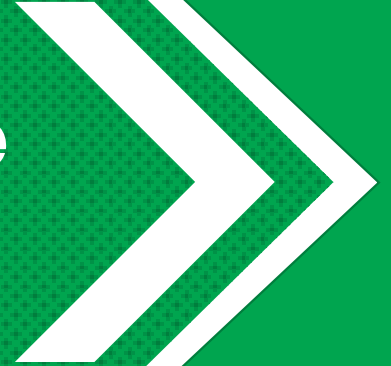


Freeparking

**How to get a Website
up and running**



It's so easy, your Nana could do it.

It boils down to 5 simple steps.

Find and register your domain name

1

Set up email accounts

2

Decide what you want on your website

3

Build it yourself or get it done for you

4

Get your website hosted

5

There are times when 'the internet' can seem like a scary and mysterious thing. Like when you want to get your own website off the ground, and you're not sure where to start.

Well, it's time to take a deep breath and relax. Because the truth is, getting your own website up and running is no harder than choosing what to watch on TV. With this little guide in your hands you'll soon know how to get your site built and how to get it online.

So read on, and you'll quickly learn how to do each of these - and to make sense of the 'jargon'.



A few things to ponder before you start.

Before you crack on, it's worth answering a few questions.
Like, why would you have a website in the first place?

The reasons for having a website just keep increasing every day. For a start, over 80% of New Zealanders are now online. Whenever anyone's looking for anything, it's a fair bet they'll start by searching the web - in many cases using Google. If you don't have a presence on the web, nobody's going to find you. Now, that might be fine if you don't want to be found. But for the rest of us, especially if you run any kind of business, being online is essential.

Most NZ businesses and organisations are small enterprises. But customers still expect professional standards. A website is like your shop window to the world: it's often the first point of contact a customer will have with you. So it pays to get it right. That doesn't mean it has to be vast and complex, just that your website works well and is easy for people to use. Your website projects professionalism in other ways, too. You can set up email accounts using the business name, rather than xtra, gmail or hotmail addresses.

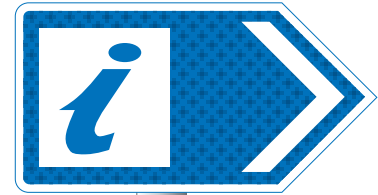
So there are a lot of advantages to having a website. And the good news is that setting one up doesn't have to be an expensive or lengthy process. Nowadays, there are all sorts of great tools that let you build a professional-looking site yourself. Plus, if you do need help, it doesn't have to cost a fortune. Visit www.freeparking.co.nz and you'll see exactly what we mean.

"It's hard to assume any other supplier could offer a superior service for the same price point."

Isherwood Bed & Breakfast Apartment - www.isherwoodwarkworth.co.nz

Help! I don't know where to begin!

Relax. Getting your website up and running is an easy-to-understand process. Here's a basic overview:



Find and register your domain name

1

The first thing to do is get yourself a 'domain name'.

A domain name is effectively your address on the internet.

We'll fill you in on choosing a good name, including what they call domain name extensions (.com, .co.nz, .org etcetera), a bit later on. Plus we'll show you a simple way to see if the name is available and how you can get it.

Set up email accounts

2

Once you've registered your domain name you'll want to get an email account set up with it.

You can do this at the same time as setting up your website or separately. We'll tell you how - and how much you can expect to pay - in the next chapter.

Decide what you want on your website

3

You'll want to think about what you actually want on your website beyond your 'home' or 'landing' page (this is the page visitors first see when they come to your site). Start small and keep it simple is our recommendation. You can always add other things later (we'll show you how).

Build it yourself
or get it done for you

4

Once you know what you want on your website, you have two options: build it yourself, or get a design company to do it for you.

DIY, as any Kiwi knows, will save you money. But there are ways to get professional help, design input and set-up expertise without breaking the bank.

Visit www.freeparking.co.nz for some examples and costs - you might be surprised how affordable it can be.

