

Author
Website Crafting Guide

by J. W. Shank

 CelebrationWebDesign.com

Author Website Crafting Guide

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Building a website requires investment, both in terms of time and money. While this guide aims to provide valuable insights and direction, the utilization of its content does not guarantee success, financial or otherwise. Each website endeavor is unique, and outcomes may vary.

Users are advised to seek appropriate professional advice tailored to their individual circumstances when considering any investment or taking on any website development endeavor.

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2 Getting Started Website Questions

Creating a website can be both an exciting and daunting task. At its core, a website for an author is an extension of oneself in the digital realm. As such, it requires careful thought and planning to ensure it truly represents the intended message and serves the desired purpose. This guide has been designed to help you navigate the early planning stages of your website. We've organized our advice into three key steps: pinpointing the purpose of your website, crafting a compelling introduction, and design elements.

2.1 Website Purpose Questions

Your website's core function and its reason for being lie here. By answering these questions, you establish the foundation of your website's identity and purpose.

A. Why are you creating a website?

Examples:

- *To establish an online presence and central platform where readers can explore all my written works.*
- *To provide an interactive space for fans to connect with me, access exclusive content, and receive updates about upcoming book releases.*
- *To offer a professional portal for literary agents, publishers, and event coordinators to get in touch and review my credentials.*

B. What is the main goal of your website?

Examples:

- *To promote and increase sales of my books across various platforms and retailers.*
- *To cultivate and grow my readership community, ensuring they return to the site for news, events, and more.*

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- *To serve as a digital portfolio showcasing my writing, accolades, and media appearances, enhancing my credibility as an author.*

C. What purpose will your website serve for users?

Examples:

- *A one-stop destination to purchase signed copies, download digital versions, or access audiobooks of my novels.*
- *A dedicated platform where readers can access exclusive downloads, stay updated with newsletters, and directly engage with updates and insights from me regarding my writing journey and upcoming book releases.*
- *A resource center where educators and book clubs can download study guides, author interviews, or request virtual meet-and-greet sessions.*

D. What information would make users want to learn about your book or you?

Examples:

- *Engaging excerpts or chapters from my books, coupled with behind-the-scenes insights into my writing process and inspirations.*
- *Testimonials and reviews from prominent authors, critics, and fans which showcase the impact and quality of my work.*
- *Personal stories or anecdotes related to my journey as a writer, my challenges, triumphs, and what influenced my narratives.*

E. What is your website's core purpose?

When crafting the foundation of your author website, it's paramount to ensure that the answers to the general questions about the website's creation, main goal, purpose for users, and enticing content have a cohesive focus. This interconnectedness will serve as a beacon, guiding your entire website towards fulfilling its core function and ultimate "reason for being".



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Whether you're looking to promote your works, grow your readership community, provide exclusive content, or share your personal journey, each aspect of the site should align seamlessly with your overarching mission and objectives. Remember, maintaining consistency in your website's message and purpose not only fosters a genuine connection with your readers but also underscores your unique value, enhancing your websites visibility on search engines.

Based on your responses thus far in “Website Purpose Questions”, please articulate in one sentence the core purpose (reason for being) of your website.

2.2 Crafting A Compelling Introduction

By addressing fundamental questions about identity, purpose, uniqueness, and desired user action, one can effectively craft a compelling website introduction that resonates with visitors and aligns with the author's mission.

A. Who are you?

Examples:

- *I am a devout Christian, an impassioned author, and a former pastor who has dedicated my life to spreading faith and love through my words.*
- *As a cancer survivor and former Sunday school teacher, I weave my tales with resilience, hope, and lessons learned from life's trials.*
- *With a background as a veteran and a former teacher, I bring stories to life that are inspired by courage, service, and the invaluable lessons from the classroom.*



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B. What do you do?

