BRAINSTORMING AND REGISTERING A DOMAIN NAME

Brainstorming A Domain

Your domain name is a lot like choosing your company name: it requires a lot of thought and consideration. It's your identity on the Web. You want to make sure it's one that fits your business and is easy to find and market.

Sometimes it can be hard to come up a good domain name. It could be your own name is already taken or that your business name doesn't work well (too long, hard to pronounce) as a domain.

What should you do then?

This tutorial will walk you through the steps to finding and registering a domain.

Finding the Perfect Domain

The best domain, of course, would be your business name. But that's not always possible. Or it might not be relevant, if you are, say, adding a new area to your business and want to target what you are offering. There are a lot of ways to pick the perfect domain.

Tip: Your domain name needs to be specific enough people automatically know what to expect when they arrive on your site. Or it should be branded with an interesting name that arouses enough curiosity people want to visit it. Think Google or About.com.

Use your imagination along these steps to help you choose a good domain.

1. Make the Domain Easy to Spell

Choose a domain name that is easy to spell. Using slang words (u instead of you) or words that can be spelled in multiple ways (two, to, too), can make it harder for customers to find your site.

2. Keep it Short

While it is ok to have a long domain, it's best to keep it short and simple to avoid mistyping and misspellings. The shorter the length, the easier you customers can remember it. Keeping it short also makes it easier for others to share it since they can remember it better. For example: Quotes.com.

3. Use Keywords

You can use keywords that describe your business, products or services. For example, an auto repair shop might choose to register something like AutoRepair.com or AutoTireService.com that includes keywords people are searching for.

4. Watch Out for Trademarks

Try to avoid registering a domain name that includes trademarked names. You are risking a lengthy and costly legal battle.

5. Avoid Numbers and Hyphens

Numbers are often hard for people to remember. They hear your website name and don't know if the domain spells out the number or uses the actual number. For example, Jewelry4You.com or is it JewelryforYou.com?

The same is true for hyphens. Consider Coolest-Tech-Toys.com. People will remember the words but often forget to include the hyphen. They will type in the words all together, like CoolestTechToys.com which may direct them to a competitor's website.

6. Make it Memorable

Millions of domains have been registered so you need to make yours memorable in some way. Make it catchy.

7. Create your Own Word

It might difficult to get a single-word domain since most are already taken. In this case, you might need to create your own word. Try combining two words to make one like YouTube.com. Or blending parts of words to make one like Contentrix.com (content matrix).

Another option is to use a prefix or suffix as part of the word like Mashable.com or Shopify.com. Or make up a completely unique name like Etsy.com.

Alliterations make good domains as well. Think Coca-Cola or FedEx.

7. Research It

Research to make sure the name you want isn't copyrighted or used by another company. Look to see if there are competitors that have a similar name and try to avoid those.

8. Use an Appropriate Domain Name Extension

The extensions are the suffixes at the end of your web address. .Com is the most popular. .info is for informational sites, .net is often used for technical sites. .Org is used for non-profit organizations.

9. Use Online Tools

There are many online domain name generator sites online that can help you. For example, Wordoid.com will generate made up words from your keywords. NameTumbler.com provides domain names by combining a keyword with a word from their database.

You can have more than one domain name pointed at your website as well. For example if you own the company Jack's tools, you could have jackstools.com, hammertools.com and buyhammers.com all point to jackstools.com.

When considering a domain name, consider how people will search for it. Is it easy to remember and spell? Is it something that is catchy? Does it stay away from copyrighted or trademarked names? Your domain name is how people find you online. It needs to reflect your business yet be interesting enough for people to remember it.

Buying a Domain on GoDaddy

There are many domain buying services online. One of the more popular is GoDaddy.com. Buying and setting up your domain on GoDaddy is pretty straightforward. Follow these steps to get your domain.

Step One

Go to GoDaddy.com.

On the home page, enter the domain you want to register into the search box. Click Go.

If your name is available, Click Continue to add it to your cart. The dot com extension is the default suffix.

If not, you will need to enter another name or choose a different extension (.net, .info, etc.) Another form of your name with a .com ending is best, though, since it's the most recognized form of extension. Look at the suggestions GoDaddy makes for you. There might be one that works well.

Good news, this domain is available

> Continue

visualinsider
.com

On Sale

~~$14.99~~ $12.99*   + Add

Step Two

Choose options to add to your domain.

Privacy Protection hides your personal information from WHOIS searches and protects your identity.

Privacy and Business Protection protects your personal information and shield your domain against misuse.

You can also add website builder, hosting and email as well. You don't have to host your domain at GoDaddy, though.

Click continue.

Step Three

Review your order.

Choose the length of time you want to register for from the drop down box.

Review your current order

Total cost   USD $ ⌄

visualinsider.com $13.99/yr* $27.98
.COM Domain Registration   Save $2.00   @Remove
6X Off   United States

Plus ICANN fee of $0.18/yr   ICANN Fees $0.36

No   Protect your personal information @ $28.34
     Make my domain private for $7.99/yr! SAVE $2.00!

                                          Total savings $2.00

! Matching Domains Available (.net, .co, .info)   ⌄   Proceed to Checkout >

visualinsider.net - ~~$16.99~~ $6.99 + Add
visualinsider.co - ~~$29.99~~ $6.99 + Add
visualinsider.info - ~~$14.99~~ $2.99 + Add

Add All Domains for ~~$61.97~~ $16.97   + Add All

Step Four

You will need to sign in or register to buy a domain.

Sign in to your account or register.
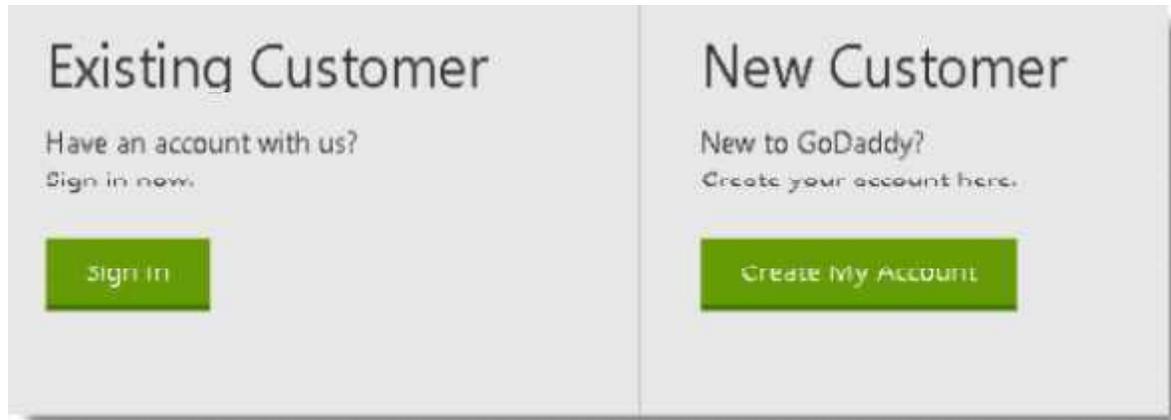
To register, Click on New customers.

Fill out the Billing and payment information.

Click proceed to checkout.

Click Place Order.

Buying and registering a domain name on GoDaddy is pretty simple. You need to have an idea of the name you want to register, your billing information and a way to pay. That's it.