Web Service tutorial
Widgets and sidebars

Feb 2021 (Beta Version)

Sidebars

The easiest way to customise pages is by editing the sidebar content. A sidebar is a dedicated space to insert custom content. On our templates they go on the right-hand side of the page.

Sidebars also can be used for dedicated custom content on other parts of the page that don't look exactly like a regular right-hand side sidebar, for example, we have a sidebar for the local navigation division and a hidden sidebar below the main page content. Those are "invisible" sidebars that can have custom content inserted.

Widgets

Widgets are tools that generate custom content for a sidebar. Classic examples are the Text widget and the Navigation Menu widget. The Text widget lets you add any text to a regular sidebar, while the Navigation Menu is used for the Local Menu sidebar that is the "invisible" sidebar that displays the site navigation menu.

The best widget functionality is the ability to add the same widget content to as many pages as you need. So if you need to add a single text or a single form to multiple pages, you can use a Widget for that.
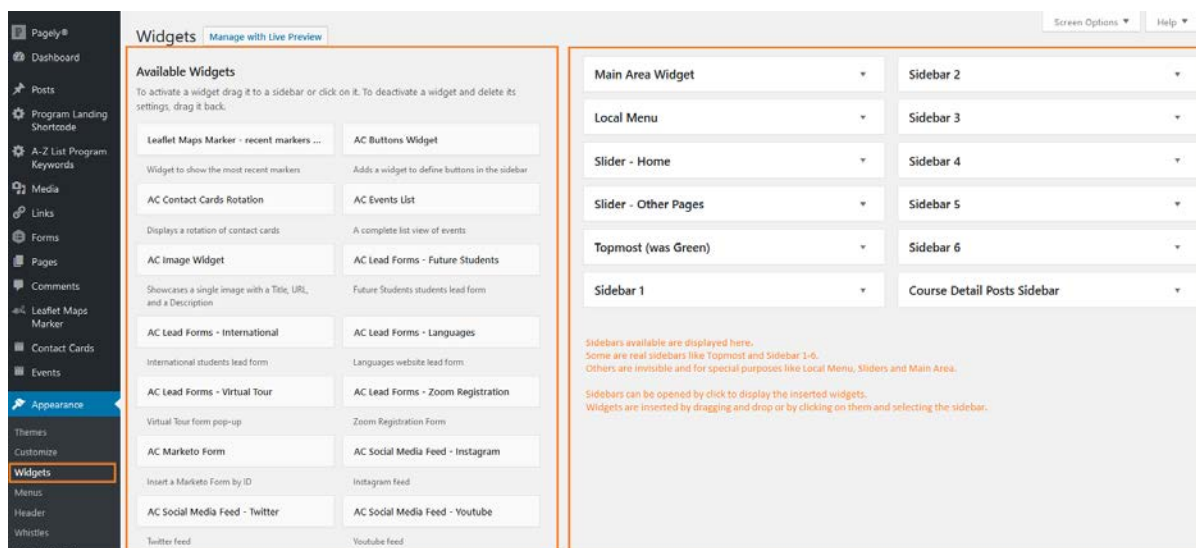
Templates with sidebar

Sidebars only work on templates that have them. All our regular templates have sidebars available. Some special ones don't, for example, the Landing template.

Read our "Starting up a new site" and "Landing Template" tutorials to find out more about them.

Adding Widgets to sidebars

Go to **WordPress admin > Appearance > Widgets:**

Widgets available are displayed on the left-hand side. On the right-hand side you find the website sidebars.

Regular sidebars

On a page, they look exactly like what they're supposed to be, a right-hand sidebar. We have the **Topmost** and **Sidebar** 1-6.

