[Webinar] transcript: Resell WP Engine into a 6 figure website maintenance program
[Webinar Recording](#)

LEXI MOSTEK:

All right, everyone. I'm going to turn down the music and get started. Welcome to our first webinar of 2024. I did, put in the chat. What's your New Year's resolution? Feel free to hop in that chat and tell us, either personally or professionally. Mine is to be more present. I feel like I start every year with that. But I have an 18 month at home, and I'm trying to be present when I'm with her, and then get my work done during the day, so that I can enjoy my family time outside of that.

Just a couple of housekeeping things from me, and then we will move on to this lovely panel.

If you haven't met me before. My name is Lexi, and I am one of our lead event managers here at WP Engine and I'm just going to kick us off on this webinar and then pass it over to our lovely Ashley, who will lead you through. Today our webinar is on how to grow and resell with WP Engine we will be recording this webinar if you want to share it with a colleague, or catch the recording after the webinar.

And if you have any questions, please, please use the question & answer feature in zoom. If you just check out your zoom task bar, you can click Q&A, and you can ask questions. You can help answer questions up out questions. We will take kind of those questions at the end of the webinar.

And with that said, I am going to introduce Ashely Beasley, who is one of our sales team, lead here for the agency account manager program at WP Engine, and Ashley is going to take you through a couple of minutes of content and then introduce this lovely panel. Ashley, I'm going to hand the mic over to you.

ASHLEY BEASLEY:

Thanks so much, Lexi. Hey Everyone, I am super excited to be here. This is the first webinar I've hosted, so I'm also just really excited to be a part of this in general.

A few key points to hit before we kick off the introductions. Just wanted to remind y'all why we're doing this, Webinar. Why, we're here today. At the end of the day. Wp. And Joe wants to help you build a lucrative, reoccurring revenue stream we want to help you grow your audience as a reseller and things we can do to help you. With that, you know, we can clarify where to start and how to level up your offerings leveling up things like pricing how you sell to your clients, or maybe some of your internal workflows that involve communications between you and your clients, or between you and Wp engine we want to shed light on how agencies add value to the Wp. And Zoom Platform as well. And we want to provide social proof of how reselling works on WP Engine And how agencies that work with us are succeeding right now.

So, as Lexi said, please drop any questions thoughts, concerns in the chat throughout the Webinar. We may not be able to get to all of them, but Lexi is, going to keep an eye on things and flag any reoccurring things or reoccurring questions that we can make sure to address and have the panelists answer at the end. So, the art of reselling hosting services is ever evolving. So that's why we don't want you to hesitate to jump in the chat and ask questions. We definitely want this to be collaborative for you.

The reason we are featuring 3 top agencies as our 3 panelists today, rather than running through an official WP Engine slide, deck of quote and quote, how to resell is because we recognize the art of reselling is ever changing, and relies on things like market conditions, competitors, and WordPress as it evolves.

So really quick before we jump into official introductions of our panelists, we're going do a quick audience poll to get everyone warmed up and to hopefully glean a better understanding of how y'all are currently operating. So if you can check that quick poll, it has a question around hosting and maintenance retainers, and what you charge per month. You know, if this doesn't exactly represent what you charge. Just pick the option that is closest to it.

But if everyone could just take a minute and I'll give you a beat to answer that poll.

All right, Looks like we have some answers here on the poll. The question was, what are you currently charging for hosting and maintenance per month. 3% of the answers was $0. Nothing. 18% of our answers is under $49 a month. Looks like we have 24%. That's 15 people voted somewhere between $50 and $99 a month. We have 31%, which is 19 people chose between $100- $99 a month and then we have 24% of our webinar audience, which is 15 people charge 200 or more a month for hosting or hosting and maintenance.

So thank you for taking the time to do that. It's super interesting to see where everyone is sitting there, and we'll definitely see where our panelists sit. Compared to whatever your answer was. So for introductions. Again, my name is ASHLEY BEASLEY. I'm a sales lead here, sales, team lead. I work in agency account management I've been with WP Engine since 2021 and I haven't loved back since. I absolutely love it here. It's been a great fit for me, and I love getting involved. However, I can in my role. I regularly work with agencies that resell on our platform.

At the end of the day. I'm here to make sure processes are as automated as possible for my agencies. That their account help is in order that they have headroom for growth, anticipated growth. So we can support those growth goals. And I want to help with support interactions and other WP Engine workflows and help make those workflows as smooth as possible for you. I'm also here to offer a consultative approach regarding most the most effective and risk averse ways to scale on our platform.

So key things I do there is an agency account, manager few fun facts about me, I'm a total modern furniture nerd. I used to work in interior design. So if you know anyone like Charles and Ray Eames or Florence Noel or Arrow Saran. Those are all you know figures in history that really impacted modern design as it is today. So hit me up on Linkedin. I'll talk about that kind of stuff any day. I used to dabble in dog training, and then my weakness is Benji sci-fi, or fantasy TV shows. So that's a little bit about me. I'm going to go ahead and intro our 3 panelists.

