

# Nikolay Blaskov

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Nikolay Blaskov is the co-founder and owner of Reseller Panel. My brother and partner Kalin Blaskoff came up with the idea for creating Resellers Panel.

Web Hosting Overview: Mr. Blaskov, how did the idea for Resellers Panel came about?

Nikolay Blaskov: My brother and partner Kalin Blaskoff came up with the idea for creating Resellers Panel. One day, he told me that according to him, it would be nice to create a web hosting reseller program which is free, because no such program existed on the Internet at that time. At the beginning, I did not understand why we should start a free web hosting program, because the reseller hosting segment, as we all know, is quite limited with very few resellers. In the beginning of 2003, we had about 30 employees and I simply did not see how a free web hosting reseller program could substantially increase our revenue. I am thankful that Kalin saw it and now the business is developing well, albeit slowly.

Web Hosting Overview: Then the credit for the creating of Resellers Panel belongs entirely to your brother and business partner Kalin Blaskoff?

Nikolay Blaskov: The credit for this undertaking belongs largely to him. After the beta version of the Resellers Panel was almost ready, I joined in and focused my attention entirely on this project. Since none of us was ever involved in reseller programs and reseller hosting business, many uncertainties lay ahead of us and we had many lessons to learn. Some of these lessons we learned well, but we were not as successful in learning others, alas.

Web Hosting Overview: What is the difference between the traditional web hosting reseller model and the free reseller hosting program offered by Resellers Panel?

Nikolay Blaskov: I would like to separate my answer to this question into two parts.

First, I would like to mention that Resellers Panel is free program, while all other web hosting companies want money to give you the opportunity to resell their web hosting services. In other words, the idea that web hosting reseller programs should be paid is widespread at the moment. All existing web hosting reseller programs so far have been paid and it is wrongly believed that any other reseller hosting business model should be put under suspicion, because it could contain some hidden or indecent goals that would be revealed in time and cause negative effects or damage to the resellers. Of course, all individuals and companies who use our program are quickly convinced that these fears are completely unsubstantiated. These resellers build up our image and change people's understanding of reseller hosting business and the ways this business can operate. We often receive e-mails with some of the following questions: "Is this true?", "Is there really a free web hosting reseller program?", "Where's the catch?", "Aren't you just trying to obtain my personal data and e-mail address to send me spam or make profit from selling the personal information from your data base?", "How can I be sure that you won't deceive me?" and so on. This only shows that there too many companies or programs on the Internet, which have deceived their users in some way or another and it is now considered normal to be much more cautious and even mistrustful. Resellers Panel is currently making a revolution in the way that reseller hosting business is understood and how it can be developed. Like any other human activity, our business is very dynamic as well. There is a constant development in the software, technologies and hardware. The skills required from the people employed in this sector are constantly changing as well. People in this sector have to learn new things all the time to stay up to date with technological developments. Resellers Panel is a highly debated topic in the web hosting sector. The program slowly, but surely gains many partners among the people and companies who deal with web design, internet marketing, domain name registration and search engine optimization. We are also popular among webmasters and Internet service providers. All these people and organizations have simply found a way to increase their revenue by using our free private label web hosting reseller program.

The second part of my answer to this question is that Resellers Panel has several advantages over its paid equivalents:

1. Resellers Panel covers all billing expenses for each billing transaction. If the resellers use a paid reseller hosting program, after they buy the offered disk space on the server, they have to cover all billing expenses, which usually range between 4.5% and 12%. Thus, resellers can increase their profits using our program, because we cover all billing expenses.
2. Resellers Panel takes care for the support of all the customers of our resellers. This support is completely free for the reseller. We can offer it, because we have found a way to provide highly qualified 24-hour customer support with reasonably low expenses by hiring a team of over 35 people in a country from Eastern Europe. I am talking about Bulgaria. My brother and I are also Bulgarians and in Bulgaria there many good Internet specialists seeking employment. This gives us the opportunity to offer inexpensive web hosting plans with 24-hour customer support. By the way, I would like to mention that the average reply time from our help center to a support ticket is about 15 to 20 minutes. We officially guarantee a maximum reply time of 1 hour. Just in case. With paid reseller hosting, the company that has offered it, provides support through the web hosting control panel only to the reseller. In other words, the resellers are kind of intermediaries in all support issues, if they are not qualified enough to resolve the problems of their customers on their own. With our program, resellers do not get involved in support issues, because we resolve all problems either

immediately or in the quickest possible way depending on the situation.

3. Resellers Panel is absolutely free and anybody interested in the program can start selling web hosting services as his anonymity is guaranteed and protected through our system without the need to invest even a single dollar. In fact, the total investment can be just \$8.00, if the resellers decide to buy a domain name from us or from a different domain registrar, in case that they do not want to use the Duoservers link, which the program automatically generates for his web hosting store. We have resellers who collect monthly commissions ranging from \$1,500.00 to \$2,500.00 depending on the month and their activity.

