

Are You Paying Too Much For Your Domain Name?

A Comparative Study of Australian Registrars



By Henriette Martel

author of '200 Marketing Ideas for Your Website'

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About the Author

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Henriette is the director of the [Australian Training Guide](#), the Australian central database for all non-vocational training and provider of promotional tools for Australian Training Providers and Training Product & Venue Suppliers.

Henriette is member of the Australian Marketing Institute and the Australian Institute of Management.



Foreword

As I was preparing a workshop for small business owners on ways to reduce their website costs, I discovered in Nov 05 that some Australian registrars charge

- ➔ 368% more than others for a single [domain name registration](#) and
- ➔ 616% more than others for packages containing a [domain name registration plus email and web redirection services](#).

As a marketer, I was curious to find out what additional value these registrars offered to justify their higher prices for essentially similar services.

This study is more than just a cost comparison exercise and is not solely intended for Australians. Although it covers an overview of the Australian domain name registration process and a comparative study of the 22 Australian registrars, it also contains information on the benefits of registering one or more domain names and utilising forwarding services to reduce hosting costs. In addition, the study includes a checklist of considerations when choosing a registrar and provides links to useful resources, such as domain name generators and keyword search tools.

This study only refers to **.com.au** domain names and use the following conventions:

[Active hyperlinks are blue](#)

[Inactive hyperlinks are brown](#).

Since this study in November 2005, some changes have occurred e.g. new registrars and new registrars' pricing structures. But essentially, the domain name system remains the same and you'll find the information still relevant.

Foreword revised – June 2008



Understanding the Domain Name System

What is a domain name?

A domain name, also called 'web name', is a unique name that identifies and locates your business on the Internet.

The domain name describes:

- ➔ the type of entity e.g. **.com** for commercial or **.gov** for government.
- ➔ the geographical location, which appears as an add-on extension to indicate an association with a specific country e.g. **.au** for Australia or **.nz** for New Zealand. A generic or international domain name would not carry this extension. It would simply be **.com** or **.gov** instead of **.com.au** or **.gov.au**.

You do not own a domain name. You can merely hold its licence for a period of time, subject to terms and conditions. Licences for a generic domain name can be granted for a minimum period of 1 year with a maximum of 10 years, whereas licences for Australian domain names are given for a fixed period of 2 years (no longer or shorter period).

What is the Domain Name System?