Let's see, first, I'm going to introduce BILL FOW. He is the co-founder and director of web development as aspire digital solutions. As I'm introducing Bill, Lexi's going to drop the Linkedin for aspire digital solutions and their website in the chat. Definitely give them a follow check out their site show some love there. Aspire Digital solutions is a digital marketing agency. They focus on web development and custom dev products. WP Engine actually did a feature on aspire years ago, and Bill has been a consistent advocate for reselling with Wp. And gin since. Thank you so much, Bill. Do. You have just a little tidbit of info about you and your agency. Anything I missed there, Bill.

BILL FOW:
Sure. Thanks for having me on here. It's it's like truly an honor. I've been with WP Engine since 2014. So I'd say, like, our agency is kind of a mix of like classic digital marketing agency but we have this web design and development component, which goes a lot of the times a little more, you know, beyond your basic WordPress website. So we always just wanted to make sure that we had a turnkey solution and just provided the best product possible to our clients.

We started aspire in 2017, late 2017 and that's kind of where I came from this web design background. And I met my business partner and she had kind of a creative background. And that synergy has worked well for us. So we're continuing to grow and it's a very exciting time to be in web design and digital marketing with with AI and I think we have developed a good tech stack. So I'm

Everything in our journey. I've tried all the different like hosting models. So like I'm happy to hence answer any questions any agency h. as

ASHLEY BEASLEY:
awesome thanks, Bill. Super excited to introduce you here, and thanks for taking taking the time to be a part of this.

Next we have DAN GRAHAM, chief executive officer at Sm. 2 dev. When I asked Dan what his favorite part of the job was, he said, getting to wear pajamas all day, and I with that I am always blazer on the top Pjs on the bottom, except I have proper pants on today, because I wanted to feel official for the webinar. So here we are. Let's see, SM2Dev, this is their 21st first year in business. About 65% of their work is through other agencies. The rest is direct to client. They work a lot with mobile app and custom dev work, too.

But as wordpress has been growing, they've been embracing their partnership with WP Engine much more and they actually let their clients know that any service and maintenance, and in regards to Wordpress has to be on WP Engine. So, Dan, I'll hand the mic to you. What am I missing?

DAN GRAHAM:
Yeah, no, I think that's a good, especially the pajamas part I'm a life or work from home person. This is really all I've done for my entire life was build this agency so really for us we pair really well, with other larger agencies. They outsource work to us. A lot more custom, dev size, some still some basic wordpress websites, but custom plugins and whatnot. So we kind of do run the gamut kind of align aligning with what Bill had said. I think we've been with WP Engine for about 8 years or so. Now. And really the solution that they've been able to provide for us is kind of gave us a little more confidence in what we were doing. Some of our clients being in the healthcare space higher education obviously security being a concern and everything. So again, honored to ask to be here happy to answer any questions that we that you have and yeah.

ASHLEY BEASLEY:
awesome. Thank you, Dan, really appreciate it. So we have our last, but not least. Our third panelist is BOBBY KING, Chief Operations Officer at the White Label Agency. Bobby started 10 years ago, providing essentially just dev services but is now offering design, content, maintenance, hosting services. The list goes on. The White Label Agency, white labels, all services and works as a partner to digital agencies, and in the past year they let clients know they're only working in regards to wordpress only working with WP Engine the main reason for this being the positive experiences that Bobby has had with our support team. So, Bobby, I'll hand it off to you for a little bit.

BOBBY KING:
Yeah, thank you very much. And yeah, very excited to be here and to share our experiences, reselling hosting and meeting packages. As you said. Yeah, it's been 10 years I've been with the with the business White Label agency. We started with just a very small team of wordpress developers and growing it to over 160 team members now. A lot of lessons learned working with many, many agency partners and working with all the team members that are partly latency so super excited to share those experiences and hopefully help other agencies that are looking to do some of things. Thanks for having me.

ASHLEY BEASLEY:
Of course. Thank you, Bobby. And as we've been speaking, Lexi has been dropping Bobby Bill and Dan's Linkedin and website and the chat. So again, make sure to check those out. Give them a follow on Linkedin. I'm sure if you had any questions after today's webinar, you know, the 3 of them would

be happy to connect via something like Linkedin, and, you know, answer any remaining questions. Thoughts concerns you have.

A few points I wanted to hit before we jump into the panelists. Questions is, you know there's a reason we took a panelist approach to this webinar. We want you to hear from a first hand source. What's working for agencies, how they arrange their hosting and maintenance plans, and how reselling has benefited both them and their clients.

In the past WP Engine hasn't necessarily broadcasted a reseller program. recently, we've reevaluated and we really want to lean into this on the agency side so that we can better support y'all so we want to talk about it more reselling. What does it mean? How do you do it each of the agencies featured here today in the webinar operate under what we call an account management as a hybrid model.

This means that the agency both resells and refers clients onto new accounts of their own. There are valid reasons to operate, utilizing both reselling and referring but as a point of clarification. Today we are going to focus solely on the reselling piece.

So let's go ahead and jump into the panelists questions. This question. The first one is for everyone. So we'll go and order Bill, Dan and Bobby. Why do you and your agency provide hosting and maintenance as a service, Bill?

BILL FOW:
Organically, we provide it because it was just something that we needed in order to make a good web design process. So, having our own host being able to spin up environments and then just having something reliable to help with any, you know, restoring backups. You know, all that kind of basic stuff was just needed to provide a good service.

