

> Debug Marketing

---

# Your First AI Workspace in One Evening



**Bjorn Vanden Broeck**

February 2026

*No coding required. Built without a developer background.*

> Debug Marketing

# What This Guide Covers

---

Most people use AI the same way: open a browser, ask a question, copy the answer, paste it somewhere. Every time from scratch. No memory, no context.

This guide shows you how to set up a structured AI workspace where the AI actually knows who you are, what you do, and what you're working on. The difference is immediate. Not because the AI gets smarter. Because it finally has something to work with.

You'll go from scattered AI sessions to a personal workspace in one evening. No coding required. I built my entire content system this way, and I'm not a developer.

## What you'll set up:

- VS Code as your workspace (free)
- Claude Code as your AI chat assistant (lives inside VS Code)
- ProjectCoach as your starter project (free, open source)

## What is ProjectCoach?

ProjectCoach is a starter project I built to make your first step as easy as possible. Instead of staring at an empty workspace, you get:

- A **guided setup conversation** that asks about your role, brand, and goals — then builds your workspace for you
- **Best practices already baked in.** The project structure, context templates, and instructions are based on patterns I've tested and refined. You won't make the common mistakes I made when I started.
- A **built-in skill creator** that lets you teach your AI new abilities. Want it to write emails in your tone? Just describe what you need and it builds the skill for you.
- A **solid foundation** to grow from. Start small, add context over time, and watch the AI get better every week.

You're not starting from scratch. You're starting from where I wish I had started.

**Download ProjectCoach:** [[github.com/DebugMarketing/Project-Coach-Lite](https://github.com/DebugMarketing/Project-Coach-Lite)]

(<https://github.com/DebugMarketing/Project-Coach-Lite>)

# What You Need

What	Details	Cost
<b>VS Code</b>	Free app by Microsoft. Works on Mac and Windows. Takes 2 minutes to install.	Free
<b>Claude Code</b>	AI assistant that lives inside VS Code. You'll chat with it like a colleague.	Requires a Claude subscription (Pro at \$20/mo is enough to start)
<b>GitHub account</b>	For downloading ProjectCoach. If you don't have one, signing up takes 2 minutes.	Free

Start with Claude Pro (\$20/month). It gives you access to Claude Code inside VS Code, which is all you need to get started. You can always upgrade later if you hit usage limits.

# Step 1: Install VS Code

---

Go to [code.visualstudio.com](https://code.visualstudio.com/) and download the version for your operating system.

Open the installer and follow the steps. Default settings are fine.

When VS Code opens for the first time, it looks intimidating. A dark screen with panels, sidebars, and a terminal at the bottom. That's normal. You don't need to understand any of it. We're only using it as a home for your AI workspace.

VS Code is not just for developers. Think of it as a container where your files, your AI assistant, and your context all live together. That's the whole point.

## Step 2: Install Claude Code

---

This is the part that changes everything. Claude Code is an AI assistant that lives inside VS Code. It has a chat interface where you can type messages, send files, paste links — just like any other chat app. Except this one can read your project files and actually remember your context.

With VS Code open:

1. Click the **Extensions** icon in the left sidebar (it looks like four small squares)
2. Search for "**Claude Code**"
3. Click **Install**
4. You'll see a **Claude icon** appear in your sidebar — click it
5. Sign in with your Anthropic account

That's it. You now have a chat window inside VS Code. This is where you'll do everything from now on. Not a terminal. Not a command line. Just a chat.

Claude Code is completely different from the Claude website (claude.ai). The website forgets everything between sessions. Claude Code reads your project files, so it always has your context. Same AI, completely different experience.

# Step 3: Get ProjectCoach

---

Here's where it gets fun. You need to get the ProjectCoach project into VS Code. Pick whichever option feels right.

## Option A: Paste the link in Claude Code (easiest)

1. Open the Claude Code chat (click the Claude icon in the sidebar)
2. Paste this link into the chat:

**<https://github.com/DebugMarketing/Project-Coach-Lite>**

1. Ask Claude to download it for you. Something like: *"Can you clone this project for me?"*
2. Claude handles the rest

That's it. Seriously. You just pasted a link and asked. The project is now on your computer.

## Option B: Download as ZIP

Want to do it yourself? Sure.

