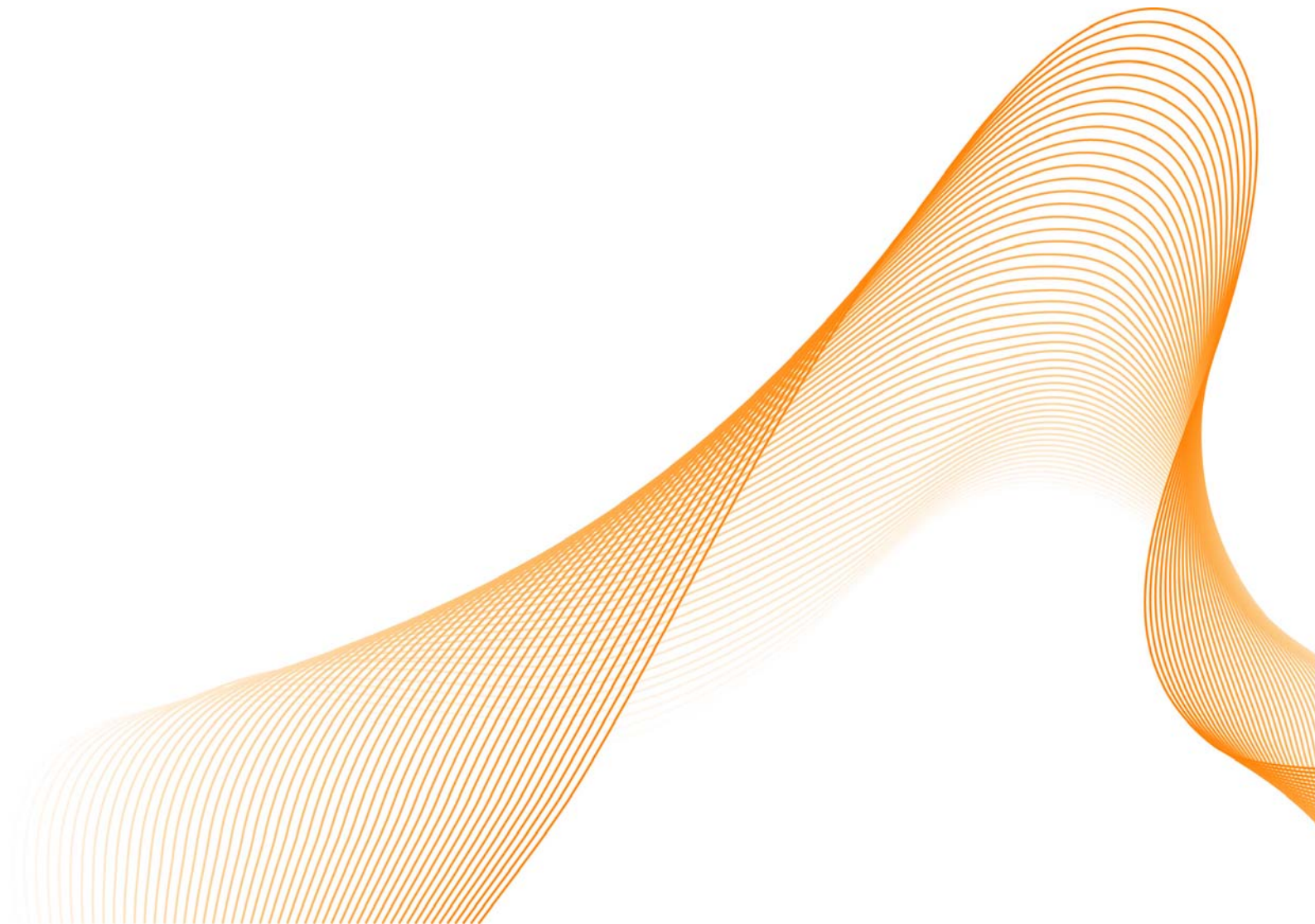


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Top tips for creating a personal web presence

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You've decided to buy a domain name to create a personal web site, either to write a blog about your interests; to share news and photographs with your friends and family; or maybe to launch your own home business. How can you maximise the potential of your web site and increase the number of visitors?

Here are some great tips to help you make the most of your personal web presence.

1. Do your research

Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. And it can also save you having to reinvent the wheel. Whatever type of personal web site you are developing, search the Internet to view examples of similar sites. Make a list of what features of those sites are most effective and least effective. You can then concentrate on copying the good bits and avoiding the mistakes.

