
GETTING & MANAGING YOUR FIRST 1,000 CLIENTS IN WEB HOSTING

FEATURING:

- ✓ Web Host Manager (WHM)/cPanel
- ✓ WHM Complete Solution (WHMCS)

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Getting & Managing Your First 1,000 Clients in Web Hosting

Abraham Iksud

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

The author has over 12 years experience in starting, growing, managing, and selling his own web hosting businesses. The author started his first web hosting company at the age of 21 and has successfully grown the business into a multimillion dollar web hosting company.

Together with his wife, the author manages to grow his first company from a literally a one man show to a staff of over 50 people with offices both in his home country and in the United States where he currently resides.

Under his management the company grew from utilizing a single reseller account to owning over 130 servers which are being collocated in a data center residing in the heart of Silicon Valley.

He then sold his first web hosting company through a well known merger & acquisition deal in late 2007.

Today the author is currently running his second web hosting company and has successfully acquired a substantial amount of market share in today's highly competitive web hosting market.

The author currently resides in the Silicon Valley area, California with his wife and three children.

DEDICATIONS

To my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for saving my life and my family.

To my wife Siao We for having such a passion for God, thank you for hooking me up with The Lord. You're the best thing that ever happened in my life.

To my three children, Ashley, Darryl, and Jeremy, you're the apple of God's eye, the lights and salts of this world. May God's fire will always burn you with an everlasting passion to do His work.

To my late father, my mom, and my brother Mario, thank you for loving me the way you do, only God can return the love you have given me.

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I would also like to thank my former employers and managers who have given me the privilege of working with them: Mr. Sachin Gopalan, Mr. Kristanto Darwin, Mr. Jonathan Morris, and Mr. Martin Entwistle. Thank you for giving me an opportunity to work for your company.

Finally, thank you to my wonderful wife who has endlessly given her full support for me to write and publish this book the right way and to put my best effort into this book. I am sure this book will end up helping a lot of people to have their own journey that they will never forget, just like us.

TESTIMONIALS

“The Web Hosting Business Book is an invaluable guide and resource for anyone looking to create their own web hosting business and maintain it — from start to finish. Even established Web Hosting companies can learn a great deal from the author’s extensive industry experience.”

-Chad Bean, Chief Marketing Officer, HostGator (hostgator.com)

“This book is an ideal companion for the newcomer to the business side of web hosting. It’s an easy read & contains lots of good advice and ideas for how to grow your business when getting started. It’s clear the author has a wealth of experience and is able to cover a wide range of topics that face the web hosts of today. The WHMCS chapter in particular has a great step-by-step guide to get you started quickly & easily with WHMCS, and thereby empower you to make your business a successful one.”

-Matthew Pugh, CEO WHMCS Ltd (www.whmcs.com)

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INTRODUCTION

The goal of this book is to guide you to start your web hosting business properly and to equip you with enough knowledge so that you will be able to maintain your new web hosting business single-handedly until you have reached your first one thousand clients.

This book is written to guide new comers who are about or have just begun their web hosting business. The knowledge and information provided in this book is based on my own personal experience in starting, growing, managing, and selling my hosting businesses.

Through the past 12 years of focusing my career life and passion in the web hosting industry, I have learned a lot, both from the failures and successes I had. One thing I learned, that the most valuable lessons one could gain is from the failures one has had, rather than the successes one has achieved. Embrace your failures, learn from it, and grow to become even a better person.

The guides brought to you in this book are gained by series of my own failures by doing things the wrong way. I hope by going through this guide book, you won't have to go through the same failures which I have experienced.

By the end of this book, you should have all the necessary knowledge and hopefully passion to go and get your first 1,000 clients and to manage them, all by yourself.

I AM ON A MISSION

I have a mission. It is impossible for me to accomplish this mission all by myself. Through this book, I want to share my mission with you and show you that it is a very doable mission, only if we do it together.

This book is written to equip you with a proper knowledge and to guide you to establish a complete working web hosting business platform so that you can turn the very place (village, town, city, island, country, or continent) where you live now... **O N L I N E**.

It is simply impossible for a single company or a single man to take on the world and switch them **ONLINE**. But, it can be done! Yes, we can do that, together we can do that.

Am I crazy? No I am not. I am just a single man with a mission. God gave me a dream one night to turn the whole world **ONLINE**. Well, how am I going to do that? I honestly don't know, but I think through this book, I am one step closer to accomplishing what my Creator has put in my heart. I surely hope you can also have a taste of this dream when it comes to reality.

I will try my best to pour out to you everything that I know, all the valuable and important knowledge which I acquired in the past 12 years of my career running a web hosting business. I want you to absorb and download what I have in me now to create a much better me in you.

All the lessons and knowledge I put in this book is gained through a real life experience starting, managing, growing, and selling my very own web hosting business. I want to transfer that knowledge all to you because I have too much of a mission to carry alone. The only way to accomplish my mission is to share it with as many people as possible so together we can make this mission a reality.

The mission is simple and very much doable, that is to bring every businesses all over the world, no matter where they are, to have their own website presence. I will cover most of my passion on Chapter 5. Your mission is to initially cover your own local area and to start your business locally then grow it world-wide.

There is one very important key: There is no such thing as “fast money”. I will try my best to guide you through this book so that you can reach your own success. There is one thing that I ask you to get rid of before we begin, forget about getting rich quick and easy, there is no such thing. I will guide you down the narrow path, the hard path, the right path, the path to true prosperity and success.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

This book is written to guide people who consider entering into the web hosting business or who are already running their own web hosting business. In order to grasp the full potential of this book, you must already have a basic understanding about the basic terms and functionalities involved in web hosting.

It is required that you already have a basic knowledge about how to setup a website. I will also assume that you are currently or have previously used a web hosting account to setup your own website. Having prior knowledge in operating the cPanel hosting control panel will also help you to understand this guide book much better.

This book is not intended for people who has never setup a website before and has no understanding on how a domain name works or what is DNS have to do with web hosting. This book is all about practical guidance for you to immediately execute to get your web hosting business up and running and hopefully getting your first 1,000 clients in the first 2 years of opening your business.

This book has no content whatsoever explaining the basic functionalities for end users to utilize a web hosting account. The guides given throughout this book will only be targeted towards you as the web hosting business owner. I expect you as the potential web hosting business owner to already have a full understanding on how to operate a web hosting account as an end user.

I also presume that you already have a basic understanding of HTML. Having a basic knowledge in PHP will also help you a lot while running your web hosting business. If you have no clue about reading a simple HTML source code, I would

suggest you to postpone reading or buying this book. When you enter into a web hosting business, there will be a lot of client support cases which involved in troubleshooting client's website by editing either HTML codes or PHP codes.

So I highly recommend this book only for people who already have a basic or even intermediate understanding and experience in coding in HTML and even in PHP and MySQL.

WHAT IS COVERED IN THIS BOOK

As you may expect, this book is a practical guide. Everything that is covered in this book is practical. I expect you to literally do the things written in the guides provided here. It's a guide book which you can immediately implement into your own hosting business.

It is not the nature of this book to give theories or explanations of the various terms and technologies involved in the web hosting industry. The nature of this book is to equip you with sufficient information which you can immediately implement to get and manage your first 1,000 clients.

It is also not the nature of this book to guide you through all available functionalities in the software which I am going to cover in this book. If you want to know how to use particular software, simply read their manual and documentation which should be available on their website.

However, this book covers valuable information which can only be gained by experience. The practical guides which I will show you in this book is not a standard basic setup guide. All guides provided in this book is gained through real life experiences while running my own web hosting companies in these past 12 years.

The guides and data provided in this book, including critical server configuration values and other customization techniques was gained through the many years of going through all the things that does not work. The goal of this book is for you to be able to skip all the time and failures which are required to finally get the best settings and setup for your web hosting business. Now all this will be given into your hands. Please use it well.

On the first chapter, I will show you all the required elements for you to begin selling to your clients. There are only several elements which you should have to begin selling, they are:

- A Name For Your Business
- A Hosting Platform
- A Domain Provider
- A Billing and Support System
- A Payment Gateway
- A SSL Provider
- A Server Provider

Each will be discussed thoroughly on Chapter 1. By the end of Chapter 1, you will see that I have narrowed down several elements choices to one single provider. I chose these providers because I am personally confident that they are the best ones available to equip your web hosting business. I have done my research. I have used other options which I honestly think that you should not try.

The next few chapters following Chapter 1 are entirely dedicated to guide you through the setup and best practices of the elements mentioned on Chapter 1, they are WHM/cPanel and WHM Complete Solution (WHMCS). I highly recommend you to use these two providers as your Hosting Platform provider and Billing and Support system provider.

The reason behind my decision is because both companies have proven themselves to be the best in their industry. They are also the most commonly used which is a big consideration factor, because then it would be much easier for you to get help from other people who are also using these two platforms.

There are also several service providers which I will be recommending throughout this book. Their services will simply make your web hosting business run more smoothly with lesser bumps down the road.

Going further, I will also provide you with guides on all the major aspects on starting and running your web hosting business which will cover:

- Sales And Marketing: How To Get Clients
- Best Client Service & Support Practices
- Common Support Cases & Solutions
- Growing Your Hosting Business
- Managing Your Team
- Liquidating Your Hosting Business

This book is not about learning to do server administration or advanced security techniques. Though on some chapters, I will provide you with some basic and intermediate server tweaking, administration, as well as server security configuration setups, it is not the nature of this book to cover advanced server administration or advanced server configuration.

This book will only cover the “beginning” part of starting your web hosting business and to inform you on what lies ahead so you will be prepared to anticipate what will be coming ahead of you.

Once your business is up and running, it is your responsibility to always keep yourself learning about this business. The day you stop learning, the day you start to lay back, the day you start to point out fingers and tell other people to do what you should be doing yourself, will be the beginning of all the hardship you will have to go through.

Never stop learning, never stop working, or you will lose all you have gained.

BEFORE WE BEGIN

When I still have your attention, before you get busy and begin doing all the practical things on the following chapters below, I would like to point out one very crucial thing to you. One thing that you can never miss, one thing you should always remember when you are in the web hosting business.

Web hosting is about people.

Please grasp that whole heartedly. If you do not care about other people, it would be very hard for your business to flourish, if not impossible. It's about caring your clients, caring your co-workers, caring your employees, always wanting the best for other people.

Focus on that and always focus on that, and all the other things will fall on its place by its own.

If you are only focusing your business on getting “new clients” and making “a lot of new sales”, it is only a matter of time before your business will crumble into nothingness. It can be five years, it can be ten years, it can be more, but if you simply only care about the sales and not enjoying your work when servicing other people, then I can tell you upfront, doing web hosting is just not your thing. It will bring more harm to you later on.

Your main focus should always be “*how can I be of your service*”. Not just to your clients, even to your employees, later on when you have them.

Other things are only “supplementary”. You don't need a shining website or the latest technology to do web hosting properly. All you need is a passion to service other people. It will bring you good name, and it will automatically bring you more clients. Be faithful in the little things which had been trusted to you, and greater things will be trusted to you as well. Now, let's begin.

CHAPTER 1 – GETTING STARTED

What You Will Accomplish On This Chapter:

- ✓ A Good Name For Your Business
- ✓ Your Hosting Platform
- ✓ Your Domain Registrar
- ✓ Your Hosting Client Management And Billing System
- ✓ Your Payment Gateway
- ✓ Your SSL Reseller Provider

A GOOD NAME FOR YOUR BUSINESS

Okay, now it's time to choose the name or brand for your web hosting business. What lies in a name? Not much, really. You "build" your name in web hosting. People won't choose your company because of the name. Well yes actually, but not for the actual name, but for the reputation which lies behind that name.

Below are a few points to keep in mind when choosing a name for your web hosting business.

CHOOSE A DOMAIN NAME WHICH HAS BEEN "AROUND" FOR SOME TIME

It is better to get a domain name which has been around for a while. People will want to know "how long have you been in business", they will not ask you that question, but they will go and check your domain name WHOIS record.

It is a good thing to invest in a domain name which has been registered for at least a couple of years. So when people are "investigating" about your web hosting brand before they buy your services, they won't find a domain name which has just been registered a couple of months ago.

Go to some domain name brokers like www.sedo.com, www.buydomains.com, www.greatdomains.com, or better yet go to Web Hosting Talk (www.webhostingtalk.com) and ask around if someone has a domain name for your web hosting business which has been registered a couple of years back for sale.

If you can't find one, don't be discouraged, there is no harm in starting your hosting business using a freshly registered domain name. Doing this would only get you started better just in case your potential clients are wondering how long you have been around.

GET AN SEO FRIENDLY DOMAIN NAME

A second consideration is getting a domain name which can be picked up by search engines better. The key is to have the word hosting or webhosting somewhere in the name. This would give you a much better chance on getting on top of web hosting related searches LATER ON. Why do I say later on? Because having a good domain name such as www.webhosting.com won't mean a thing if your website has not been around long enough to pickup links from all over the Internet.

So it's not so important, but good to have.

GO WITH A DOMAIN NAME THAT IS NOT EASILY MISTAKEN

Don't go with a name that is hard to pronounce or can be easily misheard. Go for something easy to remember, so when people refer your web hosting company to their friends, they don't mistakenly give out the wrong name. For example, starwebhosting would be nice, or rockethosting, something like that.

CHOOSING YOUR COMPANY NAME

When things get more serious, you can choose a good company name which will truly reflect who you are. Because the domain name does not have to be your actual company name. You can have a domain name such as excitinghosting.com and call your company Reach the Sky Media, LLC. It doesn't really matter.

I will talk about incorporating your web hosting business later on a separate topic. You should not consider incorporating and all the "serious" stuff at this stage. Forget about that. You can start thinking about more serious stuff like that when you get to around 500 clients. Then you can start thinking about incorporating your web hosting business.

Don't look too far away, work on what you have now. When it gets to the point where you really need to go to the next level, then think about it. Otherwise it will drain your energy. Don't do that.

Next, you need to decide what server platform to go with, a dedicated server, a VPS, or just a simple reseller hosting account.

YOUR HOSTING PLATFORM

Now that you have a good name for your hosting company, it's time to choose which platform to go with. There are several types of platform to choose from.

A RESELLER ACCOUNT, A VPS, OR A DEDICATED SERVER

Based on my twelve years experience in doing web hosting, I would recommend you to start your business with a reseller account. It is the most logical way to start a web hosting business. It requires only some \$20/Month. You can choose your reseller account from the many available reseller hosting providers out there.

Why not start with a VPS or even a dedicated server? Well, there is no point in doing that, unless you already have a substantial amount of clients to begin with, plus you already know what you're doing. If you are starting from scratch, there is no need to spend on a VPS or a dedicated server.

Okay, so a reseller account. There are several types of reseller accounts available in the industry today. I will discuss only the ones I am familiar with and have used before.

WHM/CPANEL RESELLER ACCOUNT

A WHM/cPanel reseller account is the most commonly used in the web hosting industry today. The only drawbacks are:

- It does **not** support Windows server yet, but will in the near very future.
- It is easier for your clients to hop away from your company to another web host using WHM/cPanel, because there are so many web hosts using cPanel.

Other than that, it is simply **awesome**. I am using WHM/cPanel now and it works like a charm. In my previous web host which I sold in 2007, I am using HSphere, which previously was developed by Positive Software Corporation or Psoft.

I must admit that cPanel has done a much better job than HSphere. Why? It is SO EASY to use and troubleshoot when there are issues. Cpanel is the most commonly used hosting control panel system to date. If there is a problem, you can simply "Google" about it and you will most certainly find the solution to your cPanel/WHM issue from somebody who has come across the same problem.

I also favor cPanel/WHM because there are so many third party applications out there which are developed to support this hosting platform. It's like cPanel/WHM are the "people's" web hosting platform, while other platforms are more "exclusive".

There are many reseller hosting providers out there which offer WHM/cPanel. You might want to go with a web host of "very good reputation", simply because your business depends on it.

I highly recommend you to overlook the pricing factor when it comes to deciding which company you want your business to depend on. Look for quality, not just affordability.

I personally use HostGator's reseller account when starting up my second company. I started with their Aluminum plan, in a few months I upgraded to Silver, and finally I started to go dedicated. I personally recommend them as one of the high quality reseller providers which you can rely on.

HSPHERE RESELLER ACCOUNT

HSphere has its advantages. Though back then it has a drawback of being so “exclusive”, that is you have to always ask their technicians to fix stuff. It’s not so easy to troubleshoot things yourself. But now, since it has been bought by *PARALLELS* I would think it would be more user-friendly, since they’re such a big company.

The advantages of HSphere is they support both Unix/Linux and Windows based servers from way back since I started my first company. Plus, they support more complex hosting configurations, such as separate server clusters for web service, mail, and database.

So if you want to separate your mail servers, database servers, control panel servers, and so forth, you can do that with HSphere. With this setup, when a particular server goes down, your clients will not suffer a total blackout. It can either be their website down, in case of a web server crash, or their email is down, in case of a mail server crash. They won’t lose all services at the same time, since the servers are separated, not all in one box.

Nowadays, HSphere also support EasyApps. Like cPanel which supports Fantastico. They’re great applications and can really make the client’s life easier. Clients don’t have to worry about having to install applications themselves.

You can look for HSphere reseller providers simply by searching “hsphere resellers” on Google.

TURN KEY HOSTING RESELLER ACCOUNT - NOT RECOMMENDED

What I mean by “turn-key” reseller accounts are the ones which comes with “everything”. Like the ones provided by GoDaddy through WildWestDomains.Com and Enom.Com

With these reseller accounts it is impossible to actually grow your company the way you wanted it. Why? Because you won’t learn anything! All you would know is how to make a sale by driving traffic to your instant website which looks like every other reseller websites provided by these companies, which is not good.

Another drawback, you can’t grow and actually become independent. It is impossible to compete with the other web hosting providers, since you will have a BASE PRICE. You can’t throw away crazy promotional offers, which you absolutely need to get started! You just can’t!

With the traditional reseller accounts mentioned above, using WHM/cPanel or HSphere, you can grow and lease your own dedicated servers later on. Then grow and actually buy your own servers and collocate them some place. Then grow and buy your own data center. That’s the road you should be taking.

The final decision is yours. But then again, if you're not a geek, you would want to reconsider those turn-key reseller providers. You can focus on whatever business you are doing and just use this turn-key reseller account as your "side income". But if you are thinking of doing web hosting as your core business and income, don't use these.

YOUR DOMAIN RESELLER PROVIDER

When you provide web hosting services, you would also need to provide domain registration services, so that your clients can register their domain name while ordering web hosting.

There are several domain reseller providers. The most complete one is Enom which allow you to resell up to 64 Top Level Domains (TLD).

API OR TURN-KEY RESELLERS

There are two types of domain reseller services in the industry. The first one is a turn-key service which provides you with a "copy" of full working website and allows you to sell domain names from this website. With this approach, all you need to do is to drive visitors to your domain registration website. When people buy domain names or other related services, they will be paying directly to the provider and not to you. Once a month or twice a month, you will then be paid by the provider totaling all the sales you made so far.

This all-in-one solution is good, BUT this is **not** what you are looking for.

The second type is one that allows full flexibility for you to "integrate" this domain registration services into your existing hosting business by utilizing your own existing shopping cart system and client management system. As you would have guess, this second approach would mean more work to be done upfront, BUT will eventually give you the maximum growth factor to gain maximum profit.

With Enom, the first mentioned service (turn-key) is called PDQ or Instant Reseller. Though it looks "great" and everything is already setup for you, I would not recommend using this type of domain reseller service as it would leave you "clueless" and of course limit the possibility of growing your domain registration services independently.

I would recommend using Enom's API (Application Programming Interface) based services which allow you to sell domain names "independently" and to integrate your domain registration services with your existing services.

To be eligible as an Enom Technology Partner (ETP), it would require opening up an Enom ETP account. This would initially cost you as they require an upfront deposit for you to get their lowest domain reselling prices. I believe you would need to deposit some \$5,000 or more to get their lowest \$6.95/year pricing.

BUT, the good news is Enom's existing ETP are allowed to setup sub-resellers. These ETP would normally charge you **no** upfront fee to be their sub-resellers.

You can find these Enom Technology Partners to setup a free Enom sub-reseller account to get you started without having to spend a big capital upfront. Just search "enom reseller account" on Google.

The second domain reseller provider which I want to mention on this post is GoDaddy's WildWestDomains.Net. They also offer two types of services which are the API based service and their "turn-key" instant domain registration website.

You can compare the list of Top Level Domains you can sell and their pricing to decide which one you can go with. I would strongly recommend you to use Enom simply because they have been totally focused as a domain reseller provider and I personally have received a superb service from them in the past 9 years or so.

YOUR CLIENT MANAGEMENT AND BILLING SYSTEM

What is a client management and billing system? It is an application which will do the following:

- Process orders and sign ups
- Automatically bill and charge your clients
- Automatically register/transfer/renew domain names for your clients
- Automatically creates/suspends/unsuspends/terminates web hosting accounts on your servers/reseller accounts
- Manages your client support/help desk system
- Manages automated billings and invoicing for your business
- Manages other tasks such as providing affiliate system, knowledge base system, and other tasks depending on which application/software you choose.

There are several client management and automation system available for the web hosting business today. I specifically am using WHM Complete Solution (WHMCS) and am extremely satisfied with their system. However, if you wish to compare WHMCS with other providers, here are a few that are quite popular:

- WHM Auto Pilot
- AWBS
- Modern Bill
- And of course WHMCS (recommended)

I highly recommend WHMCS because they have a very stable platform with a strong developer's community which will be able to help you with any integration issues you might have. On this book, I will particularly guide you through the entire setup of WHMCS including tips and tricks on running your web hosting business using WHMCS.

YOUR PAYMENT GATEWAY

There are two types of payment gateways:

- A merchant account – where you can process your client's payments under your own company name.
- A third party payment account – where another company processes your client payments and then sends you the funds periodically or provide you with an option to withdraw your funds at any time.

For US persons, as long as you have good credit, you should be able to obtain a merchant account with no problem. If you're just starting out and your credit is not good enough, most merchant provider can still provide you with a merchant account if you can provide them with a guarantor which has a good enough credit.

If you're residing in a country where obtaining a merchant account is considerably difficult, I would suggest starting out with a third party payment gateway provider. You won't need a merchant account to get started since there are many third party payment gateway providers.

The most popular and trusted third party payment gateway provider is PayPal. Almost anyone can sign up with a free PayPal account to start accepting payments. I highly recommend you to save your time looking for other payment gateway provider and just go with PayPal.

Another reason to go with PayPal is most billing system can automatically integrate with PayPal, so you don't have to worry about billing your clients manually.

You would need to confirm your bank account with PayPal to be able to withdraw your clients' payments. The process is simple. PayPal would need you to enter your bank account details and will deposit a small amount of funds into your bank account. You just need to confirm the amount deposited by PayPal to your bank account to verify that you actually are the account holder of that bank account.

Once that process is completed you can receive payments from your clients and should be able to withdraw the funds into your bank account at any time. Some other option is 2Checkout and WorldPay both offers solutions for people outside the United States.

WHEN AND HOW TO GET A MERCHANT ACCOUNT

It is always better to have flexibility. Having a merchant account of your own will provide you with the flexibility which you will not have through a third party payment gateway. When your business has grown and you have processed a good amount of sale for at least two years, you can consider applying for a merchant account.

There are many merchant account providers which will provide merchant account for businesses in the United States. The key is you must have a US business presence in order to apply for a merchant account. Additionally you must have a US person which will act as a guarantor for the business.

To setup a US business presence you can use an incorporation firm, one which I recommend is VALIS International, which will be able to provide international persons and businesses to have a US business entity complete with US Employer Identification Number (EIN).

Once you have your US business entity established, you can then proceed by opening a US bank account using your new company name. To do this, there is no other way than physically walking into a bank in the US. They will need you to provide them with your passport and incorporation documents and they will be able to open your US business checking account.

The best way to obtain a US person as a guarantor when applying for a merchant account is to find a good old friend of yours who are now residing in the United States. Ask them to become a partner. This is how I gain my US merchant account, which eventually opens door for me to get my own US business visa by employing myself under my own company.

If you are already residing in a country where you can get a merchant account easily, such as Europe, Canada, or United States, you won't have to go through all that.

Some of the merchant account providers I would recommend is:

- PayPal through their PayPal Pro services
- E-Onlinedata.com
- Charge.com

YOUR SSL RESELLER PROVIDER

SSL stands for secure socket layer, what you will be selling is actually SSL certificates which will tell website visitors that the website they are visiting is secure and information sent to that website is encrypted.

When you are selling web hosting, selling both domain names and SSL certificates at the same time is highly recommended. This way your clients will not have to buy SSL certificates from other places, they can buy everything they need directly from you.

I won't confuse you with many options when it comes to selling SSL certificates to your clients, just use Enom. Why? Enom offers a wide range of SSL certificates which you can sell to your own clients depending on their needs. They have SSL certificates for small websites for as low as \$9.95/year (your cost) to premium high end SSL certificates at \$499/year

(your cost) which will turn browser’s address bar to green allowing website visitors to notice the security of the website they are visiting.

For your smaller clients, you can charge them at \$29.95/year and you already make a profit of \$20/year when utilizing Enom’s \$9.95/year SSL certificates. Note that clients who need SSL certificates are most likely clients who run a money making website, so don’t be afraid to gain a larger profit margin when selling SSL certificates.

To obtain Enom’s reseller account, as I have also informed you in the previous section, simply do a search on Google for “enom reseller account”.

Also don’t forget to always use SSL when processing orders for your clients. People will go away if they see your website is not using **https or SSL** when they are ordering your service. This is **NOT OPTIONAL** when it comes to your own web hosting company website.

I will cover the technical part of how to sell Enom’s SSL certificate through WHMCS on a later chapter.

CONCLUSION

At this point, you have seen that I will further discuss how to run a successful web hosting business based on these platforms

- A WHM/cPanel hosting system (can be a reseller, VPS, or dedicated server)
- An Enom reseller account
- WHM Complete Solution (WHMCS) where we put everything together

CHAPTER 2 – SETTING UP CPANEL/WHM ON VPS, DEDICATED SERVER, AND RESELLER ACCOUNT

What You Will Accomplish On This Chapter:

- ✓ Setting Up A New WHM/Cpanel Server By Yourself
- ✓ Configuring Multiple Servers As A Cluster
- ✓ Configuring WHM With Only A Reseller Access – Setting Up Hosting Plans

cPanel or WHM is the actual web hosting platform which will manage your client's websites, email accounts, databases, and other technical side of your hosting business operations.

What is WHM and what is cPanel?

WHM stands for Web Host Manager. WHM can only be accessed by the hosting provider, in this case you. Through WHM you will be able to manage all the technical side of your hosting business, such as adding hosting packages, adding a client account, suspending or terminating a client account, installing new features to become available to clients, and so much more.

cPanel is the hosting control panel interface which will be accessed by your clients. When your client wants to create a website, add a domain name, add an email account, add a database, and do other technical aspect of managing their hosting account, they will do it from within their cPanel.

IF YOU CURRENTLY ONLY HAVE A RESELLER ACCOUNT AND DO NOT HAVE A VPS
OR A DEDICATED SERVER, YOU CAN SKIP AHEAD TO THE LAST SECTION
“CONFIGURING WHM WITH ONLY A RESELLER ACCESS”.

Where to get WHM/cPanel?

You can obtain a WHM/cPanel license from your server provider. If your server provider does not provide you with a WHM license, you can search on Google for “WHM license” which will get you a list of companies selling WHM licenses and installation.

However, I highly recommend choosing a server provider which provides WHM licenses. This way, when you need help, their support will know what to do because they are an authorized WHM/cPanel distributor.

WHM/cPanel licenses are sold as a monthly subscription payment which is from my opinion is very affordable. You don't have to worry about upfront cost when using WHM/cPanel.

On this chapter I will provide a getting started guide on how you can setup your WHM/cPanel server all by yourself and have it ready to be used by your clients. It is not in the context of this guide to explain all the advanced configuration and function details which lies within WHM.

However I believe this guide is enough for you to be able to start opening your WHM/cPanel server for clients.

Once you've finished this setup, you **MUST** go through all the available menus/functions in WHM and see all available functions within WHM which most are extremely useful for managing your day to day hosting business.

SETTING UP A NEW WHM/CPANEL SERVER

On this section I am going to provide you with a step by step guide on how to setup your WHM/cPanel server ***to be ready for production***. Simply follow through each step carefully. By the end of this section, you should have a fully working cPanel/WHM server ready to host your first client.

BASED ON MY EXPERIENCE, I WOULD HIGHLY RECOMMEND YOU TO USE THE DATA WHICH I PROVIDE IN THE GUIDE BELOW. IT IS NOT THE NATURE OF THIS BOOK TO GIVE YOU A THOROUGH EXPLANATION ON WHY A CERTAIN OPTION MUST BE SET TO THE SPECIFIED VALUE BELOW. OTHERWISE THIS BOOK WILL END UP AS A 1,000 PAGE BOOK. SIMPLY FOLLOW MY RECOMMENDATION.

Okay, let's get started! First log in to your WHM (you must log in using root, requires a VPS or dedicated server environment) from https://server_ip_address:2087/

Most likely WHM has already been setup by your server provider, if not please just go through all the setup process presented by WHM. You won't be lost as the guides are quite simple and straightforward.

Once logged in, see the long navigation menu on the left? Don't be overwhelmed by it, by the end of this section we will go through it all. We will start from **top to bottom** and I will explain everything at the best of my current ability.

ONLY MAKE CHANGES/UPDATES ON OPTIONS LISTED BELOW. WE WILL SKIP SOME CONFIGURATION SETTINGS NOW AND WILL GET BACK TO THEM AT A LATER SECTION.

SERVER CONFIGURATION

BASIC CPANEL/WHM SETUP

All contact information details:

- AIM
- Email Address
- Pager
- ICQ

Set this to your personal contact detail which actually goes to you. WHM will send out notices to these contacts whenever something goes wrong.

For now, leave other settings as it was. We'll go back to some of the settings on this page on later steps.

INITIAL QUOTA SETUP

Run the initial quota setup. This will take a while, please wait patiently. It depends on how big your HDD is.

SERVER TIME

Set the server time according to your own local time so when something happen you can relate to the incident using your own local time.

STATISTIC SOFTWARE CONFIGURATION

Generators Configuration

- **On the Active checkbox, check it all**
- **On the Enabled by Default, uncheck it all, let your clients turn it on themselves when they want to use it**

User Permissions

Check - Allow all users to change their web statistics generating software. So your clients can choose which stats to use

TWEAK SETTINGS

Since there are many options which need to be set in Tweak Settings, I will actually provide you with a real display of the Tweak Settings interface. Simply follow the values provided below.

Display	
The login theme to display for cPanel Login. See the Universal Theme Manager for options. If you are posting to /login/ you can include "login_theme" as a uri/form variable to overwrite this setting on a per case basis.	<input type="text" value="cpanel"/>
Number (or all) of accounts to display per page in list accounts.	<input type="text" value="30"/>
Domains	
Allow users to park subdomains of the server's hostname main domain.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allow users to Park/Addon Domains on top of domains owned by other users. (probably a bad idea)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allow Creation of Parked/Addon Domains that resolve to other servers (i.e. domain transfers) [This can be a major security problem. If you must have it enabled, be sure to not allow users to park common internet domains.]	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Allow resellers to create accounts with subdomains of the server's hostname main domain.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allow Creation of Parked/Addon Domains that are not registered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
When adding a new domain, automatically create A entries for the registered nameservers if they would be contained in the zone.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Prevent users from parking/adding on common internet domains. (i.e. hotmail.com, aol.com)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Check zone file syntax when saving and syncing zones.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Application for processing dns requests. The default is to use cPanel Dns cluster system located at /usr/local/cpanel/whostmgr/bin/dnsadmin. (Recommended: leave blank to use the default).	<input type="text"/>
Add proxy VirtualHost to httpd.conf to automatically redirect unconfigured cpanel, webmail, webdisk and whm subdomains to the correct port (requires mod_rewrite and mod_proxy)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Automatically create cpanel, webmail, webdisk and whm proxy subdomain DNS entries for new accounts. When this is initially enabled it will add appropriate proxy subdomain DNS entries to all existing accounts. (Use /scripts/proxydomains to reconfigure the DNS entries manually)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Allow users to create cpanel, webmail, webdisk and whm subdomains that override automatically generated proxy subdomains	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Prevent users from creating subdomains outside of their public_html directory.	<input type="checkbox"/>
When adding a new domain, if the domain is already registered, ignore the configured nameservers, and set the NS line to the authoritative (registered) ones.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mail	
Default catch-all/default address behavior for new accounts. "fail" is usually the best choice if you are getting mail attacks.	
<input checked="" type="radio"/> localuser <input type="radio"/> blackhole <input type="radio"/> fail	
Silently Discard all FormMail-clone requests with a bcc: header in the subject line	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Allow mail account authentication using the password of the domain owner's account	<input type="checkbox"/>
Number of minutes between mail server queue runs (default is 60).	<input type="text" value="60"/>
Track the origin of messages sent though the mail server by adding the X-Source headers (exim 4.34+ required)	<input type="checkbox"/>
The maximum each domain can send out per hour (0 is unlimited)	<input type="text" value="500"/>
Prevent the user "nobody" from sending out mail to remote addresses (PHP and CGI scripts generally run as nobody if you are not using PHPSuexec and Suexec respectively.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Include a list of Pop before SMTP senders in the X-PopBeforeSMTP header when relaying mail. (exim 4.34-30+ required)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Automatically setup /etc/localdomains, /etc/remotedomains, /etc/secondarymx based on where the mx entry is pointed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
BoxTrapper Spam Trap	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Horde Webmail	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mailman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
RoundCube Webmail	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SpamAssassin Spam Filter	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SpamAssassin Spam Box delivery for messages marked as spam (user configurable)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SquirrelMail Webmail	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Add the mail. prefix for mailman urls (ie http://mail.domain.com/mailman)

MySQL®

MySQL® Version to use (you must run Software/Update Server Software (or /scripts/mysqclup) for this to take effect. You should then run buildapache/easyapache after changing this option. You may also need to run /scripts/perlinstaller --force Bundle::DBD::mysql. Updating from a previous version of MySQL® to a later version is *not* automatically reversable. You should backup your databases if you think you might wish to downgrade in the future.



5.0

Use old style (4.0) passwords with MySQL® 4.1+ (required if you have problems with PHP apps authenticating)

Notifications

Notify the admin, (or the reseller), when an account has reached the "critical" Disk Usage state.

Threshold percentage where a user's disk usage is considered to be in the "critical" state. (0 will disable this notification)

Notify the admin, (or the reseller), when an account has reached the "full" Disk Usage state.

Threshold percentage where a user's disk usage is considered to be in the "full" state. (0 will disable this notification)

Notify the admin, (or the reseller), when an account has reached the "warn" Disk Usage state.

Threshold percentage where a user's disk usage is considered to be in the "warn" state. (0 will disable this notification)

Threshold percentage where a mailbox's disk usage is considered to be in the "critical" state. (0 will disable this notification)

Threshold percentage where a mailbox's disk usage is considered to be in the "full" state. (0 will disable this notification)

Threshold percentage where a mailbox's disk usage is considered to be in the "warn" state. (0 will disable this notification)

Email users when they have exceeded their bandwidth. Disabling this will prevent all Bandwidth Limits Email from being sent.

