

GUIDE

Newsrooms 2.0

A buyer's guide for global publishers

If you're looking for a new content management system to support your publishing needs, this document aims to provide a framework for evaluating WordPress as a premier solution for the modern newsroom, trusted by global media brands and publishers.

Created by Big Bite in partnership with WordPress VIP.

bigbite



VIP | Enterprise WordPress



GUIDE OVERVIEW

Transforming digital publishing for global titles and major brands

Launched in 2003 as the simple successor to a retired blogging tool, WordPress quickly gained popularity due to its ease of use, enabling individuals to effortlessly share their thoughts, reviews, and ideas online. Early adopters included forward-thinking journalists who recognized the platform's potential for digital publishing. However, the true watershed moment for WordPress came in 2018 with the release of Gutenberg—its user-friendly block editor that revolutionised content creation. This innovation allowed non-technical users to design and publish web pages in a much more visual and intuitive way, setting a new standard for content management systems.

Offering unmatched flexibility, scalability, and ease of use, WordPress today powers over 43% of all websites on the internet and has cemented its position as the number one choice for news sites . Prominent media organisations such as CNN, Vox Media, Al Jazeera, and News Corp - publisher of titles including The Times, New York Post, and The Wall Street Journal - rely on WordPress to deliver their content to millions of readers worldwide. Beyond the media industry, WordPress is also trusted by a diverse array of enterprises, ranging from tech giants such as Meta, PayPal and Spotify to institutions like the White House and the UK Civil Service, demonstrating its versatility and reliability across a multitude of sectors.

¹ <https://pressgazette.co.uk/news/which-cms-most-popular-content-management-systems-for-publishers/>



GUIDE OVERVIEW

Aimed at enterprises that have yet to leverage the power of WordPress, this guide delves into the factors driving that success by showcasing the platform's key advantages and capabilities for news desks and editorial teams. Produced in partnership by Big Bite and WordPress VIP - industry leading companies that have jointly launched scores of high-impact projects - it also shares real-world insights and wins, illustrating what you should look for when choosing a new CMS, and how and why WordPress has become the go-to CMS for the most influential brands and publications.

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SOLVING THE TOUGHEST CHALLENGES

The ferociously rapid evolution of the digital industry means that proprietary publishing systems developed on behalf of brands often date very quickly, leaving organisations stuck with cumbersome tools that are quite literally slowing down newsrooms. As a result, many enterprises now prioritise speed, agility, and adaptability when choosing a CMS - areas where WordPress not only excels but consistently outperforms the competition, empowering brands to stay ahead in an ever-changing landscape.

Faster time to publish

Through the development of custom workflows tailored to specific user needs, organisations relying on WordPress shave off valuable time across every step in the production process, enabling editorial teams to publish content quicker and easier than ever before. At The Times and The Sunday Times, which made the move to WordPress in 2023, journalists and editors can now create articles with 62% fewer clicks, speeding up the average time to publish by as much as 34%. Thanks to the intuitiveness of its headless WordPress CMS, new users are also now onboarded in record time, with average training time reduced from days to just 30 minutes.

Extensibility

Thanks to its numerous APIs, WordPress is extremely extensible and can be easily integrated with multitudes of external systems, enabling brands and publishers to build their ideal tech stack and leverage best-of-breed software. Importantly for large-scale organisations, it can also comfortably handle scale for even the biggest brands, offering a futureproof solution that grows in tandem with a business, and it provides multisite functionality that can standardise publishing processes across a near limitless number of sites.

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SOLVING THE TOUGHEST CHALLENGES

User management

Effective publishing workflows and access controls are essential for large publishing organizations, particularly those with numerous contributors and those in regulated industries such as finance. WordPress has a whole host of possibilities for creating custom roles and workflows, in addition to the six predefined roles available as standard.

Functionality freedom

As the world's best-known open source solution, WordPress offers enterprise brands exceptional feature flexibility, with the freedom to shape product development based on specific organisational needs, users and goals. Unlike licensed CMS software, WordPress also gives brands complete control over their own technology roadmaps, empowering them to quickly respond to changing requirements and launch new functionality exactly when it's needed. As a result, for many organisations open source is now a clear preference, with 82% of IT leaders stating that they're more likely to select vendors that contribute to the open source community according to recent findings .

