

Connecting WordPress with Social Media

If you have blog content, you may want your readers to share that content. In this article, Linda offers a variety of ways to help your readers share what you've written. The focus in this article is on Gravatar, avatars and linking to social media through WordPress Global.

Connecting Globally with WordPress

One way to connect globally with WordPress (WP), with your WP blog, and with other WP blogs is to check in at the [WP site](#). If you do not have an account with WP, no worries...you'll learn how to create one and how to include some other tools in the process.

A warning to those who like to remain incognito – if you plan to use an anonymous method of posting or commenting on blogs, you have to work around the features I mention in this article. These features and tools are for those individuals who want to push their products, services, writing and ideas to the forefront. These methods do NOT help you remain anonymous.

That said, you need to decide, step-by-step throughout this process, how much you want to share with your friends, family and that stranger in a foreign country. While you hope that everyone who walks through your WP door is filled with light, love and happiness, keep that idea projected into the universe. Reality is that, despite all your karma, you may encounter some trouble along the way from individuals who have nothing better to do than to stalk you, hassle you or merely disagree with everything you say and do.

Getting Started at WordPress Global

The screenshot shows the WordPress.com homepage. At the top, there's a navigation bar with fields for Username and Password, a Log In button, a checkbox for Remember me, a link for Lost your password?, a search bar for WordPress.com Blogs, and a Search button. Below the navigation bar, the WordPress.com logo is on the left, and a language selector (English) is on the right. The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column features a 'Freshly Pressed' section with a 'Subscribe' button and a grid of nine featured blog posts. The right column has a 'Express yourself. Start a blog.' section with a 'Sign up now' button, followed by a 'Stats to obsess over' section with a green arrow icon and a 'Gorgeous themes' section with a 'Vigilance' theme preview. The featured blog posts include: 'Mochar ghonto – a quintessential Bengali recipe' by Naan Therapy, 'Blogging is powerful' by Just Enjoy Him, 'Get it while you can' by Each Small Thing, 'Inquiring Minds' by Fluffy Bunnies, 'I love you like a dog' by It's Lisa's Blog, 'The Three Plants That Will Improve Your Home Air' by Broken Secrets, 'Can't Obama do anything while I'm away? Jeez!' by 56 Rebels, 'The Bleatings of a Middle-Aged Indie Kid' by the planet harris blog, and 'The Bleatings of a Middle-Aged Indie Kid' by the planet harris blog.


When you arrive at the [WordPress page](#) (different than the WordPress download or [WordPress Codex](#)), you'll see that you can log in at the registration area in the upper left of your screen. If you are not a member of the WP site, you cannot gain access to an API code, and you may want this tool down the road to activate other tools such as [Askimet](#) to help delete spam at your blog's source.


When you sign up with WP, you do not need to create a blog immediately. However, if you are new to WordPress, this feature might help you get accustomed to WP's features in a safe environment. While there are some limitations to hosting a blog on WP, they offer widgets, templates and stats that make this whole blogging process much easier than it would be if you hosted the blog on a server.

Plus, when you host a blog at WP, you get to experience some features that other WP users may not experience, ever, or – at least – not until WP developers make those features into apps that you can use on your own hosted WP blog.

Even if you do not create a blog at WP, you have the option to develop a profile and much more at WP Global. By combining WP Global and Gravatar, you can pull in some significant social network tools that can promote your blog to thousands of other readers as you make your rounds on the Web. Allow me to show you what I mean...

Gravatar Punch

 Gravatar Log in / Sign up Help



Gravatar

A Globally Recognized Avatar

Your Gravatar is an image that follows you from site to site appearing beside your name when you do things like comment or post on a blog. Avatars help identify your posts on blogs and web forums, so why not on any site?

Get your Gravatar today »

For Site Owners

Setting up Gravatars on your site is easy; you don't even need an account! [Plugins are available](#) for leading blog software and content management systems, and [our tutorials](#) will have you running Gravatars in no time.

Embed Choose any part of your image using the dotted box below HD On Off

Crop and Finish

Gravatar - Quick overview

Play Video

Crop and Finish

click here for details


Small Preview

Large Preview

The previews above represent what your new gravatar image will look like when chosen.

2:09


Some Sample Gravatars



Since I've been on [Gravatar](#) a while, and on WP even longer, I'm unsure how the conjoining between the two sites took place or when it happened. I just know that, now, I can work from two different sites to create an avatar, to switch that avatar around and to create links and ways to communicate in both places.

Now that you're registered at WP, you might want to head to Gravatar to create an avatar. An avatar is an image that you see alongside a Web user's name in many instances. If you have a FB page, a blog, a Twitter account and more that all link together as YOU or as your business...then WP and Gravatar can be likened to the foundation for that connectivity in many ways. Gravatar, basically, creates a way to identify yourself across the board at many social media sites through an avatar and through your personal preferences to connect various social media sites.

