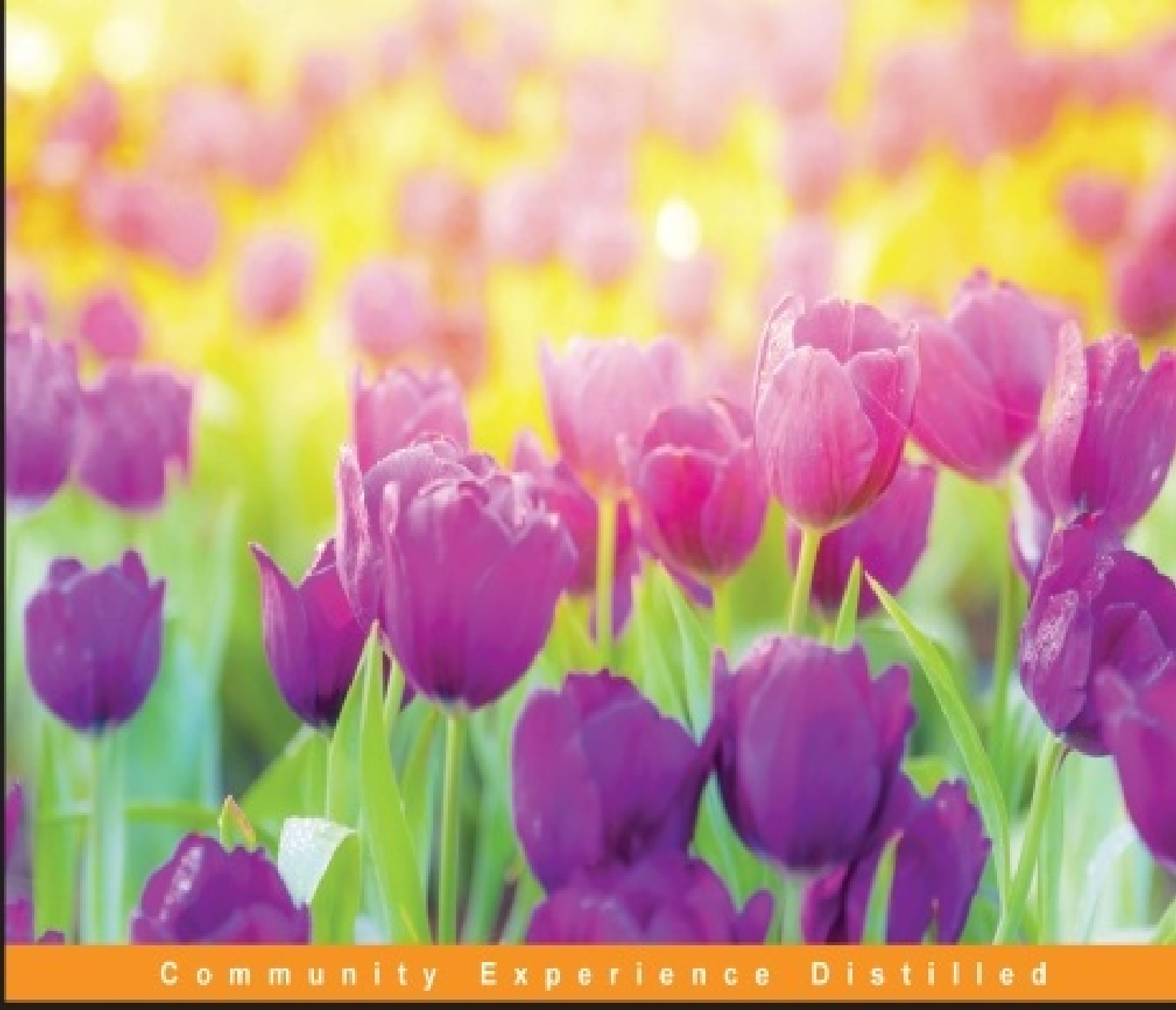

Community Experience Distilled

Building E-Commerce Solutions with WooCommerce

Second Edition

Transform your WordPress website into a fully-featured e-commerce store with the power of WooCommerce

