Brown has a collection of tools and services to aid faculty in promoting their research efforts. This article is intended to help faculty members decide on the right tool to use when communicating about their research and out-of-the-classroom work. If you have questions about any of the options listed here, feel free to reach out to us at webservices@brown.edu.

**BrownSites Content Management System** (recommended option)

**What is it?**

BrownSites is the easy-to-use content management system for Brown University websites that takes advantage of best practices in web design. BrownSites includes the template and the design used by Brown departments, centers, and affiliated organizations and allows for integration with other University systems. BrownSites require no special programming skills, and makes editing content as easy as writing an email. Each site includes an editable banner, news section, static pages, simple image/file uploads, and connection to events calendars from events.brown.edu. A BrownSite comes with a URL like www.brown.edu/research/projects/project-name or www.brown.edu/research/lab/lab-name.

The University prefers that you use BrownSites as it has the official Brown branding and standards tied to it, not to mention all the other benefits.

**Why would I use it?**

BrownSites are good when:

- Used to communicate work about a project, lab, research initiative, etc., that is being done as part of University work.
- You do not need specific functionality beyond what is already built in BrownSites, or you have funds to pay for customizations.
- You want to be able to make simple edits on your own without the need to always hire someone.
- You want to use a Brown service that is supported with training, Help Desk support, and regular system upgrades.
How do I get started?
Complete the BrownSite request form. Provide as much information as possible about the purpose of the site so that we set it up optimized for search engines.

What help is available?
- CIS Computer Education offers training sessions on BrownSites, which you can attend as many times as you wish.
- You can take advantage of our online support documentation.
- Join the BrownSites Support Google+ Community to post questions, answers, tips, and comments about BrownSites.
- The Help Desk is available to help with basic questions.
- WebServices is available to discuss customizations and advanced needs.

BrownBlogs

What is it?
BrownBlogs is an online publishing platform that allows members of the Brown community (individuals as well as official University groups, departments, and organizations) to quickly and easily communicate on the web through text, images, audio, and video. BrownBlogs run on the WordPress blogging platform. The platform has been customized to connect with Brown's authentication, to use Brown's groups infrastructure, and to contain a theme based on the Brown website design. Additionally, many of the most popular WordPress plugins and themes are installed for easy customization. Your blog's address would appear as blogs.brown.edu/websitename.

Why would I use it?
BrownBlogs are good when:
- The content is blog-based (regular op-ed, news, update-based postings).
- The content is personal in nature - it includes personal information, links, and/or the content is framed about you as an individual more than about your research work.
- You prefer using the WordPress platform over the Drupal-based BrownSites content management system and don't mind the "blogs.brown.edu/" URL format.
- You do not need specific functionality beyond what is already built in BrownBlogs.
- You want to be able to make simple edits on your own without the need to always hire someone.
- You want to use a Brown service that is supported with Help Desk support and regular system upgrades.

How do I get started?
To get a personal or group blog, fill out this simple form. Your blog will be available immediately! Visit the Getting Started page for more information. Course blogs can be requested via courses.brown.edu.
What help is available?

- The **Help Desk** is available to help with basic questions.

Google Sites

What is it?

Google services for Brown include the ability to make simple websites. Google Sites have a variety of clean, basic layouts and feature excellent Google Docs integration. Google sites have URLs like `sites.google.com/a/brown.edu/websitename`.

Why would I use it?

Google Sites are good when:

- The content is personal in nature - it includes personal information, links, and/or the content is framed about you as an individual more than about your research work.
- You want to have various levels of access to specific content within the site.
- You want to display many Google Docs, or you want to use Google widgets to embed a lot of content.
- You want to be able to make simple edits on your own without the need to always hire someone.
- You want to use a Brown service that is supported with training, Help Desk support, and regular system upgrades.

How do I get started?

Log in to [Google Sites](https://sites.google.com) with your Brown Google account and click "create" to start a new website.

What help is available?

- CIS Computer Education offers [training sessions](https://sites.google.com) on Google Sites.
- Google provides [online help](https://sites.google.com) for Google Sites.
- The **Help Desk** is available to help with basic questions.

DIY Web Publishing

What is it?

Web publishing accounts allow faculty to build their own sites (using HTML and CSS). The service provides you with a server directory (hosting space) and SFTP access - the rest is up to you! Web publishing is complicated, so be sure that you are up for the challenge! In particular, please note the following:

- This service only includes setting up the account and publishing space. You must provide your own SSH terminal, SFTP client, and code editor. Check the [software catalog](https://sites.google.com) to see what Brown provides and/or recommends.
- It is your responsibility to make sure that your code is secure. Sites that become exploited will be zipped up, taken offline, and their owner will be notified.
- A website hosted here would have a URL along the lines of:
Why would I use it?
Web publishing accounts are good when:

- The individual building and maintaining the site has advanced (programmer level) knowledge of HTML/CSS.
- You took your non-CMS site with you from a previous institution and you want a host.
- The only support you require is server access.
- You know how to build a site that functions properly, looks as you like, is search engine optimized, and secure.

How do I get started?
Complete the [Web Publishing Account Request Form](#). Be sure to indicate the reason for the site and for using web publishing as opposed to another tool listed on this page.

What help is available?

- Support is limited to assuring that your account is set up and working.

Not Sure / Something Else
Perhaps you have something else in mind other than the options outlined here. We'll do our best to meet your needs. Contact [webservices@brown.edu](mailto:webservices@brown.edu) and describe your needs. One of our team members will follow up with you.