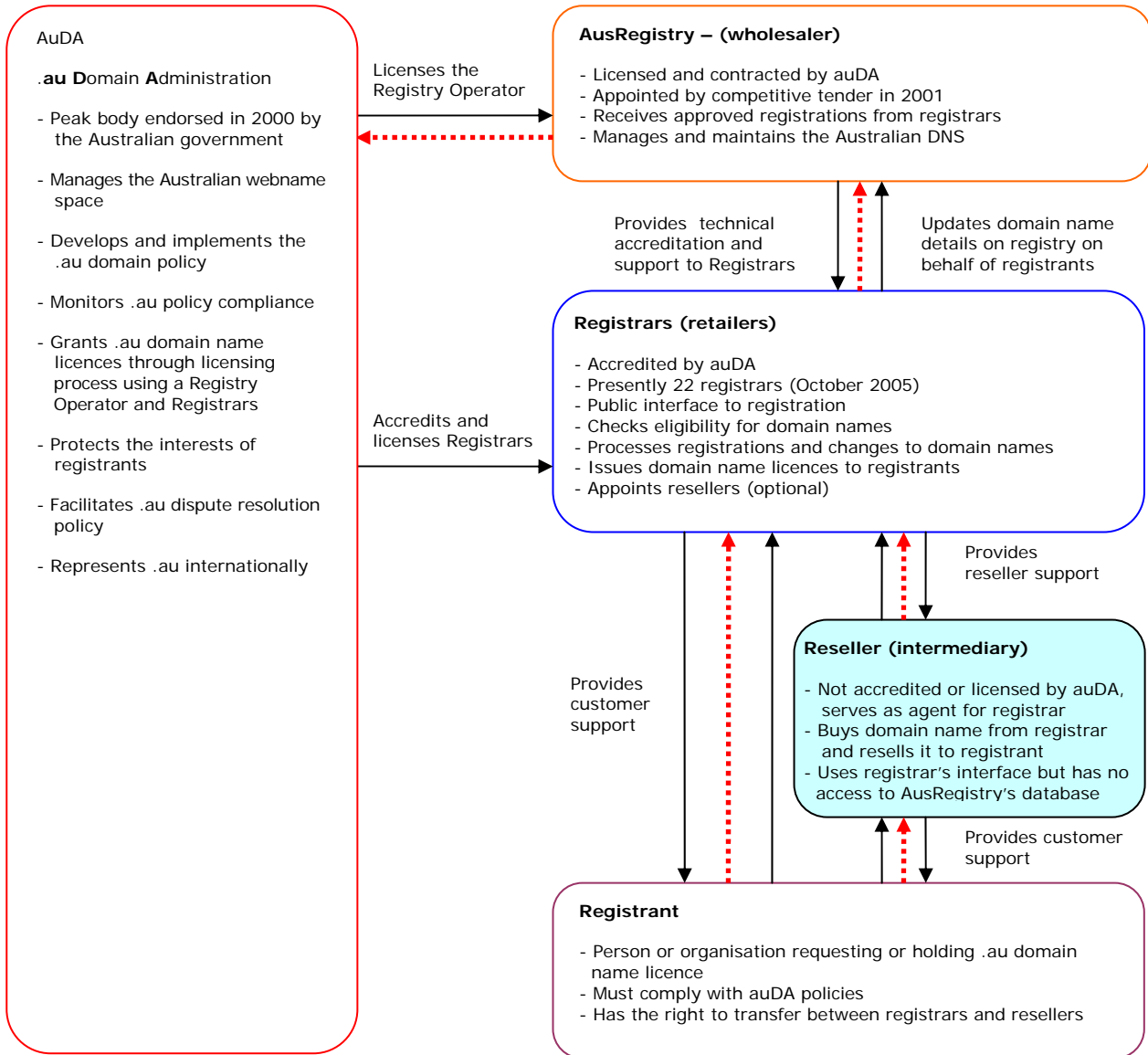
The Domain Name System (DNS) is a register or database of all domain names with a cross-reference to their address. It stores the host names for each domain name, where the website is located and where to deliver email.

The DNS enables web browsers (e.g. Internet Explorer) or mail clients (e.g. Outlook) to find the location of a domain name in order to display the website or deliver an email message.

Therefore, if you change web or email host, you need to 're-delegate' your domain name to your new host so that the DNS can be reconfigured with your new location on the Internet. Once the change of details is effective, people are automatically redirected to your new address.

ICANN (The Internet Corporation of Assigned Names and Numbers) maintains the global DNS while auDA (.au Domain Administration) maintains the Australian DNS.

Australian Domain Name Registration Process



.....➔ Payment

Benefits of a domain name

A domain name provides a unique Web and Email address that will

- ➔ Differentiate your business from competitors by providing you with a unique identity.
- ➔ Build brand recognition. Each time people see your domain name, your brand image is reinforced.
- ➔ Project a professional image and level the playing field with large organisations.
- ➔ Provide a fixed address. If you move premises, customers can contact you by email or look on your website for your new physical relocation.

"Domain Names carry a business' brand on the Internet and like any brand in mainstream media, they require constant vigilance, safeguarding and maintenance. They are a small but important investment that drives the value of any business. Domain names are as crucial as a trademark or a copyright."
*Gideon Culican,
Retail Product Manager
Melbourne IT Ltd*

The Web address

- ➔ Makes it easier for customers to remember your domain name by providing a short and memorable name e.g. www.businessname.com.au instead of a long internet address associated to your Internet Service Provider www.ISPprovider/~yourbusinessname.
- ➔ Provides a new medium to promote your business.
- ➔ Builds credibility to attract customers, advertisers and partners.

