

Lyrical Biz – creating easy-to-manage websites and blogs

TC Web Pros WordPress Presentation

WordPress and Top Plugins Overview

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WORDPRESS OVERVIEW

Why use WordPress for a content management system?

WordPress is:

1. Easy to use
2. Easy to understand
3. Can be accessed on any computer with a live internet connection
4. Site can be updated by the user
5. Is search engine friendly

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A WEB HOST

I am by no means a developer or programmer and don't feel comfortable installing programs on a hosting server. So the first thing I look for when setting up a WordPress site for my clients is a hosting company that understands WordPress and is willing to install it for you. Many hosting companies that offer c-panel and Fantastico will have most open source programs pre-installed making it easy for you to set up Wordpress for your clients. One company I work with frequently is Host Gator. They offer great support and are affordable, especially for your start-up client that doesn't have a big budget.

WORDPRESS ENHANCEMENTS AND FEATURES

WordPress comes with a fully functional dashboard allowing the user to view the overall snapshot of their website or blog. Some recent enhancements of WordPress program updates allow for direct uploading of new themes, plugins, and multi-media as well as updates, no longer requiring the user to use an ftp program.

USERS

We are often asked "what are the differences in the various user roles in WordPress" so I thought I would give a very quick rundown.

- Administrator – Somebody who has access to all the administration features
- Editor – Somebody who can publish posts, manage posts as well as manage other people's posts, etc.
- Author – Somebody who can publish and manage their own posts
- Contributor – Somebody who can write and manage their posts but not publish posts
- Subscriber – Somebody who can read comments/comment/receive newsletters, etc.

WORDPRESS CAN BE CUSTOMIZED ACCORDING TO A SITE'S NEEDS

Developers have come up with literally millions of handy FREE plugins that can do so many things to enhance a website. From SEO to multimedia to simple forums to e-commerce, custom forms and site security, you can find just the plugins you need to make the site function to its full potential.

Along with free plugins, developers also offer customized plugins for a small charge that might perform a bit better for you. For example, I created a membership site and one of the best plugins I could find that would work the way we wanted it to, was a premium plugin, licensed for the site. The cost was \$50.

UNLIMITED THEME DESIGNS

Customize the look of the website by uploading theme designs. Themes should be widget friendly allowing for widgets to be easily installed in the sidebar or sidebars of the site. A 'widget' is your sidebar content and usually remains the same on each page of the site. Widgets can be derived from uploaded plugins or can be html or text based. Widgets can also be in the form of outbound links, subscription forms, advertising blocks, or a simple calendar showing highlighted dates of blog posts.

Along with the ability to upload a theme directly from your dashboard, you also have the ability to customize the CSS code – changing the color scheme, font sizes, headers, and more. Possibilities are endless. Just be sure to copy your original CSS style sheet before you make any changes so you can restore it if you are not happy with your changes.

In addition to the multitude of free themes, premium theme developers are now selling impressive designs and are offering their own premium plugins with their packages. I-Themes is one of these companies that offers a billboard plugin for advertising blocks. Most premium themes that I've seen are priced around \$79 - \$149 depending on their built-in functions, removing a lot of the need of finding plugins that will do what these themes can do on their own.

I have a photography site that features automatic thumbnail images in excerpts of my posts and articles that appear on my home page. In addition, a moving carousel effect can be employed which will rotate the top posts in the site.

TUTORIALS

The WordPress community has come up with an impressive website devoted to video tutorials. From beginning to advanced, you can find a tutorial for almost, if not everything, that WordPress can do. You can visit this site for free by going to www.wordpress.tv

MORE ABOUT PLUGINS

Most of your questions were about modules or plugins – the term that WordPress uses. I have compiled a list of the most recommended plugins used in the following areas:

- SEO
- Social Marketing
- Multi-media (photos, audio, video, podcasting)
- Security
- Extras

