



FREE GUIDE

How to structure your WordPress maintenance plans (and sell them)!



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Table of contents

Introduction	3
Example Structure	4
Key Points	7
Services Overview	11
How Many Plans Should We Have?	17
The Importance of Time Tracking	19
Selling WordPress Maintenance	21
Conclusion	25

SECTION #1

Introduction

The team at Glow have worked in WordPress maintenance for over 10 years and in that time have tested and refined multiple combinations for structuring maintenance plans.

These days, we regularly chat to lots of WordPress freelancers, developers and agencies about the structure of their maintenance plans.

How many plans do we offer? How should we price them? What services should we include? These questions are common.

In this short guide, we will help you create the most efficient WordPress maintenance plans.



Example structure

We thought it'd be most helpful to dive straight in and show you an example WordPress maintenance plans structure.

This is actually the structure we used before we created our WordPress management app.

Note! The example shows 4 maintenance plans spread over 2 pages.

Please turn over the page to see the example.

ESSENTIALS	OPTIMISE
<p data-bbox="456 488 663 658">£47 /month</p>	<p data-bbox="959 488 1166 658">£77 /month</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WordPress software updates WordPress plugin updates Cloud backups (weekly) Uptime monitoring Maintenance report In-app ticket support system Test enquiry forms Content changes & fixes Robust extra website security E-Commerce websites Speed optimisation Scan & fix broken links Database clean & optimise Malware removal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WordPress software updates WordPress plugin updates Cloud backups (weekly) Uptime monitoring Maintenance report In-app ticket support system Test enquiry forms 1 hr Content changes & fixes Robust extra website security E-Commerce websites Speed optimisation Scan & fix broken links Database clean & optimise Malware removal





MOST POPULAR

PERFORM

£147
/month

WordPress software updates
WordPress plugin updates
Cloud backups (weekly)
Uptime monitoring
Maintenance report
In-app ticket support system
Test enquiry forms
2hrs Content changes & fixes
Robust extra website security
E-Commerce websites
Speed optimisation
~~Scan & fix broken links~~
~~Database clean & optimise~~
~~Malware removal~~

GROW

£347
/month

WordPress software updates
WordPress plugin updates
Cloud backups (weekly)
Uptime monitoring
Maintenance report
In-app ticket support system
Test enquiry forms
5hrs Content changes & fixes
Robust extra website security
E-Commerce websites
Speed optimisation
Scan & fix broken links
Database clean & optimise
Malware removal

SECTION #3

Key points

So, looking at that example structure on the previous pages, there are some key points to take note of:

1. Automate the lowest plan

You want to make sure that the lowest priced plan is almost entirely automated. Don't spend development time on this one or you'll risk making no profit.

2. Offer custom development time from the second tier upwards

This is the part of your service that clients care about most. Making it available from your

second tier upwards drives them onto your higher priced plans.



3. Don't include website hosting

Website hosting is not maintenance. It's a separate service and you should charge for it separately. Setup a recurring annual invoice to your client. If you're currently including it, consider removing it for future clients and watch your revenue increase.

4. Time tracking is so important

Profitability can easily slip with maintenance plans if you don't accurately track how much time is being spent on your clients' accounts.

5. Use a 'most popular' notice

This is a simple tactic to drive more clients to sign up for a higher priced plan - it genuinely works.

6. E-commerce websites only in top plans

It's a fact that e-commerce websites are more time consuming to manage than brochure websites. To ensure profitability, make sure clients with e-commerce websites can only sign up for your top 1 or 2 tiers.

7. Layer most time consuming tasks into top tiers



Make sure the tasks that take longest are reserved only for the higher priced plans. Speed optimisation and malware removal are great examples of this. You'll never make a dime if you include those in your lowest priced plans as they simply take too long.

8. Use WordPress management software

Save hours of valuable time by using WordPress management software to help you manage multiple sites. Even better if your clients can access it for reports and data on how you're looking after their site.

SECTION #4

Services overview

We're often asked by developers and agencies what to include in their maintenance plans.

So, referring back to those example maintenance plans again, here's an overview of the services that were listed.

WordPress software updates

Simple one - keeping the WordPress core version up to date.

WordPress plugin & theme updates

Similarly simple - keep plugins and themes updated to latest versions. This also involves

managing plugins and themes, which includes removing ones that are inactive or abandoned.



Cloud backups

Yes the hosting company should be taking daily backups but it never hurts to have more than 1, right?

They're also super simple to setup with the right plugin or WordPress management software.

Uptime monitoring

Get notified if a client's site goes down so that you can do something about it. There's lots of apps that monitor uptime for you and some WordPress management software that include this as a feature.

Maintenance report

It's extremely important to keep your client up to date with what's happening on their website. Otherwise you'll run the risk of them forgetting what they're paying you for. Reports can easily be automated nowadays.

Support ticket system

It's not essential to have a ticket system but we strongly advise it versus email. It's so much more efficient. Clients can use this to raise support queries to you and it's super easy to track everything.

