

“timthumb.php” Script Issue With HostGator

As any of you who are using HostGator with Nick’s themes can attest, you will more than likely run into problems with their “mod_security” settings. Why they haven’t noticed that there are many people coming to them with the same issue in regards to the “timthumb.php” script, and somehow make a permanent fix for this is beyond me.

Seeing that there are many people using HostGator these days, and more especially using Nick’s themes within HG I have created this guide to show you how you *may* get your individual issues resolved. Now I am not sure that you will have the same exact issues, but following the below steps should ensure that you are given a better chance of successfully getting your thumbnails and featured articles to show up quickly with the least amount of HG help.

When I was trying to figure out how to resolve this issue I discovered later on that you will more than likely be required to have tech support assist you with each and every domain that you are using the “timthumb.php” script within your HostGator account, and the best way to do this is either "Live Chat" or actually submit a ticket.

You should submit a ticket if you have more than one URL that you plan on using the new themes on. (As per request of a tech rep) I will also tell you that using the little script by JD helped me out as well. If you are not familiar with what I am talking about here is what I used to start off the chat:

```
Due to a script that my WordPress theme uses, I have been getting level 1 support to disable the mod_security rule blocking my sites on a domain by domain basis. Over the next few days I will be installing the same theme (that uses timthumb.php) onto several new domains... Please whitelist the following domain to start with - mydomainsURL.com
```

The tech rep responding to my case was able to change the settings, but I have noticed on another site I needed fixed that that particular tech rep had no idea how to change the settings and submitted a ticket in my behalf.

But either way, I would suggest the lazy approach and talk to a live chat rep and have them do it regardless and most importantly you should copy and paste the entire conversation in a text document for future use, and let me tell you why

I was able to get one domain fixed, but it happened to be a mock site I was using so that I didn’t have to keep my money making site out of commission while I was getting the issue resolved. I was able to put a different theme on the money making URL until I got the issue resolved.

Unfortunately I later learned that by doing this you will also require help with the domain later on regardless. You will have to decide what you want to do, but it allowed me to know that you will be required to submit a ticket or chat for each domain.

All of this is a little wordy I know, but it will save you headache later on. Having the saved conversation saved me much time with the next less knowledgeable tech rep because he was able to see what occurred on the conversation before and avoid many steps that would have otherwise have happened.

The second ticket that was submitted in my behalf was actually more valuable than the first. I learned that you must set up your theme in a certain way before you will get the results you desire. Now if you are like me you probably did everything under the sun to get the issue fixed before seeking help, for instance changing the CHMOD settings.

I learned that this is critical in your HG account before anything will work, and not just the “cache” folder settings, which is key to success. Take a look at the email below to see how my issue was resolved and how you should set up your CHMOD.

Hello,

The problem with [mydomainsURL.com](#) was due to the [/home/hopesque/public_html/mydomainsURL.com/wp-content](#) folder being writeable by group which means that the permissions (chmod) of this folder was set to 777 which caused it to not allow the contents to load from this server causing an Internal Server Error. **Folders require permissions 755 and files require permissions 644.**

Here is the error from the error logs:

```
[Sat Jan 17 18:30:21 2009] [error] [client 216.110.94.227] SoftException
in Application.cpp:544: Directory
"/home/hopesque/public_html/mydomainsURL.com/wp-content" is writeable by
group, referer: http://mydomainsURL.com/
```

If you have any other questions, please let us know.

Thank You,

Ryan Merritt
Linux Systems Administrator
HostGator, LLC.
<http://support.hostgator.com>
For Support Call Us At: 1-866-96-GATOR (42867)

You may notice “Ryan Merritt’s” name just above. Obviously he knows how to fix this issue so you may want to get his assistance if need be in the future.

So you will want to ensure that your “**wp-content**” and “**cache**” folders are set to **CHMOD 755** and the actual “**timthumb.php**” script is set to **CHMOD 644**. Heck, I had all of them set to 777, and then learned that they should be 755, and when that didn’t help I started changing the CHMOD on the “wp-content” folder to 777, and 755, and other folders out of frustration. So you see that it can get really confusing really quickly.

By doing this, you should ensure a quick resolution to this issue after you have contacted HG tech support and ask them to [whitelist](#) your particular domain. Another thing I learned is that your path to the image and the size of the image has a lot to do with being able to view them on the finished product.

Ensure that you use a direct path to the image, and if you are new this may confuse you so look below for an example.

Name	Value
<input type="text" value="Featured"/>	<input type="text" value="/mydomainsURL.com/wp-content/themes/ColdStone/img/image_1.jpg"/>
<input type="button" value="Delete"/> <input type="button" value="Update"/>	
<input type="text" value="Thumbnail"/>	<input type="text" value="/mydomainsURL.com/wp-content/themes/ColdStone/img/image_2.jpg"/>
<input type="button" value="Delete"/> <input type="button" value="Update"/>	

You will also want to ensure that your images are no more than about 900px in width because you may not have enough memory to resize your image if it is any larger than that, which was my case on an issue as well. (This is for your featured article(s) image on ColdStone theme)

I was stumped as to why my issue wasn't being resolved when I was reading from other people that once they had their domains whitelisted everything else fell into place. I can only guess it is because they did not jack with the other settings of the site, more particularly the CHMOD settings of other folders and files.

Now I don't know for sure if this will completely solve your image problems. But it seems logical to assume that if your settings are correct and the HG staff whitelist your domain everything else should follow suit.

I will put the conversation below of my conversation with the first tech rep who helped me with my first site, and maybe it may be of some help to you if all else fails (above). At least you will have the information from a competent tech rep and will be able to show the tech rep you get a resolved issue for the "timthumb.php" script.

