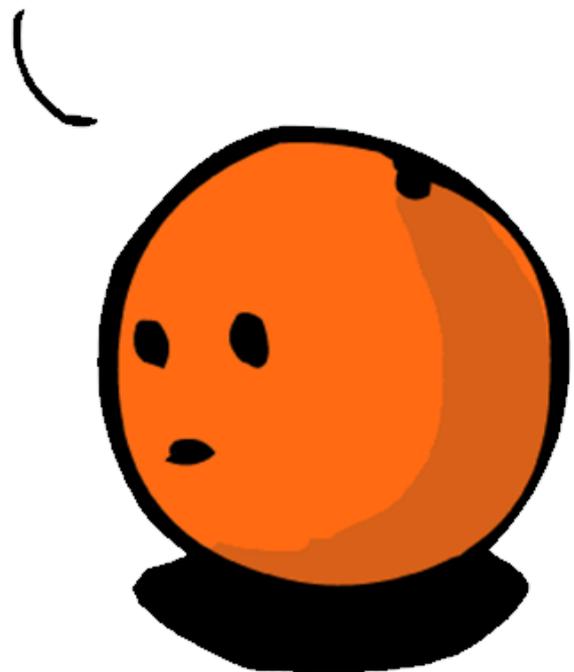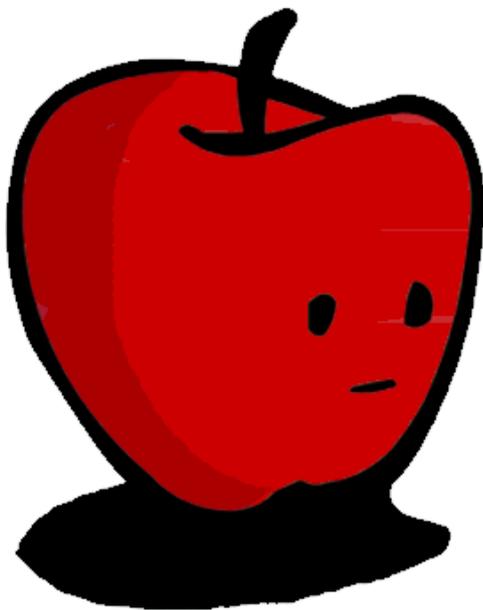# Kontrolit.net

powering business web sites

Comparing

Open Source v Kontrolit

Well, we're both fruit.

What is Open Source?

"Open Source" simply refers to computer software for which the source code is freely available for others to see and use. It's often developed in a public, collaborative manner.

So it's free, right?

That's true, but only to a certain extent. It's only free if your time (and your developer's time) is worth nothing.

Yes, the install can be a 5-minute process, but what then? What if you want to add additional features like calendars, membership databases, directories, or e-commerce? It may not be so easy.

Comparing apples with apples

If you're considering a new website, you'll probably have done a little research and come across popular **open source software** such as Wordpress.

There are, however, important differences between Wordpress and Kontrolit which can have a far-reaching impact on your website. Before you compare costs, make sure you're comparing like-for-like. There are some important questions you need to ask any developer using open source software.

Plugins & Extensions

Out of the box, open source software such as Wordpress runs on a very basic design template (called a theme), with limited functionality and features. There is often a choice of templates, but lots of other websites will be using them, too.

You'll almost certainly want to customise your website with your own design to reflect your company's brand, and add a variety of functions to suit your business needs.

Can you achieve this with Wordpress?

Yes…and no!

Design

No. If you want to move away from a standard open source template design, you'll need to hire a designer and a web developer to create something bespoke.

What will these professionals charge to create and implement your open source website design?

Functionality

Wordpress was originally intended for bloggers with very simple needs; it just didn't provide out-of-the-box features to create sites for businesses running ecommerce shops, memberships, events, booking systems or complex integration with CRMs.

So third party developers began to create **plugins** and **extensions,** pieces of open source code that Wordpress users can install freely or by paying a fee, download to add extra functionality to their own site.

Sounds great – what's wrong with that?

