ALDO LATINO

PRIVATE CONTENT

User manual of the WordPress plugin

February 2020

This file was written in LATEX with *ClassicThesis* and the *ArsClassica* style. It contains the entire text of the Wiki with some adaptations. The wiki is available at:

https://github.com/aldolat/private-content/wiki

PLUGIN DEVELOPMENT AND DOWNLOAD

The plugin is developed using:

- KDE neon repository for Kubuntu, a distribution of GNU/Linux operating system;
- Visual Studio Code as development application;
- Git, as version control system;
- GitHub as development repository;
- GnuPG as signing commits application;
- Apache, MySQL and PHP as development platform;

and can be downloaded from the WordPress official repository:

https://wordpress.org/plugins/private-content

AUTHOR CONTACTS AND FORUMS

The author can be contacted via email at `aldolat AT gmail DOT com`. For support, please use the official forums:

https://wordpress.org/support/plugin/private-content

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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- Jean Baptiste Jung* for the idea behind this plugin;
- Jeff Starr for the initial code;
- all the wonderful users that gave me ideas and tips for improving the plugin.

The photo nr. 2 on page 28 is by Noah Boyer on Unsplash and is available here.

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* The original page is currently unavailable, but a snapshot is reachable in *Wayback Machine* at: https://web.archive.org/web/20090518121832/http://www.wprecipes.com/add-private-notes-to-your-wordpress-blog-posts.

WORDPRESS PLUGINS BY ALDO LATINO

- *Pinboard Bookmarks*
  https://wordpress.org/plugins/pinboard-bookmarks/
  Pinboard Bookmarks allows you to publish bookmarks from Pinboard on your blog.

- *Posts in Sidebar*
  https://wordpress.org/plugins/posts-in-sidebar/
  Posts in Sidebar is a plugin for WordPress that lets you show a list of your posts using the criteria you want. This plugin gives you almost all the power of WordPress to retrieve the posts you want and show them in your sidebars.

- *Private Content*
  https://wordpress.org/plugins/private-content/
  Private Content provides a shortcode to display a small portion of a post content only to users of a specific role. For example, you can show the hidden text to Editors or to Authors or to any other WordPress role, even a custom role.

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ACRONYMS

HTML HyperText Markup Language

Hypertext Markup Language (html) is the standard markup language for documents designed to be displayed in a web browser. It can be assisted by technologies such as Cascading Style Sheets (css) and scripting languages such as JavaScript (from *Wikipedia*).

CSS   Cascading Style Sheets

Cascading Style Sheets (css) is a style sheet language used for describing the presentation of a document written in a markup language like html. css is a cornerstone technology of the World Wide Web, alongside html and JavaScript (from *Wikipedia*).

PHP   PHP: Hypertext Preprocessor

php is a popular general-purpose scripting language that is especially suited to web development. It was originally created by Rasmus Lerdorf in 1994; the php reference implementation is now produced by The php Group. php originally stood for Personal Home Page, but it now stands for the recursive initialism php: Hypertext Preprocessor (from *Wikipedia*).

Part I

INTRODUCTION

1 │ DESCRIPTION

This plugin provides a shortcode* to display a portion of a post or page content only to users of a specific role. For example, you can show the hidden text to Editors or to Authors or to any other WordPress role. The plugin can also display the hidden text to specific users.

The action is performed using a shortcode, for example:

```
[private role="administrator"]Text for administrators[/private]
```