The Email address

- ➔ Increases trustworthiness e.g. john@yourdomain.com looks more credible than a free email address such as john862@hotmail.com.
- ➔ Enables you to organise your correspondence with aliases e.g. sales@yourdomain.com, support@yourdomain.com or yourname@yourdomain.com.
- ➔ Saves money on stationery. No need to reprint business cards and letterheads when you change Internet Service Provider. Your internet address remains the same.



Benefits of multiple domain names

Registering multiple domain names can:

- ➔ Safeguard the use of your trademarks or other intellectual property from other registrants.
- ➔ Separate diversified lines of business. If you operate a coaching business and sell beauty products as a sideline, you could register a domain name for each line of business to maintain a professional image in each field instead of presenting as a jack-of-all-trades.
- ➔ Give each of your products a separate online identity e.g. www.product1.com, www.product2.com and www.service1.com to target different markets and provide different entry points to your site.
- ➔ Cater for different ways of searching. Existing clients may look for you using a domain name based on your actual business name or on your personal name, whereas potential customers may search for keywords and find your keywords-based domain name.
- ➔ Provide added opportunities to be located when people are performing a local search, as with Google search option 'pages from Australia'. If you target country-specific markets, you may want to secure multiple domain names to reach each local audience.
- ➔ Multiply your chances of being found. Consider registering additional domain names to cover
 - ➔ spelling alternatives e.g. **colour** (AUS) and **color** (US) or **energise** (AUS) and **energize** (US).
 - ➔ misspellings and plurals e.g. **retrieve.com** and **retreive.com** or **ezonearticle.com** and **ezonearticles.com**.

As you will discover in this study, you do not need a website for each domain name. Web forwarding services offered by registrars can help you save on website costs by redirecting multiple domain names to a single website.

Tips for choosing your domain name

Choose a domain name that is

- ➔ Descriptive e.g.
 - ➔ www.jobsearch.com.au
 - ➔ www.marketingcues.com.au

- ➔ Catchy or distinctive e.g.
 - ➔ www.oodles.com.au
 - ➔ www.dinkydi.com.au

- ➔ Easy to remember, pronounce and spell e.g.
 - ➔ www.paypal.com.au
 - ➔ www.goquick.com.au

Whenever possible, avoid

- ➔ Names visually difficult to read or subject to double meaning. e.g.
www.booksandcollectibles.com.au or www.books&collectibles.com.au

- ➔ Names with spelling alternatives e.g.
 - ➔ www.ausjobs.com.au
 - ➔ www.ozjobs.com.au

- ➔ Words with different international spelling (unless you register both spelling versions) e.g.
 - ➔ www.classic-color.com.au
 - ➔ www.colour-therapy.com.au

- ➔ Acronyms (because typos are common) e.g.
 - ➔ www.gpt.com.au
 - ➔ www.tpg.com.au
 - ➔ www.pgt.com.au



- ➔ Hyphens because they are awkward to spell and remember. Having said that, they can also be an alternative when your preferred name is not available e.g.
 - ➔ www.star-shine.com.au can be a substitute for www.starshine.com.au
- or, when you want to use a string of keywords to improve your search engine ranking. In the following cases, the hyphens make it easy to read e.g.
- ➔ www.classic-wedding-cars.com.au
 - ➔ www.best-car-deals.com.au
 - ➔ www.perth-city-directory.com.au.

Eligibility for .com.au

To be eligible for a .com.au, your domain name has to be the exact match of your business or trademark, its abbreviation or acronym, or have a close and substantial connection to your business.

Ideas for Domain names	Real examples
exact match of your business name	www.marketingcues.com.au
an abbreviation of your business name	www.advdata.com.au
acronym of your business or trademark	www.smh.com.au
program that your business runs	www.rural-leaders.com.au
venue that your business operates	www.customshouse.com.au
profession that you practice	www.publicspeaking.com.au
sport that you promote	www.afl.com.au
event that you organise	www.sporttours.com.au
problem that you solve	www.diabetes.com.au
product that you sell	www.prestigecars.com.au
service that you provide	www.whereis.com.au
your brand	www.holden.com.au



Prices for .com.au Domain Names

As at 27th October 2005, registrars are buying **.com.au** domain names at the wholesale price of \$30.05 (included GST) from AusRegistry. From this amount, \$24.00 is kept by AusRegistry and \$6.05 goes to auDA. And registrars are retailing Australian domain names from \$38 to \$140.