The widgets are always displayed on the website page following the order you add them. However, you can also use the Topmost and Sidebar 1 to 6 to sort them. Any widgets added to Sidebar 3 will be displayed below Sidebar 2, Sidebar 1 and Topmost. If you only have a few widgets to add, you can add them all to Topmost.
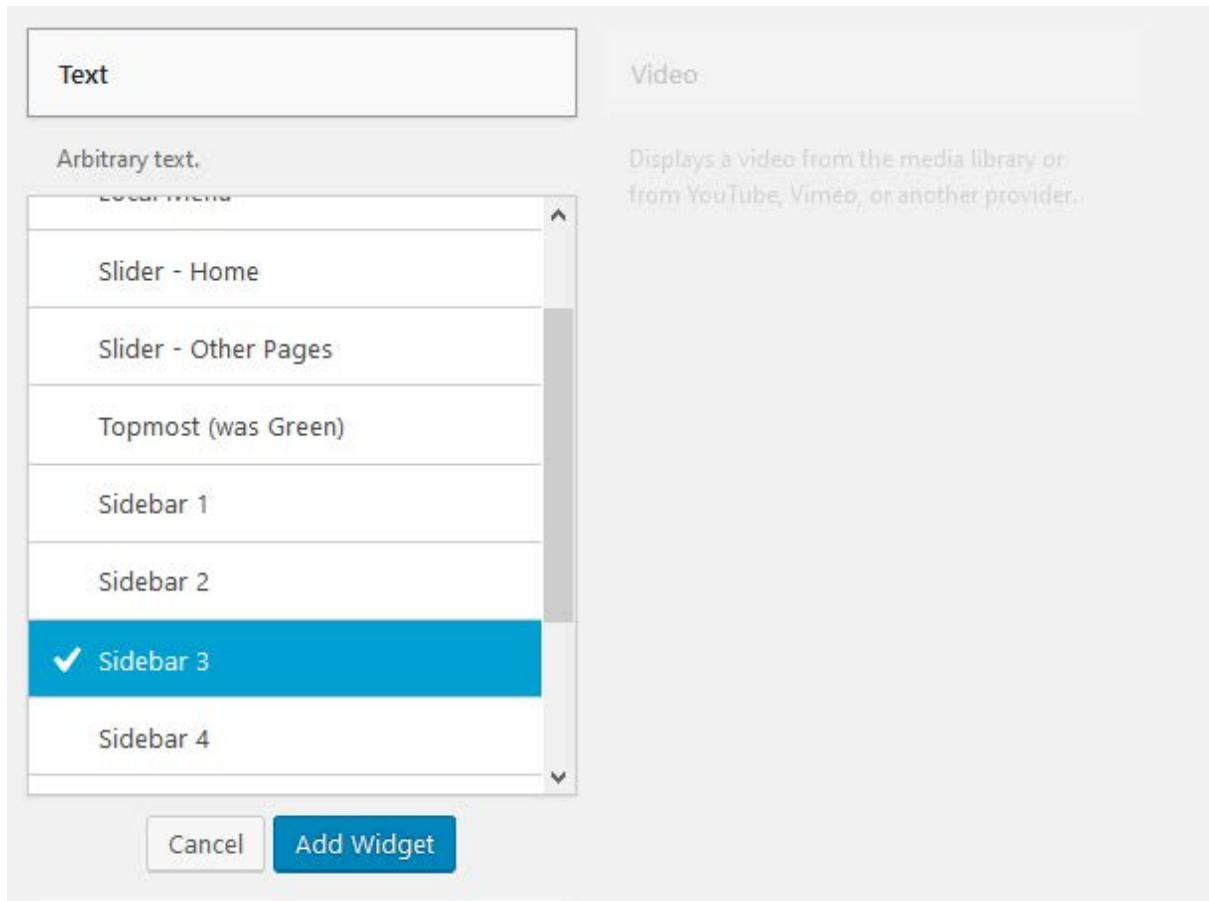
Special and "invisible" sidebars

Local Menu sidebar is only for local navigation menus. The **Sliders** sidebar are for adding slider widgets. You use them for MetaSlider. Read more about it on our Sliders tutorial.

We also have the **Main Area Widget** sidebar. It actually displays widgets below the main content area. Form widgets are majorly added there.

There are also website specific sidebars. If you have a site with custom built sidebars, Web Services probably had already briefed you about them, e.g. School sites.

Adding widgets

On the same Widgets page. You can either click on the widget or you drag and drop the widget to a opened sidebar. By clicking, click on the widget, select the sidebar and click on "Add Widget".

Once they're added to the sidebar, there are two important fields to consider.

Title

The title is available in most widgets. Use it to have a title that will be visible on this admin Widgets page. It's useful when you have multiple widgets of the same type.

Some widgets may also display the title on the website page. If you want to avoid that, add an exclamation mark before the title text.

