



## Why Book Authors Should Consider Wordpress For Their Web Presence

By Dean Hua

In recent years, the Internet has made significant breakthroughs in technological advancement. The proliferation of new technology has allowed people to promote their businesses in more meaningful and powerful ways. Businesses that have adapted to these new technologies have gained a competitive edge over their rivals.

Two tools that are blazing a trail in this next generation of the Internet are blogs and content management systems (CMS).

Known as on-demand web publishing platforms, blogs and CMS have allowed businesses to articulate their message in more powerful and engaging ways than they have in years past. At the forefront of the blogging revolution is a robust and popular platform called [WordPress](#).

Businesses across many industries are taking advantage of this new technology. Unfortunately, book authors have been slow to adapt and are instead still relying on static websites and unproductive book tours to promote their work. However, today's user-friendly blogging software and CMS can help book authors develop an online presence in line with the next generation of web technology. More specifically, I'll discuss how WordPress - a blogging platform and CMS - can fulfill the needs of many book authors who are looking for that competitive edge.

As an author, you most likely have the following or similar goals:

- Build initial buzz about your book

- Get feedback from your readers
- Update your readers on what's new with you
- Increase book sales

If these sound like your goals, then a blog/CMS platform such as WordPress may be a suitable fit for you.

## **WordPress As A CMS.**

Although WordPress was created originally as blogging software, it has become a viable CMS with software that allows the user to manage all types of content, such as web pages, digital files, and images through the website interface.

The WordPress CMS eliminates the need to pay and rely on a web designer to create new pages every time there is an update. Ordinary people with no technical skills can now have control over their online presence. They no longer need to know about foreign acronyms such as HTML, FTP, CSS or PHP in order to maintain a professional-looking website.

A WordPress-powered CMS allows users to:

- Include images, audio or video on a page
- Create categories and tags for your content
- Maintain and edit content instantly
- Simple-to-use backend interface
- Let multiple owners access the website
- Have multiple blog contributors
- Create unlimited pages

Let's give a common example of how WordPress can help you, the author of a new book. The first thing many users do is complete their "About" page describing themselves, their business, or the focus of their blog. You write your page and publish it, but two days later you decide you want to add a few more sentences and change an existing one. Before CMS existed, this type of change would require you to contact your web designer. Sometimes the designer would respond; sometimes he didn't. Meanwhile, you're stuck with an outdated web page and no idea how to fix it.

Those days are gone. Welcome to the next generation of websites, where you can publish, edit and maintain content on demand. You don't have to waste time chasing down a designer; instead, you can focus on building reader interest and promoting your books.

## **WordPress is simple to learn.**

There are hundreds of content management systems out there, but the WordPress advantage is a backend administration that's very easy to understand. Its simple CMS platform will not inundate and confuse you with unnecessary features that will only waste your time.

Its core functionality is intended to serve the needs of small business owners, unlike some CMS that cater to enterprise-level customers. As an author, you'll need to occasionally publish new web pages or update release dates or book signings. You'll also want to consider a blogging platform as part of the online marketing initiative and have it bundled into the CMS package. WordPress can serve both needs.

### **WordPress As A Blog.**

As an author, you've been hearing a lot of buzz about the power of blogging. Penelope Trunk, author of *The Brazen Careerist*, used blogging to land a 6-figure book deal. Tim Ferris, author of *The Four Hour Work Week*, used a blog to build buzz for his new book and watched it skyrocket to the top of Amazon's sales charts.

You dream that you can do the same; and now, anything is possible. And with WordPress, you are on the right track to getting there.

One of the unique features of WordPress is the ability to connect to other blogs via *trackback*. When other blogs reference and link back to your site, you receive notification through the administration interface. This form of linking from one blog to another is called a *trackback*.

By receiving notification of the *trackback*, you will be able to start a conversation and network with other bloggers. Afterall, if they are linking back to your site it means you've said something of interest to them. You'll be able to visit their website and blog and see if they have something positive or negative to say. Regardless, this allows you to monitor what the web is saying about you. *Trackback* is an invaluable source of public relations information for you.

