

# Glossary of Web Hosting Terminology

Posted by James Collins  
Tuesday, 31 January 2006  
Last Updated Thursday, 23 March 2006

A complete list of comonly used web hosting industry terms.

**.COM:** Short for .commercial. Domain names with the .com extension are by far the most popular, and can be purchased by any individual or business. .NET: Short for .network, this domain extension was originally designed to be used by technical Web sites. However, domains using this extension can be registered by anyone. .ORG: Short for .organization. Originally designated for non-profit firms and any other organizations that did not fit under the .com or .net extension, any individual or business may now register a .org domain name. .AERO: The TLD designated for the air transport industry. Available only to aviation community members, this domain suffix is now live and fully functional. You can find more information on this TLD here: <http://www.nic.aero>. .BIZ: The .biz TLD is a designated suffix for businesses. Domains using the .biz extension must be used for business or commercial use. This suffix is fully active. <http://www.neulevel.biz> has more information on the .biz suffix. .COOP: This TLD is available to cooperatives, cooperative service organizations and wholly owned subsidiaries of cooperatives. You can find more information on the .coop suffix here: <http://www.nic.coop>. .INFO: The first unrestricted top-level domain since .com, .info domains are available to the general public. You can find more information here: <http://www.nic.info/gateway>. .MUSEUM: This TLD is available only to museums, museum organizations and individual members of the museum profession. More information on the .museum TLD is available at <http://musedoma.museum>. .NAME: Available to the general public, .name email addresses are listed as `firstname@lastname.name` or `lastname@firstname.name`, while Web sites are listed as `www.firstname.lastname.name`. More information on the .name TLD is available here: <http://www.nic.name>. .PRO: The .pro suffix was created for certified professionals including lawyers, doctors and accountants. RegistryPro, the organization in charge of administering .pro domains, has initiated steps to set up the new registry, and anticipates taking registrations in late 2002. More information is available at <http://www.registrypro.com>. Appraising: The process of evaluating a domain name and determining its market value. Bandwidth: The amount of data that can be transmitted at a given moment to a server. The higher your bandwidth, the larger amount of traffic your site can handle at one time. CGI: Short for Common Gateway Interface, a small script that processes data taken from the user (such as from a form application). Cgi-bin: The directory on a Web server where CGI scripts are stored. Domain servers: This contains the DNS (Domain Name System) information for a domain, and is usually listed in WHOIS records. There are usually two lines of DNS information. The first is typically a site's primary DNS information, while the second contains secondary/back-up information. DNS: Short for Domain Name System which is used to translate numeric addresses (known as IP, or Internet Protocol, addresses) into words. Domain names: The word sequences users enter in their URL bar to visit your site. Escrow: A third party service that will essentially hold on to the buyer's payment when selling a domain name, thereby protecting both the buyer and seller. HTTP: Stands for HyperText Transfer Protocol, the protocol by which HTML files move across the Internet. HTTP requires a client browser and an HTTP server (typically a Web server). ICANN: Stands for Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, which is a not for profit organization that handles IP address space allocation and most other regulatory tasks associated with domain names. IP Address: The numeric address behind a domain name that holds a website's real location on the Web. Domain Name Parking: All domain names have to be stored on a server in order to be purchased. Most domain registration services will therefore temporarily place a newly purchased name on their servers until a hosting plan is purchased or the owner points the DNS to a different site. This is known as parking. Propagation: The process where name servers throughout the Internet add new domains and remove expired ones from their records. This can be a lengthy process, which is why connecting to a new domain name can often take three or four days. Reseller: A company/person that sells domain names through registry services provided by an ICANN approved registrar. SSL: Short for Secure Sockets Layer, a protocol developed by Netscape to handle and protect confidential/sensitive information required for e-commerce transactions (like credit card numbers). SSL address usually begin with 'https'. Subdomain: Typically known as a "domain within a domain", subdomains are individual Web addresses built upon a pre-existing domain name (such as `clientname.yourhostingcompany.com`). As a reseller, you will have the option of assigning subdomains to clients if they do not choose to have a domain name. TLD: Short for Top Level Domain, the suffix to a domain name. TLDs include .com, .net, .org and country codes such as .ca. WHOIS: A central database which tracks all domain name/IP registrations. Each domain name registrar typically maintains its own version of a WHOIS database.