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Choosing the Right Domain Name, Part 1: The "Dos"

Posted By Nathan Denny, on December 6, 2008 at 9:41 PM

Category: Tips and Advice

Your domain name is the foundation for your website, and the first step on your path to online success. Here are five tips to help you choose the right one.

1. Keep it short and simple. Try to go with what's simple and intuitive, using words that customers are most likely to search for. If you're selling candy canes, for example, the domain name candycanes.com is going to rank far better on search engines than candyfromaplusnet.com.

2. Use your existing business name, if possible. When choosing a domain for a business that you already own or manage, try to use your existing name. This helps to solidify your brand identity and ensure that your existing consumers can find your site.

3. Make it easy. Don't be too clever! Your domain name shouldn't be hard to spell, nor should it be a pun that's difficult to understand. The cleverest name in the world isn't going to do you any good if people can't spell it.

4. Make it Search Engine Friendly. Your domain name is central to your website's search engine ranking, and so it should feature your main key word or phrase. By now, you should know what that is. It isn't hard to figure out; if you're selling candy canes, then the phrase "candy cane" will be your main keyword phrase, and ideally your domain name, as well. Registering your domain for 5-10 year increments also helps your search engine ranking by setting your site apart from spammers, who typically only register for a year at a time.

5. Get Alternates! If you can, register both the singular and plural versions of your domain. Try to get alternate spellings and additional TLDs, too. That way, if customers make a spelling error, they'll still find your site.

Next time: What NOT to do when choosing a domain name. In the meantime, feel free to ask us questions in the comments. And remember, you can always Ask Jeff your online business questions at askjeff@aplus.net!

One Response to "Choosing the Right Domain Name, Part 1: The "Dos""

1.   411 New York, on December 12th, 2008 at 9:16 pm Said:

Tip number four was an eye opener and will be implemented right away.

We're currently ranking in the top 5 of all search engines so this is appreciated.

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