

AffStackDev Theme Manager — Complete Customer Reference

AffStackDev • Release 1.0.4 • Documentation revision 2026-10-20.1

Edition date: October 20, 2026.

Audience: website owners, administrators, agency staff and authorized editors.

About this reference

Theme Manager helps you find the right editing tool for website content, templates and patterns, and edit your theme's settings with drafts, a private preview, scheduling and checkpoints, with any theme. This complete reference explains every available type of control, how to save, schedule and recover changes, how permissions and integrations affect what you see, and how the optional free license brings signed updates.

Start with installation and access, then use the feature index or contents to find the task you need. The companion Master Technical Reference contains the underlying configuration, storage and integration contracts.

What's new in 1.0.4

Release 1.0.4 follows 1.0.3. Theme Manager now works fully without a license; the optional free license from your AffStackDev account adds signed updates and counts for AffStackDev Suite's full mode. **Custom Theme works with every theme:** a theme without its own Theme Manager support gets its Customizer settings and its colours and fonts (with a block theme; see [Themes without their own Theme Manager support](#)), and the [WordPress and WooCommerce sections](#) come with every theme. **Pages & content** finds templates, template parts and patterns and shows which template shows a page ([Find a template, template part or pattern](#)). **Checkpoints & recovery** works with every theme, and a section's change can be [scheduled for later](#).

Release 1.0.1 follows the launch release 1.0.0.3a. One improvement: the Custom Theme editor says in plain words when the site answers its request with a web page instead of its own reply, for example a maintenance page or a security block. The guide built into the plugin now describes the current release, and version numbers have three parts from this release on. Everything else in this section came with 1.0.0.3a.

Release 1.0.0.3a was the AffStackDev launch release of Theme Manager; WordPress showed it as version 1.0.0.3.1. It contains every change since 1.0.0.2.

A refused save keeps your input. When a Custom Theme save is refused because the active theme changed, for example to a theme without a Theme Manager provider, the page shows the refusal and the input you submitted so you can copy it, on whichever view opens. Nothing is saved (see [Working safely alongside other editors](#)).

Steadier editing tools. Theme Manager clears optional native-editor caches when the theme provider's version changes and checks your permissions again, and a blocked action says which operation it is waiting for.

License activation in place. The license activation link opens the native License screen securely.

Your license and updates. Theme Manager is free; since 1.0.4 it works fully without a license. Its optional free license from your AffStackDev account covers one live (Production) site and one test copy of it, and an installation set to Staging, Development or Local uses the license's staging place. AffStackDev Suite is optional and needs no key of its own. Download the plugin from **My Account → Downloads** on affstackdev.com; with the free license activated, WordPress offers new releases through signed updates.

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Installation and access

Theme Manager requires WordPress 6.5 or later and PHP 7.4 or later. It works fully without a license; the optional free Theme Manager license from your AffStackDev account adds signed updates from affstackdev.com and counts for the full mode of AffStackDev Suite. Suite is optional. WooCommerce adds the available product and store controls.

1. Back up the site and copy unsaved work you need to keep. Temporary drafts are not a durable backup.
2. Download the Theme Manager ZIP from **My Account → Downloads** on affstackdev.com, install it through **Plugins → Add New → Upload Plugin** or your site's normal authorized installation process, and activate it.
3. Optional: open **Appearance → Theme Manager → License**, enter the Theme Manager license key, choose the applicable licensed environment and select **Activate license**. Everything else works without this step.
4. Open Theme Manager. It opens **Custom Theme**: with a theme that has its own Theme Manager support (such as the AffStackDev theme) that theme's sections, with any other theme Theme Manager's own sections for its settings (see [Themes without their own Theme Manager support](#)), and with every theme the [WordPress and WooCommerce sections](#).
5. When Suite supplies the additional **AffStackDev → Theme Manager** route, either location opens the same product.

A site administrator manages the optional license. Workspace access requires permission to manage theme options; individual pages, products, media and other native controls have their own permissions as well. Theme Manager does not add a separate customer-facing account page or give visitors editing access.

When updating, copy needed drafts, install the signed update, and open a fresh workspace. Keep your active theme and existing saved content. You do not need to rerun Site Setup or restore theme defaults. The [license and updates chapter](#) explains checks, recovery and signed-update controls.

Feature index

Capability	Reference
Navigation and optional Suite host	Navigation and optional Suite host
Native theme editor access	Native theme editor access
Page and content search	Page and content search
Content status and assigned page roles	Content status and assigned page roles
Shortcode and dynamic block source identification	Shortcode and dynamic block source identification
Synced pattern and generated content sources	Synced pattern and generated content sources
Archives and other site pages	Archives and other site pages
Templates, template parts and patterns	Find a template, template part or pattern
Which template shows a page	Understand Content sources & editing options
Explicit page editor shortcuts	Explicit page editor shortcuts
Site section cards and saved layouts	Site section cards and saved layouts
Registered theme and plugin controls	Registered theme and plugin controls
Compatible theme detection and provider schema	Compatible theme detection and provider schema
Settings of any theme (Customizer settings, colours and fonts)	Themes without their own Theme Manager support
Task groups and section navigation	Task groups and section navigation
Text and long text fields	Text and long text fields
URL and email fields	URL and email fields
Numbers, checkboxes and fixed choices	Numbers, checkboxes and fixed choices
Media selection and manual image values	Media selection and manual image values
Product choices and lookup	Product choices and lookup
Ordered lists and row operations	Ordered lists and row operations
Empty values, overrides and theme defaults	Empty values, overrides and theme defaults
Private workspaces and temporary drafts	Private workspaces and temporary drafts
Section save and draft discard	Section save and draft discard
Refresh and section reload	Refresh and section reload
Simultaneous edits and field conflicts	Simultaneous edits and field conflicts

Capability	Reference
Unknown save outcomes and recovery	Unknown save outcomes and recovery
Private unsaved theme previews	Private unsaved theme previews
Provider checkpoints and restores	Provider checkpoints and restores
Checkpoints and style revisions for any theme	Checkpoints & recovery
Scheduled changes	Schedule a change for later
Theme supplied product flags	Theme supplied product flags
Logo, title, tagline and site icon	Logo, title, tagline and site icon
Homepage and posts page assignment	Homepage and posts page assignment
Additional CSS	Additional CSS
Page and post text, excerpt and image	Page and post text, excerpt and image
Product name, descriptions and image	Product name, descriptions and image
Store notice	Store notice
Classic navigation menus	Classic navigation menus
Enhanced UI and PHP form operation	Enhanced UI and PHP form operation
Optional free license activation	Optional free license activation
License status and manual recovery	License status and manual recovery
Automatic validation and cached deadlines	Automatic validation and cached deadlines
License replacement and pending operations	License replacement and pending operations
License release and site reconnection	License release and site reconnection
Signed update checks and installation	Signed update checks and installation
Credentials, identity and data retention	Credentials, identity and data retention
Errors and troubleshooting	Errors and troubleshooting

Where Theme Manager fits

Theme Manager gives permitted administrators one place to find website content, templates and patterns, open their original editor, and edit the active theme's settings. It is free and works fully without a license; the optional free license adds signed updates. Suite is optional: **Appearance → Theme Manager** remains the standalone location. With a compatible Suite, **AffStackDev → Theme Manager** offers the same product inside the Suite.

Theme Manager requires WordPress 6.5 or later and PHP 7.4 or later. WooCommerce is needed only for available WooCommerce-specific tools. **Custom Theme** works with any theme; a theme with its own Theme Manager support decides its sections there. Administrator permissions still apply; Theme Manager does not grant a staff member access to restricted pages, products or settings.

