

How much does a website cost?

Why does one web designer charge \$2000 while another charges \$500 for the same thing?



This is a question many business owners ask themselves when looking around to find a web designer. The problem is that nobody knows what web design costs and why there is a such a difference in pricing between designers. It doesn't help matters that the web design industry is shrouded in mystery either.

When you buy a car you pretty much know how much you are going to pay for it. There's a recommended price and then there are dealer discounts so the price may vary but at the end of the day you are going to drive out in the same car, regardless of where you bought it and how much you paid for it.

The same cannot be said of websites. A 'website' can vary in price and in substance. Designer X may quote you \$2000 while Designer Y is quoting you \$500. So why the large difference in price? The answer is simple - they are almost certainly not charging you for the same thing.

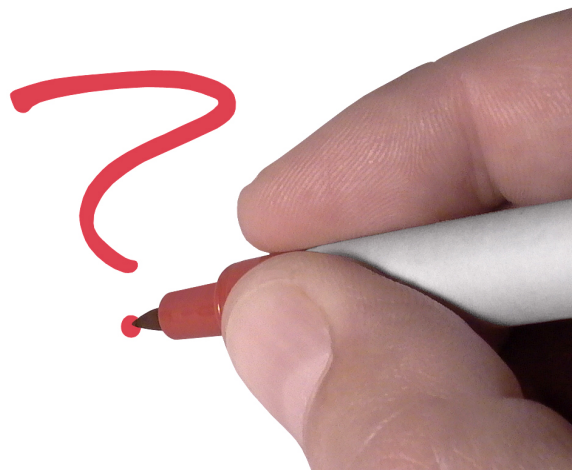
If Designer X quotes you at \$2000 for your website design, that usually because she's going to spend a lot more time on organisation, developing and customising the visual presentation, making it Google friendly, and generally making it a great site. It easy to get someone to design a website, but it may not be easy to get a website that visitors enjoy using. Now for \$500 you may get a quote for a similar project from Designer Y but they will likely only put a fraction of the effort into it and there may be limited functionality or a list of hidden extras that drive up the initial cost.

How do you choose?

The first thing to do is to look at the designers' portfolios. Be sure to view the live sites. Do you like them? What don't you like? A designer with a bad portfolio is most likely not going to surprise you with something amazing.

Check out the list of inclusions for the quote. What are you getting for your money? Does the quote include copywriting or editing of text? Editing of images? Does it include a CMS (content management system) so that you can update the site yourself?

Do you need any expensive features that are listed (or not listed) on the quote?



What are "expensive" features?

Generally it's the features that either give you added functionality and flexibility or the features that are time-intensive that are adding to the cost of your site.

Some of these features include:

- E-commerce (especially e-commerce sites with custom designed layouts)
- Slideshows
- Flash elements
- CMS (content management system license so you can update your own site)
- User interaction (commenting, ability to write reviews, etc.)
- Complicated forms

Why it's not a great idea to think "I just need to get my business online, I don't care what it looks like."

Sometimes it's tempting to you with the lowest quote you can get just to get your business up on the web. This is not a great idea, and here is why: your website may be the only impression that online viewers get of your company. You have less than thirty seconds for them to get a lasting impression of what you and your business are about.

If your site looks like it was made in 1990, doesn't load correctly, looks dated, or looks otherwise "unprofessional", you won't be doing much business online.

This is extremely important if your business intends to sell products online. Nobody is going to buy products on a site that doesn't look like it has been updated regularly. They may not get the product they pay for. With search engines, people are looking for the company that looks the "best". They want to deal with the most trustworthy business.

In the online world, that means having a professional website, and then providing content that furthers your message to your clients.

So what do you do now?

Once you've found a designer you like make sure they are upfront about the features that are included in your quote. Make sure that these features are tailored to your business goals. Stick to the core of your business, and keep the message simple. Customers don't like to be overloaded. Make the site easy to navigate, easy to load, and easy to find.

To find out the different options available for your business, call the Sauced Out Team on (02) 8014 5544.

We have a variety of affordable options available – from a simple web presence and email for \$50 through to custom built and designed websites from \$2500.



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