

Using a Web Design Program

by Dianne E. Butts

How do you build a web site? I had no idea. My husband, Hal, knew our internet provider could host my site. He visited their web site and found pricing information: \$20 a month, \$40 to “register my domain” for two years, \$40 set up fee (though the current special waived that). I signed up and www.DianneEButts.com was available. But what should I do next?

One web site designer offered to build my site, if I provided the written copy, for several hundred dollars. I'd pay more for updates and changes. That sounded expensive.

Since my book editor had her own site, I asked her what she thought. “That’s too much to pay,” she said. “Why don’t you buy Microsoft FrontPage and build your own?”

Microsoft FrontPage?

Hal and I shopped software outlets and discovered programs specifically for building web sites. We bought FrontPage for less than half the cost the designer quoted me.

Hal installed the program and I set aside three days to begin learning it. The first morning I opened the program and was delighted to discover how easy it was to use. I cut and pasted my book’s back cover blurb onto a page, created several other pages, and had a web site ready to publish to the internet in only three hours!

FrontPage has “themes” which create matching banners, buttons, and wallpaper to make my sight look professional. It also has a wealth of options I can add as I learn about them, such as a “hits counter” or an automatic date showing when I last updated a page.

The program makes updating my web site so easy I can add a page or update information, publish it to the internet, and be back to my writing project in less than an hour.

This article with sidebars appeared in the June 2003 issue of *The Christian Communicator*. Please note Microsoft discontinued FrontPage as of March 2007, replacing it with Expressions Web. (An update is available for owners of any previous version of FrontPage.) Also, I have found companies who register domains and provide hosting for far less than I quoted in this article. Please see the Resources page on the “For Writers” section of my web site for more information about where to find Expressions Web and my recommendations for your domain registration and hosting at www.DianneEButts.com