

HOW TO CREATE YOUR E-COMMERCE WEBSITE IN A DAY



A BEGINNER'S GUIDE FOR BEGINNERS
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How to create your e-commerce website in a day

A beginner's guide for beginners

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Foreword

I recently built a website on my own and I did it within a day. Admittedly, I have no experience in building a website barring a two day crash course in HTML I took over ten years ago which is all fuzzy memory now. I built my own website so I could sell my e-books from there as the big retailers I submitted my e-books to, such as Amazon and Apple, were not selling in Asia.

Every time someone I knew wanted to buy one of my books, they got the annoying ‘Not sold in your territory’ message. And after a few attempts they invariably gave up. I wouldn’t blame them, people have their lives and buying my books is not a priority. I had to make it easier for them to buy, as I didn’t want to miss out on a fairly large audience, a continent full of audience as a matter of fact.

I did a lot of research and one theme kept recurring: every author should have a website. Not a blog, but a website. Because a dedicated website shows up in search engines more often than a regular blog.

There are lots and lots of options. The World Wide Web is full of so many choices for every step of the way to building a website it leaves you dizzy. From deciding who is the best domain registrar to who is the best host to who is the best within a particular category, like in website builders.

We’ll cover each of the topics in detail, and I will explain in the best way that I can what I gathered and which companies I went with, and why. While I encourage you to do your own research, I hope that what I found out will be of use to you and help you save time and effort. I am not an affiliate, so my views are objective and based on my experience.

And this is what I learnt:

You need a website, a dot com website.

That was the first lesson. I had just finished writing my stories and published them at Amazon, Apple and other retailers, and I was wondering what else I could do besides telling everybody I knew and sharing my links on my Facebook page. I had three books and many retailers, and many links, so it could have been a bit confusing for the people wanting to buy.

I figured I needed a single portal which could direct people to all these retailers so I set about researching which was the best way to get the process going. All the findings led me to one conclusion: if you are serious about selling your goods, whether it's an e-book or mp3 recordings, or whatever it maybe, you need a website. Something like yourdomain.com, I gathered, was the most effective way to get into search engines and make your presence felt in the vast world of the Internet.

That was the beginning of a long and arduous journey, of endless research on the Net for a reputable domain registrar, a reliable hosting company, the right website builder and the best e-commerce-friendly sites among others.

Why do you need a website?

A website with your own domain name looks and sounds professional. It's like having your name on the board outside your office. Whether you are an author, architect, a freelancer, an artist or a small café, it makes sense to have your own website. Not a blog, as that's hosted on somebody else's site, like Google or WordPress. It's like renting a back room in a crowded office block, to draw a parallel.

A website of your own gives you credibility and makes it easier for people searching for what you offer to get to your site quickly through search engines.

So what do you need?

First things first: a domain name.

The first thing you need to build a website is a domain name. It's like your home address online. It's what people look for or search for when they want to visit your site; it's where they are led to when people search for products, services or topics related to yours.

When you choose a domain name, make sure it's easy to pronounce and simple. Imagine meeting a friend at a bus stop, and you have a minute to tell him or her about your new website. Any name that's complicated will likely not register on people's mind. So it's better to choose a name that's simple, memorable and ideally describes the nature of your business.

The other option to decide which name works best is to look it up using Google's Keyword Tool. This will tell you if anyone has a similar business name so you can avoid that, or see how many people have searched for that particular word. The more the searches for a particular word or phrase, the more the likelihood of your name coming up in search engine results. This is critical in driving traffic to your website.

All right, you have decided to start your own domain.com web site, you have decided on a catchy name, now what? You will need to register it with one of the many domain name registrars. Before that, you need to check if the name you want is available. Just search for domain name registration, and it will throw up a bunch of results, you can choose any of them and check if your preferred name is available. Quite likely, it will take you to GoDaddy or a link to the top ten registrars.

When you are sitting down to register your domain name, it's always good practice to keep a few alternative names handy just in case someone else has registered the name you had in mind. For example, I wanted 'thewritingguru'. But it was taken along with some other options I had, but 'the-writing-guru' was available. The debate is still on whether you should use hyphens in your domain name or not. Some say you shouldn't, some say you should. It's entirely up to you. Again, remember the bus stop conversation.