Robbert Ravensbergen

[PACKT] open source
PUBLISHING
community experience distilled

Table of Contents

Building E-Commerce Solutions with WooCommerce Second Edition
Credits
About the Author
About the Reviewers
www.PacktPub.com
    Support files, eBooks, discount offers, and more
        Why subscribe?
        Free access for Packt account holders
Preface
    What this book covers
    What you need for this book
    Who this book is for
    Conventions
    Reader feedback
    Customer support
        Errata
        Piracy
        Questions
1. Setting Up WooCommerce
    Setting up your test environment
    Installing WooCommerce
    Setting up WooCommerce
        The General Settings Tab
        The Products Settings Tab
        The Tax settings tab
        The Checkout Settings Tab
        The shipping settings tab
        The Accounts Settings Tab
        The Email Settings Tab
        The API Settings Tab
        Preparing our test store
    Summary
2. Creating Your First Products
    Setting up product categories
    Creating your first product
        General data
        Inventory data
        Shipping data
        Linked products and attributes
        Advanced data
    Setting the categories, tags, and images for your product
        Product visibility options

Summary
3. Using Downloadable Products and Variations
Working with tags
Virtual products
Downloadable products
Using attributes
Setting up variable and grouped products
Other product types
Grouped products
External/Affiliate products
Importing product data
Summary
4. Payments, Shipping, and Coupons
Payment methods
Payment methods around the world
What you need to know about credit cards
Setting up PayPal
Setting up Stripe
Shipping methods and prices
Working with free shipping
Using shipping classes
Carrier integration
Using discount coupons
Summary
5. Working with WooCommerce Themes
Using the available widgets and shortcodes
Making or buying a theme
Finding and selecting WooCommerce themes
Things you should pay attention to when buying a theme
Installing a WooCommerce theme
Working with theme settings
Setting up your home page
Using the Storefront theme
Adding a logo
Homepage control
Summary
6. Customizing a WooCommerce Theme
What we need to get started
Tools every web designer needs
WordPress theme basics
Creating a Child theme
Developing WooCommerce themes
WooCommerce CSS
WooCommerce hooks, actions and filters
Adding a logo using code
Removing the sidebar

Summary
7. Running Your Online Store
Adjusting the notification e-mails
Deploying your WooCommerce store
Working with sales orders
Adding manual sales orders
Reporting
Sales reports
Customer reports
Stock reports
Tax reports
Summary
8. More Possibilities Using Plugins
Where to find the right WooCommerce plugins
A closer look at plugin prices
Popular and useful WooCommerce plugins
WooCommerce and Google Analytics integration
WooCommerce and the Yoast SEO plugin
Advanced products
Online marketing
The MailChimp integration
Social coupons
Google shopping
Abandoned carts
Plugins for store management
Table rate shipping
Invoicing
Subscriptions
Reporting
Business to Business catalog
Importing product data
USA tax calculations
A store in multiple languages
Free plugins
Summary
Index

Building E-Commerce Solutions with WooCommerce Second Edition

Building E-Commerce Solutions with WooCommerce Second Edition

Copyright © 2015 Packt Publishing

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embedded in critical articles or reviews.

Every effort has been made in the preparation of this book to ensure the accuracy of the information presented. However, the information contained in this book is sold without warranty, either express or implied. Neither the author, nor Packt Publishing, and its dealers and distributors will be held liable for any damages caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly by this book.

Packt Publishing has endeavored to provide trademark information about all of the companies and products mentioned in this book by the appropriate use of capitals. However, Packt Publishing cannot guarantee the accuracy of this information.

First published: November 2013

Second Edition: December 2015

Production reference: 1211215

Published by Packt Publishing Ltd.

Livery Place

35 Livery Street

Birmingham B3 2PB, UK.

ISBN 978-1-78588-156-5

www.packtpub.com

Credits

Author

Robbert Ravensbergen

Reviewers

Matthew Allan

Rémi Corson

Nicola Mustone

Commissioning Editor

Priya Singh

Acquisition Editor

Manish Nainani

Content Development Editor

Arun Nadar

Technical Editor

Bharat Patil

Copy Editor

Tasneem Fatehi

Project Coordinator

Neha Bhatnagar

Proofreader

Safis Editing

Indexer

Mariammal Chettiyar

Production Coordinator

Arvindkumar Gupta

Cover Work

Arvindkumar Gupta

About the Author

Robbert Ravensbergen is an experienced e-commerce and IT manager. He has been working in several international roles for various companies. He's also a passionate writer and blogger. WordPress, WooCommerce, and Magento are the topics that he writes about.

