Week 1 – Setting Up For Success

Welcome to week one of Virtual Assistant Mojo! I'm so glad you've decided to join us and work on your VA business so. This week's topic is all about setting up for success and creating a great website that draws in your potential clients time and time again.

In this week's training, you'll learn:
- To create your VA website in WordPress!
- To setup your website to attract potential clients.
- The essential pages every service business should have.
- The systems you should have in place before you accept clients.

Here's what you'll find in this Week 1 Training Manual:

– How to Setup Your WordPress Website (pgs. 2 – 21)
– Website Creation Checklist (pg.22)
– 50 Things to Add to Your Website to Attract Clients (pgs. 23-37)

Remember to log into the customer area to take advantage of all the resources for this week including a full webinar recording and bonus pdf documents.

Here's your customer area login link:
http://www.marketersmojo.com/member/member

How to Setup Your WordPress Website

Registering Your Domain Name

Here's another common area of confusion, for people who are new to running their own blog or site: Domain registration.

Your domain is your home on the net. For example, say your name is Ray Bandana: You might pay a web hosting company to host "www.raybandana.com" for you.

Your domain URL (address) sits on your web host's massive server computer. That is it's home. But here's where people get a little confused: The person who registers your domain can either be your web hosting company (e.g. BlueHost) or a *separate registration company*.

You don't have to use BlueHost, of course: You can pick and choose any web hosting company. – but whichever one you use, just make sure that the company is WordPress-friendly.

Whichever company you choose, make sure it has **cPanel** (a control panel), and supports **PHP, MySQL5** (or the latest version of MySQL) and **WordPress** – and, finally, that it supports either **Fantastico DeLuxe or Simple Scripts**.

If you can't find the information you need on the sign-up page, look for a "Features" tab:

Bottom line: There are many types of web hosting companies – and not all are ideal for blogging!

Unlimited Domains

If you are planning to host more than one website or blog for your business, do choose a web host that offers unlimited domains: It's better for internet searchability to have each URL (domain address; e.g. "www.whateveryouwant.com") in its own separate domain, rather than as an "add-on" domain or "sub-domain".

If each site is in an entirely separate domain, it can also be transferred, should you ever decide to sell it. (Note: You will have to purchase (register) each new domain name as you add these – either from BlueHost or from your chosen Domain registration company.)

Most reliable web hosting companies offer one free domain registration with your sign up, so there's no need for a separate registration: However, if your business model **includes multiple domains**, it will definitely be cheaper – after signing up with your

web host and letting them register your primary free domain – to register all your other domains with a company such as [Dynadot](#) that specializes in domain registration.

A word of caution: Most domain registration companies will offer amazingly cheap web hosting (or even free web hosting). I would not recommend using your domain registration company for webhosting: Often your site will be laced with ads you don't know about or they provide poor support, obscure documentation or frequent "sit down" problems – as well as bandwidth limitations.

(You really don't want to sign up and discover your new web host doesn't have a cPanel, doesn't support the MySQL databasing needed for WordPress, and wants you to upgrade to their $179.95 per year plan because you've exceed your 15mb bandwidth… in the first week!)
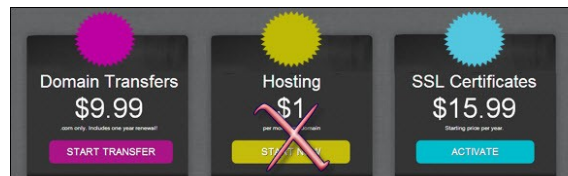
By all means use Domain registration companies for **easy multiple and single domain registration** and **inexpensive domain transfers**, however.

Now let's get WordPress installed, and set up your blog…

Preparing to Install WordPress

There are many guides showing you how to set up WordPress using the Fantastico DeLuxe script, so we're going to do something a little different. We're going with [BlueHost](#), a company that uses Simple Scripts.

Those used to Fantastico are going to want to over-complicate things when changing over to a company that uses Simple Scripts. Don't do it! It really is a simple process – but not if you start trying to dot every "i" and cross every "t". If you're into micro-controlling every step, stick with Fantastico: If, on the other hand, you want simple "one-click" processes, Simple Scripts will probably suit you better.

Sign up is easy, and you'll find yourself looking at your cPanel in no time at all. This is what it will look like. If a popup doesn't appear, you can access the introductory "Getting Started" wizard (under "Preferences") for **tutorials, demos** and **videos**. For example, if you want to see how easy it is to set up a new email account – something that traditionally has been known to give even seasoned bloggers nightmares – watch the BlueHost video in the "Getting Started" wizard.
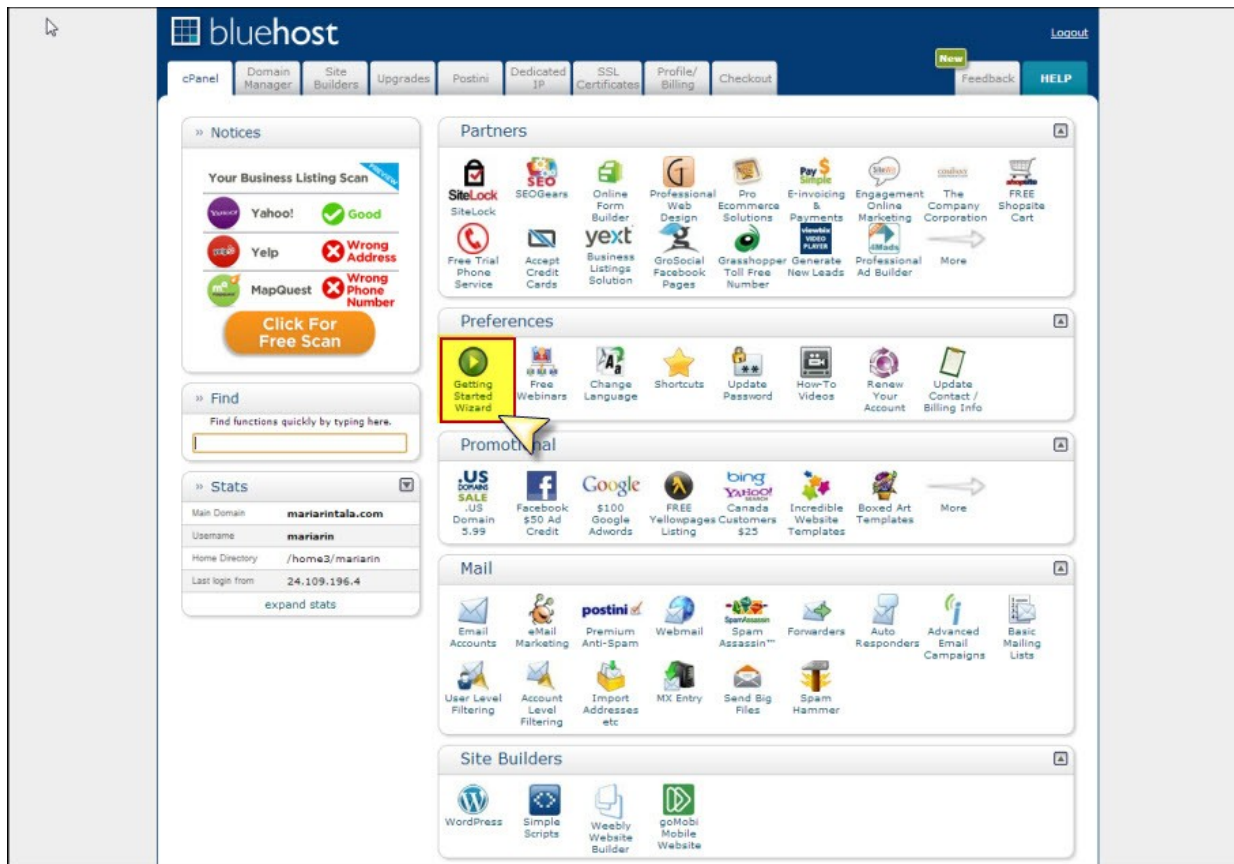
Do NOT watch the video for installing WordPress, however: If you follow the instructions, you may end up with the following error message:
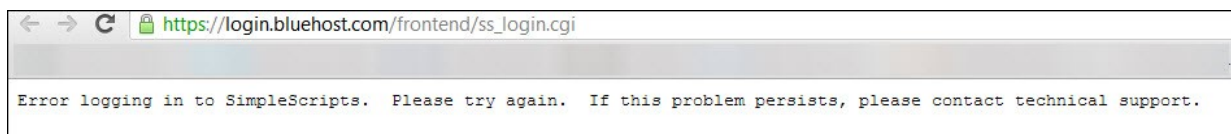
If this happens, you have two choices:

1. Contact Tech Support and ask them to fix it for you and set up your blog. (They will: And all you will have to do is make note of the log-in information and password, log in, and proceed straight to "Section Three: Customizing your Blog", skimming over the next few pages.)

