

Which Web Host Should I Choose To Host My Business Site?

By Jonathan Caputo

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This article focuses on the differences between various business hosting services, and helps the reader identify some important criteria in choosing a hosting provider for their business (for instance, do you require a dedicated server, a managed server, or a shared server). A business web site could range anywhere from a simple ecommerce site which sells one product, to a very complex pay per click engine with real time statistics and payment functionality.

Even with all of the consolidation going on in the web hosting industry, there are still thousands upon thousands of hosting companies to choose from. If you visit some of their sites, you will see that each of them tout some features you may or may not of even heard of before (Miva Scripting, Co-Location services, Virtual Private Servers, Redundant backbone connections, etc). The very first question you must ask yourself is not which hosting company to choose but rather, WHY do you need a hosting company?

Your particular needs are crucial in determining the kind of hosting you need. Web Hosting comes in many different flavors and sizes, (not to mention prices!) so its key that you shop for only the services you require or you will be paying for a lot of services that you don't need. When trying to decide which hosting company will best suit your needs be sure to ask yourself a few questions first. Here are some important ones:

1. What kind of functionality will you require (ie Database, secure server for processing credit cards, etc.)
2. What will your traffic needs require (do you anticipate your site having small, moderate, or significant traffic)
3. How important are load times (if a majority of your visitors are global you might want to consider a hosting company that has a presence overseas as well as the U.S. – also you may want to consider a dedicated server as opposed to sharing a server with several other businesses)

A business site can range in price anywhere from the low end of \$40-\$50.00 all the way up into the thousands of dollars per month. Features that usually catapult the price range are things like dedicated servers (especially if they are on the high end hardware wise), and bandwidth capacity.

Choosing a web host for your business needs is absolutely one of the most important decisions you can make. If your site is down, your business is down, end of story. Below is a list of some of the

important questions you will want to make sure you ask any prospective hosting company before signing on the dotted line.

1. Do they offer a money back, no questions asked guarantee?
2. Do they offer an uptime guarantee? (as in, if there is a outage, are you compensated?)
3. What types of backups do they offer (tape back ups, CD rom storage)
4. Do they have redundant backbone connections to the internet (are they connected to the internet by more than one provider, and are those providers major backbone providers)
5. Do they offer 24-7 technical support (including phone support, or is it only via email)
6. How long have they been in business for and can they provide some business references of other sites that they currently host?
7. Can you pay month to month or do they require an annual contract?
8. Is it easy for you to upgrade/downgrade services you may or may not require as time passes?

One place to start your search for your business provider is:

<http://www.itsallnet.com>

Happy hunting!

About the author:

Jonathan Caputo is the CEO of itsALLnet, Inc. Mr. Caputo worked as a programmer for MediaOne (now AT&T) for two years until he created the Internets first web host directory called Web Host List. Mr. Caputo also founded the Internets first Web Host Consortium called the Web Host Guild. As a result he appeared in the NY Times, People Magazine, Wall Street Journal, on CNN, and CNBC as well as various other TV and print mediums. Web Host List was purchased by CNET Networks, and Mr. Caputo worked at CNET Networks for 6 months integrating Web Host List into CNET as well as running their Builder.com directory.

Source: itsALLnet, Inc.

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