CPA

Practice **Advisor**

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AFSB Accounting and Financial Site Builder

www.afsb.net

Best Fit:

Firms adding their own content to a template-based solution at a low cost.

Strengths

- With a basic monthly subscription fee of \$29.99 and a 20% discount if paid annually (\$288/year, effectively \$24/month), AFSB is the least expensive web builder among the products reviewed after the discount.
- Over 120 templates and thousands of variations available, including specialized templates for both CPAs and EAs.
- New templating system uses CSS technology, a billboard homepage feature and Flash
- AFSB's "Website Wizard" guides the user through creating a website step by step.
- Users can easily add an events calendar, a PayPal link to accept payments securely, Google Maps showing the company location, and social media widgets and unlimited pages of their own content.
- AFSB Sites include articles, monthly client newsletters, and financial calculators.
- The system allows firms to integrate logins for programs such as accounting and payroll, on-line e-filing tools, archiving tools or blogging engines.
- A free tool is included for creating online forms.

Potential Limitations

• Templates and pages are pre-populated with content that is fairly basic as is, but can be edited and customized to each firm's needs using a website wizard.

• Although the software allows for an unlimited number of additional pages, the

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similar to Microsoft Word. Advanced users can add html code to any page. Although the amount of help in AFSB's Support Center is somewhat limited, users can e-mail technical support with questions. AFSB also provides a service to make changes on a website for its customers at \$100 per hour (\$25 minimum).

Search Engines

Firms can enter a navigation title, page heading, keywords and description for every page. For an optional one-time fee of \$30, AFSB offers search engine optimization services for submission (registration) and consultation (primarily meta tags). Google Analytics can be automatically integrated into all pages of a firm's website for no additional fee.

Domains

Included in the cost of an AFSB website, all domains are unique and may be either owned and managed by the firm or by AFSB depending on the firm's preference. If AFSB manages a domain, there are no contracts and the firm always has the option to transfer out and self-administer. Firms may export their own data at no charge, however, licenced images, templates and other copyrighted material may not be exported as firms do not own this information.

Hosting

Data is stored in a SAS 70 Type II facility with redundancy and all site administration is done over SSL. Data is backed up daily. The AFSB integrated portals are HIPAA/GLB/IRC 7216 compliant for secure and encrypted file transfers.

Email

Though not required, e-mail is included in the service for all AFSB administered

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have two RSS feed functions: the News Digest from AFSB or the firm's newsletters, both of which a firm's clients can subscribe to. An optional e-mail marketing service is available that has full COPPA/CON SPAM compliance.

Other Features

Twitter and Facebook are built into all AFSB sites automatically. Because of the html nature of AFSB and the WYSIWYG editor, users can incorporate their social media tools. AFSB recently added the ability to use the Twitter API to automatically post new information and newsletters to the firm's Twitter account.

Summary & Pricing

AFSB reports that it has a satisfied customer base and a high retention rate because of four factors: its low cost, sites are created and available for editing seconds after sign-up, AFSB does not self-promote in the footer of its customers' websites, and firms can easily add their own services.

AFSB's basic monthly subscription fee is \$29.99 and a 20% discount is offered if paid annually (\$288/year, effectively \$24/month). There are no setup fees or constricting contracts. For an optional one-time \$30 fee, AFSB provides search engine optimization and registration services. If requested, AFSB modifies templates or creates custom site designs for a fee that ranges from \$100 to \$250. Currently, AFSB is offering a 60-day Free Trial.

Technology

Sponsors.

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