Theme Manager keeps saved theme settings and native content in their original systems. You can continue to use those original editors. Disabling Theme Manager or Suite does not undo content already saved. A plugin rollback is also not a content rollback. Preserve unsaved drafts before an upgrade, reopen a fresh workspace afterwards, and use the owning theme's history or your site's backup to reverse saved changes when needed.

Which opening screen should appear?

Custom Theme is the default workspace. If the active theme registers its own Theme Manager editing service (the AffStackDev theme does), its group names, sections, fields, choices, defaults and limits come from that theme. Any other theme gets Theme Manager's own sections for its Customizer settings and its colours and fonts (see [Themes without their own Theme Manager support](#)). The WordPress sections come with every theme, unless a theme's own support names its own list. A different active theme can therefore show a different set of controls. Theme Manager does not assume compatibility from a theme's brand or folder name.

You always have **Site sections**, **Pages & content**, **Theme & plugin controls** and **License** as well. The **Open theme editor** button opens WordPress's full native editor. No license is needed for any of them.

Why an editor or setting may be missing

The content finder can identify registered content providers and link to the available editors your account may use. It cannot infer the exact field behind every piece of text on every plugin-generated page. It does not run discovered shortcodes or scan arbitrary website URLs to guess their settings. Use an explicit editor shortcut where automatic source detection is insufficient.

Controls also depend on active plugins, theme support and your permissions. After changing the active theme/plugins or account permissions, open a full Theme Manager page to refresh the authorized editor list. A section whose editor is temporarily unavailable can retain its saved setup without appearing on the overview. Native tools still apply their own checks when you open them.

Finding your editing tools

Open **Appearance → Theme Manager**. If you use the compatible AffStackDev Suite, you can also open **AffStackDev → Theme Manager**. Both entrances work with the same saved website. Theme Manager's tools need an account allowed to manage theme options; no license is needed. Individual content and store tools also respect your account's permissions for those items. The tools run in an individual site's administration area.

The available tabs divide the work by what you want to change:

Tab or action	Use it for
Custom Theme	Edit the active theme's settings section by section: the sections of a theme with its own Theme Manager support, or Theme Manager's own sections for any other theme.
Site sections	Open a set of named shortcuts to homepage, content, theme and navigation editors.
Pages & content	Find a page, post, product or other supported public content item and identify where its content comes from; find templates, template parts and patterns.
Theme & plugin controls	Find an existing theme or plugin administration screen.
License	Optional: connect, check or recover the free license that brings signed updates.

Tab or action	Use it for
Open theme editor / native design button	Open the full original WordPress design editor. Its label depends on the active theme.

Theme Manager opens Custom Theme first. Direct links to a saved content search still open the search. The original WordPress and plugin editors remain available, including when a richer task needs their full controls.

Find a page or other content

1. Open **Pages & content**.
2. Choose the content type. Pages is selected first when available; Posts, Products and other eligible content types appear when your account can edit them.
3. Enter a page title or part of it in **Find a page...**, then select **Find**. Ordinary content search uses titles, with up to 150 characters of search text.
4. Use **Previous** and **Next** to move through the results. Each result page requests up to 12 items; the screen displays the current page number.
5. Use **Edit** or **Edit content** to open the item's editor. **View** opens the saved public page, or a private page your account can read, in a new tab.

Results include published, private, draft, pending and scheduled content your account can edit. They are ordered by the content's WordPress ordering value, then title, then ID. Internal records such as orders, coupons, attachments, revisions and product variations are not part of this finder. If your account cannot edit other authors' items, its ordinary content search is limited to its own records.

A Homepage, Posts page, Shop, Cart, Checkout, My account or Store terms badge identifies an assigned role. Otherwise an unpublished item's status can appear beside its title. **No matching content here** means this search returned no eligible records; try another title or content type. Theme settings and plugin-controlled wording may belong under Theme & plugin controls instead of a page record.

Understand Content sources & editing options

Expand a result's **Content sources & editing options** to see the item's original page editor and detected generated or shared sources. A saved editor link can make **Edit content** open a plugin or theme screen while **Open page editor** still opens the page's own text, images and blocks.

Source shown	What to change
Page content	The record's own text, images and blocks in its page editor.
Shared content	A synced pattern used on this page. Changing it can also change other pages that use the same pattern.
A posts or products listing	Edit the original posts/products that feed the list.
A named theme or plugin	Open its available controls. If several are available, use Choose this provider's control to choose the correct one.
Built with Elementor	Elementor keeps the page's layout and text in its own data, which the page editor does not show. Edit with Elementor opens Elementor's editor for the page.

Source shown	What to change
Homepage design	The theme may provide additional homepage sections beyond the assigned page's text. Look in the theme controls or Custom Theme.
Template: (name)	With a block theme, the template that shows this item, worked out the way WordPress chooses it (a chosen template first, then for example the front page, page or single template). Edit template opens it in the Site Editor. A change to a template changes every item that uses it.
WooCommerce	Catalog items come from products; cart, checkout and account output also comes from store settings and the visitor's session. The surrounding page editor does not replace those controls.
Source not identified	Check whether the required plugin is active, use the original editor, or add an explicit editor link.
Generated content	A source was detected, but its exact editor was not identified. Link the correct registered editor if you know it.

A detected provider name identifies a source of output; it does not identify every individual text field inside that provider. Theme Manager reads the saved blocks and shortcodes without running them. Very large or deeply nested content may show **This large or deeply nested page was not fully inspected**. Open the original editor to review the complete content in that case.

Other site pages

Choose **Other site pages** when looking for an archive, a plugin-generated destination or a local navigation link without an ordinary editable page record. This view includes eligible generated listings, explicitly linked destinations, integration-supplied pages and local custom menu links. Its search matches destination titles and uses the same 12-item pagination.

Saved menu link — editor not identified means that a navigation link was found. It does not establish that its address currently exists or that it has an editable page behind it. You can view the destination or link its actual registered editor. External navigation destinations are not offered as local editable pages. When a URL points to a normal editable page, use that page's ordinary result instead.

Find a template, template part or pattern

In **Pages & content**, the content type list has a **Theme design** group: **Templates** and **Template parts** (with a block theme, or a classic theme that uses block templates) and **Patterns** (with every theme). Choose one, type part of a name or slug in **Find a template, part or pattern...** and select **Find**. Twelve results show on a page.

Result	What it says and where it opens
A template	Its description and where it comes from: From the theme , Changed in the Site Editor (the theme's version, changed and saved), Made in the Site Editor , or From a plugin (for example WooCommerce's store templates). Edit in the Site Editor opens it there.
A template part	The same, and its area (for example Header or Footer).
Your own pattern	Whether it is synced (a change changes every place that uses it) or not synced (each use is a separate copy). Edit pattern opens it in the editor.

Result	What it says and where it opens
A pattern of the theme, WordPress or a plugin	Kept in code: it cannot be changed where it is. Open the Patterns screen opens WordPress's Patterns screen, where you can duplicate it and change the copy.

Theme Manager only finds these and opens WordPress's own editor; designing templates and layouts stays in the Site Editor.

Link a page to its editor

An editor link is a shortcut that tells Theme Manager which existing screen to open for a page. It does not create a page, copy content or change the destination's appearance.

For an existing result, expand **Content sources & editing options** and choose **Link a specific content editor**, or **Change linked editor** if it already has a mapping. For a missing/generated destination, use **Link a missing page to its editor** below the results.