Email users when they have reached 70% of their bandwidth

Email users when they have reached 75% of their bandwidth

Email users when they have reached 80% of their bandwidth	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Email users when they have reached 85% of their bandwidth	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email users when they have reached 90% of their bandwidth	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email users when they have reached 95% of their bandwidth	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email users when they have reached 97% of their bandwidth	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email users when they have reached 98% of their bandwidth	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email users when they have reached 99% of their bandwidth	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mail Box Usage Warnings	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disable Suspending accounts that exceed their bandwidth limit (will clear all suspensions if disabled, and disable all bandwidth notifications.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disk Space Usage Warnings	<input type="checkbox"/>
PHP	
PHP max execution time for cPanel PHP execution in seconds (default 90)	<input type="text" value="90"/>
PHP Max Post Size for cPanel PHP in Megabytes (default 55M with a maximum value of 2047M)	<input type="text" value="55M"/>
cPanel PHP Register Globals (Off [unchecked] is recommended for security reasons)	<input type="checkbox"/>
PHP Max Upload Size for cPanel PHP in Megabytes (default 50M with a maximum value of 2047M)	<input type="text" value="100M"/>
Loader to use for internal cPanel PHP (Use oldsourceguardian for version 1.x and 2.x)	
<input type="radio"/> none <input checked="" type="radio"/> ioncube <input type="radio"/> sourceguardian <input type="radio"/> oldsourceguardian	
Redirection	
Always redirect users to the ssl/tls ports when visiting /cpanel, /webmail, etc.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
When visiting /cpanel or /whm or /webmail WITHOUT SSL, you can choose to redirect to:	
<input type="radio"/> Hostname <input checked="" type="radio"/> Origin Domain Name	
When visiting /cpanel or /whm or /webmail with SSL, you can choose to redirect to:	

<input checked="" type="radio"/> SSL Certificate Name <input type="radio"/> Hostname <input type="radio"/> Origin Domain Name	
Redirect user to the following URL upon logout of the cPanel interface. A blank value specifies the default logout page.	<input type="text"/>
Security	
Send passwords in plaintext over email when creating a new account. Enabling this option is a security risk.	<input type="checkbox"/>
** Only permit cpanel/whm/webmail to execute functions that have a referrer. This will help prevent XSRF attacks, but may break integration with other systems, login applications, and billing software.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Only permit cpanel/whm/webmail to execute functions that have a referrer that matches one of the domains/ip on this server. This will help prevent XSRF attacks, but may break integration with other systems, login applications, and billing software.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Software	
Interchange version to use (if you disable interchange, you must turn off the service in the service manager)	
<input type="radio"/> 5.0 <input type="radio"/> 4.8 <input type="radio"/> 4.9 <input checked="" type="radio"/> disable	
FormMail-clone cgi	<input type="checkbox"/>
The path to the Urchin installation (if installed.) (Leave blank for auto-detection.)	<input type="text"/>
Stats Programs	
Awstats Reverse Dns Resolution	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Analog Stats	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Awstats Stats	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Webalizer Stats	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Stats and Logs	
Allow users to update Awstats from cPanel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Number of days between processing log files and bandwidth usage (default 1, decimal values are ok)	<input type="text" value="1"/>
Delete each domain's access logs after stats run	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The load average above the number of cpus at which logs file processing should be suspended (default 0)	<input type="text" value="10"/>

Do not include password in the raw log download link in cPanel (via ftp).	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do not reset /usr/local/apache/domlogs/ftpxferlog after it has been separated into each domain name's ftp log	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keep log files at the end of the month (default is off as you can run out of disk space quickly)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Keep Stats Log (/usr/local/cpanel/logs/stats_log) between cPanel restarts (default is off). Note that <u>log rotation</u> may affect this as well.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chmod value for raw apache log files (0640 is the default)	<input type="text" value="0640"/>
When viewing bandwidth usage in WHM, always display in Megabytes first.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stats Log Level (default is 1, larger numbers indicate more debug information in /usr/local/cpanel/logs/stats_log) [0...10]	<input type="text" value="1"/>
Status	
The load average that will cause the server status to appear red (leave blank for default, whole numbers only)	<input type="text" value="2"/>
Support	
Send the credentials of the logged in user when requesting support from cPanel directly.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
System	
List of IP addresses or hostnames, separated by spaces, which are allowed to view the /server-info and /server-status pages. See the <u>Apache documentation</u> for proper values.	<input type="text"/>
Allow cPanel users to install SSL Hosts if they have a dedicated ip.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Allow Perl updates from RPM based linux vendors	<input type="checkbox"/>
The port on which Apache listens for HTTP connections. Specifying a specific IP will prevent Apache from listening on all other IPs. (default: 0.0.0.0:80)	<input type="text" value="0.0.0.0:80"/>
The port on which Apache listens for HTTPS connections. Specifying a specific IP will prevent Apache from listening on all other IPs. (default: 0.0.0.0:443)	<input type="text" value="0.0.0.0:443"/>
Conserve Memory at the expense of using more cpu/diskio.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allow usernames to be determined from the account domain name when no username is provided.	<input type="checkbox"/>
Compress interface pages using gzip compression reducing bandwidth usage for cPanel and WHM.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Disable use of compiled dnsadmin. Setting this option allows use of system Perl modules within custom dnsadmin hooks. Setting this option will increase execution time of dnsadmin	<input type="checkbox"/>

functions.

Allow Sharing Nameserver Ips

Disable Disk Quota display caching (WHM will cache disk usage which may result in the display of disk quotas being up to 15 minutes behind the actual disk usage. Disabling this may result in a large performace degradation.)

Disable login with root or reseller password into the users' cPanel interface. Also disable switch account dropdown in themes with switch account feature.

Try to resolve each client's IP to a domain name when a user connects to cPanel services (warning: This can degrade performance).

Display Errors in cPanel instead of logging them to /usr/local/cpanel/logs/error_log

The maximum file size in MB allowed for upload through cPanel File manager. Use "unlimited" for unlimited

The minimum filesystem quota space in MB required after file upload through cPanel File manager (Default 5MB). This will prevent users from hitting their quota limit through File Manager file uploads

The maximum number of directories deep to look for .htaccess files when doing .htaccess checks. Can be from 0 to 100. 2 is the default setting. Values higher than this are discouraged.

Do not warn about features that will be deprecated in later releases (Warning: If you check this box, you will not be able to learn about features that will be disappearing in future releases. This could lead to a non-functional server when the feature is finally removed.)

Use jailshell as the default shell for all new accounts and modified accounts

The maximum memory a cPanel process can use before it is killed off (in megabytes). Values less than 128 megabytes can not be specified. A value of "0" will disable the memory limits.

Use native SSL support if possible, negating need for Stunnel

Do not send language file changes to cPanel

Do not warn users about the system backup being disabled in cPanel.

Specify the timeout in seconds for connections between this server and other remote WHM servers. Values less than 35 cannot be specified.

Allow cPanel users to reset their password via email

Enable cPanel Software RollBack. This feature turns on a build archiving and restoration facility, allowing the server administrator to "roll back" their cPanel installation to previous

build. All files are stored on the server.

Disable Http Authentication for cPanel/WebMail/WHM Logins (forces cookie authentication)

Do not start deprecated Melange 1.10 chat server.

Send a notification when a user's backup has errors

Allow cpanel and admin binaries to be run from other applications besides the cpanel server (cpsrvd). [parentcheck]

Disable whois lookups for the nameserver IP manager.

The number of times a ChkServd TCP check must fail before notification is sent and the service is restarted. On heavily loaded systems these types of service checks fail occasionally producing erroneous indications that services are down. A setting of 0 will disable all notifications and restarts due to TCP checks. Setting this value to 3 or higher is recommended for most systems.

Use Safe Quota Setting (quotas will be disabled, adjusted, and then re-enabled). This option should be enabled if you are having problems with lost disk quotas or other quota system corruption. Under software raid and other circumstances enabling this option will degrade server performance.

cPAddons

The default administrative contact for cPAddons moderation emails. (Resellers will be notified if their contact email is set in cPanel):

Automatically keep all cPAddons Source Files up to date.

The maximum number of moderated requests that a user may have at any given time

The maximum number of moderated requests per addon that a user may have at any given time

Alert cPAddons administrator of pending moderation requests

Prevent installation of addon scripts not provided by cPanel

Prevent installation of cPanel addon scripts that have been altered (Turning this off may be useful when testing custom addons.)

Notify owners when their users have cPAddon installations that need updated

Notify cPAddons Administrator of cPAddon installations that need updated.

Notes:

Disabling cPanel features requires a skin which supports dynamic features.

UPDATE CONFIG

cPanel/WHM Updates	Automatic (STABLE tree)
cPanel Package Updates	Automatic
Security Package Updates	Automatic

Click **Save** then click on the Update Now button and do a force update just to make sure everything is updated before you open up this server for production

SUPPORT

CONFIGURE SUPPORT REQUEST SUBMISSIONS

Simply chose **Disable This Feature** since all your client support/help desk will be done through WHMCS and not here.

SECURITY

SECURITY CENTER

Password Strength Configuration

Set this to at least 70 so that your users can not use weak password. This is very important. Otherwise your client's accounts can easily be hacked by a third party.

cPHulk Brute Force Protection

- Enable this and apply the default settings.
- **Check** – Send notification when brute force user is detected

PHP open_basedir Tweak

Enable this

Apache mod_userdir Tweak

Enable this

Compilers Tweak

Enable this

Shell Fork Bomb Protection

Enable this

SERVER CONTACTS

CHANGE SYSTEM MAIL PREFERENCES

Root's mail	Set this to your personal email address
Nobody's mail	/dev/null
Cpanel's mail	Root

SOFTWARE

EASY APACHE (APACHE UPDATE)

- Choose **Previously Saved Config** and click **Start customizing based on profile** button.
- Choose **Apache 2.2** and click **Next Step**
- Choose **PHP 5** and click **Next Step**
- Choose the latest PHP version **the one at the bottom** and click **Next Step**
- Choose the options as listed below which should cover 95% of your clients hosting needs if you are offering basic shared web hosting.
 - ✓ Frontpage
 - ✓ Mod SuPHP
 - ✓ EAccelerator for PHP
 - ✓ IonCube Loader for PHP
 - ✓ Mod Security
 - ✓ Suhosin for PHP
 - ✓ Zend Optimizer for PHP
- Then click **Exhaustive Options List**, on this page choose the following options:

✓ Asis	✓ EAccelerator for PHP	✓ Bcmath
✓ AuthnDBD	✓ IonCube Loader for PHP	✓ CGI
✓ AuthnDBM	✓ Mod Security	✓ Calendar
✓ AuthnDefault	✓ Suhosin for PHP	✓ Curl
✓ DBD	✓ Zend Optimizer for PHP	✓ CurlSSL
✓ Deflate		✓ Curlwrappers
✓ Env		✓ Exif
✓ Expires		✓ FTP
✓ Fileprotect		✓ GD
✓ Frontpage		✓ Gettext

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|
| ✓ Headers | ✓ Iconv |
| ✓ LDAP | ✓ Imap |
| ✓ Mod SuPHP | ✓ Magic Quotes |
| ✓ Proxy | ✓ MailHeaders |
| ✓ UniqueId | ✓ Mbregex |
| | ✓ Mbstring |
| | ✓ Mcrypt |
| | ✓ Mhash |
| | ✓ Mysql |
| | ✓ Mysql of the system |
| | ✓ MySQL "Improved" extension. |
| | ✓ Openssl |
| | ✓ PDO |
| | ✓ PDO MySQL |
| | ✓ POSIX |
| | ✓ Path Info Check |
| | ✓ Pear |
| | ✓ SOAP |
| | ✓ Sockets |
| | ✓ TTF |
| | ✓ XSL |
| | ✓ XmlRPC |
| | ✓ Zip |
| | ✓ Zlib |

Then click **Save and build**. Wait for an hour or more until the build is finished and then click the **Save configuration option** button.

NETWORKING SETUP

HOSTNAME

Now you must choose a hostname for your server. I highly recommend using a hostname format which cannot easily be guessed. Don't use server17.yourdomain.com, or mail12.yourdomain.com.

It is better to use an unpredictable hostname than a guessable one. One that vibes a "positive energy" would be more preferable, since hey it's your server, if it goes down, so goes your reputation. An example would be shinningstar.hostup.net.

Once you've come up with a good hostname, click the change button.

RESOLVER CONFIGURATION

Most likely, this has already been set by your server provider. If it has, don't do anything. You will know when you click the **Proceed** button. If some IP is already listed, then it's fine. If it's empty, you must ask your server provider to provide you with their resolver IP addresses, and then put it there.

SERVER CONFIGURATION

BASIC CPANEL/WHM SETUP

Now that you have set a hostname for this server, go back to this page.

- On the **hostname** part, enter the hostname which you've set for this server, then continue setting the two name servers for your hosting business below.

Primary Nameserver

Set **NS1.YOURDOMAIN.COM** then click on **Assign IP Address** button, enter an available IP address from your server provider. You must have at least 2 available IPs to setup your DNS servers as a web host. If you only have 1 IP, ask for one more from your server provider.

Secondary Nameserver

Set **NS2.YOURDOMAIN.COM** then click on **Assign IP Address** button, enter an available IP address from your server provider. You must have at least 2 available IPs to setup your DNS servers as a web host. If you only have 1 IP, ask for one more from your server provider.

CLUSTER/REMOTE ACCESS

CONFIGURE CLUSTER

This setting should only be set when you have **more than one WHM server**. If you only have one WHM server, don't worry about this for now. Just skip this section for now. When you are adding a second server, then you can go back to this section and set this up.

If you have more than one WHM server, it is highly recommended that you setup at least TWO servers to serve as your DNS servers. This is where the Cluster Management page comes to place.

What we will do is to setup a synchronization scheme so that **BOTH DNS servers should sync with each other** and **ALL OTHER SERVERS should sync TO these two DNS Servers**.

To set this up simply follow the guide presented on this page, it is pretty straightforward. First you must Modify Cluster Status to **Enable Dns Clustering**

Then under **Add a new server to the cluster**, enter in the OTHER server which you want this server to synchronize with and hit **Configure**.

Follow the on screen guide, you must setup authorization scheme so that both servers will allow each other's updates. The setup is easy, follow the guide and in the end you must have a diagram looking like this.

On **NS1.YOURDOMAIN.COM**

NS1.YOURDOMAIN.COM -----→ NS2.YOURDOMAIN.COM **(DIAGRAM)**

NS1.YOURDOMAIN.COM DNS Role: **Synchronize Changes**

STARLIGHT.YOURDOMAIN.COM DNS Role: **Standalone**

On **NS2.YOURDOMAIN.COM**

NS2.YOURDOMAIN.COM -----→ NS1.YOURDOMAIN.COM **(DIAGRAM)**

NS2.YOURDOMAIN.COM DNS Role: **Synchronize Changes**

STARLIGHT.YOURDOMAIN.COM DNS Role: **Standalone**

On **STARLIGHT.YOURDOMAIN.COM** (Your third server)

STARLIGHT.YOURDOMAIN.COM -----→ NS1.YOURDOMAIN.COM **(DIAGRAM)**

|
|-----→ NS2.YOURDOMAIN.COM

NS1.YOURDOMAIN.COM DNS Role: **Synchronize Changes**

NS2.YOURDOMAIN.COM DNS Role: **Synchronize Changes**

How it works

When a client is adding a domain or an account has just been created on any of the three servers above, the up to date domain records will always be available on both of your DNS servers. Even when client's account resides on the starlight server, the DNS records will always get updates on ns1 and ns2.

INSTALLING RUBY ON RAILS

Now we can begin installing extra “features” and applications for your clients to use. First we will install Ruby on Rails. Simply follow the guide here and you'll be fine. Guide is taken from

<http://twiki.cpanel.net/twiki/bin/view/AllDocumentation/RubyonRails/WebHome>

REQUIREMENTS

There are a few major requirements for installing Ruby on Rails on a cPanel server. First, cPanel 11 must be running on the server. This can be verified by checking at the version number in the upper right-hand corner of WHM.

Installing Ruby on Rails in cPanel does require some command line interaction, so you will need to make sure that you can log into your server via SSH as `root`. Furthermore, cPanel requires that your server contain a working `yum` configuration. You can check this before trying to install Ruby by running `yum list ruby` from SSH, if it works without error, you should be fine.

INSTALLATION

The installation of Ruby on Rails in cPanel has two parts, first is installing Ruby itself, which can be accomplished by running `/scripts/installruby`. This script will install Ruby, RubyGems, Mongrel and the software that Ruby relies upon and activates the Ruby interface in your end user's cPanel.


The second step in the installation is running `/usr/local/cpanel/bin/ror_setup`. This script will setup Ruby on Rails so that it will be activated when your system starts.

DEPLOYING AN ROR ENVIRONMENT

Now that you have installed Ruby on Rails, you will want to deploy your first application environment.

Ruby on Rails works in a different manner from most of the web application languages used on cPanel servers. Ruby runs a separate server other than Apache for serving Ruby on Rails web applications, so setup for this

requires a little more work. First you will need to login to your cPanel and click on the Ruby on Rails icon, to bring up the Ruby on Rails management interface that allows you to setup your Ruby environments. At this point, you will need to give your application a name and setup its path.

 **Note:** If you set this path inside of your `public_html` directory your application's source code and configuration files can be viewable by anyone on the web.

Once you have deployed your first environment, we will of course want to turn it on by clicking on the RUN icon next to APPLICATION'S NAME in the MANAGE RUBY ON RAILS interface. If this worked successfully, you should see RUNNING under STATUS, and you should be able to click the URL icon under the RAILS SERVER column to see a page that looks similar to this:

```
This page means that the environment is up and running, and for the rest of your
Ruby on Rails application installation you will need to consult the
application's installation guide.
```

If you pay close attention to the URL used for the application, you will see that it has a number like `:12001` at the end of it. This is because Ruby on Rails does not use the standard Apache web server, but rather uses its own, called Mongrel.

We can change these to be user-friendly. You will need to create a new subdomain or addon domain in cPanel, then click on the CREATE REWRITE button next to the Rails application name in cPanel, select the desired domain name from the drop down box, and now, whenever you go to this domain, it will display the RoR application.

BASIC RAILS TROUBLESHOOTING

Since Ruby on Rails uses its own web server, it has to run this web server on an alternate port. This causes an issue if you are running a firewall on your system. You will need to ensure that ports 12001 and up are open (we recommend making the max number of the open ports 12001 plus whatever the number of Ruby applications you expect to be running will be).

Sometimes the gems repos will go down. If this happens during the installation, you will need to re-run `/scripts/installruby`.

INSTALLING IMAGE MAGICK

Image Magick is a popular graphic manipulation application which is asked by a lot of clients. Installing it before someone asks it saves you a lot of time later on.

For installing imagemagick on a cpanel server, you need to undergo below steps :

1. Log into your server as root
2. Create a new directory: mkdir /home/cpimins
3. cd /home/cpimins
4. wget <http://layer1.cpanel.net/magick.tar.gz>
5. tar zxvf magick.tar.gz
6. cd magick
7. /scripts/installrpm ImageMagick
8. /scripts/installrpm ImageMagick-devel
9. sh ./install

INSTALLING FANTASTICO DE LUXE

Fantastico Deluxe is an automated script installer which can install many web applications for your clients automatically. Having Fantastico Deluxe installed in your WHM platform is not optional, it is a requirement if you wish to compete with other web hosts.

You may obtain Fantastico Deluxe license from your server provider with a discounted monthly price of around \$5/Month. You can also get Fantastico Deluxe directly at <http://www.netenberg.com/fantastico.php>

Once you get the license taken care of, simply follow their simple installation guide at:
<http://www.netenberg.com/forum/index.php?topic=950.0>

Once you got Fantastico Deluxe installed on your WHM, go to **Fantastico De Luxe WHM Admin** page in WHM, then go to **Settings**, and make sure you select **PHPsuexec installed** since you've installed it in the previous steps above. Other than that, the other settings are good to be left at default.

UPDATING YOUR SUSPENDED PAGE

From time to time you will come across an account which violates your terms of service which you need to suspend. You may also need to suspend an account for non-payment. When you do that, by default all the clients' websites will be displayed as "SERVICE HAS BEEN SUSPENDED", please contact billing.

Now, this will bring a bad image for your clients, you might want to change that to something more subtle, such as "WE'RE SORRY, OUR WEBSITE IS TEMPORARILY OUT OF SERVICE", please come back soon.

This will not upset your clients when you have to suspend their service for late payments. To do this:

- Log in to your WHM and go to **Account Functions: Modify Account Suspended Page**
- Simply edit that page and you're done. It's simple, but it's crucial for your relationships with your clients.

INSTALLING YOUR CLIENTS DEFAULT INDEX PAGE

A client default index page is the page which your client will see upon the first creation of a client's cPanel account. If you do not set this, your client website will have no index file and it will load their directory listing when they visit clientsdomain.com through the browser. **You don't want that!** Change it to something like this:

Congratulations! Your account is now active. This is a temporary page created for your account. This page is named **index.html**. Do not forget to delete this file later (index.html), after you uploaded/published your own website files. This file resides within your **public_html** or **www** folder (these two are the same thing)

To get started, simply follow our Step by Step Guide which we have prepared for you.

Step 1 – New Order Process & Hosting Control Panel (cPanel) Access

Step 2 – Activating Your Domain Name

Step 3 – Creating and Publishing Website

Also, please read the following articles:

Moving Your Website From Another Web Host

Why am I still seeing my old page after upload?

Once you have gone through the Step by Step Guides above, we are sure that you will know exactly what to do to get your website online.

Support

To obtain support simply login to your client area at <https://webhosting-domain.com/clientarea.php> then click on Support Tickets menu on the left to submit a support ticket.

Don't forget to add your company's header and footer to make it more attractive.

IMPORTANT NOTE: THIS PAGE SHOULD NOT CONTAIN RELATIVE IMAGE PATH OR RELATIVE LINKS URL.

If you are going to use images and links on this **index.html** page, make sure you always use absolute paths such as and DO NOT use something like since the image will be broken. Do the same with links.

To implement this so that your clients will always be presented with this default index page instead of a blank directory listing:

Create a file named index.html which content should look like something above and place it in **/root/cpanel3-skel/public_html**

This will save you A LOT of getting started questions on "how do I upload my page" and other related questions. Make sure you put a very easy to use guide on how your clients should proceed publishing their website. I will also include these guides on a later chapter.

Lastly, login to your WHM and choose **Apache Configuration**, afterwards click on **DirectoryIndex Priority**. On that page you must place index.html **below** index.php. This will ensure when your client forgot to remove the index.html file and loads up their index.php file, the index.php file will be prioritized over the index.html file.

INSTALLING SSL CERTIFICATE FOR YOUR WHM SERVICES

Objective: To offer the ability for clients to access their cPanel from a secured https connection such as **https://servername.yourdomain.com:2083/**

Now we need to install SSL certificate for your WHM server so that your clients can access their cPanel accounts over https secured connection. Now, if you have read the first chapter on choosing your SSL reseller provider, you've noticed that I have recommended you to use Enom. Now is the time to make a good use of your Enom account and get your first SSL certificate to purchase the SSL certificate for your server. You can choose the \$9.95/year one and save money.

Log in to your WHM and go to each sections showed below.

GENERATE A SSL CERTIFICATE AND SIGNING REQUEST

Enter in your Contact Info and enter everything carefully. On the **Host to make cert for:** enter your server hostname, for example **starlight.yourdomain.com**

Click the **Create** button

There you have it, don't close your browser window just yet. Now log in to your Enom account.

BUYING THE SSL CERTIFICATE FROM ENOM

- On the website menu on the top click on **SSL Certificates**
- On the right column, near the bottom choose **RapidSSL® for \$9.95/yr**
- Click **Continue** button on the next page
- Click **Checkout Now** button and follow the on screen guide.
- When you're done purchasing, under SSL Certificates menu on the top, choose **Manage**
- You will be asked for the Certificate Signing Request (CSR), choose **Apache + Apache SSL** and then pasted your CSR Key which you got from your WHM earlier.
- The whole process should take only 15 minutes of your time
- You will then have the SSL Certificate ready to download.

INSTALLING THE SSL CERT IN WHM

- Copy the SSL Cert codes from Enom, then go back to your WHM, click on Install a SSL Certificate and Setup the Domain
- Simply paste the SSL Cert codes into the first crt box on the top, everything else should be loaded automatically, then click on the **Submit** button on the top.
- Now you should be able to access <https://hostname.domain.com>
- Then choose **Manage Service SSL Certificates** from WHM
- Install this new SSL certificate on ALL services there by clicking on **Install new Certificate** on each service
- Once you've done all the services, you must restart WHM/cPanel. Simply log in to your server through shell as root and do: **service cpanel restart**
- Now all of the services in your WHM are available to be accessed securely including <https://hostname.domain.com:2083> for your clients to access cPanel securely.

BASIC SECURITY SETTINGS

Now we need to configure some basic mail and security settings so that your WHM server can operate smoothly and will have smaller chance of getting an abuse from accounts residing on your server or from outside attacks.

The guides provided here are enough to get you started but is not of advanced nature in any way. Should you require a total server hardening, please look for cPanel/WHM server hardening services. One which I would highly recommend is

Way to The Web Limited, the creator of Config Server Firewall. Their services can be obtained from <http://www.configserver.com/cp/index.html>

Let's get started!

SETTING UP REVERSE DNS RECORD

This can only be done by your server provider. Simply submit a ticket to them and ask them to setup a Reverse DNS Record or PTR record for your server's base IP address to point to your server's hostname which you have set above.

They will know what to do. You can then check if it is properly setup from this link:

<http://remote.12dt.com/>

When you enter your server's IP address, your server's hostname should come up. Otherwise, get back to your server provider and make sure they've done it correctly. Sometimes they did not set it up correctly.

This must be setup properly otherwise mails going out from your server will be returned by ISPs which has strict anti-spam policy because they cannot trace back your IP address to the proper server hostname.

EDIT ZONE TEMPLATES

Go to WHM and go to Edit Zone Templates. On this page you are presented with three files which you can edit. Edit all three of them and add this line on the bottom of all three files:

%domain%. IN TXT "v=spf1 a mx -all"

What it does is it will setup the proper TXT record for each domain that is being added to your WHM so that mails from that domain will be delivered successfully to the destination without being marked as junk mail or spam.

INSTALL CLAMAV

Now we need to install ClamAV which is an anti virus application to protect your WHM server from viruses and worms. To do this, go to WHM and then click on **Manage Plugins**.

On that page install **clamavconnector** and you're done.

Once you're done there is a new menu on your WHM under Plugins. Click on **Configure ClamAV scanner**. The configuration is very simple, check everything and click save.

INSTALL MUNIN

Munin is a comprehensive and powerful server monitoring application which will help you a lot on your day to day management of your hosting business. To install Munin go to WHM and then click on **Manage Plugins**.

On that page install **munin** and you're done.

Once you're done there is a new menu on your WHM under Plugins. Click on **Munin Service Monitor**, you can now start looking for all kinds of stats in regards to your server performance.

TUNE UP YOUR MYSQL

It would be a good idea to tune up your MySQL database server configuration to prevent it being abused by accounts residing on your WHM server. This will limit clients MySQL resources in a way that "heavy abusers" cannot utilize your MySQL server and crashes the whole server.

If you're not an advanced sysadmin who knows a lot about MySQL tweaking, I recommend you to use this my.cnf configuration to your MySQL database server. This will help you a lot since MySQL are mostly the one service which has the most potential of having your server to become slow, if not crashes it altogether.

You may copy and paste the whole thing and put it on your /etc/my.cnf file

```
# Example MySQL config file for large systems.
#
# This is for a large system with memory = 512M where the system runs
mainly
# MySQL.
#
# You can copy this file to
# /etc/my.cnf to set global options,
# mysql-data-dir/my.cnf to set server-specific options (in this
# installation this directory is /var/lib/mysql) or
# ~/.my.cnf to set user-specific options.
#
# In this file, you can use all long options that a program supports.
# If you want to know which options a program supports, run the program
# with the "--help" option.
```

```
# The following options will be passed to all MySQL clients
[client]
#password = your_password
port = 3306
socket = /var/lib/mysql/mysql.sock

# Here follows entries for some specific programs

# The MySQL server

[mysqld]
port = 3306
socket = /var/lib/mysql/mysql.sock
skip-locking
key_buffer = 256M
max_allowed_packet = 1M
table_cache = 2M
sort_buffer_size = 1M
read_buffer_size = 1M
read_rnd_buffer_size = 4M
myisam_sort_buffer_size = 64M
thread_cache_size = 8
query_cache_size= 64M

# Try number of CPU's*2 for thread_concurrency
thread_concurrency = 4
max_connections = 250

# Don't listen on a TCP/IP port at all. This can be a security
enhancement,
# if all processes that need to connect to mysqld run on the same host.
# All interaction with mysqld must be made via Unix sockets or named
pipes.
# Note that using this option without enabling named pipes on Windows
# (via the "enable-named-pipe" option) will render mysqld useless!
#

#skip-networking

# Replication Master Server (default)
# binary logging is required for replication
```

```
#log-bin=mysql-bin

# required unique id between 1 and 2^32 - 1
# defaults to 1 if master-host is not set
# but will not function as a master if omitted
server-id = 1

# Replication Slave (comment out master section to use this)
#
# To configure this host as a replication slave, you can choose between
# two methods :
#
# 1) Use the CHANGE MASTER TO command (fully described in our manual) -
#    the syntax is:
#
#    CHANGE MASTER TO MASTER_HOST=<host>, MASTER_PORT=<port>,
#    MASTER_USER=<user>, MASTER_PASSWORD=<password> ;
#
#    where you replace <host>, <user>, <password> by quoted strings and
#    <port> by the master's port number (3306 by default).
#
#    Example:
#
#    CHANGE MASTER TO MASTER_HOST='125.564.12.1', MASTER_PORT=3306,
#    MASTER_USER='joe', MASTER_PASSWORD='secret';
#
# OR
#
# 2) Set the variables below. However, in case you choose this method,
#    then
#    start replication for the first time (even unsuccessfully, for
#    example
#    if you mistyped the password in master-password and the slave fails
#    to
#    connect), the slave will create a master.info file, and any later
#    change in this file to the variables' values below will be ignored
#    and
#    overridden by the content of the master.info file, unless you
#    shutdown|
#    the slave server, delete master.info and restart the slaver server.
#    For that reason, you may want to leave the lines below untouched
#    (commented) and instead use CHANGE MASTER TO (see above)
#
```

```
# required unique id between 2 and 2^32 - 1
# (and different from the master)
# defaults to 2 if master-host is set
# but will not function as a slave if omitted

#server-id      = 2
#
# The replication master for this slave - required
#master-host    = <hostname>
#
# The username the slave will use for authentication when connecting
# to the master - required
#master-user    = <username>
#
# The password the slave will authenticate with when connecting to
# the master - required
#master-password = <password>
#
# The port the master is listening on.
# optional - defaults to 3306
#master-port    = <port>
#
# binary logging - not required for slaves, but recommended
#log-bin=mysql-bin

# Point the following paths to different dedicated disks
#tmpdir = /tmp/
#log-update = /path-to-dedicated-directory/hostname

# Uncomment the following if you are using BDB tables
#bdb_cache_size = 64M
#bdb_max_lock = 100000

# Uncomment the following if you are using InnoDB tables
#innodb_data_home_dir = /var/lib/mysql/
#innodb_data_file_path = ibdata1:10M:autoextend
#innodb_log_group_home_dir = /var/lib/mysql/
#innodb_log_arch_dir = /var/lib/mysql/
# You can set .._buffer_pool_size up to 50 - 80 %
# of RAM but beware of setting memory usage too high
innodb_buffer_pool_size = 256M
#innodb_additional_mem_pool_size = 20M
```

```
# Set .._log_file_size to 25 % of buffer pool size
#innodb_log_file_size = 64M
#innodb_log_buffer_size = 8M
#innodb_flush_log_at_trx_commit = 1
#innodb_lock_wait_timeout = 50

[mysqldump]
quick
max_allowed_packet = 16M

[mysql]
no-auto-rehash
# Remove the next comment character if you are not familiar with SQL
#safe-updates

[isamchk]
key_buffer = 128M
sort_buffer_size = 128M
read_buffer = 2M
write_buffer = 2M

[myisamchk]
key_buffer = 128M
sort_buffer_size = 128M
read_buffer = 2M
write_buffer = 2M

[mysqlhotcopy]
interactive-timeout
```

TWEAKING YOUR APACHE CONFIGURATION

We also need to update your web server's configuration so that it will not easily be abused. If you have no knowledge in apache optimization, simply following the steps below will prevent your web server to be easily abused.

Edit this file `/etc/httpd/conf/includes/pre_main_global.conf` with your favorite file editor using vi or edit. Then add these lines:

```

RLimitMEM 512000000
RLimitCPU 30

StartServers      50
MinSpareServers   15
MaxSpareServers   30
MaxClients        225
MaxRequestsPerChild 4000

KeepAlive 5
KeepAliveTimeout 2

```

PHP CONFIGURATION EDITOR

Go to WHM and choose PHP Configuration Editor. You just need to update the first page. Follow the table guides below.

upload_max_filesize	50M
include_path	<code>./usr/lib/php:/usr/local/lib/php</code>
file_uploads	On
asp_tags	Off
memory_limit	32M
register_globals	Off
max_execution_time	30
max_input_time	120
enable_dl	Off
safe_mode	Off
session.save_path	<code>/tmp</code>

Click the **Save** button

SETTING UP CRON PERMISSSION

Simply run this command as root while logged in to your WHM server through SSH:

chmod /usr/bin/crontab to 4755

INSTALLING AND CONFIGURING CONFIG SERVER FIREWALL (CSF)

There are many software firewalls which are available for you to use. I myself am using Config Server Firewall which is a free yet a powerful firewall system. CSF is more than sufficient to protect your WHM servers from abusers from within your own server or from an outside attacks.

I will not cover all the capabilities of CSF here, what is presented in this guide should be sufficient for you to protect your servers so you will be able to start offering hosting services to the public. However certain cases such as when your server is experiencing a Distributed Denial of Service Attacks (DDoS), would require further tweaking and troubleshooting using advanced methods and techniques which will not be discussed here.

Let's get started. Follow the steps here to install CSF into your WHM server.

First, log in to your WHM server using SSH as root, then simply follow the install guide below:

```
#####  
# Copyright 2006-2009, Way to the Web Limited  
# URL: http://www.waytotheweb.com  
# Email: sales@waytotheweb.com  
#####  
  
Installation  
=====  
Installation is quite straightforward:  
  
rm -fv csf.tgz  
wget http://www.configserver.com/free/csf.tgz  
tar -xzf csf.tgz  
cd csf  
sh install.sh  
  
Next, test whether you have the required iptables modules:  
  
perl /etc/csf/csftest.pl  
  
Don't worry if you cannot run all the features, so long as the script doesn't  
report any FATAL errors  
  
You should not run any other iptables firewall configuration script. For  
example, if you previously used APF+BFD you can remove the combination (which  
you will need to do if you have them installed otherwise they will conflict  
horribly):
```

```
sh /etc/csf/remove_apf_bfd.sh
```

That's it. You can then configure csf and lfd by edit the files directly in /etc/csf/*, or on cPanel servers use the WHM UI

csf installation for cPanel is preconfigured to work on a cPanel server with all the standard cPanel ports open.

csf installation for DirectAdmin is preconfigured to work on a DirectAdmin server with all the standard DirectAdmin ports open.

csf auto-configures your SSH port on installation where it's running on a non-standard port.

csf auto-whitelists your connected IP address where possible on installation.

You should ensure that kernel logging daemon (klogd) is enabled. Typically, VPS servers have this disabled and you should check /etc/init.d/syslog and make sure that any klogd lines are not commented out. If you change the file, remember to restart syslog.

See the readme.txt file for more information.

Webmin Module Installation/Upgrade

=====

To install or upgrade the csf webmin module:

Install csf as above

Install the csf webmin module in:

Webmin > Webmin Configuration > Webmin Modules >

From local file > /etc/csf/csfwebmin.tgz > Install Module

Uninstallation

=====

Removing csf and lfd is even more simple:

On cPanel servers:

```
cd /etc/csf
sh uninstall.sh
```

```
On DirectAdmin servers:

cd /etc/csf
sh uninstall.directadmin.sh

On generic linux servers:

cd /etc/csf
sh uninstall.generic.sh
```

That's it. Now you have CSF installed on your WHM server. The next step is to actually configure your CSF so that the server is secured and ready to be opened for public.

Configuring CSF can be overwhelming because CSF offers hundreds of configuration options for you to choose from. If you are offering a standard shared hosting service, I will provide you with a working CSF configuration file which will take care of your server's security, enough so that your server will be running smoothly without interruption.

A few basic notes that you will have to know about the CSF configuration file I am providing

- CSF will automatically kills your clients processes if it should utilize more than 100MB of RAM per process
- CSF will automatically kills your clients processes if it should be running more than 1800 seconds and does not complete processing

With this settings implemented, it is more unlikely that a client account or website would crash your entire server because CSF will automatically kill these processes before they overwhelm your server or even take down your server. You can always play with these values on your own CSF configuration.

The CSF Configuration is accessible from your WHM, click on **ConfigServer Security&Firewall**

If you wish to configure CSF manually, simply go to the CSF page from WHM and click **Firewall Configuration**. Don't be overwhelmed, it took me several hours to completely go through the whole configuration options and it took months to finally get a good CSF configuration options that works best for my hosting platform.

If you wish to utilize the CSF configuration file which I used myself, you may download it at <http://webhostingbusinessbook.com/res/csf.conf.txt>

Then simply replace your own `/etc/csf/csf.conf` file with this file and you're done.

The next thing you do is to **WHITE LIST YOUR OWN SERVERS IP ADDRESSES**. If you have more than one server, you must white list your own server's IP addresses on the **CSF Firewall Allow IPs** and **lfd Ignore IPs**

Do this on all of your servers, so that none of your servers will block each other.