Web Hosting Overview: Resellers Panel registers domain names for the customers of its resellers for just \$4.00. This price seems too low. In fact, it is the cheapest price for domain name registration on the market. What does the Resellers Panel gain from this low price? Isn't there actually something hidden in this marketing move?

Nikolay Blaskov: We have written this on our site. We really register domain names for \$4.00 a year. From the registration of a single domain name, we lose nearly \$3.00 a year. For this reason, we do not offer stand-alone domain name registration, although, everyday we receive inquiries from our resellers about stand alone domain name registration. The truth is that through this low price we are trying to stimulate resellers to sell more web hosting packages. Many of our resellers offer free domain name registration or the prices for the registration of one domain are very low, ranging from \$5.00 to \$8.95. There is almost no competition in this price range on the market. Only GoDaddy.com and a couple of other registrars come close to the price of \$8.95 a year.

We certainly cannot say that we are a competitor on the domain name registration market, in spite of the very low price that we offer for domain name registration. Our cheap price is a marketing move to stimulate our resellers, as I have already mentioned. We do not offer domain name registration without the purchase of a web hosting package. We have received a lot of criticism for this policy.

I hope that within the next six months we will start offering stand-alone domain name registration without the obligation of purchasing a web hosting package. However, I would like to note that if anybody wants to buy domain names within the range of \$6.45 to \$6.95, this person would have to prepay to the registrar for some 500 to 1,000 domain names, which is by no means a small investment for people who resell web hosting services. eNom.com and DomainRegistrar.com are among the popular companies that offer such services.

Web Hosting Overview: I have noticed that the web hosting plans offered by you do not include an e-commerce package with a shopping cart as well as some popular scripts such as chat board, guest book, search engine submission tool and so on, which are often available with every web hosting plan offered by other companies. It seems that you are seriously falling behind your competition in this aspect...

Nikolay Blaskov: Everything in life is based on making choices. We have weighed the alternatives and decided to put the support for our customers and the customers of our resellers first. What you said is an undeniable fact, but let me thoroughly explain the reason why we do not offer yet an e-commerce package with an included shopping cart as well as features like chat board, guest book, search engine submission tool and so on.

We do not use ready-made web hosting software such as the popular and widespread CPanel, Ensim, Plesk, H-Sphere, Alabanza, and so on. We have developed our own hosting software, which according to us is much faster and can handle much heavier loads than the applications mentioned above. We are still developing our web hosting software and the features that you mentioned, shopping cart, chat board, guest book, search engine submission tool, and so on are still under development. Our system is designed in such a way that it allows us to add and install many scripts with different functionality and complexity into each web hosting package.

Anybody who has at least some knowledge of programming and administration would immediately see the advantages of having your own proprietary web hosting software to using a ready-made solution such as CPanel, Ensim, Plesk, H-Sphere, Alabanza, and so on. At any time when web hosting customer request, we can change certain, virtually all, settings of their web hosting plan according to their desires. The same applies to the settings of the server, the hosting network or to the customization of a specific script, which a web hosting customer wants to install additionally.

With the aforementioned applications, this is possible only through the modification of specific numeric parameters or through the activation or deactivation of specific packages of the provided web hosting plan. In other words, the advantages of the administration of a proprietary web hosting system are much more compared to the advantages of the administration of an encrypted web hosting system.

Web Hosting Overview: You have mentioned that the web hosting panel that you use is your own development. It isn't popular and widespread. Where did you get ideas for organizing the features in the menu of your control panel?

Nikolay Blaskov: We are neither the discoverers nor the founders of the web hosting business as a whole, nor have we invented the navigation system called "web hosting control panel". Of course, we have gathered ideas from analyzing other control panels. I would like to mention here that our web hosting control panel is more functional and better organized than the products of our competitors. We have made a very careful and thorough analysis of CPanel, Ensim and Plesk. We have noticed that in order to make their web hosting control panels appear more comprehensive, competing developers have organized the features of their products in a way that is not very efficient to use. We have taken into account the hypothetical skills of a typical web hosting customer and our web hosting control panel can be used by inexperienced web hosting customers as well as those who have substantial knowledge in programming and

website administration with equal ease.

I don't know why the idea that a web hosting control panel must be full of all sorts of features organized in a terribly inefficient way is so popular in the web hosting industry. I agree that the more features there are in a web hosting control panel the better, but the organization of these features should make the software use easier, not harder. Customers should be able to familiarize themselves quickly with the web hosting control panel to start using the advantages from the increased number of features. Instead, the customer gets completely lost among the features of an overcrowded web hosting control panel and the results are not positive, as they were intended to be.