Field	What to enter
Page name	A recognizable name, up to 120 characters. Existing post-linked forms use the record's title.
Page address on this site	The full local page address, up to the form's 2048-character limit. Existing post-linked forms use the record's permalink.
Where is this content edited?	Choose an existing registered screen from the grouped list. Only screens your account can access are offered.

Select **Save editor link**. An address that resolves to an editable ordinary page is attached to that page instead of being stored as a duplicate virtual destination. Once saved, the primary Edit content button uses the linked editor while it remains available. **Cancel** leaves the form without applying its changes.

To remove the shortcut, expand the result details and select **Remove editor link**. The original page and its content remain. An unavailable editor is kept as a saved mapping; it can become usable again if its plugin or permissions return. Choose a currently available editor to replace it when needed.

Up to 250 editor mappings can be saved. If you reach the limit, remove an unused mapping before adding another. A message saying links changed in another request means you need to reopen the form and repeat your change against the current list. Invalid-link messages usually require a current accessible editor, a valid address on this site, and a nonempty name. After a storage failure, review the current links before retrying.

Arrange Site sections

Site sections is a collection of shortcuts for people editing the site. **Arrange sections** changes these administration cards; it does not move sections on the public homepage.

Before you save a custom arrangement, Theme Manager automatically builds cards from the available homepage, Pages & links, theme editors, other content types, eligible plugin content editors, menus and widgets. The automatic layout adapts to currently available tools. It shows up to 36 cards, with the first 12 directly visible and additional cards under **More editing sections**. Business administration screens such as orders, commissions and payouts are kept out of the general editing overview.

Select **Arrange sections** and edit the rows you want:

Control	Effect
Section name	The card's title, up to 80 characters. A blank title uses the editor's standard name.
Editor to open	The current editor or content search opened by the card.
Short description	Optional plain-text help, up to 220 characters.
Order	A number from 0 to 999. Lower numbers appear first; equal numbers keep their current submitted order.
Show section	Display the card on the overview. Clear it to keep the saved card hidden.
Remove section	Remove the administration shortcut when saving.
Add a section (optional)	Fill an empty row with an editor and optional title/description to add a card.

Select **Save section layout**. The arrangement is shared by authorized administrators for this site and active theme. The form offers up to three empty addition rows at a time; save and reopen to add further cards until the 36-card limit is reached. The order numbers are sorting aids and are redisplayed as evenly spaced numbers on the next form.

Once saved, your list stays explicit: newly discovered editors are not silently added to it. Hiding or removing all cards is allowed, and the regular tabs remain available. An editor that becomes unavailable stays saved but is omitted from the overview. The arrangement form offers **Keep unavailable editor**; that choice preserves the saved name, description and visibility until the editor is available again. You can still remove that row or reposition it.

To return to automatic cards, expand **Return to the automatic layout** and choose **Restore automatic cards**. This resets only these shortcuts. Changing themes uses a separate saved arrangement for each active-theme combination, preserving the other theme's layout.

If another request changed the layout, reopen Arrange sections before saving again. A limit message requires removing an unused card. An invalid-editor message requires choosing currently available editors or retaining an existing unavailable row unchanged. **Cancel** exits without applying the form.

Find theme and plugin controls

Open **Theme & plugin controls**, enter a screen or provider name in **Find a theme or plugin control...**, and select **Find**. The search supports up to 150 characters. The default **Content providers** scope favors content, wording, appearance, page and related editing screens. **More registered controls** broadens that list, while general business administration remains outside the unfiltered content overview.

Expand a provider to see its control count and individual **Open** buttons. Theme groups start expanded and appear before plugin groups. If you arrived from a content source's **Choose this provider's control**, the list shows that provider's registered screens; use **Show other providers** to return to the wider directory.

Each button opens the original screen, which has its own fields, Save controls and permissions. The directory itself does not change those settings. If there are no matching controls, try a broader search or open the original

theme editor. Some applications keep controls inside their own interface rather than exposing a registered administration screen here.

Work in Custom Theme

Custom Theme shows the active theme's settings as sections. With a theme that has its own Theme Manager support, its fields, labels, defaults and available tasks follow that theme; with any other theme they follow [Theme Manager's own sections](#). Changing to a different theme can change the available sections. The initial overview groups related tasks; **More sections** expands additional choices within a group. The **Editing section** list, **Go**, and **All sections** buttons provide the same navigation.

The workspace keeps a separate draft for each theme section. Edit a section and use the workspace navigation buttons to move to another: the submitted draft is retained without changing the saved website. **Keep draft** explicitly retains your current section. **Save section** applies the current section only; other section drafts remain. A star in the section list marks a retained theme draft, and **review conflicts** marks a section requiring a decision.

Drafts are temporary and expire after two hours without a state-retaining workspace action. They belong to your signed-in session on this site. Typing alone is not saved automatically. Use Keep draft, the workspace navigation buttons or Save before leaving, and copy important unfinished text before signing out or upgrading. The count of section drafts refers to theme-section drafts; native-content drafts use their own controls within the same temporary workspace.

A full-page open or duplicated workspace address receives an independent copy of the retained workspace, so separately opened tabs do not become a shared draft editor. A changed active theme, editing connection or schema requires a fresh workspace. Copy any retained/submitted input shown by the error screen, then use **Open fresh workspace** to read current saved values. Opening a fresh workspace does not restore expired drafts.

View saved site opens the saved website in a new tab. It does not show unsaved drafts. Use Preview unsaved theme changes when you want to inspect pending theme edits.

Themes without their own Theme Manager support

When the active theme does not have its own Theme Manager support, Custom Theme uses Theme Manager's built-in sections for WordPress. You find:

Group	What it edits
Your theme's own groups (its Customizer panels) and Theme settings	The theme's Customizer settings, section by section as in the Customizer: text, text areas, email addresses, links, numbers, tick boxes, choices, a choice of page, colours, and pictures (by address or from the Media Library). Each is saved through the theme's own setting, exactly as the Customizer's Publish would save it, so the theme's own checks and clean-up run. A setting with a control only the Customizer shows (the theme's own kind, a picture the Customizer crops, the header or background picture) stays there: the section says how many and links to Open this section in the Customizer . Settings a theme keeps in its own option and plugins' Customizer settings also stay in the Customizer; the overview says how many and links to Open the Customizer . Some themes create most of their settings only inside the Customizer (Astra does); those are found only there.

Group	What it edits
Colours & fonts	With a block theme (or another theme with a theme.json file): Colours holds each colour of the theme's palette (as a colour code) and the Background colour , Text colour and Link colour (each one of the palette's colours); Fonts holds the Font of the text and the Font of the headings (the theme's fonts and fonts added in Appearance → Fonts). They are saved where the Site Editor saves its styles, and WordPress keeps a styles revision of every save.
Logo & site title, Homepage, Menus, Pages, posts & CSS, Store	The WordPress and WooCommerce sections . Navigation menus appears when the theme has menu places.
Recovery	Checkpoints & recovery .
Scheduled changes	Changes you scheduled .

Use theme default on save removes the setting, so the theme's own default applies again. Drafts, the private preview and the comparison of two people's changes work as described in this chapter. Right before a save, Theme Manager checks the saved values again while it holds its own lock; a save made in the same instant from another tool, such as the Customizer, is not blocked (the Customizer has no such check either).

Use fields, choices and defaults

Each section displays the active theme's field labels, descriptions and available choices. Some fields appear in expandable groups. Original-source panels can show read-only wording or a source link alongside separate editable presentation overrides. Change the original source in its owning editor when you want the underlying source content changed.

