Article published on December 29th 2011 | Domains

If you live in Canada and you own a computer then chances are good that you also have a website and with that website come a domain name. Obtaining that domain name might look like a relatively easy task. But have you ever wondered how the system works? For example, how someone in Canada would go about getting a Canadian Domain Name? Well, here's a basic rundown of what you have to do:

First, for anyone out there who doesn't know, a domain name is an easily recognized name which identifies a website on the Internet. For example: cira.ca.

A domain name is similar to the numerical addresses which also identifies computers and directs the traffic on the Internet. Domain names are extremely popular because they are easier to remember than an IP addresses.

.CA is an exclusive Canadian Domain Name, meaning it has been saved just for Canadians. In its own way it's like a Canadian flag that assures you of being safe and secure while on the Internet. The Canadian Internet Registration Authority (CIRA) is responsible for the maintenance of the DNS servers for the .CA domain. DNS stands for Domain Name System.

Once you have decided on a name for your website you should check and see if anyone else is currently using it. You can use the availability search tool on CIRA.ca.

You must use a Registrar in order to obtain a .CA domain name. There is a fee to be paid for registration of a new Canadian Domain Name. This is because the money doesn't go to CIRA, but to the Registrar, and they charge whatever fees they deem appropriate.

Under CIRA's rules a Registrant is able to change Registrars. The domain name can be transferred to a new Registrar once it has been over 60 days of the original registration. In order to do this you need to select a new Certified Registrar and give them your authorization code. This enables them to initiate the request with CIRA. You will receive an email confirming that you have changed Registrars after your request has been approved.

Domain Names in Canada is approved after going through CIRA's system which uses a first-come, first-serve policy. Meaning, if more than one person or organization asks for the same domain name whoever makes the request first is the one who gets it. Also, in order to register a .CA domain name an individual must have some type of connection to Canada. The Canadian Presence Requirements for Registrants, which is available online to provide you with the details.

A qualifying individual or organization can have as many .CA domain names as they wish. The key word here is "qualifying". If you don't meet certain standards, you don't get a Domain Name in Canada, it's that simple.And in case you're wondering let me tell that you can't register just anything you want as a Domain Name in Canada. CIRA keeps an eye on this and will permit only domain names that are allowed in agreement with CIRA's Policies, Rules and Procedures.

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Article Keywords:
Canadian Domain Name, Domain Names Canada

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