revelation before I got my slicing and dicing to that place...

3. And this is the part where you hear that angelic strum of the harps and sound of trumpets as the light went on ... because using Genesis meant that the ground work was already done, I didn't have to mess around too much in writing HTML and PHP, I could focus on the CSS to get the site looking the way I wanted to.

Here's what I mean

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All of the following images are of sites that are built on the Genesis framework, in fact, all are built on the same free Genesis child theme - This first one for Concept Initiatives and the Imperial Metric site to follow are both customised mostly via the theme options and the css.

CI shows off the custom column classes built into Genesis and Imperial metric the custom body classes to make it easy to write css display different styles according to the custom class, it also shows the addition of a custom grid function to display the featured images of each post.

The Fabrik and Digital Music Store sites are extending Genesis in conjunction with the WP ecommerce plugin and required a fair bit of modification to the theme functions - but all are built on the same core theme and mostly modified using the functions file as well the css.. But we'll get to that shortly.

So if Genesis is such a good idea... how do you get it?

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Ok... so it's not free... Just buying the framework alone costs \$60. Frankly, I think it's worth it for the amount of time saved, but also because the license attached to it allows for unlimited use in all your subsequent projects. UNLIMITED. So your first client pays for it... and you reap the rewards in all the subsequent jobs... If you want to mod a premium theme rather than the bare bones one I use then that will cost you a bit extra. You can find out all the details, and see some of the premium themes available over at [studiopress.com](http://studiopress.com), or you can download Genesis on its own and mod the free child them provided on [studiopress'](http://studiopress.com) developers' resources pages.

So at this point we'll depart from the slideshow for a bit and jump into a working version of the theme so you can get a bit of a guided tour.

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To start I'm running a local development machine with a full wordpress set up and with Genesis, and a few plugins, already installed.

Here's how the Administration section looks and what some of the out of the box features are that you can set for your Genesis theme.

>> View Dashboard and Genesis Admin Screen

We won't look at every option, you'll want to play with some of those yourself, and time here is of the essence, but some of the real stand outs are.

Default Layout.

Here Genesis provides the top six basic site layouts most websites we see are built on. These layouts are available to the whole site here via the admin section and to each page or post on a case by case basis... you could conceivably have a site that uses all 6 layouts if you wished.

## Navigation Settings

Genesis uses the Wordpress Custom Menus, so before you start you need to create a menu in the Wordpress Options, then you can include it in your theme (or not) in the Genesis options

Both the Main Navigation, and the Sub-navigation give you some options here to extend the Superfish menu with a bit of ajax for smooth drop down and arrows, if you wish or adding in some custom code into the right of the nav bar, like a link to your twitter profile or or the current date.

Quick scan over the other options.

>> Over to Posts or Pages

Here we see the basic layout, but with some additional options, one main panel of SEO options, which we'll leave for another expert, focusing instead on the Genesis Layout settings and Custom Body and Post Classes.

>> Demonstrate the change of layouts by changing the chosen page or post to a different layout from the default layout set in the Genesis Options

>> Demonstrate the addition of a body class to show off the different backgrounds.

I don't wish to spend any time going further into editing css for Genesis, it's no different in this theme, really, than any of the others. Where the biggest learning curve, I found, in Genesis lies, is in the fact that a Genesis user has to get really comfortable with the functions file and...

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... and various bits of PHP code called Hooks, Actions and Filters.

This is where the building sites with Lego metaphor really kicks in...

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Because, the Genesis frame work could be described as a collection of modules of code arranged with a particular way in mind, but that can be moved, removed and altered in order to create exactly the site that you want.

In the same way that Lego is a collection of bricks and pieces, many of which have various parts to play in the finished model which can be moved

and removed and altered, to suit the design you have in mind.

So, to our metaphoric code...

- First, are hooks... they are basically the little lego bumps to and from which, you can attach and detach code.

- Actions, are essentially the instructions used to tell you where to put your piece of code.

- Functions are the bits of code that are doing the work, the bricks

and finally, filters which are the bits of code that says swap that brick out with this one before you complete that action...

Of course, the easiest way to get your head around this stuff is to see it in action...

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So let's look at the code we need to move the genesis navigation bar to a position before the header rather than it's default position of after the header.

All it requires is adding 2 lines of code to your functions file.

First, we need to remove the navigation from it's position after the header with this

```
remove_action( 'genesis_after_header', 'genesis_do_nav' );
```

It's a fairly straight forward deduction to see that `remove_action` is the action... the hook is the next bit - the bump on which the nav bar is placed by default, then comes the function that actually writes the nav code.

To move the nav we simply have to write in a similar function that says put the nav before the header and we do that using this

```
add_action( 'genesis_before_header', 'genesis_do_nav' );
```

Update the file and refresh the page to see your changes.

>> Exit to Local Site to see the changes in action.

Demonstrate editing the functions file.

Update

Refresh the page and see the results

Now, these are just the simplest of ways to adjust the Genesis theme to do

your bidding. I'll be honest here, getting comfortable in PHP and editing these functions took a while to get my head around, and I've got a long way to go - we haven't looked at filters here, and that's in part because I'm not comfortable with them yet. But I've found that learning comes from both doing the bizness and drawing on those who've gone before... so while you're on the Genesis learning curve there are some excellent plugins that makes some of this work a bit more straight forward, and some really excellent tutorials and code snippets available that will help as well; predictably you'll find links to those over on the Web Princess blog.

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So, where to from here?

Well, my recommendation is, you really can't know how it all works until you've had a fiddle about with it yourself so I suggest you get a hold of a copy and have a play...

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Q&A

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Thanks