IntegratePro Show: Justin Meadows

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Dave: OK. Three, two, one! Hey it's Dave from IntegratePro. We're doing a podcast today with Justin Meadows from Evergreen Profits. Justin, how are you doing today?

Justin: Yeah pretty good Dave, how are you?

Dave: I'm doing well! It's evening here, I'm guessing it's morning for you?

Justin: It is yeah, morning down here on Australia.

Dave: Cool!! I was hoping we could you know continue our conversation we just had offline a little bit. I know you and I do a lot of the same things around WordPress especially developing sites, but one thing from our discussion is that you've got things that you do after the word site, and the Wordpress site is built. And I was hoping you could dive into that a little more. So that sounds good?

Justin: Yeah absolutely. So it's something that probably isn't talked about a lot of thought from business owners when they're thinking of getting a new website. I often think about what happens once the new website is built but it is pretty important with WordPress websites in particular, there's a lot of moving parts and that the software needs to be updated on a regular basis so it is important to make sure that it gets that ongoing care and attention.

You do need to make sure that the bits of software, the plugins, the themes, the Wordpress core files are all updated and they will work together. There's no conflicts when they do update because that's a pretty common thing that does come up.

So we make sure that that's done on a regular basis, it gonna helps the stats more secure. That's one of the reasons why software updates needs to be done. So the software is keeping ahead of the malware and the viruses out there chunked into the websites.

Dave: Yeah. So let me play devil's advocate here a little bit. Don't these updates occur automatically. Is there anything that needs to be done or what's going on there?

Justin: The WordPress core and the plugin files updated automatically but the theme files are not. Because a lot of people have you know, it's bad practices but a lot of people do get in and customize the thing directly instead of making a child theme over. And so it's a way to get updates automatically to the things then it would break a website so they can't do that.

Dave: Ok cool. And again now that you've jogged my memory a little bit, how does what you do compared to like WP curve?

Justin: It's pretty similar, in that we have the unlimited support aspect where it's unlimited minor changes to the website, if you send through a bunch of things and it's going to take us less than an hour to do, we just do it as part of the monthly retainer.

However I think what's different is I don't think W.P. curve include the hosting in their service. So we also look off to the hosting we setup and cloud hosting, we set up the CloudFlare CDN and that does the DNS hosting and then we also run monthly maintenance checks which I think is something that is the same as the WP curve. They just do the maintenance and the support but we go little bit further and we look after the hosting.

And there is also a way we do find that we're often helping people with things around their website as well so not just the website so. We also help people with publishing that their e-mail broadcast so syndicating their post, once they create post publishing to the social media channels and that sort of thing.

Dave: OK so definitely a lot more comprehensive as soon as you said. Email autoresponder. That's yeah that's not really covered by the WP curve or similar services. Okay. Hey Justin just backing up for people who may not know CDN, what the heck is that?

Justin: So it's a content delivery network. So basically what that means in layman's terms is that there's data centers all over the world in every major city that hires these warehouses of service. And so there will be a little a data center in a city near you that has a copy of your of the website that's on that network.

So even though you might have your website hosted in the U.S., if someone sees it in London or down here even in Perth Australia. There will be a copy of the the website down a data center which we will just make it load a lot faster for that person even though they are on the other side of the world to the original setup.

Dave: Okay so a much better experience for users regardless of where they are in the world.

Justin: Yeah.

Dave: Nice!

Justin: Exactly.

Dave: And I think I heard you mentioned earlier like malicious. Do you take care of any hacking type stuff? I mean not that does happen, and I think a lot of people don't think it is something you have to worry about. But until it happens it's like everything's good it seems that happens like "*Dang I wish I would have done something like that*". So how do you deal with that?

Justin: Well, we actually prefer to..... if we come across a site that has been infected, we prefer to actually use Sucuri to get that cleaned up because they're really good at that sort of thing. However yeah we have not had anyone on our service get infected.

So that's, our goal is mainly prevention. But every now and again like when we have people that want to come into our service we always check the sites first and if we do find that it's got malware in there we make sure it gets cleaned up before comes onto service and make sure that all sorts of services are secure.

But we do a number of things to prevent them getting hacked. The first one is those regular updates, so just by having a software up to date that's the first line of defense I guess. Then we also, you know making encouraging people to use strong passwords and making sure that we go no go out you know we are not using shared hosting where you have hundreds of websites planted on the one server and that sort of thing. And there are secure passwords not being looked after. We've got apps of clients that we're looking after on the server. And we do have the firewall plugin. We run monthly malware scans over the website. And did that sort of thing to make sure that they don't get infected.

Dave: Ok, So I'm also assuming you do backups on a regular basis?

Justin: Yeah absolutely yeah.

Dave: And so in case somebody says case something breaks or somebody breaks something on their own site, it could get restored during previous known good set up. Right?

Justin: Yeah. Yeah exactly. Yes. So we always have we always have at least seven days of service level backup so we can always go back at Day or two. And then we also take database and WordPress backups on or on a weekly or monthly basis so we've got stored in different locations so we've always got plenty of options if something disastrous does happen. We can always just restore the site very quickly.

Dave: Yeah that's going to be my next question is where do you do backups. It sounds like you probably do it locally on your server but maybe somewhere else like Amazon server or something?

Justin: Yeah yeah. So there's a separate set of server level ones done to an external server. And then also the WordPress ones we do the database backups goes to Google hosting and the full WordPress backups go to Amazon hosting.

Dave: Nice! So how do your customers interact with you? I think I'm making this up so you tell me if falling track. I think the ideal scenario be as somebody says "*Hey Justin I want to pay some money to take care of my site.*" What's the procedure they go through? I heard you say that you know you first like scan this site to make sure nothing's wrong. But what is the process look like when somebody comes on board to your services?

