

A Beginner's Guide to Getting a Website and Internet Presence for your Business

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Introduction:

This is a beginner's guide to getting an Internet presence and allowing your business to be found via the major search engine, Google, registering and setting up a web domain, hosting a website, simple Search Engine Optimisation, and using the WordPress CMS (Content Management System) to create a basic website without coding skills. There are some suggestions for hosting providers that Logan IT Services has used and has had experience with, namely CrazyDomains. Having an Internet presence is nearly a necessity these days as most potential customers use Google and other search engines (such as Bing) to search for services and products. This is majorly due to the relative ease (such as on mobile phones, computers and other Internet connected devices) that allow people to find your business, if it is online.

Choosing, Registering and Configuring your Web Domain:

Registering a web domain can be straightforward if done correctly, but can be a problem if you do not know how to configure it properly. Follow the steps below to check for availability and register your web domain.

- 1.) Choose a unique domain name that is easy to type in, reflects your business and easy for customers to remember.
- 2.) Visit www.crazydomains.com.au
- 3.) At the homepage of CrazyDomains, in the search box, type your proposed website name and address to check its availability. Your website should be of the format www.example.com or www.example.com.au, where example represents your business name or website name.
- 4.) Once you have typed in your proposed website address into the text box, click the "Search" button next to the text box.
- 5.) You will be forwarded to a page that indicates either your proposed website name is available or not. If it does not say "Good News your domain is available!" it is suggested you choose another proposed website name / address for your business and try steps three and four again.
- 6.) Once you have found an available website name, you will have the option to register it for one year as a minimum. The longer you register it for the cheaper it becomes

on average per year. Once you select your registration term in the drop-down box, click the “Add to Cart” button. A typical price is roughly \$20-\$30 for one year.

- 7.) Follow the steps to pay by supported payment methods (typically Credit/Debit card) and create an online account with CrazyDomains (remember the username and password as you will need to sign-in to set-up your records and hosting).

Typically it will take some time for the domain registration to come into effect. There are servers that make the backbone of the Internet called DNSs (Domain Name Servers). These convert your website name into a series of numbers called an IP (Internet Protocol) address, that allows your computer to connect to the server hosting your website. Since these DNSs are distributed across the world, it does take time for your website name registration to propagate across the Internet. Typically the time taken for your website name to propagate throughout the Internet is a day to three days.

Now that you have registered and you now own your website name, you need to host your website on a server. In the past, typically people had a physical server at their premises to host a website, but these days, with what the IT industry calls the “cloud”, you can pay a fee to host your website on a server through CrazyDomains without the need to buy a physical server. CrazyDomains comes with 24/7 support and the ability to connect and modify your website hosted on their servers. The typical cost for an economy Linux hosting is just above \$100 a year, which is recommended for hosting a relatively basic WordPress business website along with some business email addresses with your website/domain name. Follow the steps below to buy web hosting through CrazyDomains.

- 1.) Visit www.crazydomains.com.au
- 2.) Sign in using your username and password you used to register your website name.
- 3.) Once you have successfully signed in, you will see a bar at the top of the page titled “My Account”.
- 4.) In the “My Account” toolbar, under “HOSTING” select the cloud icon, titled “Web Hosting”.
- 5.) To the right of the page there should be an option in the grey menu titled “Buy Web Hosting”. Click on this.
- 6.) Click on the “Get Started” button.
- 7.) Follow the prompts. You want to select economy Linux hosting. Confirm the order and process the payment, usually by Credit/Debit card.

Okay, so now you have registered your business' website name and hosting, it is time to link your website address/name to your hosting. This usually involves modifying and creating what are called DNS (Domain Name Server) records. The following are steps on how to link your hosting to your web domain.

- 1.) Visit www.crazydomains.com.au
- 2.) Sign in using your username and password you used to register your domain name and hosting.
- 3.) Once you have successfully signed in, you will see a bar at the top of the page titled “My Account”.
- 4.) Click on “Web Hosting” button (has a cloud icon) in the “My Account” bar.
- 5.) Click on the orange “Control Panel” button to the right.
- 6.) When the Control Panel page opens, scroll to the bottom, and note the hyperlink stating “SERVER INFO” to the bottom left. Click this.
- 7.) A white panel will open titled “Server Information”.
- 8.) Note the field “Shared IP Address”. This IP address is your server's IP address, a series of numbers separated by dots, which is the location of your server on the Internet. Write this down, as you will need it.

