

# 6 MISTAKES WORDPRESS Site Owners Make & HOW TO AVOID THEM

During the development of any website, there are a great many things that can fall through the cracks but several common mistakes that can be easily avoided.

## 1. Unsecure Passwords and Logins

Security is an ever-present issue for websites in general but it can especially problematic for sites with online content management systems like Wordpress. If you want to keep malware out of your site and hackers from grabbing your customers' information, you must use a secure login and password. Too often website owners use what their webmaster assigned them by default. The webmaster usually assigns you a basic ID and password expecting you to CHANGE THEM to something else. He doesn't want to know your password, he likely has his own any way.

### Login ID

The first thing to do is create a new login ID. Do not use Admin or User or anything else a hacker could easily guess. Something you can remember, preferably with both letters and numbers, but is not easy to guess is ideal. Your last name and your house number, your high school mascot and your jersey number, anything that you will remember but a casual acquaintance would have to really work to discover.

After you create the new login ID (don't forget to give yourself administrator rights!) delete the unsecure IDs. If you have others that need IDs, assign them new secure user IDs – and require secure passwords.

### Secure Password

The ideal password is more complicated than a secure ID. Though the above strategies can work and they are better than nothing, we recommend a different route. If you are like most people, you struggle to keep track of the myriad of passwords and logins that you use daily/weekly/monthly. You therefore have developed some poor password habits. We recommend using Keeper or LastPass. Both have free and paid versions and will not only keep track of your passwords, enter them into sites as needed, but they will also generate unique super-secure passwords. Create one really good password and learn it for your password vault and let the vault handle the rest.

## 2. Perfection

The second biggest mistake that Wordpress website owners (and most website owners in general) make is waiting until the website is perfect to launch the site, make a new page live or release a link for marketing. The secret that no one is telling you is IT WILL NEVER BE PERFECT. Just launch, release or make it live. Change it later if you find a mistake or decide to make a change. The internet loves change and upgrade. You'll do your business more good by having it out there than keeping it all to yourself. That isn't to say that you should release something with lots of typos, poor media and bad grammar. Just realize when good enough is good enough, for now.

## 3. Backup

As a web developer with hundreds of sites built and even more sites serviced over the years, I know how incredibly important it is to back up. So many clients have contacted me (usually on a holiday or weekend) totally stressed out because they made a change or updated a theme and completely trashed their site's code. Here's the thing, if they had a backup (there are so many free plugins) it's a simple matter to restore a previous incarnation. Even if you are uncomfortable restoring the backup yourself, it will take your webmaster a lot less time to restore a backup than any other option he has available. You will save yourself time, money and heartache if your site has a backup plugin and it is scheduled to back up at least once per week.

## 4. Maintenance/Updates

Did you know that WordPress updates its software frequently? Did you know that not all plugins update as frequently? WordPress has minor updates about every month or so and major updates at least once per year. These updates patch security holes, add new features and generally enhance usability.

Where WordPress site owners run into problems is when they don't update and maintain their sites or do so infrequently that it causes a major issue (see Backup). If you haven't updated your site in a year or two and you upgrade to the latest version of WordPress you are likely to run into plugins that no longer work, templates and themes that suddenly look off kilter and other general headaches.

Check your site once a month to see if there are any updates available. Update your WordPress software first (if it is not already being done automatically by your version) and then your plugins. There is a link at the top of your Dashboard for the WordPress update and a link with each plugin for the plugin updates. Make sure to check the "compatibility" rating next to each plugin to ensure the upgrade will go as smoothly as possible (most will show 100% but sometimes it may not yet be tested so be careful). Remember to do an extra backup first just in case the new

versions cause a snafu. Make notes of any errors and you can then just restore and ask your webmaster to handle it for you.

If making the updates seems to be too daunting a task, you can just ask your webmaster to handle it as needed or use a [maintenance program that will go in to make the updates for you each month.](#)

## **5. Content**

This is probably the hardest one for site owners to understand. They ask what's wrong with my content? Its great, it tells everyone all about me. Maybe it is. But when was the last time you read it? Has any of the information changed? Remember what we said about perfection and the Internet loving change? Update your content frequently. Blog, add a landing page for a promotion, run a contest, change your media or get a new picture of yourself taken to put up on your site. You must update your content regularly to keep the site fresh and to keep the search engine bots coming back. The more often the bots crawl your site, the better things are for your business, but that's another lesson.

## **6. Spam Comments**

Many website owners want to interact with users on their site and its an admirable goal. However, allowing just anyone to leave comments opens your site up to anything from spam about discount Louis Vitton handbags and the latest erectile dysfunction drug to downright nasty comments that could damage your business. Always moderate your comments and check in on comments left at least once a month – once a week is better. Delete the spam and nasty comments and reply to those lovely users who have something meaningful to add to the conversation. There is nothing worse than coming to your site and realizing that there are bunch of spammers leaving advertising on your site or there is a nasty gram that's been sitting there for six months for the world to see and you had no idea.

Addressing these six simple issues can help your site on its way to being the best it can be with as little technology-born frustration as possible.