Now you're done. Further on a later chapter I will show you several applications utilizing CSF capabilities which I built myself. These applications can help you automate your day to day hosting operation. The good news is, **I will provide these applications for free** since you already bought this book.

CREATING A "SAFE" CPANEL PUBLIC DEMO ACCOUNT WITH WHMCS

Now it's time for you to create a cPanel demo account for your potential client to try out your cPanel look and feel. We can't simply create a cPanel demo account and leave it just like that. Sooner or later this demo account will be abused by irresponsible people. You need to have an automated system to automatically reset your cPanel demo account which destroys all previous data. We will do that here.

To create a demo account, log in to your WHM web interface.

1. Create a new feature list through **Packages > Feature Manager**
 - Create a new feature named **demo** and **uncheck/disable** the following options:
 - Password Change
 - Change Language
 - Change Style
 - Update Contact Information

Click **Save**.
2. Create a new package through **Packages > Add Packages** and name it **demo** and choose the **demo** feature from the feature drop down list.
3. You can now have the general public access your demo cPanel account like a normal user would access it. You can use this link: <http://server.domain.com:2082/login?user=demo&pass=trynow>
4. Setup a new WHMCS user account for this cPanel demo account.
 - To do this, simply go through the procedure of setting up a regular web hosting plan in WHMCS and name it **demo**. Do this from **Setup > Product & Service > Create a New Product**.
 - You should mark this plan as hidden so this plan won't show up on your WHMCS order page. You can do this from this plan's detail page.
 - On the Module Settings of this demo plan, choose WHM Package Name to **demo** which is the WHM package you created above. Then choose the **Default Install Server** into the WHM server which your demo account resides.
 - Once you've this plan created, sign up for yourself for this account and make it to have no billing.
5. Now you have a WHMCS demo account which is linked to your cPanel demo account. We need to do this so that you can terminate your cPanel demo account every day or every few hours and have your WHMCS

to automatically create the demo account again. To do this we simply need to add a cron job which automatically terminates and recreate the cPanel demo account through WHMCS.

There are two files which you need to run every day in your cron job, they are **terminatedemo.php** and **createdemo.php**

terminatedemo.php

```
<?php
//TERMINATING DEMO ACCOUNT
$url = "http://yourdomain.com/whmcs/includes/api.php"; # URL to WHMCS API file
$whmcs_admin = "whmcs_admin_username"; # Admin username goes here
$whmcs_pw = "whmcs_admin_password";
$demo_account_id = "1";

$postfields["username"] = $whmcs_admin;
$postfields["password"] = md5($whmcs_pw);
$postfields["action"] = "serverterminate";
$postfields["accountid"] = "1";

$ch = curl_init();
curl_setopt($ch, CURLOPT_URL, $url);
curl_setopt($ch, CURLOPT_POST, 1);
curl_setopt($ch, CURLOPT_TIMEOUT, 100);
curl_setopt($ch, CURLOPT_RETURNTRANSFER, 1);
curl_setopt($ch, CURLOPT_POSTFIELDS, $postfields);
$data = curl_exec($ch);
curl_close($ch);

$data = explode(";", $data);
foreach ($data AS $temp) {
    $temp = explode("=", $temp);
    $results[$temp[0]] = $temp[1];
}

if ($results["result"]=="success") {
    print "Demo account terminated";
} else {
    # An error occurred
    $error_msg = $results["message"];
    mail("you@domain.com", "Error terminating demo account", $error_msg,$headers);
}
```

```
}  
?>
```

ceatedemo.php

```
<?php  
//RECREATING DEMO ACCOUNT  
$url = "http://yourdomain.com/whmcs/includes/api.php"; # URL to WHMCS API file  
$whmcs_admin = "whmcs_admin_username"; # Admin username goes here  
$whmcs_pw = "whmcs_admin_password";  
$demo_account_id = "1";  
  
$postfields["username"] = $whmcs_admin;  
$postfields["password"] = md5($whmcs_pw);  
$postfields["action"] = "servercreate";  
$postfields["accountid"] = "1";  
  
$ch = curl_init();  
curl_setopt($ch, CURLOPT_URL, $url);  
curl_setopt($ch, CURLOPT_POST, 1);  
curl_setopt($ch, CURLOPT_TIMEOUT, 100);  
curl_setopt($ch, CURLOPT_RETURNTRANSFER, 1);  
curl_setopt($ch, CURLOPT_POSTFIELDS, $postfields);  
$data = curl_exec($ch);  
curl_close($ch);  
  
$data = explode(";", $data);  
foreach ($data AS $temp) {  
    $temp = explode("=", $temp);  
    $results[$temp[0]] = $temp[1];  
}  
  
if ($results["result"]=="success") {  
    print "Demo account terminated";  
} else {  
    # An error occurred  
    $error_msg = $results["message"];  
    mail("you@domain.com", "Error terminating demo account", $error_msg,$headers);  
}  
?>
```

You need to edit the first four variables on these two files. Please replace them with your own values. The `demo_account_id` can be found by opening your WHMCS database table, go to the **tblhosting** table and look for the **id** number of your **demo account**.

Now simply run both of these files through your cron every few hours or every day. Make sure you set the two files to be run 1 minute a part so there is time for cPanel to properly terminating the demo account before recreating it again through the **createdemo.php** file

Run these two files using cron. Go to your WHM server using SSH, then type in **crontab -e** and enter in these two tasks:

```
20 0 * * * php -q /home/username/whmcs/terminatedemo.php
```

```
25 0 * * * php -q /home/username/whmcs/createdemo.php
```

The example above will terminate the demo account at 20 minutes pass midnight and will recreate the demo account at 25 minutes pass midnight every day.

Please replace the path to the `terminatedemo.php` and `createdemo.php` files to your own server path.

That's it! Now you won't have to worry about someone uploading stuff or using your cPanel demo account in an abusive way since the entire demo account including the entire data will self terminate every day.

CONFIGURING WHM USING A RESELLER ACCOUNT – SETTING UP HOSTING PLANS

If you only have a reseller account which has WHM access and do not have root access to the server, you won't be able to do all the WHM setup steps covered on the above sections because they are already setup by your reseller provider.

If you have gone through all the above steps or if you only have WHM access and no root access and the only thing that is left to do before you start selling is to create the Hosting Plans or Hosting Packages itself.

I will not discuss about the “marketing” side of creating the hosting plans on this chapter, we will only discuss the technical side of creating a hosting plan now.

Creating a hosting plan in WHM is plain and simple.

1. Log in to your WHM
2. Under **Packages**, click on **Add Packages**

3. Simply fill in everything as you wish and click on the **Add** button.
4. You're done.

Now that you have created one hosting package, you can create more packages. As you can see there are no "pricing" related variables here, because WHM does not handle the billing part of your hosting business. Just the technical side, we will deal with "money and marketing" on a later chapter.

Now, it's time to create a test account. You've your hosting packages created, now to create a test account or later on for your own clients, follow these steps:

1. Log in to your WHM
2. Under **Account Functions**, click Create a New Account
3. Simply fill out everything and click the **Create** button.

Once you've created the account, it should be immediately available for access. You can access the account from <https://hostname.yourdomain.com:2083/> and log in using the username and password which you just created.

Also note that cPanel are accessible by the following URLs:

- <https://servername.web-host-company.com:2083> (secured via SSL)
- <https://cpanel.client-domain.com> (secured via SSL)
- <https://client-domain.com/cpanel> (secured via SSL)
- <http://servername.web-host-company.com:2082>
- <http://cpanel.client-domain.com>
- <http://client-domain.com/cpanel>

Sometimes your client will report that they cannot access their cPanel using one of the URL above, you can ask them to try and accessing from the other available URLs listed above.

I think I have covered all the basic WHM/cPanel server setup and configuration. In the next chapter I will discuss about going further with WHM/cPanel customization.

SERVER HARDENING – ADVANCED SECURITY

From my experience, once you reached more than 100 clients and started to gain public exposure, your company will start to lure potential abusers and sometimes even criminals.

I strongly suggest you to start hardening your server(s) to prevent these abusers and criminals to take advantage of your web hosting business to the extent that it may interrupt the services being delivered to your legit clients. Although the basic CSF installation guide provided above should be more than sufficient to protect your server from all the amateur

hackers and abusers out there, but I still think when your business gets larger, you should hand your server's security to a true security professional.

It is way beyond my current technical ability to give you proper server hardening tips since I do not consider myself to be a skillful system administrator. Because of that, I always outsource my server hardening tasks to the maker of ConfigSecurity & Firewall.

You can request for a full blown server hardening service from them for a onetime fee of \$100. Once you have hardened your server, I assure you that a typical abuser will not be able to abuse your server. To obtain their server security hardening service you can go to <http://www.configserver.com/cp/cpanel.html>

CHAPTER 3 – FURTHER WHM/CPANEL BRANDING AND CUSTOMIZATION

What You Will Accomplish On This Chapter:

- ✓ Branding Your Cpanel Look And Feel
- ✓ Adding Your Own Icons And Links On Cpanel
- ✓ Utilizing Cpanel Built In News Module

BRANDING YOUR CPANEL LOOK AND FEEL

After you're done setting up your WHM/cPanel server on chapter 2, the next step is to do all the basic branding and customization of your cPanel interface.

Branding is very important for your hosting business. Branding your cPanel is not an option, it is a requirement. What we want to accomplish is to present your clients with the brand they are using, as often as possible so that the image of your company brand will stick on your client's mind.

You will not accomplish this by utilizing the default and basic cPanel header on your client's cPanel interface which are being displayed by default. What happens is your clients will instead recognize the cPanel brand more than they know your actual company name or brand.

Let's change that, shall we?

The first step you need to do is to change the header of your cPanel interface to your own company logo and header. Follow these steps to accomplish just that:

- Log in to WHM and click on **Universal Theme Manager**
- On that page, under the cPanel logo, click on **Manage Themes**
- Beside the x3 Theme, under the Clone column, click on **Select**
- Now enter the new name for your own brand theme and click **Submit**. It will take a while (several seconds) to complete, be patient, nothing is wrong.
- You're done, click on the **Go back** link.
- Now you see a new theme right? That's yours!
- Now on WHM, under **cPanel**, click on **Branding**
- At the bottom, see your new theme which you just created? Click on **[edit live]**

- On this page, see that all the themes are **checked**. **UNCHECK** all the themes except for **root**. We will be using just the root theme. By not checking the other themes, your clients will not be able to change themes. So they will always use your own branded cPanel theme. This is what we want. Note that there is a save button, that page is using AJAX, once you uncheck it, it will save in the background. You don't have to click any button. Now all the other themes will have an X crossed on it, except for the root theme which we are going to use.
- Under to **root** theme, click on **Edit this Style**
- Now click on **Edit Logos**
- On the edit logos page, upload a blank transparent image, don't upload your logo. Use a blank transparent image like this one <http://webhostingbusinessbook.com/res/top-logo.html>
- Upload the blank top-logo.gif image and click **Upload Images** on the bottom
- Now click on **Go Back to Editing ([root])**. Now your cPanel logo should be gone.
- Click on **Edit Header/Footer**
- Please note, the image labels which you see are actually describing the images ABOVE the labels, NOT below the labels. Here, I would simply change the Billboard Image which is #8. Simply save that default billboard image, and then open it in an image editing software. I usually just take out the blue background you have and change it which includes putting your own company logo and brands there. If you have a good graphic designer, you can modify the whole header to make it look nice and good. All changes you apply should be immediately reflected there, so you can see how it looks.
- Once you're happy with your new cPanel header which has your company logo and look and feel, click **Go Back to Editing([root])**. At the bottom, click on **[Go Back]** to go back to the main editing page.
- Under the [root] theme, click on **Set Default for New Accounts**
- Then also click Apply to All Accounts (if you have resellers, this will NOT be applied to your reseller's account, so don't worry)
- You're almost done, close that window and go back to your WHM. Under **Packages**, click on **Feature Manager**
- Now, edit every Feature List you have there. Start with the **default**, then click **Edit**
- On the feature edit page, **UNCHECK Change Style**
- Do this to all your available feature list

You're done. Now your clients will always see your company brand every time they are using their cPanel interface. They will see your brand over and over again so that they will eventually know and remember your company name and brand automatically.

If you already have active accounts before you do the steps above, you might want to change all active accounts' cPanel to use your new branded one. To do that, please log in to your WHM server through SSH and do the following commands:

```
backup /var/cpanel/users /var/cpanel/users_backup
```

```
perl -pi -e "s/RS=x3\n/RS=YourTheme\n/g" /var/cpanel/users/*
```

```
perl -pi -e "s/CPMOD=x3\n/CPMOD=YourTheme\n/g" /var/cpanel/packages/*
```

/scripts/updateuserdomains

Please note that on the example above, active accounts are currently using the x3 theme. If your active accounts are using another theme, simply replace the x3 on the above commands to the right theme. YourTheme would be the new branded theme name which you've created previously.

That's it. Don't use the default cPanel theme, use your own!

ADDING YOUR OWN ICONS AND LINKS INTO YOUR CPANEL

The cPanel interface is the most accessed area by your clients. They will not spend much time on your company's website or your billing/support area. Whenever they want to add or remove stuff and simply manage their hosting account, they will be accessing the cPanel.

The biggest opportunity for you to communicate to your clients is through the cPanel interface. Don't offer additional services just on your company's website. All available services which your company or affiliate partners have to offer, you must make it available on your client's cPanel as well.

Some of the things which you can place on your client's cPanel area are:

- Add-on services such as SSL Certificates, Dedicated IP Address, Daily Backup Service, Premium Support
- Upgrade services to offer your clients to upgrade to the next available package right from their cPanel
- Domain registration and transfer which enables your client to buy more domains or transfer more domains into your company right from their cPanel
- Support functions for your clients to have a live chat, submit a ticket, view tickets, read knowledgebase directly from their cPanel
- Partner offers, for example if you have signed up as an affiliate with a web design company, SEO company, banner design company, merchant account providers, or any other related companies which can add value to your client's website, you can place the offers here. This way your clients will see all the things they will be able to buy to make their websites more profitable.

When we're done, your cPanel will have something like this:

From To You

 \$100 Commission
 \$5 Upload Photo
 Free Lifetime Domain
 Agent
 Success Vault
 Warrior Forum
 CRAZY Promos For Facebook Fans!
 Follow On Twitter!

Account Addons/Upgrades

 Extra Mile Support
 SEO Hosting
 Dedicated IP
 SSL Certificate
 Go VPS
 Go Dedicated

Partners For Your Success

 Keyword Spy
 Fotolia Photos
 HYPER SUBMIT Search Engine Submission
 \$20 Banners
 iDev Affiliate
 kall8 Toll Free Phone
 VALIS Setup US Company
 Charge Com Accept Credit Cards

Preferences

Got the idea? Let's do yours now!

To accomplish just that, we need to play around inside your server through SSH. Please log in to your WHM server via SSH and edit the following file:

`/usr/local/cpanel/base/frontend/YOUR_THEME/branding/index.html`

Change YOUR_THEME_NAME with the theme name which you've just created on the previous section above. Once you open the file, look for a line like this:

```
<![endif-->

    <div id="main">
    <div id="boxes">
<?cp Branding::applist([div id="% " class="itembox"]
[div id="%-bdrop" class="celldrop"]&nbsp;[/div]
[div class="cellbox"]
```

You can look for the <div id="main"> line since there is only one of that. Use the search function, if you're using edit use Ctrl+X, if you are using vi use ?

Then add the red lines as described below:

```
<![endif-->

    <div id="main">
    <div id="boxes">
<cpanel Branding="include(cpboxes.html)">
<?cp Branding::applist([div id="% " class="itembox"]
[div id="%-bdrop" class="celldrop"]&nbsp;[/div]
[div class="cellbox"]
```

For the sake of this example, I just used cpboxes.html as the filename. You can name your file name anything you like.

Now what you need to do is to create a file named cpboxes.html or whatever filename you use. Then place it in:

/usr/local/cpanel/base/frontend/YOUR_THEME/branding/cpboxes.html

The **cpboxes.html** file should initially contain these codes:

```
<!-- STARTING DOMAIN CENTER HERE -->
<table cellpadding="1" cellspacing="1" bgcolor="#EEEEEE" width="100%">
<tr><td>
<table width="100%" cellpadding="1" cellspacing="1" bgcolor="#FFFFFF">
<tr>
<td align="center">
<strong>Register New Domain</strong>
<form action="bridge.php?file=cart.php&a=add&domain=register" method="post" name="regdomain">
<input type="text" name="sld" value="newdomain">
```

```
<select name="tld">
<option value=".com">.com</option>
<option value=".net">.net</option>
<option value=".org">.org</option>
<option value=".ca">.ca</option>
<option value=".info">.info</option>
<option value=".biz">.biz</option>
<option value=".co.uk">.co.uk</option>
<option value=".com.au">.com.au</option>
<option value=".us">.us</option>
<option value=".cc">.cc</option>
<option value=".name">.name</option>
<option value=".kids">.kids</option>
<option value=".tv">.tv</option>
</select><br />
<input type="submit" value="Check Availability" />
</form>
</td>

<td align="center">
<strong>Transfer Existing Domain</strong>
<form action="bridge.php?file=cart.php&a=add&domain=transfer" method="post" name="trasdomain">
<input type="text" name="sld" value="existingdomain">
<select name="tld">
<option value=".com">.com</option>
<option value=".net">.net</option>
<option value=".org">.org</option>
<option value=".ca">.ca</option>
<option value=".info">.info</option>
<option value=".biz">.biz</option>
<option value=".co.uk">.co.uk</option>
<option value=".com.au">.com.au</option>
<option value=".us">.us</option>
<option value=".cc">.cc</option>
<option value=".name">.name</option>
<option value=".kids">.kids</option>
<option value=".tv">.tv</option>
</select><br />
<input type="submit" value="Check Availability" />
</form>
</td>
</tr>
```

```

</table>
</td></tr></table>

<!-- STARTING SECOND GROUP OF ICONS HERE -->
<div id="myGroup2" class="itembox">
  <div id="myGroup2-bdrop" class="celldrop"> </div>
  <div class="cellbox">
    <h6
      id="myGroup2-header"
      title="Double click to collapse/expand. Click to drag."
      style="clear:none;" ondblclick="rollbox(this);" class="ie-hover">
      <div id="myGroup2-expander" class="box-collapse-control"
        style="float:right" onClick="rollbox(this);" > </div>
      Account Addons/Upgrades
    </h6>
    <div id="myGroup2-body">

      <div searchText="order_ssl" class="item">
<form method="post" action="bridge.php?file=cart.php&a=add" name="form_name_sslcert">
<input type="hidden" name="aid" value="2">
<input type="image" src="https://whmcsgold.com/cpanelicons/file_lock.png" alt="Order SSL For This Account"><br />
<a href="#" onclick="document.form_name_sslcert.submit()">Order SSL Certificate</a>
</form>
      </div>

      <div searchText="order_hosting_account" class="item">
      <a class="itemlink" href="bridge.php?file=cart.php&a=add&pid=4"></a><br />
      <a id="item_tutorials" href="bridge.php?file=cart.php&a=add&pid=4">Add Hosting Account</a>
      </div>

    <div class="clearit"> </div>
  </div>
</div>
<div id="myGroup2-adrop" class="celldrop"> </div>
</div>

```



```

<div id="myGroup3" class="itembox">
<div id="myGroup3-bdrop" class="celldrop"> </div>
<div class="cellbox">
<h6
id="myGroup3-header"
title="Double click to collapse/expand. Click to drag."
style="clear:none;" ondblclick="rollbox(this);" class="ie-hover">
<div id="myGroup3-expander" class="box-collapse-control"
style="float:right" onClick="rollbox(this);"> </div>
My Support Center
</h6>
<div id="myGroup3-body">
<div searchtext="tickets" class="item">
<a class="itemlink" href="bridge.php?file=supporttickets.php"></a><br />
<a id="item_tutorials" href="bridge.php?file=supporttickets.php">My Tickets</a>
</div>

<div searchtext="support_tickets" class="item">
<a class="itemlink" href="bridge.php?file=submitticket.php&step=2&deptid=1"></a><br />
<a id="item_tutorials" href="bridge.php?file=submitticket.php&step=2&deptid=1">Submit Support Ticket</a>
</div>

<div searchtext="billing_tickets" class="item">
<a class="itemlink" href="bridge.php?file=submitticket.php&step=2&deptid=2"></a><br />
<a id="item_tutorials" href="bridge.php?file=submitticket.php&step=2&deptid=2">Submit Billing Ticket</a>
</div>

<div class="clearit"> </div>
</div>
</div>
<div id="myGroup3-adrop" class="celldrop"> </div>
</div>

<div id="myGroup4" class="itembox">
<div id="myGroup4-bdrop" class="celldrop"> </div>

```

```

<div class="cellbox">
  <h6
    id="myGroup4-header"
    title="Double click to collapse/expand. Click to drag."
    style="clear:none;" ondblclick="rollbox(this);" class="ie-hover">
    <div id="myGroup4-expander" class="box-collapse-control"
      style="float:right" onClick="rollbox(this);" > </div>
    My Billing Profile
  </h6>
  <div id="myGroup4-body">
    <div searchtext="tickets" class="item">
      <a class="itemlink" href="bridge.php?file=clientarea.php&action=invoices"></a><br />
      <a id="item_tutorials" href="bridge.php?file=clientarea.php&action=invoices">My Invoices</a>
    </div>

    <div searchtext="support_tickets" class="item">
      <a class="itemlink" href="bridge.php?file=clientarea.php&action=details"></a><br />
      <a id="item_tutorials" href="bridge.php?file=clientarea.php&action=details">Update Contact</a>
    </div>

    <div searchtext="billing_tickets" class="item">
      <a class="itemlink" href="bridge.php?file=clientarea.php&action=creditcard"></a><br />
      <a id="item_tutorials" href="bridge.php?file=clientarea.php&action=creditcard">Update Billing Profile</a>
    </div>

    <div class="clearit"> </div>
  </div>
</div>
<div id="myGroup4-adrop" class="celldrop"> </div>
</div>

```

From the codes above you will be able to see how the custom cPanel areas are being formed. All you need to do now is to customized the codes to your own and save it on

/usr/local/cpanel/base/frontend/YOUR_THEME/branding/cpboxes.html

Once you did that, these new areas should immediately appear on your client's cPanel interface.

You may download the 32x32 icon images which I found on the internet at

<http://webhostingbusinessbook.com/res/cpboxes.zip>

AUTOMATING THE CPANEL CUSTOM BOXES UPDATE

If you only have one WHM server, updating your custom cPanel area would only mean updating one file which is the `/usr/local/cpanel/base/frontend/YOUR_THEME/branding/cpboxes.html` file. But what if you have many WHM servers if not hundreds of them? When you want to add a new icon, or area you would need to update all servers one by one. That is a waste of time don't you think? Let's automate it.

What you need to do is to simply place the `cpboxes.html` file under your own company website. For example, place the file so it can be accessed from <http://www.yourcompany.com/cpanelupdates/cpboxes.html>

Now all you need to do is to run a cron job which will do the updates periodically. To do that, simply setup this cron job on EVERY SERVER you have.

- Log in to the WHM server through SSH as root and run this command
- `crontab -e`
- Then add this line anywhere inside the file:
- `0 1 * * * wget -N -P /usr/local/cpanel/base/frontend/YOUR_THEME/branding http://www.yourdomain.com/cpboxes.html`

***IMPORTANT NOTE:** ON YOUR CPBOXES.HTML FILE, ALWAYS USE ICON IMAGES RESIDING UNDER YOUR COMPANY SECURE WEBSITE SUCH AS <https://yourcompany.com/images/cpanelboxes/addticket.jpg> AND DON'T USE INSECURE IMAGE PATH OR RELATIVE IMAGE PATH SUCH AS `` WHICH WILL RESULT A BROKEN IMAGE.*

Did you know what you just did? You just make your hosting business on par with the huge hosting companies out there. You have your own branded cPanel with your own custom cPanel area.

This alone should bring a good image to your clients as they would see you as a well established company who has an actual brand!

Also remember, the sky is the limit, you can now literally integrate any kind of simple applications into your client's cPanel. Think big and be creative.

UTILIZING CPANEL'S BUILT IN NEWS MODULE

From time to time, you would want to make an announcement to your clients about an on-going promotion or sale that are currently available from your company. You don't want to annoy your clients with all kinds of pop-ups on your cPanel (even if you could, since now you can add anything you want within your client's cPanel).

The best way to deliver such message is through the cPanel news module. Simply go to your WHM, under cPanel, click on **Modify cPanel/WHM News**.

The interface is really simple. Just add what you want to deliver to your clients and click Save. This message should display on your client's cPanel's news section, on the top left.

I highly recommend you to periodically update your company's news and promotions. This is a good way to communicate a positive message to your clients that your company is active and constantly updating their clients with the latest happenings going on.

CHAPTER 4 – WHM COMPLETE SOLUTION (WHMCS)

What You Will Accomplish On This Chapter:

- ✓ Installing And Configuring WHMCS

WHM Complete Solution or WHMCS is the core application which will manage all elements required to keep your hosting business running every day. WHMCS is responsible for the following day to day tasks:

- Processes orders from clients
- Sends out invoices to your clients
- Processes your clients payments
- Sends out notification emails and account login details
- Register or transfer domain names for your clients
- Creates, suspends, and terminates your clients hosting accounts in your WHM server
- Accepts new support tickets submitted by clients
- Provide knowledge base and support tutorials for your clients

You will spend most of your time managing your hosting business through WHMCS. It is crucial that you setup your WHMCS system properly which is the core application of your business. On this chapter I will provide you with a thorough guide including tips and tricks for you to be ready to start selling your hosting services to the public.

Where to get WHMCS?

You can get WHMCS application directly from www.whmcs.com. You can also get your WHMCS license from your server provider, or if you have a reseller account from your reseller provider. Most large web hosting companies providing dedicated server, VPS, or reseller hosting usually provides WHMCS licenses, some even give it for free.

Let's get started!

INSTALLING AND CONFIGURING WHMCS

I will not cover the basic installation part of WHMCS since it is thoroughly covered on the WHMCS website. This includes downloading your WHMCS software, uploading it to your server, and running the installation script. Once you've done all that and have access to the admin page, then you can start following the guide provided here.

You can read the WHMCS installation guide directly at http://wiki.whmcs.com/Installing_WHMCS

Once you have successfully installed WHMCS, let's do the configuration together. Just follow through all the steps provided here.

BASED ON MY EXPERIENCE, I WOULD HIGHLY RECOMMEND YOU TO USE THE DATA WHICH I PROVIDE IN THE GUIDE BELOW. IT IS NOT THE NATURE OF THIS BOOK TO GIVE YOU A THOROUGH EXPLANATION ON WHY A CERTAIN OPTION MUST BE SET TO THE SPECIFIED VALUE BELOW. OTHERWISE THIS BOOK WILL END UP AS A 1,000 PAGE BOOK. SIMPLY FOLLOW MY RECOMMENDATION.

Go to your WHMCS admin page and log in as the admin.

SETUP > GENERAL SETTINGS

GENERAL

Company Name	Put your company name here
Email Address	Put your email address here
Domain	Put your company's website domain name here
Logo URL	Upload your company's logo URL into your company's website secure URL and provide the secure logo URL such as https://companydomain.com/images/logo.jpg
Pay To Text	Put your company's address here, does not matter if this is your home address, and put an address here so you look professional. Do not leave blank.
WHMCS System URL	Put your WHMCS installation URL here, such as http://companydomain.com/clients/
WHMCS SSL System URL	Put your secured WHMCS installation here, such as https://companydomain.com/clients IMPORTANT: You must provide your client with a secured SSL connection, otherwise many clients will cancel buying from you since your ordering system is not secured
Template	Choose portal
Limit Activity Log	Leave it as it is
Records to Display per Page	Leave it as it is
Maintenance Mode	Do not tick it, leave it unchecked
Maintenance Mode Message	Leave it as it is

Click **Save Changes**

LOCALISATION

You can leave things as they were or you can also change the localization preference to your own date format, language, and country.

ORDERING

Order Days Grace	0
Default Order Form Template	Cart
Enable TOS Acceptance	Tick/check this
Terms of Service URL	Put your company's terms of service URL here
Auto Redirect on Checkout	Select to automatically redirect the user to the gateway
Allow Notes on Checkout	Tick/check this
Monthly Pricing Brakedown	Tick/check this
Block Existing Domains	Tick/check this
Skip Fraud Check for Existing	Tick/check this

Click **Save Changes**

DOMAINS

Simply tick/check everything here and click **Save Changes**

MAIL

Mail Type	PHP Mail()
SMTP Options/Settings	Leave blank since we are using PHP Mail
Mail Signature	Put your company's mail signature here. Put a professional one such as Upside Web Host 777 Upstream Way London, United Kingdom Phone: +44 555 5555 www.upsidewebhost.com
Email CSS Code	Leave as it is
System Emails From Name	Put your company name, for example Upside Web Host
System Emails From Email	Put your support email such as support@upsidewebhost.com

BCC Messages	Leave blank
Presales Option	You can set it however you wish

Click Save **Changes**.

SUPPORT

Support Module	WHMCS Built-in System
Ticket Reply List Order	Descending (Newest to Oldest) Always reply your support tickets from newest to oldest when you are doing your hosting business on your own, or under 5 people. Go to Chapter 6 of this book for explanation.
Client Tickets Require Login	Tick/check this
Knowledgebase Suggestions	Tick/check this
Support Ticket Rating	DO NOT TICK THIS, leave it blank. Go to Chapter 6 of this book for explanation.
Allowed File Attachment Types	.jpg,.gif,.jpeg,.png,.doc,.zip,.tar.gz,.gz,xls,.php,.html,.htm,.txt,.sql
Network Issues Require Login	Tick/check this

Click Save **Changes**.

INVOICES

Continuous Invoice Generation	Tick/check this
Invoice Starting #	Start with a big number, such as 7178 so that when your first client signs up, they won't see that they are client #1!
Invoice # Incrementation	Put a bigger number such as 7 or 17. Same explanation as above
Enable PDF Invoices	Tick/check this
Clients Choose Gateway	Tick/check this
Sequential Paid Invoice Numbering	Don't tick this, leave blank
Sequential Invoice Number Format	Leave it as it is, we're not using this. We need to leave invoice numbers as numbers only
Next Paid Invoice Number	Leave it as it is
Late Fee Type	You decide
Late Fee Amount	You decide
Accepted Credit Card Types	Select all the card types which you can accept. If you are using third party gateway such as PayPal or 2Checkout, you can choose Visa, MasterCard, Discover, and American Express

Issue Number/Start Date	Don't tick this, leave blank
--------------------------------	------------------------------

Click Save **Changes**.

CREDITS

Enable/Disable	Tick/Check this
-----------------------	-----------------

Minimum Deposit	You decide
------------------------	------------

Maximum Deposit	You decide
------------------------	------------

Maximum Balance	You decide
------------------------	------------

Click Save **Changes**.

AFFILIATES

Leave it blank/unchecked for now. Click Save **Changes**.

OTHER

Captcha Form Protection	Off when logged in
--------------------------------	--------------------

KB SEO Friendly URLs	Tick/check this
-----------------------------	-----------------

Allow Client Registration	Tick/check this
----------------------------------	-----------------

Show Cancellation Link	Do not tick this/leave blank
-------------------------------	------------------------------

Monthly Affiliate Reports	Tick/check this
----------------------------------	-----------------

Client Details Change Notify	Tick/check this
-------------------------------------	-----------------

Exceeding Invalid Login Attempts Ban	15
---	----

Time

Credit On Downgrade	Tick/check this
----------------------------	-----------------

Client Dropdown Format	First name last name (company name)
-------------------------------	-------------------------------------

Disable Full Client Drop Down	Do not tick this/leave blank
--------------------------------------	------------------------------

API IP Access Restriction	Leave blank
----------------------------------	-------------

Click Save **Changes**.

SETUP > AUTOMATION SETTINGS

Enable Suspension

Tick/check this box

Suspend Days	7 is good
Enable Unsuspend	Tick/check this box
Enable Termination	Tick/check this box
Termination Days	60
Invoice Generation	14
Payment Reminder Emails	Tick/check this box
Invoice Unpaid Reminder	7
Second Overdue Reminder	14
Third Overdue Reminder	21
Add Late Fee Days	7
Process Days Before Due	0
Attempt Only Once	Do not tick/leave blank
Retry Every Week For	0
CC Expiry Notices Date	25
Exchange Rates	Tick/check this box
Product Prices	Do not tick this/leave blank
First Renewal Notice	60
Second Renewal Notice	30
Third Renewal Notice	15
Fourth Renewal Notice	7
Fifth Renewal Notice	1
Close Inactive Tickets	0
Cancellation Requests	Tick/check this box
Update Usage Statistics	Tick/check this box

Click **Save Changes**

Now you need to actually add the cron job which will do these automated tasks every day. Don't forget to do this. You can add a cron job directly from shell using the **crontab -e** command and add the line:

```
0 3 * * * php -q /home/to/your_public_html/whmcs/admin/cron.php (change this with your own path)
```

SETUP > EMAIL TEMPLATES

It is important that you personalize some of the email templates available in WHMCS. There are several email templates which I suggest you edit with the ones I provided below.

Hosting Account Welcome Email (Edit the links to your own links and remove parts you don't need)

PLEASE PRINT THIS MESSAGE FOR YOUR RECORDS - PLEASE READ THIS EMAIL IN FULL.

If you have requested a domain name during sign up, we will register this domain once your payment has been cleared, this can take 24 hours.

Dear {\$client_name},

Please keep in mind that your domain name will not be visible on the internet for between 24 and 72 hours. This process is called Propagation. Until your domain has Propagated your website and email will not function, we have provided a temporary url which you may use to view your website and upload files in the meantime.

IMPORTANT: Make sure you upload your files to the PUBLIC_HTML or www directory on the server otherwise they will not be visible on the internet. Also, please be sure that your homepage is saved as an "index" file e.g., index.htm, index.html, etc. We suggest you download FileZilla from <http://filezilla-project.org/> if you do not already have an ftp client. We also have video tutorials on how to use FileZilla at <http://www.web-host-company.com/knowledgebase.php?action=displayarticle&catid=16&id=31>

Below are your account details, you will need your username and password to access ftp and your control panel.

New Account Info

Domain: {\$service_domain}
Username: {\$service_username}
Password: {\$service_password}
Hosting Package: {\$service_product_name}
Server Host: {\$service_server_ip}
Nameserver 1: {\$service_ns1}
Nameserver 2: {\$service_ns2}

Temporarily you may use one of the addresses given below manage your web site

Temporary FTP Hostname: {\$service_server_ip}
Temporary Webpage URL: [http://{\\$service_server_ip}/~{\\$service_username}/](http://{$service_server_ip}/~{$service_username}/)

Once your domain has Propagated
FTP Hostname: [www.{\\$service_domain}](http://www.{$service_domain})
Webpage URL: [http://www.{\\$service_domain}](http://www.{$service_domain})

Accessing Hosting Control Panel (cPanel) Directly

Control Panel Access: [https://{\\$service_server_ip}:2083](https://{$service_server_ip}:2083) (Secured Connection)

Username: {\$service_username}

Password: {\$service_password} (We recommend to NOT change your password to perform support requests much faster)

Your WebHostCompany Client Area

Your WebHostCompany Client Area is located at <https://secure.WebHostCompany.com/clientarea.php>

Login: {\$client_email}

Password: {\$client_password}

Since we DO NOT recommend you to change your Hosting Control Panel (cPanel) password, we suggest that you always login to your cPanel from your client area. To login to cPanel from your client area:

1. Login to your client area with the details above
2. Click on My Services from the top
3. Click on details icon on the right
4. Click on Login to Cpanel button and it will log you in automatically without you having to enter your cPanel username/password

Mail settings

Catch all email with your default email account

POP3 Host Address : mail.{\$service_domain}

SMTP Host Address: mail.{\$service_domain}

Username: {\$service_username}

Password: {\$service_password}

Additional mail accounts that you add

POP3 Host Address : mail.{\$service_domain}

SMTP Host Address: mail.{\$service_domain}

Username : The FULL email address that you are picking up from (e.g. info@yourdomain.com).

If your email client cannot accept a @ symbol, then you may replace this with a backslash .

Password : As specified in your control panel

SUPPORT

To request support assistance, please submit a support ticket through your client area:

<https://secure.WebHostCompany.com/clientarea.php>

Please direct your support assistance through the ticketing system for faster resolution. The live chat service on our

website is not equipped to provide support assistance.

We want to hear from you!

We like to make things personal. Talk to us through Facebook and Twitter. Both WebHostCompany's Facebook and Twitter comments goes directly to our Director's personal mobile phone.

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter and get the latest happening and promotions directly from our Director's mobile phone!

