7 Reasons Why You Should Start with a Free Plugin in the Official WordPress Plugin Repository

https://orbisius.com/blog/7-reasons-start-free-plugin-wordpress-plugin-repository-p7089

Can you set up a test/staging WordPress sites in seconds? Yes, with **qSandbox** you can.

We have lots of WordPress plugins that we currently support. The latest one is called SEO Editor. It's a universal SEO editor and is pending approval in the official WordPress plugin repository.

Initially we thought about launching it as a paid only plugin. We invited lots of people to beta test it and share some feedback. There were lots of recommendations and one of them was to launch a lite version in the WordPress.org repository.

It kind of made sense for the following reasons.

1. Free Security Review

A few days after the submission the plugin review team came up with some good recommendations on how to improve the plugin's code. Specifically the security part.

It doesn't matter how much experience you have, it's always good to have another set of eyes check your code and share feedback. A different perspective is always beneficial.

It sucks when spammers abuse your products to spam or scam people. So you should always be learning how to improve the security of your software.

2. More Exposure

Another benefit of the free version is that having a plugin in the plugin repository will give an exposure. The more people check the plugin the higher the chance of somebody sharing feedback.

When you have real user feedback you can prioritize the future development of the plugin. That way you will be implementing features that have been requested and not rely on gut feeling. Gut feeling is important but data is way more important.

Of course if you know the market really really well even better than your users and customers then you can rely more on gut feeling but I still think that customer feedback is important because people can give you a different perspective. Sometimes they even use the product in a different way than originally anticipated.

3. Reduced Marketing Expenses

Free attracts people like nothing else. This should reduce the friction of how many people install your WordPress plugin.

Some people may not appreciate free stuff but it's still worth it.

4. Reviews

People can share reviews about a plugin that was published in the plugin repository and that way you can determine based on the feedback what they value and are interested in.

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This can also be a source for motivation.

if it's a good review, that means that you're on track so keep on doing whatever is working at the moment. If it's a bad review just comment and see if you can improve things.

Keep in mind. It's good to react as soon as possible so people are more likely to change their review. WordPress.org locks the reviews after one year and they can't be updated anymore.

5. Easier Updates

When you publish a plugin in the official WordPress plugin repository you can push updates very easily because WordPress checks if there are any updates for every plugin you have installed on your WordPress site. We have seen the update prompt within WordPress just several minutes after it was pushed.

6. Automatic Notifications

If your username is used or if you set up an alert you will get notified by email when there's a post in the WordPress.org support forums. Our plugins are prefixed by Orbisius so setting up a keyword notification just for Orbisius was nice.

Also if you have created a slack profile you will get notified there too.

To check or update the keywords that you want to be notified about go to:

https://profiles.wordpress.org/lordspace/profile/notifications/

7. Market Validation

After your plugin is live in the official WordPress plugin you will start promoting it by writing articles about it and asking people to review it. After a certain time you'll get a sense if there is real need for the product. If the feedback and installations are increasing, great!

but if it turns out that nobody wants it, you just saved yourself some time by not developing the pro version. Those resources could be directed to another project that needs attention.

Bonus: Increased Developer Credibility

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if you are applying for various Press related jobs or you can just share a link to the plugins you've created with your potential clients. They can see your work and determine if you and the job are a good fit. You will stand out compared to people who just send links to sites.

We have always requested to check some source code before moving to step when hiring a developer.

Do you have any tips or suggestions?

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