The WordPress Plugin Diet Plan: How to Trim Fat & Boost Performance

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MEET RAJ

Raj Shah is an enterprise SEO manager who has led high-performing teams at companies like AutoZone, Staples, and Oriental Trading Company. He and his wife run a family agency business for DIY, lifestyle, and food bloggers called House of Ideas.

Raj had been with his previous hosting provider for over 10 years and loved their pricing, support, and technology (for the most part). However, he would still take on many of the server-level responsibilities and would often solve problems using paid plugins. These paid plugins added cost, required expertise, and started to create bottlenecks when it came to performance.

Raj

*I shopped over **2 dozen managed hosts** recently, hoping to find the best service provider that was affordable, knowledgeable, personable, and most importantly, had the best-in-class WP technology from the ground-up, all of which would help me and our clients sleep better.*

Rocket.net was the only one that came close to meeting my strict criteria. Here are the redundant, unnecessary, or counterproductive plugins I could cut after moving over to Rocket.net.

THE PLUGIN DIET

Reducing the number of plugins was Raj's mission, not only for a cost savings perspective, but to also improve performance & reduce the complexity of managing multiple plugins across multiple WordPress sites.

Previously used plugins..   on Rocket.net

Jetpack $55.95 / year

Jetpack the plugin suite and Jetpack the company both promise to give you the world. They do a fairly decent job, too. Jetpack is probably the most feature-packed plugin in the WP repository, next to WooCommerce. The problem with everything-in-one plugins is that they load everywhere, and quickly bloat the site.

On   *by default*

- ✓ CDN
- ✓ WAF
- ✓ Image Optimization
- ✓ Backup & Restores

Caching Plugins like WPRocket or Autoptimize $150 / year

There are so many caching plugins out there that promise you a high Google PageSpeed score. However, if you have complex needs, this might not be enough - either because you didn't configure everything properly or because the server-level stack was subpar in the first place.

Speed optimization is Raj's biggest nightmare, never knowing the optimal mix of plugins, CDN, and hosting configurations. And by taking on this responsibility, Raj spent countless hours trying to crack the code for optimal optimizations, only to result in continuous setbacks from server changes, plugin updates, or CDN updates.

On   *by default*

- ✓ DevOps Knowledge
- ✓ Full-Page Caching
- ✓ CDN

> *With Rocket, I'm getting a killer platform and tailored optimization support from Rocket's product owners who've acquired deep experience and practice in web hosting for over a decade.*

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..more diet options..

UpdraftPlus & Other Backup Plugins — $150 / year

Raj utilized a variety of well-known backup plugins across his fleet of sites, as he needed the ability to manage backups and execute restorations in real time. No matter what WordPress plugin he tried (and he tried most of them), they all utilized valuable PHP resources and, in some cases (on bigger sites), slowed them down during the backup process.

It'll save me $49/month (agency plan), but more importantly, the time saved doing advanced setups and configurations for all my clients.

On *by default*
- ✓ Automatic & On Demand Backups
- ✓ Real-Time Restores

WMPU DEV Plugin Suite — $600 / year

Another company Raj admired was WPMU DEV plugin suite, and he was a paying customer for their contributions to the WP community. WPMU DEV plugin suite, while powerful, became too complex to configure, install, and update. Some of the really powerful plugins include automatic plugin updates, asset caching, image optimization, CDN, security, and others.

On *by default*
- ✓ CDN
- ✓ WAF
- ✓ Auto-Updates
- ✓ Full-Page Caching
- ✓ Image Optimization

Image Optimization.. — $50-100/month

With a number of sites that were image heavy, and knowing that size reduction will help page load times, Raj utilized plugins such as ImageBoss to reduce image size with on-the-fly image compression.
While not a huge cost, the plugins added layers of complexity, required regular updates, and utilized some of the PHP resources on the server.

On *by default*
- ✓ Brotli Compression
- ✓ Cloudflare Polish

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just a bit more :)

WordPress Security Plugins like iThemes security

$199 / year

The optimal security setup for your site starts with the hosting infrastructure, and usually ends with front-end optimizations using plugins like iThemes security, WMPU DEV's Defender Pro, and dozens of other big names. Regardless of the vendor, these plugins require PHP and expert level-security knowledge. They utilize resources and often time. If a security issue does occur, hosting providers will not be able to help, and will refer you back to the plugin vendor for support.

