WP engine®

Case Study

NOLTE

Creating educational digital experiences.

Nolte uses WordPress and WP Engine to bring a teenager's app vision to life.

Industry
Education, technology

Site
templegcse.com

Challenge
Jonny Boone was 16 years old when he had the vision to create an app to help fellow UK students study for the GCSE exams.

Solution
Notle brought Boone's vision to life by creating a Headless app on WordPress and WP Engine.

Temple GCSE is the most fun, productive way of learning the GCSEs. Created by a large team consisting of GCSE students, highly-qualified teachers and tutors, and developed by world-leading app developers, Temple GCSE delves deeply into each subject, board and specification, delivering the most accurate, precise questions (created and filtered by the some of the best tutors and teachers in the UK) and providing you with the best possible revision material.

Nolte is a New York tech agency dedicated to creating high-quality technology for web and mobile, by partnering with the world's most forward-thinking companies.

The challenge.

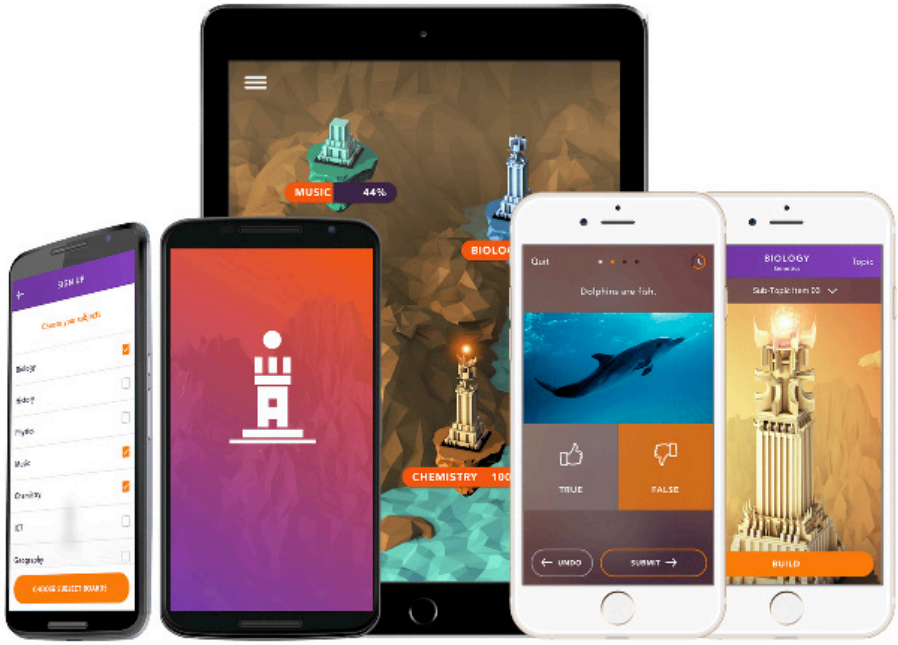
Jonny Boone was 16 years old when he had the vision to create an app to help fellow UK students study for the GCSE exams (similar to the SAT in the US). He wanted to build a gamified study guide in which temples are built up over time as you complete topics and subjects. Boone was referred to Nolte by an agency for their expertise in this area, and they started building the foundation for Temple GCSE.

"We quickly identified that Jonny needed a hybrid solution for his application. Looking at what was happening in the digital product space with decoupled architecture for other apps and framework such as Ruby on Rails, we saw this as a challenge and an opportunity to use WordPress as the backend for uploading and administering questions for the application," said Jeffrey Nolte, Founder and CEO of Nolte.

The solution.

"At the time, 'Headless' was pretty new. We had built some other sites in a similar way, and we wanted to use the benefits that WordPress provided in the admin interface, as it's really good for the admin users. We wanted to leverage that interface, but with a mobile app," said Adam Fenton, COO for Nolte.

"The customer experience and the fact that WP Engine has actual engineering and technical support for our team is really important. We feel that WP Engine has really raised the bar in terms of what's available in the market," said Nolte.



Nolte built the app using the Ionic framework (based on AngularJS), after working through user flows and experience. Boone had a favorite illustrator, whose work was used for inspiration. Nolte was tasked with creating low poly 3D modeling to create the temples.

Each temple has 100 stages, which are built up over time as you complete certain areas of the courses. Every temple has a certain effect or different style to it, which allowed Nolte to use one temple as a template, but replicate different worlds for different topics and subjects within the application.

For Temple GCSE, Nolte realized they needed a stronger platform to support the app. "The platform we were using did not have the same level of WordPress expertise as WP Engine", said Fenton. "We found that to cause issues with various sites we had with them. Getting set up and configured with them properly was really challenging. It was more difficult to solve issues with their platform. We had another site that had been hosted on WP Engine for a while, and the experience was really good. That's why we decided to migrate all of our sites over to WP Engine, including the backend for the Temple GCSE app." For Nolte, the backend was WordPress, but the frontend was the actual Temple GCSE app, hosted on the mobile device of each end user. In a Headless scenario, the app frontend on the mobile device uses the data from the WordPress backend to help manage levels, questions, and answers.

"People may not think of using WordPress in this way, and this opens the conversation around it," said Fenton.

The results.

The Nolte team migrated all of their sites moved over to WP Engine. Already, they are seeing better performance and more stability. "Overall, it's just a better experience for us. A more stable hosting solution," said Fenton.

"The customer experience and the fact that WP Engine has actual engineering and technical support for our team is really important. We feel that WP Engine has really raised the bar in terms of what's available in the market," said Nolte.

With the support and ease of use of the WP Engine platform, Nolte is looking into more Headless opportunities. "WordPress has advantages in terms of development time, in terms of shortcutting a lot of things which you may need to build in a different framework. WordPress has a lot of solutions, like WP Engine which allow you to power digital experiences pretty easily without having to manage the process," said Fenton.

"With the Temple GCSE app, we definitely did a lot of customization and custom post types. We learned that if you have a traditional publishing site that when you need to consume a couple different data sources in a mobile application, Headless can be used really well for that. We have another Angular mobile app where we're consuming other third party data sources. We're using WordPress for the content side, and then with Headless we're seeding the content through an API on an angular app on the front end," said Nolte.

About WP Engine.

WP Engine is the world's leading WordPress digital experience platform that gives companies of all sizes the agility, performance, intelligence, and integrations they need to drive their business forward faster. Founded in 2010, WP Engine is headquartered in Austin, Texas, and has offices in San Francisco, California; San Antonio, Texas; London, England; Limerick, Ireland, and Brisbane, Australia.