

DEALING WITH PROBLEM CLIENTS

Building Fences Around Friendly Monsters

Nathan Ingram



@nathaningram #wpyall

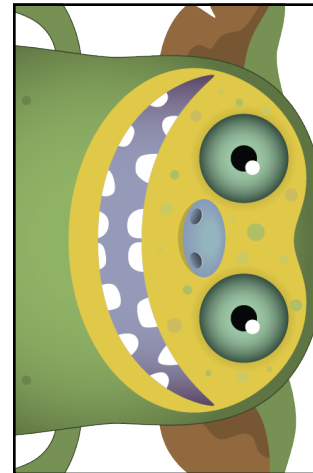
Hi, I'M NATHAN

From **Alabaster**, Alabama

Host at **iThemes** Training

Web **Business Owner** (1995)

Growth Coach for WordPress Business Owners

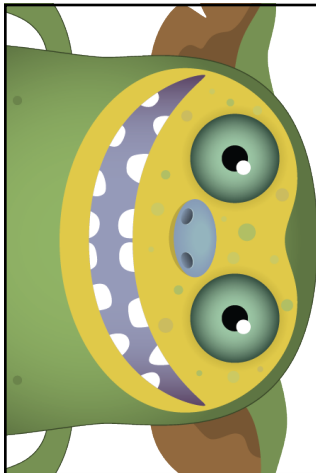


Hi, I'M NATHAN

Ambassador for **Liquid Web** Partner Program

2 FREE 1-ON-1 COACHING SESSIONS when you become a Liquid Web Partner (no cost)

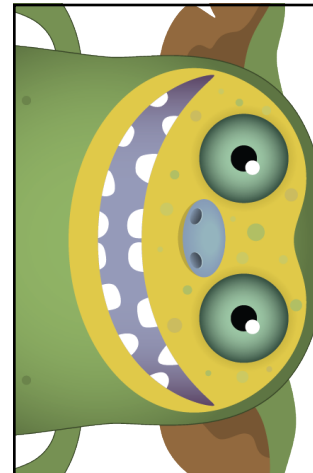
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Hi, I'M NATHAN

I'm here for you this weekend (yes, you!)

Let's talk!



OVERVIEW

Friendly Monsters

Building **Fences**

4 Monsters to Know
and How to **Contain** Them



OVERVIEW

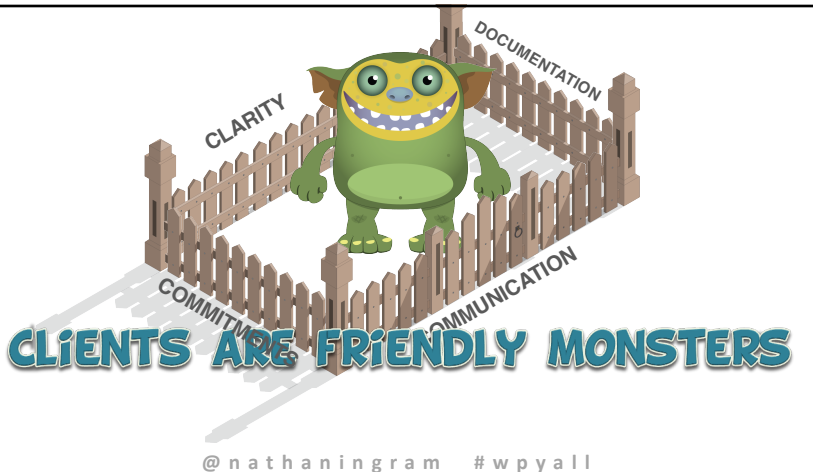
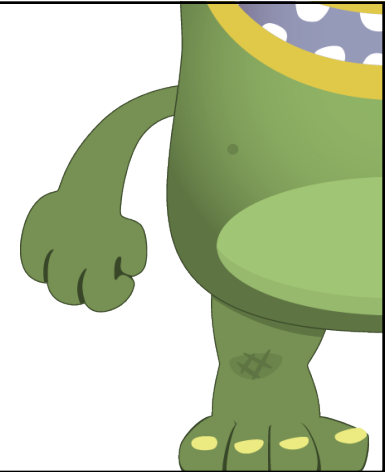
Resource Link...

Slides & Stuff

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Tweet at me...

