Goodbye Moodle. Hello Custom LMS.

Why we built our own Dojo, and why AI permanently changed the buy vs. build rulebook.

A Skill-Wanderer Architectural Case Study

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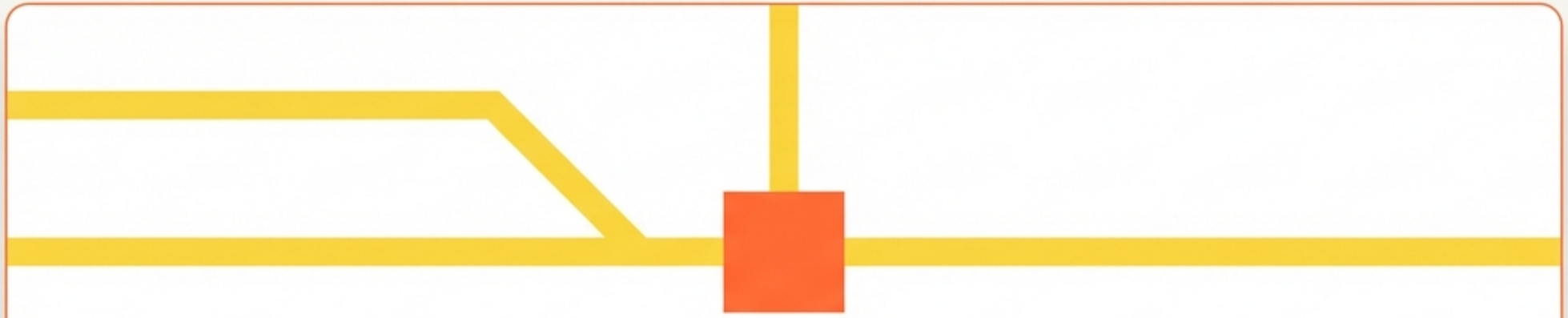

“The calculus of buy vs. build has permanently changed.”

What used to take weeks now takes days.

What used to take days now takes hours.

The barrier to building custom software has never been lower.

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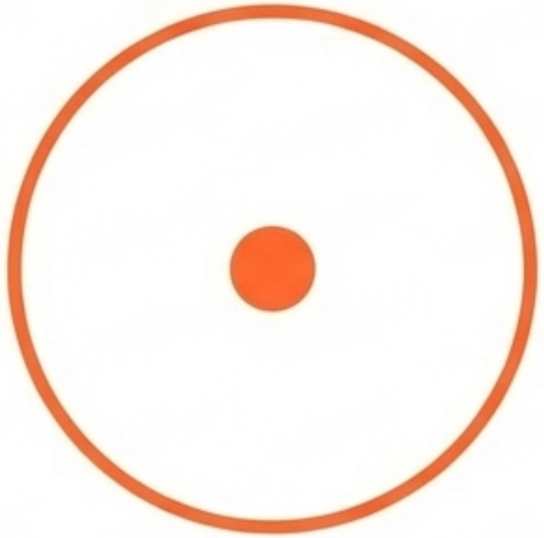
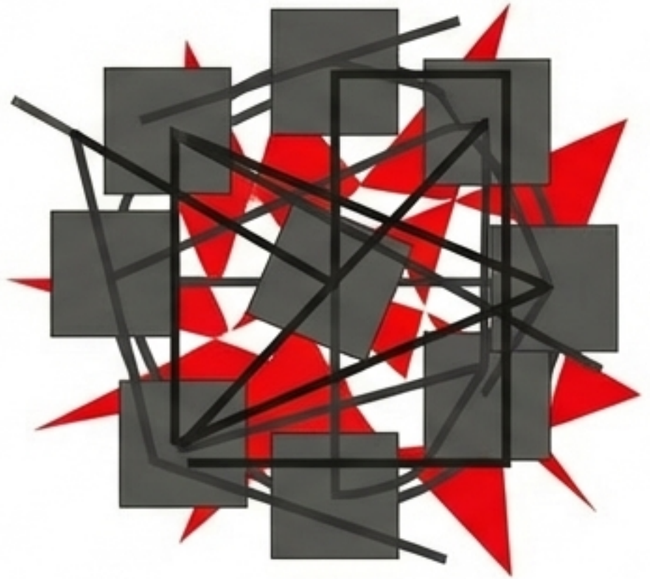
Why we started with a monolithic LMS, and why the theory failed.



