

**FIGURE 1:** The WordPress menu from my Graphics Unleashed Blog site.

# Building a WordPress Site

## HOW TO WEB PAGES AND BLOG POSTS

BY FOSTER D. COBURN III

Last month in *Insights*, I gave you basics of acquiring a WordPress website, including the importance of choosing the right theme and installing plug-ins to add functionality. Now, we are going to focus on the process of building Web pages and blog posts. Once you fully understand that process, your site is only limited by how many pages and posts you want.

### BLOG POSTS

I can already hear a few of you mumbling that you have no interest in having a blog. Bear with me because a lot of this also applies to building pages as well. Heck, you may even decide you do want a blog.

When WordPress was released, it was designed for blogging. So at its heart, many different types of content work very similarly to a blog post.

We first need to create a blank post. In the WordPress menu (shown in **FIGURE 1**), click Posts and then Add New. Note that you may see more or fewer options than the menu I've shown, but the Posts choice should always be there.

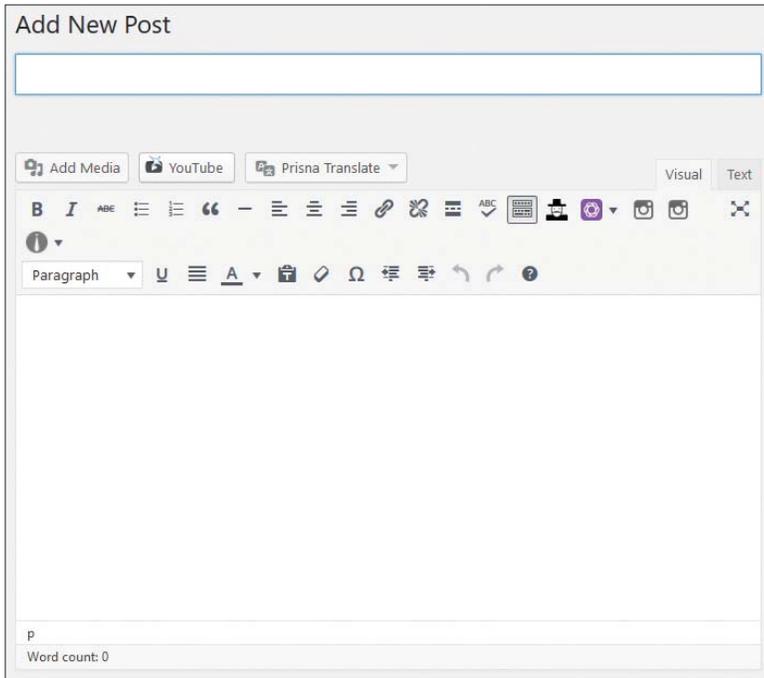
Once you click Add New, you're ready to add text, graphics, and other information. Typically things are broken into two columns. We'll start with the main column shown in **FIGURE 2**. At the top, add the title for the post. Think of this like a headline in a newspaper. It needs to be catchy and describe the content of the blog post. Depending on the settings on your site, the title can be used as part of the URL for the page, meaning it is important for search-engine optimization (SEO).

Below the title is a large area that works much like a document in a word processing program. Various formatting options are available above the large white content area. At the upper right are two tables for Visual and Text views. If you are in Visual view, the content will display similarly to how it will appear on the website. Text view shows the exact HTML code, including formatting codes. I typically prefer to work in Text view most of the time because it lets me control things exactly the way I want. But to do this, you must have at least basic HTML knowledge. If you don't, just use the Visual view.

If you want to add a picture, graphic, video, or other media, click on Add Media and either select from content already uploaded to the site or upload new content. There are a variety of options allowing you to choose how the media will be displayed. Click to insert and it will be displayed in the main content area.

