How To Create an Author Website With WordPress

Asksusanne.com

Virtual Assistant for Authors

Helping With Online Book Marketing For Authors

How To Create an Author Website With WordPress by Susanne

About The Author

Susanne Collyer is the owner of Sues Complete Web Solutions, (http://www.asksusanne.com) a business devoted to creating online business success for Authors. Susanne is a virtual assistant, skilled in WordPress customization and management, E-commerce setup, Kindle and Amazon .com submissions.

Susanne has a great interest in books as well as being the author of two published children's books and a print book "WordPress Starter Guide For Authors". Also as a Community Librarian had the opportunity to set up and host visiting authors for their book tours.

Have you ever wondered how your life would change if you were a published author? I can assure you, it does.

This is a great indication that self-publishing can be profitable, but what many aspiring authors don't realize is that it takes more than writing and self-publishing to make money.

As an author you absolutely must be willing to market your books. After all, if the only thing an author needed to do was write and publish then every author who gets their book published would be successful. The first step in becoming a profitable author is to embrace the fact that you not only have to write, you have to market and sell too.

This short report**, *How To Create an Author Website With WordPress*** is about how to create a website with WordPress even if you've never designed a website before in your life!

Read on for more information on how to use this completely free software to build a professional internet presence that gets you more book sales...

Are you ready to create an Author WordPress? There is no reason why you can't go from complete beginner to website owner in very short time, even if you've never built a website in your life!

A bit of background first on what exactly WordPress is:

WordPress is a piece of software. It's a program that allows you to set up a website on the internet. It's completely free.

It works like this: You sign up for a hosting account and install WordPress with an easy-install through the host. This process literally takes minutes and then you can customize your brand new site!

The only thing you need to pay for is hosting and you can get that at a very affordable rate – less than $10 per month. In this report I'll make the hosting component real easy on you and recommend the hosting company I've personally used to build my growing businesses and that I've built sites for clients on as well.

Just to clarify the difference in this report we are talking about using WordPress.org and NOT WordPress.com.

WordPress.com is for blogs only and has restrictions such as you cannot sell on this site.

WordPress.org is for blog and websites that you host on your own domain. Very important distinction there.

If you want more information on WordPress go to the main site WordPress.org. There you will find all kinds of documentation on how the software works as well as many add-ons that we'll get into as we go through this report.

Hosting Your WordPress Website

Step 1: Finding a host for your WordPress Website
I'm going to recommend only one host to you. There are hundreds out there but this is the one I have used for years and their hosting and customer service is excellent. Of course feel free to look around or if you're ready to just get going you can take my recommendation below.
Sign up for your hosting at Bluehost: (affilliate link) **currently hosting starts at $3.95 us/month**
http://asksusanne.com/recommends/bluehost

Here's what you need to know about choosing any host if you want to install WordPress:

- Host needs to have cpanel
- Host needs to have WordPress one-click install
- Multiple Domain name hosting is ideal (because once you've got the bug you'll want to make more than one website!)

Ok, so you've got your host. Next, to get up and running quickly you can use a script to install WordPress.

1. Log into your control panel. It should be located at:
http://www.yourdomain.com/cpanel or with Bluehost you can simply log in at Bluehost.com
2. Scroll to the Software/Services tab and click on Simple Scripts, it looks like this:

3. Choose WordPress under Blogs to install, click install, choose your blog location, agree to the terms and conditions and then click 'Complete'

4. So now you have yourself a WordPress installation!

After you install your WordPress site you'll need to log in.

Your login will be given to you upon installation – make sure
you save it. Then, whenever you want to edit your website you will need to basically log into it and start working in WordPress.

Now, before you go too much further I recommend you take at least an hour or two to PLAY with your new software. Look around, create a post, make a page, see if you can make a link or upload an image. All these things are possible and so much more. In fact, there are so many things you can do I won't talk about them all in this report as I don't want to overwhelm you.