A perfectly good wheel.

- Battle-tested & feature-rich
- Zero development time promised
- Focus purely on content creation



A heavy, complex wheel.

- Endless drag-and-drop fighting
- Buried configuration menus
- Deployment updates blocked content creation

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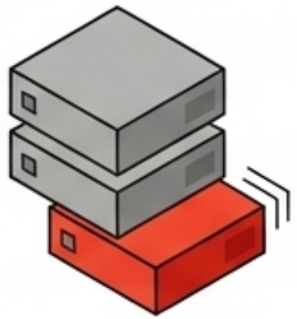
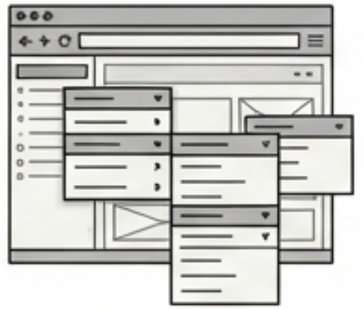
The anatomy of legacy software bloat.



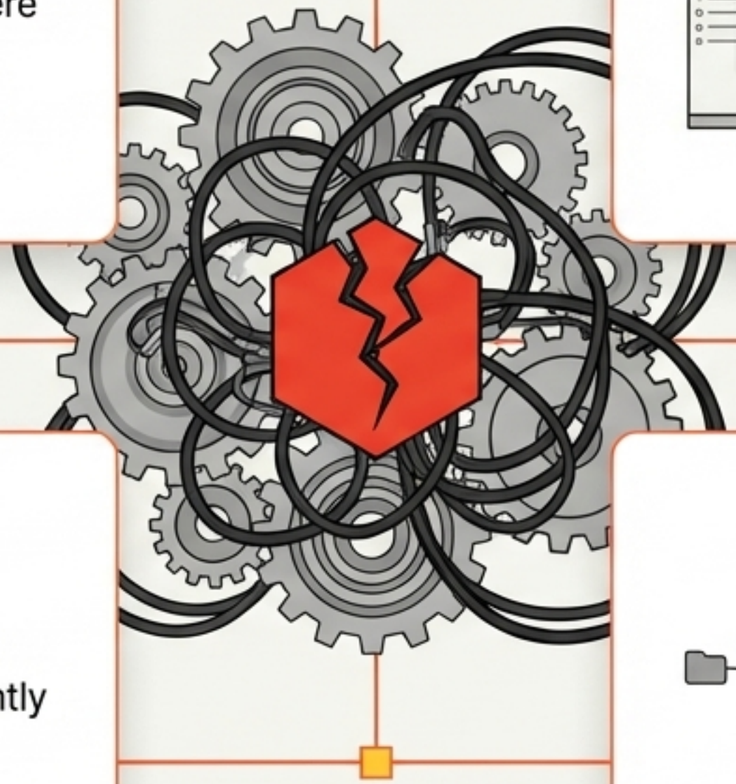
1. Bitnami Dependency Disaster

Free container images were deprecated, turning deployment into a ticking time bomb of migration burden.



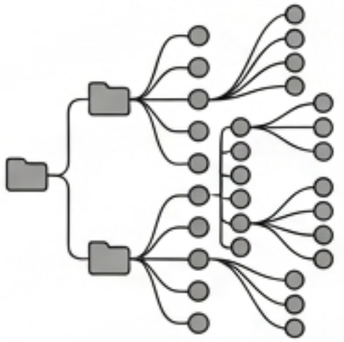
2. Clunky Content UX

Hours lost fighting 2010-era drag-and-drop interfaces and three-level-deep configuration menus.



3. The Login Wall Problem

Default behaviors forced users to log in, inadvertently gating public learning content behind rigid barriers.



4. The WordPress Syndrome

Massive PHP codebase, poor SEO control, and a heavy, brittle ecosystem of third-party plugins.

