



Torre Capistran
Owner & Creative Director
Hooked On Code

TORRE CAPISTRAN OF HOOKED ON CODE

Smashing The Norms by Instilling
Simplicity at The Core

The principle of KISS (Keep It Simple, Stupid) is not a common one to find in the web development space, where it seems everything has a way of getting overly complex. **Hooked On Code**, however, considers simplicity its primary core value and main competitive advantage, implementing it throughout its operations to deliver beautiful, flexible websites in guaranteed timelines that clients can update themselves if desired. Led by **Torre Capistran**, Hooked On Code has constantly been challenging the traditional norms of the web development industry, combatting various accepted standard operating procedures that she believes lead to overpromised expectations and inflexible solutions.

Torre and her team conduct a client training session at the end of every project to give them the knowledge and administrative power to make internal edits. Her team also remains involved with ongoing technical maintenance and content updates as needed, guaranteeing ticket turnaround times and keeping client satisfaction high with their second core value: Do What You Say.

By understanding her clients' difficulties, Torre has cultivated a work culture that focuses on creating a delightful experience without putting unnecessary responsibility on the client for providing all aspects of the website content, ranging from images to text. Instead, built into Hooked On Code's proven process are action-oriented steps where the team gathers content and drafts it for review and approval, rather than putting the burden completely on the already busy client. Hooked On Code is continuously streamlining its operations with further simplified processes with the hope of creating transformative shifts in the industry.

The Initial Lead Up

Stepping into the business world after graduating from SMU Cox School of Business in Dallas with a degree in Marketing, the jobs available were primarily in sales. Knowing that for her, taking a career in sales would be worse than having no job at all, she moved to live on a resort in Riviera Maya with her two cats and now husband. Torre had a keen interest in business strategy, operations, and design. While living on the beach, she put her heart into learning how to build websites in her free time.

When Torre moved back to Dallas six months later, she landed a digital marketing job in corporate America and remembers being frequently appreciated for her work ethic and results. However, realizing that the corporate world wasn't where she wanted to be long-term, Torre left the job in June of 2014, venturing to start Hooked On Code.

Flipping Negative Experiences to Delightful Ones

After being on the client-side of a large-scale web development project during her time in a corporate job, Torre thought it ridiculous that the experience had to be so negative. She analyzed the web development niche and its typical processes, studied existing problems that created unneeded bloat in both timelines and billing, and found simple solutions to cut the B.S. in every operational and development decision possible. The result is that her agency delivers delight, rather than the horrendous experiences that the industry is known for, such as:

- Missed deadlines/ghosting
- Poor communication
- Bloated/self-serving processes
- Inflexible solutions
- Holding client websites hostage



“WE BET YOU A NICKLE YOU’VE NEVER HAD SO MUCH FUN WORKING ON A WEBSITE PROJECT.”

Torre explains, *"Many of these issues are resolved through clear and prompt communication. By setting detailed expectations, ensuring we do not overpromise along the way, clients feel informed and our team is better equipped to meet deadlines and do what we say. Our high level of proactive communication and structure sets us apart from many in our industry."* She and her team keep a partner's perspective that helps them actively look for the things to lessen clients' worries while ensuring they are heard. Sharing one of her favorite facts about her agency, Torre tells us, *"We have never missed a launch date."*

Foundational Values

Hooked On Cooked is rooted on the firm foundation of four pillars (their Core Values):

Simplicity: finding straightforward, effective, and sustainable solutions, and avoiding unnecessary complexity.

Relentless Forward Motion: Constantly learning, improving, and finding innovative approaches compared to conventional methods.

Do What You Say: Defying the odds in an industry with exact opposite norms.

And finally, striving to spread **Delight** in every interaction.

Growth Goals

Torre loves her work but also shared her frustration with the haphazard norms that she encounters when taking over client websites who've had negative experiences in the past. She says, *"The norms in the web development space are mostly inefficient, inflexible, and work in favor of agencies but not clients. I am working to address these ridiculous and outdated practices in our niche, starting with our own operations, hoping that the positive impact of doing so will spread."*

Torre envisions growing Hooked On Code to 25 people, which she believes is a size that will allow the team to stay nimble, efficient, and most of all fun. One of the reasons she hopes to see the team grow is to create more dream jobs, especially for women with families seeking a level of

flexibility that isn't common. She wants to create a workplace culture that allows her team to be autonomous, valued for their expertise and contributions, and challenged. She dreams of Hooked On Code being known as the best place to work in the remote creative agency space, and delivering incredible experiences to more clients.

Bequeathing Guidance

We asked Torre what advice she might give to other women interested in breaking into the technology or entrepreneurial space. She advised women entrepreneurs aspiring to venture into the Web Development sector to learn as much as possible. She recalls interning (unpaid) one afternoon a week for a small agency for several months which she says helped her learn about the reality of running a small creative agency, and what she could do differently.

Torre expresses, *"If possible, find a mentor who has been where you are and who has taken their business where you want to go. Their time and experience are a valuable gift."*

She adds that entrepreneur organization and programs like EO Accelerator can also be hugely impactful. She feels that these groups help you gain access to both community and rock-solid guidance to grow your business while dealing with the toughest challenges.

Torre says, *"Surround yourself with intelligent, motivated women who want to be a part of making a difference in their world—partner with them. Work for them. And most of all, hire them."*

"Hire women who want to succeed and then do everything in your power to help them reach their goals, even if those goals take them away from your company. The dreams, ideas, and solutions that come out of a team full of people like that can change industries," Torre concludes. 🐘

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