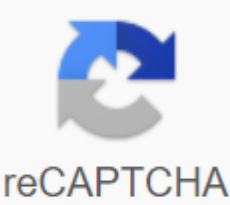




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More and more people are turning to WordPress to build a professional website as it increasingly becomes a more user-friendly CMS thanks to the availability of quality themes, plugins, and tools. Granted, that doesn't mean it's a simple platform to build a small business website with, and anyone who has used WordPress knows it takes time to get used to. To reduce the otherwise steep learning curve, we've put together the best WordPress tips and tricks. Here are 25 WordPress tips and tricks for small businesses: 1. Sign up for web hosting First The most common rookie mistake is to create a WordPress account before you get web hosting. While it sounds like the sort of thing a web host would want you to hear, that's actually what you need to hear. By getting web hosting first, you save yourself a lot of hassle. Why? The best web hosting includes extras like a free domain name, a free SSL, and one-click WordPress installation, so your domain, web hosting, and WordPress website are automatically connected. DreamHost One Click WordPress Installation Looking for a host that contains everything you need to get started? Get a free domain name, SSL certificate, and one-click WordPress installation for as little as \$2.59 per month with DreamHost. Visit DreamHost 2. Invest in the right theme Your WordPress theme is the foundation of your website. It dictates how your website looks, how it works, and how much of a pain it is building. As appealing as a free theme may sound, the reality is that premium themes are generally the way to go. Premium themes give you the chance to start with a website that looks and works the way you want your website to. This means that it requires fewer customizations, which makes your life easier and it can be launched faster. Search for WordPress themes at ThemeForest Need help finding the right one? Check out the best WordPress themes for business. 3. Build for SEO Search Engine Optimization (SEO) often comes as an afterthought. However, you will save yourself a lot of time by building it for SEO from scratch. Start by getting a good understanding of your target audience, and then research your target keywords. From there, install an SEO plugin such as Yoast SEO, which will let you know what you need to do to write pages and posts that are SEO-friendly. Ubersuggest keyword analyzer New on search engine optimization? Get all the information you need to rank on Google. 4. Edit WordPress Using a Drag & Drop Editor Let's be frank: WordPress page editor is not user friendly. As much as you can easily learn how to build web pages with it, you'll find that the pages look like a novice blog post from 1999. That's not what you want for a professional website—or any website in the 21st century. Instead, use a page builder plugin, such as Elementor or Beaver Builder, to transform the page editor a drag-and-drop interface drag-and-drop interface works in the same way as site builders such as Wix and Squarespace. Not sure where to start? Check out the best WordPress page builder plugins to find that is right for you. 5. Compressing your images Compress images sounds technical, but it's surprisingly simple, and requires zero technical expertise thanks to the help of free image optimizer tools such as Compressor.io or plugins, such as reSmush.it. Compressing images is one of the easiest and most effective ways to improve your website's load time, which plays a big role in how well your site ranks in Google. A website that loads quickly also has a lower bounce rate, so that's a win total. Compress images for WordPress using Compressor.io 6. Creating internal links on your website Both an important on-page SEO strategy and a good user experience (UX) design practice is to include internal links on your web pages. This helps to tell search engines like Google that your site is a great search result for your target keywords, and it helps your website visitors more effortlessly navigate through your site. For example, think of YouTube's Top Next column. It creates a rabbit hole of content, which keeps people engaged and can turn visitors into leads or customers. Internal linking example from Freshworks 7. Add ALT Tags to Your Photos This is one of those small details that can make a big difference. Adding ALT tags to all your images helps search engines further, such as Google, understand what your site is all about. In return, your site has a better chance of ranking high in search results. To add ALT tags to images, select the picture block and find Picture Settings from the right column under Block. There, use a few words (preferably keywords) to describe the image. How to add alt text to images in WordPress Pro tips: Your ALT description should correlate to your meta description and permalink so that your page or post content is consistent. 8. Change Your Permalink Structure for better SEO The default WordPress permalink structure includes the dates of your posts. But most SEO professionals agree that this is not the ideal permalink structure for search engine optimization. The good news is that you can change the default setting. To do this, go to the site's WordPress dashboard, select Settings from the left menu, and then click Permalinks from the menu that follows. From here, select the Post name radio button and then click Save Changes. Update Permalink structure in WordPress: Settings & Permalinks 9. Monitor your site Speed None-including Google-has the patience for a slow site. The slower the site, the higher the bounce rate, which can be harmful to your bottom line. Of course, knowing that your loads at a snail's pace can be hard to know, unless you test your website speed. With many great (and free) website performance tools there is no excuse not to test your page load time. For example, Pingdom is a top website speed testing tool that tests and rates your site. Pingdom free site speed tool Want to know more about site speed? Check out our article on best website performance tools to increase your website speed. 10. Design for User Experience Web Design is one of those things where no one notices if it's good, but everyone notices if it's bad. The best websites are not simply designed to look good, but to create a great user experience. This means knowing your audience, giving them a seamless experience in finding what they're looking for, and reducing website friction. For more insights, get the full breakdown on how to design for UX. Examples of good UX web design 11. Keep URLs Short shorter URLs addresses are easier for people to quickly decipher what the content is all about. Studies have also found that shorter URLs tend to attract more clicks than long URLs, so it's not surprising that shorter URLs are growing in popularity among strategic business sites. WordPress allows you to set the URL structure of the control panel for each post you type. So if you customize your permalinks, make sure you make a connection with them and include your target keywords in your URL, if possible. WordPress tip: Keep URLs short 12. Secure Your Site Hackers are on the lookout for WordPress websites with poor security. Don't make your website, business, and customers a target for online attacks. Instead, protect your website by using a strong password (and no, the same one you use for everything doesn't count), install an SSL certificate to protect sensitive user information (such as contact