Good times in closed systems

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- This presentation will briefly feature my coming to grips with moving to a SAAS hosted Moodle instance, the limitations I encountered (and you might), and strategies to achieve cool stuff without the normal access to plugins.
Where did it all start?

Plugins for everyone

Sourced from: https://giphy.com/gifs/excited-oprah-shouting-y8Mz1yj13s3kl/media
https://modicum.agency/bloganimated-gifs-fair-use-copyright-law/

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Plugins for look and feel
Plugins for function and form

Templating plugin - Generico

Auditing plugin - Workflow

Currently active task
First step
To be completed by
You, or any other Teacher

Instructions
1. Check the course name is correct
2. Check the start and finish dates are correct

Comments
No comments have been made about this step yet

Tasks for completion
- [ ] 1. Check the course name is correct
- [ ] 2. Check the start and finish dates are correct
It was good.

But then I changed jobs

Image sourced from:
What? Can’t just add plugins?

My current job uses a SAAS Moodle hosted by a company hereafter referred to as “another provider”

Only plugins from a set list are allowed

Anything not on the list attracted a development fee and an ongoing maintenance fee
Not a happy camper

Image sourced from: https://pixabay.com/vectors/baby-crying-mad-upset-infant-155178/
So how do I make things look cool?

1. Hard work

1. Hard work

1. Hard work
Option 1: Template Courses

Course Template Master

Assessment Activities
- NOW
  - Course Introduction
  - Assignments
  - Other Assessment and Quizzes

Course Resources Accessed
- NOW
  - Class discussions and Social
  - Start building the rest of your course
  - New Topic

Admin - Please ignore

Web Resources
- Here are some useful UCOL resources:
  - Library Guides
  - Student Intranet
Cleans out all CSS and JavaScript added to it.

This is a great thing!! It’s a security feature.

But it cleans out all CSS and JavaScript added to it.
Option 2: Additional CSS (is your friend)

Many Moodle themes have an “Additional CSS” area in their theme settings.

In Boost it’s called Raw Initial SCSS and Raw SCSS.

I’ve only used it to tweak the theme before.

A walkthrough can be found here from the New Orleans Moodlemoot:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MjJmbqplE20

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Site wide solutions – Additional CSS

Not just for changing existing CSS but can add new CSS classes as well

This allows the administrator to create code templates that teachers can use to add visual improvements or customisations to individual areas

A two part solution

The HTML: Applied on page or label/activity etc via the editor

The CSS: applied at the site level via the additional CSS area
An example: Page background YouTube video

**HTML:** Placed in a block in a course
background video
<div class="video-background">
  <div class="video-foreground">
    <iframe src="https://www.youtube.com/embed/W0LHTWG-UmQ?controls=0&showinfo=0&rel=0&autoplay=1&loop=1&playlist=W0LHTWG-UmQ" frameborder="0"
      allowfullscreen"></iframe>
  </div>
</div>

@id="vidtop-content">
<div class="vid-info">
  <h1>YouTube Fullscreen Station orbits the Earth every 92 minutes, with its crew seeing a sunrise 15 times a day. It exists as a scientific, educational, and engineering platform in low orbit, 330 to 435 kilometres above the Earth.
  </p>
  <p>Original timelapse by Riccardo Rossi (ISAA), used under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License. Raw photos courtesy of http://eol.jsc.nasa.gov/<a href="/500/Use-YouTube-Videos-as-Fullscreen-Web-Page-Backgrounds">Full article</a> &lt;/div&gt;</div>

**CSS:** Applied at site level

* { box-sizing: border-box; }
.video-background { background: #000; position: fixed; top: 0; right: 0; bottom: 0; left: 0; z-index: -99; }
.video-foreground, .video-background iframe { position: absolute; top: 0; left: 0; width: 100%; height: 100%; pointer-events: none; }
#vidtop-content { color: #fff; z-index: 2; }
.vid-info { padding: 1rem; font-family: Avenir, Helvetica, sans-serif; }
.vid-info h1 { font-size: 2rem; font-weight: 700; margin-top: 0; line-height: 1.2; }
.vid-info a { display: block; color: #fff; text-decoration: none; background: rgba(0,0,0,0.5); transition: .6s background; border-bottom: none; margin: 1rem auto; text-align: center; }
@media (min-aspect-ratio: 16/9) { .video-foreground { height: 300%; top: -100%; } }
@media (max-aspect-ratio: 16/9) { .video-foreground { width: 300%; left: -100%; } }
@media all and (max-width: 600px) { .vid-info { width: 50%; padding: .5rem; } .vid-info h1 { margin-bottom: .2rem; } }
@media all and (max-width: 500px) { .vid-info .acronym { display: none; } }

#Adapted From: https://codepen.io/dudleystorey/pen/PZyMrd
Giggity
CAUTION

The site-wide CSS is exactly that.. Site wide.. Be prepared for those changes to appear everywhere.

Make sure you don’t interfere with existing CSS.. It must be unique code or you could break your site
Limitations to site-wide CSS

I wanted individual CSS for particular pages like a unique course page

The moment people heard I could customise the look and feel they asked for logos to make their courses look more unique

But the logo location is very special and if I add the CSS I used site wide it’ll affect all the other site courses....

How do I add it just on an individual course page or activity?
Option 3: Trusted Content

An important permission that should be highly controlled!!!

Moodle will always thoroughly clean text that comes from users to remove any possible bad scripts, media etc that could be a security risk.

The Trusted Content system is a way of giving particular users that you trust the ability to include these advanced features in their content without interference. On a page by page basis.

Source: https://docs.moodle.org/37/en/Site_security_settings#Enable_trusted_content
Logos for everybody
Weird requests for in-lab quiz layouts
But I can’t find that setting/access that “trusted Content” setting?

Speak to your Moodle Administrator.

But, if he or she are smart are smart they won’t give you access...

but will instead sit down and create what you need in-terms of templates or code that will allow you to do your own thing.
Practice it elsewhere

Get your own dev/practice site.

I have two or three or...

Moodlecloud at least

https://moodlecloud.com/
Thanks and Credits

• My Line manager: Gianetta Lapsley ("It’s better to ask for forgiveness than permission").
• My Co-Worker: Kirstine White for her support “and patience”.

Plugins mentioned:

• Generico (styling and more) https://moodle.org/plugins/filter Generico
• Workflow block (auditing) https://moodle.org/plugins/block Workflow
Questions??