"WordPress has been easy to master with only the briefest training. It helps us to cut out wasteful clicks and see stories taking shape as we work on them - a huge improvement on our previous CMS. Simply put, we can now publish better stories, faster."

Simon Wells,
Head of News Production, The Times

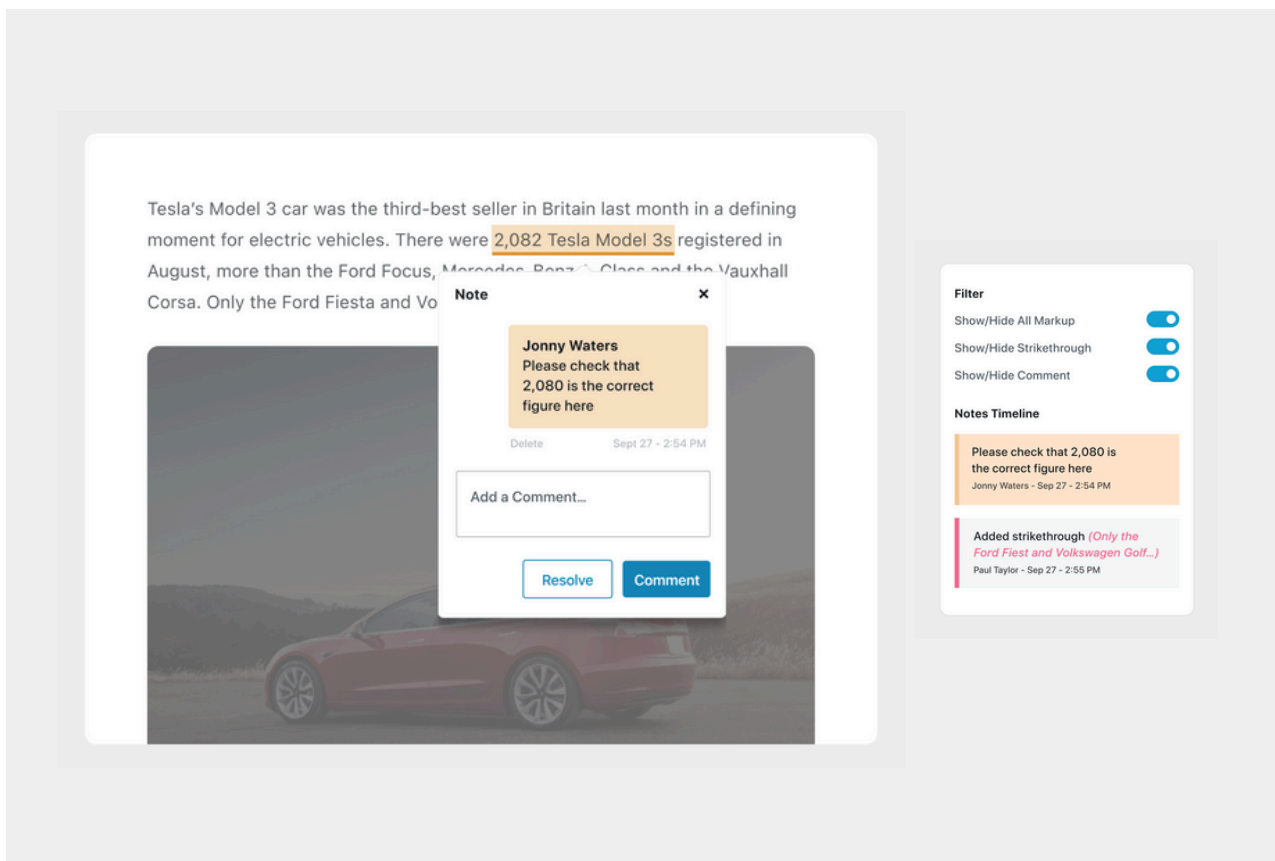
<https://www.redhat.com/en/enterprise-open-source-report/2022>

EMPOWERING NEWS DESKS WITH STREAMLINED WORKFLOWS

Putting more control in the hands of non-technical users, WordPress's block editor has revolutionised the content creation process by enabling editorial teams to put together media-rich pages and posts through a much more visual experience. In addition to core functionality, WordPress CMSs can also be enriched with specialist features - including the following plugins developed by Big Bite - which streamline the production process, save time and resources, and offer an enhanced user experience.