BEST SEO PLUGINS FOR WORDPRESS

1. [All in One SEO Pack](#) - Arguably one of the best WordPress plugins for the WordPress platform, ([for a couple of other SEO plugins have a look here](#)) all in one SEO pack automates the process of creating unique meta description, keywords, and titles. It gets rid of the default architecture in WordPress of including the site name in the title, which can dilute your rankings in the search engines. All in one SEO eradicates this problem.
2. [SEO Blogroll](#) - Do you worry that the people you link to in your blogroll are feeding off of your PageRank? With SEO Blogroll you can make separate sections for various groupings of links, with an unlimited number in each, and all of them will receive the “nofollow” attribute.
3. [SEO friendly and HTML valid subheadings](#) – Some themes for WordPress will confuse your sub-header tags based on the page they are to be displayed on, but this plugin will automatically reset them to make them more SEO friendly by moving them down one spot in the hierarchical tree. In other words, h2 becomes h3, h3 becomes h4 and so on.
4. [SEO Friendly Images](#) – Images can be a great source of traffic as people search for images of various subjects, and this plugin helps you with making sure that you have “alt” and “title” tags on all of your images so that the search engines can properly index them.
5. [TGFI.net SEO Wordpress Plugin](#) – This particular plugin will do most of the usual SEO work of optimizing titles and keywords, but it adds a unique twist as it is mainly directed at people who use WordPress as a CMS.

SOCIAL MARKETING PLUGINS

1. [Bookmarkify](#) - The Social Media Marketing Plugin that lets you put social bookmarking links in your posts and other pages. Help your readers promote your blog and watch your traffic grow! Also works without WordPress as a standalone script in any php page.



2. [TwitterTools](#) - Tweets your blog posts, blogs your tweets. Seamless.
3. [Feed Facebook, Leave Facebook](#) - Generates a separate partial feed for Facebook. Use it to direct Facebook visitors to your blog while leaving your main full-text feed intact.

4. [TweetMeMe](#) - The TweetMeme button easily allows your blog to be retweeted. The button also provides a current count of how many times your story has been retweeted throughout twitter
5. [Social Traffic Monitor](#) - Social Traffic Monitor is a plugin for Wordpress blogs that monitors your blog traffic for activity coming from social news or bookmarking sites.

BEST MULTI-MEDIA PLUGINS

From using mp3s, to photos, to video, even podcasting, a wealth of valuable plugins are available for WordPress. Here are some of the best in each category:

Podcasting – top 3

1. [PodPress](#): One of the most popular podcasting WordPress Plugins is PodPress WordPress Plugin. It features integration with iTunes, preview of your podcast on iTunes, download stats, feed generation, viewing MP3 ID3 tags, control over player look and placement, support for a wide range of formats including video podcasting, podcast categories, and audio comments.
2. [Blubrry PowerPress WordPress Podcast Plugin](#): WordPress in its default install configuration does not support podcasting at a level that most people need. The PowerPress Podcast Plugin has all of the elements needed to have your podcast RSS feed in complete compliance to obtain an iTunes listing, is optimized for listings in podcast directories and the Zune Marketplace. PowerPress Podcast plugin also includes a player that you can configure to appear on your blog posts so guests can listen/view your podcast episodes straight from your website. It should be noted that nearly half of people listen to podcast online versus through their portable media player
3. [MTR Podcast Recorder](#) - MTR Podcast Recorder offers real-time recording that is saved on the same server where WordPress is installed. All recordings will be saved into the MP3 format using the so famous LAME encoder. In addition to all this, you can manage your playlists and recordings from the WordPress administration. You can easily add a Podcast Player widget to any of your sidebars, posts, or pages if you want to promote a specific recording to your readers.

Photos/Galleries – top 3

1. [NextGen Gallery](#) - NextGEN Gallery is a fully integrated Image Gallery plugin for WordPress with a Flash slideshow option.
2. [Grand Flash Album Gallery](#) - provides a comprehensive interface for managing photos and images through a set of admin pages, and it displays photos in a way that makes your web site look very professional. You can display galleries with beautiful flash skins integrated with GRAND Flash Album Gallery.
3. [FlippingBook Gallery](#) - Allows creating flash books with page flip effect directly from the administrator panel via a specifically designed interface.

