

The top 10 dirty little secrets about website development

By Pamela S. Gockley, July 18, 2016 at 8:00 AM

The last two decades have seen a lot of change in how business operates and how consumers buy products and services.

In terms of marketing, the do-it-yourself trend to developing websites is troublesome. Each platform has its differences, so search thoroughly before you choose to use these types of website platform tools.

Essentially, though, if it sounds too good to be true, it is. If it's too cheap, quick and easy, it can't be good, because websites are complicated to build.

FIPs (fake internet professionals) exist in every industry, not just the internet. The things they have in common include the ability to lay out the problem and to make you feel as if you are the only one that has the issue.

The truth is you are not alone, and if solving the problems were easy, everyone would have solved them by now. The problem would no longer exist.

Here are 10 general things to look for and to be aware. Because platforms each have their specific details, this is a general listing that may or may not apply to the one you're searching.

- (1) Do a Google search for the name of the platform you are investigating and add the word "scam" or "problems" in the search bar.
- (2) Most platforms use proprietary software which allows the user to drop-and-drag and point-and-click in a template generator.
- (3) You are renting (you do not own) the use of the template, and you only own the images and content that you add.
- (4) The platform cannot be moved. When you become dissatisfied, you cannot move your site; you have to start over.
- (5) You have no access to the code and do not have the ability to customize the look or add functionality.
- (6) Most do not offer email, so you will have an additional fee for domain email.
- (7) Most require control/ownership of your domain.
- (8) Slow response and access, if any, to tech support and customer services.
- (9) Most are expensive, around \$150 per month.
- (10) You have no choice, and must host your site with them.

This trend of business owners creating and maintaining websites can become very costly in both dollars and time spent on the website. The platforms are easy to use but have dirty little secrets that can devastate a business and its customers

and give a false feeling of a job well done.

A website is a living communication channel or tool that provides a current and future track record of the business. It is your public presence and it creates and sets expectations of the level of professionalism and quality of doing business with you – good or bad.

Two questions you should ask before moving forward with a DIY platform:

Does the website platform equal or surpass the quality of your work?

Is a DIY platform good enough for your existing and future customers?

We don't know what we don't know. Well-credentialed and experienced website creation and management companies will do dozens of things on your behalf as the routine of creating your site.

A fake internet professional who struggles to assume the servicing of your online presence, for example, will most likely come up short in other finesse areas as well, such as search engine optimization and functionality techniques.

Not only do you risk your online reputation, you won't be aware of the problem because it is not your area of expertise. Plunging sales figures may be your only clue, but how do you attribute the problem to something you don't even know about?

You can't correct a problem until you know what it is, and don't look to your chosen fake internet professional for solutions because frequently it is naïve beyond the basics.

Of course, some bottom-fishing business owners see only cost as the deciding factor. Their customers don't think or buy that way. They want/deserve functionality and a professional look and feel, with no navigation problems, easy contact and support from empowered customer service reps.

You may think you are saving cash, but you'll never see the orders you don't get. While cost control is important to any business, it is very unusual for a company to cost-control itself into a profit.

Sooner or later, it will need sales, and today, that means having parity with competitors, both in person and online.

There can be a world of difference between cheap and reasonable. The easiest way to start this process is to confirm – not just think or feel – that your website and domain are your property.

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