Which Domain Registrar?

Now, there are several options as is the case with anything these days on the web and it can be confusing. By the way, if you are wondering what can go wrong with registering a simple name with a registrar, well, apparently a lot. There are stories of people who have had their domain names taken away from them when they failed to renew. And then there are stories of those who had their domain names stolen by the registrars. After weeks of research carefully filtering those with an iffy reputation (based on customer reviews), cost and customer service metrics, I had a handful of options.

They were: Name.com, Namecheap, Gandi and Dynadot. That's pretty much the list a casual search in Google will return. I further narrowed the list down to Name.com and Namecheap. Both are good, feature friendly interfaces, and have good reviews. I chose Namecheap as they had reasonable rates and I found their customer service prompt. I registered my domain name which took all of ten minutes, and I received a warm welcome email from the CEO, thanking me for choosing Namecheap and promising support, which was a nice gesture. They also have a Live Chat support which is very useful.

Ok, now that you have created a memorable domain name, registered with a domain registrar, and decided to build a website, what do you do? This is the fun part. You get to decide how to build your website. If you are thinking of farming it out to a freelancer or a friend, think again. Building your own website is exciting, and really, it's not that difficult. Last year I paid someone to set up my company website and I realise now I could have easily done it myself if I had spent some time looking around and learnt how to do it on my own.

Hosting companies

You're almost there, just one more step to creating your website.

If I thought the choice of domain registrars was confusing, the world of hosting companies had even more to make me go dizzy with names and packages and prices. I spent nearly a month sifting through various hosting companies, poring through the reviews and working out a list of possible names I could choose from.

The thing with reviews is that for every two positive reviews, there are twelve negative reviews. Another point you might want to keep in mind is to look for the most recent reviews, because a company that did well ten years ago may well have been bloated with growth and indifference over the years, and conversely a start-up ten years ago that didn't do well might have put a decent system in place and grown to be a good company. Which means what was a positive review in the past may not be of any value now. So enter the year you are in when searching, say you are looking for reviews of XYZ company, enter 'reviews of XYZ 2013', and read through as many as you possibly can to arrive at a sensible decision.

[NOTE: A hosting site is like a plot of land where you build your house. If your domain name is like an address, your web site is like a house with that address, and its different pages are the different rooms.]

Which hosting company?

Conventional wisdom has it that you don't host your site with the company you buy the domain name from, I don't know why, but having done that last year with my company, I decided to heed the advice and built my site with someone else.

Before we get into that, I want to tell you about a fantastic organisation called Udemy. It's an online education portal where people teach you everything from coding HTML and JavaScript to publishing your e-book to designing your website to launching a start-up and everything in between. A lot of the courses are free. I found a couple of useful courses on building websites using WordPress installation. And these courses give you links to web hosting companies with discount coupons because the authors happen to be affiliates of those companies. This came in handy while I was shortlisting the hosting companies.

I had a list that included the following companies: Hostgator, Green Geeks (from the Udemy course authors), Bluehost (from my friends and colleagues), Inmotion (from forum members on the internet), Hostpapa, which was the cheapest but had negative reviews and iPage. I made a shortlist by avoiding those with many negative reviews (it's like the old saying, if ten people are saying what's that tail doing on your back, you better turn and look, they can't all be wrong).

That narrowed the choice to Green Geeks and Bluehost when I stumbled onto this quirkily named American company called A Small Orange (ASO). Besides their friendly interface and unusual name, ASO had a range of price plans that made sense. Their starter plan was just a couple of dollars a month (around \$30 a year), of course the storage was limited but I was told that was enough for an author website which is what I wanted. Their second plan was a reasonable \$5 a month for 1GB. And when I compared that to my company's plan with Vodien, a local web host in Singapore who were charging me \$120 a year for 5GB and a list of benefits which most offer, this still made sense.

Once you decide which of these hosting companies works for you, make sure they have cPanel configuration. Most of them do but some may not. You need cPanel to install WordPress to build your site. We'll cover this in the next chapter.

WordPress

What is WordPress?

