AEE Chapters Website Documentation

We are pleased to present to you an AEE branded website template developed in WordPress. This template offers chapters a simple and easy way to create a fully functioning website that contains many elements the majority of chapters require, including:

- **About Us:** A way to display critical chapter information, such as Leadership, mission, and history.
- **Membership:** Options for displaying the value of chapter membership, AEE membership, Corporate membership, and a system for e-commerce membership payments.
- **Chapter Leadership:** A dedicated "post" system for managing and displaying officers, volunteers, student leadership, and associated student chapters.
- **Events:** We have provided a simple but robust event system for managing event registrations. You can post monthly meetings, webinars, conferences, and even include speaker information. You can manage tickets, offer free registrations, or set registration fees as needed.
- **Jobs:** A simple WordPress job category is included to help you post jobs in your area.
- **Sponsors & Partners:** A simple WordPress category is included to help you promote your supporters or partner companies.
- **News:** A simple WordPress news category is included to help blog or post news.
- **Admin Functions:** The site contains plugins to provide forms, payments, image optimizations, search engine optimization and more.

Powered by WordPress

WordPress is truly an open-source platform that is used globally for website development. 40% of all websites use WordPress. Wherever your chapter is based, you will find local freelancers, contractors, and companies that have experience with the platform. We suggest investigating one of three options to implement the AEE template:

1. Find a local volunteer that has experience in website development and WordPress to implement the template for you.

2. Contract a local web development company of freelance web developer to implement the template for you. This option will allow you to pay local rates for such services.

3. Contract the US-based Web Development firm that AEE contracted to develop the website template. Contact us if you would like this developer to offer you a quote for implementation.

Get Started: Choosing a Webhost

Just like your house, your website needs a place to call home.   Web hosts are service providers that house all of your website content and files so that the website is accessible anywhere on the Internet 24/7.   Note your web host does not need to be where you registered your website domain. In fact, it is often recommended to keep them separate so that you are not tied too much around one service provider. If you have not already registered a domain, you can register a domain at a domain registrar such as NameCheap. With that in mind, website hosts are a dime a dozen so how do you know which one is right for you? Well, luckily, we have saved you some research and recommend two hosts that fully support and are optimized WordPress.

Nexcess
Nexcess is a managed WordPress web host company that is part of the larger enterprise hosting called LiquidWeb. LiquidWeb provides industry leading speed and performance with a strong history of being a dependable web host for corporate and larger websites. Recently, Nexcess, its managed hosting provider division, has branched out into providing optimized hosting for small and medium size businesses and organizations looking to host a single WordPress website.   With this in mind, we have found the service is excellent and relatively affordable in our experience. In addition, Nexcess does some very cutting edge tech including performing a visual comparison of anything on the frontend that has changed after website WordPress updates as well optimizing the database so the website can be as fast as possible. Note that while their custom hosting dashboard is a little less beginner friendly than SiteGround, their support is top notch.
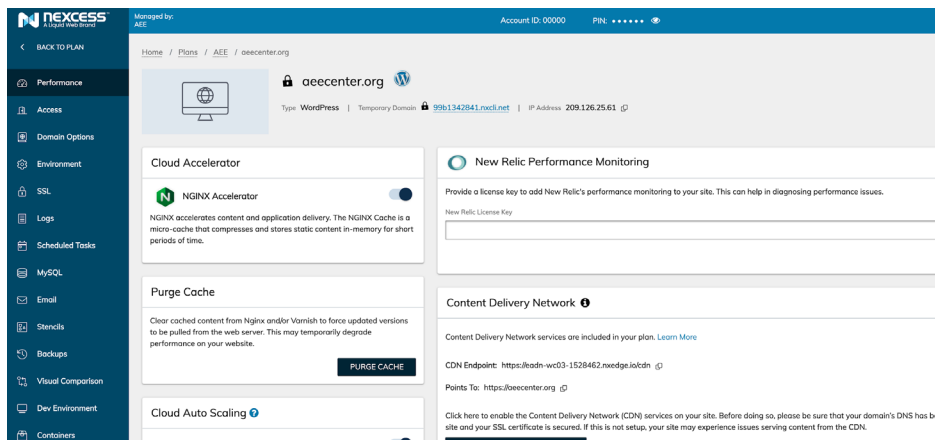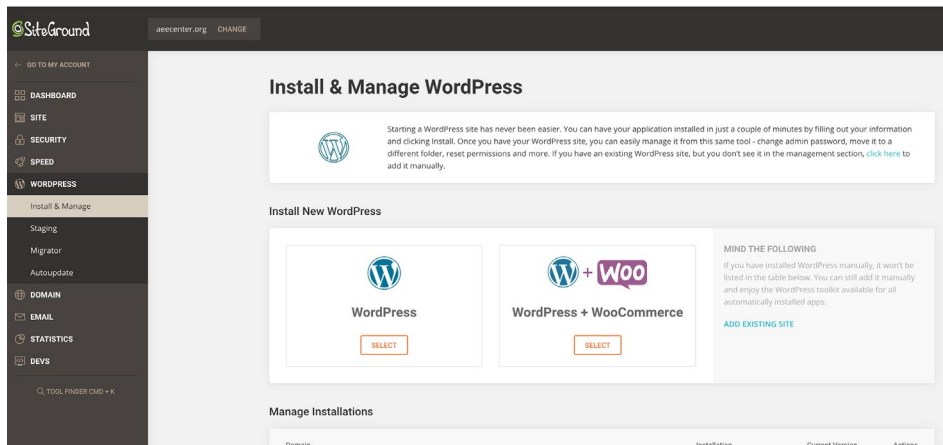
Nexcess Hosting Dashboard

Recommended Minimum Package: WordPress Spark

SiteGround
SiteGround is one of the largest and well known web hosts that has geared their hosting primarily toward WordPress. Their use of Google Cloud servers provided a more affordable price than other competitors without a loss in performance.   They include one-click staging environments along with an easy to use, custom hosting dashboard that leaves both non-technical users and developers comfortable.   In addition, their support is well-versed in WordPress and can often (not always) give some guidance on any technical hiccups you experience around WordPress. They have fantastic introductory pricing, but actually can be more expensive than Nexcess above after the first year of introductory pricing.

