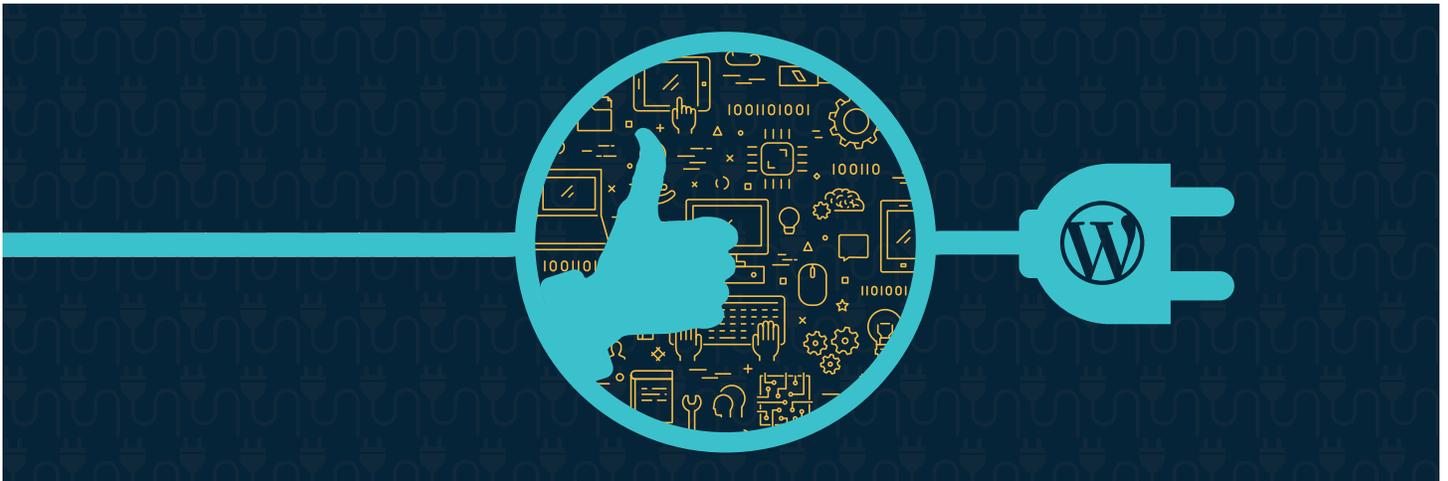


TORQUE®

THE BEST WORDPRESS PLUGINS FOR SITE OPTIMIZATION

WHITE PAPER



WordPress is the most popular CMS in the world, powering more than 27 percent of the entire internet. One of its biggest selling points is the robust plugin marketplace. With more than 46k plugins available for free in the WordPress directory alone, users can easily extend the functionality of their sites.

From marketing to maintenance to optimization and editorial, there are literally plugins for adding almost any functionality to your site.

With thousands of plugins to sort through, however, it can be tricky to determine which ones to use. That's why we put together a series of white papers to help you harness the integration capabilities of WordPress and build better digital experiences.

The plugins in this white paper were nominated by the WordPress community. To ensure that we are promoting secure, quality plugins, each plugin is included in the official WordPress repository and meets the following criteria:

- 10,000+ downloads
- 3+ star rating
- Compatible with the most current version of WordPress

In this white paper, we look at 16 optimization plugins.

Autoptimize



Speeding up your site is incredibly important to keeping visitors there longer. [Autoptimize](#) takes all the scripts running on your site and minimizes them. The plugin also gets rid of any expired footers, and even minimizes your actual HTML, making your site as fast as possible.

You can move to the paid option, but the free account is enough to speed up your site and make it more lightweight.

Jetpack



[Jetpack](#) is not so much a plugin as it is an entire box of tools, widgets, and services. Previously these were only available for users of WordPress.com. Jetpack has packaged all of your favorite features into one place to make them available for all self-hosted WordPress websites.

Currently the Jetpack stack includes more than 30 powerful features. They cover topics from site customization, content tools and user engagement, to site performance and security

Smush Image Compression



Often slow load times on pages are due to large images. [Smush Image Compression](#) finds the culprit and minimizes it, shaving seconds from your load time. Begin by setting a max image and height, and the plugin will make sure every image fits those specifications.