Field or control	How it works
Text, email, URL and number	Enter the value in the stated format and respect the field's displayed range or length. Saving validates it through the theme.
Checkbox	Checked means Enabled; clearing it explicitly selects off.
Choice list	Select an available option. If the saved choice is no longer available, it is shown as preserved until you choose another.
Large text field	Edit the text shown; use the field's description to determine permitted content.
Choose / change image	Open WordPress Media Library when your account has media-upload permission. Image selection changes the draft.
Remove image	Clear the field's image reference; the original media file is not deleted.
Image URL	Enter an image URL directly when using a URL-backed field.
Image attachment ID	Enter the Media Library attachment's numeric ID; enter 0 to remove the reference. This works even without picker scripts.
Automatic — use the theme's live selection	Use value 0 in a product selector to leave selection to the theme's current automatic behavior.

Field or control	How it works
Find products	Enter a name, choose a Results page if needed and run the lookup; then select a result in the field. This selects a reference, rather than changing the product's details.
Use theme default on save (remove this override)	Remove your explicit override when saving. This differs from deliberately saving an empty value or entering a value that merely equals today's default.

A field unavailable because a required source is missing shows its reason and preserves the existing stored value. Dependent values are retained while their controlling option is off; enhanced navigation may hide them, and ordinary PHP forms leave the help visible. Turning a controlling option off does not delete those retained dependent settings.

If a field fails validation, review the error and any listed field messages, correct it and save again. A form that is incomplete, too large or cut off by server input limits is rejected. Keep the page open and copy your text before reloading when a message says it could not be retained.

Edit ordered lists

Open a list row to edit its child fields. **Add entry** creates another draft row; **Move up** and **Move down** reorder it; **Remove entry** removes it from the draft. These buttons do not publish the list. The display shows the current entry count and the theme's maximum; Add entry is disabled at the limit.

Select **Save section** to apply the complete list. An explicitly empty list can be saved and is distinct from restoring the theme's default list. The theme determines how an empty list is displayed. To restore a default list, use its reset-to-default checkbox and save. Concurrent list changes are compared as a whole, including order; review the entire list when resolving a conflict.

Save, preview, refresh and recover drafts

Action	Result
Keep draft	Retain the current input temporarily; saved website unchanged.
Save section	Save only the current theme section and retain other sections' drafts.
Refresh saved changes	Compare current saved theme values with retained drafts. Native pages/products/menus are not reread by this button.
Discard section draft	Discard this section's unfinished edits. For native content and product flags, return to the values captured when the item was opened.
Reload this section	Expand the option, confirm discarding this section's draft and select the button to fetch its current saved values. Other section drafts remain.
Reload saved values	Under Workspace preferences & reload, confirm discarding all workspace drafts and reread the saved site values.

Discard and reload do not undo an edit that was already saved. To reverse a saved change, edit its value again or use the appropriate owning system's recovery tools.

For saved-change conflicts and uncertain saves, follow [Working safely alongside other editors](#). For the full preview workflow and access rules, see [Previewing unsaved theme changes](#).

Checkpoints & recovery

Checkpoints & recovery works with saved theme-settings history: the theme's own history when it has its own Theme Manager support, and otherwise Theme Manager's checkpoints. With Theme Manager's sections for any theme, up to 20 checkpoints per theme are kept: one is taken automatically before every save through Theme Manager, before every **Publish** in WordPress's Customizer (also a scheduled one) and before every restore, and you can save named ones. With a block theme the list also shows WordPress's own styles revisions (**WordPress styles revision**); restoring one makes it the current styles, and WordPress keeps the previous styles as a revision too. A checkpoint represents saved values, not unfinished workspace drafts. Its scope is the provider's theme wording, theme images, lists and presentation overrides. Native identity, menus, pages, posts, products, CSS, store notice, purchasing flags, orders and unrelated plugin data are outside this recovery.

To create a checkpoint, enter an optional **Checkpoint name** (up to 240 characters in the form) and choose **Save checkpoint**. The result states whether a checkpoint was created or an identical checkpoint already existed, according to the theme's recovery service.

Each Saved checkpoint entry shows its name, local creation time and type. Entries the theme marks unavailable for restoration are disabled. To restore, select a restorable entry under **Saved checkpoint**, review the scope and check **I understand this replaces theme settings and discards the workspace's unsaved theme drafts, but does not restore native content or product data**, then choose **Restore selected checkpoint**. To remove custom theme overrides using the theme's recovery operation, use the same scope confirmation and select **Restore theme defaults**. Successful restore clears theme drafts and their preview; native content is not restored.

A saved-state change since you opened recovery requires refreshed review and confirmation. If recovery reports an incomplete or uncertain result, review saved values before retrying. The theme's own history service controls checkpoint storage, retention and the exact restore behavior.

Schedule a change for later

You can prepare a section's change now and have it made at a set time, for example a store notice for a sale that starts at midnight and another that switches it off a week later.

1. Open the section and change its fields.
2. Expand **Schedule this section for later** under the buttons.
3. Enter **Date and time** (in the site's time zone, shown next to the label), at least one minute from now and within a year.
4. Select **Schedule section**. The section's draft becomes a scheduled change and leaves the workspace; the website is unchanged until that time.

Scheduling is offered for the sections of [Theme Manager's own sections for any theme](#) (theme settings, colours and fonts) and for the WordPress sections **Logo, site title & icon**, **Homepage & posts page**, **Additional CSS** and **Store notice**, with any theme that shows them. A theme with its own Theme Manager support takes part when its support declares scheduled saves; then its sections offer it too.

Scheduled changes lists every change: when, which section, who scheduled it, what changes (before → after), and its state.

State	Meaning
Waiting	It is made at its time. Cancel this change removes it; nothing on the website changes.
Applied	It was made. A checkpoint (Before a scheduled change) was taken first for theme settings.
Held for review	It was not made, so that nothing is overwritten: someone changed one of its fields after it was scheduled (the fields are named), the theme or its version changed, or the person who scheduled it can no longer edit theme settings. Review the section, then schedule it again if it is still wanted.
Not applied	The save was refused (the message says why).

The change is made as the person who scheduled it, through the same save as **Save section** or **Save native content**. WordPress runs it at the first visit to the site after that time, as it does with scheduled posts; a site with no visitors and no server task for WordPress's scheduler makes it later. Two changes of theme settings due at the same moment are made a minute apart. **Remove from the list** clears a finished entry.

Working safely alongside other editors

Your current workspace keeps the values you opened, the changes you have submitted as drafts, and a comparison with the latest saved theme settings. Theme Manager never treats typing alone as a saved draft. Use **Keep draft** or the workspace's navigation before leaving; drafts expire after two hours of inactivity. Automatic change checks do not keep an idle draft alive.

With a theme that implements the stronger concurrent-editing contract, changes to different fields can be kept together. For example, you can edit a footer label while another administrator changes an unrelated hero heading. Before Save, Theme Manager reads the current settings and preserves your independent change. If the active provider uses an earlier contract, a changed saved revision can instead require you to copy the draft and reload saved values.

If both editors change the same field differently, **Review changes to the same fields** shows **When you started**, **Saved now** and **Your draft**. For every listed field:

1. Read all three values. A list includes its whole set of entries and their order.
2. Choose **Use saved value** or **Keep my draft** under **Value to keep**.
3. Select **Apply conflict choices**.
4. Review the resulting draft, then select **Save section** if you want to publish it.

