WordPress is a free, online blogging system introduced in 2005.

This web page was designed by: Alex Lauderbaugh, Gina D'Arezzo, Mattie Foster, Marisela Gaeta, Corrina Gonzalez, William (Gus) Habig, Amy Henderson, Christopher Menegotto, Kathleen Quilty, Ashley Kitzman, and Amanda Lecklitner.

What are the uses of WordPress? What does it do?

What is WordPress?

To understand WordPress it is first important to understand social technology. Social technology can be used when describing blogs. It is a new wave that is spreading like wildfire. People around the world are on the internet blogging about any subject at any time. This is one of the reasons why teachers want to incorporate blogging in the classroom. Blogs can be public or private. Teachers can choose a blog topic and students in the same school or even students around the world can respond within a matter of minutes. WordPress is software that can be used to write, customize, and publish blogs in the way the user wants.

There are many uses for WordPress in both education and everyday life. Social technology is now becoming a fact of life and it is important to understand it. WordPress was made to adhere to the user in any desirable or imaginable way. In the classroom, WordPress can enhance the students’ learning experiences by conversing with a variety of other students about thought-provoking topics. WordPress can also be beneficial to the teacher who can use it to assign and grade assignments. Teachers can also use WordPress to communicate with other teachers. WordPress is a great way to connect with students in a way that they can easily understand because technology is the digital learner’s best tool. This Web 2.0 technology helps to power your blog or website in an easy to use format, so teachers should take advantage of it. The classroom does not need to be ordinary; it can be upgraded by using WordPress.

Who uses WordPress?

- Ford Motor Company
- Ycorpblog.com (Yahoo!)
- Martha Stewart Blog
- The New York Times
- Rannie Turingan Photographs
- People Magazine.

A Teacher was asked several questions about their use of WordPress are are their answers:

Why did you decide to incorporate WordPress in your classroom?

Students nowadays use computers and other forms of technology as it is. They could just spend that time a bit more useful by applying their knowledge to their interests, in this case cosmetology. I also think it is a good idea to use a blog, such as wordpress, in my classroom because my students will continue to apply their knowledge about cosmetology and at the same time they are using their writing and grammar skills to blog.

How do you plan to use WordPress?

I plan to post questions, videos, and pictures that are related to the industry so that students can expand their knowledge about the industry. I am hoping that by posting questions, or viewing videos about cosmetology, it will motivate my students to do some research to answer the questions, or if a topic I post sparks some interest in them it may even encourage them to learn more about that topic.

What do you like about WordPress?

I like the fact that you can protect your WordPress page with a password so only my class can access the blog, it gives a sense of security. I also believe that WordPress is effective because my students will be able to read other students responses and get ideas from them. My students will be able to post their own opinions as well as respond to the responses of the other students. They will have the opportunity to either agree or disagree with them and my students will have to give an explanation on why they agree or disagree with the other students.

And another teacher:

"I have used it, WordPress, in a couple different ways. First, I used it as a class website for many years for my world history classes. I used the pages feature to embed resources, a calendar, and add objectives. Occasionally, I also have students do projects where I require them to set up a blog... You can add ‘static’ pages to your blog with information you don’t want to put in a regular post or to disappear into the archives." - Dan McDowell
I. History

I.1 Development
The Lead Developers of WordPress are shown below:

- Ryan Boren
- Mark Jaquith
- Matt Mullenweg
- Andrew Ozz
- Peter Westwood

These men first released WordPress in 2003. They have continued its expansion with the aid of thousands of contributors around the world.

I.2 How WordPress works?
WordPress, is the largest self-hosted blogging tool in the world. It was introduced in 2005 by intelligent, creative people and it adheres to the user's needs.

It is easy to use, easy to set up, and has several potential uses in education such as promoting communication between students from classrooms all over the world. WordPress is the best blogging tool a teacher can use to successfully integrate technology into the classroom. The makers of wordpress.com are also always looking for things they can improve on. They keep data of which features get used the most, and where people seem to have trouble with. They do it for their viewers because they only want to provide the best. As a result, every day on the blogs have many ideas that get pitched, sketched, and prototyped.

WordPress is a distributive company and most of the employees live in different cities and countries. The main head quarters is in San Francisco but employees are scattered all around the world. This means word press employees are working round the clock which allows them to be informed with many cultures, places, and cuisines.

Basic Steps to Getting Started:
Step 1: Create an account. Log on to wordpress.com. On the right hand side, near the top of the page there is an orange button. The button says "Sign up now". Click on this button to sign up for a blog. During sign up, you will be asked to create a "Blog Address". This will be the web address for your blog.
Step 2: Once you have signed up you will receive a confirmation e-mail. You will need to click on the link to activate your account.