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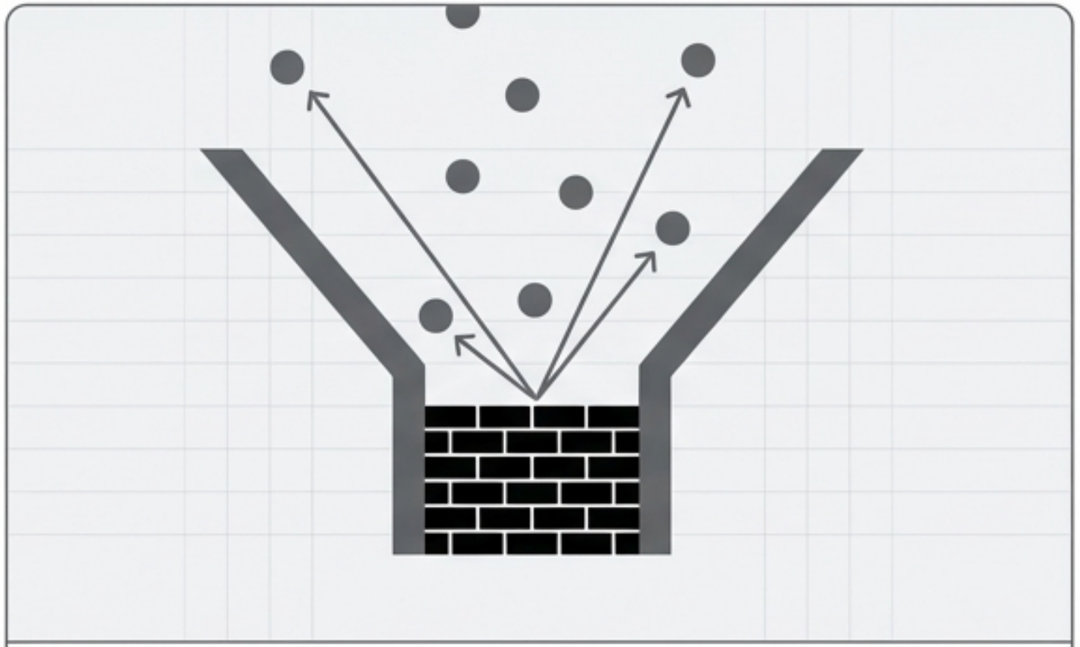
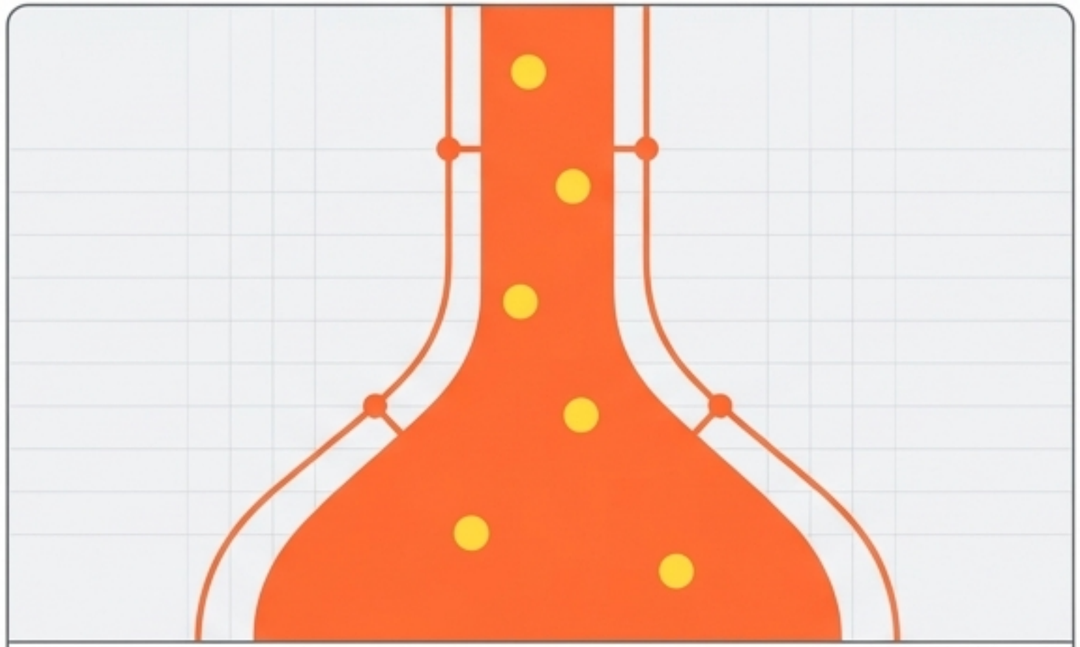
Learning should be accessible first, gated never.

