

What is a domain name and how does it work?



A domain name is a unique address that can be used on the Internet.

It's what you see in the address bar after the "www." in your web browser and it's what comes after the @ sign in an email address.

Domain names consist of two parts. For example, in "eurid.eu" the ".eu" represents what is known as the top level domain (TLD) and "eurid" represents the second level domain and is the actual name. The same name, which can be up to 63 characters long, can be used with different TLDs, such as .com, .org and .net. There are also country specific Top Level Domains, such as .fr for France and .de for Germany. When a domain name is used in a web address, 'www' is usually put in front of it to indicate that typing that name into your web browser will take you to a website. Domain name holders can set up a website with that address and also use it for email addresses. When you are a domain name holder you get to decide what is in front of the @-sign in the email address.

How it works

Each computer connected to the Internet has a unique IP address (IP = Internet Protocol). The IP address consists of four sets of numbers, for example, 195.234.53.199. To be able to connect to any given computer via the Internet you need to know its IP address, but because numbers are hard to remember domain names are used instead. The domain name system (DNS) then 'translates' the domain name you entered into your browser into the correct IP address. This is done automatically and you as a user need not worry about it.

You register your domain name with a registrar. EURid, as the Registry for .eu, accredits registrars who in turn register individual domain names for companies, organisations and people who wish to use the .eu Top Level Domain (TLD) for their website.

Your privacy is protected

When you register a .eu domain name, your details, such as name and address, are recorded in the database along with the domain name. The date and time that you registered the name are also recorded. These data are publicly available for anyone via the WHOIS lookup service provided by EURid. For privacy reasons EURid only publishes your email address and language if you are a private individual.



The domain name is registered for one year at a time. Depending on your agreement with your registrar it may be automatically renewed or it may only be renewed after your registrar has received payment.

Once your domain name has been registered, the location of your web site and email service are recorded so that they can be found when someone types in your domain name in a web browser or sends emails. Most people who register a domain name will make use of their registrar's hosting and email services. Often the registrar offers a package where the domain name fee is included. You can change registrar and move your website and email services to a new registrar at any time without having to change your domain name.

Learn more about domain names and how they work at this link:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Domain_name

