
IXDA
GEORGIA TECH

Buying a Domain

Basics

- A domain name is your “address” on the internet. It’s what people type into their browsers

- There are two parts: the name, and the Top Level Domain name (TLD)

- You typically pay for them once a year, anywhere between about $5 to $20

- Think of them similarly to a mailing address; paying for the plot of land / address doesn’t necessarily buy you the house as well

What Kind to Get

- .com is the most popular and well known in the US, .org is usually used for non profits, .gov for the government, .net for weirdos, and .biz for scammers

- Some newly acceptable TLD's are .me, .co, .tv, .us, and somewhat trendy is using it to complete your word ex: (http://bu.mp)

- A great test for whether or not a domain name is good is either (a) it's your full name and/or (b) you can say it to someone at a bar and they would understand completely without you having to clarify

Recommended Registrars

- Domains are sold from “Registrars” who are certified to resell them via an international organization called ICANN

1. hover.com
2. namecheap.com
3. 1and1.com

- Top features to look for are: DNS services, Whois Privacy Protection, and simple URL forwarding

- Do *not* get suckered into paying for hosting unless you specifically plan on coding your own site or using your own software to build it

- Don’t pay for email services too; there’s free alternatives

Miscellaneous

• Domain transfers usually kill any remaining time you had with your old provider and usually come free with a year of service included with the transfer price

• To transfer a domain, you have to lock / unlock your domain name. This is to help prevent people from just hijacking it whenever

• Your domain host still needs accurate information about your name, address, and etc. even if you got the “privacy protection” because otherwise bogus information might have your domain deactivated upon audit

Using a Domain

What is DNS?

- Domain Name System (DNS) is a database system that translates a computer's fully qualified domain name into an IP address. It’s what converts Google.com into a real number address like 8.8.8.8

- When your computer requests an IP address, and you are the first person to request information about this system in a certain period of time (ranging from 12 hours to one week), then the local name server will perform a search on behalf of your workstation. This search may involve querying two or more other name servers at potentially very remote locations

Why should I care?

- This is why a lot of times when you make changes to things like subdomains, dns servers, and etc. about your domain name, including initial registration, it can take up to at least 48 hours for it to “start working”

- So if you update something and it doesn’t work right away, don’t panic, it probably won’t until at least the following morning

Domain Forwarding

- Usually a simplified interface provided by Hover, Namecheap, and etc. that make it easier for you to forward your domain to the content you want without having to set up a bunch of DNS records yourself

- You can usually forward two types of urls:
  subdirectory: http://example.com/**forwardme**
  subdomain: http://**forwardme**.example.com/

- If you've forwarded your entire domain or an entire subdomain, it's likely that it overrides a subdirectory, so watch out for that

Domain Forwarding

- Regular forwarding a domain usually changes the url, so if you pointed http://example.com/google to Google's homepage, when it's done loading, the url bar would actually change to http://google.com/

- How do you avoid that? Use either domain masking or direct domain mapping

Domain Masking & Mapping

- Domain *masking* is the simplest but has its drawbacks while Domain *mapping* is the best but requires extra work

- Here's a simple example, on first load:

  masking: http://fowardme.example.com/

  mapping: http://forwardme.example.com/

- After clicking any link on that page:

  masking: http://fowardme.example.com/

  mapping: http://forwardme.example.com/page2

- This means in masking, no one can link to any specific page in your site. For some situations, that's okay.

Domain Masking & Mapping

- Domain *masking* can usually be done with the flip of a switch on your domain registration page

- Domain *mapping* however, requires some more manual work in the receiving site and in your DNS records

- Usually you have to create either an A record or a CNAME record and the receiving site should give you the exact steps to follow and what values to use

Domain Masking & Mapping

- Watch out, if you set an A/CNAME record for http://example.com, you can't use any of its subdirectories, for example: http://example.com/resume

- Suggestion: set the record on http://work.example.com or setup a separate subdomain for files, for example: http://files.example.com/

Intro to Html, Css, & Javascript

What do each of these do?

• HTML, CSS, and Javascript are the three most popular languages for the front facing portion of the web today and they each play their own role

• HTML is used to define your content and structure of your page: list items, images, paragraphs, links, etc. Avoid at all costs any use of HTML for aesthetics like color, font size, spacing, etc.

• CSS is where you actually get to define aesthetics and has control over display, font color, font type, spacing, size and much more

What do each of these do?

- Javascript is a bit more advanced but it’s what’s used to make your pages come to life sometimes in animation, other times in functionality, after the page is loaded

- Each of these play their role and the more you muddy the waters using one for the other, the harder time you’ll have fixing or changing things later

HTML & CSS Resources

- This is a fantastic website for picking things up, even for extreme beginners: http://www.dontfeartheinternet.com

- W3Schools is a great reference source:
  HTML: http://www.w3schools.com/html/
  CSS: http://www.w3schools.com/css/

- Codeacademy has a fantastic free interactive course:
  http://www.codecademy.com/tracks/web

- Lynda has great video tutorials online as well about pretty much everything but to get it free at Tech, there's a special login: http://www.lynda.com/

Javascript Resources

- Codeacademy has a great free interactive course too:
  http://www.codecademy.com/tracks/javascript

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Intro to Hosting Basics

Why?

- If you want to be able to put online any kind of file you want or to really tinker with the guts with your website for something nicely custom, or if you just don’t want to pay for Cargo, Behance, etc. around $10 a month for every single website you want to put up
- It’s also generally cheaper, especially for multiple sites

Where?

- There’s a myriad of options out there that range from $1 a month to around $20 and they all vary in their features and options

1	2	3
nearlyfreespeech.net	1and1.com	namecheap.com

- Nearlyfreespeech is great because it’s pay-as-you-go but 1and1 or namecheap might be just as cheap or easier, especially if you’ve bought or are going to buy your domain name from either of them

What do I need?

- Chances are, you don't need huge jiggawatts of storage, space, bandwidth, etc. Start off with the cheapest hosting plan that works for you and then upgrade from there. If you "have" to upgrade because you're getting too many visitors, then that's a good problem to have.

- If you *are* getting a lot of traffic (in the thousands per day), Nearlyfreespeech is definitely not the cheapest option but otherwise its no joke, practically free

What software?

• You’re probably going to need an FTP client to upload and edit files on your server. FTP is just an abbreviation for “File Transfer Protocol”

• Mac: Get Transmit, it’s the best by far but it costs money. If you don’t want to pay, try using Cyberduck at first and then you can upgrade or switch later

• Windows: Filezilla and WinSCP seem to be decent options for this

Quick Tips

• Most of your servers will be based on a software called “Apache” which comes with its own quirks and features

• One major thing that is useful to know is that Apache, when loading a bare folder name: http://example.com/work/ instead of http://example.com/work/home.html looks for a few “default” files and will display them automatically

• Those are what we call index files. So if you want “home.html” to be displayed automatically for just /work then rename it to “index.html”

Don’t stress out about this stuff.

Worry about the content.