

Basic Website Components and Costs

On average, the following figures can be applied to estimating the cost of a small business website

Domain Name – \$50 +GST

Hosting – \$220 + GST a year (depending on traffic and hosting services)

Web Planning, Design and Development Time – 60 hours and up

Continued Website Maintenance – depending on number/type of updates required. Allow \$100+ per month

Important Factors that Contribute to Website Cost

When preparing to budget web design costs, be sure to ask yourself the following questions:

- new** **E** Is this a brand new site or a redesign of an existing site?
- Have you prepared a detailed requirements document?
- Do you need a blog?
- Do you want a content management system (CMS)?
- Have graphics already been created for the site?
- Do you want the site to automatically resize for mobile and tablets?
- Do you need multimedia elements (Flash, video, etc.) on the site?
- How much content do you currently have and how much will need to be created?
- Do you need other special features such as social media channels,
- Do you want SEO (search engine optimization)?
- Do you want e-commerce?

us **you** Who is going to maintain the site after it has been launched?

We have listed these items in greater detail further on in this web process document and provide an estimate of how much you should budget for each. Of course these estimates are indicative only and will vary depending on your specific requirements.

Discovery and Documentation

For the best outcome, all new websites projects should begin with a required “discovery and documentation” process. This process helps define three important elements:

Online brand

Website structure

Website functionality

We think this process is critical because it helps set expectations on all sides and reduces potential frustrations. Simple business websites — those in which the client has a solid idea of what he or she wants — can get by on a minimal amount of discovery and documentation, amounting to perhaps one day’s worth of effort.

BUT... more complex websites may require weeks of meetings plus the creation of many detailed documents to fully define the project.

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Interface Design

Interface design — also referred to as visual design or the site’s “look-and-feel” — incorporates your branding, all your photos and images, even your page layouts. Don’t assume that if you already have a pre-made template you won’t need images or layouts re-done. Interface design is usually an iterative process, meaning that the designer will show you several options and then modify them based on your feedback to arrive at an approved design. For a small business website, budget \$1,200 to \$3,500 to get you from concept through to the final design that will be handed off to the developers for programming. Don’t skimp on the interface design; if you do, today’s sophisticated visitors won’t give your website a second glance.

Images and Graphics

Budgeting website graphics is tricky because images can range from \$10 each for cheap stock images to hundreds of dollars each for custom or high-end stock images. Incorporating compelling and appropriate graphics can make a huge difference in the effectiveness of your website. On the low-end, budget at least \$100 for stock images. Remember that we can make a cheap image look like a custom one. But that’s not all. You will also need stock icons and buttons to compliment your design. Add \$50 to the budget for these graphic elements.

Mobile and Responsive Design Costs

Because mobile devices have become critical to online success, your design should be at the very least mobile-friendly. The best designs are “responsive,” meaning designed to automatically adjust their layout to look good and function easily on multiple devices: smartphones, tablets, and desktop/laptop computers. Creating a responsive design can cost 20% to 30% more than a site designed solely for a desktop web browser (the price of progress). This additional cost can be attributed to the extra effort the interface designer makes to design the site’s appearance and function on the various devices, which in turn will have to be programmed by the programmer. Finally, more testing is required before the site is ready to launch. Today almost all tonic projects include responsive programming.

Costs for Content Creation and Insertion

When it comes to adding content, we find the best solution is for tonic to add the initial content [data supplied from the client - prepared/ optimized by tonic] to the specified pages so we can ensure the brand/website message is delivered consistently. it also gives us the chance to fully test the system. Allow \$100 -\$150 a page for initial content. The client and/or tonic can then take responsibility for content creation and insertion.



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Programming Special Features Often Cost Extra

A ton of extra features are available that web developers can integrate into your site to improve your business, but these extras can add up. Some features may be “included” in your website framework – but beware, just because they are “included” doesn’t mean that they look or work the way you would want. The estimates below reflect the general requirements we have seen, however, many factors can push these costs even higher. If you don’t see your add-on here, just give us a call and we can provide an estimate.

Custom Content Management Systems

For clients who want to manage their own content the web designer can integrate and customize content management systems (CMS). We work with PHP-based open-source CMS solutions like WordPress.

Costs for integrating and customizing a CMS can range from \$2,000 to \$20,000.

Training and Documentation

You will need a set of instructions and documentation explaining how to maintain and edit site content.

Depending on how extensive the material is, expect to pay from \$400 to \$1,500.

Blog

Many clients request a blog (WordPress or something similar) within their website, customized to reflect their website’s branding and design. Adding a blog ranges from \$1,000 to \$2,500.

E-commerce shopping carts

and payment processing add \$1,500 to \$5000 or more depending on requirements.

Email Marketing Campaigns

Clients that want to gather emails and send out branded email blasts for announcements or newsletters require an email management tool. We can integrate third-party tools such as Mailchimp along with an email blast template design. We can even manage your email blasts. \$500+

Branding/Identity Development

We are a graphic and marketing company so we are often asked to design logos as part of a website development programme. On the low-end, we start with an eight-hour process that generates about six rough logo concepts. If one of these is chosen, we go through several rounds of edits to arrive at a final version. \$900 to \$3,500.

Style Guides

An online style guide establishes brand consistency and provides for compliance across all your print collateral and online marketing messaging. Basic style guide: \$1,000.

Targeted Landing

Landing pages are pages that promote a specific product or service. They are usually part of an email, social media, or banner ad campaign. We can design and create these pages starting at \$500.

News feeds

of both your content (outgoing) and adding content to the site (incoming): \$400

Contact forms and surveys:

\$300 and up

Newsletters:

\$400 to \$900

Advertising integration

(Google AdWords): \$200

Photo gallery:

\$250 to \$500

Metrics

(Google analytics, custom reports, etc.): \$200 to \$2000

SEO

(on-page optimization, off-page optimization submission to search engines, etc.): \$500 to \$4000

Social media

Create and manage social media network profile (Twitter, FaceBook, YouTube, Pinterest, Google+, LinkedIn, etc.): \$500 to \$2000



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So How Much Does a Small Business Website Cost?

The majority small business websites that we design, develop and launch range from \$2,000 for a very basic HTML site to \$20,000 for an e-commerce wordpress site with 'bells and whistles'.

Using the a la carte estimates above you can see how quickly elements and functionality add up.

Another way to break the budget down is to assume:

- 15% Planning**
- 25% Interface design**
- 40% Programming**
- 20% Project Management**

And Don't Forget the Maintenance Cost

Websites don't just maintain themselves. The best websites change all the time as their strategy is tweaked and updated. Maintenance is something that most businesses forget to budget, often because they think that they can do it themselves. But the first time you delete your entire home page by mistake and lose eight hours of sales while you're trying to get it back up and running, you'll wish you'd spent the extra money on a maintenance contract. Tonic offer post-launch maintenance contracts to ensure you site is current and working! Maintenance contracts vary greatly depending upon what you expect from the firm. You should budget a minimum of \$100 per month to have a designer/developer on call if you have a problem that you can't fix. And if you expect them to do additional work such as creating new images, adding new content, maintaining social media or newsletters, etc., expect the price to go up.

A Final Note

If your website will be a significant part of your business DON'T SKIMP on design and development. If you would expect to pay \$100,000 for a brick and mortar retail shop (inventory, interior design, furniture, rent, utilities, staff, equipment, insurance, etc.), then don't balk at paying reasonable rates for the creation of your online business.

So, how much does a website cost?

For a small business website you can spend as little as \$3,000 or as much as \$20,000 or more.

Your budget should be based on the strategic needs of your business.

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