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## Are Free Domain Names Worth The Cost?

Everyone likes a bargain. It's even wise to keep one's costs down. On the other hand, you can be so cheap that you cut your own throat.

Here are two ways to register a domain name for free and some reasons why you might not want to.

### 1. You Must Have Your Own Top Level Domain (TLD) Name

Your business website should definitely have its own top level domain (TLD) name. This means a name like `yourcompany.com`. It doesn't mean a subdomain of someone else's domain name, such as `yourcompany.someisp.net`.

Sometimes persons hesitate to register a proper domain name because of cost, lack of knowledge, or indecision. However, paying the nominal fee charged by the domain registrar for your own domain name can reap rich dividends.

A Uniform Resource Locator (URL) or Internet address like (ignoring the `http` part) `someisp.net/hosting-accounts/yourco/`, or `yourcompany.someisp.net`, just doesn't look as professional as `yourcompany.com`. It might be free (as in included with your web space) but it just doesn't cut it.

Consider: If you put your URL on your letterheads, business cards, signs, et cetera, which Internet address looks more professional?

If you mention your URL on your radio advertising or to a customer over the phone, which one will be easier to remember?

As well, what if your web host goes out of business or you decide that you want to change to another provider. Now, you need to notify everyone that you have now changed to `yourcompany.someotherisp.net`. You will also need to change all your stationery, signs, and advertising to reflect the change.

On the other hand, the domain name `yourcompany.com`, could be transferred from one web host to another simply by informing your domain name registrar of the change.

So, to avoid losing business and incurring unnecessary additional costs, be sure you have your own top level domain name.

### 2. Should You Get a Free Top Level Domain?

It is possible to get a free top level domain from Dot TK (`@www.dot.tk`). (You may also get paid dot tk (`.tk`) domains from them.) However, there can be disadvantages to using a free top level domain name.

Here are some of the restrictions noted on the Dot TK website.

You may register no more than three free domain names.

The ownership of the free domain remains with Dot TK. This means that you can't sell it. (Of course, if you pay for the domain you do own it and can transfer it to a new owner.)

Also, if you don't have 25 visitors come to your home page within a ninety day period, your free domain name registration is cancelled.

You need to have existing web content somewhere so that your dot tk name can be forwarded to it.

There may well be other disadvantages.

Apparently, Dot TK uses frames to show your website. This being the case, you may have issues with navigation (bookmarking or finding specific pages) and search engine friendliness.

Therefore, for serious business use, consider carefully the true cost of free domain names.