Registrars	Prices*
Domain Central	38.00
IntaServe	39.00
NetRegistry	44.95
Namescout.com	45.95**
SmartyHost	49.95
Wobygong	60.00
Discount Domain Name Services	65.00
Anchor Systems	69.00
Aust Domains International	69.00
Click'n Go!	79.00
Planet Domain (Primus)	88.00 ***
Westnet	88.00
Enetica	88.00
GoDomains (JustNet)	98.00
Connect West (iiNet)	99.00
Bottle Domains	99.00
Domain Candy	99.00
TPP Internet	99.00
Explorer Domains	99.95
Domain Directors	121.00
Domain Registration Services	139.70
Melbourne IT	140.00

What registrars say about price

"Ultimately, the main differentiator in a competitive market is going to be the price of registration of a domain for a two-year period."

<http://www.connectwest.net.au>

"Domains are identical regardless of where they are registered. They are a commodity that is bought and sold and the only difference is how much you are prepared to pay."

<http://www.domaincentral.com.au/about/>

"...cheaper prices are in the interests of all Internet users - except, perhaps, those organisations that, until now, have enjoyed a monopoly in the domain name market."

<https://www.clickngo.com.au/?faq>

"Domain name registration is not rocket science and should not be expensive."

<http://www.smartyhost.com.au/value.html>

* 2-yr registration of .com.au prices in Australian dollars include GST unless otherwise specified

**Namescout.com does not charge GST

***Planet Domain: new registration \$66 (sale price)

Table 1: Prices for .com.au Domain Name

Redirection Services

Web and email forwarding are redirection services offered by many registrars as add-on services when you purchase a domain name from them.

Forwarding services must not be mistaken for hosting services. A hosting account provides disk space to store emails and data from your website whereas forwarding services only redirect emails and web traffic to an existing hosting account either free or fee-based.

Redirection services are used in conjunction with an existing hosting account to keep internet costs down when you have multiple domain names. These services are not free but should be less expensive than paying email and web hosting fees for each domain name.

Web Forwarding

(also called [URL](#)¹ Forwarding, Web redirection, Domain pointing, Domain masking or Domain cloaking)

This service redirects automatically and seamlessly visitors to another domain. You can redirect your new domain name to the homepage or to any other page of an existing website. This way, you only need to pay for redirection and not for web hosting.

There are two types of forwarding services:

- ➔ **Not cloaking:** The service redirects traffic to another URL leaving the destination URL visible in the browser address bar e.g. www.newdomain.com will be displayed as www.existingDomainName.com/newdomain
- ➔ **Cloaking:** The service cloaks or masks the real destination URL in the address bar of the browser address bar. Each redirected URL will appear as a separate website to your visitors e.g. www.newdomain.com will be displayed as www.newdomain.com.

For ease of comparison, I will compare in this study registrar's web forwarding services that cloak the destination URL.

¹ URL (Uniform Resource Locator) is the address of a resource found on the internet e.g. <http://www.marketingcues.com/articles/index.htm>. The first part of the URL is the protocol used to access the file (e.g. http is a web browser application) and the second part specifies the domain name and the pathname where the resource can be located.



Email Forwarding

Email sent to your domain name can be redirected automatically and seamlessly to any other email address without senders being aware of this redirection.

The advantage of using email forwarding is that you can use an existing email address without having to pay email hosting fees for each domain name. For example, email addressed to both info@product1.com and john@product2.com can be redirected to either:

- ➔ a free email address e.g. john888@hotmail.com
- ➔ an email address for which you already pay hosting fees e.g. john@primarydomainname.com
- ➔ an address provided by your Internet Service Provider e.g. john@bigpond.net.au.

With email forwarding, you are not allocated disc space to store messages as with email hosting. It is merely a redirection service.

