

With ,  has the power to
"democratize" **intranets**.

imath - June 2016



Hi everyone, i'm very honored to be in Antwerp for this very first WordCamp in Belgium. Today i want to share with you one of my strongest convictions: thanks to BuddyPress, **companies can enjoy WordPress to power their social Intranets and improve the way their workers collaborate together.**

- An Intranet is a **private network** accessible only to an organization's staff. (Source [Wikipedia](#))
- An **extranet** is a website that allows controlled access to partners, vendors and suppliers or an authorized set of customers. (Source [Wikipedia](#))
- **intranets: websites** only accessible to the organization's staff.

I will talk about intranets.



First to avoid any confusions, when i talk about intranets, i refer to **websites only the organization's staff can access to.**



Photo Eric Wayaffe



 core developer  core contributor
 author

Dad Husband

Blogs @ imathi.eu

Meetups @ 

Podcasts @ veryfrenchtrip.com

works @ 

can run, can't fly!



I am Mathieu VIET, a random employee of the french Post Office. But I am also imath:

- one of the **core developers** of the BuddyPress open source project,
 - I write BuddyPress, bbPress and WordPress **plugins**,
 - I've been regularly doing some **small contributions to WordPress core** since its **4.0 version**.
 - I blog at [imathi-\[dot\]-i-you](http://imathi-[dot]-i-you).
 - And with 2 of my friends (Thierry Pigot & Grégoire Noyelle), we're organizing WordPress **meetups** in Paris and we're producing **podcasts** over at [veryfrenchtrip \[dot\] com](http://veryfrenchtrip.com).
- Finally and most importantly, I'm a dad and a loving husband who can run but can't fly.

42



Next month I'll be forty two, so i'm pretty old, and i knew a time when my company didn't have an Intranet. This was the **dial-up internet time** and **learning computers at school** meant to learn how to use DOS, **Microsoft Word** and Excel. And i must say that what I've learnt was very helpful **when I started working for my company twenty years ago.**



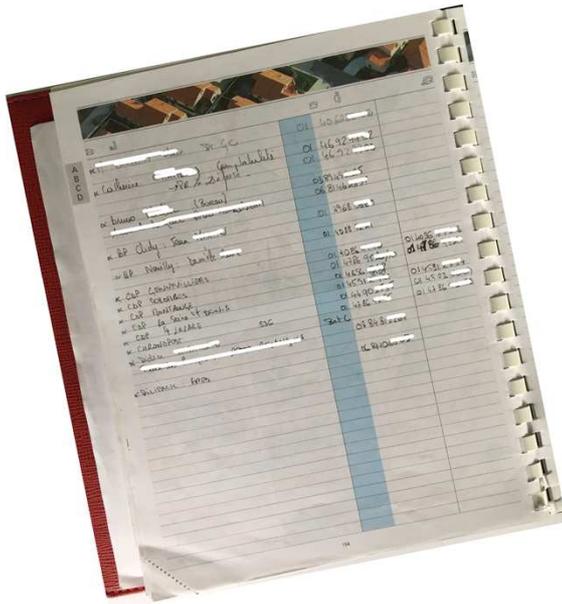
I was a salesman and as such I often spent hours writing **commercial proposals** for my customers on Microsoft **Word 6.0**. This was a really great piece of software. We could actually **preview what we were about to print**, amazing! By the way, Microsoft **Excel** was another very nice tool, thanks to it we could simulate **mailing or shipping costs for our customers or even print bulk mailing**.



