

THE BIG NETWORK

This is a simple guide to interacting with the world wide network of machines usually known as the Internet or the World Wide Web.

A BASIC INTERNET CONNECTION.

Communication between machines worldwide is enabled via established hardware such as telephone, cable, satellite and radio transmission. You have to pay the owners of this infrastructure for the privilege.

These people are known as an ISP or Internet Service Provider (such as Telstra or Optus etc.).

You pay them a fee to access the Internet from your computer.

You connect to your ISP via a dial up account, ADSL, cable or hybrid radio depending on your location and budget.

Your ISP then gives you access to the world wide network of machines known as the Internet.

This account enables you to access the Internet and send and receive email.

Please note that you must be connected to the Internet before you can send and receive email.

When you open an account with an average ISP you normally get at least one email address with the name of (for example) you@yourisp.com.au

When you send an email, your software (email client) like (Microsoft Outlook, Outlook Express, Entourage etc) contacts a special machine at your ISP known as an Outgoing (SMTP) Mail Server which actually sends your mail via the Internet to the corresponding Incoming Mail Server.

To receive your mail, your software (email client) like Outlook etc connects to another special machine at your ISP known as your Incoming Mail Server.

These details of Incoming and Outgoing Mail Servers have to be entered manually into your email client. In Microsoft software these details are found under Tools/Accounts/Properties.

SUMMARY

When you establish a basic Internet access account with an ISP you are given two essential pieces of information.

1. Your login name/details and password to connect to the Internet via your ISP.
2. Your Incoming and Outgoing Mail Server settings to be entered by you into your Email Software.

Please note that as Email is sent and received via the Internet. You must be connected to the Internet to access it.

The settings on your machine to connect to the Internet are totally separate from the settings to send and receive Email.

You have one machine setting to send mail (SMTP) and another to receive mail (Incoming).

DOMAIN NAME REGISTRATION

To have your own web address (yourdomain.com etc) you need to register it with an ICANN (Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers) certified Registrar.

If you are a registered business and want a country specific domain name (yourdomain.com.au) you need to register it with a local registrar.

This is a simple matter of visiting a registrar's website, checking availability and if successful paying the fee.

Domain names can usually be registered for 1 or two years.

This Domain Registration fee doesn't mean that you own the domain name but, as long as you keep paying the yearly fee it is exclusively your's to use.

Once you have registered a Domain you usually want to do something with it like create a web site for yourdomain.com etc.

Or you may just want to take advantage of the email address possibilities that having your own Domain gives.

DOMAIN HOSTING ACCOUNTS

Once your Domain Name is registered you need what's known as a Domain Hosting Account.

This is a separate account (from your ISP's internet access).

To enable your domain to be accessible to the Internet you now tell your Domain Registrar what the address of the webserver / nameserver at your Domain Hosting Provider is. They then assign or direct traffic to your Hosting Providers web servers.

You can now upload the content of your web site to your Hosting Providers web server for the world to see.

DOMAIN HOSTING ACCOUNTS AND EMAIL

Having a domain name and a hosting account also enables you to have multiple email accounts like mail@yourdomain.com or yourname@yourdomain.com.

These email addresses are totally independent of your ISP account and you keep them, no matter what ISP you use to connect to the Internet.

What changes are the mail server settings you enter into your Email software.

Your incoming mail server setting remains constant as long as you keep your current hosting account.

However, your Outgoing mail server setting is determined by how you connect to the Internet.

In other words you usually use your ISP's Outgoing mail server setting to send mail and your Domain Hosting Provider's Incoming mail server settings to receive mail.

SUMMARY

If you have your own domain name and want to use it you must have three accounts.

a. Domain Registrar Account (Where your domain name is registered, usually renewed every two years)

b. Domain Hosting Account (Where your web site/email facilities are hosted, usually renewed yearly)

c. Internet Service Provider Account (Provides you access to the Internet, usually renewed yearly)