

YOU COMPARE

DIY website vs hiring a website designer to build an average business website.

Many small business owners have to decide if they should build a website themselves on platforms such as SquareSpace, Wix, or Weebly, or hire a website design company to build a standard website for them. To make this decision a little easier, here are comparative facts about the two options. Choose what makes sense for your goals and budget.

	DIY Websites	Website Designer
Bottom Line Up Front	Best when you need a site fast for the short term such as a start-up business or projects.	Best when you need a site done right that grows with the business.
Cost to Build	Low to nothing	Moderate
Cost to Manage	Do it yourself for \$30-\$60/mth	Someone else manages for you \$100-\$500/mth
Set Up Responsibilities	Get your domain name, hosting, content management system, and templates in one place and through one subscription.	Select your preferred hosting company, domain manager, content management system and template. Website designer supports and advises.
Management Responsibilities	Done by you but the website provider will automatically manage software updates.	Webmaster insures the site technology is maintained, updates, and adjusted as needed.
Prior Technical Experience	No coding skills required, but requires better than average computer skills to execute. Interface is not like typical business software.	No technical knowledge required.
Support	Limited to the platform. Anything outside it, along with specific advice on design and content, is not available.	Can either resolve or recommend resources to help you address most any issue with your website and internet marketing.
Time	Can be fast if the builder has the time to learn and do. Risk is getting stuck and unsure how to proceed.	Depends on the developer. Can be quick or take a while depending on his project load. Choose wisely. Delivery date is agreed upon before signing the contract.
Marketing Strategy	No strategic guidance provided. Must know what you want the site to do and what it's capable of doing. Site is typically just an electronic brochure. Limited lead generation sales lead tactics.	Explain what you'd like the website to accomplish and the designer recommends options or other ideas to consider to create the perfect scenario for you. Can build a sales lead generating machine.
General Layout or Design	Easy to edit templates for standard types of business (restaurant, services, e-commerce). Great for businesses who are okay with staying in the box.	Follows best practices for design but also can adjust to the individuality of a business to highlight uniqueness and leverage opportunities.

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Content	Plan, write, and edit it yourself. Examples may be provided. Marketing copy is not a skill-set most people have outside the marketing industry.	Provides guidance on what to write and how to write it, or recommends a copywriter so that content performs well with search engines and user experience.
Visual Strategy	Locate and purchase your own royalty free images. Work with a designer or make your own custom graphics.	Has standard sources for royalty free images and skill-set to develop professional custom graphics. They compile the best for you.
SEO Capabilities	Easy to add metadata for search engines, but inefficient due to nature of coding and little guidance is provided on how to do it properly.	Can fully optimized the site as desired and provide guidance on keyword selection to accomplish goals for traffic.
Scalability	Most support the addition of an online shopping cart and unlimited number of pages.	Can be as simple as you like to start, and grow whatever direction you need with number of pages and capabilities.
Integrations	Works with most popular integrations such as MailChimp for email marketing and PayPal for payments, but few options are available and sometimes don't work cleanly.	Virtually unlimited integration options with other online marketing systems, so you can build exactly the kind of back-end system you need for online marketing.
Transferability	Has a unique content management system (CMS) which is non transferable. It has to be recreated elsewhere. If you cancel your hosting contract you may lose your website.	Website CMS and content can be hosted and managed by any number of providers. Open source CMS such as Wordpress has an export option making content easier to transfer/recreate. Website can be transferred intact between hosts.