



WPengine®

5 REASONS TO DEVELOP YOUR WEB EMPIRE ON WORDPRESS

WHITE PAPER



Despite being a highly favorable blogging platform, the capabilities of WordPress extend far beyond that of its front-end qualities.

Bloggers, writers, and content creators alike choose WordPress for its user-friendly functions, however it is a mistake to classify WordPress as solely a tool for site implementers.

The WordPress platform contains some powerful backend qualities, and it can be argued that WordPress is, in fact, one of the best, full-featured content management systems for building a dynamic website.

If you're a web developer looking for a top-notch CMS on which to create, you might already know that there's an array of choices to consider, each with its own pros and cons.

As a developer, how do you choose, and which functionalities take top priority?

To dig deeper, we've composed a list of five important factors developers should consider when it comes to choosing a development platform, and how each applies to developing on WordPress.

1. EXCEPTIONAL SUPPORT FROM A LARGE COMMUNITY



WordPress is an extremely popular development platform and astonishingly now powers **25 percent of the Internet**. That's a whopping 74 million-plus websites that have been created through the platform to date. And for all of the websites using a content management system (CMS), approximately 60 percent of those sites are powered by WordPress.

A benefit to WordPress's massive popularity is the large and vibrant community that supports its members and WordPress users. If you run into an issue, or you have questions about upkeep, development or the overall direction of your site, WordPress's large open source community is here to help you get the most out of your development efforts.

In addition, since WordPress is an open source software, it permits millions of developers from around the globe to refine the WordPress programming. Say you discover a bug in the software—it is likely that another person has also found and reported it, and a fix is in the works (if not already resolved).

The WordPress ecosphere of community knowledge and support extends to (but is not limited to):

- [WordPress forums](#)
- [WordPress Codex](#)
- [WordPress Mailing lists](#)
- [WordPress Slack Team](#)
- [WordCamps](#)
- [Developer Resources](#)
- [WordPress StackExchange](#)
- [Learning WordPress](#)
- [Making WordPress](#)
- [WordPress.tv](#)
- [22 Best Blogs about WordPress](#)

Another benefit to this large community is that a plethora of plugins have been developed to assist in your development efforts. In fact, there are more than 40,000 WordPress plugins in the official repo to improve and extend your site's functionality and help you attain certain goals with your client in mind (check out [the best 28 plugins of 2015](#) and the [70,000-plus plugins on GitHub](#)).

Developers in the WordPress community built the majority of these plugins and they are often willing to assist when you have a development question or if there is a particular issue with your site.

2. EASE OF CUSTOMIZATION



Developing your site doesn't have to be limited in scope. Flexibility and ease of customization are essential elements when it comes to site development. Especially if you're the type who prefers to abide by a lean methodology. Why make it complicated for yourself when flexible frameworks and infrastructures can take the heavy lifting off your shoulders, allowing for greater development possibilities?

Some important factors to know about when it comes WordPress's ease of modification include:

- Theme Frameworks
- JSON REST API
- [Plugin API](#)

EASY FRONT-END THEMING WITH THEME FRAMEWORKS

When developing a site, you can choose to develop it from scratch, or use a framework. A benefit to developing on WordPress is that it provides powerful theme frameworks that already have a good amount of the backend structure setup for you (one example is "[Genesis](#)").

Acting as a backbone to your site's structure, frameworks offer a head start without all the clutter and bloat endured when you start from scratch. Rather than coding everything yourself from the bottom up, choosing a WordPress theme framework will help you speed up your development efforts by giving you a jumpstart with a chunk of the backend already in place.

In addition, theme frameworks offer ease of customization by opening up opportunities for making WordPress plugins and themes more extensible and dynamic, as well as more integrable with separate SaaS businesses.

JSON REST API / WP REST API

What if we told you that WordPress can be compatible with any framework and programming language? Yes, this means that you can even develop native mobile applications using WordPress as a framework thanks to the JSON REST API (also known as the WP REST API).

JavaScript Standard Notation, or JSON, gives WordPress a common format to communicate with other applications and languages, while the REST API grants WordPress the ability to save content from other sites and applications from a simple POST request. This means that, on a practical level, WordPress can be the content management tool for an application or site written in any language.

This technology puts WordPress on the path to becoming a full-fledged application platform and opens WordPress up to the rest of the Internet by allowing the platform to interact with other applications and environments.

If you're a developer who has been frustrated with WordPress's administrative features, JSON REST API dismisses the need for developing on the WordPress backend, as you can build an alternative WordPress admin panel on virtually any device or platform.

To learn more about this game-changing technology, check out the [free ebook on JSON REST API](#) and our [beginner's guide to WordPress REST API](#).

3. THE WORDPRESS CORE IS SECURE (BUT DO TAKE SECURITY PRECAUTIONS)



“Security is not about perfectly secure systems. Such a thing might well be impractical, or impossible to find and/or maintain. What security is though is risk reduction, not risk elimination.”