ASHLEY BEASLEY:
Awesome, Dan?

DAN GRAHAM:
Yeah. I think my story is slightly longer than bills. When you know when we first started it was still people hosting their own websites on servers in back room, potentially. So we've we've kind of hosting has come a very, very long way for us. We were always looked at as like the agency that had, like the all in one solution for our clients. A lot of our clients are referral based.

So, when they came to us and we had all the solutions of ideation, wireframing, design development, servicing anything that the bill we could do it. And then, when it came to hosting, we're kind of like, where are you hosting right now? and it kind of become became an overall issue for us. so more panics, more fires over the course of time. So, in establishing the relationship with WP Engine. We began to see a path and to not lose money was our first call, because you know, all

these things that come up and wanted to be able to provide the service to our clients, but we found that it was eating into our bottom line. Just the fire that came up, that take up full days for engineers and everything. So, once we establish this with WP Engine we were able to control that that loss, and then we'd be able to. We started seeing how many people were able to, just want us to handle it for them. And we had that trusting relationship with Wp. Engine. So, it allowed us to actually turn it into a service that then started really actually creating some really good reoccurring revenue with us.

When we started telling everyone that either on WP Engine or you can find other hosting. We did lose a couple of clients, but we retained about 96% of our clients, stayed on our service contracts and everything. And honestly, they didn't really care where we were hosting it. They just trusted us. So, they kind of went with our. So some of them wanted to say, Okay, who is WP engine? Why are they so good, and some at times we've had our account. Managers speak with a few of our larger clients with that, otherwise they're like, hey? If you trust them. Then we'll trust them.

So essentially, at the end of the day it allowed us to build some really good reoccurring revenue. Medicine

ASHLEY BEASLEY:
awesome, really quick, Dan, just to piggyback off what you said. Do you have examples of fires that are more easily avoided. Now that you streamline your hosting through WP Engine.

DAN GRAHAM:
Yeah, I mean, I think everyone that's probably watching this right now can think of the times that they had clients that didn't pay their bill on a random Godaddy account that no one has access to anymore. The oh, my website, I think my website was hacked but couldn't get access to the Admin panel for some for one reason or another. Just all of those things that came up on like a regular basis, that we've all seen, on top of that the word that password go. And what account was that on? And did that move get moved 2 years ago? And and all of those things.

So just having one platform that my devs can take a look at and manage everything from just made it just so much easier for us. And now, obviously, those fires still come up. But we have WP Engine to to help us with those fires, and we also know exactly where everything is

ASHLEY BEASLEY:
Sure. Awesome, fantastic. We'll move on to Bobby. Why do you and your agency provide hosting and maintenance as a service?

BOBBY KING:
Yeah, I think the main things are improved workflow for our team and our partners. And then also definitely monthly recurring revenue is a very good thing. So speaking to the workflow portion of it, kind of before we got involved in hosting ourselves, we would have just our one kind of development

server that we had to run the engine and that works great. And then, when we finished a project or a developers finish the project we'd migrate it over to whatever host our client had. which worked okay until they came back, like 2 weeks later or a month later and said, My client wants this little thing fixed, or wants another page added so we had to figure out how we can fit this back into the dev schedule and it it was really hard to kind of get all that scheduled and have it work well for very small jobs that we're getting paid very much money on.

So that's when we decided to not only do the maintenance service, but also the hosting where we could say, okay, your sites completed. We're going to host it for you. Or we prefer you host with WP Engine. And then we can also saw you this ongoing maintenance package. So whenever you had those requests and they come a lot, and if you have continents, etc can come to us. We'll get you fit in right away, and our maintenance team will take care of those those types of. So that's why it works out really well for workflow.

And for the month of recovering revenue, yeah, there's this with that project where we have, there's a lot of ebbs and flows of you have a ton of projects can't keep up with it. And then they drop off. And you're like, Okay, when's that next dollar coming in? We have got make it a few more months. So it is smooth out the cash flow lot. So recurrent revenue is great.

ASHLEY BEASLEY:
Okay. And we'll get into details and future questions here. But how long did it take you to get to that point where that the money coming in from hosting a maintenance you were making money off of it. When did that become lucrative?

BOBBY KING:
We're still building that up, cause we're scaling up the maintenance team. I think we're at a point now where that the maintenance and the hosting piece is, we're definitely a little bit above break even but we have the capacity to probably double it and make nice margins on it if we just stopped and didn't like scale up the team anymore into into tools and stuff.

We also serving agencies. We have our project model for development. We also have dedicated maintenance developers where basically people are buying months at a time of development. And that also helps quite a bit with that recurring revenue on being profitable. So kind of adding on services as we go. Maintenance has been a great experiment. It's definitely gone. Well, and now we're scaling that up.

ASHLEY BEASLEY:
Okay. Awesome. Yeah. And I can only assume that. yeah, the time saved for what would normally require maybe hours of debt work through streamlining your processes. Has, you know, saved maybe some money as well?

BOBBY KING:

No, definitely. to the point that the has been brought up before, of having to migrate over to other servers. Tons of time has been saved with all the headaches that come from that.

ASHLEY BEASLEY:

Okay, cool, cool. Well, let's move on to the next question. Next question is, going to be for Bill. Bill, Can you articulate how you pitch the value of hosting as a service to new or existing clients?

