Web Development

# Building a Scalable, Educator-centred Multisite Platform

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## Overview

EdTomorrow is an education-focused organization dedicated to helping schools design and sustain Whole-Child Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) systems that support students academically, behaviourally, socially, and emotionally. As their educator community grew, they needed a scalable digital ecosystem that could deliver structured daily classroom resources while supporting long-term platform expansion.

EdTomorrow partnered with us to architect and develop a custom WordPress multisite designed to function as a dynamic educator platform. The project included two interconnected properties:

- **EdTomorrow.com** — the main brand and resource hub
- **First Five Plus** — EdTomorrow's searchable database of universal Tier 1 classroom supports, built on their daily First Five practices to help teachers strengthen routines, relationships, and engagement across classrooms




## Challenges

As EdTomorrow's educator community expanded, its digital presence needed to evolve alongside it. The existing website had been built to support earlier stages of growth, but the increasing volume of content, users, and daily engagement created the need for a more structured and scalable platform experience.

Our initial engagement focused on developing First Five Plus, a searchable content database designed to house and organize thousands of daily Tier 1 classroom supports. Once that platform was established, it created an opportunity to align the broader EdTomorrow.com experience with the same design principles, usability standards, and system-level organization introduced within First Five Plus.

In parallel, we refined how the daily First Five resources were managed and delivered through EdTomorrow.com to better support consistency, performance, and long-term scalability as engagement increased.

Transforming WordPress from a traditional content site into a more interactive, educator-centred platform required solving a range of technical and UX challenges:

- Implementing structured user authentication and access controls to support different user experiences
- Organizing and indexing thousands of daily activities for efficient filtering and search
- Extending third-party tools to better align with EdTomorrow's workflow and content structure
- Integrating an interactive slideshow builder within WordPress using Vue.js
- Creating custom API endpoints to support user-generated content and saved resources
- Optimizing media delivery and performance to support a growing national audience
- Ensuring responsive usability across desktop, tablet, and classroom projector environments
- Maintaining clarity and simplicity for educators navigating high volumes of content

WordPress required significant customization, as plugins alone could not support EdTomorrow's unique requirements. Custom PHP, JavaScript, and deep plugin extensions were essential to building a feature-rich, interactive educator platform.

## Our approach

The engagement began with the development of **First Five Plus**, a searchable platform built to organize and deliver EdTomorrow's growing library of daily First Five resources at scale.

With that foundation in place, we modernized **EdTomorrow.com**, aligning its design, navigation, and user experience with the clarity and usability established within First Five Plus. This ensured both properties functioned as a cohesive ecosystem rather than standalone platforms.

As engagement increased, we refined how daily First Five content was managed and delivered to support stronger performance and long-term scalability.

Launch milestones included:

- **First Five Plus** — Summer 2024
- **EdTomorrow.com** — Summer 2025
- **Multisite unification** — merging both platforms into one scalable architecture
- **Phase 3 (in progress)** — premium licensing and expanded monetization (targeting early 2026)

The project followed a design-first, development-second workflow, enabling the team to anticipate complexity and build a platform that could evolve alongside EdTomorrow's needs.

## Our process

### Component-based development strategy

We analyzed all approved designs to identify reusable components, ensuring efficiency, consistency, and long-term scalability.

### Selective plugin integration (80–90% coverage)

Foundational tools included:

**CBX Bookmark & Favorite**
CBX Bookmarks extended for advanced favouriting and saving

**FacetWP**
Easy Digital Downloads for reliable educator-friendly downloads

**WP Datatables**
FacetWP for flexible filtering across large content libraries

Each plugin was extended with custom code to meet EdTomorrow's needs.

### Custom CMS architecture

Using Advanced Custom Fields (ACF), we built an editor-friendly system supported by:

- Custom post types
- Page templates
- Cloned field groups for structured content

This gave EdTomorrow full control over content without development support.

### Slideshow builder (Vue.js + WP REST API)

We created a mini application inside WordPress:

- Built in Vue.js
- Connected to custom REST API endpoints
- Supported real-time creation, reordering, and autosaving

User limits were added (75 favourites, 8 slideshows) to protect performance.

### Advanced filtering with FacetWP

FacetWP enabled educators to quickly filter thousands of activities. Custom hooks ensured:

- Accurate filtering across post types and taxonomies
- Fast, indexed responses
- Smooth integration with EdTomorrow's custom CMS architecture

### Ensuring accessibility, clarity & value

**Accessibility**

- Semantic HTML
- ARIA labels and descriptive roles
- Keyboard navigability
- Tooltips for unclear interactions
- Responsive layouts for mobile, desktop, and projectors

**Clarity & ease of use**

- Co-designed with EdTomorrow based on educator needs
- Thorough feature testing
- Rapid post-launch UX enhancements (e.g., fullscreen presentation mode)

**Educator value**

The platform empowers teachers to:

- Access restorative teaching activities
- Download classroom-ready resources
- Build and present slideshows
- Strengthen community, care, and character in their classrooms

## Goals

### Primary goal

Deliver a user-focused digital platform built specifically for educators using EdTomorrow's restorative teaching tools and daily classroom resources.

### Supporting goals

- Build a high-performance multisite capable of ongoing feature expansion
- Allow new users to explore a portion of content without creating an account
- Introduce monetization via ad placements to reinvest in future development

### Key KPIs

- Generate sustainable revenue for reinvestment
- Maintain smooth performance across high traffic volumes and resource-heavy interactions

## Results

- Supports **20,000+ monthly visitors**, with ~50% unique visits
- Generates **$30,000+ in monthly ad revenue**, supporting ongoing expansion
- Stable performance during peak usage and rapid filtering

**EdTomorrow can now:**

- Support their global educator community
- Deliver classroom-ready content daily
- Generate meaningful recurring revenue to fuel new features

> **What stood out the most about seoplus+ is how much they truly value their clients. They don't just deliver a service, they build real relationships and make you feel like a partner in the process […] that combination of professionalism and personal care is rare, and it made the entire experience feel seamless and collaborative.**
>
> — **Sarah Nunn**, CEO, EdTomorrow

## Conclusion

This project demonstrates our ability to deliver large-scale, highly customized digital platforms that bring a client's most ambitious ideas to life. On a grand scale, it showcases our strengths in UX design, development, systems architecture, and educator-focused problem solving.

### Next Steps

EdTomorrow is now entering Phase 3, introducing premium licensing as an additional revenue stream, with launch targeted for early 2026.

## Want to see similar results?

Reach out to our team to find out how we can help you take your online presence to the next level.

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