



➤ Get Your Website  
Up and Running

# Get Your Website Up and Running

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## About SitePoint

SitePoint specializes in publishing fun, practical, and easy-to-understand content for web professionals. Visit <http://www.sitepoint.com/> to access our blogs, books, newsletters, articles, and community forums. You'll find a stack of information on JavaScript, PHP, design, and more.

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## Preface

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As you'll see in the first chapter of this short book, every business could use a website. This book is not a guide to HTML, CSS, and JavaScript (SitePoint has plenty of books covering those bases!), rather it runs through the basics of getting our own website up and running. We'll discuss the basics of getting a domain name, hosting, administering your site with cPanel, and even discuss the legalities of copyrighting your site.

This short selection of tutorials, hand-picked from SitePoint's [Web channel](#), will help you get your own site up on the Web in no time. It contains:

1. *Why Every Business Needs a Website* by Jeff Smith
2. *How to Choose, Register and Make the Most of Your Domain Name* by Adrian Try
3. *What Sort of Hosting Should I Choose for My Website?* by Adrian Try
4. *The Ultimate Guide to Choosing a Hosting Provider* by Adrian Try
5. *Cloud Hosting: the Pros and Cons* by Craig Buckler
6. *6 Tips for Managing Your Site with cPanel* by Jeff Smith
7. *What It Means to Copyright a Website* by Alyssa Gregory
8. *How to Create a Portfolio Site That Will Get You Hired* by Jacco Blankenspoor

This book is suitable for beginners.

## Conventions Used

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You'll notice that we've used certain layout styles throughout this book to signify different types of information. Look out for the following items.

### Code Samples

Code in this book is displayed using a fixed-width font, like so:

```
<h1>A Perfect Summer's Day</h1>  
<p>It was a lovely day for a walk.</p>
```

Some lines of code should be entered on one line, but we've had to wrap them because of page constraints. An ↵ indicates a line break that exists for formatting purposes only, and should be ignored:

```
URL.open("http://www.sitepoint.com/responsive-web-design-real  
↵ -user-testing/?responsive1");
```

## Tips, Notes, and Warnings



### Hey, You!

Tips provide helpful little pointers.



### Ahem, Excuse Me ...

Notes are useful asides that are related—but not critical—to the topic at hand. Think of them as extra tidbits of information.



### Make Sure You Always ...

... pay attention to these important points.



### Watch Out!

Warnings highlight any gotchas that are likely to trip you up along the way.

# Chapter 1

## Why Every Business Needs a Website

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by Jeff Smith

In 2017, any business that desires new customers or clients needs a website. Almost all of your customers will use the internet to find businesses before they try anything else.

If a person is new to an area and wants to find coffee shops, dentists, doctors, daycares, or mechanics, what do they do? They search online. Those searches take so little time that a business must be prepared to stand out, and capture the potential customer's attention in the fleeting moments that they have.

A potential customer flipping through Google's mapped results might ignore the first two businesses for not having websites to look at at all. They tap on the third business's website only to find that it does not work well on their phone, so they



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move on to number four. Just like that, the three businesses closest to the customer have been written off due to their lack of a useful, up-to-date, mobile-friendly website.

The website for any business needs to be professional and practical. It needs to contain the right information to convince potential customers to make an order, call, or come visit. It needs to be consistent with your signage, your elevator pitch, and your brochures, but it also needs to be better than all of those things. It needs to drive traffic to your business, even if you don't sell anything online.

It needs to convince people that *this* business has the answers to the problem they're trying to solve.

More than being useful, a website is a point of pride for a business. The state of the site's design, mobile friendliness, loading speed, and accuracy of its information may not be an issue to the business owner, employees, or regular customers — but it definitely matters to customers.

Regardless of your situation, you need this virtual signage and information online. Regardless of whether your entire business is conducted on the Internet as a software startup, or your mom and pop restaurant serves local clientele from a well-known, rustic location and you have no online services at all. Either way, you still benefit from the traffic and the good reputation that your business can gain from a website done right.

## A Good Return on Investment

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In many cases, building a good website is a ridiculously easy choice to make. Take a look at the examples below to understand just why that is.

### Case Study #1

You own a local mechanic's business. You've been quoted the cost of an informational website at \$2,000. This website will be a responsive brochure website, including information on services, testimonials, contact details, and lots of imagery. But you balk at the price — after all, you aren't in a high margin

business, and you don't have much money to spare. However, you need to consider the return on investment.

In 2015, AAA estimated the annual maintenance cost of owning a single vehicle was about \$766. That means that every customer driven your way by a website can grant you another \$766 in revenue, on average, per year.

If the website produces three new clients in the first year, you'll already have covered the cost of the website. Convert one visitor per year after that, and you can cover ongoing maintenance and hosting fees. Any other conversions after that are pure profit!

Perhaps not all of that revenue is profit. After all, there are costs to providing services beyond that of your website. But many families own multiple vehicles, so you may double or triple that revenue each time you convert a household.

With that data in mind, why wouldn't you want a website?

## Case Study #2

Not convinced? Let's take a look at an interesting type of business — wedding venues. If there was ever a business that needs a website, this is it. Couples scour the internet for images, as many as they can find, of various locations, before going to visit them in person. Without a good visual website, your venue may never make that shortlist!

The average expenditure on a wedding venue, according to WeddingStats is \$1,993. If this website also cost \$2,000, one or two customers driven to your website will pay for it in revenue, and when considering actual profit, it will only take a negligible uptick in business to pay for the website.

And then it will start paying you.

Of course, these examples do not even touch on businesses that use websites as sales platforms. In those cases, it's even easier to justify spending on web development and services. Your website sales are directly affected by the quality of the online customer experience, and that translates directly to revenue gained or lost.

Finally, consider the business that doesn't need new customers. Believe it or not, sometimes this happens. Take the wedding venue. Perhaps it's booked six months out at all times, and simply doesn't need an influx of customers. However, if it's steadily booked well in advance, it can make more money — venues in high demand merit higher rates. At the same time, that raises the competitiveness bar, and in order for people to consider this more-expensive venue, they will need to be convinced before they call for more information.

## So, What Does a Business Really Need in a Website?

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### A Domain Name

Domain names are purchased from domain name registration services (Like GoDaddy, NameCheap, or Hover) for \$10-60 per year. Your domain name is the address that users will type in to reach your website.

### Website Development

You need your website built! Usually, you'll want it built on a Content Management System — a platform that will enable you to make small updates to your site's content whenever you want to do so. This stage will usually be the most expensive step, but it is a one-time cost paid to a web developer.

### Website Hosting

Hosting is paid per year or per month, and is the “home” of your website — it's the server space on which your website's files reside.

There are many options for hosting, many of which you may not need for a simple small business website. Hosting can cost anywhere from a few dollars a month to hundreds of dollars a year, depending on what your site needs. Most simple sites are very easy to host, but do not underestimate the value of quality hosting services — guarantees for your website's uptime, and the level of service and support provided when things go wrong, are very important.

Our preferred web host of choice is [SiteGround](#) for its speed, security, support and geeky extras (staging, Git integration and premium backups) that developers will love.

SiteGround offers a wide range of plans for small, growing and very big websites. Rest assured that you won't have to worry about switching hosts as your website grows.

## Maintenance, Updates, and Backups

You may also wish to pay someone a monthly or yearly fee to perform platform and plugin updates, make regular backups, and perform other minor maintenance on your website. Some of these duties can be taken on internally, by an employee who already updates your website.

If you don't have that option, you can easily outsource this to the developer who built the site, or to others. Security threats to websites never stop growing, and it is important to keep your site secure. Even if your site does not handle user information or payments, you still want it to remain secure and safe from accidental or intentional damage.

Businesses that use [SiteGround](#) may not need to worry about paying extra for server and software maintenance. SiteGround handles many of these concerns — it offers automatic core and plugin updates for WordPress, automated daily backups, and 24/7 support to provide assistance above and beyond fixing server issues.

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## Wrapping It Up

No matter the industry, no matter the situation, any business can almost assuredly use a good website.

The question really is what the business needs out of their website, and what goals they have for their web presence. The site should be built to cater to those goals - providing the best shopping cart experience, the easiest menu to view and order from, or easy comparison of rates against competitors.

Whatever the need, the website should exist to match it. If that can be done, the value of a great web presence for the business is all but a forgone conclusion.

# Chapter 2

## How to Choose, Register and Make the Most of Your Domain Name

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by Adrian Try

You've chosen a hosting plan and provider for your website, but how will people find it? You need a domain name.

Web hosting is the physical location of your website's files on the internet. A domain name is what your website is called, or the address your visitors type in to get there. It's how your customers will find you among the millions of other web sites on the internet. So invest some time choosing the right one.

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This article is a non-technical overview of domain names, how to get one, and what you can use it for. We'll link to more technical articles if you'd like to learn more.

### What Is a Domain Name?

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Like the phone system, the internet is based on a system of numbers. Beneath the surface, each website is associated with an IP address—a numerical addresses that tells your browser where to find the website on the internet.

