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Since the mid-1990s, web development has been one of the fastest growing industries in the world. In 1995 there were fewer than 1,000 web development companies in the United States alone, but by 2005 there were over 30,000 such companies.[1][citation needed] The web development industry is expected to grow over 20% by 2010. The growth of this industry is being pushed by large businesses wishing to sell products and services to their customers and to automate business workflow, as well as the growth of many small web design and development companies. In addition, cost of Web site development and hosting has dropped dramatically during this time. Instead of costing tens of thousands of dollars, as was the case for early websites, one can now develop a simple web site for less than a thousand dollars, depending on the complexity and amount of content.[citation needed] Smaller Web site development companies are now able to make web design accessible to both smaller companies and individuals further fueling the growth of the web development industry. As far as web development tools and platforms are concerned, there are many systems available to the public free of charge to aid in development. A popular example is the LAMP (Linux, Apache, MySQL, PHP), which is usually distributed free of charge. This fact alone has manifested into many people around the globe setting up new Web sites daily and thus contributing to increase in web development popularity. Another contributing factor has been the rise of easy to use WYSIWYG web development software, most prominently Adobe Dreamweaver or Microsoft Expression Studio (formerly Microsoft Frontpage) . Using such software, virtually anyone can develop a Web page in a matter of minutes. Knowledge of HyperText Markup Language (HTML), or other programming languages is not required, but recommended for professional results. The next generation of web development tools uses the strong growth in LAMP and Microsoft .NET technologies to provide the Web as a way to run applications online. Web developers now help to deliver applications as Web services which were traditionally only available as applications on a desk based computer. Instead of running executable code on a local computer, users are interacting with online applications to create new content. This has created new methods in communication and allowed for many opportunities to decentralize information and media distribution. Users are now able to interact with applications from many locations, instead of being tied to a specific workstation for their application environment. Examples of dramatic transformation in communication and commerce led by web development include e-commerce. Online auction sites such as eBay have changed the way consumers consume and purchase goods and services. Online resellers such as Amazon.com and Buy.com (among many, many others) have transformed the shopping and bargain hunting experience for many consumers. Another good example of transformative communication led by web development is the blog. Web applications such as WordPress and b2evolution have created easily implemented blog environments for individual Web sites. Open source content systems such as Typo3, Xoops, Joomla!, and Drupal have extended web development into new modes of interaction and communication. www.imagination.io

About the Author

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