

## **Adding Domain Names as a Marketing Strategy**

*By Sylvia Todor*

If you have a web site, you obviously already have your domain name for that site. But you may want to consider having additional, keyword-rich domains that point to the same web site. It's a fairly modest expense for a piece of irreplaceable real estate on the Web. Here are some rather startling statistics from 2007:

- Buying and selling of domain names is estimated to be a \$2 billion industry.
- The market value of this industry may reach \$4 billion by 2010.
- People are purchasing about 90,000 names a day!
- There are at least 128 million domains registered worldwide, a 31 percent increase over 2006.
- Single domain names have been sold at auction for millions of dollars. (In June 2007, creditcheck.com sold for \$3 million.)

If you browse the discussion groups of webmasters and others who purchase large quantities of domains and offer them up for auction, there are several common themes that emerge.

- Dot coms are, hands-down, the best names to acquire.
- All of those alternative extensions (.net, .biz, etc.) help drive traffic to the dot com versions.
- Hyphens are problematic. People often forget to add the hyphen, plus it's difficult to verbalize those versions.

### **SEO with Domains**

From a search engine optimization perspective, short domains are not necessarily better. The words in the domain name are indexed by the search engines, and rank very high for relevancy. In other words, you improve your chances of getting your website ranked high for important keywords if those same words are in your domain name. Also, some people still enter search words directly into a browser field rather than into a search engine. To show you what I mean, go to your browser and type in lifeinsurance.com, and see what you get. Test some other phrases, and you will get results that usually are not the actual domain, but will instantly redirect to another site.

An effective Internet marketing tactic is to have more than one domain pointing to a single website. When you consider the relatively low cost to do this, it is surprising that more people do not take advantage of this tactic. Not only do they capture more traffic from important keywords, they capture the "real estate" and will have ongoing control of the domains as long as they pay the required fees to the Accredited Registrar. Even though it's not true "ownership" but more like a rental, the value is very real.

## **Domain Name Fees**

Annual fees for domains vary widely, from around \$40 annually to just a few dollars, depending on how many years of “rental” that you purchase, which registrar you select, whether the purchase is bundled into other offerings, and so forth. Most domain registrars offer an auto-renew policy, but your credit card must not have expired for this technique to work.

## **Go Ahead – Get a Domain or Two... or Three**

You may want to occasionally spend a few minutes searching for interesting available .com names. For example, I recently used the Google Adwords Keyword Tool to find some phrases that are heavily searched but not so heavily used by Adwords advertisers. I noticed that “baggage travel insurance” falls into this opportunity category, and [baggagetravelinsurance.com](http://baggagetravelinsurance.com) was an available domain name. So I grabbed it. In my opinion, travel insurance is a great gateway product to reach affluent adults.

It’s very easy to research domain name registrars. Just use any search engine and search for “register a domain name.” You’ll see many options. For domain research, go to <https://adwords.google.com/select/KeywordToolExternal>. But beware – it can be addictive once you get started. I call it searching for the hidden gold.

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