Step 3: After activating your account, click the "Login" link that appears at the bottom of the page. Once you are signed in, select the My Blogs tab, then click on "Dashboard". This is where you will create your posts.

Step 4: Now you can choose a theme. Select the Appearance tab. Then click on "Themes".
You will be able to browse the collection of themes. Choose a theme. Later you can create a customized theme if you want.

Step 5: Now you can create and publish your first post. Begin by choosing the Posts tab and then select “Add New”. Type your blog title in the top box.

Next, write your post.
Step 6: After you have finished your post, click on “Publish”. After you have published your post, you can see what it will look like to everyone else by clicking on "View Post."

Click below to watch an instructional video on creating a post in WordPress.

Getting Started in WordPress
Quick 10 minute Show and Tell - How to start a website

1.3 Getting more out of the application

One thing WordPress allows you to do is to make your own template for a theme, how the page will be seen and what goes where. WordPress offers a plan to assist you with setting up these themes. Here are a few points to consider:

- Structural layout - Where do all the parts go?
- Specific Elements - Will you have a calendar, comments, what parts will you include?
- Template Modular Elements - Which templates will you use or add? Site map? Pages? A distinctly different single post page?
- Graphics - What graphics should go where?
- Colors - How many, how are they used, do they have a purpose or are just for show?
- Fonts - How many and what sizes go where?
- Space - Space is an important part of layout so how will you use space?
- Itinerary - How and when are you going to do all this?

There are several different types of apps available for WordPress. These apps make it easier for users to post. The different apps available include:

- Mobile Apps - This allows you to access your blog from your phone or BlackBerry.
- Desktop Apps - These apps generally make it easier for you to share your blogs with others.
- Microblogging Apps - Allows you to use multiple applications at once. Makes WordPress more user friendly. Also allows you to easily share with others.

What exactly is Microblogging?

| Definition: | Short posts to a personal blog, esp. about happenings of the moment |
| Example: | Microblogging is often done from one's cellphone or instant messenger service. |

Microblogging is very similar to what people do when they "tweet" or update their status on Facebook.
Another great feature within WordPress, is the stats system. This feature allows you to see how many people have visited your blog and which posts are the most popular. The stats feature also informs you which search engine terms are most frequently sending people to your blog.

- Table of Contents

II. How WordPress relates to other applications?

The WordPress application functions in many of the same ways as other applications that students use everyday.

II.1 Comparison to Competitors

WordPress is similar to Blackboard in many ways. One way is the fact that they are both used in classroom settings. Teachers can post assignments and put up individual grades. They can also select a discussion topic and the students can comment and respond to the teacher as well as fellow students.
Another application that is similar to WordPress is Drupal, which is designed by BlamCast. Drupal powers certain websites that teachers can use, not unlike WordPress. Teachers can create a blog for their students to use so they can interact with each other outside of the classroom for assignments and important class information.

WordPress.com vs. WordPress.org

WordPress.com was created by some of the same people that developed WordPress.org. Both WordPress.com and WordPress.org are blogging sites. However, there are some key differences between the two. These differences include:

- Both are free but WordPress.org requires a web server which usually is not free
- WordPress.com is easier to use
- WordPress.org requires you to update the software manually; WordPress.com updates software automatically
- WordPress.org allows you to upload your own themes; WordPress.com does not
- WordPress.org allows you more creative freedom if you are technologically capable

II.2 Unique Uses

WordPress can be used for many different functions:

- As a Photoblog, Photoblogs are different from regular text-based blogs in that they focus mainly on publishing photos.
- As a Link Directory, A link directory is a collection of links to web pages sorted by categories and sub-categories.
- As a Magazine, As a blogging platform, WordPress is already quite suited for running daily or frequently updated magazine/news sites. Max Limpag has written an excellent article on how to use WordPress to run a magazine, news website.
- As a History or time line site, Time line from MIT is a visualization widget for time-based info. Event items are draggable, and clicking on one pops up a dialog with more detail, including links. Freshlabs offers a WordPress plug-in that allows you to embed SIMILE Time line windows into your posts. You could combine this with maps, video, images, and articles in order to create a history site. (E.g., a religion or dinosaur time line.)
- As a Twitter Clone, Twitter microblogging has become something of a phenomenon online, with some people even preferring this mode of communication over blogging. But it has its drawbacks - namely a 140-character message/ tweet limit, no simple inclusion of visual media, scrambled URLs, etc. Sure, there are Twitter alternatives such as Jaiku and Tumblr, but if you want to do something similar in WordPress, you are in luck. The makers of WordPress have released the Prologue theme. It has Gravatar support and loads of RSS feeds, and is ideal for group "twittering" activity.
As a Calendar, You could drive your web calendar by using a Prologue-like home page (discussed indepth above), using a custom notation for items. The items would be parsed elsewhere and sent to a web calendar such as Google Calendar, or displayed on a calendar widget on your site.

