

What a B&B website actually costs.

The questions innkeepers actually ask, answered with real numbers — including the four where the honest answer is *don't hire anyone*.

Every price here is published and current. Every quote is from a real innkeeper reviewing software they paid for — **linked, verbatim, and not cherry-picked from a testimonial page.**

BEFORE ANYTHING ELSE

These aren't our opinions. They're what innkeepers said when nobody was selling.

We read roughly 1,400 reviews and forum posts written by people who run properties like yours — the complete public archive of the largest B&B community online going back to 2012, plus reviews of the reservation software you're probably already paying for. Then we answered the questions that came up most.

Two things became obvious. **Almost nobody in this business will tell you a price** — two of the largest inn web companies have pricing pages with no prices on them. And **the thing owners regret is almost never the design**. It's discovering, later, that they didn't own what they paid for.

1,400

verbatim reviews and forum posts read, 2012–2026

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reviews on Hotel Tech Report for three of the best-known inn web companies

4

questions in here where our honest answer costs us the sale

THE NUMBER UNDERNEATH EVERY OTHER NUMBER

Your largest marketing expense isn't in your marketing budget.

Booking.com typically takes 15%. Expedia runs 15–30% for independents. Nobody writes that on a budget line, because it comes out before the money ever arrives. Here's what it looks like for a real property.

A TEN-ROOM INN • \$250 A NIGHT • 65% OCCUPANCY

Annual room revenue	\$593,125
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Booked through OTAs, at 60%	\$355,875
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Commission paid, at 15%	\$53,381
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Same inn, if you're in Preferred Partner at 18%	\$64,058
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You don't need to leave the OTAs. Moving just ten points of bookings from OTA to direct at that inn saves about **\$8,897 a year** in commission — which pays for a full website rebuild and a care plan, with change left over, every year, forever.

How much does a bed and breakfast website cost?

Most independent inns pay \$1,500 to \$5,000 to build, plus \$70 to \$500 a month for hosting, updates and support. One well-built page runs \$1,500–\$2,500. A full rebuild runs \$3,000–\$5,000. Quotes above \$10,000 usually bundle ad management you didn't ask for.

WHAT THE MARKET CHARGES	BUILD	MONTHLY	YEAR ONE
Your reservation system's site (ResNexus)	\$99	\$80	\$1,059
... plus their SEO add-on	\$99	\$279	\$3,447
Busy Lobby — one page + care plan	\$1,500–2,500	\$149–249	\$3,288–5,488
Q4Launch, B&B tier	\$1,500	\$297	\$5,064
Keyhole Promotion, 5–15 rooms	included	\$500	\$6,000
Busy Lobby — full site + care plan	\$3,000–5,000	\$149–249	\$4,788–7,988
Q4Launch, hotel / inn / lodge tier	\$2,500	\$500	\$8,500
Typical custom agency	\$10,000+	\$200–500	\$12,000+

Published prices, verified July 2026. Two things this table doesn't show and both matter more than the number: **whether you own it** — Q4Launch's model is a lease, and ResNexus's site lives inside ResNexus — and **what "monthly" buys**. A \$500 marketing plan and a \$149 care plan are not the same product.

Is \$15,000 normal for a small inn's website?

No. For a property under 25 rooms that's roughly three times what the work costs. It's a normal number for a 100-room resort with multi-language support and an ad budget attached. For an eight-room Victorian, it means paying custom prices for a template.

"We need a new website. We received a quote from one company that is over \$15k, which seems insane to me since they (like most) seem to rely on templates."

Innkeeper, B&B owners' forum, August 2025

The tell: ask to see three other sites the same company built. If they look like yours with different photographs, you're being charged for design that already existed.

Will a new website actually increase direct bookings?

Usually — but a website doesn't create demand. It captures demand you're already paying commission on. Guests who found you on Booking.com routinely check your own site before booking. If it's slow, dated, or has no booking path, they go back and you pay 15%.

That's the entire case, and it's a cost argument rather than a growth argument. A six-room inn at \$200 and 70% occupancy does about **\$306,600** a year. At 40% OTA share and 15% commission, that's **\$18,396** — about \$1,533 a month — for guests who, in many cases, already knew your name.

What a website cannot do is make people want to visit your town. Anyone who tells you otherwise is selling.