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/WebHostCompanycom/112147032111>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/WebHostCompanycom>

SUCCESS VAULT ACCESS

<http://www.WebHostCompany.com/successvault.php> (requires an active account)

We care about your success. See how we will equip you to achieve just that by accessing your success vault.

WebHostCompany Step by Step Guide

<http://www.WebHostCompany.com/knowledgebase.php?action=displaycat&catid=16>

You may found our success guide at our wiki site <http://wiki.WebHostCompany.com>

MORE FROM WebHostCompany:

=====

Affiliate Program

<http://www.WebHostCompany.com/affiliates.php>

Earn commissions for each client you refer to us. Earn as much as \$50 per sale!

Get a FREE DOMAIN NAME FOR LIFE with your hosting account and never have to pay domain renewal anymore!

<http://www.WebHostCompany.com/freedomain.html>

Want To Learn How To SkyRocket Your Sales?

Join the Warrior Forum - <http://www.warriorforum.com/index.php?referrerid=117739>

Thank you for choosing WebHostCompany!

{signature}

Support Ticket Reply (Edit the links to your own links and remove parts you don't need)

{ticket_message}

Ticket ID: #{ticket_id}
Subject: {ticket_subject}
Status: {ticket_status}
Ticket URL: {ticket_link}

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Follow us on Facebook and Twitter and get the latest happening and promotions directly from our Director's mobile phone!

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Twitter: <https://twitter.com/WebHostCompanycom>

Support Ticket Opened (Edit the links to your own links and remove parts you don't need)

{client_name},

Thank you for contacting our support team. A support ticket has now been opened for your request. You will be notified when a response is made by email. The details of your ticket are shown below.

Subject: {ticket_subject}
Priority: {ticket_priority}
Status: {ticket_status}

You can view the ticket at any time at {ticket_link}

All support case will be responded within one business day.

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<http://www.WebHostCompany.com/knowledgebase.php?action=displaycat&catid=16>

We want to hear from you!

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Follow us on Facebook and Twitter and get the latest happening and promotions directly from our Director's mobile phone!

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/WebHostCompanycom/112147032111>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/WebHostCompanycom>

{signature}

***Order Confirmation* (Edit the links to your own links and remove parts you don't need)**

Dear {client_name},

We have received your order and will be processing it shortly. The details of the order are below:

Order Number: {order_number}

{order_details}

You will receive an email from us shortly once your account has been setup. Please quote your order reference number if you wish to contact us about this order.

CALL VERIFICATION PROCESS

If you were unable to place a new account order and have received an error notice from MaxMind on our web page while ordering, please contact us at admin@WebHostCompanyhost.com to place your hosting account order. If you did not contact us, our system will not be able to place your order.

IMPORTANT

Please note that we process your order manually. Your account will be created within the next 24 hours. If we have any question in regards to your order, we will contact you at the email address or phone number which you have provided.

We prefer to process all orders manually to prevent fraudulent accounts to be established within our WebHostCompany network. We appreciate your understanding in this matter.

SUCCESS VAULT ACCESS

<http://www.WebHostCompany.com/successvault.php> (requires an active account)

We care about your success. See how we will equipt you to achieve just that by accessing your success vault.

WebHostCompany Step by Step Guide

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Want To Learn How To SkyRocket Your Sales?

Join the Warrior Forum - <http://www.warriorforum.com/index.php?referrid=117739>

{signature}

Client Signup Email (Edit the links to your own links and remove parts you don't need)

Dear {client_name},

Thank you for signing up with us. Your new account has been setup and you can now login to our client area using the details below.

Email Address: {client_email}

Password: {client_password}

To login, visit {\$whmcs_url}

CALL VERIFICATION PROCESS

If you were unable to place a new account order and have received an error notice from MaxMind on our web page while ordering, please contact us at admin@WebHostCompanyhost.com to place your hosting account order. If you did not contact us, our system will not be able to place your order.

IMPORTANT

Please note that we process your order manually. Your hosting account will be created within the next 24 hours. If we have any question in regards to your order, we will contact you at the email address or phone number which you have provided.

We prefer to process all orders manually to prevent fraudulent accounts to be established within our WebHostCompany network. We appreciate your understanding in this matter.

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MORE FROM WebHostCompany:

=====

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Join the Warrior Forum - <http://www.warriorforum.com/index.php?referrerid=117739>

{Signature}

Credit Card Payment Failed (Edit the links to your own links and remove parts you don't need)

Dear {client_name},

We have tried to process payment using the credit card on file ending with {client_cc_number}, unfortunately the payment cannot be processed.

Invoice Date: {\$invoice_date_created}
Invoice No: {\$invoice_num}
Amount: {\$invoice_total}
Status: {\$invoice_status}

Could you please update your credit card details from your client area. Please make sure you enter the CVV code of your card which is the **last three digits (four for AMEX)** on the **BACK** of your card.

Please login to your client area from:
<https://secure.WebHostCompany.com/clientarea.php>

Your email address: {\$client_email}
Your password: {\$client_password}

Once you are logged in, on the left menu, click on **My Details**

On My Details page, click on **Change Credit Card Details** from the link on the top right section.

Once you have updated your card we will try to process it for payment again.

Thank you for choosing WebHostCompany!

{\$signature}

You may leave all other email templates as default. I will discuss more about these email templates on Chapter 7, Sales and Marketing, How to Get Clients.

SETUP > FRAUD PROTECTION

You may initially need to setup WHMCS Fraud Protection depending on how you market your services. If you are marketing your services by means of public advertising such as Google AdSense or other pay per click advertising, enabling Fraud Protection in WHMCS is not an option. It is a requirement.

When you put your company in the eyes of the general public, you will always be attracting criminals and frauders to take advantage of your web hosting services to conduct their criminal activities.

If you do not use public advertising as your marketing means, and only promote your hosting services among friends and associates whom you know, you don't have to worry about fraud protection, at least not now.

You can also skip or disable the Fraud Protection if you are only targeting local market. By targeting local market, you will be able to verify every order manually, simply by calling each new client and verify their order by phone. But if you are targeting international market, it would be impossible to do this, because of the time difference and the cost for you to make international phone calls just to verify orders will not make sense.

The decision is yours, but I personally would recommend enabling the Fraud Protection using MaxMind service which is an affordable service. After utilizing MaxMind, I was able to reduce my fraudulent order by 95%, only 5% or fewer orders will go through the fraud detection system undetected.

To enable Fraud Protection, you would need to sign up for a MaxMind account. The official MaxMind website is at www.maxmind.com. You can get your MaxMind account from your WHMCS client area and it's free when you get your WHMCS license directly from www.whmcs.com.

Just start buying their lowest price which is just \$5/month and allows you to process 1,250 fraud detection queries per month. Once you get your MaxMind account activated (they will process your order manually, so be patient), you will get a License Key which you will use in the WHMCS settings.

Once you got your MaxMind license key, proceed below.

Choose Maxmind and click the **Go** button.

Enable	Tick/check this box
MaxMind License Key	Enter your license key here
Reject Free Email Service	Do not check/leave blank
Reject Country Mismatch	Do not check/leave blank
Reject Anonymous Proxy	Tick/check this box
Reject High Risk Country	Do not check/leave blank
MaxMind Fraud Risk Score	10
Perform Telephone Verification	Do not check/leave blank
Telephone Fraud Score	10
Language	Choose yours

Click **Save Changes**.

As you see above, we leave most of the fraud protection settings to blank. Yes, the best way to screen out fraud WITHOUT losing actual legit sales is to screen every order yourself or at least by your staff. I will explain the best practices for you to process orders and preventing frauds on a later section on this chapter. For now, save the changes and let's proceed.

SETUP > CUSTOM CLIENT FIELDS

Actually this should be discussed on Chapter 7: Sales & Marketing, How to Get Clients. But while we are doing the WHMCS setup, let's do this right now.

What we are going to add is a custom client fields which will be presented to a new client when they are about to enter in their contact information and account details during signup.

While they are doing that, we must present our new client that they are actually signing up with a bona fide and well established company. How do we do that? Simple, one questionnaire on your sign up form will boost up your clients confidence altogether.

So on the Custom Client Fields page, follow this guide:

Field Name	How Did You Hear About Us?
Field Type	Drop Down
Field Validation	Leave blank
Field Options	Choose Below:;Facebook,Google AdWords,Google Search,Smashing Magazine, ,HostHideOut,HostIndex,HostingCatalog,HostSearch,Magazine Ads,MSN Ads,MSN Search,Radio Ads,TopHosts,TV Ads,Twitter,WebHostDir,WebHostingStuff,WebHostingTalk,Word Of Mouth (A Friend),Yahoo Ads,Yahoo Search,YouTube,Other

Then add another one:

Field Name	If Other, Please Let Us Know:
Field Type	Text Box
Field Validation	Leave blank
Field Options	Leave blank

Now, whenever a new client is signing up, they will be asked.

How Did You Hear About Us?

- Choose Below:
- Facebook
- Google AdWords
- Google Search
- Smashing Magazine
- HostHideOut

- HostIndex
- HostingCatalog
- HostSearch
- Magazine Ads
- MSN Ads
- MSN Search
- Radio Ads
- TopHosts
- TV Ads
- Twitter
- WebHostDir
- WebHostingStuff
- WebHostingTalk
- Word Of Mouth (A Friend)
- Yahoo Ads
- Yahoo Search
- YouTube
- Other

If Other, Please Let Us Know:

This one questionnaire will boost your new clients' confidence to proceed buying your services without hesitation.

SETUP > SUPPORT DEPARTMENT

You will need four departments initially. That is sales, support, billing, and abuse. Simply add these four departments and its respective email addresses. For billing and support, tick the box to make it only accessible for clients only. You can open up sales and abuse to be accessible publicly.

You will have to setup four mailboxes, one for each department. When you have setup these four mailboxes, make sure you put the POP3 Importing Configuration properly as we will be using this method.

When you've added all four departments and each respective POP3 Importing Configuration, we need to add a cronjob which will actually parse all incoming emails to these four mailboxes and convert them into tickets assigned to the appropriate departments.

To add a cronjob, go back to your Support Department page and copy the cronjob command line such as:

```
* /5 * * * * php -q /home/whmcs/public_html/whmcs/pipe/pop.php
```

Add your own cronjob line into your cron by logging into your WHM through SSH and do **crontab -e** and add that line, then save it.

Once you did that, you must test all mailboxes if they are working properly. Send an email to each respective email address such as sales@yourcompany.com, support@yourcompany.com, billing@yourcompany.com, and abuse@yourcompany.com.

Your emails should be converted into tickets within your WHMCS which you can see from Support > Support Tickets menu on your WHMCS. If it does not convert your email into tickets within 5 minutes, something is wrong. Please consult WHMCS for fixing it for you. This has to work.

NOTE: WHMCS REQUIRES THAT PHP IMAP MODULE IS INSTALLED IN YOUR SERVER FOR THIS TO WORK. MAKE SURE YOU INSTALL PHP IMAP. OTHERWISE THE EMAILS WON'T CONVERT INTO TICKETS.

SETUP > ADMINISTRATORS

If you're running solo, meaning you don't have any other people running your web hosting business but you, there is no need to add another administrator. However you need to make sure your contact settings here are setup properly. Click on the edit icon on the right.

On the Edit Admin Details page, see the **Assigned Departments** section? All four support departments which you have just setup above is available. Tick it all.

Also remember, whenever you add a new Support Department, you will have to go back to this page and actually add yourself to the new Support Department. Otherwise tickets directed to this new department won't show up on your ticket list.

SETUP > PAYMENT GATEWAYS

As we have discussed in Chapter 1, I highly recommend you to start your hosting business using PayPal as your payment gateway. Don't confuse yourself using other services, at least not when you are just starting out.

On this page, choose **PayPal** from the Activate Gateway drop down list and click **Activate**.

Show on Order Form	Tick/check this
Visible Name	PayPal (Visa/MasterCard/Discover/Amex/eCheck)
PayPal Email	Enter your paypal email address

Force One Time Payments	Do not tick/leave blank
Force Subscriptions	Tick/check this
Modify Subscriptions	Tick/check this
API Fields	Place the API Fields which you can get from within your PayPal account area

You should be able to get your PayPal API from My Account > Profile > Request API Credentials. This way you can perform refunds (hopefully not so often) back to your clients from within your WHMCS without having to log in to PayPal separately.

SETUP > SERVERS

On the server configuration, you will need to your WHM server details into WHMCS so that WHMCS will be able to create cPanel hosting accounts automatically for your clients. To add a new server, click on **Add New Server** link.

Please enter in your server access and information details here. This information will be used to send out the login details to your clients, so make sure you enter in the server details correctly. Double check everything.

Notes:

Under **Add Server**, on **Server Status Addresses**, just leave it blank. It would not be a good idea to display your server statuses publicly.

Under **Server Details**, Type should be Cpanel. Then enter in your WHM access details (username and password), tick on Secure, and **Save Changes**.

SETUP > DOMAIN REGISTRARS

As I have recommended you to use Enom as your domain provider, we are going to utilize Enom to setup our Domain Registrar with WHMCS. On this page, choose Enom from the Choose Registrar Module and click **Go**.

Username	Enter your Enom username
Password	Enter your Enom password
TestMode	Tick/check this since we want to test everything first
DefaultNameservers	Do not tick/leave blank
SyncNextDueDate	Tick/check this

Click **Save Changes**.

Now we need to setup the cronjob for WHMCS to sync domain's expiration dates and domain statuses with Enom every day. Just like you did all the other cronjob above, simply log in to your WHM server using SSH and add the cronjob using crontab -e and add your own cron line from the WHMCS page, for example:

```
0 9 * * * php -q /home/whmcs/public_html/whmcs/modules/registrars/enom/enomsync.php
```

The next step is to define the domain name pricing which you will offer to your clients.

SETUP > DOMAIN PRICING

On this page you will set what type of domain names your clients will be able to register/transfer. I suggest you to add all the Top Level Domains provided by Enom here and set the pricings you wish to sell to your clients.

When adding a TLD please refer to the following guide

TLD	Enter the TLD, such as .com
DNS Management	Tick/check this
Email Forwarding	Tick/check this
ID Protection	Tick/check this
EPP Code	Tick/check this (some TLDs does not support this, please check with Enom which TLDs supports EPP Key for automated transfer)
Auto Registration	None. Always leave it to None. Do not choose Enom since we do not want to do auto registration, so in case of a fraud order, the domain name will not be purchased upfront which will cause problems for you.

Click **Save Changes** and then set the appropriate pricing for the TLD by clicking on the **Open Pricing** link.

After you are done adding all the TLDs, you might want to sort the ordering of the TLDs on your order form by prioritizing which TLDs you want to come up first in the order form drop down list.

As for the **Domain Addons**, you want to leave DNS Management and Email Forwarding to be free (\$0.00) and charge for ID Protection since you will be charged by Enom for ID Protection.

 SETUP > PRODUCTS/SERVICES

Now we are going to add the hosting packages which you will sell to your clients.

First of all you would need to **Create a New Group**. For example, name the group as **Hosting Plans**.

Then **Create a New Product**. Choose an easy to remember product name and click **Continue**.

 ***** DETAILS *****

Product Type	Leave as it is
Product Group	Leave as it is
Product Name	Leave as it is
Product Description	Enter in your hosting plan details. Do not put too much information as it may confuse your buyers. Only put basic elements which the client will get.
Welcome Email	Hosting Account Welcome Email
Require Domain	Tick/check this
Stock Control	Do not tick/leave blank
Sort Order	Define the priority this plan should appear on your order page
Apply Tax	Enter your preference
Hidden	Do not tick/leave blank

 ***** PRICING *****

Please define your own pricing preference

 ***** MODULE SETTINGS *****

Module Name	Cpanel
Default Install Server	Choose the server which you have just setup above. If you have more than one, simply choose which one you would like all new accounts to be assigned to.
WHM Package Name	Enter the hosting package name which you have setup in your WHM. Do not just enter any name, the name MUST MATCH the exact package name you setup in WHM.
All other options	Leave blank as it should already be managed by your WHM when you setup the hosting package and define its limits through WHM
Automatically setup product when you manually accept order	Tick/check this.

 ***** CUSTOM FIELDS *****

Leave this option blank for now

******* CONFIGURABLE OPTIONS *******

Leave this option blank for now

******* UPGRADES *******

Leave this option blank for now

******* FREE DOMAIN *******

You can decide if you want to give out free domain name along with this hosting package

******* OTHER *******

Leave this option blank for now

Click on **Save Changes**

You can now add more hosting plans by repeating the step above, but this time you can set your **UPGRADES** option so each plan can upgrade/downgrade to the other plans you offer.

Once you're done setting up your hosting plans you can try to surf to your WHMCS URL and click on the **Order** button to see how your current order page looks like. You can even try ordering one yourself, if you've followed the guides above correctly then you should be able to finish your order and get the welcome email sent by WHMCS.

SETUP > DATABASE BACKUPS

It is crucial that you setup WHMCS database backup to obtain a daily database backup. Since WHMCS is the core of your hosting business, it is simply unimaginable having to lose your WHMCS database data and not having a backup for it.

Simply enter in your email address to receive the backup file and you're good. If you also wish to have the database backup file uploaded to an offsite FTP server, you may also do so by entering in the FTP details there.

SUPPORT KNOWLEDGEBASE

Before you open up your web hosting business to the public, make sure you have provided your future clients with enough How To Guides and Knowledgebase so that your clients will never be left clueless on what to do next after they have bought your web hosting service.

There are only several knowledge base articles you need to prepare and provide in your WHMCS knowledge base (around 20 guides). I would recommend you to go through the How-To Guides from this book's website

<http://webhostingbusinessbook.com> which I believe should cover all the required how to guides to accommodate your clients enough so that they can perform most of the basic tasks themselves.

Simply go through each category and then create the same categories in your WHMCS Knowledgebase section (accessible from **Support > Knowledgebase**), then add your own articles.

PROVIDING FREE TRIAL ACCOUNTS ON WHMCS

Offering Free Trial accounts is crucial when you are just starting out. It would be very hard for you to generate your first 100 clients, simply because nobody knows you. You have no testimonials. People will always "doubt" your new services.

Providing a free trial accounts will encourage more people to try out your web hosting service.

HOW TO ENABLE FREE TRIAL ACCOUNTS USING WHMCS

As you would create any other hosting plan which I have shown you above, create a new hosting plan in WHMCS and make the pricing to be free.

Then download these two files which you need to run every day using cron job:

- <http://webhostingbusinessbook.com/res/remindtrial.php.txt> - rename this file to **remindtrial.php** and run it every day using cron job:

```
0 8 * * * php -q /path/to/your/whmcs/remindtrial.php
```

- <http://webhostingbusinessbook.com/res/removetrial.php.txt> - rename this file to **removetrial.php** and run it every day using cron job:

```
0 7 * * * php -q /path/to/your/whmcs/removetrial.php
```

Change **/path/to/your/whmcs/** to the location of your WHMCS installation directory

remindtrial.php will send out reminder to your free trial account holder reminding them that the account will self destruct in x more days and guiding them how they can upgrade their account into a paid one.

removetrial.php will simply insert the free trial accounts into WHMCS cancellation requests which will be terminated "immediately" when the next WHMCS cron runs. So all the trial accounts will **self terminate**.

Edit those two files and enter in your own preferences into the PHP codes.

Important note, as this is a hard coded file, you need to edit this line:

```
$sql_gettrial = "select id from tblhosting where DATEDIFF(now(),regdate)=$trial_period_days and (packageid=16 or packageid=17)";
```

See the **packageid=xx OR packageid=xx**, simply replace that with YOUR OWN hosting package ID which you can see from WHMCS by hovering your mouse over the "Edit" product details, you will see the package id or product id of your trial products.

That's all there is to it.

When you're done testing the order process, don't forget to go to your Domain Registrar settings under WHMCS Setup menu, and to tick off/uncheck the TestMode option so that WHMCS can perform live domain registration for your clients.

Also remember that you are required to submit your WHMCS website IP address to Enom before you can process live registrations. To do this, simply log in to your Enom account at enom.com, and create a new support ticket to ask them to add your IP into their live API access and you're done.

Now you have just completed the entire basic configuration needed for your WHMCS to start accepting new clients.

As you have noticed there are still functionalities within WHMCS which are not yet discussed here. I will go through them when we are discussing about running your web hosting business on the following chapters. Most WHMCS functions will be covered on Chapter 5 and Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 5 – SALES AND MARKETING: HOW TO GET CLIENTS

What You Will Accomplish On This Chapter:

- ✓ Establishing Your Company Website
- ✓ Customizing Your WHMCS Shopping Cart
- ✓ Setting Up Your Products And Services
- ✓ Getting Your First 100 Clients To 1,000 Clients And More

I suppose this is the part where you have been waiting for, or maybe you have skipped all the other four chapters and go directly to this one. Well, one thing I can assure you, patience is gold. Everything that is valuable and precious requires time and commitment.

It will take time, hard work, and commitment to build your web hosting business. One thing that I can tell you, always avoids having thoughts to *instantly* get a lot of clients in the first year of your web hosting business, or even in the first couple of years.

Through these past 12 years, I have started two web hosting companies, the first one started out just right, the way it should and it grows beautifully until I have decided to sell the company in late 2007.

The second one does not start quite right. Why? It's because I had money, which cause all things to go to the wrong direction.

Having money for your business can be your best asset but in the same way can also be your worst enemy.

My First Company – my true story

I had nothing to start with, just a hobby and a passion for computers. It was during my high school break when I got a hold of a shiny black book titled **Perl 5** laying in a book store, right in the discounted items area. It seems like nobody wants that book, well it looks shiny and the title is intriguing. I picked up the book, started reading it and found out that it is some kind of a programming language. Interesting... so I flip back the book, to my surprise it was just for \$5! The original price was some \$50. Without thinking any longer, I picked up that book and paid for it.

Then, I started to spend my entire holiday break reading this new book. As time passes by, I was totally obsessed with making perl scripts. I've made all kinds of cool perl scripts on my PC at home. A few months later the internet is becoming more popular in my city. Some of my best friends have internet access at their home using 9,600 Kbps modems.

In time, I got my own internet connection at home. The first thing I could think of is to find a free web hosting provider which support Perl/CGI! I found one! It's called Hypermart.net. Hey I just checked them out, they still exist, amazing.

Oh man, I couldn't wait to put all my Perl scripts there and see how it works, and I did. It was fun! I tell you I spend my time day and night playing around with my free Hypermart account and seeing all the cool things I can do with Perl. I even made an entire website for my class of 97 high school friends, all based on Perl using text files as my databases. I just love playing with Perl's regex.

Later on, I started free web services which provide free counter service, free guest book service, and a free message board service.

After all, there is no cost for me, only my time and passion which of course I don't count as a cost. Hey, I loved it so much! To my surprise, within a few months time, there are over 50,000 people who are using my free services.

I got some 7 or so free Hypermart accounts residing on Hypermart servers, for free. Before long, they shutdown my free Hypermart accounts one by one, since it is obviously draining up their server resources since I had so many people using it.

That was quite disappointing, but hey I have backups! I always backup my data into my home PC. So I started to look for a company which can host my popular free web services. By the way I bought a domain name for it called freewebservices.net, which I still own. I bought it for \$70/Year. Everything was pricey back then.

Now I have to look for a server to host my free web services. Everywhere I look, it was all pricey. A server would cost some \$700/Month back then for a Pentium III server with some 512 MB of RAM. I remember almost buying one from iServer.

Even with my current job as a web developer (btw that Perl book landed me a good job as a web developer during my first year of college), \$700/Month is a fortune. My brother offered me his entire savings to start up this business and lease a server from iServer. Even then, I still think it's not time, hey I'm still young anyway, just started college.

So as time passed by, I still keep my free services clients' data in my home PC. Finally I graduated college and was accepted to work as a web developer in Auckland, New Zealand. Before I went to New Zealand, I got married with the love of my life. Now we have three children, after 8 years of wonderful amazing marriage. I'm still in love with my wife.

So now we're in New Zealand and I'm working as a web developer. I got better salary now! Get paid in dollars, before I was living in Indonesia and even though I had a top paying job in the country, I still couldn't afford a \$700/Mo server.

So I'm thinking of starting up everything again, so I browse around the internet and found a good reseller hosting provider. Found a good deal and immediately setup my free web services on my reseller account. It was not long before it got back on top of Yahoo's searches again.

After my free web services is up and running, now that I got my reseller hosting account, I decided to send an email to all of my free service members and offer them a premium hosting account to host their websites. Not just the counters, guest books, and message boards.

To my surprise, the response was tremendous. People are actually signing up! Well out of that 50,000 plus list I had some three years back, I got some accounts opened, not much, not hundreds, but some! At least I got some sign ups! It got me really excited.

So we went further and further, by "we" I mean me and my pregnant wife! Yes it was just the two of us. My wife is the one who founded the company name. My wife is helping out setting up new accounts at home while I was working during the day.

When I got home I started to do the support tickets and reply to clients. It was FUN! Just fun, we were not even looking to get a real income out of it. It was just fun and exciting.

In less than a year, the income from my web hosting business surpasses my salary as a web programmer in Auckland, like double of what I am paid for at my job.

So we decided to go back home to Indonesia to make this business as our main income for our little family. We had back to Indonesia a few months later, while keeping our bank accounts in New Zealand open as well as our PayPal account, because all of our clients are paying through PayPal and 2Checkout which get wired into our New Zealand bank account.

When we got back, we started hiring people and training them to do 24/7 client support. Our office was only 25 square meter. Most people we interview for the job

said "Is this it?" when they walked into our small office space.

Long story short, the company grew to some 50 people in staff at a much larger high-rise office tower. In the end I moved to the United States since we have owned (not lease) our own 125 servers or so which we collocate in the US.

Then I started to lose my personal touch in the company, I started to hire more and more people to do all the works which I should be doing myself.

I spent most of my time "waiting" for other people to complete all the tasks which I assign them to do while doing little work myself. Just waiting for my team to do things which I expect them to do with so little involvement from myself.

That is when things started to go wrong. No matter how large your company grew, you must do things personally. You must involve yourself with the daily admin tasks. Although you have staff and managers and directors doing it for you, you still have to get personally involved in the daily routine operation of your company. Because the soul of the company lies in you. Everybody else is just "working".

I finally decided to sell the company in late 2007 which gain me quite some capital at my disposal. Now there is a pile of CASH sitting in my bank account.

I did not know that I was not ready for it. Now, I know. Please continue reading my second story where I started up my second company.

After the sale - my true story

Before I sold the company, I have had a vision. A vision to make "fast money" so to speak. It was a wrong vision. The business idea itself may not be so wrong, but the goal of that business idea is totally wrong, that is "to get the most income with as little effort as soon as possible, and make to it happen fast"

Is that your motto? If so, I might about to save your life here, because this will be a wakeup call for you, THERE IS NO SUCH THING!

I had so much confident on this project that I want to finish the project really fast. There is a burden in my heart to actually develop this project myself since I have the right skills and experience, but hey, I got money, why should I do things myself when

I got money?

Wrong again! Do it yourself if you know you can do it all by yourself. You will end up doing it better than anyone you pay to do it for you. Even if you pay a fortune for it. Which I ended up doing, I paid a fortune to a big software firm to do my project which was completed in 6 months time.

So now the project was finally ready to make some money. I was so excited. I spent another fortune marketing the whole project using very expensive advertising methods. Hey I got money, and I want everything to happen fast!

After the project was launched, it turns out that there is so little interest from the market I was targeting. It did make a few thousand dollars in the first month after the service was opened, but that's not what is on my mind. I was aiming for millions, and it was making only a few thousand. Compared to what I have spent on the whole project, it was making nothing.

Soon, I've lose interest in the project, I completely shut it down. I've wasted about a third of the sale I make on my first company on that project.

So now I am looking for something else to do, since that did not work out well. I find myself focusing on doing my initial passion which started all this, that is to provide free hosting services, but in a "grand scale", and I want it to happen FAST.

Why? Because I had the money. I bought high end equipments, spent over \$100,000 just for buying servers, load balancers, storage arrays, and high end equipments for my new free hosting service project.

I hired developers and paid top salaries for their services, I hired people all over the world, to be representatives of my free hosting services in their countries. I literally spit out money every month with no income whatsoever coming into the free hosting services, hey it's free.

It was madness! All because I had a pile of cash sitting in my bank account.

It does not work. Free hosting simply does not work, because you cannot sell anything to your free hosting members. For those of you who are thinking of doing free hosting and expect to get something out of your free hosting members, like an upgrade, or cross sell your members with other services, forget about it.

They are free seekers. They will not be interested in something which they have to pay for. So there is no income in free hosting, unless maybe you have over than 1 million members, then you can get a decent amount of income from advertising, not to them, but

to their website visitors.

From my experiences in doing free hosting since when I started it in 1997 until recently, you can only get more problems than anything good out of doing free hosting. I would recommend you to never consider doing free hosting to be your main source of income. Do it for fun, for the excitement, but don't focus on getting a real income out of it.

Since that didn't work well, I had to let go all of the people I hired to do my "grand scale" free hosting project. I sold all the equipment for less than half the original price I bought, which was only less than a year old.

Now I'm back to square one. What do I have? A bunch of non paying free hosting members, hey I got some 300,000 members now. So hmm, ring a bell? I did this before, so I'm going to do it all over again.

What did I do? Exactly like I did 7 years ago, I sent them an email offering my "paid hosting service". Yes, I decided to open up paid hosting service again.

As I would have expected, people started to sign up. Out of 300,000 members, I got some 50 or so clients. Hey, it's better than nothing!

I was happy and excited again. There is no one now, but me. Only me. So, I started to do everything all over again. All by myself. It works. People likes it, people are signing up, more and more. I was doing support all by myself but it's that personal touch which will get your clients to love your service.

Before long, I have a long list of awesome testimonials from my clients and my client list keeps growing larger and larger.

But hey, as things started to fall in place, I still have my enemy, my CASH, I still got some. Hmm... people seem to love my service, let's go then! Get me more clients, FAST!

What I did is spent everything that I had left on paid advertising, mostly through pay per click advertising. People are singing up alright, but I have to pay no less than around \$90 to get ONE new client.

I spent tens of thousands of dollars getting about a hundred new clients or so. In the end, the income which I got from these new clients will only gain me profit when and IF they stayed with my service for at least 24 months or 2 years.

That is NOT the way to go.

As you would expect, soon, I drained up everything I made on my first company sale, I was left with nothing but a fear creeping into my heart since I am not a single man, I had a pregnant wife and two small children. What have I done? I got money, but I want more of it and I want it FAST, because of it I spent all I got left.

Here comes the real lesson.

When you build your web hosting business, please forget about doing it FAST.

It's like planting a plant. It takes time, and you have to wait, and you have to patiently water the plant, give it proper sunlight, and finally give time for it to grow naturally.

When you want everything to happen fast, it will only "seems" to be working right in the beginning, but I can assure you, you will eventually be going to the road of destruction.

It is not about how we started the race, it is how we finish it. Finish it well.

Now since I have nothing left, I started to do everything the right way, and it works, and it works like a charm.

That is what I am about to show you in this chapter.

You don't need money to start your web hosting business, you WILL SUCCEED without having money upfront, what it takes is just your TIME and your COMMITMENT. That is all you need and you're on your way to the road of success.

WHAT YOU NEED TO GET YOUR FIRST 100 CLIENTS

What you should NEVER do to get your first 100 clients is to pay your way to get them. That is the last thing you want to do, trust me. If you should know, getting 100 clients by spending money would cost you at least \$10,000 USD. Do you have that kind of money? Even if you do, you would only be following my FAILURE if you spend that kind of money to get your first 100 clients.

Do you know where money comes from in the first place? People get money when they work, correct? The harder they work the more money they would get. Hey, it is common sense! Here is a light bulb moment for you

MONEY = HARD WORK + TIME

YOU CAN ALWAYS REPLACE MONEY WITH A LOT OF HARD WORK PLUS THE TIME NEEDED TO GENERATE THE SAME OUTCOME WHICH YOU CAN GET BY SPENDING MONEY

So, if I say it would require you \$10,000 USD to get your first 100 clients for your web hosting business, I can also say to you it would require you 6-12 months of hard work to get your first 100 clients with \$0 of money spent on advertising.

By hard work, I mean **HARD WORK!** I hope I did not shatter your dream to pieces through this moment of truth. Look at the bright side? It requires you no money upfront, well maybe some to pay for your electrical bill, a lot of coffee, and of course your internet connection.

The most important factor is **T I M E**, don't rush into it and don't give up too soon. If you put your hard work into your web hosting business for the next 2 years, I will be confident to tell you, you will see the fruit on the third year of your business and you should be able to quit whatever else you are doing and just focus on your web hosting business.

Competition from Larger Web Hosts

Don't be discouraged by all the large web hosting firms, trust me, there are plenty of fish in the sea. These large web hosting firms can only take a little chunk of the client base that is ready to be reaped by much smaller web hosting companies. Your company!

You can provide what larger web hosting providers won't be able to provide, personal touch. If you currently have a hosting account with one of those larger hosting companies, try asking them for something "personal", not one of them will be able to deliver a personal care to their clients, simply because it is impossible for them to do so.

I know, because I have an active account with each of those larger web hosting companies to do my own research for this book and my personal projects. Try asking them for a personal opinion about something or have them to please install something, which you know only takes 10 minutes to be done. Either one of their template "policy" messages will be thrown at you or it's going to cost you a lot to get it done.

HERE IS WHERE YOU COME IN. YOU MUST HELP OUT YOUR CLIENTS PERSONALLY, TRULY HELPING THEM WITH WHAT THEY NEED. IT'S THE ONLY ASSET YOU CAN GIVE WHERE NO LARGE WEB HOST CAN DO. **IT'S YOUR ULTIMATE WEAPON!**

So don't be afraid of the bigger web host, you can beat them really good. Alright then, let's get started with the practical stuff.

YOUR COMPANY'S WEBSITE

First things first, you need to have *“the right kind of website”*. You don't have to have a \$5,000 website to get you started, did you know that out of my desperation when starting up my second web hosting company, I did not have any money left, I did not have any graphics designers, all I did was found a basic free website template on the internet, put some nice images I found from Google Images, put up my hosting plans and start selling.

That ugly looking website made my first 100 clients. It's not about the design. It's how you deliver the information to your website visitors and how you can relate to what they are looking for.

Here are a few very important factors for you to implement to your own company website. I come up with these suggestions from my own experiences in doing research and development of my own company site. If you follow the guides below, it will save you a lot of time trying different kinds of websites or changing your website pages to find out what works and what doesn't work.

- ✓ Always make your website clean and simple. Do not overwhelm your website visitors with too much information. Providing too much information on your front page will confuse a lot of people.
- ✓ Always provide your web hosting plans right on your website front page, complete with the pricing and basic features with a button to order or to find out more details about each hosting plan.
- ✓ Do NOT use flash, use simple static pages with nonmoving or flashy elements on your website.
- ✓ Provide noticeable contact information, a phone number is a must, even if it goes to your voice mail.
- ✓ Have a favicon installed on all your website pages, I will show this below
- ✓ When you have enough client testimonials, put a noticeable client testimonials area on your front page linking to your full client testimonials page
- ✓ Relate your web pages to your client's personality, even when doing special promotion. I will cover this on this chapter as well.
- ✓ Do a search on Google for “top web hosting company” which will bring you to various top hosting review sites. Go to each of the web hosts' websites listed there. Simply go through each of these large web hosting sites and see what kind of information they present on their front page.
- ✓ Make sure your website's content is professionally edited especially when you are a non native English speaker. Having a poorly written website content will turn off all prospective clients from the English speaking countries. That is the last thing you want because most of web hosting clients come from English speaking countries.

Of all the basic elements provided above, I will give you a complete guide on two specific elements, which is how to put a favicon for your own company website and how to relate your web pages to your website audience.

INSTALL FAVICON ON YOUR COMPANY WEBSITE

What is favicon? Favicon is the tiny icon images which is placed on your visitor's browser's title bar. Though it seems to be insignificant, having this favicon will boost up your client's confidence that they are dealing with a professional company. A favicon looks something like this:



See that small icons on the left side of each company's website title? It's called favicon and you MUST have that. To make your own favicon, simply create a 16x16 image with your favorite image editing software. Once you got your image ready, go to <http://tools.dynamicdrive.com/favicon/> and upload your image there.

You will then be provided with a .ico file. Once you got your .ico file, simply upload it to your website. To utilize your new favicon on all your website pages, simply put this line of code on all your website pages:

```
<link rel="shortcut icon" href="/images/favicon.ico">
```

On this example, I used favicon.ico as the filename example. You may need to change that with your own favicon filename and you should be done.

AUTO ADAPT YOUR WEBSITE PAGES WITH YOUR VISITORS

Now this is a pretty cool functionality which you need to have on your company's website. Your website must relate to other people on a personal level, in this case where they are located. This fact is also true when you are giving a promotion to your website visitors. Don't just give out general promotions, but give out specific promotions which relates to your clients personally, not generally.