Speeding up your site is an easy way to boost your SEO ranking, and this plugin will ensure each of your images is displayed properly.

Google Pagespeed Insights for WordPress



Increase your site's user experience with [Google Pagespeed Insights for WordPress](#). The developers designed this plugin to look at the current industry best practices, giving suggestions on how to improve site speed based on those findings. This allows you to see where your site is lagging and how to fix it.

By implying these suggestions, you'll notice faster page load times, better search engine rankings, and an enhanced user experience. Pinpoint your best and worst performing pages and learn how to fix them.

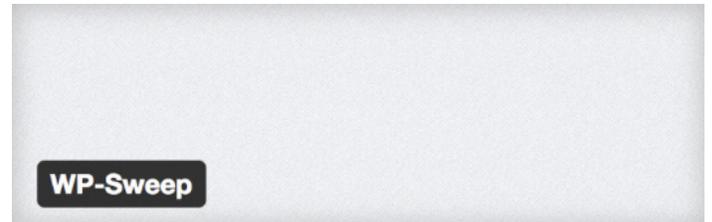
Yoast SEO



[Yoast SEO](#) goes above and beyond to provide systematic instructions for improving the SEO of your content. Its user-friendliness guides you through the process of adding metadata, selecting keywords, and easily adding "nofollow" tags.

Yoast also performs a page analysis to ensure you're not forgetting any small details such as image tagging. It includes a slew of other features to ensure your posts possess the qualities that search engines love.

WP-Sweep



Duplicate and unused data can really slow your site down. [WP-Sweep](#) works to get rid of everything you're not using. There may be data you don't even know you're creating that's been affecting the way your site runs.

The plugin gets rid of deleted comments, orphaned comment meta, transient options, revisions, and more. In no time your site will be cleared up to run faster.

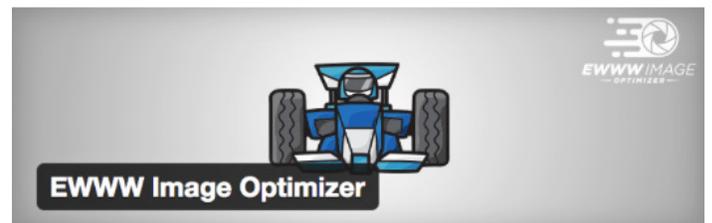
Google Analytics:



[Google Analytics](#) for WordPress is an intuitive plugin that allows users to easily track their WordPress site.

The plugin provides extended metadata for greater tracking capabilities, such as views per author and category, and overall pageviews. It uses the asynchronous Google Analytics tracking code to provide the fastest and most reliable tracking possible.

EWWW Image Optimizer



Images can be a huge cause of a site slowdown. It's really important that all your images are taking up as little space as possible so everything loads blazing fast. Of course you can do this yourself, or download [EWWW Image Optimizer](#) to do it for you.

The plugin automatically optimizes any image you upload so you avoid accidentally including something that's too large and makes your page load like molasses.

(Note to WP Engine customers that EWWW Image Optimizer is a disallowed plugin, however the Cloud version of the plugin located [here](#) is a great alternative that offloads the computing to the Cloud.)

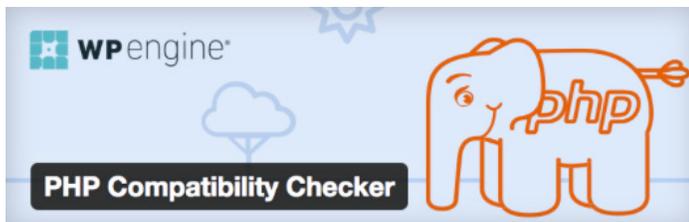
WordPress Charts and Graphs Lite



A great way to accentuate a point in an article is to add a chart or graph but it can be tricky to add one manually. When using [WordPress Charts and Graphs Lite](#), you have access to over nine different chart types that can be edited with the live editor, and then placed on your site.

Every graph and chart is extremely customizable. While this is the lite version, it still has great functionality, and will give you the tools to make amazing graphs.

