

**Subject:** AmeriWeb Hosting July 2021 eNewsletter  
**From:** AmeriWeb Hosting <newsletter@ameriwebhosting.com>  
**Date:** 6/30/2021, 12:00 AM  
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# Letter from the Editor

## News and helpful information from your friends at AmeriWeb Hosting July 2021



### WEB NEWS

#### PHP 7.4 and Discontinuing Some Older Versions

A large part of our service involves keeping server-side and client-side software up to date, secure and fast. One of the key elements of our server stack that requires expert maintenance is the PHP programming language, which is a prerequisite for the functioning of the majority of the websites. PHP is an extremely popular and well-supported language and, as any software, its development involves the continuous release of new versions. New versions introduce new features and important performance and security enhancements. As a managed hosting service provider, we keep track of how each PHP version evolves, especially how fast it is adopted by the leading application developers, and we make proactive efforts to make sure our customers get all the benefits of the newer versions as soon as possible. Here is our latest PHP maintenance update.

PHP 7.4 has been around for more than 2 years now and has already become widely compatible with different CMS's, themes and plugins, where PHP 7.2 (our current default) is already out of active support and will get out of security support too, by the end of this year.

At the same time, the security support for all PHP versions below 7.3 has been officially over for quite some time, and given the exploits that leak out once in a while, we believe the risk of using them is growing higher. Additionally, the performance of websites using old PHP versions is considerably lower compared to sites using newer versions.

Keeping your PHP version up to date has undeniable performance and security advantages, and that is why we are now helping you switch to PHP 7.4. You can check and upgrade your PHP version through your control panel, or let us know and we will do it for you. A quick support ticket is all it takes!



### HOW TO

#### Fastest Way to Get Support

The fastest way to get support, especially for a complicated matter, is by support ticket. We have several people monitoring our support area, so resolution is faster. Often I am not in the office, and am away from computers, so calling me might mean a delay.

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Support is broken down into 3 categories:

Emergency  
Urgent  
Routine

All Routine and Urgent matters should be addressed with a support ticket. One of us (me or staff) can get on it.

You always have the option to phone me or send an email (I love talking with you) but honestly, you will see faster results with a support ticket. There are several of us working on them.

To open a support ticket is easy.

- Log into your accounting area (<https://ameriwebhosting.com/accounting/index.php>)  
--OR--
  - Go to <https://ameriwebhosting.com> and click CUSTOMER AREA>Support Tickets
  - Enter your info and click SUBMIT
  - Expect an email auto response when the ticket is logged into our system

**BENEFIT:** If you log in to your accounting area you can view all of your past support tickets as it keeps them available for review.



## MARKETING

### What is your **BOUNCE RATE**?

Google Analytics defines a [“bounce”](#) as a single-page session. In simple terms, it means a person leaves your website from the entrance page, without clicking on any site element or visiting another page. The bounce rate is the percentage of single-page sessions vs multi-page sessions.

A high bounce rate is bad, the lower the bounce rate the better. But there are exceptions. A site should never expect to have a zero% bounce rate. My personal preference is to drive it down to around 35-45%. Others feel anything under 50% is acceptable. It will vary from industry to industry, and business to business.

A high bounce rate indicates either or both of these two things:

#### **You are attracting the wrong kind of audience**

For our managed sites, we correct this as a natural part of our marketing plan. No reason to attract visitors from far away if you are a local business. If you are a local plumber in Michigan, phone calls or emails from someone seeking a plumber in California is a waste of time for you. Eliminate those outside your prospecting market, make your targeting more precise. NOTE: Many online marketing agencies will specifically cast a wide net, in order to inflate your response rates. It makes them look good. But you will end up with phone calls and emails that you can't service. What a waste of time. We prefer to try to deliver semi-qualified leads.

#### **Your website isn't providing a good user experience**

Your site should have a logical hierarchy. Don't hide contact information. A local business should have their hours and address prominently listed. Email and phone number easily found, preferably as a link. Design a site that loads quickly, as not everyone has a fast internet connection, don't make them wait to see your business. Fix broken links. I could talk a week on this topic alone. If we manage and market your site for you, or if we

have designed it, all this and more is built in. Nothing to worry about here!

Bounce rate is a tool to monitor, just as the number of hits your site receives. As with all tools, use it with expertise, and it will help you thrive. Used incorrectly and you will miss the mark. When I was just a lad, I would try to use my father's screw drivers to hammer in nails. He was not happy, and after he emphasized using the right tool for the right job, I learned a lifelong lesson. LOL

EDIT: If you have a 1 page web site, you will always have a 100% bounce rate because there is no place else for visitors to go.



### ASK A TECH

**Q: My email works, but bounces when I send to specific addresses. Why?**

**A:** This is a common problem, with many causes. If we host for you, I can do some diagnostics to see if we can find out what is going on. Sometimes your DKIM or SPF have changed. Sometimes you get caught up on the recipients spam filters. Open a support ticket and we will check on this for you.

AmeriNews is published approximately 10 times a year  
by AmeriWeb Hosting for our customers, friends and those curious about our business.  
If you have a question for our ASK A TECH section, email it to  
[support@ameriwebhosting.com](mailto:support@ameriwebhosting.com)

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