

**HOW TO BUILD A WEBSITE
EASILY SO THAT EVEN YOUR
GRANDMA WHO DOESN'T
KNOW HOW TO USE A
COMPUTER COULD UPDATE
IT AND YOUR MONEY-TIGHT
BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATORS CAN'T
SAY NO BECAUSE IT'S SO
CHEAP AND CAN BE SO
BENEFICIAL TO YOU IN YOUR
MINISTRY. SERIOUSLY.**

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OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

This session is to help those in ministry understand how to design a website for ministry in a way that is simple to set up, easy to use, and cost effective in both time and money. And let's face it, we've all spent money on dumber things in ministry than a website that is actually trying to make your ministry easy and more accessible to your students and parents.

STEP ONE: PURCHASE A DOMAIN...OR DON'T.

One of the most important parts of a website is the actual domain name...the stuff that follows the www. It needs to be short or really easy to remember. For example, www.parishre.org is super easy. What isn't easy is:

www.stspeterandpaulreligiouseducationforhighschoolandmiddleschoolstudents.org.

Seriously, how many people do you think can get that accurate? Can you type 140 words per minute with no mistakes? I don't think so. Keep it simple and easy to remember. Also, try to avoid using too many initials when making a website name.

For example, St. Vincent de Paul in Green Bay uses www.svdpgb.org for their domain.

While it's short, it's very difficult to say, especially when you hear them have to slow down and verify it multiple times with whoever they're telling you (it's happened to me multiple times). Words are much easier to remember than a bunch of initials.

Unless you have have one of those names in which your initials actually spells a word.

When it comes to the actual domain name, there are two options when using website editors: paid and free. Paid will allow you to check for the domain name that you want. Free will usually give you something like www.parishre.weebly.com which isn't necessarily the worst, but not always the easiest to remember. If you decide you like living life simpler, try these websites to purchase a domain for an entire year for a little more than the cost of two of those Starbucks drinks you spend inordinate amounts of money on.

- Paid:
 - Google Domains - domains.google.com
 - My favorite because besides Apple, Google owns the world.
 - Most .com, .net, .edu, .org address are only \$12 a year. If money is no object (hahahaha right), you can purchase a .church domain for \$40.

- GoDaddy Domains - www.godaddy.com
 - If cheap is the way you want to go, they run specials all the time where you can get promotional deals for about \$0.99 a year if you buy a 2 year subscription (but make sure to read the fine print that it goes to \$14.99 a year after that).
 - If you use GoDaddy, you may want to ignore the marketing ads or letting the parish know that you use it. GoDaddy is infamous for using “sex sells” in its marketing campaigns.
- 1&1 - www.1and1.com
 - Free for the first year* (always goes way up in price the second year, kind of like that credit card that offers no interest for 6 months but if you forget to pay it before that 6 months, you might as well give up your retirement fund to pay the accrued interest).
 - Another option for \$0.99 a month (promotional rate as well), that gives you their website builder for free. Make sure to check the fine print for the cost of the domain and the website builder after promotional pricing is over.
- Weebly - www.weebly.com
 - A website builder that I will talk about later in these instructions, if you happen to read that far.
 - Definitely not the cheapest option, but if you don't wanna mess around with two different websites, it makes it a lot easier.
 - Too many packages for me to list the pricing on here, and I'm tired. Look them up yourself.
- Wix - www.wix.com
 - Ditto to Weebly.
- Free:
 - Weebly
 - Wix
 - Freenom.com
 - Ok so it may be free...but the websites end in things like .tk, .ml, .ga, .cf, .gq. Let's be honest...most people would probably not trust these sites. So please don't use these.

Now that you're an expert on how to get the website name that your heart desires, you can move on to actually building the website.

BUILD YOUR WEBSITE

Building your website can be really easy or really hard. You can choose the hard way, but I don't know many church workers that were good at coding a website. So here are some ways to build the website of your dreams, tiered by difficulty.

- Hard
 - Purchase Adobe Creative Cloud single app for 19.99 a month, use Dreamweaver to set up your website, design, and code. But really, don't do this, as there are much easier ways to go. Unless you think something like this is easy: `<iframe src="https://calendar.google.com/calendar/embed?src=en.usa%23holiday%40group.v.calendar.google.com&ctz=America/Chicago" style="border: 0" width="800" height="600" frameborder="0" scrolling="no"></iframe>`
- Easier
 - Wix.com
 - I told you I'd talk about Weebly and Wix later in this, so congratulations for actually reading through all my rambling.
 - Wix is grid based and allows you to do a lot of custom tailoring to websites. It's not my number one pick because it has its limitations as well. You can email me to ask me why.
 - Wix does also offer a free premium plan for nonprofits.
- Easiest
 - Weebly.com
 - Remember in the title page of this session I said I'd help you make a website easy enough for your grandma or someone you know who doesn't know how to use a computer? This is the way to do it. I've used a lot of different website builders: 1and1.com, wix.com, etc. and I truly believe that weebly is definitely the easiest to use. It uses a drag and drop method of website building. Take what you want from the left hand "Build" bar and drop it into your website and edit it from there. Upgrade to the Pro account and unlock a lot of great options.

LINK YOUR CREATED WEBSITE DESIGN TO YOUR DOMAIN

This is undoubtedly the hardest part of the website design process. It's like you're playing peacemaker between Russia and the US and you have a united mission, but you don't like each other's methods. Really, it doesn't have to be that hard. I'll try to make it simpler for you.

If you used one of the websites like 1and1, wix, or weebly and you purchased your domain through that program, then it will automatically point your designed website to your domain.

If you didn't do that and used Google Domains or something else, you will need to change your website's DNS settings wherever you hosted it. Your Domain is where the website will be hosted, and you have to get your website you designed to that hosting site. Almost every online design program has directions on how to do this. You have to create an A record in your domain to point to an IP that your website will use. For example:

<https://hc.weebly.com/hc/en-us/articles/202916068-Use-a-Google-Domain-with-Your-Site>

If this doesn't work, feel free to call me (920) 562-0503. I will gladly help you do this.

UPDATE

The worst thing I see happen to these websites that you spend all this time designing is that you don't actually use the website at all. Websites are worthless if you don't keep them updated with fresh material that your target audience needs/wants. You don't have to always do this alone. Most of these websites allow you to create admins or editors that can help you with updating the website.