2. If you prefer more control, or want to know what to do the next time you want to add a blog, simply follow the instructions below. (Yes. In spite of the error message.)
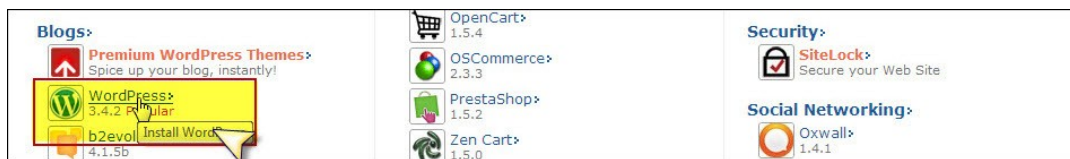
The following method has worked for me every time – even after I have asked Tech Support to "nuke" my account and bring it back to brand-new, empty status.

Section Two: How to Install Simple Scripts and Quickly Set Up WordPress

1. Find the "Site Builders" tab and select the WordPress icon.

2. The Simple Scripts page will open up. Find the "Blogs" section and select "WordPress"…

3. The "Install WordPress" window will open. Click on the "Install" button.

A new page will open up, and you will see your WordPress site being built.

As soon as the Site URL and Login URL for your blog appears, even if it still says "In Progress", you can (a) copy-paste your auto-generated password and (b) click on your Login URL to access your new blog.

4. Enter "admin" under "Username" and paste your Password into the "Password" field. Click the blue "Log In" button:

5. You should then see your new dashboard. Ignore all the stuff under the "Welcome" message….
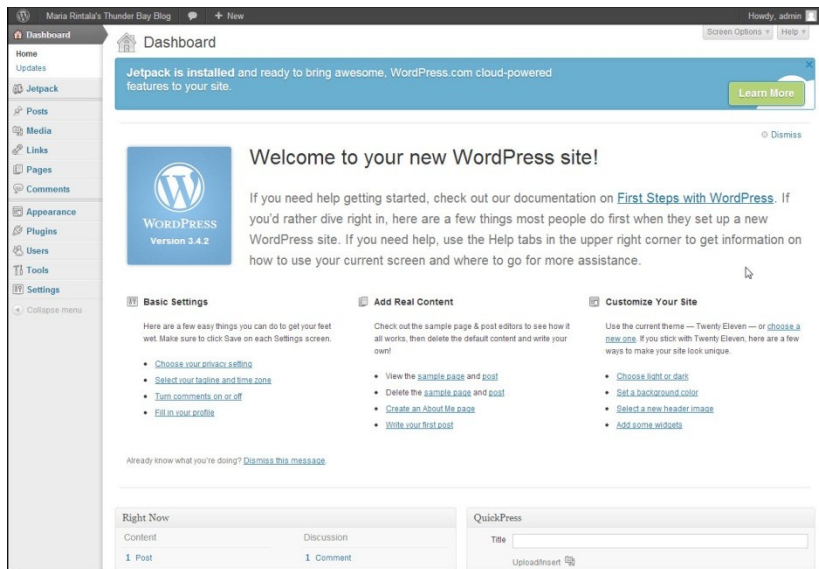
We are only going to use your left-hand, vertical Dashboard controls.

We are going to go through only the tabs where you need to customize data for maximum searchability. First, let's take care of your "Settings" section…
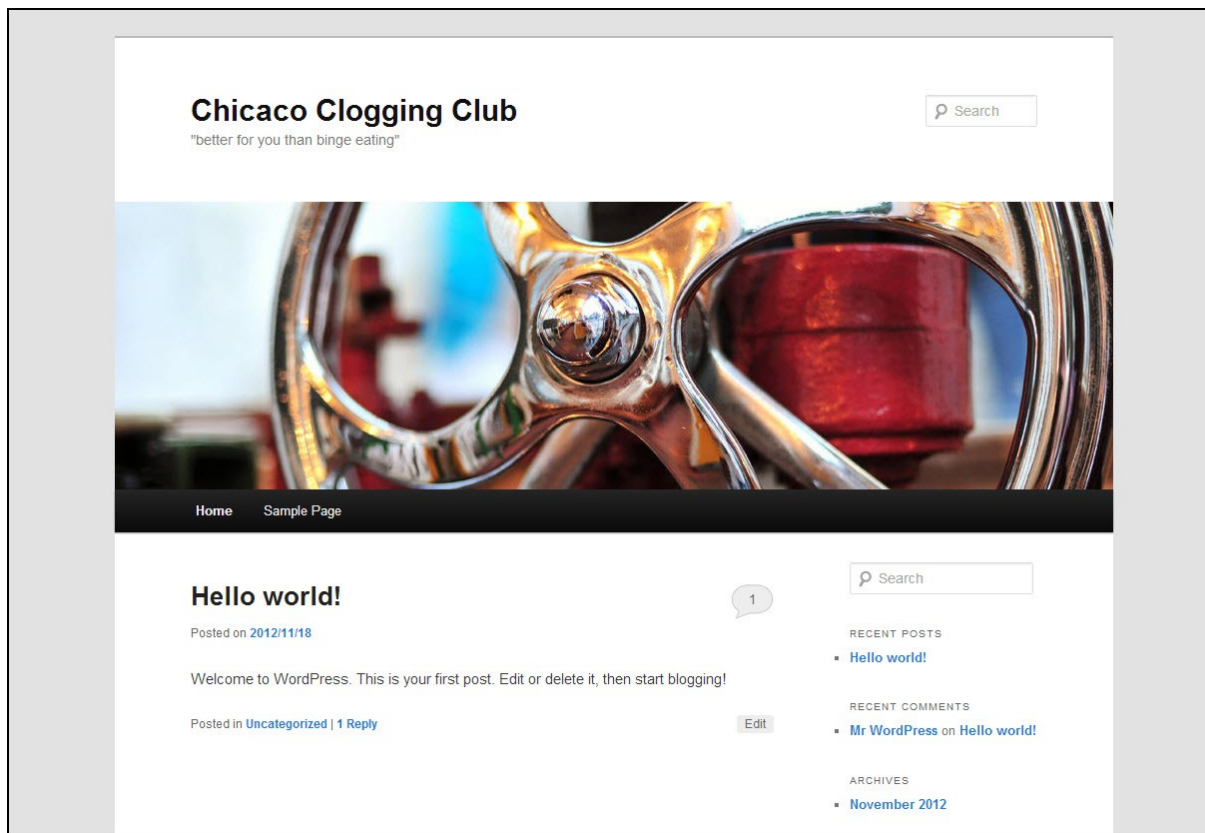
Settings>>General

Select "*General Settings*" from the drop-down list that appears. Now is when you can change your site or blog **Title**, if you wish.

Select your "**Tagline**" – your motto, slogan or a short description of what readers can expect.

(What you input in your Site Title and Tagline is what your readers will see. Like this…)


All of your other default settings in "General Settings" should be as you want them, except for **Timezone**. (You will want to change your UTC code.)

