



Selecting Your WordPress Theme

What is WordPress? Your website + blog will be built using the WordPress Theme. WordPress is an open source code developed and used for free by developers. WordPress offers superior features in terms of optimization, usability and content management.

Purpose: This document helps you determine which theme we will use to build your site.

Included in this document:

- Layout Considerations
- Elements of Theme
- Customization Options
- Customization Limitations
- Recommended Themes to Choose From
- Future Theme Changes
- WordPress Widgets
- 3rd Party Plug-ins (IDX Search)
- Advancing Technology

Layout Considerations

- **Column Widths** – We need to make sure your 3rd party plug-ins will fit within the existing columns. These columns are static and generally cannot be changed. Try to select a theme with a grid that fits the needs of your 3rd party plug-ins, especially on the home page. Secondary pages (MLS Search and Featured Listings) can be built without left or right sidebars to accommodate wider 3rd party plug-ins. Columns will exist on all other pages, especially the home page.
- **Above the Fold** – We want to get all important content “above the fold” of the screen. This is best accomplished in themes with smaller headers. The smaller the height of the header area, the more content we can fit above-the-fold.

Elements of WordPress Theme

Site Layout Elements

<u>Header</u>	Header of the theme
<u>L Sidebar</u>	Left vertical column
<u>R Sidebar</u>	Right vertical column
<u>Global Navigation</u>	Horizontal, vertical or both
<u>Widget</u>	Special program that's available for free. Developed by eager developers. Some of these are worthwhile, others are not. Examples include event calendar, special tag clouds, news feeds, YouTube poster, etc...Visible widgets are generally seen in the Left or right sidebars.
<u>Bottom</u>	The bottom of the site where the admin links and copyright information located.
<u>Footer</u>	This is something The Marketing Shop.com adds to your WordPress theme. The footer appears on every page. This is where we put contact information, a smaller logo, keyword links and a call-to-action. Sometimes we add a contact form to the Footer.
<u>RSS Feed Button</u>	This button is where people can click to subscribe to your feed. It is highly useful for content syndication and SEO.