(9:01:14 AM) Zach Ka: has entered the chat.

(9:01:15 AM) Zach Ka: Welcome to HostGator Live Chat, how may I assist you?

(9:01:38 AM) Zach Ka: Please wait while I check. Thank you for your patience.

(9:05:27 AM) Jeremie: Thank you

(9:10:19 AM) Zach Ka: Okay, for [myURL] it has just the default WP theme, while the other two have your custom theme, normally, if you have multiple accounts with the same mod_sec rule, sending a list

(of affected pages, or even better the exact link where you get the 403 error) to support@hostgator.com is the best option

(9:11:10 AM) Jeremie: No problem, I'll remember that in the future

(9:11:28 AM) Zach Ka: That way our admins can just run a batch to do them all at once

(9:11:47 AM) Zach Ka: And the link with the 403 error is really the best way to determine what exact rules need to be whitelisted.

(9:13:47 AM) Zach Ka: Do you have a domain that has this already installed? It seems that on the pages you gave me there might not be any pictures uploaded

(9:22:16 AM) Jeremie: there are pictures there, and no to your question, every domain that this theme is on is not working

(9:22:36 AM) Zach Ka: I see, and what is supposed to be happening with the thumbnails?

(9:22:53 AM) Jeremie: do you want me to put this theme on one of the other whitelisted sites?

(9:25:17 AM) Zach Ka: Please

(9:25:37 AM) Jeremie: Working on it now

(9:26:12 AM) Zach Ka: Thank you

(9:28:45 AM) Jeremie: just about done one moment please

(9:32:05 AM) Zach Ka: Sure thing

(9:33:45 AM) Jeremie: <http://hopesquest.com/> done check this site please

(9:35:19 AM) Zach Ka: Do you have an example site where it is working 100%?

(9:36:23 AM) Jeremie: no, that is the reason I am communicating with you guys

(9:36:40 AM) Zach Ka: I mean, not even from where you downloaded it?

(9:36:46 AM) Jeremie: sorry for the confusion, but I know of others that have had the same problem

(9:36:59 AM) Jeremie: yes, hold one sec and I will get one

(9:38:23 AM) Zach Ka: I did notice this error on hopesquest.com

(9:38:24 AM) Zach Ka: [Sat Jan 17 09:34:24 2009] [error] [client 216.110.94.227] File does not exist: /home/hopesque/public_html/hopesquest.com/wp-content/themes/ColdStone/timthumb.php, referer: <http://hopesquest.com/>

(9:38:57 AM) Zach Ka: And that does return a 404 page

(9:40:13 AM) Zach Ka: <http://www.elegantthemes.com/preview/ColdStone/> I guess is how it should look, correct?

(9:44:45 AM) Zach Ka: It looks like it is searching for timthumb.php where I see PhpThumb.php

(9:45:58 AM) Jeremie: many have tried both versions just because they wanted to get the problem fixed.

(9:46:27 AM) Jeremie: I have tried both versions and CHMOD 777 755 and everything else you can think of

(9:47:02 AM) Zach Ka: Well, the PhpThumb.php file right now looks corrupted, as it gives me /PhpThumb.php File Type: ERROR: cannot open `PhpThumb.php' (No such file or directory) when i've selected it

(9:47:15 AM) Zach Ka: Though, normally yes, this is something that is caused by mod_sec

(9:47:40 AM) Zach Ka: Though, it is hard to determine the exact rule, is this copy you installed just like the one on the site?

(9:47:52 AM) Jeremie: yes

(9:53:34 AM) Zach Ka: http://hopesquest.com/wp-content/themes/ColdStone/timthumb.php?src=/images/general_1.jpg&h=250&w=883&zc=1&q=100

(9:53:43 AM) Zach Ka: It has a double slash

(9:53:50 AM) Zach Ka: I'm trying to see if there is anything causing it

(9:55:13 AM) Zach Ka: It has //images/general_1.jpg not found.

(9:55:28 AM) Zach Ka: Meaning it looks like its checking the wrong folder

(9:55:31 AM) Zach Ka: folder

(9:55:39 AM) Jeremie: oh okay

(9:56:49 AM) Zach Ka: I'm pretty sure it is located in the section of code

```
(9:56:51 AM) Zach Ka: function clean_source ( $src ) { // remove http/ https/ ftp $src = preg_replace("/^(ht
```

(9:57:09 AM) Zach Ka: Of the timthumb.php

(9:58:08 AM) Zach Ka: http://hopesquest.com/wp-content/themes/ColdStone/timthumb.php?src=wp-content/themes/ColdStone/images/general_1.jpg&h=250&w=883&zc=1&q=100

(9:58:14 AM) Zach Ka: That works doesn't it?

(9:58:24 AM) Jeremie: I am not using http or anything, I am using a direct path to the images, I read in the forum somewhere that we needed to use the direct path and CHMOD 755

(9:58:57 AM) Jeremie: yes it does work

(10:02:00 AM) Zach Ka: The /home/hopesque/public_html/hopesquest.com/wp-content/themes/ColdStone/includes/thumbnail.php file has this `<?php $thumb = get_post_meta($post->ID, 'Thumbnail', $single = true); ?> <?php if($thumb != "") { ?> " class="single-thumb" /> <?php } else { echo "; } ?>`

(10:02:37 AM) Zach Ka: The \$thumb variable (where ever it is set) need to be changed to the full path to the images folder

(10:02:42 AM) Zach Ka: Once you do that, it should work

(10:02:56 AM) Zach Ka: Though, I do not know where it is defined.