Most people find it easier to relate to names than numbers. Do you prefer to make phone calls by dialing a phone number, or tapping on a name in your contacts app? In the same way, you can think of a domain name as the *human readable version* of the IP address.

Some examples are *sitepoint.com*, *wordpress.org* and *example.com.au*. A domain name is made up of:

1. A series of letters, numbers and hyphens,
2. An extension (called a Top Level Domain), like *.com*, *.org*, *.biz*, *.edu*.
3. An optional country code, like *.au*, *.nz*, *.uk*. US sites don't have a country code.
4. These are separated by a “dot” (a period, or full stop).

A domain name must be registered before it can be used.

### Choosing a Domain Name

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Think long and hard about your domain name—it's the first impression people will have of your website. It can strengthen your brand, affect your search result ratings, and impact how easily visitors will remember how to get to your site. The choice deserves careful consideration.

Here are some tips for choosing an effective domain name for your business or project:

- Keep it simple.

- Keep it as short as possible, but not at the expense of clarity.
- Keep it memorable. Beware of tricky spelling.
- Avoid complication. Adding a hyphen is just one more thing for your visitors to remember. Avoid numbers if possible, too.
- Aim for a *.com*, it's what people are expecting. *.org* is good for non-profits, *.gov* for government sites, and *.edu* for educational institutions. *.net* is also commonly used.
- A host of new TLDs have become available, like *.info*, *.biz*, *.business*, *.church*, *.investments*, *.photography*, *.software*, and *.tv*. Consider them if they're a good fit for your business, but think twice about not using *.com* if it is available.
- If your business is local, you might like to end your domain with the relevant country code, like *.com.au* or *.org.nz*.
- If your business name is already taken, consider adding something to the beginning or end, like *johnsmithplumbing.com* or *hirejohnsmith.com* or even *iamjohnsmith.com*.
- Avoid using someone else's trademark, even if the domain is available.
- Find inspiration at morewords.com (the Scrabble resource)—it can help you come up with interesting domain name ideas.

Further reading:

- [How to Choose a Domain Name for Your Business](#)
- [Domain Names: Make Them Memorable](#)
- [How to Find the Perfect Domain Name](#)
- [ICANN's New gTLDs: Is It Worth Becoming a .guru?](#)

## Checking Domain Name Availability

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Of course you need to choose a name that's available. Domain names are vanishing every day, so don't put the decision off. While you're at it, also check the availability of the name on social media, including Twitter and Facebook. Hover, our preferred registrar, has a tool that you can use to check domain name availability.

If you haven't chosen your business name yet, take the availability of the domain name into consideration when doing so.



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Further reading:

- [12 Tools to Help You Buy the Perfect Domain Name](#)
- [11 Domain Name Generators & Search Tools](#)
- [Top 3 \(Free!\) Domain Name Generators](#)

### Registering Your Domain Name

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The next step is to hand over your money and register the domain. This is relatively inexpensive—often just \$15 or \$20 a year for a *.com*, *.net* or *.org*. And there's no shortage of companies you can pay for the service. Make sure that any registrar that you use is accredited by ICANN (the Internet Corporation For Assigned Names And Numbers). Our recommendation is to use Hover, and new users can get [10% off using this link](#).

### Why You Should Keep Your Domain Name Separate From Your Web Host

If you're new to the domain realm, you may take a standard route of using your web hosting service as your domain provider. However, there may be a few things you are missing out on by keeping your services under one roof. Here's why you should always use a different provider to maintain your domain name instead of the provider that maintains your website.

### Potential to Lock with Current Web Host

If your domain name is tied to your web host, you could lose your domain name if you ever decide to switch to another host. That's because your domain name has the potential to be locked with your current web hosting service due to what's called [registrar-locking](#). This can happen if it's [less than 60 days](#) between when you start using the service and decide to go elsewhere. If your domain name is owned independently, you can point it to whatever new web host you choose even if it's within these 60 days.

## More TLD (Top-Level Domains) Options

Web hosts will typically only offer a few TLDs to choose from, which can leave you in the dust if you're searching for a unique domain name based on a niche market or location. However, using a dedicated domain provider will typically offer much more TLDs. For example, Hover offers more than 400 TLDs for you to choose from. That means if you want to register your domain that is specific to your city or a domain that ends with anything from .photography to .horse, you'll have a better chance finding and securing the domain name you want when you keep it with a domain name provider versus a web hosting service provider.

## Avoid Domain Name Loss

Data breach is very real, and it can even happen by simply having access to your domain web hosting services. If you use a domain web hosting service that lacks multi-step authentication, it may make it easier for hackers to access your web content. What's worse, if your domain is also parked with your web hosting service, you can potentially lose your domain name should the hacker transfer the domain name elsewhere. That can mean tons of lost hours and money trying to prove you own your domain name.

You can also easily lose your domain name if your web hosting service and domain name expire on the same date. For example, suppose you have your domain name registered with your web hosting provider and forget to renew your web hosting service, or you decide you no longer want to use the hosting service but haven't decided on which to use. Your name can also easily be set up for failure if you have an expired credit card on file and your web hosting service provider does not alert you of the need for an update before renewal. Many aftermarket domain name companies wait for these types of opportunities to grab forgotten domains. This situation is even more critical when you lack a trademark for the domain name. Using a different provider to secure your domain name can circumvent these issues from happening in the first place.

## The Real Price of a Cheap Domain Name

There's nothing quite like finding a great deal, and domain names are no exception. After all, the domain name will be exactly the same regardless of

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where you register it — so why not pay less for it? Many registrars will offer limited time sales for cheap domain name for as low as \$0.99, which seems like a no-brainer...until you go through the checkout process and see what that practically free domain name really costs. In many cases, this will end up being much higher than a regularly priced domain name at another domain provider.

### The Hidden Costs of a Cheap Domain Name

Here's a list of commonly-used tactics to watch out for to make sure you're truly paying the best price for domain names.

#### High Renewal Cost

Your domain may be on sale right now, but it won't always be. Look at how much it will cost to keep your domain past your first year of registration and compare this cost with other registrars. In the long run, it may make more sense to pay more in your first year and save much more in the long run.

#### Long Registration Term

Even if you're a savvy shopper and planning on transferring to a different registrar that has a sale when it comes time to renew your domain, pay attention to how long you need to register the domain for to get the sale price. Some registrars will lock you in for two or more years, and the price of your second year can skyrocket in order for the registrar to recoup the cost of your first year's discount price.

#### Charging for WHOIS Privacy Services

When a domain name is registered, its owner's contact information is published in the online WHOIS database. WHOIS Privacy keeps your information hidden, protecting you from hackers and spammers who often use the WHOIS database to target unsuspecting domain owners.

Some registrars will charge upwards of \$10-20/year for WHOIS Privacy. Others may offer it free for your first year of registration, after which they will begin charging for any subsequent years. This is typically the most overlooked fee

involved with domain registration, so make sure your registrar charges a reasonable price for domain privacy (or, in Hover's case, offers free WHOIS privacy).

## Many Upsells

Shopping at a domain registrar can be like shopping at a grocery store: you go in just to grab some milk and end up spending \$50 on chips, ice cream, apples (to offset the previous add-ons) and other things you had no intention of buying when you walked in.

Domain names are often used as an opportunity to upsell customers on additional items like website builders and hosting. They'll list the domain names for cheap, but you will "pay" by getting a cluttered experience with annoying upsells for additional services that you may not want or need.

## "Premium" Support

Mistakes can happen, and when they do you want to make sure your website or domain email address have as little downtime as possible. Some registrars will charge additional fees to speak with their support team, so make sure that your cheap domain name includes access to your registrar's support (or, more importantly, that they offer it at all).

## What Else Can I Use My Domain Name For?

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**Use your domain name for your email.** Using *fred@fredsbakery.com* sounds much more professional than *fredsbakery@hotmail.com*. Using a generic email address when you've registered a domain should be a crime.

Your hosting provider will provide a way of setting up email for your domain. Alternatively, you can use a third-party solution like Gmail, which is part of Google's G Suite of apps for businesses.

**Set up subdomains.** Once you have a domain name, you can create an unlimited number of subdomains for free. A subdomain is created by adding a word and a

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dot before your domain, like *subdomain.domain.com*, and is set up in your DNS settings.

You can map a subdomain to an important page on your website (like your contact page), a different website you have set up (like your company blog or wiki), or somewhere different on the internet, like your Facebook or Twitter account.

Here are some ideas to get you started:

- `blog.mydomain.com`
- `facebook.mydomain.com`
- `twitter.mydomain.com`
- `faq.mydomain.com`
- `contact.mydomain.com`
- `mail.mydomain.com`
- `wiki.mydomain.com`
- `support.mydomain.com`
- `bookings.mydomain.com`
- `jobs.mydomain.com`
- `services.mydomain.com`
- `help.mydomain.com`

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## Time to Choose

Are you ready to choose a domain name? Work through the tips in this article, and browse some of the additional articles I've linked to.

If you'd like to learn more, also check out SiteGround's article [Web Site vs Domain Name vs Hosting – what are the differences?](#)

# Chapter 3

## What Sort of Hosting Should I Choose for My Website?

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by Adrian Try

Having a website is a bit like having a child. It's rewarding to watch them grow, but they require time, effort, and a watchful eye. Providing an environment that meets their needs will ensure their healthy, ongoing growth.