Examples:

- *I write children's books that instill Christian values and frequently speak at faith-based conferences*
- *I'm an author of adult fiction and devotional books, blending compelling narratives with spiritual insights.*
- *Beyond penning Christian devotional books, I engage audiences at conferences, sharing lessons from both life and scripture.*

C. Why are you an author and what makes you different?

Examples:

- *I write to inspire faith in young hearts, crafting children's stories that resonate deeper than traditional tales.*
- *Blending real-life struggles with Christian teachings, my adult fiction offers readers both solace and enlightenment.*
- *Drawing from my experiences as a speaker, my devotionals provide a unique fusion of personal anecdotes and scriptural wisdom.*

D. What do you want the person viewing your website to do?

Examples:

- *I hope visitors explore my stories, finding both entertainment and spiritual growth within their pages.*



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- *I invite readers to delve deep into my writings, and in turn, strengthen their own faith journey.*
- *My desire is for guests to connect with my words, perhaps even booking me for their next faith-based event.*

E. Create your website introduction:

Using the given information, one can weave together the answers to craft an engaging website introduction. Remember, the goal is to write in the third person and incorporate the author's name so that search engines like Google can recognize the content's subject. Here are three examples based on the provided responses:

Examples:

- *John Doe, a devout Christian and former pastor, has dedicated his life to spreading faith through his writings. Known for children's books that instill Christian values, John often speaks at faith-based conferences. His unique approach stems from his deep desire to inspire faith in young hearts, crafting tales that resonate profoundly. Visitors are encouraged to explore John's stories, immersing themselves in both entertainment and spiritual growth.*
- *Jane Smith, a resilient cancer survivor and former Sunday school teacher, crafts narratives filled with hope and the wisdom of life's trials. As an author of adult fiction and devotional books, Jane seamlessly blends compelling tales with spiritual insights. Her unique voice, influenced by real-life struggles and Christian teachings, offers solace and enlightenment to readers. Those who visit her website are invited to delve deeply into her writings, fostering their own faith journey.*
- *Tom Brown, drawing inspiration from his background as a veteran and former teacher, paints stories of courage, service, and invaluable classroom lessons. Beyond writing Christian devotionals, Tom is a staple at conferences, sharing profound lessons from scripture and personal experiences. Offering a unique fusion of personal anecdotes and scriptural wisdom, he beckons guests to connect with his words, potentially engaging him for their next faith-based event.*

2.3 Design Element Questions

By addressing fundamental questions about identity, purpose, uniqueness, and desired user action, one can effectively craft a compelling website introduction that resonates with visitors and aligns with the author's mission.



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A. Find Three Website you like and write down what you like about them:

- Website 1: _____

- Website 2: _____

- Website 3: _____

B. How do these three websites align in design principles and which elements do you wish to incorporate into your own website?

Examples:

- *All three websites utilize a minimalist design with ample white space, ensuring a clean and uncluttered user experience. I'm particularly drawn to their use of vibrant, high-quality images that instantly capture attention, and I'd like to integrate a similar visual approach into my own site.*
- *Each website effectively employs a cohesive color palette that aligns with their brand identity, creating a harmonious and memorable impression. Additionally, their navigation menus are intuitive and user-friendly, which is a feature I believe is vital for my site.*



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- *What stands out across these websites is their emphasis on typography; they use bold, readable fonts that enhance content readability. The interactive elements, such as hover effects and animated transitions, also add a touch of sophistication and dynamism that I'd love to implement on my website.*

C. What fonts do you want to utilize on your website?

Select fonts from <https://fonts.google.com/> which offers a diverse range of high-quality typefaces tailored for web use. Using Google fonts ensures rapid load times across all browsers, with special optimization for Google Chrome, the world's leading browser. Their universal compatibility also means seamless integration on almost every device, enhancing user readability and experience.

- Body Font: _____

- Heading Font: _____

On Google Fonts check "Show only variable fonts" and sort by "Most Popular" or "Trending" to swiftly identify versatile, highly readable fonts that aesthetically enhance web designs.

D. What imagery would you like to see on your website?

Keep in mind that chosen visuals should resonate with and bolster your website's core purpose, enhancing its overall impact and message.

