



DIY Web Site Solutions for Smaller Churches

Don Nowak

www.miamipresbytery.org
webmanager@miamipresbytery.org

Five Key Purposes of an Effective Church Web Site

Inform Communicate Educate Promote Inspire



An effective church web site should...

- 1. Inform-** The site should provide basic information to its visitors, such as general contact information, mission statement, contact information for staff members, links to Presbyterian (and other) web sites of interest, upcoming events at the church, a calendar, map/directions to the church, an online version of the church newsletter, weekly bulletin, etc.



An effective church web site should...

- 2. Communicate-** The site should provide its visitors with ways to communicate with the church and should provide opportunities for the church to communicate its message and mission to the public.



An effective church web site should...

- 3. Educate-** The site should help its visitors learn more about the programs, ministries, and missions of the church. It may also include other learning opportunities and links for members to enhance the study and practice of their faith.



An effective church web site should...

- 4. Promote-** The site should promote the church and enhance and support its image. In addition, the web site should work to increase the profile of the church among its members, prospective members, and the larger community.



An effective church web site should...

- 5. Inspire:** The site should encourage its visitors in their faith journeys and provide them with information about opportunities to live out their faith by participating in the programs, ministries, and missions of the church. An effective church web site may also include text or audio versions of Sunday sermons to download.



Register a Domain Name

ICANN - International Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

You can register a domain name through a registrar like:

- Domain Central <http://www.domaincentral.com>
- Go Daddy <http://www.godaddy.com>
- Readyhosting <http://www.readyhosting.com>
- Network Solutions <http://www.networksolutions.com>
- Or through most web site hosts

Cost is reasonable: 10-25/yr



Domain name advice from pcusa.org

"A common mistake many congregations make is allowing a volunteer or a vendor to register the domain. Then when the volunteer leaves or you decide to change vendors you don't have access to the domain.

"Your domain name is a church asset, just like any other property you own. Keep the registration contract and passwords on file in the church office and be sure you renew your registration when it expires."



Main features of many DIY web site services

- No web site design experience is required. No programming or HTML knowledge necessary.
- No special software is needed. Interface is Internet-based.
- A variety of predesigned templates
- Easily edit web pages, add text, images, in some cases audio and video.

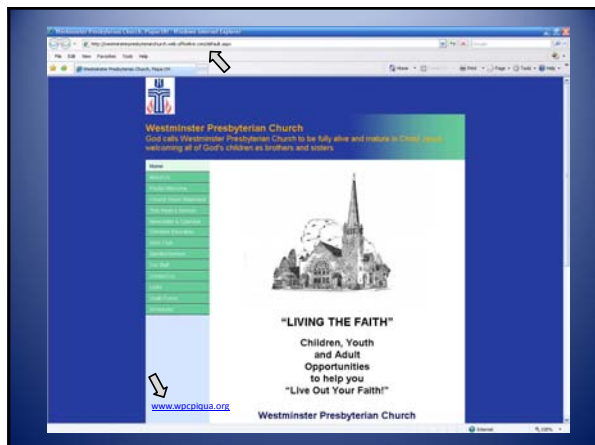
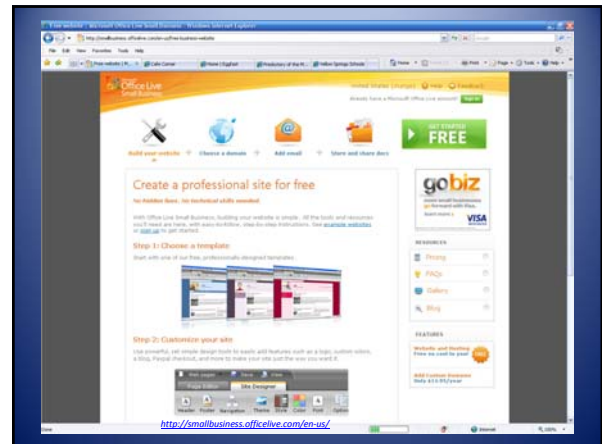
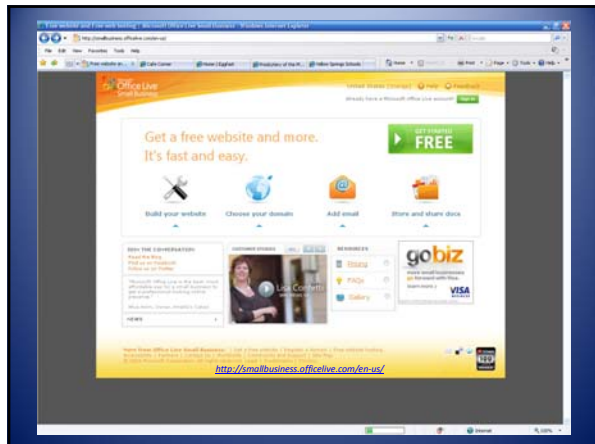
Main features of many DIY web site services