A website can grow in terms of content, structure and functionality, and these have implications for your site's home—your web hosting. Invest some time considering the options.

In this article we'll help you choose the appropriate type of web hosting by listing some key decisions about your website and the amount of assistance you'll need setting it up and maintaining it.

# What Types of Web Hosting Are There?

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One thing that complicates the choice of web hosting is the overwhelming number of options out there! Here's a quick rundown.

The most affordable hosting plans are **shared hosting**. They cost less because you share a server with others. You split the cost, but you also split the storage and bandwidth. If another site gets a lot of traffic, yours might suffer.

A **dedicated server's** resources are completely available to your website. You get all of the storage and bandwidth, and you may be responsible for the management of the computer as well.

**Cloud hosting** is a cluster of maintained servers that scale when necessary to give your website even more resources than a dedicated server.

In each case you're typically offered a choice of plans with different options at different price points. These vary from provider to provider.

So, which type of hosting is best for your site? Answer the following questions to find out.

## 1. How Many Pages Will Your Site Have?

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You might be surprised by how little space a basic website needs. You might also be surprised by how fast a website can grow. So choose a hosting plan that provides enough room to store your website now, with plenty of room to grow in the future.

A single web page contains text, formatting and images. That sounds a lot like a simple word processing document, and in many ways it is. To visualize how much storage you will need, it may help to think of a web page as a Word document, and a website as a folder of documents.

In 2016, the average size of a web page was 2.2 MB. That's just over double the average size in 2014, which is just over double the size in 2010. The main reason for this growth is that image sizes are increasing to keep pace with our computers' ever-improving screen resolutions. So when calculating the amount of space you need for your website, allow plenty of room for growth.

Let's do some estimates based on that 2.2 MB average. If your website will have 10 pages, you'll need at least 22 MB to store them. A site with a hundred pages will need 220 MB. 1 GB of space will hold an average of 450 pages—more than many websites will ever need.

How much space do you think you'll need for your web pages?

Given that some of the least expensive shared hosting plans offer around 10 GB of storage, the size of your web pages are unlikely to be a limiting factor, especially for a brand new blog or small business website.

But that's just allowing for web pages. Storage needs can escalate quickly if you allow visitors to view or download additional files or media - video, audio, high-res photos, or documentation. We'll look at that in Section 4 below.

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## 2. How Many People Will Visit Your Site Each Month?

File storage is the amount of hard drive space you need for your website.

Bandwidth is the amount of data that is viewed or downloaded from your site each month.

Every time a webpage is viewed or accessed, it adds to the amount of bandwidth you use. The text and images of each page need to be downloaded onto each visitor's computer before they can be displayed in their web browser.

Your bandwidth depends on how many visitors your website receives each month, and how many pages they access each time they visit—in other words, your monthly pageviews. Hopefully this is something that is going to grow over time, so you need to choose a hosting plan that will not only meet your current needs, but take you into the future.



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Website traffic can be hard to predict in advance, but we'll help you come up with an estimate. Once your site is up and running, it's something you can track with a tool like [Google Analytics](#), but that's a topic for another tutorial.

How many visitors should you expect? A local business should expect much fewer visitors than a world-wide corporation. A new blog should expect much less traffic than an established one. Here are some ballpark figures:

- New blogs typically receive around 10 visitors a day, who may read a single blogpost then leave. That's around 300 pageviews a month—around 660 MB of bandwidth.
- As a blog becomes established, traffic may (or may not) increase to hundreds of visitors a day. That's up to 10,000 pageviews or 20 GB of bandwidth each month.
- A local small business might receive around 30 visitors a day - that's close to 1,000 visitors a month. If each visitor views three pages, that's 3,000 pageviews a month, or over 6 GB of bandwidth.
- A large law firm with good branding will get a lot of traffic from Google, and might receive 3,000 visits a day, or 90,000 a month.
- Popular blogs can receive hundreds of thousands of visitors a month. The largest receive tens of millions of monthly visitors.

Back to your website. What conclusions can we make from those ballpark figures?

- Popular hosting companies indicate that their shared hosting plans can cope with tens of thousands of pageviews and hundreds of gigabytes of bandwidth each month. That's more than enough for most blogs and small business websites.
- As your blog grows in popularity, monitor your bandwidth carefully. As your traffic moves closer to 100,000 visitors a month, plan a migration strategy to a dedicated server. Don't just monitor monthly averages—take into account peak usage as well.
- Large companies with a well-known brand may receive a large amount of traffic from Google. They would be better served by a dedicated server.
- Large corporate websites and popular blog networks will need a dedicated server, cloud hosting or a custom hosting solution.

Allowing for growth, how much bandwidth should you initially allow for your website?

SiteGround offers everything you need across a range of plans that suit beginners with new sites, all the way up to more experienced web masters with larger sites. If you're looking for a solution that fits the bill right now, try SiteGround.

### 3. What Will Your Website Run On?

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Most websites use a content management system like WordPress, Drupal or Joomla. They are web applications that make managing your website and adding content easier.

Like any software, these applications have system requirements that must be met by your web host. These include:

- Enough storage space to install the software.
- Software to run the scripting language the software is written in.
- Database software to contain the information for each web page.
- An operating system that supports all of the above.

WordPress is the most popular of these apps, so let's use it as an example. Here are its main requirements:

1. PHP version 7 or greater. WordPress is a collection of PHP scripts, so PHP software needs to be installed on your web server to run it.
2. MySQL version 5.6 or greater. Your web pages are stored in a database, so you need MySQL or compatible software to store and access that data.
3. 15-20 MB of additional space on which to install WordPress along with your themes and plugins.

Because WordPress is so popular, you'd expect most web hosting options to meet the requirements to run it, and you'd be right. Other web platforms have more specific needs. Do your homework and make sure your host of choice can meet them. If in doubt, contact the company via email.

## 4. What Additional Media Will You Be Serving?

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Storage and bandwidth considerations start to balloon when you're serving up more than just web pages:

- Developers may provide software downloads to their users.
- Corporations may host extensive document libraries and content management systems for their staff.
- Companies may provide documentation and user manuals by allowing their customers to download PDF files.
- E-learning sites may integrate multimedia into their lessons.
- Photographers and graphic designers may store extensive portfolios or libraries of high-resolution, print-ready photos and images.
- Music producers and podcasters may provide access to hundreds or thousands of audio files.
- Videographers may share extensive video projects and portfolios online.

These additional files require careful consideration. Determine the amount of storage space you'll need by checking the space the files occupy on your computer's hard drive. And determine how much bandwidth you should allow for by estimating how many files will be viewed or downloaded each month.

Here are some guidelines:

- Shared hosting typically allows you to store gigabytes of space, and download hundreds of gigabytes a month.
- Dedicated hosting plans typically increase both to terrabytes.
- Consider reducing the impact these files will have on your website by hosting them elsewhere. For example, you could host your video files on YouTube. You don't want to slow your website to a crawl while users eat up your bandwidth by downloading files.

## 5. Do You Value Ease-of-Use or Total Control?

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Like any computer, a web server has lots of software that needs to be installed and maintained:

- an operating system (like Linux or Windows),
- web hosting software (like Apache),
- scripting languages (like PHP and Perl),
- and the software for your platform of choice (like WordPress or Joomla).

If you want total control over your website, having all of these choices at your command can be a good thing. But for most of us, it is an unwelcome burden.

A **managed hosting** plan is where your hosting provider will take care of all of this for you. They bear the technical burden, and you configure your website from an easy-to-use control panel. Web apps like WordPress may come pre-installed, or be installable with a single click.

Shared hosting plans are managed. You're sharing a single computer with other users, rather than managing it yourself. Many dedicated hosting plans give you the choice of managing the server yourself or having it managed for you.

Strongly consider a managed hosting plan, even if the idea of managing your own server appeals to you. Best practice is that the same person should not be trying to build the content of the site and managing the infrastructure at the same time. You won't do either job as well as someone focused on the task.

## 6. Other Considerations

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Here are a few more considerations when deciding the type of hosting your website needs:

1. Are you likely to add more sites or web apps in the future? A forum, wiki, ticketing support system, an email system? Allow for enough storage space, bandwidth and databases for future development when choosing your hosting.
2. Is your website mission-critical? If your website going down brings your business to a halt, invest in prioritizing its reliability. Aim for 99.99% uptime, and ensure there is enough bandwidth for a peak numbers of visitors.
3. Choosing and registering a domain name (a web address for your site like *mybusiness.com*) is technically not part of web hosting, but it's something many web hosting providers can help you with. This may simplify your site setup, and reduce the number of companies you need to pay.

## Decision Time

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What's the best hosting plan for your website?

- A plan that offers enough storage space for your web pages, web software and additional files.
- A plan that offers enough bandwidth for your visitors to view your web pages and download any additional files.
- A plan that satisfies the system requirements of your web software.
- A plan that gives you the right balance between control and ease-of-use.
- A plan that allows plenty of scope for the future and room for growth.
- A plan that is reliable so that your site will be up and responsive every time someone would like to visit.