SiteGround Hosting Dashboard

Recommended Minimum Package: GrowBig

Choosing Another Host
While we have recommended a few hosts that we have extensively tested, you may choose another web host.   We do have a few hosts that we do not recommend specifically for

WordPress. In our own apples to apples comparison and internal testing, GoDaddy Hosting and HostGator Hosting significantly underperform in speed and reliability tests for nearly the same costs as the two hosts we have recommended.

Installing the Website

Once you have chosen a web host, you should contact your host as well as your domain registrar to assist with helping you set up your existing domain or register a new domain to point to your new hosting. Once you have this confirmed, you are ready to proceed with restoring the website starter site provided by AEE. With either website starter restoration method, you must create a new database and database user first within your web host account.

Nexcess:
https://help.nexcess.net/client-portal/how-to-delete-mysql-databases-in-nexcess-cloud?from_search=56560673

SiteGround
https://www.siteground.com/kb/site-tools-vs-cpanel-comparison-create-mysql-database/

Please temporarily copy your database name, username and password in a safe place. You will not need these in the long run, but just while restoring the starter website. Once you have those pieces of information, you can proceed with either of the following restore methods below. Note that the BackupBuddy Restore option is best for beginners whereas as the manual restore is only for developers or advanced users who already prefer that method:

- **BackupBuddy Restore**: This uses AEE's BackupBuddy account to restore the website in the fastest possible way to the new chapter URL. Two files are required to be uploaded to the root 'public_html" folder of your new web host server: aee-chapter-starter-backupbuddy-restore-v1.0.zip and importbuddy.php. You should have received both of these in your AEE Starter Website package. If you already have an existing website, it is recommended to download your previous files from your public_html folder before deleting and uploading those two files provided. Once uploaded, you can run the importbuddy.php by visiting your website domain/importbuddy.ph to finish the quick wizard and have the website configured properly.   For example, if your website is aeechapter.com, you would visit aeechapter.com/importbuddy.php to run the wizard and restore the website.   Further details are available in the guide starting with 'ImportBuddy to the Rescue': https://ithemes.com/how-to-migrate-wordpress-website/ . When you visit the restore wizard, it will ask you for a password: eMeFFRP-f@HoAwmsL8NQMT3t

  Please follow the prompts in the ImportBuddy process. When you are asked to enter your new database details, you can generate a new database name, user and password with all privileges using this guide from SiteGround:
  https://www.siteground.com/tutorials/php-mysql/create-user-database/

After finishing the restore, you can login at the admin link below:

https://yourdomain.com/xtjmqcqbu

username: aeeJKg4

password: ulUGsnFQ9lCNo7UV!JCW6#8&

Note that after restoring the starter site from BackupBuddy, you may have to click 'Remove Maintenance Mode' from the Ninja Forms Settings to view forms properly on the frontend:


- **Manual Restore**: This method is for more advanced users or developers. This process involves manually uploading all files via FTP or Hosting File Manager and importing the data into a new database. A guide can be found here: https://www.siteground.com/tutorials/wordpress/transfer/

After finishing the restore, you can login at the admin link below:

https://yourdomain.com/xtjmqcqbu

username: aeeJKg4

password: ulUGsnFQ9lCNo7UV!JCW6#8&

About WordPress

WordPress is a piece of software that runs your entire website from the back to the front. Whether you are trying to add or edit new content on the backend of the website as an admin or viewing and reading information from the frontend, WordPress is a content management system for maintaining and building your website.   The AEE Starter site was built on the latest version of WordPress.   WordPress itself has no fees and uses plugins to add new functionality to your website (much like apps on your phone).   Likewise, the website has a theme which is the design of the site that has been built for AEE.   In this case the theme is called GeneratePress. With WordPress powering 35% of the web, you are in good company and there are a plethora of support resources available online.
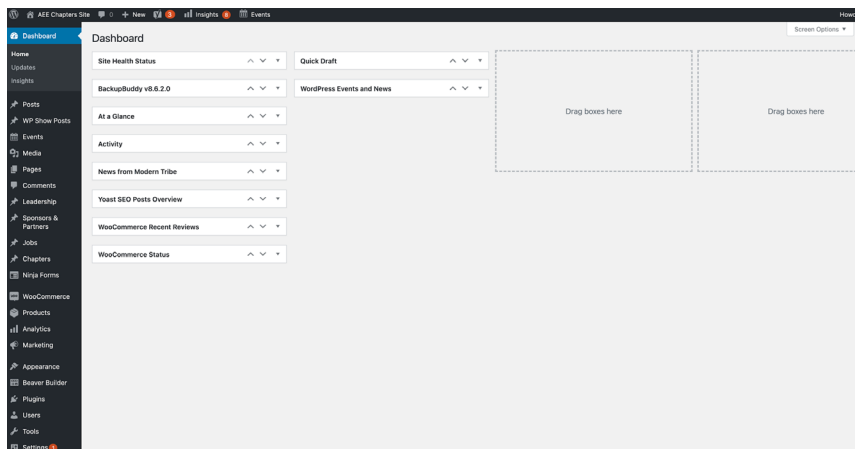
The WordPress Admin Dashboard

You can read more about WordPress below:
https://wordpress.org/support/
https://www.siteground.com/tutorials/wordpress/
https://help.nexcess.net/74095-wordpress/what-is-wordpress?from_search=56561373

All WordPress Plugins Pre-Installed

The AEE WordPress starter website has various plugins pre-installed in order to make the website function and meet your needs. Think of plugins as the upgrades or apps that really boost what your website can do. AEE has purchased commercial licenses to ensure that every chapter website is able to take advantage of all of the functionality available from these plugin vendors. Here is a list of each plugin with a description and settings you may use in each. Plugins marked with a red asterisk (*) are ones that you may need to configure or change settings for directly after installing the website:

- **Advanced Custom Fields PRO:** Allows you to create custom fields for posts and custom post types.   This is primarily for developers and was built to create the various

types of fields on the website including on post types such as leadership, sponsors, jobs, etc. Note that this is advanced functionality that is not recommended to change without help of a web developer. Guides for editing: https://www.advancedcustomfields.com/resources/

● ***AEE Color**: A custom built plugin for AEE which allows you to easily change the accent color of the entire website with one button.   This plugin changes the theme's color accent across the site globally. Refer to the "Changing the accent color of the website" section of this document in order to change the color.