- 9.) Go back to the My Account page, the page which displays after you log-in.
- 10.) Under the My Account bar, click on “Domains” which has a world symbol.
- 11.) Under the domain name list, click on the domain name you registered, it should be listed as a black hyperlink stating the domain name.
- 12.) When the new page appears detailing the properties of your domain name, scroll down to DNS settings.
- 13.) In the DNS settings table, if it states two “A Record”s, and has a list of your web domain addresses, make sure the values are set to the IP address (that number written down in step eight) and are the same. Skip the next step.
- 14.) If there are no “A Record”s listed in the DNS Settings, click on the “hamburger” icon to the top right. In the drop down menu select “Add record” then select “A record”. Set the value for the new record as your website domain (left most value) e.g. “example.com.au” where example is replaced by your own website name and set the right most value to the IP address written down in step eight. Repeat this step again, by adding another “A Record” this time including “www” in front of your website domain name, e.g. “www.example.com.au”, where example is replaced by your own website name. In essence, you should have two “A Records” listed under DNS settings, one for “example.com.au” and another for “www.example.com.au”.

Changes to DNS records take time to propagate through the Internet, so these settings won't come into effect straight away but usually take an hour or so to come into effect from personal experience.

Installing the WordPress CMS (Content Management System) on Your Hosting Server

A quick way to create a professional business website is to use a Content Management System. In the past, websites and webpages had to be coded, writing in special markup and script languages (such as HTML and Javascript), and while for special customisation, this can be still certainly be done, for a basic business website with slideshows, pictures, text, videos and a “contact us” form, with a professional layout, we can set this up where zero coding is required. This is all done visually, using the world's most popular CMS system, “WordPress”. WordPress is like social media, where you choose pictures, videos and text to post to your WordPress website, all done via a web browser after it has been installed on your server. Follow the steps listed below to install WordPress on your CrazyDomains web hosting.

- 1.) Visit www.crazydomains.com.au
- 2.) Sign in (using the “Sign Up/Log In” button to the top right of the CrazyDomains web-page) using the username and password you entered to sign up to CrazyDomains.
- 3.) After logging into CrazyDomains you should see a bar that is labelled “My Account”. Click on the “Web Hosting” button in the tool bar, it has a cloud icon.
- 4.) Click on the orange “Control Panel” button to the left of the screen.
- 5.) Scroll down the page to the “Software” section.
- 6.) Click on “Installatron Applications Installer”.
- 7.) Click on “Applications Browser”. This has a star shaped icon and is located to the top right.
- 8.) A list of applications will be present. Scroll down the page to the section of apps labelled “Apps for Content Management”.
- 9.) Click on the icon titled “WordPress blog”. An Installatron application page will display titled “WordPress”.
- 10.) Click on “install this application” button located at the top right.
- 11.) Follow the prompts, fill out the fields and continue to install WordPress. Note the username and password you have set up for your WordPress website, write this down as you will need it to edit your website.

- 12.) After WordPress is installed on your server with the default settings, you can log into the website to add and edit content.

Choosing the Theme for Your WordPress Website

Now that you installed WordPress to your hosting server, you should be able to log in and start to build your business website. Follow the steps below to log in and choose the theme for your WordPress website.

- 1.) Open a web browser.
- 2.) In the URL textbox, visit www.example.com.au/wp-login.php, where “example” is your domain name that you registered through CrazyDomains.
- 3.) If WordPress has installed properly using the default settings, a login page should appear asking for a username and password.
- 4.) Type in the username and password you typed in during the installation of WordPress.
- 5.) Click the Log-In button.
- 6.) If successful, you will be presented with the WordPress dashboard.
- 7.) In the menu to the left of the screen, move your mouse over “Appearance”.
- 8.) Click on “Themes” on the “Appearance” menu.
- 9.) You can now choose from a range of different themes, that have different colours, heading formats, fonts and layouts (such as menu positioning and page).
- 10.) Select the “Add New” button to browse more themes.
- 11.) Choose a theme that suits the look you want for your business website. You can see how they look like in the previews. You may try a range of different themes before choosing one you like. Hover your mouse over the theme you want, and an “Install” button will appear to the bottom right. Click this to install the selected theme.
- 12.) Go back to the themes page, hover over the theme you have installed and make sure it is activated by clicking the “Activate” button if it appears at the bottom right of the theme's preview. You have now selected your theme.

Choosing an Icon, Tagline/Motto and Site Title for your WordPress Website

After choosing your WordPress theme, you need to create content to add to your website.

