Cory Computer Systems

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"Web Design With the Small Business In Mind"

I help people with their business; I do it in several ways:
- Setup and maintain a web site
  - Take over a current site, redoing it in a consistent manner
  - Maintain a current site, updating as required
  - Create a new site, using a corporate template/design
  - Create a new site from scratch
- Create a new site and turn over to a customer
- Create a new site and allow the customer maintain it
- Create a new site and allow the customer to make changes and additions
- Procure a hosing company
- Procure a Domain Name

When considering a web site, ask yourself*: "Do I want to do web sites or run my business?"* This is not as simple a question as it sounds. There are many trade-offs to consider; time, cost, etc. This is something that we can discuss over lunch.

I have been in the computer business since 1968. During this time I have worked as a Research Physicist, System Administrator, Configuration Manager, Network Administrator, and Consultant. In the last 6 years, I have created over 60 web sites. These very from small one-page sites to large corporate sites with hundreds of pages. Links to many of these may be found at CoryComputerSystems.com.

One of my large customers, Marin General Hospital, requires constant maintenance. With this one customer, I support their three Internet sites and their Intranet site. This may take as much time as three days a week.

Other Ways:
I help customers by analyzing their needs. By this I mean, I look at their requirements, determine their goals, then find a cost effective way to get there. In other words, I ask embarrassing questions.

I don't have all the answers, but I do have a lot of questions, for example:
- I don't know your business, tell me about it.
- Where to you want to go from here?
- Why do you think you need a web site?
- What do you want a web site to accomplish?
- What is your competition doing?

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- Is it working?
- Is there a better way?

These are the types of things that I ask. Using your answers, I can come up with a plan that you can afford to meet your needs. This might very well mean that I tell you that a web site will not help you.

Costs:

The first question I always get is: *"What is it going to cost?"*
There are two types of costs:

1. Fixed Costs
2. Variable Costs

Fixed Costs:

Domain Name: (yourcompany.com) $20-$35 per year. This depends on the number of years you pay in advance, the registration company, service charges, etc.

Hosting Company: (myisp.net.) A hosting company is one that supplies a web server, backup, technical support, email servers, ftp servers, etc. The size and number of connections to the Internet, the size of the web site, the amount of traffic, and the amount of disk space, all affects the cost. The cost varies from free to thousands per month. May large companies have their own with their own staff. For the rest of us, there are many companies that do this for a monthly fee. Typically, costs range from $25/month on the low end to $65/month for an e-commerce site, with shopping carts, etc. I have a reseller's agreement with one of the largest and can offer hosting for as low as $18.95/month.

Setup Fees: This is a one-time fee charged by a hosting company to get everything in place, typically, $40-$50. This includes setting up an empty web site on a server, setting your domain name to point to the empty site, setting up POP3 and SMTP email services to allow the creating of email accounts.

Per Transaction Fee: These are fees charged by merchant accounts, credit card companies, pay-check, pay-pall, etc. They vary from a few cents to a few % of the transaction.

Summary: Your fixed costs are about $250 per year, with an extra $50 the first year for setup.

Variable Costs:

There is only one variable cost; paying for the time it takes to do what you want.

These are the costs that can get out of hand. Everything you think of takes time, every change you make, takes time, every addition (scope creep) takes time.

As an estimate, you can figure on one to two hours per page, 10 hours for graphics, navigations, and color selection, i.e. the basic design. This varies by the complexity of the site. For a 10-page site, this will come to about $1000.

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