Introduction to Blogging

Using WordPress.com

About Me

- Over a decade experience in web development
- Built web sites for LG Canada, Molson Canadian, Freeview, Canadian Standards Association
- Teaching assistant and instructor at Wilfrid Laurier University; internal training at past employers

Course Outline

• Day one

- brief overview and history of blogs
- Comparison of available tools
- Blogging concepts
- Themes
- Getting started

- Day two
 - Writing better posts, and best-practices
 - Hands-on
- Day three
 - Advanced topics
 - Hands-on

Early blogging

- First web logs were hand-edited HTML files
- First link-blog was the NCSA's "What's New" report
- Today about 140,000 new sites go up daily!

What's New, June 1993

June 27, 1993

Digital Equipment Corporation is running a <u>Web server</u> fro. The Army Research Laboratory is now running a <u>Web serv</u> Information on the <u>Front Range Consortium</u> is now online The <u>Navy Research Laboratory Advanced Concepts Group</u> June 25, 1993 A <u>Web server</u> has been installed at the Centre Universitaire

June 24, 1993

The Institute for Theoretical Physics at State University of 1

HyTelnet 6.5 is now online; see here.

If you haven't tried it yet, take a look at the <u>Web server</u> run people interact with one other in a computer-enabled world Another example of this is the <u>Gopher server</u> running inside

Second Generation

- Blogger launched in 1999
- First mass market blogging tool
- Offered automatic page creation



Current Generation

- Advanced features like social, application development
- Self-hosted, or dramatically simplified software-as-a-service
- Takes advantage of lowered costs

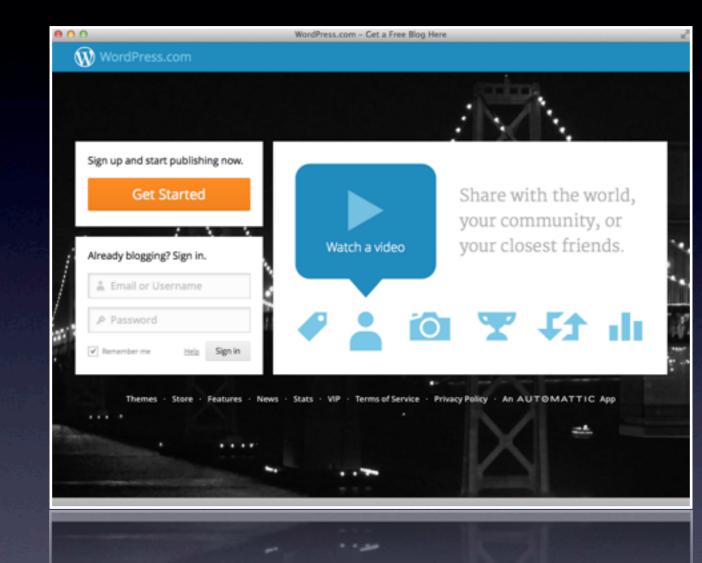
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Email or Usern	ame	
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Next Generation

- A return to static files, generated by tools
- Uses text files, hosted services like DropBox, or application data (like Evernote or VoodoPad) for source
- Third-generation tools will remain the standard

inklia

blog with evernote



We'll use WordPress.com

- WordPress dominates modern blogging
- 60 million sites run on WordPress
- WordPress served 3.5 billion pages a month in 2012, expected to be higher in 2013
- Web development shops are adopting it for their clients
- Notable users include Adobe, BBC Americas, Variety Magazine

Wordpress.com v. WordPress.org

- Made by same company
- WordPress.com is hosted for you
- WordPress.org is open source; you run it on your own server

WordPress.com

- Blog appears as "name.wordpress.com"
- Hosting is included, but some features are paid upgrades
- Adds a social network layer
- Can only use official themes and plug-ins

WordPress.org

- Pay for your own hosting (typically \$25-100/year for smaller sites)
- Register your own domain (\$10-30/year)
- Install any theme and plug-in you want
- Allows broader uses, like taking appointments, ecommerce, reviews sites

The Competition

• Tumblr

- Squarespace (or Shopify)
- Drupal
- Jekyll, Octopress, Letterpress, GitHub Pages

But what about...