● ***BackupBuddy**: Allows for easy backups and restoration of the website in case you need to restore anything back from a simple file to the entire website. This software is the primary method of installing the website and can also be used to restore the website at various time points if needed as long as a backup has been made. While both Nexcess and SiteGround create 30 days of backups that can be restored quickly from their hosting dashboards (how to restore with Nexcess, how to restore with SiteGround), you may want to further configure BackupBuddy to take daily or weekly backups of your website as well. This way you have two sets of backups as often recommended (for anything really). You can read how to schedule backups here as well as how to send backups away from your web host to a Cloud provider such as DropBox.

● **Beaver Builder Plugin (Pro Version) & Beaver Themer**: These two plugins work together to make your website into a visual layout builder and editor. This way you can easily edit pages with drag and drop methods without knowing any code. To edit a page with Beaver Builder, go to the "Pages" in the WordPress Admin sidebar, click on a page, and then click "Launch Beaver Builder." Beaver Builder has robust documentation below: https://docs.wpbeaverbuilder.com/

If you want to get a feel for Beaver Builder outside of your website, the Beaver Builder Team has a live demo on their website to play with their page builder: https://demo.wpbeaverbuilder.com/

● **Custom Post Type UI**: Allows you to create custom post types. WordPress by default only comes with two content types: pages and posts. Pages are for static content that are added right in the Beaver Builder page builder and posts are used for news articles in which each post is a different news entry that displays on your news section.   This plugin allows you to create additional custom post types such as leadership, jobs, sponsors & partners, and chapters that are already installed and working on your website.   This way you can individually add new people, sponsors, etc. and they will propagate to the correct place in the website automatically.   Since this is all already set, you will most likely never need to access this plugin unless you have a developer working with you to expand the website functionality.

- **Duplicate Page**: Allows you to copy pages or posts with a single button. This is especially helpful if you have an existing page that you simply would like to use as a template for a new page you are building out.   It will create a new copy in the WordPress Pages backend in 'draft' mode (which means it is not published on the website for users or Google to find).

- **Event Tickets & Event Tickets Plus**: Allows you to set so users can RSVP or purchase tickets to events under your Events page using the Events Calendar plugin. The plugin keeps track of attendees, who has paid and who has not when it is a paid event. There is an extensive Knowledge Base on how event tickets work here. See the WooCommerce section below for more information on the Event Tickets Plus integration with WooCommerce allowing users to purchase event tickets online. Note that duplicating an event will not duplicate the tickets on that event.   You must re-add all ticketing and attendee fields if you create an event by duplicating an existing event.

- ***Events Tickets Extension: Ticket Email Settings**: Allows you to change the emails when users purchase tickets. You can change these email templates under the "Settings" link in the "Events" tab of the WordPress Admin sidebar. Once there, click on the "Ticket Emails" tab.

- ***Google Analytics for WordPress by MonsterInsights**: Connects Google Analytics to the website and ensures your website is tracking user and traffic behavior for your WordPress website correctly. Google Analytics is the gold standard in web statistics and is absolutely free from Google so this is highly recommended so you know how your website is performing and engaging users. You can connect your Google Analytics account by clicking the "Settings" link under the "Insights" tab of the WordPress Admin sidebar. Note that you must already have created a Google Analytics property for your website.   A guide to create this can be found here (you must have a free or paid Google account).   MonsterInsights has a paid version of this plugin that gives more insight into your analytics on their homepage, but for most AEE chapters, the currently installed free version is more than sufficient.

- ***Google Map**: Adds Google Map embeds to pages where it is needed. To change the map settings or API key, go to the "Google Map" link under the "Settings" tab of the WordPress Admin sidebar. Note that an API key should already be present and working for you, but if you need to create or input a new key, please follow this guide.

- **GP Premium**: Adds additional functionality to the theme being used on the website called GeneratePress. It should be activated at all times, but doesn't require any other specific configuration.

- **Lightweight Social Icons**: Adds social icons widget to the footer through the GeneratePress theme.

- **Ninja Forms**: A drag and drop form builder that is used throughout the website. Anywhere you see a form from the subscribe button to the membership dues payment form to the contact form, you can control it through Ninja Forms. You can easily drag and drop different fields into the existing forms or even create a new one. To add forms to a page, use the shortcode. Guide on building a form: https://ninjaforms.com/docs/form-building/

  Ninja Forms is very powerful and easy to use.   You can add a plethora of additional functionality as described here: https://ninjaforms.com/add-ons/.

- **Ninja Forms - Layout & Styles**: Allows for more advanced styling and layouts of Ninja Forms. This gives you more control over how your form looks and feels for end users.
- ***Ninja Forms - Stripe**: Stripe integration into Ninja Forms. Allows you to collect payments/donations with Ninja Forms using the Stripe payment gateway. Stripe is a payment gateway to process credit cards and collect payments online to your bank account. Guide to setting it up in a form: https://ninjaforms.com/docs/stripe/

- **Really Simple SSL**: Enables SSL and HTTPS across websites which tightens security and ensures Google shows your website in search. This is a utility and shouldn't need further changes. If you or a developer find the site is not showing the 'padlock' in your browser on every website, you can purchase the paid version of this plugin for more features and support here.

- **Smush**: Optimizes image size and speed to ensure the website loads as fast as possible which makes sure users stay on your website and Google crawls the website for ranking purposes in Google results. Smush will shrink the size of your images upon upload into the media library. Smush does have some additional settings in case you have trouble with images loading. In addition, Smush offers a premium version that shrinks your images even more (without a user being able to tell a quality difference of course) as well as connects the images to a faster network called a content delivery network.   This is a paid monthly plan, more details here.

- **The Events Calendar & The Events Calendar PRO**: Events and calendar functionality for you to be able to post events to the calendar page and users to be able to RSVP, register and pay for event tickets on the website. Extensive guides can be found: https://theeventscalendar.com/knowledgebase/ .This plugin can be further extended for virtual events with direct Zoom integration at an additional cost here.