— From [WordPress.org](https://wordpress.org)

Around **30,000 sites get hacked per day**. Although not all of these attacks are carried out on WordPress, the platform is often targeted by hackers because of its popularity. Commonly reported on by the media, this often gives WordPress a bad rap and fuels the misconception that it's not secure.

On the contrary, the WordPress core is actually quite secure, **as long as you keep its core up to date**. There are thousands of developers actively testing and patching any security vulnerabilities in the WordPress core software, and enhanced security features regularly roll out with each WordPress update.

In addition, **security precautions** must be taken on your end to harden your WordPress site. Laxity in security will only end up leaving your site vulnerable, despite the efforts put forth by WordPress. Because WordPress is regularly updated, **it's crucial that you keep your WordPress site, plugins, and themes up to date** with the latest security fixes or you may be leaving your site open to potential hackings.

Even the most popular plugin or theme may not live up to the security code standards of the WordPress core. Often, when a site is hacked, that site was not targeted specifically, but rather the hacker targeted a widely installed plugin or theme with known security vulnerabilities.

Studies show that around 37 percent of the vulnerabilities that have been reported on WordPress came from core accounts, 52 percent from plugins, and 11 percent from themes. In addition to keeping the WordPress core up to date, it's important to take caution before installing a plugin or theme by doing your research to see if any have encountered security flaws in the past, and if that vulnerability was resolved with an update.

The security of your WordPress site can also be strengthened with other measures, like **using robust security plugins**, which are incredibly useful for ecommerce sites that contain sensitive client information. Dedicated hosting platforms and security specialists (like Sucuri) can also add an extra layer of protection for your site.

For more stats on WordPress and security, be sure to check out this [infographic](#).

4. WORDPRESS IS A FREE, OPEN SOURCE PLATFORM

The costs of running a WordPress site yourself are fairly inexpensive. Because it's open source software, it's completely free to develop on WordPress. As a developer, you can spin up new WordPress sites without having to think about licensing and copyrights.

If you're a developer looking to create multiple sites, it's cost-efficient to use a platform like WordPress so you can install and develop as many sites as you choose without charge.

While the WordPress software is free to run, develop on, and redistribute, the costs that will come from running your WordPress site will vary. For instance, hosting a site yourself or with a hosting provider creates additional costs, as does purchasing a domain name, and other requirements.

And while the majority of WordPress plugins and themes are free, some do come with a pricetag. In fact, there are many businesses that revolve around and profit from developing WordPress plugins, themes, and offering [managed WordPress hosting](#).

In addition, the resources required to set up a custom site are higher than that of developing on WordPress. A custom theme for a small business typically costs around \$1,000 from a freelancer. As a developer, this means you'll need to build any custom features that your employer needs—the time required for this could be anywhere from hours to weeks of work.

5. SIMPLICITY FOR ADMINISTRATORS AND CONTENT AUTHORS

You've constructed a site for your client and have completed developing the core functions. Now what? Since you chose WordPress as your development platform, you can now relax knowing that your client can take on its front-end, content producing elements.

The WordPress interface is fairly straightforward and easy for bloggers, content creators, marketers, and enterprise users to instantly start publishing media. It's also simple for you to add on features that'll allow the content manager to focus on the purpose of his/her site, whether it be ecommerce, news reporting, hobbyist blogging, or an enterprise homepage.

In addition, extensive training with a content manager on how to use the administrative dashboard may not be necessary on your end. Because there's already a lot of documentation out there on how to use WordPress, the front-end user can easily get support from WordPress's large community when needed (although you may need to train system administrators on how to use new dashboard features that have been developed in-house).

FINAL THOUGHTS

In conclusion, before you decide on an alternative development platform or CMS, be sure to reevaluate your skills as a developer, your client and their needs, as well as the resources you have available. Developing on WordPress is a solid choice because it effectively supports content creation workflows, and is also a top influencer in the future of technology.

“When WordPress adopts modern technologies, the Internet adopts modern technologies,” said Scott Taylor, Senior Software Engineer at The New York Times during a recent speech at WordCamp US.

Where else can you attend an event like WordCamp and get your developer questions solved by world-class experts, as well as learn advanced industry tricks and tips? WordPress boasts a powerful community, and is a leader in new development technology, like the WP REST API, making developing on WordPress something to seriously consider.



ABOUT WP ENGINE

WP Engine powers amazing digital experiences for websites and applications built on WordPress. The company's premium managed hosting platform provides the performance, reliability and security required by the biggest brands in the world, while remaining affordable and intuitive enough for smaller businesses and individuals. Companies of all sizes rely on WP Engine's award-winning customer service team to quickly solve technical problems and create a world-class customer experience. Founded in 2010, WP Engine is headquartered in Austin, Texas and has offices in San Francisco, California, San Antonio, Texas, and London, England.

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