

BEHIND THE DOT

state of the .au domain

A portrait of Nick Bell, a man with short brown hair and a light beard, wearing a blue blazer over a white shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile.

DOMAINS & SEO WITH NICK BELL

WME Director gives tips on maximising search results

CHANNEL TALK

The best uses of .au in marketing

DNS SECURITY AROUND THE WORLD

Q&A with APNIC's Paul Wilson

KEYWORDS IN .AU

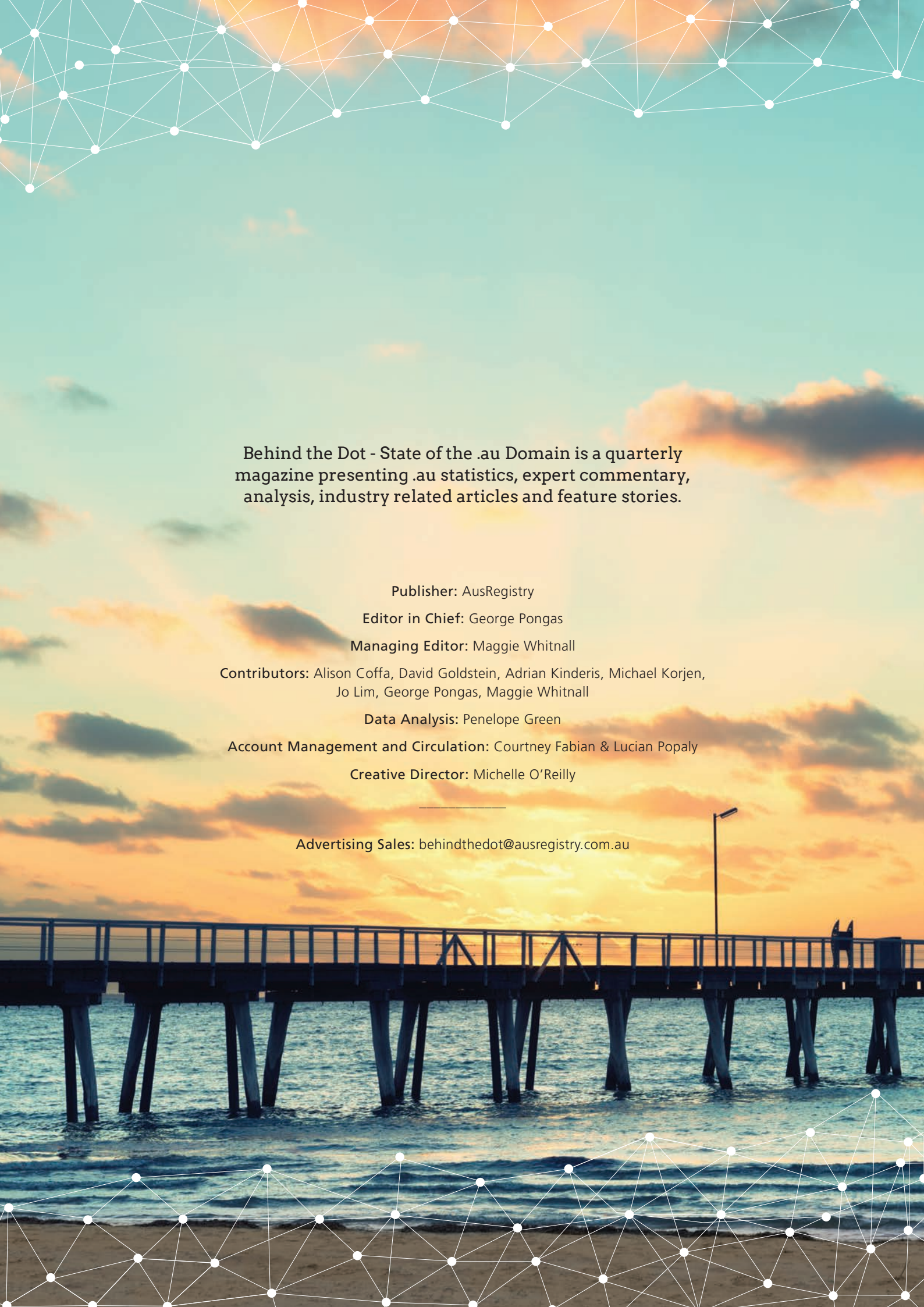
What's the value of a perfect name?

#HASHTAGS & DOMAINS

A match made in marketing heaven

BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS

How every Aussie business can build their brand



Behind the Dot - State of the .au Domain is a quarterly magazine presenting .au statistics, expert commentary, analysis, industry related articles and feature stories.

Publisher: AusRegistry

Editor in Chief: George Pongas

Managing Editor: Maggie Whitnall

Contributors: Alison Coffa, David Goldstein, Adrian Kinderis, Michael Korjen, Jo Lim, George Pongas, Maggie Whitnall

Data Analysis: Penelope Green

Account Management and Circulation: Courtney Fabian & Lucian Popaly

Creative Director: Michelle O'Reilly

Advertising Sales: behindthedot@ausregistry.com.au

Contents

DEPARTMENTS

UNDER THE MICROSCOPE	1
An overview of the number of .au domains currently under management (open 2LDs), monthly registrations, renewals by age of domain and APTLD statistics.	
.AU RESEARCH AND SURVEYS	2
Findings from the most recent .au survey or .au related research initiative.	
CHANNEL TALK	10
News and views from the .au retail channel. This edition: What is the best use of a .au domain name in a marketing campaign?	
DNS & SECURITY	11
Paul Wilson of APNIC gives insights into security issues facing the Asia-Pacific region.	
GOVERNANCE & POLICY	13
An update on the policy that underpins the .au namespace and .au Domain Administration (auDA) related activities.	
GLOSSARY	16
Abbreviations and definitions of DNS and Internet related terms.	

FEATURE

DOMAINS & SEO WITH NICK BELL OF WME... 3
What is Search Engine Marketing and what role do domain names play in maximising results in search?
HOW KEYWORD .AU DOMAIN NAMES CAN IMPROVE YOUR MARKETING RESULTS..... 6
How a perfect match domain name can hold huge marketing value and become a strong digital asset.
DOMAINS AND #HASHTAGS: A MATCH MADE IN MARKETING HEAVEN..... 7
Combining domain names and hashtags on social media can boost results for businesses.
BRANDING FOR SMALL BUSINESS..... 9
How every Aussie business can build a brand essence and strengthen it online with .au.

CHARTS & TABLES

.au Monthly Creates	1
.au Domains Under Management	1
Renewal Rates by Domain Age	1
Domain Numbers in the APTLD Region	1
Website Analytics	2
Top three analytics applications	2
Domains by String Length (excluding zone).....	2
.au Policy Deletes (and Reinstatement Rate)	13



Visit our new website to view more reports
ausregistry.com.au/research-au



3,032,341
.au domain names
currently registered

31 March 2016

Foreword



Welcome to the seventh edition of AusRegistry's industry report, *Behind the Dot: State of the .au Domain*.

A domain name is one of the most integral aspects of a business' marketing strategy. Whether your focus is on large-scale, outdoor and display advertising; innovative digital and interactive campaigns; or traditional print and television advertising, chances are there is a website sitting behind each activity, providing the primary source of information and contact for customers.

In order for that website to be found online, it requires a memorable domain name that clearly reflects your business and what's on offer at the site.

In Australia, a .au domain name included in your call-to-action is a seal of authenticity and locality. The AusRegistry .au survey has consistently shown Australian Internet users trust websites ending in .au and see it as the most relevant domain extension for Australian businesses. Such an asset can only be beneficial as it encourages brand engagement and loyalty.

In this edition of *Behind the Dot*, we've delved into the world of marketing to explore the ways in which domain names complement and underpin many of the tactics employed by businesses and brands today.

For our feature Q&A, we've gone straight to the top in our examination of Search Engine Marketing with Nick Bell, Managing Director of digital marketing agency WME. Nick's experience and understanding of search, its intricacies and its mechanics are clear in the great advice he offers Australian businesses.