Editorial Notes

Utilised by a number of leading titles including The Times, the Editorial Notes plugin strengthens collaboration by enabling sub-editors to add, edit, reply to, or delete comments against articles directly within the WordPress CMS. The functionality also provides a full timeline of all comments and conversations saved against each article, and makes it possible for users to submit global notes against an article, providing overall comment or feedback.



EMPOWERING NEWS DESKS WITH STREAMLINED WORKFLOWS

Revisions

A significant upgrade to the core revisions feature in WordPress, this plugin enables editors and journalists to view the current version of an article - including all of its dynamic elements - side-by-side with previous versions of the same article. Changes between versions are clearly highlighted, making it possible to quickly identify design variations and copy amendments.

"The new WordPress CMS built by Big Bite enables our editorial teams to interact with content in a much more visual way and publish captivating narratives in much quicker timeframes. It also facilitates collaboration better than any platform we've previously used."

Luke Sikkema,
Newsroom Product Editor, The Times

Revisions

Draft 2

Rob M | August 31, 2024 1:29 pm

Restore

Publish 6 (Most Recent)

Rob M | September 2, 2024 11:01 am

QuantumLeap Tech, a rising star in the world of advanced computing, has just announced the release of its groundbreaking new processor, dubbed the "QL-PhotonX." This revolutionary processor promises to redefine the boundaries of traditional computing

QuantumLeap Tech, a rising star in the world of AI, has just announced the release of its groundbreaking new processor, dubbed the "PhotonQL." This revolutionary processor promises to redefine the boundaries of traditional computing

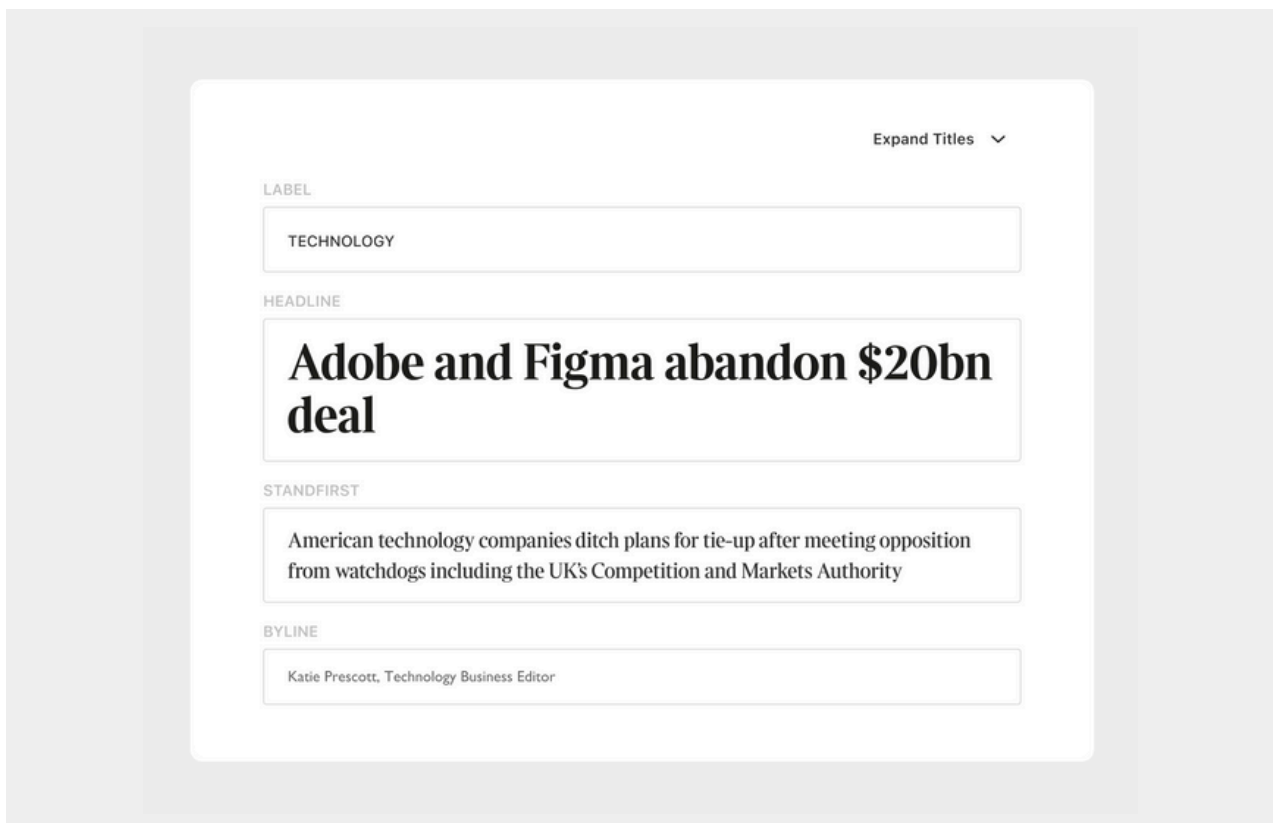
EMPOWERING NEWS DESKS WITH STREAMLINED WORKFLOWS