WordPress is web software you can use to create beautiful websites and blogs. As the site (www.wordpress.org) says, you can have a blog about your cat or host a successful company's site. Wordpress.com is a blogging site, which makes it easy for you to create great looking blogs, whereas Wordpress.org needs a host (like Hostgator or A Small Orange) to install the software in. You can read more about it here <http://en.support.wordpress.com/com-vs-org/>.

Installing WordPress on your host using their cPanel

It sounds daunting but don't let it scare you. Once you get past the technical names, it's actually quite easy. What happens with hosting companies is that when you sign up, they send you an email with all the details and a separate user id and password for cPanel access. It's nothing but a control panel. Here's where the Udemy courses will come in handy for you, they take you step by step in setting up your website using cPanel and installing WordPress. Or you can do a YouTube search which will return more than a handful of results you can work with.

Your hosting company will give you two options to launch WordPress to build your website: Softaculous or Fantastico. Check which one the host supports (you can see it on the cPanel when you scroll down), and click install. It's that simple. Once it's done, you can play around with the various widgets, pages and design elements to build your website. It's a lot of fun and a very enjoyable process. When I started my company last year, I paid someone to design my website and launch it after registering with a local hosting company (going against the conventional wisdom that states that you never host with the company you register the domain name with, but it worked out ok for me in this instance). Now I realise I could have done it on my own and had fun building it for less.

I was all set to sign up for ASO's \$5 plan when I discovered another way of building a website. With Website Builders.

What are Website Builders?

Website builders are designed to appeal to novices and people with little or no coding experience. They use a simple WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) drag and drop method to help anyone build a stunning website in a very short time. If you have coding experience, by all means try Dreamweaver or Kompozer or any similar software. But I wanted to build a website quickly and focus more on my writing and less on the steep learning curve involved with coding, HTML, CSS etc. That's why I chose to go with Website Builders.

Website Builders, who is right for you?

In one of the courses I took on Udemy, someone had mentioned Yola. I signed up for a free trial and checked out what they had. That's one good thing about Website Builders; all of them give you a free account with limited features so you can try it on for size. Some of them will offer a free trial with a choice to upgrade at the end of the trial period.

I did more research and discovered a few more interesting options. These are: Weebly, Wix, Jimdo, SquareSpace and Edicy. I tried all of them and deliberated a week deciding between Jimdo and Weebly before finally settling for Weebly.

All of them work on a drag and drop method of building your site, and give you a choice of templates to decide the look and feel of your web site. Here are my observations:

SquareSpace. Personally, I found SquareSpace a bit clunky to work with. You can't immediately see what you are working on ('no live preview') as you have to work on the page and refresh for it to show what you've done. And the templates were limiting, at the time of writing they had a dozen or so. Also, they were a bit pricier compared to the rest.

Jimdo. I quite liked it. It was a close competitor to Weebly in my reckoning. But I found it a bit clunky for some reason and not as easy as Weebly although Jimdo is optimised for e-commerce.

Wix. It's quite a funky and interesting site but when I discovered that you can't change your template once you've settled on one, I gave it a wide berth.

Edicy. I really liked the simplicity and user friendliness of Edicy. Elegant, uncluttered and simple. But pricier, and doesn't fully support e-commerce and the storage is 5GB.

Weebly. I liked Weebly and still like it although it's only been a couple of months since I signed up with them. It's simple, easy to use, has good customer support, a live chat that works on weekdays but I find their email support pretty good too. Read more about why I chose Weebly in the next chapter.

Why Weebly?

I chose Weebly because I found it simple to use. It's truly drag and drop, with unlimited storage space and you can add up to 10 sites (of course these additional sites will be subdomains, as in yoursite.weebly.com). Weebly provides its own stat tracking system. The support is quite prompt, I see that they have a live chat desk but I haven't tried it yet. There are enough resources to reach out to in case you have a question or an issue. They also have a Facebook page where you can post your question and someone is bound to answer your query.

There are two downsides which hopefully they will fix soon. One is Weebly doesn't give you an email address, which is ok by me I use my personal one. Two is that their e-commerce capabilities might feel a bit limiting to some as Weebly accepts only PayPal and Google checkout. I use Gumroad, a really simple solution which I'll cover later.

After trying Weebly for free for a while, I decided to upgrade to the Pro version. I pay about US\$99 annually and I'm quite happy with it so far.