Examples:

- *Nature Landscapes: Given my website's focus on promoting my eco-conscious novels, showcasing serene forests, clean waterways, and thriving wildlife would align perfectly with my brand, emphasizing the environmental themes present in my writing.*
- *Historical Artifacts: As my website centers around my historical fiction series set in ancient Egypt, incorporating imagery of pyramids, hieroglyphics, and antique artifacts would immerse visitors in the time period and setting of my novels.*
- *Inspirational Portraits: Since my website serves as a platform for my self-help books, featuring uplifting images of diverse individuals triumphing over challenges, celebrating victories, or in contemplative reflection would embody the resilience and hope my writings aim to inspire.*



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E. Pick the colors you would like to see on your website:

Colors play a pivotal role in shaping the first impression of your website and can significantly impact a visitor's experience. A harmonious color palette can evoke specific emotions, reinforce brand identity, and guide users' attention. When noting your preferred colors, use the hex code format (e.g., #000000) as it's the standard reference for most Content Management Systems (CMS) and web designer.

- Primary Color: _____
- Secondary Color: _____
- Accent Color: _____

For inspiration and curated color palettes, visit <https://colorhunt.co/>. This platform offers a vast collection of palettes that can be adapted to various website themes and purposes.

F. Describe the Logo or Name you want at the top of your website?

When contemplating the logo or name to display prominently on your author website, it's essential to reflect on its significance and alignment with your literary brand. What imagery or typography resonates with the themes or genres you write about? Remember, the chosen name or logo should be instantly recognizable and evoke a sense of your writing style and genre. It's crucial to ensure the design is scalable, maintaining its clarity and impact on various device sizes. Aim for a design that encapsulates the essence of your writing and stands apart from other authors. Above all, the logo or name should harmonize with the overall aesthetic and mood of your website. If you're unsure where to begin, drafting a rough concept or drawing inspiration from your favorite authors' branding can guide your decision. Keep in mind, a distinctive logo or name is not just about aesthetics; it serves as an emblem.

Your detailed description or sketch is invaluable—it provides a foundational guide for you or your designer to craft the perfect logo for your author website. If you're looking for a platform to experiment with your ideas, try out [Canva.com](https://www.canva.com/). It offers user-friendly tools to help bring your vision to life or explore new design concepts.

G. What is your slogan, key phrase or main scripture verse?

Your slogan, key phrase, or chosen scripture verse often plays a pivotal role on an author website. Not only can it serve as a visual element to break up page content, but it also gives visitors an immediate sense of your core message, beliefs, or what you stand for.

Examples:

- *Slogan: "Stories that Illuminate the Heart."*
- *Phrase: "Discover Faith Through Fiction." Inspirational Portraits: Since my website serves as a platform for my self-help books, featuring uplifting images of diverse individuals triumphing over challenges, celebrating victories, or in contemplative reflection would embody the resilience and hope my writings aim to inspire.*
- *Scripture Verse: "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." - Jeremiah 29:11.*

4 Helpful Online Tools

In a world where digital real estate commands prime attention, savvy authors recognize the need to wield the right digital tools. Imagine penning a riveting tale or insightful message, only for it to become a mere whisper in the vast digital marketplace. Fortunately, the internet isn't bereft of its navigational beacons. This handbook provides a meticulously curated suite designed for authors and ministry figures. Dive deep into the intricacies of web analytics, unearth potent SEO tactics, craft compelling digital narratives, and foster newsletters that truly engage. With these instruments at your disposal, harness the boundless possibilities they offer. When adroitly utilized, they can construct a commanding digital footprint, amplifying your sphere of influence.

4.1 Google Website Tools

A. Website User Analysis

Google Analytics: This tool provides a comprehensive view of a website's traffic, detailing where visitors come from, how long they stay, and what content engages them most. For authors, understanding these metrics means they can tailor their content to their audience's preferences, ensuring higher readership and engagement. Moreover, Analytics helps track conversion rates, allowing authors to gauge the effectiveness of their call-to-actions, whether it's newsletter sign-ups or book sales.

 **Link:** <https://analytics.google.com/>

- You may need help to get this setup
- Can be difficult to interpret data and make it actionable

B. Website Error and Search Analysis

The Google Search Console tool focuses on the website's presence in Google search results. It offers insights into which keywords drive traffic to the blog or website, helping authors to optimize their content for better search visibility. Moreover, Search Console alerts website owners about any technical issues, such as crawl errors or potential security problems, ensuring the site remains in good health. For authors, understanding which topics or blogs have the highest visibility can guide their future writing endeavors, aligning with what readers are actively searching for.