In other news, recent weeks have seen a monumental development in the .au landscape as .au Domain Administration (auDA) announced its decision to introduce direct domain name registrations under .au, following recommendations from the 2015 Names Policy Panel. This will mean that for the first time, domain names such as [www.yourname.au](#) will be available for registration. It is a significant milestone in the Australian Internet landscape and will be the focus of much discussion and planning in the months to come. We look forward to updating you on developments in this space as they unfold.

Also in *Behind the Dot* this quarter – the value of keyword .au domain names as a business asset and their benefits for marketing; how domains and hashtags can be incorporated to improve your social media strategy and the basics of branding for small businesses, from finding your essence to communicating about your organisation online.

Finally this quarter, auDA recently announced the departure of its CEO, Chris Disspain. We commend Chris on more than 16 years of service and his contribution to the Australian domain name industry and we wish him well in his future endeavours. AusRegistry has confidence that the .au community is in good hands under the stewardship of the auDA Board and with the tireless and diligent support of auDA staff.

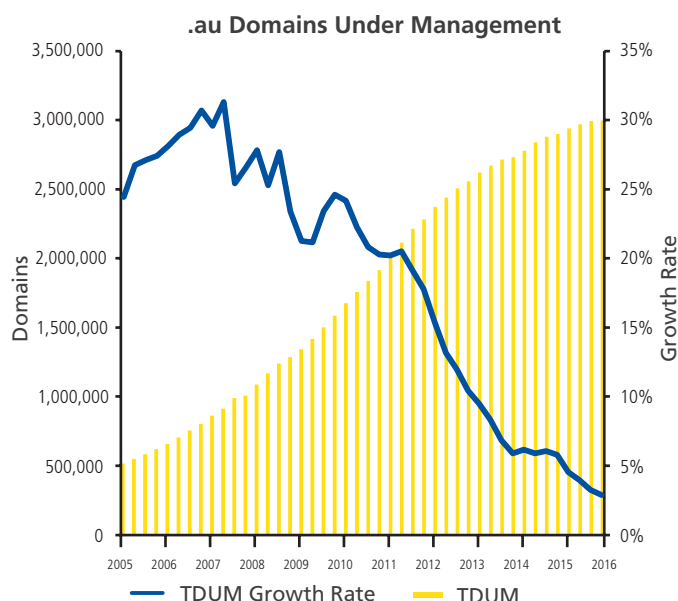
It is my pleasure to present the seventh edition of *Behind the Dot: State of the .au Domain*. As always, we welcome your feedback and input on the magazine and thank you for reading.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adrian Kinderis'.

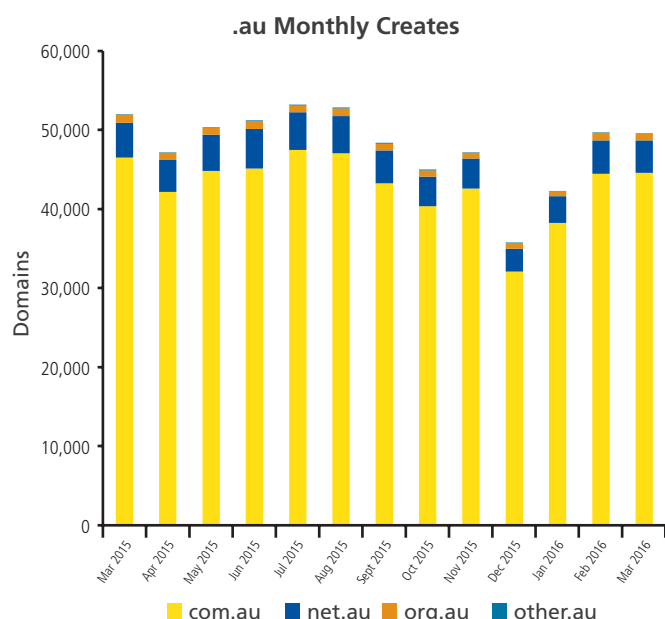
Adrian Kinderis
CEO AusRegistry

Under the microscope

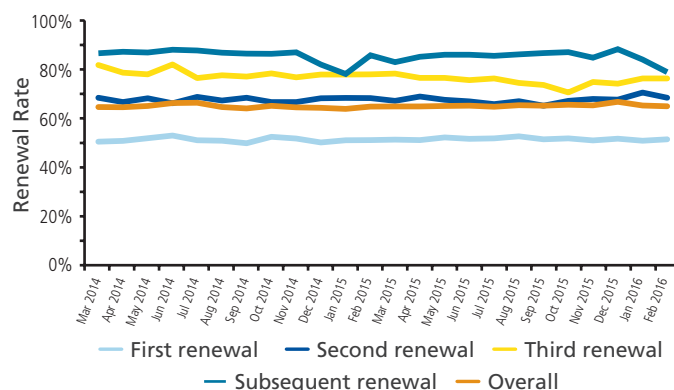
Whilst continuing to expand, the .au namespace sustained its trend of slow growth, increasing domains under management (DUM) by 3 percent in the 12 months to 31 March. This was supported largely by com.au which grew 3.8 percent, while net.au shows continued signs of pressure possibly due to the competition of new gTLDs and has shrunk by 3.1 percent. The net.au challenge will likely become more apparent next quarter with a number of promotional names due to expire, which may incur a lower than usual renewal rate.



The number of .au names under management in open zones rose to 3,032,341 at the end of March 2016. Overall the annualised growth rate remains fairly low compared to 6 percent at the same time last year. Partly contributing to this reduction is the contraction of net.au for the sixth consecutive quarter.

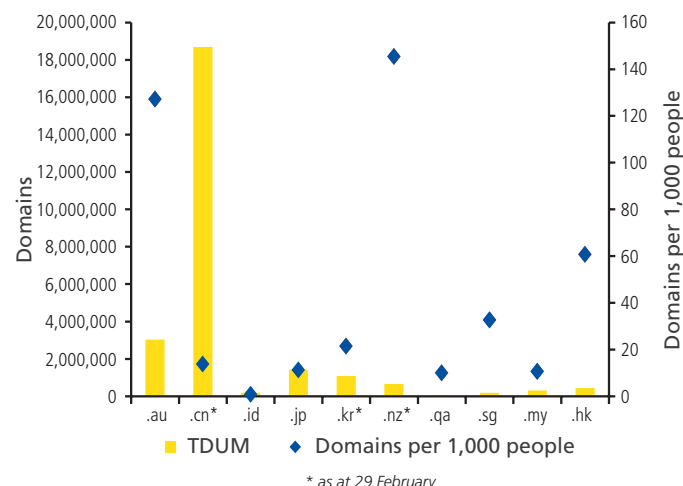


Renewal Rates by Domain Age



With the ageing of the namespace, the proportion of domains six years old or more has risen markedly. The supporting graph has been enhanced to separate out third time renewals from fourth and subsequent renewals. The effect of the increased volume of domain names created from 2009-10 has meant the year-on-year renewal rate (for third time renewals) has slipped slightly overall. This is possibly due to the maturity of the namespace with more people in that period purchasing domains for speculative reasons and letting them go for commercial reasons. Meanwhile, a more recent dip in older name renewals (for fourth time renewals) is largely due to a recent contraction in domain portfolios.

Domain Numbers in the APTLD Region



.au is part of the APTLD, the organisation for country code Top-Level Domains (ccTLDs) in the Asia-Pacific. Compared to a range of ccTLDs in the region, Australia has a very high number of domains held per capita (currently 127 domains per 1,000 people). However, the most substantial movement in the region is coming from China (.cn), Hong Kong (.hk) and Indonesia (.id) – all of which had substantial growth this quarter. .hk has increased 17 percent from last quarter and .id is up 23 percent. China is up 14 percent in two months and is likely to continue in this fashion in response to a surge of domain name registrations tied to an investment boom.