Test enquiry forms

This is an awesome value-add for clients. Regularly test their enquiry forms to make sure they're not missing out on important enquiries.

Content changes and fixes



Clients will expect you to be able to make changes to their website for them. Offer them an allotted amount of time each month for them to request these changes. Offer more time for the higher priced plans.

Extra website security

There's loads of ways to make WordPress more secure. Use plugins like Wordfence or All In One WP Security to add extra layers of security.

E-Commerce websites

Less a service, more an indication that you will only support e-commerce websites on your higher plans. They are generally more time consuming to manage so this ensures you remain nice and profitable.

Speed optimisation

This is another one clients care deeply about. Everyone, techy and non-techy, can spot a slow loading website. Offer the service of carrying out periodical speed tests, making improvements where you can and highlighting these in reports.

Scan and fix broken links

This dovetails slightly with SEO and is an important task to complete periodically to ensure the client's website user experience is a good one.

Database clean and optimise

Larger sites can become bloated and it can be a good idea to keep databases clean to ensure everything runs as it should do.

Malware removal



Keep an eye on malware being injected into your clients' websites and ensure you have a mechanism for swiftly removing it. This can be a time consuming and complex process, hence why we'd recommend reserving it only for the higher priced plans.

SECTION #5

How many plans should we have?

This is a really common question and it's an important one to get right.

The trick is to find the balance between not making your offering look to “thin on the ground” and not making it look too complicated.

‘Thin on the ground’ would be 1 or 2 plans with a limited services set.

‘Complicated’, would be 5, 6, 7 plans with multiple price points and choices.

In the research we've conducted, we've found that the most efficient structure is either 3 or 4 maintenance plans.



Any less than 3 and you're missing out on the opportunity to sell more at higher prices.

Any more than 4 and you'll confuse the client with what you offer - it'll make it harder to sell the service and selling WordPress maintenance is already hard enough if you don't have the right systems and processes in place.

With 3 or 4 plans, you're able to:

- Demonstrate a significant service offering
- Give clients a fair amount of choice that doesn't confuse them
- Provide a low, medium and higher priced setup
- Highlight a 'most popular' option

SECTION #6

The importance of time tracking

This can't be understated.

Building a recurring revenue stream through offering WordPress maintenance is great but only if it's profitable.

Revenue is vanity, profit is sanity.

At the very least, [make sure you have a spreadsheet](#) where you and your team record time spent on tasks for each of your clients.

You can then review this at the end of each month to see which clients are most profitable and which are costing you money through over-servicing.



With this data in your hands you can then speak with your team and figure out how to save time and whether or not you need to move clients onto higher plans.

Without accurately tracking time, it's impossible to understand the profitability of your client accounts.

SECTION #7

Selling WordPress maintenance

It can sometimes be tricky selling WordPress maintenance.

Clients often don't understand why, having (usually) just invested in a new website, they now have to pay a monthly fee for it.

There's a number of factors at play here so below are a few reasons why it's sometimes a tricky sell:

Your client hasn't been educated

They aren't aware of the importance of diligent website maintenance.

You have a job to do here - educate them as early in the process as possible.



Your offering isn't easy to understand

Many WordPress maintenance offerings are over complicated, both in terms of pricing options and with what the client actually receives in exchange for their investment. Refer back to Page 8 in this guide for the key points in efficiently structuring your offering.

Poor quality or no pitch deck

You've got to have a solid pitch deck when selling WordPress maintenance. It adds another element of professionalism to your business and it's easier to communicate the value of maintenance to your clients when you're looking at a document together.

In many cases, maintenance follows you building a website for them, so make sure you have slides for it in your pitch deck.

You email your proposal

This is one of the easiest things to change in your process. It makes a huge difference to your conversion rate when you present your proposals to clients rather than sending them on an email. You're able to communicate your offering much more easily as well as answer any questions your client might have.

Lack of website maintenance content on your website



If you're offering WordPress maintenance, whether it's your only service or it's part of a wider digital offering, you've got to create content around it. Your clients will check out your website and social media profiles for proof that you are an expert and without this content, that'll be hard for them to validate.

Lack of social proof

Something else clients will be looking for, is proof that other businesses have had a great experience with you as their supplier. Your website and social media profiles should highlight reviews and testimonials (even better in video form) from your clients.

SECTION #8

Conclusion

Structuring your WordPress maintenance plans efficiently will result in you being able to sell the service more easily to your clients, ensure your team are productive and that your business grows in a predictable and profitable way.

Here's a quick recap on the key points from this guide:

Offer 3 or 4 plans

Your clients have a choice to make. You're able to demonstrate a solid service offering and you can drive clients to higher priced plans.

Thought out pricing



Don't just pluck a figure out of thin air. Make sure your pricing works for your business in terms of profitability and put the more time consuming tasks into the higher priced plans.

Time tracking is super important

We can't reiterate this enough. Make sure you have solid systems in place for tracking the time you and your team spend on your clients' accounts.

Create quality pitch decks and present them to clients

It's so much easier to communicate the value of maintenance to clients when you're doing so via a professional, branded pitch deck.



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