

2015-11-10 - Wordpress Dashboard Part 6

This month of our WordPress blogging training we will be covering one important topic, namely, WordPress widgets. Next month we will teach you how to install and use different Wordpress plugins. It is important to know how to use and manage WordPress widgets. These Wordpress widgets are a great way to add additional functionality using core WordPress features.

If you have not already noticed, you have a series of widgets that are already published by default in the WordPress site including Search, Recent Posts, Recent Comments, Archives, Categories and Meta. Your WordPress ready areas are dependent on the theme you are currently using for your WordPress blog website.

To manage your widgets, return to the WordPress dashboard and go to the Appearance Option in the toolbar and select widgets from the fly out. You will notice that you have a series of available widgets in WordPress by default that offer additional functionality. These include a lot of different options and you should learn about all of them so that you can offer the functionality that you would like. You also have different widget ready areas. In some themes, you will have the primary sidebar which includes the widgets you will see on the front end of the site including search, recent posts, recent comments, archives, categories and finally, meta. Again, these appear in the same order as they do in the front end in our sidebar. We also have the content sidebar widget ready area in our theme. If we want to move a widget from one widget ready area to another, we simply can drag and drop them. For instance, you can drag and drop recent posts and recent comments into our content sidebar. We also have the footer widget ready area. You can move categories and your meta widgets into this widget ready area by again simply drag and dropping the widget into the widget ready area. You could also completely delete the archives widget from the primary sidebar. In order to do so, select the drop down on the right side of the archives then click on the delete button. Initially, you may not want to delete any widgets until you know definitely you will never

use them. If you simply want to deactivate a widget, just select the widget you want to deactivate and drag it down to the inactive widgets area on the very bottom left hand side. When you move widgets around like this, you will see the changes reflected and automatically occur on the front end of the site. We will return to the front end and refresh the page and we will notice how no more widgets appear in our primary sidebar and how our recent posts and our recent comments in our content sidebar.

We can also scroll down the page to see that two widgets, namely, categories and meta content appear in our footer. Remember that widget ready areas are dependent on the theme that you are using.

Now let's return to the dashboard again because I want to reactivate the search widget by dragging it back into the primary sidebar widget ready area. You may also want to use your available widgets and there are many of them to choose from. You can choose the calendar widget to add a calendar feature to that primary sidebar. When you add a title in the area under Title, it will override the title default of calendar on the front end of the site. When we save this widget and return to the front end of the site and of course refresh the page, you will see that the search widget has been added to the sidebar as well as the calendar widget with the upcoming events title that I just created.

Next I want to show you how to use a different type of widget and that is called the text widget. I am going to put a new text widget into my content sidebar area. The text widget is a very useful type of widget because you can customize text that appears within the widget. Now I am going to create the title for this widget which is my latest video and instead of adding text into this widget, I want to show you how to imbed a YouTube video. Imbedding media like this is a very popular way of getting different types of content and media to your users through your website. I will go to YouTube where I have already located a video that Michael Dlouhy did on the e-Book "Success in 10 Steps" that I would like to imbed into the widget. You must first click on the share button below the video and the author of this video, that is Michael, has already given us permission to use this video. You may already have your own content too. Next click on the embed

button which will give you some iframe code. The iframe code is something that you will want to copy so that I can paste it into the widget. By returning to the WordPress dashboard, then come to the text area within the text widget and paste in the iframe code. Now click on the save button below the widget to save it and then you should return to the front end of your WordPress site and refresh the page. Once I refresh, you will notice that the video that I embedded appears in the content sidebar area of the theme that I am using and that WordPress has sized it down to a manageable size.

There are many widgets in your WordPress site and there is a lot of documentation out there on the Internet on how to use them all. But I would suggest that you do your own investigation and learn by trial and error. This I believe is the best way to get experience and knowledge of all the WordPress widgets.

There is one last widget that I would like to talk about before we end this training and get some of your questions answered. This widget is called the Akismet widget and its function is to display the number of spam comments that Akismet has caught. This widget is used by millions and Akismet is possibly the best way in the world to protect your blog from spam comments. I would recommend you activate this widget and also checkout the many widgets that WordPress offers you to enhance the functionality of your WordPress Blog Website.

We have now come to the end of this WordPress Dashboard training. Next month we will discuss some of the popular plugins you can install to make your website even more functional. But for now I would like to open the call for any questions and comments you may want to talk about.