HOW A FREE WEBSITE CAN COST YOUR SMALL BUSINESS OVER $75,000 IN FIVE YEARS!

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YOUR SMALL BUSINESS WEBSITE

As a small business owner, saving money and cutting unnecessary costs is one of your biggest priorities. Many people are tempted to reduce their expenses by cutting down on items they don't consider vital – such as your company's website or their marketing efforts. It's important to remember, however, that your online presence is just as important as your real life one and a badly constructed website can hurt rather than help your business.

INTRO TO THE FREE WEBSITE

One seemingly good alternative is the so-called "free" website, such as those offered by GoDaddy, Weebly, Yola or Wix. They often entice users with offers which include unlimited storage or multiple email addresses along with free website builders. Many offer basic functionality and very few if any "perks", for free or a small amount of money, usually from $1.99 - $10.49 per month for the hosting fee. Out of this the only required cost is the ICANN fee of $0.18 per year, which every site must have. These site builders offer a free introductory period once you sign up, but most of them will require a monthly subscription fee at some point. The free website builders also provide you with the basic tools but limit your access to certain features forcing you to upgrade and pay for a premium account. The price of a premium account can cost up to $85 per month (with unlimited storage and bandwidth), and another $5 per month, if you decide to connect it to your own domain. While all of this may seem appealing at first glance, one has to realize that they will be constructing, developing and managing their own site. It comes down to how much of your time are you willing to spend and what your time is worth.

> ## "As with any other thing, you get what you pay for."

ADDITIONAL CUSTOMIZED FEATURES

Don't forget that the themes, offered by free website builders are actually not unique. The designs are pretty simple and may look appealing, but they rely heavily on Flash – which is not supported by iPhones and iPads. "Avada", the most purchased theme on Themeforest.net has been sold over 139,000 times! For a business that is looking to establish itself and stand out, this is not a particularly unique way to accomplish that goal.

Extras: Most of these providers are going to charge extra for additional "premium" services. Extra storage, unlimited visitors and additional security options are just a few of the premium services. Site backups and SSL certificates that allow secure connections from a web server to a browser are examples of extra services that a user will have to pay for. Often times there are hidden fees associated with hosting and managing email accounts as well.

SEO Features: None of the free or low cost site builders offer any sort of on site search engine optimization features. Your business will not stand out any more or less than your competitors. Citation listings, which validate your company NAP (Name, Address, Phone) to the major search engines, are left up to the site owner.

TOTAL COST OF OWNERSHIP ANALYSIS

The TCO is a time-tested model that will allow business owners to calculate the total cost of the ownership of a purchase or acquisition over a set amount of time. As with any purchase the actual retail price may vary from one vendor to the next, but for our purposes we are taking the average over a set amount of time (year) and coming up with a TCO number. We've taken the high and low numbers from some of the most popular website builders as a starting point for our "real" costs.

Web Hosting:
- Domain Registration $4.99 - $16.85 p/y $10.92 avg. p/y
- Hosting $1.99 - $10.49 p/m $6.24 avg. x12=$74.88 p/y
- Premium Theme Purchase $59.90 - $199.00 p/y $129.45 avg. p/y
- Upgraded Account $25.00 - $ 85.00 p/m $55.00 avg. p/m x12=$660 p/y
- Storage and Bandwidth This is usually unlimited and included.
- Email Sometimes these are included.
- Security A few offer some form of security software.
  Total hosting fees: **$875.25** avg. p/y

Website Development:
- Programming Time (2-120 Hours)
  61 x $105.00 p/hour = **$6405.00** one time fee

Website Maintenance:
- Personal Time (2-6 Hours p/w)
  4 x $25.00 p/hour = $100.00 p/w x52=**$5200.00** p/y

Search Engine Optimization (SEO):
- SEO Service
  $299.00 - $899.00 p/m $748.50 p/m x12=**$8982.00** p/y
- Citation Listing $275.00 - $499.00 p/y **$387.00** avg. p/y

First Year Total Expenses: **$21,849.25**

Every Year After The First Total Expenses: **$15,444.25**

First Five Years of Ownership: **$83,626.25**

J DRAKE GRAPHIC DESIGN

It is impossible to calculate exactly how much a "free" website will cost your small business, but one thing is absolutely sure: it will be far from "free". Depending on the page size of your specific website design the average price of our sites is usually between $999.00 and $5000.00 with a monthly maintenance fee of $99.00.