### **WordPress Is Robust.**

WordPress has hundreds of plugins that will allow an author to create a formidable online presence. Plugins are modules or add-ons to your existing site that help increase its functionality. A *sitemap* plugin allows you to add a *sitemap* to your WordPress powered website. A *video* plugin allows you to upload various types of video such as YouTube, flash, and QuickTime. An *SEO* plugin can help increase the search engine friendliness of your website.

There are hundreds of plugins within WordPress' library. One of the primary reasons it has become one of the most popular blogging platforms on the Internet is because users can add robust functionality to its core software.

There are new plugins being developed every day, and many of these plugins are free. The plugin library has helped differentiate itself from other platforms such as Typepad or Blogger.

### **WordPress Is Flexible.**

There is little doubt that every author needs a website in order to generate exposure for their book. Some authors will want to leverage blogging to help improve their online presence. The great aspect of WordPress is that it acts as a kind of Swiss Army knife, unfolding to reveal its many features. It is so flexible, you'll think it has taken yoga lessons!

Perhaps you've started blogging, but decide you can't keep up with it anymore. That's fine with WordPress - you still have your website as the storefront to your book.

Currently, there are a lot of authors who have a website for their work and a blog hosted on a separate domain. Some might be relying on Google's Blogger as their blog platform. What would happen if you stopped blogging while relying on a hosted solution like Blogger? Your readership abandons you because of the lack of fresh content. This issue would not be as bad if your blog was on your website, because at least you have visitors to your website looking for news about you. But with a blog hosted elsewhere, you lose those potential viewers because the blogging platform doesn't give a lot of wiggle room to create a normal website architecture, such as an about page or product page.

Conversely, some authors feel that a blog presence is more important than a website. But somewhere along the way, they get the idea that they need a website. They want to have a normal site architecture, including:

- Home page
- About page
- Reviews of their book
- Schedule of upcoming events and book tours

By relying on WordPress, they can easily turn their blog presence into a website by just adding a few pages to the blog. Or, they can redesign the entire blog to look like a website that has a blog section. With a competent designer, WordPress is flexible enough to meet both demands.

Regardless if you want to start with a blog, a website or both, you should consider WordPress as a viable option as it is flexible enough to meet most goals - even if those goals change over time. Coupled with its ease of use, strong community support and a vast library of plugins, aspiring authors cannot go wrong with using WordPress to create a powerful online presence.

## **WordPress For Your Website And Blog.**

It is important for your website to rank well on search engine results, so Internet users find the web page they seek. Permalinks, the address of your blog page and the structure that WordPress provides are easily understood by humans and machines, making your website visible and easy to locate.

Many CMS have permalink features, but not all of them are search engine friendly. Do not underestimate the importance of search engine friendly permalinks when designing

your site. Anything that boosts the search engine rankings of your website is considered a positive and should be considered when creating your online presence.

As an author, you want to attract as many people as possible, as easily as possible - and RDA, RSS 2.0 and ATOM feeds can go a long way in achieving this. Essentially, they help your readers keep up with the latest from your website and blog by allowing them to “subscribe” to your site. WordPress supports all three feed services, and any page on your website can be associated with a feed so your readers are able to find the categories and sections they are most interested in.

You will never be short of support and guidance, as there is a vibrant online community of WordPress users. WordPress is free and open source, which should dispel any worries you might have about propriety software.

WordPress has become very popular because it simplifies the manner in which a website can be created and managed, and its list of users continues to grow. WordPress gives control back to the website owner and allows authors to focus on generating interest in their work rather than worry about writing code.

**About:**

Dean Hua is owner and Chief Web Evangelist of Sachi Studio- a web design and online marketing consultancy. Sachi Studio focuses on web and blog designs, content management systems, and localized search engine optimization strategies.

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