IS WORDPRESS THE RIGHT PLATFORM FOR YOUR BUSINESS WEBSITE?

Let me first tell you why I think my belief that WordPress is bad for most small businesses. I started designing websites when I was 12 years old, in 1998, with pure HTML code. But it wasn’t until 2010 that I first started professionally designing websites for businesses. At that time, Adobe Flash websites were all the rage. Every client said “I want my website to have all those fancy animations and fading effects with Flash.”

But soon after, in April of 2010, Steve Jobs sent out his “Thoughts on Flash” announcement that openly criticized Adobe Flash technology. Since Steve Jobs was the leader of online technology, I knew that his words were powerful enough to change the entire online industry. I then frantically told all of my new clients they must instead use WordPress, as it was (and still is) the leading website platform in the world.

So from 2010 until 2015, I built hundreds of websites in WordPress for clients. But as I built these sites, and maintained them for clients, I found that my clients were extremely frustrated with their inability to learn and maintain the website, and to discover all the costs associated merely with updating plugins, running security...
tests and cost for building out new sections of the website. Even writing a simple blog post took hours to
complete for the Client’s employees. Hiring social media consultants or marketing consultants was too
expensive to simply keep the website up-to-date. I had numerous Clients start up a website and then 2 years
later shut down because they could not justify the cost of keeping the website up.

These were not multi-million dollar businesses. They were small businesses all across the United States. They
have limited budgets, and aren’t interested in spending all of their savings just on their website alone.

At the same time, in 2013, I started building Squarespace websites for other clients who had requested it.

Back then, I built websites on whichever platform the Client preferred, focusing on what they wanted, or
believed they wanted, and not on what platform was truly best for them. In fact, at the time, I didn’t know
which platform was best for them, because I had only been designing websites for 3 years professionally.

And designing websites for real-life businesses and Clients is much different than just build websites for fun.

By 2015, I was noticing that almost all of my clients on WordPress were frustrated, and virtually all of my
Clients on Squarespace were immensely happy with their website even 2 years later. I went through my
entire archive of Clients and compared the satisfaction rate between Clients on Squarespace versus Clients
on WordPress. And the results were very clear. Business owners who use Squarespace are much, much happier with the long-term results than those on WordPress.

In 2015, I stopped designing websites in WordPress altogether and pointed every new business to Squarespace, as long as it made good sense to do so. I am a very firm believer that it is far more valuable to focus on building your business through exciting marketing ideas than to get bogged down and distracted with updating WordPress or other complex web technologies. After all, people come to your businesses because they are inspired by your work, and want to buy services & products from you. Your clientele does not care what platform your website is built on.

For these reasons, I believe that Squarespace is the most friendly platform for small business owners. It works best for 95% of small businesses who do not need a big commerce presence. It is perfect for architects, engineers, custom home builders, landscape designers, photographers, artists, restaurants, lawyers, accounts and other professional industries.

If this isn’t reason enough, here are 7 reasons why WordPress is bad for business, and 4 reasons why Squarespace is probably the right fit for you.
THERE IS ONLY 1 GOOD REASON TO USE WORDPRESS

Is it worth the investment for all the customizations you want to have?

A good quality WordPress website is going to run you about $20,000 for the first year. You can definitely get one built a lot cheaper, but it will be very poorly built. If you find that it is worth $20,000 USD to build your website because it will generate you lots of income, then WordPress likely may be a good fit for you.

For instance, if you have an Ecommerce website which allows customers to custom-build their own furniture, and you estimate your potential revenue for the website to be over $200,000 USD, and a custom WordPress website that costs $20,000 USD is a worthwhile investment for the first year, that is the kind of website which makes sense to build on WordPress. If you also require complex databases, such as a large list of Wines that need to be cataloged with inventory, custom search features, and you’ll have a full-time WordPress developer managing it for you, and you are willing to spend a couple thousand dollars every month to maintain that database, the WordPress makes sense for you. For everyone else, you are better off with Squarespace for an informational website, or Shopify for a complex commerce website.
HERE ARE 7 REASONS WORDPRESS IS PROBABLY A BAD IDEA FOR YOUR SMALL BUSINESS

1

**WordPress Developers will drive you down a dark path of coding & customization**

Wordpress people love code and researching and all the crazy things you can do with a website. The problem is that you run a business, not a technology experiment. WordPress Developers will make your project too complicated, take too long, and cost too much money.

2

**WordPress is too expensive to manage**

Once you get your website up in WordPress, get ready for a world of hurt. WordPress sites often break down every 3 months or so. They need to be constantly fixed and updated as online technology changes. Be prepared to hire multiple WordPress developers over the next two years to fix up your site until you get to the point where you’re so burnt out, you hate the idea of having a website altogether.
You won't be able to edit on your own without a ton of training

I’m a website designer & developer, and even I get frustrated and confused with WordPress. That’s because it was not designed with Clients or Business people in mind. It was made for coders. The backend of WordPress is so confusing, so annoying and frustrating, that all my clients refuse to attempt to edit it on their own after their first few attempts. WordPress is not user-friendly to Clients, no matter what any WordPress developer claims. WordPress might be fun to play around with for coders, but it is not fun for business owners.

