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# Tumblr to add support for ActivityPub, social protocol powering Mastodon and other apps

Sarah Perez @sarahintampa / 10:20 PM UTC • November 21, 2022



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Tumblr will add support for [ActivityPub](#), the open, decentralized social network protocol that is powering social networking software like [Twitter alternative Mastodon](#), the live video streaming service PeerTube, and others. The news was revealed in response to a user's complaint about Mastodon's complexities. Automattic CEO Matt Mullenbach, whose company [acquired Tumblr from Verizon in 2019](#) — [suggested](#) the user “come back and we would soon “add activitypub for interconnect.”

“Don’t stress,” he said, before [clarifying](#) that Tumblr first has to deal with the work coming in right now from Twitter but that support for “interop and activitypub” was “ASAP.”

In short, this announcement means Tumblr would move from being only a niche platform to becoming a part of a larger, decentralized social network of sorts — and one v

grown in size in recent days as people flee Elon Musk's Twitter in search of ne

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Come to [@tumblr](#). We'll add activitypub for interconnect. Don't stress.

— Matt Mullenweg (@photomatt) [November 21, 2022](#)

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We are mostly dealing with the waves of new users right now and keeping everything s  
activitypub are ASAP.

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The ActivityPub protocol, its [website](#) explains, provides a client-to-server API f  
and deleting content, as well as a federal server-to-server API for delivering nc  
subscribing to content. In practice, this means that Mastodon users can intera  
on other instances (independently run nodes) and on other social apps (like Pi  
support the implementation of ActivityPub. It makes for a web of social network  
find and follow each other without having to set up new accounts on each new

This is the opposite approach to today's "walled garden" social networks, wher  
platform can't be viewed by those on others, unless you re-upload or repost th  
share a link to the other site where the content can be found.

If Tumblr were to add ActivityPub support, it means users on Mastodon could f  
posts from their own Mastodon instance — without having to use the Tumblr a  
provide Tumblr users with an entry point into the so-called [fediverse](#) without ha  
the complexities that are involved with [signing up for Mastodon](#) for the first tim

Tumblr [was already benefiting](#) from the Twitter exodus, having grown its U.S. :  
over-week from the week prior to the acquisition and the 7 days after, [data.ai](#) f  
month. And, as of 12 days after Twitter's acquisition, Tumblr's worldwide down  
301,000 up from 170,000 in the 12 days before the acquisition, [Sensor Tower](#)

Mullenweg later offered a glimpse into Tumblr's metrics, noting to [The Atlantic](#)  
the Tumblr app were up 62% the week after Musk took over Twitter.

But even before Musk took Twitter's helm, Mullenweg had been thinking [about](#)  
[better compete with Twitter in the future](#).

"I just want there to be an open alternative, I want you to be able to choose yo  
trying to make Tumblr a space for art and artists....," he had said earlier this ye  
not doomscrolling, you're joy-scrolling."

## Matt Mullenweg thinks Tumblr can be a better Twitter than



Welcome Back to Found, the TechCrunch podcast where we get the s we get to speak to someone who has been working at their company f with Matt Mullenweg of Automattic and WordPress feels a little special founder was grounded ... Continue reading



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More recently, Mullenweg has been trying to directly [recruit former Twitter employees for Automattic](#), setting up a dedicated website for the purpose.

I think the biggest opportunities for influencing [@Tumblr](#) come from people who helped ranking, and self-serve ad systems.

— Matt Mullenweg (@photomatt) [November 21, 2022](#)

Automattic, we should note, already has some experience with ActivityPub.

In addition to Tumblr, Automattic runs the blogging service WordPress.com an open source WordPress blogging software platform. The latter today offers [an](#) self-hosted WordPress sites. This allows a WordPress blog's readers to follow Mastodon and other federated social platforms. One could imagine a similar s ActivityPub support was added.

Mullenweg did not offer an ETA as to how "ASAP" this support would be added.

Tumblr was not able to provide an immediate comment when reached.

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