

Updated: 11/8/2021

Hope IT WordPress course

Instructor's Notes:

Summary:

These notes are meant for other instructors that may run a similar WordPress course for kids. We wanted to share the lessons we have learned, and what we found to be helpful.

Notes:

- 1) Mainly this course was very appropriate in an on-line format.
 - a) WordPress is very much on-line. Work done by the students can be saved in their individual web sites/domains.
 - b) We could easily monitor their progress by just checking on these web sites, without needing to ask to see their screens.
 - c) We kept the number of students intentionally small, so we could provide enough attention to the students, when problems occurred or when they had questions.
 - d) There were times when a problem took 10 minutes to resolve, which would take about 1 minute if done in-person. That's one of the only unfortunate parts of the online format. The other is there can only be one conversation going on at a time, rather than many conversations when students work on their own.

- 2) **We keep this course almost at no cost.** We used the free WordPress install, and used free Themes and plugins. The only part where we had "costs" was in 3b below, using domains, but that was because we have a tech savvy team with resources.

- 3) **Domains:**
 - a) WordPress allows free web sites, so one can learn, see the link below.

<https://wordpress.com/free>

- i) We decided to not go this direction for a number of reasons:
 - (1) With this free offering, the [Terms of Agreement to have kids being older than 13](#). That wasn't going to work for us, as we would have kids younger than that...some were 10 years old.
 - (2) [Plugins cannot be installed in this free site](#). (One would have to upgrade to the paid business plan.) We thought if students couldn't learn about plugins, we did not think the course was worth the time. We had to find a way to get free domains for WordPress so plugins could be used.

- b) **Azure web sites:** We explored many options, and were fortunate to have a team member that could create 10 Azure web site domains from his work account (with work funding). WordPress was installed on each of them, and students could work on these for the entire month, in-between Saturdays, saving their work and having individualized web sites. Yes, these web sites are not permanent, as we closed them down after a month, but it was a great environment to learn and work online. If you like more details on how we created these web site domains in Azure, see Appendix A below. Our domains used URLs like below:

<http://hopeit1.azurewebsites.net/>

- 4) **Tools:** We decided on the following in our course:

- a) **Themes: Astra:** It worked out great, using the free Themes. Next time, we would explore a theme that has a better free blog page format. Still looking for that.

- b) **Plugins:**

- i) **Page builder: Elementor:** It is used so widely, and there are so many other videos using this, we felt this was a safe and good introduction to show kids how easy creating a web site is with this tool.
- ii) **Stats: WP Power Stats:** This plugin is a good introduction to gathering visitor stats. The others seem way to involved to get a quick introduction for kids.
- iii) **Search Engine Optimization (SEO): All in One SEO:** We decided on this as it is again, simple for kids to get to see how it works, and go over a few items. Yoast SEO is probably best, but it's so involved, and would be a class to itself.
- iv) **Easy Digital Download:** This is a great example for students to learn how to setup an eCommerce site. This plugin allows you to setup many downloads for your visitors/customers to purchase, a cart, check out, and even payment history. The only thing that wasn't very smooth was their default web pages (which they provide as part of the plugin) don't really work with the theme we pick in Astra. We had to force the main button -- by setting the URL of the button to go to the Download page -- on our home page.
- v) We planned to show more plugins like Security, Backups, and others, but we just ran out of time. It's just helpful to show the students a few more plugins in the download list, so they realize there are so many plugins to use.

- 5) **Hiccups:** There were a few hiccups as the course went on:

- a) **Cookies:** We had a few students get caught up with cookies, and using the "/wp-admin" logging, and switching back and forth between the Site and Dashboard menus. We had to have a dad resolve the issues, clearing out cookies.

- b) **Elementor**: There were 4 times Elementor went into a weird non-editable mode. The components were not able to be draped onto the web page. The green “Update” button no longer was enabled.
- i) *Solution*: Cached pages. We used the Chrome “Incognito” window, and able to log into the WordPress dashboard, and Elementor worked again.
 - ii) *Unsuccessful attempt*: Some web pages said this issue may be some plugins are incompatible with each other. We uninstalled all plugins and reinstalled Elementor, and that didn’t help.

Appendix A - Create a WordPress domain in Azure

This is a brief description of how the Hope IT team created WordPress domains using Azure, Microsoft’s cloud. Note that Azure changes frequently, so some of the configurations in our screen shot may change over time.

Azure’s Portal can be used for free for 30 days. We used paid-subscriptions, and or company-based subscriptions. This setup was still within reasonable prices, about \$10 per web domain per month, see the screen shot below.

Home > Mike Veerman > Cost analysis > Cost Management: Mike Veerman

Cost Management: Mike Veerman | Cost analysis (preview)

Scope: Mike Veerman (change)

Resources

Filter rows

Oct 2021

Showing 4 resources

Name	Type	Resource group	Location	Subscription	Tags	Total ↓
> hopeit7	App Service web app	mike_hopeit	us west	pay-as-you-go	--	\$9.67
> hopeit9	App Service web app	mike_hopeit	us west	pay-as-you-go	--	\$9.67
> hopeit7	Application Insights app	mike_hopeit	us west	pay-as-you-go	--	\$0.00
> hopeit9	Application Insights app	mike_hopeit	us west	pay-as-you-go	--	\$0.00

There are 2 resources that are needed, beyond setting up a resource group (which isn’t an extra charge.)

First, create an App Service Plan, see the screen shot below.