There is nothing drastically wrong with the others, it was a matter of personal choice and how it resonated with me. Luckily, as mentioned earlier, they all have a free trial period so you can check them out and draw your own conclusions.

Sign up for Weebly Pro.

There are two types of accounts you can open with Weebly. The regular account will give you a subdomain which will be www.yoursitename.weebly.com. You don't need a domain name registered for this account. But since we are talking about a .com site with a registered domain name, you need Weebly Pro.

Point your domain to Weebly.

Once you sign in and create a Pro account, you'll have to fill out your domain name and point it to your Weebly page. To do this, you will have to go to Namecheap (or whichever domain registrar you chose) and point your domain name to Weebly otherwise your domain name won't be recognised. It's a bit like changing your house address and not informing the post office. The process is simple and is explained clearly in the knowledge base section of Namecheap (I'm sure others have this section too). You can also do a Google search if you want. If you still find it difficult, then you can check with the live chat support team and they will help you, just give them the necessary details, at least that's what I was told.

Choose a theme and start building!

That's it! You're all set to build your website, all by yourself, with no geek's help, no frantic calls to people you know about FTP, uploading, coding or javascripting or CSS. There's something exciting, something triumphant about building your own website from the ground up, from the first page.

Weebly works in blocks. Blocks of text, images with text, images, header, footer, block quotes ... you name it, you can drag and drop to build your website.

The interface gives you basic options you can build on. You add pages using the Pages tab, organise them according to your structure, choose a template using the

Design tab, drag and drop the necessary elements using the Build tab, and use the Settings tab to edit users, add codes from search engines, password protect a page etc.

Here are a few tips that might help you.

Always have a clear idea what you want to achieve with your site (e.g.: promote my e-books, sell my products or services, raise awareness about my products etc.).

Keep the number of tabs to four or five as anything extra will go under the 'more' tab and will not be available at first glance. Ideally, it should be Home, About me, Products, Services, Contact. And you can have sub-pages to feature relevant content under the respective tabs which are created with the Add Page button.

IMPORTANT: Once you settle on a template and start building your pages, make sure to select the 'Save to this page' option, otherwise whatever change you make on one page will override any change you may have made or any look you may have chosen for the other pages. This can be very annoying and frustrating especially if you have built a whole site, and decide to make some change on one page and discover that it has changed the whole site. If, after you've designed the site you are not happy with the look, you can always change it to something else.

Blog

Weebly offers a decent blogging feature which you can use to promote your webpage with relevant articles and tips. If you are an author, you can write blog posts about writing in general, your favourite authors and your preferred writing style. I have added a Disqus widget to let people log in and comment. Initially, I had a form which Weebly provides in its drag and drop mode, then decided to use Disqus. Details can be found at <http://disqus.com/websites/>.

Weebly and SEO

Congrats! You've built your website. All by yourself. Excellent job. Now what? Building a website is only half the story. There are a couple of important steps you need to take because there is no point building a website if no one knows about it. You can send emails to only so many people, send text messages to only a handful of your friends. To reach a wider audience, you need to submit your site to the powerful algorithms of search engine giants such as Google and Bing. Fortunately, it's simple.

Submit to Google and Bing

Visit <http://kb.weebly.com/webmaster-tools.html> and follow the step-by-step process to link your website to Google.

You can search for submitting your site to Bing as well.

With both, you will have to copy the code the search engines give and paste it in your header or footer as advised by the sites and Weebly. After that you will be asked to verify your site with the search engines, and that's about it. Now people looking for your site will be able to find it by entering either your site or the key words associated with it, which brings us to meta tagging each of your pages in your Weebly site with the relevant key words. This will enhance the search engines' ability to lead visitors to your site. So make sure you add tags in the space given in the Advanced Setting when you Add Page.

What's a meta tag?

Meta tags are nothing but short descriptions of what a page is about. For example, if your home page is about shoes and your company is 'Happy Feet', you can add relevant 'tags' such as, 'happy feet shoes' 'happy feet', 'shoes', 'sandals', 'footwear', 'all size shoes' etc. This will help the search engines to direct people to your site. Also enter your site name in the meta tag section.