PHP Compatibility Checker



In his annual State of the Word address, Matt Mullenweg stressed the importance of PHP 7 in 2017. His dream was to see everyone upgraded by 2018, however every time something is updated, there's the possibility of breaking something on your site.

The [PHP Compatibility Checker](#) finds compatibility issues with plugins and themes, and delivers a report with a list of what you need to fix to move forward.

Imagify



Remove extraneous metadata without sacrificing image quality with [Imagify](#). Any image you add to your site with Imagify will automatically be optimized, making your site as fast as it can be. You can choose from three levels of compression depending on how many images you have on your site and how much room they take up.

The free version offers up to 250 images a month, which is 25MB of images.

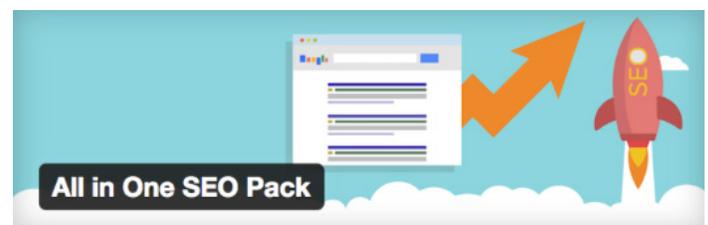
The SEO Framework



SEO is incredibly important for any site. If you want to be noticed and get more readers, you need to be picked up by search engines. [The SEO Framework](#) sets you up for success by showing you exactly what you need to fill out to be optimized.

The plugin lets you customize over 90 features on your site to find the pieces of SEO that are most important for you.

All in One SEO Pack



The self-proclaimed “original SEO plugin for WordPress,” will make sure your site is completely optimized for search engines. [All in One SEO Pack](#) is a full-featured way to see what you need to fill out before publishing a post.

It comes with Google AMP support, Google Analytics support, advanced canonical URLs, and more.

Redirection



301 and 404 redirects can be disastrous to your site. Visitors might not come back if they are met by redirects. Luckily, [Redirection](#) is here to make sure that doesn't happen to you. The plugin will alert you when there has been an error and offer solutions to fix it.

It automatically adds a redirect if you get at 301 error, making sure at least the visitor lands on something and not a dead end.

ShortPixel Image Optimizer



[ShortPixel Image Optimizer](#) does exactly what it says, makes sure everything on your site is optimized. Every image, PDF, gallery, and slider is compressed so it takes up the least amount of space, resulting in faster page load times.

When your site is easier to load and access, this results in an increased user experience and better search engine rankings.



Let the madness begin!

Voting for *Torque's 2017 Plugin Madness* is now open. Modeled after the NCAA college basketball tournament March Madness, we use a bracket-based voting system to pit plugins against one another each week.

This year we asked you to **nominate your favorite plugins**, and today we're happy to kick things off with an impressive lineup of plugins. Head on over to pluginmadness.com to vote for your favorite plugins now.

[Vote for your favorite plugins here](#)

The voting schedule is as follows:

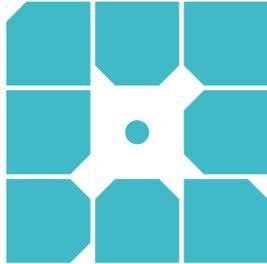
- March 7: The Enchanting 64 (Round 1)**
- March 14: The Thrilling 32 (Round 2)**
- March 21: The Supreme 16 (Round 3)**
- March 28: The Exceptional 8 (Round 4)**
- April 4: The Phenomenal 4 (Semi-finals)**
- April 11: Championship**
- April 18: Winner Announced!**

When you vote, remember to tell the world using **#pluginmadness** for a chance to win an awesome prize! And don't forget to check Torque weekly for competition updates!



About Torque

Torque is a news site featuring all things WordPress. We are dedicated to informing new and advanced WordPress professionals, users, and enthusiasts about the industry. Torque focuses primarily on WordPress News, Business, and Development, but also covers topics relating to open source and breakthrough technology. Torque made its debut in July 2013, at WordCamp San Francisco, and has since produced valuable content that reflects the evolution of WordPress, both as a platform and a community. Torque is a WP Engine publication, though maintains complete editorial independence. torquemag.io



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 Limerick, Ireland, San Francisco, California, San Antonio, Texas, and London, England.

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