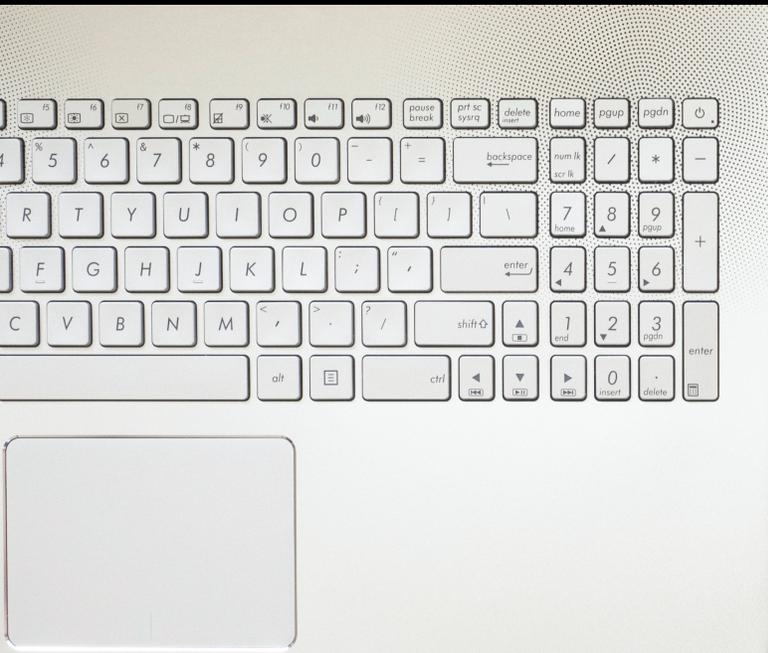




HANNA FITZ



WEBSITE HOSTING GUIDE

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This can be a challenging decision for some business owners especially if you are not working with a website designer who can advise you on this.

I recommend discussing your specific website needs with your website designer and working together to find the best solutions.

However, if you are on the DIY track, this will provide you with some things you need to know. It is also useful for those working with the designer to have the checklist as a guide for factors you may want to discuss with your website designer.

There are three types of hosting service options:

Shared Hosting- These are the most common plans that new business owners and websites which do not have high-volume traffic use. It means that you are sharing server space with several other domain names, making your monthly fee relatively low. It's like sharing an apartment in a sort after location with several roommates to reduce your share of the rent.

Dedicated Hosting- Means that you have the entire server to yourself and can install customized applications. You can even rent space to other people. In this case you own the apartment and it's up to you whether you decide to Airbnb it!

Virtual Private Server (VPS)- is a hybrid of the shared and dedicated server. While each user has their own operating system, they are still sharing a single server. It's like living in a condo. There is one building yet everyone is responsible for their own unit. Many websites start with shared hosting but as your business starts to grow and require greater capabilities, you may want to consider a VPS.

When selecting your hosting plan, you should try to answer the following questions:

What kind of website are you building? *(how will your website be used? E.g. blog, e-commerce, etc.)*

What platform are you planning to use? (e.g. WordPress, Squarespace, WIX, etc.)

Does the host support the platform that you will be using (e.g. Wordpress, etc.)?

Will you need to integrate any special plugins or features?

Do you need a special version of software for any plugin you are planning to use (i.e. PHP version required)?

How big (or small) can the web traffic volume go?

There are several hosting companies out there, here are a few options:

Bluehost- great for wordpress site.

A Small Orange – High traffic bloggers love it.

Dreamhost- great reviews from users online.

FEATURES TO LOOK FOR:

Scalability – How easy is it to upgrade your plan as your business grows? Do they offer Dedicated Server Solutions?

Dependability- Reviewing your prospective host uptime is key. You'll see that most companies claim 99% uptime. Here some estimates of what these numbers indicate (i.e. in terms of monthly downtime):

99 percent – 7 hours and 18 minutes downtime

99.9 percent – 43 minutes and 12 seconds downtime

99.99 percent – 4 minutes 19 seconds downtime

99.999 percent – 26 seconds downtime

99.9999 percent – 3 seconds downtime

SUPPORT

Ensure that your website host offers 24/7 phone, email or live chat support. In fact one that provides phone or live chat is great, especially if you have technical challenges and need real-time feedback or support.

SECURITY FEATURES

Daily website backups: There are people who have experienced waking up to find that their website was accidentally deleted by the hosting company. Ensure that backups are included in your package or can be included as an option. Having to start from scratch is no fun.

SSLs: This is an important feature if you are designing an e-commerce website and not planning to use a third party service to collect client payments.

SiteLock: Ensure that you get this feature as part of your hosting package. I had a client who didn't take on this feature and had her website blacklisted and taken down by the host. The Sitelock badge on your website also inspires customer trust.