BILL FOW:

Sure. First, I just want to touch on like I love the journey to like the, you know, losing money on hosting and then breaking even, and then making money on it. We're finally at the making money point. But it was a was a journey, and I also just wanted to point out, like WP Engine isbuilt into our processes like contact. WP Engine support is like a step in our sops. Migrating websites as a step in our SOPs.

I think the main reason we went with WP Engine to begin with, was, the support is so good like it's having an extension of my team. I rely on WP Engine knowing that like I can fall and get something done. Now I don't have time to wait on, like, you know live chat with Godaddy. So that's the main reason I used it, and I equate to like having, I'd have to hire someone like a full time salary to you know, do the nuance-y kind of server maintenance stuff that just is kind of done with it. So that's kind of more of the why that I didn't touch on and then, in terms of the value and how I pitch it. A classic conversation with my business partner and I, when we're talking.

Web design is like our way into like a lot of our marketing contracts because people understand like, Oh, I want a website. They don't really care if it's WordPress. But they probably heard of WordPress. So they're like, Okay, that's good. And then, like Dan was saying, like, they're just trying to. They want to trust that we're giving them the best option. So a classic conversation with my business partner on a sales call be like you know. She'll go through our web design process and then she'll say, and we offer hosting and maintenance. And Bill can tell you more about that, because I'm kind of like the techier guy, and that's when I'll I just chime in now. And ever since the beginning, like of our selling our first website, I would just say, "we host everything with WP Engine, because it's just the safest, and the support is the best. It's the most secure. If you ever have, like a hack or need a remediation, they handle that for you. I've personally dealt with having sites get hacked and then hiring consultants to go in. It's just like a whole nightmare. So that kind of support is a. It's a good. It's a big thing. Free SSL Certificate, I think Godaddy still charges like 99 bucks, or whatever for an Ssl like that's included. And then overall management." And then I just say that it's built into our process.

So, I will say like, when we first started, I was selling a month like $30 a month accounts, and kind of treating it that way. So we had a lot of clients on a yearly like $300 a year, hosting like generic hosting. And then the maintenance was on top of that, and we finally have everyone. It's only

monthly. It's bundled and you know we can control how many sites we have on our servers and now it's finally become comfortable. So it's just kind of part of the discussion, like, I don't go into too much detail and open up too many opportunities for questions or doubt. If I get asked. Why WP Engine, I'll go into all the detail that I need.

I will say we won't provide maintenance if it's on another host, cause it just doesn't fit into our process. It's you can't scale that way. Like, we're looking to create a scalable business. So yeah. That's how we express the value to new leads.

ASHLEY BEASLEY:

Yeah, that's great. I mean, cause I, you know, at the end of the day it's my role is is, I'm a salesperson, right? So I can communicate the value of WP Engine as a platform to you the agency. But you, as the agency, are turning around and then essentially pitching that to your client, right? So it's like it puts you in this position where you're for lack of a better word, the *salesperson* so it helps to get clarity on what that dynamic looks like between you and your clients.

Let's see Dan and Bobby. Is there anything you want to Just piggyback and add on? Any common forms of pushback you get from clients, when discussing, offering, hosting and maintenance?

DAN GRAHAM:

Yeah, I mean, as I mentioned before, a lot of our work is all is referrals to us. So when it comes down to that, I mean, maybe 25 to 30% of our clients maintain their own content on the website, the rest will have us make updates depending on the on the industry that they're in. But 100% of them do not want to update plugins themselves. They do not want to deal with security issues. They do not want to figure out why. Why am I all of a sudden getting inundated with spam, you know all they don't want to deal with any of that, and I think something for us that I kind of had to get over a little bit was the fact of, especially early on in the business was that like, just because this stuff was all easy to me, it certainly wasn't easy to any of them. They're trying to run their business whether it is a a restaurant or a 500 person tech company, they want to run their business. They don't want to think about their website being down and affecting sales and affecting people knowing if they're open or not, all of those things. So, it's kind of just a cost of doing business and having that knowing like, yeah, I've had early on had people like, well, I can go to Godaddy or one of the other ones and pay $10. I was like, go ahead like, that's fine. We'll migrate the site over there, and you can take it from there.

They never did. And you know they eventually saw a lot of the value that we were bringing by providing these maintenance contracts. And obviously we can confidently sell those, no matter what size the client is knowing that we had WP Engine to to have our backs on it.

ASHLEY BEASLEY:

Awesome, I'll go ahead and move on for the sake of time, I'll go in and move on to the next question.

This next question is going to be for Dan. We know there are a lot of software and services you can build into your tech stack. How are you strategic with tech, stack consolidation? And how do you ensure your tech stack has the most value? Also like, what did you learn along the way?

DAN GRAHAM:
Yeah. This was this was part of our. It was about 6 years ago that we're able to find out. Figure out how much money we're losing on these service contracts or lack thereof, and still dealing with the problems of them. So a couple of big things that I would say like any agency looking to grow in this space is obviously, you know, again, WP Engine isn't paying us to be here. There is problems that they have solved for my business as a whole, and going through every other type of host that has ever been. I think getting on a platform where you have trust and help, especially if you're a small business is number one, number 2. We also have done a lot of work. 2 of my lead WordPress engineers, Kelly and David, really focus on creating what we call our trust list. And this is the list of plugins and tools that we use within WordPress and that's really all we use outside of very special circumstances or building our own custom plugins. It allowed us to create a list that all of our engineers are very aware of and know how to use. So that way anyone can jump in at any time and be able to service, the website without it going like, hey, how did this guy build this a year ago? Well, it was built with a lot of the same tools that would that we use today.