Google Analytics

I added Google Analytics to measure traffic to my site. It helps to know where your audience is coming from so if you want to target a promotion or advertising, you can be more specific instead of talking to everybody and thus wasting money. You will need a Google account for this. Details can be found here <https://support.google.com/analytics/>.

There are a couple of other tracking widgets I have added recently and I'm told they supplement Google Analytics. They are Statcounter and Flag Counter (this collects flags and puts them on your site so you can tell at a glance where the traffic is coming from).

[Selling through your website](#)

Now that you have a working website that looks professional, you may want to sell your goods from there. I sell my e-books from my site. And needless to say, I spent a fair bit of time researching on which was the easiest and best way to sell.

Based on my research, here's the list I compiled: Ganxy, Gumroad, Shopify, and Ejunkie.

I didn't want to spend any more money than I had already just to add on an e-commerce component. Weebly has a PayPal or Google Checkout option on its site, which I'll get to soon, but for now we'll focus on third-party software. My budget restrictions helped me rule out Shopify which charges you to set up an online store (like Magento), and it's not cheap. Also it takes your visitors away from your site, whereas I wanted a shopping option that I could display on my website with the choice of opening it in a new window. I found Ejunkie a bit difficult to understand and execute. That left me with Gumroad and Ganxy. They both appealed to me although I had heard of Gumroad a few months ago when I wasn't even thinking of selling anything online. I had a few questions and Ganxy didn't answer on time but Gumroad did. That's important to me, as a newbie, I am bound to have many questions and I need them answered at the earliest, and both Weebly and Gumroad score high on this front. Besides, I was on the verge of starting to sell my e-books and I wanted an answer fast, which Gumroad gave me so I went with them. It wasn't just the speed of response that made me choose them though, as I'll explain in the next chapter.

Why I chose Gumroad?

Simplicity, reasonable commission rates and elegance. Those were the reasons that swayed me to Gumroad (see it for yourself at www.gumroad.com). It was simple to set up my store, all it took was about half an hour to sign up, upload my e-books, set the price and finish the whole process. Gumroad take 5% and 25 cents a purchase. I can live with that.

Here's how you set up with Gumroad.

You create an account, upload your files, whether it's an e-book or an mp3 track. Currently they help you sell digital goods which suited me fine as I was selling e-books.

Here is an article I wrote on my blog which you might find useful.

Initially, I thought I would provide an external link to my Gumroad site, then figured that it would take the readers away from my site. Then I discovered the Gumroad overlay element which, when you copy/paste it on your site, helps you sell your digital products while keeping the users right on the page they are buying from. For instance, if I had a Gumroad overlay here, and you could click on it, my sales page would be displayed over this page. Perfect right? Not really, because I found that it doesn't display https in the URL when you do that. Maybe it was safe, maybe it wasn't, but I was uncomfortable directing readers to an interface without https where they would be using their credit card information. So I decided to copy paste their HTML code on my landing page above the cover images of my books (it's easy to do that and edit it as well to say 'Buy this here' and take the readers to the sales site. Drop me a note here if you want to know how, I'll tell you what I've learnt, hopefully you'll find it useful). But unfortunately, I couldn't add a button and use the HTML code. Because when you drag the `</>` embedded code element in Weebly, it doesn't sit on the button. So I had to create a text based direction message that said 'Buy this at (Gumroad link)'. (Btw, I forgot to mention that when I added the Gumroad visual (the G icon), it looked quite ugly against this background, so I removed that). Still, I wasn't happy as some people didn't see the 'Buy now' message right off. Plus, when people clicked the link, they were still on the same page without https, which meant I had to add a note under the 'Buy' message to open it in a new window. Clunky. Clumsy. Not nice. So today, I was playing around with the layout and realised that I could add a button right above the cover image, name it 'Buy now' and link it to my Gumroad sales page of that particular book and it automatically opened in a new window. Perfect! Here's how you do it: When you sell a product through Gumroad, you get a short link to the product. Copy it, paste it in the URL bar of your browser, hit return, and once you see your product there, copy that URL, come back to the Weebly page, click the button, and paste that link, save and publish (after adjusting the space and alignment). No hassle, no notes to say open in a new window for secure transaction, no worries about your message being hidden. You can make the button big and obvious. Take a look at my Welcome page and you'll know what I mean. The whole buying process is streamlined and much easier for my readers. Hope you find this article useful.

