Platform Decision Worksheet

Requirements-based, not a popularity contest

Provider choice (who builds it) and technology choice (what it's built on) are separate decisions. Rate how important each factor is to your business, then compare against the platform profiles below.

Rate your priorities (1-5)

Content editing ease: _____

Hosting flexibility: _____

Data & content portability: _____

Ecommerce needs: _____

Maintenance burden you can take on: _____

Customization requirements: _____

Tolerance for recurring app/plugin costs: _____

Self-hosted WordPress

Free, open-source publishing software you install on a web host of your choosing. It supports themes and plugins and can be customized extensively, from a template theme to fully custom design and development.

Best fit: Businesses that want control over hosting and long-term portability, and are comfortable with an explicit maintenance plan.

Wix

A cloud-based, all-in-one SaaS builder. Wix's own documentation states that Wix sites need to be hosted and run on Wix's servers because of how the platform is architected.

Best fit: Businesses that want infrastructure and updates handled for them and are comfortable with that platform dependency.

Squarespace

A hosted website platform with visual templates and an integrated editor. Squarespace's export documentation allows exporting certain content to XML, but explicitly states that not everything exports because many features rely on Squarespace's own JavaScript and CSS.

Best fit: Businesses that want a managed, design-forward platform and are not planning a near-term platform change.

Shopify

A hosted commerce platform for selling online and in person, covering store, product catalogue, checkout, inventory, sales channels and point-of-sale.

Best fit: Businesses where transactions, inventory and checkout are central to the website, not a brochure site with an occasional sale.

Custom-coded site or application

"Custom code" is a delivery method, not one fixed product. It can mean a hand-built static site, a custom web application, or a custom front end connected to a headless CMS.

Best fit: Businesses with requirements that don't fit an off-the-shelf platform, and the budget and governance to maintain something bespoke.

Platform features and pricing change. See vortio.com/resources/website-toolkit/platform-guide for the current comparison and last-reviewed date.