LEGACY LMS ARCHITECTURE



Traditional Institutions
Content gated by default. Users bounce off forced login screens.

SKILL-WANDERER ARCHITECTURE



Open Knowledge
Discoverable via search, frictionless entry, login only to track progress.

Moodle’s architecture fundamentally clashed with everything Skill-Wanderer stands for.

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We already proved the model with our custom blog.

Replacing WordPress with an AI-built static site proved that AI-assisted code is now faster than fighting a GUI builder.

Blazing Fast

Static generation, ms load time
JetBrains Mono

Perfect SEO

Clean URLs, full metadata control
JetBrains Mono

Zero Maintenance

No DBs, no PHP updates, no plugins
JetBrains Mono

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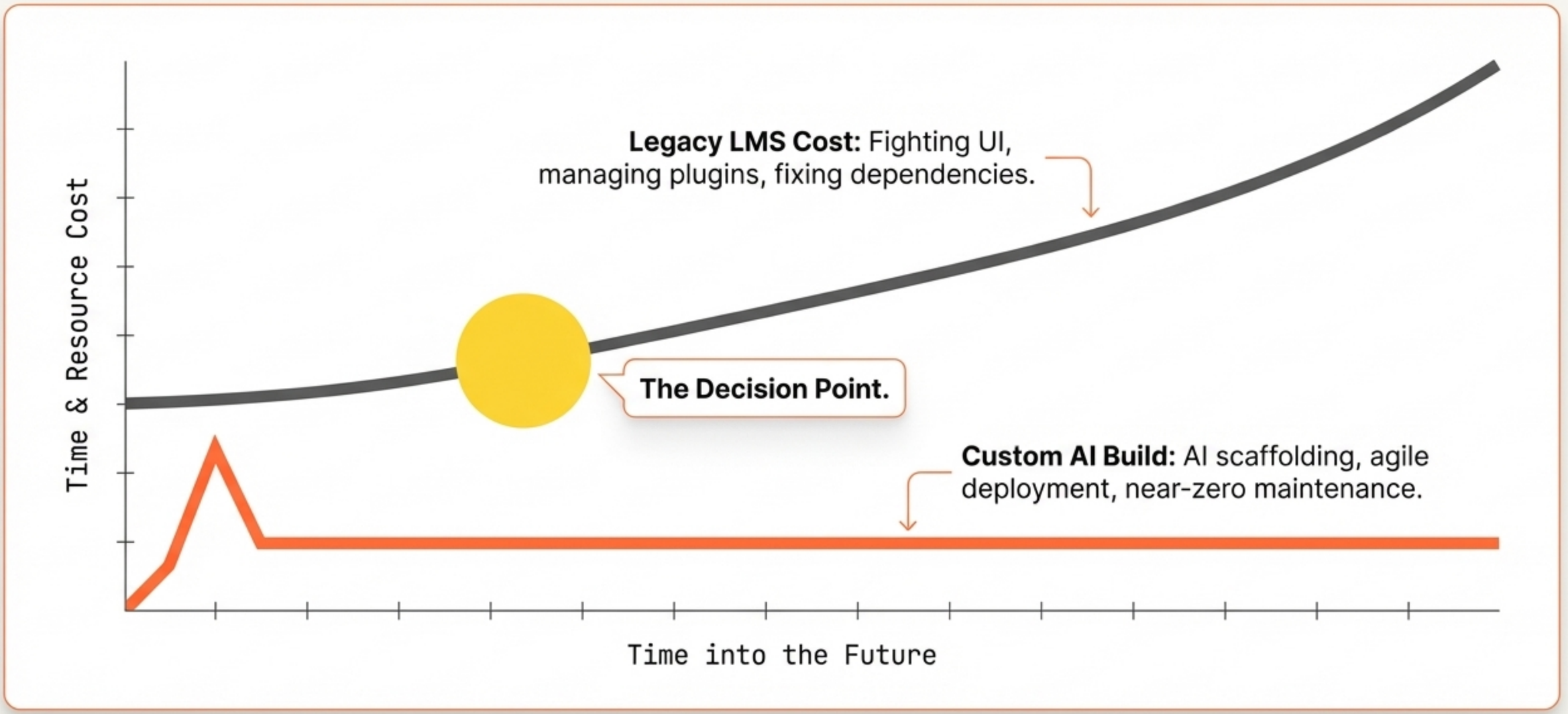
The hidden cost of not building.



