

## Making Your Mark Online

### Choosing Providers for Web Services

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## Overview

- Learn about the range of options for putting a site together
- Assess your strengths and where you want to put your time.
- Huge number of choices; focus on understanding the broad approaches

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## Copy Writing

- Well-written copy is critical.
- If you don't want to write it yourself, consider subcontracting.

Two web site marketplaces for finding subcontractors:

<http://www.guru.com>

<http://www.elance.com>

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## Logo Design

If you want to look professional, you need professional looking graphics.

A few possibilities:

Katy Putnam (local) - <http://www.kapart.com>

Alexis Garrett (local) - <http://www.adsense2.com>

Stephen Asbury - <http://www.asburydesign.net>

Or - <http://www.guru.com>

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## Photography and Images

### Stock Images:

<http://www.istockphoto.com>

### DIY/Photography

<http://www.tabletopstudio.com>

**Book:** [Taking Great Pictures for eBay Auctions and Online Selling](#) - by Rod March

### Video

<http://www.videomaker.com>

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## DIY – Option 1

Buy a copy of Dreamweaver (about \$350)

use a design included with Dreamweaver, or create your own – but are you a graphic designer?

Buy a web design template from <http://www.templatemonster.com> and modify it with Dreamweaver.

For simple eCommerce functionality, use

Mal's eCommerce – <http://www.mals-e.com>

PayPal Buy Now Buttons – <http://www.paypal.com>

Use a mass-market hosting company like <http://www.godaddy.com>

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## Option 1 Pros and Cons

### Pros

*Dreamweaver includes many designs and fancy widgets you can add to your site*

*Dreamweaver is a WYSIWYG editor*

*TemplateMonster has 1000's of custom designs you can edit with Dreamweaver for around \$50/each*

*Mal's Ecommerce and Paypal are fairly straightforward and work well for smaller product lines.*

*With PayPal Buy Now buttons, you don't need to get a Merchant Account separately.*

### Cons

*Learning to use Dreamweaver, understanding PayPal buttons, downloading and editing templates can take a fair amount of time.*

*Template Monster designs are low-cost, but the "exclusive" price is as much as our whole platform with a custom design.*

*Also, offer customization service (if you don't want to use Dreamweaver), but again, price is significant.*

*Often imply functionality, like "user accounts", but functionality isn't built in to design.*

*Users leave your site when shopping.*

*ex: <http://www.killthelabel.com>*

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## DIY – Option 2

**WordPress Blog – <http://www.wordpress.com>**

**Hire a geek to add plug-ins and install a theme.**

**(<http://www.guru.com> or locally via <http://eugene.craigslist.org>)**

**Add PayPal Buy Now buttons or Mal's Ecommerce for Shopping**

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## Option 2 Pros and Cons

### *Pros*

*A blog lends itself to content updates, which is a big plus.*

*Very easy to use "out of the box".*

*Very inexpensive.*

*No software to install, use your browser to edit the web site.*

### *Cons*

*You'll probably still need a geek for custom design or widgets.*

*A blog format is limiting, a blog can work well as just one section of a larger web site.*

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## DIY – Option 3

***Site Build It – <http://www.sitesell.com>***

***Low Cost CMS (\$299/year now)***

***Includes tools and instructions for developing content.***

***Can add PayPal buttons***

***Example:***

***<http://www.northwestgardenplants.com>***

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## Option 3 Pros and Cons

### *Pros*

*Low Cost*

*Good instructions and easy to use*

*No software to install, use your browser to edit the web site.*

*Includes lots of instruction and tips on making pages search engine friendly*

*Has a large community of users who help each other*

*Good option for an informational site*

### *Cons*

*Web design is not very sophisticated*

*As with other low-cost solutions, not ideal for a large catalog/shopping cart.*

*Site navigation is flat.*

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## Option 4 – Hire a Web Developer