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CLARiTY

Agreement
does not equal
Clarity

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CLARiTY

Assumptions
create
Confusion

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CLARiTY

Be Specific
to create
Clarity { *Intake Form,
Scope of Work
Contract*

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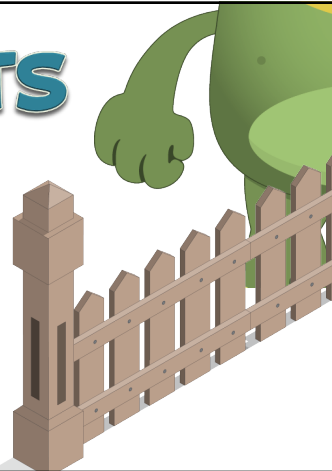
COMMiTMENTS

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COMMITMENTS

Healthy relationships
are based on
**healthy
commitments.**

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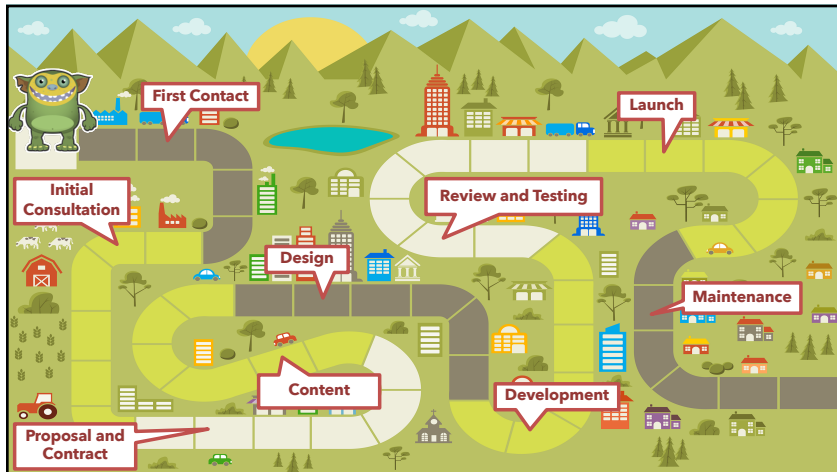
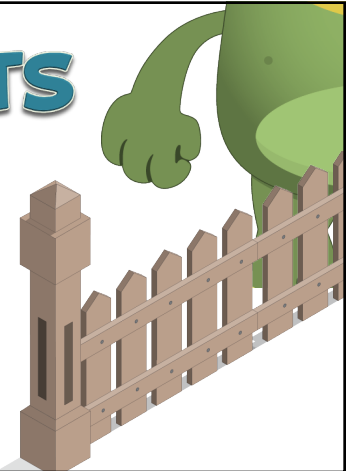


COMMITMENTS

Design a Process

that includes opportunities
for the client to commit
at key points.

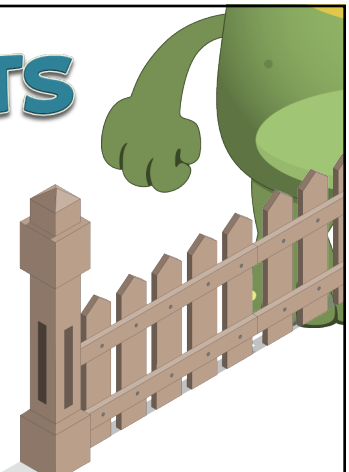
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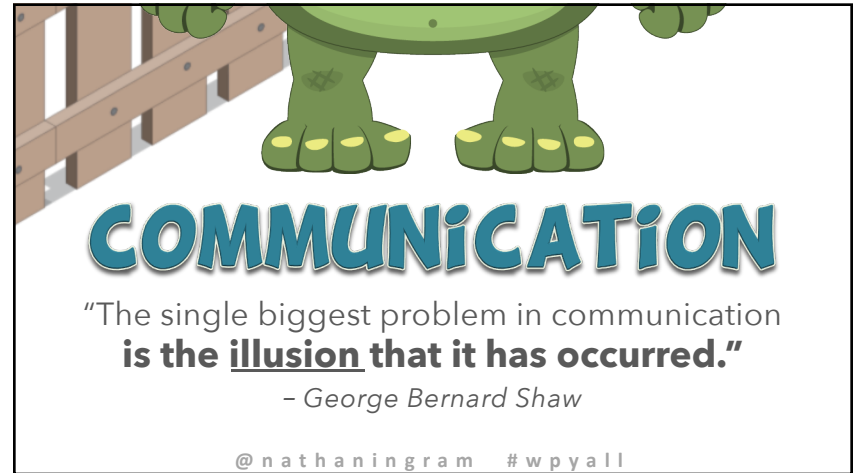