Think through each option to decide whether you can begin with a shared hosting plan, or need a dedicated server or cloud hosting solution.

The quality of your hosting will also depend on the company who will be providing it. Choosing that company is your next decision.

Like your website, they need to be reliable and around when you need them. They need to know what they're doing and be around for the long haul. But that's a topic for next time.

If you're looking for a great solution right now, we recommend [SiteGround](#). SiteGround offers blazing fast loading times, and includes security enhancements, automated backups and software updates, and a 99.99% uptime guarantee in every plan.

# Chapter 4

## The Ultimate Guide to Choosing a Hosting Provider

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by Adrian Try

You need a website. You have a clear idea of what you want, and have carefully considered the type of hosting you need. Now, with credit card in hand, it's time to decide which company to sign up with.

Choosing a hosting provider is one of the most crucial decisions you'll make. The future of your website depends on it.

If you were looking for a babysitting service for your children, you wouldn't just pick the cheapest option that came along. "Leave your kids with us for just 50c a day. Pick them up whenever." Your kids mean more to you than that. You'd want

to make sure they were safe, and being looked after by people who know what they're doing. Saving money isn't your priority; investing in their well-being is.

Invest some time up front in the future well-being of your website. Who should you pay to host your website? What are the qualities you need in a hosting company?

Here are six key criteria to consider when weighing up the options.

### 1. Speed & Performance

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Do you remember the last time you bought a new laptop? You immediately noticed the improvement in performance, and the old one suddenly felt surprisingly slow. Fast is good. You want a hosting company with the equivalent of a new laptop.

First impressions are everything. You don't want new visitors to your site to leave before your home page loads. How committed is the hosting company to performance? It requires an ongoing investment in both hardware and software.

Work through this **Performance Checklist** when evaluating a hosting provider:

- Servers on multiple continents. A closer connection is faster. If your site has visitors from around the world, servers on multiple continents will ensure the fastest connection time for everyone.
- A CDN (content delivery network) is designed to decrease latency by having a network of proxy servers around the world. Many companies provide paid CDNs, and some offer them for no additional charge.
- Servers with SSDs rather than spinning hard drives will load your website faster.
- HTTP/2 is the future of the internet, and is here now. It's around ten times faster than the original HTTP. Make sure it is supported by your host, and learn more about it in [Craig Buckler's article](#).

- Caching options can speed up high-traffic WordPress sites dramatically - making them potentially hundreds of times faster. Look out for options like PHP 7 opcode caching, Memcached/Redis object caching, Nginx/Varnish full page caching, CDN, and Elasticsearch/Solr full text searching.

It's not always easy to tell how often a company upgrades its hardware, or how much money they invest in it. Here are some ways you might find out:

- Review the company's blog for hardware and software upgrade announcements.
- Use services like Load Impact and WAPT to load test websites and see how they perform.
- Or be direct - phone their customer service people and ask.

## 2. Security, Reliability & Uptime

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When your website is down, it reflects badly on your business, and you may lose money. If hackers gain access to your site and install malware, not only will you infect your visitor's computers, but Google will display an embarrassing message warning of the threat.

How committed is the company to maintaining your website's stability and reliability? In today's climate of hacking, what is the company doing to keep your site secure?

Hackers can gain access by taking advantage of security vulnerabilities in the software you are using. So you need a web host who proactively keep their software up to date so these vulnerabilities are patched. The company should also take additional steps to ensure the security of your website.

Work through this **Security Checklist** when evaluating a hosting provider:

- Server software updates. Is the company running the latest server software (PHP, Apache, MySQL)?
- Vulnerabilities handling. Is the company proactively patching on the server level?



- Automatic CMS updates. Does the company provide automatic updates of your content management software (e.g. WordPress)? Do they allow you to choose when the updates occur? You don't want WordPress updating in the middle of an important marketing campaign.
- Does the company employ brute-force detection and prevention systems? These systems monitor and analyze all the traffic to the server where your site will be hosted and stop the fraudulent ones—for example someone attempting to hack into your WordPress admin dashboard by trying to guess your password.
- Does the company have a Web Application Firewall (WAF)? How often are rules updated? How often are rules created for new vulnerabilities? Ideally, the host is proactive and every time there is a vulnerability, they will add a WAF rule to protect you.

Bad things happen to websites. Like anything else on a computer, backups are essential. They make disasters less disastrous.

Work through this **Backup Checklist** when evaluating a hosting provider:

- Does the company do any backups? Some hosts leave the responsibility with the end user. Ideally, you want a company that will do regular backups for you.
- How does the company actually perform the backups, and how often? Ideally, you should be looking for regular daily backups, with copies saved for at least 30 days. The more copies and the longer they are kept for you, the better.
- How quickly can you restore when necessary? Ideally, the host provides an easy one-click restore process.
- How much do they charge for a restore? Restoring a backup may not be cheap—you can pay as much as \$150 for a single restore.

Web servers are like any other computer. Programs crash, things go wrong, and you need to restart. On a web server this will take your website down. You need a hosting company that can minimize the impact.

Here's what normally happens when something goes wrong with a web server:

- A server admin is notified and if possible logs onto the server.
- They troubleshoot, fix the problem, and sometimes restart the machine.

- The restart causes downtime.

Companies can minimize downtime by having an excellent monitoring system—one that proactively checks the server status as often as possible and automatically fixes problems instead of waiting for system administrators to do it.

How can you find out about the effectiveness of a hosting company's monitoring system? Check their website and blog, or ask their pre-sales reps. Hosts with good monitoring systems don't hesitate to share how they do it.

You can also monitor your own website for downtime by using tools like [Uptimebot](#), [Pingdom](#) and [Uptrends](#).

### 3. Customer Service & Support

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You're caught up in building your website. Time has stopped, and you're absorbed in the creative process. Everything is coming together... until you hit a roadblock. Something has gone wrong, or you're not sure how to take the next step. It's almost midnight. What do you do? Who do you turn to?

It's common for people to work on websites outside of normal 9-5 business hours. You need help when you need help, whatever the time. You need someone who will listen to your problem, know what to do about it, and be able to communicate with you in a friendly, understandable, and human way. You need excellent support.

Work through this **Support Checklist** when evaluating a hosting provider:

- When is support available? Ideally it should be 24/7—you don't always work on your website during office hours.
- What support channels are available? Phone? Chat? Tickets? Which are available 24/7? Can you pay more for priority support? The more options the better, but ticketing is always better for complex issues.
- How friendly is the support team? Is it in-house or outsourced? Do you see staff profiles in their chat and ticketing systems so you can easily see there's a real human being on the other side.

- What's the company's response time for resolving issues? You don't want to wait three days to get your question answered. On chat and phone, how long do you have to wait to get to an operator?
- What type of issues can be resolved through the support channels? Many hosts help with server-related issues only. Try to find out what are the limits and what issues are considered to be "beyond the hosting support".
- Look for the availability of documentation and self-help—tutorials, a knowledge base.
- Is support available in your language?

## 4. Features & Limitations

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A hosting company must provide the software and infrastructure necessary to run your website and content management system. They should also offer features that support the way you prefer to work, whether that is geeky or down-to-earth. And any limits they place on your hosting plan must not be too constrictive for what you want to achieve with your website.

Work through this **Features Checklist** when evaluating a hosting provider:

- Do they provide all of the system software and services you'll need to run and manage your website? CMS, operating system, database, web server, programming languages? Refer to the system requirements of your content management system, and make your own checklist of required software.
- Besides web hosting, does the company provide the other online services you require? This may include domain registration and transfers, email hosting, and database management. It's convenient to have everything in one place.
- If you value ease-of-use, do they provide a control panel like cPanel, and easy installation of popular content management systems like WordPress?
- Moving your website to a new hosting provider can be tricky. Do they provide website migrations? Are they free or paid? What are the terms? Ultimately, you want to find a host that will do the migration for free for you.
- If you are geeky, do they provide your tools of choice? SSL? Let's Encrypt? Staging? FTP? SSH?
- Do they blacklist WordPress plugins? Many WordPress hosting companies don't allow you to install some plugins.

- What are the actual limits placed on storage and bandwidth? Companies that use the word “unlimited” still have limits on what they consider too much storage and bandwidth. Check those limits in their Terms of Service and Fair Use documents. Every computer system has limits; how transparent the company is about theirs is what matters.

## 5. Philosophy, Culture & Reputation

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You need a company you can trust. One that cares about your needs, and aren't in it just for the money. A helpful company that's easy to deal with, not one that's trying to sell you something at every turn. A company that is open and transparent, and not trying to trick you. A company that won't leave you with regrets.

