# Annotum: Publishing with WordPress soon coming to a journal near you

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Last week the first Alpha version of **Annotum** was released. Annotum is "a scholarly authoring and publishing platform based on WordPress". I first learned about Annotum at the Beyond the PDF workshop in January. One of the themes of the workshop was that we need better tools for authoring, reviewing and publishing of scholarly articles. For many at the workshop it was obvious that these tools should be web-based, use HTML as the file format, and should use readily available tools whenever possible.

WordPress is a perfect candidate for such a tool, but needs to be extended with functions required for scholarly articles: better handling of citations, figures and tables, support of standard document formats such as NLM-DTD, and support of a review workflow with co-authors, editors and reviewers. WordPress can easily be extended with plugins, and a good number of plugins have been released for scholars. A good starting point are plugins tagged res-comms and the WordPress for Scientists Google Group.

There is one problem with these scholarly plugins: none of them offers a complete solution, and it is sometimes tricky to make them work with other required plugins or with each other (a particular problem are plugins that use Javascript). This means that there is currently no out-of-the-box solution to create, review and publish scholarly content with WordPress.

**Annotum** is an ambitious project that wants to change this. It helps that Annotum seems to have sufficient funding and commitment to launch a production version later this year – rather than being the part-time effort of a single developer. Technically it is a WordPress theme, and not a plugin. Themes normally are responsible for the look of a WordPress site, but they can also contain functions normally found in plugins. Installing a single theme is much easier for the average WordPress user than installing a number of plugins plus a theme that works with all plugins. BTW, themes can have child themes, so this doesn't mean that all Annotum sites will look the same.

Annotum of course can't do everything by itself and has to work with existing plugins (it took me only one hour to make it work with my ePub Export plugin).

Annotum's Carl Leubsdorf is part of the WordPress for Scientists community and I think he will make sure that Annotum will work well with the plugins already out there.

I hope that Annotum will not only become a nice out-of-the-box solution to create a WordPress-based journal or science blog, but will also be a big stimulus for the budding community of scholarly WordPress users and developers.