

Networks+



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<http://wpebooks.com>

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Introduction

This is an updated version of my multisite plugin for WordPress MU. The WordPress MU codebase and functionality were merged into WordPress 3.0. In WordPress MU, a site was a network of blogs and the multisite plugin allowed the site admin to create additional blog networks within the same WordPress MU install.

The terminology surrounding blogs, sites and blog networks has changed. In WordPress 3.0, a site can either be a single WordPress install or a site within a WordPress network. What used to be a site (network of blogs) in WordPress MU is appropriately called a network in WordPress.

WPMU	WordPress 3.0
Blog	Site
Site	Network
Site Admin	Super Admin

This plugin relies on the network functionality. If you do not have the network enabled, please follow these directions:

http://codex.wordpress.org/Create_A_Network

note: if you have upgraded from WordPressMU, you do not need to create a network because you already have one.

Before You Install

This plugin allows you to create multiple networks in your WordPress installation. In the initial version, the WordPress Network functionality needs to be enabled through the Network Settings screen.

While you can use toplevel domains with this plugin, they are not required. The main functionality is to provide subsites from sites. So, you can have mydomain.com with user blogs/sites, and also myotherdomain.com with user blogs/sites, all living within one installation.

There are many combinations and permutations of URL schemes you can come up with. For example, one client we had wanted city.state.clientdomain.com, where the city sites were visible blogs, and the state sites were also visible. This provides three levels (domain, subdomain and subsubdomain) of blogs/sites in the entire network. Each state was created as a new network.

You can also create new networks on subdomains, when the original install uses subfolders. Thus, the subdomain will have subsites in subfolders.

This plugin provides an interface for the creation, deletion and maintenance of networks. Removing the plugin will not remove the networks or access to them – it will just remove the menu. The networks created will continue to function.

Plugin Compatibility

There are thousands of plugins available for WordPress which have been written by authors with varying degrees of experience with WordPress and WordPress Networks. I would estimate that at least half of the WordPress plugins that I have downloaded from the Internet are not network aware.

By network aware I mean that in retrieving and displaying data the plugin ensures that the data pertains to the current network. I felt that you should be aware that other plugins that you are using may need to be modified to restrict data display to the current network.

The most common symptom is the plugin acts the same for all sites in every network, even maintaining the same information across the entire installation.

Copyright

Networks+ for WordPress uses function hooks built into WordPress. WordPress is an Open Source project released under the GPL license. Therefore, the GPL is extended to the source code of the plugin. The full text of the GPL license is included in this zip archive.

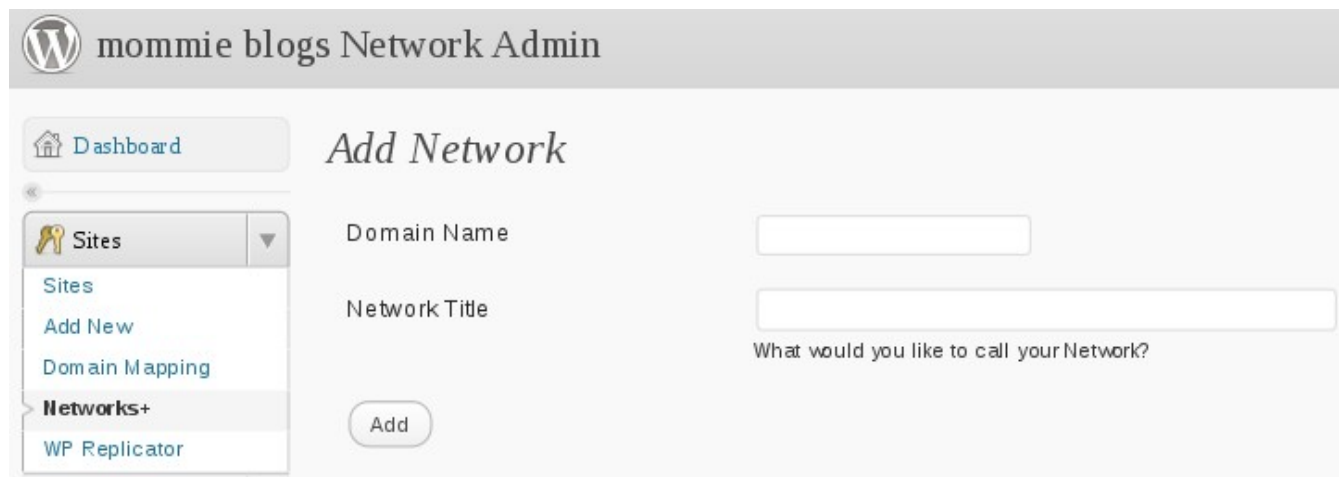
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Installation

