



Registering Your Site's Domain Name

Jewish culture put great value on a name. A Jewish boy, for example, did not receive his name until the eighth day following his birth, the day of his circumcision. The meaning behind this tradition is rich; circumcision was, in the Old Testament, a picture of God's covenant with the children of Israel, that which set them apart as His chosen nation. The rite of circumcision placed God's heavenly name on the child at the same time that his parents were giving him an earthly name.

Every name in the Bible has meaning, and the name that Jewish parents gave to their child often foretold the child's life-story or personality. In the New Testament, circumcision is replaced by Holy Baptism. Through the water and the Word, we receive Christ's name and become part of God's family. We no longer belong to ourselves; we are His (Romans 8:16-17). Jesus' name, as noted in the passage above, is of utmost importance. He is 'I AM' (Exodus 3:14); that is, He is all that we shall ever need for life and salvation.

Pick a Name

When creating a Web site, it will be important for you to determine the domain name that you will use. What is a **domain name**? It is the "easy to remember" URL that tells the **Name Server** computer where to look for your Web site. For example, the Lutheran Women's Missionary League chose 'lwml.org' as its domain name. Domain names are not required in order to publish information on the World Wide Web (you may, instead, publish information that is part of another domain, such as www.wy.lcmls.org/Pres/LWML/, which is where the Wyoming District LWML Web site is located). However, given the option, domain names provide a much simpler reference for your viewers.

Register Your Name

Registering a domain name is not

difficult. Before you begin the process, though, you will want to consider the characteristics of a domain name:

1. It should be short and easy to remember,
2. It may include key words to increase search engine activity,
 - Key words are those words, combination of words, or phrases that are associated with your domain. For example, "women missionaries", "Lutheran", "women's league", or "women + missions", may be key words that point a search engine to your Web site.
3. It can contain any alpha-numeric combination, and
4. You may use dashes (-) or underscores (_), but do not use spaces or other characters (such as @, #, or %).

Choose an Extension

Once you have determined your domain name, you will need to choose an extension. Possible extensions include:

1. .org for organizations (usually non-profit),
2. .com for businesses,
3. .net for businesses (used less), or
4. .info, .biz, .name, .kids, etc. for a variety of sites.

Check Your Name

Common sense tells us it is possible that another site on the Web already possesses the name that we would like to use for our site. To ensure that your chosen domain name is available, you can visit http://www.networksolutions.com/en_US/whois/index.jhtml, which is the official database registrar, or a registrar of your choice (see below for some suggestions). You need to be aware that a registrar of your choice may not have a complete database. If needed, you can make your domain name unique by choosing a different extension, adding a dash, or using an abbreviation.

Find a Domain Registrar

The final step in registering your domain name is finding a domain registrar. Be sure to read the registration agreement carefully before accepting its terms; you want to ensure that you will retain ownership of the domain at the registrar that you choose. Some registrars to consider include:

1. www.mydomain.com
2. www.networksolutions.com
3. www.omnis.com
4. www.register.com
5. Or do a search for domain registrars on a Web search engine, like Google.

Follow the steps outlined on the registrar's site. Your domain name's registration is normally valid for one year, but you can also register your domain for more than one year. Most registrars offer an automatic renewal system for you, if you leave your credit card information on the site, so that you do not have to remember when your registration term expires. If you have not already done so, you will need to set up your Web host; you can 'park' your domain at the registrar's site while you set up your host. If your host is established, you will be able to enter the server information at the same time that you register your domain name. More information about Web hosts can be found in this issue of Cyber Scoop.

Take note of how many years you originally registered your domain for and with what registrar. You may receive renewal notices from competing registrars as an attempt to lure your business away from your current registrar.

Success! You have selected and registered your domain name; the name that sets your Web site apart from all others, just as YOU are set apart as God's child through the sacrificial death of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Information in this article derived from "Building Blocks for Website Creation," by Wendy Greiner, 2005.

