

The evolving role of the

WordPress Administrator

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Experiences are **not** always

backwards compatible

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WordPress users **need**

~~consultants~~ administrators



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Administering WordPress means

evaluating core features



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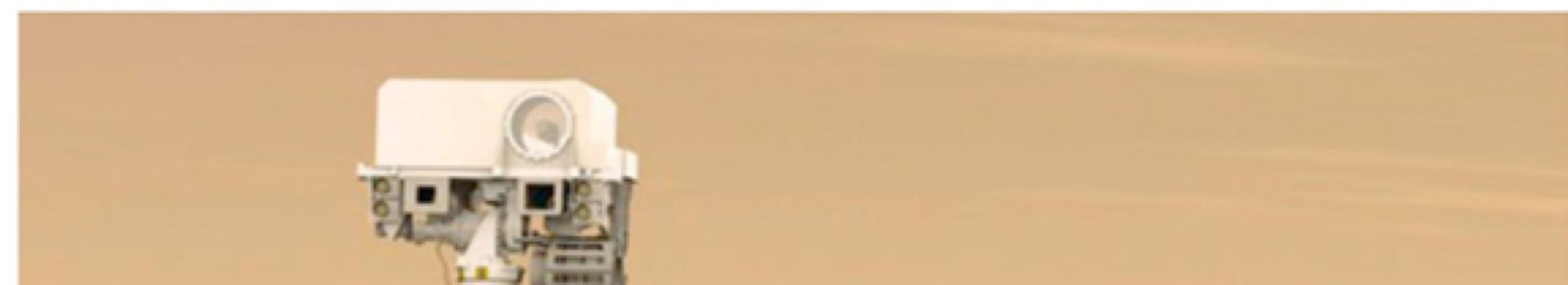


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Riad Benguella announced on the core development blog last week the editor in WordPress 5.4 will ship in fullscreen mode by default. While some form of fullscreen or distraction-free writing has existed for years in the core platform, this marks the first time WordPress will make it the default experience.

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Disable Block Editor default FullScreen mode in WordPress 5.4

Mar 3, 2020 - Scheduled for March 31, 2020, WordPress 5.4 will enable FullScreen mode by default in the Block Editor (Gutenberg). Even if I'm fully involved



Matt Mullenweg 7:52 pm on March 3, 2020

This is on me as release lead — I've been meaning to get this in for a while but it got lost in the shuffle.

I'm very comfortable with the decision to have fullscreen by default given the user testing we've seen and other qualitative feedback, which I've also heard is similar to what folks like Godaddy have found in their testing. The code change is minimal so if during the month of March we need to revert it, shouldn't be a problem.

I'm not as sure yet about the toolbar placement, that default is not on my radar to change currently.



Joost de Valk 4:00 am on March 4, 2020

I'm very unhappy with this change this late in the process, without a lot of discussion, even when I see in the comments above that it's basically Matt making the call.

I think this change leads to more people being "lost" in the admin and I'm not convinced it's a good step. I'd like to see some of those user test results, and have a wider discussion before we make a change like this.

I'm not sure if people are aware that changes like this force lots of work on people who maintain courses and materials around the editor.



Samuel Wood (Otto) 7:32 pm on March 4, 2020

Yeah... This is pretty awful, going to cause a lot of support issues, and really needs to not be default without some kind of a walk through or introduction for existing users.

I'm fine with making it default for really brand new users, as they have no expectations and are more likely to take to it, but making this the default after an upgrade situation is highly disorienting and confusing, even to me. Why did my sidebar disappear? Where are the settings? What messed this up? That's the first three thoughts.

Don't introduce change without actually introducing change. That should be the lesson. Try for a more gradual approach. Right now, the main complaint against the block editor is that it is too narrow, because most themes don't make it wider... and you want to remove even more things on the sides to make more extra unused space? Not gonna sell well, friend. Is the editor actually full width now? Did it address an issue, or create more of them, for existing sites? That's what should be focused on.



John James Jacoby 10:03 am on March 9, 2020

It would be lovely to include a reason why this change is happening here.

I know @matt commented above justifying it with positive user testing results, but that doesn't provide any context into why it's necessary, and why now might be a good time for it.

If I had to guess, there are 2 primary motivating factors:

- it makes the Editor behave more like the Customizer
- the extra screen estate provides a nicer canvas for full-site editing which is still a 2020 goal

I think it makes sense to take tiny steps over a few releases, and these two UI/UX concerns can be stepped over with a single shift. That seems pretty nice actually.

But... I would strongly prefer not to have to do the extra work of guessing (or researching) on my own. Don't make me think, etc...

I found this issue on GitHub, which has some neat ideas in it: <https://github.com/WordPress/gutenberg/issues/20579>

Lastly, there is the "Matt really just likes it" reason, which has nearly always worked out OK, but with WordPress releases coordinating more people, and requiring more checks and balances (especially during beta/RC), it's not very fair that one person gets what they want when every other new feature currently in 5.4 is being shifted to 5.5.

Fair needs to be fair for all, or it isn't fair for some.



Jory Hogeveen 9:26 am on March 5, 2020

What is it with the new Block editor and last-minute inconvenient changes? Please, make sure something is finished before including it in a major release and ask users beforehand if they actually WANT such a change.

I'm just starting to allow my clients to use the block editor... back to classic it is.

Administering WordPress means

absorbing disruption

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Administering WordPress means

reading changelogs

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Administering WordPress means

building confidence

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