Pages

Your widget might be displayed on all pages by default. This may not be what you need. To select the pages, use the "checked pages" field.

You can choose between either **"Show on checked pages"** or **"Hide on checked pages"**

Use "Show …" to select exactly on what pages you need it displayed. For example, if you want to add a text to the sidebar of the Campus Tours page, you do exactly as you can see on the figure.

Use "Hide on …" to do the opposite. When it's selected, the widget displays on all pages, except the ones you select.

Don't forget to save.

Customising and deleting

Between the "Title" and the "Show …" fields, you find all the widget settings fields.

For the example Text widget, the only particular field is the text box.

You can delete or move a widget between sidebars by dragging and dropping. Just drop them out of the sidebar box to delete them. You can also click on the "Delete" link.

Available Widgets

There are many widgets available for use on our website. The best way to learn them is experimenting. Widgets will never break your site. Feel free to add as many as you want to experiment. Add them, change their settings and check the results on the pages. If anything goes wrong, just remove them.

Keep in mind that some widgets require installation by the Web Services.

We've got a few widgets worth mentioning:

Text

It provides a text field with some text options like bold. Useful to add small text section to a sidebar or even the main text area.

Image

You can select one single image to add to a sidebar.

Navigation Menu

It's used to set up the local navigation menu. Read our "Setting up a new website" tutorial to find out more.

You can also use it on a regular sidebar. It'll display the menu as a sidebar link section.

Links

Displays a sidebar link section. Links can be added on WordPress admin > Links.

Form

It allows you to add a Gravity Form either to a regular sidebar or the main area. Contact Web Services to find out more about Gravity Forms.

Custom HTML

For those who can write HTML, this is the correct widget. It displays any HTML inserted. It works like an advanced Text widget.

Gallery

It's useful to display image galleries. It's best used when added to the Main Area. When editing, click on it to add a gallery and it opens the "Edit Gallery" screen where you can select multiple images for you gallery.

When on the "Edit Gallery" screen, make sure to select "Link to Media File".

AC Marketo Form

Allows you to add a Marketo Form. Contact the Marketing Salesforce team to find out more.

AC Buttons Widget

It's almost the same as the Links widget, with the exception that you can add links on the widget settings form itself. You can also choose between 3 styles for the link buttons.

AC Events List

Displays the official list of events from the Algonquin College Events website. You can add it to the Main Area.

MetaSlider

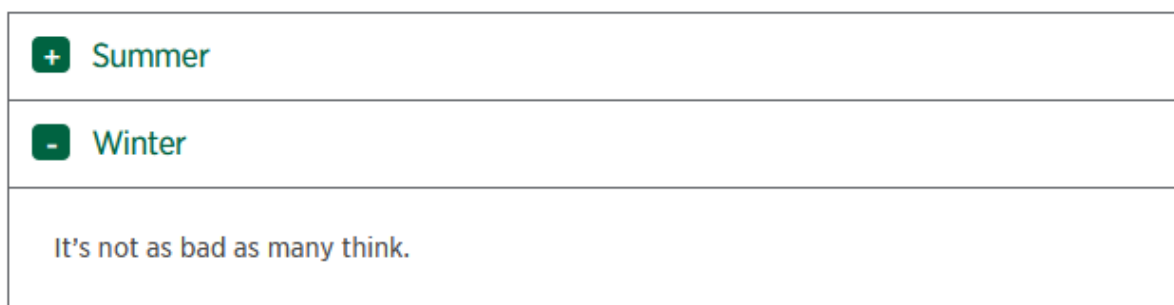To add sliders created on MetaSlider. Read our "Sliders" tutorial to find out more.