 **Link:** <https://search.google.com/search-console/welcome>

- You may need help to get this setup
- Your web developer or Content Management System (CMS) creator should already be using this

4.2 Website Ranking Tools

These tools help you analyze your website's current (Search Engine Optimization) SEO status and all links are for a free tool. *

A. Website Authority Checker

Ahrefs' Website Authority Checker is a tool designed to measure the "strength" or authority of a domain, known as Domain Rating (DR). For an author with a website, understanding this metric is pivotal in gauging the site's potential influence and reach in search engine results. The higher the Domain Rating, the stronger and more authoritative the website is perceived, often correlating with better search rankings.

 **Link:** <https://ahrefs.com/website-authority-checker>

Understanding the Results

- **Domain Rating (DR):** This metric, unique to Ahrefs, runs on a scale from zero to a hundred and evaluates the quality and quantity of external backlinks to a website. A high DR suggests that the site is reputable and has authoritative sites linking to it.
- **Backlinks:** These are the actual links from other websites pointing to the author's site. The number and quality of backlinks can significantly influence a site's DR. For an author, this means other sites, perhaps fellow writers, reviewers, or fans, are referencing or promoting their content.
- **Linking Websites:** This refers to the distinct number of websites or domains that are linking back to the author's site. It's crucial because 100 backlinks from a single website will hold less weight than 100 backlinks from 100 different websites. For authors, a diverse range of linking websites can indicate widespread interest or recognition in their work across the web.

B. Domain Authority Checker

Moz Domain Analysis Tool, provided by Moz, offers a comprehensive assessment of key domain metrics that help in understanding a website's potential visibility and performance in search engine results. It serves as a valuable resource for website owners, SEO professionals, and marketers in benchmarking and strategizing their online presence. Using Moz's Domain Analysis tool, website owners can gain actionable insights into their site's performance, strengths, and areas of opportunity.

 **Link:** <https://moz.com/competitive-research>

Understanding the Results

- **Domain Authority (DA):** Domain Authority is a proprietary metric developed by Moz that predicts how well a website will rank on search engine result pages (SERPs). It's calculated based on multiple factors including linking root domains and the number of total links. DA is

presented on a scale from 1 to 100, with higher values indicating greater likelihood of ranking prominently.

- **Page Authority (PA):** Similar to Domain Authority, Page Authority predicts the ranking potential of individual web pages as opposed to whole websites. Calculated in the same manner as DA, it provides insights on the strength of specific pages within a site, allowing for more granular analysis.
- **Ranking Keywords:** This metric showcases the number of keywords for which the domain is ranking on SERPs. For website owners, understanding which keywords their site ranks for offers insights into their content's performance and potential areas for optimization.
- **Top Positions:** This denotes the keywords for which the website holds the top positions in search engine results, typically the top 1-3 spots. Being in these positions usually drives the most organic traffic, making it crucial for website owners to know which keywords are performing exceptionally well for them.

4.3 Keyword Research Tools

Curate content that resonates by harnessing the power of keyword analysis. The following tools each offer, at the very least, a valuable free version. *

A. Google Search

Google.com is a crucial starting point for bloggers and website creators embarking on keyword research. By initiating searches related to your niche or topic on Google, you can immediately identify leading competitors and observe the kind of content they're producing. This preliminary analysis offers insights into which keywords are driving traffic to these competitor sites, giving you a clearer understanding of the market landscape. Furthermore, Google's autocomplete function showcases real-time popular terms and phrases, ensuring you stay updated on trending topics and the language users employ, thereby aiding in crafting content that resonates and ranks well.

 **Link:** <https://www.google.com/>

 **Literally The Most Important Search Tool**

B. Keyword Generator, Volume & Difficulty Tool

The RyRob Free Keyword Research Tool is an AI-enhanced platform tailored for SEO keyword insights and suggestions. Ideal for small websites, this tool not only aids in uncovering medium-volume keywords but also gauges the competition level, ensuring your site targets terms that are easier to rank for. It offers details like monthly search volumes and ranking difficulty, providing a comprehensive overview to optimize your content strategy. Simply input your desired keywords on this link to initiate a deep-dive into keyword opportunities.

