Brainstorming Your Website Domain

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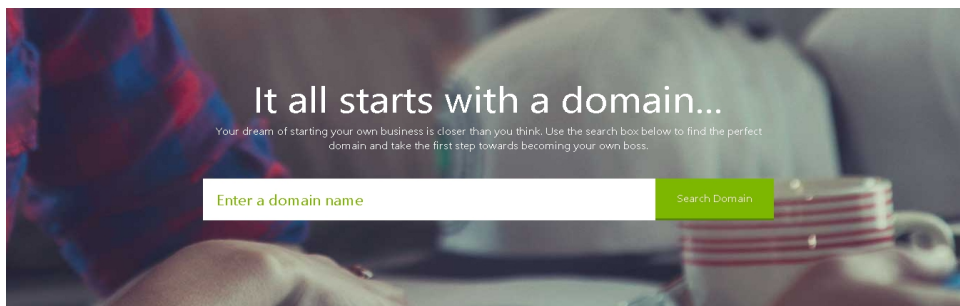
Your website or blog domain name is a lot like choosing your company name: it requires a lot of thought and consideration. It is your identity on the Web. It is both who you are and where you will be found. You want to make sure your domain name is one that fits your business, your business model, and your products and or/services.

You will want to be sure your website domain name is both easy to recognize and easy to find. A lot of that will come down to how your market your business, but having the right domain name in the first place makes the rest all that much more easy.

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. It could be too long, or too hard to pronounce to use effectively as a domain.

What should you do then?

This tutorial will walk you through the steps to finding and registering a domain that is right for you, and your business.

Finding the Perfect Domain

The best domain, of course, would be your business name, or your personal name if that is the route you choose to take. But that is 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 with separate and distinct branding.

None-the-less, there are a lot of ways to pick the perfect domain.

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

Use your imagination along these lines to help you choose a good domain. The more of the following factors you can apply to the process the better the resulting domain name is likely to be.

It is not really all that difficult. A little work in the beginning will make thins much better later on.

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: ourhutch.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.

Remember, just because your website is about something, it doesn't mean you can use a trademark or brand name in your domain.

For example: wordpressbusinessnetwork.com is not acceptable because "WordPress" is a registered trademark of Automattic corporation. However, it is permissible to use wpbusinessnetwork.com which not only conveys the same message but is also shorter.

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 if you can. Remember Yahoo and Google – strange words that are hard to forget. You may want to find something of that nature for your own domain name.

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. A couple of examples would be:

youtube.com
ourhutch.net

Or you can blend parts of words to make one new word. A couple of example would be:

contentrix.com (content matrix).
larmtronics.com (alarm electronics)

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 or ebay.com.

Alliterations, rhymes, and other wordplays make good domains as well. Think cocacola.com or fedex.com.

Finally, acronyms can work. Consider this one a friend of mine came up with years ago when he just couldn't find anything suitable that was still available:

solfan.com (Sick Of Looking For A Name)

If you are having trouble thinking of something you can use, or finding something that is actually available, don't give up. There is still more you can do.

7. Research It

Research to make sure the name you want isn't copyrighted, trandemarked, or in common use by another competing company. Look to see if there are competitors that have a similar name and try to avoid those if you can.

8. Use an Appropriate Domain Name Extension

The extensions, properly known as top level domain (TLD) are the suffixes at the end of your web address. While .com is the most popular others are available. You might choose .info for an informational site or .net if your site is more technical or relates to networking. The .org TLD is used for non-profit organizations.

10. Use Online Tools

There are many online domain name generator sites which can help you with your selection. For example, wordoid.com will generate made up words from your keywords, and nametumbler.com provides domain potentially unique names by combining a keyword you provide with a matching 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.

To recap, when considering a domain name, think about how real people are likely to 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

We often talk about buying, or purchasing, a domain name. That really isn't true. In fact, you register, or rent, or license your domain name. There is a yearly fee required to keep that registration active.

There are many domain registration services online. One of the more popular ones, and one I use myself, is GoDaddy, found at http://godaddy.com.

Registering and setting up your domain on GoDaddy is pretty straightforward, however I do suggest you be wary of all the in-your-face ads and upsells GoDaddy seems to be known for.

Many people who start out to register one domain name end up with many extra features and services the probably don't actually need. If it is your first time, just register the single domain name.

Follow these steps to get your domain.
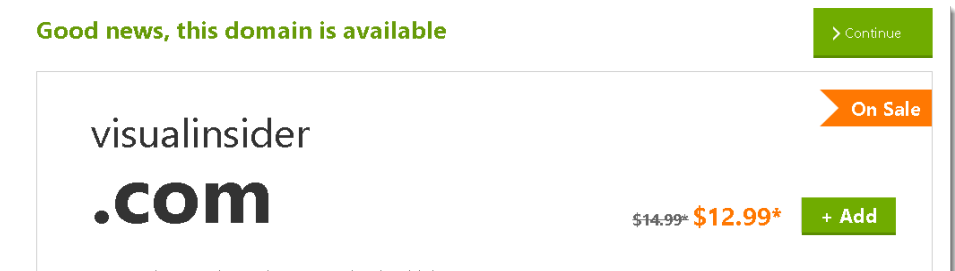
Step One

Go to GoDaddy (http://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 is the most recognized form of extension. Look at the suggestions GoDaddy makes for you. There might be one that works well.

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.

Either of these options may be of interest to you, but the choice may not be properly understood by others if you are in business. Some may wonder why you want to hide who/where you are.

You can also add website builder, hosting and email as well. However you do not have to host your domain at GoDaddy just because you register your domain there and you may want to host your website elsewhere. I do just that.

Click continue.

Step Three

Review your order.

Choose the length of time you want to register for from the drop down box. Unfortunately there is a lot of misinformation floating around on this topic. You DO NOT get a Google/SEO boost by registering your domain for more than one year.

Review your current order

Product		Term	Unit Price	Subtotal
WWW	visualinsider.com .COM Domain Registration **6% Off** *Plus ICANN fee of $0.18/yr	2 Years	$13.99/yr* Save $2.00	$27.98 ⊗Remove

Total cost   USD $

United States

ICANN Fees* $0.36

$28.34

Total savings $2.00

Proceed to Checkout >

NO   **Protect your personal information.** ⓘ
Make my domain private for **$7.99/yr! SAVE $2.00!**

⊕ Matching Domains Available (.net, .co, .info)   ⌄

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.

Existing Customer

Have an account with us?
Sign in now.

Sign In

New Customer

New to GoDaddy?
Create your account here.

Create My Account

To register, Click on New customers.

Fill out the Billing and payment information.

Click proceed to checkout.

Click Place Order.

And that's it!

You see... 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 is all it takes.

Look for my Hosting and WordPress tutorial guides, companions to this one, as well. If you can't find them, feel free to contact thewiz@ourhutch.com and Steve will let you know where you can find a copy.