Website Setup, Hosting and Maintenance

Domain, hosting and the site itself: how it fits together, how we set it up, and how to keep it healthy.

Updated November 2026 · for small businesses

1. The four parts of a website

Part	What it is	If it lapses
Domain name	Your address, e.g. yourbusiness.co.za. Registered through a registrar and should be in your name. Renewal reminders go to the contact email on file.	Site and email on the domain both stop.
Hosting	Rented server space where the site files live.	Site goes offline; email hosted there may stop too.
The site	The pages, images and forms visitors see.	Content dates; forms may stop working.
Email	Mailboxes on your domain (see our Business Email guide).	Mail bounces or is lost.

> **Check once a year** that the contact email on your domain and hosting accounts is one somebody reads. Missed renewal reminders are the most common cause of a site disappearing.

2. What we build

Plain **HTML, CSS and JavaScript** business sites, and **Markdown documentation sites** for growing collections of guides and procedures. Both are static: ready-made pages, no database.

- **Fast** and **few things to break**: no database or plug-ins means fewer updates and fewer ways to get hacked.
- **Cheap to host and easy to move:** the whole site is a folder of files, and a copy of the folder is a complete backup.
- **Forms** need a small script on the server that sends mail from your own domain. We set it up and test it; it never opens the visitor's own mail program.
- **Existing site built on something else?** Tell us what it runs on before sending any access details and we will say whether we can look after it.

3. Domain and hosting

Domain name

- Register it in the **business's name** with a contact email you control. Do not let a designer or ex-employee be the owner of record.
- Short, easy to say, no unnecessary hyphens or numbers.
- Renew early and put the date in your diary. If you have no domain yet, we register it for you and hand over the login.

Hosting

- For most small business sites, ordinary shared cPanel hosting is plenty. We recommend it where you have none. Contact us for pricing.
- Already have hosting? We work with your provider; we only need the right access.
- Good signs: reputable provider, automatic SSL (the padlock), regular backups, clear support line, a control panel you can log in to yourself.

> **Where DNS is managed:** the records that point your domain to the site and to email are managed either at your registrar or at your host. Records added in the wrong place do nothing. We check this at the start of every job.

4. How we set a site up

- ☐ **Plan:** what the site must do, pages needed, text and photos available.
- ☐ **Domain and hosting:** register and set up, or work with yours.
- ☐ **Design and build:** clean, works on phones and computers.
- ☐ **Email and forms:** mailboxes and a form connected to your own domain, tested.
- ☐ **Test and launch:** every page on phone and computer, padlock and form.

☐ **Get found:** sitemap, search settings and a local business profile.

☐ **Hand over:** a summary of what lives where, renewal dates and where the backup is kept.

5. Keeping it healthy (about 15 minutes a month)

Check	How often	What to do
Does the site load?	Monthly	Open it on a phone using mobile data and click through every main page.
The padlock	Monthly	Should show with no warnings. A warning means the certificate did not renew.
Forms	Monthly	Send a test and confirm it arrives.
Contact details	Monthly	Phone, email, hours and services still right.
Email on your domain	Monthly	Send to and from the main address; check for full mailboxes.
Backup copy	After every change	Keep a complete copy of the site folder away from the host.
Renewal dates	Quarterly	Domain and hosting, and where reminders are sent.
Passwords and access	Yearly, and when anyone leaves	Change hosting and registrar passwords; remove old access.

6. If the site is down

Work through these in order.

Check	What you see	What to do
1. Down for everyone?	Loads on mobile data but not your Wi-Fi.	The problem is your own internet.
2. Domain expired?	Registrar or parking page, or “this site can’t be reached”.	Check the expiry date and renew straight away.
3. Hosting active?	A suspended or disabled-account page.	Unpaid invoice or over a limit: contact the host.
4. Certificate?	“Not secure” or “connection not private”.	Certificate did not renew: ask the host to re-run it, or send us a screenshot.
5. Just changed?	500 error or blank page after an upload or edit.	Undo the last change or restore the last good copy.
6. DNS changed?	Site or email stopped after a nameserver or record change.	Allow a day or two; if it persists, check the records are in the right place.
7. Still stuck?	None of the above.	Send a screenshot, the address you typed and what changed recently.

7. What we need from you

- **Starting from scratch:** business details, what you want on the site, photos and logos, and the details to register a domain.
- **Maintenance on an existing site:** admin access to the hosting control panel, and to the registrar if domain or DNS changes are needed. Tell us who your host and registrar are.
- **Sharing access safely:** where the host allows it, create a separate login for us. Change the password when the work is done, and never send a password in the same message as the account address.

> **Need a website, or help with one?** Afridyne Systems helps Helderberg businesses with domains, hosting, site builds and upkeep. Call or WhatsApp 062 509 8065, or visit afridyne.co.za. Contact us for pricing.