If you don't know your UTC code, simply press the drop-down button and select your city from the (alphabetical) drop-down list that will appear. Select it, and your correct

UTC code will also be selected (but it won't appear until after you've Saved and refreshed).
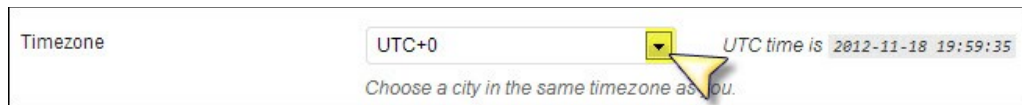
If you wish, you can also change the way you want the date to appear in your posts from five separate formats…
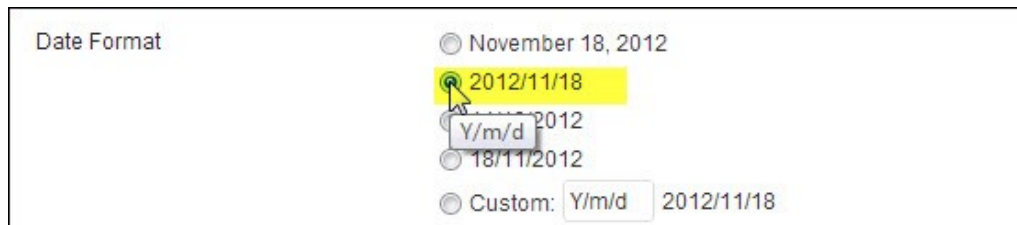
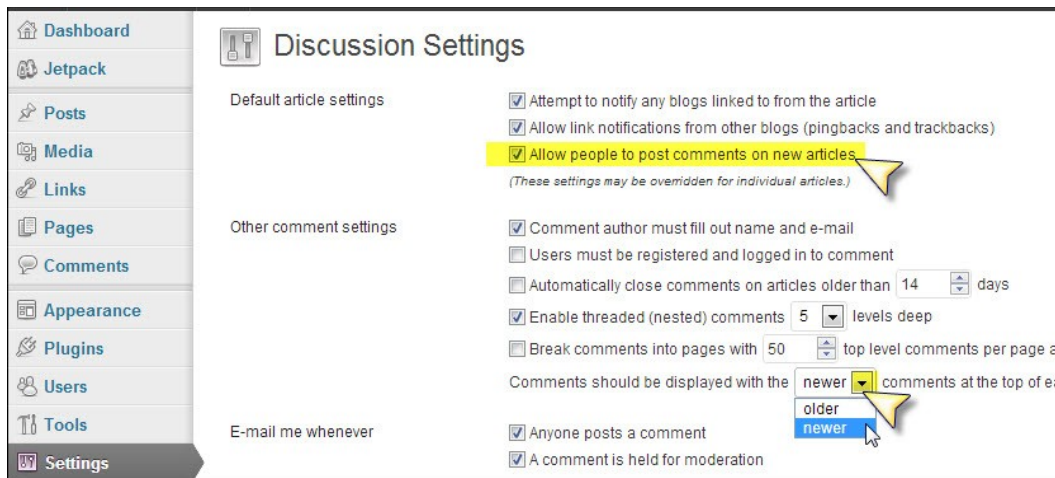When you're done altering your general settings, press the blue "Save Changes" button

Settings>>Discussion

Close "General Settings". Go back to your "Settings" tab and select "Discussion".

When your "Discussion" page opens, all you need to do there is click on "***Turn comments on or off***" to toggle this setting to your preference.

BlueHost has excellent SEO defaults, which you may not wish to change: However, as you can see, it's easy to do so, if you wish. The default is to allow people to comment – simply uncheck it if you want no comments at all.

The only other recommended change: **_Put "Newer" comments at the top rather than "Older"_** (this is what people expect).

Slide on down to "**_Avatars_**" to set your preferences. I would recommend "Gravatars", if you want peoples' Profile photos to appear; or else "Mystery Man". (Don't bother with the cutesy Wavatars, etc., unless your audience is under twenty.)

Save your changes!

Fill in your profile. The only two sections you'll want to pay attention to:

1. "**_Display name publicly_**" – the name you want your public to see.
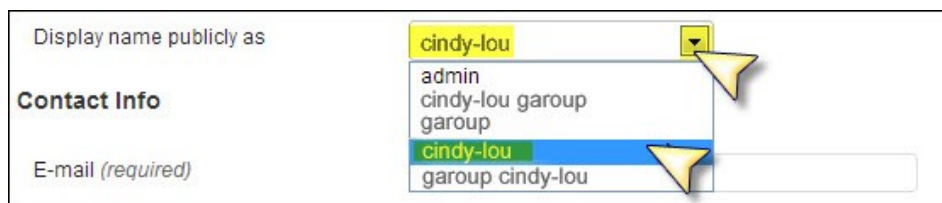
If you don't want "admin" to appear, select your preferred name from the drop-down list. (N.B.: This **_will not_** change your "admin" username in your log-in box!)

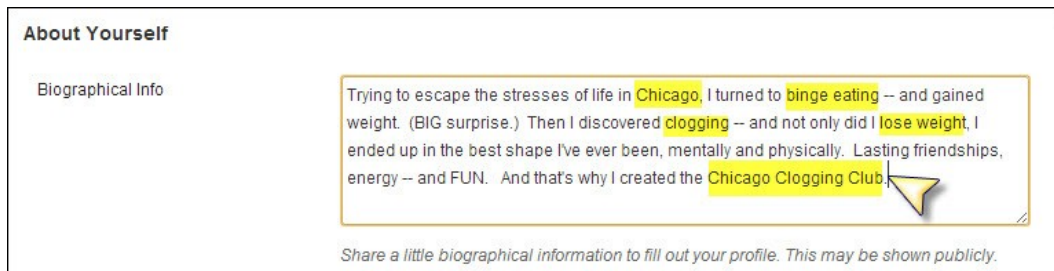2. "***About Yourself***" -- Fill in short biographical details that you think *would most interest your readers*. (Be sure to include keywords you'd like people to find you with.)

About Yourself

Biographical Info

Trying to escape the stresses of life in Chicago, I turned to binge eating -- and gained weight. (BIG surprise.) Then I discovered clogging -- and not only did I lose weight, I ended up in the best shape I've ever been, mentally and physically. Lasting friendships, energy -- and FUN.   And that's why I created the Chicago Clogging Club.
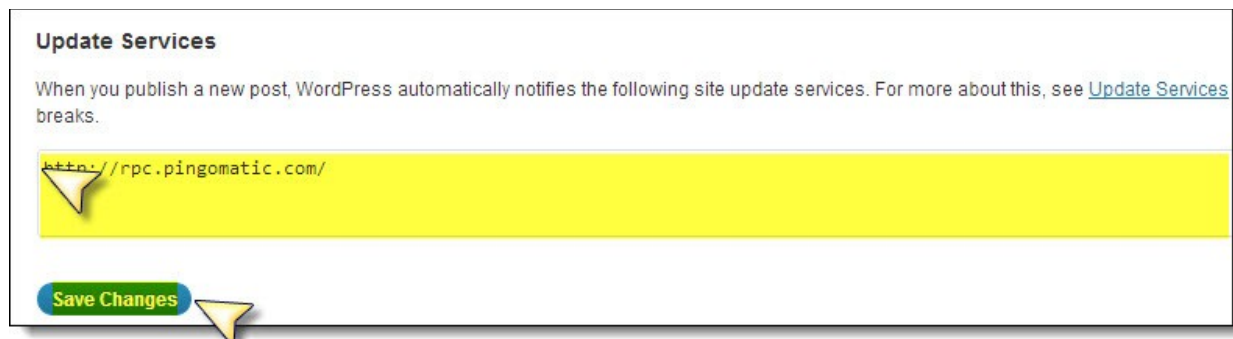
Share a little biographical information to fill out your profile. This may be shown publicly.

Press "Update Profile" to save.

