FAQs About Website Maintenance

What exactly is "website maintenance?" Isn't that the same as website management?

Website maintenance consists of performing all the tasks necessary to keep a website up to date and in good, working order so that it works and displays correctly. The focus is on software and security, and it is distinct from website management or content management where the focus is on developing and updating content.

Since when did websites start needing "maintenance" anyway?

When modern content management systems (CMS) came into popular usage around 2014, things changed with websites. WordPress evolved from a simple blogging platform into a highly complex system of interconnected software components. The themes and plugins that support WordPress likewise grew in number and complexity. All this software needs to be updated on a regular basis. The typical website we maintain now generally need 5-12 software updates in any given month.

What happens if my website software doesn't get updated?

Outdated software presents a variety of issues. Hackers can exploit vulnerabilities in outdated software and gain unauthorized entry into your site. The result may be that malware or other apps placed on your site can impact your its functioning or turning it into a spam-generating machine. Other issues include loss of site functionality, poor display or slowed site speed, which drags on performance and can affect your search ranking position.

Can't I update the site software myself by clicking the various "update" buttons when I see them?

You can, but software management brings with it an entirely new set of issues. Sometimes plugin or theme updates can crash or disable the site—or cause embarrassing display issues. There are tricks to updating software that help to minimize these issues, but sometimes they occur anyway. If so, you need to know how to restore your site and/or fix the issues. In short, it's something you probably don't have the background or time to make the process worthwhile.

What exactly does my maintenance subscription fee cover?

All levels of website maintenance cover:

- Regular software updates: core WordPress (if needed), theme and plugins
- Checking general site display following the updates (note: we don't check every page)
- Minor update-related tweaks
- Uptime monitoring
- Security prevention (measures vary based on plan level)
- Daily malware scan
- Site load time speed testing
- Priority incident response if your site goes down or gets hacked
- Monthly report to summarize activity over the past month

Do you add anything to my site?

Yes, we install and configure plugins to help with site maintenance and protect your site.

- We install and configure a login security plugin on all sites.
- We install a monitoring plugin on all sites.
- On upper-tier plan sites, we also install and configure a leading premium plugin with firewall protection.
- Most sites also receive optimization plugins to improve various aspects of performance.

Do I need to do anything related to site maintenance?

Following each software update, we briefly review your site's general appearance to ensure it displays properly. However, we are not able to conduct a thorough review in the time allotted. As the website owner, you should review your site every other week, checking site display and special features, such as forms, calendars and other plugin-driven content to ensure that it is displaying properly. If you see any issues you believe are related to an update, please inform us immediately so we can address them. If you wait for more than 30 days, you may be responsible for the time it takes us to fix the issue.

How do you monitor uptime?

We install a "worker" plugin in your site when you enroll it in the maintenance program. If your site goes down, this triggers an email that our team researches at our earliest opportunity. Once your site is restored, we also receive an "up" notice. Please note that it is not unusual for a site to temporarily go offline due to server anomalies and then "right itself" within a few minutes.

What are the differences between the levels of website maintenance subscription plans?

In general, the upper tiers provide enhanced firewall security, faster response time, SEO keyword monitoring and a 10% or 15% discount on hourly services. This page on our site lists the detailed differences between the plan levels. Also, the larger and more complex the site, the more time it takes to provide maintenance, which is reflected in pricing for those levels.

What site work is not covered by the maintenance subscription?

Certain issues not related to routine software updates aren't covered by the plan:

- Third-party hosting issues that damage the site
- Hacking/malware removal (unless it is specifically covered by your plan)
- Time to repair something done by you or persons you authorize that compromise site integrity

In these cases, the hourly service rate will be applied to any work required to fix or restore your site. In general, we will advise you in advance of required work that is expected to exceed one hour of billable time. For shorter service needs, we will proceed to fix/restore your site and advise you promptly.

How can I pay for my subscription plan?

You can pay for your service by enrolling on this page on our site. Be sure to select the appropriate level before clicking the subscribe button. If you wish to pay for your subscription annually, we offer a 5% discount for prepayment. Note: subscription approval is not automatic. We will review your site to make sure it meets our requirements for the plan level you have selected and inform you of the results of that review.

What happens if my site gets hacked or injected with malware?

If we are notified that your site may have been hacked or contain malware, we will verify this with additional scans and/or manual diagnostics. If remediation is relatively simple, we will proceed to do it and then notify you of the situation. If the situation is more serious and/or it requires more extensive measures, we will notify you prior to taking action and get your authorization before doing the work. Paying for this service depends on the level of maintenance you have subscribed to. There is no charge for the Advanced and Ultimate Maintenance Plan levels for the first hour of remediation work. In most cases, one hour is sufficient time for malware remediation.

What slows down my website?

There are many things that can affect the loading speed of your site. Improperly sized images are one of the main drags on page speed. But there are many others, including such things as JavaScript, redirects, HTTP requests, etc. It is not always clear exactly what slows a site, but we have found that third-party/external scripts including Google fonts, maps, analytics, Facebook integration, etc. can slow a site.

How do you speed up my site, and how is the speed measured?

Depending on your website and its unique configuration, we will conduct a range of activities. These may include re-sizing images, deploying an image "minification" plugin, installing a browser caching or other optimization plugins, etc. We measure speed by using GTMetrix or similar platforms to obtain a score, including fully loaded time. Google would like to see site speed as fast as 1.3 seconds, although the vast majority of websites—particularly local sites—are much slower than that.

We strive to achieve site speed load time in under 4 seconds. Sites with third-party scripts (including Adwords, Google, Facebook, etc.) are often slower. Your results will vary.

What happens if I unenroll in the website maintenance program?

You may unenroll at any time, although you agree to commit to paying for a minimum of three months of service regardless of how long you stay on the program. This minimum subscription period helps cover the time and cost of setting your site up on the program in lieu of a setup charge. If you do unenroll your site at some point, we reserve the right to remove and/or deactivate any plugins we have added to your site. This includes our licensed premium plugins designed to protect your site and speed its performance.

What if I need help related to website maintenance?

Please email support@newparadigmmarketing.com. This is important to use, since it is monitored by our senior techs during travel when regular staff are not available.

What else should I know about website maintenance plans?

We encourage you to read our website maintenance Terms of Service, which include additional detail about this service. You can find the Terms of Service at the bottom of this page:
https://newparadigmmarketing.com/wordpress-website-maintenance-plans/