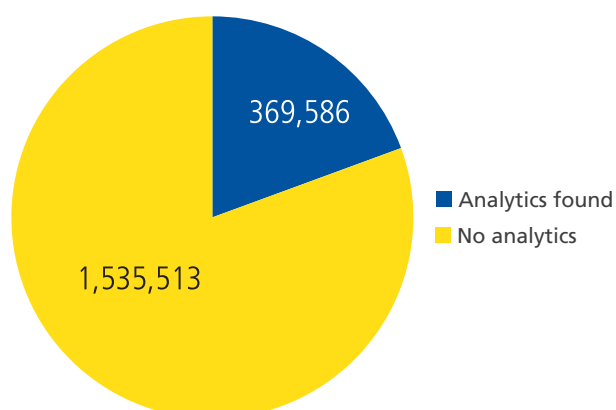
.au research and surveys

In August 2015 AusRegistry conducted a zone file analysis; a comprehensive examination of the .au namespace's 3 million domain names. It was the first time an analysis of this kind had been conducted and it revealed numerous insights into .au domain name usage and websites. The findings were published in Edition 5 of *Behind the Dot* (Nov 2015).

One particular finding identified .au websites using analytics. Analytics provide information about a website's effectiveness, as the data may show how many people visit a website, how many of those visitors were unique visitors, how they found the website (i.e. via a link or search engine), how long they stayed on a page or on the entire site, what links they clicked on and when they left the website.

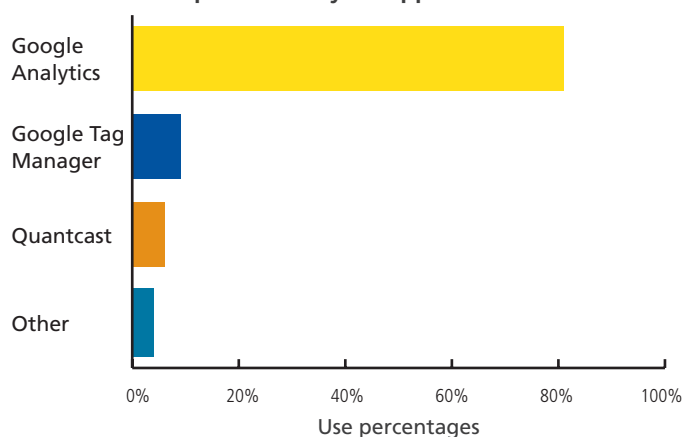
Of the 2,932,421 domains scanned in the zone file analysis (in August 2015), 1,905,099 were found to have websites. Of those websites only 19% had analytics applications.

Website Analytics

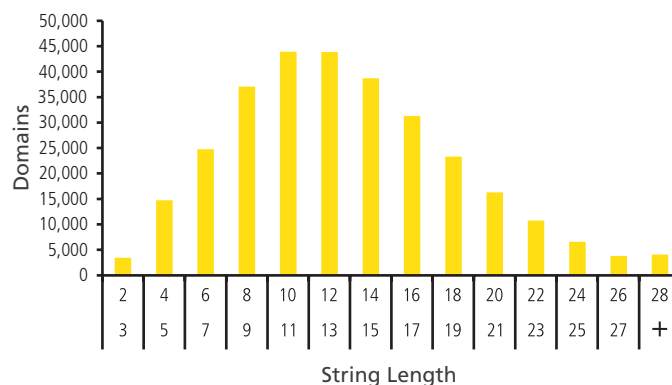


The top three analytics applications were: Google Analytics (81%), Google Tag Manager (9%) and Quantcast (6%).

Top three analytics applications



Domains by String Length (excluding zone)



Total 3,022,531 under second-level .au domains (com.au, net.au, org.au, asn.au, id.au), as at February 2016.

String length is the number of characters in a domain name to the left of the dot, for example ausregistry.com.au has an 11-character string length.

In .au the composition of domain names must:

- Be at least two characters long
- Contain only letters (a-z), numbers (0-9), hyphens (-), or a combination of these;
- Start and end with a number or a letter, not a hyphen
- Not contain hyphens in the third and fourth position (e.g. ab--cd.com.au)

The graph shows the breakdown of .au domains by string length with names in the 10—13 character count being the most common. This statistic, first reported in *Behind the Dot* in 2014, has not varied.

Shorter, more memorable domain names are limited due to the finite numbers of character combinations available, especially meaningful combinations forming real words (almost all two- and three-character combinations are registered and currently in use). Whilst the argument for shorter domains is sound – easier to remember, easier to type in – they are also very limited and usually valuable in the secondary market.

Names between 8 and 15 characters long appear to be popular, with more than half of all registered names falling in this bracket. This may indicate that registrants tend to prefer more meaningful domains which have a relation to a product or business rather than longer phrases or sentences.

Domains & SEO with Nick Bell of WME

By George Pongas

Director of Product Management at AusRegistry

George Pongas, Director of Product Management at AusRegistry, sat down with Nick Bell, Managing Director of digital marketing agency WME, to discuss the important role domain names play in digital and Search Engine Marketing.

GP: *Nick, can you give our readers an overview of WME and how you help your clients?*

NB: WME was founded in 2008 as a Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) agency. At the start, SEO was our bread and butter, but over the years it's expanded into a full-service agency offering web design and development, social media marketing, and of course Search Engine Marketing (SEM) strategy. We boast a team of 440 of employees in Australia and across our overseas offices in Singapore, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Thailand and Dubai. As a result of our growth, we've been recognised as one of the fastest growing tech companies in Australia. The team here go about every day with a sense of urgency, ensuring we're always informed of the latest industry developments. Everything is moving at such a rapid pace, so it's critical to keep up.

GP: *What is Search Engine Marketing and why is it important to businesses?*

NB: Search Engine Marketing (SEM) is the process of gaining visibility and rankings from search engines through unpaid and paid marketing channels. Traditionally, unpaid methods include SEO through earning free traffic via the search results, and paid methods may include traffic channels such as Google AdWords.

SEM is critical for your business as it allows you to quickly reach your target audience, find new opportunities, dramatically boost your online presence and grow your business.

GP: *What role do domain names play in SEM? In the past, exact match domains were very valuable. Is this still the case?*

NB: Domain names still play a large role in SEM but it's important to test the effectiveness of each domain that is trialled. For example, we tested a number of domains for our business before finding that seoquote.com.au performed by far the best for us. In fact, it generated 50% more conversions for us than WMEgroup.com.au.

We then rolled out "(industry)quote.com.au" domains for our other companies (e.g. for Appscore we used appquotes.com.au) and suggested our clients to do the same.

Furthermore, from an SEO point of view, exact match domains are valuable but it can be very easy to over-optimize these domains, which can quickly lead

to a Google penalty or filter. Google is aware that these kinds of domains are typically used by spammers who are targeting specific keywords. In this way, exact match domains have their place, but require a different approach in regards to an optimisation strategy.

GP: *Our consumer surveys tell us that Australian Internet users trust .au domain names when navigating online. What does this mean in an overall digital marketing strategy for a business?*

NB: Australian Internet users trust .au domains because the domain extension identifies Australian businesses. People simply trust local and .au means Australia online. So we find a .au domain name does help in regards to customer engagement and can dramatically improve conversions for our clients.

GP: *What advice do you give to your clients about their domain name strategy? For instance, do you tell your clients to register one domain name or many? Should they consider multiple registrations across multiple Top-Level Domains? Is a brand domain name better than a generic keyword domain name?*

NB: Typically, we advise clients to select a domain name that targets their brand name, product name or marketing campaign call-to-action. Branding has become a big component of search algorithms and does play a role in the success of SEO and SEM campaigns. You will often see generic, keyword-rich domains in the search results – these kinds of domains are often heavily scrutinised by Google as they are typically purchased by those who are heavily optimising their sites around specific keywords. This can quickly lead to over-optimisation issues if the right approach is not taken.

