

Publishing Options

The Store Editor and the Web Hosting File Manager are the two publishing platforms that you will use to create your online presence with Merchant Solutions. These two platforms can be used separately or in unison depending on your needs. This page will help to explain the differences between the Store Editor and Web Hosting as well as help make the decision of whether to build your site in Store Editor or in Web Hosting. You can read each topic in order or jump to a particular subject.

- The main differences between Web Hosting and Store Editor
- The advantages of Web Hosting and Store Editor
- Additional information about building your site in Web Hosting using SiteBuilder, Dreamweaver® with the Merchant Solutions extension, or some other HTML editing tool
- An evaluation of how appropriate the tool in question is for your skill level, and the tool's advantages and disadvantages
- Which help pages to refer to next, depending on the tools you choose to use

Main Differences Between Web Hosting and Store Editor

Your Yahoo! Merchant Solutions account has two separate tools for building Web pages, Web Hosting and Store Editor. Table 1 shows some of the important differences between each tool.

	Web Hosting	Store Editor
How new pages are developed	You build your pages on your own computer using an HTML editing tool such as Yahoo! SiteBuilder, Microsoft® FrontPage® or Macromedia® Dreamweaver®.	You build your pages in the Store Editor tool using only your web browser.
Location of pages after publishing	The pages are published to "www." domain, for example, "www.my-first-store.com.	The pages are published to "store." domain, for example, "store.my-first-store.com.

Table 1: Comparison of main differences between Web Hosting and Store Editor.

Advantages of Web Hosting vs. Store Editor

The reason your Merchant Solutions account has both Web Hosting and Store Editor is so that you have more options in building your store. Each tool has its own advantages, summarized as follows:

- Building your store in Store Editor requires some time to learn how to use and then get your site up and running, but it takes more work to customize the site design and page layout, especially if you are already familiar with HTML editing tools such as Dreamweaver®.
- Building your store in Web Hosting requires you to know HTML (or be familiar with an HTML editing tool), but because you control 100% of the HTML on the page, it's easier to make sure that the site design and page layout looks and behaves the way you want.

In particular, there are three issues that affect your decision to use Web Hosting or Store Editor:

- What type of site you wish to build and your knowledge of HTML
- How much work you would like to put into customizing your site design
- How much experience you have using HTML editing tools

Table 2 shows some of the comparative advantages of Web Hosting and Store Editor for these three issues.

	Web Hosting	Store Editor
Ease of development	If you know HTML, customization is important to you and you are creating a small to medium sized store then building your store in Web Hosting may be the right choice. You have to create or choose a site template, and you also must either import the Catalog Manager data or manually insert Store Tags and Store Modules. If you want to design your store from the "ground up", including custom artwork and layout, then it takes even more work for you to build and test your store.	If you are new to web site building, don't know HTML or you wish to create a database-driven site with many products then building your store in Store Editor may be the right choice. Each time you add product data to Catalog Manager, Store Editor automatically creates a page for that product. Store Editor also comes with a default page design consisting of a left-hand navigation bar and a preset layout for product and section pages.

	Web Hosting	Store Editor
Ease of design customizability	It's easier to customize your site in Web Hosting, assuming you have experience creating HTML and custom images. You have complete control over your HTML page, so if you're already experienced at web design, you can create your site design and page layout to your exact specifications. Hosting also allows you to use advanced features like PHP/MySQL and Perl.	It's less easy to customize your site in Store Editor, assuming you have experience creating HTML and have exact specifications. While it's not hard to make significant design edits to Store Editor in the Variables page, if you are already experienced in building web sites using a particular HTML editor, Store Editor may seem less intuitive than your current method of development.
Your amount of experience using HTML editing tools	If you have a great deal of experience using one or more HTML editing tools, then you may prefer to develop your site in Web Hosting. That way you can continue using tools you're comfortable with, and you can control your site design to the same degree you're used to.	If you don't have a great deal of experience using an HTML editing tool, you may prefer to develop your site in Store Editor. Store Editor comes with a pre-set look and feel that you can change, and the only tool you need to make any edits to your site is your web browser.

Table 2: Comparison of advantages of developing your site using Web Hosting vs. using Store Editor.