 **Link:** <https://www.ryrob.com/keyword-tool/>

 **Completely Free**

— Not Sortable

C. **Keyword Generator, Location, Volume, and PPC Cost Metric**

GetKeywords.io is a cutting-edge keyword research platform designed for precision, real-time data, and user simplicity. The 'Forever Free' plan provides users with unlimited basic keyword research, audience insights, and the ability to derive relevant keywords by domain or URL, including location and language-based searches that present a sortable keyword idea chart detailing volume, (cost per click) CPC, and (pay per click) PPC competition.

 Link: <https://www.getkeywords.io/>

+ Sortable

+ Easy way to See Average Cost Per Click

— Expensive Plans for More Detailed Information

D. **Keyword Generator, Difficulty, Volume, Engine Selector**

Ahrefs' Free Keyword Generator is a versatile SEO tool that offers users a robust keyword discovery solution for multiple platforms. With its comprehensive features, users can unearth keywords, evaluate their difficulty, and ascertain search volume specifically for Google. Beyond just Google, the tool extends its capabilities to platforms like Bing, YouTube, and Amazon, ensuring a wide spectrum of keyword insights. This makes Ahrefs' Keyword Generator an indispensable resource for marketers and content creators aiming for a well-rounded digital presence.

 <https://ahrefs.com/keyword-generator>

+ Limited Free Tool

— Expensive Plans for More Detailed Information

+ Leader in SEO Research Tools

4.4 Website Writing Tools

Write, refine, and elevate your content with the assistance of innovative writing tools. The following tools each offer, at the very least, a valuable free version. *

A. **Search Trend Finder**

Google Trends is a free, online tool provided by Google that allows users to explore and visualize the popularity of specific search queries in Google Search over various time periods and regions. It offers insights into trending topics, enabling users to compare the search volumes of multiple terms and observe their seasonal fluctuations. For bloggers, Google Trends is an invaluable resource. By identifying emerging patterns, spikes in interest, or declining topics, bloggers can tailor their content to align with what readers are actively seeking or showing increased curiosity in. This not only ensures content relevancy but also enhances the potential for increased traffic and engagement. Furthermore, by understanding regional interest in specific topics, bloggers

can cater their content to specific audiences or markets. Overall, leveraging the data from Google Trends allows bloggers to make data-driven decisions, optimizing their content strategy for better results.

 Link: <https://trends.google.com/trends/>

 Free and Easy to Use

B. **Blog Title Generator**

The RyRob Blog Title Generator is a free AI-driven tool designed to provide SEO-optimized title suggestions for bloggers. By simply entering target keywords, users receive creative headline examples tailored for their content. Created by Ryan Robinson, it offers a convenient solution to transform a primary idea into engaging blog titles. This platform serves as an invaluable starting point for content creators looking to expand their main concepts into captivating posts.

 Link: <https://www.ryrob.com/blog-title-generator/>

 Completely Free

C. **Ultimate Blogging Assistant**

ChatGPT is a revolutionary tool for bloggers, streamlining the entire content creation process from ideation to publication. Starting with the basics, it can suggest captivating blog titles tailored to your topic or niche, ensuring your articles stand out in a sea of content. Diving deeper into SEO, ChatGPT can assist in identifying high-potential keywords, balancing both search volume and competition to optimize your blog's visibility. Beyond the planning phase, it truly shines as a co-writer, aiding in structuring your content, suggesting relevant points, refining language, and ensuring your blog post is both engaging and informative. With ChatGPT by your side, the blogging process becomes not just smoother, but also more effective and data driven.

 Link: <https://chat.openai.com/>

 Paid (More Advanced Response)

D. **Text Complexity Analyzing Tool**

The Hemingway App, available at "<https://hemingwayapp.com/>", is a digital writing assistant designed to refine and simplify your text. By analyzing the complexity of sentences, use of passive voice, adverb counts, and readability, the tool provides suggestions to make your content clearer and engaging. Named after the renowned writer Ernest Hemingway, known for his concise and clear prose, the app encourages users to embrace a similar straightforward writing style. This tool helps you match your content complexity to your audience.