...Facebook?

- You have little control over appearance
- Only fresh, new content has any prominence
- Company is notoriously heavy-handed and quick to censor

...Twitter?

Great tool for encouraging conversation
Good for publicizing new content
Very short entries (140 characters)
Volume of posts means it's easy to be missed

...Google+?

All of the problems of Facebook, with...
...less customization, and...

• ...lower usage

Own your own stuff

- Make sure you can import and export from whatever you use in a useful format
- Assert control over what pieces you can

A quick overview of technical and blogging concepts

Web host

- Company with many servers, and a fast, fault-tolerant connection to the internet
- Sell you space on their servers, or allow you to connect your server to the 'net

Domain name

- The human-friendly address of a computer on the internet
- You pick a top-level-domain (TLD) first
- Then find a domain name that is available, short, and memorable
- At WordPress.com, you pick a subdomain
- Domains are purchased from a "registrar"

HTML and CSS

• HTML: Hypertext Markup Language

- Markup that describes the structure of a web page
- CSS: Cascading Style Sheets
 - Rules that describe how the web page will appear (and behave)



- Really Simple Syndication
- Offers a way for people to read a blog without visiting the site
- Requires an RSS Reader



- File Transfer Protocol
- Allows you to transfer files from your computer to a remote server



- Secure SHell
- A way of connecting to, and working on, a remote computer
- Uses a "Command Line Interface" (think DOS)

PHP and MySQL

- PHP is the programming language in which WordPress.com and .org are written
- MySQL is the database most commonly used with PHP. It holds all the posts for WordPress

Themes

- A collection of files that define the appearance of a blog
- Themes can make subtle changes to how a blog works, making it a portfolio, a magazine, a journal, a slideshow, etc
- WordPress.com has a curated collection of free and paid themes

Plug-ins

- Small programs written in PHP that you can add to a WordPress.org site
- Allow you to dramatically change the behaviour of your site
- Common uses are for advanced forms, SEO, slideshows, managing users

Widgets

- Small pieces of content on your blog that are separate from your main stories
- Common uses are bios, ads, links to popular content

Menus

- Navigation you can customize
- Usually runs across the top or side of your blog
- WordPress will create the basics for you

Featured images

- An image that gets special prominence in your content
- Often appears in the header of a post, as a thumbnail in lists of posts
- You can add as many images as you want to a post, but only one featured image

Pages and Posts

- A post is a timed entry, like a traditional journal entry
 - Used for articles and content that are timely
- A page is content that doesn't change often, and does not appear in your archives
 - Used for things like "About Us"
 - Can also make a page the first thing people see on your site

Categories and tags

- Categories organize your posts at a very high-level
- Tags are simpler, more fine-grained ways of organizing posts
- A clothing store blog might have
 - Categories of sales, new products
 - Tags of shirts, socks, trousers

You're about to set up your own blog.

The visual language of themes

• Different layouts convey different meanings

- Picking the wrong type of theme can confuse your readers
- Don't get too hung up on picking a theme, though: they're easy to change without losing content

Blogging theme

- Moves articles frontand-center
- Focus on readability
- Often have special treatment of featured images



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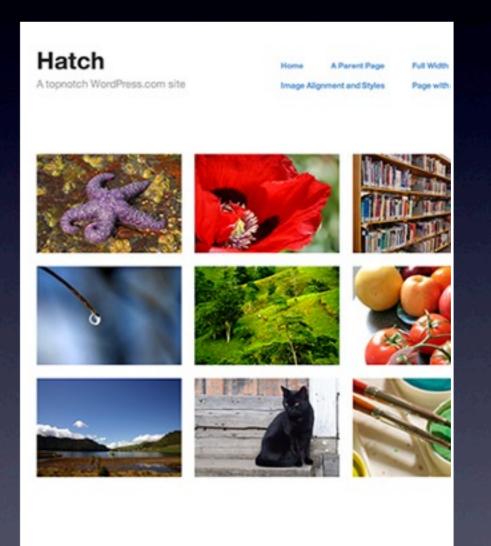
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Portfolio theme

- Used by designers, photographers, some small business
- Usually has a grid of smaller images, sometimes with a large leading image



Blog at WordPress.com. | Theme: Hatch by DevPress.