and payment information), and use a security plugin, such as Sucuri or Wordfence. Sucuri WordPress security plugin 13. Change your WordPress Login page URL Speech about website security, take a step further and change your WordPress admin login URL. That's right, you can change the actual URL (or permalink) of your login page. Why would you do this? Well, each WordPress site automatically generates the same generic login page (e.g. yourbusiness.com/wp-admin). This means that it is easy for hackers to try to log in if they find clues to your password. WPS hide login plugin 14. Limit your use of plugins Sure, WordPress comes with thousands of free and useful plugins, but that doesn't mean you need all of them. Having too many plugins is a great way to slow down a website, so while they are supposed to work for you, they can work against you. Chances are you have some extra installed plugins that you don't use. Check your installed plugins and all that you do not use. Installed WordPress plugins 15. Get help when you need it Just because you chose to build your own WordPress website doesn't mean you need to build it completely on your your It also doesn't mean you're a web developer or even a graphic designer, but there are times when you might run into questions where you wish you were. In these cases, get help from the pros. Whether you need a specially designed contact form or a graphically professionally modified, you can get surprisingly affordable help with sites like Fiverr and Upwork. Examples of Fiverr gigs 16. Create a custom 404 page You never want anyone to land on a 404 page. But it happens, and when it does, you want to try to keep visitors to your site. Almost every WordPress theme comes with a standard 404 page, but a generic 404 can lead to visitors leaving your site because they may not even realize it's really your site. By creating a custom 404 page, you let visitors know that while they landed on the wrong page, they still came to the right site. Custom 404 page example 17. Tracking website visitors It's impossible to get a good read about how your site performs if you don't have any data on your website visitors. For example, you might know that you're getting around 50 conversions per month, but if you don't know how many people visit your website per month, you don't really know if it's a good percentage or not. First, add Google Analytics to WordPress, if you haven't already. Then, install plugin MonsterInsights for more helpful user insights reports. MonsterInsights dashboard 18. Automate Site Backups Website backups are one of the things that most people plan to do, but are easily overlooked and forgotten until it's too late. Don't just plan to back up your website-automating backups so you never have to think about it. There are a couple of ways to do this. The first is to choose a web hosting plan that includes automatic backups, such as InMotion and GoDaddy. If you have web hosting already, choose a plugin, such as UpdraftPlus, which is free and automates backups. InMotion hosts backup manager 19. Stay on Top of Updates WordPress plugins are constantly updated by developers, and by not performing updates when they are available you risk breaking parts of your site. So keep track of WordPress and plugin updates by checking your WordPress dashboard frequently. You will receive notifications at the top of your dashboard, but you can also navigate to installed plugins to see which ones have available updates. Examples of WordPress updates Don't you have time to constantly monitor WordPress? Automatically update WordPress plugins by using a plugin. Yes, there are plugins that automate updates for other plugins, such as Companion Auto Update. 20. Use reCAPTCHA to reduce the Spam Contact Form contact form is good, but they are also a magnet for spammers. the amount of junk you get from your contact forms by using reCAPTCHA. This helps eliminate robo messages as it is deciphered between humans and robots. Robots. of the leading WordPress contact form plugins include reCAPTCHA as an option in settings or during integrations. It is also a good idea to add reCAPTCHA to WordPress login and registration to further reduce bots and hackers. reCAPTCHA integration with Contact Form 7 21. Understand how Redirect's Work WordPress redirect allows you to automatically transfer site visitors from one page to another page. While you may be wondering why this is important to you, it is because when you run into instances where you need to delete pages or change URLs, you need to set up redirects. If you don't, your website visitors will land on a 404 page, which generally leads to visitors leaving your site. To make this easy, use a plugin like Redirect. Easy 301 redirect using Redirect 22. Use Click-to-Call or Click Map Buttons People come to your website to find information like your number or to get directions to your business. Make it easy for them by using a click-to-call button or a click map to open directions from their mobile device. For example, a user might have found your restaurant by searching for the best restaurants near them. They land on your site, but they want to call to make a reservation. By using a click-by-call button, they can quickly and easily place the call. Click-to-call and click map samples on your phone Don't you know how to add one of these? Traditionally, coding is required, but now there are plugins like the Call Now Button plugin or embed Google Maps to add driving directions. 23. Take advantage of Available Integrations The average business uses a variety of platforms, from customer relationship management systems (e.g. HubSpot) to booking systems (e.g. OpenTable), and email marketing software. What's great about WordPress is that there are lots of integrations available, so it's worth checking if there's one for the platforms you're using. For example, if you use Mailchimp for email marketing campaigns, you can integrate Mailchimp into your website so that users who sign up for your newsletter can be automatically added to your contacts. When your next newsletter is deployed, the new contact will receive it. Mailchimp integration for WordPress 24. Embed Reviews to increase social proof Whether you book a hotel or an event, you want to know if it's any good first—and so do your customers. User reviews play an important role in the success of businesses, and even if you have a lot of reviews on platforms like Google, TripAdvisor, Trustpilot, or Houzz, you want to show them on your site. Embed reviews on your site so that can see what others are saying about your business on other platforms. For example, you can use the Google Reviews widget. Google reviews widget for WordPress 25. Submit your site to Google Search Console As big of a search result as your site can be, that doesn't mean that aware of it. When you launch a new website, it can take months for Google to find and recognize your site as a quality search result. However, you don't have to sit around waiting for Google to notice you. Instead, you can help the site be found earlier by submitting your site to google search console. Get step-by-step instructions on how to submit your URL to Google. Google's search console What's Next? If you are in the early stages of building a WordPress website, check out our WordPress tutorial video for beginners and follow along step-by-step in our article on how to make a WordPress website. Website.

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