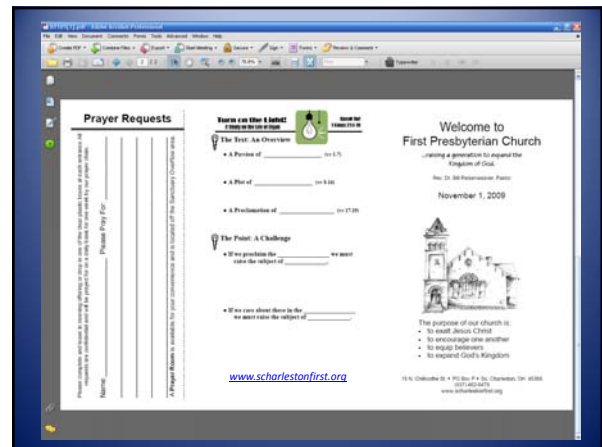
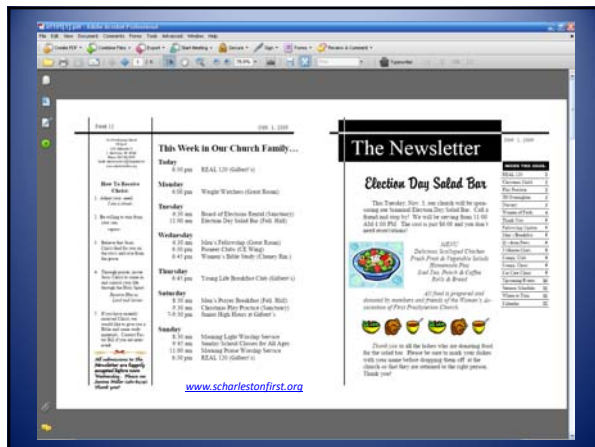
- Add pages to your web site. (Some allow an unlimited number of pages.)
- A church events calendar
- Upload documents like newsletters, weekly bulletins, registration forms, etc.
- Email accounts: e.g. pastor@yourchurch.com
- Reasonable cost. Pricing includes hosting.

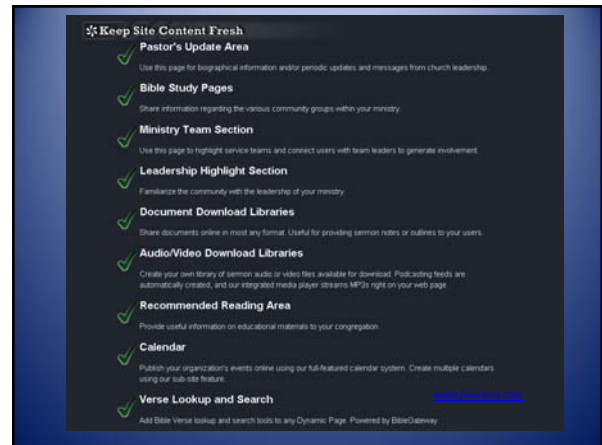
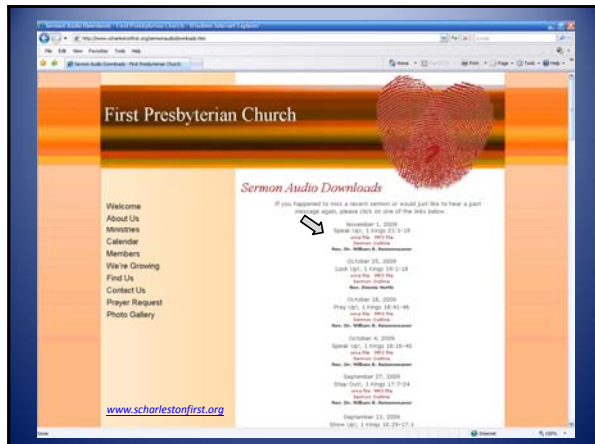
A partial list of "do-it-yourself" church web site service providers and their current fees:

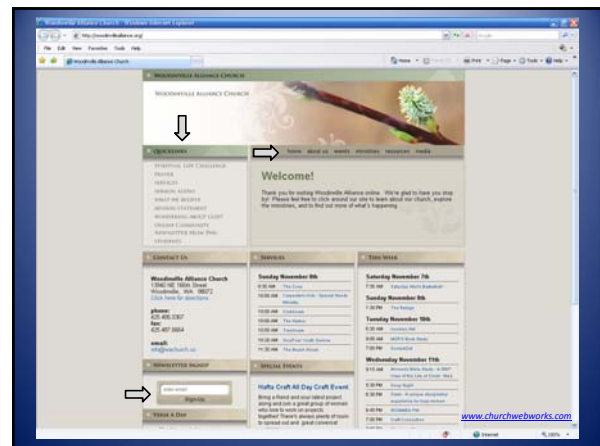
- MS Office Live: <http://smallbusiness.officelive.com> 0-165+/yr
- eChurchOnline <http://www.echurchonline.com> 120-360/yr
- Church 1 2 3 <http://www.church123.com> 370/yr
- Finalweb <http://www.finalweb.com/main.asp> 480/yr
- Church Webworks <http://www.churchwebworks.com>
588/yr (under 100) 828/yr (100-250) 1188/yr (251-500)
- CyberChurch <http://www.cyberchurch.com> 120-360/yr
- My Church Site <http://www.mychurchsite.com> 300+/yr
- WebMedley <http://www.webmedley.com> 200-500/yr











For the most effective and useful web site...

- Always keep your five purposes in mind: *Inform, Communicate, Educate, Promote, and Inspire*
- Always keep your web site up to date
- Make use of photos & other graphics to add visual interest
- Decide who can manage your web site most effectively: Staff? A motivated and committed volunteer? Both?

For the most effective and useful web site...

- Be sure your web site manager is receiving church information in a timely manner so your web site can be kept up to date.
- Create a church members & friends email list. Use the list to generate emails that provide timely information to subscribers and link them to your site for more. Consider Constant Contact : www.constantcontact.com