Photo Frédéric BISSON

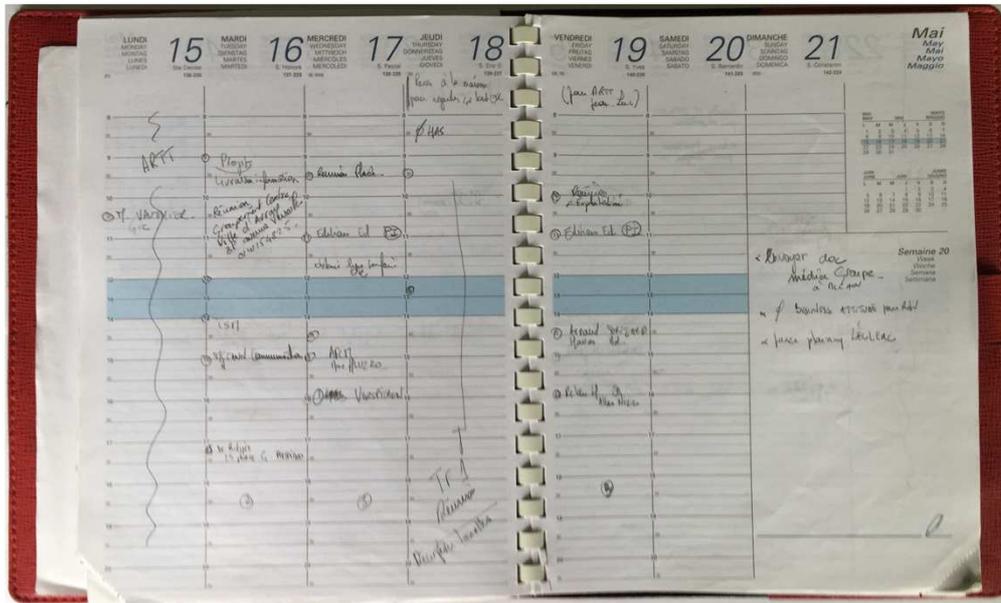


I remember we were a team of 8 salesmen and there were **only 2 computers** in the office. So we were using **floppy disks** to save and carry with us our masterpieces. **Sharing documents** between us or reporting our sales to our hierarchy was achieved thanks to these little disks. Floppy disks were everywhere, we even had specific **secured boxes to tidy them**.



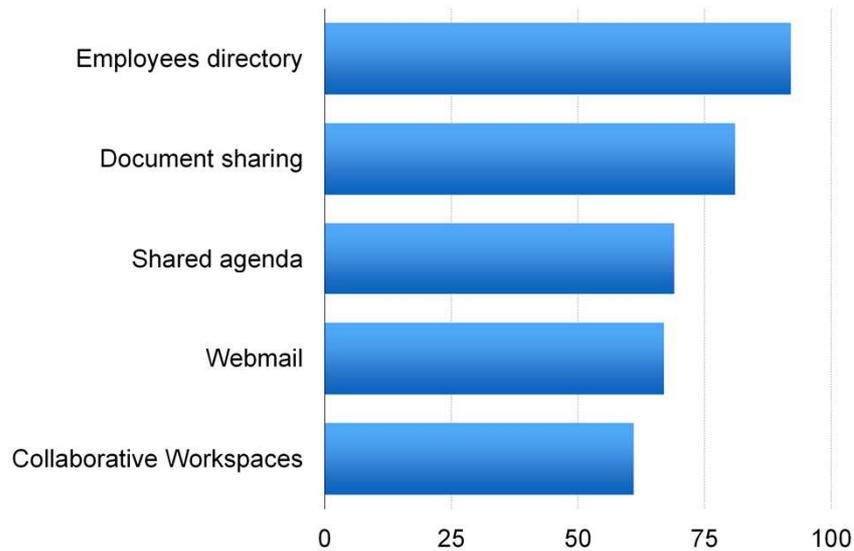
My Phone book in 1996

Another very important tool was our **phone book**. This is the tool that allowed us to store all phone and fax numbers for the **coworkers we needed to contact frequently**.



My Agenda in 1996

Some had a specific phone book and a diary, I personally chose to use an **organizer**. This way I always had all the most important informations at a unique place. The key for a good use of this specific tool is to use a **pencil you can erase**. **Because**, this way when a phone number changes, or when a coworker is replaced or when an appointment is deleted, **you can properly update your data**.

