



TORQUE

Top WordPress plugins for 2018.

WHITE PAPER



Introduction.

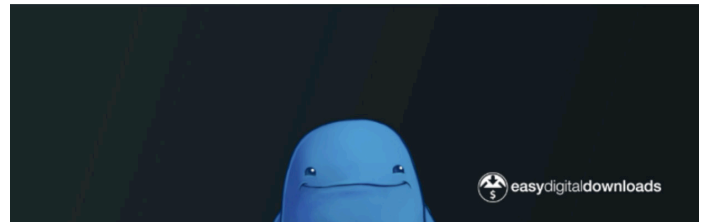
The WordPress directory is made up of nearly 55,000 plugins. This immense directory gives WordPress users endless options for customizing and optimizing their WordPress site. However, sometimes endless possibilities are overwhelming. How do you sift through thousands of plugins in order to find the highly-rated, top-notch plugins? Although the directory allows plugin users to give plugins a one to five star rating, it doesn't give you the ability to compare plugins side by side.

Torque's annual Plugin Madness competition plugins go head to head in a bracket-style competition in order to determine the best WordPress plugins on the market. This bracket-style competition started off with 64 plugins split into 4 groups: eCommerce, Maintenance, Optimization, and Marketing. Ultimately, the overall winner of the competition was [WPMU Dev's Smush Image Compression and Optimization](#).

To help you navigate the top plugins of the year, we've compiled a list of the top 4 plugins from each category. We'll help you navigate the directory by providing descriptions, prices, and top features.

E-commerce.

Easy Digital Downloads ★★★★★



INSTALLS: 60K+

With more than 60,000+ downloads, [Easy Digital Downloads](#) is clearly beloved. When selling any sort of media file (photos, documents, software, etc.) Easy Digital Downloads' solution is seamless and effortless. This plugin is easily integrated with the most popular payment systems: PayPal, Bitpay Stripe, Braintree and more. There are also custom add-ons and themes available for maximum customizability including the [Simple Shipping](#) extension which allows you to easily collect shipping info from your customers during checkout, set shipping rates for domestic and international orders, and mark payments as being shipped or not. Other notable features include discount codes and promotions, advanced reporting, and powerful, real-time customer management.

Restrict Content ★★★★★



INSTALLS: 10K+

Restrict Content allows you to easily restrict content to logged-in users only. Content restriction works both with partial content restrictions using shortcodes, as well as full page restrictions for post, pages, and most custom post types. Users will also have access to front-end forms for user registration, login, and password reset so your members can do all these actions on the front end of your site without going to the wp-admin or wp-login.php pages.

For a more feature rich version, users can opt for the pro version. Included in pro is printable HTML invoices, WooCommerce integration, discount codes, integration with popular payment systems and more. **Restrict Content Pro** is available with three different plan options: Gold, Silver and Bronze. The plans range from \$2-10 dollars a month.

WooCommerce ★★★★★



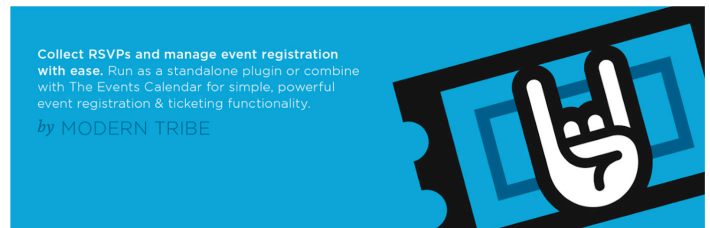
INSTALLS: 3M+

Perhaps the most nimble and integratable ecommerce plugin, **WooCommerce** gives your WordPress blog or business immediate capability to sell any digital or physical product upon installation. WooCommerce offers everything you need to make a beautifully designed, user-friendly online store. This plugin offers infinite degrees of customizability given its open source functionality.

WooCommerce also offers premium extensions where you can offer subscription services so that customers can set up recurring subscriptions on digital or physical goods. WooCommerce comes bundled with the ability to accept

major credit cards, PayPal, BACS (bank transfers), and cash on delivery. Most importantly, if a capability is not available within WooCommerce's built-in features, its extensible, open-source framework allows for scalability. This is perhaps the only plugin that is capable of scaling with your business growth.

Event Tickets ★★★★★



INSTALLS: 20K+

Event Tickets is the easiest way for visitors to RSVP or purchase tickets to events. The plugin works by allowing you to add RSVPs and tickets to posts or pages. Users can easily collect payment by connecting their Paypal account. Event Tickets can also be synced with **Events Calendar** allowing admins to add ticketing purchasing capabilities to event listings. If support is needed, the Event Tickets developers at Modern Tribe are dedicated to supporting the users and the WordPress community as a whole.

Maintenance.