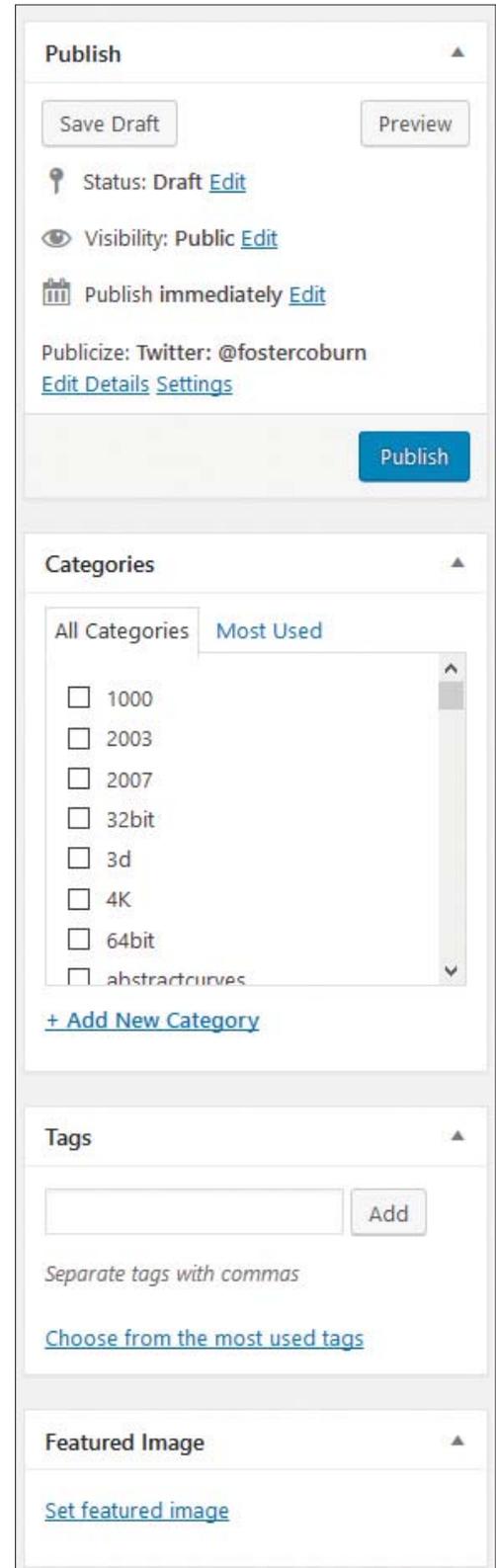
You'll also find a number of important sections in the right-hand column (possibly below if you change WordPress settings). We'll start at the top of **FIGURE 3** in the Publish section. One of the most important settings is the one that currently shows Publish immediately. This can be changed to a specific date and time.

Almost every blog post I write is written at least a day before it is published and sometimes weeks in advance. Changing the publish time allows you to create posts in advance and only make them viewable to the public at the time you specify. This allows you to post at regularly scheduled intervals or post when you're too busy to write and post. You could even schedule posts to be viewable every 2 days while you attend the International Awards & Personalization Expo, using the brochure information ahead of time to write posts that explain to your customers why you're out of town and what you're learning to better serve them.



**FIGURE 2 (ABOVE):** The main section for creating a new blog post.

**FIGURE 3 (RIGHT):** The right-hand column of the Add Post screen.



The button labeled Publish will change to say Schedule if the post has a future time and date. If you have already pushed Schedule or Publish and make changes, the button will say Update.

Below the Publish section are the Categories and Tags sections. It is important to assign at least one category or tag to every post. Often you'll assign several of each. This helps organize blog posts and makes it easier for visitors to find similar posts. For example, I often post tutorial content on Tuesdays, so I have a category and a tag named "tutorialtuesday" so visitors can easily see all posts of that type by clicking on the tag at the bottom. (Keep a handy list near your computer of the tags and categories you use often to make tagging easier in the future.)

The last item I've shown is the Featured Image. It is extremely important. A photo or graphic, the Featured Image often is displayed at the top of the blog post, though the theme determines the layout of the page. In other cases, a thumbnail is created from the Featured Image to display in a compact list view of blog posts. It is very important to choose the right image—one that will draw in visitors and convey what you're writing about—and just as important to size it to a specific size. The size to use varies based on the theme. For my Graphics Unleashed Blog, I use 900 pixels wide by 500 pixels tall on almost every post. Why that size? It is the best size for the theme I use.

## NEW PAGES

Blog posts are something you will add on a regular basis. You probably won't create pages very often, instead updating the existing pages you

initially created. You'll create pages when you create the site and may need to add pages later as you create new sections of content.

Creating a page in WordPress is very similar to creating a blog post. Using the same menu we saw earlier, go to the Pages menu item and choose Add New. That leads you to the Add New Page screen shown in **FIGURE 4**.

