

How To Set Up Your Own Website

By Michael LaRocca

How To Set Up Your Own Website

Michael LaRocca
michaellarocca@lycos.com

Books OnLine Newsletter <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/michaellarocca>

How To Set Up Your Own Website
Copyright 2001, Michael LaRocca

(940 words. This article may be freely published or distributed as long as the author's information at the bottom remains intact. If you use it, please notify michaellarocca@lycos.com.)

This article deals solely with the mechanics of writing a website and placing it in the search engines.

For an explanation of why you want to do this, and how to determine what your target audience is, send a blank email to websitenewsletter@sendfree.com. That article will also tell you how to harness the power of newsletters to bring in traffic.

This is something of a rough overview. If you have specific questions or want to know about something not covered here, write to michaellarocca@lycos.com and I'll try to help.

And finally, since websites that give you free advice on setting up websites tend to come and go rapidly, visit http://free_reads.tripod.com/bookpromo.html for the latest version of the information contained in this article.

Web Site

Free or registered? Buying your own domain name costs about US\$35 A year, and paying someone to host it costs US\$20 or less per month. Conventional wisdom has it that free sites don't place as well in search engines, and this is probably true. But if you're just learning, I'd start with a freebie and move it later. If you want a free webpage, you can run a search for "free websites." Here's what every web host should have:

FTP server

Banners, frames or pop-ups? Pop-ups are definitely a no-no, and personally I hate frames

An easy-to-remember address. Some use `www.{server}.com/{user}` and others use `{user}.{server}.com`. These are both fine. But something like `www.{server}.com/{something}/{something else}/...` is just too complicated to transmit verbally, assuming you can remember it.

CGI support, which means nothing to you now but which you'll definitely want down the road

If you're looking for some help just getting started, visit *Is Your Website Unfriendly?* for some excellent pointers and a fine tutorial. It's at <http://lbarker.orcon.net.nz/HTMLtips.html>.

Also, visit *Links To Helpful Sites over on MURDER MUST ADVERTISE*. <http://www.murdermustadvertise.com/Links.html>. The site was set up for mystery writers, but the advice is useful to any writer. Heavy on the Internet promotion, meaning the FREE stuff, but not limited specifically to the Internet. Fine tips on writing as well.

You also want to visit two other sites that offers much the same thing as this article does but have very different sets of resources.

Internet Authors Network

http://www.xenite.org/internet_authors/

FictionHouse Raconteur

<http://www.fictionhouse.com/html/raconteur.html>

If you don't know how to write a website, many of the freebie sites give you the tools to do it by menu in five minutes. Personally, I hate those. To learn all you need to know, visit:

HTML For The Complete Idiot

http://www.geocities.com/hiker_jjw/

HTML Goodies

<http://htmlgoodies.earthweb.com/>

HTML: An Interactive Tutorial for Beginners

<http://www.davesite.com/webstation/html/>

HTML Primer

<http://www.htmlprimer.com/>

The JavaScript Source

<http://javascript.internet.com/>

Web Developers Journal

<http://www.webdevelopersjournal.com/>

Webmonkey

<http://hotwired.lycos.com/webmonkey/>

For many years, I used Notepad to write my HTML. Now I use CSE HTML Validator Lite. It's free. Imagine Notepad with the ability to open multiple pages (like Excel workbooks) and to validate your code, and you've pretty much figured out CSE HTML Validator.

<http://www.htmlvalidator.com>

Diagnostic Tools

Here's a closely related subject. Running a "diagnostic" on your site (after upload) will tell you how long it takes to run at various modem speeds, how compatible it is with older browsers, how to improve the problem areas, identify busted links, etc.

Link Alarm - Website that emails you reports

<http://www.linkalarm.com/>

Link Sleuth - Software you download and run

<http://home.snafu.de/tilman/xenulink.html>

Web Site Garage

<http://www.websitegarage.com>

Scripts

Okay, you're finding you want to do things that HTML just doesn't handle. In a nutshell, if the website sends it to the user, that's HTML. If the user sends it to the website, that's CGI.

But do you really want to learn yet another new language? Of course not. It's already been done thousands of times. You want to go pick up some free code, perhaps learn just enough to plug it in and make it work. Here's what you need to know about scripts, then.

<http://www.merrymonk.com/cgi-shl/s.pl?index-419>

This book will tell you everything you need to know about how to install a CGI script, modify it, or even write your own if you feel like it. It's loaded with many free samples, and it tells you all the places to get thousands more. It's a resource you'll refer to over and over again, and it'll pay for itself the first time you use it.

Before you actually go out and BUY it, though, download the free sample I'm giving away. Then you'll know what CGI is and if you can use it. If you can use it, and I believe you can, this is the best book I've read on the subject. Easy to read and understand, loaded with useful stuff.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/michaellarocca/files> is where you can get that free sample. It's called sample.pdf.

Software and Graphics

Okay, I have no doubt that you want pictures and buttons and all those bells and whistles. I won't even try to keep the list up to date on the free artwork. Just pop into any search engine and type "free clipart" or "free backgrounds" or "free wallpaper" and prepare to be hammered.

By the way, if you're on a website somewhere and you see an uncopyrighted graphic you like, you can always right-click it and "Save Target As" and take it home with you.

But remember, every graphic takes time to load on the user's end. Try to keep the file sizes as small as you can manage. This is where "optimization" comes in handy. Or perhaps you want to do a little graphics creation of your own. For these particular tasks, I recommend the links below.

DeWitt Industries Interactive Web Site

<http://www.dewittindustries.com>

EarthStation1 Shareware and Freeware

<http://earthstation1.simplenet.com/software.html>

Graphics Optimization

<http://www.xat.com>

Mediabuilder

<http://www.mediabuilder.com>

My Imager

<http://www.myimager.com/>

Scream Design

<http://www.screamdesign.com>

Michael LaRocca is the author of four published novels and an EPPIE 2002 Award finalist. He is an American living in Asia, and he's been a full-time author and editor since December 1999. His website is designed to help you find the best free & low-cost quality reads, and to help you improve/publish/promote your own writing free and avoid scams. http://free_reads.tripod.com

Get-Articles.com : 1000's of [reprintable business and internet marketing-related articles.](#)

[Submit your article for reprint.](#)