

Three Steps to setting up a Web Presence

An article by



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There are three steps to setting up a web presence for your business:

1. Register a domain name
2. Find a Host for your website which includes email services
3. Design and implement your website

Register a Domain Name

A domain name is a unique name you can purchase which allows people to find your website on the internet. Think of it like a phone number that connects customers to your business. Typical domain names include the likes of www.coles.com.au or www.holden.com.au.

A domain name is registered via the official domain name authority [AUDA](#), the Australian Domain Name Administrator. This body controls all domain name registrations in Australia which in turn answers to the ICANN, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, an international affiliation. [The Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy](#) is the federal government overseer to AUDA with reserve powers of intervention if necessary. AUDA however does not directly sell domain names. This is delegated to a selection of approved commercial registrars who must comply with the framework set out by the above three authorities.

When you register a domain name with a registrar, it is listed with AUDA and then with ICANN. It is your domain name. It is not owned or controlled by the registrar, and you can transfer it to another registrar at any time you wish.

Registrars are free to charge what they like for domain name registration and this is why you find varying price structures. Most however are within a few dollars of each other and are often complimented by other services on offer, such as hosting. More on hosting later. In Australia, all **com.au** names are registered for at least two years.

You will notice the prefix *www.* in front of a domain name. This simply denotes the *World Wide Web* where a website is found. You will also notice that some domains have differing suffixes to them, for example *domainname.com.au*, *domainname.net.au* or *domainname.gov.au*. The suffixes denote what kind of domain name the organisation falls into. **.com** denotes a commercial organisation as does the lesser used **.net**. The **.gov** as you may have guessed denotes a government department. **.org** can

only be used by charities and other non-profit organisations. A full listing of suffixes and their meanings can be found [here](#) on the AUDA website.

The **.au** suffix denotes that the domain belongs to a registered business within Australia. To register a **.com.au** name, you must supply an ABN or business registration number which must be in turn verified by the domain registrar. This is important as it signals to the customer that you are a bona-fide business. Similar rules apply in other countries such as **.com.ca** for Canada or **.com.ru** for Russia. Anyone however can register the familiar .com or .net domain names. Consider these generic domain suffixes as international domain names answerable to nobody as to their content.

However note that many multinational corporations carry a generic .com names along with local suffixes for countries they do business with, for example www.intel.com the world site and www.intel.com.au, the Australian arm of the company. A full list of international suffixes can be found [here](#).

Note: Always be wary of dealing with companies using only .com or .net suffixes. As stated earlier there is no official government control over these domains and they could be based everywhere. Notice how SPAM email is almost always from these types of domains.

Arrange Hosting

Once you a domain name registered you need website and a hosting service for your website. Hosting is a service provided by companies that will display your website to the world. These companies employ Web servers, which are powerful computers connected directly to the Internet. These computers can host hundreds of websites at a time. Almost all companies that offer domain name registration also offer hosting package. You are not obliged to purchase both through the same provider, though it is often practical to keep them under the same banner. Email addresses are created and managed from within your hosting service.

Hosting is not to be confused with your Internet Service Provider (ISP), for example Bigpond or Optus. An ISP provides access to the Internet via various forms of telecommunications, such as cable, ADSL and wireless. Just too confuse you, most ISP's however also offer domain name registration and hosting for your website. Hosting packages come in varying forms offering different levels of service. These include bandwidth of the website (loading speed), disk space for the website (how much room the website uses); the number of email addresses you can commission; databases for e-commerce sites etc. Your requirements of web hosting should be discussed with your website developer.

Develop a Website

Then finally you need to have your actual website developed. Development of the website is a cooperative affair between the website developer, you and your business. We won't delve into web development here as it is a whole subject on its own. Once the website is finalised, it is uploaded to your hosting service for the world to see!