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The comprehensive platform audit.

Dimension	Moodle (Legacy)	Custom LMS
Architecture	Heavy PHP Monolith	Static, Microservices
Accessibility	Forced Login Wall	Open by Design
Dependencies	Locked to Bitnami/Plugins	Self-contained, Fully Owned
SEO & Speed	Poor URLs, Sluggish	Perfect Lighthouse Scores
Build Time	Hours lost to GUI fighting	AI-accelerated code generation

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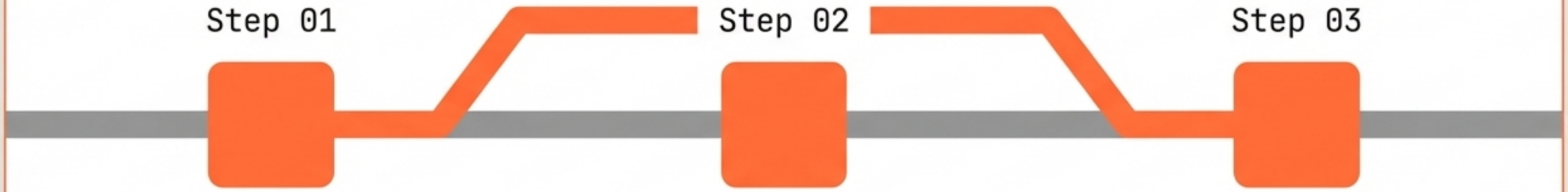
Agile execution powered by an AI force multiplier.



Scaffold boilerplate & CI/CD pipeline

Establish core data architecture

Build content rendering engine

AI eats scaffolding for breakfast. By moving sprint-by-sprint, the core foundation, content pipeline, and deployment infrastructure were live in a fraction of traditional time.

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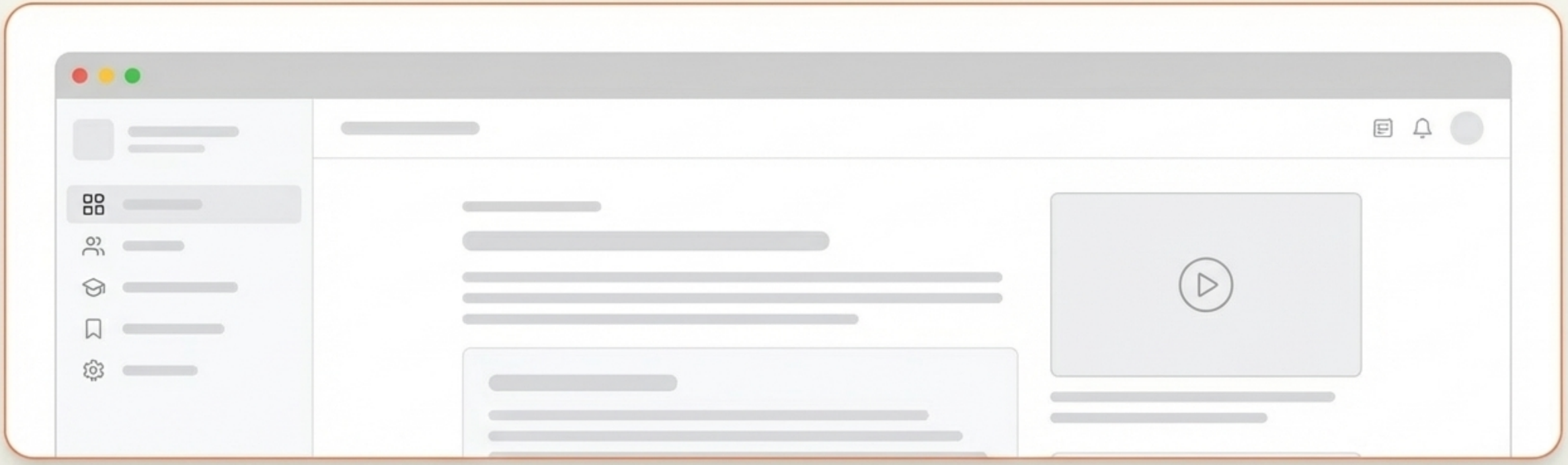
The new Dojo is live.