Update Profile
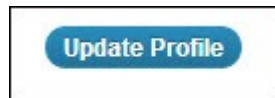
Settings>>Writing

The "Writing" tab has only one modification you need to make. Slide right down to the bottom of that section and find the Textarea box with the single, solitary, lonely little "pingomatic" ping-back link:

Update Services

When you publish a new post, WordPress automatically notifies the following site update services. For more about this, see Update Services breaks.

http://rpc.pingomatic.com/

Save Changes

Copy-paste the following list, and add after "http://rpc.pingomatic.com/:

http://blogsearch.google.com/ping/RPC2
http://api.feedster.com/ping
http://api.moreover.com/ping
http://api.moreover.com/RPC2
http://ping.syndic8.com/xmlrpc.php
http://ping.weblogalot.com/rpc.php
http://pinger.blogflux.com/rpc

http://rpc.icerocket.com:10080/
http://rpc.technorati.com/rpc/ping
http://rpc.weblogs.com/RPC2
http://topicexchange.com/RPC2
http://www.blogdigger.com/RPC2
http://xping.pubsub.com/ping
http://ping.feedburner.com
http://api.my.yahoo.com/RPC2
http://bblog.com/ping.php
http://blogbot.dk/io/xml-rpc.php
http://blogmatcher.com/u.php
http://bulkfeeds.net/rpc
http://mod-pubsub.org/kn_apps/blogchatt
http://mod-pubsub.org/knapps/blogchatt
http://ping.amagle.com
http://ping.bitacoras.com
http://ping.blogmura.jp/rpc
http://ping.exblog.jp/xmlrpc
http://ping.myblog.jp
http://ping.rootblog.com/rpc.php
http://ping.weblogs.se
http://rcs.datashed.net/RPC2
http://thingamablog.sourceforge.net/ping.php
http://trackback.bakeinu.jp/bakeping.php
http://www.a2b.cc/setloc/bp.a2b
http://www.bitacoles.net/ping.php
http://www.blogoole.com/ping
http://www.blogoon.net/ping
http://www.blogpeople.net/servlet/weblogUpdates
http://www.blogroots.com/tb_populi.blog?id=1
http://www.blogroots.com/tbpopuli.blog?id=1
http://www.blogshares.com/rpc.php
http://www.blogsnow.com/ping
http://www.blogstreet.com/xrbin/xmlrpc.cgi
http://www.lasermemory.com/lsrpc
http://www.mod-pubsub.org/kn_apps/blogchatter/ping.php
http://www.mod-pubsub.org/knapps/blogchatter/ping.php

http://www.newsisfree.com/xmlrpctest.php

http://www.popdex.com/addsite.php

http://www.snipsnap.org/RPC2

http://www.weblogues.com/RPC

http://xmlrpc.blogg.de

http://holycowdude.com/rpc/ping/

http://pingoat.com/goat/RPC2

http://rpc.blogbuzzmachine.com/RPC2

http://rpc.newsgator.com/

Press "Save Changes".

Plugins

Next, go to your Plugins tab in your left-hand, vertical menu. The only already-installed plugin that you absolutely MUST activate is Akismet, your spam filter.
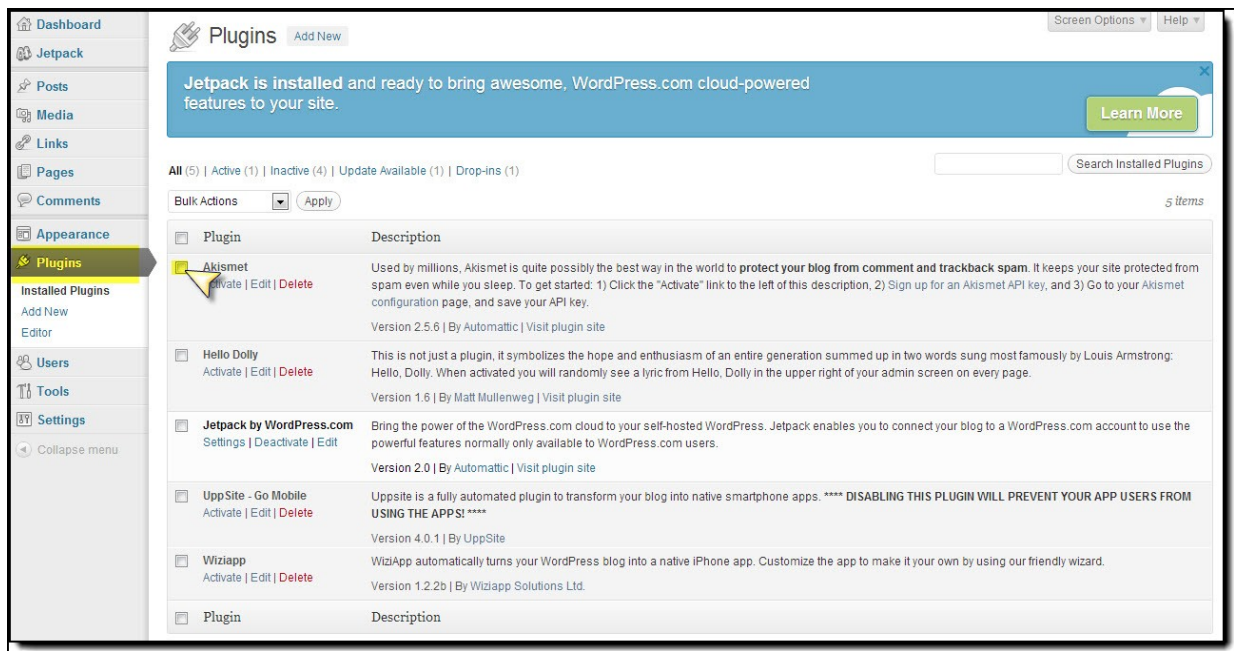
If you already have an Akismet API key, click on "Activate", then click on "Enter your Akismet API key" and enter it in the Textarea box provided. (If you don't, click on "Sign up for an Akismet API key".)

You'll be given the key – a serial number. In fact, it should already be populating the Textarea box when you Activate it:

Don't add the mobile plugins until you've (later) customized your theme. Once you've got your theme looking the way you want, then you can return and add these mobile plugins, if you wish them activated. Meanwhile, don't overload your blog with plugins. Stick to the essentials. After Akismet, these are:
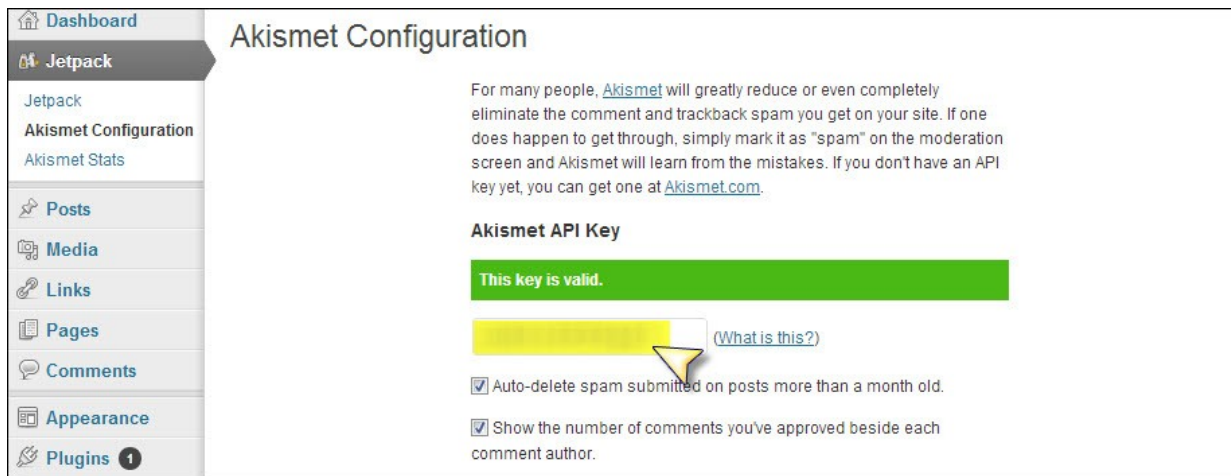
- All in One SEO Pack
- Google XML Sitemaps
- Theme Authenticity Checker (TAC)
- Sociable (or any other social bookmarking plugin you prefer)
- WP Security Scan

You can find each of these at WordPress.org in its "Plugins" section – right from your Dashboard! Simply Go back to "Plugins" and select the "Add New" tab. Then enter the name of the plugin you wish to find into the Textarea box, and press "Search plugins".
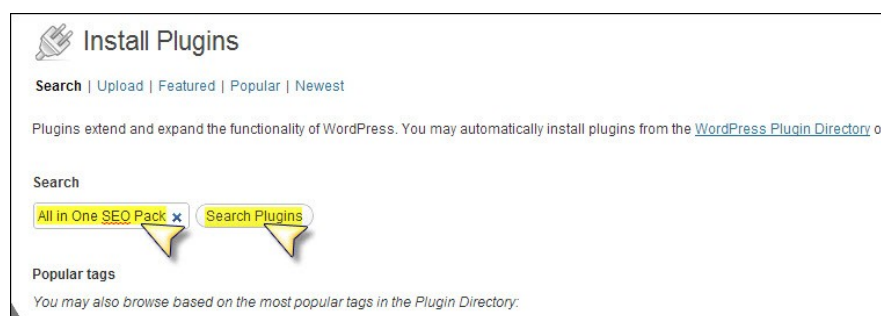
A page will open up: Select your plugin from the choices presented.