The process of installing is fairly straight forward:

1. Do a full database backup.
2. Place the attached Networks+ plugin (ra-networks.php) in the /wp-content/mu-plugins/ folder.
(If the mu-plugins folder doesn't exist then create it.)
3. Log in to the main site and browse to the Network Admin menu then to the Networks+ page.

The plugin is successfully installed when you see the following screen in the Network Admin area.



The screenshot shows the 'mommie blogs Network Admin' interface. On the left is a sidebar menu with 'Dashboard' at the top, followed by 'Sites' (which is expanded to show 'Sites', 'Add New', and 'Domain Mapping'), 'Networks+' (which is selected and highlighted), and 'WP Replicator'. The main content area is titled 'Add Network'. It contains two input fields: 'Domain Name' and 'Network Title'. Below the 'Network Title' field is the text 'What would you like to call your Network?'. At the bottom of the form is an 'Add' button.

Adding a WordPress Network

To add a network:

1. enter the domain name in the text box to the right of Domain Name. Do not include http:// or the path (if you have a subdirectory install that is not in the root of the website).
2. enter the description you want your site to have in the text box to the right of Site Title.
3. Click the Add Network button.
4. The network was successfully added if you see the requested network is listed when the screen refreshes.

Note on a subdirectory install: Networks added with the Networks+ plugin will be given the same path as the main network. The path has to be the same because it has to match the location where WordPress is installed. Please see the section on server configurations to make sure the additional networks will show up properly.

gs Network Admin Sites Howdy, admin | Site Admin | Log Out

Networks Help

delete	id	URL	Admin	Sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	32	howtosetupablog.net	Dashboard	1

☐ Delete sites in this network. ☐ I have a current database backup.
Leave unchecked to move sites to the main network

Add Network

Domain Name

Network Title

What would you like to call your Network?

As a final step, Edit your wp-config.php and comment out (put // at the beginning of each line) the following 3

lines:

- `define('DOMAIN_CURRENT_SITE', 'domain.tld');`
- `define('PATH_CURRENT_SITE', '/');`
- `define('BLOGID_CURRENT_SITE', '1');`

Managing WordPress Networks

Sites

The super admin sites screen only shows the sites that are a part of that network. Sites in other networks are not shown in the sites list. When using this plugin, sites are still managed through the built-in Network admin sites screen.

my second network Network Admin

Sites

Howdy, admin | Site Admin | Log Out

Screen Options Help

Dashboard

Sites

Add New

Domain Mapping

WP Replicator

Users

Themes 1

Plugins 5

Settings

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Bulk Actions Apply

<input type="checkbox"/>	Domain	Last Updated	Registered	Users	Mapping	Network Role Site
<input type="checkbox"/>	second	2011/03/13	2011/03/13	admin		Use for network roles
<input type="checkbox"/>	howtsetupablog.net	2011/03/13	2011/03/13	admin		Current

Bulk Actions Apply

It is necessary to log into each network to manage sites in that network. The ID number will be sequential across the entire installation. Also note how the Networks+ menu item is only accessible from the main network.

Users

The segregation of networks does not apply to users. In WPMU and WordPress 3.0, users are global to the entire installation and not associated with a specific network. Excepting super admin users, all users' privileges in WordPress/WordPress MU are controlled at the individual site level. Note in the image below that the sites the admin user is listed is restricted to the sites in the current network.