You can end up needing a lot of plugins from a variety of different developers to make your website do all the things you want it to do. Unfortunately, sometimes plugins aren't compatible with each other. When a conflict occurs, part or all of your website might stop working. There's no way to anticipate the conflict in advance and when it happens, it can be a difficult job to isolate the plugin causing the problem.

Problems also occur when third party developers don't keep their plugins and extensions updated. Eventually they're no longer compatible with more recent versions of Wordpress and that can break your site, too.

If this happens you may have to choose between abandoning the plugin (and the feature it provides on your site), trying to fix it or finding another plugin.

How does your open source developer identify and fix incompatible and out-of-date plugins on a Wordpress website? What happens if a plugin or extension breaks your website?

Functionality & design on a Kontrolit website

We have in-house design expertise at Kontrolit, so we can work with you to create a website design that reflects your business and calculate up-front what it will cost.

As for functionality, Kontrolit doesn't need to rely on third party software. We've created a range of customized modules for Shops, Members, Events, Galleries and Blogs, but there are many more, giving you a flexible site that exactly meets your needs.

And as you'll read in just a moment, because Kontrolit has created all the features which help your website work, they're always updated and compatible with each other, so there won't be any unexpected surprises.

Security & Updates

What security features does a Wordpress website provide?

"Open source" means you can customise the code to your heart's content. This obviously has advantages if you want to add new features, but it also presents a weakness, giving bugs and determined hackers an opportunity to probe for a way in.

Security & updates: updating your Wordpress site

There are 6-12 Wordpress updates each year. You will be encouraged to always go to the latest version to prevent hackers gaining access to your site. With each version update someone will need to audit the site to check nothing is broken. You will then need to check for updates to plugins. If the main Wordpress software is updated and this breaks a plugin which does not have an update you will need to either look for a new plugin or abandon it.

Security & updates with a Kontrolit website

By keeping the source code for Kontrolit "closed", at a stroke we are massively improving the security of our software. This means to date a Kontrolit site has never been hacked.

We launched Version 1 of Kontrolit's CMS way back in 2002. Major updates are made approximately every three months between each Version. And because the modules which provide the extra features on your site are all owned and developed by Kontrolit, we can carry out thorough testing at every stage to ensure 100% compatibility with every update.

Admin Interface

How user-friendly is open source software?

The main reason most site owners want a content management system is so they can update their websites themselves, quickly and easily.

The admin interface of some open source CMS platforms is more user-friendly than others, but the level of control you're given over your website can be frustratingly limited. If you want to do something that your CMS doesn't allow you to do, you might have to go back to your developer to create a work-around.

What will this cost?

How is Kontrolit's CMS different?

First of all, it's very user-friendly (more information later about our training and support), so you'll be up and running in no time.

Just as importantly, Kontrolit's content management system gives you far more control over many more areas of your site, with plenty of "widgets" to enable you to choose the website features you need.

And if your business changes in the future, simply expand your website with a new widget to create even more functionality.

Support & Training

What support does Wordpress provide?

Need to learn something new? Figure out a problem? The tricky thing with some open source software is that it's developed by a huge community of (mostly) voluntary contributors with varying degrees of expertise. And none of them are obliged to provide you or your developer with answers.

We'd be misleading you if we said that in some cases there wasn't a huge library of online resources for open source platforms on the internet, but finding exactly the right answer to resolve your query isn't always easy. There are community forums where you can ask questions, but you're relying on there being someone with the time, expertise and inclination to help you out.

How long will it take you to find solutions to your problems? What will your website developer charge you for this support? Can you just pick up a phone to get an answer?

What support does Kontrolit provide?

We provide 1 month's free support after your website goes live, plus we give every customer full training on our CMS. This gives you the knowledge and confidence straight away to make your website a success.

We've also created a free and useful library of supporting materials such as videos and training documents, to remind you of the basics or give you more advanced skills.

If you run into problems later on, one-to-one support from our team of experts is always available; we've a range of budget-friendly support options so you can either pay as you go or purchase a cost-efficient Support Pack for websites which need more regular support and development. This all helps to keep you productive.

Next Steps

Want to know more about Kontrolit?
Here are a few easy ways to get in touch:

Call us on 01935 434734

Email hello@kontrolit.net

Arrange an online demonstration

Visit our website www.kontrolit.net