GP: *Google constantly updates its search algorithm. Where do you think the next major changes will be made and how will this impact Australian businesses? How can businesses best future-proof their websites / domains to ensure they aren't penalised by Google algorithm changes?*

NB: It's true that Google is constantly updating its algorithm. One update that we are eagerly anticipating is Google Penguin¹ that looks at the links pointing to a website. Without getting into specifics, Penguin attempts to reduce the rankings of websites that are using spamming techniques and strategies.

We think the biggest change will be the greater importance placed on behaviour components of websites. This includes user engagement such as time spent on the website, bounce rates, social sharing and engagement, and using these validity factors to reward

¹ Google, Another step to reward high-quality sites. Available from: <https://googleblog.blogspot.com.au/2011/02/finding-more-high-quality-sites-in.html>. [15 March 2016].

web masters for providing a better user experience. The algorithm will become much more intelligent at understanding user intent and therefore providing higher quality content in the search results.

GP: *The term 'search for us' is an emerging trend in print and TV advertisements in Australia, with an increasing number of marketers using search instead of domain names as a call-to-action. What are your thoughts on this practice?*

NB: Advertisers use 'search for us' as a call-to-action in their advertising because studies show most people use search to navigate the web. They are simply taking advantage of consumer behaviour, but it is an interesting conundrum because you are also sending your customers to a very competitive environment where your ad campaign can be ambushed by your competitors.

To me it makes more sense to send interested customers directly to your website, but you cannot ignore market forces so it is about a balanced online marketing approach. You need to use all the tools in the toolbox and this is why I founded WME – to help businesses with their online marketing.

GP: *Much has been discussed about the impact new Top-Level Domains (new TLDs) will have on search. Now Australian businesses have the chance to secure local domains like .melbourne, .sydney and .club. What are your thoughts?*

NB: We have many clients using these TLDs with great success. We have found this has led to an improvement in traffic as a result of higher click-through rates. Google is on record stating they will be treated like other TLDs, therefore they must be set up correctly – by using, for example, geo-targeting, even if they are already region-specific domains. Once again, it's about a balanced approach; differentiate yourself from your competitors but don't over play yourself.

GP: *Finally, what are your top search engine and digital marketing tips for Australian businesses?*

NB: SEM in 2016 requires more of a strategic approach than yesteryear. As the search landscape changes and the algorithms improve, it will require dedicated experts who understand industry marketplaces and target audiences. Businesses should avoid the temptation for automated solutions and techniques that once worked – these can quickly result in getting your website penalised.

Online marketing is an indispensable investment – you should use an agency that offers well-defined and measurable KPIs, to help establish performance targets for your budget to deliver improved sales results.



"Australian Internet users trust .au domains... we find a .au domain name does help in regards to customer engagement and can dramatically improve conversions for our clients."

Nick Bell, Managing Director of digital marketing agency WME

**\$2,500
PRIZE**

TO BE WON

Australia & New Zealand Internet Awards

2016

**NOW OPEN
SUBMIT YOUR
ENTRIES ONLINE
ANZIA.ORG.AU**

ANZIAs are awarded to categories covering six areas: Security, Diversity & Digital Skills, Information, Innovation, Tech Startup and The Leonie Dunbar Memorial Award for Community Websites. Entries close 10 June 2016.

ANZIATM

How keyword .au domains can improve marketing results

By George Pongas
Director Product Management, AusRegistry



Every marketer, CEO and business owner in Australia understands the importance of having their brand registered as a .au domain name.

They know Australian consumers trust .au domain names and have been conditioned to visit brand websites with web addresses ending in .au.

One area of domain name marketing regularly overlooked is the power of generic keyword domain names.

A premium, generic keyword domain name is a short, memorable and descriptive domain related to the market vertical or industry sector on which your business is focused. For instance, a hotel could see great value in hotel.com.au, as would a florist with florist.com.au.

Given the intuitive nature of keyword domains, consumers find it easier to recall the website addresses and the businesses using them soon become the most authoritative and trusted online providers within their sectors. Consumers are drawn to these websites over others and the domain name actually brings in traffic. It's a bit like getting the prime eye-level product position on a supermarket shelf, rather than being located out of sight at the bottom.

It's not just about consumer appeal either. Owning keyword domain names which are highly targeted to specific industries can help your business get a serious leg up in Google search results.

A comprehensive study by Searchmetrics¹ – one of the world's leading SEO advisors – of the top 30 Google search results across 10,000 keywords found the importance of keyword search terms in Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) is decreasing, while short and highly relevant domain names have the equivalent worth of "thousands of keywords in the rankings".

The study suggests highly relevant content, social media signals and good domain names are among the most important factors for attaining a high ranking in Google search results.

The researchers say domain names are an important factor in search results and the study suggests domains with high SEO visibility also obtain higher rankings.

Results like this and the clear appeal to consumers have made generic keyword domain names highly sought after. For example, serendipitously toy.com.au sold at auction on Christmas day 2015 for \$82,350 and in September 2011 investmentproperty.com.au became the highest recorded .au domain name at auction when it was snapped up for \$125,000 by New South Wales property developer Vision Homes. Similarly, hardware.com.au was purchased at auction by Woolworths in 2010 for \$33,000 and more recently basketball.com.au was purchased at private sale by the National Basketball League.

Another success story is carloans.com.au². When the business transitioned its operations from a brand domain name to a keyword domain in 2013, it saw an immediate increase in website traffic and customers, a decrease in marketing spend, 40 percent reduction in ad word spend, and overall growth of 60 percent to generate turnover in excess of \$100 million.

At the end of the day, it's all about diversification. When investing your money, you wouldn't put all your eggs in one basket. The same is true for your domain name marketing strategy. Don't just rely on your brand domain name. Get creative and secure the industry sector keywords for your products and services too.

A keyword domain can be a cost-effective and highly successful method for increasing direct type-in browser and search traffic to ultimately improve your bottom line. Importantly, they are appreciating assets you can sell on the secondary market for incredible profit.

¹ Searchmetrics, The Searchmetrics Ranking Factors study 2015 for Google.com. Available from: <http://blog.searchmetrics.com/us/2015/07/30/ranking-factors-2015/>. [10 March 2016].
² AusRegistry, Premium .com.au domain names a valuable asset for Australian businesses. Available from: <http://www.ausregistry.com.au/premium-com-au-domain-names-a-valuable-asset-for-australian-businesses/>. [10 March 2016].

Domains and #hashtags: a match made in marketing heaven

By Alison Coffa

Marketing Communications Coordinator, AusRegistry



It is widely believed that social media has had a democratising effect on the marketing business. No longer is branding conducted solely through one-way channels and traditional advertising alone – now organisations are conducting conversations every minute of every day with their customers, supporters and detractors alike.

At the same time, social media allows organisations of all sizes to engage in meaningful marketing activities regardless of budget. For many who use Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and more in their daily lives, extending this usage to a business scenario is not a huge stretch.

The Sensis Social Media Report 2015¹ found that 24 percent of those surveyed use social networking sites to follow or find out about particular brands or businesses in general, and that half of those who research products and services on social media ended up making that purchase.

So how can small to medium enterprises ensure they're capitalising on this opportunity and make the most of social media for their business?

There's a hashtag for that

Hashtags can be a valuable tool to ensure your content is reaching the right audiences and being included in the right audiences. In particular, hashtags allow your posts to be seen by people who don't necessarily follow your account.

Placing the 'hash' or 'pound' sign in front of a word or phrase turns it into a clickable category heading, allowing social media users to easily search for other content that contains the same hashtag. For example, an article on digital marketing can find a whole new audience by categorising it under #marketing, #digital or even #digitalmarketing.

Sales Force Marketing Cloud conducted a statistical review for effective tweeting² and found that "tweets with hashtags receive two times more engagement than those without hashtags."

Including a relevant hashtag in each post can provide small to medium businesses with a significant boost to their social media marketing efforts and take advantage of the broader network of potential customers social networking provides.

