



Yahoo for Small Business

Build an easy, affordable website with
Yahoo SiteBuilder

As the Web becomes an increasingly essential business tool, the requirements of small business Web hosting customers, from established users to first-time Web site builders, are becoming increasingly complex.

Though many small businesses lack the resources to employ professional Web site designers and the technical know-how to build a complex site on their own, customers are consistently demanding more functionality and complexity than most simple browser-based page-building tools can provide.

YAHOO! SMALL BUSINESS



Yahoo Web Hosting has launched its Site Builder, a powerful and downloadable Web site building tool, and the latest step in Yahoo's efforts to establish itself as the leading provider of Internet solutions for small business.

Developed in-house at Yahoo, the Site Builder tool is a departure from the free Web design tools commonly offered by Web hosting providers. Perhaps the most important difference is that it is a downloadable program that allows users to manage their Web presences from their desktops and publish to Yahoo's Web hosting service, unlike browser-based tools, which usually require users to edit pages online.

According to Tim Roberts, director of product management for Yahoo Small Business, many of the fundamentals of good Web design are built into the product. The company was careful to craft a tool that could offer a template-based approach at first, providing 206 categorized Web page templates and 1,100 royalty-free images, but would allow customers to move easily beyond the constraints of those templates.

"One of the things that we saw was people using templates," says Roberts, "but then feeling as constrained by them, once they got going, as they were helped by them when they started."

Anyone can download site builder for free and use it to design a site, says Roberts, without so much as a Yahoo ID. But to publish the site, the user requires a Yahoo Web hosting account. "We actually found that it was critical for customers to be able to use the tool and build a site without having to pay first," he says. "And then they can actually pull out their credit card and pay for a Yahoo Web hosting account."

One of the other important features of the tool, says Roberts, is that it forgoes any proprietary file formats in favor of standard HTML pages. This, he says, enables customers to continue working with their sites with more complex editing tools, or to hire designers to work with them.

"If you want to use Dreamweaver or FrontPage or any other client tool out there, that's fine," says Roberts. "We just want you to have a successful, professional-looking Web page that you're happy with, and use whatever tool is necessary to do that."

Of course, the other advantage of Site Builder is that it allows users to incorporate functions from throughout the Yahoo network into their Web sites. Customers can incorporate features like maps or driving instructions into their site, or use the popular Yahoo Store to build in e-commerce features.

In fact, says Riley, it is that range of functionality, along with the ongoing effort to meet the changing demands of small businesses that will enable Yahoo to set itself apart as the leading provider of Internet services to small business customers.

Links

Yahoo SiteBuilder Homepage

<http://smallbusiness.yahoo.com/webhosting/sitebuilding.php>

Yahoo Small Business Services Homepage

<http://smallbusiness.yahoo.com/>

Yahoo Hosting Plans

<http://smallbusiness.yahoo.com/webhosting/compare.php>

Yahoo Small Business Merchant Solutions

<http://smallbusiness.yahoo.com/ecommerce/>