Web Hosting - A Guide for Beginners

So you're looking to learn about web hosting and what it has to offer or you may not know much about web hosting? There is no shame in not knowing this information. Everyone has to start at the beginning at some point. On that note, lets begin learning about web hosting.

First off, what is web hosting and how does it work?

Web hosting is the business practice of providing space and bandwidth on a high-powered computer server that is connected to the Internet at very high speeds. Hosting companies maintain large networks of high-powered web server computers in a physical location known as a data center. These computer servers are connected to a very fast, and generally redundant, Internet connection. The data centers have primary and backup power, a fast connection to the Internet, and a security monitoring staff.

The web hosting companies provide a share of disk space and available bandwidth to a customer for a monthly fee. Once the customer is signed up, they can upload files to their personal space on the web server and the information is then viewable to anyone interested on the Internet. The monthly fee the web hosting company charges is much less than what it would cost to run a server out of your own home or data center. This is the reason these companies exist. They take care of all the hardware, software, and other technical needs for you.

Types of web hosting

There are many different types of web hosting offers, but the main three are shared, reseller, and dedicated. Each type of hosting is for a different purpose.

Shared Web Hosting

Shared web hosting is the most popular form of hosting. Shared hosting is a portion of disk space and bandwidth provided to you by the web hosting company on a high-powered server. There are many other web sites hosted on this server, and the hosting company is likely to have quite a few of these servers in a large data center. The resources of the server are shared by as many other websites as are allocated to that computer.

Shared web hosting is the best form of web hosting if you are looking for a great price and don't have more than a couple thousand daily visitors to your site.

Reseller Web Hosting

Reseller web hosting is a popular, low-cost solution to starting your own web hosting business. There are two types of reseller hosting, private-label and a reseller of services.

The private-label is the best type of reseller plan because it allows you to retain full control over your customer's websites. A private-label plan allows the reseller to keep the full monthly payment of the web-hosting customer, but the reseller must pay a monthly fee to the larger hosting company for the reseller space. The more hosting accounts a private-label reseller can sell, the higher the profit for them. Private-label hosting allows you to host many more websites than if you were using shared

hosting for each. This is a great solution for someone who has many sites they need to host in one location to save money.

The reseller of services plans resell the regular web hosting plans of a larger web hosting company, but you get a discounted price for providing the customer and earn a monthly fee for as long as they remain a customer. This plan does not allow control over customer web sites and you only keep a portion of the potentially monthly revenue.

Dedicated Web Hosting

Dedicated web hosting is the most powerful and cost effective solution of hosting a busy web site without resorting to buying your own equipment and paying hundreds of dollars per month for a fast Internet connection. Dedicated hosting consists of single server with no one else hosting on that computer. This allows for the greatest of configuration options. Anyone who has a busy website will find dedicated hosting is the necessary choice.

Web Hosting Considerations

Wondering about all the other information listed in web hosting plans? In this section, I will explain the most important considerations in choosing a good web host.

Price

The price of web hosting services is one of the most important. There are many hosting companies out there with cheap hosting packages, but they may be lacking in other areas. Don't let the price of a hosting package fool you. There are some hosting companies out there who have great prices and the other features are just as good. Price may be one of the most important decisions of a web hosting plan, but there is much more to consider in choosing a quality web host.

Disk Space / Storage Space

Disk space is the amount of physical storage space a web host gives to you to store your web files. Hosting companies these days have plans with disk space being measured mostly in terms of gigabytes, but some are still offering plans in the megabytes for storage space. Depending on your needs for file storage space, you may need more or less. Generally the more disk space offered, the better.

Bandwidth / Data Transfer

The amount of bandwidth available can make a big difference in choosing a quality hosting plan. In general, the more bandwidth a hosting company makes available to you, the better. This means you can support more traffic to your web site as your business grows. Be wary of web hosting companies that offer unlimited or unmetered bandwidth. While many of these are legitimate offers, there are some out there who are overselling their bandwidth in hopes the average user won't use much.

Customer Support

In any business, it is very important to provide exception customer service. Web hosting is no exception to this. Many of the hosting companies are available all day and night in case you have a problem with your web site, but there are some who are just available specific hours of the day. If your web site goes down in the middle of the night when they're not available, this means lost revenue for a business. You should make sure the web host you select is always available for support.

Money Back Guarantee

Most web hosting companies will provide a thirty-day money back guarantee. Some will provide one even long, but be wary of the ones who offer no money back guarantee. I would not purchase web hosting services from a company who does not offer at least a 30 day money back guarantee, unless they have proven themselves to be a leader in the industry and have an excellent reputation

Photo credits:

(1) WWW-Symbol in blau via photopin (license)
(2) Internet Marketing Tree via photopin (license)
(3) Domains mehrfarbig - tld via photopin (license)
(4) Ideas for Optimizing Your Landing Pages via photopin (license)
(5) YEE: For The Love of The Arts via photopin (license)
(6) Thumbs Up, Good Job, Facebook Page via photopin (license)
(7) Web hosting via photopin (license)
(8) How to Make Money with Your Blog via photopin (license)
(9) 5 Simple Ways to Optimize Your Website for Lead Generation via photopin <a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/">(license)</a
(10) GWP Virtual Network Meeting 2015 via photopin (license)
(11) GWP Virtual Network Meeting 2015 via photopin (license)
(12) GWP Virtual Network Meeting 2015 via photopin (license)
(13) GWP Virtual Network Meeting 2015 via photopin (license)