AC Social Media Feed widgets

Instagram, Twitter and YouTube are available. They're straightforward to use, except Instagram that requires set up by Web Services.
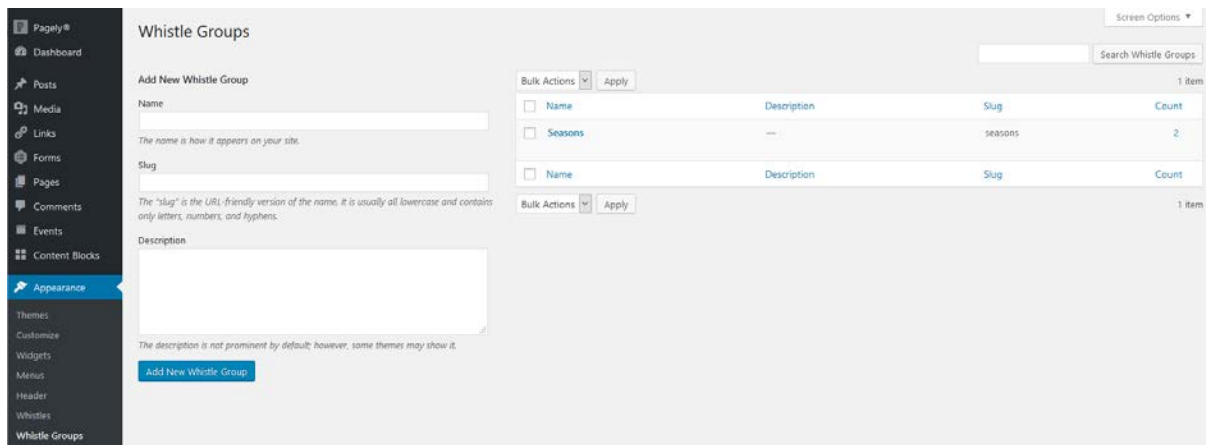
Whistles

It's a famous tool to create tabs and collapsible sections on a page. When adding to the Main Area, it displays sections like this one:
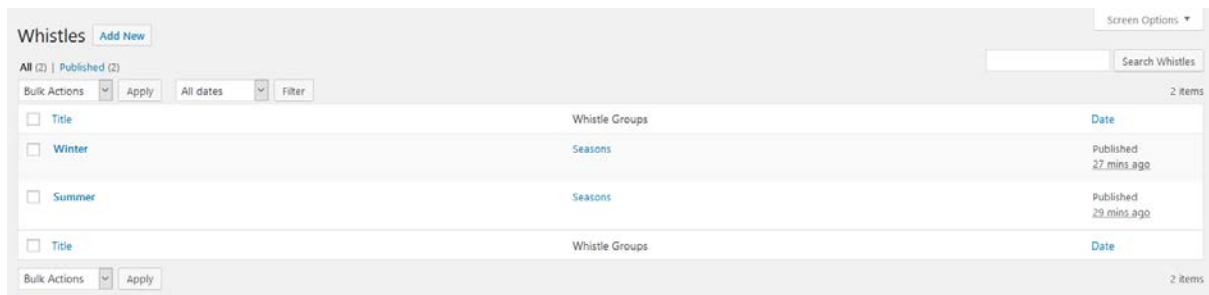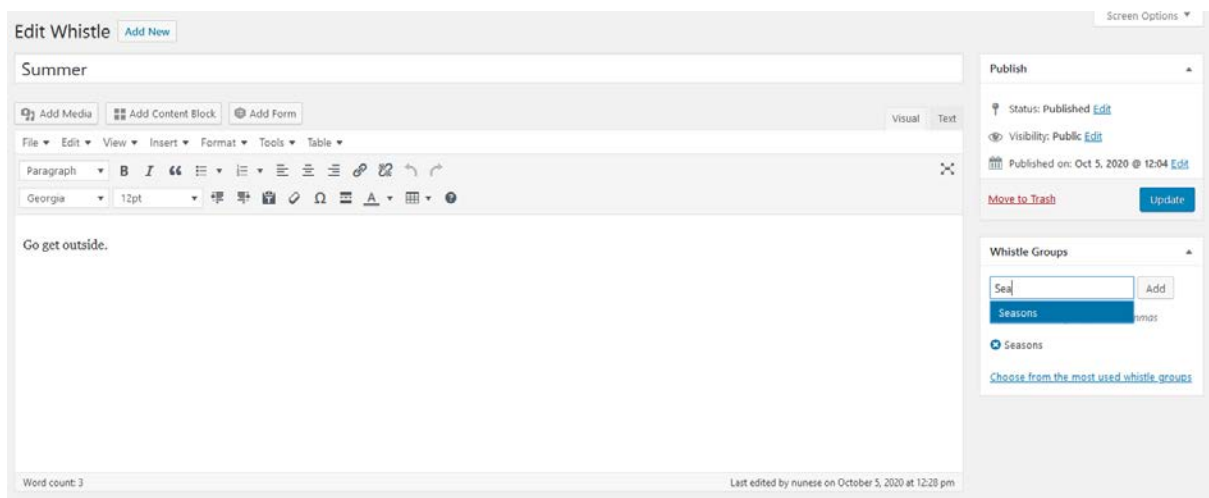

Before adding the Whistles widget to the Main Area sidebar, you need to create the content. Go to **WordPress Admin > Appearance > Whistle Groups** to create a group of tabs. In this example, I added "Seasons".