Username	Name	E-mail	Registered	Sites	Network Role
adamaria			2010/09/27		Grant login permission
admin - Super Admin		andrea@ronandandrea.com	2010/06/27	howtosetupablog.net second	N/A

Super admins

When a new network is created with the Networks+ plugin, the super admin creating the network is added to the super admin list in the new network. The Networks+ plugin has code in place to ensure that the initial admin user is always a super admin on all networks. You can also add additional super admins to secondary network that do not have access to the other networks.

While logged in, and from the admin area of the network you want, look up the user under Super Admin → Users. Click to edit their profile and check the checkbox to make them a super admin on that network.

Super Admin	<input type="checkbox"/> Grant this user super admin privileges for the Network.
First Name	<input type="text"/>
Last Name	<input type="text"/>

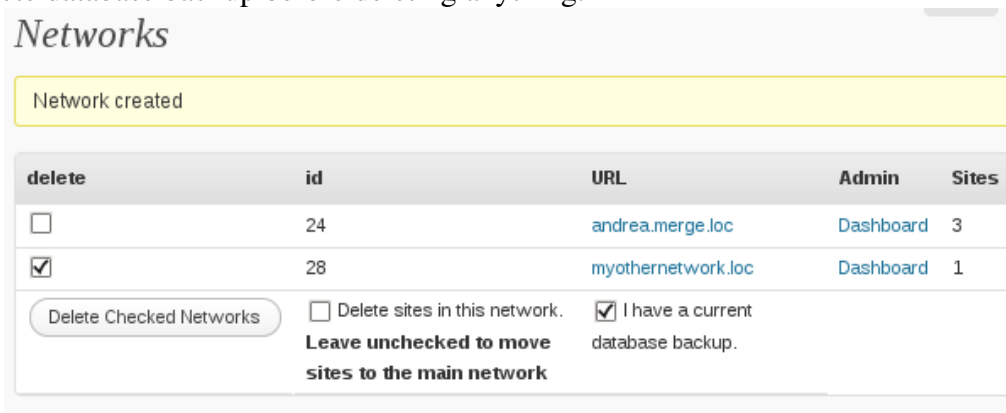
Network Settings

Like sites, network settings must be managed by logging into the admin area of that particular network. The Networks+ plugin applies the default network settings to a new network when it creates the network. Changing network options on one network has no effect on the network options in any other network.

Deleting Networks

The Networks list only show in the Networks+ admin screen when there are additional networks in an install. The main network is not listed in the Networks list and cannot be deleted through Networks+ admin screen. The Networks admin screen does allow you to delete one or more networks at the same time. To delete one or more networks:

1. Check the checkbox under the delete heading in the row of the network(s) you would like to delete.
2. To delete all sites in that network check the checkbox to the left of Delete Sites on this Network. This choice will be applied to all checked sites.
3. To remove the network but keep the sites, leave the checkbox from step 2 unchecked. With this checkbox unchecked the sites are made children of the main network. That is the only change that is made to the site.
4. To the bottom right is a checkbox for you to confirm that you have a current database backup. Checking this checkbox is necessary to delete a network. I strongly recommend that you make a complete database backup before deleting anything.



