

Own Your Own Dot Com!!  
By Frank, *Your Computer Mentor*

21<sup>st</sup> Century folks who have a small business, a money-making idea, or a big ego, need to have a Dot-Com (Domain) name so they can be found by the millions of folks surfing the internet. A “domain name” makes up the address of your future web site that ends in either: .com, .net, .org, .info.

- a dot-COM is usually considered as a business, but it can really be *any kind* of entity.
- a dot-NET is usually a network, but accepted as a secondary biz name if a dot-COM name is taken.
- a dot-ORG is reserved for non-profits and community organizations.
- a dot-GOV is for government body. There are other Domain delineations such as dot-INFO, dot-BIZ, dot-US, and too many more to mention here.

NOTE: Having a Domain Name is not a frivolous venture - it's a very big deal: a Domain Name is “real” property like a house, and its use not taken lightly in the ether-world or the legal world. You can sell it, and even lock-it-down so no one else can ever use it. You can also move your Dot-Com from country to country via a web server, known as a Website Host.

Securing a novel or your name domain name can be a chore to assure that it hasn't been taken by someone else. The most common place to start your search to see if the name you want to use is available, or already taken, is at [www.whois.net](http://www.whois.net) or [www.register.com](http://www.register.com) .

Both [whois.net](http://www.whois.net) and [register.com](http://www.register.com) give you many options for name choice and name *modifications* and even domain suggestions – fortunately, the sites are comprehensive and walk you through the process, gently. The process takes about 20 minutes; however, the procedure can be a little overwhelming. So you can review your information at a later date, make sure you print every screen page as you register.

Next, you'll need a “website host” – this is where your dot com and website will reside and where you'll create and publish your web pages. There are plenty of dot com hosting sites. You can short-cut this process by letting [whois.net](http://www.whois.net) or [register.com](http://www.register.com) host your site, however, they might be pricier than you want or need. Look at [www.100best-free-web-space.com](http://www.100best-free-web-space.com) to help you decide the advantages of one host over another.

Other host sites will provide you everything you need, as well as help you to register your Dot-Com for as little as free! Look at [www.20m.com](http://www.20m.com) . \$6.00 per month is average: [www.startlogic.com](http://www.startlogic.com) [www.godaddy.com](http://www.godaddy.com) . Remember, that low dollar figure is “only” for “parking” your Dot-Com on their server. Other considerations when acquiring a Host are: the amount of Webmail (E-mail) users you can have, the size of the server space you'll need ( 100-250 megabytes is recommended to start ); the ease of accessing the your site to build web pages; the cost of creating and storing web pages, and the ease of access to the Host's customer service - note: customer service is an oxymoron, **don't expect to talk to a human** - ever. Research and patience are key.

Also, most website hosts will have an easy-to-use, changeable web page “template” for you to use to build your website. Look around the internet and make note of what other folks are doing. Take notes on layout and design and sketch ideas from what you like of other people's sites. Now you're ready to create your site! Whoo Hoo!

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Happy Computing!

MENTOR FRANK HARE, M.A., has Hundreds of Happy Clients & manages Colorado-based BeyondTech, LCC:  
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