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I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

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27 February 2013

# MASTERS IN DESIGN (RESEARCH) //

## THE TRANSITION FROM STATIC TO DYNAMIC WEB DESIGN:

Investigations and directions for the implementation of a low cost cms in educational curricula.

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## ABSTRACT

Recent developments in open source software are enabling web designers to configure dynamic web sites quickly, easily and cheaply.

The promise of open source CMS software, ultimately is a web environment in which users are programmers. On the surface it would appear that web site creation is moving in the direction of no longer needing expensive custom solutions by professional web developers. These new software systems use a variety of approaches from mere configuration of the system to script implementation. They may require limited programming experience beyond the web designer's CSS and XHTML capabilities. Based on the Open Source platform, PHP and MySQL offer an easily learned and supported framework to web designers. Web designers now have a tremendous opportunity to harness open source content management systems and extend what they are offering to clients and their employers. Increasingly, it will become the duty of web instructors and of tertiary institutions to equip students with these capabilities, so that they can function effectively in the new environment.

This research uses surveys, interviews, and a research workshop with longitudinal results to explore the questions posed. The collation of materials is hosted on a dedicated web site.

The findings of this research indicate that students would benefit from a practical approach to web development through the introduction of a CMS in their studies. These are skills employers consider valuable.

The main conclusions and recommendations are firstly that many design students see themselves as performing an exclusively aesthetic role in the development of web projects, and secondly, that these students, with proper instruction in the usage of open source CMS's, are more than capable of making and implementing decisions concerning the functionality or programming of web projects. As a result of this study it is my belief that design students with a deeper understanding of open source CMS's will be able to occupy a role currently falling between the occupations of graphic design, web development and object-oriented programming. It is my hope that this project will inform and educate so that the wider design community, and in particular design educators, can make more informed decisions about the transition from static to dynamic web design.

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*start of a section*



*Original research*



*Discussion*



The web site accompanying this thesis at:  
<http://www.independentdesign.com.au/whichcms>

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