Duplicate Post ★★★★★

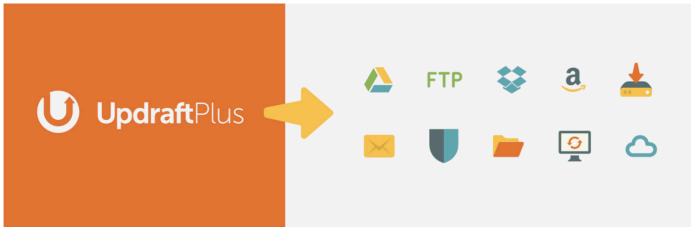


INSTALLS: 2M+

Reformatting the same post again and again is a waste of time. **Duplicate Post** makes it easy to replicate posts of any type with one click. No more copying and pasting every time you need to create the same post.

The plugin has over two million active downloads and a five star rating, which makes it incredibly reliable. All you have to do is install and activate and you can start replicating immediately.

Updraft Plus ★★★★★

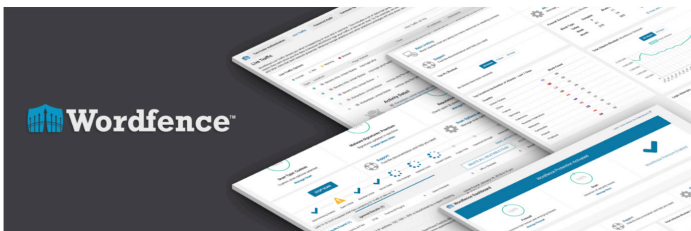


INSTALLS: 1M+

One of the most essential parts of site development is backup and restoration. Any dev knows you should never make a change without creating a backup just in case something breaks. While WordPress has some backup capabilities baked in, [Updraft Plus](#) is much more complete and easier to use.

You can backup to the cloud using any service from Google Drive to Dropbox, and then restore the original with just one click. This plugin is essential for any new site.

Wordfence ★★★★★



INSTALLS: 2M+

Security is a huge priority among anyone that works online. Having reliable security plugins is crucial for any WordPress developer. [Wordfence's](#) endpoint firewall and malware scanner will make sure you are notified at the first sign of attack. Hackers will attempt to access your site, but Wordfence will make sure they don't get very far.

Not only will the plugin keep you safe with endless features, the team also puts out a [blog](#) alerting WordPress users to large scale attacks and compromised plugins. Always be in the know about when attacks happen and how to prevent them.

All-in-One WP Migration ★★★★★

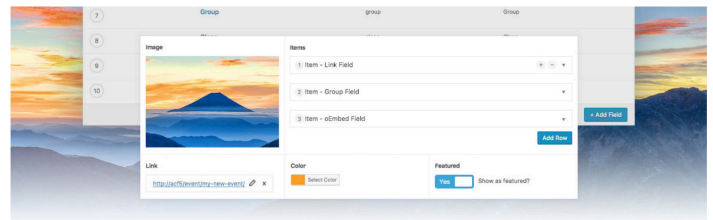


INSTALLS: 1M+

Sometimes your site gets too big and needs to be moved to a different location but transporting all your content, plugins, and themes is an incredibly daunting task, especially if you don't have a lot of technical knowledge. [All-In-One WP Migration](#) takes the worrying out of migration allowing you do it with just one click.

You can apply an unlimited number of find and replace operations during the move. The plugin is also the first to be 100 percent mobile device compatible on WordPress 3.3 and up.

Advanced Custom Fields ★★★★★



INSTALLS: 1M+

[Advanced Custom Fields](#) is considered to be the best custom fields plugin for WordPress; it has over one million downloads in the plugin repository. The plugin is simple and easy to use while still maintaining a beautiful design face. You can use Advanced Custom fields virtually any browser.

Using Advanced Custom Fields you can quickly and easily add fields on demand to any part of your WordPress site including posts, users, taxonomy terms, media, comments and even custom options pages. Lastly, there are 26 different field types including text, number, email, password and image making the plugin extendable and scalable.

Smush ★★★★★



INSTALLS: 1M+

Our Plugin Madness 2018 (and 2017) **winner!** Smush is an award-winning image optimizer. 99.99% of images on WordPress can benefit from image optimization via Smush. Smush servers do all the heavy lifting by stripping images by stripping hidden bulky information from images while still maintaining quality. There is no slowdown due to WPMU Dev's fast and reliable Smush API. Smush is compatible with any and all media library plugins. This plugin just works and should be a staple for all WordPress sites.

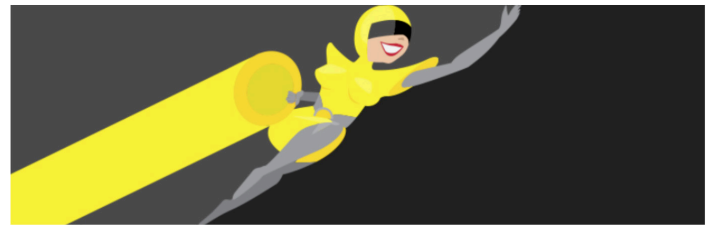
Contact Form 7 ★★★★★



INSTALLS: 5M+

With more than 5 million active installs, **Contact Form** is definitely the most downloaded and used contact for plugin that lives in the plugin repository. Unlike many other Contact Form plugins, Contact Form 7 is absolutely free and there is no limit to the amount of sites you can use it on. The plugin is also very flexible allowing you to customize forms, configure the mail settings, or create multiple forms.

