

The Web: Domain Names & Hosting

Domain Names

Names that identify one or more IP addresses. For example, the domain name 'microsoft.com' represents about a dozen IP addresses. Domain names are used in URLs to identify particular web pages.

Good domain names are usually short, concise, and easy to remember. Registering a domain name that's long (just because the name of your company is long) is not always a good idea because it makes it less accessible to someone's memory. This could affect your business in any number of ways like driving down the amount of traffic you receive. Sometimes this unintentionally alienates your products from possible buyers or people in search of a service. When registering a domain name, a good rule of thumb is to keep it short and simple.

Popularity

Domain names have spread like wildfire across the internet platform making it possible for small businesses all the way to large companies to have a presence on the web. Because of their popularity, sometimes even the most simple and recognizable names are reserved and impossible to use.

Extensions

Most domain names fall under one of a few categories:

.com– Refer to companies.

.net– Refer to vast networks like IT companies

.org– define organizations like non-profits (think: Habitat for Humanity or cultural operations)

As the web continued to grow, more entities sought domain extensions that defined their own industry:

.gov– Government institutions and agencies

.edu– Colleges and academic facilities

.ca, .de, .mx– Even countries like Canada, Germany & Mexico have started creating their own interpretations

Mobile Domain Names

With the advent of mobile technology like cell phones and PDAs, the internet is more accessible than ever. Be-

cause more users get their information on the go, (from things like RSS feeds, online news papers, and e-mails) companies have started designing sites for a larger audience of professionals, teenagers and still more tech savvy consumers.

Companies now have the advantage of registering the extension .mobi (for mobile content on the web). Since 100% of .mobi sites must be optimized for viewing on a mobile phone, the main advantage of .mobi, from the user's perspective, is:

- They are guaranteed a site optimized for usage on the go. This means hard factors such as smaller screens, device form/size, and device input/output options.
- Their expectations for immediacy of results and context awareness under a shortened attention span (compared to home & desktop use of the Internet) are fulfilled on a wider scale.

Hosting Services

When considering hosting for website, you need to know what a host does. Internet hosting allows individuals and organizations to store source files, content, and make their websites accessible via the World Wide Web. These companies provide space on a server they own for use by their clients as well as providing internet connectivity, typically in a data center.

When considering hosting packages, price and reliability are huge factors in determining where your website will spend it's time. Like a home, your hosting service needs to provide all sorts of comforts and luxuries to you. Without these basic necessities, living there is going to get REALLY annoying. For example, your host should keep a reputation for very little downtime or crashes. Companies who provide service to customers but maintain zero stability keeping your site up and active should be left out of the mix. Downtime on the web is dangerous and affects profit margins, the passing of information, and traffic.

Some responsible and reliable examples of web hosting are:

www.NetworkSolutions.com

To this company, the domain name registration business

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has become it's most valuable division. As of 2006, Network Solutions manages more than 7.6 million domain names. Their size, founding status, and longevity have made them one of the most important corporations affecting domain name price and policy.

www.Register.com

This company is one of the original founders of internet services. Their long life in the community eventually led them to turn over a large piece of their operations towards ecommerce and the hosting and registration of domain names.

An example of inadequate hosting and registrar service is:

www.GoDaddy.com

You may have seen Godaddy's commercials or heard their ads on the radio. While they claim to have excellent customer service and easy to use tools that get you up and running in no time, their one downfall is their end user experience.

Customers visiting their site are greeted with a sloppy infrastructure, hard to navigate architecture, duplicate links, solicitous banners, pop-up ads, and web applications most non-specialists would have a hard time understanding. In short, GoDaddy say they're the friendliest of all registrars, but their lack of engaging content, tools, or attention to new internet standards make them an all-together poor choice as your first and only host.

Pricing

Average prices for a hosting packages cost as much as \$6.95 for basic and extend as far as \$30.00 for pro. The difference in these prices vary in between medians but the more you're willing to pay, the greater service and security you're entitled to. Those who pay \$30 fees are permitted to more space to store their files, email, and expanded data transfer rates. Customers willing to pay only modest amounts of money are limited to 1 domain registration per hosting package and only a fraction of the space your allowed to store files or transfer data.