

Publishing on the Internet

The last module is concerned with a topic which concludes the entire cycle of working with information. Due to the development and implementation of new technologies in web environment, publishing on the Internet ceased to be a privilege of those who know the HTML language. Today, anyone who at least partially knows how to work with a computer, has an Internet connection and knows how to use it can publish their opinions on the Internet.

At the completion of the module you should be able to:

- describe the basic options of publishing on the Internet
- present offline tools for web creation
- describe the possibilities of publishing various types of documents (online services)
- publish documents through given web services etc.

Key concepts

Blog; Microblog; Wiki systems; Instant webs (online CMS); CMS (Content Management Systems); Web hosting; Domains

Contents

The Internet has become an indispensable source of information. Due to the development and implementation of new technologies in web environment, publishing on the Internet ceased to be a privilege of those who know the HTML language. Today, anyone who at least partially knows how to work with a computer, has an Internet connection and knows how to use it can publish their opinions on the Internet. This text is intended for all those who want to come to know the tools and possibilities of publishing in web environment, and are not afraid to experiment in it.

1 We start publishing on the Internet

If you are mere passive Internet users, use it for the search for information and basic communication (e-mail, IM, discussions, VOIP, Skype etc.), and have not yet tried to create your own content, then this chapter is intended for you. You will learn how to publish your first text without the knowledge of HTML language or other programming languages. There are several options, depending on **what information you want to provide, and in what form.**

It may be characterized as a **web diary or web log.** On a blog, you publish your opinions and ideas in the form of contributions. They are usually in a chronological order, from the most recent contribution to the oldest. Blogs can be divided into **personal, scientific and corporate.** Personal blogs are intended for presenting personal opinions, scientific blogs are focused on a particular field or topic (e.g. the SEOBOOK blog is concerned with the issue of optimizing websites, or blogs on Inflow are focused on the field of library studies), and corporate blogs are used as communication channels and very interesting marketing tools in companies (e.g. the blogs of Mozilla or Vodafone).

1.1 WYSIWYG

WYSIWYG editors are usually a part of blogging systems; they enable you to format texts in a similar way to Word and upload photos and videos easily via a web form, or share them via well-known services such as Flickr or Youtube. Most systems offer a selection from several predefined templates, or you can create your own template. An access and management of blogs via mobile phones is a matter of course.

If you want to start your own blog, you may **use one of the online services.** Their advantage is that all you have to do is register without the need to install your own system. You can thus publish your first article in a few minutes. **Among the most well-known online blogging services is:**

- **blogger.com**
- **posterous.com**
- **asBlog.com**

If you want to manage your own blog, you can install one of the blogging systems on your own hosting:

- **wordpress.org**
- **nucleuscms.org**
- **lifetype.net**

1.2 Microblog

A blog variant with the difference that the **text length is limited to 180 characters**, which is the length of one SMS message. Its original purpose was to communicate what the author was doing at the moment. Today it is used in scientific fields as well in the form of short messages.

Contributions may be made directly in microblogging systems via mobile phones (e.g. via SMS, MMS etc.), or via social networks (e.g. Facebook) or instant messaging systems (e.g. Digsby).

Among the most well-known systems are:

- **twitter.com**
- **jisko.org**

1.3 Wiki systems

They are intended for an easy creation and management of documents or entire webs. Emphasis is placed above all on their **openness and simplicity**. They support a multi-user access. A simple editor is a part of wiki systems; you can upload content via this editor. The system may be set in such a way that only selected users are allowed to upload content; or all registered users, or anyone who enters the web.

In order to prevent chaos and intentional misinterpretation of the content, there is **change history** in these systems, and administrators can return the page to any previous version anytime. Wiki systems are most often used for the **creation of encyclopaedias or documentation**. It is possible to build simple websites on them. **Among the most well-known online services** working on the basis of wiki systems are:

- wikipedia.org
- mediawiki.org
- dokuwiki.org
- phpwiki.sourceforge.net
- twiki.org

1.4 Instant webs (online CMS)

If you want to create a full-feathered website, blogging systems and wiki systems are usually not enough. You can, however, use online services which offer a **simple creation of websites**. All you have to do is register, choose one of the offered templates and upload content via a WYSIWYG editor.