The Gravatar site is easy to use, and they link to a ton of instructional sites and guidelines to help you delineate how to use your avatar and your profile. Once you connect between Gravatar and WordPress, you can open your WP account and see that your profile at WP imitates the one that you created at Gravatar. The profile you create can be self-edited so that your public image displays only what you want others to see:

 Gravatar

Log in / Sign up ▾

Help ▾


This is the public, global profile of Linda Goin.


Gravatar allows you to manage all of your online identities in one place on the web. You should [sign up](#) and create your own profile, or [log in](#) if you already have an account.



[Sign Up](#)

Already have an account? [Log In](#).

Verified Services

 [@LindaGoin](#)





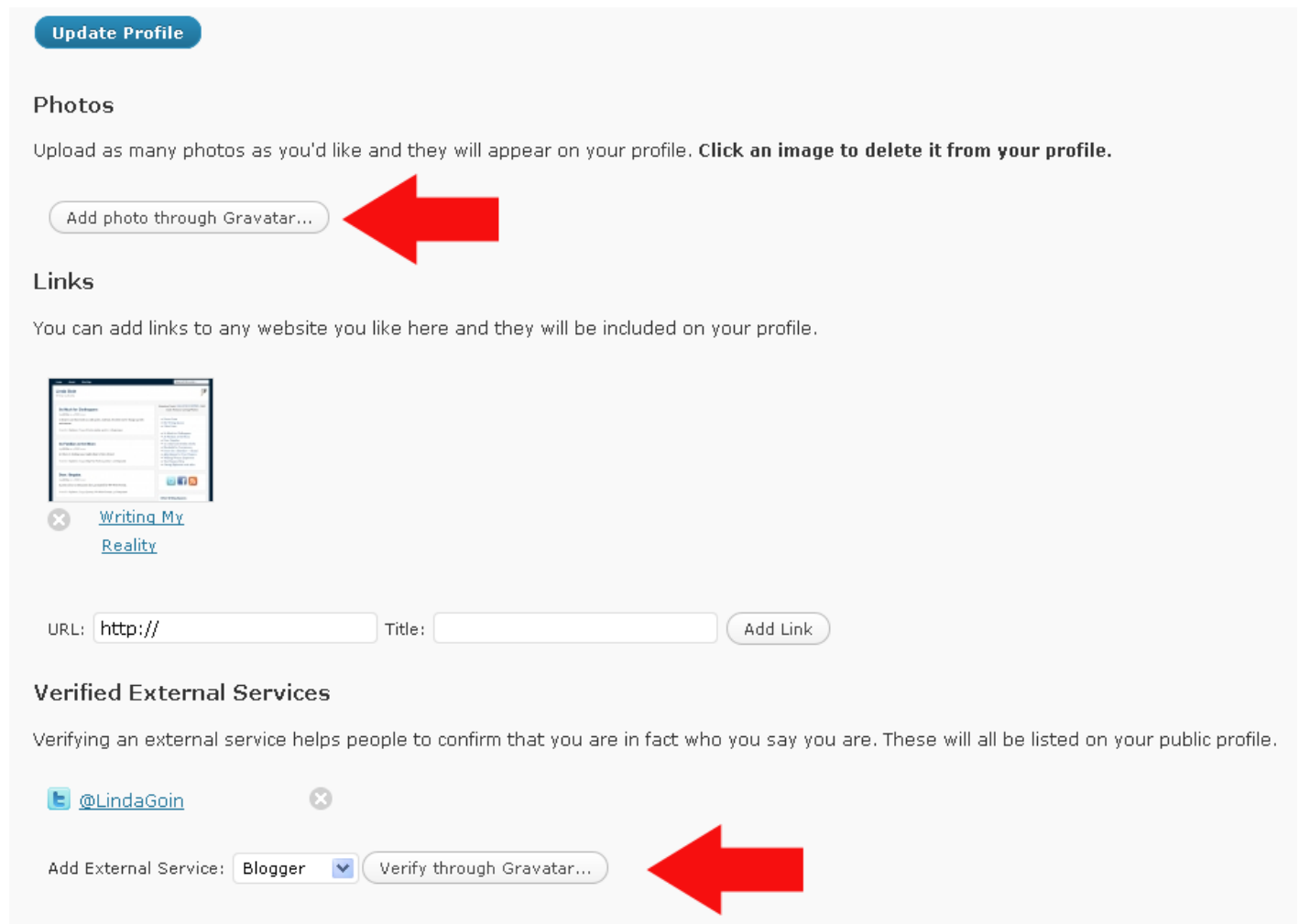
Linda Goin

Publisher, published writer, ghostwriter, poet and cranky crone.