Robbert released several books about Magento and WooCommerce for Packt Publishing during the last couple of years. Besides this, he's an important writer in the Netherlands and well known for his understandable books for beginners about WordPress.

Readers can reach Robbert on his personal blog at http://www.joomblocks.com.

I would like to thank the employees of Packt Publishing for making this new book possible. It has been a pleasure working with you again. Besides that, I would especially like to thank the reviewers of this book, whose inputs were very valuable in creating a better product. Thank you!

About the Reviewers

Matthew Allan works with a growing team of developers at Prospress to bring top-notch plugins and extensions to the WordPress and WooCommerce platforms. Some of Prospress' most well-known extensions are WooCommerce Subscriptions and WooCommerce One Page Checkout—both available from woothemes.com.

Over the past 3 years, Matthew has been reviewing WooCommerce books and developing new software for entrepreneurs wanting to jump into the e-commerce world and start selling online. Matt's experience in developing and supporting premium extensions for WooCommerce has informed his technical review for this book.

Rémi Corson built his first website in high school, where, after a few months, he realized he was teaching web languages to his own teacher. Then, he decided to build his own content management system called PHPforge, which was used by more than 5,000 users at that time. He finally switched to WordPress a few years later.

Formerly in the top ten of CodeCanyon's best sellers, the largest code-related marketplace on the planet, Remi worked on Easy Digital Downloads' early versions with Pippin Williamson, and joined WooThemes as a Happiness Engineer in 2013 before the acquisition by Automattic in 2015.

Rémi is a public speaker and code expert. He works on WooCommerce core code on a daily basis and he built/refactored many official add-ons. He was also involved in the first WooConf organization in San-Francisco in 2014, the major WooCommerce-related event. Rémi writes weekly posts on his blog, mainly about WooCommerce, and provides a lot of free plugins and snippets.

He is also passionate about woodworking, surfing, and video making, and is a great guitar player.

Nicola Mustone is a web developer based in Italy, where he studied economy and programming. He developed his first website at the age of 15. Since then, he fell in love with programming and web developing, so he started studying it in depth, improving his skill set.

He started working as a freelancer at the age of 19. In 2011, he accepted his first job at a local web agency.

In 2012, Nicola moved from his birth city, Lucera, to Acireale in Sicily to work with Your Inspiration where he learned about WordPress in its entirety, from end user usage to themes and plugins development. Working at Your Inspiration, he specialized in WordPress development and customer support.

In October 2014, he started working for WooThemes, and in June 2015, Automattic

acquired WooThemes. He is currently an automattician working in the WooCommerce support team as an Internal Support Ninja. Nicola also writes articles and tutorials regularly to help customers understand WooCommerce and WordPress better.

www.PacktPub.com

Support files, eBooks, discount offers, and more

For support files and downloads related to your book, please visit www.PacktPub.com.

Did you know that Packt offers eBook versions of every book published, with PDF and ePub files available? You can upgrade to the eBook version at www.PacktPub.com and as a print book customer, you are entitled to a discount on the eBook copy. Get in touch with us at <service@packtpub.com> for more details.

At www.PacktPub.com, you can also read a collection of free technical articles, sign up for a range of free newsletters and receive exclusive discounts and offers on Packt books and eBooks.

https://www2.packtpub.com/books/subscription/packtlib

Do you need instant solutions to your IT questions? PacktLib is Packt's online digital book library. Here, you can search, access, and read Packt's entire library of books.

Why subscribe?

- Fully searchable across every book published by Packt
- Copy and paste, print, and bookmark content
- On demand and accessible via a web browser

Free access for Packt account holders

If you have an account with Packt at www.PacktPub.com, you can use this to access PacktLib today and view 9 entirely free books. Simply use your login credentials for immediate access.

Preface

Back in the early days of WordPress, the platform was mainly used to create and run blogs. Soon plugins became available to add functionality to the platform. A couple of e-commerce plugins became available as well. However, often they were incomplete or buggy.