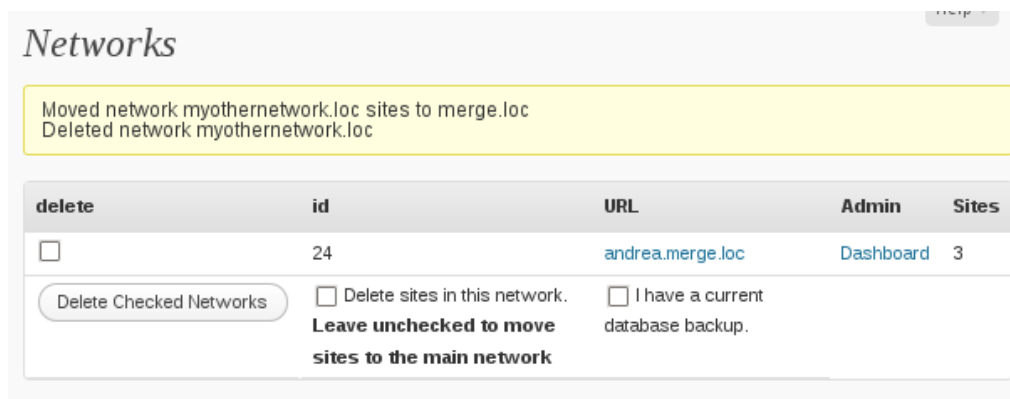
The screenshot shows the 'Networks' admin interface. At the top, there is a yellow notification box that says 'Network created'. Below this is a table with the following columns: 'delete', 'id', 'URL', 'Admin', and 'Sites'. The table contains two rows of network data. The first row has an unchecked checkbox, id 24, URL 'andrea.merge.loc', Admin 'Dashboard', and 3 sites. The second row has a checked checkbox, id 28, URL 'myothernetwork.loc', Admin 'Dashboard', and 1 site. Below the table, there is a button labeled 'Delete Checked Networks'. To the right of this button are two checkboxes: 'Delete sites in this network.' (unchecked) and 'I have a current database backup.' (checked). Below these checkboxes is a bold instruction: 'Leave unchecked to move sites to the main network'.

delete	id	URL	Admin	Sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	24	andrea.merge.loc	Dashboard	3
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	28	myothernetwork.loc	Dashboard	1

☐ Delete sites in this network. ☒ I have a current database backup.

Leave unchecked to move sites to the main network

5. After clicking Delete Checked Networks the screen refresh lists the actions applied to the Networks(s).



Web server configuration

Multi-network capability is integrated into WordPress and WPMU. However, it does not update your web server's configuration for additional domains. The setup is similar to domain mapping.

On a shared IP address

If you have either cPanel or Plesk, you can add the additional domain to your web server by parking the additional network's domain on the domain with your WordPress install.



You're basically making a ServerAlias from the new network domain to the originating network domain.

On a dedicated IP address

If possible, make your WordPress install the default website for the IP address. This can be done in some implementations of Plesk. If you have cPanel, your server support should be able to do this for you. This will set the WordPress install to be the website to respond to any domain requests to that IP address that are not configured elsewhere on that IP address. If another website is already the default host, then go the route described for a shared IP address.

A quick way to check this is to type your IP address in a web browser and see where it goes. If it redirects to your main install, that's good. All you need to do in the DNS records for the second network is to add an A record to the first network's IP address.

VPS or dedicated

If you have root access, you can configure Apache yourself by editing the virtual hosts file. Make sure

you have a wildcard named host pointing to the IP address, and the IP goes to the MU install. It will look like this in the httpd.conf file:

```
<VirtualHost *>
    ServerName www.example.com
    DirectoryIndex index.html
    DocumentRoot /home/www/www.example.com/htdocs
</VirtualHost>

<VirtualHost yourIPhere >
    ServerName www.example.com
    DirectoryIndex index.html
    DocumentRoot /home/www/www.example.com/htdocs
</VirtualHost>
```

In user experience terms, if I type in the IP address of your site, I should hit the main page of the MU install. The above lines ensures that happens.

This step right here eliminates the domain parking (or ServerAlais) step, and allows for hundreds of domains on the server without any speed issues.

On the domain record side, all you need is an A record filled in with the IP address of the main network. The domain will gets sent to right server and the main WordPress install with the priginating network. Nameservers won't matter, and mail records (MX) can be on the same server or elsewhere.

WordPress will look up the right record when the request comes in. If you'll be mapping some custom subdomains, like blog.clientdomain.com, then you'll have to use CNAMEs. Some places won't let you stuff an IP in a CNAME record, so you can put the main mu domain in there or a custom sub from the mu side.

Support

Paid support is available for this plugin at <http://wpebooks.com> and is included in the purchase price.

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