Picture Populator

With this custom image tool, photo desks across Times Media are able to import images from a centralised digital asset management system to its WordPress CMS, and then manage, arrange, categorise, and apply images to any article as required. Crucially, the tool also allows editors to adjust the crop, positioning and zoom size of images to best suit predefined formats - such as thumbnails and hero images - removing the need for external imaging software.

Multi-Title

Enabling editors to create multiple titles in various predefined formats for every news story or feature, this plugin covers homepage headlines, SEO titles, article labels, as well as standfirsts and hidden metadata. Each title field can also be assigned a custom word count, ensuring brand consistency.



BOOSTING ENGAGEMENT AND INNOVATION

As well as offering functionality that improves the editorial experience and increases operational efficiency, the extensibility of WordPress makes it possible to rapidly build and deploy innovative features that not only build audience engagement, but also utilise the power of cutting edge technologies, such as AI.

Live Blog

Built by Big Bite on behalf of the New York Post, the Liveblog plugin is the first of its kind on the WordPress platform, enabling reporters to publish online news feeds in real-time and create live coverage for key events. Providing 'as it happens' coverage in a familiar and shareable news feed format, editors can also add visual or further textual content to any published news snippets to deliver a richer user experience.

Smart Specs

Developed for Gumtree, this feature merges together a vast amount of up-to-date car specification data via multiple APIs, enabling the brand's end users to access detailed, accurate and relevant information in an instant. Using the tool, Gumtree readers can quickly search for a particular car make and model, and be presented with a page that includes an incredible array of vehicle info - including fuel type, engine capacity, and boot dimensions - all neatly displayed in a concise table.

Metadata Tagging

Created for The Times in collaboration with a data science agency, this advanced metadata tagging tool automatically recommends relevant metadata by analysing edited article content. By scanning key on-page information - including the headline, standfirst, and story copy - it's able to offer suggestions for tags and categories that align with an article's content.

DELIVERING UNLIMITED SCALE AND AIRTIGHT SECURITY

WordPress VIP has a deep understanding of the unique demands of global news and publishing organisations. The platform is designed to handle the massive traffic spikes that accompany breaking news, all while ensuring the security of your content. WordPress VIP's infrastructure scales effortlessly to accommodate millions of visitors without compromising performance, and it maintains the highest security standards to protect your data and reputation.

Infrastructure Capabilities

WordPress VIP's robust infrastructure is built on a foundation of high availability, redundancy, and global distribution. Their enterprise-grade hosting environment leverages the power of a global CDN, optimised caching, and automated updates to ensure that your content is always fast, reliable, and accessible to your audience, no matter where they are in the world.

Platform Management

Managing a high-traffic publishing site is no small feat, which is why WordPress VIP offers comprehensive platform management capabilities. From automated backups and disaster recovery to real-time monitoring and performance optimization, WordPress VIP handles the technical details so you can focus on what you do best—delivering top-quality content to your readers.

Support Services

The WordPress VIP support team is your partner in success. With 24/7 access to their team of WordPress experts, you're never alone when challenges arise. Working closely with partners like Big Bite, WordPress VIP provides proactive monitoring, quick resolutions, and strategic guidance tailored to your needs, ensuring your site remains secure, efficient, and aligned with your business goals.

DELIVERING UNLIMITED SCALE AND AIRTIGHT SECURITY

Headless CMS Capabilities

WordPress VIP's headless CMS architecture offers unparalleled flexibility for news organisations looking to push the boundaries of digital storytelling. By decoupling the front-end and back-end, the WordPress platform enables seamless integration with your existing tech stack, allowing you to deliver content across multiple channels with speed and precision.