 Link: <https://hemingwayapp.com/>

 Completely Free

 You should not necessarily follow its recommendations

E. **AI Detection Tool**

GPTZero is not merely an AI detector; it ensures your content doesn't come across as solely AI-generated. GPTZero assists users in differentiating between human-crafted content and that produced by AI models. Proficient in detecting outputs from models such as ChatGPT, GPT4, BARD, Llama, and beyond, GPTZero is invaluable for blog writers striving for SEO prominence. Given that search engines emphasize genuine, human-focused content, GPTZero helps writers uphold the authenticity and uniqueness crucial for achieving top search rankings and establishing trust with their audience.

 **Link:** <https://gptzero.me/>

 **Free up to 5,000 characters at a time**

 **You still need human judgment**

 **Provides false negatives and positives**

4.5 Image Tools

Enhance your content's visual appeal with the right imagery. All of these below tools can help you create a website that has great visuals. *

A. **Image Finder**

TinEye is a reverse image search engine that allows users to trace the origin or source of an online image. It's useful for bloggers to verify the originality of images or to find the primary source for proper attribution.

 **Link:** <https://tineye.com/>

 **Searching is Free**

B. **Image Creator**

Canva is a graphic design platform offering tools to create visuals like memes, presentations, and infographics for various media channels. Bloggers find Canva valuable because it allows them to produce professional-quality graphics without the need for advanced design skills, enhancing their content's appeal.

 **Link:** <https://www.canva.com/>

 **Offers a Free Version**

C. **Image, Video & Music Stock Supply**

Adobe Stock provides a vast collection of premium images available for licensing at reasonable prices, along with features to search for similar images. For bloggers, this platform offers a reliable source of high-quality visuals to complement their content while ensuring legal use and avoiding copyright issues.

 **Link:** <https://stock.adobe.com/>

+ Great Selection

D. 3D Book Cover Creator

DIY Book Covers' 3D Mockups is an online tool designed to transform flat book cover designs into realistic 3D mockups. This user-friendly platform allows authors and designers to present their book covers in a visually appealing manner, mimicking how they would appear in a tangible, physical format. By uploading a flat cover image, users can effortlessly generate a three-dimensional representation of their book, which can then be used for promotional materials, website graphics, or social media marketing. For authors and publishers, this tool enhances the presentation of their work, making it more enticing to potential readers and giving a professional edge to their promotional efforts.

 **Link:** <https://diybookcovers.com/3Dmockups/>

+ Completely Free

4.6 E-Mail Newsletter Tools

Engage with your audience consistently and compellingly through tailored email newsletters. Each of the following has a free version and can be connected to your website for email list building. *

- A. **ConvertKit** is a powerful email marketing platform tailored specifically for creators such as bloggers, writers, and artists. Its intuitive design emphasizes automation and segmentation, enabling users to send personalized messages to their audience with ease. Additionally, ConvertKit offers integrations with various tools to help creators grow and engage their subscriber base effectively.

 **Link:** <https://convertkit.com/>

+ Free to 1000 subscribers

- B. **Mailchimp** is a comprehensive marketing automation platform that goes beyond just email campaigns. It offers a suite of tools for creating, sending, and analyzing email newsletters, combined with features like customer segmentation, automation, and even e-commerce functionalities. Its versatility makes it ideal for authors of all sizes looking to build, grow, and refine their online communication.

 **Link:** <https://mailchimp.com/>

+ Free to 500 subscribers and 1,000 emails per month

- C. **MailerLite** provides a straightforward and user-friendly email marketing solution, making it easy for businesses to craft, manage, and track email campaigns. It boasts a clean and intuitive interface, along with features such as drag-and-drop email builders, automation, and advanced

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subscriber segmentation. Its simplicity and efficient design make it a favorite for those new to email marketing or those seeking a streamlined approach.

 Link: <https://www.mailerlite.com/>

 Free to 1,000 user and 12,000 emails per month

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