

5 very Important Questions You Need To Ask Your Web- hosts Before You Buy

You finally decided to approach a web-hosting company for hosting your website. You got your domain name registered or perhaps you did not. Web Hosting isn't like buying groceries - there are far too many things you have to consider even for something that looks deceptively this simple as putting up a website. It depends on how cautious you are and how you manage to bag the best web-hosting provider available to serve you.

It would help you a great deal if you asked your potential web hosting provider a few pointed questions such as those mentioned below, along with the reasons as to why you need to ask (for your knowledge).

1. Do they have sound customer support systems in place?

Now, you would find a lot of web-hosting serve providers online. Some of them serve their customers promptly while some don't. It is very important as a web master, or a web site owner for you to know how your potential service provider rates on this aspect. You could shoot some pre-sales questions about something you wanted to know or ask them one of these other questions and wait to see the response period. If they don't respond within 24 hrs (the Industry Standard) you are talking to trouble-hosting providers. Good customer service and the extent to which the provider would go to educate you or familiarize you with their available services would mean a lot to you as a client.

2. Server systems, technology, Data Centers, Back-up schedules: Does your provider explain his standing on these?

Servers are a must for a web-hosting provider. It forms his basic infrastructure. Back-systems are scheduled to run automatically and these servers are backed-up as frequently as daily with some hosting providers. What does your potential provider has to say about these things? Do they mention the kind of technology they use? Do they have reliable back-up systems at traceable data-centers? How are they equipped technically? Do they have technical people on rolls?

3. Company data, financial standing and profitability: How sound is your provider financially?

You must be wondering as to why you need to bother about your web-hosting provider's financial standing - well, it so happens than some companies might be new and there are chances that you could be talking to a fly-by-night operator. Properly financial health also signifies a stronger management which might be placed better to be able to serve its present and potential customers. However, it is another entirely that some of the best of the web-site providers also make losses and is not to be mistaken that they do not have good customer support or services offered.

4. What might be scope of service provided?

What exactly is your service provider going to offer to you? Depending on your requirements he must be able to provide everything (almost!) under one roof. You could have wanted just a single page hosted or perhaps you wanted a 300 page super content website -Do they have the range to suit your requirements? Under your allocated budgets? Single page websites usually are simple HTML pages and can be hosted easily. Your requirement can be very complex too which calls for inclusion of different application platforms like PHP, asp.net and Java extending up to scripts, forum, shopping carts, Intuitive control panels, plesk and also enabling e-commerce. So can your service provider be able to provide you all of this?

If you had plans of making a truly interactive and content rich site, you could have thought of including content in the form of Video, streaming media, blogs, chatting, live customer support and much more. You will have to ensure that your service provider is able to provide you with all of this and much more.

5. What's your provider's take on Hosting reliability and up-time guarantee?

Up-time when it comes hosting means the time (expressed in percentages) the host is available to access through the Internet. You would have seen a lot of hosting providers mention a 99.9 % up-time guarantee. But then, you ought to realize that any hosting application environment calls for maintenance too. You should ask how the web-hosting provider manages to shuffle this time efficiently. How do they manage their maintenance?

According to an extract from wikipedia

"A popular claim from the popular hosting providers is '99% or 99.9% server uptime' but this often refers only to a server being powered on and doesn't account for network downtime. Real downtime can potentially be larger than the percentage guaranteed by the provider. Many providers tie uptime, and accessibility, into their own Service Level Agreement, or SLA. SLAs may or may not include refunds or reduced costs if performance goals are not met. One must be extremely careful when selecting a new company and they should read all terms and conditions carefully. A potential customer should also check out the web hosting company's Acceptable Use Policy in order to avoid potential cancellation of services due to activities that are considered a violation"

Hence, it is important to read all their terms and conditions carefully before signing up any new company as mentioned above and never forget the Acceptable Use Policy before signing on the dotted lines.

Source: <http://www.articlecircle.com>

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