These systems enable you to insert scripts and various functions (e.g. photo galleries, visitor books, contact forms etc.). In addition, they often allow you to **share content with third-party services** (e.g. Youtube, social networks etc.). There is a possibility of one's own appearance modification, detailed statistics etc.

With instant webs, there are several disadvantages, e.g. **limited space**, a small offer of basic templates and limited functionality. Advantages include a preinstalled system and **simple online management**. Instant webs may be offered free of charge or as paid webs in the form of a monthly subscription. Czech system: www.webnode.cz or www.estranky.cz.

1.5 CMS (Content Management Systems)

CMS may be defined as systems for content management. It is thus an editorial system where the content is uploaded and managed via a web interface. In contrast to instant webs, you have to select a suitable CMS first and install it on your own hosting.

There is a wide range of editorial systems. A freely accessible **open source software** is usually enough, **but there are also commercial solutions** which you can buy (one-time payment, may be up to a few tens of thousands crowns) or pay monthly fees. While choosing a CMS, we have to consider the suitability of the system for our hosting.

We should therefore find the required configuration on the product webpage, and compare it to the hosting. We should also be able to manage the program well in order to avoid daily stress.

CMS are usually installed via **installation packages**. It may happen, however, that there is the need to modify the configuration and settings (above all enabling access to folders and modifications done to the configuration file); it is thus advisable to know at least the basics of the language in which the CMS is programmed.

The greatest advantage of your own CMS installation is the fact that you can adjust the system to your needs.

On the other hand, a **disadvantage** lies in that you have to update on a regular basis and install patches which eliminate security errors.

If you do not want to solve technical issues, use hosting with a preinstalled editorial system which ensure that your system is up to date at all times. This service is offered e.g. by the Czech server Banan.cz (<http://www.banan.cz/index/predinstalovany-opensource>), where it is enough to pay for web hosting and choose the required system which will be installed automatically.

Among the most well-known freely accessible CMS are the following:

- drupal.org
- joomla.org
- wordpress.org

You can find further information on CMS, including assessments and free trials of demo versions, on the server <http://php.opensourcecms.com>.

2 Systems for publishing individual documents

If you want to present only certain types of documents, you need not create your own website. Use specialized services. Below you will find a list of the most well-known ones:

Video: collecting (instruction) media:

- youtube.com
- teachertube.org

Photographs - databases of photos and their management

- flickr.com
- picasa.google.com
- rajce.net (czech)

Presentations - links to systems for presentation management.

- slideshare.net
- flixtime.com
- animoto.com

Electronic texts and hybrid systems

- scribd.com
- docstoc.com
- issue.com
- yudu.com
- docs.google.com
- zoho.com

3 We create our own websites

If you want to create your own website, you can use a WYSIWYG editor in which you will format your text directly; the system will create the HTML code for you. Among the most well-known editors are:

- <http://www.microsoft.com/cze/msdn/expression/web>
- <http://www.czilla.cz/produkty/nvu>
- <http://www.adobe.com/cz/products/dreamweaver>
- <http://www.adobe.com/cz/products/contribute>

Another option is to **learn the (x)HTML language**, which is intended for designing website structure and content upload. A simple notepad may be used for the website creation, or eventually one of the broad selection of source code editors, e.g.:

- PSPad (<http://www.pspad.com>)
- EasyPad (<http://www.elka.cz/easypad>)
- Notepad++ (<http://notepad-plus-plus.org>)
- Yugie (<http://www.yugie.com>)

Portals (link) are a good entrance into the world of website creation.

If you want to provide your web with multimedia content, you may use various **photo banks or multimedia archives**.

- <http://www.sxc.hu>
- <http://www.photoexpress.com>

It is possible to **share multimedia from other services via the <embed> or <object> components**. Most services offering multimedia which you can use on your websites **generate a HTML code** which you will simply insert **in the source code** of your website. Some services offer the API interface, which enables you to display third-party content in your own way. However, for this you already need at least the essentials of programming. One of the most well-known video providers is Youtube. Website creators will appreciate an enhancement in the form of various applications and scripts. There is a large number of script banks on the Internet. Javascripts are the easiest to use. It is usually enough to insert them in websites, and then they work without any further modifications.