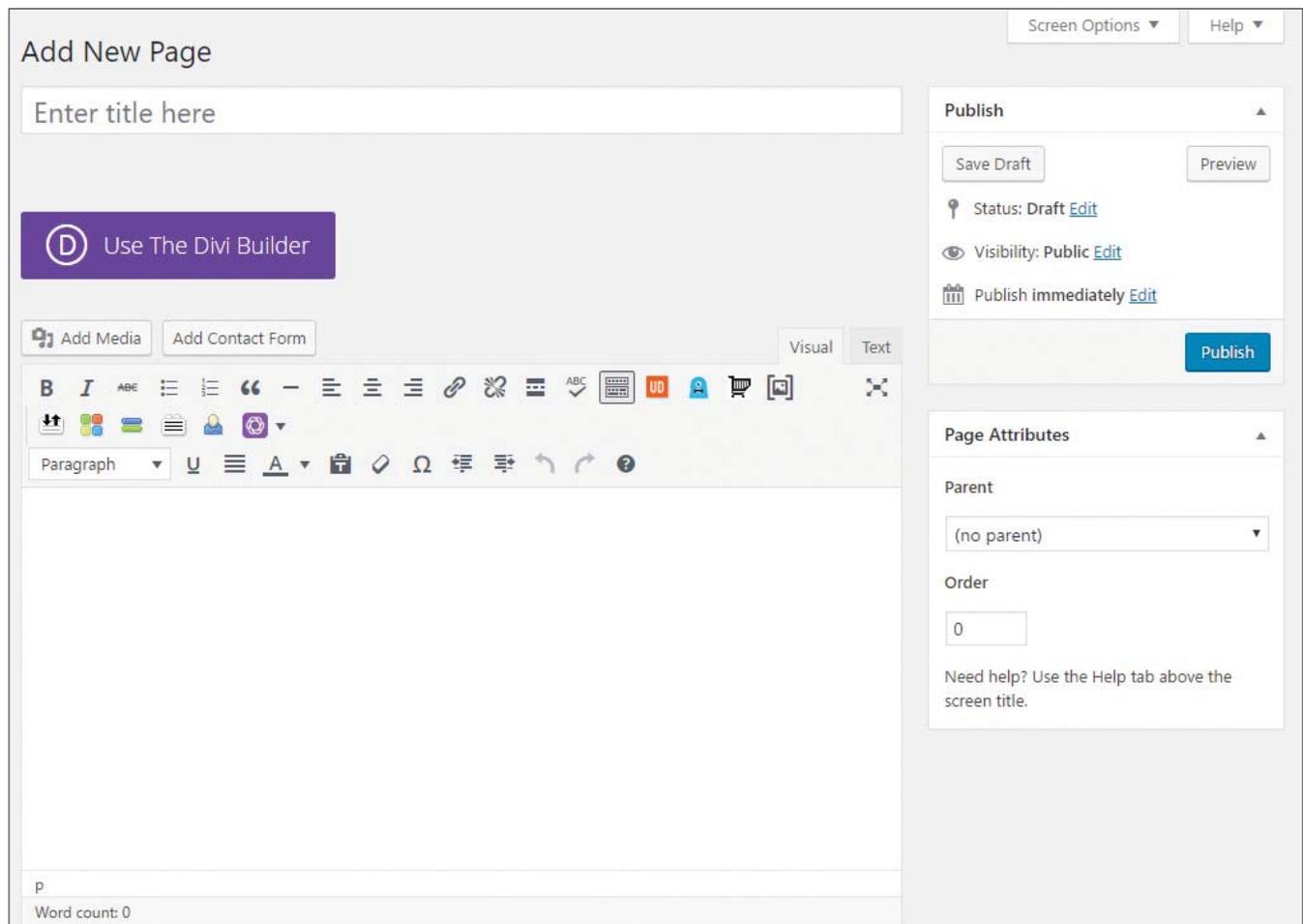
This screen is taken from my CorelDRAW Unleashed site. It has a different theme from the Graphics Unleashed Blog site shown earlier, so there are some minor theme-specific differences to this screen. But you've got a Title, the formatting buttons, and content area, as well as the Publish section that is virtually identical to that of a blog post. Often themes will have Page Attributes or something similar, as shown in this example. The biggest difference is the "Use The Divi Builder" button, which only appears here because of something specific I've installed on this particular site.

Just as with the blog post, focus on creating the content for the page by adding text and graphics. When you are done, you'll click Publish and the page will be live on the site. It can be scheduled for later, but most people publish pages immediately.

## VISUAL PAGE BUILDER

By default, WordPress does not include a tool for visually building pages. But there are a number of themes and plug-ins that will add that capability. I'm a big fan of the Divi theme from Elegant themes. It includes the Divi Builder mentioned above. The Divi Builder also is available as a plug-in to use on sites using a different theme.