I find this fact while experimenting on my own company's website, desperate for new clients. I have tried numerous ways on how to get more clients with spending as little money as possible. This is one of them, use it with wisdom.

With this little chunk of codes below you will be able to present information (can be data, images, promotions, etc) to your website visitors in a personal way. There's nothing new to this, but the new thing I want to share with you is that IT WORKS.

On this particular example, I am "adapting" my website's CSS (style sheet) with the website visitor's location. If the visitor is coming from a specific region of the world, my website will automatically adapt to it, giving out different kind of promotions, different images, and information which relates to the website visitor on a personal level.

```
<link type="text/css" rel="stylesheet" href="css/sitestyles.css" id="adaptss"/>

<script language="JavaScript"
src="http://j.maxmind.com/app/country.js"></script>

<script language="JavaScript">

var country=geoiip_country_code();

if(country == "CN" || country == "HK" || country == "JP" || country == "KP" ||
country == "KR" || country == "MN" || country == "SG" || country == "TW"){

    document.getElementById('adaptss').href = '/css/sitestyles_asia.css';
}

if(country == "IN" || country == "BD" || country == "PK"){

    document.getElementById('adaptss').href = '/css/sitestyles_in.css';
}

if(country == "AE" || country == "AF" || country == "AM" || country == "AZ" ||
country == "BH" || country == "IL" || country == "IQ" || country == "IR" ||
country == "JO" || country == "KW" || country == "KZ" || country == "LB" ||
country == "QA" || country == "UZ" || country == "YN"){

    document.getElementById('adaptss').href = '/css/sitestyles_me.css';
}

if(country == "AT" || country == "AD" || country == "AL" || country == "AT" ||
country == "BA" || country == "BE" || country == "BY" || country == "CH" ||
country == "CY" || country == "CZ" || country == "AU" || country == "NZ" ||
country == "DE" || country == "DK" || country == "EE" || country == "ES" ||
country == "FI" || country == "FO" || country == "FR" || country == "GR" ||
country == "HR" || country == "IE" || country == "IT" || country == "LU" ||
country == "UK" || country == "GB" || country == "NO" || country == "PL" ||
country == "PO" || country == "RO" || country == "RU" || country == "SE" ||
country == "UA" || country == "US" || country == "CA" || country == "ZA"){

    document.getElementById('adaptss').href = '/css/sitestyles_eu.css';
}
```

```
}
</script>
```

I will discuss the above code line by line so you will understand what it does:

```
<link type="text/css" rel="stylesheet" href="css/sitestyles.css" id="adaptss"/>
```

This code simply sets my website's default CSS file which is set to `css/sitestyles.css`, note that this tag is equipped with an id tag with `adaptss` as the value. This id tag will be used with the rest of the codes below.

```
<script language="JavaScript"
src="http://j.maxmind.com/app/country.js"></script>
```

This code is simply grabbing the country detection script from the `maxmind.com` server which will be used to detect your visitor's country. There is nothing to be edited here.

```
<script language="JavaScript">
```

```
var country=geoip_country_code();
```

```
if(country == "CN" || country == "HK" || country == "JP" || country == "KP" ||
country == "KR" || country == "MN" || country == "SG" || country == "TW"){
```

```
document.getElementById('adaptss').href = '/css/sitestyles_asia.css';
```

```
}
```

These codes are the ones determining which CSS (style sheet file) should be loaded for my website depending on the website visitor's location. As you can see, I loaded a different CSS style depending on my visitor's location. On the example above, my site will be presented differently, in terms of promotions being displayed, images used, based on my visitor's location.

For a good example, if you are from Canada and are visiting a particular website where there is a promotion going on like this:

NEW CANADIAN CLIENTS ONLY!
FREE .CA/.COM/.NET/.ORG DOMAIN ON ALL HOSTING PLANS!
OFFER MAY EXPIRE AT ANY TIME. GET YOURS TODAY.

Compare the above promotion with:

CURRENT PROMOTION – FREE DOMAIN NAME ON ALL HOSTING PLANS!

OFFER MAY EXPIRE AT ANY TIME. GET YOURS TODAY.

If you are a Canadian, which promotion would attracts you more? The same can be applied to any other countries. As I said before, the key to your success is **HARD WORK + TIME**.

Do this special promotion combined with personalized images adapting the countries you are offering the promotion to, the more personalized it is, the better. Yes, it is a lot of work, but it is going to be worth all the hours you put into this as it will convert your sales like never before. Try it, and see the results yourself.

PS: If you are creating promotional coupon codes, make sure you do NOT create one promotion code which applies to all countries. Create one promotional code for EACH promotion on every country, for example CANADASPECIAL, UKDISCOUNT, INDIAPROMO, SINGAPORECUT, etc.

SEARCH ENGINE OPTIMIZATION

Optimizing your company's website for search engines shouldn't be too complicated. There are only a few important points which I want to stress out.

- ✓ All pages must have a proper TITLE, KEYWORDS, and DESCRIPTION tag. Always keep in mind that your web page title is the one being presented on the search results when people are searching for things that are related to that page.
- ✓ Have a proper Site Map both the HTML and XML version of your entire website.
- ✓ Use an SEO friendly file names for your web pages, such as "order_hosting.html", "how_to_switch_from_other_host.html", and the like.
- ✓ Don't forget to turn on WHMCS SEO Friendly URL simply by renaming the htaccess.txt file in your WHMCS installation to .htaccess and everything should be taken care of.

That is all there is to it. Also don't waste your time trying to get your company web pages on the web hosting related keywords search results, they are too crowded and there are literally too many powerful competitions. Don't waste your time and move on.

If you don't know how to generate a proper XML sitemap for your website, here is a good tutorial on how you can do just that.

<http://ezinearticles.com/?How-to-Submit-Your-Site-Map-to-Google,-Yahoo!-and-MSN&id=660037>

Just in case that URL is no longer available long after this book is published, I will paste the content of the above URL below:

XML Sitemaps are an easy way for webmasters to tell search engines about pages on their site that may be crawled by their robots.

A typical XML Sitemap file lists each URL, together with information about when it was last updated, how often it normally changes, and how important it is, relative to other pages in the site). This helps search engines to more intelligently crawl your site.

In November 2006, Google, Yahoo! and MSN joined forces to support a new industry standard for sitemaps: Sitemaps 0.90. As long as webmasters follow the protocol, they can ensure their sites are fully and consistently indexed across all the major search engines (a real step forward). This article is important for all those with missing or poorly ranked pages.

The official site for the joint venture is at sitemaps.org and contains a lot of info about the new standard and it's syntax. What the site singularly fails to do is explain correctly how to submit your sitemap to the big three! The format suggested on the site of:

```
search-engine-url/ping?sitemap=your_sitemap_url
```

does not currently work at any of the three sites! Until it does, this short article provides instructions for how to (a) create your sitemap and (b) how to submit to each of the three main search engines...

Creating your Sitemap

Some hosting providers (for example 1and1) provide utilities via their web control panel, to create your sitemap, so you should always check with your provider first. If this service is not available, then make a visit to xml-sitemaps.com and enter your site URL into the generator box. Copy-and-paste the resulting sitemap into notepad, then save-and-upload to your site with the file name: `sitemap.xml`

If you want to validate the XML prior to uploading to the search engines (useful if you have made any manual amendments), look at the XML validator (at the same site) where you can put in the URL of your sitemap and check it against the standard.

Submit sitemap to MSN

MSN have yet to implement a formal interface for Sitemap submission (as at July 2007). To monitor the situation, please visit (from time to time) the MSN Official Livesearch Blog (where where future announcements are likely to be found).

Whilst MSN have yet to implement a front door, there is a recognised back door for submitting your sitemap to the MSN Search index; namely moreover.com! You should use the following syntax directly in your browser URL box:

```
http://api.moreover.com/ping?u=http://yourdomain.com/yoursitemap.xml
```

Since February 2005, moreover.com have been the official provider of RSS feeds to the myMSN portal (see press release) and reliable evidence suggests that submission to Moreover will result in MSN spidering your pages within 2-3 weeks.

Note that, whilst MSN still do not support direct submission, they do suggest on their blog that you add a reference to your Sitemap into your robots.txt file (something now supported by sitemaps.org). For example:

```
User-agent: *  
Sitemap: http://www.yourdomain.com/sitemap.xml  
Disallow: /cgi-bin/
```

This would tell MSN (and all other engines) to crawl your sitemap file but not to crawl your cgi-bin directory. For more info on how to implement a robots.txt file (in the root of your site webserver) please visit: <http://www.robotstxt.org>

Submit sitemap to Google

Google originally developed the XML schema for sitemaps and have developed a dedicated portal for webmasters, from where you can submit your sitemap:

`google.com/webmasters/`

First, you need to tell Google all the sites you own, then verify that you indeed own them. The verification is achieved by adding a metatag between the head tags on your site homepage. The syntax for the tag is as follows:

```
<meta content="unique code advised by google" name="verify-v1">
```

There are full instructions on how to do this on the Google site.

Submit sitemap to Yahoo

Yahoo follows a similar approach to Google. Again, there is a dedicated service for webmasters (Yahoo! Site Explorer) and a procedure for verifying your ownership of the site. First go to:

`siteexplorer.search.yahoo.com/`

Add a site, then click on the verification button. You can then download a verification key html file - which you will need to upload to the root directory of your webserver. Then you can return to Site Explorer and tell Yahoo to start authentication. This will take up to 24 hours. At the same time you can also add your sitemap by clicking on the manage button and then adding the sitemap as a feed.

Submit sitemap to Ask

Ask follows a simpler approach to the other three. To submit your sitemap, you simply enter a ping URL, followed by the full URL of where your sitemap is located:

```
http://submissions.ask.com/ping?sitemap=http%3A//www.yourdomain.com/sitemap.xml
```

After clicking return, you will get a reassuring message from Ask that they have received your submission. Very neat!

About the author:

David Viney, the author of [Get to the Top on Google](#), is a leading [website promotion](#) expert - and provides search engine optimisation

services to companies large and small. Further articles tackling the tricky SEO challenges faced by David's clients may be found on the SEO Expert Services site.

Article Source: http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=David_Viney

ADD SOCIAL TWIST TO YOUR WEBSITE

Social Twist is a small application which you can place on your company's entire web pages, including your WHMCS header or footer. Through this application your website visitors and your clients can easily share your company's web pages to their friends through the various medium provided by this small application.

You can get one for free at <http://tellafriend.socialtwist.com>

Simply cut and paste their code after you've signed up into the header of your company's website or anywhere you wish to present the tell-a-friend widget to your website visitors/clients. A good idea is to also include this widget within your cPanel interface which I already taught you how to do in the previous chapter.

That is all there is to it, it's simple yet a powerful way to promote your company website. Make sure you have one on your website.

YOUR COMPANY IDENTITY

What I am referring to is actually your company's website about us page. You must draft your company's about us page in a way that people would be confident trusting their website and business into your hands.

Again, check the web hosts websites I mentioned earlier. Go over to these companies' about us page, I would recommend having all the necessary information which they have on your own website.

BUSINESS ADDRESS

One important factor I would want to stress out is you need to put your real business address and phone number(s) where you can actually be reached at. If you prefer to have a US business address, I would recommend you to get your US mail forwarding address from VALIS International (<http://www.valisinternational.com>)

If you are a US, UK, or Canadian resident, simply put up your real home address on your company's website, it should be just fine. If you're from none of these countries, I strongly recommend having a US business address, especially when you are starting out to reach out clients outside your local area. If you're just focusing on getting clients in your local area, then you won't be needing a US business address.

BUSINESS PHONE NUMBER (TOLL FREE / REGULAR LINE)

You also need to have a business phone number, even if you're just running your entire business by yourself, having a business phone number is very useful. If you don't speak English very well, you can always direct your calls into a voice mail, but having a phone number on your website is a must. When people call to that number, they must be greeted with your company name. It does not matter if it goes to a voice mail after the greeting.

If you are not yet comfortable picking up phone calls, simply do a recording which says "Thank you for calling **your company name**, we're sorry but we're currently unable to pick up your call. We would recommend you to leave us a message by clicking on the Contact Us button on our website. We will get back to your as soon as possible. Thank you"

If you want to have a voice talent to speak this call prompts to your caller, you can use FlashPointStudios.Com which I personally use. Their service is great, but you have to be willing to spend some funds to have a professional voice talent to speak your voice prompt. It will be worth it.

You can also use a toll free provider such as www.tollfreeforwarding.com. They have an awesome service.

LIVE CHAT

If phone is the last option you would want to go with, simply provide a Live Chat button on your website where your website visitors can have a live chat with you. You can use the many free live chat software that are available today. One of them is http://www.volusion.com/livechat_software.asp

The point being presented here is that people would want to have an interaction with your business before they finally decides to sign up for your services. You **MUST** be reachable either through the phone, live chat, or email. If you fail to respond their initial contact request, you will simply loose a brand new client.

DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH A BRAND NEW CLIENT COSTS IN THE WEB HOSTING INDUSTRY, ABOUT \$100 USD, SO IF YOU'RE LAZY TO PICK UP YOUR PHONE, ATTEND TO LIVE CHAT IMMEDIATELY, OR TO REPLY YOUR EMAILS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, CONSIDER YOURSELF THROWING AWAY \$100 USD, OR EVEN MORE?

JOBS SECTION

Are you currently hiring? Of course not! But always have a jobs or careers section on your website's about us page. This is very important. To have an idea of what to put up on your Jobs or Careers section on your company's website, simply go through the web hosting companies' websites I mentioned earlier above.

On your Jobs/Careers web page, mention about all the benefits people will have by joining up to work for your company. This builds up prestige and confidence to your clients that your business is growing and even has job opportunities.

NETWORK & DATA CENTER

Don't forget to put up a web page about your network or data center. You can ask to your server provider if you can borrow their data center images material to put on your website. Other than that, simply pull of the entire data center page from your server's or data center provider and put them on your own network and data center page.

Other than that, simply do your best to describe about your company's mission and vision and how you can help both your existing and potential client reach their success goals.

CLIENT TESTIMONIALS (THE MOST IMPORTANT ONE)

This is the most important web page to present to your potential clients. I will discuss about this thoroughly on a separate section below. Once you've got enough testimonials, don't forget to make a very good client testimonials page and show it off from your website's testimonial page.

TERMS OF SERVICE AND PRIVACY POLICY

When it comes to deciding what kind of terms of service you would want to implement to your company, I would suggest you to use this template which I have for my own company. Simply replace MYCOMPANY to your own company name. This term of service would also cover unlimited features policy.

If you are not offering unlimited features you may alter the provided terms of service. You are free to use and edit both the terms of service and privacy policy template I provide on the links below.

Please also don't forget to provide your Terms of Service links on your WHMCS through **Setup > General Settings > Ordering** Tab, **check** the **Enable TOS Acceptance** and enter in your **Terms of Service URL**

You may download the TOS template and Privacy Policy Template here:

<http://webhostingbusinessbook.com/res/tos.pdf>

<http://webhostingbusinessbook.com/res/privacy.pdf>

HAVE YOUR WEBSITE CONTENT EDITED PROFESSIONALLY

Having poorly written contents on your website may immediately turn off potential clients from English speaking countries. If you came from non English speaking country like me, I would highly recommend you to use a professional service to proof-read/edit your website content.

Having your website content delivered professionally will impact your sales dramatically. Remember that you need to always deliver an atmosphere of professionalism to both your potential and existing clients. The last thing you need is to send a message to your potential client that your website/company is being run by someone who is not serious enough by having poorly written content with a bunch of incorrect grammars and spelling all over the website.

I know it can be expensive to have your entire website content professionally edited or proof-read. I have used a service from a professional who's also a friend. His name is Steven Rosson, during the first years of running my first company. He has helped me correct all the poorly written content on my company's site which I initially wrote myself. The result was dramatic, simply because people stopped looking my site as a "foreign company" trying to sell professional services. My company has been "localized", which is just what I was looking for.

I would highly recommend you to use his services which you can attain from <http://www.stevenrosson.com/international.php>

You can also try to look for other professional content editor through oDesk.Com or Elance.Com, but I am sure these providers would charge you quite some fees. I tried asking for a quote from professional book editors to edit this book, since I know my grammar is still very lousy, the quotes for the book is in the \$3K and up. Amazing huh? I decided to forget about it, as I am sure you will still get the essence of this book without it having to be professionally edited. My English isn't that bad anymore, is it?

Anyways, make sure you deliver your website professionally. It is a necessity, not an option.

As for the other web pages or elements of your company website, I will not discuss it all here as it is quite a general knowledge. Please refer to the five web hosting companies I mentioned above and you will do just fine.

CUSTOMIZING YOUR WHMCS SHOPPING CART

Now that you have a great company website that is ready to engage your website visitors, let's customize your WHMCS shopping cart. WHMCS already has a great shopping cart system out of the box, but it's not perfect.

As I have done my research studying all the shopping carts used by the bigger web hosting companies, I have come up with my own version of WHMCS shopping cart modification. It's not complicated at all, just a few simple steps which you have to go through to make your clients more confident when they are buying services from your company's website.

REPLACE WHMCS HEADER AND FOOTER

One thing I noticed when ordering web hosting accounts from bigger web hosting companies, during the ordering process, their ordering system eliminates all the unnecessary menus and links and replace it with a very simple header and footer which confirms that the visitors is actually on the ordering system of the company.

One thing WHMCS lacks, on their ordering system, all page menus and links remains visible to the visitor/prospective client which can distract their ordering process. We have to eliminate all the links both on the header and footer part of the WHMCS shopping cart and replace it with a simple header and footer confirming the security of the ordering system.

Let's get started.

There are two files which you need to edit, as you may have guessed, it is the header.tpl and footer.tpl file within your WHMCS template folder. If you are using the portal template, then it should be located on **the templates/portal/header.tpl** and **templates/portal/footer.tpl**

I will be giving an example based on WHMCS 4.0+, but the same thing should also work with WHMCS 3.8.x

Open up your header.tpl file and add these simple php codes into your header.tpl file.

```
{php}
if($currpage == 'cart.php' or $currpage == 'creditcard.php'){
$this->assign('ordermode', 'yes');
}/php}
```

Then you can simply use this guide to remove all the WHMCS links from your header/footer during the signup process.

```
{if $ordermode == 'yes'}
<!--DISPLAY YOUR ORDER MODE HEADER/FOOTER, REMOVE ALL LINKS AND MENUS FROM WHMCS -->
```



```
{else}  
<!--DISPLAY WHMCS DEFAULT HEADER/FOOTER -->  
{/if}
```

Try ordering or signing up with one of the larger web hosts out there, as soon as you land on their ordering page, they remove all the links from headers/footers replacing it with a very simple header/footer which has no distraction to the clients. Do the same things.

DO NOT DISTRACT YOUR POTENTIAL CLIENTS BY PROVIDING MENUS AND LINKS ON YOUR ORDERING PAGE. POTENTIAL CLIENTS WILL EASILY GET DISTRACTED AND POSTPONE BUYING WHEN YOU PRESENT THEM WITH MENUS AND LINKS ON YOUR ORDERING PAGE.

KEEP IT CLEAN OF DISTRACTION.

REPHRASE CONFUSING QUESTIONS DURING SIGNUP

WHMCS uses these default questions which will be presented to your potential client on the first page of the signup process. These simple questions confused many of my potential clients. I highly recommend you to rephrase it using the ones I provide below

The original WHMCS language file will present your clients with these questions when buying a hosting account:

I want YOUR COMPANY NAME to register a new domain for me.
I want to transfer my domain to YOUR COMPANY NAME
I will update my nameservers on an existing domain Or I will register a new domain.

These questions are confusing. You MUST rephrase them to the following:

Order Hosting Account With A New Domain Name
Order Hosting Account With An Existing Domain Name
Order Hosting Account Only, I Want To Keep My Domain Name Somewhere Else

Now, that makes much more sense don't you think? I find out that many of my clients are confused simply because some of them take an extra step by submitting a pre-sales ticket asking about these questions. Imagine how many got confused and simply decided to buy somewhere else?

I got MANY tickets asking about this until I finally rephrase the questions which eliminate all the pre-sales tickets asking about this domain questions. By simply rephrasing these questions, you will save a lot of clients who might postpone their sign up simply because they are confused on how to proceed. They may end up signing up with another web host. We don't want that, right? Go change yours now.

To do that, open your WHMCS language file, which is located in the **lang** directory inside your WHMCS. Open the language file you are using, mine us **English.txt**

Simply find the words that are being used to ask these questions in that file and replace them with the ones I've provided above. This should save you a lot of wandering off clients simply because they're not sure how to proceed with sign up.

SETTING UP YOUR PRODUCTS & SERVICES

Make it simple. Don't confuse your potential clients with the many options you present them with. Since you are just starting out, I highly recommend you to offer one simple hosting plan. The more plans you present to your clients, the more confusing it will be, the more people will simply "postpone" buying and will most probably end up with another company which offers more simplicity.

I highly recommend you to offer one "base plan". So there is only one hosting plan which your clients can sign up with. Your clients will then be able to buy more features when they require more. This would prevent your clients to get overwhelmed by the many options which they are presented with "initially". It will make them dizzy. Don't do that.

Here is a good approach:

One Simple Base Hosting Plan:

- ✓ Personal Client Support
- ✓ 1 Free Domain Name Registration/Transfer AND Renewals Included
- ✓ Host Up To 10 Websites/Domain Names
- ✓ 10,000 MB (Enough to store thousands of web pages)
- ✓ 100 GB Data Transfer (Enough to get thousands of visitors per DAY)
- ✓ 5 FTP Accounts (Have up to 5 webmasters/developers to manage your websites)
- ✓ 1,000 Emails (Have 1,000 employees? We cover it all)
- ✓ Easy To Use Online Site Builder - Demo
- ✓ Etc

(SIGN UP NOW – Base Plan Only \$4.95/Month)
Upgrades available once you have your base plan – [click here to see our units pricing](#)

Additionally, when they are ordering through their shopping cart you should offer these add-ons (you can set them up on your WHMCS Setup > Product Addons):

- ✓ Premium SSL Certificates to Secure Your Website + Dedicated IP Address
- ✓ Dedicated IP Address Only
- ✓ More Disk Space (\$3/Mo/100 GB)
- ✓ More FTP Account (\$1/Mo/FTP)
- ✓ Etc

A COMPANY WHICH PROVIDES ONLY ONE HOSTING PLAN GIVES ME MORE
CONFIDENCE SIMPLY BECAUSE I CAN BE SURE THAT I AM NOT “BUYING THE
WRONG ONE” WHEN I SIGN UP WITH THEM. DO THE SAME AND YOU’LL GET MORE
CLIENTS!

If you need technical guide on how to create and manage your hosting plans, pricings, and setup, please refer to Chapter 4 which cover this in detail.

PRICING

I will only give you one advice when it comes to defining the price for your hosting business. Always give an option for your clients to choose monthly hosting payment. This will set your business a part from the competition, most companies, specially the larger ones, only accepts annual payments which will cost clients to make their initial payment around \$100 or even more.

Don’t do that, if you do that you will scare away all the potential clients who are willing to put themselves on the line by trying out your “new” services and ended up having to pay big bucks for a service they’re unsure of in the first place. It will easily scare people away.

Always have monthly payment as an option without charging any kind of setup fees. You can give discounts for your annual payment plan, but never close the option for new clients to initially buy through your monthly payment plan (with no setup fees).

Once they are comfortable with your service and you've proven them that you are doing professional web hosting services, most clients will comfortably upgrade their payment plan to annual payment plan without even being asked to, simply because they know you now and they would like to save some money for future payments.

DON'T RUSH IT, YOU WON'T BE SPENDING MONEY FOR MARKETING ANYWAY, SO DON'T CHARGE YOUR CLIENTS UPFRONT, MONTHLY PAYMENT IS THE WAY TO GO.

Now let's go to the good stuff, client hunting!

I will discuss several places which you can work on to get your first 100 clients, but before continuing I want to warn you about pay per click advertising or any form of paid advertising.

DO NOT USE PAY PER CLICK ADVERTISING (PPC), SUCH AS GOOGLE ADWORDS TO GET YOUR FIRST 100 CLIENTS, IT WILL BE A WASTE OF YOUR MONEY. YOU HAVE NO CLIENT TESTIMONIALS YET. GETTING CLIENTS FROM PAID ADVERTISING WHEN YOU HAVE NOTHING TO SHOW FOR WILL JUST WASTE YOUR MONEY. – YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.

THE FIRST 100 CLIENTS YOU GET SHOULD COST YOU NOTHING BUT YOUR TIME AND HARD WORK.

GETTING YOUR FIRST 100 CLIENTS

What do you have now?

- ✓ A Fully Configured WHM Servers With A Branded Cpanel Interface
- ✓ An Engaging Company Website With All Kinds Of Personalized Promotions Going On
- ✓ A Clean And Secured Shopping Cart To Process Your Orders
- ✓ A Hosting Plan Ready To Sell

What's missing? Yes, that would be the clients which I will discuss in details right now.

I am going to divide this section into two sub section:

- ✓ Getting Clients By Reaching Out

✓ Getting Clients By Reaching In

What I mean by reaching out is ways for you to get clients through direct interaction between you yourself and the people and businesses which you are targeting. Later on I will show you ways for you to get and grow your client base by reaching in to your EXISTING clients and have them promote your services to other people.

Both approaches are very important and crucial to the ongoing growth of your web hosting business.

GETTING CLIENTS BY REACHING OUT

FIELD #1 – PERSONAL AND LOCAL MARKET

The best field for you to get your first 100 clients is to reach out to all the people whom you personally know. The second best field is to reach clients in your own local area, which is the city where you live now.

Once you have setup all four elements mentioned above, you can start promoting your new business to all the people you know, both online and offline.

Step 1 - Promoting To People You Know

The best promotion you can ever do is to promote your new business through social network communities which you are actively involved on. Post a message to your friends on these social network sites such as Facebook, MySpace, Friendster and others and brag to your friends about your new business which you just launched.

Give out special promotion codes and discounts to your personal colleagues and friends, give out something that you would not give out to strangers. These friends and colleagues of yours will be the best assets you will ever have to promote your web hosting business.

Do personal favors for them. Offer “website setup” promotions, even simple website design promotions for the first 100 clients that sign up with you. After all, it’s about HARD WORK and TIME to get your first 100 clients.

I am sure you are familiar with all the various website applications that are available today, such as Word Press, Joomla, Drupal, phpBB (message forum), and other well know popular website creation or application software. Utilize these free web applications to create amazing websites for your first 100 clients, free of charge, as your personal favor to them when they sign up to your new hosting business.

Offer a free domain registration AND renewals as well when they sign up with your hosting plan, do all the confusing work for your first 100 clients, until their website is online and ready to use.

If you're thinking that it's too much of work to be done, then I can simply tell you, you will have to spend at least \$10,000 USD to get your first 100 clients. Which one do you have? Tons of money OR hard work plus the time required to get your first 100 clients.

All the hard work starts here, once you've secured your first 100 clients, growing it will be MUCH easier, trust me. But first you must "earn" your first 100 clients and once you get them, make sure you can get honest positive testimonials from all 100 of them.

These testimonials will be the very "evidence" which shows how professional your company truly is and how you treat your clients. Once you get these testimonials, you can rest assured, strangers will be confident enough to buy your services directly from your website.

I will show you later on how to publish these testimonials on the internet so that when people are searching for your company name, they will find your clients testimonials on independent sources, not on your own website.

Aside from social network community websites, simply call your friends, email them, text them or whatever, saying "Hey, I just start up a new business. I can make a website for you for free as a promotion. Let me know if you're interested and I'll call you."

These people know you, you don't have to break their "trust barrier" since they already trust you by personal relationship. You simply just need to do the hard work for them it's that simple.

Step 2 – Promoting To Your Local Market

By now, you should at least have several clients to show off for. I surely hope you get at least five or six clients from your personal relationships with other people, otherwise I must admit you are a genuine geek, which is a compliment from me.

The next step is to pursue getting clients locally from businesses in your own local area where you live. You must be aware that web design companies or ISPs charge a few hundred dollars to a few thousand dollars for a simple company website. That is the fact. The first thing you need to do is

- Find as many **large** ISP (internet service providers) and web design companies residing in your local area and get the **price list** for a website design (and hosting if available) from them. Get their official price catalog from their website or from their brochures. This is important.

The next thing you need to do is to create and print out your own brochures or leaflets describing your own company's services which will certainly be MUCH MORE affordable than what these large ISPs and web design firms has to offer.

On that brochure, provide a side by side comparison of your own company's services compared to all these other well known local ISPs and web design firms in your city or country, for example:

YOUR COMPANY	ISP -A	ISP -B	WEB DESIGN FIRM A
20 Website Pages	5 Website Pages	10 Website Pages	10 Website Pages
1000 Emails	20 Emails	10 Emails	5 Emails
Free Domain Name	Domain Name \$50/Year	Domain Name \$25/Year	Domain Name \$70/Year
Free Ecommerce System	N/A	N/A	N/A
\$5/Month	\$25/Month	\$100/Month	\$50/Month

Also, on that brochure you must provide a working sample of your previous clients websites (hopefully you got some from Step 1), give their website addresses and also print out their website screenshots to be presented along with your brochure.

So now you have at your hands a brochure describing your web hosting and design services comparing your company with the some of the largest ISPs known in your city. Don't forget the website samples/screenshots on these brochures or leaflets.

The next thing you need to do is to present these brochures personally to the local businesses and stores in your area. Pursue these businesses from top to bottom. The top categories listed will most likely buy your services than the bottom ones.

1. Restaurants
2. Café's
3. Internet Café's
4. Fitness Centers
5. Bars or Night Clubs
6. Small Hotels/Motels
7. Travel Agencies/Tour Operators
8. Photo Studios
9. Beauty Salons
10. Retail Stores
11. Businesses/Companies

As you may have guessed, you must target businesses which are in the "hospitality" industry as your priority. These businesses are the ones which need the most public exposures, which is more likely to buy your website hosting services.

You should consider "general companies" on your lowest priority because they don't really need a website that much, compared to these other hospitality businesses.

THINGS TO OFFER TO YOUR CLIENTS FOR FREE

- ✓ Offer these businesses with your free internet marketing package which will allow their websites to come up on page 1 on any search engines when people are searching for their business name on the internet. Include this free marketing package on your brochure! This you can do easily and will cost you nothing but some 30 minutes submitting your client's websites into popular web directories.
- ✓ Offer these businesses a simple card design where they can print out themselves and distribute it to their own clients. Cards design as well as sticker design which they can stick on their menus. Something saying "Get two free drinks by becoming our Facebook Fans" while putting their dot com website address on the bottom. People can become their Facebook Fans as well add testimonials through the restaurant's website which you made.
- ✓ There are so many other small things which you can add into your website presence package which is impossible for me to list it all here. Please visit this book's website <http://webhostingbusinessbook.com/res> and I will show you all the little things you can add to make your hosting package very compelling.
- ✓ I highly recommend you to use WordPress as your base application for your website package deals. WordPress has thousands of plugins and themes which you can apply to any type of entity. You can even setup a full blown e-commerce enabled website using WordPress, all for free! It just requires your time and hard work. What could be better than that?

SOME TRUE FACTS – WILL THEY GO FOR IT?

I am currently living in the Silicon Valley Area, where the eBay, PayPal, Yahoo, Google, and other internet giants call the place where I live their Headquarters. I would also think everybody living here in the bay area would have an internet access. It's like not having a phone when you don't have an internet access here.

With these true facts, would you think most restaurants on this area would already have their own website? If you think so, then you are wrong. Most restaurants here in the bay area doesn't have their own website, the market is THAT COMPELLING. And here I am talking about the very place where every business is supposed to have a website.

I am not sure why they don't have one, or maybe when people are offering their services to make a website, it will cost these restaurants some \$2,000 or so. What if I go to these restaurants and told them that I would make them a professional looking website, complete with all the goodies where people can leave comments, restaurant managers can issue discount coupons, and other cools stuff for say \$200 only plus a \$5/month hosting fee. Plus when people do a search on Google and other search engine about their restaurant name, their website would come up #1. I would say I could land myself 100 new restaurants as my clients very easily. Now if you do the math, \$200 times 100 clients would land me a good \$20,000 USD, plus an additional \$500/month for the hosting fee. How about that? More than that, I would secure my business with 20 restaurants' websites as my business's portfolio.

Well that is here in the Silicon Valley area. It's the same thing in your city, restaurants and all the businesses I mentioned above would LOVE to have a website which they can "show off" to their clients, stick their dotcom address on their menus, and have people brag about their food on social networking sites. But they would not know a thing about doing that. You on the contrary know exactly what to do my friend. Use that and make serious money out of it. Work hard at this and you WILL succeed.

All you need is a digital camera (your phone would work if it has a camera), which you most probably would already have. You all have digital cameras these days. You would also need a scanner for you to scan out these restaurants menus if you must. If you don't have a scanner, just bring the menus to your local printing service where they can scan out these restaurant menus. That's all you need aside from the hosting platform which you already setup on the previous chapters.

Find a good base website templates or use WordPress and their free third party templates to be a base design for your clients, make a professional looking website for them, and before you know it you got yourself a set of portfolios of your own client base. Once you have this, you can start to charge more to your future clients, but always remember to keep it "reasonable" for these businesses. Their businesses operations are not depended on having a website, it's just a nice thing to have, but if you give a reasonable price, they would go for it.

Always remember that you are still a no body. Don't charge unreasonable price, I would even start off my first 10 restaurants or clients FOR FREE.

Also, remember to put up some true hard facts about the statistics of Internet growth in your local country, how people are currently using the internet, how so many young people are currently being totally dependent of the internet and how their businesses can gain advantage from the internet era.

Make it compelling for these businesses to see how having a website would gain them more clients, yet it would only cost them a small amount of investment.

Going Further

About 30 days later, you would have quite a handful of local businesses as your client base, mostly restaurants, cafes, bars, travel agents, fitness centers, small hotels/motels, photo studios, beauty salons, and other hospitality businesses in your city.

When you have this valuable client base, use these portfolios to offer your services to businesses on the same industry as your existing clients.

Tell your new prospective client things such as

"WE HAVE SUCCESSFULLY DEVELOPED A WEBSITE FOR MOTEL-AXZ ON THAT STREET. NOW AS YOU CAN SEE, IF PEOPLE SEARCH FOR MOTEL AXZ ON THE INTERNET, THEIR WEBSITE WILL COME UP ON THE TOP OF THE SEARCH RESULTS. WE CAN DO THE SAME FOR YOUR THREE STAR HOTEL. SINCE WE HAVE NEVER

DONE A THREE STAR HOTEL BEFORE, I WOULD BE WILLING TO GIVE OUT A SPECIAL PROMOTION FOR YOUR HOTEL.”

Then off course, present the three start hotel owner/manager with your brochures comparing your services with the big well known ISPs in your city. They can call these ISPs to confirm the price if they like, it would only confirms them that your services are much affordable than what they have to offer.

See, as you get your first few clients, it would be MUCH EASIER for you to get more clients. Why?

IT'S BECAUSE PEOPLE ALWAYS WANT WHAT OTHER PEOPLE HAVE. ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE DEALING WITH PEOPLE. ALL BUSINESSES ARE BEING RUN BY PEOPLE. EVERYTHING IS BEING DECIDED BY A PERSON. ALL YOU NEED TO DO IS TO CONVINCING THAT PERSON THAT THEY WANT YOUR SERVICE.

People will most likely think like this: *“If that hotel has a website, we also have to get a website! If that restaurant has a website, our restaurant must also have a website! If that internet café has a great looking website, we also need to have a great looking website, and so on”*

Get the idea? So do these things and within a few months time, I am sure you will get even more than 100 clients.

Once you've secured quite some clients, then it's time to get some clients ONLINE. By now you should have something to show off to the public that you are a professional business offering professional services to serious businesses.

FRIENDLY WARNING #1: ONLY PROCEED TO OTHER FIELDS BELOW (ONLINE FIELDS) WHEN YOU HAVE TRIED VERY HARD ON FIELD #1 ABOVE. FIELD #1 IS THE ONLY LOGICAL PLACE WHERE YOU CAN LAND YOURSELF A GOOD NUMBER OF CLIENTS TO START UP YOUR HOSTING BUSINESS.

IF YOU GO DIRECTLY LOOKING FOR CLIENTS ONLINE AND NOT OFFLINE, YOU WILL ONLY LEAD YOURSELF TO SERIES OF DISCOURAGEMENTS. YOU MAY GET CLIENTS JUST DOING ONLINE MARKETING WHICH I AM GOING TO SHOW YOU BELOW, BUT IT WILL BE MUCH HARDER FOR YOU TO GET CLIENTS IF YOU HAVEN'T TRIED FIELD #1 ABOVE. TRUST ME OR PROVE IT FOR YOURSELF. YOU HAVE BEEN WARNED.