- <http://javascript.internet.com>
- <http://www.dynamicdrive.com>
- <http://www.javascriptkit.com>

4 We enable access to websites

4.1 Web hosting

If we create our own website or use a CMS, we have to find a suitable hosting, i.e. a place where the website will be stored and accessible. There are two possibilities of hosting:

free hosting - it is offered free of charge but there is usually the provider's advertisement on the website. Furthermore, its availability is not guaranteed and the website is often **limited by a monthly capacity of transferred data** (the so-called traffic).

commercial hosting - you have to pay not only for the lease of a second-grade domain, but also for its hosting. The price of domains ending in .cz is usually around 200 CZK per year, domains ending in .com, .net, .biz, .org or .info cost around 150 CZK per year. Their advantages include a **guarantee of service availability**, quick online support and no advertisements.

Before you order a web hosting, it is good to find out whether its **parameters** suit your web and web applications. Some hosting companies offer server configurations to particular CMS, or they have them preinstalled.

Availability plays an important role while choosing the right hosting. It should be around 99.9%. Commercial companies usually guarantee this figure. The availability is usually lower with free hostings. You will find an overview of hosting availability at.

4.2 Domains

A domain is actually a URL where your website will be accessible. Domains can be divided into:

second-grade (<http://www.title.cz>) - they look more professional, they are a must in the case of company presentations. You pay an annual fee which differs with different registrars. The price for .cz, .com, .net, .info and .biz domains is around 200 CZK/year (7 euro), .eu domains may cost as little as 170 CZK (5 euro). A price comparison is found at: <http://www.cenikdomen.cz>. In practice, you may find good prices of combinations of domains and hostings (domains are free of charge with some tariffs, or you can use advantageous packages).

Beware of suspiciously low prices.

Some registrars offer a good price for the first year, only then they may charge you twice as much. You can cancel the domain anytime or transfer it to another registrar. In such a case you have to pay the registration fee again; it is thus advisable to transfer the domain only towards its expiration date. Today second-grade domains are offered by free hostings (e.g. Pipni.cz, Hostingzdarma) and most online CMS as well (e.g. Webnode).

third-grade (<http://title.provider.cz> or <http://www.provider.cz/title>) - in this case the address will contain the web hosting provider. Or the title may be included after a slash. Both variants of addresses are usually equivalent. A third-grade domain is typical for free hostings, or you can use it on webs consisting of more projects (then each project can have its own third-grade domain) or on microsites (small commercial websites offering selected services).

4.3 Uploading content on a server

After you register your domain and order (pay) a hosting, you will receive your user data needed for the administration of your account, FTP server or other services you might have ordered (database, e-mail etc.). For uploading content, the FTP access is important. You access it via a client. Among the most well-known are WinSCP (it supports the transfer of encoded data and advanced security), Total Commander (this variant is not recommended today due to a plain transfer of data) or FileZilla etc. You will find detailed settings of individual FTP clients in the Help section of each hosting provider. Some hostings enable access only for concrete IP

addresses which may minimize the risk of hacker attacks or viruses. In order for file transfers to be secure, encoded transfers are recommended.

5 Conclusion

This study support was meant to provide you with a brief introduction into the issue of **website creation**. You learned how to publish your ideas without the knowledge of HTML and programming languages. You became acquainted with various tools for website creation and services you may use for the **management and sharing of various types of documents online**. The issue of website creation and presentation of information on the Internet is very extensive. If you are looking for simple guidelines on how to create websites, have a look at the Czech portals Interval.cz and Jakpsatweb.cz.

Author of the text

Mgr. Martin Krčál <Department of Information and Library Studies of the Faculty of Arts of MU; Central Library of the Faculty of Social Studies of MU>

He studied Information and Library Studies at the Faculty of Arts of MU where he currently teaches the following courses: Computer Literacy, Electronic Information Sources, Library Processes or Presentation of Information on the Internet. He also works as the assistant manager in the Central Library of the Faculty of Social Studies. Martin is the creator and administrator of the portal www.citace.com.