

## **Web Site Creation Process**

There are 6 Basic Steps that I will follow in order to create your web site:

### **Register a web site “domain name”**

This is an address like *msn.com*, *olwestfarms.com*, or *pnb.org*. I will do this for you through what is called a “reputable ICANN-accredited domain name registrar. ICANN is the “Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers” and is responsible for the global coordination of the Internet's system of unique identifiers.

- It is possible to create a web site on a free web site hosting service without registering a domain name, but there are drawbacks to a "free" web site:
- A "free" web site must usually include some form of advertising, which distracts visitors from your site content and slows page loading.
- A "free" web site name is appended to its hosting service name, limiting your ability to promote the site and later move it to another hosting service.
- Search engines are less inclined to list a web site which lacks its own registered domain name.

More than one domain name can be secured for the same web site. For example, for the Ol West Farms site, I secured 2 additional domain names (*olwestbullmastiffs.com*, *olwestcashmere.com*) that all point to *olwestfarms.com*, so this can be fairly flexible – it’s just a matter of paying the fee!

Costs: This is first of two “fixed costs” that I will describe. For one domain name, about USD\$20 will lock down a domain name for 2 years (or a bit less if you only do 1 year) without even launching a website. With most reputable and reliable web site hosting companies, the longer you secure something (i.e., pay for it up front), the cheaper the monthly rates usually are.

## **Select and configure a web site hosting service**

If you don't want to learn about the technical aspects, I can handle this all for you. Basically, a hosting service is a company that has high capacity file servers connected to the worldwide web (WWW) where you put your web site files. Hosting enables your site to be accessed by anyone on the web 24x7.

Costs: This is the second of two "fixed costs", normally ranging from USD \$100-140 for 2 years.

## **Design, code, and test your web site**

You'll want to think about colors, and what kind of content you'll have (e.g., pictures, documents, etc.). Once you have an idea for colors and types of pages, I will send you samples (in .jpg photo files) to look at based on your specifications, and you can give me comments on them (e.g., move this item to that location, use a different font, etc.) - this is the easiest way to work the design and coding part. As for the site architecture, most sites contain the following pages:

Home

About us

Product/Subject A – content, photo albums

Product/Subject B – content, photo albums

Links (emails, other sites)

I can build the site in one of 2 ways:

- A basic site that you can easily maintain yourself with little to no training. This way would take advantage of the hosting site's template program that can be used on the Internet (some companies call this type of product "web site tonight"). This is an easy way for people with little technical skills to get a web site created fast. However, template programs limit the number of pages, types of pages, layouts, colors, etc. that you can have.
- A site that is more dynamic. This would not limit the number of pages, types of pages, layout, colors, etc. that you can have.

Costs: This is an area where you can spend all kinds of money if you want, but it's not necessary. For my own web business, I've been moving toward package pricing for my work. Some web site packages sold on the Internet can range from USD\$199 (3 pages with basic features, which is never enough) to USD\$999 (15 pages with advanced features, which may be more than you need). Most companies also charge hourly for design (USD\$55) and development (USD\$95), which can end up costing a fortune. I'm trying to keep design and development included in the package price, staying somewhere in the USD\$400-500 range for everything for most sites (including the fixed costs from the hosting company). But I am always open to negotiation! I may also be able to offer flexible payment options; for example, you could pay the fixed costs first and then the remaining costs once your site has been developed and is ready for launch.

If you expect your content to change frequently, you can add periodic maintenance (may require an additional fee) to your package. If you want to have advanced web site interaction features like message boards, guest books, etc., it will be a bit more expensive to build and maintain. Many commercial web site owners opt to pay a small monthly fee for interactive features because they can really enhance your web site's ability to attract return visitors.

### **Deploy your web site to your host**

This is the most technical part of things, using a file transfer program (FTP) to upload and download your web site and any updated pages between your computer and the host computer.

### **Promote your web site**

You can achieve priority treatment and listings on search engines like Yahoo and Google by paying a nominal fee. This type of promotion is more suited to commercial/product sites. The reality is that unless you opt for one of the free web sites, search engines will eventually pick up your site through "spiders" that "crawl" through all web sites and collect information about them without you ever paying an additional fee. Most sites appear on Google, Yahoo and MSN

searches in less than a few weeks of publishing. It helps if you list your site on someone else's website (e.g., links).

### **Maintain your web site**

If you don't expect your site to change frequently once it is published, I can handle periodic updates for you (e.g., new pictures, news items) at an hourly rate. If you want to make frequent changes, and/or want to overhaul your site completely, we'll negotiate affordable ad hoc or monthly maintenance fees.