COMMITMENTS

Clearly define
**expectations
and
consequences**

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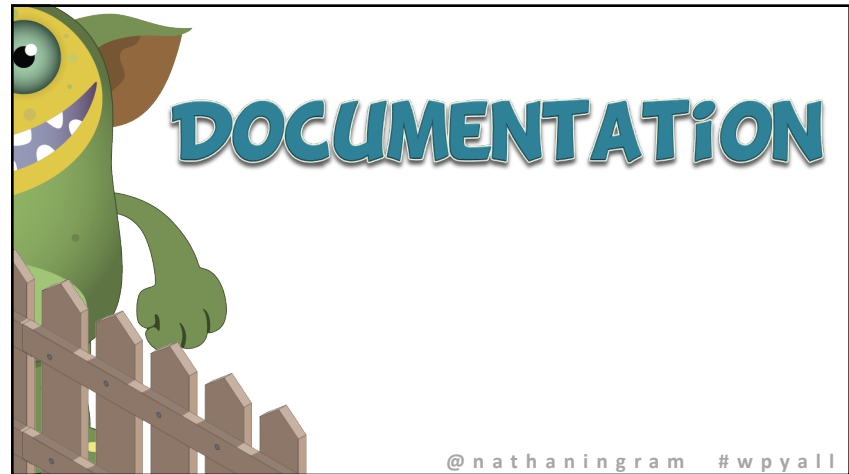






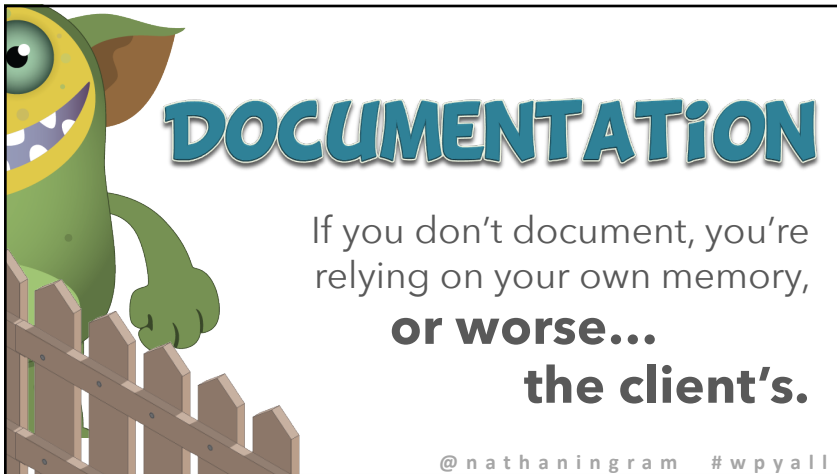
COMMUNICATION

Become a master of the
The Friday Email Strategy
3 Sentences: Past, Present, Future
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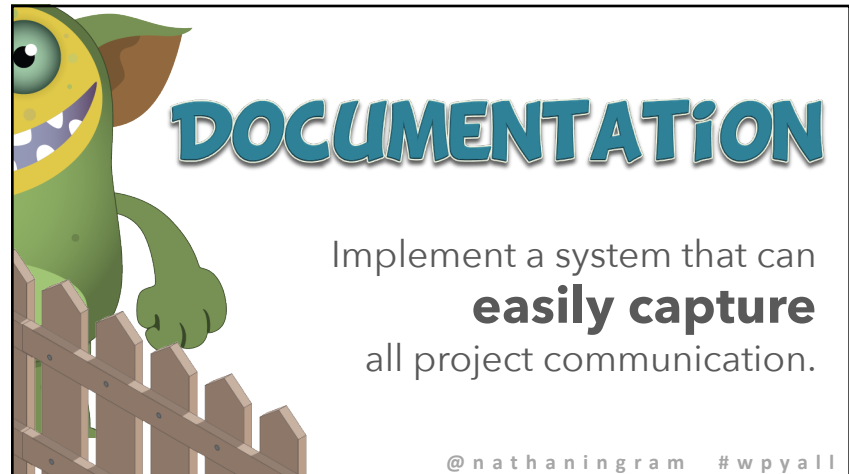
DOCUMENTATION

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DOCUMENTATION

If you don't document, you're
relying on your own memory,
or worse...
the client's.
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DOCUMENTATION

