How Much Should a Website Cost, Anyway?

It can be hard to get a solid price range for a web design project without going through the gamut of contacting lots of web design providers and asking for quotes. Most people will give you a short answer – “It depends,” and that’s true. Prices for websites vary quite a bit depending on what features you need, yet they still fall within a general range, and here it is (updated June 2015):

**Simple custom-designed websites (1-10 pages): $400-$10,000**

ex. Designing a site from scratch

**Complex sites (10+ pages or sites with lots of programming): $10,000-$25,000**

ex. A custom social media site or web application

Just for reference - your typical small business site generally costs between $2,000-$6,000.

**Can I get a custom site for less than $1,000?**

Yes, but you probably won’t like what you’re getting. Around the lowest price you’ll find for an entire custom website will be $400-$500, which will almost certainly come from overseas (very frequently from India and Pakistan). These websites are notoriously of very, very low quality, and likely will do little to help your business succeed. Online marketing in the U.S. is an incredibly difficult discipline, even when your first language is English – imagine how hard it can be with a language barrier! If you’re looking to actually make money online, you’ll need a higher quality site.

For a reasonably high-quality site from a U.S. firm, the minimum price is usually something like $4,000. With any eCommerce functionality, most firms charge at least $6k.

**What if my designer wants an hourly rate?**

International work: $5-$40

Freelance: $30-$90 (usually)

Professional: $45-$120

Pay-by-the-hour is not particularly uncommon with freelancers, but if you’re working on a big project – beware. Your cost can quickly get out of hand if your designer hits a roadblock (or simply decides to exaggerate the number of hours he/she worked). Attempt to avoid an hourly rate if you can. Nearly all projects can be quantified with a flat rate to some extent. If not, make sure you have a bona fide contract in place that limits the number of hours you can be charged.

**Other website costs**

**Web hosting:** $4-$50 a month

Your hosting fee is the way that you pay “rent” to house your website on the internet. For simple websites, you shouldn’t need more than 1GB of space per year and 3-10 GB of bandwidth. As you begin to grow, you’ll want to expand your hosting, but unless you’re hosting large image files or streaming videos, that likely won’t be necessary soon. Nearly all web design firms will work with your existing hosting provider (if you have one), so don’t feel as though you’re required to switch every time you need a redesign.

**Domain registration:** $7-$14 a year

Your annual domain registration fee renews your exclusive right to the use of your domain name. You can register a domain on your own or through your web design firm. **Warning**: if your web design firm is registering your domain name for you, and you’re not sure if they’re trustworthy, make sure that they register the domain in**your**name, not theirs. If the domain is registered with their business name, some domain providers consider them as the actual rightful owner of the domain – which means if you ever need to switch web design firms, you’ll be unable to do so without going through the firm. I can’t tell you how often we encounter clients who’ve been essentially extorted by their web design firms over their domain names – sleazy firms will require a “transfer payment” to give over control of the domain, sometimes $500 or more. Make sure you never get into that position!

**And that’s just about everything!**

Just so you know – Plato Web Design charges $2,500 for a small business site (one of the lowest rates on the internet), which includes a high quality custom web design, marketing help, and lots of other great freebies. [Get a free quote today](http://platowebdesign.com/get-a-quote.php).