

5 Steps to Getting on the Web

You know you need a website, but have no idea where to start? This step-by-step guide will painlessly walk you through the process.

Step 1: Register a Domain Name

Domain name prices start at just \$10.50 per year with **YourDomainRegistrar** (<http://www.yourdomainregistrar.com>), a subsidiary of Identity Website Hosting, Inc.

Beware of those registrars advertising \$1.99 domains. More than likely, the price will increase at renewal time. Look at what is included for the price. Do your homework and compare (<http://www.yourdomainregistrar.com/compare.html>).

Choose a domain name that matches your company name or best describes your type of business. Check your spelling. The shorter the name, the better. A short name is easier for people to remember and to type.

Need help choosing a domain? YourDomainRegistrar has a new tool called the **Duke of URL** (<http://www.yourdomainregistrar.com/dukeofurl/>). This tool will suggest available and premium domain names based on a word or phrase you provide.

Step 2: Design Your Logo

If you do not already have a company logo, **Logoworks** (<http://www.logoworks.com>) can quickly and affordably create one for you.

Step 3: Develop Your Website

a. Define Your Goals

The most important step in building your website is determining your goals. What do you want your website to do for you? Websites can do many things: provide customer service, sell products, promote services, gather information to generate leads, recruit employees, and more.

Searching Yahoo! and Google for websites within your industry and for your competitors' sites will provide great ideas and develop a better understanding of the market and your competition within it.

b. Write Your Content

After defining the goals of your website, you now need to come up with a list of pages you want on your site. Pages may include a company overview, shopping cart, biographies of key personnel, industry information, blog, and submission form.

Write the content for each of your pages. Remember, it doesn't have to be perfect. The beauty of a website is that you can easily update your content at any time.

c. Build Your Website

Now that you have written the content for your website, you are ready to build it.

The big questions are 'Do you hire a designer?', 'Can you build it yourself?', 'Who will maintain the website?'

With the tools available today, you can easily build and maintain the website yourself (see Step 4 below). However, if you have time constraints, I-dentity can build your website for as little as \$199 (<http://www.i-dentity.com/resources/>).

Step 4: Choose a Site Builder Plan

I-dentity offers 3 different site builder applications — Trellix, EZ-Site, and dotMobi. All 3 are very easy to use.

There's no software to download or install and no technical knowledge required. You can literally build a website in just a few minutes.

Take the short questionnaire (<http://www.i-dentity.com/new-to-web-hosting.html>) to help determine the best site builder application for your needs. You can even demo the product!

Step 5: Promote Your Website

a. Site Optimization

The site needs to be built so that it is search engine friendly. The search engines need to be able to follow links throughout your website and determine the prominent information.

The most important factor in search engine optimization is content — for search engines this means words and lots of them. The search engines look at the text on your pages (as well as the name of the page itself) for indexing.

Avoid flash and frames pages as search engines cannot index them.

In addition, it is critical that your site be designed with META tags.

b. Search Engine Submission

Once your site is optimized, submit it to more than 200 Search Engines/Directories (<http://identity.submitter.net/>) including Yahoo! and Google for only \$49.95.

c. Reciprocal Links

Links to your website provide traffic and can greatly improve search engine rankings.

It's a fact, reciprocal links (http://www.i-identity.com/resources/links_main.shtml) can make any site more important in the eyes of the search engines, and are often valued more highly than one-way links. But it is extremely important that the websites relate in either content or theme. Not just to the search engines, but to the people who visit.

d. Paid Online Advertising

Online advertising can take the form of pay-per-click campaigns and paid listings. These options should be considered carefully as they can get expensive.

e. Printed Material

Include your Domain Name on all marketing/print material such as letterhead, business cards, brochures, advertising, signage, and company vehicles.

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Glossary of Website Terms

Bandwidth (Data Transfer): The amount of data that you are allowed to transfer monthly. Data = images, text, audio files, video files, and everything else that a server transfers to a user's Web browser. Approximately 40,000 page views = 1 GB of data transfer.