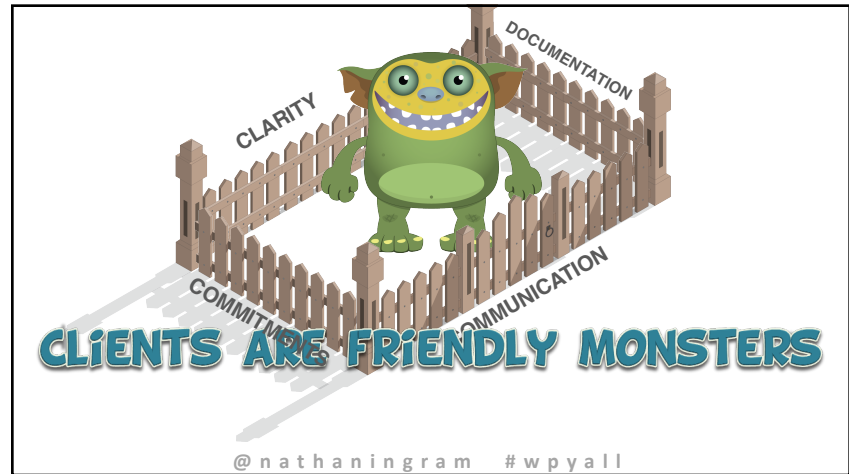
Implement a system that can
easily capture
all project communication.
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DOCUMENTATION

The best system is the one **you will consistently use.**

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CLIENTS ARE FRIENDLY MONSTERS

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DON'T TEAR DOWN YOUR OWN FENCES

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4 MONSTERS YOU SHOULD KNOW

...and how to contain them



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THE iNViSiBLE MAN



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THE iNViSiBLE MAN



Monster Marks

Expresses interest then disappears unexpectedly.

Repeatedly reschedules planned meetings.

Takes a long time to respond.

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THE iNViSiBLE MAN



Usually well-intentioned but busy.

The website is not a top priority.

Tend to disappear during the project, then reappear with unreasonable demands when timing gets critical.

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THE iNViSiBLE MAN



Containment Strategy

Focus on Clarity

Create a process to deal with disappearing clients.

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THE iNViSiBLE MAN



Containment Strategy

Have clear wording in your contract describing projects delayed by the client.

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THE iNViSiBLE MAN



Containment Strategy

Clarity is critical in delays.
The longer a project takes,
the more likely it is
to go off the rails.

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THE QUESTION MARK



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THE QUESTION MARK



Monster Marks

Has no idea what he wants,
or he wants *everything*.
Asks endless questions.
Has no goals or budget.

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THE QUESTION MARK



Containment Strategy

Focus on Commitment

These clients are classic time-wasters.

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THE QUESTION MARK



Containment Strategy

Use an intake form.

Get to price early.

Suggest a discovery phase or consulting agreement.

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THE BOUNDARY BUSTER



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THE BOUNDARY BUSTER



Monster Marks


Sends 3am emails with a 7:30 follow-up.

Insists on after-hours meetings.

Works weekends and holidays and expects you to also.

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THE BOUNDARY BUSTER




Containment Strategy

Focus on Communication

Clearly communicate how and when you work.

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THE BOUNDARY BUSTER



Containment Strategy

Set the tone in the initial meetings and how / when you follow up.

Don't violate your boundaries.

Excellent candidate for a PITA surcharge.

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THE DRAMA QUEEN



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THE DRAMA QUEEN



Monster Marks

Everything is an emergency.

Favorite word is NOW.

Worked with a previous developer who "did everything wrong."

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THE DRAMA QUEEN




Containment Strategy

Focus on Documentation

System trumps drama.

Keep careful records when you deal with this client.

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CLIENTS ARE FRIENDLY MONSTERS

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HOW STRONG ARE YOUR FENCES?

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GOOD FENCES MAKE GREAT CLIENTS

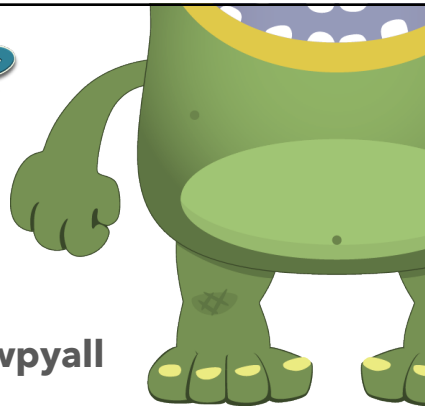
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QUESTIONS?

Presentation Slides
Problem Clients Book
Other Resources

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THANKS!

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I'm here for you this
weekend (yes, you!)

Let's talk!

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