

MEMORANDUM

TO: Robert Wolf, Executive Director
Dennis Skolnik, Business Manager

FROM: Walter Tersch

DATE: February 19, 2002

SUBJECT: Technical aspects and costs of Family Services web site

I have organized some information about what is technically involved in setting up a web site for Family Services. *Responses to most recent questions detailed at end.*

Domain Name Registration

Any major web site should have its own domain name, such as .com, .net, .edu, or .org. A “.org” domain suffix would be ideal for a nonprofit such as Family Services.

Domain names are registered through “registrar” companies; here are two of the best options:

- **DirectNIC.com.** DirectNIC has the lowest rates for domain name registration I’ve found.
 - \$15 per year; no restrictions.
 - Info: <http://www.directnic.com/features/prices.php>
- **Cedant.com.** Cedant also has low rates, and has the benefit of also offering hosting, simplifying the site setup process slightly.
 - \$39.95 for two years; must register for two years in advance.
 - Info: <http://cedant.com/services/domains/>

Domain name possibilities

I searched on availability online. “FamilyServicesHighlandPark.org” is available, although familyservices.org and numerous variations of that name are already taken.

Two other available names are “FamilyServicesHP.org” and “FS-HP.org”. I would be happy to check the availability of any other names the organization would be interested in.

Hosting

Hosting essentially rents space on server computers to store the web site, making it viewable to everyone. A multitude of companies offer hosting services at various prices, but here are a couple of the best options. Both of these companies offer everything organizations and small businesses need.

- **Addr.com.** Addr is a relatively small company, but their rates are very affordable and their customer service is good. They are my personal choice when I set up sites for small businesses.
 - Rate: \$9.95 per month, no setup fee
 - Discount for advance payment on annual basis: \$107.46 for year of hosting
 - Payment via checks also acceptable (doesn't require credit card)
 - Rate info: <http://addr.com/services.htm> (Silver account recommended.)
- **Cedant.com.** Cedant web hosting offers competitive rates and all the same features as Addr. I have never personally worked with them, though my research suggests that they are a solid choice.
 - Rate: \$12.95 per month, no setup fee
 - Discount for advance payment on annual basis: \$124.32 for year of hosting
 - Payment via checks also acceptable (doesn't require credit card)
 - Rate info: <http://cedant.com/services/plans/standard.html> (Standard account recommended.)

Corporate e-mail solutions

Standard “pop” e-mail boxes are included with the hosting packages offered by the two above companies:

- Cedant's slightly higher cost is offset by the fact that their standard hosting account includes 25 e-mail addresses, and their slightly costlier “advanced”

hosting plan includes 50 e-mail boxes. (The Advanced plan is \$18.95 per month, lower if paid in advance.)

- Additional e-mail accounts can be added to either of Cedant's hosting packages for \$1 per address per month.
- Addr's affordable Silver hosting package only includes 3 e-mail addresses, and I could not find information on their site detailing if additional e-mail addresses are available.

In terms of included e-mail solutions, Cedant hosting comes out ahead. Not only would all e-mail addresses be "...@familyservicesHP.org", the the company appears to include a web interface for e-mail access as well, so that e-mails are accessible from any computer on the web.

Estimated Web Design Costs

Like anything, web design fees can range widely based on the type of work being done and the skills of the designers.

- Average web design rates are \$60 to \$80 per hour of time working with text and general page layout, including simple HTML programming.
- Typical rates for graphics work, including animation, logo design, special effects, etc. are typically \$90 to \$120 per hour. This higher rate typically also applies to more complicated programming, such as database integration, interactive pages, and Flash animation, etc.

Of course, the design process varies, but a simple web site with standard (non-animated) graphics and a dozen or fewer pages often takes 5 to 8 hours to set up.

- Some designers may also be willing to work on a "flat-rate" basis, charging, for instance, \$600 for a complete site.
- Due to Family Services' nonprofit status, some designers would be willing to offer further discounted rates.
- In terms of site maintenance and updates, some designers charge a flat monthly rate, such as \$49 per month for all updates and revisions (excluding complicated site redesigns or major overhauls.) Others charge hourly depending on the type of work, as detailed in the typical rates explanation above.
- Revisions such as adding new text or revising previous text does not take much time, perhaps 30 to 90 minutes to update pages.