- 1.) Log into your WordPress website. The log-in page can be accessed via your domain with the extension “/wp-login.php”. For example, “www.example.com.au/wp-login.php”, where *example* is replaced by your domain name. Enter your username and password you entered when you installed WordPress on your hosting server, and click on the “Log-In” button.
- 2.) To the right side of the browser you should see a menu. Click on “Appearance”.
- 3.) To the right side of the browser a menu should appear beside “Appearance”, select “Customise”.
- 4.) You will be forward to a preview to your website, and a white menu panel will appear to the left. Select “Site Identity” in the menu.
- 5.) Choose your site's icon image (usually a business logo), tag line (usually a business motto) and site title (usually the business name) fields to customise the content of the website for your business.

Creating Pages for your WordPress Website Content

The core of your website content can be stored in Pages. If you are creating a website for your business, you may want to create Pages such as a “Welcome” Page, an “About Us” Page, a “Products and Services” Page and a “Contact Us” Page etc. A Page consists of a title, which usually appears in a menu, and at the top of the opened Page in a large title font, and a body, which consists of Blocks of text, pictures, links, videos etc. Below are instructions on creating a Page for your WordPress website.

- 1.) Log into your WordPress website.
- 2.) To the right side of the browser you should see a menu. Click on “Pages”.
- 3.) A “Pages” screen should appear. Next to the “Pages” title click the “Add New” button.
- 4.) A Page editor will appear, in the Title sections choose/type a title for your page, such as “About Us” or “Products and Services” etc.
- 5.) After entering the title text, click on “Start writing or choose a block” text beneath to edit to Page's body.
- 6.) Start writing content for your page. This will usually be text, but you can also upload and add images to your Page by select the “+” button to the top left of the Page. After select “+” scroll down to the section titled Media and select “Image”. A new panel will appear. Select “Upload” and select the image from your computer. Note that there is usually a file size limit (in the order of Megabytes) on the images to be uploaded, so if unsuccessful in uploading an image, try reducing its size before attempting to upload it again.
- 7.) To create new paragraphs/Blocks hit the enter/return key.
- 8.) After creating your new Page, and you are happy with it, click the “Publish” button to the top right of the browser screen. You can also edit it again later.
- 9.) Now you have published your page, but you have to add it to a menu for it to appear as a link on your website.
- 10.) Select back on your web browser to go back to the main WordPress dashboard after publishing your page.
- 11.) In the right menu, hover the mouse over “Appearance”, and click on “Menus”.
- 12.) Create a new main Menu if you do not have one already. If you already have a main Menu, add the created Page to the main Menu. If not type in a new Menu name (such as “Main Menu”) and click “Create Menu”, then add the Page to the main Menu.
- 13.) If the main Menu has not been added to the website, hover the mouse over “Appearance” in the right WordPress panel, a menu should appear, click “Customise”.
- 14.) A new Customise view should appear in the web browser. A menu should appear to the right, click on “Menus”.
- 15.) Click on “Menu Locations” and a series of drop-down boxes will appear for different website locations of the menu. Select the drop-down box that corresponds to the location of where you will like your main Menu to appear, and select your “Main Menu” you created.
- 16.) Select the “Publish” button to the top left of the screen after choosing the main Menu.
- 17.) Click back on your web browser to access the main WordPress dashboard.
- 18.) At the top, the name of your WordPress website will appear, click on this to view your website and what it looks like.
- 19.) Repeat the process of creating Pages and adding them to the main Menu.

Adding Your Website To Google for a Google Search Listing

After creating your content in Pages and adding them to Menus and locations in your WordPress website, also having set up your domain name and hosting beforehand with CrazyDomains, you need to register your domain with Google. Here we are registering your website such that it lists it in a Google Search for your business. Follow the steps below to add your website to Google Search.