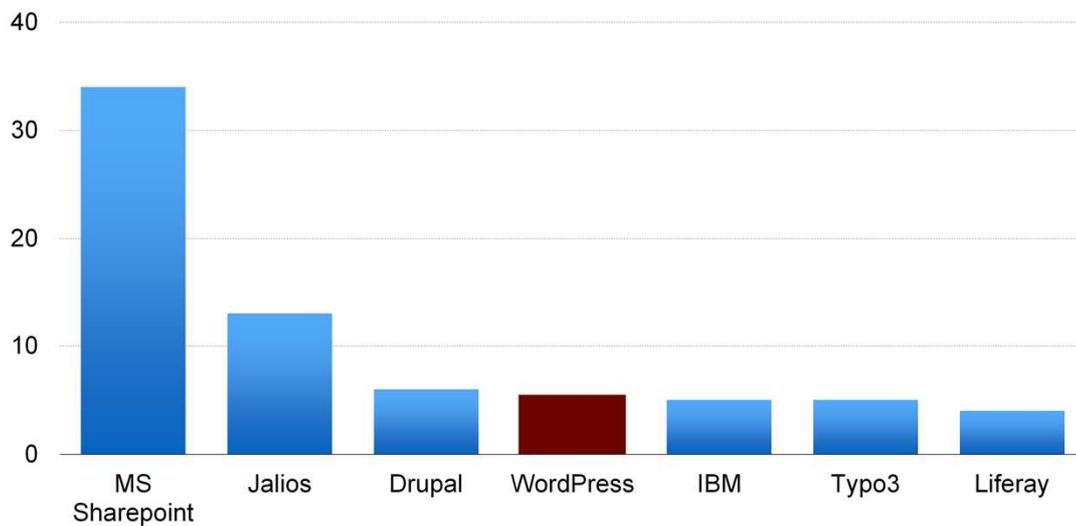


Source The "[Observatoire de l'intranet 2015](#)" survey.



I guess some of you are thinking I completely lost my mind talking about my past at a WordCamp talk! Actually **what i've just described appears to be the top 3 features expected about Intranet softwares** according to the "Observatoire de l'Intranet" survey:

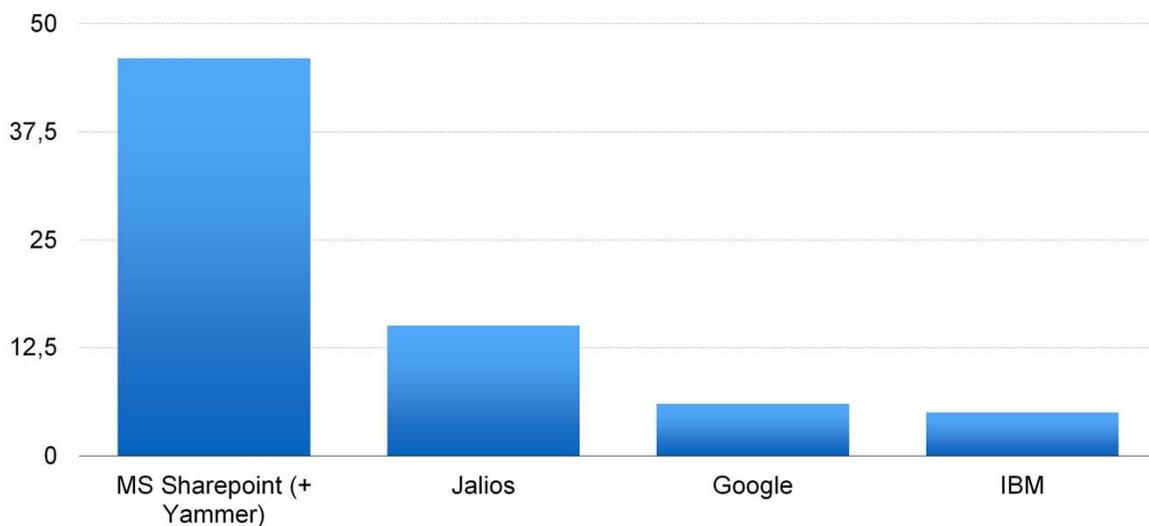
- Our old phone book has been replaced by a powerful **employees directory**,
- our diary is now a **shared tool other employees can check** out to see if we are available or busy
- and **document sharing** or should i say Microsoft generated document sharing is so important in our working life.



Source The "[Observatoire de l'intranet 2015](#)" survey.



So i'm not surprised, knowing **Microsoft** has been helping us for more than **20 years in creating our documents**, to see that Microsoft **Sharepoint** is leading the market of Intranet softwares. This chart is showing that **36 percent of the three hundred and forty seven companies** who replied to the "Observatoire de l'intranet" survey are using it to publish their top down informations. As you can see **5 percent chose to use WordPress**, which is nice.



Source The "[Observatoire de l'intranet 2015](#)" survey.



But as soon as we look at what these companies chose to power their **social or collaborative Intranets, WordPress sadly disappears**. Obviously Microsoft Sharepoint seems to be a really great piece of software as almost 1 company out of 2 is using it, but **it's also a very expensive tool to deploy**. I've found on one of its competitor's site that for **two hundred and fifty** people it could cost more than **eighty five thousand** euros.

