



STEPS TO BUILDING A WEBSITE

Step 1: REGISTERING A DOMAIN NAME

- A domain name is another name for your website name. It is the address where internet users access your website.
- A domain name provides valuable branding and marketing for your site and makes it easier for people to remember how to get to it.
- Domain names can generally cost between \$10 and \$35 a year and they can be registered at several sites online.

Step 2: PLANNING YOUR WEBSITE

When planning your website, consider the following:

- **Purpose and Goals.** Determine the type of site you need. Is this a company or service site, or a news or informational site, a non-profit, an eCommerce shop, etc. Each of these sites have a slightly different concentrations which will influence its design.
- **Navigation design:** Navigation is how people understand and move around your website. Good navigation makes the whole process easy and smooth. Good navigational design can speed up the viewers search. Decide what pages you'll be using and what features will be on each one. Most websites have an "About Us" and "Contact Us" page, however the pages you use should meet your business needs. To start the process, try creating an outline that contains possible pages that you want to include on your website.
- **Content:** As the saying goes, "content is king" online. The quality of your site's content will play an important part in its success. Content is everything that your pages will contain, which includes text, images, video and more. Before you start designing or building pages, you should have a clear strategy for the content that those pages will contain.

Step 3: DESIGNING AND BUILDING YOUR WEBSITE

This is easily the most complex part of the web page creation process and there are several topics to be aware of at this step, including:

- **Design Basics:** The elements of good and appropriate design and how to use them on websites.
- **Learning HTML:** HyperText Markup Language or HTML is the building blocks of a web page. While there are many platforms out there that will code a page's HTML for you, you'll do better and have far more flexibility and control if you learn the basics of HTML.
- **Learning CSS:** Cascading Style Sheets dictate how web pages look.
- **Web Page Editors:** Different web page editors will allow you to accomplish different things. HTML and CSS can be written in simple text editors, like Notepad, or they can use software like Adobe Dreamweaver to get some assistance with the pages you are creating. You may also decide to use a Content Management System, like WordPress, to build and power your website.



Step 4: **HOSTING YOUR SITE**

Web hosting is like paying rent for your website's virtual storefront, including the pages, images, documents, and other resources needed to display that site. Web hosting uses a web server, which is where you put those website resources so others can access them through the Web. You can build a fully functional website on your personal computer, but if you want other people to be able to see it, you will need to use a web host.

There are several types of web hosting options you can choose from. Many new web designers tend to gravitate to free web hosting, there can be significant drawbacks to those no-cost services, including:

- You may get less server space where your pages will be stored. Depending on the size of your site and the resources it needs (video, audio, images, etc), that storage space may not be enough.
- You may be required to run ads on your site.
- There are sometimes limitations on the kinds of content you can place on a free hosting provider. For instance, some don't allow eCommerce websites.
- Several free hosting providers add on maintenance and renewal fees to their "free" accounts.

Be sure to read all the fine print before you put your website on any web host. Free hosting providers may end up being good enough for testing web pages or for very basic, personal websites, but for more professional sites, you should expect to pay at least a nominal fee for that service.

Step 5: **PUBLISHING YOUR WEBSITE**

Publishing your website is a matter of getting the pages you created to the hosting provider.

This can be accomplished by either proprietary tools that come with your hosting service or with a standard FTP (File Transfer Protocol) software. Knowing which one you can use depends upon your hosting provider. In most cases providers should have support for standard FTP. Contact that hosting provider if you are not sure what they do, and do not support.

Step 6: **PROMOTING YOUR WEBSITE**

One of the most desirable ways to promote your website is through search engine optimization or SEO. SEO allows your website to be found by people who are looking for the information, services, or products that your site provides. Other ways to promote your site include word of mouth, using email marketing, social media, paid search marketing (SEM), and all the traditional forms of advertising.

Step 7: **MAINTAINING YOUR WEBSITE**

A well-maintained website attracts new customers and maintains the interest levels of existing customers. A website should be customer centered and kept relevant by periodically refreshing the content and ensuring that customer contact points are in good working order. Check that contact forms links work, phone numbers, and address listings are up to date and products, services and price lists are current and correct.