

### *Cleveland Web Hosting and Design*

This is a question that we get asked quite often. Someone may approach us and would like to take their business to the web. They know they want a website, but aren't sure how to get started. It is usually once we begin the discussion about their web hosting needs is where the confusion begins. This article will hopefully explain the basic needs of a web host as well as some pointers on how to choose the right one for your company.

## **What is web hosting?**

Every website on the internet needs to be "hosted". This simply means that for you to be able to access a website on the internet it needs to "sit" somewhere connected to the internet. Websites are hosted on what are called "web servers" which are similar to your home PC or laptop, but are much larger and robust. These web servers have a dedicated purpose: Storing and sharing websites on the internet. Most websites are hosted with a web hosting provider which provides you with a specific amount of space to store your website on their web servers. Some larger companies may choose to host their websites themselves, which only means that they use their own web servers connected to the internet to store their websites.

## **How do I choose a web hosting company?**

This is a really great question, and the simple answer is "it depends". With so many web hosting companies out there, it is difficult to determine what provider is right for you. You can begin by asking yourself some very basic questions:

### **How much SUPPORT do I need?**

Depending on how technically savvy you are, you may need a hosting provider which offers a more personalized service. The majority of the large hosting providers offer extremely inexpensive hosting, but one of the sacrifices is that personalized service. If your website is infected with a virus, will your hosting provider help you?

If you need email addresses created, forwarders configured ( or not sure if you need forwarders or what they are?) you may require a hosting provider which has this more personalized service model.

### **Is my web host GREEN?**

Some web hosting providers (STB Hosting included) are a carbon neutral, GREEN hosting company. What this means is that the equipment used to host your website is powered by a renewable energy source such as wind or solar. STB Hosting is powered completely by wind energy!

### **Is SECURITY Important to you?**

Most of the large web hosting companies offer very inexpensive hosting, but there's one thing they don't tell you. You may be sharing a web server with HUNDREDS of other websites. What this means is that if one website out of those hundreds of other websites on your shared server is infected with a virus, there is a good chance that your site will be infected as well. This could potentially be very devastating to your business, specifically if you have an online store, storing customer information, or any other sensitive data on your website.

In summary, every website on the internet requires a web hosting service. The web hosting company you choose depends on your needs and the needs of your business. If a web hosting company and it's promises of unlimited everything for an unbelievably low price seem too good to be true...it probably is.