Do small properties actually get direct bookings?

Yes, and the pattern is consistent: repeat guests first, then Google, then word of mouth. Small properties have an advantage larger ones don't — a guest who had a good stay at a six-room inn remembers the innkeeper's name.

The failure isn't that direct bookings don't happen. It's that nobody asks at the moment they would. The most valuable window is the week after a good stay, while a guest is still glowing. Almost nobody reaches out then — so next spring that guest books through Booking.com again, with 15% attached, for a stay they were always going to make.

That's a follow-up problem more than a website problem. But it's the cheapest revenue in the business.

Where your commission actually goes

PROPERTY	REVENUE	OTA SHARE	COMMISSION AT 15%
6 rooms, \$200/night, 70%	\$306,600	40%	\$18,396/yr
10 rooms, \$250/night, 65%	\$593,125	60%	\$53,381/yr
16 rooms, \$275/night, 68%	\$1,092,080	55%	\$90,097/yr

My booking system includes a free website. Is that good enough?

Sometimes — and it's the right answer more often than a web designer will admit. A bundled site from ResNexus, Cloudbeds or Little Hotelier is fast, cheap, and wired to your calendar with no work from you. What you trade away is design control, ownership, and looking like anywhere other than the other properties on the same platform.

The trade is worth making if your property competes on price and location. It's a bad trade if your property competes on *feeling* — if what makes guests choose you is the porch, the light in the front room, the fact that it's been in the family since 1886.

Their own customers describe the trade consistently. Both of these gave ResNexus **four stars** — they like the reservation software. The website is the part they volunteer as the problem.

"The website is sometimes a little limited with its widgets and customization's unless you know how to HTML code, which we do not."

Laura H., General Manager · ResNexus customer, 4★, Capterra

"Website integration looks very old and dated."

Katie H., Director of Sales & Marketing · ResNexus customer, 4★, Capterra

What happens to my website if I cancel my reservation system?

You usually lose it. The site lives inside their platform. You keep your domain and your words, but the built site does not come with you, and there's typically no export that produces a working website somewhere else.

"Their website is also a joke, it is a way to keep you hostage. Because they own it. I had to rebuild it completely myself after they built it for me."

Svetlana H., CEO · Cloudbeds customer, 1★, Capterra, March 2023

Before you sign anything — with them, or with us — get the answer in writing: **if I leave, what exactly do I take with me?**

Is Squarespace good for a bed and breakfast?

Excellent for the pages, and structurally unable to handle the booking. Its own scheduling tool, **Acuity**, can't book an appointment that spans midnight — which means it cannot book a night's lodging. You'll need a third-party booking engine regardless.

That's not a competitor's knock; it's the answer Squarespace's own community gives.

"Sadly, you'll need to use a third party solution as Squarespace's own scheduling solution (Acuity) doesn't support this yet (appointments can't span midnight)."

Squarespace Circle Leader, 18 years on the platform · Squarespace Forum

One more data point: Hotel Tech Report has 1,916 hoteliers across 86 countries reviewing 52 website products. **Squarespace has zero reviews there.** Not proof it's bad — evidence that essentially nobody in lodging runs their booking on it.

Should I use Wix?

Fine for the site, currently a real problem for the booking. Wix Hotels by HotelRunner — Wix's own hospitality booking product — averages 2.4 out of 5 across 313 reviews on Wix's own app store, with 154 of them at one star. That's 49% one-star, on the vendor's own storefront.

The complaints are operational, not cosmetic.

"Syncing is not instant, takes several hours sometimes which can create serious calendar problems with other sites, leaving me with embarrassing calls about double bookings."

Owner, 10–24 room B&B, Clarkesville · Hotel Tech Report, 1.0★

Counts as of July 2026 and they drift. If you're already on Wix and it's working, don't panic and don't rebuild for the sake of it. If you're choosing now, know what you're choosing.

Can I just build it myself?

You can, and some owners do it well. Budget honestly: a hospitality theme and booking plugin runs \$89–\$350, hosting \$5–\$30 a month, and 40 to 120 hours of your time. The building isn't the hard part — styling the booking calendar so it doesn't look bolted on is, and it's where most owners stop.

"It took me 5 mandays to go through the code and apply CSS styles to each and every element... I have more or less given up trying to make it look too perfect."