- 1.) Visit Google (www.google.com).
- 2.) Before continuing make sure you have a Google account, such as a gmail email address and are logged into Google. If you don't have a Google account, create one by typing "Create Google Account" into the Google search box, hit enter/return key, and click on "Create your Google Account", usually the first search result. Follow the prompts to create the Google Account.
- 3.) Type in "Google Search Console" in the search box in Google and hit the return/enter key.
- 4.) Click the result that is named "Google Search Console"; it is usually the first result.
- 5.) Click "Start now" blue button.
- 6.) If logged into Google you will be presented with a Google Search Dashboard, otherwise you may need to Log In.
- 7.) You may be presented with a "Select Property Type" panel, if not select the drop down menu to the left, scroll down, and select "Add property".
- 8.) Under the "Domain" section of the Google Search Console "Add property" panel, type your web domain / website address you registered with CrazyDomains earlier, for example "www.example.com.au" where *example* is your web domain name, into the text box.
- 9.) You will be presented with numerous ways to verify ownership of your domain. The primary way we are going to discuss here is through a DNS (Domain Name Server) TXT record. This will involve you logging into CrazyDomains and adding a record to your domain's DNS registry. Start by clicking the "Continue" button after typing in your domain.
- 10.) If the domain property is successfully pre-processed, you will be given the option to "Verify domain ownership via DNS record". A text string such as "google-site-verification=SXkxhxq3aIr7a5YEAW4iwRdf_aj5_iNSzjEyDr7-uI" will appear and can be copied to the clipboard. Click on the grey "Copy" button next the the verification text to copy to clipboard.
- 11.) Now since it is copied to the clipboard, minimise the web browser but clicking the line icon at the top right of the window, and open a new browser.
- 12.) Visit www.crazydomains.com.au and log into your account (if not already signed in).
- 13.) Click on "Domains" in the "My Account" tool bar in the CrazyDomains dashboard; it has the icon of the world symbol.
- 14.) Under the "Domain Names" list, click on your domain name you registered for you business website.
- 15.) The domain name details will open, scroll down to "DNS Settings", which has a list of DNS records.
- 16.) Click on the green Upgrade button, you need to Upgrade to add a "TXT" DNS Record.
- 17.) A panel will appear stating the advantages of Upgrading. Scroll down and click "Activate" if you are willing to spend roughly just under \$30 upgrading your DNS record capabilities which is needed to list your website under Google.
- 18.) After upgrading, click on the "hamburger" icon to the right of the DNS

Settings title.

- 19.) A menu will appear, click on “Add Record”.
- 20.) A new record will appear in the list, choose “TXT Record”.
- 21.) A pair of text boxes will appear. Leave the left one blank, then paste the Google verification text you copied in step ten into this right text box.
- 22.) Click the Update button.
- 23.) If successful your DNS registry will be updated with the new TXT Record containing the Google verification string. It may take up to a few hours for it to update, or as little as half an hour from experience.
- 24.) Go into the web browser you opened and minimised that had the Google Search Console opened.
- 25.) Click the Verify button. You may need to try multiple times (for example every fifteen minutes) and wait for the DNS record you added to update over the Internet.
- 26.) Once the Verification is successful, Google Search Console will inform you of the result every time you hit the Verify button. It may take some time for Google to crawl and list your web-page, usually takes less than a week.

Automatically Creating a Sitemap and Registering it with Google

A sitemap is a document that informs Google of the structure of your website, so it can properly list all the pages you created in your website. It is recommend that you submit a sitemap (which is done through Google Search Console) so Google can list all the content of your website properly and in a structured listing. Follow the steps below to submit a sitemap to Google for your website.

- 1.) Log into your WordPress website (usually done by visiting www.example.com.au/wp-login.php where example is your domain name). Use the username and password you used to install WordPress and then click on “Log In”.
- 2.) Once you have successfully logged in, the WordPress dashboard will appear. In the menu to the left, click on “Plugins” then click on “Add New”.
- 3.) To the right you can search the Plugins via a keyword, in the keyword text box, type in “Yoast” and hit the enter/return button.
- 4.) It will search the database of Plugins, click the install button (usually at the top right) of the Plugin called “Yoast SEO”.
- 5.) Once installed, click on “SEO” in the left WordPress main menu.
- 6.) Click on “General” on the menu that appears.
- 7.) Click on “Features”.
- 8.) Scroll down to XML Sitemaps and make sure it is switched on.
- 9.) Click on the question mark icon next to the XML Sitemaps title.
- 10.) Click on “See the XML Sitemap”.
- 11.) Copy the URL/web address of the page-sitemap.xml file.
- 12.) Go into/log into Google Search Console (as described in “Adding your website to Google for a Google Search Listing”).
- 13.) To the left menu, click “Sitemaps”.
- 14.) Under “Add a new sitemap” paste the URL/web address of the page-sitemap.xml file.
- 15.) Click submit. It may take a while (in the order of days/weeks) for Google to process this.

These are the basics of getting an Internet presence online for your business. If you need further help please get in touch with your local web designer/developer or via Logan IT Services (jonathan@loganitservices.com.au).