STARTING A WEBSITE

Kansas Writers Association
October 15, 2022
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jmercer@wichita.gov
Sound Check

• If you can't hear me, please raise your hand or get my attention.
What we'll cover today:

• Getting Started
  • Look at other author websites
    • What do you love?
    • What do you dislike?
  • Identify type of website you want
  • Budget
    • What can you afford?
    • Can you afford a designer?
• Compare and contrast platforms
• Tips
Getting Started

• What is the purpose of your website?
• What content do you want on your site?
• Choose a platform
• Decide on a website name and domain name
• Decide on branding
• Draw out a website map or plan of your site
• Decide on budget
Getting Started

• Identify the type of website you want
  • Blog?
    • https://kwawriters.org/
    • https://www.johngreenbooks.com/blog
    • http://www.dianagabaldon.com/
  • Standard Website
  • E-Commerce Site
    • https://asharmy.com/
Getting Started

• Look at other Author Websites
  • Janet Evanovich: https://evanovich.com/
  • James Patterson: https://www.jamespatterson.com/
  • Kate Quinn: https://www.katequinnauthor.com/
  • Kristan Higgins: https://www.kristanhiggins.com/
  • Sarah Dessen: https://sarahdessen.com/
  • Jordan Michelle: https://www.jrdnfmichelle.com

• What do you like?
• What do you dislike?
Blog

• Post regularly
• Moderate comments
• Make it fun
• Social media presence a bonus (Facebook)
  • https://www.facebook.com/KristanHigginsBooks/
  • https://www.facebook.com/groups/2079379615628229/
• Digital Newsletters are also an option
Platforms

• Google Sites
  • https://sites.google.com
• Wix
  • https://www.wix.com/
  • E-commerce option
• WordPress (blog-based)
  • https://wordpress.com/
  • www.wordpress.org (self-hosted)
Blog Platforms

Blogger (can embed into Google Sites)
Wix
WordPress (self-hosted)
Wordpress.com

https://www.wix.com/blog/2021/02/how-to-start-a-blog/
Hosted vs Self-Hosted

• Hosted – use a Software as a Service (SAAS) to store or host the site for you
  • WordPress.com, Wix, Weebly, Google Sites
  • Service provides server space and software to build your site
  • Easier
  • Less control.
  • Everything in one place – software, domain name, etc.

• Self-hosted – you host
  • Wordpress.org
  • Download the software yourself and can host it on your own server or buy hosting space from a provider (HostGator, Bluehost, etc).
  • You’re responsible for updates and security
  • https://www.pcmag.com/picks/the-best-web-hosting-services
Budget

• How much money can you spend on your website?
• Can you afford a web designer?
• Hosting package?
• Domain Name
Budget

• Web Designer
  • Hire freelancers from sites like fiverr. or Upwork
    • https://www.fiverr.com/categories/graphics-design/website-design
    • https://www.upwork.com/hire/web-designers/
  • Prices can vary.
  • Expect to pay around $200 (may be more or less)
  • There are also local web designers
# Compare Packages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Package</th>
<th>Price</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Basic     | $30    | ONE BASIC EDIT
Includes *1* basic edit on one page or post. Such as a text, link OR image modification. |
| Standard  | $395   | SMALL BUSINESS WEBSITE PACKAGE
Includes up to 10 pages plus contact or quote request form. |
| Premium   | $595   | E-COMMERCE WEBSITE PACKAGE
E-commerce site with up to 25 products. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of pages or screens</td>
<td>7 days</td>
<td>30 days</td>
<td>30 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery Time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$30</td>
<td>$395</td>
<td>$595</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Compare Packages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Package</th>
<th>$20</th>
<th>$100</th>
<th>$150</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Basic</strong></td>
<td>BASIC</td>
<td>STANDARD</td>
<td>PREMIUM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsive design</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prototype</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source file</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content upload</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of pages or screens</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revisions</td>
<td>Unlimited</td>
<td>Unlimited</td>
<td>Unlimited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery Time</td>
<td>3 days</td>
<td>14 days</td>
<td>21 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example of price from fiverr**
### Example of prices from Upwork