How to optimise your domain name for social media

Demonstrate trust

The annual .au survey has consistently shown that Australians trust domain names under .au. As much as any other digital forum, social media can be subject to spam and malicious content. Using a .au domain name as your call-to-action shows your followers that you're a local Australian business and gives some peace of mind that the link is safe to click.

URL shortening

Particularly on the character-controlled platform of Twitter, URL shorteners are often built into the user interface to allow you to trim long, complex web addresses into shortened, generic versions. However, often these are done through URL shortening tools such as [Bit.ly](http://bit.ly), returning a link that looks something like 'bit.ly/20TPUxm' (I promise this example is safe to click!).

Using these shorteners introduces a risk to your posts. They remove your brand and any identifying information from the link, meaning followers can't ascertain any information about the website from the URL and may be hesitant to click on it.

¹ Sensis Social Media Report <<https://www.sensis.com.au/about/our-reports/sensis-social-media-report>>

² Strategies for Effective Tweeting: <<http://www.salesforcemarketingcloud.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Strategies-for-effective-tweeting.pdf>>



A .au domain name however includes your brand and the seal of authenticity in the '.au' extension.

An interesting illustration of URL shorteners can be found with our own Prime Minister, Malcolm Turnbull. In his tweets, Mr Turnbull uses the URL shortener 'aus.pm' to represent 'Australian Prime Minister' and to avoid the lengthier www.pm.gov.au address. However, .pm is actually the country code domain name of Saint Pierre and Miquelon, a self-governing territorial overseas collectivity of France. With recent developments in the opening of direct .au domain registrations at the second level, there could now be an opportunity for Australian URL shorteners including a short phrase and a .au extension. It would great to see our Prime Minister use our country's own extension with something like 'pm.au'.

Hashtags and domains: a perfect marketing match

Despite its ability to disrupt some traditional advertising activities and provide an accessible marketing channel to businesses of all sizes, social media is by no means a silver bullet. Neither can it afford to work in isolation.

Domain names remain an integral part of any marketing campaign – online or off. A domain name is the signifier of an organisation's online presence, providing a one-stop-shop source for information about their products or services. It is the place all advertising leads and social media followers get sent once their attention has been caught by a marketing campaign.

In social media, usually a domain name is your call-to-action. Bringing more attention to it through the clever use of hashtags and then ensuring that domain is recognisable, trustworthy or creative is a perfect combination to ensure you're driving traffic to your website.

Common hashtags for Australian organisations

#ausbiz	#SMB
#smallbiz	#entrepreneurs
#startup	#marketing
#business	#sales
#Australia	#nonprofit

Branding for small businesses

By Alison Coffa

Marketing Communications Coordinator, AusRegistry

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics¹, there are over 2 million active businesses in Australia. That makes for a pretty crowded marketplace in which small and medium businesses need to compete in order to stay afloat.

In many cases, factors such as product or service design and quality, store location, customer service and the like can be replicated, making it hard to develop a distinct difference between one business and the next. So how do you differentiate your company to ensure you can compete? The answer lies in building a strong, recognisable and trusted brand.

Why is it that Apple consistently tops charts of the world's most valuable brands² despite the fact that Samsung's products are often reviewed equally or more highly³ than Apple's? Why do more people buy Coca Cola even though reports⁴ suggest Pepsi performs better in blind taste tests?

Customers are loyal to brands, not companies. Building a brand people can relate to and trust can be the difference between driving away customers and driving up sales.

What is branding?

Branding is a strategic process by which you decide what your business is, what it stands for and how you're going to present it in public. Usually, this involves a significant planning process where you consider your audience – who are they and what do they want to see from you?

The Economist⁵ reported that in 1980, Steve Jobs articulated Apple's mission "to make a contribution to the world by making tools for the mind that advance human kind". Similarly, IKEA's website states that the company aims "to create a better everyday life for the many people". You'll notice that Apple said nothing about computers and IKEA doesn't mention furniture.

A company's brand goes beyond its history and a list of its products and services. Instead, it speaks to the essence of why the company exists. What problem are you solving? What do you enable people to do?

Branding is not the same thing as marketing, although they do work together. While marketing is the process by which you communicate about your brand and your products, branding stands alone as the single memorable part of your organisation when all other factors are removed. A brand is uniquely yours, whereas marketing techniques can be replicated and repurposed by any organisation.

A brand's essence encompasses its answers to all these questions, often through messaging workshops, brainstorming sessions or other forms of gathering feedback and surveying stakeholders. In the case of many larger organisations, the results are presented in a brand essence statement or document that summarises the core of your brand in a few simple sentences. This can then be shared with everyone within your organisation to ensure that at all public touchpoints, your audience is being presented with a consistent, clear vision of your company.

Branding in .au

Once you've locked down your brand essence, you can begin to plan how to communicate it. For many business owners, one of the very first assets you need to secure is a domain name.

It can be easy to overlook the importance of a strong domain name in any marketing strategy. Whether you're running digital advertising that directs people to your website, displaying billboards or signage that give your domain name as a call-to-action or even working through word of mouth, in many cases potential customers will look to find you online.

In selecting a domain name, brands should consider the signals their chosen name sends about their business. For example, a .au domain name indicates that the website belongs to a verified Australian business.

Roy Morgan research in 2015⁶ found that 45 percent of Australians research products or services online before buying in-store, while almost 25 percent only buy from Australian online stores. Despite globalisation occurring through the rise of online shopping, many Australians are still loyal to local brands and choose to shop on our shores where possible.

A .au domain name can prove a valuable branding asset, identifying your business with a community of shoppers who are eager to support local businesses and feel an affinity for Aussie companies. AusRegistry's annual .au survey⁷ has consistently shown that Australian Internet users are more likely to trust a website that ends in .au and think .au best represents Australian organisations.

Many organisations choose to build their entire brands around the inclusion of their .au web address. Consider the likes of Realestate.com.au, Sportsbet.com.au and News.com.au, all of whom incorporate their domain name into their logo.

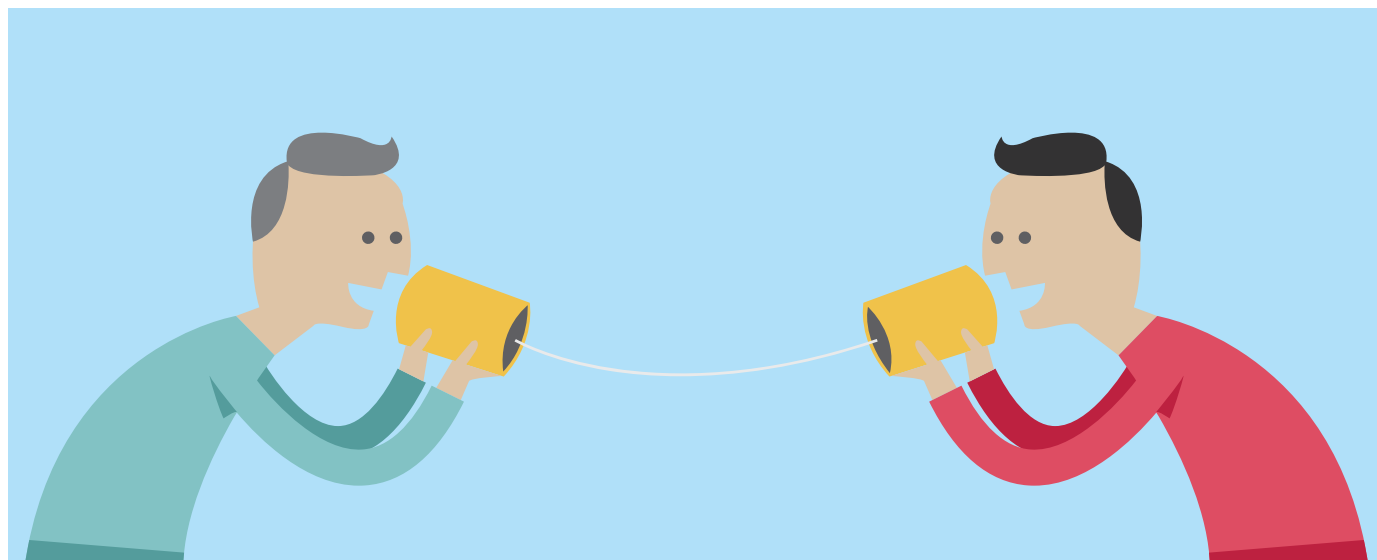
Branding is not just the domain of ASX 200 companies and multi-national marketing agencies. In a competitive Australian market, local Aussie businesses can benefit significantly from articulating what they stand for and selecting customer touchpoints that communicate their essence and build loyalty among their audience.