- **Ultimate Addons for Beaver Builder**: Advanced modules on top of Beaver Builder. Beaver Builder as mentioned is your page builder and Ultimate Addons gives you more modules (add-on elements to the page) so you can show information in more dynamic ways with sliders, buttons, galleries, countdowns and more. This is all available with this plugin enabled. You can read more about all of the different modules here.

- **WooCommerce**: Shopping cart software built for WordPress that allows you to sell physical, virtual products, and events while calculating shipping, taxes and charge payments.   For the AEE Starter website, WooCommerce has been integrated with the Events Calendar software using the Event Tickets Plus plugin to create events with purchasable website tickets.   When a new event is created, a new product for the event is also added into WooCommerce and the user checks out through the WooCommerce shopping cart, generating a WooCommerce order. The starter website has been set up with Stripe payments although WooCommerce supports a large variety of payment gateways that can be integrated in with additional plugins here.   After purchasing an event, ticket orders will appear in the WooCommerce orders dashboard and users will be sent their ticket information via email.   Administrators can also view event details from the Events Calendar backend dashboard and download / print Excel attendance records. Overview information on this integration can be found here. Additional troubleshooting and details can be found in the knowledgebase.

- **WooCommerce Stripe Gateway**: Adds the Stripe payment gateway to the WooCommerce shopping cart, allowing users to pay via credit card securely online and deposits into your own bank account via Stripe.   Please follow this guide to add your Stripe details and configure the payment gateway.

- **WP Rocket**: Website speed optimization utility. This plugin speeds up your entire website for users and Google.   It is currently configured to work with most web hosts, but can be further configured for even faster page loading using this guide: https://docs.wp-rocket.me/category/3-getting-started. Changing these settings is only recommended for advanced users since erroneous settings can break your website for end users.

- **WP Show Posts**: Allows you to list posts (from any post type) anywhere on your site. This is primarily used on the website to show different types of information into Beaver Builder.   Most users will not need to use this plugin further than how it is already configured. You can read more about this plugin here.

- **WPS Hide Login**: Changes the WordPress Admin login link to a unique URL of your choice. By default, every WordPress website allows you to login to the website at /wp-admin. For example, mywebsite.com/wp-admin.   This plugin allows you to set a unique URL that protects the website from bad parties and hackers.   The AEE starter site already has a custom URL set for you at /xtjmqcqbu. For example, if your website is mywebsite.com, the link would be mywebsite.com/xtjmqcqbu to access the WordPress backend dashboard. If preferred, you can change this custom URL in the "WPS Hide Login'' link under the "Settings" tab on the WordPress Admin sidebar.   More information can also be found here.

- **Yoast SEO**: Improves search engine optimization (SEO) tools for working to make your website better for search engines. This plugin is quite easy to use, but if you do not

know the basics of SEO, we recommend following their guide [here](#).   Then you can read further documentation on how to improve SEO on the website using the Yoast SEO plugin already installed on the website [here](#).   Yoast also provides [paid online training](#) and a [premium WordPress SEO plugin](#) for more control over your website's SEO.

Adding all Pre-Installed Premium Plugin License / API Keys

The AEE Starter website includes various premium plugins that have been provided and allow your website to receive all necessary software updates. As part of the website implementation, you should make sure that all API or license keys are correctly entered into each paid plugin. Many of these license keys have already been added when the website was installed, but some may not have been transferred over so each one should be double checked.

Please view the list below to ensure all these license keys have been entered or appear under each plugin with the WordPress Admin Dashboard:

- **Advanced Custom Fields Pro**:
  NWU0Mjk3Y2QyMjM5NjgyZGM5ZDNhOGM0YWEzNzBhZTM3NTVhYzM1NDgyNTlkNDk5YjI0YWNj
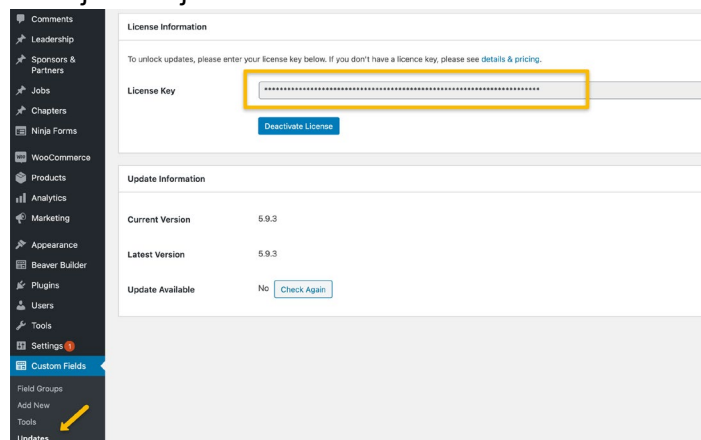
- **BackupBuddy:**
  Preinstalled; no license needed