**FIGURE 5** shows a portion of the home page of our CorelDRAW Unleashed site and you can see a number of blocks containing specific content. We always do a good job of labeling the blocks so we know what they contain. Note that some sections are dimmed. These are from a previous



**FIGURE 4:** Add New Page screen in WordPress.

design of the page. Rather than deleting the sections, we simply made them not visible in case we decide to use them again in the future.

While there is a bit of a learning curve for any page builder, users not intimately familiar with Web design may find that page builders make it easier for them to build a page with the layout they desire. Of course, it also provides a lot more control for Web pros so it is something I really like to use.

### DO YOU NEED A PRO?

You've now learned the basics of getting a WordPress site and creating blog posts and pages. We've only scratched the surface of what is possible.

Want a calendar of events? There are plug-ins for that and each "event" is created in much the same way as a blog post.

Want a shopping cart? Each product in your store can be set up similarly to a blog post. These features are not native to WordPress, and thus each is different depending on the plug-in you select.

Unless your goal is to be in the Web design business, it is probably best to work with a Web pro to build the site. With the basics you've learned, you can make changes, only turn to the pro to make bigger updates to the site.

Often I will set up a blog site for a client and not hear from them at all for many months, because they are perfectly capable of creating new blog posts. That is also true of e-commerce sites. I set up the shopping cart and then rely on the clients to add, edit, and remove products and handle order management and fulfillment. I'll only get involved again when they want changes to the pages on the site.

By working with a Web pro, you can focus on your business and what you do best. You can also get timely changes and save money by doing basic changes yourself. It truly is the best balance for most businesses' websites.



Foster D. Coburn III is the author of 13 books on CorelDRAW, the latest being *CorelDRAW X6 Unleashed*. He also writes the free Graphics Unleashed Blog (<http://graphics-unleashed.com>) and provides fonts, artwork, and add-ons of interest to CorelDRAW users through the CorelDRAW Unleashed Web Site at <https://>

[coreldrawunleashed.com](https://coreldrawunleashed.com). Connect with Graphics Unleashed on Facebook at <https://facebook.com/graphicsunleashed> and follow Foster on Twitter @fostercoburn and Instagram @fostercoburn.

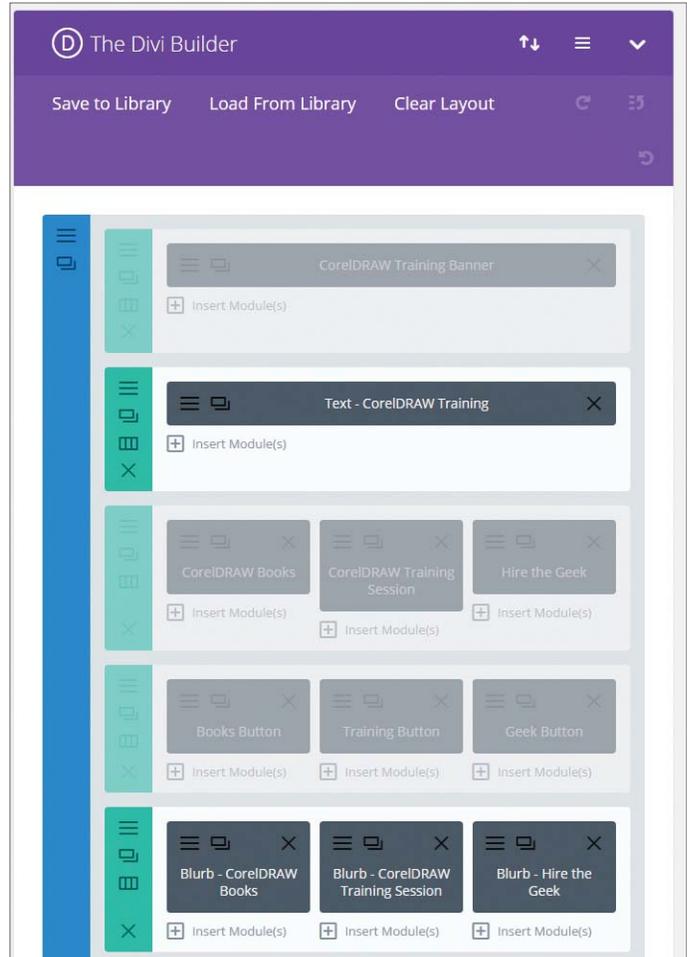


FIGURE 5: Part of a page design created using the Divi Builder.

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