

Website Hosting Solutions — Comparison Matrix (editable)

Scale: 1 (weak) → 5 (strong). 'Ops burden' is scored as 5 = low ops / managed, 1 = high ops (you own uptime).

Criteria	Weight (%)	Preview deploys	Private staging	Custom domain	HTTPS	Performance	Authoring UX	Images	Search	Archive	Contact forms	Portability	Ops burden	Cost predictability				
Weights	100	12	12	8	6	10	12	10	8	6	2	6	4	4				
Definition		PR/branch preview URLs for review	Can restrict dev/previews to 1-2 reviewers	Attach custom domain easily	Automatic TLS/SSL	Fast on older devices (static/CDN edge)	Markdown + optional CMS; easy edits	Simple image handling / uploads	Practical site search	Easy 'Archive' section / tagging	Low-friction contact form support	Move between platforms without pain	Less maintenance = higher score	Stable, low surprises				
Option	Stack / Platform	Notes	Preview deploys	Private staging	Custom domain	HTTPS	Performance	Authoring UX	Images	Search	Archive	Contact forms	Portability	Ops burden	Cost predictability	Weighted Score (0-5)	Score (0-100)	Rank
A	Cloudflare Registrar + Pages + GitHub + Markdown (optional Decap CMS)	Static edge, previews + Access gating	5	4	5	5	5	4	4	4	5	3	5	4	5	4.50	90	1
B	Netlify + GitHub + Markdown	Previews + very turnkey forms	5	3	5	5	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	4	3	4.24	85	2
C	Vercel + GitHub (Next.js-friendly)	Best if interactive/app-like	5	3	5	5	4	4	4	4	5	3	4	4	3	4.14	83	4
D	Webflow	Designer-first, less Git-native	2	2	4	4	4	5	5	3	3	4	2	5	2	3.44	69	6
E	Ghost(Pro)	Writer-first managed blog	2	3	4	4	3	5	4	3	3	3	3	4	2	3.36	67	7
F	WordPress.com	All-in-one CMS ecosystem	2	3	4	4	3	4	5	4	4	4	3	3	2	3.46	69	5
G	HOMELAB: self-host static + reverse proxy (optional Cloudflare front)	Max control, max ops	4	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	1	4	4.20	84	3

Radar Criteria	A	B	C
Preview deploys	5	5	5
Private staging	4	3	3
Custom domain	5	5	5
HTTPS	5	5	5
Performance	5	4	4
Authoring UX	4	4	4

Pros & Cons (from your chat log; editable)

These lists are deliberately concise. If you want, you can expand each option with: exact setup steps, repo structure, and a minimal contact-form implementation.

Legend: **strong fit** | **tradeoff** | **requires extra work**

Option	Stack	Pros	Cons / Risks	Best when	Not ideal when	Effort	Cost note
A	Cloudflare Registrar + Pages + GitHub + Markdown (optional Decap CMS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PR/branch previews (clean dev→prod workflow) Static edge performance; very fast on older devices Custom domain + automatic HTTPS Highly portable (Git + Markdown) Can gate previews with Cloudflare Access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact forms need Functions/Workers or a 3rd-party form backend Preview URLs are public unless gated (Access) 	You want a durable, low-cost, Git-native stack with strong previews and speed.	You want a no-backend, 1-click contact form workflow.	Low–Medium	Pages free; domain at-cost; Access may add cost depending on needs.
B	Netlify + GitHub + Markdown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deploy previews per PR out of the box Custom domain + SSL included Built-in forms handling (very turnkey) Git + Markdown portability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Credit/usage model can be surprising at scale (builds/bandwidth/forms) Private dev typically relies on unlisted previews or add-ons 	You prioritize turnkey forms + solid preview workflow.	You want the simplest, most predictable long-term cost model.	Low	Free tier exists; paid tiers add credits/features.
C	Vercel + GitHub (Next.js-friendly)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Best-in-class for Next.js and interactive demos Preview deployments are first-class Custom domain + HTTPS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generated deployment URLs are public by default; protection can be plan-dependent If you stay mostly static, it may be more than you need 	You're building interactive sections (apps, demos, Next.js).	You want a purely static, minimal stack with lowest complexity.	Low–Medium	Hobby for personal use; Pro/Enterprise for more controls.
D	Webflow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very strong designer-first editing Quick executive polish Managed hosting + publishing workflow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not Git/PR-preview native (more 'stage in Webflow → publish') Portability is weaker; exports lose fidelity Search may require higher tier 	You want a polished site fast and prefer visual design tools.	You want Git-based workflows and maximum portability.	Low	Paid tiers for custom domain; search usually higher tier.
E	Ghost(Pro)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excellent writing experience Managed hosting (SSL/custom domain support by plan) Clean blog delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Less natural for complex docs-like portfolio trees PR preview workflow is not the model 	Your site is primarily writing/blog with light pages.	You want a repo-driven portfolio with nested project pages and previews.	Low	Monthly managed hosting; plan limits for uploads/features.
F	WordPress.com	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flexible ecosystem; can do almost anything with themes/plugins Strong media handling and content workflows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More moving parts than a static stack Git/preview workflow is non-native Pricing and feature availability vary by tier 	You want a full CMS with lots of options and don't mind complexity.	You want a lean, fast, portable static site with PR previews.	Medium	Often paid for custom domain/advanced features.
G	HOMELAB: self-host static + reverse proxy (optional Cloudflare front)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum control; truly private staging if you want it Can be extremely fast if serving static Fully portable (your repo, your infra) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You own patching, monitoring, backups, uptime Internet exposure risk unless carefully fronted (e.g., CDN/tunnel) Time tax compared to managed options 	You want full control and accept ongoing ops work.	You want low-maintenance and predictable uptime without babysitting.	High	Hardware + power + ISP constraints; CDN/tunnel optional.