If you are going the DIY route, you'll find the 'What makes a good website?' chapter very useful. DIY can be fine, so long as you don't need a flash, animated and interactive website. For that, you'll probably need help from a web designer. But if your site ambitions are a little more straightforward, it's amazing what you can achieve using a good DIY method, like Freeparking's SiteBuilder. If you've already lined up everything you're going to put into the website, the copy and images, you can have your site online in a few hours.

"The support and help I have had from Freeparking during the set up of my hosting services has been amazing. They made a potentially complicated process easy and stress-free."

Lisa Coulson - www.slicecreative.co.nz

Get your
website hosted

5

The other consideration is 'hosting'. Another bit of jargon, but all it means is where is your website info stored and who's looking after it. Nowadays, the 'where' can be anywhere. Your actual site could be hosted in Canada or the USA but nobody would know. What you need is a hosting service that is flexible, reliable and cost-effective.

Going local will give you the benefit of being able to get help during the hours that you need it and without expensive international phone calls.

"Freeparking developed a very professional looking website and we reached exactly the outcome that we were after... we are getting very good feedback regarding the website from both our existing and new customers."

Euro Quality Painters Limited - www.europainters.co.nz



Let's get started.

The obvious first port of call is a domain name that's the same as your business or organisation name. Even if your name is long, that's OK - the advantages are that people will remember it and they'll know it's your company.

If you're still working on what your business should be called, then try to keep it short, make sure it's easy to spell and that it is not likely to be confused with a different spelling when you hear it.

Choosing a name

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If your name is two or more words, put them into one word and try to avoid using hyphens.

Extensions

A domain name extension is the bit at the end - the '.co.nz' or '.com' and many others.

There are some practical things to consider here. The .org or .org.nz extensions are useful for charities and other non-commercial organisations. It clearly states you are not a commercial company, and that may be very important.

The .com extension is the most international option and, if you're targeting overseas markets, this could be the best option. But if your market is primarily New Zealand, or your target audience expect to find you in New Zealand, then .co.nz could be your best bet.

Securing your domain name

Right, you've settled on 'mybusinessname.co.nz' as your domain name. What next? You'll need to search to see if it's available (you can do this on www.freeparking.co.nz). If it is, with the extension or extensions you need, then you can simply purchase them.

If the name is taken, then try adding 'td' or 'nz' to the name. It's better than something completely different.

If you're struggling or have any questions, get in contact with **www.freeparking.co.nz** and they can guide you through it.



Email Accounts

Domain sorted now for your email.

Cool, you've got your domain name secured and paid for. Well, for the first year at least (you'll have to renew the domain name registration annually). Now you'll want to crack on and start using it.

You can buy an email-only package if you want to have a professional look with email addresses using your domain name. You can do this even if you are not yet ready to take the next step to creating a website. If you are on the journey to building a website, then most website hosting or SiteBuilder packages come with a number of email accounts (mailboxes) included.

Email-only plans come with as many or as few mailboxes as you like. A mailbox is generally used by one person, so having 5 mailboxes means that 5 different people can use email addresses @yourdomain.co.nz. Don't forget that you can point several different email addresses at each mailbox, so you don't need a separate mailbox per email address. Again, **www.freeparking.co.nz** have off-the-shelf plans you can purchase for this.

Usually, once you provide your domain name, email can be up and running in minutes. You'll be given details on how to check your emails via webmail (using your web browser) or simply add the account to your existing email programme such as Outlook.

Now you're in business.

"It was a lot easier than I thought it would be to setup a website and the Freeparking team have been so great - extremely helpful!!!"

Paula Vermeer - www.paulamaree.co.nz

So, what's it going to be?

The first thing you need to do is have a long, hard think about what sort of site you really need. And what you need to assemble to go on it.



Site Content

The first thing you need to do is have a long, hard think about what sort of site you really need. And what you need to assemble to go on it.

Some things you might want as part of your website include customer testimonials or case studies; a gallery with pictures; some background information about your organisation or key people; a 'Contact us' or 'How to find us' section. You may even want to add a sales facility, or 'e-commerce' in the jargon. All of these things are do-able, and you can scale up as you see the need.

