

Topic | Website

Tutorial 8

Registering a Domain Name

This tutorial will help you select a good domain name for your website and give you advice on the cost.

Reading time: 15 minutes | Prerequisites: None

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1. What is a domain name?

A domain name (like mytrendyhotel.com.au) is the address used to find you on the Internet. It can be used on both your website address (also called a URL: www.mytrendyhotel.com.au) and your email address (john@mytrendyhotel.com.au)

It is better for your business email address to use your domain name:

URL:	http://www.airporttransfers.com.au	http://www.airporttransfers.com.au
Email:	info@airporttransfers.com.au	airporttransfers@bigpond.com

The final portion of a domain name  www.mytrendyhotel.com.au is  called a top level domain (TLD). In this instance it is a country code TLD as it carries the nationality of the domain name (.com.au = Australia).

2. How do I select a good domain name?

Just like your business name, your domain name should:



- Nicely balance what your business is all about
- Be meaningful to your target market so they can remember it**
- Encompass all or part of your business name
- Not be easily misspelt and not be too long (3 words or less is best)

Don't forget that your domain name automatically becomes your brand name, whether you like it or not.

If you need some inspiration, www.nameboy.com or www.domainfellow.com will propose domain name based on your keywords.

Finally, only letters, numbers or dash ("-") are allowed in a domain name. Avoid using dashes when possible: www.mytrendyhotel.com.au is less confusing than www.my-trendy-hotel.com.au.

3. Do I register a .com or a .com.au? What is best?

Getting a .com.au informs your clients that you are a legitimate Australia business. If you cannot decide you can always purchase both a .com and a .com.au domain name. Domain names are so affordable nowadays and you won't miss out on business by people forgetting to append or remove the .au.

Having both will also make sure that people emailing you at john@tourguide.com.au will still arrive, even though your primary domain name is tourguide.com.

<p>Sample of international top level domains (TLD)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • .com: originally intended for 	<p>Australian top level domains (TLD)</p> <p>For more information:</p> <p>www.ada.org.au/pdf/yau.pdf</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • .com: originally intended for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • .com.au: for commercial entities, such

<p>commercial sites, anybody can register</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • .net: originally intended for companies involved in Internet infrastructure, anybody can register • .org: originally intended for not-for-profit organisations, anybody can register • .info: anybody can register • .biz: anybody can register • .travel: exclusively for the travel industry. This .travel TLD is suffering from a lack of update from the industry. It could be due to its higher than average cost. For more information visit www.encirca.com/HTML/travel.shtml • .co: anybody can register (new) 	<p>as companies (with ACN as registered through ASIC), and businesses (registered with state governments).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • .asn.au: for incorporated associations, political parties, trade unions, sporting and special interest clubs. • .net.au: for commercial entities, such as companies (with ACN as registered through ASIC), and businesses (registered with state governments). • .id.au: for individuals who are Australian citizens or residents. • .org.au: for charities and non-profit organisations.
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4. Do I need to have a registered business name?

If you would like to register a .com.au domain you will need either an ACN or a registered business name. You will be asked to provide this when you register your domain name.

auDA, the Australian Domain Name Administrator is the policy authority and industry self-regulatory body for the .au domain space. Their website is www.auda.org.au.

5. How to register a domain name?

If you wish to register an Australian domain name, start by browsing www.auda.org.au/registrars/accredited-registrars to find a list of all accredited domain name registrars. It is very straightforward and you can pay with your credit card online.

For .com domain names, you will get a best price if you buy directly from the provider – in this instance the USA. For instance, a reputable US registrar, GoDaddy.com offers domain names at USD5 a year. Do your research though; the cheapest is not always the most reliable

6. How much does a domain name cost?

The below table will give you an idea of how much you could expect to pay for each type of domain name.

<u>International</u>	<u>Australian</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • .com .org .net .info: from USD10.00-15.00 per year • .biz: from USD15.00 per year • .travel: from USD99.00 per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • .com.au: from AUD25.00 for 2 years • .asn.au: from AUD38.50 for 2 years • .net.au: from AUD25.00 for 2 years • .org.au: from AUD13.75 for 2 years • .id.au: from AUD29.95 for 2 years

7. What if the domain name I want is already taken?

A possible scenario could be that the domain name you wish to buy is already taken. Generally domain name registrars will provide you with other options. For instance, they could offer you:

- .com if the .com.au is already taken. This option isn't a good idea as it would signify that two different businesses in Australia would share very close domain names: www.mytour.com and www.mytour.com.au. It would be too confusing for your target market.
- .com.au if the .com is already taken. This option makes sense if the .com is not an Australian business.
- a .biz or a .net if either or both .com and .au are already taken. This could be confusing for your target market, especially if the holder of the .com or .com.au is a competitor in your space.

If your preferred domain name is already taken, it is best to say away from simply changing the top level domain (the .com or .com.au) as it might confuse your target market. Brainstorming and finding a unique domain name is recommended. You can use tools such as try www.nameboy.com or www.domainfellow.com to assist you.

Imagine www.accommodationbyron.com.au was already taken. Stay away from purchasing www.accommodationbyron.com and www.accommodati0n-byron.com, especially if your target market is Australians used to domain names ending in .com.au. You could try www.romanticaccommodatinbyron.com.au, www.stayinbyron.com.au or similar names and you might even find a more catchy one than would have initially thought of.

8. Is it true that it's best to have a lot of different domain names?

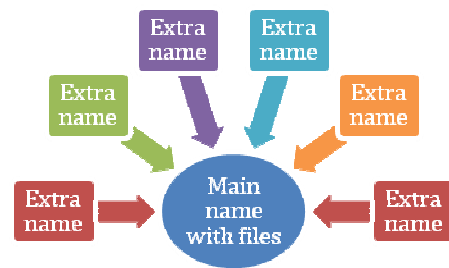
No, this is false, unless you do so because your domain name is commonly misspelt or you want to buy other good domain names that you do not want your competitors to have.

Large companies might have different domain names for each product but for small and medium tourism businesses there is no real benefit. It will make absolutely no difference to your search engine rankings to have many domain names all pointing to the same website.

Search engines index websites based on their content. Since a domain name is not associated with any content (unless it is linked to a host with your websites' files), it will not be indexed.

If you have a few domain names, such as country-hostel.com and country-hostel.com.au you will want to redirect the "extra" one to the main one (which hosts the files).

From a search engine perspective, 301 redirects are the only acceptable ways of redirecting domain names.



9. Key learning outcomes

- If you are an Australian business ensure you own the .com.au and the .com domain name (if possible). Then redirect one to the other. This will avoid someone else buying it
- Having multiple domain names without content directly attached to each one of them is not going to help your business achieve better positions on search engines
- If you have more than 1 domain name ensure you or your web developer uses the "301 redirect" technique to redirect the domains to the main domain
- It is best practice to ensure our email address reflects your domain name e.g: info@yourdomain.com.au and not country-hostel@bigpond.com or any other Internet Service Provider

10. Related material

a) Related tutorials

- Domain name: advanced
- Organising hosting for my site
- Security and backups

b) Related websites

- The Australian domain name administrator: www.auda.org.au
- The Australian domain name administrator need to know: www.auda.org.au/pdf/needtoknow.pdf