Architecture Strips + Key Feature Icons (visual overview)

Each row is a simplified 'flow' from domain → hosting → content → extras.

This is not a network diagram; it's a quick mental model for what you'll actually manage.

Legend:

Domain/DNS	Hosting	Repo/CI	Content	Forms	Auth/Gate	Ops
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Option	Architecture strip						
A	Cloudflare Registrar + DNS	GitHub (repo + PRs)	Cloudflare Pages (static)	Markdown + assets (+ Decap CMS)	Functions/Workers or form backend	Cloudflare Access (previews gated)	
B	Any registrar + DNS	GitHub (repo + PRs)	Netlify (static)	Markdown + assets	Netlify Forms (turnkey)	Preview URLs (unlisted / controls)	
C	Any registrar + DNS	GitHub (repo + PRs)	Vercel (app hosting)	Next.js / Astro + content	Serverless or 3rd party	Deployment protection (tier)	
D	Any registrar + DNS	Webflow Designer + CMS	Webflow Hosting	Webflow Forms (or integrations)	Staging via Webflow	Managed (low ops)	
E	Any registrar + DNS	Ghost Admin (editor)	Ghost(Pro) managed	Embeds / 3rd party	Member features (optional)	Managed (low ops)	
F	Any registrar + DNS	WP Admin + themes/plugins	WordPress.com managed	Plugins / blocks (forms)	Various controls	Managed (moderate)	
G	Registrar + DNS	Git + CI (self)	Your server (home)	Reverse proxy (Caddy/Nginx)	VPN/Tunnel (optional)	Self-hosted endpoint	

Sources (URLs referenced in your chat log)

ID	Topic	URL	Used for
[1]	Cloudflare Pages preview deployments	https://developers.cloudflare.com/pages/configuration/preview-deployments/	Preview deployments per PR/branch
[2]	Cloudflare Registrar overview	https://developers.cloudflare.com/registrar/	Registrar, at-cost pricing/DNS features
[3]	Decap CMS intro	https://decapcms.org/docs/intro/	Git-based CMS with media uploads via UI
[4]	Cloudflare Pages product page	https://www.cloudflare.com/developer-platform/products/pages/	Free tier / platform positioning
[5]	Cloudflare Email Routing product page	https://www.cloudflare.com/developer-platform/products/email-routing/	Email forwarding for custom domain
[6]	Netlify deploy previews docs	https://docs.netlify.com/site-deploys/deploy-previews/	Deploy previews per PR
[7]	Netlify pricing	https://www.netlify.com/pricing/	Free tier + credit-based model
[8]	Netlify forms setup docs	https://docs.netlify.com/forms/setup/	Built-in form handling
[9]	Vercel for GitHub docs	https://vercel.com/docs/deployments/git/vercel-for-github	Preview deployments from GitHub
[10]	Vercel generated URLs docs	https://vercel.com/docs/deployments/generated-urls	Deployment URLs and access model
[11]	Vercel pricing	https://vercel.com/pricing	Plan tiers & controls
[12]	Webflow pricing	https://webflow.com/pricing	Plans, custom domain, search availability
[13]	Ghost(Pro) pricing	https://ghost.org/pricing	Managed hosting features & plan limits
[14]	WordPress.com pricing	https://wordpress.com/pricing/	Plans and feature tiers