

Important features of a website host

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If a company or business wants to make it in today's competitive markets, they have no choice but to go online. By going online, businesses are able to target a wider market and provide information that's not easily included in print adverts or brochures. Before they can take advantage of all that online marketing has to offer, they need to choose a website host. Choosing a host isn't as straightforward as some might think. There are several factors to consider before making a decision, and some features that distinguish an adequate host from an excellent one.

The range of website hosts covers free accounts through to very expensive, high-end hosting servers. Whichever option you decide on, always consider your business needs and your prospects of company development and growth, as these will aid you in finding the host most suitable for your business.

Round the clock support 24/7 support is vital in maintaining contact with clients and associates, as well as preventing an unnecessary loss in sales. All day, every day support means that if a problem occurs, you can report it and have it fixed immediately. If 24-hour support is lacking, your problems could be placed on a waiting list and you may have to wait for days before they're fixed.

Bandwidth The larger your bandwidth, the greater the volume of data that can be transmitted, and the faster your page opens. Studies have shown that if a page takes longer than ten seconds to open, users move on. You want to make sure that your bandwidth exceeds your needs to prevent unnecessary glitches, especially if your business uses video, audio or graphics on a daily basis.

Excessive storage space Deciding on how much storage space you're going to need is much like choosing the size of your bandwidth. If your needs are small and you won't be using video, audio or large graphics, then your bandwidth requirements are going to be smaller than that of a large website. A smart option is to purchase slightly more space than you need, or to make sure that your service has upgrade facilities, to allow your business to grow.

Email A hosting service that provides an email service is a better option than one without email facilities. It's preferable for companies to have their own email addresses tied into their trading names. This increases their accessibility and improves their credibility in the eyes of their clients.

Additional domains Even though your current needs may only require one domain name, it's important to have the option of adding additional domain names in the event of growth and development.

Domain parking A domain name parking facility allows you to store your domain name on the host's server so that it can retain its validity. This feature comes into play when companies don't have name servers of their own.

Site management tools You need to be able to manage your site with confidence and ease, whenever the need arises. Having the right management tools will enable you to adjust or update information to keep your site current. Another important feature to look for in a website hosting server is guaranteed reliability with at least 99% uptime. An unreliable host could cost you in terms of traffic flow and sales. Regarding free hosting, many servers offer a free service, but add the condition that you allow adverts to be posted on it. Pop-up adverts can be especially detrimental to your site, as most people don't like them and avoid sites with them. Free servers may also limit the size of icons and graphics that you can use. They can also provide you with a regulation template, which restricts you in terms of design and content space.

Once you've decided on a particular website hosting company, there are no rules tying you to them forever. Should you find their service inadequate, or have problems with their network availability you are entirely free to switch to a server you think will be more appropriate for your company. Changing servers is not a simple process, however, and can involve unforeseen obstacles and hindrances. It's better to be more discerning when making your original decision. Research a variety of hosts as thoroughly as possible. Try to consider what you may need in the future, and make an informed decision to the benefit of your business.

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