In figure 1 you can see an example of usage.
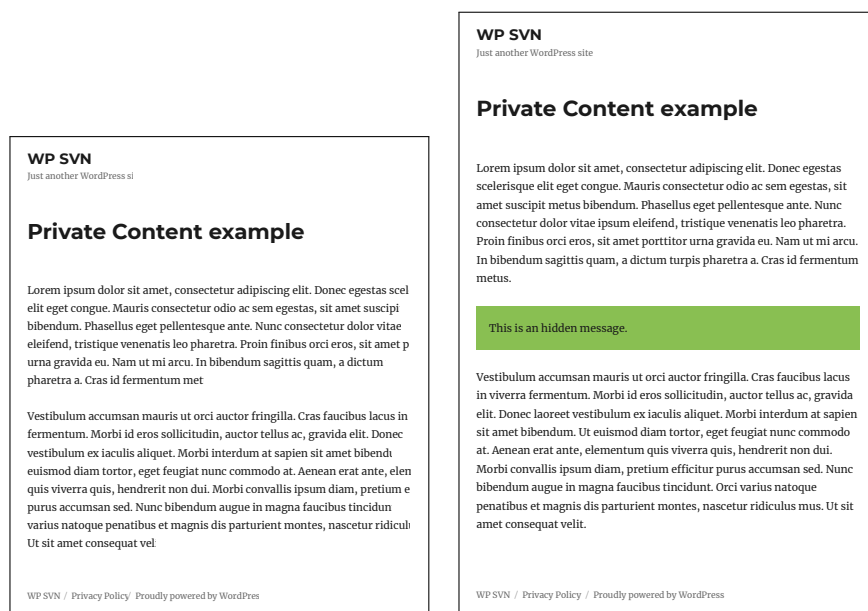
(a) The webpage when the visitor doesn't have rights to read the hidden message. There is no text between the two paragraphs, even in the HTML source page.

(b) The webpage when the visitor has rights to read the hidden message. The green background has been added via CSS.

Figure 1: The shortcode in action.

Please, note that an Administrator can read an Editor private content or a Subscriber private content, and so on. Same thing for Editor, Author, Contributor, and Subscriber: *a higher role can read a lower role content* (in almost all cases, see the paragraph 3.3.2 on page 15

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* «Shortcodes are macros that can be used to perform dynamic interactions with the content. i.e creating a gallery from images attached to the post or rendering a video». WordPress.org, *Plugin Handbook*, "Shortcodes", https://developer.wordpress.org/plugins/shortcodes/.

Multiple custom roles for more information), according to the following WordPress roles† schema in descending order:

- Administrator

- Editor

- Author

- Contributor

- Subscriber

Also you can show the hidden text *only* to a certain role. For example, you can mark a text as visible only to Contributors and hide it to higher roles, such as Administrators or Editors and so on.

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† For more information see WORDPRESS.ORG, *Plugin Handbook*, "Roles and Capabilities", https://wordpress.org/support/article/roles-and-capabilities/.

Part II

THE SHORTCODE

2 | THE SHORTCODE COMMAND

The shortcode is [private]:

```
[private {attributes}]Text[/private]
```

There is another shortcode available [ubn_private], that can be used just in case private is already taken by another plugin:

```
[ubn_private {attributes}]Text[/private]
```

3 | THE SHORTCODE ATTRIBUTES

These are the available attributes for the shortcode, that will be explained in the next sections of this page:

- `role`

- `recipient`

- `custom_role`

- `reverse`

- `align`

- `alt`

- `container`

- `id`

- `class`

3.1 {ROLE} TEXT FOR A CERTAIN ROLE

Accepted arguments:

- `administrator`

- `editor`

- `editor-only`

- `author`

- `author-only`

- `contributor`

- `contributor-only`

- `subscriber`

- `subscriber-only`

- `visitor` or `visitor-only` (they are equivalent)

- `none`

- custom

- custom-only

Let's see them in detail in the table 1 on the next page.

3.1.1 Examples

Display the private text to Administrators:

```
[private role="administrator"]Text for Administrators[/private]
```

Display the private text to Administrators and Editors:

```
[private role="editor"]Text for Editors[/private]
```

Display the private text to Administrators, Editors, and Authors:

```
[private role="author"]Text for Authors[/private]
```

Display the private text to Administrators, Editors, Authors, and Contributors:

```
[private role="contributor"]Text for Contributor[/private]
```

Display the private text to Administrators, Editors, Authors, Contributors, and Subscribers:

```
[private role="subscriber"]Text for Subscribers[/private]
```