So about the 5% of companies using WordPress for their top down informations, i guess:

- some of them are **using another tool** for their social or collaborative intranet,
- some others probably **decided to not have such an intranet which is too bad**.
- and perhaps some others **had no clue WordPress could do it with a little help from BuddyPress which is even worse**.



- Easy to host
- Easy to use
- Free, open source & **active**
- Easily **extendable**

So yes, of course, **WordPress can power intranets**. It's easy to host, to use, unlike some other softwares it's free and open source but most importantly **WordPress is extendable**. This means: if your intranet needs a specific feature, **there's a good chance you'll find an existing plugin providing it**, otherwise it's quite easy to build your own plugin.



Publish/Comment top down informations

+



+

Other plugins

+ Employees directory

+ Document sharing

+ Collaborative workspaces

+

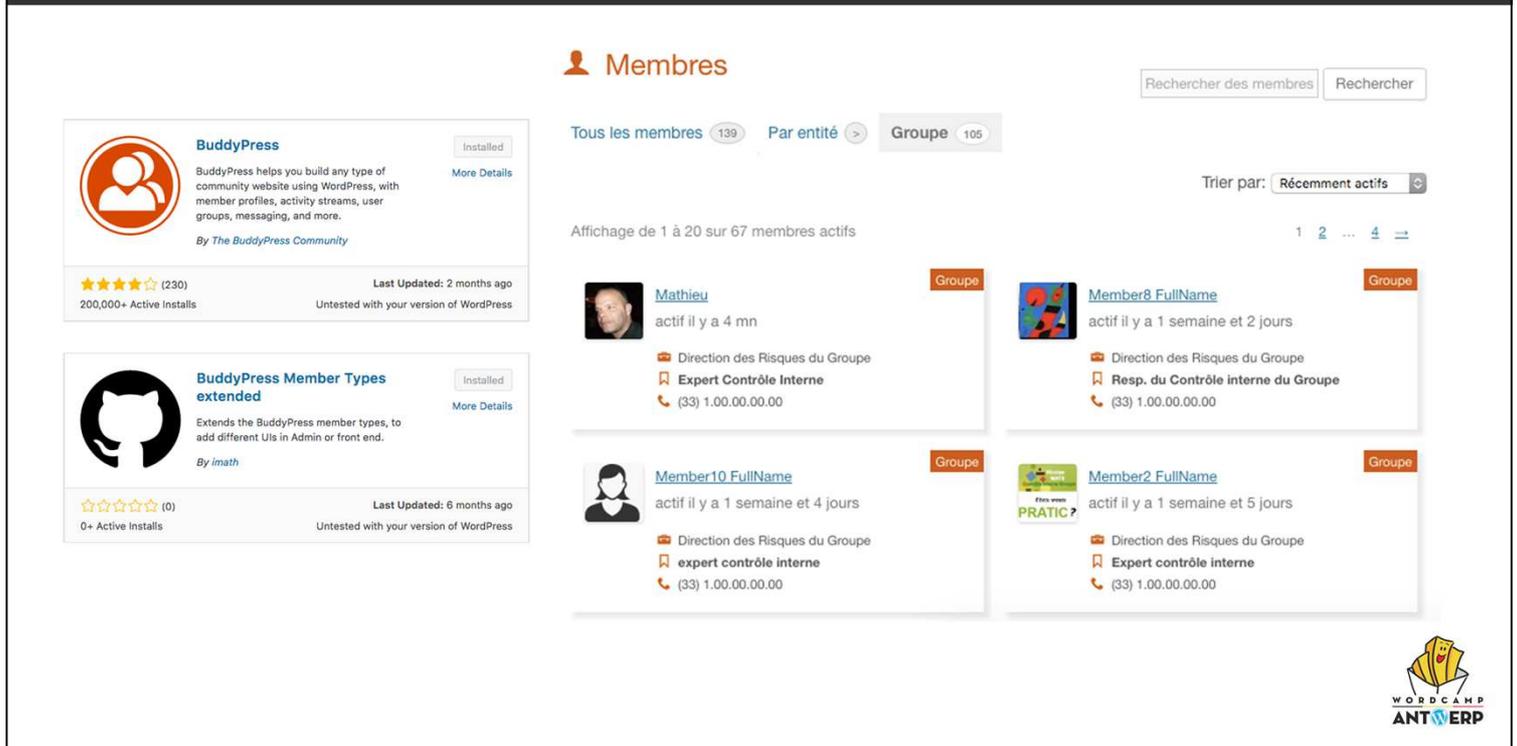


So how do you build a Social Intranet for a company using WordPress? Even if I've just narrowed the subject, there are still **many ways to achieve this**. For the rest of my talk I will tell you about **the way i chose**. This doesn't mean it's the best one, of course. But, i'd say it's a very powerful one.

