

Case Study



Building with Genesis: An Agency Case Study

See why WordPress veteran Remkus de Vries and his digital agency Buro Kreas rely on the Genesis Framework for building great-looking themes, fast.

[Remkus de Vries](#) has been building WordPress sites for more than a decade, and since the beta version became available in 2009, he's been building themes for those sites using the [Genesis Framework](#).

"Since Genesis was released, I've only built one site that didn't use it," de Vries says. "I'm a huge proponent of the framework and the approach it applies to theme building."

Today, de Vries is the Manager of Partnerships at SEO giant [Yoast](#). Together with his wife Karin, he also runs [Buro Kreas](#), a digital agency based in the Netherlands that specializes in building complex WordPress sites for a wide variety of clients. While his agency has gone through different iterations (it was previously Forsite Media, and focused on enterprise-scale projects) de Vries has always insisted that Genesis be a part of his teams' workflow, for every project, regardless of its size and scope.

"Genesis just makes a lot of sense," he says. "Since it first became available, it's always been a more programmatic way of building themes than the other options out there."



Genesis: In the Beginning

Genesis got its start more than a decade ago as the brainchild of co-founders Brian Gardner and Nathan Rice. Their idea was simple: provide designers and developers with a quick and easy way to build standout themes for WordPress.

Fast forward a year or so later, and Genesis had already made a huge splash in both the development and design communities. Its sleek, simple approach to theme building answered a huge need within the growing WordPress ranks at the time, and in the years that passed, Genesis quickly grew to become the most popular theme framework for WordPress. Today, Genesis-built themes are among the most widely used within the WordPress community.

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REMKUS DE VRIES

For de Vries, the introduction of Genesis came as he was growing his WordPress agency. While he and his colleagues already had a lot of experience building themes, Genesis seemed to fit perfectly with the types of projects they were working on.

“Genesis just helped us build themes faster,” he says. “As time went on, and we were working on more complex projects that included things like custom post types and custom taxonomies. Genesis hooked into all of that perfectly.”

As time went on, de Vries’ agency, and the types of projects it took on, continued to grow. Nevertheless, Genesis remained his go-to solution for building themes and even won over some of his most skeptical developers.

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A Focus on Multilingual Support

With his agency projects moving forward at a solid pace, de Vries began contributing to the Genesis Framework himself, starting in 2014. While he’s helped with numerous bugs and fixes over the years, his main focus has been on adding multilingual support to the framework, so that non-native English speakers can benefit from Genesis as well.

This is a bit of a passion project for de Vries, who is fluent in English and Dutch, but whose first language is [Frisian](#), which is spoken by about half a million people living in the Netherlands. Given his own multilingual background, de Vries says he has a clear understanding of the need for Genesis to be accessible to people who speak different languages.

Some of de Vries’ key contributions in this area include maintaining [translate.studiopress.com](#), which houses community-provided translations for Genesis, in addition to maintaining the [Genesis Translations](#) plugin, which provides a translated version of the Genesis Framework based on available translations made on [translate.studiopress.com](#).

“If you’re not very well-versed in the language of the software you’re working with, that’s a bug,” de Vries says. “I want as many people working with Genesis as possible, and I certainly don’t want language to be a barrier for anyone. In fact, anybody who wants to spend time translating anything in Genesis is [free to do so](#).”



Changing of the Guard

Over the past decade, there’s no question Genesis has become the go-to framework for building great-looking WordPress themes. But it also remained mostly unchanged for many years, save for minor updates to patch vulnerabilities and bugs.

As a Genesis contributor, de Vries saw this relatively slow pace of innovation up close.

“We’d have three or four-month development cycles in which not much would actually happen,” he says. “I’m well aware of why that was—there was a focus on integrating other platforms, a very strong focus on content—and I totally get it. But from a development perspective, the framework simply wasn’t advancing much.”

Case Study

In 2018, that began to change, as [WP Engine acquired StudioPress](#), and with it, the Genesis Framework. In the short time since that acquisition, de Vries says he feels Genesis has been given new energy and a refreshed focus on innovation.

For starters, WP Engine convened a diverse group of hand-selected Genesis-focused developers from around the world, known as the [Genesis Shapers](#), who have come together to serve as a representative voice for shaping the strategic direction of Genesis.

That group, which de Vries is a member of, [meets monthly](#) to discuss new Genesis-focused initiatives and projects that have surfaced in the wider Genesis community.

Additionally, WP Engine has begun supporting new versions of Genesis, starting with [Genesis 2.8](#), which incorporated the new block-based elements found in WordPress 5.0+ and touches on priorities important to Genesis users, including the process of loading a theme's demo content and utilizing [Gutenberg](#), the new [WordPress post editor](#), to build better, more engaging digital experiences.

Soon after 2.8 rolled out, WP Engine launched [Genesis 3.0](#) which brought [AMP functionality](#) directly into Genesis core. This makes it easier for developers to build AMP-compatible themes and sites, and by bringing this functionality into the Genesis Framework, those sites are able to achieve faster load times, better search engine results, and the benefits of AMP caching on mobile devices.

"This has been a huge win," de Vries says of the recent updates. "if you want to stay relevant you have to be on the innovative side of things, and that's what Genesis is starting to do again. WP Engine is listening to the crowd, and frankly, I'm amped up!"

As far as the future is concerned, de Vries says he's confident Genesis is in good hands.

"I'm excited about what's next," he says. "Be it new versions of Genesis and added functionality to the framework, I feel like things are moving in the right direction. I can't wait to see what we're able to accomplish with all the new momentum and energy behind us."

The Genesis Framework is available to WP Engine customers at no extra charge. [Click here](#) to get started with Genesis today!

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.