Prices for redirection services

The following table can only be used as a guide. There are no ‘standard prices’ for forwarding services: some registrars bundle web and email forwarding and others have a different fee schedule for each of them. To complicate the matter, some registrars display monthly fees, others yearly; GST can be included or excluded; web forwarding services can be divided into free and premium; some charge set-up fees; and finally, some registrars have introductory offers to attract new customers.

Please check the registrars’ websites to grasp all the variables.



Prices for Redirection Services

Registrars	Redirection services**				Total		Comments
	web	email	web/m ail	Set Up	1yr	2yrs	
Domain Central			24.50		24.50	49.00	
IntaServe			99.00	55.00	154.00	253.00	
NetRegistry			110.00*		110.00	220.00	No email forwarding (only email hosting)
Namescout.com	Free*	7.57 monthly			90.84	181.68	Free but no cloaking option No GST charged
SmartyHost	Free*	20.00*			20.00	40.00	No email forwarding (only email hosting) Free but no cloaking option
Wobygong			99.00		99.00	198.00	
Discount Domain Name Services			n/a			n/a	
Anchor Systems			n/a		n/a	n/a	
Aust Domains International			34		34	68.00	
Click'n Go!			25.00		25.00	50.00	
Planet Domain (Primus)	Free*/13.21	free			Free*/13.21	Free*/26.42	Prices excl GST *Free (no cloaking) \$13.21 for cloaking
Westnet			n/a			n/a	
Enetica	5.50	99.00			104.50	209.00	
GoDomains (JustNet)	Free*	15.95 monthly	19.95 monthly		191.40	430.80	Free for 1st year
Connect West (iiNet)			n/a			n/a	
Bottle Domains			15.00		15.00	30.00	
Domain Candy			66.00		66.00	132.00	
TPP Internet			99.00		99.00	198.00	
Explorer Domains			n/a			n/a	
Domain Directors			77.00		77.00	154.00	
Domain Registration Services			104.50		104.50	209.00	
Melbourne IT	99.00	99.00			198.00	396.00	

Table 2: Prices for Redirection Services

* check the Comments box

** prices are in Australian dollars for 1-yr period and include GST, unless otherwise specified



Prices for .com.au Domain Name + Redirection Services

Registrars	.com.au Registration	Redirection (for 2 yrs)	Total*	Comments
Domain Central	38.00	49.00	87.00	
IntaServe	39.00	253.00	292.00	
NetRegistry	44.95	220.00	264.95	No email forwarding (only email hosting)
Namescout.com	45.95	181.68	227.63	No cloaking option No GST charged
SmartyHost	49.95	40.00	89.95	No email forwarding (only email hosting) Free (no cloaking) No cloaking option
Wobygong	60.00	198.00	258.00	
Discount Domain Name Services	65.00	n/a	n/a	
Anchor Systems	69.00	n/a	n/a	
Aust Domains International	69.00	68.00	137.00	
Click'n Go!	79.00	50.00	129.00	
Planet Domain (Primus)	88.00	Free**/ 26.42	88.00**/ 114.42	Prices excl GST on redirection services **No cloaking
Westnet	88.00	n/a	n/a	
Enetica	88.00	209.00	297.00	
GoDomains (JustNet)	98.00	430.80	528.80	
Connect West (iiNet)	99.00	n/a	n/a	
Bottle Domains	99.00	30.00	129.00	
Domain Candy	99.00	132.00	231.00	
TPP Internet	99.00	198.00	297.00	
Explorer Domains	99.95	n/a	n/a	
Domain Directors	121.00	154.00	275.00	
Domain Registration Services	139.70	209.00	348.70	
Melbourne IT	140.00	396.00	536.00	

Table 3: Prices for .com.au Domain Name + Redirection Services

* Prices in Australian dollars and include GST unless otherwise specified



How do registrars compare?

There is no difference between domain name registrations. The Australian domain name industry is regulated by the peak body auDA who licenses and accredits registrars and also provides consumer safeguards with grievances handling policies. Same process, same product.