Of course i chose BuddyPress. Thanks to it i was able to **quickly**

- put up a **directory of workers**,
- put up **advanced profile pages** for each worker,
- and put up **private workspaces** workers can create or join to collaborate.

BuddyPress is a very modular plugin organized into components you can activate according to your community needs, for instance i'm not using the "**Friends**" component, because i think **it doesn't make any sense in the context of a corporate intranet**.



Membres

Rechercher des membres | Rechercher

Tous les membres (139) | Par entité > | Groupe (105)

Trier par: Récemment actifs

Affichage de 1 à 20 sur 67 membres actifs

1 2 ... 4

BuddyPress (230) | 200,000+ Active Installs | Last Updated: 2 months ago

BuddyPress Member Types extended (0) | 0+ Active Installs | Last Updated: 6 months ago

Member8 FullName | actif il y a 1 semaine et 2 jours | Direction des Risques du Groupe | Resp. du Contrôle interne du Groupe | (33) 1.00.00.00.00

Member10 FullName | actif il y a 1 semaine et 4 jours | Direction des Risques du Groupe | expert contrôle interne | (33) 1.00.00.00.00

Member2 FullName | actif il y a 1 semaine et 5 jours | Direction des Risques du Groupe | Expert contrôle interne | (33) 1.00.00.00.00

WORDCAMP ANTWERP

Two of these components are systematically loaded, the BuddyPress core and the Members component. The first great feature provided by the Members component is the **Members directory**. It allows you to list all the users of your intranet and to eventually **reorder this list** according to :

- the date they **join** the community,
- the date of their **last activity**
- or **alphabetically**.

I chose to design each entries of this directory a bit like **business cards** as you can see. These cards are containing some extra informations to inform about :

- the user's **job**,
- the **department** of the company he works for
- and their **phone**

These custom user fields are brought by the BuddyPress **extended profile** component. Thanks to it, you can easily **create as many field** as you need and your intranet **members can edit them from their profile page**. What's great is that the **directory search will also look into these profile fields**. As a result, when you need to build a project team, you can look for specific jobs and quickly see who can join your team.

To complete your employees directory, you can also use the BuddyPress **member types** feature. Under the hood it's a taxonomy applied to users. A bit like developers can register custom post types, you register member types. Once registered you get a **minimalist UI** to set a user's member type within its WordPress administration extended profile screen. But there's **no UI to actually create new types or browse** the members directory according to a member type. That's the reason why i've written the **BP Member types extended** plugin. I think Member types are really interesting because as we are a Group of companies, we were able to use them to **attach each member of the community to their belonging company**. So it's now very easy to filter our employees directory according to each company of our Group. It's also very easy to edit, add or delete member types when a company name changes, a company is created or acquired, or when the company left the group.

 Mathieu



BuddyPress Installed

BuddyPress helps you build any type of community website using WordPress, with member profiles, activity streams, user groups, messaging, and more. [More Details](#)

By The BuddyPress Community

★★★★★ (230) Last Updated: 2 months ago

200,000+ Active Installs Untested with your version of WordPress



BuddyPress Member Types extended Installed

Extends the BuddyPress member types, to add different UIs in Admin or front end. [More Details](#)

By imath

★★★★★ (0) Last Updated: 6 months ago

0+ Active Installs Untested with your version of WordPress



@mathieu

actif il y a 2 mn

Groupe

Le document de référence du Groupe pour 2015 est disponible sur le site internet du Groupe. [Afficher](#)

[Nouvelles](#) [Profil](#) [Notifications](#) 0 [Messages](#) 0 [Ateliers](#) 16 [Forums](#) [Pièces jointes](#) [Rendez-vous](#)

[Référentiel CI](#) [Réglages](#)

[Mes publications](#) [En cours](#)

Travaux auxquels je suis associé(e)

Filtrer par : Choisir

1 2 3 [→](#)



5-1-1-b : Vérifier l'existence d'une liste des personnes habilitées

[habilitées](#)

📅 5 novembre 2015

Vérifier l'existence, pour l'entité, d'une liste des personnes habilitées à signer la documentation professionnelle émise. Vérifier sa bonne mise à [...] [...](#)



The Members component also comes with **extendable Profile pages for users**. As you can see **most of the built in BuddyPress components** are adding their pages to **display their specific content** in this area. For example: the activities involving the user, the user's public profile, the groups the user is a member of, etc. BuddyPress plugins can also add their own pages using a **specific API to create public or private pages**. Private pages can be very interesting when you need to build a **personal dashboard** where the user can manage his company account for instance.