Work through this **Reputation Checklist** when evaluating a hosting provider:

- How human is the company? What's on their About Us page? What are their values and philosophy? What is their story?
- Check their social media channels. Are they real people committed to what they do? How do they respond to complaints and negative feedback on social media? Negative reviews on blogs?
- How do they treat their employees? What do their offices look like? Do they organize company retreats? Companies who genuinely care about their employees care about their clients too.
- Is their website clear and easy to follow, or frustrating, confusing and misleading? Do you get the feeling they are open and transparent, or trying to trick you?
- Who writes their blog and what do they write about? Is it mainly guest writers creating link bait, or company staff openly sharing how they run the business?
- Are they environmentally responsible? Data centers use a lot of electricity. Do they use renewable energy? How do they offset their carbon footprint?
- How stable is the company? Are they a large corporation running a network of hosting companies, an unsustainably small company that is hoping to be bought out, or a growing company with a solid business plan, committed to being around for the long haul?

- Hosting providers profit from open source software. Do they contribute back to the community? Do they donate cash or programming time back into open source projects? Do they organize or sponsor events like WordCamp?

## 6. Pricing

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Saving a few bucks a month should not be your priority when choosing a web hosting company. By all means shop around, but look for the best value for money, not the cheapest price. And do your homework so you're not fooled by unclear or misleading advertising.

Providing fast, reliable, secure hosting costs money. Paying a reasonable price is an investment in your own website by strengthening the company who is hosting it. Paying for a premium product can even feel good!

Work through this **Pricing Checklist** when evaluating a hosting provider:

- Don't be fooled by the lead price, and check what it provides. Many companies will try to grab your attention with their cheapest price, while the hosting plan is extremely limiting even for the most basic needs.
- Some companies advertise a low price for sign up, but charge a higher price at renewal. Check the ongoing costs—you'll be paying them for years.
- Check the subscription periods. How much in advance do you need to pay to get a good price? Many companies offer their lead price for the longest billing cycle (say 3 years), while monthly and yearly subscriptions cost more.
- Does the company offer a trial period? What is their refund policy.

## Your Choice

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This article is a bit like a dating service. We're trying to hook you up with a suitable partner who's compatible with your needs in the long term. Take your time when working through the checklists. Identify the criteria that are most important to you, then carefully research your shortlist of hosting companies to come to a decision.

I manage several personal websites, and I've been through the process of choosing a hosting provider several times over the years. I decided to give SiteGround a try

after learning of the [SiteGround-SitePoint partnership](#). I'm happy to report that they check a good number of items on the lists above, and I'm currently moving a couple of projects over to them. Stay tuned for an article about my migration experience soon.

Which criteria are most important to you when choosing a web hosting company? Let us know in the comments, along with anything we may have missed. Happy hunting!

# Chapter 5

## Cloud Hosting: the Pros and Cons

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by Craig Buckler

We've recently discussed two types of hosting service:

- **Dedicated Servers** You own/rent one or more servers at your host's data center for your sole use.
- **Shared Servers** You rent space and processing capacity on a server which may also be used by many other companies and websites.

In general, a dedicated server is normally more flexible and you can configure it as you wish. A shared server may offer fewer options but is easier to manage and normally costs less.

Cloud hosting can be a good compromise between the two and brings other benefits. Let's discuss the terminology and concepts before we go any further.

## What is the Cloud?

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The "cloud" and "cloud computing" are marketing buzzwords for the web. That's it. Rather than buying software and storing data on your PC's hard disk, you use an online application. That typically runs and stores data on a web server while displaying the interface within a web browser. In other words, you're accessing software on-demand and sharing computing resources with others.

A web application can be hosted on a shared or dedicated server but scaling may become difficult. Perhaps the application works well with fifty concurrent users, but how does it cope with 1,000? How quickly could you migrate to a better service or server? What if user demand returned to normal levels after a few hours?

## What is Cloud Hosting?

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Cloud hosting allows resources to be rapidly provisioned on demand. You can quickly add further processors, RAM or disk capacity and hosts such as [SiteGround](#) can automatically scale according to peaks in traffic.

Auto-scaling is a great option for short-term campaigns when you know you'll have huge traffic while a particular event takes place. In these situations, additional resources will be automatically added when the traffic kicks in, so you won't have to worry about it.

Technologies differ but most cloud hosts depend on virtual machines.

## What is a Virtual Machine?

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You have probably encountered emulators which recreate one computing device on another. For example, the [Internet Archive](#) allows you to [play old arcade games](#), run [Windows 3.1](#) or an [Apple Macintosh](#) from your browser.



It's important to understand these are the original systems obtained from old disks and ROM chips -- they are *not* faithful recreations. The hardware is being emulated. The legacy software may be saying "put this image on screen" -- in the examples above, that instruction is intercepted by JavaScript, translated to HTML5 canvas code, and an appropriate response is returned. The software thinks it's running on a compatible device.

A Virtual Machine (VM) is a similar concept. Software such as VWware, VirtualBox and Hyper-V emulate a PC on a PC using software-driven recreations of standard hardware. You can therefore run any guest operating system "within" any other operating system.

Cloud hosts can therefore provide a virtual machine which is functionally identical to a dedicated server. However, they are simply data files emulating a real server so there are several practical implications:

1. A virtual server can be created, installed and configured within seconds.
2. The virtual server is just data. It can easily be cloned, backed-up, rolled-back, or moved elsewhere.
3. Development and deployment is simplified. Developers, staging and production environments can use identical images. It's easy to test and undo alternative configurations.
4. A web application can run within it's own virtual OS image. A second application can use another virtual machine; there is no risk of clashing or difficulties with differing technology stacks.
5. Processing, RAM and storage are no longer tied to a real device. The VM can be deployed to a server farm which can automatically allocate resources as required.
6. The risk of failure is greatly reduced because the OS is not running on real hardware.

## Do All Cloud Hosts Work in the Same Way?

No. Most cloud hosts use some sort of Virtual Machine architecture but services can differ. For example:

- **Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS)** Perhaps the closest to dedicated hosting, IaaS provides virtualization facilities but you choose your OS, install your software stack and keep it updated.
- **Platform as a Service (PaaS)** Perhaps the closest to shared hosting, PaaS provides a specific platform for running particular types of application.
- **Software as a Service (SaaS)** Typically on-demand software. For example, you could use a third-party service to store data rather than maintain your own MySQL installation.
- **Serverless or Functions as a Service (FaaS)** An abstracted application environment which manages logic and state. You write functions or micro-services which use that architecture without having to worry about the underlying software.

Not all services fit neatly into one of these categories!

## Cloud Hosting Pros and Cons

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My previous articles examined ease of use, flexibility, capabilities, safety and security when comparing dedicated servers with shared servers. These are less relevant to cloud hosting because the service will determine those factors. For example, cloud hosting can be as difficult as an unmanaged dedicated server or easier as the simplest shared server solution. It's up to you.

This leaves us with three other metrics...

### Performance

A cloud host can automatically allocate resources as traffic increases although it will depend on your host and service plan. Some may apply specific limits although it is usually possible to upgrade the number of CPUs, RAM and disk space. Hosts such as SiteGround can apply new limits without a reboot.

### Reliability

Dedicated and shared servers fail. Hosts take precautions to minimize risk but an overheating CPU or disk corruption can bring the system down. Cloud services have less dependency on real hardware. Processing can be shared across multiple servers; failures still occur but your website or application remains active.

## Cost

Cloud hosting is often compared to a utility such as gas, electricity or water: you pay for what you use. The reality is usually more complex and pricing incurs a mixture of fixed and variable-rate charges. Your monthly payment could differ considerably from month to month.

## Who Should Choose Cloud Hosting?

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Long term, I suspect cloud hosting will replace both shared and dedicated server plans. Everyone will use a cloud service whether they're aware of it or not.

That said, the cloud hosting industry is in its infancy. The variety of services is growing exponentially and the market changes on a daily basis. Choosing the right plan for your business can be difficult when services are not directly comparable and costs are unknown until you start hosting.

Some hosts pitch cloud services mid-way between shared and dedicated hosting plans. Perhaps that's the best option at the current time. Consider a cloud service as you move beyond the limits of shared hosting.

# Chapter 6

## 6 Tips for Managing Your Site with cPanel

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by Jeff Smith

If you use shared hosting for your website, chances are good that you are managing your site with cPanel. The cPanel software is the prevalent administration panel for a significant number of hosting companies out there, but many people who use it don't stop to check out the features that it offers. With cPanel, depending on what your host offers and what your hosting package includes, you can manage domains that are attached to your account, email accounts, files and databases, and many other administrative tasks, all made easier with a single interface.

