

Web Hosting Terms

Anonymous FTP: Anonymous File Transfer Protocol. Allows the public to log into an FTP server with a common login, avoiding the need to assign passwords to anyone who wants to download files from your Web site. This is unnecessary unless you plan on providing downloadable files to the public.

ASP: Active Server Pages. A commonly used Microsoft scripting language that enables the use of online databases.

Auto responder: An email address that is set up to automatically reply to the sender with a previously prepared response.

Bandwidth (Data Transfer): The amount of data that you are allowed to transfer (usually monthly). Data = images, text, audio files, video files and everything else that a server transfers to a user's web browser. Approximately 40,000 page views = 1 GB of data transfer. Web sites that get a lot of visitors (and page views) need larger amounts of data transfer (or bandwidth).

CGI: Common Gateway Interface. A program that translates data from a web server and then displays that data on a web page or in an email. CGI scripting can add numerous interactive elements to a Web site.

CGI-BIN: A directory on a server where CGI programs are stored. CGI scripting can add numerous interactive elements to a Web site.

CGI Library: Certain hosts will provide a collection of pre-made CGI scripts (as a convenience) that can be used to add numerous interactive elements to your Web site.

Control Panel: An online interface often used to facilitate Web site management and editing. Control panels often allow hosting customers to perform basic functions (make changes, check data, etc.) without contacting customer service.

Database: A collection organized records of information that can facilitate searching, sorting, and recombination of data.

Data Transfer (Bandwidth): The amount of data that you are allowed to transfer (usually monthly). Data = images, text, audio files, video files and everything else that a server transfers to a user's web browser. Approximately 40,000 page views = 1 GB of data transfer. Web sites that get a lot of visitors (and page views) need larger amounts of data transfer (or bandwidth). Also, graphics-heavy sites will need more data transfer than more basic sites.

Dedicated Servers (Dedicated Hosting): The opposite of Shared Web hosting. Servers that are owned by a Web hosting company but rented out and used by a single customer. Web sites in need of a lot of disk space and/or data transfer and/or Web sites that have very specific software needs may opt to rent a dedicated server. Shared Web hosting is usually sufficient for most small and medium sized businesses.

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Disk Space (Storage Space): The storage capacity for images, HTML files, audio files, video files, graphics, etc. A Web site planning to have a large amount of pages and/or planning to use a lot of images (or other large files) will need a greater amount of disk space.

Domain Name: Domain name is an easy-to-remember address that can be translated by DNS into server's IP address. Domain names are hierarchical. Domain's suffix indicates which TLD (top level domain) it belongs to, for example .com, .gov, .org, .net, or .jp. Recently ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers) added several new TLDs, like .biz, .pro., and .museum.

E-Commerce: Electronic Commerce. The buying/selling (or exchange) of goods and services through the Internet.

Email Forwarding: When email sent to different email addresses is automatically sent (forwarded) to another specified email address. For example, you could have multiple email addresses (i.e. info@domain.com, support@domain.com, webmaster@domain.com) that would all be forwarded to one address (i.e. whatever@domain.com) for easy checking and responding.

Firewall: Software and/or hardware combination that protects a computer or network from unauthorized access.

FrontPage: Microsoft FrontPage is an HTML editor often used to create and maintain Web sites.

FrontPage Extensions: A set of programs and scripts that allow specific features of a Web site created with FrontPage to perform correctly.

FTP: File Transfer Protocol. The most common method for uploading files to servers. FTP allows files to be uploaded from local machines to servers, where the files can be

GB: Gigabyte. 1024 Megabytes.

IMAP: Internet Message Access Protocol. A method allowing an email program to access remote messages stored on a mail server.

IP Address: Internet Protocol Address. A unique number identifying all devices connected to the Internet

KB: Kilobyte. 1024 bytes.

Linux: A UNIX-like operating system used by Web servers.

Managed Hosting: A dedicated server complemented with technical support and maintenance services. This is a step up from standard dedicated Web hosting, where customers are responsible for all administrative and maintenance duties.

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MB: Megabyte. A million bytes. A thousand kilobytes.

Merchant Account: Enables the processing of credit cards online.

Microsoft Access: Microsoft's low-end relational database.