How to Choose a Web Host

Web hosts are remote servers on which Web sites are located. There are many options for servers to select from when you begin the process of setting up your Web site. The most tempting are free hosting services, which, as the name implies, do not charge a fee. However, free hosting services are not always the best choice for the following reasons:

- Many free Web hosts won't allow specific design elements such as PHP or CGI or any kind of interaction between your site visitors and your site
- Most free Web site hosts will only allow a certain amount of visitors per day and/or hour
- Domain names are not usually available
- Technical support for the site may be poor or non-existent

A second option for you is to host your Web site on your home computer. The primary drawback to this option is that it is not economically feasible. In order to host thousands of visitors accessing your computer every day, you would be required to invest significant resources in security and equipment upgrades.

Taking all of this into consideration, we recommend that you choose a Web host to house your Web site; you will have creative freedom and will not have to worry about maintaining the host. The process for setting up a Web host will take planning on your part. There are several steps to follow:

1. Decide what you need in a Web host

- How many pages will be on your site; that is, how big will your site be? The answer to this question will determine the number of MB required to host your site.
- How many visitors do you expect on your site? Your answer determines the amount of bandwidth you will need.
- Do you need any special elements for your site (such as Front Page extensions, PHP, Ecommerce, etc.)
- What e-mail address will you use to register your domain name — be sure it will be valid for as long as you plan to keep your Web site registered with this particular host, and choose an e-mail address that is located at a domain different from the domain you are registering. For example, you would want to use janedoe@hotmail.com instead of

janedoe@lwml.com if you are trying to register the 'lwml' domain name.

- Will you need additional e-mail addresses, like an e-mail distribution list or contact e-mail for a particular individual in your organization (ie webmaster@lwml.com or lwmlpres@lwml.com)? How many?
- Do you want the capability to set up mailing lists?
- How much technical support will you need?
- What is your budget?
- Is there a Web-based Control Panel, or will you have to contact Tech Support to install the special elements, such as individual emails, mailing lists, or scripts to make small web programs work, etc.?

2. Research Web hosting services in your price range. Consider the following:

- Your own Internet Service Provider (ISP). Note: this option should be utilized only if your ISP offers a paid domain service; free domain services are not recommended for the reasons mentioned above.
- Do a search on Google for Web hosts
- Look at <http://www.tophosts.com> — a listing of Web hosts by type

3. Purchase your chosen Web hosting package

4. Find out your Web site IP address or Name Server

5. Point your domain name to your IP address or Name Server by entering the server information from your Web host service with the registrar where you "parked" your domain name.

6. Your site should 'go live' the same day.

7. Upload an "under construction" Web page (named index.html or whatever your Web host specifies) as soon as possible so that visitors to your site know that your Web site is coming soon. You may want to include your contact information on the page so that visitors can reach you in the meantime.

Information in this article derived from "Building Blocks for Website Creation," by Wendy Greiner, 2005.

Yes — You Can Get Your Own Domain Name!

I recently went through the process of setting up our District's LWML Web site with its own domain name. Our Web site resided with a free site provided by my Internet Service Provider (ISP), so it was a third level domain name that was rather lengthy and not easy to remember.

I researched the steps and costs involved in getting our own domain name, consulting with the technical support person at my ISP and with WSTF member, Wendy. Both were valuable resources in guiding me through the process.

The tech support from my ISP was very good, so I chose to use their Web hosting services. I set up an account with them for our District, including the e-mail address that would be used in connection with the domain name.

My ISP recommended a domain registrar (see "Registering Your Web Site Domain Name" in this edition of Cyber Scoop for suggested registrars.) There I found that the domain name that I was considering was available, and at a reasonable rate. I set up a username and password and contacted my ISP tech for the information that I needed to point the domain name to the correct server; entered that information, paid for the registration, and had our new domain name!

As the SD LWML files were created in Front Page, I then opened a New Web for those files. Once that was set up, and files copied over to the new Web and saved with the new domain name, I could then publish the new Web to the destination — the new domain. After contacting my ISP tech one more time, everything was up and running and the new site was live! Geekette success!!