Here are a few questions that might help

- What is the purpose of the site? Is it to provide detailed information as a follow up to advertising? Is it to build credibility, or help customers make the right purchase decision? Is it a sales channel?
- Who is your audience? Where are they?
- How well do visitors know your product or service? Does it need explanation?
- Why would people visit? Are they researching, buying, experiencing a problem?

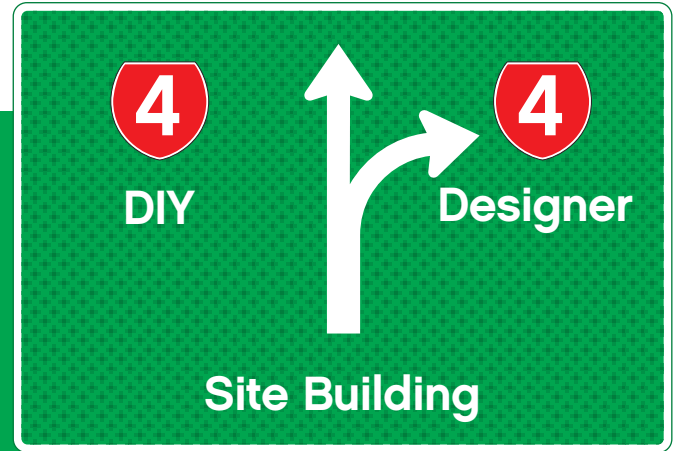
- Will people want to buy online? Would they prefer to talk to someone via an 0800 number, or email an order?
- How do you want to be contacted? And when can you be contacted? Phone calls? Email? Text? Skype? Messaging?
- What are we selling, here? Is it an experience that goes beyond a commonly understood product or service?

Do some research

- The internet is a big place. Chances are, someone out there is doing something similar. So check them out.
- Cut and paste. Copy or write down all best bits from the sites you like. What are they doing well? What do you want to avoid? Think about the content, the design and the navigation.
- Find the gap. Look at your closest competitors and see what your target audience are going to see. Search out the weaknesses and think how you can fill that gap in customers' eyes - are they too confusing, too expensive, lack product range, don't deliver or charge a lot for delivery?

Okay, it's choice time. DIY or Designer?

DIY website building is getting easier and easier. You can do it using online programs that require no specialist skills at all. Usually, you buy a package that includes searching and registering your domain name, a number of email accounts and hosting. What you will need to have is a pretty clear picture of what you want on your website.



To help you choose between DIY or getting your site done by a professional, we've laid out the differences in the following table:

DIY WEBSITE		PROFESSIONALLY DESIGNED WEBSITE	
Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons
Low cost	Takes time and work	High quality job	More expensive
Easy-to-use packages	Needs basic understanding of the web	Unique design, look & feel	You don't learn 'how to' as much
Easily updated using CMS	Needs understanding of eg Word, Powerpoint	Capable of delivering more content	May be harder to update. May require 3rd party to be involved
Fun, sense of achievement	Not suitable for complex content	Can include animation, interaction and multimedia	Takes Longer
Pre-designed templates	May lack unique design, looks templated or may incur cost if custom design chosen Harder to include e-commerce etc.	Projects quality	Potential misunderstanding of needs working with a designer
		Higher spec - e.g e-commerce	
		Confidence in result	
		Advice and support	

Drawing your needs up against the above criteria, it should be pretty simple to choose which way you want to go.

If you want your website professionally designed talk to us on 0800 GETAWEBBSITE or if you want to do it yourself here are some good pointers to get you started.

What makes a good website?

With so many of us having used the internet for so long, you'd think people would have a pretty clear idea of what makes a good website. But you don't have to go far to find some pretty terrible examples.

To avoid the mistakes, here's some useful tips on making your website the best it can be.

Design

- Keep it clean and simple.
- Don't use too many colours.
- Don't use too many fonts and avoid 'fancy' fonts. Usually 'sans serif' fonts are best. Sans serif means the letters lack the 'fiddly bits'. Here are some examples:

Serif - **Times, Bodo**ni, **Big Caslon**

Sans Serif - **Verdana, Arial, Futura**

There's no law against using a serif font. It's just that the letters can be harder to read and 'break up' when small, particularly against a coloured background.