BuddyPress
BuddyPress helps you build any type of community website using WordPress, with member profiles, activity streams, user groups, messaging, and more.
By The BuddyPress Community

★★★★☆ (230)
200,000+ Active Installs

Last Updated: 2 months ago
Untested with your version of WordPress

Installed [More Details](#)



bbPress
bbPress is forum software, made the WordPress way.
By The bbPress Community

★★★★☆ (182)
300,000+ Active Installs

Last Updated: 2 weeks ago
Untested with your version of WordPress

Install Now [More Details](#)



BP Groups Taxo
Use WordPress built-in taxonomy to add tags to BuddyPress groups.
By imath

★★★★☆ (0)
0+ Active Installs

Last Updated: 6 months ago
Untested with your version of WordPress

Installed [More Details](#)



WorkMates
Customizes BuddyPress on some behaviors (that I've needed) for its use in a company.
By imath

★★★★☆ (0)
0+ Active Installs

Last Updated: 6 months ago
Untested with your version of WordPress

Install Now [More Details](#)

WorkShop



Atelier Privé · actif il y a 32 s

Administrateur

Groupe

Let's collaborate

Adhérer

Modifier la photo de profil de l'atelier

[Accueil](#) [Forum](#) [Adhérer](#) [Membres](#) 1 [Inviter des collègues](#) [Gérer](#)

Privé : WorkShop

M'abonner

Ce forum contient 1 sujet et a été édité pour la dernière fois par [Test Utilisateur II](#) y a 33 secondes.

1 sujet (sur n total de 1)

Sujet	Participants	Articles	Dernier accès
Welcome to this group. Démarré par: Test Utilisateur	1	1	Il y a 33 secondes Test Utilisateur



Thanks to the **BuddyPress Groups** component you can build your intranet **collaborative workspaces**. Groups can be **public, private or hidden**. And i must say, there are **most of the time private** inside of our intranet.

When a Group is private users need to request the Group admin to be able to join the group. **Just like the Members component**, the Groups component comes with a **directory page** and **single groups pages** and just like the members profile pages there's a **specific API plugins can use** to add their own pages to the group. A good example is the bbPress plugin. As you may know **bbPress** is a great forum software and it **integrates the best way** with **BuddyPress Groups** so that each group can have a forum with a **consistent visibility**.

I'm using **2 other plugins** to extend the Groups component. The first one **BP Groups Taxo** is there to let group admins **add tags** to their Groups. This way they can inform users **which population they are targeting**. As i've said earlier, i deactivated the BuddyPress **Friends** component, **and you must know** inviting people to join a group is **only possible if this component is active**, so to bypass this BuddyPress restriction, i've built the **Workmates** plugin so that any member of our intranet can invite others to join a group.

 **BuddyPress** Installed [More Details](#)

BuddyPress helps you build any type of community website using WordPress, with member profiles, activity streams, user groups, messaging, and more.

By The BuddyPress Community

★★★★☆ (230) Last Updated: 2 months ago

200,000+ Active Installs Untested with your version of WordPress

 **BuddyDrive** Installed [More Details](#)

Share files the BuddyPress way!

By imath

★★★★★ (32) Last Updated: 4 months ago

7,000+ Active Installs Untested with your version of WordPress

   Dernière modif.