Applying conflict choices does not publish. If another person changes the saved field again before you apply a choice, the comparison must be reviewed again. A conflict in another section does not prevent saving an unaffected section, but every theme conflict must be resolved before previewing all theme drafts.

An empty value and a reset to the theme default are different choices. An explicit value that happens to equal today's default is also different from removing the override. Theme Manager preserves that distinction in conflict comparisons. Lists are compared as whole fields, so two people's different row orders need one deliberate choice rather than an automatic row-by-row mixture.

Use **Refresh saved changes** to compare current saved theme values with your draft without blindly discarding your work. Enhanced UI may notify you when something changes elsewhere; it leaves newly typed input visible. If you see **The last save outcome needs review**, some changes may already have reached storage. Keep your input, use Refresh saved changes, and inspect the saved result before trying another Save.

An **Another request is using this workspace** message means a submission is still active or an expired lock has just been cleared. Keep the form open and retry once after the other request finishes. If your theme, provider, login session or workspace has changed, copy any retained/submitted input before opening a fresh workspace. A save refused because the active theme changed shows the refusal and your submitted input on whichever view opens; nothing is saved. Temporary workspace protection cannot turn every third-party editor into a compatible concurrent editor.

Previewing unsaved theme changes

Use **Preview unsaved theme changes** to inspect the theme drafts kept in your current workspace without publishing them. It includes provider theme fields from all drafted sections, and with Theme Manager's sections for any theme also the colour and font drafts. It does not preview pending native page, product, menu, identity, CSS or store-notice edits. **View saved site** opens the currently published website instead.

To preview:

1. Open a Custom Theme section and change one or more theme fields.
2. Keep drafts while navigating to any other theme sections you want to include.
3. Resolve every flagged theme conflict.
4. Select **Preview unsaved theme changes**.
5. Inspect the embedded preview or use **Open preview in a new tab**.
6. Return to the section you want to apply and select **Save section**. Preparing the preview alone publishes nothing.

The preview is private to the same authorized WordPress account and login session on this site and active theme. Its access expires after 30 minutes. It is not a shareable review link for a different person or an incognito window. Switching themes, logging out, losing required access, saving/restoring/reloading theme state or replacing the preview can make an old link unusable. Prepare a new preview when necessary.

A preview is a temporary native WordPress auto-draft. It cannot be used as a second publishing route through the Customizer. Theme Manager verifies that the theme's fields are registered for native preview; if one is missing or another Customizer session is already active, the operation leaves your draft available and reports the problem. Keep the draft, open a fresh Manager page if directed, or use an updated compatible provider.

The preview blocks ordinary form submissions and selected action links, but a site's third-party scripts can have their own behavior. Use it to inspect appearance. Do not place orders, submit customer transactions or treat it as a complete isolation environment.

With Enhanced UI off or JavaScript disabled, a successful preview stays on the submitted PHP page so the link remains visible. Browser Refresh may ask to resend a form; use the current workspace controls instead. Replaying the old submission is rejected. Opening the workspace as a full page or in a duplicated tab creates an independent workspace copy without the old preview reference; prepare another preview there.

There is no separate Close or Revoke preview button. Preparing a replacement preview or using the applicable save/reload controls changes the old preview's access. Deactivating Theme Manager attempts to remove only its marked preview auto-drafts; ordinary WordPress changesets and published content remain. A preview's expiry controls access and does not promise an immediate database purge.

Edit WordPress and WooCommerce content

Custom Theme offers fixed native sections when your account has the required WordPress or WooCommerce permissions, with every theme. A theme with its own Theme Manager support can name its own list instead; then only those appear. They save into the original system. Each has **Save native content**, and where fields are loaded, **Keep draft** and **Discard section draft**. Theme checkpoints do not restore these edits.

Native content is checked again before saving. If it changed in another editor after you opened it, your draft is kept and the save is stopped. Copy any edits you want to reuse, then use **Reload this section** and review the current saved values. **Refresh saved changes** checks theme fields and does not refresh a loaded native item.

Logo, site title & icon

Field	Requirement and effect
Site logo	Available when the theme supports a custom logo. Choose a readable image attachment or set its ID to 0 to clear the logo reference.
Site title	Available to accounts with permission to manage site options. Changes the existing WordPress site title.
Tagline	Changes the existing WordPress tagline.
Site icon	Requires permission to manage site options and a readable square image at least 512 × 512 pixels. Choose/change it or enter 0 to remove its reference.

The icon control does not crop the image. Select a suitable square image first. Removing the logo or icon reference does not delete the original Media Library file. Existing site values are loaded when you open the section; activating Theme Manager does not reset them.

Homepage & posts page

Choose **Homepage displays** → **Latest posts** or **A static page**. For a static page, select **Homepage**, and optionally assign a different **Posts page**. **Not assigned** clears an assignment. A static homepage must have a page and cannot be the same as the posts page.

The selectors show the first 200 published, password-free pages by title that your account can read, plus any current assignment outside the list. Newly changed assignments must be published readable Pages. If a needed page is not in the list, use the original WordPress Reading settings. This section requires permission to manage site options and saves the original WordPress homepage settings.

Additional CSS

Enter CSS without `<style>` or other HTML tags, then select **Save native content**. The section requires WordPress's Additional CSS permission and saves through WordPress Additional CSS for the active stylesheet. It does not edit theme files. Use the original editor when you need its other design controls.

Store notice

Check **Show the store notice**, enter **Notice text**, and select Save native content. The notice allows safe WordPress content markup. Clearing the checkbox turns off the existing WooCommerce store notice while preserving its text. The initial value follows the store's saved notice setting; an absent setting is off. This section requires WooCommerce and permission to manage it.

Page & post text and product presentation

- 1. Open **Page & post text** or **Product names, images & descriptions**.
- 2. Enter terms under **Find content**, set **Results page** if needed and select **Search**. Searches request 20 records per page, sorted by title, and show items your account can edit.
- 3. Choose **Content to edit** and select **Edit selected content**.
- 4. Edit the fields below and select **Save native content**.

Field	Saved effect
Title / name	Page/post title or product name.
Main text	Page/post text source or the product's main description.
Summary / short description	The native excerpt or WooCommerce short description.
Main image	Page/post featured image or product image; use a readable Media Library attachment, or 0 to clear the reference.

These searches cover published, draft, private and pending records. Unlike the title-only general content finder, these native searches use WordPress's ordinary content matching. Product editing is for parent products, not individual variations. This form does not change publication status, product price, stock or membership/subscription rules.

Main text is a text/HTML source field. Use **Open the full native editor** for visual blocks and builder layouts; known separate builder documents are rejected by the basic form. Changed text and summaries are filtered to permitted post markup. Existing shortcode and block source can be present in the text, but a source field is not a visual layout editor.

When selecting a different item with changed native fields, either save/discard the current draft first or check **Discard the current content draft when selecting another item**. This deliberately replaces the current selection's unfinished edits. The **Original editor** disclosure can also provide the original WordPress/WooCommerce editor link.

Edit navigation menus

Navigation menus edits classic WordPress menus and the active theme's registered menu locations. It supports menus with up to 100 entries. For larger menus or block-navigation editing, use the original editor.

Choose **Menu**, then **Edit menu**. The first existing menu is initially selected when no other selection is loaded. Expand an entry to edit it:

Control	Effect
Label	The displayed navigation text.
Link (custom links only)	The address of a custom-link entry. Page/category entries retain their native destination relationship.
Position	A whole number from 0 to 999999; lower positions appear earlier. Zero is saved as position one.
Parent entry	Top level or another existing menu item for nesting.
Open in a new tab	Set or clear the new-tab target.
Remove this menu entry on save	Mark only the navigation entry for removal. The linked page/product is retained.