Faster, cleaner, completely open, and built for the future. The exact same address, built on a brand new foundation.



[No Bloat] [SEO Optimized] [Login Optional]

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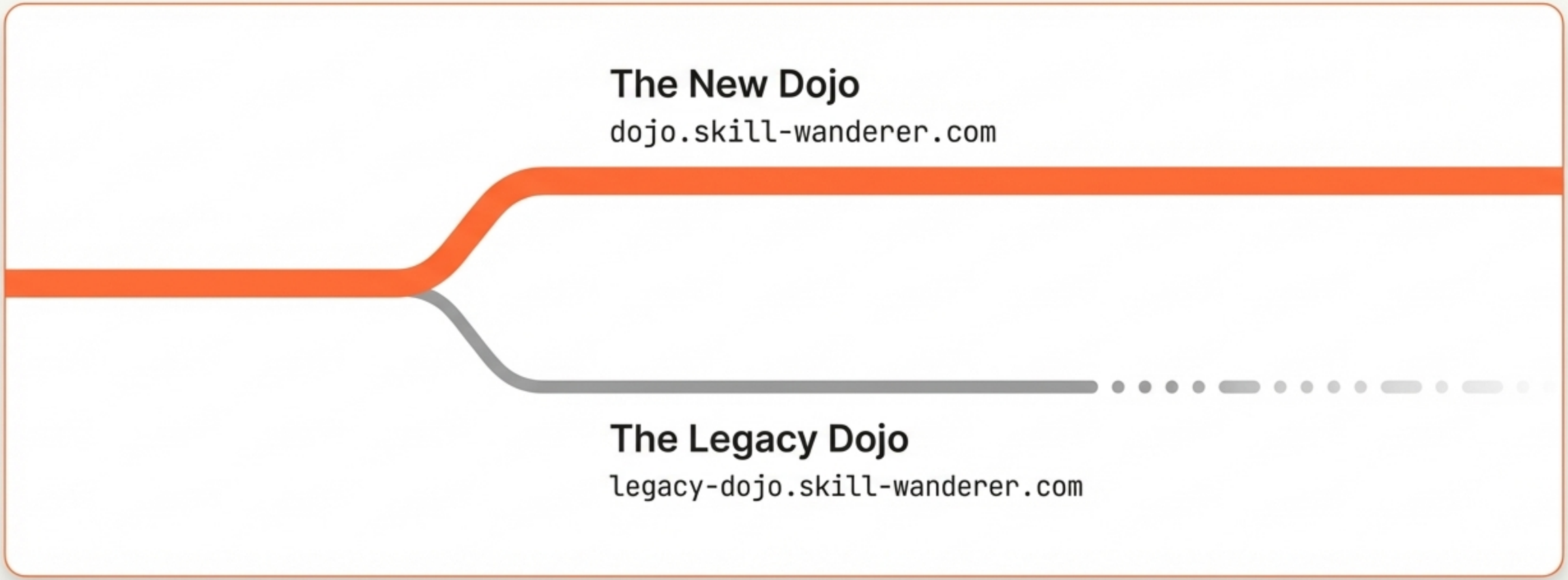
We don’t burn bridges while people are crossing.

Legacy content is safely preserved until migration is 100% complete.



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A reflection of our core engineering philosophy.

01 **Own your stack.** Never be at the mercy of vendor changes.

02 **Practice what you preach.** We teach development, so we build our own.

03 **Embrace AI as a force multiplier.** A core operational tool, not a gimmick.

04 **Prioritize openness.** Content must be free from unnecessary barriers.

05 **Move fast with purpose.** Agile is a mindset, not just a methodology.

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The journey of a thousand steps continues.

Every feature built with intention.
No bloat, no unnecessary complexity.
Just exactly what our learners need.

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Experience the future of open learning.

Explore the New Dojo

`dojo.skill-wanderer.com`

An open source, community-driven microservice project.
Free to learn, free to build.

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