

Web Creation and Development Tools

DMJ

S T U D I O



Introduction

When you're starting a business or organization you may find yourself wearing multiple hats. One of those hats is web designer or web manager. How can you manage a web site if you have not had any experience in this area? There are quite a few ways for you to successfully create and manage a site with little knowledge of things like HTML, CSS, Javascript and the like.

The following information will help you make the best choice to create a quality web site for you, your business, or your organization.

We will discuss the following:

- Domains and web hosting
- Free and low-cost template-based web site companies
- Blog vs. Traditional web site and which one is right for you

Domains and Web Hosting:

Purchasing a domain name and find hosting are two of the first things you should do when creating a web site.

Domain - is simply the specific URL that browsers will use to access your site.

Web Hosting - is a service that allows your web site and its content to be accessible. The files that make up your web site are stored on a server and are available through assigned URLs (Uniform Resource Locator). Hosting services can be purchased from third party vendors.

There are many web site hosting companies. Here are ones I recommend:



www.godaddy.com



www.register.com



www.register.com



www.godaddy.com

Register.com Services

- Hosting
- Web design
- Web statistics
- Domain purchase
- E-mail
- E-commerce
- Online Marketing
- Great Support
- SEO (Search Engine Optimization)
- Great IT and Customer Service Support
- Some of their services are more expensive that other companies.

GoDaddy.com Services

- Hosting (web and blog)
- Web Design
- Online Marketing
- Marketplace (Online stores)
- Web statistics
- Domain purchase
- E-mail
- E-commerce
- SEO (Search Engine Optimization)
- Social media Advertising
- Great IT and Customer Service Support
- Inexpensive

These two companies have become favorites of mine because of the services they provide, but most importantly, their help desk teams and very "helpful." This is something you want when you are creating a new site. Help desk is available 24 hours and through different conduits:

- chat
- phone
- e-mail

I recommend GoDaddy.com to people who are new to web creation and development. They provide video tutorial which is very helpful.

BEFORE YOU CHOOSE: Make a list of the things you want your web site to do. Add to that list what type of support you will need to maintain your web site. From that list, make a decision about hosting services that will best fit your needs.

Web Templates

If you are not a web designer, you will need templates to help you develop a web site. For a fee or sometimes for free, you can find wonderful templates online for you to use. Four companies that I suggest:

Wix
Big Black Bag
Word Press
Template Monster



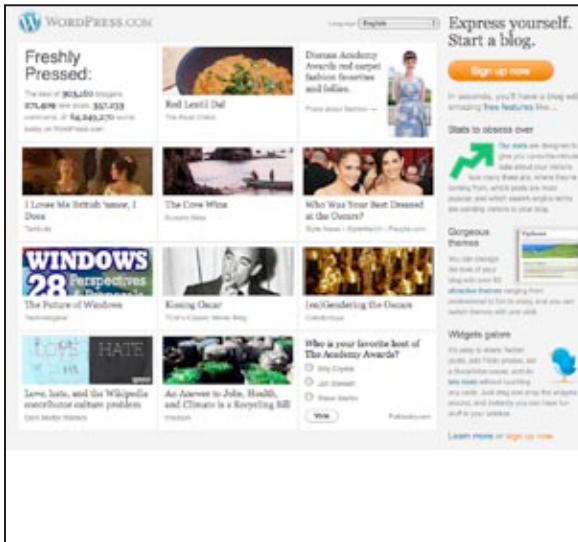
WIX.com

- Flash-based/motion web site
- You can open an account for free
- You have access to hundreds of the templates
- No HTML/CSS or other web knowledge is necessary
- Very easy to update and add content to the site
- Provide paid plans provide more services including the use of your own URL/domain
- You can create an e-commerce store using the WIX e-commerce software (in most cases you will find that you will have to house your store on a separate web site)
- A great choice for someone with a small amount of content or has a lot of visual content (photos, art, products, music) to their site
- **COST:** If you choose to pay for the WIX services, they start at \$15.99 a month



