

# BEN BLOCK

**Educator · Operator · Builder**

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## SUMMARY

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Educator, program-builder, and hands-on engineer. I created and teach Kellogg's "Building Software in the AI Era," a course that takes non-programmers from zero to a deployed product — built around the difference between vibe coding and agentic coding. I've produced large-scale learning experiences end to end, led engineering and operations at venture-backed startups, and I still ship production software every week. I design for how adults actually learn and turn loose ideas into structured, high-quality programs.

## TEACHING & EDUCATION

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**Adjunct Lecturer — Kellogg School of Management** 2017 – Present  
*Northwestern University · Creator & instructor, ENTR-451: "Building Software in the AI Era"*

- Created and teach a 10-week course taking non-programmers (founders, product leaders) from zero to a full-stack product they deploy live; teach 2–3 sections per year since 2021.
- Built the entire curriculum end to end — four project-based assignments, lectures, live-coded demos, labs, written/video pre-work, and assessment — and re-tool it each quarter as tools and models change.
- Organized the course around directing AI inside deterministic guardrails (tests, acceptance criteria, scoped tasks) — the gap between "vibe coding" and "agentic coding."
- Design for adult learners with multiple paths into each idea (hands-on, written, visual, audio) to meet students where they are.
- Student outcome: an experienced-technologist MBA credited the course with moving her from never considering software development to "actively entertaining ways to integrate it" into her career.

**Faculty Coach — The University of Chicago, Booth School of Business** 2015 – 2017

- Provided teaching support for web-development courses across the Booth MBA program and the graduate Computer Science department.

**Full-Stack Software Development Mentor — Bloc (online bootcamp)** 2015 – 2016

- Held weekly 1:1s pairing, reviewing projects, and supporting career-changers learning to build (Ruby on Rails, JavaScript).

## PROGRAM & OPERATIONS LEADERSHIP

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**Associate Producer — Chicago Ideas Week** 2010 – 2011

- Curated and produced the inaugural week-long event series for 6,000+ attendees: designed 40 behind-the-scenes experiences and ran operations and logistics for 100+ experiences (ticketing, volunteers, production staff).
- Owned the ticketing-system buildout — and learned to code in the process, which is how I fell in love with software.

**Chief Operating Officer — WeDeliver (acquired by Deliv)** 2014 – 2015

- Ran Finance, HR, and Customer Service and helped scale delivery personnel from 20 to 600+ while protecting quality and efficiency; supported fundraising and major partnerships.

## ENGINEERING & PRODUCT

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**Chief Technology Officer — IntelliCare by Adaptive Health** 2022 – Present

- Lead technology for a clinically-oriented digital mental-health product; own architecture, roadmap, and engineering execution across web and mobile.

**Senior Software Engineer — SalesAndCatering.com** 2024 – Present

- Ship production features across the stack for a hospitality SaaS platform using modern agentic-coding workflows.

**Software Developer (Consultant) — Self-employed** 2017 – 2024

- Senior developer and advisor modernizing and overhauling client codebases across insurance, hospitality, finance, and staffing (The Mom Project, Anthem, SalesAndCatering, Eight Bit Studios); mentored junior developers.
- Rebuilt The Mom Project's interview platform (phone/video integrations) and overhauled its candidate-matching system.

**Lead Developer / VP of Engineering — Scale Down (acquired by Anthem)** 2015 – 2017

- Built and led engineering for a clinically-proven weight-management platform; scaled from 0 to 125k+ users processing millions of data inputs; owned the product roadmap and managed technical teams.

**Lead Developer / Scrum Master — Halfaker and Associates** 2012 – 2014

- Led requirements analysis, feature planning, code review, and client interaction for a Department of Veterans Affairs event-management application.

## **EDUCATION**

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The Starter League (Code Academy), Chicago — software development, 2012

The George Washington University, Washington, DC, 2002–2004 · Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT, 2000–2002

*Earlier: Co-Producer, feature films (\$1M–\$30M budgets), Los Angeles — financing, deal structures, and on-set production.*