Miva Empressa: An XML-based server-side scripting language. Miva Empressa installs on most Unix and Windows web servers and enables the server with XML based Miva Script, commerce processing and database.

Miva Merchant: A dynamic browser based storefront development and management system that allows merchants to create and administrate multiple online stores from anywhere in the world.

MS SQL: Microsoft SQL Server. A relational database management system. Windows hosting plans often include MS SQL databases.

MySQL: A popular open-source relational database. UNIX hosting plans often include MySQL databases.

Payment Gateway: Enables the authorization, processing and managing of online transactions.

Perl: A programming language that facilitates data management and processing.

PHP: A scripting language. PHP commands are embedded within the HTML of a Web page and is useful in the arena of dynamically generated pages. PHP scripting can add numerous interactive elements to a Web site.

POP: Post Office Protocol. A protocol used to retrieve e-mail from a mail server.

POP3 Email Account: POP3 email allows all emails addressed to your domain to go to one place. If a host allows multiple POP3 email boxes, you can have multiple (separate) email addresses.

Server: A computer or device on a network used to store files and maintain network resources. This computer/device handles requests for Web pages.

Setup Fee: Initial fee charged by a host to create your hosting account.

Shared Web Hosting: The opposite of Dedicated Web hosting. Multiple sites hosted on a single server. Multiple Web sites share the system resources of a single server, with each single Web site being allotted specific amounts of resources. Shared Web hosting is the most common (and cheapest) hosting option.

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Shopping Cart Software: Software that allows users (customers) of a Web site to add and delete items into an online "shopping cart" and then proceed to purchase the item(s). A shopping cart is an essential component for most e-commerce Web sites, as it allows users to browse for and purchase products online. Some Web hosts provide free (usually more basic) shopping carts, while others provide a shopping cart for an additional fee. Different shopping cart programs range greatly in usability, functionality and features, so choose wisely before creating your online store.

SMTP: Simple Mail Transfer Protocol. A protocol for sending email.

SQL: Structured Query Language. A database query and programming language used for accessing, updating, and managing data in a relational database system.

SSI: Server Side Includes. Often used by Web developers in order to facilitate in updating content on Web sites. An SSI is a variable value that a web server can dynamically add to an otherwise static Web page. SSI-enabled Web pages will often be found with .shtml extensions.

SSL: Secure Sockets Layer. Allows encrypted, authenticated communications over the Web. SSL provides security in online commerce. URL's starting with "https://" indicate the utilization of SSL.

Static (Dedicated) IP Address: A unique and unchanging IP address. The opposite of dynamic IP addressing, in which a Web site's IP address is different with each connection to the server. With dynamic IP addressing, several domains can use 1 IP address. With static IP addressing, your Web site gets an unchanging IP address that is not shared with other sites and can be called up in place of your usual www.domain.com.

Storage Space (Disk Space): The storage capacity for images, HTML files, audio files, video files, graphics, etc. A Web site planning to have a large amount of pages and/or planning to use a lot of images (or other large files) will need a greater amount of storage space.

Subdomain: A subdomain is a division of a Web site, a section set apart with a different sub-domain name. For example, subdomains of Web site "domain.com" could be "support.domain.com," "clients.domain.com," etc.

Uptime: How often a Web site is accessible to users on the Internet (often given in a percentage).

UNIX: The most commonly used operating system among Web servers. Unix is a text-based, multitasking operating system that is designed to be used by many people at the same time.

Virtual Private Servers: Shared hosting servers in which each hosting space is allotted its own amount of dedicated resources. A step above shared Web hosting but a step below dedicated Web hosting.

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Virtual Web Hosting: Also known as shared Web hosting. Multiple sites hosted on a single server.

WAP: Wireless Application Protocol. A set of protocols that standardize the way that wireless devices can be used for Internet access.

Web-based Email: Allows a user to access email from any computer that has an Internet connection and a Web browser.

Web Statistics: Reports on visitors to your Web site. Statistics range from basic (how many visitors), to advanced (referring URL, search phrase, etc.).

Windows Hosting: Hosting on a web server that uses Microsoft Windows server software as its operating platform. Windows hosting plans are useful in the arena of dynamic content generation and database functionality. Windows is a graphic-based, multitasking operating system.