

# Launching Your Author Website

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**Hello author!** You're reading this because you don't have your own website.

You might be active on social media, but that's **not enough**. Why?

Your website is the **first thing** someone looks for when they want to find out more about you.

But most important, it's something you **own**, not something you **rent**.

You have **control** over it.



"The secret is to spend most of your time and creative energy [building assets that you control](#)." -Copyblogger

## Why does control matter?

- Third party sites, including social media platforms, can disappear.
- Their assets can be bought by another company that decides to shut the service down.
- They can change something about their site or algorithms that harms your ability to communicate with or market to your readers.
- They can delete your account by mistake or due to a change in their terms of service or simply because they don't like something you're doing.

In other words, **anything can happen with those other sites.**

Whether or not you have books that are sold wide or exclusive to Amazon, what if something happened on *those* third party sites or to your account there?

Yes, something could also happen to your own site, but you control it, so you can fix it.

## Your website is a hub of information about you and your books.

If you get an agent (or a different agent), or a different publisher (::sad face:), or win an award, or when a reader wants to know more about you and your books, they're going to look for your website first.

And keep it simple. You need less than you think.



Social media platforms can help **expand your reach** by getting your content and books in front of people, and increase the number of people who visit your website.

*"For anyone with a long-term author career, this is one of the [best and most critical investments](#) you can make." -Jane Friedman*

Your website is the **center** of all of it. Social media and other third-party sites serve as arteries that lead to your site, the **heart**.



Plus, your website will serve as a **lasting asset** for your writing career. **Curiosity Quills** was founded on the deeply-held principle of being more helpful to writers. (That's why we have such fair, straightforward contracts!) We also want to **empower writers** to take more control of their careers.

And one important way to do that is to have your own website.

## Here are four recommended website platforms



With any of the platforms, make sure you choose one of the plans that includes a **domain name**. The price estimates below reflect the lowest paid tier that **includes** the domain name. Note that the price may be a bit higher after the first year, since things like the domain name renewal may be charged separately.

### **Squarespace**

<https://www.squarespace.com>

Starting at \$12/month

### **Weebly**

<https://www.weebly.com>

Starting at \$8/month

### **Wix**

<https://www.wix.com>

Starting at \$14/month

## Wordpress.com

<https://wordpress.com>

*Note that using wordpress.com is different than maintaining your own Wordpress installation*  
Starting at \$2.99/month

CQ doesn't have any commercial relationship with these companies, but we think they represent some of the best options out there for easily building and maintaining a great website.

For most people, **Squarespace** is probably the best choice, since it includes the domain name, website management, professional email, and collaboration tools in a single package.

But all of the platforms are easy to use, don't require any coding knowledge, and have a great set of templates to begin with.

*"Your website is one of the most important things to get sorted if you're taking your career as an author seriously." -Joanna Penn*

## Things to keep in mind when setting up your website

Don't make your overall site specific to one book. This site is **about you**, not just one of your books or one of your series, and it should encompass all of your current and future books.

Ideally, your domain name will be **your name**. If your name is Thor Starshine, you can almost certainly get [www.thorstarshine.com](http://www.thorstarshine.com). But if it's John Smith, you'll have to work a little harder; e.g. [www.johnsmithbooks.com](http://www.johnsmithbooks.com).

If you write under multiple pen names, just pick a **primary** one to use as your domain name for now. You can build out separate sites for your other names later on, if you like.



## Other Resources

*Digital Sharecropping: The Most Dangerous Threat to Your Content Marketing Strategy*  
<http://www.copyblogger.com/digital-sharecropping/>

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*How To Build Your Own Self-Hosted Author Website In Under 30 Minutes*  
<http://www.thecreativepenn.com/2015/08/13/build-author-website/>

"Just as a book IS judged by its cover, so are you judged by your website. Readers, agents, publishers, journalists, TV producers, bloggers and podcasters will all visit your website – and they can tell a free site instantly. How seriously do you take this author career if you don't invest in a pro looking site?"

*3 Reasons Why a Facebook Page Can't Replace an Author Website*  
<https://janefriedman.com/facebook-cant-replace-website/>

"A website, on the other hand, serves as a hub for all people who are interested in your work and are seeking more information or updates directly from you. It doesn't matter if they heard about you online or offline, people are trained to use their mobiles, tablets, and desktops to search for more information, and your author website is a 24/7 resource waiting for them."