So it makes it much more seamless. As I mentioned before, the fact that all done through one platform as well. You know we do monthly and quarterly maintenance depending on the contract. And you know my team can go through 100 something sites and maybe 2 days. And get all of our servicing done, and everything which, turns, you know, I lost into a really big win for us.

ASHLEY BEASLEY:
Awesome. Very cool. Alright? Let's see. Next question is going to be directed towards Bobby. Can you give us an example of how you successfully set your price model, or how can you discuss how your price model has evolved in the last few years?

I think Lexi is going to tee up a slide here and show. The pricing page on the white Label agency website.

BOBBY KING:
Yeah, our our pricing is definitely evolved as we started the the maintenance and hosting service.

In the beginning, we kind of just put our feelers out there into the into the industry and looked at a lot of competitors and based our pricing on kind of what was being offered, what we're seeing out there, as well as taking into account. What is the labor cost? Going to be, what kind of software do we need for this? And we ended up starting with, just a like $49 per site per month type of package and we didn't say any kind of minimum. So we take one site. We take 1,000 sites type of deal.

That was definitely a learning experience. We had some good experiences with these, this kind of smaller packages, like the one to 3 sites, but that was like very rare the ones that had maybe 20 sites with us 50 sites. Those were a lot more fruitful for our company and, so we dug into. Well, what's going on with the the $49 sites that only have one to 3 sites.

And it's just what we found is typically, a smaller agency that's not so interested in maintenance like they only would sell one site or their client only ask for one. So we end up spending a lot of time, and they're just not really interested. So if you're going to get on meeting with them or need credentials to get into a certain server we'd be chased them down. We'd be wasting so much time and money just with the communication, and then all the administrative tasks. So sending them an invoice for 49 bucks each month. It didn't make a lot of sense. So we kind of regrouped and went back and said, Okay, let's start at a higher package level. And basically we're going to raise our prices. But we're also going to raise the value. So that's when we added in the actual hosting with the WP Engine. We put that into the package. We went from doing 1 h of site edits per month per site up to unlimited edits per month per package.

And we also added a few other services, such as like, uptime monitoring, and these other ones that you can see on the screen here now. So I think as long as you're delivering that value and bring the extra, you can attract the higher prices and sell it value. Pass a value over to your client.

ASHLEY BEASLEY:
Awesome? Yeah. And it's really nice to have that pricing page to show as an example. We touched on this a little earlier about how long did it take you as an agency to ramp up to the larger packages and the higher pricing?

BOBBY KING:
Yeah. So we started with the maintenance service back in like spend about 3 years now. And just about a year ago, we said, Okay, we're going to go back to our client base. We had about 60 different accounts at that time, and kind of give the ultimatum of if you have, you can either come up to these 10 site packages. We'll continue to serve the lower quantity packages for another year and else we'll either have to move up or find another solution. We'll have you do that.

So yeah, that was just within like the past year that we went to these new price models. Okay, as far as anyone that's going to be getting into maintenance for the first time. I think one of the key lessons we learned is start basic, like, if you're not really confident with your tech skills or exactly what you want to offer, yet just do like plugin updates, theme updates, backups, keep it very simple. Get a pricing point that you're comfortable with. Cover your costs a little bit margin, and then kind of build it up as you get used to used to it, and comfortable with it.

ASHLEY BEASLEY:

Absolutely. Thank you for sharing Bobby. I'm going to pass the mic to bill over here, Bill. Quick question, how did you land on pricing for your hosting and maintenance plans, and what factors went into deciding how much you charge?

BILL FOW:

Man, what a journey that was we went from charging like nothing to, after everything. It pretty much came down to $49 a month. Bobby. That's our bare bit like our bare bones. We really, I can show you guys what my plan is, am I allowed to share a screen on this?

LEXI MOSTEK:

Can you send me the link. I don't think it'll let you share.

BILL FOW:

It's a Pdf.

LEXI MOSTEK:

hmm!

ASHLEY BEASLEY:

We can always send it out

LEXI MOSTEK:

Perfect clicking on the fly

BILL FOW:

Cool alright, so, you know. we still, we sell like hosting in a few different ways, and we're always trying to sell the whole, not the drill. So for, like marketing clients or any client that has, like an additional service. We'll just bundle wordpress, hosting in with like the maintenance and the support.

But for web design shops. And we're just doing a website for someone. The basic is always $49 a month. And I just want to walk you through how we arrived at a couple of these nuances in here which are pretty interesting.

We determined basic by being just like a site with less than 5 plugins really like less than 3. If it's like a basic basic website where we're really just using smart plugin manager and keeping an eye on things. For $49 a month we have a ton of these. They're fine. They just kind of run themselves. We don't do anything on it because there's not even does. It doesn't even cover an hour of our time.

