



# Tech Talk for Non-Tech Professionals

**You've built your business and  
your brand. Now how do you  
secure and protect it?**

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# INTRODUCTION

As the technology sector continues to grow and domain providers are equipping their customers with self-service management platforms, you may find yourself wanting to learn more about how the Internet operates. We work closely with professionals in many different fields who, as part of their service or duties, are responsible for managing domain portfolios for their client or their own company. In reality, many of these professionals have little to no background in the domain name system (DNS).

If you fulfill the role of a domain clerk, engage in intellectual property litigation, or are the trustee for a client's domains, and would like to further your education on the terminology and the processes you are in charge of, this is the guide for you. We will provide you with a basic understanding of key terms and processes involved in managing domain names and DNS so you can quickly respond to, and act on, requests from your clients and IT professionals.





## WHY YOU SHOULD LEARN BASIC TECH TALK

Your website is your connection to the world. It's essential to have basic knowledge of website settings so you can take appropriate action without disrupting your lifeline to the Internet. The worst thing you can do as a domain admin is making DNS changes without completely understanding everything these changes effect.

Making blind changes to DNS settings is one of the leading causes of website downtime and email failures. It is essential to educate yourself on the basic domain functions before you take any action. Improving your efficiency will give you more time to spend where you need it and prevent updating incorrect web settings that could result in downtime for your business.

## THE TOP TECH TERMS YOU NEED TO KNOW

Understanding the terminology involved in domain and DNS management will empower you in your role and help you efficiently apply changes in the account you manage.

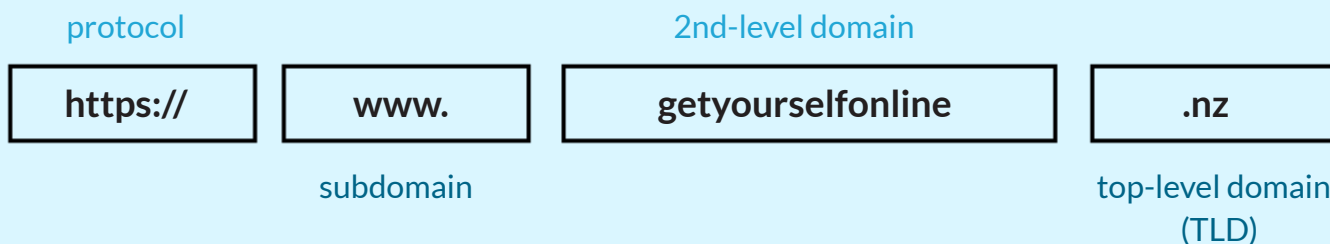
A significant struggle we face as a domain Registrar is understanding what our customers are asking for. As much as we enjoy working with our clients, the more you know, the less time you have to spend going back and forth between your team and our hosting engineers.

When you familiarize yourself with basic tech talk, you can quickly go into your account and make the simple changes you need, or know precisely how to ask our hosting team for what you need doing.

## SECOND-LEVEL VS. THIRD-LEVEL DOMAIN

The way in which domain names operate on the Internet is similar to physical addresses in the physical world. Each part of the domain name provides specific information. These pieces of information enable web browsers to locate the website.

*If the domain name is the address of your house, then web hosting is the actual house. Without a domain name, it is impossible for people to find your website and without web hosting, you cannot build a website.*



The top-level domain (TLD) is whatever is behind the farthest dot to the right, also referred to as the extension. You've heard the terms new gTLDs and ccTLDs being throw around, that's what they are. gTLDs are generic word domain extensions (also referred to as domain endings), and ccTLDs are domain extensions for countries. In this example, the TLD is .nz for the country New Zealand.

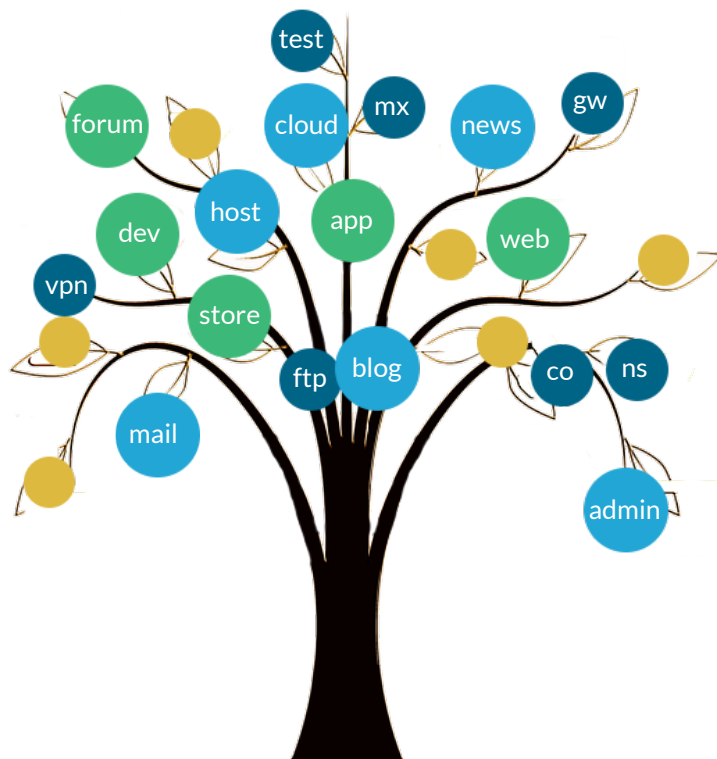
*Pro-tip: You can always tell ccTLDs apart from other domain extensions because they are only two characters after the dot while all other TLDs are three characters or more.*