Corporate theme

- Shares many features of portfolio themes
- Has more space for descriptive text on the home page
- Well designed form elements for contact us, feedback

Blog is secondary

REACT

work about blog cor

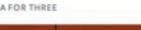
A small, independent illustration studio focused on guality over guantity.

le create beautiful illustrations

is is filler text that normally would be used to talk about who you are and at your business does. One morning, when Gregor Samsa woke from subled dreams, he found himself transformed in his bed into a horrible min. He lay on his armour-like back, and if he lifted his head a little he could e his brown belly, slightly domed and divided by arches into stiff sections.

e bedding was hardly able to cover it and seemed ready to slide off any ment. His many legs, pitifully thin compared with the size of the rest of him, wed about helplessly as he looked. "What's happened to me? " he thought. It sn't a dream. His room, a proper human room although a little too small, lay acefully between its four familiar walls.

ecent projects







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Monday, 29 April, 13

Magazine theme

- Takes cues from the table of contents pages from print magazines
- Featured stories, secondary stories, callouts



Spotlight

Chinese Food

argumentum ...



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January 11, 2010 | Theme Buster I 1 November 11, 2008 | Magnus Johnmont Off

Mini tomatos, basil, paprika & cheese

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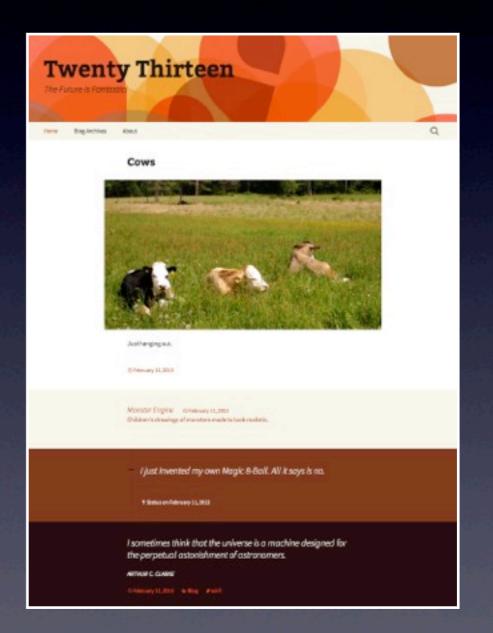
October 11, 2009 | Theme B Commonts Off Khandvi –

Mumbai Food

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Tumbleblog theme

- Designed to work like Tumblr
- Takes advantage of "Post Types"
- Intended for sharing multimedia and short text, not long-form writing



Theme frameworks

- Starting points for theme development
- Require knowledge of HTML and CSS, WordPress
- Offer the most customization, requires the most work to be usable

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	Just another WordPress.c		
About About How	I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Blog Page	e	
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Twenty-Twelve

- Highly customizable
- Tonnes of different page layouts
- Works for a wide variety of types of blogs

Twenty Twelve

HOME

Your favorite WordPress theme, updated and polished for 2012.

ABOUT BLOG SAMPLE PAGE FULL WIDTH

DAYTRIPS

WRITING

Write with a purpose

Leave a reply

One morning, when Gregor Samsa woke from troubled dreams, he found himself transformed in his bed into a horrible vermin. He lay on his armour-like back, and if he lifted his head a little he could see his brown belly, slightly domed and divided by arches into stiff sections.

The bedding was hardly able to cover it and seemed ready to slide off any moment. His many legs, pitifully thin compared with the size of the rest of him, waved about helplessly as he looked. "What's happened to me?" he thought, it wasn't a dream.

His room, a proper human room although a little too small, lay peacefully between its four familiar walls. A collection of textile samples lay spread out on the table – Samsa was a

- Try and pick the shortest subdomain you can think of, and that makes sense. Abbreviations are OK!
- Use a secure password or passphrase (try <u>http://</u> <u>passphra.se</u> for memorable passphrases)
- Write your password down. Consider using software like LastPass or KeepPass
- You can find sample content at <u>bit.ly/oTWOeD</u>
- Don't be afraid to experiment!