And then we have this basic plus which we determined by being sites that have maybe, like a few more complex plugins, not woocommerce, but I don't know like Wp. Forms, or rank math, or any kind of marketing plugin any potential. It takes a little extra time every month to look over, and maybe some manual that's like our basic plus plan.

And then, you know, most of our clients we want on these higher tier plans. And so where we're at currently with it is 2 hours of support that we just base this on real statistics from our support ticket system. So we have Whmcs as our support ticket system, which, like, saved our life. And this is like where we do our billing.

Our plans are built through here, and then we know what tier they're on in their client portal system, and then they submit their tickets through their client portal. We track the time so just based on the rough number of the like hours it takes per client. We kind of came up with this 2 hours and then development hours are really just anything on top of that. If you want a page you want like a new blog template landing page. We bill on that basis.

And then the same for enterprise on enterprise we just give. You know, this is really for businesses, Mo. Like most businesses where you know, their website is mission critical. But the point I wanted to talk about here is, **overage for like custom sites**, and this has been an ongoing thing, and I'd love to hear like a everyone's thoughts on this. So we got in a situation where we're selling all these one off websites, mainly small websites, lawyers, restaurants, doctors, you know, as kind of a generalist agency, and everything was fine for a very long time. But we started these like international sites, where they wanted us to take over the hosting or redoing a website. And we have really no benchmark on how much traffic their sites get, how much, how big it is, and it doesn't fit into a package. So my kind of solution to that at the moment is up to 25,000 visitors, 10 GB of storage, 40 GB of bandwidth. It's broad it matches WP Engine's pricing page for the moment.

But if you need more bandwidth, it's extra 50 cents per gigabyte. So I had to build in a way to scale clients that were just killing us like eating up all the server resources and paying the same amount as other clients. I just kind of got this under control, and like June and if there was one thing I think, that we've like thought of, it was that, and we use WHMCS to handle the calculation of the gig of the gigabytes, and we're working on a provisioning module, so that when you actually like sign up and buy a hosting plan through the aspire client portal, it'll provision account in WP Engine as long as the Api lets us. We're going to try to automate that process.

Long answer. But I, you know just wanted to show how we got to that point.

ASHLEY BEASLEY:
Absolutely no. And all the details are very much appreciated like we want to take a deep dive into y'all's brains right now. So, and I'm sure I haven't been able to keep up with the chat. But I know

there were some things you asked for feedback around, Bill. I'm sure people have been dropping comments in there. For the sake of time I have 2 more quick questions. I'm going to knock through, and then we'll move on to the audience. QA.

ASHLEY BEASLEY:
Let's see, next question I have is for Bobby. Do white label WP Engine's hosting services. If so, do you have tips on how to do?

BOBBY KING:
Yeah, so our default option is to basically will purchase the server boxes from the WP engine, and then we resell them. But that comes with. Then the agency needs access, and WP Engine is awesome about kind of setting up different account users, and like segregating them into their own spaces on, on even the larger servers. So that's worked out really well.

And then a tip for that is for the white label aspect of it, we love the single sign on feature, but it doesn't work great when it says, like Bobby at the white late latency, and it's going into one of our agencies and clients account. They're like, who the heck is. This guy?

So we set up a just a very simple way of doing it, just a default generic email address that we use for that. And then our maintenance personnel that have access to the accounts. They don't have to worry about single sign on making new users and creating confusion there. So that's definitely one tip. If they you want to kind of white label it

And then sometimes we just have agencies that want full control of their server or their client does, and then we just pass on the recommendation to WP Engine, and the teams been awesome about kind of taking over that conversation and getting them set up with a good solution.

ASHLEY BEASLEY:
Fantastic. Dan or Bill, any other comments you wanted to add on in regard to white labeling.

DAN GRAHAM:
Yeah, I mean, I think for us. I think a lot of agencies always have to make that that decision right of to white label their services or work that people are doing for them or their hosting, or anything. Obviously, Bobby, given the name of the business we know what direction that they or what direction they have support and everything. And II think it really comes down to the industry and the type of clients you have and everything. I don't think there's a wrong answer there at all. We really have no reason to white label WP Engine hosting. We typically, what's good for us is that A if something goes wrong, we could say it's WP Engine's fault, which, you know, never really happens but and then but honestly, more importantly, it allows us connect them directly. WP Engine. You know, we, we works up with some rather large clients in the healthcare space. They have an it department that are like, wait, you're where are you hosting this? Who is this going to be with? And

everything like that? And we brought in Wp engines, tech teams to speak directly to security and other stuff that you know, we're developers. We understand service security and stuff. We're not server techs. So you know, our approach to it is like, Hey, we are one of the best wordpress developers in the space. And we could solve all of these problems. WP Engine is the best wordpress host in the space. So this is why we work together. And not try to be everything all in one, and we do the same thing with SEO. We do the same thing with any type of web marketing which we don't do either. We prefer those partnerships and to pass those people along where needed.

ASHLEY BEASLEY:
Yeah, absolutely. It's sort of like white label when it makes sense. But you know, be transparent communication around your partnerships when that makes sense. So totally get that. Oka. Cool. Last question I have before we move on to audience. QA. Is is for Dan. How are you adding value to WP Engine's platform to enhance your clients? So what is your clients experience. So what is your agency specifically doing to add additional value onto WP Engine as a platform?

