Computer Tips

Building & Hosting a Website

We all know the advantages of advertising. If you want people to know you have something to offer, then you must let them know. We are familiar with ads on TV, on billboards, in newspapers and magazines. But one of the more modern ways of getting yourself known is by using a website.

A website is a small piece of the Internet which you own and run. Your website can contain any type of information, subject of course to government regulations. You can display your last month's fishing trip photos, the house or car you have for sale, the poems you write, or the fan club you always wanted to start. The list is endless. Businesses and organizations can use a website to display their products, their services, how to find their office, current promotions, or their latest industry news. More and more businesses are even using their websites as virtual shops, providing website visitors the opportunity to buy their products online. The different possibilities of a website are endless, limited really only by your imagination.

To own a website, you first need to select a computer business who provides website hosting. A website hosting business has access to the fast Internet backbone not normally available to the public. For a monthly fee, the hosting business provides you with Internet space in which to build your website. Monthly fees and hosting features vary widely, so it does pay to shop around.

The second thing you will need to do is select and register a domain name. A domain name is an easy-to-remember Internet address, which uniquely identifies you and your site out of the many millions available.

To register your domain you need to contact a domain name registrar, such as Namescout (www.namescout.com.au) or PlanetDomain (www.planetdomain.com). These are businesses that are government certified to sell and manage domain names.

When selecting your domain name, make sure it reflects the purpose of your website. For personal websites, it might incorporate your name, for example, 'katiesplace' or 'toddsdayout'. For businesses or organizations, the domain name should be as close to your trading name as possible. Once you have picked a suitable name, you will need to search the available domain names database, accessible from your registrar's website, to check that your proposed name is not already taken. If it is available, you can then register your name. You must pay a small yearly fee to own your particular domain name.

In our next column we will look at building your website, and getting it up and running. If you have any questions, or would like help in any aspect of owning or creating a website, we are happy to help you. You can contact us on 0419 790 071 during business hours, or you can email us at info@mcsyarraman.com.au anytime. We are happy to assist you.