

Want to redesign your website but your old design agency also hosts your current site?

By Evan Mangan

So, you are thinking about getting a new agency to redesign your website but the agency who designed your current site also manages your hosting. Wondering how easy it will be to transfer the hosting over to your new agency or to start managing the hosting yourself? Wondering what details to ask your existing web / hosting agency?

Many business owners put off an important decision such as getting another agency to redesign their website because they either don't know how to go about the process of a switch or what information they would have to ask their existing web agency for. Don't worry- it's not as confusing as you might think.

The first thing you need to do is decide whether you want to

1. Transfer the hosting of your website from the old web agency to the new web agency or
2. Manage the hosting yourself by dealing directly with a hosting company

Whichever option you choose, the next thing you need to do is find out some specific details about your site. The new hosting company is going to need some technical information from you, and if you can call with the information in-hand things will go a lot smoother.

So what kind of things will they need to know? You'll need to ask your old design agency the following:

- What your site is written in- All websites are rendered in html, but are written in a variety of different languages such as ASP, PHP, Pearl, or JSP to name a few. The new hosting company will need this information to determine if they can host the technology.

- How to get into your account- Are you the Administrative Contact on the account? Is it someone else? You'll need your login information, including user names and passwords.

Many web design agencies will manage the transfer of your old hosting to new hosting for a fee. It might be worth it to shell out a little bit extra for this service if it will save you some headache and frustration. If you'd rather do the transfer yourself, you'll have to take the following steps.

- Once you've set up an account with your new web hosting company and have gotten your email accounts squared away, you're going to have to upload all your web files to the new server. These will have to be downloaded from your current web hosting company, and then uploaded to the new host.
- Make sure all your files are there and that all the links are working properly. You can do this by creating a temporary "test" site, and your new company should provide you with a url to do this.
- You're then going to have to go to wherever your domain name is registered and change your domain name servers (DNS) to point to the new site. Your new host should provide you with their DNS settings. It will usually take 24-48 hours to make this change, so during this time your site will still be hosted by the old company. Once the DNS change goes into effect, the new hosting company will be activated and you can safely cancel your old account.

It's important to keep your current web hosting account active until your new site is completely up and running. This will ensure that your site has no downtime and no lost business as a result.

See? Not too painful, and in many cases your web design agency will take care of a lot of these steps for you. Switching to a better web design agency may seem daunting if your old design agency also hosts your site but *Marketing Small Business*, a full service marketing agency, can make this transition hassle free. If your business is being held back by a website that no longer meets your needs, switching design agencies is simple and straightforward.

About The Author

Evan Mangan is a former Head of European Marketing for Yahoo! Mobile and was Head of International Operational Marketing for Orange. He is founder and Managing Director of The Marketing Crowd (www.TheMarketingCrowd.com), a full service marketing agency which makes the marketing techniques employed by major brands available and affordable to smaller companies.

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