Reporting for Cyber Scoop for Webmasters, Nancy Bogenhagen, LWML WSTF Chairman

Preparing to Design Your Web Site

Your creative juices are flowing. You have established your domain name and your Web host. The excitement is almost too much for you to bear; either that or you are trembling in your shoes at the thought of having to design the site you have established.

Whether you are ready to shoot out of the starting blocks or you are postponing the race by tying your shoe, it is important for you to take the time to define your purpose and goals, collect your data, and do some research before launching your site. Here are some guidelines for preparing your site to 'go live.'

Gather information

Take some time to browse sites similar to the one you intend to create. What do you like about them? What do you dislike about them? Are there commonalities to all of them? What sets each of them apart? If you are unsure of where to start, ask another LWML webmaster for some ideas and/or links.

Define your site purpose/goal

Now that you have an idea of what you like and dislike about comparable sites, begin planning your own. What is the message you want to share? Whom do you wish to reach with your message? How and why do you want to share your message with this audience? What does your audience already know about the topic; what new information can you share? How can you present your message most effectively? How will you organize your graphics, text and other elements on the page(s)? What other links or buttons on the home page will you need to provide for easy navigation through your Web site? Will you need to provide a way for the audience to interact with your site? Does your audience need to access the information on your site for a secondary use/purpose?

Determine your site presentation/layout

Consider what colors and font you will use on the site. Will you include graphics,

sound, or motion on your page? If so, where will they be on the page?

If you have ideas that require tools you do not have or do not understand, the Internet is an invaluable resource for researching design options and skills.

Additional tips

- Your home page is your opportunity to make a first impression with your message; spend time thinking about how best to grab your visitor's attention.
- It is better to have a few, quality pages than numerous, poor pages. Let your visitors know that additional information is coming—encourage them to return to your site to see what's new!
- Be sure to back up everything.
- Seek constructive criticism from individuals with and without Web creation experience. Ask someone to visit your site and give you feedback about the design, ease of navigation, and overall message.

Information in this article derived from "Building Blocks for Website Creation," by Wendy Greiner, 2005.

How is that spelled?

Even 'geekettes' have a hard time remembering how to spell all of the technical terms associated with computers, the Internet, and Web design. To make some sense out of the confusion, here are some commonly misspelled terms and phrases:

- World Wide Web
- Web site (two words, Web is capitalized)
- Web page
- the Web
- webmaster (one word, not capitalized)
- webcast
- hyperlink
- login - logoff - logon
- online
- username
- password
- Internet (always capitalized)
- home page (two words)
- e-mail (with a hyphen; capitalized only at the beginning of a sentence)
- dot-com

What did you say???

Remember the account of the Tower of Babel in Genesis, chapter 11? All the people of the world spoke one language, which seems like it would be a good thing, right? Instead, it turned out to be a means by which the people attempted to make themselves like God. As a result, God confused their languages so that they did not understand each other.

Sometimes, it is easy to become confused by the terminology and jargon used by computer 'geeks'. There are so many odd phrases and acronyms! To help you become a better 'geek' — er, I mean, computer communicator — here are some terms that you will see used in this edition of Cyber Scoop.

Domain Name: The 'easy to remember' URL that tells the Name Server where to look for your Web site

URL: This stands for Uniform Resource Locator, such as <http://www.lwml.org>

Name Server: The computer that translates your domain name into an IP

address so that a Web browser can find your Web site

IP Address: The actual address of your Web site; it consists of between eight and twelve numbers separated by periods (192.168.1.1, for example)

Browser: Short for Web Browser; it is the tool (program) that allows you to surf the World Wide Web (Internet Explorer, Netscape Navigator, Firefox, etc.)

Web Host: The remote server on which a Web site is located

Server: A computer permanently connected to the Internet so that visitors can see your Web site 24 hours a day, seven days a week

Bandwidth: The amount of data that can be transferred to or from the website or server, measured in bytes transferred over a prescribed period of time.

MB: A unit of information or computer storage equal to either 106 (1,000,000) bytes or 220 (1,048,576) bytes, depending on context.