Existing custom links can use a complete web, email or telephone address, a site-root-relative path or an anchor. Parent selections cannot point to the same item, form a loop or point to an entry marked for removal. Before saving marked removals, also check **Confirm removing any marked menu entries**. Select Save native content to apply the complete menu form.

Expand **Add a link** to enter a Label and **Full destination URL**. New links require complete `http:`, `https:`, `mailto:` or `tel:` addresses; anchor-only or root-relative additions are not accepted in this field. The new custom link is added when you save the menu. Existing page/category items keep their original relationship. Save or copy an unfinished new-link name/address before switching menus.

The location selectors below the entries assign an existing menu to each registered theme location. Choose **No menu assigned** to clear a location. Changing a location does not delete the menu.

To create a menu, expand **Create a navigation menu**, enter a nonempty **Menu name** within the 100-character form limit, and select **Create menu**. This immediately creates the WordPress menu; it does not merely stage a future menu. You can then add a link and assign locations. Whole-menu renaming and deletion remain in the original editor.

Switching away from changed menu fields requires saving/discarding first or checking **Discard current menu draft when selecting another menu**. A stale or incomplete menu form must be reopened. A message that earlier changes may have saved requires checking the original menu editor before retrying, because menu updates, removals, new links and location assignments are separate writes.

Change a theme-provided product flag

A compatible theme can expose a product archive flag with its own label and purchasing-effect warning. Read that warning before changing it. Use **Find a product**, a **Results page** if needed, and **Search**; choose a Product and select **Load product flag**.

The loaded product's checkbox shows its current flag. Set or clear it, check **I understand the purchasing effect and that theme recovery cannot undo this product flag**, then select **Save product flag**. You must have permission to edit that product. The active theme determines the flag's purchasing effect and performs its guarded product save.

Loading another product replaces the currently loaded flag draft. Save or copy that draft first. To reverse a saved flag change, return to the same product and save the opposite choice with confirmation; theme-settings checkpoints do not undo product flags.

Workspace preferences and problem recovery

Expand **Workspace preferences & reload** to change **Use enhanced in-place navigation when the Suite allows it**, then select **Save preference**. It is on by default and saved for the site. Reload applies it. A global Suite setting that disables enhanced navigation takes precedence while preserving the local checkbox preference.

Optional browser enhancement

Enhanced navigation updates the workspace in place, warns before leaving with new unsaved input and checks periodically for saved theme changes while the page is visible. If you have not typed new input, it can refresh changed saved theme values. While you are typing, it shows a notice and keeps your input. These checks do not save typing or keep an otherwise inactive draft alive indefinitely.

Ordinary PHP forms continue to provide section navigation, saving, list buttons, recovery and reload.

WordPress's Media Library can still use its normal scripts even with enhanced navigation disabled. With all JavaScript disabled, use the visible forms and enter image URLs or attachment IDs manually. Use Keep draft or the workspace navigation buttons before leaving; the enhanced leave warnings are not available in that mode.

Message or situation	What to do
No matching content / controls	Try another title, content type or broader controls scope. Use the original editor when the application does not expose a matching screen.
Linked editor unavailable	The shortcut is retained. Restore the editor's availability or select a different authorized editor.
Destination no longer listed	Return to Pages & content and add a new editor link for the current destination.
Workspace or login session expired	Copy visible unsaved input, sign in as needed and open a fresh workspace. Saved site settings remain.
Active theme or editing provider changed	Copy retained drafts and reopen a fresh workspace for the current theme.
Another request is using this workspace	Allow the pending operation to finish, review its result and retry once.
Form incomplete, cut off or too large	Keep/copy input and address the server's form-input limit or reduce the submission before retrying.
Field or list validation error	Correct the indicated field; use available choices and stay within the theme's row limits.
Native content changed elsewhere	Copy the draft, reload this section and review current saved values before reapplying.
Last save outcome needs review	Refresh saved theme changes; for native content inspect the original editor. Earlier changes may have saved.
Request failed / incomplete response	Input remains on the page where possible. Copy it before reloading, and inspect saved values before retrying a write.

Message or situation	What to do
Permission changed	Return to an account with the needed permission. Original saved content remains in its owning system. No license is needed for Theme Manager's tools.
Need to undo a saved edit	Change it back through the owning editor, or use recovery that covers that particular data. Draft discard only removes unfinished changes.

Free license, maintenance and plugin updates

Optional: Theme Manager works fully without a license. A free license from your AffStackDev account adds signed updates from affstackdev.com and counts for the full mode of AffStackDev Suite on this site (its enhanced screens and layout choices). Everything you set up keeps working whatever happens to the license. Installing Suite is optional and Suite needs no key of its own; another product's key does not activate Theme Manager. There is no trial timer or usage quota. The license service decides whether the site's activation is accepted and which site limits apply.

The license affects only Theme Manager's signed updates and what it counts for the Suite. It does not lock any tool, deactivate your current theme, erase published pages, delete saved theme content or take the public website offline. Your existing WordPress and theme editors keep their own normal permissions. A license does not give a staff member additional WordPress permissions.

Activate Theme Manager

Use a site administrator account. People who can edit theme options but cannot manage WordPress settings must ask an administrator to perform license actions.

1. Open Appearance → Theme Manager and select License, or use the License link beside the plugin on WordPress's Plugins screen.
2. Use "Open AffStackDev account" to find your own Theme Manager key.
3. In "Activate free license," enter the complete key in "Theme Manager license key." It is a password field and accepts up to 128 characters/bytes as checked by the client; paste the full key without extra surrounding spaces.
4. Choose "Licensed environment": Production, Staging, Development or Local. The initial choice follows the WordPress environment when the site's license identity is first created. Use the choice appropriate for this installation.
5. Select "Activate license." Wait for the request to finish and read the returned status.
6. When licensed, use "Back to Theme Manager workspace" or another tab.

A production site may be refused by the service if its site address is not HTTPS. A "no available site slot" message means you must manage activations in the AffStackDev account before this site can use another slot. The plugin cannot create a plan, issue a license key or increase an account's permitted site count.

The complete license key is used for activation. Theme Manager stores an encrypted installation credential for subsequent checks and updates. It does not keep the complete key as an ordinary WordPress setting. Do not send a key or credential when requesting general troubleshooting help.

If a previous activation is pending, use “Check now / recover activation” before entering another key. A request can reach the server even when the reply fails to arrive; the recovery control checks that existing attempt instead of creating another uncertain activation.

Read the License screen

The “Free Theme Manager license” panel shows a status label and a message explaining it. The following details help an administrator identify the installation and understand timing:

Detail	What it tells you
Site	Site address bound to this activation, including any subdirectory.
Environment	Selected licensed environment.
Installation	Only the final eight characters of the local installation identity, useful to distinguish copies.
Plan	Plan code returned by the service, or a dash when unavailable.
Last accepted check	Most recent accepted license response.
Last attempted check	Most recent request attempt; an attempt is not necessarily an accepted check.
Next automatic check due	Scheduled validation or retry timing.
Current permission deadline	Earlier limit after which this cached permission cannot be used.
Server-authorized deadline	Entitlement or grace deadline returned by the service, when present.

Screen dates and times are UTC. A dash means the relevant value is not available. A previous update status or accepted-check date is historical information; read the current license status as well.

