

My progression to the decision to design my own web page may sound familiar to you if you have thought about getting a website for your business or project.

1. First, I signed up for a free 30-day-trial on www.homestead.com. I've seen other small businesses use this service. For me, however, the templates seemed limited. The service did allow me the independence to add content. On the other hand, I would be linked to this company and its fees (check it out to see). I decided to try something else.
2. Next, I researched hiring a webpage designer to do the initial design and tutor me on how to maintain the site. The people I spoke to gave me quotes from \$600 - \$1000. That was more than I can invest at this point in my business. Also, I imagine the designers could make my page in an hour, which made me feel bitter about the expense. Although, I do understand why a small business needs to charge such fees even where the matter is simple and routine. I decided, however, not to hire a web designer (I may hire someone to design the client login feature I want).
3. Finally, I decided to purchase a two-year webhosting service subscription (\$165)
 - a. The site <http://top10webhosting.review4dummies.com> provided a helpful comparison of the various services. I chose www.bluehost.com on the recommendation of a friend who is a web design instructor at Western Washington University.
4. I had the good fortune to get access to Dreamweaver MX. With this software I decided to try building a website myself. I am not sure what this software costs in the store but it has been very helpful.

I do not consider myself computer savvy. My limited computer knowledge, however, may make the following barebones, technical steps to building a web site even more practical to the computer novice.

1. I found a free website template online at <http://www.openwebdesign.org/>.
2. In Dreamweaver I created a site definition, which does two important things:
 - a. Sets up a file folder on your computer.
 - i. Mine is called 'kleps law office'. This is where I put the template files I downloaded (image file, design file, html file).
 - b. Sets up the connection information to your hosting service. Your host service will have tips about this process. Aside from a few terms, the process is similar to other login processes. The data I entered was as follows:
 - i. How do you want to connect to the web server? FTP
 - ii. What is the hostname of your web server? www.klepslawoffice.com
 - iii. What folder in the web server do you want to store your files in? public_html/
 - iv. What is your FTP login? klepslaw
 - v. What is your FTP password? *****
3. To make the page view with the proper style (initially I could only type in formatted text) I needed to update one piece of code. The original html page needed to look for the style sheet file called "default.css" in its new location. I highlighted this section of code. This prompted a window to open below called 'Properties'. I clicked on the folder to browse for the new location where I wanted the html files to search to find the style file. On my site the style file was called 'default.css'. I browsed to this file (the process felt similar to attaching a file to an email).
4. Then I clicked 'Put' the files by clicking an arrow icon in Dreamweaver. This sent the website files I had edited to my host server. I logged onto my host server. To publish, I moved all the files to the 'public_html/klepslawoffice' folder.
5. Then I typed in www.klepslawoffice.com into my browser. Yippy, there are the pages that I had just edited.

Conclusion

I am sure that a professional web designer would laugh at these overly simple instructions. Also, my site is basic and I have limited my discussion to the issues that I encountered. Further, I may have only succeeded to confuse and give false hopes to the people who read this. I would, however, be delighted if you feel encouragement and empowered to take action toward your dreams.