In this article, we'll walk through six tips for managing your site with cPanel, that you may or may not have seen in your own hosting adventures. Experienced

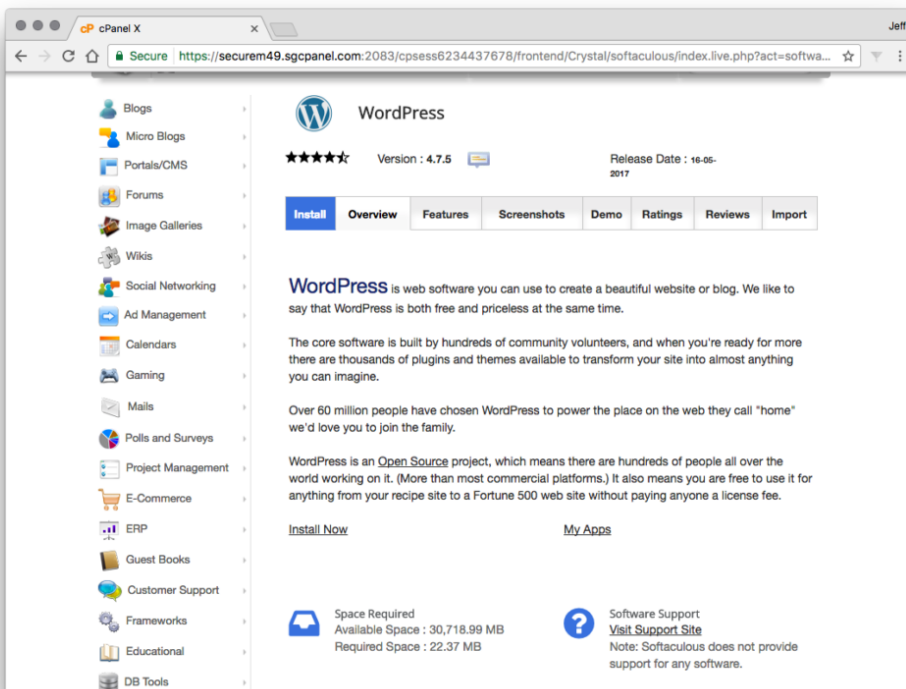
users may already know about these items, but newer users, especially those who haven't taken the time to really look through their cPanel interfaces, may not have seen these options. In fact, sometimes even experienced users can get bogged down in routine and forget some of the options available to them, so it's worth a look!



### Not All cPanels Are the Same

The first two items are not default features of cPanel, but rather available "cPanel Apps", meaning that some hosts may have them, some may not, and some may have more than one similar app available. They're still mentioned here because of how common they are, and how incredibly useful.

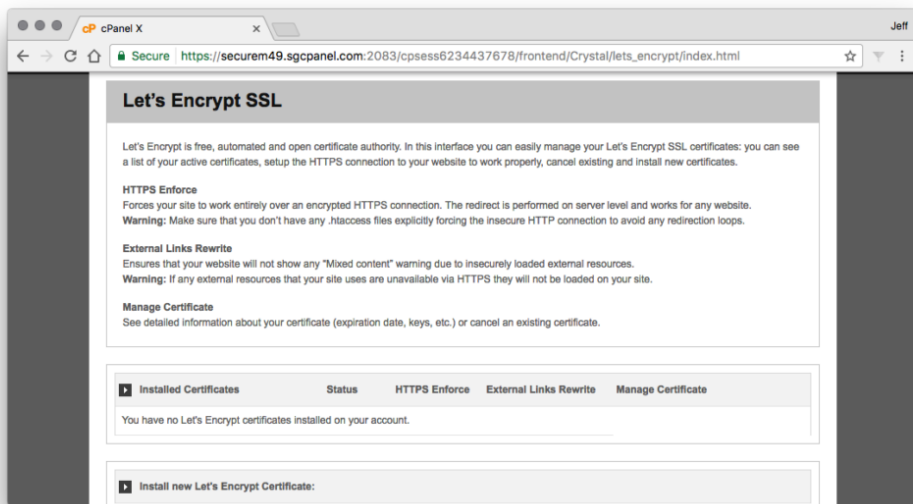
## Autoinstallers



Autoinstallers (such as Softaculous Auto Installer) are exactly what the name says. They provide a way to perform quick and painless installations of platforms

that you may need in order to build a new website, such as WordPress, Joomla, Drupal, PrestaShop, forums platforms, and a variety of other content management systems, frameworks, and scripts. With a click or two you can have the platform you need installed on your new hosting and ready to go, rather than manually setting up databases, uploading files via FTP, and running through setup processes, troubleshooting issues as you go. It's a great feature that is sometimes overlooked, and saving time is something that even veteran site administrators can get behind!

## SSL Certificates



Another app that you may find in your cPanel is one that provides you with the ability to install an SSL certificate for your website, such as the [LetsEncrypt cPanel app](#). If you're not very familiar with SSL certificates, and the growing need for [every site to use HTTPS](#), you should take the time to learn about it.

Many hosts, including SitePoint's partner, [SiteGround](#), provide these certificates free, via the cPanel, for all, or at least some payment tiers, of their customers. With SiteGround, the installation and renewal of these certificates is automated for all domains. And if you're using a CMS such as WordPress, [here are some tips for getting set up with an SSL certificate](#).

Securing your site with HTTPS will make it easy for all visitors to see that security is important to you, as any modern browser will indicate with a green lock when a site is HTTPS and secure. The growing pressure from Google and others to force *all* sites to become HTTPS only makes it more urgent, and that much greater of a feature that you can set one up right from your cPanel.

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## Custom Error Pages

When a visitor of your website attempts to navigate to a page that isn't there, they'll get a stock 404 error, unless you create a custom error page. This can of course be done within your application, but if you don't want to take the time, or don't have the knowledge, this is an invaluable cPanel feature. You can quickly and easily customize your own error pages so that your visitors will land on a page that has some type of valuable information on it instead.

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## Error Logs

Your web server's logs can be hard to get at in some shared environments. Luckily, you can access Apache error logs straight from cPanel. This will allow you to see in some cases what the problem is with a broken website. If you're a website administrator, but not the developer who works on it, it will also give you valuable information to relay to that developer, if needed.

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## Backups

Another great cPanel feature is the ability to create backups from the panel. You can do backups of all of your data, in one big file, or you can choose your home directory (all of your files) your MySQL databases (if your website uses a database), or your email forwarders and filters (if you use email from your hosting company). You can download any of those things to your web server account's home directory, or to a remote FTP server if you desire. Of course, if you back it up to your hosting server, you can also use FTP later to download those backup files if desired.

Restoration is a similar process, just selecting which item of the three available to backup that you intend to restore, and following the prompts. A good backup system is never a bad thing, and if you're using a CMS like WordPress, there are lots of available backup plugins, but taking manual backups is sometimes needed, or is even your only option, so it's good that this functionality is here at the push of a button from your cPanel.

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## Cron Jobs

Cron jobs can be created from the panel as well. Cron jobs are something that novice users may not be too familiar with, but that many developers may really be missing if they're used to using their own servers and then have to work with a shared hosting service without command line access.

Cron jobs are a way to schedule tasks on a server. You can pick a day, date, time, and frequency for an action to occur, usually the running of a script or other task. If this feature interests you, you probably already know all about the uses of cron jobs, but in case you don't, here's a comprehensive guide to cron jobs that might provide more insight.

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## Exploring cPanel

In the end, the best thing for you to do, once you've purchased hosting, is to simply explore your cPanel. There are literally hundreds of cPanel apps which your host might have chosen to install and enable in their cPanels, so there are many other features waiting to be discovered and used. Both native features of cPanel as well as add-on items are often not well explained or marketed, and people rarely visit the cPanel for their website, other than perhaps to set up a new FTP user or email account. Remember that there's much more there to find and use!



# Chapter 7

## What It Means to Copyright a Website

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by Alyssa Gregory

The vast majority of websites have a copyright notice in the footer. Most designers do this as routine on all websites they design. But what exactly does it mean and what protection does it provide? This is vital information for web professionals to know. Here are answers to some common questions related to copyrights.



### Important Legal Note

Please note: This information is based on copyright laws in the U.S. as provided on [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov). It is provided as general information and is not a substitute for professional legal advice.

## What Is a Copyright?

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According to the U.S. Copyright Office, “Copyright is a form of protection provided to the authors of ‘original works of authorship,’ including literary, dramatic, musical, artistic, and certain other intellectual works.”

The basis of the U.S. law is the Copyright Act of 1976, which gives authors of original works exclusive rights to the works and the option to grant usage rights to others. Generally, the rights include:

- Reproduction
- Development of derivative works
- Distribution
- Public display

## How Can I Copyright a Website?

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Original work is copyrighted from the moment of creation, provided it’s fixed in tangible form. What does “fixed in tangible form” mean? This means that the work has to be documented or communicated in an observable way, either directly or through a machine or device. Some examples of fixed in tangible form include written on paper, saved on a hard drive, or captured on a recording device. Ideas, systems and methods cannot be copyrighted.

A website -- graphics, content, visual elements -- is copyrighted at the time of development. So putting the copyright notice on the bottom of a site states that the material displayed is not to be used without permission of the owner. In fact, you don’t even need the notice to claim copyright; the law eliminated the requirement of public notice in 1989.

To take this one step further, copyright registration is an option when protecting online works. Registering a copyright provides a public record of ownership, plus registration is necessary before filing an infringement suit in court, should you ever need to do so. You can register online or by mail, by providing an application, a non-refundable fee (which is currently \$35 for online registration),

and a non-returnable deposit. The deposit is the entire work to be copyrighted (i.e. the website), which can be uploaded or sent in via CD.

This is important to note: the registered copyright only extends to the works included in the deposit. If you update the website after filing the copyright, you will need to register again for the new material. There are two cases (databases and serials/newsletters) where, if you meet the requirements, you can register in three-month chunks, with the copyright covering three months at a time. See [Circular 62b](#) for more information serials and newsletters, and Circular 65 for more information on databases.



