

Own Your Name

Action Steps to Owning Your Name

Presented by:



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Register your domain name.

This can be done using a site like **GoDaddy**, **BlueHost**, **HostGator**, or **SuperGreenHosting** or, if you have an existing blog hosted on **WordPress.com**, **Tumblr**, or **Blogger**, you can register your domain name and host your blog there. **FirstTimeOnline** has a great step-by-step guide to setting up your domain name and hosting service. You can also pay them to set everything up for you.

By purchasing your domain you own your own little piece of the web – for example, www.yourname.com. The place where you host your site is your domain name's home. Think of it this way – you can go out and buy a tent to go camping, but you still need a place to pitch it. Your domain name is your tent and your host is the campground.

If you already have a blog you can buy your domain and continue to host it on the same site. If you currently host a free site on **Wordpress.com**, for example, you can direct that site to your new domain name with very little effort. This allows for the ease of use and familiarity of your favorite platform while projecting a professional image. By staying with the same blogging platform, you don't have to worry about moving content and possibly losing formatting, comments, or archived posts. A “platform” is just another way of talking about a particular site used to publish web content, whether that be a blog, photos, status updates, etc. If you check out the different blog publishing sites like **Tumblr**, **Wordpress.com**, and **Blogger** you'll notice they're each a little different – they are each a different platform, a different way to publish content on the web.

Testing the Waters

If you're new to the blogging community (or blogosphere, as it is often called) and want to try your hand at blogging, experiment with different platforms. Sites like **Tumblr** brilliantly showcase photo and video, while sites like **WordPress.com** allow for greater text editing. Don't be afraid try out different platforms to see which one best suits your needs. Once you find the platform you're most comfortable with, delete any inactive blogs you may have started to ensure consistent search results.

If you'd like to jump right in and start blogging, check out the **Tumblr help center**, the **BlueHost help center** and **video tutorials**, the **GoDaddy help center**, WordPress' “**getting started guide**”, and the **Blogger video tutorial**.

These guides will help familiarize you to the sites and get you started. If you have a question not answered in the guides, just Google it. The internet is full of information on blogging. If you have a question, chances are someone else has already asked it.

Put your url (this is just another way of saying “web address”) on your business cards, resume, all social media profiles, and any other materials associated with you and your business.

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Google yourself

Google is used for 63% of all web searches so it is vital that a search of your name leads to your web content. Take control of your name and break through the web clutter to ensure your search leads to accurate, useful, and professional results. The best way to push upwards to the top of a Google search is to increase your online presence. Purchasing your domain name and creating a website or blog, staying active on social media, and updating your website or blog content regularly all increase your visibility and will lead to better-positioned and more accurate search results.

Your own email address

Google Apps for business is a selection of applications developed by Google to help businesses large and small use the web effectively. One of the easiest and most useful Google Apps is Google's email service, called Gmail.

You may already have your own personal Gmail account. In that case, Gmail for your business will look familiar. The Gmail application allows you to set up your own email address (formatted like **yourname@yourbusiness.com**, as opposed to **yourname@gmail.com**). The user interface is identical to the personal Gmail program. Gmail provides lots of storage and an easy-to-use format that anyone can pick up quickly.

Google Alerts

Google Alerts allow you to know when someone publishes web content containing your name or your business's name. Alerts are easy to set up and customize. Just decide which terms you want searched and how often and Google will email you a list of links to sites that mention your terms. Know who is talking about you and what they're saying.

Use the same name across platforms

If possible, use the same name for your url, Twitter handle, Facebook fan page, YouTube channel, etc.

This will make it easy for clients to find you online and gives you a professional, streamlined image.

Link, link, link!

Put links to your Twitter, Facebook, and other social media profiles on your website/blog. Link to your website/blog from your Twitter and Facebook. Put links to all of your social media on your LinkedIn profile. That way, if someone finds you on one site, they have easy access to all facets of your online presence.