Wordpress Glossary

This lecture lists some of the technical terms I may use in this course. You may also hear these terms when watching other videos, or tutorials online. Don't let this list scare you. You do not need to know all of these. This list is for reference only. As you go through the course, if you hear a word you don't understand, look here.

Please, if you find a term that is not in the list, please leave a message in the Q&A section for this lecture and I'll add it. Additionally, if you don't understand one of my definitions, let me know in the Q&A and I'll try to simplify it.

Wordpress Terms

Administrator / Admin - The person that is responsible for maintaining the website, adding pages, etc.

Category Silo - A silo is a closely related group of posts that link to each other, but not to less related posts. For example, you might have a category on your site about mountain bikes. All posts in that category are about mountain bikes, and link to other articles on mountain bikes. Categories in Wordpress allow you to group posts into these silos, so you might hear the term category silo, simply meaning a group of highly related posts, all in the same category.

cPanel - This is your web host's control panel that provides an easy to use interface and automation tools to simplify your job as site admin.

Child Theme - This is a Wordpress theme that inherits its functionality from a parent theme. The parent theme needs to be installed as well as the child theme. Changes made to the child theme won't affect the parent theme, so you can update the parent theme as and when updates are available, without trashing your site.

CSS - The layout and design of a web page and it's contents are controlled by CSS. This stands for Cascading Style Sheets. You can change colours, font size, alignment of text or images, etc, all using CSS.

Database - A database is a file that contains information. Wordpress stores your site content and settings in the database.

Dashboard - This is the Wordpress control panel, where you log in to add / edit your website.

Directory (or folder) - You organize files on your computer into folders (also called directories). Web Servers are just computers too and files are organized into directories (or folders) on servers too.

DNS - DNS stands for Domain Name System. It's a system that converts domain names into numeric IP addresses. See also Registrar and web host.

Domain / Domain Name - This is your website's web address. e.g. mydomain.com

FTP - Stands for File Transfer Protocol. This is a system for connecting to your web space so you can add, edit, delete files, etc. Using a tool called an FTP client, you can view all files and folders on your server in much the same way you can with a File Explorer on your computer.

.htaccess - This is a file that is processed by your web server before your web page is loaded in a web browser. You can add specific messages to this file, e.g. to prevent certain people accessing your site, or redirecting an old URL to a new URL.

Host - See Web Host

HTTPS - http defines how content is formatted and transmitted around the web as well as how web servers react to that content. Https is the same as http but uses SSL to ensure content is encrypted.

IP address - This is a unique string of numbers and full stops (periods) that uniquely identify a computer on the internet.

MySQL - This is an open source database that is commonly used with Wordpress installations as well as other web applications.

Plugins - Plugins are pieces of software that can "plugin" to Wordpress to add new features. e.g. a plugin might allow you to create a contact form, or backup your database on a schedule.

Protocol - Essentially a set of rules that define how something works.

Registrar - Also called the domain registrar. This is the company that registers your domain for you. They will renew it if you want to. When someone comes to your website, the registrar will send them to your web host, via the DNS settings at the registrar. Each web host has unique DNS, so the visitor will be sent to your web host, where your Wordpress site is installed.

Responsive Theme - These themes adjust to the size of the web browser. If someone is viewing your site on a mobile phone, the responsive theme makes sure it looks great. The same site in a desktop browser will also look great as the responsive theme adjusts the layout accordingly.

Root folder - This is the top level folder on your server where a website is installed. On your home computer, the root folder for any application you have installed will be the folder that contains all the files and sub-folders for that application.

RSS Feed - Stands for Rich Site Summary, or Really Simple Syndication. It is a file that contains details of the last X posts on your website. Each post will have details of title, date, description, etc.

SEO - Stands for Search Engine Optimization and refers to the methods you use to

try to get your site to rank higher in the search engines.

Shortcodes - A Wordpress specific code that you can use to insert something into a website. E.g. a contact form plugin may give you a shortcode like [cf-form-1]. when the page is rendered in the browser, the shortcode is replaced by the contact form.

SSL - Stands for Secure Sockets Layer. It's a security measure to ensure a connection between two computers is encrypted.

Themes - These are the "skins" of your site. They control the fonts, colours & layout of your site. You can change the look and feel of your site by changing the theme. It takes seconds to do.

URL - the web address you type into your web browser.

Web Host - This is the company that rents you disk space on their computers (servers). You can use that disk space to install your website. When someone visits your website, it's delivered from that web host. The web host has a unique DNS which you give to your registrar.

Webmaster - Same as administrator.

wp-config.php - This file contains the basic setup information for your Wordpress site. Things like database name and other database settings.

Widgets - These are plug and play pieces of software that can add features to various areas of your website. e..g there is a widget that displays a calendar and this could be placed in the sidebar.