Comparing registrars based on their taglines and promotion slogans can be misleading because of the hype and marketing fluff such as:

“THE WORLD’S **FAVORITE** DOMAIN NAME REGISTRAR AND WEB HOST®”

“one of **Australia's largest** and most prominent specialist domain name”

“...is a **leading** Domain registrar”

“...strives to provide exceptional service. We are **experts** in our field”

“... is one of Australia and New Zealand's **most** experienced and trusted domain name registrars.”

“the Domain Name **Experts** delivering the **best value** domain names”

“trusted by hundreds of Web Professionals & also by thousands of businesses and individuals across Australia”

“we aim to provide the **highest** levels of service and expertise to all our clients in every aspect of the Domain Registration process.”

“**fastest** domain name registration service and the **most** comprehensive and affordable list of additional domain services”

“...is **Australia's Favorite** 'one-stop' internet domain name registrar”

“**Australia's best value**”

Some of those registrars even erode their credibility by making incorrect statements:

“**cheapest** prices, best service .com.au Domains”

“**best** price, great service”

“our prices for domain names are the **lowest** available in Australia and our service & support is second to none”

“We don't claim to have the best prices. **We do have the best prices.** Guaranteed.”

In the jungle of self-proclaimed leaders, some registrars have positioned themselves in the Domain Name Registration arena. Firstly, we will look at the most expensive, the cheapest and newest registrars and secondly, some points of difference between registrars.

Melbourne IT: the most expensive registrar

Prior to the establishment of AuDA, Melbourne IT was the registry service provider for Australia's leading commercial Internet domain registry (.com.au). But under AuDA, an organisation could no longer be registrar as well as registry operator. Melbourne IT decided to forego the role of registry operator to focus on their registrar and service provider operations.

Melbourne IT is a well-established brand listed on the Australian Stock Exchange. Their aim is to “establish themselves as the global leader in Corporate Domain Name Management and Online Brand Management Services.”(annual report 2004)

Gideon Culican, Retail Product Manager explains that “People choose Melbourne IT for

- our value for money: Do you want the cheapest, or the BEST?
- peace of mind: Who do you TRUST?”

Their loyal customers and the corporate sector are less price-sensitive: this could explain their ongoing success.

Domain Central: the cheapest registrar

When asked “Why are your domain names cheaper than those of your competitors?” George Pongas, Chief Operating Officer of Domain Central replied:

"Essentially we have cheap domain names because we have adopted a volume based business model.

"Support is the most expensive aspect of our business. We removed the significant expense of phone support. Our help support is limited to email only, and we are confident you will be satisfied with the quality and the response time. Our approach to our services is that, if you do the job right you can minimise support. If a customer calls 3 or 4 times with a problem, then you have effectively eroded most of your margin for the sale. Minimise the support and you can pass on these savings to the customers.

“We provide our customers with an easy to use domain registration and management system to reduce help desk costs. Our job is to provide the tools to interface with the registry for domain management. If our tools work and are easy to use then again the support issue is minimised.”

I have tested their customer support twice and could not fault their email service: quick response time and helpful reply.

SmartyHost: the newest registrar

SmartyHost focuses on “making web services easy to use and affordable for everyone.” (<http://www.smartyhost.com.au/company.html>).

They provide a competitive *11 Point Value and Service Plan* which includes:

- ➔ **No hidden costs with fancy names** e.g. 'domain management fee', 'domain hosting fee', and 'powerful set-up fee'.
- ➔ **Best customer support in Australia:** We're available to you by Phone, Live Online Chat Support, Online Forum and Fast Email Support. We even contact you on a regular basis to see how you are going.
- ➔ **Rock-bottom Renewal Guarantee:** You'll never pay more to renew your domain name registration than the rate you paid when you initially signed up.
- ➔ **Price Guarantee:** We will beat any competitor's price by 10%.

Points of difference between registrars

Prices

To differentiate themselves from others, some registrars have priced their services competitively to gain the edge.

	1 st position	2 nd position	3 rd position
Domain name registration	Domain Central	IntaServe	Net Registry
Web & email forwarding	PlanetDomain	Bottle Domains	SmartyHost
Domain name PLUS forwarding services	Domain Central (includes cloaking)	PlanetDomain (no cloaking)	SmartyHost (no cloaking)

Table 4: Best buys based on price



Price Guarantee

Bottle Domains offers a worldwide price matching policy: “We even price match, because we want to prove how good we really are.”

