

When Can Multiple Domains Help Your Business?

I'm going to tell you why it might be a good idea to use multiple website addresses for your business. But first, I'm going to tell you about my car.

You see, I love my car. I've had it forever and it's paid off. I can drive to work for just over two weeks on the same tank of gas and the air conditioning still works. This car has been with me longer than my wife and kids.

The problem is that my car no longer accommodates my growing family. It got to the point where my boys, from their places on each side of their baby sister's carseat, could punch each other with decent accuracy; and I couldn't just blast Depeche Mode to drown out the screaming. Other motorists judge you. Trust me – they judge. So rather than continue to be the “OMG, I just saw an old guy with tattoos blasting Depeche Mode in the parking lot ... his poor wife” Facebook® status update guy, I traded in my dignity and added a minivan to the family fleet.

“Smart businesses evolve to accommodate their customers.”

My life is different than it was 10 years ago, and so are my needs. Maybe you could say the same about your business. And smart businesses evolve to accommodate their customers.

Multiple Domains Help You Pivot for Growth

Let's pretend you own a small greeting card boutique in Brooklyn with a website at CrazyGreatCards.com. Birthday cards and thank-you cards and congratulations cards drove your first few years of business. Those are the products you've marketed online and off, and they're what customers in your brick-and-mortar and online stores know you for.

But these existing customers really seem to love the gourmet gift baskets you added to your inventory six months ago. They've got the potential to drive sales through the roof – but you've got to pivot your marketing strategy to grow your business.

It's not enough to add a banner and some pics and descriptions to your existing website, or to hand out brochures to customers in your checkout line. You want to reach new consumers in the market for gourmet gift baskets, not cards. Adding a new website address, or domain, can help.

With a second website at CrazyGreatBaskets.nyc, for example, people searching online for baskets will know at a glance that 1) there's a good chance you offer baskets, and 2) you're located in the Big Apple.

“Since more people than ever before look first on the Internet for products and services, there's enormous value in having a descriptive, memorable website address.”

Plus, you can send email campaigns branded with that descriptive domain name. You can use it to drive traffic to your online store through advertising. You can even have it emblazoned on the back of your minivan for 24/7 mobile marketing in your borough and beyond.

Multiple Domains Can Protect Your Brand

Lots of businesses use multiple domains to protect their brand. You probably wouldn't be thrilled if another cards-and-baskets business had a website at CrazyGreatCards.net or CrazyGreatBaskets.com. Your brand is just as important as your physical business. One easy way to help protect it online is by registering multiple domain names. The idea is simple: If you own a domain, your competition doesn't.

Locals Only

Another great reason to have multiple website addresses is to brand your business and your site locally. If you own a pawn shop in Las Vegas, for instance, you might have a website at FrankiesProPawn.com. It's a great domain that tells customers exactly what you offer. You've used this domain name for years with great success.

But you can sell even more previously owned goods with an additional website name that shouts your geographic location online. Have you heard about all the new generic top-level domains (gTLDs) hitting the market? Now, you can get FrankiesProPawn.vegas and tell the world what you do and that there's a connection to Sin City. If you opened a location in Queens, you even could register FrankiesProPawn.nyc — that geographic domain extension is only available to those based in New York City's five boroughs.

Industry Insider

Like the new geographic domain names, there are a slew of new industry- and interest-specific domain extensions rolling out that let you get a super-recognizable website address — even if you've already got a domain. You could register an additional name like CrazyGreatBaskets.boutique or FrankiesProPawn.deals. Own a photography business? It might be worth your while to consider adding a .photography domain name to your online business portfolio.

These domains are so new that there are still tons of great names up for grabs.

More Than One Domain, One Website

If you register multiple domain names to keep pace with your business's growth, protect your brand, and/or establish a connection to a certain place, interest or industry, you don't have to attach different websites to each domain. There are multiple ways to forward your additional domain(s) to your existing website.

The only one that matters here is what's called a [301 redirect](#). This type of forwarding tells the search engines to permanently redirect your new domain to your website. If you want to learn more, [this Moz.com article](#) gives a great overview of 301 and other types of redirects.

Don't worry if you don't know a whole lot about website hosting. Get in touch with your current hosting provider and tell them about your awesome new domain. Ask for help setting up a 301 redirect for it. And, while you're at it, tell them about your new line of gourmet gift baskets and the new pawn shop in Queens!

Source: "When Can Multiple Domains Help Your Business?," Isaac Irvine, GoDaddy