

# 1. Introducing WordPress, a Web CMS

## Topic



Continuing our new thread of Web development knowledge we started last week, we look at and discuss the topic of Web Content Management Systems (WCM or CMS)

## What is WordPress?

The WordPress platform is a Web Content Management System, typically powered by the LAMP software stack:

- **L**inux operating system
- **A**pache web server software
- **M**ySQL database software
- **P**HP language interpreter software

WordPress is an open source software project. The project's online community site can be found at <https://wordpress.org> [\\_ \(https://wordpress.org\)](https://wordpress.org).

## Web Content Management Systems

Many websites today are not composed simply of static text files filled with HTML code. Instead, many sites use server-side scripting and database technologies to separate the structural HTML code from the site's content. We call the software that stores content in a database and uses a server-side scripting language to generate the final HTML markup a Web Content Management System. Web Content Management is often referred to as WCM. Content Management Systems are often referred to as CMS. You may find both acronyms used when the WordPress platform is discussed.

WordPress stores the site content and configuration settings in a database file managed by the MySQL database software. WordPress uses the PHP server-side scripting language to generate the final HTML response to a browser's request for any URL within the WordPress site.

## Basic Characteristics of a Web Content Management System

1. Dynamically-generated HTML sent as response instead of static HTML file sent as response.
2. Content stored in a database, often powered by MySQL software.
3. Server-side scripting code, often in PHP language, retrieves content from database and generates HTML markup returned to browser request.
4. CSS files with style rules easily generated on server using pre-processors like LESS + Sass.

## History of WordPress

The WordPress platform was first released in 2013. It was originally authored by Matt Mullenweg, who went on to found the firm Automattic, which continues today to develop the WordPress platform source code and run the commercial blog hosting site found at <http://wordpress.com> [\\_ \(http://wordpress.com\)](http://wordpress.com).

## Hosting a WordPress-powered Site

Your Web hosting sever will need to support the LAMP software stack in order to successfully host a WordPress-powered site. **The SRJC student server found at student.santarosa.edu will not support hosting a WordPress-powered site.** Instead, we will use the free cloud-based hosting and IDE service known as Nitrous.io, found online at <https://nitrous.io> [\\_ \(https://nitrous.io\)](https://nitrous.io). If you have access to another hosting provider that supports WordPress hosting and the LAMP software stack, you may use that hosting provider for the hosting of your final project site powered by WordPress. Otherwise, you must use the free account level of the Nitrous.io hosting service.

## Special Topic 3: WordPress and Content Management Systems

Participation in the **"WordPress and Content Management" Discussion** [\\_ \(https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/17705/discussion\\_topics/63666\)](https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/17705/discussion_topics/63666) is required this week. It is worth 15 points of your total class point score. A full score of 15 points can be earned by posting two or more times before this module closes. Make your first post with your initial thoughts after doing all of the following tasks:

1. Download the free "Getting Started with WordPress" ebook and video PDF guide from ithemes.com, found at <https://ithemes.com/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2015/10/getting-started-with-WordPress-ebook.pdf> [\\_ \(https://ithemes.com/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2015/10/getting-started-with-WordPress-ebook.pdf\)](https://ithemes.com/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2015/10/getting-started-with-WordPress-ebook.pdf) or directly via Canvas hosting [here](#)

<https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/17705/files/462005/download?wrap=1>   
<https://canvas.santarosa.edu/courses/17705/files/462005/download?wrap=1>.

2. Complete the setup of your own WordPress-powered site by following our module materials for this week.
3. Read pages 5 - 50 of the PDF guide, watching any relevant linked video screencasts, to gain a detailed understanding as you explore your new WordPress-powered site.

Follow up with a second post responding to your classmates' shared perspectives on web content management and WordPress..

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## Objectives

By the end of this week you will be able to...

- Install and configure a WordPress-powered website.
- Understand the basic concepts of Web Content Management Systems (WCM or CMS).
- Work with a cloud-based Integrated Development Environment (IDE).
- Develop an understanding and perspective about Web Content Management Systems in dialog with classmates and instructor.

**Note: You will not have to learn the PHP server-side scripting language – all PHP code is provided.**