But – I also don't want to underwhelm you! I want you to understand how powerful and fantastic the program you just installed really is! To help you along, let's do a quick overview of the different sections of WordPress:

The image you see to the left is on the left side of every page inside your WordPress dashboard. If you click on any of the words you see in the image you'll get a drop-down menu with more options. Let's go over what each general section does.

Dashboard – Click this to bring you to the main page of your WordPress. Here you will see various items relating to your WordPress site. It will give you a summary of your posts and pages, comments, etc. You will also see links to the WordPress.org site, recent comments, incoming links, etc. You can customize this page.

Posts – If you're going to set up a blog on your site this is where you create, view and edit your posts.

Media – You can use the media section to upload images, videos and documents.

Links – If you want to use the links 'widget' so you can link out to other people this is where you would fill in the links.

Pages – This is where you create, view and edit your pages.

Comments – Here you can view all the comments you've received, check your spam comments, edit or delete comments.

Appearance – This is where you upload a new theme, you customize your widgets and you can also set up a custom menu. You can also work in the css and php files if you have some advanced coding knowledge.

Plugins – We've yet to talk plugins but here is where you can upload and activate them.

Users – Lets you set users to your site or update current users. You can allow others to log in and post content.

Tools – Import or export WordPress files.

Settings – You can set options about how people read your blog, how many posts they see, how the permalinks are set, etc. Any plugins you install will often show up here too.

Step 2: Setting Up a Static Homepage

The main difference between a website and a blog is that the homepage is static on a website where the homepage is always changing on a blog.

This report focuses on the setup of a website. To do that you need to know how to set up a static homepage. It's a quick and easy process. Here are the steps:

1. Add a page called 'Home' by clicking on 'Pages' > 'Add New' from the left menu. Enter 'Home' into the title and then click 'Publish'.

2. To add a page called 'Blog' create a new page and in title add "Blog" and then click 'Publish'.

3. Next, click on 'Settings' > 'Reading' from the left menu. Select the radio button that says 'A static page'. Set the front page to your 'Home' page and the blog page to your 'Blog' page. Make sure you save your changes by clicking the blue button.

Step 3: Choosing and Installing Your Theme

We've covered how to choose a host and we've installed WordPress.

Next we are going to talk about choosing and installing a theme for your new site!

What is a WordPress theme or template?

WordPress comes with a default 'theme'. A theme is what sets the layout of your website. It is advanced php and css coding that allows you to have a more customized look.
There are literally thousands of themes to choose from. You can choose from a current selection of over 1200 on WordPress.org database here: http://WordPress.org/extend/themes/

Here's what I recommend you do before you take ANY time looking for a theme:

--> **Decide what you need it for.**

Get a very good idea in your mind what you want from a theme and your search will be much, much easier!

Here are some questions you should ask yourself.

- Am I willing to pay for a theme?

- Do I want a free theme?

- Do I want to customize the header?

- What colors do I want my theme to be?

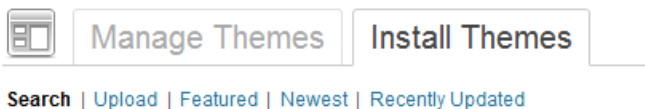- How do I want the content to look- two columns or three?

FREE: WordPress - You can search a huge database of free themes here http://www.WordPress.org.