(<http://www.bottledomains.com.au/prices.php>)

Domain Central: “We sell the CHEAPEST 'com.au' in the world. If you can find cheaper let us know and we will beat them.”

(<http://www.domaincentral.com.au/about/>)

Smartyhost: “We will beat any domain prices in Australia by 10%”.

(<http://www.smartyhost.com.au/cheapdomainnames.html>)

Aust Domains: "We Will Beat Any Price On Australia Domain Names"

(<http://www.austdomains.com.au/pricing.html>)

Specialisation

Explorer Domains: “We are a new kind of registrar, geared to work alongside ISPs, Web Developers and Internet Specialists...We just do domains, we don't do hosting.”(<http://www.explorer.net.au>)

Wobygong Pty Ltd is a wholesale supplier of Australian (.au) domain names to Authorized Resellers.(<http://wobygong.com.au>)

Sponsorship

Aust Domains is “the only Australian internet domain company proudly supporting Australian sport.” Aust Domains sponsors Australian Champion Danny Green known as ‘The Green Machine’ WBC Interim World Champion.”

(<http://www.austdomains.com.au/aboutus.html>)

Gift solution provider

Namescout.com uses an innovative sales strategy: “Searching for a unique gift idea for an upcoming birthday, a special occasion or for the “one who has it all”? This year why not give the gift of a domain name? Every domain name is unique, affordable and the possibilities are endless. It's the perfect solution for every occasion!” (<http://www.namescout.com.au/gifts/index.asp?a=2008>)



Reward program

TPP Internet offer a reward program for customers. “TPP Internet have realised that many of our existing customers refer our services to friends and work colleagues. We would like to say "thanks" to our customers and reward them with the TPP Internet Buddy Code.”

(<http://www.tppinternet.com/pub/content/buddy.code.php>)

Customers can apply and receive a buddy code. This program benefits customers as well as the people they refer to TPP Internet. Friends and colleagues receive a discount on their order and customers receive \$50 in cash when 10 of the people they refer place an order.

Alliances & Relationships

Through their alliances and relationships, the following registrars can benefit from a pool of resources and an established network:

PlanetDomain is a division of Primus Telecommunications Australia Pty Ltd.

GoDomains is part of the JustNet group.

Connect West is a wholly-owned subsidiary of iiNet. The parent company iiNet is the reseller that sets prices and provides customer support.

Domain Central and **Bottle Domains** belong to the Australian Style Pty Ltd group of companies. Each business captures a different share of the market. Bottle Domains is the premium brand of Australian Style and competes directly with Melbourne IT whereas Domain Central takes care of the bargain end of the industry.

WestNet is a registrar for Australian domain names but uses **Melbourne IT** as the registrar for their international domains (e.g. .com).

Subjective factors to choosing a registrar

Ultimately, choosing a registrar is not always about money. There are several subjective factors that may be influencing your choice of registrar:

Value for money

The price may not be the cheapest but you perceive that the price fair and you have value for money because of the pleasant customer experience e.g. special attention from friendly staff.

Loyalty

You remain loyal to your domain name provider, either a registrar, affiliate or reseller, to preserve your relationship.

Convenience

You are prepared to pay a premium for convenience and low involvement. You choose a single service provider to cater for all of your needs e.g. domain name registration, web hosting and perhaps web design. And year after year, you use the same provider to avoid re-evaluating alternatives and switching to a new one.

Personal knowledge

You may select a domain name provider based on the level of customer support available and your self-confidence and personal knowledge of the domain name registration process. If is your knowledge is minimal, you may consider an 'I will hold your hand' approach rather a discounted 'do-it-yourself' option.

Viral marketing

The mighty power of referrals. You are more likely to follow the recommendation from a friend, web designer or any other person you trust.

Brand image

You may feel reassured to be under the umbrella of a organisation that is well-established, has a high profile or endorsed by reputable professionals.



Conclusion

Are you paying too much for your domain name?