3.1.2 Text for specific roles excluding other roles

If you want to show a note only to a certain role, you have to use a {role}-only option. In this way, for example, an Administrator or an Editor (roles higher than Author) cannot read a note for Authors only. These are all the cases:

Display the private text to Editors only:

```
[private role="editor-only"]Text for Editors only[/private]
```

Display the private text to Authors only:

```
[private role="author-only"]Text for Authors only[/private]
```

Display the private text to Contributors only:

```
[private role="contributor-only"]Text for Contributors only[/
    private]
```

Display the private text to Subscribers only:

```
[private role="subscriber-only"]Text for Subscribers only[/
    private]
```

Display the private text to Visitors only:

```
[private role="visitor-only"]Text for Visitors only[/private]
```

or the equivalent shortcode:

ROLE	RESULT
administrator	The hidden text is shown to Administrators.
editor	The hidden text is shown to Editors and Administrators.
editor-only	The hidden text is shown to Editors only.
author	The hidden text is shown to Authors, Editors, Administrators.
author-only	The hidden text is shown to Authors only.
contributor	The hidden text is shown to Contributors, Authors, Editors, Administrators.
contributor-only	The hidden text is shown to Contributors only.
subscriber	The hidden text is shown to Subscribers, Contributors, Authors, Editors, Administrators.
subscriber-only	The hidden text is shown to Subscribers only.
visitor / visitor-only	The hidden text is shown only to non-logged-in users. *Administrators can read the hidden text.*
none	When used, it is mandatory to use also the recipient option. The hidden text is shown only to users in the recipient list. *Administrators cannot read the hidden text.*
custom	When used, it is mandatory to use also the custom_role option. The hidden text is shown only to users that have a role in the custom_role list. *Administrators can read the hidden text.*
custom-only	When used, it is mandatory to use also the custom_role option. The hidden text is shown only to users that have a role in the custom_role list. *Administrators cannot read the hidden text.*

Table 1: Who can read the private text when a given role is used.

```
[private role="visitor"]Text for Visitors only[/private]
```

Display the private text to Designers only (Designers is a custom role created by the user):

```
[private role="custom-only" custom_role="designers"]Text for
    Designers only[/private]
```

3.2 {RECIPIENT} TEXT FOR A SPECIFIC OR MULTIPLE USERS

Accepted arguments:

- login name of the target user. You can use multiple login names, comma separated;

- user ID* of the target user. You can use multiple user IDs, comma separated;

- login names and user IDs mixed together.

In the case you want to show a text only to a specific user, assign `none` to `role` and a login name to `recipient`:

```
[private role="none" recipient="login-name"]Text for a specific
    user only[/private]
```

Change `login-name` with the correct login name of the target user.

You can use a comma separated list of usernames to target certain users:

```
[private role="none" recipient="login-name1, login-name2, login-
    name3"]Text for specific users only[/private]
```

Change `login-name1`, `login-name2`, and `login-name3` with the correct login names of the target users.

Also, you can use user IDs to target users, for example:

```
[private role="none" recipient="5, 31, 27"]Text for specific
    users only[/private]
```

3.3 {CUSTOM_ROLE} TEXT FOR CUSTOM OR MULTIPLE ROLES

Accepted arguments:

---

* By default, WordPress hides the IDs of elements like posts, pages, users, and so on. To display these IDs and use them in the shortcode you can install a dedicated plugin, like *Reveal IDs* by Oliver Schlöbe, available at https://wordpress.org/plugins/reveal-ids-for-wp-admin-25/.

- the custom role

- the custom roles, comma separated

3.3.1 Single custom role

If you want to show a text only to users of a custom role, use the option `custom_role`.

For example:

```
[private role="custom" custom_role="designers"]Text for Designers
    group.[/private]
```

Please, note that texts for custom roles can be read also by Administrators. To avoid this, use the `role="custom-only"` option, followed by the name of the custom role.

