

## 7 essentials of moving to a new web host

When a site has outgrown its web host on all counts or when a web host does not keep its promises, moving web hosts becomes imperative. If a web host fails to provide much needed expansion requirements or technical support you need to upgrade to one that can meet your growth needs.

The first step is to ensure that you have all legal documents and contracts with you. Then make sure you have accurate and updated copies of all content, databases, scripts, and clientele lists. A back up needs to be done as a matter of routine not just when you need to move. Trouble can rear its head in the form of hardware failure or unexplained data losses.

Research the market thoroughly before deciding on a new hosting service. List your requirements and look for a host that can exceed your needs. It is not just bandwidth that you need to look at. Consider technical support, upgrading options, as well as whether the host is keeping up with new developments in the field.

It is important to run from the two web hosts simultaneously for a period until all debugging is carried out and problems are solved. Activate your new solution and upload all your pages, databases, and scripts. Use the new IP address provided by the new company and test the site.

Once things function satisfactorily you must transfer the DNS servers from your previous host to the new one. The transition may take around two weeks so it is essential to keep both sites functional during that transition period. Check mails from both sites until such time you don't receive any communications to the old site. Once you are sure, discontinue your old hosting service.

Be sure to:

- Select a new service that is similar to your old one as far as technology is concerned. And that you are using the latest design software and that the host has the latest server versions. This will maximize site efficacy.
- Check carefully the hosting service agreement pertaining to the new host.
- Choose a dedicated environment that will offer more capacity for dealing with online customers and provide adequate bandwidth allowances.
- Check out the benefits of an annual plan against a monthly one.
- Find out if your new web hosts are reliable, honest, and competent. The people running the web hosting service must comprehend the technology thoroughly and keep abreast of new developments.
- Check forums to see if the new host you have selected has good reviews and whether there are any valid complaints.
- The host must ensure that your site is up and running 24/7 for 365 days. The pages must load instantly; to this end the web host must have state of the art computer systems. CGI routines, autoresponders, PHP, ASP, SSI scripts, credit card gateways, and so on. All systems must function smoothly.

Be a wise and informed mover.

### About the Author

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