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With the availability of cheap domain names a little known shortcoming of free web space is the inability to use one's own domain name. Many small businesses start this way with the likes of BT as their ISP, thinking it'll be a cost effective way to have a web presence but without realising the impact on their on-line image by having to put up with a domain name along the lines of anybusiness~btinternet.com. As a web developer I constantly have to advise new clients that paying for web space has this significant benefit.

There is also the question of reliability. Not perhaps with the larger hosting companies, granted but we've all seen ISPs come and go. Considering I am 'in the business' I know of not a single person, professional or otherwise, that takes advantage of free web space. Most people just haven't a clue what to do with it.