 [folder](#)   

 [Spreadsheet](#) Survey results   

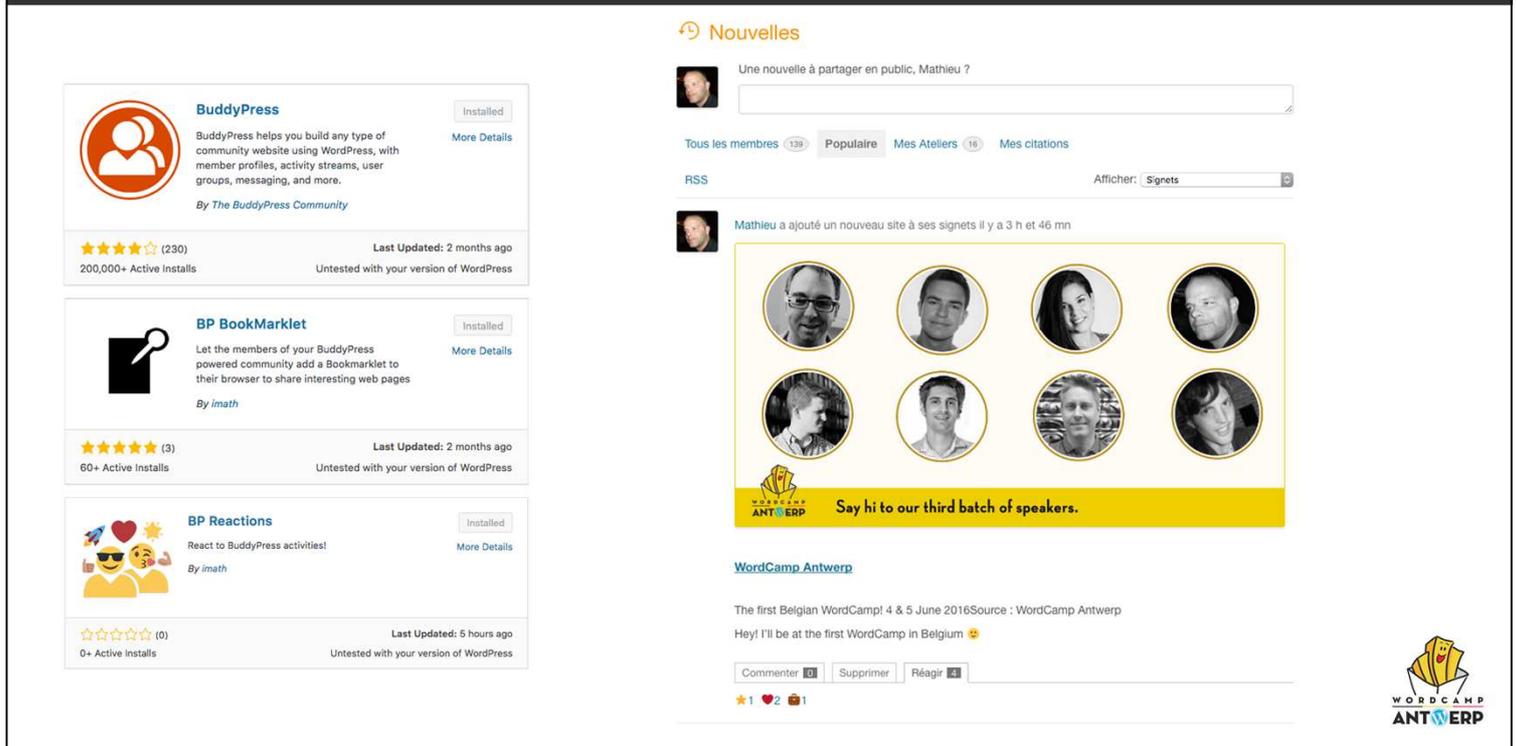
 [Archive](#) Contains some useful tools   

 [Document](#)   

 [Presentation](#)   



Document Sharing is the most important collaborative feature of our intranet. Our users need to share what they are used to work with that is to say **texts, spreadsheets, presentations** and sometimes pictures. BuddyPress doesn't include any document sharing feature yet. But it includes a **really great API to help you build one**. So i've built my own file sharing system with the **BuddyDrive** plugin. Thanks to it, members can **safely share private or public files** with other members of the community or **specific groups**.



The screenshot shows a WordPress intranet interface. On the left, there are three plugin recommendations: BuddyPress (200,000+ Active Installs), BP BookMarketlet (60+ Active Installs), and BP Reactions (0+ Active Installs). On the right, there is a 'Nouvelles' (News) section with a search bar and filters for 'Tous les membres', 'Populaire', 'Mes Ateliers', and 'Mes citations'. Below the filters, there is a post by 'Mathieu' titled 'Mathieu a ajouté un nouveau site à ses signets il y a 3 h et 46 mn'. The post content features a grid of eight circular profile pictures of speakers and a yellow banner that says 'Say hi to our third batch of speakers.' Below the banner, there is a link to 'WordCamp Antwerp' and a short paragraph of text. At the bottom right of the screenshot, there is a logo for 'WORDCAMP ANTWERP'.