1 Australian Bureau of Statistics; 8165.0 - Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, Jun 2010 to Jun 2014 <<http://www.abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/mediareleases-bytitle/950EC94DB899312ECA2573B00017B8F4?OpenDocument>>
2 Forbes; The World's Most Valuable Brands <<http://www.forbes.com/powerful-brands>>
3 Forbes; iPhone 6S Vs Galaxy S6 Review: Brilliant, Failed Smartphones<<http://www.forbes.com/sites/gordonkelly/2015/10/24/iphone-6s-vs-galaxy-s6-review/#3b6a0b576148>>
4 Slate; Sweet Sorrow <http://www.slate.com/articles/business/rivalries/2013/08/pepsi_paragraph_why_people_prefer_coke_even_though_pepsi_wins_in_taste_tests.html>
5 The Economist; Mission Statement <<http://www.economist.com/node/13766375>>

6 The state of Australia's \$37.8b online shopping landscape <<http://www.roymorgan.com/findings/6591-online-shopping-in-australia-june-2015-201512012314>>
7 AusRegistry; .au Survey 2015 – Understanding the Australian Internet User (infographic) <<http://www.ausregistry.com.au/pdf/SOTD-BTD-AnnualReportInfographic-2014.pdf>>

Channel talk

'In your opinion, what is the best use of a .au domain name in a marketing campaign?'



Tyron Ball – General Manager, Asia-Pacific, NetNames

What many campaigns lack these days is a tangible link between the offline campaign and the online experience that is completely measurable, this is evidenced through marketing using a search box as a call-to-action. .au domain names are an underutilised weapon in many marketing activities, prospective marketers should always consider registering their campaign tag line as a .au domain name to optimise user experience and campaign conversions. One of the best examples of this is www.mycrédithistory.com.au. For any marketer looking to create a memorable link between their marketing campaign and their website registering and campaign tag line as a .au domain name is a must.

Louise Lentino & Josephine Bradford – Marketing, Instra Corporation

Choosing to use a .au domain name in a marketing campaign is the obvious

choice because of the trust that .au resonates with online users. UBank, an internet-centric direct bank has been very clever with their award-winning marketing campaigns, which prominently feature their online presence at www.ubank.com.au. From TV Ads about skaters back in 2010 with a message to the younger generation about saving, a humorous advertising campaign in 2011 about annoying habits, to their most recent campaign the 'All I need project'. UBank, a division of National Australia Bank now has over 100,000 customers. Examples like this have proven that the use of a .au is a secure, trusted and memorable way to ensure success within a marketing campaign.

Johnathan Horne – CEO, Leading Internet Solutions

I think the best case would be Commonwealth Bank's 'CAN' campaign. At the time it was rare to see the big banks deviate away from their core domain name, but having a dedicated

domain meant CBA could accurately measure the return on investment for that specific campaign spend.

An important part of a campaign that size is the traffic bleed you get on aggregators such as Google. With the market searching for 'Can' or 'Can.com.au', the cost to protect this traffic with AdWords was a third of the cost to purchase keywords associated with 'CBA' or 'Commonwealth Bank'. CBA has shown having a unique com.au domain as the call-to-action for each campaign can be a smart move.

I think a lot of businesses are starting to understand the benefits of owning short, brandable domains and how they can be used for marketing campaigns in conjunction with their core brand.

Want to contribute to the next 'Channel Talk' feature?

Reach out to us at behindthedot@ausregistry.com.au with your expression of interest or topic suggestion.

DNS & security

Paul Wilson is the Director General of APNIC, the organisation in the Asia-Pacific responsible for distributing and managing IP addresses, performing much of its work out of sight of everyday Internet users. David Goldstein, publisher, Goldstein Report and Editor, Domain Pulse, sat down with Paul to discuss APNIC's role and why it is so important.

In part one of this conversation, find out more about APNIC as an organisation, its membership, and some of the local and global issues it deals with on a daily basis. In the next edition of *Behind the Dot*, Paul and David will discuss in more detail IPv4 depletion and APNIC's perspective on the transition to IPv6.

DG: *Some of our readers will know about APNIC, but I'm guessing only some of those will really know what the organisation does. So what is APNIC and why is it important?*

PW: APNIC (pronounced A-P-NIC) is the Regional Internet Registry for the Asia-Pacific. Our role is to distribute and manage Internet number resources – Internet Protocol (IP) addresses and Autonomous System (AS) numbers – in the Asia-Pacific region. These number resources are the building blocks for the Internet to operate and grow.

The name of this magazine *Behind the Dot* is very apt, actually, when discussing IP addresses – because they are the numbers behind the domains. The two most important identifiers on the Internet are IP addresses and domain names: without these identifiers, and the systems that manage them, “the net” as we know it would not function.

People sometimes confuse domain names and IP addresses, but the difference is fundamental. A domain name is a name: a label or brand which we use to refer to something on the Internet; while an IP Address is an address: it identifies where something is on the Internet. These addresses are what APNIC manages in the Asia-Pacific.

APNIC also helps build essential technical skills across the region through training, supports Internet infrastructure development, encourages adoption of network technologies such as IPv6, Resource Public Key Infrastructure (RPKI) and DNSSEC, produces technical research, and is an active participant in the multistakeholder model of Internet cooperation and governance. APNIC performs these activities as part of its commitment to a global, open, stable and secure Internet that serves the entire Asia-Pacific region.

DG: *Who are your members? What sort of organisations and people benefit, and how do they benefit, from being a member?*

PW: APNIC has just over 5,200 direct members and indirectly, around another 5,000. They are Internet service providers, telecommunications companies, governments, universities, banks, online businesses, Internet start-ups – basically any organisation which operates its own network and needs its own IP addresses or AS numbers.

Apart from the flexibility of having their own IP addresses to build their networks, members can benefit from our technical training, access to services like RPKI, research information, and our conferences which provide opportunities to hear from global experts and build relationships with their peers. APNIC members also develop policy for how IP address resources are used in the region, and elect leaders to sit on the APNIC Executive Council (APNIC's board).

Overall, APNIC Membership is a way to join the vibrant Internet community of the Asia-Pacific, to help build Internet networks and to participate in developing the Internet in this region.

DG: *What are the main issues that APNIC deals with?*

PW: APNIC deals with a number of issues that are critical to the Internet today and in the future. These include the proper management of remaining IPv4 supplies, and at the same time supporting the deployment of IPv6.

Infrastructure security is another increasing concern for all Internet stakeholders, and we play an important role specifically in relation to IP addressing. This includes maintaining the APNIC WHOIS database, which provides registration information for all resources in the AP region; promoting resource certification (RPKI) which will secure the Internet routing system; and supporting DNSSEC. We increasingly provide support to law enforcement and other public safety communities that need to better understand these issues in the work they do.

We're also a part of the global system of Internet governance, which has been gaining increasing prominence over the past decades. This “multistakeholder” system includes many others, including technical organisations, businesses, government bodies, and also non-profit civil society organisations; who work together to shape the Internet as it develops.

DG: *Around the Asia-Pacific region, do the issues you deal with differ?*

PW: The Asia-Pacific is the most diverse region in the world – culturally, economically and politically – and there are certainly differences in priorities and issues facing each economy. However, there are some common issues across the region; obviously IPv4 exhaustion is one, and Internet security is another.

