

Web Hosting Service Providers : The Basics



When starting your online business, having your own domain name and a web hosting service are two things that are most crucial to your success. This is because having your own domain name will allow you to 'brand' your product or service, and having a good hosting company will provide you with a space to put that domain name and the website you build around it.

A web hosting service can be likened to a big storage facility where anyone can rent one (or more) storage units. You will need pay a monthly fee and will have varying degrees of access to your storage space. The company renting out the storage buildings will take care of all the maintenance and service, and all you just have to watch out for your particular storage unit.

There are many companies that can provide you with an online 'storage space' where you can 'place' your website. You will be renting a portion of their server, or a whole server depending on your needs. You will then need to pay a monthly fee and they will take care of making sure that their servers are up and working 24/7.

The major web hosting companies, such as GoDaddy and HostGator, offer a wide range of packages to suit virtually every online business need. For many people a simple shared hosting plan (where you rent a portion of a server) that will allow them to host unlimited websites (as long as none of them require a lot of bandwidth) is more than enough. However, if you are building a niche website empire, you might want to consider a dedicated hosting account where you can rent a whole server from your

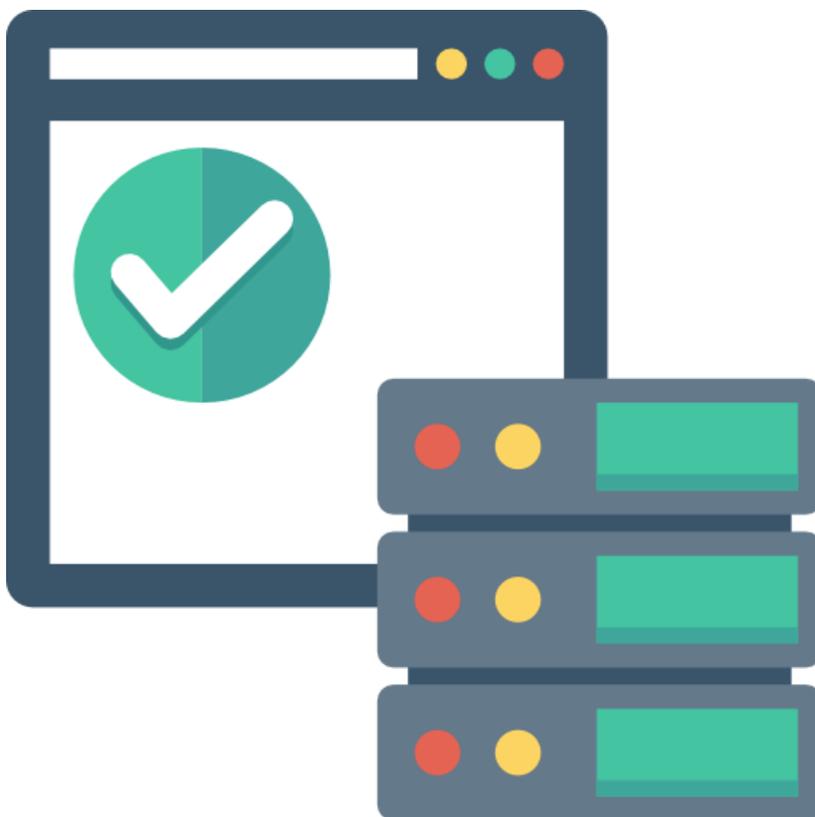


hosting company. By going this route, you will have more control and a lot more bandwidth.

Another option you can consider is a reseller account. This is an option where you pay to rent a block of the servers. You can sub-divide that block into smaller units and then rent those out. The hosting company will still handle all the maintenance required as well as customer service.

When choosing a hosting company, be sure to get one that guarantees 99% up time. This is to ensure that you don't lose money if your server goes down due to customers not being able to get to your website. Great customer service is another thing that you would want to consider. You will want to be able to reach someone 24/7, particularly if you have a problem or a question during the odd hours of the day.

Most companies are quite inexpensive and if you pay a year, or more,



ahead of time, your actual cost can go as low as \$3 or \$4 a month depending on your plan. If you don't prepay and opt for a monthly payment plan, you can expect to pay around \$10 a month for a shared hosting

plan which will still allow you unlimited websites. You may have some bandwidth restrictions with this type of plan, but unless you are getting millions of hits everyday, you shouldn't have to worry too much.

As your online niche website empire grows, you then might want to consider getting a dedicated hosting account so you can have more flexibility in terms of bandwidth, as well as other additional functions.