### Circular 65 Being Revised

At the time of writing this, Circular 65 was being revised and was unavailable.

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## Who Owns Copyrighted Material?

Generally, the creator owns the rights to the work, except in the case of a “work for hire” arrangement, such as an employer/employee relationship. If you’re a freelancer or business owner hired to create a specific work, you are considered the creator and retain all rights, unless you have a “work for hire” agreement with the client that grants them ownership of the work. These details should be negotiated and outlined in your contract for every job so there is no question about ownership.

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## Does a Copyright Extend Internationally?

There is not a world-wide copyright, but many countries adhere to international copyright treaties and conventions for foreign works. Review [Circular 38a](#) for a list of countries and their copyright laws.

For more information on copyrights, how to register and current fees, visit [www.copyright.gov](http://www.copyright.gov).

# Chapter 8

## How to Create a Portfolio Site That Will Get You Hired

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by Jacco Blankenspoor

Being a developer, designer or writer is a great way of making a living. But what if you need to attract a new job or clients? In today's market competition is fierce, which means you need to stand out.

Having a professional LinkedIn profile is surely a good start, but if you really want people's attention you need to market yourself with a portfolio site. This is basically your personal LinkedIn page, only with much more room to display your skills.

Developers, designers and writers each have different skills and work to display, but they all have one thing in common: they need to sell themselves to potential clients.

In this article, I'll show you some useful tips for making a portfolio site, along with some great live examples.

### Why a Portfolio Site?

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Having a professional LinkedIn profile is one thing, but you can really show your skills using your own portfolio site. Why? Freedom! You can do anything you want with it, and really make a lasting impression. You can even win awards with it.

What you want is potential clients visiting your site and instantly thinking, "I want that too!" It's your virtual showroom, which prospective clients can even show others when they need to convince someone else.

Even the most professional LinkedIn profile looks like every other profile on the service, but your site is your way of saying, "This is me, and this is what I can do for you."

Need more convincing? Well, this is the LinkedIn profile of the guy with the most awesome portfolio site I've even seen.

### It's All About Selling Yourself

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It's sounds like a cliché, but you are your own best salesman. This means you have to sell yourself without losing your own identity.

As you'll see in the examples below, there are many ways to display yourself. You can choose to become a cartoon, use tons of photographs, display your technical prowess, or impress with your writing.

## Tailor your site to your personality

What's important is that you feel comfortable on your own site. If you're a bit shy, make a cartoon of yourself so you don't have to use your picture online. Make your site wild and extravagant if that's what describes you best. Make your site your online equivalent. Give it character while still keeping a professional touch when it comes to wording.

## Keep it relevant

Make sure your portfolio includes relevant work. Only list team efforts if you made a significant contribution that can be identified as your work. Never take credit for other people's work. Specify what you did, and how it benefited the whole process. If possible, make a screenshot to show your part.

## Trim the fat

It's okay if you sculpt your portfolio a bit by showing only the work you like. We all need to make a living, sometimes taking on work we'd rather avoid to earn a few bucks. Use your portfolio to target the type of work you **do** prefer to do.

## Add context

Give prospective clients an idea how it is to work with you. When working on-site, include testimonials from previous customers or co-workers. When doing off-site only, let people know what they can expect when it comes to communication, managing deadlines or your work hours.

## Make a good impression

See your portfolio site as the equivalent of sending in a job application, convincing prospects why they should hire you. Try to make the best first impression you can, with the added benefit of prospects coming back to your site for fun when it's really slick.

Oh, and don't use the word "we" when you're just on your own ...

## What to Include?

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There are a few basic things every portfolio site must have:

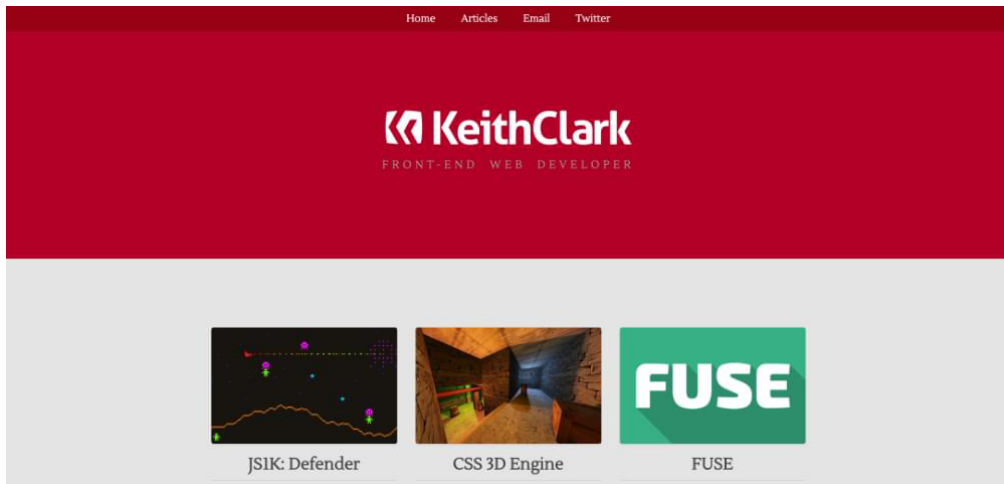
- your name and picture
- a little bit about who you are
- your contact details
- recent work
- your skills

Sounds easy, right? Let's have a look at some examples and see how a little (or in some cases a very large) bit of creativity can make this list come alive.

## Developer Portfolio Examples

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### Keith Clark



This is the website of Keith Clark, who is some kind of CSS master. This is an example of his work using HTML and CSS3. Now that's something to use for "Recent Work".

## Jean Helfenstein



Meet Jean Helfenstein, a highly creative and expert front-end developer, as this portfolio site demonstrates.

## Timothée Roussilhe



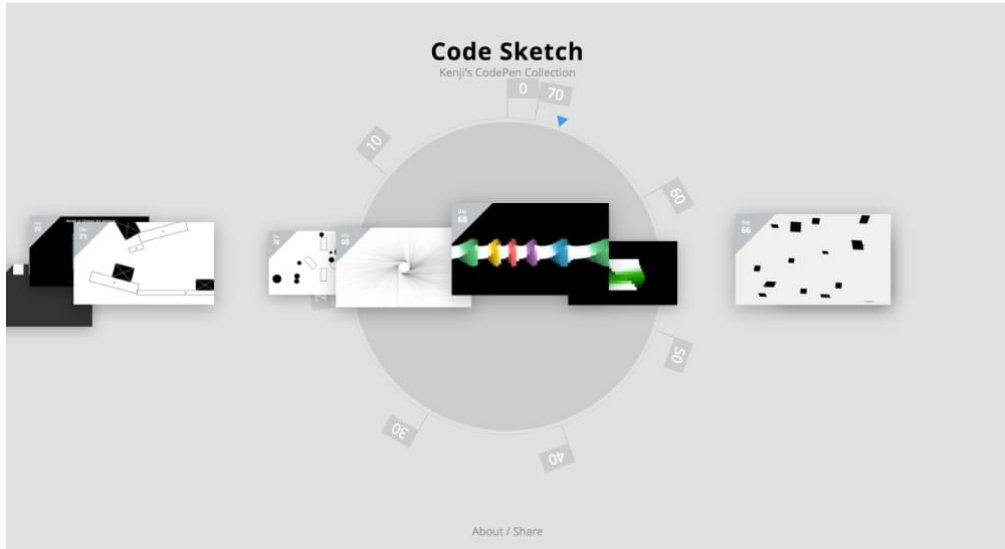
This award-winning portfolio shows off Tim's development skills while also presenting a fun interface with lots of personality and humor. (There's a "Do not



## 50 Get Your Website Up and Running

press this!” link on the home page, and see what happens when you try to highlight Tim’s name with your cursor!)

### Kenji Saito



This creative portfolio site by Tokyo-based Kenji Saito creatively displays examples of his amazing work on CodePen.

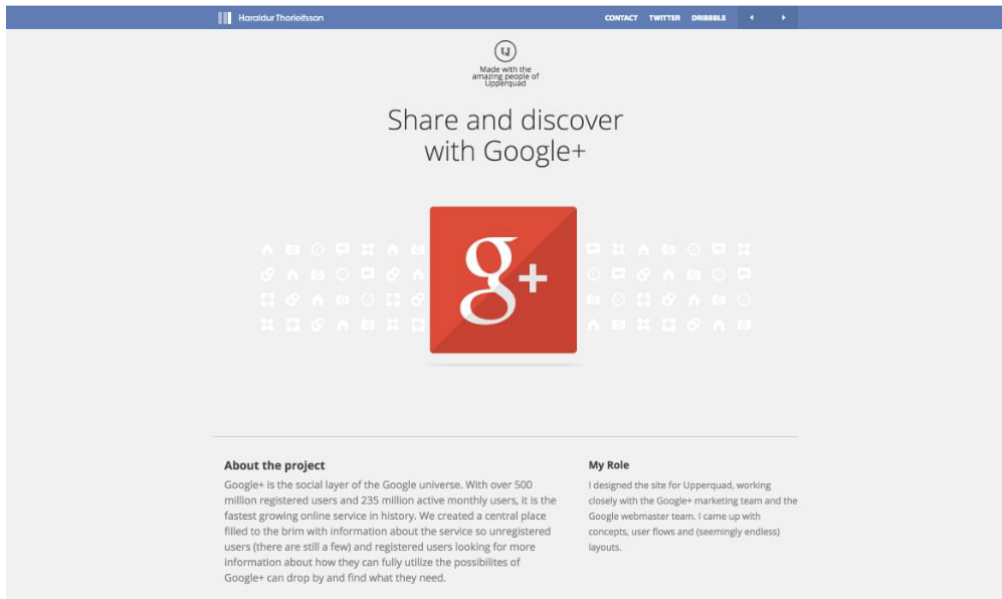
## Designer Portfolio Examples

## Robby Leonardi



I already mentioned Robby's site above, because this is truly the greatest portfolio site I've ever seen. The Design section is a beauty, but his interactive resume is simply a work of art. Robby is an expert in both design and coding, leaving no one questioning his skills with his site.

