

Your Web Designer Left You... Now What?

By Milana Leshinsky

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If you rely solely on your web designer, you may find yourself wondering how to take care of your web site if he or she can no longer maintain it for you.

There are certain things you need to know for maintaining your web site, so be sure that you have this information before you are no longer in touch with your designer.

Here is the information you need whether you plan on maintaining it yourself or hiring a new web designer:

1. Hosting account information:

- username, password, host name to update or back up your web site
- hosting company web address
- support e-mail and phone number

You may want to back up your web site by logging in and downloading all your files to your computer. Use WS_FTP or another FTP program for transferring files.

2. Domain name information:

- registrar company name
- registrar company web address
- username and password to manage your domain

Find out whose name and e-mail address are on the administrative contact of your domain. If it's your web designer's (which shouldn't be the case initially) change it immediately to yours.

3. Passwords to important pages:

A web site may have

- an autoresponder
- a shopping cart
- a tell-a-friend
- a message board
- any other interactive feature.

Be sure to ask for all the passwords, usernames, and web site addresses to be able to access the administration screens of all of these tools.

4. CGI scripts and other updates:

Be sure to ask your web designers if any CGI scripts have been set up that need to be updated. See if any other files need regular maintenance. Also, ask which web editor was used to create your web site. It is not crucial, but may be useful to you when a problem with your own web editor arises.

Keep this information in one file, on your computer or on paper. You will want to refer to it as soon as you need to make an update to your site, or if you're ready to hire a web designer.

Milana Leshinsky

P.S. By the way, did you know that SPAM was named after a famous Monty Python parody on the canned meat product? (see <http://www.detritus.org/spam/skit.html> to hear this skit)

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