The screen changes to show relevant controls. An accepted license adds “Back to Theme Manager workspace.” An existing active credential changes the activation panel to “Replace / recover license.” A pending activation prevents another key submission until recovered. The environment selector is disabled while an active credential is bound. A site move or unreadable credential adds “Reconnect after a move or credential change.”

Manual check and replacement

To ask the service for current status, select “Check now / recover activation.” It validates a pending activation first, then uses the existing active credential as applicable. The returned message and status panel tell you what happened. This action does not reset theme settings or edit website content.

To replace a readable, active license, use “Replace / recover license” and submit the new matching Theme Manager key. If a replacement request is uncertain, the plugin preserves recovery information and can retain the old credential independently until the outcome is resolved. Use Check now before trying further replacements. When the screen says another licensing operation is in progress, allow that operation to finish and retry shortly; do not submit repeated forms from several tabs.

An active credential's environment cannot be changed during replacement. To intentionally change the selected licensed environment, first release and resolve the existing activation, then activate in the appropriate environment. A change to WordPress's actual configured environment is a separate identity change and may require the explicit reconnection workflow.

A manual check is available even when the cached license has expired or the service previously denied permission. It can recover after a service or account issue is fixed. Checking does not override a server restriction, create an entitlement or extend a server deadline without an accepted response.

Automatic checks, outages and deadlines

An accepted license is normally checked every 12 hours, with up to 15 minutes of timing variation. WordPress scheduling is the primary mechanism. Eligible administrator page visits and normal frontend visits that execute PHP can retry an overdue check even if scheduled tasks or loopback requests fail.

An outage does not immediately erase a previously accepted license. Theme Manager can use it for at most 72 hours after the last accepted local check, and only until any earlier server entitlement/grace deadline. Failed requests and retries never start a new 72-hour period. If the service sends a definitive denial or a restriction, it takes effect when received rather than waiting for that offline limit.

For example, a check accepted Monday at 10:00 has a maximum offline ceiling of Thursday at 10:00. If the service's applicable deadline is Tuesday at 18:00, access ends Tuesday at 18:00 unless a new accepted response changes the authorized state. The plugin does not automatically assume an expired active license has entered a grace period; the service must authorize grace.

After temporary availability failures, retries back off from about 15 minutes to about one hour and then up to six hours. You can use Check now when the connection is restored. A healthy status can appear “validation overdue” for a short period before the next successful retry; it is still usable only while inside the hard deadline.

Automatic fallback skips checkout, cart, account actions, APIs and mutating form requests. On hosts with FastCGI support it finishes the frontend response before checking; on other hosts a due check may add a short wait, bounded by a four-second licensing timeout. Ordinary visits do not install plugin updates or run unrelated scheduled jobs.

A fully cached page may never run PHP, and an idle site has no visitor activity. Such sites still need a working scheduler, an administrator visit that reaches WordPress, or a manual check. If the system clock moves backward substantially, correct it with the host and check the license again.

License status and recovery reference

Status shown	What to do
Not connected	No free license is connected. Theme Manager works fully; to get signed updates, enter the complete Theme Manager key and activate this site.
Licensed	Continue using Theme Manager.
Licensed — validation overdue	Current permission is still within its deadline. Use Check now if it does not recover automatically.
Licensed — connection grace	Latest check could not reach/complete with the service. Restore connectivity and use Check now before the displayed deadline.
Licensed — term grace	Service has authorized a grace period. Review the license before its grace deadline.
Licensed — term and connection grace	Both a server grace period and a connection problem apply. The earlier deadline controls access.

Status shown	What to do
License validation expired	Cached permission reached its authorized deadline or 72-hour offline limit. Check now after fixing connection/account issues.
Activation recovery pending	An activation may have reached the service without a usable reply. Use Check now before another key.
Validation required	A credential exists but no accepted current validation does. Select Check now.
Local license state needs recovery	Cached local status failed its integrity check. The credential was retained; validate again.
License credential needs recovery	Stored encrypted credential cannot be read. Ask your host/administrator about changed salts or missing encryption support, then use the explicit reconnection flow if needed.
Site identity changed	This copy's address or actual WordPress environment differs from its stored identity. Prepare reconnection as described below.
Activation missing	Service did not find this exact active installation. Review its activation and recover through Check now/account management.
License could not be authenticated	Service rejected this credential or product scope. Confirm you are using the Theme Manager license and correct account.
License unavailable / License needs attention	Resolve the entitlement with the account/service, then check again. The client cannot identify every underlying account reason.
License restricted by server	Signed updates are unavailable until the restriction is resolved; Theme Manager itself keeps working.
System clock needs attention	Correct host time and validate again.
Licensed — deactivation pending	Remote release is not confirmed. Use “Retry pending deactivation”; do not assume the slot is free.
Site deactivated	This site's remote activation was confirmed released. Enter a valid key again if the site should use Theme Manager.

License errors do not delete the theme, published content or saved settings, and they do not stop Theme Manager's tools.

Release this site's activation

Use this when the site should stop occupying its Theme Manager license slot.

1. Open Appearance → Theme Manager → License.
2. Find “Release this site’s license activation.” It is available when an active readable credential belongs to this site.
3. Select “Release this site’s remote activation.”
4. Select “Deactivate license.”
5. Verify that the status changes to “Site deactivated.”

The plugin clears its local credentials only after a valid server acknowledgment. If the outcome is uncertain, the button becomes “Retry pending deactivation” and the same pending request is retried. There is no separate cancel-pending-deactivation control. Resolve the pending release before activating a different key.

Deactivating the plugin in WordPress, deleting its files or updating it does not release the remote slot. WordPress plugin deactivation clears Theme Manager's scheduled license event; it preserves local license records and saved content. If you are retiring a site, release its license first while the site can still communicate with the service, or manage the old activation in your AffStackDev account.

Reconnect a moved site or unreadable credential

A cloned or moved site should not silently share the old installation identity. Theme Manager detects changed canonical site addresses and actual WordPress environments. Changing the WordPress environment type (`WP_ENVIRONMENT_TYPE`), for example when a staging copy becomes the live site, counts as a move: release this site's activation first while the identity still matches, then reconnect after the change and activate again, so the released place is free. Credentials may also become unreadable after authentication salts change or required encryption support disappears.

1. Open the License screen and read the recovery explanation.
2. Under “Reconnect after a move or credential change,” select “Clear this copy’s local license credential and reconnect.”
3. Select “Prepare reconnection.”
4. Enter your free Theme Manager key again and activate the appropriate environment.
5. Review your AffStackDev account if the original site's activation needs to be released separately.

For a moved/cloned copy, confirmation clears this copy's local licensing records and creates a new installation identity. For an unreadable credential on the same site, it clears the credential/state while retaining that site's identity. It does not reset the theme or content, contact the original site's activation or automatically free its slot.

Keep WordPress authentication salts with backups when you intend a restore to preserve credential continuity. Before clearing an unreadable credential, an administrator can check whether the original environment/salts or required PHP extension should be restored instead. Reconnection is only offered for a detected identity or credential problem; it is not a general license reset button.

Check and install signed plugin updates

Theme Manager's License screen includes “Signed plugin updates.” It requires a currently accepted free license, the service's installation-token update capability, the bundled public verification key, and PHP Sodium plus ZipArchive. A host with OpenSSL alone may store the encrypted license credential but still lack the Sodium signature function needed for protected updates.

Update readiness label	Meaning and next step
Activate your free license	Activate or recover the license above.
Waiting for update service	License is accepted but the service has not advertised protected update support for this installation. Check now again after the service is ready.