Select "Install Now". A page will open up, letting you know if the Install was successful. Click on "Activate Plugin".

Note: That's all there is to it for some plugins. Others will have a "Settings" link or present you with a message such as this one:
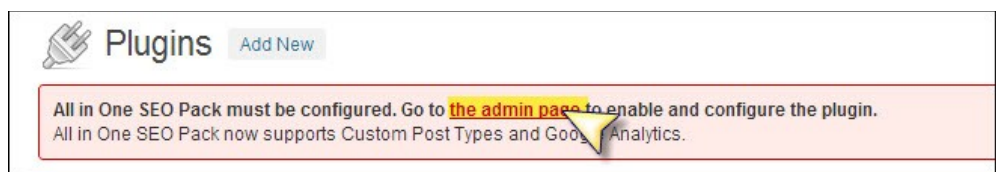
Click on the link provided and configure or input settings as instructed. This usually includes:

- Sliding over any advertising to click on "Enable" or "Activate" buttons

- Entering Titles, Descriptions, Summaries as instructed

- Entering hard data requested, such as your Google Analytics ID

Once you are satisfied with your plugins, it's time to change your blog's appearance from the default theme to a custom theme that best befits your needs.

Make sure you Save by pressing "Update Options".

Appearance

To change your Theme, go to the "Appearance" tab in the left-hand, vertical menu and press it. A selection of three basic themes will open up. You can find more themes at the WordPress.org Themes section, or you can purchase a paid Premium Theme such as the highly flexible and easy Socrates theme; but whatever you do, be very careful of indiscriminately downloading and trying "free" themes from randomly-Googled sites. Many of these are laced with hidden code that will undermine or even harm your site.

Let's start the **SmallBiz**" theme offered in your Appearances screen. A full-screen page will open up, showing you how your blog will look (without your personal data – this is just a Layout example).

If you like it, select "Save & Activate":

The next page that opens up allows you to thoroughly customize your new SmallBiz theme, as well as watch a video explaining its features. Don't do this part unless you have some time to go through all the settings and features. It will likely take a little time to tweak your settings, text and colors until you've got them the way you like them – until then, the sample text displays.

And if you're anxious to get started blogging, simply stay with (or go back to and re-activate) the **Twenty Ten** theme or **Twenty Eleven** for now: You can start adding posts right away – and search for the theme of your choice later. (Note that even these basic themes allow you to perform actions like upload a custom Header or pick a new one from the "Appearances" drop-down menu.)
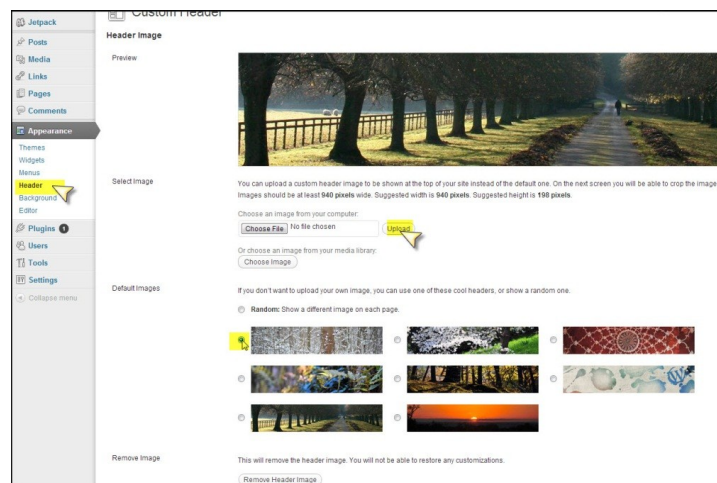
Section Three: Getting to Know Your Blog

The first thing you'll want to do is add a post (and change any default post, if there is one). Go to your left-hand, vertical menu and select "Posts>>All Posts".

The default "Hello World" post will open up. Replace the Title with your own and the text with your own.
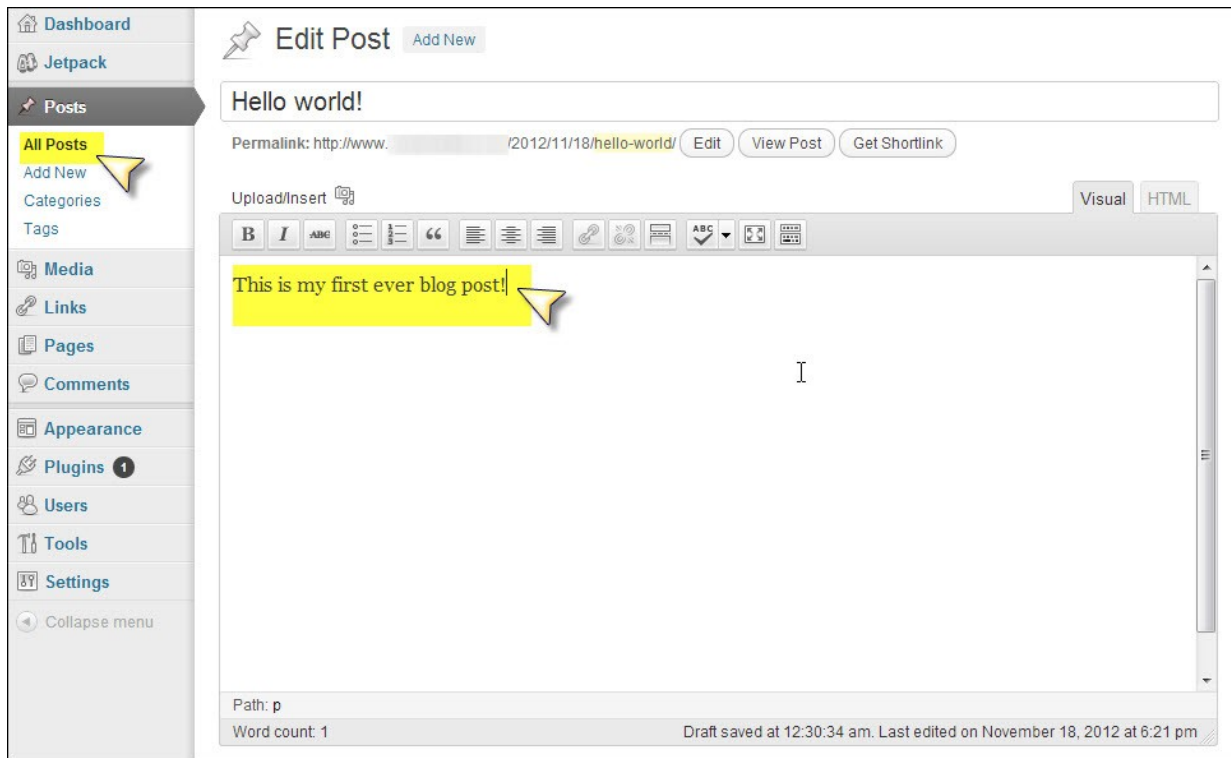
Remember to slide down to your All in one SEO boxes and fill in your blog post Title, Description (less than 160 characters) and Keywords – as well as any Tags you want to flag the article with. This will help your post's searchability greatly.
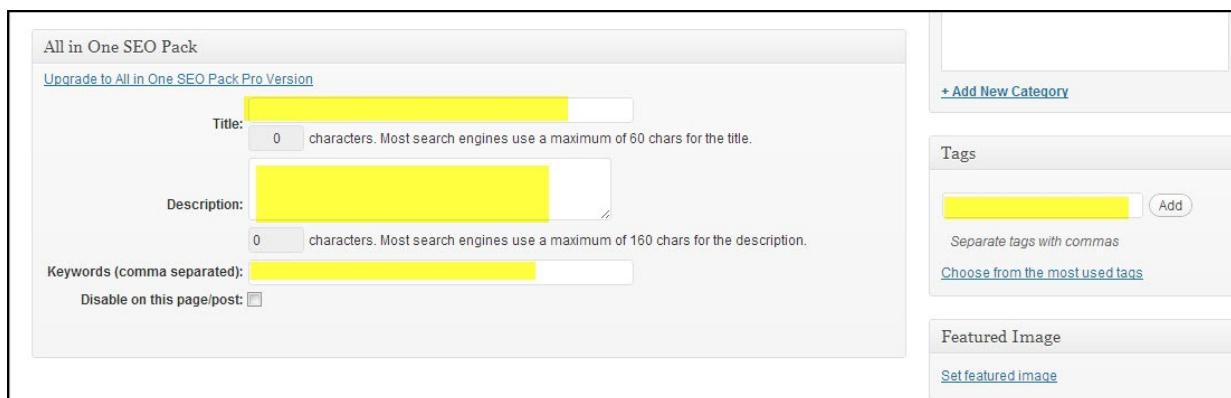
Finally – Press the blue "Update" button on the top, right-hand side of the page.

