



FACTSHEET

No 5: Essential Wordpress Plugins & Widgets



What are plugins?

Wordpress is a bit of a blank canvas, waiting for a painting. When setting up your wordpress site, we will not only build a design stylesheet to give the right look & feel to the site, but also look for the right 'Plugins' to enhance the functionality of your site.

1. Google Analytics for Wordpress

This little plugin allows Google to assess who visits your site, how they find you, and friendly referral sites. You can track adword campaigns, and get reports on demand, or emailed weekly, monthly or whenever you want.

2. All In One SEO Package

This allows more flexibility in designing page titles, and other factors which will help find you in Google. A must if you want to be found!

3. Exclude pages

If your site is large, you might not want all the clutter of every page being visible on the menu bar. With this one, you can hide pages from the menu, and link to them where it's more appropriate, perhaps through an image.

4. Registered Only

This restricts specific pages to users who are logged in. You can issue user details or allow people to register to gain access.

5. Contact Form

Instead of an email address, why not have a contact form, with the details you need to get the best information from the visitor. You can have plenty of different entry boxes, and include anti-spammer 'Captcha' boxes. The contents of their entries are then emailed to you.

6. Registration Form

If you're looking for new clients, or to collect emails etc for a mailing list, the registration form allows you to do this easily. Details are then emailed to you.

7. Widgetlogic

You see the little boxes on the left or right of the website. These contain a variety of headlines, links, images etc. You can choose which ones appear on which pages, and end up with a selection to choose from. You may not want the same on your home page as other pages for example. You can even have specific messages depending on where visitors arrive from.

8. SWF-Object / flash video player.

This allows you to put flash moving images onto your site for dynamic moving content.

9. Calendar

This allows you to display a calendar of events, or bookings, or simply availability. You update it as & when you want.

10. Admin Management

This makes management of pages & posts much more user friendly.

11. Flash Album / Laziest Gallery.

These allow slide shows either within your pages, or on the sidebar.

12. Log User Access

Allows you to track which users have been into the site, and when.

13. RSS fetcher

This is a great plugin for getting RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds from other websites. Be it news, or weather, or magazine articles online, there are thousands available, many industry specific.

14. Theme my login

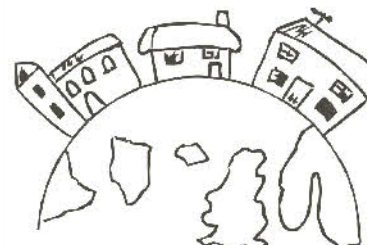
Normally if a user logs in, they go to their 'Dashboard' screen in their control panel. With this plugin, the user can stay on the same page, or be redirected anywhere you want. Makes for a much cleaner, simpler navigation for logged in users.

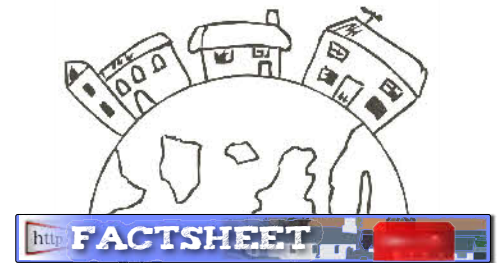
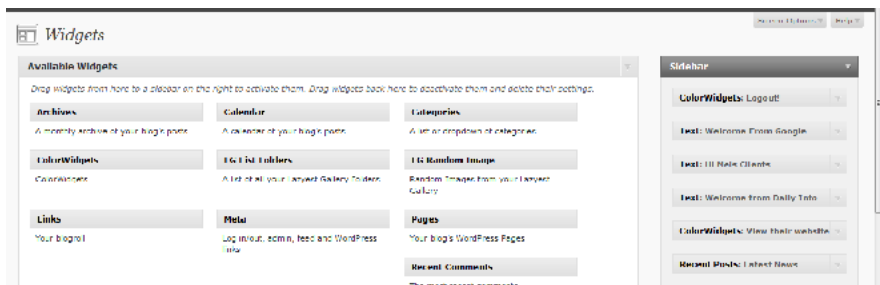
15. User Lockers

How many times do you think someone ought to be able to try their password before being locked out? With this, you can set the limit, and they have to follow a 'lost password' link to reset it via their email address.

16. WP-Ecommerce

You can sell online, or simply display your categorised articles in an easily sortable system. It's as big as you want!





Widgets

Widgets are the clever little boxes you see on the side of web pages. They do a variety of different things, and there are more which can easily be added. Here's a selection of the most common, and some really useful ones.

1. Archives – A monthly archive of your news stories.
2. Categories – If you categorise your pages, or products, this provides easy navigation to them
3. Colour Widgets – You can have boxes that have different colours from the rest, to stand out.
4. Widget-Logoc – Allows you to have different sidebar widgets on different pages. You can also have sidebar boxes for authorised users when logged in.
5. Random image – Slide show through a folder of your images
6. Pages – A list of the pages on your site. If you have a menu bar, then you probably won't need this though.
7. Recent Comments – If you allow comments on your news stories, then you can list the recent ones here.
8. Recent Posts – Displays the headlines of your recent posts with the most recent first.
9. Search – Exactly what it says.
10. Sidebar login – allows authorised users to login to see restricted pages, or editors to edit the site. If you allow this, it will also allow people to register to use the restricted areas of the site.
11. Tag cloud – Your posts or news stories can be given tags. These tags help google / SEO enormously. If you want users

to be able to use this to find articles on particular topics, this will help them do so speedily.

12. Text – This can be just a simple box with text in it, or it can link to images, links within the site, or off site. You can have paypal buy it now buttons here too.
13. Shopping Cart – If you use wp-e-commerce, this shows the shopping cart for your customers.

For others, Google 'wordpress plugins' and select widgets to see a whole range. They are almost all free to download, but may need some time to configure them to your needs.

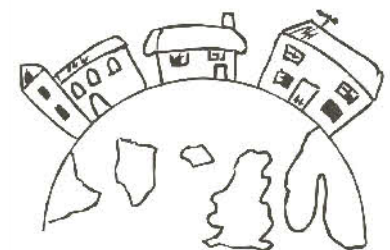
Configuring Wordpress Layout

Wordpress has a great deal of flexibility. Choices to be made include:

- Your design & colour scheme. We can either make one for you to your design, or you can choose one from wordpress. Google 'wordpress themes' for a selection of ideas.
- Header – displays your brand & logo here, along with your website's name and some additional limited information. This appears on every page.
- 0, 1 or 2 sidebars? 1 is the norm, but not always.
- Sidebars left or right, or 1 on each side?
- Front Page – What do you want to display? Your home page remains

static, but your posts are updated as often as you want. You can choose which people see first.

- Do you allow people to register? If so, what authority do they have?, and do you want to 'vet' them before they have access.
- Do you allow comments on your news stories (posts)? If you do, you can allow them to appear, or wait for you or other authorised editors to pass them. You can also allow comments from logged in users only if you want.
- Google – do you want google to find you or not – Surprisingly, some site owners don't want their site to be found.
- Headers / Footers – You can display data with any post or page including who wrote it, when and number of comments. On the footer, there are normally links to your legal info, like terms of use, privacy. However, you can link anywhere you want, or nowhere. Village Web Design will normally put a link back to our site here.



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