Bigblackbag.com

- Specifically for artist or persons who are selling products
- Very easy to add images and to update
- No HTML/CSS or other web knowledge is necessary
- All services are paid services with a monthly fee. Very affordable.
- E-commerce is available. Not as flexible as WIX, but still part of your primary web site.
- A great choice for someone with a small amount of content or has a lot of visual components to their site (artist, photographers)
- **COST:** If you choose to pay for the services, they start at \$23.99 a month



Wordpress.com

- You can open an account for free
- Has thousands and thousands of templates (free and paid)
- No HTML/CSS or other web knowledge is necessary, BUT with the knowledge you have more flexibility with your templates and your content.
- There is a lot of information, plugins and a lot of support for Wordpress blogs
- There are hosting companies (like GoDaddy.com) that offer Wordpress hosting. This allows you to have a blog with your own domain
- Incorporating your brand into these templates are quite easy.
- Exporting and backing up your content is as easy as saving a file every month.
- Importing content from other blogs that you own is doable and also easily done within Wordpress.
- These are great for people or organizations that create new content and who want more interaction with customers.
- **COST:** In most cases blogs are free, but you can pay for themes/templates or for hosting.



TemplateMonster

- Has a large variety of templates for you to purchase and use. One fee is paid for the template and it is yours to use.
- Templates are for people who are a little more web savvy and are comfortable dealing with code and images
- TemplateMonster TURNKEY web site service is similar to WIX. You have a limited number of templates AND their is a monthly fee.
- TemplateMonster provides other templates as well like logo templates, e-commerce templates, web development templates, flash templates
- A great choice for someone who wants something very unique, customized and who may be looking for other brand components for their organization
- **COST:** The cost varies depending on what services you purchase

Blog vs. Traditional Web sites

Nowadays it is difficult to tell the difference in a blog or a traditional web site. Many blog templates have the same functionality as traditional web site. So if this is the case, which one is best for you; blog or traditional web site?

Traditional web sites

- Traditional web sites are for people or organizations whose content may not change frequently.
- Traditional web sites are great way to provide information; but not a great way to have two-way communications with viewers/customers.
- Traditional web sites can be more difficult to revise, especially for someone who is not a web guru.
- Content Management Systems (CMS) can resolve some of the challenges of traditional web sites, but CMS can be another challenge in itself.

Blogs

- A lot of the blog functionality is plug and play and easy for most to maintain, regardless of experience.
- Adding new information is just as easy as creating a MS Word Document.
- Changing the look of your blog is simpler than the traditional sites. In most situations, you view a lightbox of themes/templates, click the template you want to use and it is activates. All pages change at once an all content is still available.
- Blogs allow you and your customers to interact. Customer interaction gives you a clearer understanding of their perception of you and your services. This may help you provide better services and it gives you a better understanding of your customer.
- Most blogs allow you to easily add tags, keyword, descriptions, to your blog which helps increase you traffic. Adding keywords to your web site pages, links and images is part of a process called Search Engine Optimization. We will discuss that later in the workshop.

Blogs have a lot of advantages over traditional sites. If you have the time to create new content on a consistent basis, the blog direction can be a great way to grow cliental and relationships.

Below are some sites that use blog themes.
www.elegantthemes.com | www.diythemes.com
www.graphpaperpress.com | www.diythemes.com
www.smashingmagazine.com | <http://www.area1.info>
<http://wordpressthemesbase.com>



www.npr.org



www.whitehouse.gov



www.cuteoverload.com



www.newyorktimes.com



www.myp perfectlibrary.com




www.dmjstudio.com



For more information or support on web site/blog design
and maintenance

www.dmjstudio.com
donna@dmjstudio.com | dmjstudio@msn.com

 <http://twitter.com/dmjstudio>

 <http://www.linkedin.com/in/dmjstudio>