And that's the basic process in setting up a WordPress blog (except for selecting "Add New" next time in "Posts", rather than "All Posts").

Editing Your HTML URLs

Another thing you may want to do: Edit your post URLs for more searchability. It's a very simple process – just press the "Edit" button and write in your new page URL, exactly as you'd like it to appear.

Before:
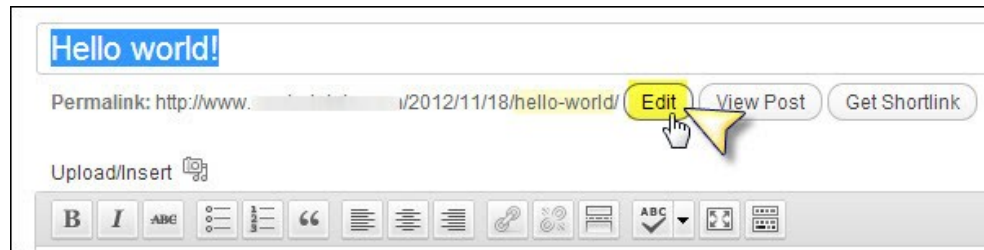
After:
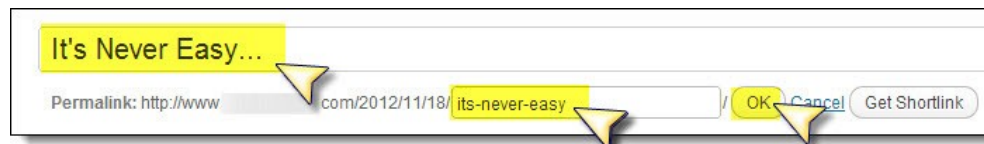
(Remember to press the "Okay" button when you're finished.)

Adding Images

Photographs and graphics give your posts (and blog) massively more searchability and eye appeal – so do get into the habit of inserting at least one, per post.

The best idea for image sources: Take your own photographs. Failing that, only use photographs in the public domain (with public domain licensing) or ask permission to use photos.

(Government websites and Wikipedia are often a great source of public domain photographs: Do still check the licensing, however – sometimes government photos do have licensing restrictions.)

Pressing the "***Add Media***" button will open up a popup allowing you to add photos from your blog library (once you have one), your computer or from another URL, if you have a photo parked on another site. (Do NOT use the latter option if you don't own the site or if you're not directly invited to do so: You might end up inadvertently "stealing" bandwidth from the site owner.)

View your post from the edit buttons, or else from the "View Site" at the top left corner of your Dashboard.

Static Page or Latest Post?

But – whoops! Why does your first page not show the post?

Go to "Settings>>Reading" and change "Front page displays" option from "A static page" to "Your latest posts" by pressing the radio button.

If you'd rather make your first post into a static page (a "Home" page all visitors will see every time they visit your site) keep "A static page" selected, and select the correct post from the drop-down menu
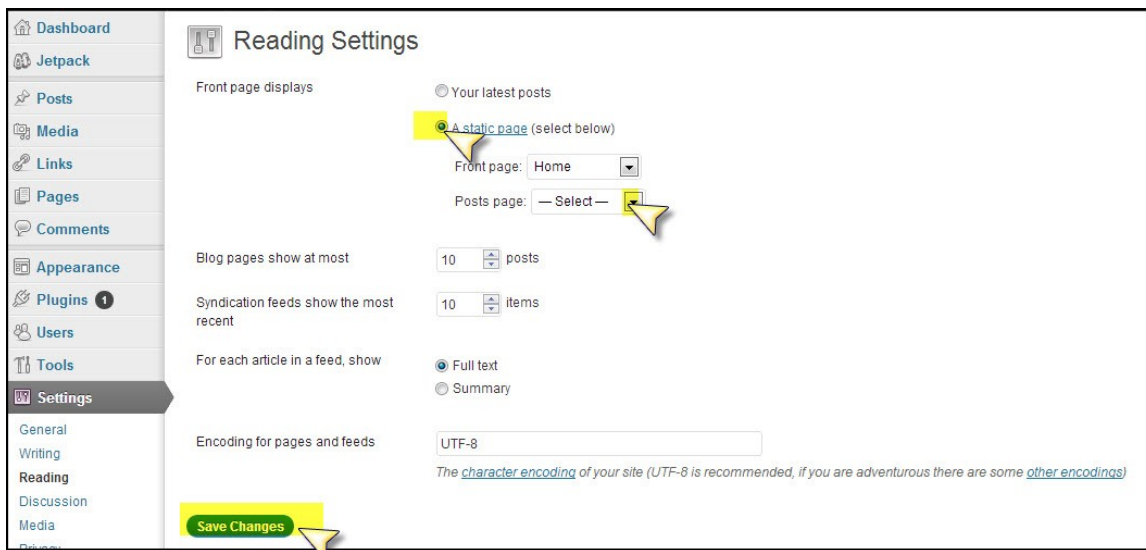
Be sure to "Save Changes", of course.

Your Comments Section

Your final action for the day: Click on "Comments" in the left-hand vertical menu and delete the "Default" test comment.
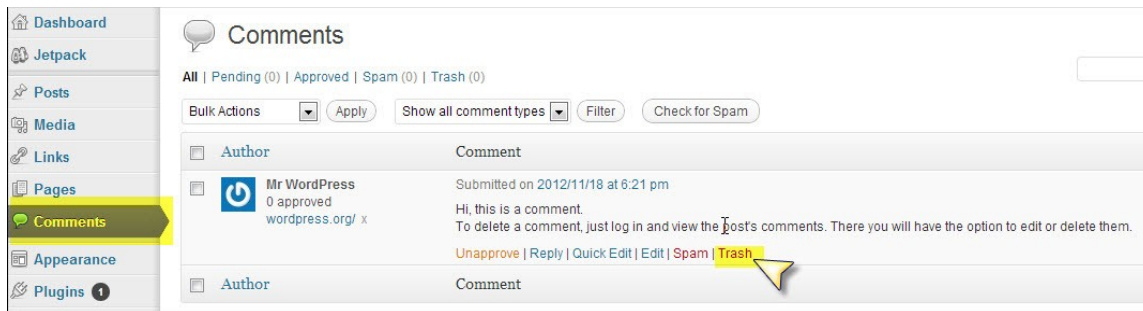
"Visit" your post or site, and make sure everything looks the way you'd like it to.

There is, of course, a lot more to learn – such as pre-scheduling posts, adding more plugins, tweaking your CSS, adding audio or video plugins, and more – but get comfortable with blogging and make some posts first, rather than trying to jump from WordPress beginner to expert all in one day.

Happy blogging!

Website Creation Checklist

- register domain name
- buy hosting (recommend bluehost – get hosting & domain there)
- create Website 'Critical Info Sheet' & add to Writeboard (see template)
- keyword brainstorming & research for site & blog categories
- create facebook account
- create twitter account
- create google account (gmail, google + and youtube)
- have header created
- install wordpress
- install builder theme (if using builder – my favorite!)
- create a layout
- create a style
- create a custom menu
- change permalinks
- install plugins (see my recommended list)
- add social media plugin
- add spam plugin (I use Comment Luv)
- add related posts plugin
- add backup buddy plugin
- set up RSS feed
- customize colors
- set up analytics (use your google account)
- if adding blog, set up main page as static page
- add agreed upon pages and content, normally 5 common pages: Home, About, Contact, Services, Rates, Products, Blog
- set up email account
- setup email list (Aweber is the best)
- add opt-in form to website
- add ping-list (for blogs)
- filter uploads into one folder (uncheck sort into folders in 'Media')
- check in common browsers (firefox, IE, Google Chrome)
- do final site quality check of all pages (click links, click pages, scan content)

50 Things to Add to Your Website to Attract Clients

Your website is your storefront. In many cases it provides a prospect's first impression of your company. You know what they say about first impressions; you can only make one and it better count. The good news is that keeping in mind a few fundamentals and making a few simple tweaks to your website can take it from bland to brilliant. You can create a website that attracts visitors, converts clients, and helps you build a prosperous and exciting business.