Note: Even if you have a lot of experience using an HTML editing tool, you may still prefer to build your site in Store Editor. Since Store Editor automatically creates a page for every product in Catalog Manager, that means you don't need to do any extra work to create these pages. Instead, you can concentrate on editing the Variables or editing the Templates to customize the site-wide design. Keep in mind, however, that the Templates in the Store Editor are not HTML based, but are created using the Yahoo! proprietary language, RTML.

Choosing an HTML Editing Tool for Web Hosting

If you wish to develop your site in Web Hosting, you need to choose an HTML editing tool for designing your site and creating all of its pages. In general, you have three choices:

- Use Yahoo! SiteBuilder
- Use Macromedia® Dreamweaver® with the Merchant Solutions Extension
- Use some other HTML editing tool such as Microsoft® FrontPage®

The following series of tables compares these three options.

This HTML editing tool is appropriate for you if...

Yahoo! SiteBuilder	Dreamweaver & Extension	Other HTML Editing Tool
...your store will have fewer than 20 products and you don't have much experience with HTML or don't plan to customize your site design much beyond the template you use.	...you have a lot of experience with Dreamweaver and HTML. Also, you plan to customize your site design extensively or create it from scratch	...you have a lot of experience with the tool and HTML. You don't mind making many edits to HTML code. Also, you plan to customize your site design extensively or create it from scratch.

Table 3: Comparison of three HTML editing tools based on your degree of experience and number of products.

Advantages of this HTML editing tool:

Yahoo! SiteBuilder	Dreamweaver & Extension	Other HTML Editing Tool
It's free and downloadable from Yahoo! Small Business (http://webhosting.yahoo.com/ps/sb/). You can import all your product data from Catalog Manager and rapidly create product and section pages. SiteBuilder also includes a large template library with new free templates available on an ongoing basis, simplifying the process of choosing a design.	Dreamweaver is a very comprehensive and popular HTML editing tool with a wide user base. The free Merchant Solutions extension for Dreamweaver (http://smallbusiness.yahoo.com/bzinfo/prod/com/dmx.php) allows you to import all your product data from Catalog Manager so that you can rapidly create product and section pages.	If you already have a great deal of proficiency with another HTML Editing Tool such as Microsoft® FrontPage®, you don't have to give it up. You can build your site using the tool you're already comfortable with instead of spending time and money buying and learning another tool.

Table 4: Comparison of three HTML editing tools based on their advantages.

Disadvantages of this HTML editing tool:

Yahoo! SiteBuilder	Dreamweaver & Extension	Other HTML Editing Tool
<p>Yahoo! SiteBuilder is not appropriate for sites of more than 20 products. Also, SiteBuilder doesn't allow you to edit the actual HTML code, which can be frustrating to an advanced web developer.</p>	<p>You have to buy Dreamweaver®, and using it requires a significant level of expertise. Also, Dreamweaver doesn't include free ecommerce design templates, so you must buy them or develop them from scratch.</p>	<p>You have to buy most other major HTML editing tools such as Microsoft® FrontPage® or Adobe® GoLive®, and using them requires a significant level of expertise. Also, because other HTML editing tools don't have a way to retrieve product data from Catalog Manager, the only way to create product and section pages is pasting Store Tags and Modules that you copy from Store Tag Hub, which can significantly slow the development process. Finally, other HTML editing tools may not include any free design templates.</p>

Table 5: Comparison of three HTML editing tools based on their disadvantages.

Which Help Pages to Refer to Next

When creating your site you have both of these platforms at your disposal but are not required to use both. We recommend you create a few test pages in each to see which you are most comfortable with using. In general, if you had planned on building your pages from scratch when signing up for your Yahoo! Merchant Solutions account, you will want to be using the Web Hosting portion of your package. If you were looking for a more automated process of building your storefront we recommend using the Store Editor.

Please review the help pages listed below to get started with your account:

- [Create using the Store Editor— http://help.yahoo.com/help/us/store/store-39.html](http://help.yahoo.com/help/us/store/store-39.html)
- [Create using Web Hosting—http://help.yahoo.com/help/us/store/store-40.html](http://help.yahoo.com/help/us/store/store-40.html)
(requires an active Internet connection)

Note: If you are currently using Yahoo! Store and want to upgrade to Merchant Solutions, you may want to consider continuing to use the Store Editor for the bulk of your pages and using Hosting for additional informational pages and file storage. If you choose to rebuild your Store pages and upload them to the Web Hosting File Manager in order to have complete control over the look and feel of your website, it is best to complete the entire storefront before switching traffic over to the Web Hosting portion of your account.