***Search google for phrases like "eugene web design", "eugene web developer"***

***Look at the portfolio of the provider***

***–Look at real live web sites***

***–Review the design, functionality, SEO***

***Contact clients of provider by email or phone and ask about the service.***

***How will updates happen?***

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## Option 4 Pros and Cons

### Pros

*Leave it to an expert. Save time and focus on your message and running your business.*

*The designer may have access to more sophisticated tools for your web site.*

*Professional design skills.*

*Can offer advice and guidance on your online presence.*

### Cons

*Can be expensive.*

*What happens if the designer quits?*

*Changes and updates will usually be billed at an hourly rate.*

*As with other contractors, a lot depends on whether you find a good one.*

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## Option 5 – CMS/Package

***Allows you or a non-technical person to update the site.***

***Can use various platforms***

**Drupal – <http://www.drupal.org>**

**Joomla – <http://www.joomla.org>**

**Drupal and Joomla hosting available at**

**<http://www.siteground.com>**

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## Option 5 Pros and Cons

### Pros

*Work well for large complicated web sites and for organizations where many people need to update the site.*

*Have many plug-ins that add functionality.*

*Include templates for design*

*You can hire a contractor ([guru.com](http://guru.com)?) to customize and do the techie part, while you focus on the content.*

### Cons

*For more advanced features, you will probably still need expert help.*

*Because they are open source, security can be a problem because hackers find vulnerabilities.*

*For design changes, you will need a fair amount of technical skill.*

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## Option 6 – Themed Marketplace

**<http://www.cafepress.com>**

You can sell

\* Merchandise you design including t-shirts, posters, mugs, bumper stickers and much more.

\* Books printed on-demand. Learn more

\* Audio and Data CDs. Learn more

What CafePress.com does

1. Gives you a FREE online shop to promote your products
2. Produces each item when ordered using our unique print-on-demand technology
3. Handles all payment transactions including major credit cards
4. Ships your products worldwide
5. Manages all returns/exchanges
6. Offers customer service via toll-free phone and email
7. Sends you a monthly check for your earnings on sales!

**<http://www.etsy.com>**

A similar model for handcrafted goods.

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## Option 6 Pros and Cons

### *Pros*

*Access to lots of buyers*  
*Easy to use*  
*Free to set up*

### *Cons*

*Cost to sell will be higher than on an independent site.*  
*Limited to certain kinds of products*  
*Competing with like vendors on the same web site*  
*Not your own web site*

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## Option 7 Shopping Cart Platforms

**MightyMerchant** - <http://www.mightymerchant.com>

*Our solution, includes custom development and shopping cart platform, and hosting.*

**Volusion** - <http://www.volusion.com>

*Hosted solution, do-it-yourself with templates or use a developer to customize.*

**1ShoppingCart** - <http://www.1shoppingcart.com>

*Like Volusion*

**osCommerce** - <http://www.oscommerce.com>

*Open source ecommerce (can get hosting at <http://www.siteground.com>).*

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## Option 7 Pros and Cons

### *Pros*

*Features are tailored for the needs of online merchants.*  
*Tighter integration with the rest of your business.*  
*Design flexibility and branding.*  
*End to end solution, a complete solution that goes beyond the web site and helps with order processing, marketing, analytics, etc.*  
*Requires less technical knowledge.*

### *Cons*

*May still need an expert for custom designs.*  
*Can be difficult to use.*  
*Monthly fees are usually higher.*  
*Customer support may be lacking.*  
*It's difficult to evaluate the pros and cons of each provider.*  
*When using an "out of the box" solution, it can be difficult to differentiate your web site.*

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## Accepting Payments Online

### **Merchant Account**

An account with a financial institution that allows you to accept credit cards.

<http://www.mypaymentpartner.com>

### **Payment Gateway**

An internet web site that processes credit card transactions

<http://www.authorize.net>

### **Web Site Integration**

You must connect your web site to the Payment Gateway to process transactions.

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