Yes, if you suffer from post-purchase dissonance—the unpleasant feeling you get when you just bought something and found out that you paid too much.

No, if you perceive the price is fair and you have value for money.

Appendix 1: Checklist when choosing registrars

Products	Range	Some registrars offer a wide range of services whereas some others offer only Australian domain name registrations.
Price	Price display	Are fees per month or per year? Some registrars break down fees to display lower figures.
	GST	Most registrars include GST in all their prices. Exceptions: - Namescout.com do not charge GST. - PlanetDomain include GST on Australian domain registrations but exclude GST on redirection services. - Domain Registration Services ask Australian residents to add GST to fees displayed.
	Set-up	Any extra charge for setting up?
	Bulk discount	Some registrars offer volume discounts.
	Introductory offers	Some prices apply to new registrations e.g. PlanetDomain. Therefore renewals will be at full price!
	Bundling	Some registrars make a higher profit margin on domain names and others on complementary services. If you are price sensitive, bundle the services you want and then compare prices for similar packages. This will give you a reliable benchmark.
Customer support	Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Email - Phone - Toll free number 1800 or 1300 - Voicemail - Live Chat - Phone appointment booked by email e.g. Melbourne IT
	Office hours	Help availability 24/7 or business hours? Check time zones. Emergency help line?
	Response time	In my experience, the response time was usually between 1 to 2 working days but some registrars did not reply to my emails.
	Quality of response	Was the answer to your question satisfactory or did it take numerous emails or phone calls to sort out your query?



Customer support (cont.)	Knowledge base	Some registrars have comprehensive online documentation, tutorials, videos and FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) section. e.g. TPP provides screenshots of the online management system
Accounts	Payment methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Credit Card - Cheque - Money order - EFT (Electronic funds transfer) - BPAY™
	Tax invoices	Do you have access to your account details and billing history? And can you print your tax invoices from their online management system? e.g. Namescout.com does not issue tax invoice for .au domain name registrations.
Reward Program	Reward program	Are you getting paid for referrals to your registrar? e.g. TPP Internet Buddy Code
	Affiliates	Do you have commissions on your own purchases? on renewals? Do you receive a commission on all or selected services only?
Policies & Security	Policies	Are the following policies displayed? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Security - Service agreement - Privacy.
	Register Lock	Prevents or malicious domain name transfer or modification by a third party e.g. Namescout.com
	Auto-renewal	Renews your domain name automatically prior to the expiry date to avoid involuntary lapse e.g. Namescout.com
Miscellaneous	Reciprocal links	Opportunity to boost search ranking e.g. 'Customer Links' page from PlanetDomain
	Certificate of Registration	Several registrars offer an Official Domain Name Certificate of Registration. NetRegistry provides a sample certificate.
	Freebies	Customised 'coming soon' page or a one-page web site.



Appendix 2: Useful Resources

[List of auDA accredited registrars](http://www.auda.net.au/registrars/accredited-registrars/)

(<http://www.auda.net.au/registrars/accredited-registrars/>)

[List of auDA published policies](http://www.auda.com.au/policies/policy-index/)

Policies include eligibility rules for .com.au domain names

(<http://www.auda.com.au/policies/policy-index/>)

[AusRegistry](http://www.ausregistry.com.au): the registry for .au domain names

(<http://www.ausregistry.com.au>)

Tools

[WHOIS look up](http://www.ausregistry.com.au/whois): Information on registrants of Australian domain names

(<http://www.ausregistry.com.au/whois>)

[Keyword search tools, Domain Name generators and other free tools](http://www.marketingcues.com/tools/freeTools.htm)

(<http://www.marketingcues.com/tools/freeTools.htm>)

Articles

[The Domain Name Debate: Brand versus Keywords](http://www.marketingcues.com/articles/domainBrandvsKeywords.htm)

(<http://www.marketingcues.com/articles/domainBrandvsKeywords.htm>)

[50 ways to use your website](http://www.marketingcues.com/articles/50waysforwebsite.htm)

(<http://www.marketingcues.com/articles/50waysforwebsite.htm>)

[Index of web marketing articles](http://www.marketingcues.com/articles/index.htm)

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