Control Panel: An online interface used to facilitate website management and editing. Control panels allow you to perform basic functions such as view site statistics (visitor traffic), create your POP3 email accounts/aliases and autoresponders, setup spam filters, and install preconfigured scripts and databases.

Database: A structured collection of records of information that can facilitate searching, sorting, and recombination of data.

Disk Space (Storage Space): The storage capacity for your Web pages and email.

Domain Name: A meaningful, easy-to-remember "handle" for addressing computers and information on the Internet. Domain names typically end with a suffix that denotes the type or location of a resource (for instance, ".com" for commercial resources or ".ca" for resources based in Canada).

Domain Name Registration: The process of allotting a new, specific domain name to an owner. **YourDomainRegistrar** (<http://www.yourdomainregistrar.com>) is a domain registrar with whom you can register a domain name.

eCommerce: Electronic commerce. The buying/selling (or exchange) of products and services on the Internet. If selling many products, a Shopping Cart is essential.

Email Aliases/Forwarding: Email forwarding is an email service in which your email is automatically sent (forwarded) from one or more email addresses, to another (possibly several) specified email addresses.

Email Autoresponder: An autoresponder is an email address that is setup to automatically reply to the sender with a previously prepared response. An autoresponder could be used to send "more information" to potential customers. If you have ever sent an email and received a reply within 5 minutes, you probably received a message automatically generated by an autoresponder.

FrontPage Extensions: A set of programs and scripts that allow specific features of a website created with Microsoft FrontPage to perform correctly.

FTP: File Transfer Protocol. The most common method for uploading files to servers. FTP allows files to be uploaded from your local computer to the hosting server.

HTML: Hypertext Markup Language. HTML is a language designed for the creation of Web pages and other information viewable in a browser. HTML defines the structure and layout of a Web document by using a variety of tags and attributes.

IP Address (Number): Internet Protocol Address. A unique number identifying all devices connected to the Internet. A dedicated (static) IP number is unchanging. If your hosting account comes with a dedicated IP number, your website can be accessed using your domain name or IP number. A shared IP number is just that, shared. Multiple websites can use the same IP number, meaning the website can only be accessed by the site's domain name.

META Tags: Many search engines (including Yahoo! and Google) use META tags to index your Web pages. These tags include the description of your page and keywords relevant to the page. The description tag returns a description of the page in place of the summary the search engine would ordinarily create. The keywords tag provides keywords for the search engine to associate with your page.

Payment Gateway: Enables the authorization, processing, and managing of online payment transactions (credit cards and checks).

POP3 Email Accounts: Post Office Protocol. POP is the method that email programs (such as Outlook and Eudora) use to retrieve email. Each POP account has its own unique username and password associated with your domain name (i.e., yourname@yourdomain.com). Multiple POP accounts work well if you need email addresses for several people within your organization.

Shopping Cart Software: Software that allows visitors (customers) to add and delete items into an online "shopping cart" and then proceed to purchase the item(s). A shopping cart is an essential component for eCommerce websites.

Spam Filters: Spam refers to any unsolicited email. Spam filters allow you to block email matching predefined criteria. You can block a specific email address, an entire domain name, or an IP number.

SSL: Secure Sockets Layer. Allows encrypted, authenticated communications over the Web. SSL provides security in online commerce. URLs starting with "https://" indicate the utilization of SSL.

Web Hosting: A service that allows you to publish your website to a Web server. This makes the files available on the Internet for viewing by the public.

Web Page: A document that can be accessed on the Internet. Web pages can contain text, graphics, video, audio, etc.

Website: A collection of Web pages.

Website Design: The process of creating a website.

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10 Reasons Why Your Business Needs a Website

1. Your business is open to the world 24/7, 365 days a year
2. It's your online brochure/catalog that you can change anytime
3. Reach new markets with a global audience
4. Improved customer service
5. Present a professional image
6. Sell your products
7. Promote your services
8. Gather information and generate valuable leads
9. Provides instant gratification
10. Great recruiting tool

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