## Heraldur Thorliefsson



Haraldur works for a design agency working closely with Google. While his home page might seem not that impressive, his project descriptions certainly are. This is where he displays the project details, and more importantly his role in the project.

## Adham Dannaway



Adham is both a designer and coder, and found a perfect way of showcasing his work right on the home page. He also found a great way of using one of his interests (Jedis) for grading his skills. He made a very nice recent work overview as well.

## Writer Portfolio Examples

### Kristi Hines

#### Kristi Hines – Freelance Writer, Ghostwriter, and Content Marketer



My name is Kristi Hines and I am a freelance writer, ghostwriter, and copywriter with over five years of experience in developing web copy,

ebooks, whitepapers, in-depth guides, and blog content.

My work has been featured on [Content Marketing](#)

[Institute](#), [CrazyEgg](#), [HubSpot](#), [KISSmetrics](#),

[Moz](#), [Salesforce](#), [Search Engine Journal](#), and [Social Media](#)

[Examiner](#).

Hire me to develop high-quality content for your business. I work with businesses looking to create content about the following topics.

- |                           |                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| • ANALYTICS               | • LOCAL SEARCH MARKETING |
| • BLOGGING                | • MARKETING TOOLS        |
| • BUSINESS TOOLS          | • MOBILE OPTIMIZATION    |
| • CONTENT MARKETING       | • OUTSOURCING            |
| • CONVERSION OPTIMIZATION | • PHOTOGRAPHY            |
| • CUSTOMER SERVICE        | • PSYCHOLOGY             |
| • ECOMMERCE               | • REPUTATION MANAGEMENT  |
| • EDUCATION               | • SEARCH MARKETING       |
| • EMAIL MARKETING         | • SOCIAL MEDIA           |
| • LINK BUILDING           | • WORDPRESS              |

If you know the value of quality content from an experienced online marketing professional, please contact me via email at [info@kristihines.com](mailto:info@kristihines.com) or using the form below to find out how I can help your business.

Name: \*

Email Address: \*

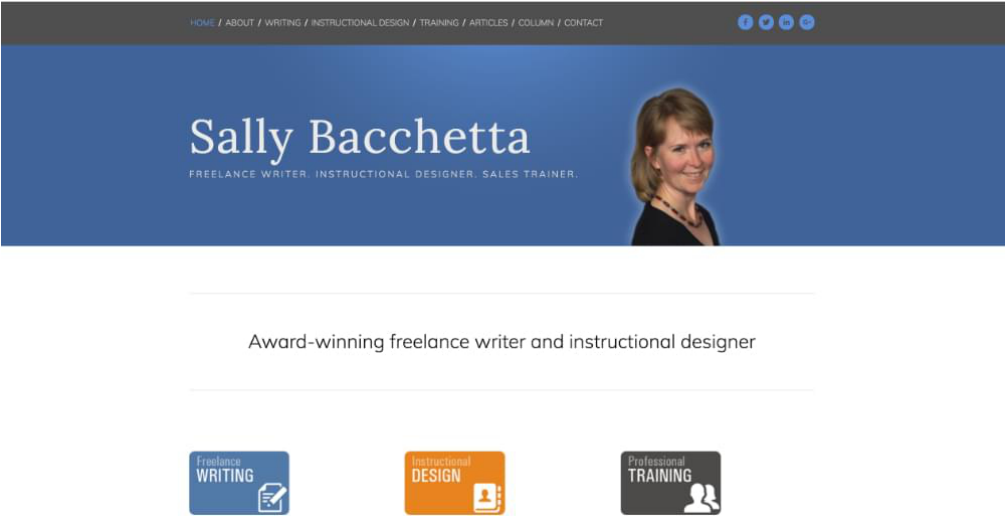
Subject: \*

Message: \*

SUBMIT

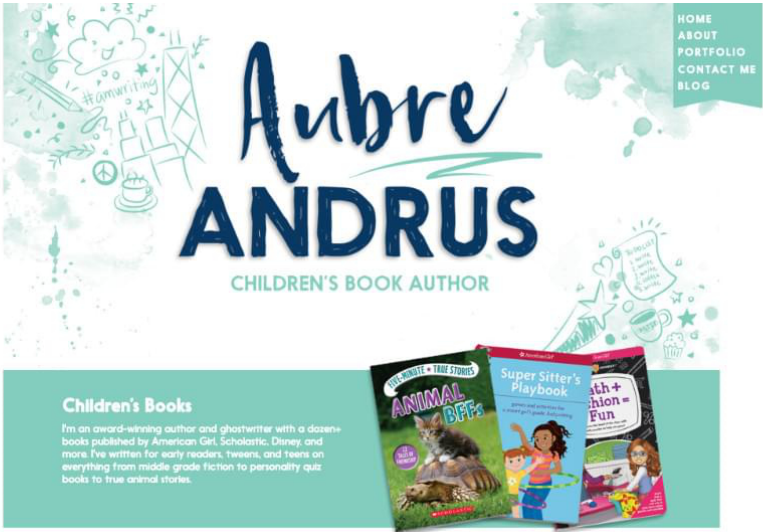
While Kristi may not have as flashy a site as the guys above, it's a perfect site for the writer she is. She shows exactly what you can hire her for, and her site gives you the feeling she is a trustworthy writer who knows how to deliver quality work.

Sally Bacchetta



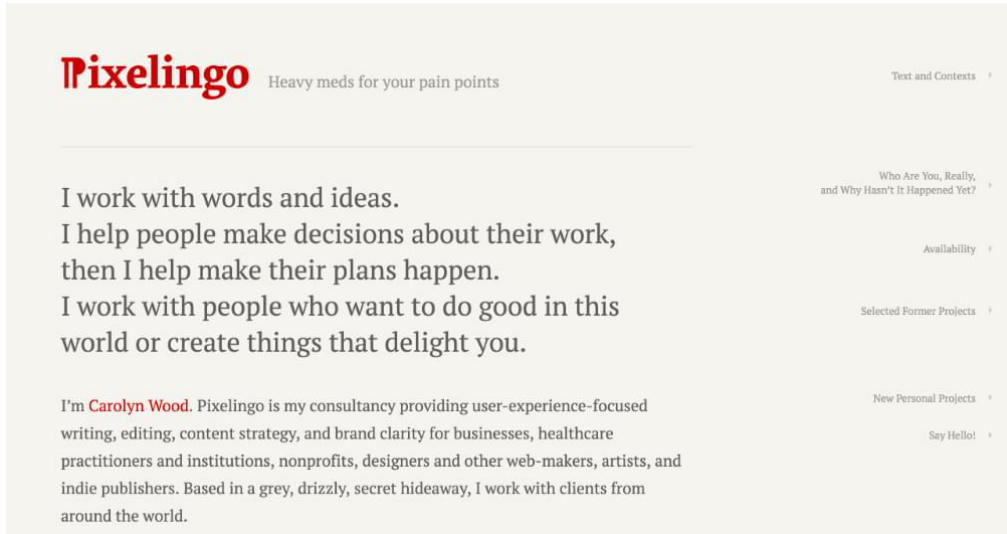
It’s great to see how writers say it with words, because that’s exactly what you hire them for. Instead of throwing around pictures, Sally makes sure everything she does is properly described. And she uses two little magic words which gives you an instant sense of quality: award-winning.

Aubre Andrus



Aubre is a versatile writer whose site has plenty of character. She makes it clear what she likes to write about, with active social media accounts to support her statements.

## Carolyn Wood



Carolyn Wood's Pixelingo writing and editing portfolio is mostly text-based, which makes sense if you're trying to sell writing and editing skills. Her site provides a clear, concise and direct explanation of what she offers and why prospective clients might want to work with her. The site also conveys a strong sense of personality and individuality.

## Conclusion

Different types of skills allow for different ways of showcasing your work, that's for sure. I hope I've inspired you with these examples to make the most out of your own portfolio site. The sky really is the limit (yes, let's throw in another cliché). The competition is fierce, but a portfolio site is a great project to work on in your spare time. Just make sure to create a wow! factor (last cliché, I promise) and you're golden.