Custom Website Design And Development:

Custom website design allows for your own unique Wordpress website design. It will be based on your individual requirements and not a prefabricated template, so that you can stand out from your competitors, without paying an additional charge. Our basic package includes the first 15 initial webpages with unlimited revisions for each new project. With our support package you can also add up to 5 pages per month while most free websites will allow you only a couple of pages. A custom website provides that you will obtain full SEO optimization with Meta tags and title tags, so that your business page won't get lost beyond the first Google pages. We integrate your social media pages into your website. Any requested icons will be added to your website, as well as full image and video galleries, which can really make your website stand out amongst all other websites.

Custom Design With Unlimited Revisions:
Each project includes a custom WordPress website design based on your direction. In addition, we include unlimited revisions until we reach a concept that you absolutely love.

Built In WordPress:
Every site is built in the most recent version of WordPress utilizing the Genesis platform.

15 Initial Pages:
The first 15 initial web pages of each new project are included and with our support package an additional 5 pages can be added per month if the need arises.

Two Custom Web Forms:
We want to make it easy to convert visitors into customers so we provide two custom web forms to help with this process. Contact and sign-up forms are the most common forms that are utilized in most website designs.

Social Media Integration:
We understand the importance of social media. We can add any requested social media icons to connect your website to any social media accounts that you might have.

Videos & Images:
Videos and images are a huge part of any small business. We will help integrate image and video galleries to make your website truly shine.

Unlimited Hosting:
Each website package includes unlimited disc space and bandwidth.

Basic Website Support Package:

Our support package provides unlimited WordPress and hosting support for only $99 per month.

Technical Support:
Our Flat Fee Support Package also includes technical support for items dealing with the hosting of your website.

Website Service Maintenance Plan:
We provide daily backups and hacking recovery for your website if necessary. Any WordPress or plug-in updates are completed as necessary to ensure software compatibility. The flat fee monthly support avoids unwanted additional hourly fees for costly maintenance and tech support fees.

Google Analytics Tracking:
We also include Google Analytics tracking for your website. This is fully customizable so that you can track all metrics about your website and its' visitors.

SEO Optimized:
All of our custom websites are built with SEO (Search Engine Optimization) best practices and principles in mind. We will guide you in creating content that is written with your target audience in mind. The website will include content that is useful, informative, and helpful, and will be updated regularly and whenever possible. Using title tags and URL's correctly as well as having relevant content along with image alt text, keywords and backlinks will help the overall page ranking of your site.

Citation Listing:
To help your business appear on Google, Bing, Yahoo and other search engines we include citation listings from trusted search directories. We include **15** Local/Niche citations, which are city level local directories and directories specific to your industry such as newyorkbusinesslist.com, lawyerlocate.ca, mylocalhvac.com, etc.

Additional listings can be added for a fee: This part of our support service includes **250** generic citations listings which are typically national business directories such as insiderpages.com, local.com, kudzu.com, thomsonlocal.com, yellowpages.ca, etc. and yelp.com.

The Real Cost = Lost Sales:

In Conclusion:
What if this free website was indeed totally free? How would you expect it to be designed? Would you expect it to improve your brand image? Will it get listed on page one of Google? (probably not). Will it convert traffic to phone calls? (probably not).

If a free website doesn't show up on page one, and doesn't convert traffic to leads, then expect next to zero calls over the next five years.

If a well designed website costs $5k, or $10k, or even $100k, but it brings in $100,000 in additional revenue per year for the next five years, how much money do you think that free website will cost your business in lost opportunities?

"If you invest nothing, you get nothing."

At J Drake Graphic Design we are here to help you succeed by designing and developing custom websites that highlight your products and services to your customers. We do this by understanding your business objectives and marketing goals and designing your website with these goals in mind. We use proven design principles and the latest coding techniques to create websites that are aesthetically pleasing, easy to navigate and fully optimized. All of this is designed to give your website visitors the best experience possible and convert them into paying customers.

THANK YOU.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: JOHN DRAKE AT
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I would like to acknowledge and thank one of our trusted partners Third Marble Marketing.