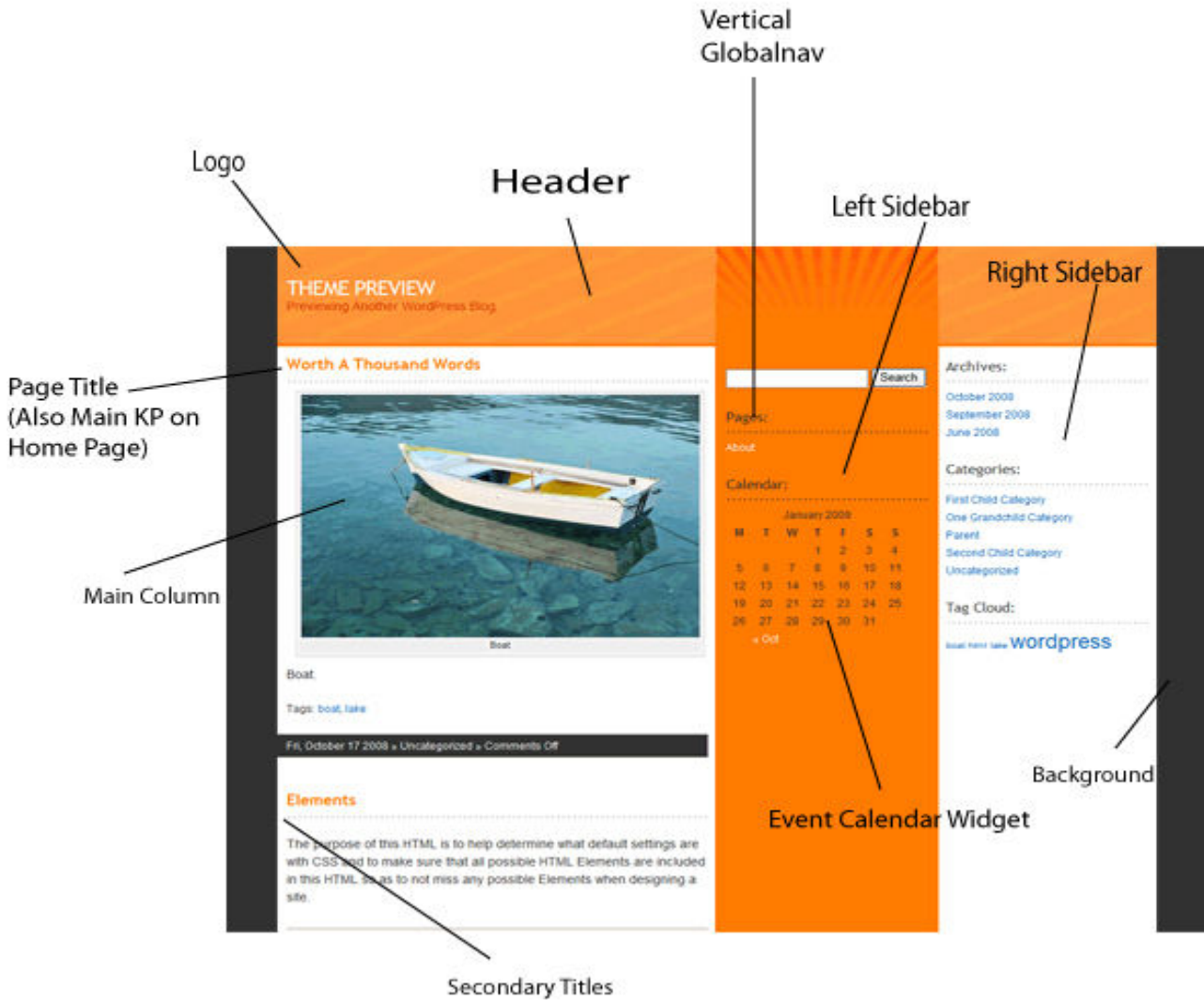
Page Elements

<u>Pages</u>	Static web pages. Pages are not archived and generally available through global navigation. These are for unchanging information such as About Company, Meet the Team, Contact Us and MLS Search. Once your site is complete, you can add pages to your site and they will appear in the global navigation automatically.
<u>Sociable</u>	Widget that provides links allowing web site visitors to share document with their social networks. You can turn this on or off per page.
<u>Pingback</u>	Methods for web authors to request notification when someone links to one of their documents.

Blog Elements

<u>Tags</u>	One way of tracking blog posts (different from Categories)
<u>Categories</u>	Organizes blog posts
<u>Archives</u>	Older blog posts

Word Press Theme Elements



Customization Options

Customization is not available for Basic WordPress blogs. Only Premium clients are able to customize WordPress blogs.

Finding the theme that best reflects your style and your needs will assure you are most happy with the outcome. With all the unique, beautiful themes available, there is no need to “reinvent the wheel.” We can, however, replace certain images within the theme with custom images. For example, if you don’t like the orange color in the theme example below, we could make it red, blue or any other color you choose.



Color Selections

Colors for the web are based upon the RGB grid. If you want a template customized to match a specific color, we need to know the RGB number. Please select from this RGB chart and let us know the six-digit number that matches the color you want.

Important! Once you choose a color, it is very time consuming to choose another. Make sure the color you choose is the color you want.

Customization Limitations

The customization of the layout is restricted to the following:

- Background Color
- Font Color
- Accent Color (Header, etc...)
- Border Color
- Paragraph Heading Color
- Link Color

The layout cannot be altered mechanically. Make sure you choose the layout that you like and plan on making specific design customizations only.

Recommended Themes

We recommend the following themes for your real estate web site blog.

1. <http://wordpress.org/extend/themes/inove>

Benefits

- Clean design.
- Easy to customize
- Room to add 3rd party widgets
- Allows WP widgets
- Good for SEO
- Good usability
- Not confusing

Negatives

- No drop down on horizontal nav. However, can also be a good thing, as it is less confusing for the user. We can make secondary pages / related pages show up on actual page.
- Not confusing

Sample: <http://www.mckinney-tx-real-estate.net/> (A corporate site)

2. <http://wp-themes.com/blog-design-studio-newblue/>
 - a. Lots of space to put 3rd party widgets
 - b. No drop down for horizontal nav.
 - c. Can handle large fonts which some visitors prefer
3. <http://wp-themes.com/black-n-white/>
 - a. No horizontal global nav.
4. <http://wp-themes.com/code-blue/>
 - a. Drop down on horizontal global nav
 - b. Room for widgets
 - c. Easy to customize
 - d. Neg: A little plain
5. <http://wp-themes.com/staypressed/>
 - a. No drop down
 - b. Clean design
6. <http://wp-themes.com/vista/>
 - a. Simple, spacious, fun
 - b. Only one column
7. <http://wp-themes.com/seo-basics/>
 - a. Clean
 - b. Good for SEO
 - c. Bright looks good

8. <http://wp-themes.com/magicblue/>
 - a. Simple
 - b. Only one column (this CAN be a good thing)
9. <http://wp-themes.com/slim-glassy/>
 - a. Nice background
10. <http://wp-themes.com/page-style/>
 - a. Customization difficult – This style comes AS IS.
11. <http://wp-themes.com/grey-matter/>
 - a. Simple as can be
12. <http://wp-themes.com/black-splat-wr/>
 - a. Nice
13. <http://wp-themes.com/black-n-white/>
 - a. Nice

Future Theme Changes

Most of these themes can be exchanged later after the technology improves. Later, if you find a theme you prefer, you can change it with very little effort. (Practically the touch of a button) Later theme changes can cause you to lose customization.

WordPress Widgets

Small free programs that can be uploaded to your blog site. These include the Event Calendar, News Feeds, Tag Clouds and other elements. These must be uploaded by your webmaster. Widgets are free and created by developers for WordPress. They do not always work effectively. We recommend only using highly rated widgets. Your WP site will come with all the best recommended widgets. New widgets are being developed daily.

3rd Party System Integration

When developing your site, please consider the 3rd party tools you will be adding and the size of such tools. This includes Wolfnet, iHomefinder and/or any other MLS system you choose to integrate.

Advancing Technology

WordPress Upgrades

WordPress is *constantly* being upgraded. Your site will be built with the latest version of WordPress possible on our current servers. Please note that as technology increases, the server demands increase and we will eventually reach a plateau for our existing server. At that time you can choose to stop upgrading your WordPress or to pay us to upgrade your site to a newer, more advanced server that will be available in the future. There will be a limit to how far you can scale your site on the current servers. Our current servers are adequate for a certain amount of upgrades, but not guaranteed to always be scalable for all future upgrades.