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The cost for a website that will make money is a very open ended question that I'd like to put some parameters around it. [!:<http://www.webmarksolutions.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/BlakeHirt5.jpg>]To find out how a website makes money you must know the goal of the website. E-commerce website is the easiest site to analyze because of the direct measurement of sales. Most websites for small business are lead generation. Other types of websites are informative, or are to establish professionalism among peers. The later are harder to measure, but still can be useful to the bottom line of a company's profits.

Formula to have for a website to make money, you must have a few variables: A product or service to sell, a profit margin on that item or service, and how much will it cost you to sell that product or service in the quantity that you need to make the desired profits. Stack as many advantages in your favor as possible, do you have a quality product at a price point that the market that wants. Can you sell enough of your item without changing the market?

OK, so you know your profit margin and you know the market of customers buying but, now you want to go online and sell but you don't know how to measure the market, or even how to compete. This is where you want a marketing expert that can measure the competition in scientific measurable terms. How many competitors do I have, and how high does Google rank their website (pages). Measure your competitor's pages, measure the amount of inbound links to their site, and measure how many high quality links they have. Once you measure your competition, you can now gauge how much it will cost to build a site that will compete.

Not all website companies are the same. The fact that each vendor says they will optimize your site, you will want to know how they do that. Also, you will want to know how they are going to build links. Are they buying links or can they do it organically, and if so how? Obviously, organic is best, bought links are just fluff and will eventually harm your rankings. **Cost is a big variable among website companies, and when you don't know how to measure the quality of their work the price is really meaningless.**

Avoid templates, most templates are full of errors and will cause your website to not even be indexed by the search engines. Websites costing \$ 4.95 a month and \$29.99 a month are almost definitively garbage. There are exceptions, if you want a business card site "you hand someone your business card- they type in your domain EXACTLY CORRECT then that person will find your web site". In other words no one will find your website, except those people that have your business card. Must have a site that is compliant to W3C, this is the web consortium that determines what a good web site should have and how they write code. Some code is invisible to search engines and will never be indexed. This is a big mistake, many artist have made by choosing a site that has a lot of activity, flash and pretty, yet this code is basically invisible which will prevent them from being found organically, which is why most business wanted to be on the internet in the first place.

How to pick a web site expert:

Education, the more questions you ask the more you will be educated. The more you learn the more you will be able to decipher which vendors are blowing smoke. Your website builder does not have to be local, the web is global, and however, it is nice to deal with people using the same language. Measure cost by comparing apples to apples. Can your vendor tell you what you need specifically to be on the first page of Google? Paying to be on the first page of Google is the last way you want to get there. Yes, after you've done all the things to get on the first page of Google, by all means buy those PPC (pay per clicks), and Sponsor Ad positions, and by the way now that you've done all the organic work, you will pay a lot less than other guys who didn't, it's based on relevance. So how much will it cost me to build 100 links for my site, what is the quality of those links, how will you accomplish that. If your vendor can't answer, - walk away! They will not be able to give you an exact number but they should be able to give you a ballpark estimate.

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