"Our commitment to security and scalability ensures that our customers can trust us with their most critical digital experiences, no matter the scale or complexity. We're proud to power the content operations of some of the world's largest and most influential organisations."

Nick Gernert, CEO
WordPress VIP

MAXIMISING YOUR RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Publishing systems are a sizable investment for large-scale publishers and brands, which means organisations need to be certain that they're getting the right CMS and the best possible return.

The question of 'build it vs buy it' is repeatedly asked in these circumstances, and it can be a tricky question to answer, as the answer is nearly always dependent on key requirements and existing workflows and assets. For a competitive advantage, 'build it' is often the right approach for organisations looking for a more tailored solution, however if initial budgets are low, a CMS which gives 70-80% of the functionality to succeed is a good way to get started, allowing long term iterations and ongoing improvements to be implemented into the solution as budgets become available.

One of the key advantages of developing a WordPress solution is that costs are directed toward development time rather than expensive ongoing licensing fees, shielding enterprises from paying for an extensive feature set that may go underutilised. Instead of being locked into a rigid system, WordPress provides the flexibility for organisations to adapt seamlessly to evolving requirements.

This adaptability is crucial in the fast-paced world of digital publishing, and importantly, it allows businesses to avoid the expense of features they no longer need or never actually required.

True ownership

Unlike licensed systems, brands retain full rights over anything they build on top of the WordPress codebase - provided they own the IP - giving them much greater control over their own functionality and a true sense of ownership. Additionally, as WordPress is maintained by thousands of agencies and developers across the globe, organisations can also avoid vendor lock-in, giving them the freedom to move from one provider to another without facing the high risks and costs associated with deplatforming.

Long-term value

As a sizable investment, it's crucial that an enterprise-level CMS can empower brands to make savings in other areas, such as publishing time or tech resources, and enable organisations to monetize websites via a mix of advertising, affiliate marketing and content paywalls. In this respect, WordPress fares extremely well, with a recent survey of enterprise WordPress users highlighting that 74% of organisations believe that the platform delivers good or excellent return on investment. The same survey also found that 91% of enterprises will continue to use WordPress in the future - a key indicator of its scalability, adaptability and enduring long-term value.

Extensibility

With scalability ranking as one of the most important factors considered when choosing WordPress, according to the 2023 State of Enterprise WordPress results, it's no surprise that many growing enterprise brands choose WordPress as the CMS of choice.

For growing companies, speed and scalability are key, and as a CMS with an extensive community of highly skilled people (as well as an impressive catalogue of approved plugins for additional functionality) WordPress empowers teams to move quickly and save financially.

Open source solutions drive the industry forward, pushing the boundaries of what's possible with digital publishing.

Q. How important were the following factors in choosing WordPress over the other solutions?

Data taken from <https://soewp.com/2023-report/>

Scalability



Functionality



Extensibility



³ <https://soewp.com/2023-report/>



Relied upon by some of the world's best-known brands and news titles, Big Bite revolutionises how enterprises create, collaborate, and publish digital content. Founded in the UK in 2011, the enterprise WordPress agency has evolved into an industry leader, collaborating with a wide range of household names such as The Times, New York Post, Gumtree, Wall Street Journal, the V&A, and Amnesty International.

By designing and developing scalable publishing ecosystems, custom tools, bespoke templates, and powerful plugins exclusively on the WordPress platform, Big Bite empowers newsrooms, editorial teams, and marketing departments to quickly and easily produce and publish digital content, significantly speeding up production and streamlining workflows.

Accredited as a WordPress VIP Gold Partner, Big Bite also continues to introduce innovative functionality to the market, reflecting its status as one of the most experienced WordPress agencies globally.

Learn more at bigbite.net.



Enterprise WordPress

The best companies run the web with WordPress VIP.

Founded in 2006, WordPress VIP is the agile content platform that empowers marketers to build content both faster and smarter so they can drive more growth.

Combining the ease and flexibility of WordPress with unmatched scalability and security for the enterprise, its solutions are trusted by iconic media titans, major brands, and government agencies like CNN, Salesforce, News Corp, The White House, NBC Universal, Capgemini, and Bloomberg.

With WordPress VIP, brands can scale their web presence, enable their teams to produce more web content, and use data to continuously improve content performance, eliminating wasted effort while maximising ROI.

Learn more at wpvip.com.