SUPPORT & RELIABILITY

Care plans: what maintenance covers

Know what your monthly plan does and where to turn when something breaks.

FOR SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS

PLAN THE WORK

Understand the recurring work

Maintenance can include platform or plugin updates, uptime monitoring, backups, and routine checks on key forms. Coverage depends on the site and agreement. A managed website builder can handle platform patches while your provider handles site content and integrations. A self-hosted site may need explicit application and server responsibilities.

Ask how backups are tested

Find out what is backed up, how often, where it is stored, and how long copies are kept. Ask who can restore the site and when a restore was last tested. If your site takes orders, confirm how the provider would reconcile orders placed after the backup.

Ask what monitoring triggers

Agree on who receives alerts, coverage hours, response targets, and escalation contacts. An uptime alert is useful, but a broken form might still need a separate check because the site can be online while inquiries fail.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Draw the line between upkeep and new work

Routine fixes and small edits may come with included time. New pages, redesigns, ongoing SEO, malware cleanup, or custom features may be separately priced. Confirm which tasks use your hours, what happens when you reach the limit, and who renews the domain, software licenses, and hosting.

Ask for a record of work

A short report can show changes made, issues found, backups or restore checks, and follow-up items. If you switch providers, ask for the handoff steps and how monitoring, access, and backups transfer.

WORKED EXAMPLE

Riverbank clinic with an appointment form

The site loads, but a form update stops appointment notices. A care plan that includes end-to-end form checks can identify the issue earlier. Ask who will test delivery, how the clinic is alerted, and whether fixing the integration is covered.

PRINTABLE WORKSHEET

Your next steps

Assign each task and check it off when you verify it.

- [ ] **Confirm routine work**
  List updates, monitoring, and checks included in writing.
  OWNER / DUE _____

- [ ] **Ask about recovery**
  Confirm backup schedule, retention, restore tests, and owner.
  OWNER / DUE _____

- [ ] **Define urgent support**
  Record hours, response targets, and escalation contact.
  OWNER / DUE _____

- [ ] **Clarify limits and extras**
  Check monthly hours, incident cleanup, and renewal costs.
  OWNER / DUE _____

- [ ] **Plan the handoff**
  Confirm access and exports if the plan ends.
  OWNER / DUE _____

FIRST ACTION _____