

Professional WordPress Blog Toolkit



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With the right tools, you can turn your blog into a serious business, just like us here. We use [this blog](#) to share our knowledge about information technology. In case you have a passion in blogging or writing and want to create a professional blog with WordPress, we will share the ultimate toolkit you can use to create your professional blog.

Being open-source software, WordPress has a very open ecosystem. You have a bunch of options for each entity. From plugin, theme, web hosting, to optimization tool. Conducting research to find the appropriate option for each entity can take you lots of time. You need to compare the features offered by a tool with another's, as well as pricing, functionality, and so on. That is why we created this article to help you save time by narrowing down your options.

Here are the tools we use to run this blog and the reasons why we use them.

Web hosting: SiteGround

Web hosting is the first tool you need if you want to create a website. For a professional need, you need a web hosting that offers a solid performance. We use SiteGround as our web hosting provider. There are 6 reasons why we use SiteGround (read [this article](#) to learn more). We subscribed to one of its managed WordPress hosting plans.

Another reason that convinces us to use SiteGround is that SiteGround is recommended by both WordPress.org. We prefer to use a managed WordPress hosting as it offers some easiness for bloggers like us. With a managed WordPress hosting, you don't need to be a hassle on taking care of technical aspects regarding your website as they are handled by the associated hosting provider (SiteGround in our case). The technical aspects include:

- Security
- WordPress updates
- Speed/performance
- Daily backups

Since the crucial technical aspects of your website are handled by your hosting provider, you can focus on business aspects (like marketing and analytics) and content creation.

[Learn more about SiteGround managed WP hosting](#)

Theme: Newspaper

There are a bunch of WordPress themes for blogging out there. We use Newspaper as it is easy to customize. Newspaper comes with a default page builder plugin -- called tagDiv

Composer -- that you can use to create beautiful pages (home page, about page, contact page, and so on) on your WordPress site without having to deal with HTML or CSS. Newspaper also allows you to create custom single post templates. You can, for instance, use different single post templates for articles under certain categories. In addition, Newspaper also allows you to create custom header, custom footer, custom 404 page, custom search page, and so on. Nearly all theme parts can be customized -- using [tagDiv Composer](#).

[Learn more about Newspaper theme.](#)

Email marketing: Mailchimp

Email marketing is the main foundation of the entire internet marketing process, above social media marketing. Every online business should invest in email marketing. Blog is no exception. We use Mailchimp as our email marketing tool as it has wide integration supports with other tools and services. Most WordPress themes support integration with Mailchimp, including Newspaper. Newspaper comes with a default feature that you can use to create an email opt-in form and connect it with your Mailchimp account.

You can use Mailchimp to collect email subscribers and run certain campaigns like weekly newsletter, send promotions, and so on. In some cases, the number of email subscribers can be used as one of the selling tools.

SEO: Yoast

Search engine is one of the most main traffic sources of a website. To get traffic from search engines, you need to optimize your website to make it appears on the search results page of search engines. Yoast is the most popular SEO plugin for WordPress with over 5 active installations. It allows you to optimize every element of your website. From the home page, blog posts, category pages, and so on.

Yoast comes with crucial SEO features like XML sitemap, breadcrumbs, and content optimization analyzer. When writing a new blog post, Yoast will provide indicators whether your article already has a good SEO or haven't. The article components that are analyzed by Yoast are:

- Outbound links
- Internal links
- Keyphrase length
- Meta description length
- Text length
- Image alt attributes

- SEO title width

Yoast itself is a freemium plugin. All basic SEO features mentioned above are available on the free version.

Analytics tool: Google Analytics

As a blogger (who is also a webmaster), it is crucial to always learn the statistics of your website. How many daily visitors you gain, bounce rate, how your campaign goes, and so on. Google Analytics is second to none when it comes to the analytics tool. You can install it on your WordPress site to monitor the number of visitors as well as supporting data such as demography, geolocation, how they get to your website, and so on. Google Analytics offers detailed metrics and most importantly, you can use it for free.

While you can see your website statistics from the Google Analytics dashboard, you can install the Site Kit plugin to monitor your site statistics via the WordPress dashboard.

Site optimization: SG Optimizer and CloudFlare

As we mentioned earlier, we use a managed WordPress hosting as we don't want to be a hassle on taking care of the site performance. It's our hosting provider job (SiteGround in this case) to taking care of our site performance. However, for maximum optimization, we still make some optimization efforts by installing SG Optimizer plugin and configuring CDN (CloudFlare). Both SG Optimizer and CloudFlare help you to optimize the content of your website, while SiteGround helps you optimize your site on the service configuration side.

SG Optimizer itself is a free caching plugin developed by SiteGround. It offers some optimization options like lazy load, DNS pre-fetch for external domains, GZIP compression, browser caching, minify JavaScript files, minify CSS files, and so on.

Meanwhile, CloudFlare allows you to configure a free CDN for your website. SiteGround itself offers free CDN that is powered by CloudFlare, making it easier for you to configure CDN on your website.

The bottom line

Starting an online business — be it a blog, e-commerce site, membership site, or anything — requires the right tools. With so many options out there, it can be time-consuming to find the right option for every component of your website. If you want to start a blog with WordPress, we have narrowed down your choices so that you don't need to conduct the research from the ground (if you still need to do so). We use all of the tools above on this website.