Single-property build · WordPress.org plugin review

"You become your own support team and you're probably not qualified."

Vacation rental owner, arguing against DIY on a forum full of DIYers · OwnerRez

Do I own my website if an agency builds it?

Not automatically — and this is the question to ask before any other. Ownership means three separate things: the domain name, the hosting account, and the site files. Plenty of arrangements give you the first and not the third. Get all three in writing before money moves.

The exact language, which you're welcome to copy into an email:

*If we part ways, do I keep the domain, the hosting, and the site files — and will they work somewhere else?
Please confirm in writing.*

Anyone reasonable answers that in one sentence. Hesitation is the answer. This is settled wisdom among innkeepers, not a novel warning — the moderator of the largest B&B community online has been telling members the same thing since 2019.

For the record, ours: the domain stays in your name, the site is yours, and if you leave we hand over the files and help you move them. We think that's table stakes. We say it out loud because a surprising number of companies can't.

Why isn't my B&B showing up on Google?

Usually one of four things: your Google Business Profile is unclaimed or incomplete, your homepage never states your town in actual text, the site is slow or broken on phones, or you're chasing a term nobody in your area searches. The first two are free and take an afternoon.

Start with the Google Business Profile — claim it, fill every field, add current photographs, post a few times a month. For a small inn that listing routinely drives more visits than search rankings do, and most owners set it up once in 2019 and never touched it again.

Then read your own homepage. A remarkable number of inn websites never say what town they're in, in text, above the fold. **Google can't read it off a photograph.**

And be realistic about the target. You were never going to win “hotels in Cape May” — Booking.com owns it. You can absolutely win “Cape May bed and breakfast with parking,” and that person is much closer to booking.

THE QUESTION NOBODY ASKS

When should you **not** hire us — or anyone?

Four situations. We'd rather say this now than take a deposit and have you work it out in month three.

DON'T HIRE ANYONE YET IF...

Your reviews are under 4.0

Fix the stay first. Presence isn't your problem, and a beautiful website will just bring more people to a disappointing visit.

You're pre-opening with no photographs

Hire the photographer instead. A well-photographed property on a plain site beats a badly-photographed one on a beautiful site, every time.

You're already 80% direct and repeat

Your return is real but slow. Spend less than you're being quoted, and don't let anyone tell you it's urgent.

You have two rooms and you like building things

Build it yourself, keep it simple, and put the savings into the porch.

How to check any web company in ten minutes

Including us. Innkeepers get pitched constantly and most of it is noise, so here is the filter we'd want you to run on anyone who emails you — us included.

- 1 Ask for two references and call them without the vendor on the line.** Not testimonials — phone numbers. Anyone with real clients produces them in a day.
- 2 Ask what happens if you leave.** Domain, hosting, files — all three, in writing. One sentence is enough. Hesitation is the answer.
- 3 Look at three other sites they've built.** If they look like each other with different photographs, you're paying custom prices for a template.
- 4 Get the price in a number, not a range with a call attached.** Two of the largest inn web companies have pricing pages with no prices.
- 5 Check who controls your domain registrar today.** Sort this out before you give anyone notice — untangling it afterwards is much harder.

Send us a domain name and we'll tell you who currently controls it. Takes a minute, costs nothing, and we'll do it whoever you end up hiring.

We build it first. Then we talk.

Send us your website address. We'll redesign your homepage using your own photographs, put it on a private link, and send it over with a short plain-language audit of what's costing you bookings today.

No cost. No call required. No obligation. If it isn't clearly better than what you have, ignore us — you keep the audit either way.

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1. Your photographs stay yours — we link to them from your own site, never copy them, and credit them in the footer.
 2. It's never indexed or linked publicly. Search engines are blocked. Nobody sees it unless you share it.
 3. Takedown on request, same day, no questions. Just reply and ask.

Manav Thaker — a decade in hospitality with Ace Hotel, The Standard, Kimpton, The Bowery Hotel and Coqui Coqui; a decade building digital products. Both careers in one studio.

Every price in this guide was published by the company named and verified in July 2026. Every quotation is verbatim from a public review or forum post and was re-checked against its live source before printing. Commission rates change; treat the arithmetic as a method, not a promise.