FRIENDLY WARNING #2: NOW THAT YOU HAVE QUITE A FEW CLIENTS FROM PURSUING FIELD #1, YOU CAN START TO “BOAST” YOUR SERVICES TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE, FROM THIS POINT FORWARD, WHEN YOU START TO PUT YOUR BUSINESS IN THE EYE OF THE PUBLIC INTERNET, MAKE SURE YOU HAVE IMPLEMENTED THE FRAUD PROTECTION SYSTEM ON YOUR WHMCS AS DESCRIBED ON THE PREVIOUS CHAPTER.

WHEN YOUR BUSINESS IS PUBLICIZED ON THE INTERNET, YOU WILL ALSO OPEN YOUR BUSINESS FOR INTERNET CRIMINALS LURKING FOR WEB HOSTS TO CONDUCT THEIR CRIMINAL ACTIVITIES. THIS IS SERIOUS. DO NOT GET EXCITED WHEN YOU GET AN ORDER WITH A HIGH VALUE, ALWAYS BE SUSPICIOUS, HIGH VALUED ORDER WILL MOST LIKELY TO BE FRAUD. ALWAYS CHECK THE FRAUD SCORE FROM MAXMIND, IF IT IS ANYWHERE ABOVE 2.5, BE VERY CAUTIOUS.

FIELD #2 – CROSS SELL & B2B PARTNERSHIP

What I mean by cross sell and b2b partnership is doing it locally in your own area, not online on the internet. When you ask other businesses to partner with you or cross sell their services with yours online, these companies will most certainly treat your offer as a junk advertisement and will probably delete your email without even reading what you have to say.

That is not the case when you do it offline. It’s a whole different story. What you need is a handful of existing clients with their website portfolios, a nicely print out brochures or leaflets offering your web hosting services and that’s pretty much it.

What you need to do is go to all the local book stores, printing/photocopy shops, and internet cafes in your area. Go find the person in charge of that shop. Here is the best approach which I find quite impossible to reject.

HELLO SIR/MA’AM, I REPRESENT A WEB DESIGN COMPANY, IT’S A NEW INTERNET COMPANY AND WE ARE CURRENTLY DOING A PROMOTION IN THIS

AREA. WE ARE LOOKING FOR BOOK STORES, PRINTING SHOPS, AND INTERNET CAFES IN THIS AREA WHICH DOES NOT CURRENTLY HAVE A PROFESSIONAL DOT COM WEBSITE.

WE ARE PICKING A FEW POTENTIAL STORES WHERE WE CAN DO A SPECIAL PROMOTIONAL PROJECT. WE WILL CREATE A PROFESSIONAL WEBSITE FOR YOUR STORE FOR FREE WHICH USUALLY STARTS FROM \$500 USD. WE WILL ALSO REGISTER A FREE DOT COM DOMAIN NAME FOR YOUR STORE, FREE OF CHARGE.

WHAT I NEED IS JUST TO TAKE A FEW PICTURES OF YOUR STORE AND ALSO TO HAVE ALL THE INFORMATION YOU WISH TO BE PLACED ON YOUR STORE'S WEBSITE. IF YOU HAVE READYMADE SERVICE BROCHURES DESCRIBING THE SERVICE YOU PROVIDE, I CAN ALWAYS START WITH THAT.

IT WILL NOT COST YOU ANYTHING. WHEN WE'RE DONE, WE WILL JUST BE ASKING YOUR PERMISSION TO DISPLAY YOUR STORE'S WEBSITE WHICH WE MADE AS AN EXAMPLE FOR US TO SHOW OTHER BUSINESSES OF THE SERVICE WE DO.

That's it. Your cost is just your hard work and time + \$8.95/year domain name fee which you have to pay for every store, but it will be worth it.

After you did that store's website, and you must do it the best you can, make a very nice website. I would suspect it would only be a 5 page website with a few pictures which you can do in a few hours time.

Now you come back with something to show for the store manager or owner. Present the store manager or owner with the website which you have made for them. You can print out the website pages in nice shiny pages or if the store has internet access you can simply surf the store's website which you made live from the store's computer.

You can also suggest the store manager or owner to print out some stickers showing off their new dot com URL which they can stick on their store's front door and other places in the store. At this time, you may offer the store owner another big favor for them.

SIR/MA'AM, THANK YOU FOR LETTING US CREATE THIS WEBSITE FOR YOUR STORE, WE WOULD BE SHOWING OFF YOUR WEBSITE TO OUR OTHER CLIENTS AS A PROOF OF OUR WORK. ADDITIONALLY, I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO INTRODUCE

YOUR STORE'S SERVICES TO ALL OF OUR CLIENTS WHO ARE MAKING THEIR WEBSITE WITH OUR COMPANY.

IF YOU LIKE TO DO THAT, IT WOULD BE A GREAT IDEA IF YOU CAN GIVE OUT A PROMOTIONAL DISCOUNT WHICH WE CAN PUT ON YOUR NEW WEBSITE. THIS WAY I CAN SIMPLY GIVE OUR CLIENTS YOUR WEBSITE ADDRESS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF YOUR EXCLUSIVE PROMOTIONAL OFFER. SO THEY CAN GO HERE AND TRY YOUR SERVICES IF THEY NEED ONE.

I'm pretty sure the store manager or owner would love to do that. Simply proceed with the idea and realize it.

Then don't forget to really promote this store's website on your WHMCS and cPanel, simply create a special page which says **"Exclusive Special Offer from Our Own Clients"**

Inside that partners page you can separate the category by location/area since these are local store promotions. Once you're done adding this store's promotion on your Exclusive Special Offer page, notify the store owner that it has been done and that all of your existing and future clients will be aware of these promotions from their store.

How many favors have you done for this store so far? A lot of favors, by now I would suspect that the store manager or owner would like you a lot, as a person. Now is a good time for you to ask the book store/photocopy shop/internet café owner or manager if it would be okay for you to stack up your company's brochure even a small banner or poster inside their store?

Even offer them a commission for every new client they can bring into your company. Do you know what will happen, not only that the store owner would accept your offer but he/she will make sure that every client that walks into their store would notice your poster or brochures and should anyone ask about it, they will explain it to them with passion.

Because this store has accepted a tremendous amount of favor from you, they will be passionate when explaining about your service to their clients, because they have experienced you themselves.

IT WOULD EVEN BETTER IF YOU CAN SOMEHOW ASK THE STORE MANAGER OR OWNER TO PROMOTE YOUR WEBSITE HOSTING AND DESIGN SERVICES AS "PART OF THEIR SERVICE" SINCE THEY WILL ALSO BE GETTING A COMMISSION FROM YOUR COMPANY. SO INSTEAD OF STACKING YOUR BROCHURES AND PUTTING UP POSTER INSIDE THE STORE, ASK THEM TO PUT UP A SIGN SUCH AS

“ASK ABOUT OUR AFFORDABLE WEBSITE DESIGN, DOMAIN NAME, AND HOSTING SERVICE”

Now that’s something. If you can do that in all the book stores, photocopy/printing shops, and internet café’ in your local area, I would think you will be so busy with many new clients, because now you have many marketing agents which will be promoting your web hosting service all over your local area.

FIELD #3 – PRESS RELEASES

Now that you have quite a hand full of clients, it is time to bring your web hosting business to the next level. The next step is to issue an **on-going press release** about your company’s services through the various web hosting directory and news sites that are available today.

I want to stress out the “on-going” part of this method. Why does it has to be on-going, and not a one time or several time press releases which can be launched during the initial stage of establishing your web hosting business. When people are signing up for a web hosting service, they always prefer going with a company which is up to date.

Always put yourself in the shoes of your potential client. Imagine, if you yourself is looking for a web hosting provider or maybe in this case for a server provider or a data center provider, or whatever. Once you have narrowed down the list of companies which you are interested in signing up with, what would you do? You would do more research on this small list of companies you have.

The same goes with other people, they will search on your “company name” or “domain name” through their favorite search engine. Here is where all the press releases come to power.

When you have an on-going press release posted out to all major web hosting news and directories, what happen is when people search for your company name or domain name, all these press releases would come up on the very first page of the search results.

What happen is, people will be attracted with these press releases, they will be reading some of them for sure. When they open up the press releases shown on the search results while searching for your company, they MUST find out that these press releases must be at least of the same year or even better if it is issued in the past couple of months.

This will boost up their confident a lot. This means that your company is current. They will know that they will be signing up with an active company. One that is actively innovates theirs technology and services.

On the contrary, what happens if your potential client search about your company name and all they could find is very old press releases which is a couple of years old or even older! That would make you think, are you still around? Are you still serious about being the best in web hosting, or your company is “a thing of the past”.

I know I would never sign up with a provider which relates to “old times glory”, I would only want to sign up with one that is current and have a lot of happenings right now, not in the past. This is where you can set your company a part of the competition. Do this well, and you will reap the benefits for sure.

So you get the idea right? The idea is for your potential clients to find all these press releases which you just released a couple of months ago (at the latest) on these major web hosting directory and news sites when they are searching about your company name.

Now, that you get the idea, I will show you how and where you can do these press releases.

WHAT KIND OF PRESS RELEASES SHOULD I ISSUE

I know it can be very confusing when choosing the topic you can use to issue a press release to the public. I myself cannot come up with a press release idea just like that, you need inspiration. Well, common sense tells us, see what other people are doing! Then issue your own press releases in the same area that is being used by other companies.

Your press release must entirely have a different content than what other companies have, don't even think about copying other company's press releases or you will only get yourself in a huge trouble.

Never ever have your company banned from the major web hosting news and directory websites. They are your friends, you need them. Stay within their policy and be very careful when submitting your press releases to these sites, it has to be very carefully written and it has to be professional. You cannot submit a poorly written press release to these major sites or your press release will not be published by them, even worse they can ban your company from ever submitting your press releases.

If English is not your first language, like myself (as you can probably see by the many grammatical mistakes I make across this entire book), you can still do this with the help of other people. Find yourself a good friend who is very good in English and have them review the poorly written press release you made and have them edit it for free.

If you want to make it really professional, I highly recommend you to use **PressAdvance.Com** which I personally use to issue all kinds of press releases which my companies have.

Or you can also hire a professional editor from Elance.com or oDesk.com. The choice is entirely yours. But always keep it professional.

Here are the websites which you can use for Press Release and News inspiration to write your own.

- ✓ Web Hosting Industry Review – www.thewhir.com. Go to their Web Hosting News section
- ✓ WebHosting.Info – www.webhosting.info/news/
- ✓ The Hosting News – www.thehostingnews.com/topic2.html
- ✓ Web Host Magazine – www.webhostmagazine.com. Go to their Web Host News & Press
- ✓ Host Search - www.hostsearch.com/web_hosting_news.asp
- ✓ PR.Com - <http://www.pr.com/press-releases/1637>
- ✓ Compare Web Hosts - http://www.comparewebhosts.com/Web_Hosting_Press_Releases.htm
- ✓ My Host News - www.myhostnews.com/category/web-hosting-news/

That list of websites should give you a good idea on what topic you should write for your own press release.

Now I would recommend you to go through the entire resources provided by PRWeb.Com on how to write your own press releases <http://www.prweb.com/pr/press-release-tip/index.html>

HOW OFTEN YOU SHOULD ISSUE YOUR PRESS RELEASE

Not too often, I would highly recommend you issuing a high quality press release about the latest happening and improvement about your web hosting business only once a month. So you can do this, it is not a lot of hard work, maybe on the beginning of every month you can schedule a time for you to write your own press release and make it a killer one.

I am almost certain that you will keep forgetting this since you think this is not important, **IT IS VERY IMPORTANT** if you are serious about growing your web hosting business.

Now, drop this book, set a reminder for yourself, a sticky note on your computer monitor, or put an alarm on your mobile phone or PDA or whatever, put it in bold **PRESS RELEASE TIME** so you will never forget doing your press release once a month.

WHERE DO I SUBMIT MY PRESS RELEASE TO

As you would have guessed, to the sites I mentioned above and a few more. I will give you the links on where you can submit your press release to. If you see an email address it means you must submit your FULL press release or news content to the email address shown below.

Do not expect a REPLY from them and DO NOT bother them and keep asking why your press release is not yet published. Simply send an email and you're done. DO NOT annoy them. It will take several days before your press release is published.

- ✓ The Web Hosting Industry Review – submitnews@thewhir.com
- ✓ WebHosting.Info - news@webhosting.info
- ✓ The Hosting News - <http://www.thehostingnews.com/SubmitHostingNews.html>
- ✓ Web Host Magazine - http://www.webhostmagazine.com/ip/submit_press.asp

- ✓ Host Search - http://www.hostsearch.com/contact_news.asp
- ✓ PR.Com – open a free account and submit your press release to their web hosting category
- ✓ Compare Web Hosts - info@comparewebhosts.com
- ✓ My Host News - <http://www.myhostnews.com/press-release-submission/>
- ✓ iNet Interactive - content@inetinteractive.com (iNet Interactive operates many major web hosting directory, news, and forum sites including the very popular WebHostingTalk.Com)

Ok now that you have learned the power of press release, I would only expect you to do the work. Let's get on to the next thing which is also very exciting.

PROVIDE FREE TRIALS TO YOUR POTENTIAL CLIENTS

As I have shown you previously on how to setup your Free Trial system in WHMCS, now it's time to make it to use. Put up a noticeable promotion on your company's website and promote your Free Trial promo. To make it more interesting you can combine this technique with the auto adapt capability of your website, your promotion should end up something like this:

WE ARE EXPANDING WORLD WIDE – SPECIAL FREE TRIAL PROMOTIONS FOR THESE COUNTRIES:

UNITED KINGDOM, CANADA, INDIA, AND SINGAPORE- IF YOU ARE FROM ONE OF THESE COUNTRIES, YOU ARE ELIGIBLE TO GET OUR FREE 14 DAY TRIAL HOSTING ACCOUNTS!

When putting up that promotion banner or notice or box or whatever, you already know all the while that the visitor who is opening your website is from Singapore or country code SG.

Using the auto adapt website feature described on the previous section, you can “slip in” Singapore, combined with all other random countries so it won't be so obvious that you are only targeting the visitor's country.

This way, you relate directly to your visitor and he/she would most likely sign up for your free trial account. Once your new client signs up for the free trial account make sure you are the one who make initial contact with this new potential client.

Send out a personal and NON TEMPLATED/AUTOMATED email to your new trial client, ask him/her what kind of website he/she is thinking to make, offer the client your suggestions, and just be friendly and reachable to this

new potential client. Before the trial account auto terminates, make sure you reached them and ask them if there is anything that you could do to make their trial experience a good one.

If the trial clients ended up not upgrading to a live account, don't be discouraged, there are always people who just wants to play around while there is no intention of buying up a web hosting account in the first place. Actually, you will come across quite plenty of them, just try your best to convert them, if in the end they did not upgrade to paid account, just move on.

GETTING CLIENTS BY REACHING IN

FIELD #4 – WEB HOSTING REVIEWS

It's all about building a good reputation and building a good image for your web hosting business. Once you've got a good name backed by real client testimonials, getting new clients will become a much easier task to accomplish.

So, let's go back putting ourselves in the shoes of our clients. As I said above, people will always search for your company name on their favorite search engines before finally signing up. If that is the case, what do you think will come up on page 1 of the search results?

The search results will come out like this chronologically from top to bottom

1. Your company's website itself
2. All press releases and news about your company on major web hosting news sites
3. All reviews and client testimonials on web hosting review sites
4. Your company's Facebook Page (we'll cover this later)
5. Your company's Twitter Page (we'll cover this later)
6. Your company's YouTube videos (we'll cover this later)
7. All other websites which has relation or links to your website

So, we have covered point 1 and 2. Now I will show you how to cover point 3, so that when your potential clients do a search about your company, all they can find is good positive vibrations regarding your company which will only boost their confidence in signing up with your web hosting services.

Isn't that just awesome? Now wipe that smile out of your face and let's get to work.

When it comes to web hosting review site, of all the review websites I have worked with, I can only recommend you with two websites, **WebHostingStuff.Com (WHS)** and **WebHostingColumn.Com (WHC)**.

WEBHOSTINGSTUFF.COM

WHS review page about your company will certainly get on the first page of the search results when people searched for your company name in any search engines. Plus their website is very clean and not full of advertising here and there which will bring your visitors confidence while reading the reviews there.

You only need to list your company on WHS and just forget about all the other review sites and directories. They will not work as well as WHS, not even close. I don't know why, but WHS just works out very well for a hosting business, BUT... you have to follow my lead, otherwise you'll only waste time and money there.

As you can see WHS utilize their own PPC (pay per click) engine which powers their Top 10 chart across their website. Forget about this for now. Remember that I told you DO NOT SPEND MONEY TO GET YOUR FIRST 100 CLIENTS.

What you need is to open up a free WHS account, go to www.webhostingstuff.com, on the right navigation panel, under About Us, click on the List Your Company Here and open up a free account.

Once you got a free WHS account, complete the steps below:

- ✓ Under **Manage**, click on **Plans**, then on the top, click **Add Company** and add your Company Details there
- ✓ Then click **Add New Plans** and add your hosting plans there, as I recommend previously, it would be better if you only offer one hosting plan, but the choice is yours.
- ✓ Now click on the **Overview**, see the four seal images, click on the second one from the left, **Share Your Opinion**
- ✓ See the HTML codes you got, **don't get them all**, just get the REVIEW LINK from the bottom one, which looks something like this http://www.webhostingstuff.com/addcomments/your_company.html where [your_company.html](http://www.webhostingstuff.com/addcomments/your_company.html) should be replaced with your own link.

That's all what you need to do for now on WHS. DO NOT EVEN TRY to start buying pay per click advertising there, you will not be able to compete with all the other web hosting companies which are already listed there because they have many testimonials already. You will only be wasting your money if you don't listen, no one will buy from you, even if you are on the top 10 list.

Now that you got your WHS review link, this will be one of your ultimate weapons on building a good reputation and client testimonials.

WEBHOSTINGCOLUMN.COM

Web Hosting Column provides a free service for web hosts providing “personal care” services, which you should be doing when you want to compete with the bigger web hosts out there. The process is fairly simple. You can register for their free account at <http://www.webhostingcolumn.com/web-hosts/>

It is actually a WordPress account under Web Hosting Column. Once you’ve registered a free account, you can immediately write up your own web hosting column page. Now this is a rare opportunity which no other web hosting review site provides. Use this opportunity wisely and carefully.

Take your time writing up your “public profile” on web hosting column. Describe your personal care approach in details. Also, always refer your company with your company name, don’t use “We” or “I”. For example, instead of writing “We pride ourselves to deliver the best personal care support to our clients”, write “Uptime Host has proven to deliver the best personal care support in the industry”. I think you get the point there.

Use several images in your post, so it won’t look too plain. Be creative, if you can, post a video tour into your post. Provide a video tour of your personalized care support, or maybe your control panel. If it’s too much, post a few pictures showing yourself or your staff, since you need to emphasize on the “personality” level of your business.

Remember, web hosting column does not restrict what kind of content or how long your post can be, take your time writing up a really powerful and detailed content. You can put as many pictures, videos, testimonials, etc on this page. Make use of it.

Also choose a catchy title for your post which invites the reader to read your post thoroughly. Don’t use a title like “UpTime Host is The Best Personal Care Web Host”, that sounds like an advertisement. Use a title like “UpTime Host Takes Personal Care to A New Level”. Get the point? Also capitalize each word of your title.

Now, once you’re done writing your first post, make sure you enter in the “Web Hosting Domain Name” carefully. Web Hosting Column uses a technology to detect if a visitor is coming from your website by checking the referrer variable. So put your full domain name there, if you use UpTimeHost.Com for your business and not use www then enter uptimehost.com. If you use www on your website then use www.uptimehost.com.

How it works is that whenever a visitor clicks the webhostingcolumn.com link or their certified personal care seal on your website, when your visitor lands on webhostingcolumn.com, your post will be loaded on the very top of their front page and it will stay there forever, just for this visitor. If this visitor closes his browser and goes back to webhostingcolumn.com through another link anywhere, your post will still be featured on the top of their front page, permanently. How cool is that?

You get to make two initial posts with web hosting column. The second one is where you actually invite your existing clients to post their testimonials. So write up a page something like:

“WERE YOU PERSONALLY HELPED BY ONE OF THE STAFF AT UPTIMEHOSTS AND WOULD LIKE TO LEAVE YOUR PERSONAL FEEDBACK? THIS IS THE PLACE TO BRAG ABOUT IT! WE APPRECIATE YOUR DETAILED COMMENTS, YOU CAN WRITE UP A WHOLE STORY IF YOU WANT!”

Once you’ve submitted both posts, it will take a couple of days before web hosting column approves your posts. Once your posts are live, get the Certified Personal Care seal from web hosting column and place it on your website.

The beauty of it is whenever your site visitors click on that seal and lands on WebHostingColumn.Com, your post will be featured on the very top of their front page. Whenever this visitor leaves the site and come back through any other link or even directly to the site, your post will still stay featured, permanently.

So, for example after reading your post, the visitor searched on “Bluehost speed test” on Google and found WHC page on the top results, then clicks on the link back to WHC, your post will still be featured on their front page.

The last thing you need to do is to include your web hosting column review link to your WHMCS support ticket just which I am going to show you below.

The next time anyone searching for “your-company-name review” both Web Hosting Stuff and Web Hosting Column reviews will show up on the very top of the search results.

The beauty for web hosting column is they want to help web hosts build up their reputation and not bring it down. They initially will have to manually approve incoming comments or reviews to screen out fake reviews. Once the review/comment is approved, the power lies on your hand. You can remove any review which brings down a bad image to your company. How about that? This way you can build up your business reputation.

USING THE POWERFUL REVIEW LINK

Now I will show you how you should make use of this review links from WHS and WHC.

As I have said before, it’s all about hard work. You can only build your good name and reputation through hard work and time. Now is the time to make use of your hard work to drive more clients to your business. The way you should see it, whenever you are servicing your EXISTING clients, you are also doing sales and marketing at the same time, always DO YOUR VERY BEST to service your existing clients.

My secret weapon is I always do my very best when I am servicing my existing clients, in a way that these clients can't thank me enough for what I've done. I have sincerely helped them, not just because they are a paying client and it is my duty to do what they ask, it's because I care if their website succeeded, it's about caring other people.

SERVICING YOUR EXISTING CLIENTS IN A WAY WHICH TAKES THEIR BREATH AWAY IS THE ULTIMATE WEAPON ON BUILDING YOUR HOSTING BUSINESS TO REACH ITS SUCCESS. AS OF MATTER OF FACT, IT IS THE ONLY WAY.

The good thing is, hey you own the business, and it is only natural if you care for your own clients. The hard part of doing this is when you started to delegate your client service to other people, such as your employees.

Other people would naturally have less passion and care while helping your clients. This is a whole new area which I am going to cover on a later chapter. For now, it's just YOU and YOURSELF. So it's simple. If your company does not have a very good reputation when you only have less than a few hundred clients, than it's your own mess, it's your own fault. You can't blame it on other people, but it's easier to fix, since you only need to fix YOURSELF.

HOW TO USE YOUR WHC AND WHS REVIEW LINK

- ✓ Whenever you are doing client support and have solved the client's case successfully and you are 100% sure that the client is satisfied with the help which you have provided them, you **MUST** give them this WHC and WHS link for them to submit their review.
- ✓ When you are doing this (giving the review links to the satisfied client), think of it as you are getting a brand new client for each and every link you give to your client.
- ✓ **DO NOT** do this automatically (for WHS) by putting the link on your Support signature or even on your website. When doing web hosting, it is unavoidable that service interruption will occur from time to time which will sometime leave your client unsatisfied. The last thing you want them to see is "Please review us" link lying around when this happens. Only give out this link manually to satisfied clients during EVERYDAY client support.
- ✓ However you can always put your WHC review link (automate it) on the bottom of your support and live chat signatures. Simply because WHC gives you the power to screen out your own reviews after it has been approved.
- ✓ How do you deliver your review link to your clients, here is how to do it and I can guarantee you that this approach will bring the best possible reviews to your business. Use the following approach when giving out the link automatically on your support ticket signatures.

I AM GLAD THAT I COULD BE OF ASSISTANCE TO YOU. YOUR SATISFACTION IS OUR PRIMARY OBJECTIVE.

I WOULD TRULY APPRECIATE IT IF YOU CAN PLEASE SPEND A MINUTE OF YOUR TIME REVIEWING MY PERSONAL SERVICE THROUGH THE LINK BELOW.

THE REVIEWS YOU GIVE WILL DETERMINE HOW I WILL BE PROMOTED. I PERSONALLY EXPECT YOUR KIND REVIEW ABOUT THE SERVICE I HAVE JUST PROVIDED. A FIVE STAR WOULD BE NICE!

[HTTP://WWW.WEBHOSTINGCOLUMN.COM/YOUR-COMPANY-REVIEW/](http://www.webhostingcolumn.com/your-company-review/)

THANK YOU SO MUCH!

I am sure you get the general idea. You can alter the message above to your own version, but make sure that you deliver a message to the client that **YOU NEED THEIR HELP.**

PEOPLE LOVE TO RETURN FAVORS TO OTHER PEOPLE. IT TRULY GIVES PEOPLE A SENSE OF GLADNESS AND SATISFACTION WHEN THEY ARE GIVEN THE VERY POWER TO HELP OTHER PEOPLE WHO JUST HELPED THEM.

You will surely reap the fruit of your hard work. Do this every single time you are sure that you got a very satisfied client, 90% of them will boast about your great services on these two review sites, simply because you did gave them your very best.

That's it, it's pretty simple right? In time, you will have over than 100 client testimonials in WHS, which most of them are soaring FIVE STARS. Now when people search on your company name, they will surely be presented with all these happy clients. This will be the final confirmation which will convert your potential client to become your client.

These two sites are the very best friends you can ever have. Never abuse WHC and WHS. Never submit your own testimonials and fake them. WHC and WHS are being run by a team of professionals which has been doing this for so many years, they do everything manually. They approve every single rating and reviews manually, if you try to abuse their system ONCE, you will get yourself blacklisted by WHS. Should that ever happen, you just lost the most precious friend which will get you a lot of clients ahead.

FIELD #5 - SOCIAL NETWORK SITES

Here comes the exciting part which you should already be familiar with, social networking sites. On this section I want to make sure that you have **STRONG** presence, and I mean strong presence in three of the most powerful social networking sites on the internet today. These sites as you may have guessed are Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

Why these three, well I don't have to explain it to you, they're simply the most visited and well known social networking sites there is on the internet. There is no need to establish presence anywhere else than these three major sites.

You may have done this while we are covering Field #1 above, which is how to get clients from your own personal friends and colleagues. But in case you haven't done that, you get a chance to do it right on this section.

Let's begin.

FACEBOOK

I will discuss several things which you need to do on Facebook. First of all, you need to open a Facebook page. Go to www.facebook.com. See the Sign Up form? Well, DON'T sign up from there. Just below the sign up form there is a small link which says **Create a Page** for a celebrity, band or business. Click on that and finish the whole sign up process.

When creating your Facebook page, please take a very careful step when entering your business **Name**. Capitalize every first letter of your company name. Use "Web Hosting Company Name" instead of "web hosting company name".

It is beyond the scope of this book to discuss every functionalities there is on Facebook and how to best utilize them. This is where your hard work comes in. Do your own research. I will give you a few pointers on how to utilize Facebook with your web hosting company.

- ✓ Create a Facebook Page for your business
- ✓ Place the Become a Fan icon/link so that all your clients can join and become your Facebook page fan on your website and your email signatures. Put it everywhere!
- ✓ Do a special promotions which will only be offered on your Facebook page, notify this to your client that special promotions will only be distributed on your Facebook page
- ✓ Post regular updates on your Facebook page about your services and news, this will go **DIRECTLY** to your fans' Facebook Wall where your fans **AND ALL THEIR FRIENDS** will be able to see.

Simply put, Facebook is an extremely powerful method of marketing where you can deliver your brand awareness and show that you care about your clients to the general public and to all your client's friends.

Do you know the most powerful marketing method there is from the days of stone-age until today, yes of course you know, **WORDS OF MOUTH**. Through Facebook you would accomplish just that.

Always update your Facebook page EVERY DAY and always reply to ALL of your client's comments on your company's Facebook page. You must always deliver a **STRONG** message to your existing clients that there is always someone in your company who will always be caring for what your clients has to say.

There are so many other things you can accomplish just by utilizing the power of Facebook, I challenge you to explore all the functionalities you can take advantage on Facebook to promote your brand and excellent services to the general public, mostly to your clients and their personal friends.

Never abuse your Facebook page to SPAM junk messages and overly crowded advertising to your Facebook fans, they will cut you out. Never "wrongly use" other people's care for you, simply make a good use of it and always treat their openness with a sense of respect and value.

TWITTER

Twitter is the hype of the internet today. Everybody is twtting nowadays, from celebrities, politicians, athletes, professionals, well everybody. You should too. Follow the trend and people will relate very well with your company.

Using twitter is simple and straightforward. It is actually too simple which can get people to be addicted to updating their twitter status all day long. Simply go to www.twitter.com and open your company a new twitter account. Use your company name carefully, in a way that you will be sure that your twitter page will come up when people are searching about your company name on Google or other search engines.

Once you got yourself a twitter account for your company, well, start twitting! What should you be twitting about? Well anything, that's the whole idea of twitter. You can ramble about anything that is related to your company day to day operation. I highly recommend updating your twitter status (posting a message) at least once a day, or even a couple of times a day or more.

Some things you can talk about through twitter are tips and tricks on how to build a great website, focus on a specific subject every day. For example, one day you twit all there is to know about WordPress, another day you twit about osCommerce and how to build a shopping cart with it, some other day you talk about PayPal.

There is nothing much too it than having to update your twitter every day with new innovative tips and tricks on how your followers can end up with a much better website to accomplish their own mission. Twitter about things which can build up your followers, don't tweet about "I'm eating my hot dog now, sure is delicious". Why would anyone want to know about your hot dog? Well that's just an extreme example, but you get the idea right?

YOUTUBE

YouTube videos will show up very high on search results. Anything you search about on Google, when there is a YouTube video related to that subject, it will surely come up high on the search result, almost certainly on page 1 of the results.

We have to make a very good use of this, what you need to accomplish is to have as many YouTube videos as possible which is related to your company name. The way I see it there are two ways of having a STRONG presence on YouTube

- ✓ Put up genuine client testimonials on YouTube submitted by your clients, NOT YOU
- ✓ Put up short video tutorials on tips and tricks on how to do the various tasks which is related to web hosting or making a website. This should be submitted by you.

GETTING YOUR BUSINESS GENUINE VIDEO TESTIMONIALS

To accomplish the first task, it would be impossible to ask your clients to actually make a video testimonial for your company simply because you've just helped them a lot. You have to actually offer them something in return. The way I do it is to offer them a lifetime domain name renewals for as long their website is hosted with my service. So, it goes like this

GET A FREE DOMAIN NAME FOR LIFE BY SUBMITTING YOUR PERSONAL VIDEO TESTIMONIALS TO YOUTUBE!

That promotion gets me some 20+ video testimonials over the period of 3-4 months which is worth everything. Do you know how much a domain name cost you, just \$8.95/Year if you have an Enom sub reseller account, so having to renew 20 domain names would cost you \$179/year, that is per year, in return you would get 20 genuine video testimonials from your satisfied clients on YouTube, which is ***PRICELESS!***

That is the way to go. Now, you should put this Free Domain for Life promotion and any other promotion you have for Facebook on your cPanel. Remember on the previous chapter where I show you how you can put your own icons on your client's cPanel? You see the three icons I have there which cover my YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter promotion? Do the same.

When your clients clicks on that icon or the YouTube promo link, present them with a page which look something like this:

You must be an existing client to get a free domain name for life

To claim your free domain name renewal for life, you have to submit a **video testimonial** about our hosting

services to YouTube.

What should be in the video - your video must be between 30 - 90 seconds long:

Your name and where you are from

Tell about your website

Your domain name (free exposures for you)

What you love best about hosting your site with us

Be your self

Speak in your own native language (non english is perfectly fine!)



What do I need?

A free YouTube account - [Get one here for free](#)

A webcam or digital camera to record your video

If you don't know how to create and upload a video to YouTube, please follow these links:

[Making Videos](#)

[Uploading Videos to YouTube](#)

[YouTube General Support](#)

Once you have uploaded your video testimonial to YouTube, let us know! Upon review, we will renew your domain name each year, for life! To notify us, simply submit a ticket from your client area with your YouTube URL and the domain name you wish to be renewed for life.

Have fun making the video!

See how fun it is? Doing web hosting should never be boring. Now from time to time you get to enjoy the video testimonials submitted by your clients which is a personal satisfaction of all the hard work you've been doing. Additionally these videos will send out an extremely positive vibration to the public out there.

YOU CAN OFFER OTHER KINDS OF PROMOTIONS TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO POST THEIR VIDEO TESTIMONIALS ON YOUTUBE, MAYBE A FREE HOSTING SERVICE

FOR 6 MONTHS OR SOMETHING, WHATEVER YOU OFFER THEM, IT WILL BE WELL WORTH IT, TRUST ME, IT'S WORTH IT.

Do you see many web hosting companies having client testimonials posted on YouTube? Hardly, maybe you can be one of the few which has them, take advantage of this opportunity and set your business a part of the competition, in a good way that is.

POSTING YOUR OWN YOUTUBE VIDEO TUTORIALS

Having YouTube video testimonials is crucial to set your brand apart from your competition, but uploading your own short video tutorials will attract people to know about your company when initially they were not even searching about you. I should put this on the Reaching Out section instead of the Reaching In section, but I will include it here instead since we're discussing about YouTube.

As you see on the YouTube instructions provided above to your clients, I will also instruct you to do just the same:

- ✓ <http://www.youtube.com/signup?next=/index> to get your Free YouTube Account
- ✓ <http://help.youtube.com/support/youtube/> all you need to get started uploading your short video tutorials

I would highly recommend you to make SHORT video tutorials about guiding your clients to getting their website up and running with your web hosting service.

- ✓ How To Add A Domain Name
- ✓ How To Create A Website With WordPress
- ✓ How To Create A Website With Drupal
- ✓ How To Create A Forum With phpBB
- ✓ How To Create A Shopping Cart with osCommerce
- ✓ How To Add Sub Domains
- ✓ How to Setup MySql Databases Manually
- ✓ How To Setup Remote MySql Database Connection
- ✓ How To Add Email Accounts

You can add all the other things which you can show to your existing clients as well as the general public on how to use your web hosting services. Additionally at the bottom of each video, always include a watermark which shows your company's domain name, so people can think about signing up with your web hosting services while watching your video tutorials.

On every video you can define a tag or keywords of your video, make use of this property carefully so that when people search for "Create Website with WordPress", your video tutorial will come up, exposing the searcher about the very existence of your web hosting service.

The sky is the limit, be creative, come up with your own great ideas on how you can utilize this powerful marketing methods to generate more clients for your business, for free.

To create YouTube videos, you can use any kind of free screen recording software which can record your computer screen and produce the required video format for you to upload to YouTube. If you have some funds to spend, I highly recommend using Camtasia Studio <http://www.techsmith.com/camtasia.asp>

But if you don't make a serious amount of income yet, you can use something free by searching "free screen recording software" on Google.

SHOWING OFF YOUR CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

Now that you have quite a handful of client testimonials, don't forget to put all of them on your company's website. Make sure the testimonials links or icon or button STANDS OUT on your company's web pages so that potential clients can easily spot this section and can enjoy the many positive testimonials you have.

Put all your YouTube video testimonials on your website as well, it's very powerful, don't forget to keep adding new testimonials into your company's testimonial page, people wants the latest testimonials not the one which has been posted two years ago.

Always keep updating our testimonial page. This is one very powerful asset which you've gained over a long period of time. Make sure you make a very good use of it.

FIELD #6 – MOBILIZING YOUR EXISTING CLIENTS

Now that you have enough clients, it's time to mobilize these clients. What I mean by mobilizing your existing client is to encourage them to actively promote your web hosting business to their friends, relatives, even to other strangers. We will do that by utilizing two approaches, coupons or gift cards and affiliate marketing.

Coupons or Gift Cards

Offer your clients the ability to promote your web hosting services to other people by giving them special discount pricing through your coupon or gift card system. For better understanding, I will use a practical illustration.

Present this notice to your clients however you like it, such as on their client area, on their cPanel, by emailing them, etc.

GET 40% OFF FOR ALL HOSTING PLANS THROUGH OUR COUPONS SYSTEM.

