

## Meeting summary for October WordPress Meetup (10/09/2024)

### Quick recap

Mark led a comprehensive discussion on WordPress, covering its fundamentals, sharing options, and the process of registering a new domain. He also emphasized the importance of password complexity and security, suggesting the use of unique passwords and tools like Fast Phrases for creating strong passwords. Additionally, Mark discussed the importance of choosing a reliable hosting service, the risks of shared hosting platforms, and the need for understanding different audiences and their preferences for effective web design.

### Next steps

- Mark to prepare content for the next meeting on November 13th based on group preferences.
  - Patrick to share the link to his company's blog post about the "Swiss cheese" security approach in the meetup group.
  - Attendees to consider exploring alternative hosting options like Big Scoot for better security and support.
  - Attendees to implement security best practices discussed, including using unique admin usernames, setting up 2-factor authentication, and creating separate accounts for different website functions.
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### Summary

#### WordPress Fundamentals and Domain Registration

Mark led a discussion about WordPress, focusing on its fundamentals and sharing options. He shared his experience of creating a new site for his Alaska trip, emphasizing the importance of understanding various aspects of web technologies. He also discussed the process of registering a new domain, highlighting the choice of [the.net](https://the.net) top-level domain for privacy reasons. The discussion was interactive, with participants encouraged to ask questions and share their thoughts. Mark also explained the process of domain registration and management, including the use of name servers and the creation of a new DNS zone. The conversation ended with an invitation for questions and comments.

#### Managing Apps and Password Security

Mark discussed using Cpanel for managing apps and resetting passwords, emphasizing using unique passwords for each task. He explained creating a new database user and password, and using salt values for encryption. Mark noted the current Wordpress version was outdated and recommended downloading the latest version. He stressed the importance of keeping passwords secure and not sharing them across platforms, recommending tools like Fast Phrases for creating strong passwords.

### **Password Complexity, Rainbow Tables, and WordPress Plugins**

Mark discussed the importance of password complexity and the potential risks of using the same password repeatedly. He explained the concept of rainbow tables and how they can be used to crack passwords. Mark also mentioned the use of Navajo language during World War II as a form of communication that was difficult for the enemy to decipher. He then moved on to discuss the installation of plugins for WordPress, emphasizing the importance of auto updates. Lastly, Mark touched on the topic of website backups and the use of UpdraftPlus for this purpose.

### **Website Security and Development Strategies**

Mark discussed the importance of security in website development, drawing from his company's experience with frequent attacks. He introduced the concept of treating a website like Swiss cheese, with multiple layers of security to prevent breaches. He also mentioned the company's website has an infographic detailing this approach. Mark shared his experience of his website being attacked even before it was fully built, emphasizing the need for security from the start. He also mentioned the possibility of renewing domain security and the potential for AI involvement in detecting vulnerabilities.

### **Choosing Reliable Hosting Services for Websites**

Mark emphasized the importance of choosing a reliable hosting service for websites, advising against shared hosting platforms like Godaddy, Bluehost, and Hostgator due to potential vulnerabilities. He suggested reputable alternatives like Wp Engine and Big Scoot, which offer better security and support. Mark also highlighted the risks of hosting services being bought out, leading to a decline in service quality. He concluded by suggesting he might try out Big Scoot for his hosting needs. Additionally, Mark stressed the importance of setting up email accounts associated with a website, using a different email address for admin tasks, and setting up accounts with two-factor authentication for security.

### **Recent Travels and Web Design Discussion**

Mark discussed his recent travels, particularly to Alaska, and shared his experiences and photos from the trip. He also mentioned his investment in a year-long portal and his interest in web design. The group discussed the challenges of finding suitable venues during the summer months and the potential for different approaches to web design depending on the purpose of the site. Mark also touched on the concept of conversion rate optimization in e-commerce, but noted that the definition of a 'conversion' can vary depending on the website's goals. The next meeting was scheduled for November 13th.

### **Understanding Audiences and Design Elements**

Mark discussed the importance of understanding different audiences and their preferences. He mentioned the need for A/B testing to determine which colors, fonts, and other design elements are most effective in converting visitors. He also compared the evolution of print media to the development of digital content, suggesting that there is still much to learn about what works best. Mark concluded by expressing optimism for future advancements in this area.