

Underestimating the Value of Free or Low Cost Web Hosting Services and Tools

A variety of free or low cost web hosting services and tools is provided by most web hosting companies. However, in their search for the best web hosting package, many webmasters do a good job of comparing the basic offerings but fail to examine the wide range of additional free or very cheap services and tools offered by their prospective web host.

Overlooked and undervalued

Most web hosts don't tout these freebies as prominently in their sales copy as they do the basics such as storage space, bandwidth, and tech support. This is simply because they know that most potential customers are only comparison-shopping on the basics.

However, low cost web hosting services and/or free web tools can mean the difference between a robust, customer-friendly web site that supports your expanding business and one that is stuck in low gear just as the traffic begins to increase.

What will you need later?

There is a wide array of these free or nearly-free web hosting services to choose from but first you must know, or at least be reasonably able to predict, the ones you are likely to need when your business grows.

Depending on the nature of your online business you may need some or all of the following:

- Custom web site design
- Search engine optimization services
- Inward and outbound link tracking
- Visitor counts
- Free e-mail
- e-mail forwarding
- Spam filters
- Free web templates
- Free HTML software
- Free website builders
- Auto-responders
- RSS feeds
- Live chat
- Shopping carts

These are just some of the many free or low cost web hosting services and tools you should evaluate before committing to any hosting package.

The bottom line

Stretch your dollars by choosing the low cost web hosting plan that provides as many of these value-packed extras as possible so you don't wind up having to pay full price for them later when your business finally needs them.

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Source: <http://www.articletrader.com>