For example:

```
[private role="custom-only" custom_role="designers"]Text for
    Designers only.[/private]
```

The option `role=custom` can be used also for the WordPress standard roles, for example:

```
[private role="custom" custom_role="author"]Text for role Author
    .[/private]
```

In this case, Authors will read the private text, but higher roles (such as Editors) will not read it. It is like using a `role-only` option. Anyway, Administrators will read it. For more information, see the paragraph 3.3.2 *Multiple custom roles*.

3.3.2 Multiple custom roles

If you want to show a text to multiple roles, you can enter them separated by a comma. For example:

```
[private role="custom" custom_role="designers,engineers"]Text for
    Designers and Engineers groups.[/private]
```

You can mix custom roles and standard WordPress roles, with a *caveat* explained in the paragraph 3.3.3 on the next page.

For example:

```
[private role="custom" custom_role="designers,engineers,author"]
    Text for Designers, Engineers, and Authors group.[/private]
```

As you can see, Designers and Engineers are custom roles, while Author is a standard WordPress role. In the above example, Administrator will read the private text. Even in this case, as wrote before, you can use the `role="custom-only"` option to prevent Administrators from reading the private text:

```
[private role="custom-only" custom_role="designers,engineers,
    author"]Text for Designers, Engineers, and Authors group.[/
    private]
```

3.3.3 Caveat

A note on using standard WordPress roles with the option `role=custom`. If you use a standard WordPress role with the `custom_role` option, you expect that a higher role can read the private text for lowers roles, i.e. a text for the Author role should be read by the Editor role (which is a role higher that Author). Actually, the Editor role won't read that text. This is normal, because the option `role="custom"` follows a path different than standard WordPress role management. It's like you'd use a `role-only` option, in our example a `role="author-only"` option. For example, this shortcode:

A note when using WordPress standard roles here.

```
[private role="custom" custom_role="designers,engineers,author"]
    Text for Designers, Engineers, and Authors group.[/private]
```

will be read by Designers, Engineers, Authors, and Administrators, but not by Editors (even if Editor is a higher role than Author).

3.4 {REVERSE} REVERSE THE LOGIC OF HIDING TEXT

Accepted arguments:

- `1` — Activate the reverse option

The option `reverse=1` is used when you want to hide a private text to some users or to some custom roles. Since it would be uncomfortable to add a lot of users/group in the shortcode, it is more convenient to tell the plugin to show the private text to all users/groups and hide it to some.

The `reverse` option is available only with the following options:

- *single users:* `role=none`, adding also the `recipient` option and the `reverse`;

- *custom roles:* `role=custom`, adding also the `custom_role` option and the `reverse`.

See here below the two cases.

3.4.1 Use of the {reverse} option for single users

If you want to show a text to all users but not to some, activate the option `reverse`, so that users added in the `recipient` option will not read the note.

For example:

```
[private role="none" recipient="alice,bob,charlie" reverse=1]We
    all read this message while Alice, Bob, and Charlie can't
    read it![/private]
```

This shortcode will show the text to all users, excluding Alice, Bob, and Charlie (which cannot read the text).

3.4.2   Use of the {reverse} option for roles

You can use the reverse option also when using roles. In this case you will not use the recipient option, but simply in this way:

```
[private role="custom" custom_role="designers" reverse=1]Text for
    all roles, excluding Designers.[/private]
```

With this shortcode, all users will read the private message, while Designers will be excluded. If you define an alternate message with alt option, Designers will read the alternate message only.

You can also exclude multiple roles. For example:

```
[private role="custom" custom_role="designers, engineers, author"
    reverse=1 alt="You can't read hidden texts because you are
    part of Designers and/or Engineers and/or Author roles"]Text
    for all roles, excluding Designers, Engineers, and Author
    roles.[/private]
```

Take note that Administrators will read the hidden text, even if the current Administrator has also one or more of the excluded roles. See the section 4 on page 20 for more information and also the table 1 on page 13.