On *by default*

- ✓ Cloudflare WAF
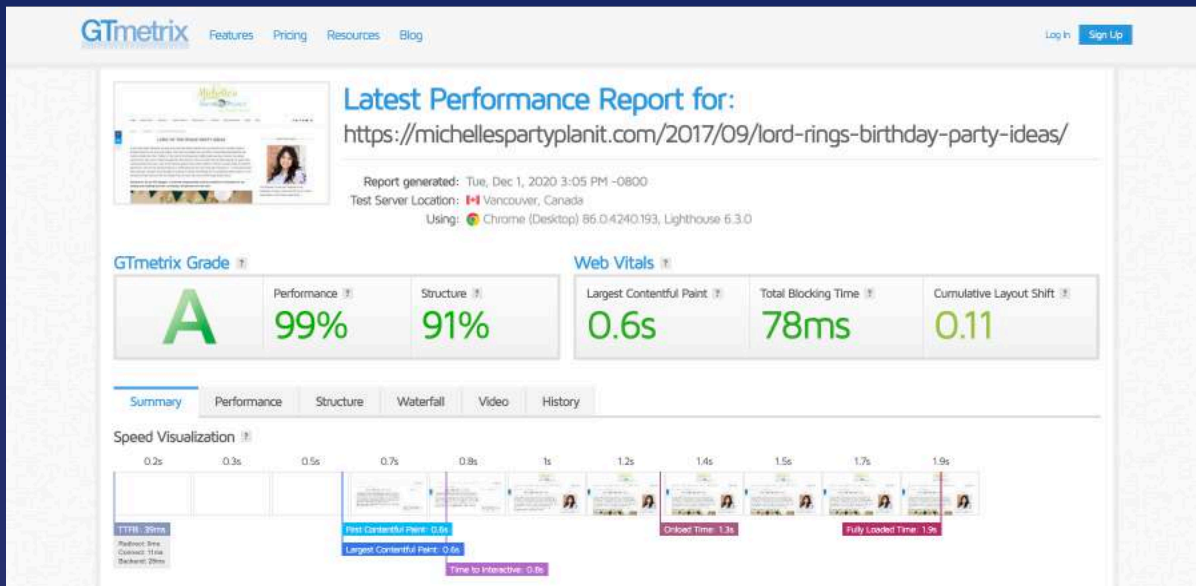- ✓ Immunity 360
- ✓ Custom WordPress Rules

Other Plugins

- OMGF (Optimize My Google Fonts)
- CAOS (Complete Analytics Optimization Suite)

The fewer 3rd party calls you make, the faster your actual core page content renders in the "waterfall," resulting in faster FCP, LCP, and whatever new metric Google has incorporated into their algorithms.

On *by default*

- ✓ Locally Cached Google Fonts
- ✓ Enterprise Priority Network Routing

REAL LIFE EXAMPLE

Results after plugin removal!
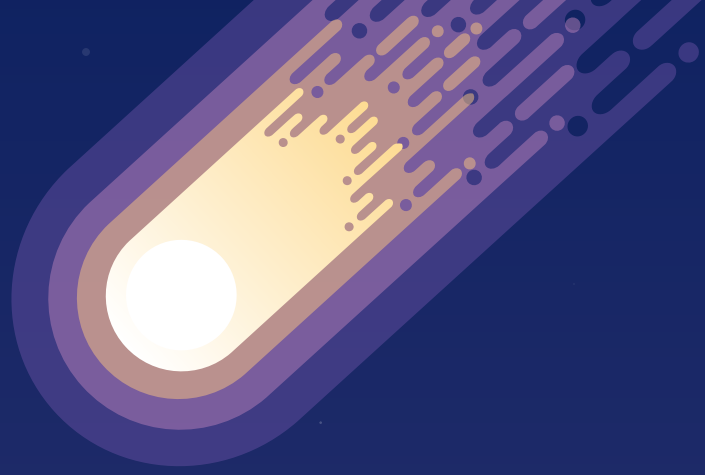
PER SITE COST & TIME SAVINGS

Annual Cost	$250 Annually
Hours Spent	24 Hours

Before Rocket.net, Raj spent on average $250 per year on various plugins to help optimize and protect an individual site and about 2 hours per month updating, configuring, learning, and tweaking settings.

A LONG-TERM SOLUTION

The right platform, the right support, and a balanced plugin arsenal enable you, the business owner or product owner, to take your best shot at success. When you stop fretting over the technical stuff, you can focus on creating, selling, growing, and so on. If you run an agency like Raj, working with long lists of plugins sometimes becomes a nightmare on your overhead, R&D, and even client services.

Saving money is always positive, but the real value in the Rocket.net platform comes from the always-on, expertly configured enterprise features that come with every account launched on the platform. Optimized from Edge Data Centers with premium access to the CloudFlare Enterprise Network, your WordPress site gains an immediate edge over the competition and utilizes Rocket.net pre-configured content optimization platform.

SAVE $250 A YEAR *per site!*

Just like Raj and House of Media and enjoy all the benefits of the Rocket.net plaform.

✓ **Fewer Plugins** *(or none at all)*

✓ **Fastest WordPress**

✓ **Best Security That's Always Up To Date**

✓ **Always-On CDN & WAF**

✓ **CloudFlare Enterprise CDN & WAF**

✓ **Free SSL that NEVER Expires**

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