Link to this profile: <http://gravatar.com/appomattoxnews>

Note: This profile is shown at Gravatar, but anyone can reach it through WP as well. Note that you can include a number of profile photos and links to other sites as well as links to your Twitter account and about twenty other social media sites. You might also note that your larger image will be pixelated, or lossy, because Gravatar seems to refuse to post the larger image on any given avatar photo.

You might note, too, that when you register at WP Global and at Gravatar and return to check out your profile at WP, you'll see the following:



Update Profile


Photos

Upload as many photos as you'd like and they will appear on your profile. **Click an image to delete it from your profile.**

Add photo through Gravatar...

Links


You can add links to any website you like here and they will be included on your profile.

 Writing My Reality

URL: Title:

Verified External Services

Verifying an external service helps people to confirm that you are in fact who you say you are. These will all be listed on your public profile.

 @LindaGoin

Add External Service:

The arrows above point to the fact that if you add new photos and new links to external services (meaning social media sites), you'll be conducting those activities through Gravatar.

Using Avatars in Self-Hosted WP Blogs

If you are hosting a WP blog on a server outside WP, you'll see how you can manage your avatars in the Dashboard if you go to "Settings > Discussion." Scroll down that page to the bottom, where you'll see this information:







Avatars

An avatar is an image that follows you from weblog to weblog appearing beside your name when you comment on avatar enabled sites. Here you can enable the display of avatars for people who comment on your blog.

Avatar Display ☐ Don't show Avatars
☒ Show Avatars

Maximum Rating ☐ G — Suitable for all audiences
☒ PG — Possibly offensive, usually for audiences 13 and above
☐ R — Intended for adult audiences above 17
☐ X — Even more mature than above

Default Avatar For users without a custom avatar of their own, you can either display a generic logo or a generated one based on their e-mail address.

- ☒  Mystery Man
- ☐  Blank
- ☐  Gravatar Logo
- ☐  Identicon (Generated)
- ☐  Wavatar (Generated)
- ☐  MonsterID (Generated)

Save Changes

In the image above, you can see choices to show or not show avatars, choices for ratings, and choices for default avatars for others who do not use an avatar. From these settings, you can see how comments look on one of my sites, lindagoin.com:

**neil reid***3 June 2010 at 2:58 pm | [Permalink](#) | [Reply](#)*

What a delight! Your poem literally breaths Linda. All the importance of nothing much, just the moment as it was – and just precisely where we live day to day. Meaning without significance – I much appreciate. Excellent, and arriving here was also just right I think. When you don't know what to do (or write), attend what you're already doing. I'm amazed myself how oft what I want or need is already right in front of me (literally and figuratively both).

You brightened my day! Thanks.

**Linda***3 June 2010 at 2:59 pm | [Permalink](#) | [Reply](#)*

Wow – thanks, Neil! Some days are just good, ya know? =)

**Neil***3 June 2010 at 12:15 pm | [Permalink](#) | [Reply](#)*

Yes, I chose a very complimentary response to one of my poems at that site for this example. Who wouldn't? The arrow points to the person who does not have an avatar. In my previous settings, I chose the "mystery man" for the default avatar, but other choices can be more colourful. I don't know how Neil created his avatar, but – by the mere fact that it shows – it means that he has created an avatar and that it is available to show up on any site uses and accepts avatars.

Note that my public image avatar, the beak nose profile compared to penguins with same, is used here in this blog. Rest assured that, if I choose to comment on any other blog tapped into using Gravatar avatars (or avatars in general), this same image will show up there as well.

This similarity of image across the board works wonderfully to help people connect you to a face, a logo, or a piece of your artwork for that matter. Use consistency, especially with a logo (in other words, don't change up the avatar unless you design a new logo). But, feel free to change up your logo across the board if you feel you need to change it. Once you change the image in the avatar, it is change globally, across all WP sites or any other sites that recognize Gravatar avatars now, in the future and – incredibly – also in any past comments or posts you have created. This makes your avatar virtually seamless.

Conclusion

Using an avatar to display a logo or your image or any other image that you see fit to use can create a visual connection between you and your words and the reader. This connectivity can work to help readers to place your image, subliminally, with your ideas at your blog or at other blogs where you post comments.

Now, in addition to using Gravatar to help you connect with your social media tools, WP also is getting in on the social media circus at their WP Global site. If you host a site with them, you can add ["like" and reblogging features](#) to your blog hosted at WP. If this is the case, then you might expect WP to come out with an app in the near future that can help those individuals who host WP blogs on other servers to be able to do the same. Some plugins now offer that capability, but – not trusting using a wide variety of plug-ins – I will wait to see what WP offers after they work out any bugs in this feature.

In the next article, I'll provide more information about these features at WP Global as well as information about other social media capabilities, no matter where you host your WP site.