Justin: Yeah. So when someone signs up first, first thing we need to do is obviously get access to their website to take a look at it. Make sure that it's going to be suitable. We check through the site we log in, just run a malware scan of it make sure it's safe.

And also another thing that we check out for is how e-mails are being handled for that website because that's something to find. Yeah we ran into this quite a lot where people are using the web server to handle their e-mail hosting. And it's really not it's not an ideal scenario. It means that you run into a lot of issues that you just don't need but also it either

although it's cheaper than going with Google Apps or something. Oh wait it is now. That's still 95 dollars a month, that's really not much.

And the thing is you getting a whole lot more spam and yet end up getting problems with connecting to the server and getting tripped up in the firewall. And that sort of thing and problems connecting to different devices.

We just run into a lot of hassles when we when we used to let people have the e-mails going through the Web server. So now we just set people off with the g-suite. And that gets rid of all those problems. It also makes it if we need to upgrade the server this week we can do that without having to worry about what's going on with the emails we can just quickly upgrade your website to so has more resources or what have you need to.

Dave: Sounds smart using outside resources firm for their expertise I heard you mentioned Sucuri for scanning and then g-suit or whatever it's called now for e-mail I totally agree on the e-mail thing sending from your own server. Man you've got to tweak it and dial it in, there is no issues. You know, deliverability is the big thing I'm thinking about if you just tell Google to take care of it is like, they're gonna trust those e-mails versus if it's coming from like your server if your servers ever been spammed and might be difficult to do.

Cool. So on a monthly basis would you know. Or does a customer typically hear from you frequently or unless there's a problem or how often when they expect to hear from you?

Justin: Yes. Once a month just send through a report just letting them know how we went with the monthly update. But generally I find that most of our clients do tend to get in touch with us once or twice a month at least with small changes to the site.

We have a few different levels of service that we provide. Some just want the hosting but don't really want any further support than that. We still do. I quarterly maintenance check which really is not as good as monthly. There is a bit more risk there in doing it quarterly but it's sort of at least we're doing it quarterly. You know that's sort of the bare minimum I think.

Yes but most most people are on a higher level plan that includes some support as well. So we're helping them with publishing globe personnel changing product pages so doing bits and pieces just a sort of small things that a growing business needs to be updating on their website. They just have to shoot us an email and we get back to them quickly and get make things happen for them.

Dave: Cool cool. So it sounds like your services both kind of proactive I heard like you know publishing blog post but also preventative in terms of keeping problems at bay. You know keep things away fixing them if they do occur. One thing I was going to curious about what about SSL stuff do you deal with that?

Justin: Yeah we do. However these days we mainly just do the less encrypted SSL it's a lot easier, cheaper. Yeah. No reason Why. Well yes. Once you get to logic, logic websites then you probably make it to is it called thing excel or SSL something we have a little gray bar.

Yeah the extended ones right. So but for most most business websites all they need is the less encrypted SSL and yeah we certainly set up all our websites to have that. Because that's that's important now for your SEO rankings as well because it was Google's made it clear that that's what they want all the websites in the internet be like.

Dave: OK here's one for you too. This one's kind of get near and dear to my heart. What about your mentioned CDNs page loads speed stuff? So I'm assuming you're doing whatever you can to make things load quickly. Because you know some in some sites are just horrible with regards to load times and when you're when you're designing it looking at on this big screen not a big deal but man put that on a small TV screen device that might be on a 3G network and it just becomes a disaster soon. Do you guys also do stuff along those lines where you're working to improve page speed time?

Justin: Yeah absolutely. That's that's become a big thing because once again Google has made it very clear that they want to all the websites on the Internet to be fast and so now it affects not just your rankings in Google but also if you're running Google ads that you'll be paying more for your ad clicks.

If you got a slow website, so it really is important to speed up the site. It creates a much better user experience as well. People expect sites to load faster these days. Yes so we certainly take a look at this when it comes to speed though, there's a lot of moving parts to it some different factors that influence how website loads as is usually no silver bullet but it takes a number of small tweaks of things things like optimizing the images also.

Yeah like having having that CDN and having fast hosting with gould caching and yeah there's a lot of different things could be done even clearing out the database of the website helps. Yeah there's a lot of things. That we sort of look out and usually we find that we can we can show a couple of seconds off on page load. Yeah.

Dave: Cool! So Justin where do people find out more. I know you're at Evergreen profit dot Co is there a specific page or is it pretty obvious if somebody goes there?

Justin: Yeah!! we'll actually got a separate page evergreen support dot Co just for just for our support plans. So if people are interested in checking out our maintenance and support services. Yeah Evergreen support dot com.

Dave: Okay. Perfect. So evergreen support dot Co. Is there anything I should have been asking that I wasn't?

Justin: I don't think so. No, aren't we?

Dave: Oh I got one question one last question. How was the whether?

Justin: It's actually not too bad it's March today. It's still a warm up. Do you still have snow up there?

Dave: No it's springtime but it could snow, but where I'm going with this is. Are you wearing flip flops today?

Justin: No, not even wearing shoes.

Dave: Alright!! Awesome!!

Justin: I'll still get another month or so before it gets too cold outside.

Dave: Sorry, this is kind of an inside joke. I know but I just want to kind of bring it up. Anyway, Justin thank you very much. Appreciate hearing about what you're doing. And for anybody that is interested. evergreen support dot co. Thanks Justin.

Justin: Thank you very much. It's been a pleasure to speak to you.

Dave: Likewise.

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