1. **Invitation To Friend/Follow On Social Media**
   Social media is more than a trend or a tactic that you can use to build an audience. It's as essential for most industries as a website itself. And merely having a social media "presence" isn't enough; you have to let people know you're active on social media by inviting them to interact.
   There are many ways to accomplish this; one of the simplest is to extend an invitation – "Follow me on Facebook," for example, and include a link to your page.

2. **Professional Quality Logo/Header**
   The world of Internet marketing is vast and competitive. While you can create your own blog header, you should probably leave it to the professionals unless you happen to be a design whiz. Make an investment in your brand and your business by creating a strong and relevant header and logo to represent your business.

3. **Easy To Navigate**
   Make sure your visitors can find their way around your website quickly and easily. If you're uncertain about how to accomplish this, then study websites that you visit often. Notice how they guide you through the site. Do they provide relevant and easy to recognize navigation tabs? Does the flow of the site seem logical? Is there a search function so you can head directly to the page or information you're looking for?

4. **Interaction / Comments**
   Does your website invite visitors to comment on your articles and blog posts? One of the best ways to not only measure engagement, but to also create it, is to take a look at the level of interaction on your site. With WordPress you can turn comments on and off and you can allow comments for a specific period of time.

   Some business owners choose to not allow comments, but if you don't then you may be selling your visitors short. Engage them in conversation and invite interaction and comments. You'll not only learn a lot about your audience, you'll

help build a loyal community of customers.

5. **Social Bookmarking**

   Social bookmarking not only adds value to your visitors and prospects, it also helps boost your traffic and brand awareness. By adding a social bookmarking function to your site, your visitors can bookmark using the bookmarking service of their choice. There are several top quality WordPress plugins that make social bookmarking easy. You can add buttons for the primary sites like Digg, Delicious and Reddit. When someone bookmarks your site it's added to their account, where other users can browse, vote, and share.

6. **Fresh and Catchy Content**

   The single most important thing you can do to transform from bland to brilliant is to create the best content possible. Fresh content means that your content is recent and it's topical.

   You're not creating content about something that happened five years ago or even five months ago. You're creating content about what's going on right now. And catchy content varies depending on your niche and your audience.

   The most important thing to remember when contemplating what makes something catchy is what voice and style you want to communicate to your readers. Are you serious? Funny? Controversial? What makes your content interesting, different, and valuable to your reader?

7. **Archives With Clearly Distinguishable Keywords**

   This function is particularly important if you have a blog or other WordPress based website. Make finding information easy for your visitors by creating archives. Archives are essentially directories for old content.

   No one wants to search through page after page of old content just to find something they're looking for. They want to be able to find what they need with a few clicks of their mouse. Use keywords that accurately describe the subject of the content to organize your archives.

8. **Search Field**

   It doesn't matter what the foundation is for your website – Joomla or WordPress or anything in between – it is important to make it fully usable by anyone who visits. One of the simple tools you can use to make this happen is a simple search field. It was briefly mentioned in Item #3 above, where navigation was discussed. There are different search tools you can use.

   For example, Custom Search Plugin is a WordPress plugin that allows you to create custom searches. Maybe you want people to be able to search for quotes or tips on your site. You can use this tool to add functionality to your website and to help separate your business site from your competition.

9. **Inquiry Form**

    What do you want people to do when they're at your site and they have a question? You might already have a FAQ page (hopefully you do), but what if the answer to a visitor's question isn't on that page? Ideally, you want your visitor to be able to reach out and ask their question. This keeps them engaged and connected to your business.

    To make this happen, it has to be easy for them to contact you. One of the simplest ways to accomplish this is to have a contact form or an inquiry form on your site. They enter their email address, subject line, and ask their question. You or your customer service assistant receives the message and can promptly respond.

10. **FAQ Page**

    FAQ stands for Frequently Asked Questions. Including an FAQ page on your website helps make it more user friendly. Create a list of the most common questions you receive and turn it into a separate page on your site. Make sure that like all your other valuable pages, this FAQ page is easy to find and read. As you receive more questions, you can add to the page.

    Also, consider occasionally linking to other important internal pages. This can accomplish two things. It can help keep your visitor on your website longer. And it can help boost the rankings for the page you're linking to.

    When you're creating your FAQ content remember to make it valuable and easy to understand, and don't forget to include your unique voice in the content. If you're witty when you create blog posts then be witty when you create your FAQ page. Consistency helps strengthen your brand.

11. **List Of Awards Earned and/or Recognitions**

    If you or your business has been recognized for anything relevant to your industry then by all means make sure it's acknowledged somewhere on your website. Awards and recognitions give you a boost in credibility.

    For example, "Best of the Web" winners proudly display their award logo right on the landing page of their sites.

    If you haven't won any awards or received any relevant recognitions, that's okay. You're certainly not alone. Consider including a campaign to win an award in your business planning. Get involved in your industry and get acknowledged.

12. **Media Page**

    Do you have a media page? A media page is designed to help provide the media with the essential information they need. Approach it with the belief that the media will come looking for you and will want to learn more about your business.

Here are just a few of the elements to include on your media page:
- o Company Mission and History
- o Product List
- o Company Bios
- o Company News and Press Releases
- o Brochures, Logos, Images

13. **Competition – Get People Involved**

Competition has the tendency to ignite a fire of attention and sales. There are many ways you can use competition to add fun and flare to your business. For example, you might use it to build awareness of your Facebook page.

For example, anyone who "likes" your page could be automatically entered into a drawing to win a prize. Another type of competition gets your prospects involved and contributing, so you might have them share a story that's relevant to your niche and readers can vote on whose is the best story. They could create videos too.

14. **Top Quality Free Downloads**

Freebies are appreciated by just about everyone. However, they can't be the average run of the mill freebies. Your free content needs to provide unique value to each prospect. It should solve a problem in an organized and efficient manner. Some of the best freebie downloads are simple.

For example, you might create a calendar, checklist, or even a downloadable worksheet for your prospects to fill out. Remember to brand your free downloads and use them to gently drive traffic to a sales page or the next item in your sales funnel.

15. **Relationships With Relevant Industry Professionals**

Relationships are what build business. You have relationships with your customers and prospects, your vendors, contractors and much more. Each relationship is an opportunity to leverage, grow, and prosper. Relationships with relevant industry professionals can be significant.

For example, imagine if you have a pet blog and you forge a relationship with Cesar Millan (the "Dog Whisperer") who links to your site or mentions you on Facebook. That would be huge for your business. And you don't have to forge relationships with industry celebrities to make an impact. Connecting with others builds your community, one person at a time.

16. **Contributor Content**

Let other people create content for you. Each guest blogger, interview, or contributing author brings their audience with them. You'll gain traffic and

followers. You'll also gain credibility by providing your prospects with a variety of valuable content.

17. **Community Involvement**

What are you doing to make the world a better place? Getting involved in your community is great for business. It not only promotes you locally, it provides you with content to share online as well. And you can invite your prospects to get involved in your community causes.

For example, if you have a pet related business you might get involved in a fundraiser for your local humane society and invite others to donate or get involved themselves.

18. **A Newsletter**

Email marketing is still one of the most powerful means to connect with your prospects, build relationships and make sales. However, your email newsletter has to be valuable. Make sure it provides different value than your website content. And separate that content so that newsletter subscribers receive unique value.

19. **Membership Option**

Have you ever considered offering a membership for your business? Members receive exclusive content, products or services, or promotions. You can charge for the membership or offer it for free. The choice depends largely on your audience, niche, and goals. Consider offering a membership option for your site to help broaden your offerings and set your website apart from your competition.

