

Static Versus Dynamic Web Pages

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Static versus Dynamic Web pages In the web hosting world, there are basically two different types of webpages, static pages and dynamic pages. Before you begin to program a site you will need to pick between one of these two types since the type you choose to use will influence the programs you create your site with, the type of hosting package you purchase, the functionality that you are able to put into your site, and much much more. In order to help you make the decision between the two types of pages, a definition is in order. Static Webpages are pages who's display largely does not change based on the user's input. A static webpage is comparable to billboards or magazine advertisements in that they are simply there to convey information. Once they are up, what you see is what you get. Dynamic Webpages, on the other hand, are designed to change based on the actions of the user. For example, if a user clicks on a button in a static page, all the static page can do is redirect the browser to another page. In a dynamic webpage, the webpage can pop up a dialog box, ask the user for some input, validate that the input is in the correct format, and then store the input in a database to be displayed to an admin at a later time. This is just a simple example of what is possible with dynamic webpages. In reality, almost anything can be done as long as the programmer is capable enough. So, since dynamic websites are so much better why doesn't everyone just use dynamic languages to create their sites? The reason why people still use static websites is that static websites are much, much more easy to create. Static webpages can be created using simple drag and drop tools in programs such as Microsoft Frontpage or Macromedia Dreamweaver. Dynamic websites, however, require that the person who creates them know how to code in one or more of the dynamic web languages (ASP.NET, PHP, ColdFusion, Javascript, and JSP to name a few). Learning how to code, and more importantly to code well, is a time-intensive process that many people are not ready to undertake. Aside from the complexity, dynamic websites just cost more money to create. Hosting usually costs more, databases are often required, programming is extremely expensive (\$50 an hour is at the very low end and even small projects can take 10 hours or more), and maintenance is usually an ongoing concern. That said, for many things dynamic websites are a necessity. Any application that sells products, or needs to get and store some kind of input from the user will need to have a dynamic element to it.