Choosing the Right Host

And other recommendations from a Hosting insider

Presented by Joshua Knapp

About \\Me

Joshua Knapp

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- Worked **with** hosting for 18+ years
  - First website was built with NotePad on Windows 98 (Hosted on AngelFire)
- Worked with Linux for 17+ years
  - Knoppix was my first Distro I installed by myself
- Worked **in** the hosting Industry for the last 10 years
  - Started as a Tier 1 Server Technician
  - Developed and implemented virtualization, spam protection, and automation solutions for Hosting Providers
- Worked with WordPress for the last 10 years

Identify what your goals are for your site

Business or Pleasure?

- Personal sites and Business sites have different needs
  - A personal site is any site that **doesn't** help you generate income
    - Community Websites
    - Fan Sites
    - Personal Blogs
  - A business site is any site that helps you generate income
    - E-Commerce Website
    - Personal Resume` Sites/Professional Blogs
    - Business Information Websites

You've got the Control (Panels)

There are 3 common Panels that your hosting provider may offer when you sign up for an account.

- Home Grown (Custom Built)
  - Tied to the hosting provider
  - Features are varied
- Plesk
  -
- CPanel
  - Pretty much the industry standard
  - Same basic function at all hosts

Cpanel Demo

The Technology

LAMP : *Not just to light your desk*

Linux - The OS that runs the server your website is hosted on. Think of it like Windows or OS X but for a server. (CentOS 7.x)

Apache - The application that accepts browsers requests, and attempts to fulfill them. (Latest Version: 2.4.x)

MySQL - The application that handles database requests from your web/php application. This is where any posts, settings or user credentials are stored for WordPress. (MariaDB 10.x)

PHP - The language that WordPress is written in and the name of the (Latest Version: 7.1.x)

The People

- **What kind of user are you?**
  - I'm just starting out/I need a lot of help
  - Point me in the right direction, and help me if I get stuck.
  - I tend to figure stuff out for myself, but sometimes need help.
  - I'll provide *you* support
- **Availability of Support**
  - What hours/days is phone support open for you?
    - May differ depending on package and support level.
  - What hours/days is ticket support open for you?
    - should be 24/7 IMHO
- **Quality of support and time it takes to get a resolution.**
  - Getting good quality responses to questions and ultimately a resolution should the gauge when evaluating support.

Remember: The person on the other end of the call or ticket is a person too!

"Unlimited Everything"

"Life is like loading twice your cargo weight onto your spacecraft. If it's canaries and you can keep half of them flying all the time, you're all right."

**- Okona
(Star Trek: TNG)**

Unlimited Does not Exist

Plans that claim "Unlimited" are misleading, and lead to customers getting blindsided when they get suspended for going over limits they didn't know existed.

- Unlimited Bandwidth
  - At either a reduced speed or
  - CPU Limit (typically 1 to 2%)
- Unlimited Storage
  - Typically does not include email storage
  - Typically requires that data is used for the site

Hosts are not required to adhere to the "Unlimited" Claims

Hosting is a Business

Hosting Providers provide a service as a part of their business.

If you do not pay for your service, they will disconnect your services with them.

This can mean your website, email address and DNS will go offline.

Also, as a part of their business, they will try to upsell you on things.

Don't take things with your hosting provider personally.

It's not personal, Sonny. It's strictly business.
-- Michael Corleone
 --The GodFather

Thank You// WordCamp Sacramento 2017
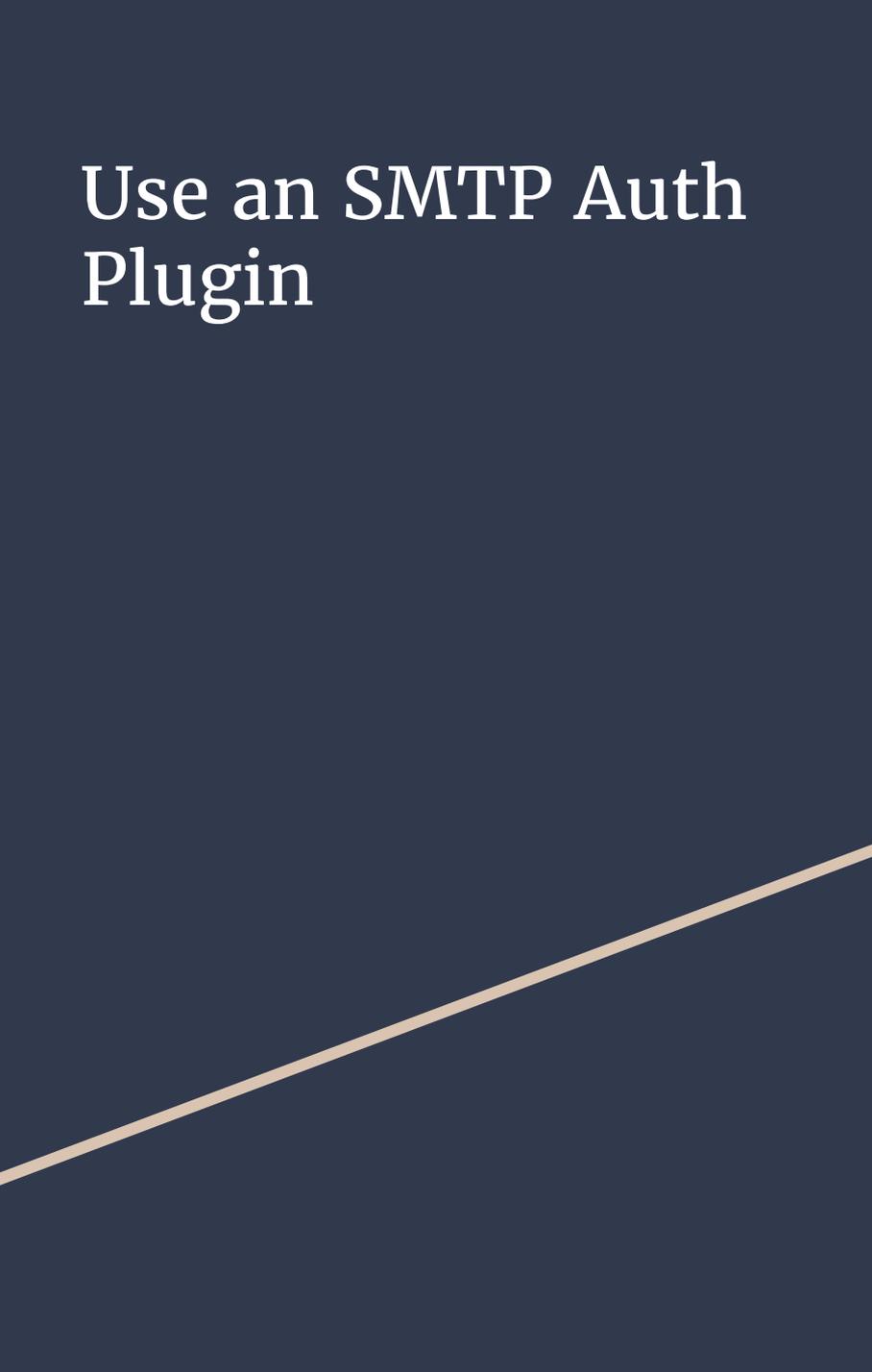
Extra Credit

Do I Need an SSL?

- Short Answer: Yes!
  - For hosts that have support for HTTP/2, SSL actually improves speed of websites.
  - Google gives higher ranking to sites with SSL

- Long Answer: Yes, but which type/one?

Types of SSL

- Self-Signed
- DV - Domain Validation
- OV - Organization Validation
- EV - Extended Validation

Use an SMTP Auth Plugin

What is your Scope?

- What are the ***realistic numbers*** for visitors to your site?
- Do you have specific software requirements?
  - Does your site need a certain PHP module or technology to function?
- How much control do you want or need over your environment?
  - Custom Modules, Kernels and Software can't typically be installed on Shared Platforms
  - Unless included with your plan, or you pay someone to do it, security updates, patches and software updates to a VPS or server.
- How will your site scale?
  - User tracking, Security Logs and Site Stat applications that store data in the database are some big offenders of clobbering users.