With the example .nz there are many choices. You can put your name before one of 14 second-level domains, including .co.nz, .net.nz, .org.nz, .kiwi.nz and many more. More commonly, users put their website name directly before .nz – like with getyourselfonline.nz. Doing it this way is called registering directly at the second level.

Sometimes you'll see a URL with two dots, for example, **https://www.subdomain.domain.com**.

The space before the second-level is known as the subdomain. You may be asked to add a subdomain to a domain that your client already owns.

You can think of the subdomain as branches on a tree. Once you have the tree trunk (the domain), all sorts of branches (subdomains) can grow from it. You can have as many different subdomains as you'd like.





## CHANGING NAMESERVERS

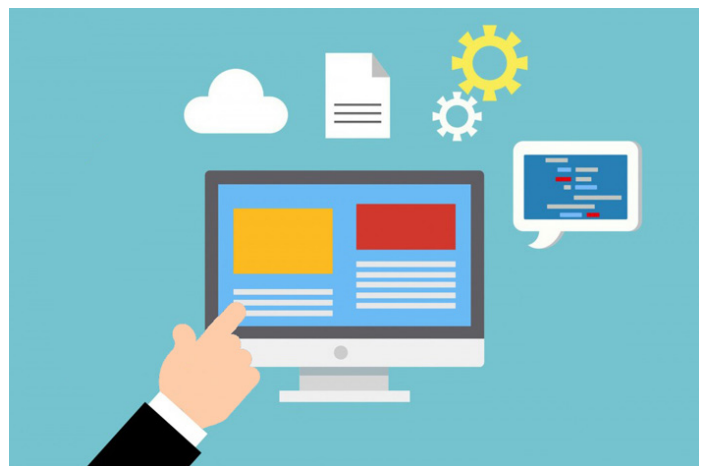
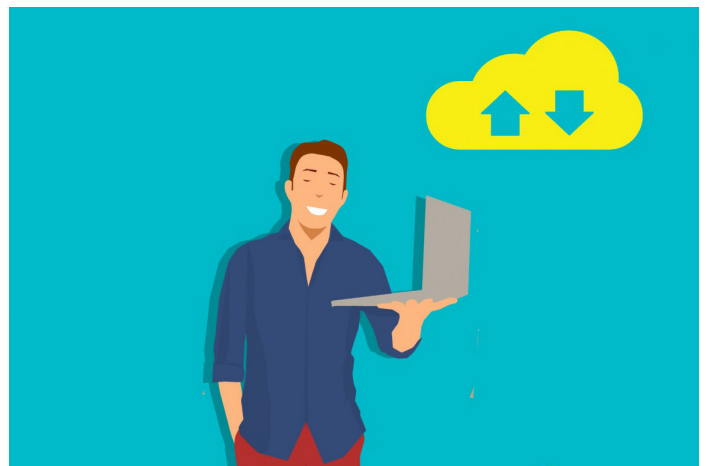
If you wish to park or host your website with 101domain, choose the default name servers. These will be automatically set up for you.

If you have a third-party hosting provider, you can connect the domain registered with 101domain to match your hosting provider's settings. It may take 24-48 hours after the nameservers have been updated for your domain to propagate appropriately all over the world.

## UPDATING A RECORDS

If you purchased a domain from 101domain and wanted to keep it registered with us, you can connect it to a third-party website like Wix or Squarespace by updating the A records.

Updating an A record is a simple setting you can change from within your 101domain account. After completing these steps, your domain will stay registered with 101domain, but it will connect to your third-party site.



## UPDATING MX RECORDS

Email relies on Mail Exchange (MX) DNS records to dictate how mail is sent and received. A lot of this happens behind the scenes whether you use email through a webmail interface, a mail client like Outlook or the mail app on your phone.