In 2011, the WooCommerce plugin became available on the market, developed by the popular creators of Woothemes.com, where you can buy premium WordPress themes. WooCommerce was an instant hit and reached over ten thousand downloads in the first couple of weeks. A few years later, the plugin was downloaded almost 1.4 million times and it received a complete makeover during 2013 with the release of WooCommerce 2.0. Meanwhile, the solution has become mature and is even used for larger online stores.

The reason that the plugin became so popular is that it is so easy to use. Millions of people were already using WordPress for their blogs and websites and were looking for an easy way to be able to sell products and services directly on their own website. WooCommerce made this possible for all of us.

This book will explain you how to set up WooCommerce, create products, and use payment and shipping methods. You will work with themes and add plugins to expand the functionality of WooCommerce. It will teach you how to create and run your own online store in a very easy, straightforward manner.

It's time to get started!

What this book covers

Chapter 1, *Setting Up WooCommerce*, shows you how to set up a test environment and install WooCommerce. After that, you'll learn how to set up WooCommerce and work with taxes.

Chapter 2, *Creating Your First Products*, helps you create your very first products. You'll learn what the minimum steps are to get your products available and be able to start selling them.

Chapter 3, *Using Downloadable Products and Variations*, offers various other possibilities when creating products. In this chapter, you'll create downloadable products, learn how to work with attributes, and create variable products.

Chapter 4, *Payments, Shipping, and Coupons*, shows you how to set up payment and shipping methods for your store. You will also learn how to use discount coupon codes for marketing purposes.

Chapter 5, *Working with WooCommerce Themes*, shows you what you need to pay attention to and where to buy or download good themes. Having a solid WordPress theme available for your WooCommerce store is very important.

Chapter 6, *Customizing a WooCommerce Theme*, gives you a brief introduction to themes to get you started. Creating a WordPress and WooCommerce theme is worth a book by itself. You'll actually make code changes to your theme and find some practical examples.

Chapter 7, *Running Your Online Store*, starts with explaining how to bring a development store live. What do you do when the first orders flow in? How do you use WooCommerce to make sure that orders are handled correctly? We'll also show how to manually create an order and speak about reporting. Time to bring your store online and start selling!

Chapter 8, *More Possibilities Using Plugins*, explains which plugins to use and where to look for other possibilities. WooCommerce is a plugin for WordPress. On top of WooCommerce, you can install additional plugins to expand or change the functionality. But there are so many options, which plugins are a good choice?.

What you need for this book

In this book, we're assuming that you're familiar with using WordPress. You do not need development skills, but just a basic user-level knowledge of WordPress should be sufficient. Your WordPress website should be a self-hosted one. Using WordPress.com is not an option as it does not offer the possibility to install your own WordPress plugins.

If you're not yet familiar with WordPress, we highly recommend that you read one of the WordPress beginner's books or tutorials first. *WordPress 4.x Complete* from *Packt Publishing* is a good start (https://www.packtpub.com/web-development/wordpress-40-complete).

If you're already working with WordPress, we're also assuming that you know how to work with an FTP tool, like the free FileZilla.

Besides this, it's handy to have image manipulation software available, such as Photoshop, Photoshop Elements, Fireworks, or Gimp.

Finally, you'll need a code editor if you want to be able to change or create your own WooCommerce themes, a topic that we'll cover in Chapter 6, *Customizing a WooCommerce Theme*. Well-known editors are Notepad++ for Windows users and Coda or Sublime Text for Mac users. There are plenty of alternatives as well; just use the tools that you like.

Who this book is for

This book has been written for everyone who wants to learn how to expand an existing WordPress website with e-commerce functions using the WooCommerce plugin.

WooCommerce is an easy-to-use, but fully-functional, e-commerce plugin that will turn your website into a fully-featured online store. The book is suitable for marketers, e-commerce (project) managers, and web design agencies working with WordPress. First of all, this book is meant for everyone willing to run their own online store on a relatively small budget.

Although this book is not aimed at developers, some WooCommerce code examples are provided in this book.

Conventions

In this book, you will find a number of styles of text that distinguish between different kinds of information. Here are some examples of these styles, and an explanation of their meaning.

Code words in text, database table names, folder names, filenames, file extensions, pathnames, dummy URLs, user input, and Twitter handles are shown as follows: "Next, simply enter `WooCommerce` in the Search Plugins field and hit *Enter*."