20. **Events**

Hosting events is a great way to not only attract attention to your business but get people involved with your business – events creates relationships. Consider hosting regular events and adding a promotional banner on your site to generate interest and attendance. You can host regular monthly webinars, chats, and other events to educate and promote at the same time.

21. **Optimized Sign Up Offer**

How do you motivate people to sign up for your newsletter? A great sign up offer can do the trick. There are many options to consider. You can give away a free report or ebook. You can provide a free online tutorial, video series, or access to behind the scenes audio recordings.

Create a fabulous offer to motivate subscribers and publish that offer in a prominent location on your website. Experiment to see what type of opt-in form works best. Some people have great luck with pop-ups, while others find that the upper right hand corner of their website works best.

22. **Mobile App**

There are more than a billion smartphone users around the world. And according to Forbes magazine global mobile traffic now represents roughly 13% of all Internet traffic. You can capitalize on this growing trend by creating a mobile application for your business and promoting it on your website. Offer it for free or charge a fee and include it in your product catalog.

23. **Testimonials**

Testimonials are money in the bank. They're mini sales pitches made on your behalf by a satisfied customer. Who better to promote you and sell your services than an unbiased customer? Use these testimonials wisely and place them strategically on your website.

24. **Social Media Widgets**

You're active on social media right? You can add social media functionality into your website. Social media widgets can invite people to join you on your chosen sites. Social media widgets can also display your activity on your favorite sites. For example, if you have a Pinterest account you can add a Pinterest widget to your site and display your latest pins.

25. **Newsfeed**

Use newsfeeds to display the latest industry news. Help keep people coming back to your site for information and to provide them with many levels of value.

26. Webinars

You can take your website up a level by offering webinars and using the tool to provide teaching opportunities to your prospects and customers. You can even use material from the webinars as the foundation for new content on your website.

27. **Great Headlines for Everything**

Headlines have an important role to play, and the more compelling and relevant they are the better. They'll pull your prospect to your content. Practice writing headlines. Test headlines to determine what your prospects respond to.

28. **Exceptionally Effective Calls To Action**

Include a call to action in every single piece of content you publish on your website – even if you merely want someone to stay on your site and read some more. Tell your visitors what to do next and help guide them through your site step by step.

29. **Have You Written A Book?**

If you've written a book then list it on your website. Promote it and use it to help establish you as a credible resource.

30. **Have You Been Featured On The News?**

If you've had the opportunity to be featured on the news then share the logo of that show on your website. Imagine how powerful "As Seen on CNN" could be to grow your business.

31. Do You Have Credentials?

What are your credentials? What makes you an exceptional source of information, services or products? Include your credentials on your website in the form of a biography or on your "About" page.

32. Clear Brand

What's your brand? Is it strong and apparent on your website? You can use your colors, logo, header, buttons, graphics, and the voice of your content to help build and establish your brand.

33. Obvious Target Market

Who is your target market, and when they visit your site is it obvious that you're talking to them? Your target market are the people who your products and services are designed to help. They're the people whose problems you solve.

If you're unsure who your target market is, then it's time to conduct some research. Take a look both at the demographics and psychographics of your customers. What do they have in common? Create an ideal prospect and then craft your website to appeal to that ideal prospect.

34. About Page

Your "About" page can include a number of pieces of information. Consider including information about your company's vision and mission. You can also include a bio or staff, although those are often best left to a separate page. You might include the company history and your purpose.

35. Contact Page

The contact page is simple enough yet it is very important. It should include your contact information even if it's already been published elsewhere on your site. Include name, phone numbers, email addresses and physical address. Also consider including any social media links on this page.

36. Video And Welcome Audio

Video and audio have become primary means of communication online. YouTube, Vimeo and other social video sites have changed the way we interact online. People enjoy being able to put a face with a business. They also like to hear your voice. Consider including both video and audio content on your site. You might even include a simple welcome message embedded into your landing page and/or sales page.

37. A Way For People To Give Money

Are you passionate about a cause? There are many ways you can integrate your cause into your business website. Taking this step not only helps raise money for something you believe in, it can help build your business.

A simple plug-in to help people click and donate, or a link to a cause you believe in, helps identify your business as a socially responsible one. More and more consumers are choosing socially aware businesses.

Additionally, if you have environmentally friendly practices then take time to identify those on your website. Sustainability is not just a buzzword; it's an approach that consumers respond to.

38. USP

USP stands for unique selling proposition. It's what makes you different. How do you separate yourself from your competition? What do you do better or differently from them? Integrate your USP into your voice, branding, and content online.

39. RSS Feed

RSS is a means of syndicating your content. It allows others to subscribe to your site and automatically receive new content and/or blog posts in their email inbox or via their favorite reader like Feedly. It's ideal if you can offer both reader RSS and email RSS so that your visitors have a choice.

40. New Products and/or Services

One of the best ways to make your business website stand out from your competition and really take hold is to create a steady stream of top quality products or services. Create a launch plan that provides you with the ability to talk about new products or services often, to discuss pending launches, and to offer promotions. It keeps things exciting and of course it helps your bottom line.

41. SEO

SEO is search engine optimization. It's the strategy and toolbox of tactics that drive traffic to your website. There are many tactics to embrace including linking, keywords, content, social media and more.

42. Analytics

Analytics will not only help you fine tune your SEO strategy, it'll help you build stronger relationships, better understand your clients and prospects, and it will help you create highly targeted content. Analytics is essentially a program that helps track every single visitor activity on your website.

Google offers a free version of analytics software that is easy to use. You embed the code into your blog or website and then you can track your website activity. You can see which pages receive the most visits, where your visitors come from and much more. Analytics is an essential tool for any serious business owner.

43. Relevant and Strong Outbound Links

Many people are frightened of outbound links. They're worried that they will be sending their visitors away. The key to good outbound links is to link to websites that are complimentary and that you have a relationship with.

For example, if you have a dog training blog you might link to your favorite dog toys website or your favorite dog breed information site. Choose relevant sites that aren't in direct competition with you. These outbound links should also only be with professionals that you have a connection with. Ideally they'll also help promote you by linking to your site or by promoting you on social media.

44. Controversial Content – Share Your Opinion

Some blogs seem to thrive on controversy. Others avoid it like the plague. There is a happy medium. Consider adding the occasional opinion piece. Surely you have strong opinions about matters in your industry, and chances are your prospects and customers do too. By sharing your opinion in a professional and interesting way, you engage conversation and can create a lot of traffic and interest for your site.

45. Picture

Do your prospects and customers know what you look like? Add a picture to your website and show them. Make it a professional image that represents you and your brand. If you have a team of employees or even contractors that your clients may interact with frequently then consider adding photos of them on your "About" page or contact page.

46. Promotional Offer

Ideally you'll always have something going on, something that you can promote. You don't need to have a fire sale every other week; in fact, that's generally not a great idea. However, a relevant and valuable promotion can create interest for your company. There are many opportunities for promotions including new product launches, sales, and holidays.

47. Referral or Affiliate Program

Word of mouth marketing is one of the best forms of marketing because it doesn't come from you. It comes from satisfied customers. Consider creating a referral program for your business. You can reward referrals with money, discounts or add ones.

You might also consider creating an affiliate program. An affiliate program pays others a commission based on sales they send your way. It requires some additional legwork because you'll want to provide them with materials to be

successful, but it can pay off generously.

48. Security

Make sure your customers' information is protected by an appropriate level of technology. Using a secure shopping cart and payment system. Make sure your customers know they're protected by sharing your security protocol and policies. If you have SSL (Secure Socket Layer), then tell them you have it by displaying the logo.

49. Fast Load Times

Invest in a good webhost and make sure the graphics you're uploading aren't so large they slow down load times. People are impatient and generally won't wait more than a few seconds for a site to load.

50. Visual Interest

With good design elements and attractive and relevant graphics strategically placed throughout, you'll create a website that is beautiful to look at as well as useful. Work with a designer to get an attractive and balanced site.

There you have it. 50 ways you can improve your website and make it stand out from your competition. Start with a few of these changes and gradually implement more of them as can. Each step you take helps your business grow, provides value to your visitors and prospects, and attracts more people to you and your wonderful Internet based business.