- **Beaver Builder Plugin (Pro Version) and Beaver Themer**
  7465622e65726761727072726e4079726e7570767a
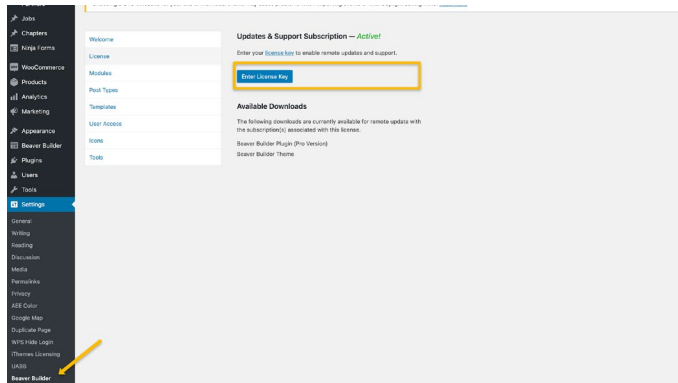
- **The Events Calendar Pro**
  7c3b886be3cfd208583b40abf6c3e948336489f5
  Event Tickets Plus
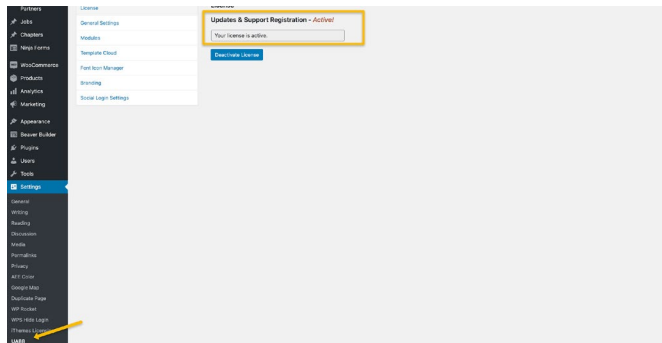 d9dafb187c1305d6a73a6ba12af6dcb53ea6ec20
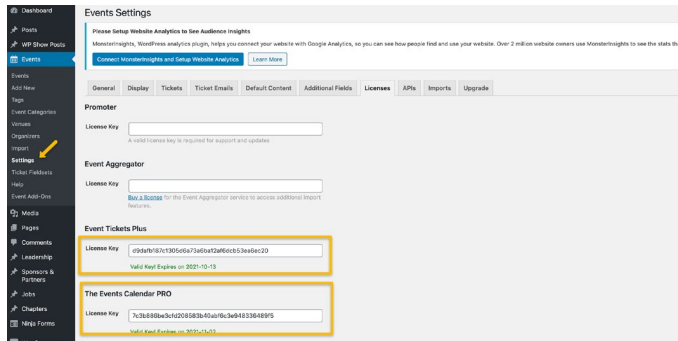
- **GeneratePress Theme and GP Premium Plugin**
  228e78541878eac460c17a7c5b170ec2
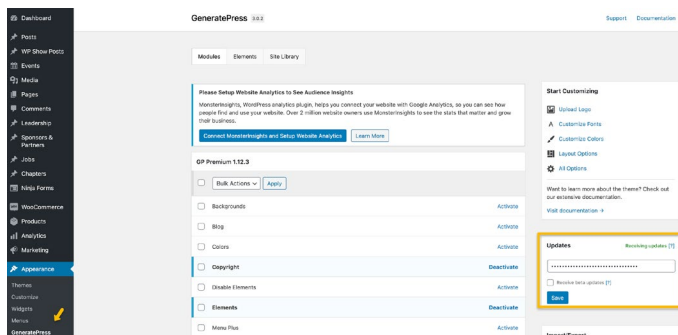
- **Ninja Forms Premium Add-Ons such as Layout & Styles, MailChimp, Stripe**
  B5e8442b2f7757dd6e57ae3dcdb3399f
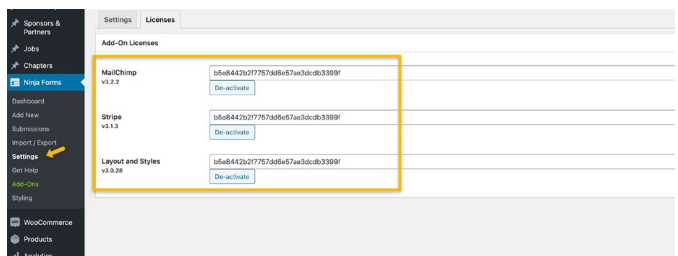
- **Ultimate Addons for Beaver Builder**
  a77a0ab2214316d56b6be0fd91662cb8

- **WP Rocket**
  Preinstalled; no license needed

Licenses not working? Contact AEE if your keys no longer work as expected.

Installing Add-Ons and Your Own Plugins

Much of the beauty of WordPress is that thousands of plugins exist that can provide nearly limitless possibilities for your WordPress website.   While we have installed many of the best ones for you, if you wish to install additional plugins, we recommend checking out this guide on how to install free plugins in the WordPress global plugin directory.

In addition, you may wish to install one of the Ninja Forms add-on plugins provided with this documentation or purchase additional paid plugins. To install a paid plugin, you need to find the provided .zip file and follow this guide. Note that after installation, the plugin may remind you to add a license or API key. This is important to ensure the website has access to the latest software updates for the website. The license keys for all pre-installed plugins are available on the last page of this document.   If you have purchased another paid plugin, this will typically be within the 'My Account' section of where you purchased the plugin.

Custom Post Types

As mentioned previously, the site will come with some custom post types that are already pre-built for you. Remember, these custom posts types are just organized content that show various places on your website. They are the following:

- **Jobs**: Jobs are listed on the "Jobs" page.
- **Sponsors & Partners**: Sponsors & partners are listed on the "Sponsors & Partners" page.
- **Leadership**: Leadership members are listed on the "Chapter Leadership" page under the "About Us" tab.

- **Chapters**: Chapters are listed on the "About Our Chapter" page under the "About Us" tab at the bottom of the page as well as on the "Chapter Leadership" page under the "About Us" tab.
- **Events**: Events are listed on the events page as well as upcoming events on the home page.
- **Posts**: Posts are listed under the "News" page.
- **Products (optional):** Products will only show when you have the WordPress cart software, WooCommerce, installed. Products from WooCommerce can be associated with the Events Calendar Events for allowing users to purchase online tickets.
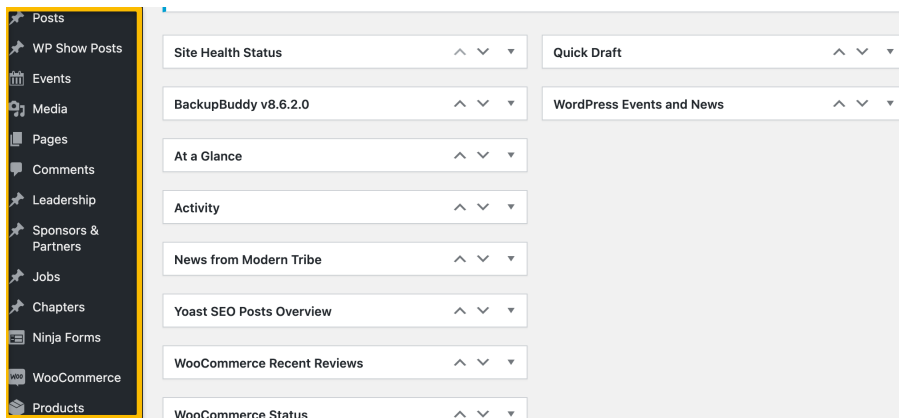
Different Content Post Types in the WordPress Admin Dashboard

By using the WordPress left hand admin sidebar, you can access each post type, update their content and the frontend will automatically show the changes on those pages reflected above.