Then, to add the tab content, go to **WordPress Admin > Appearance > Whistle**:

When editing a Whistle, don't forget to select the Whistle group on the right-hand sidebar. Just start typing the name of the group.
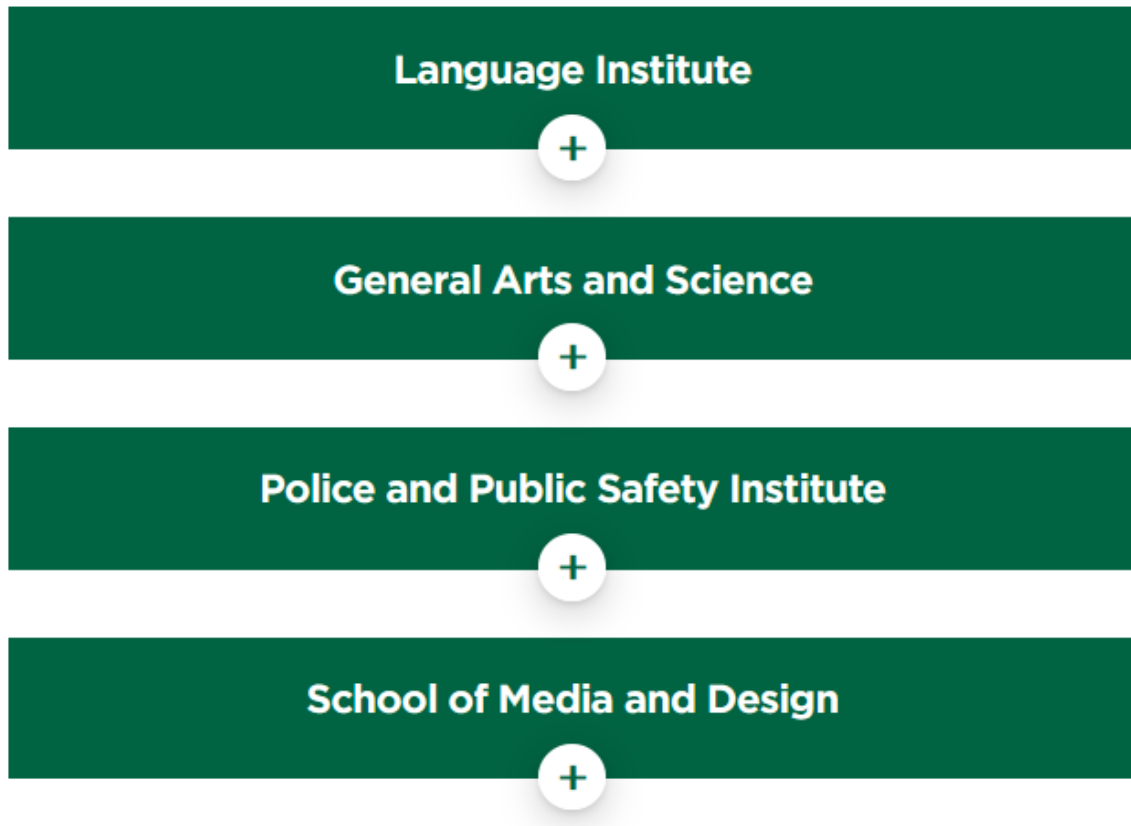

It's important to know that the tab content can be reused in multiple collapsible sections. Just add the same Whistle to more than one Whistle groups.

On the Widget settings, you'll select the group you want to display.

Whistles AC skin

You can ask Web Services to install the Algonquin College skin for Whistles that provides this design:

To choose this skin, select the AC type when adding or editing whistles.

This skin is particularly fitting for pages using wide templates.

You can also add a subtitle for your collapsible by adding a heading level 2 as the first sentence of the whistle content.

The result looks like as following: