

FAST-TRACK WEBSITES FOR AUTHORS – April 19, 2011

This document will be short and to the point. There should be no need to convince you, as an author, of the importance of having an online presence whether that is a blog or website or both. This document explains in quick and simple terms, how to achieve that goal.

In the past, getting a website up and running and keeping it updated could be a costly and painful affair. These days, blogging software with built-in content management software (CMS) make the process a doddle. Some are also free of charge (in their basic, but very usable form), so there is really no excuse for having a web-presence as quickly as you can.

A couple of freebie options are:

- ❖ **Wordpress** (www.wordpress.com)
- ❖ **Blogger** (www.blogger.com)

Owing to time-constraints, this document will focus on **Wordpress**.

Basically, visit the URL above and click on the “Sign Up Now” button. After answering a few questions and making a few choices, you’ll receive an email asking you to confirm that you actually want a Wordpress account. Click the link to confirm this, and your website/blog is now active. That’s it...it really is that simple.

You can customise Wordpress by using any one of the 90 (currently) free to use themes. A theme is basically a collective term for how the blog/site looks (colours, fonts, photographs, layout, etc.)

You can also buy themes which have been created by others. Prices for these themes vary greatly from a few bucks to loadsamoney!

Wordpress comes in two flavours; paid and free. Some features of the free version are:

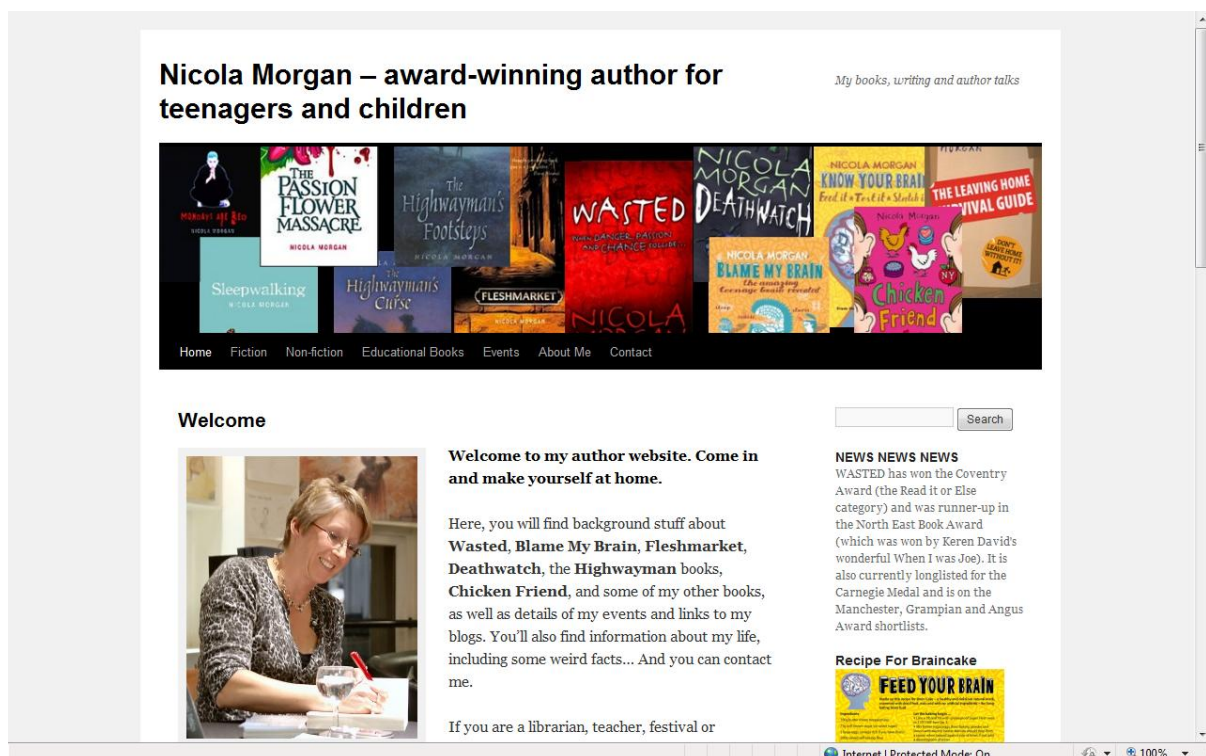
- ❖ Uses **yourchoice.wordpress.com** as the address, rather than your choice of domain such as **www.mysite.com**
- ❖ As Wordpress is a piece of software, your installation is constantly kept up to date (other versions require download and installation of latest updates)
- ❖ Wordpress provides approximately 90 free themes to choose from
- ❖ The Wordpress blogging engine provides an excellent (and pretty sophisticated) content management platform to enable you to keep your site as updated as your blog.

Wordpress uses *pages* and *posts* to differentiate between blogging and website content. “Pages” are static items with no ability to accept comments, whereas “posts” are blog entries and can have comments added.

Blogs (such as Wordpress) are very search-engine-friendly – Content is automatically optimised for indexing. This means that your blog/site will be found in higher ranks of search engines such as Google and Yahoo than a site which has been hand-coded.

As a big part of search engine ranking is based on who links to you, if you use the free version, the Wordpress site is already very highly ranked on Google and Yahoo, so you get a free ride up the ranks on their tail!

An example of an excellent Wordpress site is Nicola Morgan’s (www.nicolamorgan.com):



Now, it's time to get your Wordpress hat on and get your site up and running.

If you need any help to do this, as a professional web-development company, we have years of experience of designing and customising blogs and sites with systems such as Wordpress and Blogger. We can provide assistance at very reasonable rates. Contact us on webenquiries@rosssoftwaresolutions.com in the first instance.