3.5   {ALIGN} ALIGN STYLE

Accepted arguments:

- left — Left align the paragraph

- center — Center align the paragraph

- right — Right align the paragraph

- justify — Justify the paragraph

3.6   {ALT} ALTERNATE TEXT FOR EXCLUDED USERS

If you want to show an alternate text in case the reader can't read the hidden text, you can use:

```
[private role="author" alt="You have not rights to read this."]
    Text for authors only[/private]
```

Please, take note that, if defined, the alternate text is always publicly displayed to users without the rights to read the hidden text.

The alternate text can contain some HTML tags. The list is:

- b or strong for bold text;

- em or i for italic text;

- a for links, with href and title included. For href and title do not use double quote, but single quote.

For example:

```
[private role="subscriber" alt="<a href='https://www.example.com/
    subscribe' title='Subscribe now!'>Subscribe</a> to read this
    <strong>super powered</strong> text!"]Hidden text.[/private]
```

3.7 {CONTAINER} THE HTML CONTAINER FOR THE TEXT

Starting from version 2.4, the user can choose the HTML container element for the text.

Accepted arguments:

- p — The default value;

- div — This element allows you use HTML elements like lists, headings, and more.

- span — This element allows you to add private content inline.

Examples:

Wrap the note inside a DIV:

```
[private container="div"]This is the text[/private]
```

Wrap the note inside a SPAN:

```
This is my home I bought a year ago [private container="span"](
    the key is under the doormat)[/private].
```

3.8 {ID} CUSTOM IDS FOR THE HTML CONTAINER

The user of the plugin can add custom IDs to the HTML container using the option id="name-of-the-id", for example:

```
[private id="myid1, custom-id-2, my_id_3"]Private text.[/private]
```

The single ID names should be separated by a comma. Also, if the ID is composed by more words, the words must be separated by a dash or by an underscore, otherwise the single words will be considered as separated ID names.

3.9 {CLASS} CUSTOM CLASSES FOR THE HTML CONTAINER

The user of the plugin can add custom classes to the HTML container using the option `class="name-of-the-class"`, for example:

```
[private class="myclass1, custom-class-2, my_class_3"]Private
    text.[/private]
```

The single class names should be separated by a comma. Also, if the class is composed by more words, the words must be separated by a dash or by an underscore, otherwise the single words will be considered as separated class names.

4 | THE ADMINISTRATOR ROLE

The Administrator role is a special role in this plugin. This role can always read the hidden texts, unless one of these options has been used:

- a `{role}-only` option (excluding `visitor` and `visitor-only`);

- a `none` (with `recipient`) option;

- a `custom-only` option.

For example, let's say that the role Designers has been excluded from reading a hidden text. If an Administrator is reading that page and he has also the Designers role, he will read the hidden text. In the following example, Administrator (which has the Designer role too) can read the hidden text:

```
[private role="custom" custom_role="designers" reverse=1]Text for
    all roles, excluding Designers role.[/private]
```

In the following examples, instead, Administrators cannot read the hidden texts:

```
[private role="author-only"]Private note for Author.[/private]

[private role="none" recipient="john"]Private note for John.[/
    private]

[private role="custom-only" custom_role="engineers"]Private note
    for Engineers role.[/private]
```

5 | NESTING SHORTCODES

With Private Content you can nest a shortcode inside another short-code. For example, you have a paragraph dedicated to Author and Marketing roles, but a portion of that text should be displayed to Marketing role only. For this purpose, you can nest a shortcode inside another.

Only take note that you can't use the same shortcode name for both the outer shortcode and the nested shortcode: this is due to how WordPress handles the shortcode names.[*] In other words, you can't do this:

```
[private]Text
  [private]Nested text.[/private]
  Text.
[/private]
```

Having in mind that Private Content has two names available,[†] [private] and [ubn_private], the correct nesting would be:

```
[private]Text
  [ubn_private]Nested text.[/ubn_private]
  Text.
[/private]
```

In our example, a nested shortcode could be:

```
[private role="custom" custom_role="author, marketing"
    container="div"]Leading text for Author and Marketing.
[ubn_private role="custom" custom_role="marketing"]Text for
    Marketing only.[/ubn_private]
Trailing text for Author and Marketing.[/private]
```

When nesting shortcodes, it is advisable to use the DIV tag as container, because the standard P tag may produce unexpected results (for example, empty P tags and/or text without an HTML tag).

