

A Web Host Checklist

See Chapter 3 for complete details about what to look for when selecting a Web hosting firm. Once you start researching your options, print out this checklist to keep track of what to look for when picking your site's home on the Web.

- _____ **Web space.** 20 MB is acceptable if you're getting free Web space from your ISP. If you're paying a monthly fee for Web space, you'll almost certainly get hundreds of megabytes or more. This is far more than you'll ever be able to use, even if you want to include photos, audio, or other large files. Many Web hosts offer gigabytes of space, knowing that almost no one has the time to upload that much information.
- _____ **Bandwidth.** You don't need much. 1 GB works for most text-centric Web sites, but look for 5 GB or more if you want to provide large files or are expecting to create a popular Web destination. See the box on page 71 for tips that can help you estimate your bandwidth requirements.
- Domain name.** This is your identity—*www.You.com*. Ideally, your Web host will throw in the domain name for free.
- Email addresses.** These go with the domain name. Look for at least one POP mailbox. It's better to have five or more, because it lets you give separate email addresses to family members, or use them for different purposes. Also look for Web-based access to your email.
- FTP access.** This lets you easily upload your files.

- Tech support.** The best companies provide 24-hour tech support, ideally through a toll-free number or a live chat feature that lets you ask a tech support person questions using your browser.
- Server-side scripts.** Although Web server programming is too complex for most ordinary people, this feature gives you some room to grow. If your Web site supports a server-side programming technology (like CGI, ASP, or ASP.NET), you could conceivably take someone else's script and use it in your Web pages to carry out an advanced task, like collecting visitor information with a form (page 339).
- FrontPage extensions.** If you create your Web site with Expression Web (the successor to FrontPage), you can use FrontPage server extensions to get a few extra frills. For example, FrontPage server extensions include server-side scripts that count the number of visitors to a certain page and let visitors upload files to the Web server.