

The Basics of getting a Website

The question is no longer "Why should I have a website?" but rather "What kind of a website do I need?"

To come up with a good answer, let's break down the process of creating a website into its components:

1. You need a domain name, as in "meandwhatido.com".

Your domain name should reflect what it is you do or sell as closely as possible. While a "me.com" is good for the ego, if no one knows you, no one is going to look up your website. If however you are selling left-handed widgets, "lefthandedwidgets.com" would be your ideal domain name. Lots of popular domains are taken, and you might be tempted to get the ".biz" or ".info" or ".us" version of the name. Don't! People will not hear that ending, all they remember is the first part of the domain. They will go to the ".com" version. And that is likely your competitor.

2. You need a host.

That is the landlord for your website. Your host is largely determined by steps 3 and 4. You don't need an expensive industrial strength hosting package for a plain informational website.

3. Who is your target audience, and how do they find your site?

- a. Is your website your online portfolio? Do you send customers online to view your products and services?
- b. Are you informing your audience about news and events? Will you want your customers to interact with a message board or guestbook?
- c. Are you displaying your products and also plan on selling them online?
If yes, how many products? What kind of product? How much traffic do you expect? Do you already have a credit card service?
- d. Will you advertise your site on Google or Yahoo?

4. And last but not least, are you planning on having someone else create your site, and administer your site, or are you planning on doing it yourself?

The answer can easily be a hybrid of all of the above.

- a. You can create the website yourself, from scratch or with templates. If you can do it from scratch, this article likely was too basic for you already. So use templates.
- b. You can have a web designer customize a template for you and then teach you how to administer the site yourself.
- c. You can have a website designer create a custom site. And he/she should not be using a template! The designer will then update your site as needed.

If you are the do-it-yourself type or plan to take over from the designer, one of your options is to set up an account with Yahoo. You can get your domain, the template, and the hosting package (from basic to full blown e-shopping) all in one neat package.

A web Designer can completely customize a Yahoo template. Or you can use them as they are. Lots of goodies such as guest books, forms and blogs are included. Your monthly hosting fee is a bit higher with Yahoo than with lots of other hosts, but you save by not having to pay a designer to update your site.

Another excellent option are “Websites Tonight” from Godaddy. Cheaper than Yahoo with all the same features, Godaddy provides superior Customer Support.

Kolibri Web Design is a proud Reseller of Godaddy products: Same great price plus an extra layer of dedicated customer service.

Now a lot of people like stick to what they do best and delegate the other tasks of their business, such as website design.

Give some thought to the above questions. Your website designer can then register the appropriate domain name for you, get a hosting package that fits your needs, and design a website that truly reflects your and your company’s image, and targets your desired audience.

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