1. Go to [github.com/DebugMarketing/Project-Coach-Lite] (<https://github.com/DebugMarketing/Project-Coach-Lite>)
2. Click the green **"Code"** button
3. Click **"Download ZIP"**
4. Unzip the folder somewhere you'll remember (Desktop is fine)
5. In VS Code: **File** → **Open Folder** → select the unzipped folder

Either way, you should now see the project files in your VS Code sidebar. You'll see a `CLAUDE.md` file, a `.claude` folder, and a `templates` folder.

The `CLAUDE.md` file is your AI's instruction manual. Everything in that file tells Claude Code how to behave, what to know, and how to help you. ProjectCoach fills this in for you — you don't have to write any of it yourself.

## Step 4: Run the Setup

---

This is the fun part. Open the Claude Code chat and just tell it you want to start.

You can type the command:

```
/start-setup
```

Or just say it in plain language:

*"Hey, let's start the setup"*

*"I want to set up my workspace"*

*"Can we do the guided setup?"*

It all works. Claude Code understands what you mean. That's the whole point of working in the chat — you don't need to memorize commands. Just talk to it.

The setup is a conversation, not a form. It takes about 10 minutes and covers:

- What your business does
- Who your target audience is
- Which channels you use (LinkedIn, newsletter, etc.)
- What takes the most time in your marketing
- What you want to automate or improve

After the conversation, ProjectCoach creates context files based on your answers. These files are what make the AI actually useful — they contain your brand information, your audience details, and your goals.

Be specific in your answers. "I run marketing for a SaaS company targeting HR managers" is much better than "I do marketing." The more specific you are, the better the AI output will be from day one.

# Step 5: Start Using Your Workspace

---

Your workspace is set up. Now try it.

Open the Claude Code chat and ask it to do something you'd normally do manually:

- *"Write a LinkedIn post about [something you're working on]"*
- *"Draft an email to [your audience] about [your latest update]"*
- *"Give me 5 content ideas for this week"*

Notice the difference: the AI doesn't ask you to explain who you are, what your brand is about, or who your audience is. It already knows. Because it read your context files.

That's the shift. You went from starting every AI conversation from scratch to having a workspace that remembers everything.

## **What you can do next:**

- Add more context over time (the more you add, the better it gets)
- Use the built-in **skill creator** to teach it new abilities — just describe what you want in the chat and it builds the skill for you
- Build on top of the foundation that's already there — ProjectCoach gave you a structure that follows best practices, so everything you add fits naturally

# How I Use This for Marketing

---

I'm not a developer. I run marketing. Here's literally how I started:

I opened VS Code, installed Claude Code, and put my brand info into a few files. That was it. No grand plan. No technical knowledge. Just curiosity and a lot of "let's see what happens."

After a few weeks of building on this foundation, I now have a system that writes LinkedIn posts in my voice, generates branded visuals, and keeps track of my content strategy. The AI remembers my positioning, my audience segments, my tone of voice — everything.

It grew organically. I started exactly where you are: one evening, one workspace, one setup conversation. Then I kept adding context and skills as I needed them.

# What I Learned

---

## What works well:

- The AI output quality jumps immediately once it has context
- You don't need to explain yourself every time — it just knows
- Adding new skills is surprisingly easy (describe what you want in the chat, it builds it)
- The best practices built into ProjectCoach save you from a lot of trial and error

## What's still rough:

- VS Code feels overwhelming at first (it gets better within a day)
- You'll want to keep adding context — start small, expand as you go
- The AI sometimes needs steering. It's a smart colleague, not a mind reader

**My advice:** Don't try to build everything at once. Get your first workspace running, use it for a week, then expand. The speed of improvement matters more than the quality of your start.

# Follow Along

---

I'm documenting my entire journey building AI systems for marketing. Every win, every failure, every lesson.

**Newsletter:** [<https://debug.marketing>](<https://debug.marketing/>)

**LinkedIn:** [<https://linkedin.com/in/bjornvandenbroeck>]  
(<https://www.linkedin.com/in/bjornvandenbroeck/>)

*The tools will change. The principle won't: give AI the right context, and it stops being a chatbot. It becomes a system.*

# Want to follow along?

I'm documenting my entire journey building AI systems for marketing. Every win, every failure, every lesson.

---

[Subscribe to Debug Marketing →](#)

[Follow Bjorn Vanden Broeck on LinkedIn](#)

[> Debug Marketing](#)

*AI moves fast. The tools will change. The principle won't: give AI the right context and structure, and it becomes a team, not just an assistant.*