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GUIDE TO CHOOSING A DOMAIN NAME FOR YOUR WEBSITE

When you are starting a business or expanding to new markets, it is essential to do so with today's modern Internet in mind. The Web can serve as a very effective advertising medium for your products/services and has the potential to reach more consumers than any other medium. If your business is entirely web-based, its presence, and its name, is of the highest importance.

- ✓ On the web you have the potential to reach potential clients all over the world, so you will need to compare business names in a much greater geographic area to avoid the potential for confusion and trademark infringement.
- ✓ Once you come up with a few ideas for business names, consider what your domain name could be. The closer it is to the actual name of your business, products, or services, the more likely your customers will find you.
- ✓ Although using your actual business name or some variation thereof will attract existing customers or potential customers who have already heard about your business, using a product or service descriptor, like window-washing.com, may more effectively attract new or potential customers.
- ✓ Domain names must be registered using an on-line accredited registration service. But don't go it alone Contact Liz for help, or you'll probably end up paying for things you don't need! They have a few sales tricks as you pass through the checkout process as all domain registrars do!
- ✓ Domain names cannot be issued to more than one person or business, so if someone else has already registered your idea, you will have to come up with a new one.
- ✓ Consider possible mistakes that potential customers could make when typing in your web address. If mistakes are likely, consider simplifying the name, or perhaps registering multiple names so that even if a common mistake is made, the user will get to your site.
- ✓ Although domain names are available with a variety of suffixes – the letters that follows the period (.) after your chosen name – the one that most people are used to is “.com,” or .com.au for Australian websites, so it may be best to use those letters, rather than an alternative like “.net,” to attract as many visitors as possible.
- ✓ The “.com” or .com.au suffix can be used for commercial and personal sites; “.net” is recommended for companies involved in Internet infrastructure; and “.org” is recommended for non-profit companies.
 - ✓ For all of those suffixes, only letters, numbers, and hyphens can be part of the domain name, but the name cannot begin or end with a hyphen.
 - ✓ Using any of those three suffixes, the name is limited to sixty-three characters not including the suffix, but some web browsers, email programs, and other applications may not support anything over twenty-six characters in length, so it may be best to keep the name short.
- ✓ Domain names should follow the same general rules as business names in general. Try to keep it easy to remember, and most importantly choose a name that is easy to spell.