- Try not to make pages overly long, so people have to scroll too much. Ideally, you'd want your whole page to appear on an average laptop screen.
- Ensure all the really important stuff is easily visible. If you really want visitors to contact you, make your phone number or email link prominent on the first page they get to. Don't hide your contact details somewhere else.

Navigation

By 'navigation' we mean everything associated with going from one part of the site to another - opening a new page, finding the button or other means you use to do that, opening a video or increasing the size of an image, even how you display which pages you have on the site.

You should make navigating around your site as easy as possible. That way people are more likely to find what they are looking for. And, because they don't get irritated and frustrated, people tend to stay on easy-to-navigate sites longer and explore more of them.

Content

The briefer, the better. People scan web pages, so stacks of text will probably not be read. Use sub headlines to break up text and get the point across quickly.

If you have suitable images, use them. If a 'stock' photo might help, you can consider paying for one or there are a few online libraries that offer free images you can download.

A few tips on writing style

Keep sentences short. Anything more than 18 words in a sentence is long - try to shorten it or break into two.

Avoid flowery language and long words. Keep the writing simple and direct. Never use a long word where there's a shorter alternative.

A simple structure to get you started

Here's a suggestion on how to organise your website. You might want to add or change something but this basic structure should help.

- 'Home' page. This is the first page most visitors will see. It's the introduction to everything else on your website and it could be the only page people actually visit. So, any action you want visitors to take should be flagged up here. Contact details, 'buy now', subscribe - make sure you can do it from the home page.

- 'About us'. Rather than clutter your home page with detailed background, history or values, put them on an 'About us' page. The idea is to build trust and confidence as people learn more about your organisation.
- 'Products' or 'Services'. Gives you a chance to detail what you offer. Keep it simple, short and to the point. Why is it good, why should I buy it and what's the price?
- 'How to order'. Details the process. Ensure it is simple and tell people such things as how long the process will take, when they can expect delivery etc.
- 'Contact us'. As well as ensuring people can contact you straight off the Home page, a 'Contact us' section lets you offer other ways of getting in touch. This section can include your physical and postal addresses, a map or a link to Google maps.
- 'Enquiries'. You may want to have a separate 'Enquiries' section that allows people to email in questions, You can also include an 'FAQs section' if you are aware of frequently asked questions and you can set out the answers.

Right. You've built your site. Now get it hosted

Your website needs to be stored on a computer that is part of the World Wide Web, or 'hosted' on a 'server'. Once it is, that's when your little baby can step out into the big, wide world of the internet and 'go live'.



Site Hosting

There are lots of options when it comes to hosting, some of which are guaranteed to send your head spinning. What you need is something that's simple to understand, affordable, reliable and meets your needs, with enough flexibility to cope as your business grows.

If you check out www.freeparking.co.nz you'll see the type of hosting packages we mean. Remember that it's easy to upgrade and add extra capabilities as your business grows. So, to start with, there are only a few things to consider:

- For a basic website, 5 email accounts should be enough to start with. You probably won't need e-commerce facilities or a database, so a low-cost base plan will get you going.
- If you are going to sell products online, or need more than 5 emails accounts, then go for a hosting plan with e-commerce facilities.
- If you are building your own site using something like SiteBuilder, it's still possible to include all options including e-commerce options.

Other things to be aware of when choosing a hosting provider:

- Reliability and scale. Go with someone who has strong experience and a good reputation. The last thing you want is your website going down all the time. Where are they based? Can you talk to them easily and get them to understand your problems?
- Technical support. You're bound to need some help along the way, so who's got the resources to back you out of a hole when you're in it?
- Price. Hosting, especially for simpler packages, isn't terribly expensive but it's worth shopping around. Remember, cheapest isn't always best. Focus on reliability, service and support.

Still got some questions?

We hope we've inspired you to get that website project under way, by showing that it's not that difficult or expensive. If you're still umm-ing and ah-ing, why not give the friendly people at Freeparking a call or email? They're experts at guiding people like you through getting online, and they will be more than happy to answer any questions.

Just call **0800 FREEPARK** or email info@freeparking.co.nz



Freeparking

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