SASKATCHEWAN efuturecentre

Domain Name Registration

Domain Name Registration Explained

How important is your domain name? If you are promoting or selling online it is extremely important. Not only is it your company's brand name, but it's also your address in cyberspace. Once you've selected what that name will be, you must register it with one of the hundreds of registrars. This is not the easiest task due to the fact that your first choice may already be taken. Here are some tips on how to come up with an effective domain name and how to go about registering it.

Step 1: List all the words that relate to your business idea
List all words relating to your business' category, products, services, core audiences, and key differentiating factors. The longer this list, the better. Your goal is to brainstorm a business name that is striking and memorable.

Step 2: Brainstorm business name word combinations.
Chances are that each of these keywords has already been taken separately. Now you can utilize the list previously made and begin to form two-word combinations. Ideally, you'll come up with a business name that makes you stand out from the crowd. While you're not quite at the stage of selecting a domain name, the characteristics of a good domain name are as follows:

Come up with a business name that makes you stand out from the crowd.

- Short
- Memorable
- Not easily confused with others
- Hard to misspell
- Relates to your core business
- Sounds solid to your target audience

Useful tools are also available on the Net to help you combine words and come up with domain names.

Step 3: Check domain name availability
Only when you have developed a number of possible company (or product) names, should you begin the domain name search. The reason is that many good domain

names will already be taken, and you may be influenced to only use domain names that are left over.

Check all of your top name choices, and minor variations of them. Note which domain names are available as a ".com" and those that are available with your country designation, such as ".fr" or ".ca". Also note domain names that have already been purchased. These days there are many more domain names than there are active web sites. In many cases, over eager domain speculators have bought up blocks of names, and are having a difficult time unloading them at the prices they were hoping for.

Step 4: Check trade-mark availability

In conjunction with deciding on a business name and a corresponding domain name, make sure you check the trade-mark database for your country. You can also find databases online for most countries. Make sure you cover your own country first, then other countries where you want to avoid confusion. Some online databases are:

- **US Patent and Trademark Office**
  http://tess.uspto.gov

- **Canada**
  www.strategis.ic.gc.ca/cgi-bin/sc_consu/trade-marks/search_e.pl

- **UK**
  www.patent.gov.uk/dbservices/tm.html

- **Australia**
  www.ipaustralia.gov.au/trademarks/T_srch.htm

Step 5: Register domain name(s)

It is important to claim both .com and .ca so you can catch all the traffic.

It is recommended that you register all variations of your domain name. It is important to claim both .com and .ca top-level domain names so you can catch more traffic. You can also direct more than one domain to your website. This is ideal if your company name is long, difficult to spell, or is not easily recognized. This also enables additional search engine registrations. If you know customers will misspell your domain name, you might want to register common misspellings.

Just for information, new domains have been created. Here's a quick review of the seven new categories:

.aero	Air-transport industry
.biz	Businesses
.coop	Nonprofit cooperatives
.pro	Accountants, lawyers, and physicians
.museum	Museums
.name	Individuals
.info	Unrestricted use

Step 6: Purchase already owned domain name(s)

If the domain name you wish to use for your company is already taken, you always have the option of negotiating a purchase price with the owner of the domain. Some are concerned about the price of previously purchased domain names getting jacked up if interest is shown. One way to handle this concern is to find out who the owner of the domain is and then to contact them. You can locate owners through www.webnames.ca and by searching the "who is" database of CIRA.ca and netsol.com..

Here is an example of a possible letter:

> Dear Domain Owner,

A memorable domain name is an important marketing investment.

> I've been thinking about starting an online business selling (your business). I've come up with about a dozen really good possible domain names, one of which is yours. If you're interested in selling, I'd like to see if we can come to an agreement about price. Fortunately, since I've identified a dozen good domain names, I'm not under pressure to purchase the one you own, but if your price is right, it might help me select yours, and put some fast cash in your pocket.

> Sincerely,
> John Doe

This way you don't sound too eager, but do show your willingness to negotiate. The domain name owner can't push the price up too high, because he knows you have other options.

Useful Information Sources

- **ICANN** - www.icann.org/registrars/accredited-list.html
- **CIRA** - www.cira.ca
- **Network Solutions** - www.netsol.com

Contact Us

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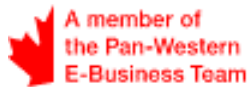
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