About social sharing and intranets. First, it's **very different from Internet**. On Internet almost **everyone has a point of view and share it**. On intranets, people seems to be **afraid to express themselves**. So we almost have no comments to our top down informations for instance and People only **collaborate** on specific topics into **private groups which is nice but** doesn't show how dynamic our community is. **So i've been trying to extend the BuddyPress activity component to help people really enjoy it**. BuddyPress activities can be a **lot of things**:

- **status** updates,
- user **profile** updates (eg: Johnny changed their profile photo)
- **relationship** updates (eg: Johnny added Selma to their contacts)
- **group** updates etc..

BuddyPress activities can be **commented**, users can be **mentioned**, so it's an interesting way of **publicly starting conversations**. The main issue we had with activities was that it's not easy to find **what are the trending ones. The ones we absolutely need to read**. That's the reason why, i've recently written the **BP Reactions plugin**. This plugin allows people to react to an activity :

- they can add it to their **favorites**
- they can **like** it
- or developers can add any other reactions of their choice. For our intranet, we choose to add the **"recommandation"** reaction.

Users can easily find their reactions within their profile page. And in the **Activity directory** i added a new tab to list all the **most reacted activities ordered according to the numbers of reactions they got**. So it can help our users to find out which are the most interesting activities of our intranet.

Finally we also use a plugin to **give people a bookmarklet** so that they can easily share internet sites or specific web pages into new activities.



BuddyPress Installed [More Details](#)

BuddyPress helps you build any type of community website using WordPress, with member profiles, activity streams, user groups, messaging, and more.

By The BuddyPress Community

★★★★★ (230) Last Updated: 2 months ago

200,000+ Active Installs Untested with your version of WordPress



Restricted Site Access Installed [More Details](#)

Limit access to visitors who are logged in or allowed by IP addresses. Includes many options for handling blocked visitors.

By Jake Goldman, 10up, Oomph

★★★★★ (35) Last Updated: 1 year ago

20,000+ Active Installs Untested with your version of WordPress



BP Restricted Community Installed [More Details](#)

Restrict the access to your BuddyPress community.

By imath

★★★★★ (0) Last Updated: 6 months ago

0+ Active Installs Untested with your version of WordPress



Identifiant ou adresse de messagerie

Mot de passe

Se souvenir de moi [Se connecter](#)



Nous serions heureux de vous compter parmi les membres de notre communauté. Pour nous permettre de procéder à la création de votre compte, merci de remplir le formulaire ci-dessous. Une fois votre identité vérifiée, vous recevrez un email pour activer votre compte et commencer à contribuer aux contenus de ce site.

Informations du compte	Votre profil détaillé
Identifiant RH (obligatoire)	Prénom (obligatoire)
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Adresse e-mail (obligatoire)	Nom (obligatoire)
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Choisissez un mot de passe (obligatoire)	Votre fonction
<input type="password"/>	<input type="text"/>
Confirmez le mot de passe (obligatoire)	Votre téléphone
<input type="password"/>	<input type="text"/>

[Poursuivre l'inscription](#)



So far our intranet website was **hosted** on the **Intranet network**. But we recently decided to **move it** on the **Internet** so that we can use it directly from **touch devices** and so that **any worldwide company of the group** can access to it.

The big difference then is that **we need to take care of controlling the access to our Intranet website**. I chose to use the “**Restricted site access**” plugin, even if it wasn’t completely matching my needs, it was **including some hooks** i was able to use to **extend it the way i wanted it to work**. I’ve packaged these specific behaviors into the **BP Restricted Community plugin**. So now we are making sure it’s possible to **register** to the site for the users having a **specific email domain** and we’re also making sure **BuddyPress pages are not reachable if the user is not logged in**.

thanks a lot!



@imath

<https://profiles.wordpress.org/imath#content-plugins>
<https://github.com/imath?tab=repositories>



This is the end of my talk. Today i wanted to show you, **thanks to an intranet** website I've built, **it's completely possible to power any intranet thanks to WordPress, BuddyPress** and some other plugins. The plugins i've talked you about are **all free & open source**, of course you will still have to deal with some costs like the **hosting one**, but **comparing to paid softwares**, i really think WordPress can help companies of any size to **successfully power regular, collaborative and social intranets**.