A common issue for the whole region is a shortage of skilled network engineers. This is critical because the difference between an Internet service which is efficient, stable and secure – and one which is not – can be attributed in many cases solely to the skills of the engineers who build and operate it. The pressures of growth, increasing security challenges and new technologies such as IPv6, all contribute to a huge challenge for network operators, and undermine the effectiveness and the benefits of the Internet in many countries.

APNIC's training activities aim to tackle the problem, but we're aware that we don't have the scale to solve this by ourselves. To help increase the amount of training and development activities APNIC can deliver, a new entity, the APNIC Foundation, will be created later this year to accept philanthropic donations from corporate and government organisations to fund development efforts. We'll share more information on the Foundation when it launches, but if any readers are interested in Internet development in the Asia-Pacific region and want to provide their support, please do get in touch with us.

"Our core responsibility is to operate a world-class number registry, and to make sure that our registry operations keep pace with a growing Internet and changing member needs."

Paul Wilson, Director General of APNIC

DG: *APNIC has been involved in discussions regarding the transition of the US government oversight of the key domain name functions performed by IANA, performed under contract by ICANN, to the global multistakeholder community. What is the likely outcome of this and when is it likely to happen?*

PW: The US government is now in possession of a complete IANA Stewardship Transition plan, after it was approved by each of ICANN's stakeholder groups and endorsed by the ICANN Board at ICANN 55 in Marrakech.

The US government will now evaluate the plan from the community, and that process is expected to take around three months.

The contract between ICANN and the US government is due to expire in September 2016, so the hope is that the transition will go ahead by this date. The Internet community has worked very hard in a short space of time to develop the proposal for the transition to occur, with global participation and thousands of hours of work going into developing the final documents. It demonstrates clearly that the multistakeholder model of Internet governance is working, and hopefully the US government will accept the proposal.

DG: *Looking to the future, what do you see as the most important issues APNIC will be involved in?*

PW: Encouraging IPv6 adoption in the Asia-Pacific will continue to be an APNIC priority, as will security initiatives such as RPKI and DNSSEC. Supporting the development of Internet infrastructure and skills across the region, particularly in fast-growing, emerging economies will also be important. However, our core responsibility is to operate a world-class number registry, and to make sure that our registry operations keep pace with a growing Internet and changing member needs will always remain our primary focus.

DG: *And after reading this, if I've decided I want to become a member, how do I join?*

PW: Any organisation that needs IP addresses or an AS Number for their network infrastructure can benefit from APNIC Membership. Just visit apply.apnic.net for more information and to apply.

In edition 8 of Behind the Dot, Paul Wilson will discuss APNIC's perspective on IPv4 depletion and the transition to IPv6. Edition 8 will be published in August 2016.

Governance & policy



Jo Lim, Acting CEO, .au Domain Administration (auDA) discusses how not-for-profit organisations can use video content to optimise engagement levels.

As the administrator of the .au domain space, one of auDA's key responsibilities is to raise awareness and educate the Australian community about .au domain names. We do this in a number of ways, tailored to different segments of the community.

This month we're pleased to be participating in the Communities in Control conference in Melbourne, which is Australia's biggest annual not-for-profit gathering and always features an impressive array of high-profile speakers. Our participation in this conference is aimed at promoting the .au brand – specifically org.au – among the not-for-profit sector.

The focus of auDA's panel session at Communities in Control will be on how not-for-profit organisations can use video content to optimise their website traffic and raise awareness of their work, enhancing their ability to engage with stakeholders and achieve their fundraising goals.

It's interesting to note that the not-for-profit sector (including government and education) is already leading the way when it comes to using video content on their websites. As the table below shows, a greater proportion of org.au, asn.au, gov.au and edu.au domain names use video content than com.au and net.au domain names (noting that a greater proportion of org.au, asn.au, gov.au and edu.au domain names resolve to websites than in com.au and net.au).

2LD	Has Video *	Number of Domains	% With Video
org.au	6,458	62,821	10%
asn.au	404	3,616	11%
edu.au	466	3,116	15%
gov.au	148	998	15%
com.au	237,137	2,515,030	9%
net.au	24,630	309,905	8%

*(embedded YouTube or Vimeo). Data as at 19 August 2015

At our session we will discuss the benefits and pitfalls of using video, share some success stories, and hopefully inspire more Australian not-for-profits to make the most of their online presence.

For more information about the Communities in Control conference, 30-31 May 2016, see www.communitiesincontrol.com.au/cic

Want to become an auDA member? See www.auda.org.au/membership for more information about the benefits of auDA membership and how to join.

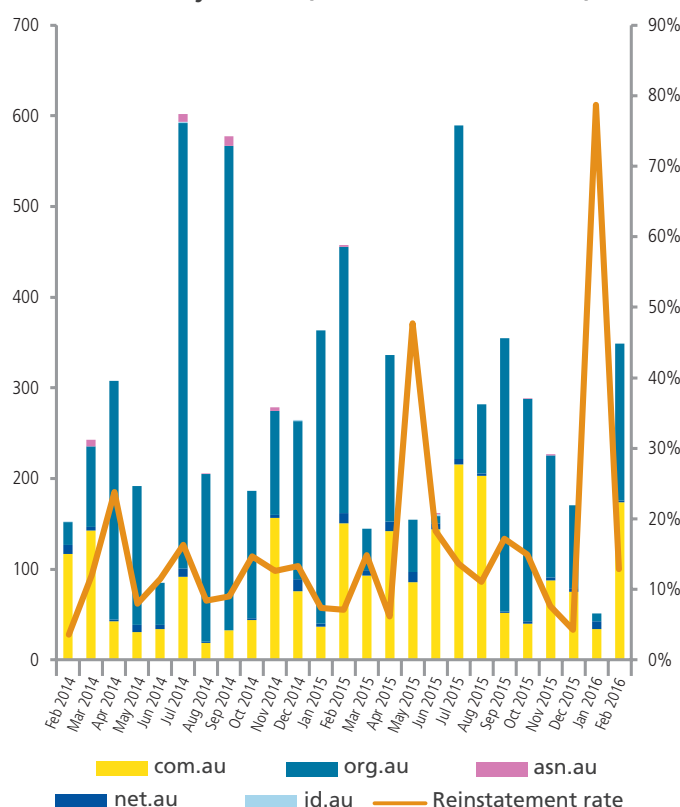
Economy, People, the Planet - it's nothing without communication

Joining auDA's Jo Lim as moderator of this session:

Georgie Harman, CEO - beyondblue
Krystal Barter, Founder - Pink Hope
Natalie Isaacs, Founder - 1millionwomen

Monday 30 May 2016
Communities in Control Conference 2016

.au Policy Deletes (and Reinstatement Rate)



MEMBER BENEFITS

**AUSTRALIANS VIEW .au AS A TRUSTED SPACE
ON THE INTERNET. IF YOU CARE ABOUT THE
INTERNET IN AUSTRALIA, BECOME A MEMBER**

auDA MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS:

- A VOICE IN THE FUTURE OF .au
- VOTE IN auDA BOARD ELECTIONS
- FREE ENTRY TO AUIGF
- INVITATIONS TO SPECIAL EVENTS
- QUARTERLY MEMBERS' NEWSLETTER
- AND MORE...

www.auda.org.au/Membership



...

**BECOME AN
auDA MEMBER
TODAY & HAVE
YOUR SAY**

A DDOS ATTACK
JUST ATE \$16M
IN REVENUE.
ALONG WITH
HIS ANNUAL
BONUS.



ALI CARTER // CIO

DDoS attacks are costly. Revenues tank. Your brand gets smacked. Sometimes malware slips in. Neustar can help. With flexible solutions for DDoS mitigation, we'll deliver exactly the defense you need from the threats you face. **Learn more at www.neustar.biz/services/ddos-protection.**

neustar

All characters appearing in this advertisement are fictitious.
Any resemblance to real persons, living or dead, is purely coincidental.

©2015 Neustar, Inc.