Update readiness label	Meaning and next step
Update verification needs attention	The bundled public key or required Sodium/ZipArchive support is missing. Ask the host/administrator to restore the signed plugin files and enable the missing extension.
Signed updates ready	WordPress can check for signed releases. This does not mean a newer version exists or has been installed.

To check manually:

1. Sign in with an administrator account that can also update plugins.
2. Open Appearance → Theme Manager → License.
3. Select “Check for plugin updates.”
4. Read “Last update check” and its result: “Up to date,” “Update available,” or “Update check needs attention.”
5. If an update is offered, use WordPress's normal update control for Theme Manager.

“Check for plugin updates” checks and refreshes WordPress's offer; it does not itself install the update. Automatic update preference is set in WordPress → Plugins. Theme Manager does not turn automatic installation on for you. Manual updates from the WordPress offer and automatic updates use the same protected download and verification process.

The protected updater accepts stable releases with a greater native version. It checks supported WordPress/PHP requirements, and a WooCommerce minimum only if a release requires one. It obtains a temporary download grant using the installation credential, verifies the package signature and every file, checks again that permission is current, and verifies the extracted files before replacement. License credentials are sent through HTTPS requests rather than placed in download URLs.

If the release offer changed while you were working, check again and use the new offer. If the host cannot create a temporary file or the package fails verification, resolve the indicated storage/service problem and retry through the normal update path. The plugin has no separate downloadable backup, rollback button or partial-download resume screen. Retain an appropriate site backup before installing updates.

Do not directly edit files inside a signed Theme Manager installation, including its manuals. Added, removed or changed files cause the protected updater to stop rather than overwrite an altered installation. Restore the correct intact signed package or have the administrator investigate the changes. An arbitrary package URL or replacement ZIP is not automatically an accepted protected update; use the signed release and supported deployment workflow. A newer release appears only when the service supplies an eligible signed update for this site.

What remains after disabling or deleting the plugin

License deactivation, plugin deactivation and deletion are different actions. Confirmed license deactivation releases the remote slot and removes this site's local installation credentials; it leaves the site's identity and website data. WordPress plugin deactivation stops this plugin's scheduled checks and performs its separate private-preview cleanup. It leaves theme/content records and license options in the database. Deleting plugin files does not run a Theme Manager license-record eraser in this version, and does not release the remote slot.

Reinstalling Theme Manager can therefore encounter an existing identity or credential. It should be checked or recovered, not assumed to be a new activation. Reinstalling an older plugin does not undo theme or content changes that were already saved.

Details to include in a support request

For safe troubleshooting, provide the visible status label, nonsecret error/result, approximate last check time and whether the site was moved or the host changed. The screen itself shows only a shortened installation ID. The complete license key and installation credential are not needed to explain routine status messages.

Other activation and update problems

Problem or message	Action and expected result
The complete key was not accepted, or no key is configured	Use the Theme Manager key from the correct AffStackDev account. An installation must be activated before it can be checked or released.
Secure credential storage or credential encryption is unavailable	Ask the host to enable supported encryption and investigate cryptographic support. Activation cannot finish until its installation credential can be stored securely.
The installation credential, identity, request or accepted state could not be saved	Check WordPress database health and permissions with the administrator. After storage works, return to the current License screen and use its offered recovery action.
Another licensing operation is already in progress	Let the current request finish, then retry shortly. Avoid repeated submissions in several tabs.
A previous activation or deactivation needs recovery	Use Check now or Retry pending deactivation before submitting another key or release request.
The server returned an incomplete, invalid or unexpected reply	Read the current status and retry after the service issue is resolved. An uncertain activation or release can remain pending; do not treat a request failure as proof the remote action never happened.
Licensing service could not be reached	Check the host's outbound HTTPS connectivity and the service. Existing accepted permission remains limited to its original deadline.
Too many requests / rate limit	Allow the service's waiting period to pass, then retry. Background license checks already back off after failures.
The plugin update could not be verified or authorized	Check the License tab first, then refresh the WordPress update offer. Do not reuse an obsolete download selection.
Update requires a newer WordPress, PHP or WooCommerce version	Have the administrator meet the offered release's requirements, then retry. WooCommerce is required only when that release declares a requirement.
Update download cannot create a temporary file	Ask the host to check writable temporary storage and free space. Restart the update after this is fixed.
A package is incomplete, corrupted, contains unexpected files or fails its signature check	Obtain the correct intact signed release. Do not change its contents to get past verification.

Problem or message	Action and expected result
Existing signed plugin files have been changed	Investigate changes and restore the correct intact signed installation before retrying the protected update. Changes to included manuals also count.
Permission or update offer changed during installation	Recover the license or check for updates again, then start from the current offer.

The Master Technical Reference includes exact license and updater error codes for developers and hosting support.

Preview and collaboration troubleshooting

What you see	What to do
Custom Theme shows an error instead of sections	Read the message: a theme with its own Theme Manager support that does not match this Theme Manager release says so; the original editors remain available.
A scheduled change was held	Read its reason under Scheduled changes, review the section and schedule it again if still wanted.
Theme/provider changed or workspace expired	Copy available retained input, then open a fresh workspace to read the current site. Saved theme settings have not been deleted.
Same-field conflicts	Review each comparison, apply saved/draft choices, then Save section separately.
Settings keep changing during Save	Your draft remains. Refresh and coordinate with the other editor before retrying.
Save outcome needs review	Inspect current saved values with Refresh saved changes before saving again. Some work may have been stored already.
Preview requires a changed field	Change a provider theme field first, or use View saved site for the published website. Native drafts are not included.
Preview field is unavailable to native WordPress preview	Keep the draft and use the original editor or have the compatible provider corrected. Do not assume previewing saved anything.
Private/expired preview	Return to the originating login session and prepare a new preview.
Preview disappeared after reopening the page	The reopened page has its own workspace copy; prepare a fresh preview.
Editor link or control is missing	Refresh a full Manager page and check account/theme/plugin availability; the original administrator menu may still be the correct route.

Glossary

Term	Meaning in Theme Manager
Provider	The active theme's registered service supplying its fields, saved values, validation and recovery behavior; for a theme without its own, Theme Manager's built-in WordPress provider.
Scheduled change	A section's draft that Theme Manager makes at a set time, or holds for review when its fields were changed meanwhile.
Styles revision	WordPress's own saved copy of a block theme's styles (colours, fonts) from before a change.
Native editor	The original WordPress, WooCommerce or owning plugin editor for a resource.
Workspace	Private temporary working state for your site, account, login session and editing tab.
Draft	A change kept inside the workspace until you explicitly save it. Typing alone is not a kept draft.
Saved value	A value already written to the owning theme or native content store.
Override	An explicitly saved theme value, including a value that currently matches the theme default.
Reset	Removing a theme override so the provider's default applies.
Revision	A marker used to detect changes since values were opened or last compared.
Conflict	Different local and saved changes to the same field requiring a deliberate choice.
Checkpoint	A saved state in the theme-settings history: the theme's own, or Theme Manager's for a theme without its own.
Private preview	A temporary view of validated, unsaved theme drafts for the originating authorized session.
Editor shortcut	A Manager-owned link to an existing authorized editor; it does not copy the content.
Section card	An editing shortcut on Theme Manager's Site sections overview.
Licensed environment	The selected production, staging, development or local identity for this product activation.
Remote activation	The license service's record for this installation, released by the explicit license operation.
Signed update	A release whose identity and complete file inventory are verified with a trusted public key.