

# How Much Does A Small Business Website Cost?



## *Emade Consulting offers*

- Small Business Web Design Packages
- Custom Web Design Packages
- Packages for the maintenance of your Website
- Advanced SEO packages to increase your Website's visibility and traffic

A business owner asked three website development companies to submit a proposal to design her company website. She supplied the developers with the same “requirements document” that listed the website’s goals and functions. A week later each of the three web developers came back to the client with their estimates.

The first one had priced the project at \$3,000, the second had priced it at \$12,000 and the final web developer estimated the project at \$32,000.

If you’re waiting for the punch line... well, there isn’t one. That’s because the joke is on the client who now needs to figure out why these estimates are so wildly different and which one represents the most realistic and reasonable budget for her needs.

Believe it or not, we often hear stories like this. One business owner actually sent us four proposals she had received and asked us to explain the differences in pricing. Unfortunately, most business owners have no way of knowing which bids are unrealistically low, which are outrageously inflated and which are in the right ballpark.

Please note: When we say “small business website” we are talking about an informational website consisting of approximately 10 to 20 pages with some basic content management and social media widgets.

So I bet your next question is  
"how much does a website cost?"

## Basic Website Components and Costs

On average, the following figures can be applied to estimating the cost of a small business website (if you'd like a custom estimate for your website, call us at 559-477-7481):

- **Domain Name** – \$10/year
- **Hosting** – \$12 to \$100 a year (depending on traffic and hosting services)
- **Web Planning, Design and Development Time** – 60 hours and up
- **Continued Website Maintenance** – \$500 a year and up (depending on number/type of updates required)
- **Marketing Your Website Online** – \$750 a month and up

## Important Factors that Contribute to Website Cost

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

- Is this a brand new site or a redesign of an existing site?
- How prepared are you to ask for bids? Have you prepared a detailed requirements document?
- Do you need a blog or 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, SEO (search engine optimization) or ecommerce?
- Who is going to maintain the site after it has been launched?

Below we go into these items in greater detail and provide an estimate of how much you should budget for each. The prices listed are estimates based on our 16 years of experience designing and building business websites. Prices will vary depending on your specific requirements. Be sure to contact us for an estimate.

## New Sites Often Cost More Than Redesigns

Remember, when you're starting a new website from scratch, so is the web designer. With no existing elements to work from, the designer can't look at an existing site and study your current online brand nor can the design team examine the features and functionality that will be carried over to the new website and improved upon.

## 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:

1. Online brand
2. Website structure
3. 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.

## 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 a good designer 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 Emade Consulting' projects include responsive programming.

## Costs for Content Creation and Insertion

When it comes to adding content, the least expensive model for small business owners is to create all the content on their end and insert it into the site via a content management system (CMS). Most designers have no problem delivering a blank design template that the client would populate with text and images. But if you want the design firm to add your content and adjust the layout of the text, you should budget **\$100 to \$150** per page.

## 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 Drupal and 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**.
- For E-commerce shopping carts, catalogs, 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 Graphic mail, Mail chimp or Constant Contact along with an email blast template design. We can even manage your email blasts. **\$720 and up**.
- Branding/Identity Development – We are often asked to design logos. 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: \$1,440**.
- 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 **\$450**.
- 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**

## So How Much Does a Small Business Website Cost?

The majority small business websites that we design develop and launch range from **\$6,000 to \$20,000**. 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. Make sure your web developer offers post-launch maintenance; many don't because they can't be bothered with clients calling with small requests.

Maintenance contracts vary greatly depending upon what you expect from the firm. You should budget a minimum of **\$250 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. [Emade Consulting](#) offers several customized, full-service maintenance plans.

## 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 \$6,000 or as much as \$20,000 or more. Your budget should be based on the strategic needs of your business.

**If you've read this far, you must be serious about your web business. Take the next step by clicking [HERE](#) below to fill out our short inquiry form. We will get back to you ASAP with a recommendation. No obligation – you can also call us at 559-477-7481 because we love to chat.**