

SESSION 08

E-Commerce WordPress

Themes • Plugins • Architecture • E-Commerce

E-Commerce | Winter 2026 | 3rd Year Bachelor

Session 6: Introduction to CMS



CMS Basics

A CMS lets you create and manage websites without coding — the engine behind your online store



Major Platforms

WordPress (43% of web), PrestaShop (e-commerce native), Magento (enterprise), Shopify (SaaS)



Open-Source vs. SaaS

Open-source: free, self-hosted, full control; SaaS: monthly fee, managed hosting, easier setup



Morocco CMS

PrestaShop #1 for e-commerce; WordPress #1 overall; both supported by local Moroccan agencies

Session Objectives

- 01** Discover WordPress as a powerful website creation and management solution
- 02** Understand the architecture of WordPress: core, themes, plugins, and database
- 03** Explore the role of themes in design and plugins in extending functionality
- 04** Identify essential plugins for building a professional merchant site
- 05** Understand the advantages of WordPress for e-commerce in the Moroccan market

Agenda: What Is WordPress → Architecture & Themes → Plugins & E-Commerce → Morocco Focus → Getting Started

What Is WordPress?

WordPress is a free, open-source CMS that powers 43% of all websites — from personal blogs to Fortune 500 sites to full e-commerce stores with WooCommerce.



Free & Open-Source

Download, install, and use for free — no license fees ever; you own 100% of your code and data



Huge Ecosystem

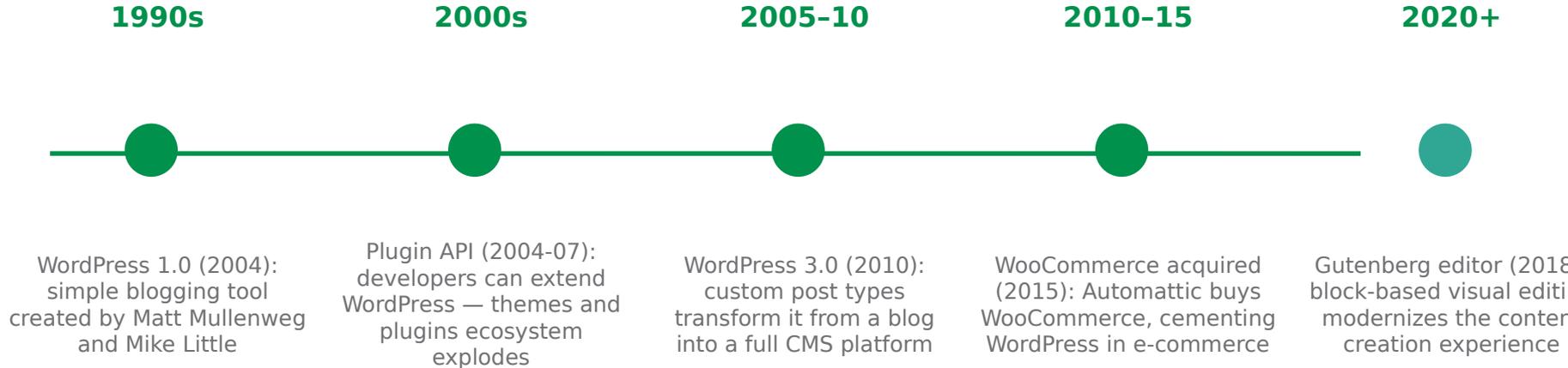
59,000+ plugins, 11,000+ themes, and a global community of millions of developers and designers



WordPress.org vs .com

.org is the free self-hosted software (what we use); .com is a hosted service by Automattic

WordPress History



WordPress powers 43% of all websites in 2024 — from blogs to news sites to multi-million dollar stores

WordPress by the Numbers

43%

of All Websites
Run on WordPress

59K+

Free Plugins in
the Directory

11K+

Free Themes
Available

500M+

Websites Built
with WordPress

WordPress Architecture



**Core /
CMS Engine**



**Theme /
Design Layer**

**WordPress
Architecture**



**Plugins /
Functionality**



**Database /
MySQL Storage**



**Core handles content;
themes control
appearance; plugins add
features; MySQL stores all
data**

WordPress Themes

What Is a Theme?

A theme controls the visual design and layout of your site — colors, fonts, page structure, and style

Free Themes

11,000+ in the WordPress directory — Astra, GeneratePress, and Flavor are top choices for stores

Premium Themes

Paid themes (\$30-100) from ThemeForest, Flavor — advanced features, priority support, unique designs

Theme Customizer

Built-in live preview editor — change colors, logos, menus, and layouts without touching code



Theme Tips for Morocco

Global, RTL-Ready, Mobile themes for Arabic support

- Prioritize mobile-responsive themes (78% mobile traffic in Morocco)
- Lightweight themes load faster on slower Moroccan mobile connections
- Astra and GeneratePress are the fastest free themes — ideal for performance
- Start with a free theme — upgrade to premium only when your design needs require it

Page Builders & Customization



Gutenberg (Built-In)

WordPress's native block editor — drag-and-drop blocks for text, images, buttons, and columns



Elementor

Most popular visual page builder — free version plus Pro (\$59/yr) for advanced widgets and templates



Divi Builder

All-in-one theme and builder by Elegant Themes — visual editing with 2,000+ pre-made layouts



Customization Levels

Theme Customizer for basics • Gutenberg for content layout • Elementor/Divi for advanced design • Custom code (PHP/CSS) for full control

WordPress Admin Dashboard



Dashboard Overview

Central control panel — manage posts, pages, media, comments, plugins, themes, and users



Posts vs. Pages

Posts are time-based content (blogs, news); pages are static content (About, Contact, Policies)



Media Library

Upload, organize, and manage images, videos, and documents — auto-generates multiple sizes



User Roles

Admin, Editor, Author, Contributor, Subscriber — control who can do what on your site



Key Insight: The WordPress admin panel is where you manage everything. Spend time learning the dashboard — it is the command center of your entire website and store.