Changing the Accent Color of the Site

To change the accent color of the website, navigate to the "AEE Color" link under the "Settings" tab on the sidebar of the WordPress Admin panel. Once you're on that page, you'll see a single setting with a HEX color code assigned. Change that HEX color code (with the initial "#" symbol) and then save the settings. Refreshing the front-end of the website will show your new chosen color. If you do not know how to find the right HEX color, refer to a site such as https://htmlcolorcodes.com/ and copy and paste the HEX code once you have chosen your color on that website.
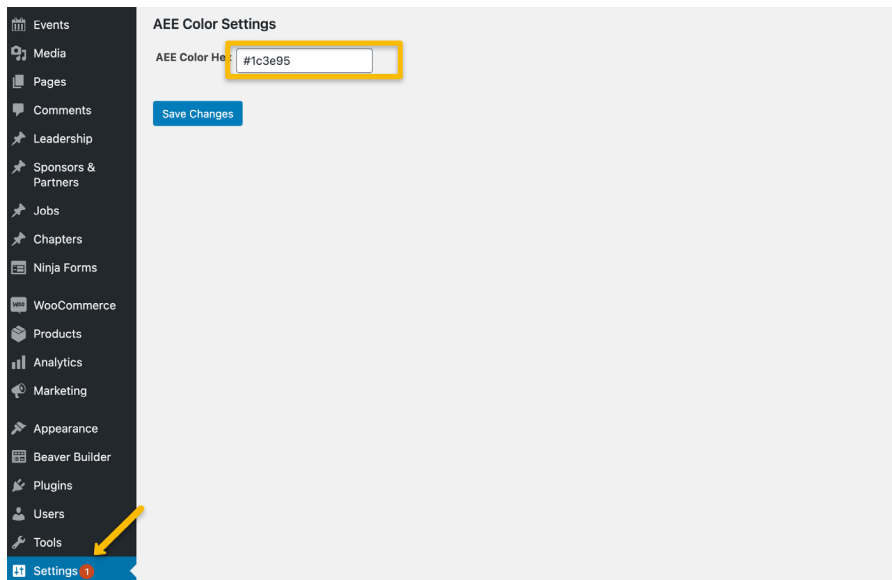
Adding a new accent color

Changing the Language of the Site

To change the language of the site and admin panel, navigate to the "General" link under the "Settings" tab on the sidebar of the WordPress admin panel. Once you're on that page, scroll down to the "Site Language" option, select your language and then save the settings.
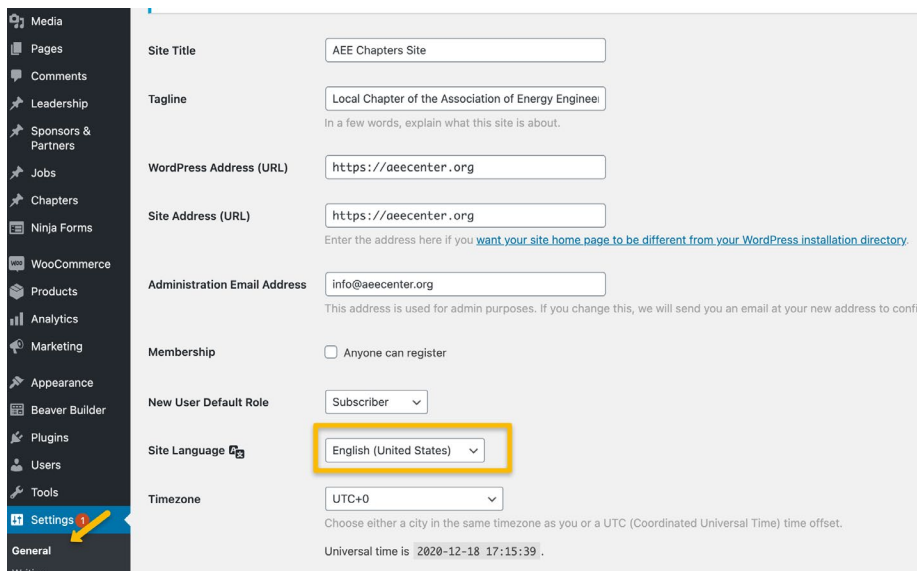