DAN GRAHAM:
Yeah, I think I kind of answered that because we really don't add a lot more on top of Wp engine, because, you know, if new things do come up and new tools, I know the nitro pack upgrade that recently happened. So we're always exploring those things and giving advice to our clients as to what tools we should use from WP Engine or from other tools. Within wordpress so for us is kind of less about adding value on top of Wp engine is more about the fact that we feel that Wp. Engine is kind of equal to us in terms of the level of service that we're providing. And we're just telling them, Hey, we are. We are good at what we do. They are good, they do. And then, to be honest, 95% of our clients don't care. They're just like, alright, it's safe. It's not getting hacked. It's running fast. Okay, cool, you know. And we don't really get a whole lot of questions in that space.

ASHLEY BEASLEY:
Sure, sure. In a quick plug Dan referenced our new partnership with Nitro Pack. We now offer page speed. Boost WP Engine, first front end optimization tool and we are super stoked about it. I think. Lexi dropped a support article about page speed boost in the chat. We sell it by the license.

DAN GRAHAM:
I wasn't paid for that, but I will take anything that comes from this. WP Engine Keeps supplying us with new tools. We explore them, see who it's a fit for, and really then be able to go to our clients and say, Hey, we should give this a try because of Xyz. And that's really the guidance is really the the value that we're adding

ASHLEY BEASLEY:
cool, very cool. Thank you, Dan. Yes, Dan, this is not a paid gig. Dan is here for free he's rocking it. Let's see Bill or Bobby anything that y'all would specifically Want to bring up in regard to things you do to add value to WP Engine as a platform.

BOBBY KING:

Yeah, what one thing that I've we found with the engine is that it's it's really great about kind of staying on top of technology, like other hosts out there you go in for like our clients, and they're still on php, 704 stuff like that. So one thing that came up this past year was the upgrade to like the latest Php additions. Lots of warnings from WP Engine, but one way we could add value is, say.

Hey, we want to move your sites over here. If they're a little outdated, we can test this before we go and update it. So that was like 1 one of those things, I guess. Get the conversation started like, what is the value of WP Engine being on a good hosting environment? What do you have to think about? And that opened up a lot of conversations of like I don't even wanna deal with that. So it just can. You can add some more business if you have the ability to take on those types of requests.

BILL FOW:

Yeah, I can add one thing about that, too. in terms of adding value. I think it's how we can utilize the tools. The WP Engine tools. We had a recent project. It was a huge project. It was overwhelming, and we had to deal with like reverse proxies and all. It was like just a very complicated multi-site migration. And I took that project on because I it was a unique value. Like we were able to collaborate with our partner manager and get access to like really just a very deep level of integration. We had a screen share call between the WP Engine, Senior Tech and our client.

Amd we didn't stop until we got a resolution. So the value there was like the fact that I was a WP Engine partner, and they knew that they trust they knew they wanted to bring the rest of their site from AWS to WP Engine, but they didn't trust that they could do it themselves, and they didn't necessarily trust that WP Engine would be able to fully help them. So like we kind of came in as a you know, a third party, and that was how we kind of contributed value, and I don't think the project would have been able to happen any other way.

ASHLEY BEASLEY:

Sure, thank you for sharing Bill. Cool. Well, that wraps up the questions I have. I'm going to go ahead and pass it back to Lexi. So she can run the audience. QAI know she's been monitoring the questions. Y'all have been dropping in the chat. And Lexi will have some final wrap up notes as well. But I, personally just want to say thank you sincerely to our panelists. They hopped on meetings to prepare for this call with us, and they've been running through material with us. So we just really appreciate your time and contributions. So thanks. Y'all.

LEXI MOSTEK:

Yes. Lots of love in the chat and on the emojis this has been. This has gone so fast. I feel like, I say, that every webinar but there are so many questions, and we're going to get to a handful of them. But just giving everyone additional. Follow up. We will be following up trying to get articles and

information out on all of these questions, because, I guarantee you. You are not the only one that has the question.

I have kind of like a hypothetical situation or scenario, but I will ask this, maybe to Dan, but when a new client comes and asks you to build their website, how are you pitching the value of hosting? That's obviously like a much longer term, a much longer contract, not just like a one and done project. How are you pitching that value or articulating that value to a potential new customer?

DAN GRAHAM:
Yeah, certainly. So one place that we do differently is that we do charge by the year for all of our servicing and hosting as well. We as a smaller team. We struggled to keep up with billing monthly and everything. So we kind of we've lumped this all together, included support and maintenance and hosting all in one package, and we kind of we add that as a line item in the overall proposal.

And when you're looking at a website at the scale at to scale, you know, it's just a little add-on to it as well. So it's kind of like shows the person all right, I built, though. II get the website built for this much money, and I'm going to have it posted and everything for a year, and I don't need to worry about all of that. It just makes it just part of like, part of what the scope is versus going. Okay, we built this for you? Now you have to pay us for this and I think that that was the the big difference maker for us, and taking away the monthly fee which was a difficult decision. We tried it out at first to see if it would work. We we've had a lot of success for it. I think people just kind of would rather just write that one check than see their credit card get pinged every month. Specifically again, for the type of industries that we work in

LEXI MOSTEK:
totally and thank you for that. I am going to pass this to, I think, Bill, but obviously we're in 2024. A lot of all of you gentlemen have been in business several years. How are you navigating raising your hosting rates. Or have you learned anything from past experience like we all started a long time ago and charged a very different and how are you navigating that experience with clients and still articulating value, or increases in rates?

