

Blog and Website Design Specifications

Need/want a blog or website, but feel daunted by the steps involved in creating and installing one? WordPress has become the standard for blogging due to its clean design and its simple template for creating posts, and adding videos and images. It also is a perfect springboard for a no-nonsense website. We will install a simple, clean WordPress site and host it for you.

The price includes installation and one year of free hosting as well as one-on-one instructions (tutorial) on maintaining your site. We can create an “About” page as well as add anti-spam, SEO, social media and Web analytics plug-ins. You only have to register a URL (website address) with GoDaddy and we'll do the rest.

Here’s an easy worksheet to use in planning your website; you should decide upon some of the variables before contacting us to create your site.

Site Name and URL: Choose a catchy name for your site – or just use your name. It’s beneficial to have the name of your site correspond to the URL (or web address) that people type into their browser, as it makes it easier for them to find you on the Web. Thus the Intermedia Magazine website, for example, can be found at intermediamagazine.com. Unfortunately, your name or title may have already been taken, so you may have to improvise. LeonardoDavinci.com may be taken, but LeonardoDavinciArtist.com can be set up as a Web destination.

Web Title: The title of your website as it will appear in WordPress: Intermedia Magazine or Leonardo Davinci, for example.

Tagline: A short subtitle that will appear under your site title in WordPress.

Note: You can choose NOT to have the Web title or subtitle appear at your site if you use a masthead graphic (see below).

Do you want to blog or do you want a traditional website in which to post information (photos, artworks, fiction, poetry, news, events, press releases, etc) -- or do you want a combination of the two?

- A blog (short for *web log*) is a discussion or information site consisting of discrete posts displayed in a linear, chronological order so that the most recent post appears first. Individuals, groups and even many news sites display their information in this way. WordPress was designed to implement blogging in a fast, easy way.
- Many websites simply display “static” pages of information (photos, artworks, fiction, poetry, promote events, press releases, etc) – this is a traditional website. WordPress also lends itself as a platform for this type of website.

- Many people set up websites with “static” pages of information coupled with a blog to engage friends, relatives, readers and customers in discussions or to post the latest news and, yes, gossip.

Blog Design and Content

- **Color Scheme:** Do you want a particular color theme as a background for your site? Perhaps a particular color to elicit feelings?
- **Masthead and other images:** Do you have a masthead that you want to appear at the top of the site? These are typically wide and narrow (1000 pixels by 300 pixels). Many times a masthead can be created by cropping a photograph or piece of art. Is there other art you want on the site?
- **Format:** Columns? Typically, blog posts appear at the center of the page, with a sidebar to the left or right. The sidebars are used for links, a directory of previous posts, a list of pages, a calendar, even advertisements. You need to decide which side of the main column you want the sidebar to be placed. Static pages typically don’t have sidebars (they take up the entire page, which is useful for displaying photos, artwork, etc.). But a sidebar can be added to static pages if needed.
- **Social Sharing:** Do you want social sharing apps (such as Share This) displayed? This is typically a bar that displays icons for Twitter, Facebook, Digg, StumbleUpon, LinkedIn, Tumblr, GoogleReader, etc.
- **Discussion:** Do you want your readers, clients, friends and family to be able to make comments to your posts? If not, “comments” can easily be turned off.
- **Navigation and sidebars:** What might you want in the way of sidebar elements – and in what order? Sidebars can contain a list of pages and posts for ease of site navigation; a list of links to other sites and resources; a list of categories that your posts fall under; a search bar; a tag cloud; recent comments; archives; a calendar and more. We can walk you through this during the tutorial.
- **Top Menu:** What would you like on the top menu. Typically, most sites have menu entries for About, Home, Posts, and the different topics covered in the site.
- **Multimedia:** Do you want to add video or music to the site. WordPress works well with multimedia and we can walk you through it in our on-site tutorial.

Here are some of the “tweaks” we can perform:

- Change titles for the sidebar entries. For example, the sidebar entry for Links is called “Blogroll” by WordPress and that can be changed to Links, Friends, etc. Similarly, the default name for Pages in the WordPress sidebar is Pages. We can change that to Contents, Entries, Poetry, Artwork, etc.
- Eliminate Comments if needed
- Posts are “marked” by date, name of author, etc. We can eliminate that nomenclature.
- We also implement the following useful add-ons:

Google XML Sitemaps, to help get you listed in Google searches
 Akismet, which is an anti-spam add-on
 WP SlimStat, which is a powerful real-time web analytics add-on,
 allowing you to see who has visited your site
 Add This and Share This social networking icons
 All-in-One SEO: To optimize your WordPress blog for Search Engines

What you need to do now:

- Come up with a name/URL and register it.
- Create a masthead or pick a photo or artwork that can be cropped to fit the horizontal configuration of the page. Or just go with your site title and subtitle.
- Decide whether you want a blog, a static site or a combination of the two.
- Make a list of your site categories to organize your content by (a writer, for example, could use such categories as fiction, poetry, performance, events, etc)?
- Make a list of Pages you may want to add to your site for the top navigation menu, such as About, Contact, or Events. If you want an “About” page, it would be a good idea to create text for it so that we can add it to the site right away
- Decide what format and sidebar entries you would like: links, search, categories, etc.
- Decide whether or not you want comments.

First things first:

1) Call Godaddy to register the domain name xxxxxxxx.com. Their number is 480-505-8877 (they don't have an 800 number) and yearly registration is \$12.99 (they offer discounts for multi-year registrations; and sometimes they have specials that can reduce the yearly fee to as low as \$5.99). Skip their add-ons -- unless you want to have personalized e-mail (\$2.59 a month) or hosting (\$4.74 a month; but I'll host for you for free for the first year, then it's \$15 a year thereafter).

2) They will set you up with an account number, log-in and password for their website.

3) Tell the salesperson you want the xxxxxxxx.com domain to be attached to the following IP address:
 97.74.144.176

The Word Garage will then set up your WordPress site, providing you with a username (typically ADMIN) and password (which you can change at any time). We then will give you a brief lesson in adding posts, pages and multimedia to your site. All beginning at \$150.00. Hosting after the first year runs \$15.00 per site per year.

Here's some sample sites to get some ideas:

<http://www.intermediamagazine.com>

<http://www.dreamsville.net>

<http://www.lapotholes.com>

<http://www.billmohrpoet.com>

<http://www.laurelannbogen.com>

<http://www.lindafryartist.com>

<http://cyberpod.com/barbie/>