A block of code is set as follows:

```
add_action( 'get_header',
'remove_storefront_sidebar' );
function remove_storefront_sidebar() {
  if ( is_product() ) {
    remove_action( 'storefront_sidebar',
'storefront_get_sidebar', 10 );
  }
}
```

New terms and **important words** are shown in bold. Words that you see on the screen, in menus or dialog boxes for example, appear in the text like this: "Click on **Plugins** in the menu on the left-hand side, and click on **Add New**".

> ## Note
>
> Warnings or important notes appear in a box like this.

> ## Tip
>
> Tips and tricks appear like this.

Reader feedback

Feedback from our readers is always welcome. Let us know what you think about this book—what you liked or may have disliked. Reader feedback is important for us to develop titles that you really get the most out of.

To send us general feedback, simply send an e-mail to <feedback@packtpub.com>, and mention the book title via the subject of your message.

If there is a topic that you have expertise in and you are interested in either writing or contributing to a book, see our author guide on www.packtpub.com/authors.

Customer support

Now that you are the proud owner of a Packt book, we have a number of things to help you to get the most from your purchase.

Errata

Although we have taken every care to ensure the accuracy of our content, mistakes do happen. If you find a mistake in one of our books—maybe a mistake in the text or the code—we would be grateful if you would report this to us. By doing so, you can save other readers from frustration and help us improve subsequent versions of this book. If you find any errata, please report them by visiting http://www.packtpub.com/submit-errata, selecting your book, clicking on the **errata submission form** link, and entering the details of your errata. Once your errata are verified, your submission will be accepted and the errata will be uploaded on our website, or added to any list of existing errata, under the Errata section of that title. Any existing errata can be viewed by selecting your title from http://www.packtpub.com/support.

Piracy

Piracy of copyright material on the Internet is an ongoing problem across all media. At Packt, we take the protection of our copyright and licenses very seriously. If you come across any illegal copies of our works, in any form, on the Internet, please provide us with the location address or website name immediately so that we can pursue a remedy.

Please contact us at <copyright@packtpub.com> with a link to the suspected pirated material.

We appreciate your help in protecting our authors, and our ability to bring you valuable content.

Questions

You can contact us at <questions@packtpub.com> if you are having a problem with any aspect of the book, and we will do our best to address it.

Chapter 1. Setting Up WooCommerce

During the last couple of years, WordPress has outgrown any other Content Management Solution worldwide. Numerous websites are built using WordPress on a daily basis. WordPress is even popular among large companies. Currently about a quarter of all websites worldwide are powered by WordPress.

WooCommerce is a plugin for WordPress that turns your website into a complete online store. Practically in minutes, but that doesn't mean that the solution is very limited. This book will show you what you can do with it. WooCommerce is a versatile plugin that gives the possibility for everyone with a little WordPress knowledge to start their own online store.

Originally, WooCommerce was derived from the Jigoshop plugin. The WordPress theme developers of WooThemes quickly brought the solution to a higher level and soon it became the most popular plugin for e-commerce within WordPress. In 2015, Automattic (the company behind WordPress) acquired WooThemes and WooCommerce. So we could almost say that WooCommerce has become the default ecommerce solution for WordPress now. At time of print WooCommerce is even powering 30% of all online stores worldwide.

In case you are not familiar with WordPress at all, this book is not the first one you should read. No worries though, WordPress isn't that hard to learn and there are a lot of online possibilities resources to learn about WordPress solution very quickly. Or just turn to one of the many printed books on WordPress that are available.

The following are the topics covered in this chapter:

- Setting up your test environment
- Installing and activating WooCommerce
- Using all WooCommerce settings
- Setting up Tax
- Adding WooCommerce pages to your WordPress menu

Setting up your test environment

Before we start, remember that it's only possible to install your own plugins if you're working in your own WordPress installation. This means that users that are running a website on WordPress.com will not be able to follow along. It's simply impossible in that environment to install plugins yourself. WooCommerce has recently become a part of WordPress itself. I can imagine that because of this WooCommerce might become available for WordPress.com users in the future. But so far there are no signs yet of an integration of WooCommerce into WordPress.com.