

Choosing a Website Developer

Business owners and Decision Makers often hear about Web hosting options that sound like a great deal until they learn that the cheap alternative comes with tremendous drawbacks. Here are a few reasons why cheap Web development hosting isn't such a bargain:

Website Development - Make sure you know what you're paying for

Just a Template. You think you're getting a viable website, when all you're getting is just a template. Then you have to figure out the software, create the text, and figure out how to size and add your pictures. **And forget being search engine friendly - metatags, what are those!**

Or Inexperienced developer. A lot of people take a class or two in web design and think they are suddenly able to develop a website. Be leery of anyone who cannot provide you with samples of at least 20 websites they have developed. You want a professional, full time website developer who has been in the business for at least 2 years. Ninety percent of people selling websites have no clue what they are doing.

Common Mistakes

- No Keywords or Keywords don't match text
- No Title Bar or Title Bar doesn't describe page
- Page wrong width, not centered, or too short or long
- Insufficient content - majority of pages should have 250 to 450 words
- Overlapping text
- Not enough appropriate pictures - should show what you do
- Pictures distorted or take too long to load - resolution wrong
- Poor placement of navigation
- Broken links
- No service area, copyright, licenses or affiliations
- Inappropriate use of Flash

Hosting - What does it really include

Unauthorized Advertising. To offset their 'discounted' prices, cheap Web hosting companies will often place distracting advertising banners and pop-up ads on their clients' Web sites without prior authorization.

Long Contracts and Full Up-front Payments. Cheap hosts may require long-term contracts and will sometimes require the full amount of the site be paid in advance. You should never pre-pay in full. A legitimate developer will ask for 40% to 60% down, then balance on completion. Long term contracts often costs more in the long run and give you no guarantee that the site will be built to your specifications and in a reasonable time frame.

Hidden Costs. The cheap hosting companies will often build additional charges for things like additional storage and higher traffic capacity onto its customers' bills. A good web host includes storage for thousands of images and volumes of text as well as unlimited hits/bandwidth, no matter how popular a site becomes.

No or Additional Cost Technical Support. Many of those 'bargain' hosting companies won't provide their customers with a hotline for technical questions and concerns. And even those that provide technical support want to charge you for it.

Choose carefully, your website is your online showroom and first impressions count!