BILL FOW:
Oh, man, our CFO gave us a tip, and it was a transformative experience. Think of like your cable company. They just raised the bill and they send you a letter, and they're like, we're raising our bill. And if you have any questions about it, you can call us so. We had all different prices for all of our clients, all throughout the years, and we decided we need to standardize it. So we just sent out an email like a few months before New Year's, hey inflation. We want to provide you with a better service. We need to increase our rates. Now we standardize the hourly rate and the hosting rate. And finally, everyone's on the same plan, and we know what they do get and what they don't get.

And it was so much easier than I thought by just telling them. You know, we're raising our rates. I thought it was going to be this whole thing. It was, no one, no one, not one person, actually even brought it up or cared.

LEXI MOSTEK:
Totally, I think, setting the expectation. And we had a kickoff call on this, and we were talking about like finding the right client for you, and not. Every client is right for you, and setting that expectation and saying this is who we are. And this is what we're doing, or this is where we're going.

Awesome. I don't have a particular person to ask this to but some people had questions as far as how many engineers or developers. Are you employing and can we split that into like full time basis? On salary or to ever contract? Or have people that work? Just on an ad hoc basis. Bobby, do you want to take that one?

BOBBY KING:
Yes, I know know how we're going to be a little bit different here. But we have. This is bad, I mean, I don't know the exact number we're at right now, but we I think we have over 110 actual developers working on building the sites and doing standard development. And then our maintenance team, we have 8 individuals that are working specifically with maintenance, doing the content edits, etc.

And that those 8 maintenance staff we have about 50 clients who work with different package levels.

LEXI MOSTEK:
awesome hopefully that puts it into perspective on there. This is kind of a random question, but I'll ask it, do you have any marketing channels or recommendations to acquire maintenance clients?

Bill, I see you kind of nodding your head. I'm going to pass this your way.

BILL FOW:
I got approached by a company 2 companies to take over all their maintenance contracts, and I don't know how they found us. They just they just found us and submitted. Honestly. My opinion on that was like, what a nightmare that would be. The worst acquisition possible.

DAN GRAHAM:
but people built is just is, it just never goes.

BILL FOW:
Well. Yeah, yeah. The the other thing there's a community called a 7 Figure Agency. Probably the closest thing I could say is to a a it's called digital Marketing agency success. It's on Facebook. And there's a group of people in there looking to buy and sell agencies. So that that might be a place

where, you can ask like, is anyone selling an agency or selling off their clients? I'm sure you could find people there?

LEXI MOSTEK:
Totally. Yes, okay. I am going to wrap this up a ton of questions. I'm going to just ask the 3 of you. Do you have any closing thoughts, or even like recommendations to people that are just starting to resell tons of questions here. I know we didn't even reach all of them. But I'll give you just a maybe a minute each. Any closing thoughts or recommendations? Dan.

DAN GRAHAM:
I'd say. Just, you know, number one, go for it when we found out that we're losing money. All we did was just use harvest and had a couple of our dev service 20 websites for a few months, and we're just like all right. How many hours did that take? How much money did that cost? How much money did that cost? And then just build a contract around it. And honestly, I like Googled a few things, and then just wrote something and sent it to people. So anyone that thinks that this is like super complicated. Obviously, you want to protect yourself and make sure you have legal language and stuff in there. But, like, just go for it and see what sticks your business owner. You're already taking risks, I'd say. Just continue doing that.

LEXI MOSTEK:
yotally passing the mic bill.

BILL FOW:
That's a great tidbit. Just don't get overwhelmed with the how and the what and the how, what Pippin packages to start with something, and up, you know, changing your packages down the road is always possible.

LEXI MOSTEK:
all right. And last, but not least, Bobby.

BOBBY KING:
Yeah, just to kind of piggyback on that one more time. Go for it. Keep it, keep it basic, build it up, test things, break things, readjust and listen to your clients. What do? What do they want? What are they saying? It's good. What's bad, and use WP Engine. They have been an incredible resource for us over the years. Just to answer questions. We want to try this. What do you think, what are, what are the risks we're not seeing so definitely take advantage of that resource as well.

LEXI MOSTEK:
Awesome. Well, thank you, gentlemen, all so much. I think if there's one thing we're all walking away with is there's no cookie cutter solution here. Everyone on this panel has had vastly different

experiences. Every client is different. Every agency is different, and we hope you walked away from the 60 min with some best practices and things that you can take away and implement.

I will just quickly, shamelessly plug WP Engine's upcoming events. We are launching decode today. So, if you haven't been to decode, this is our developer-centric conference with 10,000 people. And that's going to take place in March. So coming up, I'm going to drop a link. If you'd like to register for that we will share the recording with everyone after the event.

And as well as a transcript, and anything like that and then be on the lookout for upcoming events. I want to thank you, everyone for attending, and see you on the next webinar.

ASHLEY BEASLEY:
Thank you for having you all. Thank you.