2. Decide on the goals and objectives for your web site

Before you choose the domain name for your web site it's worth giving some thought to what you want to achieve through it. Think about the following questions to help work out what sort of domain name would suit your site:

- What is the main topic of your web site?
- What do you hope to achieve with it?
- Who is your intended audience?
- What tone of voice will the site be written in?
- What action do you want visitors to take – do you want to inform them or sell to them etc?

3. Choose a domain name that matches those goals

Pick a name that will grab the interest of your target audience and enable them to instantly understand the aim of your web site.

4. Make sure your domain name is memorable

Try and keep your domain name short – two to three words maximum. Avoid complex or hard to spell words, as people will struggle to type them correctly and remember them. Try to avoid a hyphenated domain name, as it will make the name hard to pass on verbally (e.g. on the telephone).

5. Be flexible about your choice of domain name

However, as there are approximately 120-130 million domain names registered worldwide, it may be useful to have a shortlist of alternatives in

case the name you ideally want is already registered. You can check the availability of any domain names ending in .uk using the WHOIS search facility on our web site <http://www.nominet.org.uk>.

6. Think about sources of traffic to your web site

The type of traffic you want to attract to your web site will also have a bearing on your choice of domain name, as well as influencing how you decide to publicise the site, and the features and content you include.

Traffic to a personal web site usually comes from three main sources:

- Search engines
- Referral traffic (from other sites)
- Loyal readers

Each of these audiences will benefit from a different approach. The key to building a group of regular readers is to keep the content on the site fresh and update it regularly. Adding features such as a forum, or comments section will enable your audience to interact with you and others who share your interests, which can help keep the impetus going.

You can attract readers from search engines by using keywords. Search engines use keywords within domain names to rank web sites. If you choose a domain name that contains generic keywords (like mobile, music blog, gamer) you could achieve a high ranking. If your web site contains advertising this kind of traffic can be valuable, as visitors who come via search engines are more likely to click on ads than regular readers.

You can also attract readers who follow links from other sites. If your site is a blog you could benefit from links from one of the larger blogs such as Slashdot. This can result in large amounts of traffic and although these visitors are less likely to click on ads if they decide to post links to your site on their own blogs this can help with your search engine optimisation.

7. Marketing your web site through search engines

If you are not able to use keywords in your domain name you can still use search engines to promote your web site to a larger audience. Most of the search engines and directories allow you to register your web site for free. You can also take advantage of free banner advertising on various link exchange networks.

8. Marketing your web site through social networking sites

If you belong to a social networking site such as MySpace or Facebook, or you are a member of a network such as a Yahoo Group, make sure that you post a link to your web site on your page, and post messages every time you update the web site or add a new feature. It's free advertising that could reach a much larger audience than you think.

9. Making money from your web site

You can make money from your web site by placing adverts on your home page that generate revenue when visitors click on them. Google AdSense

adverts are pay per click and can generate decent revenue. You could also sign up for an account with Text Link ads, who will sell small text ads on your site and split the revenue with you 50-50. You can also take advantage of free access to various affiliate networks such as Amazon and LinkShare. You can also make extra revenue by adding a donation button – if your site is giving people genuine value they may well be prepared to give a donation.

10. Keep developing your web site

The key to any successful personal web site is to generate traffic. In order to keep attracting visitors to your site, you must spend time developing it and updating it regularly. Add new content as often as possible, and carry out regular reviews of your layout and design. Keep your eye out for new features you can add to improve usability and if you are monetizing your web site, experiment with different revenue streams.

11. Use your domain name for your emails

In addition to your web site you can use your domain name for your email address. If you have an existing personal email account (e.g. hotmail) you can keep this, but use the domain name to forward your email.

12. Publicise your blog relentlessly!

When you have finished creating your new blog you can launch it to your public. Write an introduction to the blog and submit it to various share web sites such as Digg, Reddit and Now Public. You can also create an account with Technorati and 'claim' your blog in order to make it more attractive to search engines.

About Nominet

We are the registry for all
Internet domain names
ending in **.uk**.

We operate at the heart of e-commerce in the UK,
running one of the world's largest Internet registries
and managing over six million domain names.

We maintain the register of *.uk* domain names.
We also run the technology which locates a computer
on the Internet hosting the web site or email system
you're looking for when you type in a web address or
send an email that ends in *.uk*.

We aim to be the leading provider of registry services,
including ENUM and other associated technologies.

For further information about
Nominet, visit our [web site](#)

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