

WordPress Under Fire for Search-Engine Spamming

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Bloggers and search-engine marketers are accusing the open-source WordPress project of spamming the major search engines, while at the same time being one of the advocates in an effort to combat comment spam in blog postings.

The discovery emerged late Wednesday when the blog Waxy.org revealed that thousands of articles about such popular search terms as asbestos, mortgages and debt consolidation appear on sections of the WordPress.org site while being hidden from visitors to the site's home page.

News of the search-engine gaming technique spread quickly on the Web. As of Wednesday evening, search results to WordPress.org pages with the articles began disappearing from Google's Web index. Yahoo Inc. followed suit Thursday, removing the WordPress.org pages from its index because of what a spokesman confirmed was "noncompliance to our content guidelines."

Google officials declined to comment on why WordPress.org pages had dropped from the company's index, but its Webmaster policies bar techniques that display different content to its crawler than to site visitors.

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