

Free vs paid – why should I pay for a website build?



VS

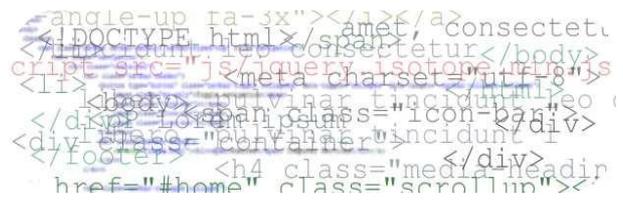


Nowadays there are many handy website builders available on the Internet. They vary from free, through subscription, up to apps that charge monthly or annual fees. Some of them host your website for you, sometimes at extra cost, whereas others merely help you build your basic structure. So why should you pay to have my new business website built for you when you could use a free website builder instead?

There are some good features with these free website builders – low, or no, cost makes it a cheaper option, and little to no coding knowledge required as they're mostly drag-and-drop type interfaces. They're probably good for a small personal website, and certainly good to get you off the mark.

But there are varying arguments against these DIY packages too though. For a serious business project they're not suitable for a number of reasons:

1. Design templates are generally restrictive and limited in functionality; you may well be working inside pre-existing colour and layout requirements. There will be restrictions on your capability and control of your own website;
2. Generally speaking if it's free then you'll be stuck with website builder labels, logos, icons and even annoying copyright notices; you probably won't be able to remove them unless you begin to pay for a subscription (it doesn't look very professional);
3. The number of pages that you can create could be restricted in storage space or size (this bodes ill for anyone looking at larger photographic or image-based websites);
4. If the website builder insists on also hosting your brand spanking new home-built website then you may well be stuck with a subdomain name that doesn't look so professional e.g. http://yourdomain/their_domain_name.com.au;
5. Free website builders often come with unwanted ads on your website to help them pay for your usage of their systems and gain some extra revenue from you;
6. Read their Terms & Conditions; some packages will give you a free trial period but then they lock you in to paying for a contract, which isn't always cheaper;
7. Free apps generally don't allow the use of call centres and support for their free website builders until you begin paying. Most apps follow this pattern now.
8. SEO and rankings – some free builders are now employing better SEO techniques so your site can be found in the search engines, but generally you're limited to basic concepts.
9. If the website builder shuts its business down you lose it all.
10. Some website builders have even been known to spam your own customers!



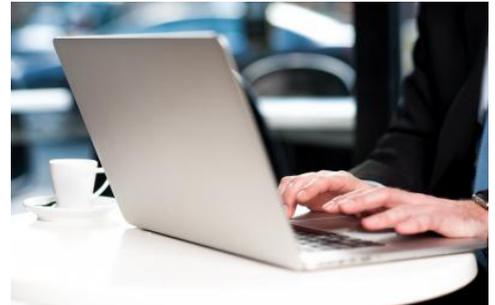
11. Transferring your pop-up website to a fully hosted location may not be possible down the track, if you decide to upgrade later on.

One real benefit from trialling these free website builders is that you're gaining valuable knowledge and understanding of how the Internet, websites and web pages work, how they hang together and what you'll need to know when you step up to a fully functional business website soon.

The other side of the coin, however, drives a more compelling case for business and interest group owners to pay for a skilled programmer and developer to build you a comprehensive web presence that will be cost-effective for your business. There are many important advantages in utilising existing expertise and if they're good they'll actually include you also in the design & build process, as well as the expected ongoing maintenance!

What to expect:

1. A custom-built website, designed to your specs and hopefully a little more unique than your competitors, using modern design factors and techniques.
2. Keywords & SEO; your developer will help to build your valuable keyword list using current SEO and search engine requirements. SEO is a science unto itself and very much the second stage of your website project. Unless a strong SEO program has been implemented it's doubtful you'll see your home-built website ranking near the top.
3. Search engine submission; a good design service will do this for you. That same design service should also implement the likes of visitor stats and analytics programs.
4. If you choose to follow the Content Management System (CMS) path then you'll most probably need a hand in setting up hosting and building the CMS website from the ground up. Once your CMS has been established & secured you may be in a better position to operate it yourself as a blog, gallery and the like, but leave the heavy duty administrative stuff to your developer/design service.



Ultimately of course it's up to you as to which way you'll go to establish your web presence. Gumtree Computer Services are able to advise your best choice of website platform and offer ongoing maintenance services to ensure your web presence is maintained, relevant, up-to-date, and reflecting your position in the marketplace.

As a reseller for domain name leasing and website hosting packages we can put together a solid online solution for your business and maintain a customer relationship with you to ensure your marketing tool remains at the head of the pack.



References:

1. <http://www.websitesmadesimple.org/free-website-builders-the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly/>
2. <http://webdesignfromscratch.com/business/online-website-builders-are-they-worth-it/>
3. <https://webtegrity.com/our-blog/web-design-tips/wix-vs-webs-vs-weebly-free-websites-really-free>

www.gumtreecs.com.au
Get a presence.



Gumtree Computer Services