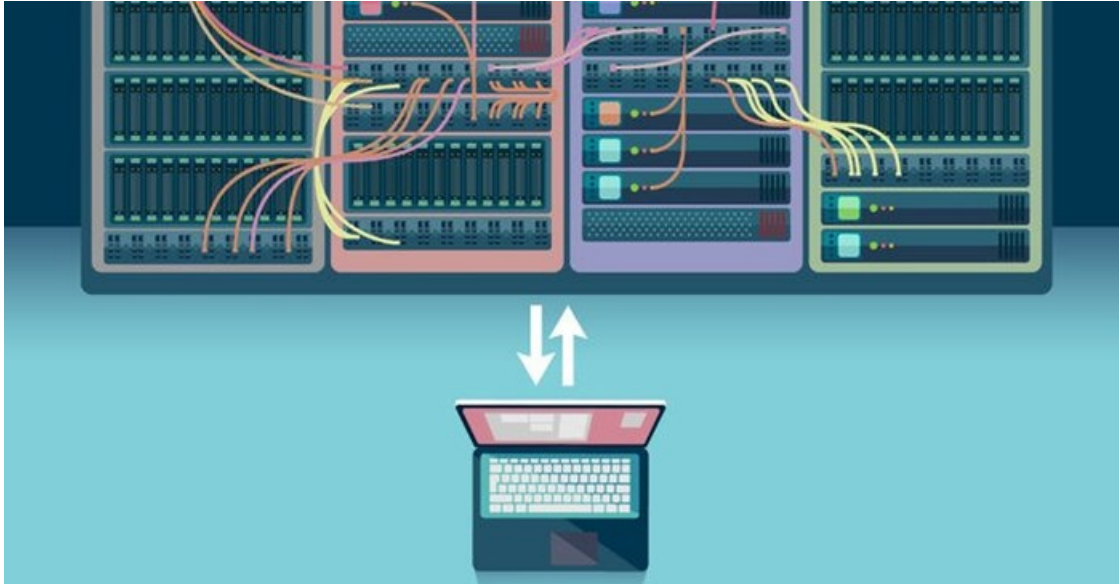# Five things that show you might need a new web host

By Michael Osterloh

12 May 2017

Web hosting is a very important aspect of your website. Luckily, these days web hosting has become somewhat of a commodity with a plethora of web hosting companies offering a wide range of products.

© theromb via 123RF

While that can be good for competition, it's easy to fall into the trap of thinking that web hosting is a commodity like electricity or petrol. It's not. It's a dynamic system made up of plenty of moving parts.

If these parts are working in harmony then your website is a smooth and enjoyable experience. But a bad web host will affect your website and ultimately your customers experience of your business. There are several ways you can tell whether or not you have a bad host and should consider changing.

Too much downtime

This is a no-brainer. Having a website that is constantly available is critical to your website and to your business' reputation. Your site's uptime directly affects your sales and conversion. If the site isn't available, how can you expect your customers to engage with it?

Every moment that your site is down is a second of lost revenue. Most companies these days will promise you a certain

uptime percentage. But it's fairly difficult to track this and there's usually no way to verify this until you've signed up for an account.

If your website is constantly down, it'll reflect in your traffic statistics. Be sure to pay attention because your web host may not mention it.

Customer service

Following the previous point, your website can go down at any time of day. This is why it's important that your web host has customer service that is available 24 hours a day, every day. Whether it's a simple billing question or a genuine fault log, the customer service department should be on hand to guide you in restoring your site or answering your billion query.

If you cannot reach your web host's customer service department, then there's a problem. It shows either a lack of willingness to help or a lack of planning on behalf of the hosting company – both are equally poor motivators for future business.

Slow load times

The average person will wait just three seconds for a site to load before moving on to another source. The amount of time it takes for your site to load is a huge factor in converting leads to sales.

If your site's taking a while to load, chances are your web host company has stretched its bandwidth on the host server to the absolute maximum to try make as much money as possible.

That's the sign of a cheaper, less reputable web hosting company which has sold shared hosting packages to multiple parties which bogs down the processors. And there are few things more annoying than having to wait for a site to load.

Poor security

In an age where every other week we hear of another large hack where sensitive data has been stolen, security is at an all-time premium. The security on your site should be as good as it can be. Your web host company should be offering basic security features such as firewalls, anti-virus and anti-malware apps. Cheaper web hosts may not offer such features and in doing so put your site at great risk.

You might think that your business is too small for hackers or cyber criminals to care about, but that's naive. Go with a web host that's able to offer you the best security possible. Your information is perhaps your greatest asset and provides a soft underbelly for hackers to target. Spend money on a web host company that's going to offer you properly secure features and keep your data safe across its servers.

Web hosting is a critical part of your site. If you're currently using a cheap host, then you're putting your business at risk of losing revenue and reputation. If your website currently experiences any of the thing mentioned in this article, then chances are you need a new web host. Cancel your subscription soonest and choose a reputable and efficient web host.

That way, no matter what size your business is, you'll be sure to get the kind of service that your business requires and deserves.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Michael Osterloh is the CEO of HostAfrica [[www.hostafrica.co.za]]