Table of Contents

III. Real World Application

In today's classrooms, students are making the transition from the traditional classroom to a digital world where assignments are turned in online and technology is used on a daily basis. In addition, students are more successful when they use technology to aid them in understanding concepts presented by their teachers. One helpful technique in exploring the availability of constructive web tools for use in the classroom is to research online sites. When doing this research, a teacher may consider Web 2.0 technologies to connect with the students who are becoming digital learners in today's world. One Web 2.0 technology, WordPress, is the largest self-hosted blogging tool in the world. It was introduced in 2005 by intelligent, creative people and it adheres to the user's needs. It is easy to use, easy to set up, and has several potential uses in education such as promoting communication between students from classrooms all over the world. WordPress is the best blogging tool a teacher can use to successfully integrate technology into the classroom.

III.1 Educational Lesson Plans

i. Elementary

In this lesson students will use WordPress to learn how to better express themselves and reflect on familiar objects, person, place, or events through writing. They will also become more familiar with adjectives and verbs, and will be introduced to the idea of blogging.

Elementary.docx
Elementary.pdf
---
The Bird Can Blog- Online Writing with a twist.doc
The Bird Can Blog- Online Writing with a twist.pdf
---
adventures under the sea.doc
adventures under the sea.pdf

ii. Secondary

WordPress is most applicable to students in upper level education courses. There are many ways that teachers in a secondary education classroom can incorporate WordPress into their daily lesson plans. One common use is blogging. These blogs can be used for discussion among not only the students, but also people outside of the classroom, from all over the world. Three common ways to use WordPress to help with daily lessons and homework are: to post homework questions, to start a discussion, or to have students post discussion questions that can be used in future class periods.

In this lesson students will be using a character of their choice to analyze that characters' traits based on narration of the story, dialogue from the character, and soliloquy (when the character speaks aloud to themselves).

Secondary.docx
Secondary.pdf
---
Blogtopia- Blogging about Your own Utopia.doc
Blogtopia- Blogging about Your own Utopia.pdf
---
Harry Potter and WordPress.docx
Harry Potter and WordPress.pdf

iii. Post Secondary

WordPress usage in secondary and post secondary education classrooms is very similar. Here is another sample lesson plan that uses WordPress and can be implemented into a post-secondary education class.

Post-Secondary.docx
III.2 Business/Industry

Many businesses can use WordPress in a variety of ways. One way is that it can improve communication between business people. If a business person needs to contact another company they can use blogging or a website to share ideas and make decisions. This helps the company cut down costs on travel expenses. Another way is that it can attract potential consumers and allow the consumers to share their input on topics. This keeps the consumers interested in the product while helping them learn more about it. Consumers may also be able to communicate with employees at the company or read suggestions on tech support if they need help with a product. Companies also use WordPress to power and host company websites.

Table of Contents

IV. Demonstration of Educational Value

WordPress can be used in a variety of ways within schools. Teachers can incorporate WordPress into any lesson plan for any grade level. Examples of how to do this can be found under the different lesson plan sections. Not only can it be used to help the students learn, but teachers have also been using it to organize their own classroom material. Teachers can create blogs for each of their lesson plans and organize them by their unit. Also, teachers can post their lesson plans to share ideas and suggestions with other teachers. This can be very beneficial to teachers.

Many teachers such as elementary and even secondary can also use WordPress without student involvement. WordPress works great for formatting and organizing lesson plans. Features allow the teacher to make categories such as math, science, english...ect. There is also the option to post lesson plans and get suggestions and helpful tips from other teachers.

This Twist 'n Shout website is an example of how WordPress can be used. The content can easily relate to education because it allows non-profit groups and companies to tell their stories of what they are about. It can be used in education by means of certain teacher projects that would need to be publicized.
V. How WordPress is used Internationally

People all over the world can use WordPress in a variety of ways. One way is that people can share ideas about the same topics and can understand different perspectives from other cultures. Another way is that business people will be able to communicate easily with other companies overseas without spending the money on airfare. In addition, people all over the world are learning about WordPress and collaborating on the improvement of it. WordCamp is a conference where people from all around the world can come together to share ideas and learn more information about WordPress. The events focus solely on WordPress topics and speakers highlight how WordPress can be used in various workshops. A few locations include Barcelona, Spain; Sydney, Australia; Jakarta, Indonesia; Whistler, BC, Canada; and Milan, Italy.

VI. References

1. WordPress.ORG. http://wordpress.org/
8. twistnshout.com http://twistnshout.com/ twist/