

Assignment 7 Discussion - Web Hosting

Conduct a search on the web for free or inexpensive web page hosting services. Visit at least three sites. Post the URL and your evaluation of the effectiveness of these sites based on the following criteria: ease of use, cost, technical support, and options. Post your evaluation as to whether or not the sites would suit your purpose in your educational/organizational setting. If you've experimented with any of these sites, post your sample page, as well.

From my research, I learned there are four types of web hosts (e.g. shared, collocated, unmanaged-dedicated, and managed-dedicated hosting) that could best serve my needs and budget when creating a website. From experience, I deduced most educators choose shared hosting services (server is shared with other clients) since it is the most economical option and ideal for low traffic sites. However, shared hosting limits the installation of special software programs and heavy traffic of many sites in the server may affect the performance of other sites. Price should not be the only factor when selecting a web host since you probably would get what you paid for: second-rate performance, reliability, and support. Another consideration is to verify the host is not blacklisted for hosting spammers, which means your e-mails could be refused from other networks.

I will compare similar web hosting services that I have used for the last nine years with Geocities (<http://geocities.yahoo.com>). I have two websites with Geocities: (<http://www.geocities.com/kaferico> and <http://www.geocities.com/kferico>). Initially, I used the Geocities Free package, which includes 15 MB of disk space, 3 GB of data transfer, and annoying ads (to cover the hosting costs). The page builder and page wizard are user friendly to create a website since you select from different templates to design the web pages. Many useful add-ons are available to enhance the site. My favorite add-on is Yahoo Presence which alerts any visitor that I am online. The technical support is web based, where you get instructions to get started and frequently asked questions.

Once I learned about HTML editors and Microsoft Word can save in HTML format, I stopped using Geocities' web design tools and I started uploading my web pages to geocities' server. The Free package does not offer FTP, but it has an option to upload files to the server. When my site became sophisticated, I upgraded to Geocities Plus (\$4.95 service fee with a \$10 1-time set up fee). This package offers you more disk space (500 MB), data transfer (25 GB), FTP, remote loading, free ads site, and Priority email tech support. Both Geocities' packages offer blogging tools.

Tripod hosting services (<http://www.tripod.lycos.com/>) offer similar services and tools for the same price as Geocities. However, Tripod's Free/Plus packages offer more disk space (20 MB and 1GB), a Photo Album builder tool, and more add-ons to enhance the site (interactive calendar and polls were my favorites). The Free package has less data transfer (1 GB) and the Plus package offers more (100 GB) than Geocities similar packages. FTP is available for both packages and live tech support for the Plus package.

I must warn Tripod Free package shows more ads than Geocities Free package, which I consider inappropriate for educational sites.

I found about Microsoft Live Basics (<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/officelive/FX101465131033.aspx>) in an article of the NCU Library. This service is free and offers free domain name, user-friendly website design tools, 500 MB of disk space, 10 GB of data transfer, 25 company-branded e-mail accounts with 5 GB each, and online/e-mail tech support. What makes this hosting service attractive is the free domain name option, which I consider is essential to create a serious and legitimate web identity. For such reason, I have started using this hosting service for the final assignment of LTM5000 (<http://www.theEdDjourney.com>).

The only drawback of this free hosting service is that you cannot upload an existing site, but the other available options surpass this inconvenience.

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