NOTE: After copy/pasting the Gumroad G- link, when I clicked the G- logo, I found that it goes to Gumroad's default Alice in Wonderland page. So buyers will

have to click the link to the book and not the G logo. So I took it out and kept the link to my books.

Creating Facebook ads

On signing up for Weebly Pro, they gave me a Google Adwords voucher worth \$150 provided I spent \$50. I did a bit of research and discovered that Facebook ads were the better option as they allowed for more specific, more targeted advertising. I found a very insightful course on Udemy which helped me launch my first ad campaign on Facebook. It's been five days at the time of writing and so far I have over 200,000 impressions and about 200 clicks, which means the ad was seen by over 200,000 people and 200 people clicked it and came to my website. I targeted US, UK, Singapore, India and Australia. I used the reports from Google Analytics and added Australia as it showed some users coming from there. I changed a few words in my ad and relaunched it yesterday.

There are two types of ads you can create, an internal ad and an external ad. You can use internal ads for promoting your Facebook page (it is advisable to create a Facebook page for whatever business you are building your website for). One of the sites dedicated to helping Weebly users recommends installing the Facebook 'like' button on your website and linking it to your Facebook page rather than just the website.

For the external ad, you can create a Facebook ad and add a link to your website for people to visit your site and check out what you have to offer, and hopefully buy what you have displayed.

Couple of issues you might encounter while creating your Facebook ad.

I had a couple of annoying issues while I was creating my campaign, which I managed to solve after wrestling with them for a while.

Here's my blog post which might come in handy:

How to make your audience go beyond 20 in Facebook ads

Ok, a quick post on a rather painful 20 plus hours trying to create a Facebook ad for this site. After being anti-social for quite a while, mainly put off by people who 'liked' everything from status updates on food to posts on violence to animals (shouldn't there be a 'dislike' button for certain posts?), I decided to go back to Facebook to let my friends know about my recent endeavours in the e-publishing area. A week or so of researching and reading up on the subject and taking a course on Udemy, which was very helpful, I decided to step into the unknown waters of social media ads with caution. Start with a small amount, they said, hence. This is what happened: I went to the page I created for my e-books on fb, and created an ad, went through the process fairly smoothly till I got to the payment page. I paid through PayPal, and the page went straight back to 'create an ad' page again, with no confirmation of any kind. And Facebook is not known for reverting to customers is what I gathered when I entered my question in the search bar (also learnt that I wasn't the only one with this issue). Then someone in the forum suggested using Power Editor but that works only on Chrome, so did that. It must be one of the clunkiest pieces of software/tools that I've worked with in my life. After wrestling with it for a while (you have to hit the Campaign tab, create a campaign, and then create an ad, and hit upload button), I was puzzled by the audience reach which was 20. It just wouldn't go beyond that ridiculous number even if I included all the continents in the audience tab. I gave up and was toying with 'Pay with a tweet or a post' mode.

Meanwhile I wrote in the fb forum, and again, I wasn't the only one with the issue. It was good to know in a safety in numbers sort of way, but it wasn't good when you realised fb wasn't answering anyone on the issue. Then suddenly it occurred to me while I was fiddling with Power Editor why the number didn't go beyond the stubborn 20. Here's why. There's a field in the audience section where you decide who sees your message. In that there is a field that says: 'target people who are connected'. And if I entered my Facebook page url in that field, the audience reach number immediately went to 20 and refused to budge. But it changed once I removed my Facebook page I created for my books. And, oh, just received an email from Facebook saying my ad was approved. Will let you know how that goes. Hope you found this useful.

Adding PayPal on Weebly

This is a bit tricky to quote a Weebly helpdesk person and they are working on making it more seamless than it is right now I'm told. I'll tell you how you install the PayPal button and why I'm in two minds.

I wanted to try this just in case people wanted to buy through my website using PayPal. How it works is, you go to your PayPal page (assuming you have a PayPal account), and upgrade to Premier, if you are on Personal, which lets you sell on your website. Next, you create a Buy Now button or Add to Cart button by following the onscreen instructions. Copy the code for the button and paste it on your website where you want to sell your product, say your Store page.

