

What is a Blogging Platform? (thebalancesmb.com)

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Updated November 16, 2017



A common question I often get is, "Should I set up a blog or a website for my online business?"

The reality is, these days, if you want to [make money blogging](#) there isn't much difference between a blog or a website; or which platform you choose to use for your online presence.

In the past, a website was really more of a "static" online presence; meaning it served more as an online brochure and wasn't updated often.

On the flip side, a blog was a site that was frequently updated with the newest posts showing in reverse chronological order. A blogging platform is the software or service that you use to publish your content onto the internet in the form of a blog. A blog platform is a specific form of a content management system.

Again, in the past, the software programs you would use for building a website versus the software program you would use for a blog (CMS) were completely different.

These days many people will use either a website builder (like Wix.com or [Web.com](#)) or a blogging software (like [WordPress](#)).

In most cases a website builder or a blogging CMS will be able to create both regular web pages and blog type pages; so there really is a lot of overlap.

Contents

Blogs vs Websites	2
Top Free Blogging Platforms	2
Blogging with WordPress	2
Alternatives to Blogging Platforms	2
Web Hosting for Blogs	3
Searching Engine Rankings from Blogging	3
Making Money with Your Blog	3

Blogs vs Websites

A blog differs from a typical website in a number of ways.

The primary thing that distinguishes a blog from other websites is that the content that is published onto a blog is shown in reverse chronological order; meaning that the most frequent additions to the website are shown first.

Blog posts will usually show the date that the blog post was published and have a specific author assigned to the post. Blog posts can also be assigned to specific categories, making it easier to search for all posts on a blog related to a specific category. Blog posts can also be tagged with multiple keywords; as another way to search for specific blog posts on a website.

Most people will have a blog included in their website; and even use the same software to create regular website pages and blog pages.

Top Free Blogging Platforms

There are several different companies that offer free and/or paid services for publishing and hosting a blog.

The most popular [free blogging platforms](#) include WordPress, Blogger, Tumblr, Blog.com, and Medium.com.

If you are just looking to create a personal journal or share information with others than a free blogging platform can work out well for you. But if you have any intent on [making money online](#) or using your blog for commercial purposes than it's highly recommended that you avoid these free blogging platforms and use a self-hosted blog using WordPress.

Blogging with WordPress

One of the most popular blogging platforms is WordPress. There are two versions of WordPress; WordPress.com which where you can have a free blog hosted with WordPress and WordPress.org, where you self-host your own WordPress blog.

While it may seem confusing initially; WordPress.com is like the free blogging platforms; where you are limited in what you can do. WordPress.org is where you get your own hosting account and install your own WordPress installation, where you have complete control over what you can do.

You can also learn more about the [differences between WordPress.com and WordPress.org here](#).

As mentioned above, these days there aren't many differences between using a blogging platform or website platform for your website. Most website platforms allow for you to have a blog included and most blogging platforms could make regular website pages. I recommend building your website/blog using WordPress, though there are other options you should be aware of.

Alternatives to Blogging Platforms

Though there are many benefits to using WordPress, some people may find it a little too "technical" to use. There are popular website builders that aren't as technical as WordPress and can create good looking websites, including:

- [SquareSpace](#)
- [Web.com](#)
- [Wix.com](#)

Keep in mind, the only downside to these website builders is less ability to customize your site and less integrations with other third-party platforms.

Web Hosting for Blogs

As mentioned above, a very popular option for blogging is using the WordPress platform, which you would host on your own website. When selecting a hosting account you'll want to go with a [web hosting provider](#) that supports free installations of WordPress. Bluehost is a popular choice for many people.

Searching Engine Rankings from Blogging

Blogging (adding new content to your website) on a regular basis is a great way to get ranked in the search engines and [get free traffic](#) from people who are looking for information related to your topic.

The key to getting free traffic from the search engines is to publish good quality, original content on a regular basis. You'll want to do some [keyword research](#) to find what topics people are looking for.

One of the advantages of using a blogging platform is that it makes optimizing your blog for the search engines easy to do. Most blogging platforms will have fields for you to include what's referred to as "meta data" which helps tell the search engines what your website is about. This information usually includes a title for your page, a description of your post, and some related keywords.

No matter what platform you decide to use to build your website, you'll want to make sure that there is a blogging function built into the program, so you can add regular content to your website.

Making Money with Your Blog

As mentioned above, when it comes to many free blogging platforms, you are only allowed to use your blog for personal use and not allowed to use it for business purposes. If you plan on making money with your blog, you'll want to be sure you're using a blog that allows commercial use or simply self-host your blog on your own hosting account as mentioned above.

There are many ways to use a blog to make money online. You can [sell e-books online](#), promote other people's products and [make money as an affiliate](#), or use your blog to promote your own products and services.

Note: Article edited/updated by Online Business/Hosting Expert [Brian T. Edmondson](#)



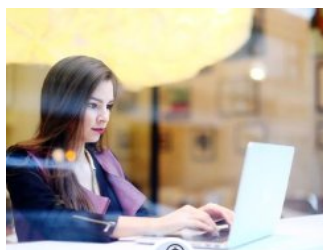
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The Top 5 Best Free Blogging Platforms



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WordPress.com vs WordPress.org - Which is the Right WordPress for You?



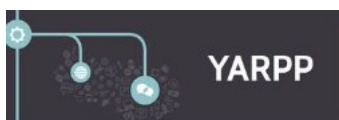
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