Hummingbird ★★★★★

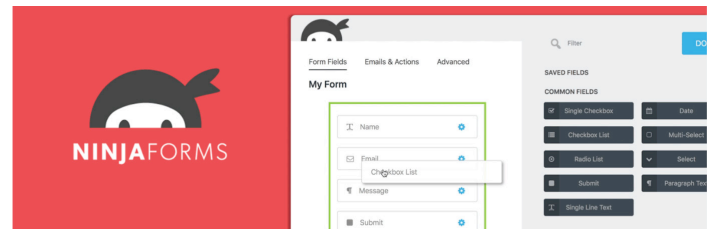


INSTALLS: 20K+

Hummingbird Page Speed Optimization optimizes the speed on your WordPress site by fine-tuning file compression, minification and full-page, browser and Gravatar caching. The plugin will zip through your site, speeding it up immediately. To help ensure that your site is always speedy, Hummingbird will provide performance reports and makes recommendations for improving performance. Hummingbird was built for users to be able to take full advantage of Cloudflare technology and uses uptime monitoring to constantly detect whether your site is performing as it should.

Marketing.

Ninja Forms ★★★★★



INSTALLS: 1M+

If you want someone to contact you or inquire about your services, you need forms on your site. Use the powerful drag-and drop functionality to create forms for any purpose. There is no limit to the number or type of forms you can create with **Ninja Forms**.

It's easy to use for beginners and experts alike with built-in hooks, filters, and custom field templates. You have the flexibility to customize forms however you need.

Custom Sidebars ★★★★★

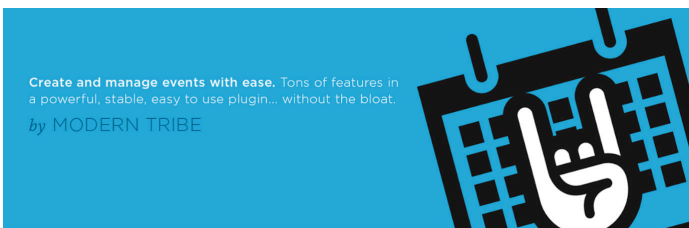


INSTALLS: 200K+

[Sidebars](#) are a great way to present pages and other navigation in a way readers can easily see them. Completely customize the way they look with custom widgets. You can elegantly display any page, post, archive category, or post type right on the side of your page.

Custom Sidebars is so customizable, you can even set individual widget visibility so different user roles or guests can see different things. You can also import and export sidebars when you find a style you like.

The Events Calendar ★★★★★

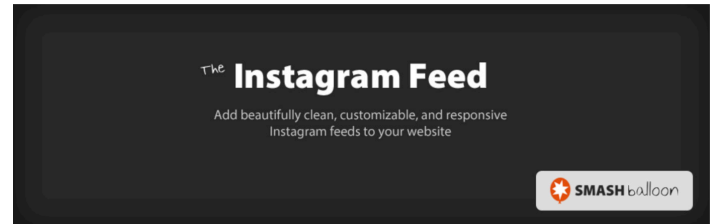


INSTALLS: 600K+

If your online business specializes in events, [The Events Calendar](#) is the best way to display a calendar right on your site. The Modern Tribe calendar is ready out of the box. The calendar is scalable and works with everything from small restaurants to huge concert venues.

Though the calendar comes with a skeleton stylesheet, every piece of it can be customized. The plugin also works with [Events Tickets](#), so you can sell tickets directly from the calendar itself.

Instagram Feed ★★★★★



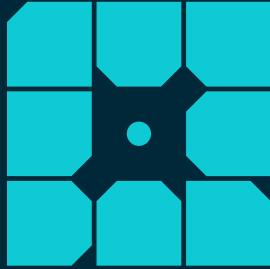
INSTALLS: 600K+

Having a presence on social media is crucial for the life of any website. While most companies consider Twitter and Facebook, many forget how powerful Instagram can be. The Instagram Feed makes sure your photos and images are displayed beautiful on your site.

With [Instagram Feed](#) you can display photographs from multiple feeds directly on the page. Showcase your photography, fashion, drawings, or more. Show off your beautiful work and get more social engagement all with one plugin.

Stay up to date.

WordPress now powers nearly a third of the internet and shows no signs of slowing down. New plugins are added to the WordPress repository everyday. To stay up to date about the best plugins and themes in the repository or learn more about all things WordPress, check out [Torque Magazine](#) and subscribe to the weekly newsletter.



About WP Engine.

WP Engine is the world's leading WordPress digital experience platform that gives companies of all sizes the agility, performance, intelligence, and integrations they need to drive their business forward faster. WP Engine's combination of tech innovation and an award-winning team of WordPress experts are trusted by over 70,000 companies across 130 countries to provide counsel and support, helping brands create world-class digital experiences. Founded in 2010, WP Engine is headquartered in Austin, Texas, and has offices in San Francisco, California; San Antonio, Texas; London, England; Limerick, Ireland, and Brisbane, Australia.

www.wpengine.com



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



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