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Web Designer</th>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Reviews</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Srdjan D.</td>
<td>$25/hr</td>
<td>4.8/5</td>
<td>37 jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick J.</td>
<td>$120/hr</td>
<td>5.0/5</td>
<td>33 obs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angela May A.</td>
<td>$12/hr</td>
<td>5.0/5</td>
<td>6 obs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arthur L.</td>
<td>$45/hr</td>
<td>4.9/5</td>
<td>33 obs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anton B.</td>
<td>$60/hr</td>
<td>5.0/5</td>
<td>81 obs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oleh H.</td>
<td>$25/hr</td>
<td>4.9/5</td>
<td>43 jobs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vladyslav P.</td>
<td>$50/hr</td>
<td>4.9/5</td>
<td>8 obs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew L.</td>
<td>$30/hr</td>
<td>5.0/5</td>
<td>44 jobs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Upwork Example

https://www.jrdnmichelle.com/
Budget

• Custom domain name?
  • Usually around $7 - $20 a year (usually included with first year cost of hosted site)
  • Suggest getting a .com
    • Keep it short and simple
    • Example: www.janellemercer.com
# Budget Total Estimate (Google Sites)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Google Sites</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Custom Domain</td>
<td>$10/year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Fee</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>Can hire a designer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platform Fee</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>$10</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Budget Total Estimate (Wix)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wix</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Custom Domain</td>
<td>$10/year</td>
<td>First year might be free depending on service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Fee</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>Should only have to pay once. Unless you pay for updating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platform Fee</td>
<td>$192</td>
<td>Wix ($16/month 12 * $16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>$402</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

https://www.wix.com/upgrade/website
## Budget Total Estimate (Wordpress.com)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wix</th>
<th>Cost</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Custom Domain</td>
<td>$10/year</td>
<td>Free domain first year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Fee</td>
<td>$200</td>
<td>Should only have to pay once. Unless you pay for updating.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platform Fee</td>
<td>$96</td>
<td>WordPress ($8/month 12 * $25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>$306</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[https://wordpress.com/pricing/](https://wordpress.com/pricing/)
# Website Platforms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Google Sites</th>
<th>Wix</th>
<th>WordPress.com</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Address</strong></td>
<td>sites.google.com</td>
<td>wix.com</td>
<td>wordpress.com</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cost</strong></td>
<td>Free</td>
<td>Free with ads</td>
<td>Free with ads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pay for Domain Name</td>
<td>Starts at $16/month</td>
<td>Paid starts at $4/month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="https://www.wix.com/upgrade/website">https://www.wix.com/upgrade/website</a></td>
<td><a href="https://wordpress.com/pricing/">https://wordpress.com/pricing/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pros</strong></td>
<td>Easy to use</td>
<td>Easy to use</td>
<td>Very customizable and powerful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lots of options</td>
<td>Lots of options</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lots of templates</td>
<td>Lots of templates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Been around a long time</td>
<td>Been around a long time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cons</strong></td>
<td>Not a lot of options</td>
<td>Can’t change template</td>
<td>Learning Curve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>without having to revamp website</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Can’t export site or access code</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Website Platforms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Google Sites</th>
<th>Wix</th>
<th>WordPress.com</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blogging</td>
<td>No. Can import Blogger site</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eCommerce option</td>
<td>Sort of</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Custom domain</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes, with paid versions Free domain for year</td>
<td>Yes, with paid versions Free domain for year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analytics</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Free for year starting with $27/month plan</td>
<td>Depends on version</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEO (Search Engine Optimization) Tools</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes with $25/month plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Getting Started: Draw it out

- Home
- About
- Books
- Blog
- Appearances
- Contact
Getting Started: Draw it out
Getting Started: Draw it out
Photo Tips

• High quality photos
• Use your own photos if possible
• Clear book cover images
• Relevant to you and your site
• Headshot
  • No selfies if possible
  • Ask friend to take picture
  • Schedule headshot with professional photographer if possible (budget?)
• Royalty Free Images
  • https://unsplash.com/
  • https://www.pexels.com/royalty-free-images/
Photo Tips

- File naming
  - Don’t use file convention directly from phone, camera, or downloads
  - Instead use descriptive file name

FB-IMG-1665706938460.jpg  NO!

Fall-into-reading-libby.jpg  YES!
Adding Pictures Google Sites

Janelle Mercer

Janelle has been writing since she was in grade school. She discovered a love of books at a young age.
Tips

• Keep site up to date
• Renew domain every year
  • Set reminder
• Setup website account with email you will always have access to
  • Use extremely strong passwords on email account and web hosting site
Resources

• https://support.wix.com/en/article/building-a-website-for-free
• https://www.wix.com/blog/2021/02/how-to-make-a-website
• https://www.stylefactoryproductions.com/blog/wix-review
Need Help?

Book a Librarian Service
Free one-on-one
1 hour Technology Help

Janelle Mercer, Technology Trainer
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jmercer@wichita.gov
316-261-8500