***OFFER ONLY VALID FOR CLIENTS WHO HAS AN ACTIVE HOSTING ACCOUNT.**

[CLICK HERE TO GET YOUR COUPONS](#)

When your client clicks on that promo notice, they will be presented with this page.

[Issue Coupon](#) | [Transaction History](#) |

Account Credit Balance: **\$176.00 - [ADD FUNDS](#)**

Get 40% discounts on all hosting plans through our coupons! You can use these coupons to buy services for yourself and get a 40% discount, or simply sell them and make profit. The maximum coupon value you can generate is 40% more than what you are paying. For example, if you have \$25 in your account balance, you can issue up to \$35 worth of coupon(s). We simply give you 40% more than what you pay us.

Coupons **cannot** be applied towards domain name purchases (registrations/transfers/renewals). It will work for any other services BUT domain names. If you wish to issue coupon to register/transfer domain names, use the Generate Domain Coupon below. But the cost of the coupon will be exactly the same as it would cost you. To issue a \$9.95 domain coupon will cost you \$9.95 (no discount for domains)

You may begin saving 40% right now by creating your coupon(s) below.

Generate Coupon (coupons are non refundable and cannot be cancelled)

Coupon Code

(Alphanumeric only, for example: 25Bucks)

Coupon Value

\$

(Your Cost = Coupon Value - 40%)

Generate Coupon

[Reset Value](#)

Generate Domain Coupon (coupons are non refundable and cannot be cancelled)

Coupon Code	<input type="text"/>	(Alphanumeric only, for example: 25Bucks)
Coupon Value	\$ <input type="text"/>	(Your Cost = Coupon Value)
<input type="button" value="Generate Domain Coupon"/>		<input type="button" value="Reset Value"/>

The idea is to encourage clients to buy more services from you at a discounted rate as a privilege for being your client.

They are also encouraged to promote your web hosting services to other people. How it works is that they can issue, for example a \$100 coupon VALUE by only paying the discounted price. You can offer any kind of discounted price, 10%, 20%, or whatever amount.

This \$100 coupon can be used to purchase your hosting services which is priced \$100 or more. Your clients can freely define how much coupon value they want to buy at any given time. Having this feature will motivate your existing clients to promote your web hosting services to other people since they can give their friends hosting accounts at a discounted price.

They can also sell the coupons to strangers at a higher price than what they've originally bought from you. For example, they bought the \$100 coupon for only \$60, and sell the coupon at \$80. Whoever buys this coupon is saving \$20 which is better than having to spend \$100 when buying directly from your company.

For the Coupon Software, you may visit <http://www.whmcsgold.com/coupons>

Affiliate Marketing

From my personal experience, the coupons or gift card system is a more powerful way to mobilize your existing clients to bring more clients into your business. But, there are some people who prefer to do affiliate marketing instead of using the gift card or coupon system, simply because they are already used to do affiliate marketing.

It is always a good idea if you turn on your Affiliate Marketing system in your WHMCS, don't go overboard by buying whole new affiliate marketing software to promote your affiliate marketing. Use the built in WHMCS affiliate module, it's more than enough to get you started. To make it more powerful, I highly recommend you to create banner ads and buttons for your clients to promote your services on their websites through your affiliate marketing system.

I personally use <http://www.20dollarbanners.com> to create all banners I would ever need for my own online promotions.

Now, to turn on Affiliates on WHMCS go to the **Setup** menu, then **General Settings**. On the General Settings page click on the Affiliates tab (the second from the right). There simply set the commission amount you wish to award your affiliates for every new client they bring.

When you have your own banners, place the banner codes into the Affiliate Links code there, so the banners will be displayed on your client's affiliate page.

This affiliate settings applies globally to your entire products and services, I would suspect that you want to differentiate the commission which you want to give to your clients depending of what kind of products or services bought by the new client.

Go to **Setup > Products/Services** then click on the edit icon next to the product/service which you want to set the commission amount. On the product page, click on the **Other** tab on the far right. Choose **Custom Affiliate Payout** to your preferred method and set the **Affiliate Pay Amount** for this product and you're done.

Now you should have a fully working affiliate system that is ready to be used by your clients to promote your web hosting business on their websites.

FIELD #7 – SURPRISE YOUR CLIENTS

As I have said earlier, web hosting is about people, is about relationship, your clients is not buying a tangible product which they wear or eat then forget about it, they are buying a service. As a service company, you are expected to provide your clients with an ongoing relationship, one that you must keep nurturing from time to time.

Like having a real relationship with other people in your personal life, business is not that much of a difference. If you are dating, you are expected by your girlfriend or boyfriend to keep constant communication and update each other with what's going on. Sometimes you want to surprise him/her to make the relationship sparkling and passionate.

The same goes with business, put a personal touch into your business and dare to be different. Sending a holiday card is a thing of the past, though it is a good idea, but it won't stick with your clients so much. Provide them with something which relates to what they are trying to accomplish by having a website in the first place.

Now I am going to supply your web hosting business with something that is very precious. It is a full package which you can give to your clients FOR FREE. You must give it for free, like in a relationship, how would you feel if your girlfriend or boyfriend keeps selling you things when you are dating instead of surprising you with a nice present? It won't be long before you start looking for other girls or boys.

It's time to give your clients a good present, I guarantee you this present will get them so passionate about your business, simply because you are fulfilling their needs and you do it for free. Because you care for them, if you don't care for them, you simply sell it to them, if you do that their respect towards your business will decline in time.

The present is in a form of many software and guide books which you are to give to all of your clients FOR FREE. Here is the way to present it to them.

Welcome to Our Success Vault, where we go beyond website hosting for your success. We will be updating our success vault periodically with the latest knowledge and resources to help you achieve your online success. All for free. As long as you have an active account, you will be able to access the Success Vault.

Turn-Key Products

Niche Market Ideas

Have you ever wanted to create your own product on the Internet, but never knew what the best niche market would be to dive into that would give you guaranteed success? This section is dedicated to give you more successful ideas than you could ever imagine that you can use to create a product or website around to start making money right away. We put a team of Research and Development guys to apply many metrics and variables to decide on the best markets to dive into. This is that list. It will expand each month with more and more ideas! Enjoy!

Turn-Key Products

We have provided you with tons of turn-key products for you to give away for free or to sell online on your website. By giving away these turn-key products to your website visitors or selling it to them, you will attract much more attention and visitor loyalty to your website.

Please download and offer products that is closely related to your website, don't offer or give away products that has no relation whatsoever with the content of your website.

You can also use these very extensive resources to learn what you want to learn including how to build website traffic. Many resources on this turn-key products are MUST READ materials for your own website success.

Note: on the download page there is a search function for you to find your related turn-key products more easily.

Website Success Partners

Have you ever had a time when you spent hours browsing the depths of the internet looking for the perfect website for a product or service that you need to enhance your website, business, or affiliate marketing promotions? Look no further! Here is a list of every helpful website we have that has been a working part of all our success on the internet. We will always update this page with new websites as we discover them on the internet to save you many hours of endless web surfing. Enjoy!

In Progress: Online Success Core Training

Step 1: Development - **Download Now**

Step 2: Online Spying - **Download Now HOT!**

Step 3: Keyword Mastery - **Download Now New!**

Step 4: SEO Intelligence- **Download Now New!**

Step 5: Content Creation

Step 6: Video Marketing

Step 7: Social Networking

BY GIVING THESE SO CALLED "SUCCESS VAULT" ACCESS TO MY ENTIRE CLIENT BASE, I SEE A **TREMENDOUS INCREASE** IF NOT AN UNBELIEVABLE INCREASE IN THE INVOLVEMENTS OF MY CLIENTS TOWARDS ALL KINDS OF OTHER PROMOTIONS WHICH INVOLVED UPGRADING THEIR ACCOUNT OR ADDING MORE SERVICES TO THEIR ACCOUNT THOUGH IT REQUIRES PAYMENTS.

What I mean by that statement above is that *after* applying the Success Vault, the responses of all other promotions I offered to my clients increased tremendously.

For example, before applying the Success Vault, when I give out a promotion to my clients to upgrade their account and add more resources, the response rate was low. After the success vault has been implemented, the response rate to every promotion I open to my existing client base simply put *skyrocketed*.

Why is that? As I said, doing web hosting is about caring other people and building relationship and trust. When you have provided your clients with all you've got and even more, they simply put their trust in you, and even more, they can be passionate about your business. It's that powerful.

So again, care about your clients, truly care about them and your business will *automatically* grow itself without you having to spend a fortune and trying all kinds of crazy things to get one or two new clients.

You can do a search on Google to get all kinds of free resources which you can give to your own clients. There are quite plenty of free marketing software and eBook resources which you can download and redistribute for free to your own clients. One resource I would recommend is <http://www.ebookdirectory.com> or simply search on Google about "ebook directory". Find guides which can tremendously benefit your web hosting clients.

If you want to save time you can also get these resources from <http://www.whmcsgold.com/24karat> or <http://1st-for-ebooks.com>, but it's going to cost you some money. Again, as I said before, you can spend money or simply replace that money required to get these kinds of resources with your own hard work and time doing your own research. Choose wisely.

When you finally completed your own version of "Success Vault", make sure your it is noticeable to your clients. Put it on your WHMCS client area, on your cPanel as well as your Support Ticket email templates in WHMCS so that your client is constantly reminded that the Success Vault exists and is free for them to use.

GROWING FROM 100 TO 1,000 CLIENTS

By now, I feel that I have covered all the best possible fields for you to gain your first 100 clients. You've just been handed all the things which I have to find out THE HARD WAY.

FROM THESE 100 OR MORE CLIENTS, KEEP REPEATING THE WHOLE PROCESS AND IT WILL BECOME EASIER AND EASIER FOR YOU TO DOUBLE YOUR CLIENT BASE. I WOULD ESTIMATE THAT IT WILL TAKE YOU ABOUT 2 YEARS AT THE MOST FOR YOU TO REACH YOUR FIRST 1,000 CLIENTS. JUST KEEP DOING THE HARD WORK WHICH I KEEP STRESSING OVER AND OVER THROUGHOUT THIS

BOOK AND BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, YOU WILL BE MANAGING WELL OVER 1,000 CLIENTS AND YOU WILL START LOOKING FOR “HELP” TO MANAGE YOUR COMPANY. I’LL COVER THAT IN THE LATER CHAPTER OF THIS BOOK.

I surely hope you make very good use of these advices and suggestions to establish a good foundation for your web hosting business. I will not go further to discuss about the various way you can get clients through paid advertising, simply because I have found much failures than successes when I pursue to get clients through the means of paid advertising on the internet.

I highly recommend you to stick with the principle of growing your client base locally by focusing and pursuing to get more and more clients through the #1 FIELD explained on this chapter, which is by pursuing local businesses in your own area.

If and only if you have made a serious amount of income doing all the things explained above, you can consider going into the paid advertising arena to secure more client base for your hosting business.

Please know when you start doing paid advertising on the internet, such as pay per click, banner advertising, etc. You are putting your business in a very dangerous zone, only proceed if you feel that it’s about time to do it and it is always a good thing to have a true expert in internet marketing to guide you through.

JUST BE VERY CAREFUL WHEN DOING PAID ADVERTISING, YOU MIGHT END UP SPENDING A LOT OF MONEY TRYING OUT NEW STUFF AND TRYING TO GET MORE CLIENTS THE FAST AND EASY WAY WHICH MAY BRING YOUR ALREADY FLOURISHING BUSINESS MORE HARM THAN PROFIT. BE VERY CAREFUL.

You know what, I would highly recommend you to not go there in the first place, I’m just afraid that you will spoil all the great things you have accomplished so far, all your hard work. It is much safer if you stick with the hard work + time formula and sticking with FIELD #1 to be your main business focus on getting clients.

I would highly recommend you to stick with these methods to grow your web hosting business the best and natural way:

- ✓ Close Friends & Colleagues
- ✓ Local Businesses
- ✓ B2B Partnerships With Local Businesses
- ✓ Press Releases
- ✓ Web Hosting Reviews (WebHostingStuff.Com)
- ✓ Facebook
- ✓ Twitter
- ✓ YouTube

- ✓ Free Trials
- ✓ Coupons/Gift Cards Marketing to Existing Clients
- ✓ Affiliate Marketing through Existing Clients

If you have mastered all the mentioned techniques above, you can do your research on growing your business through the many points I give below. I will not be explaining it all to you but I encourage you to do your own research about these techniques on Google.

INTERNET MARKETING 101

- Create a site map and submit it to google.
- Add a bookmark this button in a visible place.
- Add an RSS subscribe button in a visible place
- Submit your RSS feed to RSS directories.
- Write articles and submit them to article directories.
- Write press releases and submit them to press release sites.
- Make a 404 redirect page that sends visitors to your home page to stop you losing visitors.
- Answer peoples questions on yahoo answers with a link back to your site.
- Submit your company blog to blog directories.
- Create a new free product to giveaway. If it goes viral then you will get visitors plus you can build a list.
- Write a great article or something interesting and email other blogs and websites in your niche to get them to link to you.
- Have a signature link in forum in your niche pointing to your site – webhostingtalk.com
- Buy links to your site from other people’s websites that get traffic in your niche.
- Use PPC traffic such as Adwords, MSN and Yahoo (*you have been warned*)
- Add an optin form on your site, preferably in the top right hand corner.
- Pay people to review your site. So they will write about your site and link to you.
- Submit your site to directories.
- Optimize your website for the search terms people search for in the search engines.
- Use a tell a friend script on your website, maybe offer an incentive for people to use it such as a free ebook.
- If your site has good quality content then apply for google’s news search.
- Buy banner space on other peoples website.
- Post on google groups with a link back to your site in your signature.
- Build a list and jv with other people with lists in your niche to get them to email their list about your site.
- Social bookmark your pages.
- Send articles to ezine publishers.
- Notify your list when you add new content to your website.
- Review a product and company and contact them to ask if you can be put in their press section with a link back to your site.
- Write testimonies for products and get your testimony on the sales page with a link back to your site.

- Tell people about your site on face book and other social sites.
- Use face book advertising.
- Purchase misspellings of competitor's sites and redirect them to your site.
- Post something controversial in your niche and people will link to you.
- If you have a product, start an affiliate program and then recruit affiliates.
- Leave comments on other peoples blogs with interesting or informative comments.
- Look in Digg's upcoming section for peoples posts that will soon be getting traffic and leave a comment on their blog.
- Advertise on related forums in your niche. Lots of forums allow banner advertising.
- Purchase advertising on other peoples mailing lists.
- Submit videos with links back to your site to you tube, google videos etc.
- If you have a good product send it out to blogs and people with mailing lists to get it reviewed and some of them will mail out or post about it.
- Create pages on squidoo and hubpages and put links on them pointing to your site. Post some content now and again to these sites.
- Use eBay classified ads with links back to your site.
- Create free e-book and create a squeeze page and email everyone you can find that has a website in your niche or a mailing list and tell them about it. They will then post or email about it and you can get thousands of visitors and subscribers.
- Exchange links with other people in your niche.
- Hold competitions in your niche that will go viral.
- Create guest posts for high traffic websites and ask the owner if they will post it with a link to your site.
- Submit reviews to Amazon about related product in your niche.
- Create surveys in your niche and make sure people know about it.
- Have a memorable domain.
- Have a page where you post about other people's sites in your niche so they will get a ping back and will possibly link back to you.
- Try and get your posts printed in offline magazines. Or talked about on the radio.
- Get your posts translated to get foreign traffic.
- Write catchy headlines with good titles that get peoples interest.

If you wish to learn about paid advertising and spending money on pay per click, I would highly recommend starting with WebHostingStuff.Com, the second place I would consider is to open an account with Commission Junction (cj.com). It will cost you some \$7,000 USD upfront to open an account and some \$500/Month fees plus all the commissions you have to pay your affiliate for each new client they bring into your business. The commission trend today is around \$70-\$120 per one new client. Imagine that.

The way I see it, when you decided to go with paid advertising, you can only start to gain profit from the client you acquire after the second year of the client's joining your services. If you are highly optimistic that you can retain your clients for many years to come, then yes, by all means consider paid advertising. But then again, you have been warned.

GOOD LUCK GETTING YOUR FIRST 100 CLIENTS AND GROWING IT TO 1,000 CLIENTS AND MORE.

IT SHOULD BE EXCITING AND NOT FRUSTRATING. IF IT GETS FRUSTRATING, THEN YOU ARE DOING IT THE WRONG WAY, TURN FROM YOUR WRONG WAYS BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE.

CHAPTER 6 – CLIENT/CUSTOMER SERVICE AND SUPPORT (DAILY OPERATIONS)

What You Will Accomplish On This Chapter:

- ✓ Facing Unexpected Problems
- ✓ Daily Operations With WHMCS
- ✓ Daily Operations With WHM/cPanel
- ✓ Service Monitoring
- ✓ Other Daily Operations

On this chapter I will provide you guides and best practices on how to manage your day to day operations using both WHMCS and WHM/cPanel servers. By following my example, I would assure you that you should be able to manage your entire 1,000 clients all by yourself, no help required.

Always know your true potential you have in yourself. Never assume you cannot do many things all by yourself, I have proven it and so does many other people. Never underestimate the power of yourself. Challenge yourself and prove yourself that you are an image of your Creator.

FACING UNEXPECTED PROBLEMS

It is never enough for me to keep stressing this over and over again.

Never treat your existing client as a thing of the past, your true sales and marketing sales force lies in the relationship you have with your ***existing*** clients. Treat them wrong, ignore them, it will be the start of your company's downfall.

Look at it this way. You should always treat your existing client as if you are trying to get them to become your new client, because in fact that is the case. You should always have this mindset:

ONE UNSATISFIED CLIENT = ONE LESS NEW CLIENT

ONE ANGRY CLIENT = FIVE LESS NEW CLIENTS

TEN ANGRY CLIENTS = ONE HUNDRED LESS NEW CLIENTS

If you value one new client as \$100, if you have ten angry clients, it would cost your business \$10,000 USD. Can you afford that?

If your focus lies more on reaching OUT than reaching IN, it is only a matter of time before your web hosting business reputation starts to decline and in time it would be bad enough that no one would even consider buying from your company anymore since the image of your company name is just so bad.

So always focus in making sure that your entire existing client base is satisfied with your service. Even do more than that, treat your clients in a way until they become addicted to how you are treating them.

ALWAYS TREAT EVERY SINGLE CLIENT SUPPORT TICKET/CHAT/PHONE CALL AS YOU WOULD TREAT A PRE-SALES TICKET/CHAT/PHONE CALL AND SEE THE MAGIC HAPPEN AS YOUR WEB HOSTING BUSINESS GROWS BEYOND YOUR EXPECTATION

Now I will guide you on what you should do when the unavoidable happens.

A SERVER/SERVICE WAS DOWN FOR SEVERAL HOURS BEFORE EVERYTHING IS RESTORED

Apology, apology, and apology. You owe it to them. Always tell the truth when it comes to explaining why your clients websites were down for several hours. Give your clients a sincere apology and continue by explaining why the service outage occurs in the first place. Following that you should always provide what preventive measures you have taken to prevent the same incident to happen in the future.

In summary your ticket replies or email or announcement should contain:

- ✓ A sincere formal apology for the inconveniences which your client has suffer
- ✓ A thorough explanation on why the outage or incident occurs
- ✓ A thorough explanation about the preventive measures taken to prevent this to happen again in the future

If you miss out any of those three points, I guarantee you that someone will be asking for one of those three points for sure. It is better if you deliver these three points to all your effected clients rather than them having to ask for your explanation about it.

This type of incident is bound to happen, make sure you find the root cause of what trigger the incident and fix it. Make sure it doesn't happen again in the future.

A SERVER/SERVICE WAS DOWN FOR MORE THAN 24 HOURS

There is simply no excuse for this type of incident. Be prepared to face some very angry clients. When this incident happens, I sure hope not, go through the same three points above PLUS one ***tangible*** token of apology to give to your customers.

What I mean by physical is that you MUST offer them something to compensate for this kind of outage. The most common compensation which I would recommend is to give them free service for one month. You owe it to them, if you don't do this, your client's satisfaction rate would decrease so much that it would almost be impossible for these affected clients to ever recommend your business to other people.

Remember that one angry client equals to five new clients, so this angry client can cost your business \$500 if you do not immediately restore their satisfaction rate by offering them something tangible. You can even go as far as offering two months free of service. It is still well worth it compared to losing \$500.

FACING A FURIOUS CLIENT – THE KUNG FU WAY

When a service interruption occurs over and over again you will surely have a handful of furious clients. What I mean by furious is that, they are so angry at your company to the point that they take everything personal. Some will even curse and use violent words on their tickets or during a phone conversation.

When it gets personal to them, it may also come to a point where it becomes personal to you, to a point where your blood would boil and you would love to just get back at them by giving them an impression to "walk away if you don't like it!".

NEVER DO THAT!!!

Here is a grandiose light bulb moment for you

TREAT THESE FURIOUS CLIENTS AS YOUR MOST PRECIOUS JEWELS. THE SECRET IS, WHEN ONE IS EASILY TRIGGERED EMOTIONALLY IN A NEGATIVE WAY, ONE WOULD ALSO BE EASILY TRIGGERED EMOTIONALLY IN A POSITIVE WAY.

What you have on your hands now is one furiously angry client who is ready to blow your company to pieces. What would you do to them? Say "Sorry, I will fix it". If you do that, you will only be asking for trouble.

No, instead convert this one furiously angry client to become your heat seeking missile marketing agent.

How would you do that? Follow my lead.

If you got yourself one of these clients, it is one of those rare golden opportunities to use all the negative energy this client has and convert it to a powerful positive energy and use this positive force to the benefit of your own business.

It's like Kung Fu huh? Yeah, I am giving you all my Kung Fu techniques here, learn well young apprentice. Okay, so here is what you say to this furious angry client.

HELLO SIR, PLEASE DO ACCEPT OUR SINCERE APOLOGY FOR THE TERRIBLE OUTAGE WHICH HAS CAUSED SEVERE DOWN TIME TO YOUR WEBSITE. IT IS BEYOND OUR POWER TO IMMEDIATELY FIX THE OUTAGE SINCE IT REQUIRES A THIRD PARTY ENGINEERS TO REMEDY THE SITUATION.

THE OUTAGE HAS NOW BEEN RESOLVED AND ALL SERVICES ARE BACK ONLINE. AS A TOKEN OF OUR SINCERE APOLOGY, WE WOULD NOT CONTINUE TO BILL YOUR ACCOUNT FOR FUTURE SERVICES. OUR MANAGEMENT HAS DECIDED TO CONTINUE YOUR HOSTING SERVICES FOR FREE WHEN YOUR CURRENT BILLING PERIOD ENDS.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR KIND UNDERSTANDING AND WE HOPE THAT YOU WOULD ENJOY OUR SERVICES FOR MANY YEARS TO COME, IT'S ON THE HOUSE.

Now, that's something don't you think? There are several occurrences where I have to exercise this myself, and every time I did that, do you know what happened? The furious customer was immediately converted into a passionate fan and started to brag about my company all over their website and even beyond their own website.

As I said above, people who are easily triggered emotionally in a negative way would also be easily triggered in a positive way. Now you just got yourself a passionate free agent who will recommend your web hosting business to everybody he/she knows. This one client will passionately and voluntarily become your company's marketing agent.

Always remember this when you've come across a time where you have to deal with an extremely furious customer. Don't forget this, it will bring your business a lot of good and it will only cost you one client's monthly fee. This one client will bring you many clients into your business. It's well worth it.

On the contrary if you choose to ignore this one furious client, consider that you just begin a short journey of destroying your whole web hosting business, and I will assure you, it will happen if you treat your clients like that.

FACING AN ABUSIVE CLIENT

A furious client explained above means that they have every right to be angry and furious. An abusive client means a client who has no right to be angry at your company or business. This type of clients is simply trying to abuse your web hosting business. What I mean by abusive clients is a client who clearly violates your company's terms of service.

One example is a client who is trying to send out 100,000 emails through their shared hosting account. Now that clearly violates your AUP (it should). You ended up having to suspend the hosting account. This action will result the client to be frustrated at your service since they cannot accomplish their abusive tasks.

Some abusers will "try" to threaten your business by throwing all kinds of stuff at you, if they do that, simply ignore them. You can rest assure that these abusive clients will not hurt your business because they are not real businesses or real clients. They are abusers who are almost criminals to some extent.

They will not waste their time bragging about how bad your company is because they were unable to send out their spam emails from your server. They will simply move on to the next host to be their victim.

Even if they do provide a terrible testimonial, simply provide a counterclaim to their statement stating how their account was abusing your server. Nobody will back up these abusers statements because they are alone and no other client would confirm this fact to be true which only proves them to be an abuser.

DAILY OPERATIONS WITH WHMCS

On this section I will guide you on how to go through your daily routine with WHMCS. I will guide you through every task I go through every single day while operating my current hosting company using WHMCS.

PROCESSING NEW ORDERS

The first thing I would do is to process all new orders one by one. Why not process orders automatically? I have to learn this the hard way. When you process your orders automatically (which you can do so with WHMCS), you are opening your business for criminals and all kinds of abusers to abuse your web hosting business.

Criminals and abusers love to abuse web hosting companies which automate their new account creations. You should never automate your new signups, never, just trust me. Legit clients will not mind waiting for several hours even to a day to have their account setup, they're not in a rush.

Only people who have bad intention are rushing new account creations. Either they are a criminal or they are one of those abusers who just got kicked out from another web host because of server abuse. Now they are trying to move their abusive account into your server.

By simply processing your orders manually, you would automatically screen out your client base to true legitimate clients instead of abusers or even worst, criminals. Another advantage is that you will see what kinds of client are signing up with your web hosting business by seeing their domain names used on these orders.

For example if you see an order which seems legitimate but uses a suspicious domain name containing words like eBay or PayPal, or bank names, be extra cautious when processing these orders. Another note is when you see an adult related domain names being used, especially when you do not tolerate adult websites to be hosted on your business.

There is no way you can detect these kinds of abusers by processing orders automatically, as I said before, never rush your business, manage your business carefully. Don't be too excited when you see high value orders, because high value orders is most likely to be generated by criminals who are using stolen credit cards.

Another important thing, never automate domain name registrations on your orders. Register all new domain name orders manually. Since you have to buy these domains from your domain registrar provider which will cost you, if a criminal or abuser registers a domain name using a stolen credit card which later you have to refund or resolved in a chargeback, you would lose money because the domain has been registered. It cannot be reversed or unregistered. You would have to bear the cost.

So now you know why you should always process every order manually by hand, nothing can beat the human brain, plus when you process orders manually, you get to know what kind of people are buying your web hosting services. You will also have a sense of personal relationship with every client you have, since you actually process their orders manually, seeing their name, their addresses, their domain names, it just makes a personal connection which is truly valuable.

Ok let's process some orders together now. To process new orders first log in to your WHMCS as the admin user. Once you are logged in, under **Orders**, click on **List Pending Orders**.

Now here on this page you will see your list of new orders to process today, start by clicking on the order ID for each order from top to bottom. Once you clicked on the Order ID number, you will be taken to the order details page.

Step 1 - Fraud Check Results

I highly recommend you to use the built in WHMCS fraud protection and use MaxMind as I have shown you on the previous chapter. When you have MaxMind activated in WHMCS, you should see a table of **Fraud Check Results** on the order page. When you have followed my instruction setting it up, you should have this kind of result.

Distance from IP address to Address	9951	If Country of IP address matches Address	No
Country Code of the IP address	EG	Whether e-mail is from free e-mail provider	Yes
Whether IP address is Anonymous Proxy	No	Fraud Risk Score	10
MaxMind Configuration Error		Likelihood of IP Address being an Open Proxy	0.00
Estimated State/Region of the IP address		Estimated City of the IP address	

Estimated Latitude of the IP address 27.0000	Estimated Longitude of the IP address 30.0000
ISP of the IP address NET@NET ADSL Network	Organization of the IP address NET@NET ADSL Network
Customer Phone in Billing Location NotFound	IP address or billing address in high risk country Yes
Whether billing city and state match zipcode No	MaxMind ID R485APQJ
Explanation	This order is very high risk, and we suggest you not accept it. This order is higher risk because the distance between the billing address and the user's actual location is so great. The order is slightly riskier because the e-mail domain, aol.com, is a free e-mail provider. The order is riskier because it comes from a country associated with high levels of fraud. The order is higher risk because the billing country and the country in which the IP address is located don't match

Now, as you can see on the right column, there is a Fraud Risk Score. This one shows as 10 which most definitely is a fraud order. This is the latest order which I had this morning when I am writing this page, see how much fraud order will come into your business once you are open to the public?

As you can see, I also choose not to reject potential fraud orders automatically (which you can do on the MaxMind fraud settings) since I want to reject any fraud orders myself, by hand, not automatically because many times legitimate orders can also be treated as a potential fraud. It is always best to process all orders manually.

Sometimes, I get an order from Vietnam, or Malaysia, or Indonesia which automatically triggers the Fraud Risk Score to 7+ and is categorized as a very high risk order. Sometimes it turns out that these orders come from a legitimate person residing in these countries. If you automate rejection, you will lose all sales from the so called high risk countries. Not all orders from these countries are frauds.

So back to the sample case, when processing orders or doing fraud screening, put your focus on these important factors:

- ✓ **Fraud Risk Score**, it helps a lot, but sometimes it can be wrong. If the fraud risk score is below 3.0, it is most likely that you have a good legitimate order. If the fraud risk score is above 3.0, be extra cautious.

- ✓ **Likelihood of IP Address being an Open Proxy**, this is a very important factor. If you see that there is a small likelihood that the originating order comes from a proxy, just flag the order as fraud. 100% of orders that comes from open proxies are fraud. So even if the likelihood is 1.80 or 3.0, treat the order as fraud.
- ✓ **ISP of the IP Address**. This also is very helpful, you can immediately see if the IP is coming from a legitimate ISP or it is an IP Address owned by a server/data center provider or a web hosting company. If it says Dream Host Network, or The Planet, or Hurricane Electric, or whatever web hosting company you know, treat the order as fraud, because they are fraud.
- ✓ **The Domain Name used**. The next step is for you to check what domain name is used on this order, if it's a fraud, most likely you will also caught it by the domain name being used. If you are unsure about the domain name, google it. If you see some banks returned on the search result, it is absolutely a fraud order. You can see the level of fraud clearly by seeing the domain name used.
- ✓ **The Client Personal Details**. This should be the last point of reference because many fraud orders nowadays used a legitimate personal details, simply because they got this identity from the stolen credit card data they posses in the first place. A good place to look would be the email address being used, if it feels negative, you can be extra careful. If you see the personal data is entered with gibberish data, then it is absolutely a fraud.

To help you prevent fraud orders, it is always good to notify all these criminals and abusers that you are processing your orders manually. Simply put this notice on your WHMCS checkout page:

ATTENTION:

All signups information is manually verified by our anti-fraud officers. Invalid information will result in site removal. We do not accept signups originating from dedicated servers, VPS servers, or proxy servers. You must be directly connected to a direct internet connection through your local Internet Service Provider.

To do that, open up your viewcart.tpl file under your WHMCS installation folder **templates/orderforms/cart/viewcart.tpl** place that notice right under these codes:

```
{if $accepttos}
<p align="center"><input type="checkbox" name="accepttos" id="accepttos" /> <label
for="accepttos">{$LANG.ordertosagreement} <a href="tos.html" target="_blank">{$LANG.ordertos}</a></label><p>
{/if}
<br /><strong><font color="red">
ATTENTION:<br />
All signups information is manually verified by our anti-fraud officers. Invalid information will result in site removal. We
do not accept signups originating from dedicated servers, VPS servers, or proxy servers. You must be directly connected to
```

a direct internet connection through your local Internet Service Provider.

Having that notice will help you reduce the fraud attempts. Also, as you can see on the previous Chapter about setting up Email Templates on WHMCS, I also put a notice on the client's sign up email informing them that all orders are processed manually and it will take up to 24 hours before all new orders are activated. You must have this notice so that legitimate clients won't be left clueless on how long they can expect to start using your web hosting service.

If you find a particular order as a Fraud, simply click the **Set as Fraud** button on the bottom of the order page and move on to the next order.

Step 2 - Accepting the Order

Once you are confident that the order is a legitimate one, you may follow the steps below to accept the order and activate it.

- ✓ Make sure the **Hosting Account** item has both **Run Module Create** and **Send Welcome Email** checked.
- ✓ Make sure you choose **Enom** from the drop down list on the Domain item and have both **Send to Registrar** and **Send Confirmation Email** checked.
- ✓ Scroll down to the bottom and click "**Accept Order**"

Upon clicking that button, the web hosting account will be automatically created on your WHM server and the domain name will also be automatically registered for the client (make sure you Enom account balance is enough to register new domains). Your client will also receive an account activation email explaining everything there is to know about getting their website online on the internet.

That's it! Because I have fully equipped your web hosting business with all the necessary elements to provide your new client with all the required guides and steps to get started, it is very unlikely that your client will be left clueless upon the activation of their new web hosting account.

By following each guide provided on the previous chapters thoroughly, it is very unlikely for you to receive a support request from a new client asking you how to get started or how to make their website, the only support cases which you will receive will be pure support cases which truly require your intervention to solve their problem.

You have saved yourself hundreds of hours of doing unnecessary support time on guiding new clients on how to get started. Now that you know how to process new orders, let's proceed to discuss the most common support cases you will encounter during your daily operation.

DOING SUPPORT WITH WHMCS

On this section I will guide you through the most common support cases which require your intervention to help solve the customer support case. I will not be discussing general support cases which do not require your intervention and most likely can be solved by the customer themselves.

Going Through Your Support Tickets

When you are working on your WHMCS support tickets, always work your way from **top to bottom**. That is to answer all newer tickets first going your way to older tickets. Don't use a first in first out methods (FIFO). Why would you want to do that? It's because you are doing everything by yourself.

If you start to have employees working for you 24/7, then yes, the best way is to do your support tickets in a first in first out basis. But since you're still doing everything solo, all by yourself, so always answer the newest ticket first.

This way, you will give a very good impression to all the clients which has just recently submitted their ticket and got a very quick response. When people get a response to their ticket in less than an hour, or maybe even within a few minutes after submitting it, they will just be amazed. They did not expect it, get them by surprise.

This is how you will build your many client testimonials, because some of your clients will get almost instantaneous support, while some will have to wait 12 hours or so to get your respond. You can't improve your response rate with clients who submitted their support from the other side of the world ticket while you are sleeping, but you can give a truly amazing response to clients who submitted their ticket while you are sitting there in front of your computer.

So for clients who are on the other part of the world, they won't mind waiting for 12 hours or so, as long as you attend to their inquiries and try to always solve their case in your first response. People won't mind waiting as long as you get the job done. Make sure you get the job done right the first time.

Now that you know that you always do your tickets from newest to oldest, I will guide you on how to approach each ticket when you are working on them.

- ✓ When doing your support tickets, use the link on the left navigation menu under **Filter Tickets**, click on **Awaiting Reply**. You will then be presented with all the tickets which are waiting for your reply to the clients. Go through all tickets from top to bottom until you've solved every one of them.
- ✓ To start working on a ticket, click on the Subject of the ticket you want to work on. On the ticket details page, notice there are several links which you can click on. Please go through all the available links which you see on this ticket page. These links are meant as a shortcut for you to efficiently work on the support ticket. Make use of these links, usually I right click on these links and choose open in a new tab or window.
- ✓ When you are working on a ticket, sometimes it is required for you to log in to the client's hosting control panel **as the client**. Do not use the **login to control panel** link to log in to your client hosting account, because it will only logs you in as the root user. Most cases can be solved only if you log in as the client itself and not as the admin of

your WHM server. To log in, click on the **client name** on that ticket page. Then on the Clients Profile page, on the right section, under **Actions**, click on **Login as Client** (right click then choose open a new window). This should bring you to the client area, simply click on My Services and click on the details icon, then log in to your client's cPanel from there to troubleshoot their issue.

To avoid having to work on support cases which your client can solve by themselves, it is recommended that you add an extra notice to your support submission area which will encourage the client to always try to solve the case by going through all the knowledge base and self service guide you've provided for them.

To put up this notice, under **Setup** click on **Support Departments**. Then choose the department which you want to add this notice to, for example technical support. Click the edit button/icon.

On that page, choose the **Custom Fields** tab. Then simply add two custom fields which will generate this questions/notices whenever your client is trying to submit a new support ticket.

Error URL/web page address (if reporting an error)

I have checked/read the knowledgebase suggestions shown below and found no answer to solve my issue/question

It will save you a lot of support hours because now, most of your customers will actually look up the knowledge base guides presented to them when trying to submit a support ticket.