Changing the Site Language

Changing to the Alternative Membership Page

Under the WordPress backend's Pages section, you will find an existing page called Membership This page is located in the website under /membership by default.   In that same backend, you will also see a page called Membership (LOCAL OPTION). This page can be viewed by hovering over the post in the backend and clicking 'view'. This page is an alternative to the existing Membership page.   If you prefer to use this page, you should first hover over the Membership page and click quick edit and choose post status as Draft so that the primary membership page is not shown to users or Google. Then you can visit Appearance->Menus and select the Main Menu to edit.   Then delete the existing Membership page under About and replace with the Membership (LOCAL OPTION) page from the left hand side under Pages. Once you have added that page, you can edit its title both on the menu item and in the Page itself so it does not have the word (LOCAL OPTION).
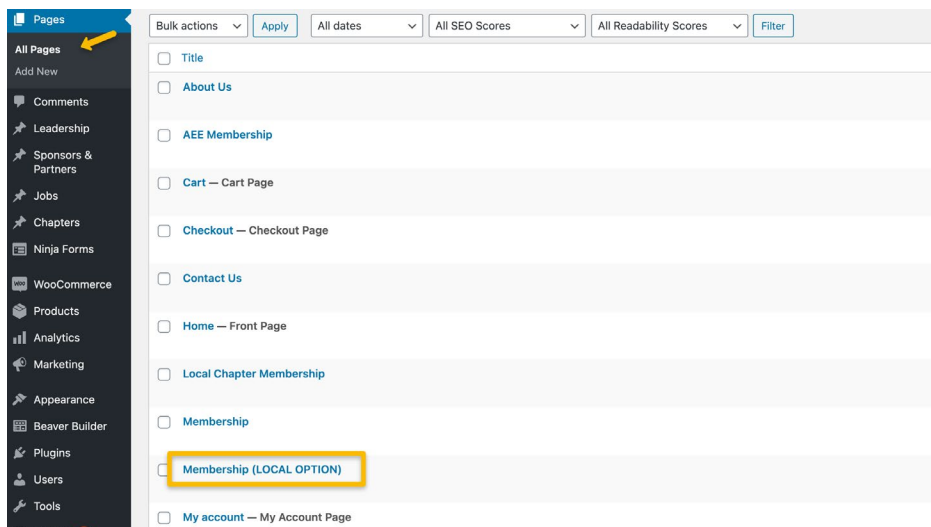
Finding the alternative membership page
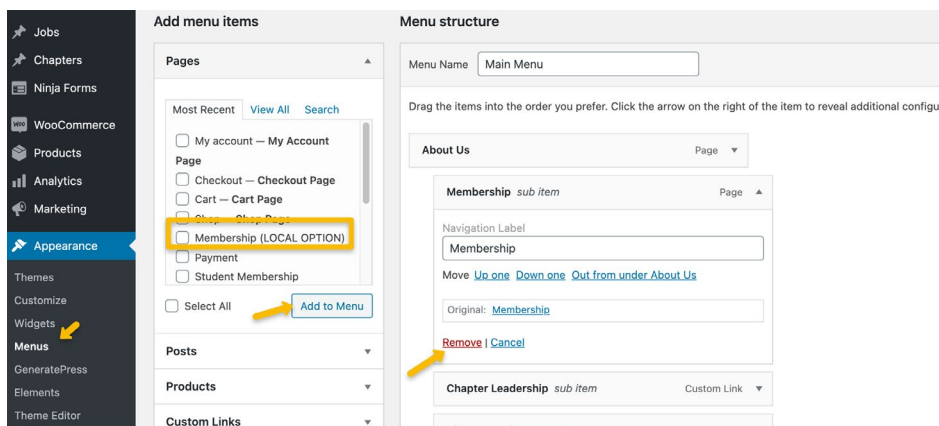
Removing the existing membership page and adding the alternative membership page

Selling Events Tickets Online

WooCommerce combined with The Events Calendar Pro and Event Ticket Plus Add-On allows your chapter staff to post events to the website in which users can then RSVP or purchase available tickets online using their credit card depending on if the event is free or paid. The magic of this setup is you can post events just as you normally would with the Events Calendar to post to the website, but with Event Tickets Plus, you have the option now of creating tickets.
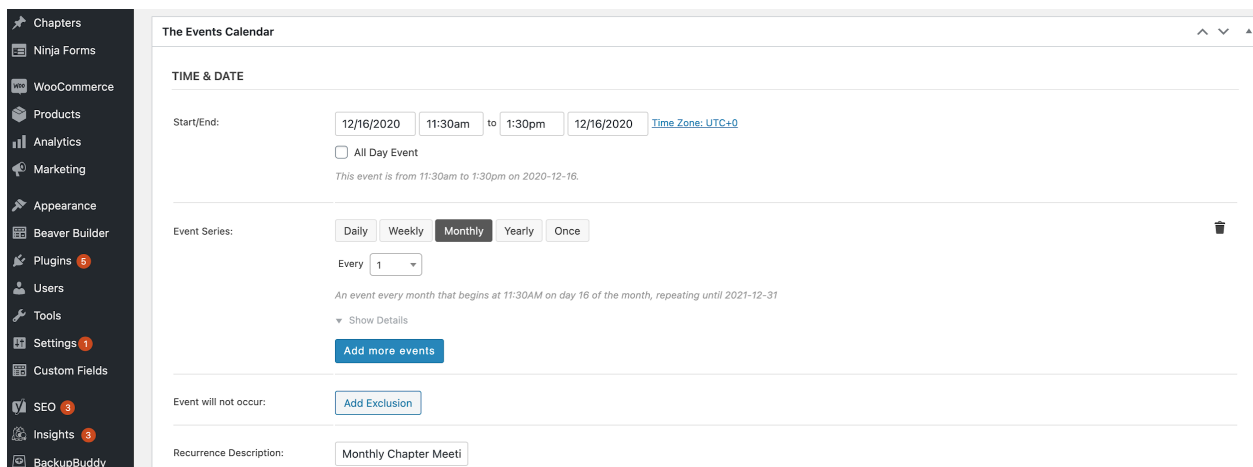

Sample Ticketed Event Edit Screen

Tickets allow users to RSVP to free events or paid for paid events. You can define the quantity of available tickets, the start and end date of selling such tickets, the price (optional), required attendee information such as name, phone number, etc. and more right within the ticket section of the event editing screen. For any paid events, an eCommerce product will be automatically created in WooCommerce as well. By creating a unique WooCommerce product per paid event, users can checkout using the cart with your payment gateway of choice.

WooCommerce Link to the Associated Product Along with Required Attendee Information Fields for a Paid Event

The website starter site includes an event called "Sample Ticketed Event". This event has

prebuilt tickets and attendee fields set up and saved for your testing and use. In addition, WooCommerce has been set up with the Stripe payment gateway enabled, but the account is in test mode until the website is ready to launch.   You can test your setup using Stripe test credit card details, but please make sure to follow this guide to add your own Stripe details and uncheck the 'test mode' before taking the website live.

A note about recurring events and tickets: Due to the nature of tickets, recurring events do not support recurring tickets.   If you add tickets to a recurring event, the tickets will not be added to subsequent events in the series, only the first instance of the series. If your chapter plans to use ticketed events routinely, we recommend avoiding the recurring events functionality. The AEE starter site includes many recurring series events.   Please click the trash icon on the event series row to disable the recurring functionality if you wish to use ticketed events.

A Recurring Event Series

Payments through Ninja Forms

Ninja Forms allows you to collect payments on your forms with various credit card processors and payment gateways. In order to accept recurring payment payments that charge the user each time period automatically, you must use Stripe or Recurly. If you do not need recurring payments, you can use other gateways such as PayPal Express and Elavon.   If you do not currently have a payment gateway we recommend Stripe due to the ease of use for being approved and integrating into the website.