Before you do that, there is a field in the PayPal form that you have to fill which is an important step in selling through your website. This step asks you to fill in the URL (a URL is a Universal Resource Locator which simply put is the address of your webpage, for example if your site is `www.yoursite.com` and you are selling from a page titled 'Store', then the URL will be '`www.yoursite.com/store`', you can go to the page and copy/paste the URL) of the site you want to direct your user to so they can download the e-book or whatever digital goods you are selling.

This is called the download page. Now all the pages you create in Weebly, as in any website creation programme, are visible. But you can't have the download page visible otherwise people can go to that page and download without paying. We want to avoid that, so when you create a download page, you simply select 'Hide from navigation' and voila! The page is not seen when you publish it.

But there's one snag. All the pages on Weebly are available to all the search engines you have submitted your site to for increased traffic, which means anyone can accidentally land on your download page by searching for the page. For instance, if you are selling an e-book called 'How to succeed in business' and put your pdf file on the hidden navigation page, and someone searches for your book title, they can still be directed to that page. So not only is hiding the download page from navigation crucial, you need to password protect it well. My question was, if I password protect my download page, would I have to send the password to the person buying it? That could potentially be a clunky process. (A Udemy course author has an interesting take on this. He asks people to not share the download page URL with anyone but despite that if anyone does, he says people pirating your book is better than it lying around all alone, so I might just give PayPal a try after all.)

Another option is linking your site to Ecwid. The tutorial seems simple enough. It says you first create a page and name it 'Store', for instance, on your Weebly site. Then go to Ecwid where you can create an account upon which you will be given an HTML code. Copy that and paste it on your 'Store' page, and you are ready to sell. You'll have to go back to your Ecwid account and add product descriptions and upload your goods. Weebly and Ecwid both have tutorials on how to set up the store.

Summary

In conclusion, we learnt that:

You need to have a website if you have something to sell

You need a domain name

Where to get a domain name

Web hosting using WordPress vs. Website builders

Why Weebly could be your choice

How to sell through Gumroad on your website

How to create Facebook ads

With the tips and research findings given in this book, you can build a website in a day. Domain registering with Namecheap should take you less than half an hour. Signing up with Weebly and building a simple website with four to five pages with a blog should take you around half a day, and pointing the domain name to your site should take another half an hour.

Hope you find the book useful.

Some useful links

www.weebly.com - Build your site the easy way (you can check out my site www.guruswriting.com - I built it with Weebly)

www.namecheap.com - A reasonably priced domain registrar

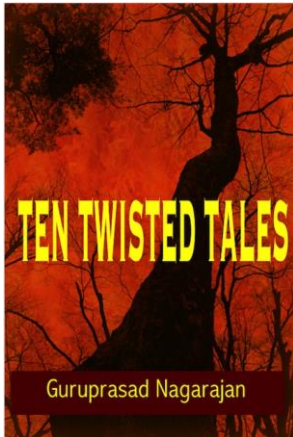
www.gumroad.com - The simplest way to sell your digital goods. I use them.

www.websitetooltester.com - thorough analyses of website builders

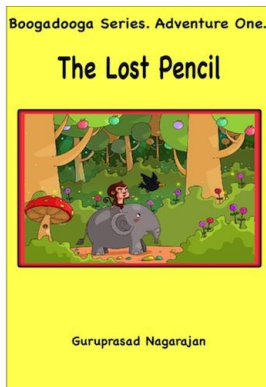
www.udemy.com - a brilliant site for learning everything from coding to e-publishing and everything in between.

www.tagul.com - Create funky word clouds (like on the cover of this book) for free. It's always good practice to credit free resources like this.

Also by the same author



Ten Twisted Tales - A collection of short stories, each with an unexpected ending.



Boogadooga Series – The Lost Pencil – The first in a chronicle of adventures for children set in a magical forest. The second in the series, The Expensive Brush, is due mid-November.

He is currently working on his second set of tales with a twist.

About the author



Guru has been peddling assorted products and services in the name of advertising for the last 20 years. He was born in Coimbatore, a small town surrounded by hills in Tamil Nadu, India. He lives in Singapore where he is currently adding more books to his repertoire. He swims, practises yoga and attempts to play the guitar. He loves to travel with his wife.