COMMON SUPPORT CASES

It is impossible for me to even begin to guide you on the various support cases which I had gone through on these past 12 years of doing web hosting. It would also hurt you and not build you if I lay out every imaginable support cases which you will encounter yourself.

The beauty of utilizing WHM/cPanel as your web hosting business platform is that you will *always* find a solution on all kinds of imaginable support cases which your client will ever ask you. There is a solution to every single case on the internet, simply search on Google on what you are trying to accomplish and I can assure you the answer has been provided for you to solve that support case immediately, and the information is free.

Just Google your way to answering your day to day support tickets, from a simple task to even migrating your entire WHM/cPanel servers are covered on the internet. You just need to do your research.

Before you start working on each ticket just make sure you go through these basic steps:

- ✓ **Make sure your client's domain is already pointing to your DNS servers.**
Most support cases were opened simply because the client's domain is not pointing to your DNS yet. To check this, use the WHOIS tool in your WHMCS, under **Utilities**. Make sure the domain name is correctly pointing to your DNS servers.
- ✓ **Make sure your client uploaded their site into their www or public_html folder.**
Many clients who have never setup a website before will most likely upload their website files into their root / folder instead to their www or public_html folder. Make sure you check this if they are saying their site is not coming up.
- ✓ **Make sure your client's .htaccess file is not using directives which are not supported by your server.**
If you follow the server configuration setup I provided above, clients are not allowed to have any kind of htaccess directives which may jeopardize your server's stability, which is increasing their php memory, input time, execution time, etc. If they have those directives, most likely their website will come up as **500 Internal Server Error**. Always check that. First thing you need to do is to try and rename your client's .htaccess file, see if that fix the internal server error page. If it does, than tell your client that their .htaccess file is using directives that is not supported.
- ✓ **If Page is still showing 500 Internal Server Error page.**
If your client's website is still coming up with this error code, there are only two possibilities left. Either their directory permission is setup wrong or apache's mod_security broke their site. Your server will not support directories which has a 777 file or directory permission. If a client uses 777 as their directory/file permission, it will not work. Simply change these files/directories permissions to 755 should fix the problem. The last possibility is that mod_security is causing their website to break. If you've done the steps above and it is still showing 500 Internal Server Error, try excluding their website from your mod_security rules.

To white list your client's domain so that their site can work without any problem simply adds this line into your mod_security configuration:

```
SecRule SERVER_NAME "website.com" phase:1,nolog,allow,ctl:ruleEngine=off
```

You can access your mod_security configuration from your **WHM > Plugins > Mod Security**

Also before doing all that make sure your client does not have a broken script in the first place. For example if a client uploaded a script using a BINARY mode, specially a Perl script, it will always generate an Internal Server

Error message. Try running your client's script from SSH and check if it executes alright in SSH, if it does, then it should also work from the browser, just make sure you go through all possibilities above.

✓ **Problem accessing cPanel.**

Sometimes there are times when your client is having a problem accessing their cPanel through the default cPanel log in area which you have provided them in the welcome email. If they said they cannot access their cPanel while your server is running and accessible, it is most likely that their network connection blocks port 2082 and port 2083 which cPanel uses.

When this happens, suggest your client to access their cPanel from either of this URL:

<http://clientdomain.com/cpanel>

<http://cpanel.clientdomain.com>

<https://clientdomain.com/cpanel>

<https://cpanel.clientdomain.com>

Also notify them that they will get an SSL warning message when trying to access it through the https URL above since the SSL certificate was issued to another domain. Simply ask them to ignore that warning message and proceed with managing their cpanel account.

✓ **Recreating your client's account or changing cPanel's username or main domain.**

There will be times when your client will ask to change their cPanel's username or main domain associated with the account. The only safe way to do that is to simply terminate their current account and create a new fresh account using the new username or main domain. Always ask your client to backup all emails, files, and databases because when you do this, their current data will all be lost.

Once they've confirmed that it would be okay for you to terminate their current account and create a new one, go to your Client's Profile Page by clicking your client name anywhere on the WHMCS ticket system.

Then go to the **Products/Services** page by clicking the tab. On that page, terminate the current account by clicking the **Terminate** button (all data will be lost). Then change the main domain/username of that account as the client requested and click the **Create** button. After that, on the bottom of that page, there is a **Send Message** button, chose to send the Hosting Welcome Email and click that **Send Message** button which will send the client his/her new account details.

✓ **Adding custom DNS records for your clients.**

Some clients will also ask you on how they can update or add their domain's DNS records such as adding or modifying their CNAME, MX, or A records. They cannot do it themselves. You must do it for them.

To do this, log in to your WHM then under **DNS Functions**, click on **Edit DNS Zone**. On the Edit DNS Zone page, enter in your client domain name and click **Edit**.

When editing your client's DNS zone, when adding a CNAME or MX record, it is **very important** that you always add a dot/period at the end of the record data where you wish to point the sub domain to. For example if you want to point calendar.domain.com to apps.google.com you must enter the following:

calendar 14400 IN CNAME apps.google.com.

Note that apps.google.com. is ended by a dot or a period, without that dot or period the record will not work. Please always make sure there is a dot at the ending. It is not necessary to add the dot if you are adding an A record and entering an IP Address.

✓ **Working with MySql Databases.**

Most clients are not aware that when they want to work with a new MySql database, they would also need to associate their database with their username so that the username has proper privileges to access the database. Simply provide this guide to your clients when they say they were unable to connect to their databases.

To connect to your MySql Database for your website or application, you would need the following four variables, which is:

hostname = localhost

mysql username = we will create this below

mysql password = we will set this below

mysql database nme = we will create this below.

1. Your hostname will always be localhost - do not change this

2. You need to create a new mysql usernme. To do this, log in to your Cpanel account, under databases, click on MySql databases. Then scroll down bit to the middle of the page, under Mysql Users, click on Add New User, enter the usernme and password, then click Create New User. Your new mysql usernme format will look something like cpaneluser_mysqluser (with an underscore)

3. Create a new database, to do this, from the MySql Databases page above, simply enter the new database name, and click on Create New Database. Once you do that, you will have a new database name with this format cpanelusername_dbname

4. Now you need to associate the mysql user with the mysql database. To do that, on the MySql Database page under Add User to Database, you may associate the respective user to the database and click on the Add button. On the next page, choose ALL PRIVILEGES and click Make Changes.

That's it, so now you will have:

hostname: localhost

mysql_username = the username you created above

mysql_password = the password you set when creating the username

mysql_database = the database you created above

Now the mysql user should have FULL access to the database. If you did not associate it by going through STEP 4, the user will NOT have access privileges for that database.

✓ **Shell access/SSH request.**

Some advanced client would want to have SSH access to be able to manage their account by utilizing command lines from within your server. If you have such request, make sure only enable SSH from clients you surely know is a legitimate client.

To provide shell/SSH access, log in to your **WHM > Account Functions > Manage Shell Access** then choose your client's username and click on **Enable Jailed Shell**. Never provide clients with Normal Shell, always use Jailed Shell for security purposes.

Also, if you are opening SSH on a custom port, please give the client your SSH port so that they can access it.

✓ **Custom apache/php installation request.**

From time to time there will be clients who will ask you to install a particular php/apache module which requires their website to work. If you don't know what it is or are unsure if that module could increase your server load, I would not recommend you go provide custom module installation for your clients.

I was providing this service when initially starting up and ended up having totally unstable servers because all of my servers have different kind of modules installed upon a client request. It is much better if you have a standardized server configuration which will benefit your company in the long run.

When turning down a client's request of installing a custom module, simply explain them that it cannot be done because your company is aiming to having server security and stability which requires server standardization. Most clients will understand and accept your explanation.

✓ **Transferring a cPanel account from another web host.**

When you have a new client who wishes to move their account from another web host who utilize cPanel, you can help them move their account to your company easily. Simply ask them their current cPanel login details on their existing web host and you can perform the move.

To start moving your new client's cPanel account from another web host:

1. Log in to your client's old cPanel account. Go to **backup wizard** under Files tab. Then click on the Backup button, choose Full Backup.
2. On the full backup details, use Backup Destination to Home Directory and click **Generate Backup**
3. Wait for a few minutes if the account is small or a few hours if it's a huge account
4. Go into your WHM server using SSH. Now through SSH go to your /home directory by doing **cd /home**
5. Inside the /home directory, connect to your client's FTP which resides on their old web host server using the domain name/IP and their cPanel login details. Use a command like **ftp clientdomain.com** or **ftp 127.0.0.1** if the old host server IP is using 127.0.0.1. Once logged in, wait it out until the backup file is ready (when it's no longer increasing in size and not 0)
6. When the file is ready, get the file simply by using **get backup_file_name_date.tgz**
7. Wait until the file transfer is done, then log out from your ftp session by typing **bye**
8. Now you're back on the /home directory with that backup file already downloaded
9. Log in to your WHM web interface, choose **Restore a Full Backup/cpmove file**
10. On the restore page enter in the **username** of the account you wish to restore continue with the restore. Within a few minutes the restore should be completed.
11. Once it's completed change the package of that restored account to your own package. You can do that from **List Accounts** under **Account Functions**. Then search the new restored account and click on the Package column of that account. Simply change the package to your own hosting package and click **Upgrade/Downgrade**

That's it. You're done. Now you can notify your client that their cPanel account has been successfully transferred to your company and is ready to use.

The cPanel username and password is **exactly the same** as the one used on their previous cPanel account on the previous web host.

✓ **Transferring a domain name for your clients.**

There will be times when your client would like to transfer their domain name into your company. This involves several steps which needs to be completed and requires both you and your clients' direct interaction to fully finish the transfer process.

Here are the steps of doing a domain name transfer from another registrar to your company:

1. When ordering a domain name transfer on your WHMCS system, it is required that the client provide an EPP key for the domain name being transferred. The client can only get this EPP key from their current domain provider/registrar. You cannot get this EPP key for them, they have to contact their domain registrar themselves.
2. Once the client obtains the EPP key, they need to enter it into your ordering system while ordering a domain transfer. You will now have a pending domain transfer request in your WHMCS area complete with the EPP key code from your client.

3. Once you accepted the domain transfer order, WHMCS will send out the request directly to Enom for this domain name to be transferred. This will be done automatically upon you clicking the Accept Order button and checking the **Send to Registrar** check box. Enom will then send out a domain transfer authorization request to **your client** and not to you. Your client **must** respond to this authorization request by clicking the link provided on that email.

Many times clients will miss out this authorization email which is being sent to their WHOIS contact email. If they do not click on the link which is provided inside the authorization email, the domain transfer will never be completed.

If a client failed to respond to that email, in time they will ask you about the transfer, how come it is taking so long? Simply explain to your client that they have to respond to the domain transfer authorization request and also make sure that the domain name is not being locked at their current registrar.

What happens is now that you have to either retry the transfer (don't worry you won't be billed by Enom if a transfer failed) or you have to resend the verification email. To check the status of the transfer, log in to your Enom account directly from Enom.com, under **Domains** click on **Transfers > My Transfers**

On that page, enter in the domain name which is being transferred, if the status is **completed** and says that it **fails**, you simply retry the transfer by going on to your WHMCS then, click on the client's name to pull up their **Client Profile Page**. Under the **Domains** tab, click on the **Transfer** button again to initiate the transfer again.

But, if Enom says that the transfer is still **pending** and it says that it is awaiting owner's response to the authorization email, you can click on the **Resend Verification Email** link there to resend it.

This time make sure the client gets it right. If everything is verified, the domain should be successfully transferred to your company in a few days.

One important note, when transferring **.co.uk** domain names into your company, the losing registrar will ask for your company's **TAG name**. Your company TAG name would be ENOM with all capital letters.

✓ **Other types of support cases.**

There may be some other common technical support cases which I may have missed, but going through the thousands of support cases which I've done in the past concludes that the most common technical support requests are in the form of those discussed above.

Other types of support inquiries will be targeted to general administrative tasks which involved with billing, invoices, pre-sales questions, and other issues of non technical nature.

I think by now you should be able to handle 80% of your daily client support cases, the rest 20% will consist of emergency support request such as when your server is having service interruptions or totally down or other support cases which requires more advanced troubleshooting where I would cover on the next chapter, basic server administration.

Always try to keep a mindset that each support cases you handle are more valuable than all the pre-sales inquiries you handle. Do the very best that you can on every case, oh and I forgot, always address your clients with respect and never ever reply to your clients disrespectfully by giving them a very short explanation and hoping that they would not bother you anymore. Never do that.

CHAPTER 7 – BASIC SERVER ADMINISTRATION

On this chapter, I will try my best to guide you on doing your own basic server administration. Since this book is intended for people who are just starting out a web hosting business, I will not cover any kind of mass server administration or advanced techniques which involves in managing more than ten servers.

When you have reached a point in your business where you are managing more than 10 servers, I can assure you that your server administration skills is either at the same level as I am currently at, or even better.

While I was managing my first company, I have decided to put my hands off direct server administration and leave it to other people to manage our daily server management until it grows to some 130 servers or so. That was a mistake. As I pointed out on the very beginning of this book, they day you started to point out fingers and expect other people to do your job, it would be the day your business start to go down.

When trusting other people to do your daily server administration is unavoidable, you must always find yourself to always be involved in those server management tasks, because all the passion which started this business lies entirely in you, not in your employees, not in other people. This is your stuff. You are the one who can do it best since you have the passion in you.

To get started I would recommend you to download this software which you will use frequently to access your WHM server(s) through SSH <http://puttycm.free.fr/>

The putty connection manager does not include the putty software itself, to download the putty software itself, please download it from <http://www.chiark.greenend.org.uk/~sgtatham/putty/download.html>

Using this software, you will be able to connect to your WHM servers over SSH easily without having to enter in your root password. Setting up your server's connection is pretty straight forward. Please go through their documentation if you are not sure on how to connect to your WHM server using putty.

I will now go through the most common day to day task which requires you to access your server through SSH. I will presume that you are already logged in to your WHM server through SSH.

FIXING CLIENT'S WRONG DIRECTORY PERMISSIONS

`chmod -R 755 directoryname` will fix most common internal server error caused by a 777 directory permissioning

CLEARING UP FULL /USR PARTITION AND LOGS ON YOUR SERVER

USE IT AT YOUR OWN RISK - ONCE EXECUTED YOUR LOG FILES WILL BE GONE PERMANENTLY

If you like to “backup” or save the log files to another partition, you may do so by copying what you need to another partition, then AFTER you copied it, do the following the clear your log files and free up some space on your /usr partition

```
cat /dev/null > /usr/local/apache/logs/access_log
cat /dev/null > /usr/local/apache/logs/error_log
cat /dev/null > /usr/local/apache/logs/suphp_log
rm -rf /usr/local/apache/logs/*.gz
```

To automate this, just create a simple file and run it with crontab. What I do is
#vi /root/removelogs.sh

Then on vi, press **i** to go to insert mode, then paste all that command you see above. Then press **Esc**, press **:wq** and enter to save it.

```
#crontab -e
```

In the crontab edit mode, enter

```
0 0 * * * /root/removelogs.sh
```

Then save the crontab.

CLEARING UP FULL /TMP PARTITION

When your production server has been online for quite some time, chances are your /tmp partition will be full from time to time. You would need to clear some temporary files to clear up the partition so your client’s scripts will not generate errors when they are making use of the /tmp partition.

To free up most of the disk space on your /tmp partition, please use the following commands.

USE IT AT YOUR OWN RISK - THESE DATA WILL BE REMOVED PERMANENTLY

```
rm -rf /tmp/sess_[0]*
rm -rf /tmp/sess_[1]*
rm -rf /tmp/sess_[2]*
```

```
rm -rf /tmp/sess_[3]*
rm -rf /tmp/sess_[4]*
rm -rf /tmp/sess_[5]*
rm -rf /tmp/sess_[6]*
rm -rf /tmp/sess_[7]*
rm -rf /tmp/sess_[8]*
rm -rf /tmp/sess_[9]*
rm -rf /tmp/sess_[a-e]*
rm -rf /tmp/sess_[f-j]*
rm -rf /tmp/sess_[k-o]*
rm -rf /tmp/sess_[p-t]*
rm -rf /tmp/sess_[u-z]*
rm -rf /tmp/sess_[A-E]*
rm -rf /tmp/sess_[F-J]*
rm -rf /tmp/sess_[K-O]*
rm -rf /tmp/sess_[P-T]*
rm -rf /tmp/sess_[U-Z]*
rm -rf /tmp/cookie[0-9]*
rm -rf /tmp/cookie[a-e]*
rm -rf /tmp/cookie[f-j]*
rm -rf /tmp/cookie[k-o]*
rm -rf /tmp/cookie[p-t]*
rm -rf /tmp/cookie[u-z]*
rm -rf /tmp/cookie[A-E]*
rm -rf /tmp/cookie[F-J]*
rm -rf /tmp/cookie[K-O]*
rm -rf /tmp/cookie[P-T]*
rm -rf /tmp/cookie[U-Z]*
rm -rf /tmp/*.zip
rm -rf /tmp/clamav_*
rm -rf /tmp/php*
```

Once you did that, most of your temp files will be removed and you should be back in business. It would be a good idea to do this automatically every day or week or month so you won't have to keep doing this manually.

To automate this, just create a simple file and run it with crontab. What I do is
#vi /root/removetemp.sh

Then on vi, press i to go to insert mode, then paste all that command you see above. Then press Esc, press :wq and enter to save it.

```
#crontab -e
```

In the crontab edit mode, enter
0 0 * * * /root/removetemp.sh

Then save the crontab.

RECREATING DNS ZONES

So why would you want to do this? For example, you are “copying” an account from one server to another, and then for some reason you changed your mind and want the account to reside in the first server after all.

With this case, all DNS records for this particular account have been changed to the new server, right? How do you change it back? You don’t want to “copy” it again from the new box to the old box, and what if the copy wasn’t successful in the first place?

Follow the steps here:

1. Terminate the account on the other server first (which you don’t want the account to reside)
2. Once you do that, all DNS Zones for that account is removed, right? Now, go to the original server, log in to WHM and click on Change Site’s IP Address
3. Change the account’s IP to another IP address (yes you must have at least one free IP available)
4. Change it back to the original IP
5. Presto! All domains’ DNZ zones under that account are recreated and are pointing to the original server.

LOWERING OR LIMITING MYSQL CPU RESOURCE USAGE

When you are running a server for a shared hosting environment, you don’t want a particular service to overload your CPU and make the whole server crash.

What I found in regards to MySQL, we can lower down the “priority” of the CPU resource consumption by MySQL by setting the niceness level of MySQL.

To do this, find your `safe_mysqld` by doing `locate safe_mysqld`. Then edit that file using `vi` or `pico`. Find the line that says **niceness=0**. Change that to **niceness=7**.

This way your server will prioritize other services than MySQL. The lower the niceness means it has more priority. The niceness level goes from -20 to 19 (higher to lower priority).

This is just a simple way in telling your server MySQL comes less important than the other services, it will automatically allocate your CPU resources for other services first, then MySQL.

CLIENT IS NOT RECEIVING INCOMING EMAILS

When you ever come across when your client's email account cannot receive any incoming mails, do the steps below.

Check if there is a virtual filter for the domain located at **/etc/vfilters** that was causing all email to be delivered to **/dev/null**, which is equivalent to nothing.

The vfilter for a given domain lives at **/etc/vfilters/<domain.tld>** where **<domain.tld>** is the domain name.

Secondly, check if the domain was set in **/etc/remotedomains** implying that it had a remote MX mail handler. The MX record was the local server. Remove the domain from **/etc/remotedomains** and place it in **/etc/localdomains**.

WHEN YOUR MAIL SERVER IS CLOGGED UP WITH SO MANY EMAILS

Sometimes if you are not carefully managing your server, an abusive client can get away undetected while trying to abuse your server's mail service resulting your server having some 100,000 mail queues or so. When this happens, you will get many complaints from your other clients saying they are unable to deliver and receive emails.

You may want to flush the spam mails and do some mail server tweaking. A guide on how to do this can be found here: http://bradthemad.org/tech/notes/exim_cheatsheet.php

WHEN YOUR SERVER LOAD IS EXTREMELY HIGH

When you notice or client reports that the server is running very slowly, it is possible that some account residing in your server is abusing the server. The first thing you should look for is your Apache's status page in WHM.

Step 1: Log in to your WHM web interface and click on **Apache Status** under **Server Status**. On that page you will see all kinds of page requests, if you see 70% or more of these page requests are coming from one VHost, I would strongly suggest you to immediately suspend that account. Don't be surprised if you see most requests are coming from your own server hostname with **OPTIONS * HTTP/1.0**. That is normal, ignore that.

Step 2: The second place to look is **Show MySQL Processes** under **SQL Services**. On that page it will list you all active MySQL processes, if one particular user is flooding the process list, simply suspend that particular account.

Step 3: If none of that works or you find nothing, log in to your WHM using SSH and do the **top** command by simply typing **top**. Watch all that process lists in real time. Sometimes you find a particular user is listed all over the top process list. If that happens, again simply suspend that particular account.

Step 4: if you still don't know what is going on, simply try to restart all services in your WHM server by doing these commands:

```
service httpd restart
service mysql restart
service exim restart
service cpanel restart
```

Step 5: If that still doesn't help things out, simply reboot the server by issuing the **reboot** command.

If after a reboot you've found that your server is still loading tremendously slow you should escalate this issue to a more knowledgeable system administrator.

My recommendation is to go with a server provider which offers per incident support for emergency support cases. This kind of support case would cost you a lot, but sometimes it is worth the cost because your business reputation is on the line. You cannot afford to have a service interruption to last more than a few minutes.

Also always think of the possibility of having too many accounts within one server. When you do that, it seems that nothing is wrong but your server is running really slow simply order another server and start migrating enough accounts until that server starts to run normally. Once you've achieved that, don't put that server open for sign up anymore, assign a new server in your WHMCS for new accounts to be created on.

WHEN YOU ARE RUNNING OF /HOME DISK SPACE

If there should come a time where your accounts overgrown the current HDD capacity of your server, simply add another HDD and mount it as `/home2`. Once you've done that you need to start assigning new clients to `/home2` partition and to move some of your largest clients residing on your original `/home` partition to the new `/home2`

Changing the default home directory

To change your default WHM home directory so that new accounts can be created into the new `/home2` partition, go to your WHM and click on **Basic cPanel/WHM Setup**. On that page change the **Default Home Directory** to `/home2` and click **Save**.

Moving your existing accounts to the new `/home2` directory

To start moving some of the largest account from your full /home directory to the new empty /home2 directory, click on **List Accounts** on your WHM and then sort the listed account by Disk Space by clicking on the **Disk Used** column title.

On some of the top largest accounts, click on the home directory under the **PARTITION** column and change it to the new /home2. It will take a long time to move large accounts even hours for some very large accounts. Be patient when moving these large accounts to the new /home2 directory.

Once you're done moving, simply notify the client that their account was moved to a new directory.

CHECKING USERS BANDWIDTH USAGE

You must check your user's bandwidth usage every day, especially when you are offering an unlimited bandwidth feature, which is not a good idea in the first place. But competition sometimes forces you to also offer this kind of unlimited features.

If goes undetected, users can use some 1,000 GB of bandwidth without you knowing it, leaving you with some extra \$900 bill in your next server's monthly invoice. Always keep monitoring what your users are using every day.

To do so, simply click on **View Bandwidth Usage** under Account Information in your **WHM**

MOVING AN ACCOUNT FROM SERVER TO SERVER

There will also be times when you need to move a particular account from their existing server to another server. WHM makes this very easy, you can also migrate your entire accounts from a WHM server to another one using this feature.

Go to **Copy multiple accounts/packages from another server** under **Transfers**. On that page, provide the necessary log in information of the remote server which you are transferring the accounts **FROM**.

So this is done from the new WHM server where you want the account(s) to reside. Choose the appropriate WHM version and log in credential and simply go through the entire process, you could not go wrong here, just follow the on screen guide.

Their transfer process is simply amazing. I just love WHM/cPanel since they make everything so easy. Two thumbs up for WHM/cPanel.

Important Note: Since your servers are running CSF Firewall, always **DISABLE CSF firewall on BOTH servers while doing a transfer. I usually do this to prevent any kind of "strange" behaviors when having CSF up and running during a server/account transfer.**

On one instance when transferring an entire server with CSF running, all the large accounts only got transferred partially, some files on these accounts are missing. I suspect it was caused by CSF killing the packing up process while transferring

these large accounts. So it's always a good thing to temporarily disable CSF when you are transferring an account or an entire server to another server.

BACKING UP YOUR SERVER

I would suggest you to backup your entire server to another drive or network storage in a daily basis. If you're just starting out, it would seem costly when you have to pay more to have an empty server backed up. Well you got a good point there. I honestly did not backup my first server before I reached quite a number of clients to protect, simply because I could not afford it.

What you can do if you decide not to pay for backup when initially starting out your business is to notify your client upfront on their welcome email that backup is the client's own responsibility. Simply notify them that the service provided does not include a daily backup routine. They need to do their own cPanel backup which they can do easily from their cPanel.

When you started to have enough income, you **MUST** protect your business by doing a regular server backup. The way I would go is to add or order one very large HDD (1TB) on your server and do your server backup there.

If your server/data center provider provides network storage or cloud storage, you can also use it to do your backup. Please consult your server provider on how to setup this network/cloud storage on your server.

To configure your backup, go to **WHM > Configure Backup** under **Backup**

Please configure your backup preference according to your backup budget, why do I say budget? Because the configuration options you choose depends on how much protection you want to provide which eventually relates on how much you would be willing to spend for the additional space/bandwidth required for this backup system.

The most economical and reasonable way is to have a daily backup only with weekly and monthly disabled to have a lesser backup sets.

GOING FORWARD

I think I have covered all the basic server administration tasks needed to be done to reach and manage your own first 1,000 clients all by yourself.

When you encounter an emergency which is beyond your system administration knowledge and skills, don't delay to immediately escalate this issue to a third party support. I would recommend using Bob Cares (bobcares.com) if your server provider does not support any kind of emergency support at all, or if they're simply unhelpful.

Or you can also ask for Jonathan from ConfigServer Firewall - <http://www.configserver.com/cp/index.html>, he's very good in security and server recovery. If you're having a Distributed Denial of Service Attack (DDoS), ask assistance from your server/data center provider to help out and drop all the packets which are being targeted at your server.

Whatever you need to do, do it fast and wait until the whole issue has been resolved before even thinking of leaving your computer screen.

I personally utilize my server's provider advanced support department, they call themselves Alpha Support Team which always takes care of the issues which is way beyond my skills to resolve myself.

Go get yourself a good server provider which provides this kind of support. The advanced service costs \$37.50/Hour for every support case I submit to them, which is very well worth it compared to the thousands of dollars I will lose if the issue is not taken care of immediately.

Additionally, I would also recommend you to utilize WHMCSgold plugins. The CSF Auto Unblock and Abuse Meter WHMCS plugin would save you a lot of time managing the "abusers" in your web hosting business.

CHAPTER 8 –BEYOND 1,000 CLIENTS

On this chapter I will guide you through the things which you may have to go through once your business grows beyond yourself. I will try to guide you through all the processes of growing your business chronologically based on my own experience.

CLONE YOURSELF

When it's time to bring help into your growing web hosting business, I find it easier if you bring help from people you know, people who you already trust. Look around, find someone whom you see have the biggest potential in growing your web hosting business. It can be one of your close friends, siblings, or other close relatives.

My own business grows this way, it was started by me, and in time I brought my wife into helping me with the business. Once the business grows more, I bring my brother along to grow the business even more. Later on, I started to contact my close friends from college and ask them to work for me. Growing even more, I started to ask my fellow co-workers which I have worked with in the companies I worked before.

Slowly, one by one, I recruited these people whom I personally know has a big potential in helping the company to grow even larger and it grows beautifully. Things is growing the right way initially, but when my company grows larger in a very short time, I started to make terrible mistakes. Mistakes which I hope you would never have to go through.

So here comes the valuable lesson, when you are growing your team which is the core success factor for your web hosting business, you must always do it personally and very carefully. See to it that you are the one who will be responsible when it comes to bring in new team members into your business.

Also see to it that every new team member will be trained personally by you, your passion must be transferred to your new team member. Also during every training process, always see to it that you make yourself available to be present on these training sessions. Even if you are not conducting the trainings yourself, make sure you are there so that you can add valuable inputs during the training sessions and to ensure that your own personal passion gets transferred into your new team member.

Always recruit your new member one at a time to ensure that you will bring the highest quality of people into your team and to also ensure your passion and knowledge gets transferred successfully into this new team member. When you're recruiting your team simultaneously at one given time, it would be impossible for you to actually "clone" yourself into this new team member.

When you are recruiting a new person into your team, always treat them with high value, that is why I said that you must recruit people which you know has a high potential in growing your business. Never hold back anything, simply clone yourself into this new team member. Give everything you got and make sure that this new team member got at least 80% of what you have in yourself.

When you apply this into your hosting business, I can guarantee you that you will have a very powerful team with dynamics that will bring your company into a totally different level. It's like having many versions of yourself in your company. This is what I am actually trying to do here, to clone myself into you through this book.

From my experience, it takes at least 30 days to fully transfer what you have to your new team member. Give time and be patient, every person has more than enough capacity to fully absorb what you have to teach them. They just need time and off course willingness to be taught.

This method applies when you are recruiting your third team member or your hundredth team member. It does not matter how large your company has become, always use this approach and make sure you have an extremely knowledgeable and passionate people in your business and all things will be fine.

If you do this "cloning" process the right way, you won't have to worry about having to monitor or manage your team by having all kinds of strict rules and policies. You just need to transfer your whole passion into each of your team member and simply share your dream with them on a personal one on one level, don't go with I'm the boss and you're my employee approach, it won't take your business far.

About outsourcing, I personally don't think that it is the right way to grow your business, especially when you are serious about making your web hosting business a lifelong career to keep. Secondly, it would cost you way more than having your own team running your web hosting business.

I would only recommend you to consider outsourcing your support team to a third party provider when you're just "playing" web hosting and won't consider it to be the main income source for you and your family.

INFRASTRUCTURE

When you've reached thousands of clients, often times you are tempted with trying all kinds of new stuff to make things "easier". Remember what I've told you all throughout this book, when you start to think that you know how things goes and would want to make money faster and easier, it would be the start of your company's downfall.

Please grasp this wholeheartedly, there is no such thing as easy and fast money, keep doing your hard work, keep doing what is working so well and keep doing it. That's the right way to do, there is no other way.

When you start to have all this cash piled up in your bank account, before long you will start to have wandering thoughts, all kinds of crazy and costly things which you want to try and implement in your business to make faster money and easier money. Don't go there.

Most likely you will end up finding it the hard way that all the other things will not work as well as the pure and old hard-work + time formula.

It's the same infrastructure wise. Always grow your hosting business one server at a time. Don't start ordering one hundred servers all at once, or start buying enterprise level software to accommodate your \$5/month paying customer. Don't do that, even if you have a gazillion dollars sitting in your bank account.

Don't start buying all the "toys" which is not necessary to keep your web hosting business running. Do it the old fashioned way, one server at a time and don't try all kinds of new things which will cost you tens of thousands of dollars of license fees or any other fees which is not necessarily required to have your web hosting business to reach success to the next level.

Don't do that, it will cost you a lot of money and more critically it will cost you your "energy and spirit" because when you spend so much money into something and it turns out it does not work well, it will only put your spirit down.

So keep doing what is working well, don't get greedy and be faithful in what you are doing. In time you don't even realize that you have over 10,000 extremely happy clients in your business. Keep doing what you're doing and it is only a matter of "time + hard work" before your business outgrows your initial dream. How wonderful is that? Experience it!

INCORPORATE + MERCHANT ACCOUNT

When you have reached around 500 clients or so, I would think that would be a good time for you to start incorporating your web hosting business. Having formed a US company has its advantages. As I said previously, I would recommend you to use VALIS International to open up your Delaware LLC with their Employer Identification Number (EIN) as well as a US mail forwarding address.

Once you got that, it's time for you to pay a visit to the US. Simply apply a US tourist/business visa (B1/B2), once you're in the US, open up a US business checking account by walking in to any bank in the US.

They will ask for your incorporation document, I would suggest Wells Fargo if you are considering California. From my experience, they would ask to have your Passport and the Incorporation documents which you got from VALIS International, including your EIN and your US business checking account will be provided to you right there, instantly.

Now you're one step further to having your own merchant account. Now that you have a US business checking account, a US company complete with the EIN, you can start applying for a US merchant account to process credit card payments internally without using a third party payment provider.

I would recommend <http://www.e-onlinedata.com/merchantaccounts/hostisp.php> which is a special program for web hosting companies. If you've been around for some years with a proven track record of sales, you can provide them with your new US business checking account, your company document and EIN, as well as your transaction history with the third payment processing company you used, I would think they would have no problem issuing your company a US merchant account.

Once you got the US merchant account activated, you can immediately use it with your WHMCS and start processing payment yourself without having to ask your customers to go to PayPal or Google Checkout or other payment providers.

Another recommendation which I would like to suggest is PayPal Pro, because you probably have been using PayPal previously, it would be easier for them to see how legit your business is. Now that you have your US business checking account along with your LLC documents and EIN, they would be more likely to approve your merchant application compared to any other merchant provider, since you've been a PayPal member for quite some time now.

To apply for your PayPal Pro account, simply apply from within your PayPal account, click on Merchant Services on top.

Once you've got your own merchant account, you're on the same league as any other big web hosting companies out there. Dream big, go beat these guys and be the best at what you do!

LIQUIDATING YOUR HOSTING BUSINESS

There could be a time where you will be thinking of selling out. Maybe you're just tired, maybe you want to try something else, or maybe you just want the cash!

I've gone through this path and I would like to share my experience with you. When it comes to a time where you are considering selling your web hosting business, please make sure you truly know what you are going to do next, and I surely hope it's not web hosting again.

It just does not make sense if you are selling your hard worked web hosting business only to find yourself starting up another web hosting business, which I ended up doing. I can guarantee you, when you end up starting up another web hosting business the second time, it will be 1,000 times harder than your first.

I had no intention whatsoever to start another web hosting business, but circumstances forced me into starting up my second hosting company, because all my initial projects which I am counting on does not work as I expected it would. I ended up losing all that I have gained from selling my first hosting company into these projects which makes no revenue at all.

So, even when you've finally decided to sell out your web hosting company, say for a million dollars, be very careful. You'll be put into a situation where I see as a very dangerous ground.

With one million dollars sitting in your bank account, you would have a wandering mind almost every day, because now, you would think that you can start up any kind of business which could make you even more money, easier and faster. It will not always be the case. Please be very careful.

If you don't be extremely careful, you can spend these one million dollars into things that does not make sense, things which you thought would certainly work but it won't always be like as you thought it will. With great power comes great responsibility.

The right way for you to start up another business after selling your web hosting business is to start it like you have NO MONEY at all. Forget about your pile of cash, put it in a bank somewhere and don't touch it. Because when you're utilizing that cash into all kinds of crazy things to make sure your new business starts up easy, you will only end up failing your second business because you don't give your best into it, you're just trying to pay your way out to making money. It does not work like that. Please always remember this when it's your turn to sell your web hosting business.

If you finally decide to sell out, I would recommend you to contact Hillary Stiff from Cheval Capital, her firm is the one who handles my merger and acquisition deal and it worked out very well.

When you are going through a merger and acquisition deal, remember that it takes a LOT of time to close the deal. It takes months and a lot of hard work of doing all the due diligence, paperwork and other legal stuff. Be patient, just like starting your hosting company, when it comes to selling it, it will also require a lot of hard work and time.

If you like to know the rough calculation on how your web hosting business is going to be worth, just calculate your annual gross income. That would be the rough value of your web hosting business. If you're making \$10K/Month, your business would worth \$120K or so. If your business is making some \$100K/Month, your business would worth \$1.2M or so.

Tempting huh? Just make sure you know what you're getting yourself into. If you're planning to fully retire after selling your web hosting business, make sure your retirement plan is not just a temporary passion which can be replaced with a two weeks' vacation traveling the world. It's a once in a lifetime decision, decide it very carefully.

FURTHER TRAINING

I am sure that I have left out some if not many of the itsy bitsy details on technical issues or even other areas where you feel that you still have unanswered questions. Remember that I said I have a mission. My mission does not end with this book.

I would be more than happy to answer all of your questions and even coach you and equip you with more information and valuable experiences for you us to be able to accomplish the mission together.

I have setup a special website to train you even more. To post your questions to me, please go to this book's website <http://webhostingbusinessbook.com>

I will answer all of your questions thoroughly on that website, anything that you have in mind, even when you don't know how to troubleshoot a specific client's support case, I will try my best to help you out through this Question and Answers website.

Together, let's accomplish this mission. It's going to be an exciting journey. I'll see you on the website.