Thanks,
yes I'm aware of that. In the last couple of months of part-time investigations, it seems that there are two approaches for web (even if limited to commercial in-house intranets) applications...

1) The 'Rails' type of web app framework, a page-by-page multiple URL HTML Get/Post kind of affair - where the dev effort is put into the server side, and one relies upon it generating HTML back to the browser such that the programmer doesn't have to put any scripted intelligence into the rendered page. The actual brains of the app lives in OOP class code on the server app, 'controller' code deciding what is required based upon the web address and param.s, calling 'model' code to deal with data, and then calling 'view' code to render the HTML to be shown to the user. Seems fair enough, although usually very badly explained in the documentation!

2) RIA (Rich Internet App) using a lot of Javascript in the HTML (obfuscated to make it hard to examine the code - but still vulnerable to reverse engineering and attack) to create a single page emulation of a traditional native app, using a supplied library of GUI controls.

The second seems to have another problem that validation efforts are duplicated; one has to sanitise user inputs on the front end, and again check on the server side that anything passed to it is sensible. I was looking at Qooxdoo briefly for that approach, but got hopelessly lost and decided that normal web frameworks might be better for this newb

Frankly I think it's still going to be some time before I'm comfortable with any approach, looking at PHP frameworks - even the best documentation has me lost and asking questions that simply aren't addressed... even in the first paragraph of the 'basics' introduction!