In order to receive payments through the forms, you'll need to have a Stripe account with a connected bank account. You can create a Stripe account, apply and pass their verification and then you can add a bank account using this guide. After you have that, you'll need to obtain your API keys from Stripe in order to connect the forms to your account. Reference this guide on obtaining your API keys from Stripe. Once you have those keys, navigate to the "Settings'' link under the "Ninja Forms" tab on the WordPress Admin sidebar. Once there, scroll down to

the "Stripe" section and paste your test keys and live keys into the input boxes. You can also read more about this in [Ninja Form's guide](#) to setting up Stripe:.   Once Stripe is set up, you can optionally set payments to be recurring (such as with memberships).
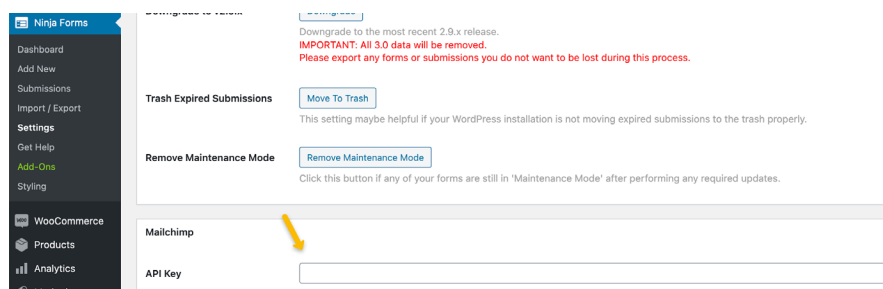

Adding Stripe Keys in Ninja Forms

Newsletter / CRM Subscribers through Ninja Forms

For the newsletter and contact form, you may wish to integrate in a subscriber feature in which users can submit their information and be automatically enrolled in your newsletter or customer relationship management (CRM) software of choice. By default, the AEE starter site integrates with [MailChimp](#) which is not only easy to use, but has a free plan available. To add your MailChimp API key, you need to find your API key by logging into your MailChimp account and clicking [here](#). Then paste your key under Ninja Forms->Settings->Stripe:

**Adding Your MailChimp API Key**

Follow [this guide](#) by Ninja Forms for further information on choosing what list each form should subscribe a user into within your MailChimp account.

Ninja Forms also has integrations with other newsletter and CRM platforms such as ConstantContact, ActiveCampaign, Zoho CRM and more. WordPress Ninja Forms add-on

plugins have been provided to you in zip formats along with this documentation for many of these additional integrations mentioned.

Review the Privacy Policy

Please review the privacy policy page and make sure it is set to your standards. You can find the privacy policy page by logging into the WordPress Admin Panel, clicking Pages, click the "Privacy Policy" page and then edit the text. Once you're finished, click "Publish" on the top right corner.
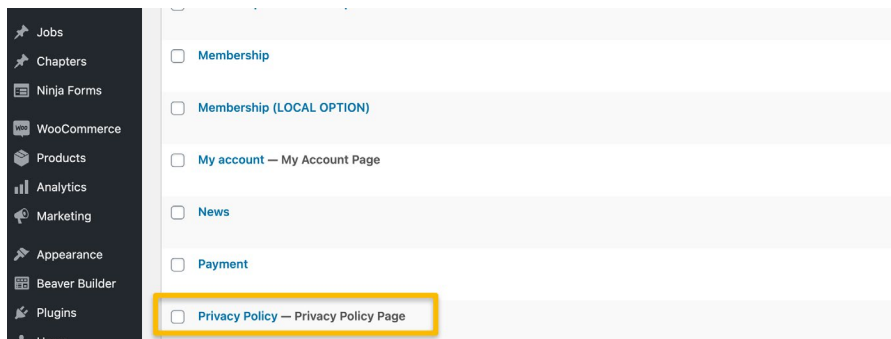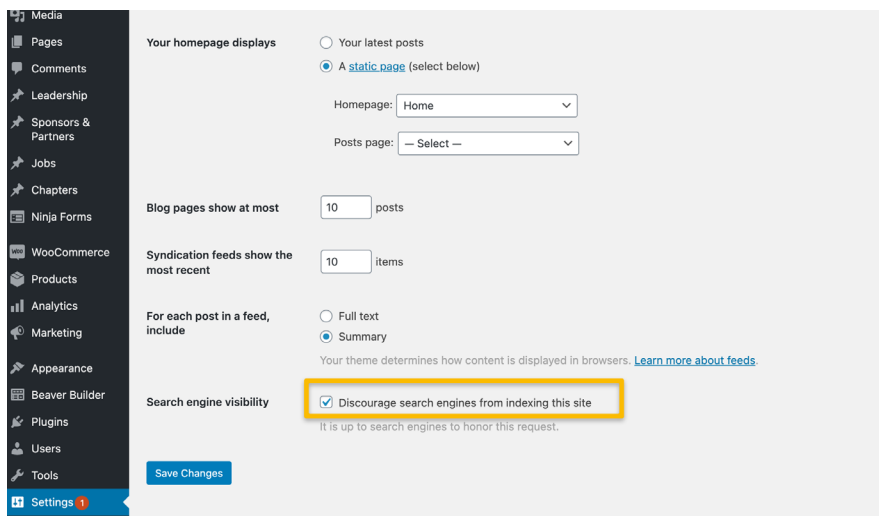

Finding the Privacy Policy Page

Preparing for Launch

Prior to launch, you should go through the following checklist:

In addition, do not forget to uncheck 'Discourage search engines from indexing the site' under Settings->Reading, otherwise users will not find your website in Google!

Uncheck before launch so search engines can index your website in their results

Updates and Website Maintenance After Launch

Like any other software, WordPress required on-going updates to its core, the GeneratePress theme, and all of its plugins. These updates are essential for the safety and performance of your website. With any updates though, there is a chance of conflicts, bugs or other issues that may break your website. With this in mind, we recommend that you contract out maintenance on a monthly basis to a local firm or you can reach out to us for information on our own vendor who can provide you with a quote. Such vendors will ensure all updates are performed when necessary, test after the updates run and backup the website before and after in case of any issues. If you prefer to maintain the website yourself, please checkout [this guide](). Note that both Nexcess and SiteGround run automatic core WordPress updates, but will not run updates on your theme or plugins. In addition, their daily backups will help in case you do run a backup and something goes wrong as you can quickly restore the website back to the prior backup version.