WordPress breaks down too frequently

WordPress is designed so loosely, that all the pieces, plugins and technology fall apart constantly. You’ll need to hire a WordPress developer on a roughly 1-3 month basis just to make sure it’s all still working properly. And this can often cost anywhere between $300 and $1000 per 3 months just to make sure all is working well. And that's not including any website changes, improvements or modifications as your business grows. WordPress is not cost-effective for small businesses when your gross revenue is less than $200,000.
per year. Spend that money elsewhere on advertising, or other ways to automated and improve your business internally.

5

Hackers get into WordPress too easily

If your website is not being managed and updated on a monthly basis, get ready for someone from Russia to hack your website. Coders and hackers love to mess with WordPress to try and break your site to use it for their own purposes. For this reason alone, WordPress is a nightmare to deal with.

6

WordPress is not the only platform that works well with SEO

A lot of WordPress developers claim that only WordPress works well with SEO. This may have been true 5 years ago, but it simply is not true anymore. Just about any web platform works well with SEO, and that is because Google prioritizes quality design, good blog posts, and helpful information higher than any sneaky tricks or techniques. Don't let a WordPress developer convince you otherwise. SEO is about good, quality blog posting and content creation - it's no longer about sneaky, weird coding hacks that only developers can figure out.
WordPress is just bad for most small businesses

For every reason mentioned above, and so much more, WordPress is bad for small business. It takes up your precious time, money and resources to make sure your site just does the bare minimum. So many of my clients come to me after 2 years of a WordPress site, desperate for a change, but unsure if something better is possible. Your website is the most important marketing tool for your business, so don’t leave it in the hands of an unreliable and expensive CMS platform. Instead, you need a website which can stay online, without getting hacked, that looks beautiful, and is easy for you to manage and grow, so that it builds over time and becomes an invaluable asset to your business.
HERE ARE 4 REASONS WHY SQUARESPACE IS LIKELY THE BEST PLATFORM FOR YOUR SMALL BUSINESS WEBSITE

1

It’s easy for you to quickly change text and images on your own

Even my clients who are not computer savvy love how easy it is to edit their Squarespace website on their own. I’ll even come back a couple years later to view their website to see that my clients have been blogging on their own, making simple text changes to their pages, and sometimes swapping out images on their own. The easy of use for Squarespace is so enjoyable, that most solo entrepreneurs and small businesses take on the task of updating their website willingly. When challenging new changes are required, my clients will get in touch for help or to ask a quick question. But for the majority of the time, my clients are extremely pleased with just out enjoyable it is to maintain and manage their website on their own.

2

Squarespace takes care of all the technology updates, so you don’t have to

Squarespace is on a roll making great updates to their platform in 2018. And when they release a new tool or feature on their website, it tends to work flawlessly. While Squarespace doesn’t have every option in the
world that a website can possibly do, it has all the main features you actually need to run a proper small business website. This leaves my clients with having peace of mind that their site will still be working 2 years from now, with very few setbacks. Just like any other web platform or web hosting plan, Squarespace web hosting goes down several hours per year sporadically. But instead of having to pay a web developer to diagnose all the possible issues that might have risen with a platform like WordPress, Squarespace takes care of hosting & web technology issues automatically, usually resolved within hours.

3

The long term maintenance costs are much lower than any other web platform

Because Squarespace takes care of all the features, updates and plugins, your long term costs on Squarespace are extremely low. The only time you’ll be paying a developer or designer to make changes is when you need substantial changes made, such as lots of new pages, or a re-design, or need SEO integration. For a platform like WordPress, you’ll end up paying a web developer every 3 months to do major diagnostics to make sure things are still working. And that can get incredibly expensive. Even more, when you need to add new pages, or hire an on-staff employee to make basic edits regularly, your costs are
going to skyrocket. Many businesses I have worked with that used WordPress in the past have deep emotional scars, leaving them weary of another website project. All businesses know they need a website to be relevant in 2018, but if you've had a WordPress site in the past, you know what I nightmare it is. But I can tell you with all certainty, you are not going to regret moving forward with a Squarespace website for your small or medium-sized business.

In 2 years from now, your Squarespace website will still be working flawlessly. But your WordPress website would have already broken a few times. I've had clients on Squarespace for over 5-years straight, and their websites are still going strong. For WordPress, that is unheard of. WordPress websites break down, they need to be watched carefully. Every time WordPress does a major update, you can expect to spend days trying to figure out where all the broken holes are.
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