HopeITAppServicePlan

App Service plan

Delete Send us your feedback

Overview

Activity log

Access control (IAM)

Tags

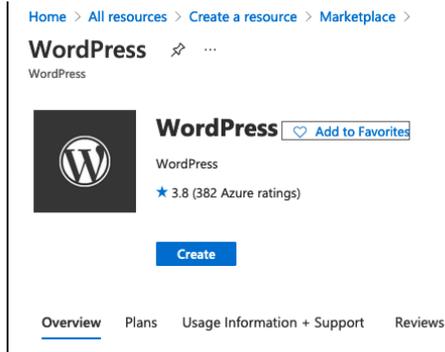
Diagnose and solve problems

Events (preview)

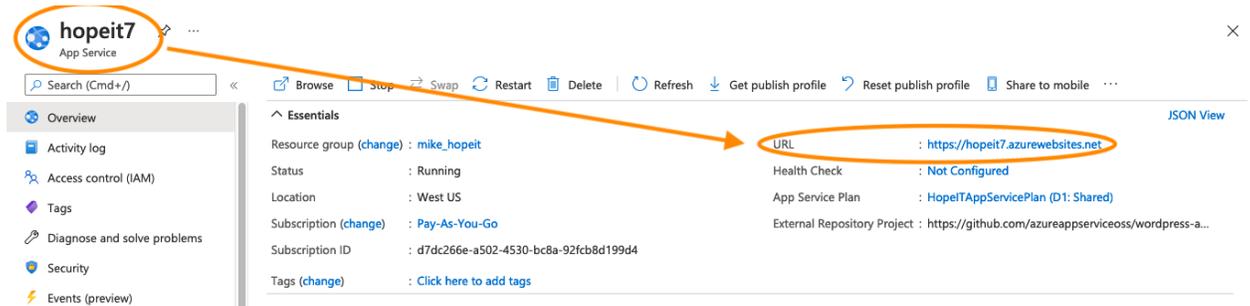
Essentials

Resource group (change)	: mike_hopeit	App Service Plan	: HopeITAppServicePlan (D1: Shared)
Status	: Ready	App(s) / Slots	: 2 / 0
Location	: West US	Operating System	: Windows
Subscription (change)	: Pay-As-You-Go	Zone redundant	: Disabled
Subscription ID	: d7dc266e-a502-4530-bc8a-92fcb8d199d4		
Tags (change)	: Click here to add tags		

Next, create an “WordPress” App Service, see below. This is your WordPress web site.



Create this App Service. The name of the App Service Plan -- here hopeit7 -- becomes the subdomain of the URL: hopeit7.azurewebsites.net. Note that “hopeit7” needs to be unique across all domains in azurewebsites.net.



Additional notes:

- Pricing Tier: use the lowest you can, Prod / Premium V2 P1v2 - 210 ACU - 3.5 GB
 - Linux is cheaper. (No one will see it, so just use linux.) See the light blue rectangle below.
 - We used the Prod machine, as Dev’s limit was 60 minutes. Our course is 1.5 hours long. See the orange circles and arrows in the screen shot below.
 - Select the App Service Plan you just created in the 1st step.

Create Web App

Select a subscription to manage deployed resources and costs. Use resource groups like folders to organize and manage all your resources.

Subscription *

Resource Group *

[Create new](#)

Instance Details

Need a database? Try the new Web + Database experience. [Learn more](#)

Name * .azurewebsites.net

Publish * Code Docker Container

Operating System * Linux Windows

Region *
 [Not finding your App Service Plan? Try a different region.](#)

App Service Plan

App Service plan pricing tier determines the location, features, cost and compute resources associated with your app. [Learn more](#)

Linux Plan (West US) *
 [Create new](#)

SKU and size *
 Premium V2 P1v2
 210 total ACU, 3.5 GB memory
 [Change size](#)

[Review + create](#) < Previous Next: Docker >

Production For most production workloads

The first Basic (B1) core for Linux is free for the first 30 days!

Recommended pricing tiers

P1V2 210 total ACU 3.5 GB memory Dv2-Series compute equivalent 83.95 USD/Month (Estimated)	P2V2 420 total ACU 7 GB memory Dv2-Series compute equivalent 168.63 USD/Month (Estimated)	P3V2 840 total ACU 14 GB memory Dv2-Series compute equivalent 337.26 USD/Month (Estimated)
P1V3 195 minimum ACU/vCPU 8 GB memory 2 vCPU 127.75 USD/Month (Estimated)	P2V3 195 minimum ACU/vCPU 16 GB memory 4 vCPU 255.50 USD/Month (Estimated)	P3V3 195 minimum ACU/vCPU 32 GB memory 8 vCPU 511.00 USD/Month (Estimated)

[See additional options](#)

Included features

Every app hosted on this App Service plan will have access to these features:

- Custom domains / SSL**
Configure and purchase custom domains with SNI and IP SSL bindings
- Auto scale**
Up to 20 instances. Subject to availability.
- Staging slots**
Up to 20 staging slots to use for testing and deployments before swapping them into production.
- Daily backups**
Backup your app 150 times daily

Included hardware

Every instance of your App Service plan will include the following hardware configuration:

- Azure Compute Units (ACU)**
Dedicated compute resources used to run applications deployed in the App Service Plan. [Learn more](#)
- Memory**
Memory per instance available to run applications deployed and running in the App Service plan.
- Storage**
250 GB disk storage shared by all apps deployed in the App Service plan.

[Apply](#)

Then, go to the new web site domain, and enter the admin login.

- Select "My SQL" in the App
- Visit your site to create the Admin account.

You are all set!!