Video – top 3

1. [All in One Video Pack](#) - it includes every functionality you might need for video and rich-media, including the ability to upload/ record/import videos directly to your post, edit and remix content with an online video editor, enable video responses, manage and track your video content, create playlists and much more
2. [Wordpress Video Plugin](#) - A filter for WordPress that allows easy video embedding of supported sites.

3. [Google YouTube Video Bar](#) - This plugin will add a Google-YouTube Video Bar with targeted content to your weblog. Search results are obtained in real-time on post tags/slugs using the Google-YouTube Videobar API

Audio – top 3

1. [Wiget Photo / Video and Voice player](#) - Wiget is the easy to use multimedia tool to personalize your website. Make photo slideshows with voice or music, upload your video or make one directly with your webcam. Upload photos (and edit them in/outzoom, rotate), add voice comment (via your own microphone), upload all type of videos, upload music files, make webcam videos
2. [Inline mp3 Player](#) - Inline mp3 player replacing any link directly to a mp3 file, such as 'http://yoursite.com/musicfile.mp3' into a special link. Clicking it will turn the link into a small media player with a dhtml slider interface. It works simple, click the link the music starts playing. Drag the tab to browse through the music. Click the link again to stop.
3. [Yahoo Media Player](#) - Embeds the Yahoo! Media Player music plugin into your site to play back media links. It also allows you to input your Amazon Affiliate ID in order to monetize referrals made through the plugin.

Security Plugins

1. [WordPress Security Scan](#) - Scans your WordPress installation for security vulnerabilities and suggests corrective actions. Passwords, file permissions, database security, version hiding, WordPress admin protection/security, removes WP Generator META tag from core code
2. [Akismet](#) - checks your comments against the Akismet web service to see if they look like spam or not and lets you review the spam it catches under your blog's "Comments" admin screen.
3. [Invisible Defender](#) - This plugin protects registration, login and comment forms from spambots by adding two extra fields hidden by CSS. This approach gave me 100% anti-spam protection on one of my sites.
4. [No Spam NX](#) - automatically adds additional form fields to your comment form, invisible to the users. If a spambot fills these fields blindly (which 99.9% of all spambots do), the comment will not be saved. You can decide if you want to block these spambots, mark them as spam or put them in moderation queue. Furthermore, you can put common spam-phrases on a blacklist.
5. [Antivirus WordPress](#) - Viruses, worms and malware exist for WordPress and could easily attack your WordPress installation. AntiVirus for WordPress monitors malicious injections and warns you of any possible attacks. Includes multilingual support. Simply, the plugin you must have. Ideal as a supplement to the manual security measures in your blogs. Hey, it's free!

JUST A FEW FAVORITES

1. [Cforms](#) – I love this plugin for creating forms. Incorporates captcha for security, you can fully customize, allows for a cc option, creates a database of received forms fully downloadable and much more. Cannot be uploaded through the dashboard – only through ftp.
2. [Advertising Manager](#) - Control and arrange your Advertising and Referral blocks on your WordPress blog. With Widget and inline post support, integration with all major ad networks.
3. [Flexi Quote Rotator](#) – works great for testimonial posting.
4. [Maintenance Mode](#) - Adds a splash page to your blog that lets visitors know your blog is down for maintenance. Logged in administrators get full access to the blog including the front-end.

ABOUT LISA DREW, LYRICAL BIZ



Web site design by Lisa Drew McClain has been helping the small business person establish themselves on the Internet. For the last three years using WordPress open source software, Lisa has been able to create efficient, powerful and easy-to-maintain websites and business blogs for professionals and small business owners.

And the real beauty? Lyrical Biz web sites look expensive but are ridiculously cheap.

Contact Lisa today if you know a small business start-up that could use her expertise and experience.

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In addition, Lisa is a professional classical singer and soloist with the internationally acclaimed chamber vocal group The Rose Ensemble, and is the alto soloist at Plymouth Congregational Church in Minneapolis. Find out more at her website www.killeralto.com.

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