Free themes do not come with support, so if anything goes wrong there is usually no place to get help. This is something to keep in mind when choosing a free theme.
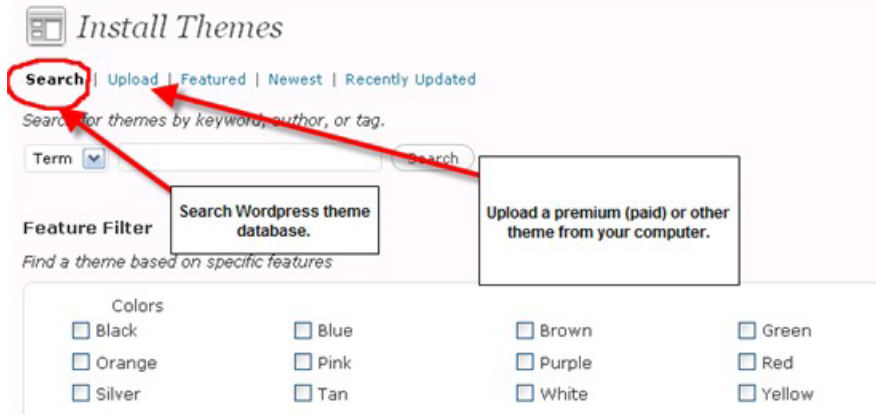
The default WordPress theme is actually a great theme.

Also, note that WordPress comes with a fully functional theme and at this writing it is the Twenty-Fifteen theme. This theme offers a robust platform to build your author website. It includes a slider, complete customization, and a support forum if you need help. And you can always change your theme later. I have changed my theme many times over the years to accommodate change in website trends.

If you are using a different theme than the default WordPress theme, then you will have to install it. To do this you need to log into your WordPress dashboard click the 'Appearance' tab on the left sidebar. Click on the large tab in the main area that says 'Install Theme', it looks like this:

From there you can choose to search the WordPress.org database for free themes or you

can upload your chosen theme (in zip format) from your computer and install it.

Once you've chosen your theme you will need to click on "Install Now".

Then click to activate the theme. I can't tell you what a simple process this is compared to the 'olden days' of website design. I built my first website in 2004 with all HTML and I can tell you it was a long, long process to get the simplest of websites going. These days you can have a super-powerful robust website platform in a matter of minutes.

Look, if you run into a snag or a problem I understand and it happens. This free report is the 'best case scenario' but sometimes problems come up. The first thing to do when you have a problem is see if your webhost can help, most times they can. If you don't find the answer you might want some extra help.

If you need any extra help with installing a theme for WordPress be sure to check out my Author Virtual Assistant Support service at Asksusanne.com/author-website-help

Step 4: Customizing Your Theme

Next we are going to talk about customizing your WordPress Website.

Almost everyone who installs their own WordPress theme will at least want to customize the header. How you do this will be dependent on the theme in question. Then you may want to customize other parts of your theme like the sidebar, the footer and the colors.

Many themes will come with settings that allow you to customize the entire site making it completely unnecessary for you to have any previous coding or design experience.

Other items to customize:

Sidebar - Many people will want to remove the 'Meta' information that is added to some WordPress themes by default. You may also want to add other elements such as an email opt-in and RSS Feed info to your sidebar. The easiest way to make changes to the sidebars is to use widgets. Almost all new themes are 'widget-friendly'. You simply click on 'Widget' under 'Appearance' in the left menu of your WordPress software to see what options you have for customizing with widgets.
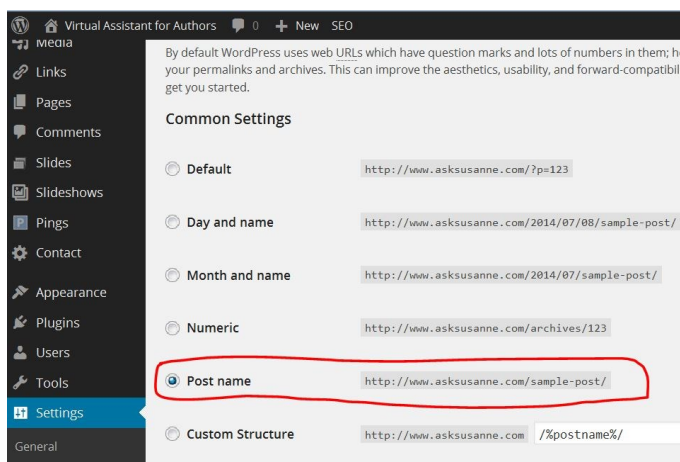
Background Color – Again, some free and premium themes let you change the background color within the theme settings.

