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website services

5 Things You Need to Know about WordPress Website Security

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So you have your own online business and your website is where prospective clients can find you, browse through your services, and contact you to find out about working with you. It's one of the most important marketing tools for your business.

But what if something were to happen to your website and your people could no longer find you there?

That's what happened to me when my website got hacked and I can assure you, I went through a few days of panic finding out how to get it cleaned up and back online.

As is usually the case, catastrophes often have valuable lessons and that's where I started focusing on what can be done to reduce the risk of your WordPress site being hacked and infected by Malware.

Here is my *Top Five List* of things you can do to reduce that risk:

- Regular Website Backups
- Plugin Management
- WordPress Version Updates
- WordPress Dashboard Passwords
- Hire an Expert when in trouble

Let's take a look at each of these points in a little more detail.

Regular Website Backups

For many different reasons, you'll want to set up automated Website Backups. They are lifesavers in many different scenarios including if your site gets hacked or infected with Malware. My favorite Backup Plugin is called BackupBuddy. It's a paid plugin, but well worth the annual \$80 license fee for the flexibility and storage options it provides. You can configure regular automated backups with email notifications sent to you should anything go wrong.

Note: I offer a monthly Website Security service that includes installation of BackupBuddy and allows you to use my Developer License Key at no additional charge (including automated annual renewals) to you. You'll find details [here](#).

Plugin Management

Plugins are those wonderful little WordPress Add Ons that can provide so much additional functionality to your website. For example if you want pretty social media icons displayed on your site, you'll find hundreds of free plugins that will do that for you in a few clicks.

The problem is that not all Plugins have secure coding behind them and a high percentage (20% or more) are vulnerable to attacks that allow Hackers access to your site. That's why you'll want to use Plugins sparingly and disable and delete ones you don't really need. You'll also want to update Plugins regularly since new versions get released – often to close known security vulnerabilities as they are identified.

WordPress Version Updates

WordPress regularly releases new versions to provide additional features and also to repair security vulnerabilities. Sometimes these new versions automatically update via your Hosting Provider (those people you pay monthly or annual fees to for providing the computers where your website physically lives), but many times you'll need to trigger the update yourself.

It's good practice to backup your site before updating new Plugin Versions as well as before updating your version of WordPress. Most often, everything will be fine, but sometimes updates can "break" parts of your site and should that happen, you'll be glad that you have a backup you can restore while you figure out why the update broke your site and what can be done to correct that.

WordPress Dashboard Passwords

Change your WordPress Dashboard Password often. And go with the strong passwords that WordPress will generate for you. No, they won't be easy to remember, but that means that they won't be easy to hack either. Store your strong password somewhere safe and if you lose or forget it, you can easily reset it by having WordPress send you an email with the new password. Of course this means that you need to know which email account is associated with your WordPress Dashboard User name.

Hire an Expert when in Trouble

Should your site be hacked, you'll want to find someone who specializes in this to come galloping to your rescue and "fix" it for you. Since new security threats show up every day, this is a specialized field where you'll want someone reliable who does this all the time and knows their way around the problem and the solution.

I choose to work with [Sucuri](#)* because they have given me excellent service whenever I needed their help. They respond promptly to questions and cleaned my sites within hours when Google was blacklisting them as infected by Malware.

Though they will clean up your site if you run into problems, they expect you to perform the basic steps listed here to ensure that you reduce the risk of being hacked.

Besides the clean up service, they also offer daily scans of your site to ensure that nothing suspicious is happening and they also allow you to configure a firewall that adds more protection for your site. The firewall redirects all potential visitors to your site, to Sucuri first where they are screened before being sent to your Hosting Servers.

I'm more than happy to pay Sucuri's annual fees for both my websites for the peace of mind it gives me.

Conclusion

Assuming you have these 5 things in place or have at least thought about them, you're well on your way to keeping your website more secure. If you're not technically minded and all this makes your head spin, I offer a monthly Website Security service and would be happy to take care of your site for you. You can find out details of my service and sign up [here](#).

If you have any questions, [Contact me](#) (email: maryna@marynasmuts.com) and I'll be happy to answer them.

**Note: I do have an Affiliate account with Sucuri and earn commissions if you sign up via my Affiliate link. I only recommend services that I use myself, but understand if that makes you uncomfortable. So no problem if you'd prefer to contact them directly bypassing my Affiliate link.*

Meet Maryna

I Love Playing With Technology

For as long as I can remember, I've loved all things logical and organized and before finishing school I knew that I wanted a career in Computers and Information Technology. Though I loved that part of my career, I wasn't quite as enchanted with corporate politics. It didn't take long for me to notice that my best experiences at work had to do with people who came to me to talk about problems at work and at home and I loved watching them walk away feeling better about whatever the issue was.



I'm a Martha Beck Coach

After being laid off from my most recent corporate job in August 2010, timing was perfect to pursue my dream of working with people and I signed up for life coach training with Martha Beck. Since I had no day job, I knew that I had to grow my coaching business. Fast! Part of that process was setting up a website for my business. And that's when the unexpected magic showed up!

I'm a Life Coach who Designs and Maintains Websites

I discovered that learning the basics of WordPress websites and setting up a site wasn't as fun for many of my coaching buddies as it was for me. That's how I initially started my website services business – as a way to pay the bills while I grew my traditional coaching business. I loved it!! I understand the coaching business and I know what coaches need to support the online side of what they do. And the big bonus: Coaches are so much more fun to work with than some of the corporate types I tried so hard to please.

I Make Systems Easy for Non-Techy Coaches

While I loved the business I've been creating for myself, it has only been recently that I've realized I don't need to feel bad about not having a traditional coaching business because it turns out, this is the perfect niche for me: combining my love for technology and working with Coaches. My super power is calm, can-do energy and I love smoothing the online systems and website design, implementation, and maintenance processes for my clients. I take what feels like a challenge for my non-techy clients, making the process easy and effortless as we work together to turn their ideas into reality. And since this process of setting up websites and services often brings up issues for coaches, I enjoy gently stepping them through those issues.

You, your dreams and plans.

Me: setting up services and systems to showcase what you do.

Big smile in my soul!

Need some help with making your site more secure?

If you have questions [contact me](#) and I'd be happy to answer them.

Want to know more about my Monthly Website Security Service? You'll find all the details [here](#).

And if you're a New Coach looking for a Web Designer, or you would like to update the look of your site, I'd like to offer you a [FREE 30 minute consultation](#) where we can discuss what you need and answer any questions you may have.

Meet a few of my Clients

“I love the monthly service with Maryna because I no longer have to worry about updates, security and maintenance. She checks everything and sends me an email telling me what’s going on. I’m not a technical person so to have Maryna on my team is amazing. She knows about all the things I never knew I had to worry about. I feel that my website is so much more secure with Maryna.”



~ Shawna O'Hagan Morrow



“Thank you for this! I am in :) I haven’t said enough how grateful I am to you for taking such good care of me and my virtual home. I am in a period of tremendous growth in my coaching business and I’m so thankful to have someone I trust who gets me to carry this out so flawlessly and with such professionalism and kindness.”

~ Laura Wagner

“I sleep better at night knowing that Maryna has my back. It gives me such peace of mind to know that every month my site is being monitored and updated. And if anything does happen I am covered and I have expert help to get me back up and going again.”

~ Melani Marx