Use `div` as container when nesting shortcodes.

---

[*] For more information see WORDPRESS.ORG, *Shortcode API*, "Nested shortcodes", https://codex.wordpress.org/Shortcode_API#Nested_Shortcodes.

[†] Private Content has two shortcode names available since version 4.3. The new name was introduced in the case the name private was taken by another plugin.

Part III

STYLE & TESTING

6 | GIVING A STYLE TO THE PRIVATE TEXT

The text generated by this plugin uses some CSS classes, listed here:

- `private` — Applied to each HTML element generated by this plugin.

- `{role}-content` — Applied to the text for a particular role. Here is the complete list:

  - `administrator-content`

  - `editor-content`

  - `author-content`

  - `contributor-content`

  - `subscriber-content`

  - `visitor-content`

  - `user-content` — When used for specific user(s).

    * `user-only` — When used for specific user(s). This class is always preceded by `user-content` class.

    * `{user_login}-only` — When used for specific user(s). The placeholder `{user_login}` will be changed into the actual login name. This class is always preceded by `user-content` and `user-only` classes.

    * `user-only-reverse` — When the reverse option is used. This class is always preceded by `user-content` class.

  - `{custom_role}-content` — When used for custom roles. The placeholder `{custom_role}` will be changed into the actual custom role.

- `{role}-only` — Applied to the text for a specific role. This class is always preceded by `{role}-content` class.

- `{custom-id-names}` — Added when specified by the user.

- `{custom-class-names}` — Added when specified by the user.

- `alt-text` — Applied to the alternate text.

7 | TESTING THE SHORTCODE

It could be useful to test if the shortcode is working as intended. To do this, you can use a plugin that lets you temporarily switch between accounts. The plugin is *User Switching* by John Blackbourn & contributors, available at:

`https://wordpress.org/plugins/user-switching`

After having inserted the shortcode in the post/page, switch to the user account in the user management page using the relevant link, then visit the published page. You should see the page as the user will see it.

Part IV

DEVELOPER NOTES

8 | CAPABILITIES CREATED BY PRIVATE CONTENT

These are the capabilities created by this plugin:

- `read_ubn_editor_notes`

- `read_ubn_author_notes`

- `read_ubn_contributor_notes`

- `read_ubn_subscriber_notes`

These capabilities will be removed when the plugin is uninstalled using the usual uninstallation command in the WordPress Dashboard.

9 | AVAILABLE FILTERS

- ubn_private_align_style — Filters the style string. An example of a string is:

```
$align_style = ' style="text-align: justify;"';
```

Please note the leading space before style=.

- ubn_private_containers — Filters the array containing the HTML container for the private and alternate text.

An example is:

```
$containers = array(
  'open'  => '<p',
  'close' => '</p>',
);
```

Notice that the first element of the array must not have the closing >.

- ubn_private_content — Filters the private content.

- ubn_private_alt — Filters the alternate content.

- ubn_private_text — Filters the entire private and alternate text, just before the output. The string contains also the HTML container.

- ubn_private_text_empty — Filters the text if it is empty, just before the output.

- ubn_private_class_selector — Filters the HTML output for the classes.

- ubn_private_id_selector — Filters the HTML output for the IDS.

10 | UNINSTALLATION

The plugin can be simply uninstalled from the WordPress Dashboard. During the uninstallation process, the plugin removes its files and the modifications created during the installation. The removed modifications are:

- remove `read_ubn_editor_notes` capability from the Editor role;

- remove `read_ubn_author_notes` capability from the Author role;

- remove `read_ubn_contributor_notes` capability from the Contributor role;

- remove `read_ubn_subscriber_notes` capability from the Subscriber role.

Figure 2: *"So long, and thanks for all the fish."*
(Douglas Adams)