Important Information About Permalinks:

Having proper permalinks is very important, almost crucial, to your search engine results.

 A permalink is basically your pages address on the internet. When you set up a new WordPress website it will have permalinks set on the default which usually includes the date and the post name in your URL. If you want to change this, you go to the Permalinks section and set your own permalink structure.

The first thing you do is go to 'Settings' > 'Permalinks'. Then, under 'Custom Structure' enter the custom structure you choose.

 What that does is change your website page and post links from a bit of meaningless code to actual WORDS.

Step 5: Stopping The Spam

Oh spam – how we love to hate you!

Next we are going to talk about stopping the spam on your WordPress Website. Spam is a problem everywhere and blogs or blogsites get no reprieve.

What you need to do to solve this is install a plugin to prevent spam. The one I'm going to recommend here is Akismet.

Using Akismet will solve about 99.9% of any problems you might have with spam on your blog site.

How do you install it?

The first thing you will need to know is that Akismet is automatically installed in your plugins section of your blog.

On 'Plugins' from the left menu bar, find Akismet and click 'activate'.

The next thing you will need to do is get an API key. Click the activate link and it will take you to the Akismet site where you sign up for an Akismet API key, and Go to your Akismet configuration page, and save your API key.

Security Note – Whenever installing any plugins make sure you check for vulnerabilities and be sure it comes from a trusted source. Plugins can cause security issues on your website if you are not careful. Also, always keep up with plugin updates as they come out.

Step 6: Adding Plugins

We talked about plugins in the last step while installing Akismet, your spam protector.

The thing to understand about WordPress is that it's open source. Open source means that the program is free. It also usually means that it's open for editing and additions. WordPress is really a community project where many programmers work on little software add-ons called plugins.

WordPress supports this fully. In fact it also lists these plugins right on its site. Currently there are over 15,000 available!

Now, on to adding plugins.

1. Choose your plugin.

2. Click the 'Add New' link under 'Plugins' from the left side menu:

3. Next choose how you want to add a plugin. You can search the plugin directory if you don't know exactly what you want, or even if you do but don't have it on your computer. You can also upload a plugin from your computer. You would normally do this when you have a plugin you have paid for.

4. Once you've found your plugin you want to install click 'Install', then make sure you click 'Activate Plugin' to activate the plugin.

Step 7: Adding Content That Attracts

It's essential for you to add great content that draws and keeps readers on your site. Here are some tips for you.

First Tip: Write content that people are looking for and that is targeted to your website's purpose. Fill your website with high-quality information that serves a purpose and provides high value at the same time. People come to the internet looking for information, entertainment or to find the answer to a problem - do any combination of these three things on a regular basis and you are sure to have a hit on your hands. Talk about your book, your characters, your plot, why you wrote your book , I think you get the idea. Let your readers into your world. They will love it.

Second Tip: Decide with a clear set of goals what you want to use your website for. Will it be to draw traffic to your book? To make money through affiliate marketing? Or a bit of all of the above.

Third Tip: Get out there and let people know your website exists! I'm not going to cover the dozens and dozens of ways to get traffic here. You need to build a plan you can follow and one that works for you. But know this --> just because you build a website that doesn't mean people will automatically find it. You now need to shout it from the rooftops!

Set your goals, stick to them and you'll start to see your efforts pay off as you build a website that people love to come back to again and again.

So that's it for how to get your website up and running.

If you want to get a LOT of hand-holding and one-on-one attention to learn the ins and outs of setting up a professional WordPress website for yourself, then I recommend you check out the WordPress video program at http://www.asksusanne.com/wordpress-video-tutorials/.

If "do it yourself" is not for you and you'd like someone to set this all up for you I offer fully customized WordPress website designs at http://www.asksusanne.com - come check it out!