Essential WordPress Plugins



Yoast SEO

The #1 SEO plugin — meta tags, sitemaps, readability analysis, and keyword optimization (13M+ installs)



Wordfence Security

Firewall, malware scanner, login protection, and real-time threat defense (4M+ installs)



WP Rocket / LiteSpeed

Caching plugins that speed up your site 2-3x — critical for mobile users on slow connections



UpdraftPlus

Automated backups to cloud storage (Google Drive, Dropbox) — essential for disaster recovery



Contact Form 7

Simple, flexible contact forms — the most installed form plugin with 5M+ active installations



WPML / Polylang

Multilingual plugins for French/Arabic sites — essential for reaching all Moroccan customers

WordPress for E-Commerce



WooCommerce

Free plugin: full store with products, cart, checkout, orders — powers 6.3M+ stores worldwide



Easy Digital Downloads

Selling digital products (e-books, courses, software) — lightweight alternative to WooCommerce



MemberPress

Subscription and membership sites — sell access to premium content, courses, or communities



Dokan Marketplace

Turn WordPress into a multi-vendor marketplace — like building your own Jumia or Etsy



Morocco E-Commerce Plugins

WooCommerce + Yoast SEO + Wordfence + WPML is the standard Moroccan WordPress e-commerce stack



Plugin Rule

Use maximum 20-30 plugins — too many cause conflicts, slow loading, and security vulnerabilities

Plugin Management Best Practices



Quality over Quantity

Choose well-maintained plugins with high ratings, frequent updates, and large install bases



Keep Updated

Update plugins weekly — outdated plugins are the #1 cause of WordPress security breaches



Test Before Installing

Use a staging site to test new plugins — conflicts can break your live store and lose sales



Remove Unused Plugins

Deactivated plugins still pose security risks — delete any plugin you are not actively using



Morocco: stick to the top 15-20 essential plugins; use caching and CDN for best mobile performance

WordPress – Key Trade-offs

BENEFITS

- ✓ 43% market share — the largest community and ecosystem in the world
- ✓ 59,000+ plugins extend any feature imaginable
- ✓ Free and open-source — zero license fees forever
- ✓ Full code ownership and data control — no vendor lock-in
- ✓ SEO-friendly by default with clean URLs and structured content
- ✓ Visual page builders make design accessible to non-developers
- ✓ Massive community — easy to find developers and agencies worldwide

CHALLENGES

- ✗ Not e-commerce native — requires WooCommerce plugin for store features
- ✗ Security is your responsibility — updates and backups are essential
- ✗ Too many plugins slow your site and cause conflicts
- ✗ Requires hosting and server management knowledge
- ✗ Theme and plugin compatibility issues can break your store
- ✗ Performance degrades without proper caching and optimization
- ✗ Gutenberg editor has a learning curve — many users prefer classic editor or page builders

WordPress in Morocco

43%

of All Websites
Run WordPress

#1

CMS in Morocco
for All Websites

59K+

Free Plugins
Available

WordPress Landscape

- WordPress is the #1 CMS used across Morocco for corporate sites, blogs, and portfolios
- WooCommerce is the #2 e-commerce platform in Morocco — growing fast among new stores
- Active WordPress community — meetups and WordCamps in Casablanca and Rabat
- Moroccan agencies offer WordPress development from 3,000-15,000 MAD for full site builds
- WordPress supports French and Arabic (RTL) with WPML or Polylang for bilingual Moroccan sites

Your WordPress Launch Checklist



1. Install WordPress

One-click install via cPanel/Softaculous on your hosting; set language to French, timezone to Casablanca



2. Choose a Theme

Start with Astra or GeneratePress (free, fast); ensure mobile-responsive and RTL-compatible



3. Install Core Plugins

Yoast SEO + Wordfence + caching plugin + UpdraftPlus + Contact Form 7 — the essential starter pack



4. Add E-Commerce

Install WooCommerce for a store, configure products and payments — that is the next session!

WordPress Success Stories



The White House

whitehouse.gov runs on WordPress — proving it can handle the most demanding security and traffic requirements



TechCrunch

One of the world's largest tech news sites runs on WordPress — handling millions of daily readers



Sony Music

Sony Music uses WordPress to manage artist pages, albums, and tours — enterprise-scale content management



Moroccan WP Community

Growing WordPress community in Morocco — local developers build sites for businesses, agencies, and government



Key Takeaways

- 1 WordPress powers 43% of all websites — the most popular CMS with an unmatched plugin ecosystem
- 2 Themes control design, plugins add functionality — together they make WordPress infinitely customizable
- 3 Essential plugins: Yoast SEO, Wordfence, caching, backups, and WPML for multilingual Moroccan sites
- 4 WooCommerce transforms WordPress into a full e-commerce store — free, powerful, and extensible
- 5 In Morocco, WordPress is the #1 CMS overall — start with a fast theme, essential plugins, and French language

Homework & Required Reading

Required Reading

Book: *"How to design, create, and manage your site"*

Author: Pelet, Jean-Eric | **Publisher:** Dunod (2018)

Pages: 107 to 131

Access: <http://international.scholarvox.com>

Coming Up — Session 9

WooCommerce: Creating and Managing an Online Store — We will install WooCommerce, manage products, orders, and payments, and discover the functionalities of an open-source online store.

Thank you | Questions? | See you next session!