



Case Study



Giving lean agencies the agility to land big clients.

Digital agency Symbiotisk relies on WP Engine to help meet its clients' toughest challenges.

Industry
Digital Agency

Site
symbiotisk.dk

Challenge
Build customised websites for Børns Vilkår, a children's welfare organisation in Denmark, ahead of the May 25, 2018 deadline for GDPR compliance.

Solution
WP Engine Digital Experience Platform

Results
Both sites were delivered ahead of deadline, with all needed customisations and integrations built-in.

Symbiotisk is a digital agency based in Copenhagen, Denmark that specialises in developing WordPress sites for clients both large and small. From website updates to complete digital overhauls, Symbiotisk helps clients realise their vision online and provides expert advice for everything from effective online newsletters to responsive websites.



The challenge.

Digital agency Symbiotisk started nine years ago as the brainchild of its three partners, Tore Vesterby, David Tolnem, and Mette Hertzmann. A WordPress-specialised shop from the start, today Symbiotisk is responsible for running [some of Denmark's most highly-trafficked websites](#).

While the technical expertise of the agency's founders still makes up the backbone of the business, WP Engine has helped Symbiotisk gain added agility to meet the demands of some of its largest clients, who in turn have needed Symbiotisk to deliver customised digital experiences on a tight deadline.

When Symbiotisk had the opportunity to work with [Børns Vilkår](#), a children's welfare organisation in Denmark, their pitch had to encapsulate a number of factors. Børns Vilkår wanted to rebuild its two websites, each of which required customisations for different tasks. The main site, which houses information about the organisation, needed to migrate over from its original Drupal build-out and integrate with third-party software providers.

The second site, called [Børnetelefonen](#), or "children's phone" is an online crisis hotline for at-risk youth, which required customised user permissions and mobile responsiveness to facilitate the messaging and chat functions the site uses to provide assistance to young people in need.

“We’re really happy to have found a partner like WP Engine. It’s allowed us to evolve as a business and it also allows us to focus on more of the projects we love to work on, like building beautiful, and effective websites for our clients.”

Tore Vesterby,
Partner, Symbiotisk



“Our goal was to do it all before GDPR went into effect, which was just a couple of months after we pitched them,” said Vesterby, referring to the [General Data Protection Regulation](#), a comprehensive set of European Union privacy and personal data laws which went into effect in May 2018.



The solution.

During the pitch process, the Symbiotisk team was adamant about building the new sites using WordPress.

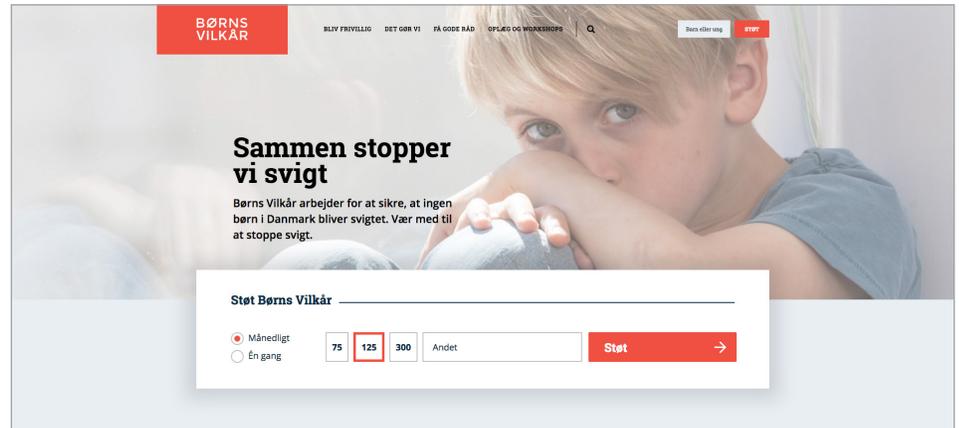
“The client was uncertain that a specialised document handling system or other proprietary software was necessary,” Vesterby said. “Meanwhile, we were sure we could build those parts entirely using WordPress.”

Tolnem, who specialises in backend customisations for Symbiotisk, used WP Engine’s Digital Experience Platform to quickly build a custom site during the pitch, and provided an impromptu demo of how he and his team would build the backend for Børns Vilkår.

“That actually helped us win the pitch,” Tolnem said. “Once we showed them what we could do, they were all on board.”

From there, the team got to work, beginning with the initial build-out of the organisational site.

“The launch process for that site was quite easy,” Vesterby said. “We built the entire site using WP Engine, and Børns Vilkår had 10-15 different editors with different roles, each of whom were able to go in and add content from the existing site before it launched.”



Once that was done, the site just needed a Domain Name System (DNS) change and it was live within an hour.

“When we launch sites like this, we configure the DNS setting in the WP Engine control panel and once that switches over, we use the [WP-CLI](#) function in the user portal to change all the URLs from WP Engine to whatever it’s going to be when it’s live.

After the first site was done, the Symbiotisk team began working on the site for Børnetelefonen, which was slightly more challenging. Tolnem shared that for this site, they needed an entire custom backend built to accommodate the different permissions the various site users had.

Because the site is designed to field messages that can include sensitive information, some members of Børns Vilkår's staff initially field messages and then divide them out across the staff.

"Some staff have a minimum interface," Tolnem said. "They only see messages they're supposed to respond to and they have custom templates for answers they can select from and edit. Once they're done, they send it back to the other staff members who ultimately facilitate the response."

Both sites also required multiple integrations with other software systems.

"On the organisational site, the donation feature is partly done using [WordPress Gravity Forms](#), but then another company is processing the donations using a different server, and our two platforms need to talk to one another," Tolnem said. "The site also needed to integrate with an existing [Apsis newsletter system](#), which is similar to Mailchimp."

"We implemented sharing code for Facebook and Twitter," Tolnem said. "Because we had WP Engine in the background the whole time, it made all of the different integrations much easier."



The results.

The sites Symbiotisk built for Børns Vilkår were precisely what the organisation needed, and both are seeing higher traffic and engagement since the relaunch.

With both sites up and running ahead of the GDPR deadline, Vesterby said the experience had only further solidified his positive impressions of WP Engine.

"We're really happy to have found a partner like WP Engine," Vesterby said. "It's allowed us to evolve as a business, and it also allows us to focus on more of the projects we love to work on, like building beautiful websites for our clients."

Tolnem added that the peace of mind they get from having WP Engine take care of regular maintenance and back-ups was a huge asset.

"If we had to deal with servers all the time, I wouldn't be able to sleep at night, and I like sleeping," he said. "Being a small agency but running really high profile sites, for a country of our size, it's very comforting to know that WP Engine is keeping an eye on things for us."

"We're looking forward to our next client, and our next opportunity to work with WP Engine."

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. 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.