Glossary

Abbreviations

2LD

Second Level Domain

ACMA

Australian Communications and Media Authority

AISI

Australian Internet Security Initiative

ANZIA's

Australia and New Zealand Internet Awards

APNIC

Asia-Pacific Network Information Centre

auDA

.au Domain Administration

auIGF

Australian Internet Governance Forum

ccTLD

Country Code Top Level Domain

CERT Australia

Computer Emergency Response Team Australia

DDoS

Distributed Denial of Service

DNS

Domain Name System

DNSSEC

Domain Name System Security Extensions

gTLD

Generic Top level Domain

IANA

Internet Assigned Numbers Authority

ICANN

Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

IDN

Internationalised Domain Name

SEO

Search Engine Optimisation

SEM

Search Engine Marketing

TLD

Top-Level Domain

Definitions

Asia-Pacific Top Level Domain Association (APTLD)

APTLD is an organisation for ccTLD registries in Asia-Pacific region. APTLD was originally established in 1998, and in 2003 legally established in Malaysia. APTLD works as the forum of information exchange regarding technological and operational issues of domain name registries in Asia-Pacific region.

Australia and New Zealand Internet Awards (ANZIA's)

The ANZIA's are a collaboration between auDA and InternetNZ. An annual event celebrating the achievements of organisations, businesses and individuals who excel in delivering accessible, innovative, informative and secure resources to a diverse and wide community on the Internet.

.au Domain Administration (auDA)

The policy authority and industry self-regulatory body for the .au domain space.

Autonomous System (AS)

An AS is a group of IP networks operated by one or more network operator(s) that has a single and clearly defined external routing policy. Exterior routing protocols are used to exchange routing information between Autonomous Systems.

Australian Internet Governance Forum (auIGF)

Developed by auDA, the auIGF provides a unique opportunity for all who use the Internet in Australia to share ideas and experiences, discuss Internet-related policy, identify issues and engage with each other in a multi-stakeholder forum.

.auLOCKDOWN

.auLOCKDOWN a security measure for .au domain names that provides an added level of security for domain name Registrants. Domain names are locked at the Registry level, and changes are only possible through direct communication between the Registrar authorised contact and the Registry, by following a strict authentication process.

AusRegistry

The Registry Operator for the open 2LDs (com.au, net.au, org.au, asn.au, and id.au); the community geographic 2LDs (act.au, nsw.au, nt.au, qld.au, sa.au, tas.au, vic.au and wa.au); and two closed 2LDs (edu.au and gov.au).

Country Code Top Level Domain (ccTLD)

A TLD that is used to represent a country or external territory. Some examples of ccTLDs are '.uk' for the United Kingdom, and '.au' for Australia.

Domain Name/Domain

An identification string that defines a realm of administrative autonomy, authority, or control on the Internet. Domain names are formed by the rules and procedures of the DNS. Any name registered in the DNS is a domain name.

Domain Name System (DNS)

A hierarchical distributed naming system for computers, services, or any resource connected to the Internet or a private network. It associates various information with domain names assigned to each of the participating entities. Most prominently, it translates easily memorised domain names to the numerical Internet Protocol (IP) addresses needed for the purpose of locating computer services and devices worldwide.

Domain Name System Security Extensions (DNSSEC)

Domain Name System Security Extensions (DNSSEC) is a security extension that facilitates the digital signing of Internet communications, helping to ensure the integrity and authenticity of transmitted data.

Internationalised Domain Name (IDN)

A domain name that includes characters from scripts other than the 26 letters of the Latin alphabet (a–z). An IDN can contain Latin letters with diacritical marks, or may consist of characters from non-Latin scripts.

Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA)

A department of ICANN, which oversees global Internet Protocol (IP) address allocation, autonomous system number allocation, root zone

management in the DNS, media types, and other IP-related symbols and numbers.

Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF)

IETF is a large open international community of network designers, operators, vendors, and researchers concerned with the evolution of the Internet architecture and the smooth operation of the Internet

Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN)

The global DNS administrator, formed in 1998, is a non-profit public-benefit corporation with global participants dedicated to keeping the Internet secure, stable and interoperable. It promotes competition and develops policy on the Internet's unique identifiers.

Internet Protocol (IP) Address

An IP Address is the numerical address by which a location in the Internet is identified. Computers on the Internet use IP Addresses to route traffic and establish connections among themselves; people generally use the human-friendly names made possible by the Domain Name System.

IPv6

Internet Protocol (IP) addresses uniquely identify devices on the Internet. Currently, almost all devices connected to networks use the IP version 4 (IPv4) address system. IPv4 has more than 4 billion possible address combinations, but these are being used up quickly. APNIC reached its last block of IPv4 addresses in April 2011.

Internet Protocol version 6 (IPv6) was developed to ensure the continued growth and innovation of the Internet. IPv6 offers an extremely large (2128) address space, as each address is 128 bits long, rather than 32 bits.

Registrant

An entity or individual that holds a domain name licence.

Registrar

An entity that registers domain names for Registrants and in the case of the .au ccTLD, is accredited by auDA.

Registry

The registry comprises of a database of domain names registered in each 2LD and a public WHOIS service for looking up the identity of the registrant of a domain name.

Reseller

An entity appointed by accredited Registrars to increase the retail channel of .au domain names.

Resource Public Key Infrastructure (RPKI)

The Resource Public Key Infrastructure (RPKI) enables users of public networks, such as the Internet, to verify the authenticity of data that has been digitally signed by the originator of the data.

Second Level Domain (2LD)

The alphanumeric string before the dot and the TLD. AusRegistry is the Registry Operator for the open 2LDs (asn.au, com.au, id.au, net.au and org.au); the community geographic 2LDs (act.au, nsw.au, nt.au, qld.au, sa.au, tas.au, vic.au and wa.au); and two closed 2LDs (edu.au and gov.au).

Total Domains Under Management (TDUM)

Total number of domain names registered in the namespace.

Zone

A portion of the namespace in the DNS for which administrative responsibility has been delegated.

Zone File

A file on a root server that contains domain name registration information. Zone files contain information necessary to resolve domain names to IP addresses and contains all information related to one domain.

Data References

Domain numbers in the APTLD region:

China - .cn

www1.cnnic.cn/IS/CNym/CNymtjxxcx

Indonesia - .id

<https://www.pandi.id/content/statistik>

Japan - .jp

jprs.co.jp/en/stat

Korea - .kr

isis.kisa.or.kr/eng

New Zealand - .nz

dnc.org.nz/content/2014-09_stats.html

Qatar - .qa

domains.qa/en

Singapore - .sg

www.nic.net.sg/page/registration-statistics

Malaysia - .my

www.mynic.my/en/statistics.php

Hong Kong - .hk

www.hkirc.hk/content.jsp?id=77#!/&in=/aboutHK/registration_statistics_hkirc.jsp

Disclaimer

This report has been produced by AusRegistry and is only for the information of the particular person to whom it is provided (the Recipient). This report is subject to copyright and may contain privileged and/ or confidential information. As such, this report (or any part of it) may not be reproduced, distributed or published without the prior written consent of AusRegistry.

This report has been prepared and presented in good faith based on AusRegistry's own information and sources which are believed to be reliable. AusRegistry assume no responsibility for the accuracy, reliability or completeness of the information contained in this report (except to the extent that liability under statute cannot be excluded).

To the extent that AusRegistry may be liable, liability is limited at AusRegistry's option to replacing, repairing or supplying equivalent goods or paying the cost of replacing, repairing or acquiring equivalent, or, in the case of services, re-supplying or paying the cost of having such re-supplied.

© 2016, AusRegistry Pty Ltd.



Powered by
ausregistry



Protect your business from attack

Cybercrime is alive and well in today's online environment. Unauthorised access to your website could be disastrous for both your business and your clients. Protecting your .au domain name is a positive step towards peace of mind - Safeguard your .au domain today.

Visit www.aulockdown.com.au

Participating Registrars:





ausregistry.com.au