When you send an email, the MX record settings tell which mail server the domain use for email. The MX Record provides mail servers with the information required to forward e-mail messages to the recipient's e-mail server. When someone sends you an email, their system does the same lookup and checks where to send your email based on the MX record.

Most of the time, the same subscription provides both your website and email services. However, some services like Wix only deal with the site itself. To get both working, you need to configure the MX DNS records for your email service. Those settings should be provided to you by your email service provider, and you can add them while logged into your 101domain account.

## ADDING A NEW CNAME RECORD

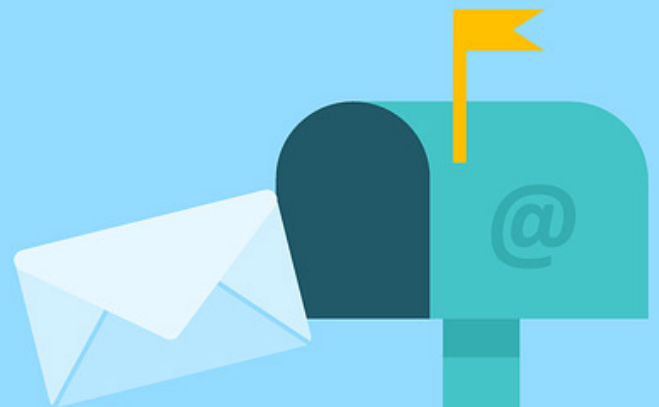
CNAME Records map a domain or subdomain to another domain name. A typical example of a CNAME is pointing **www.domain.tld** to **domain.tld**.

Many people think they are the same thing, but technically they are not. **www.mydomain.tld** can resolve on a different server than **mydomain.tld**, unless you set up a CNAME record to point to **mydomain.tld**. This is why it usually doesn't matter when you forget to type in the **www**, but sometimes, if the DNS is not set up correctly as described above, a visitor receives an error.

## UPDATING TXT RECORDS

Text Record (TXT) DNS records are used to verify ownership of a domain for Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) purposes as well as for Sender Policy Framework (SPF) use in regulating who can send email using your domain.

SSL technology ensures that all data transmitted between a web server and browser remains encrypted. You will likely recognize SSL as the green lock you see in the address bar, which signifies there is secure encryption tied to the domain. TXT records look scary, but your client should provide you with a long string of characters that you will just cut and paste to update the domain.



## UPDATING SPF RECORDS

An SPF record is a type of DNS TXT record that identifies which mail servers are permitted to send email on behalf of your domain. The purpose of an SPF record is to detect and prevent spammers from sending impersonating emails to your customers with forged “From addresses” on your domain.

All it takes is a single fraudulent email to damage the relationship you have with a client, configuring SPF records allows you to control who can send outgoing mail on your behalf.

## FORWARDING A DOMAIN TO ANOTHER URL

There are many instances where someone will ask you to forward a domain to another URL. Two types of web forwarding exist.

A **301 redirect**, the most common type, will send traffic from one domain directly to another URL. In 301 forwarding, the name in the user’s location bar will change to the domain they are being forwarded to.

The second type of forwarding is **302 forwarding**. Also known as masked or cloaking forwarding, 302 forwarding redirects users to another URL while keeping the original domain in the user’s location bar.

## UPDATING TRANSFER LOCKS FOR ADDED SECURITY

Transfer lock is automatically enabled for your account and prevents your domain from being transferred to another domain registrar. Transfer lock must be disabled to initiate a transfer. You are required to provide answers to your security questions to disable transfer lock. Transfer lock adds a layer of security to prevent your account from possible hijacking.



*All it takes is a single fraudulent email to damage the relationship you have with a client.*





## BEST ACCOUNT PRACTICES FOR SUCCESS

In addition to understanding the tech jargon, there are measures you can take to improve your productivity and reduce the risk of error.

### BE PROACTIVE WITH DOMAIN RENEWALS

Whether you are an IP lawyer or a paralegal filling in the role of a domain clerk, you have a few critical responsibilities under your supervision. One of the most essential and dry and cut tasks is staying on top of domain renewals. Forgetting to renew your domain names can be embarrassing, costly, and downright bad for brand reputation. The best of us have made this mistake including the marketing automation giant, Marketo.

A problem with the Marketo website was reported early morning when client complaints came rolling in. As the Marketo team was working to resolve the unknown issue, a customer named Travis discovered the problem as a failure to renew their domain. He kindly paid the \$38 cost and \$35.99 restatement fee and tweeted the invoice at the company.



*I renewed your domain @Marketo. Hopefully things will be back up soon."*

Marketo was fortunate to have a customer like Travis whose quick wit was in all good intentions of helping the Marketo team get their services back online as quickly as possible. Someone else who discovered the mishap might have been more interested in profiting from the oversight of the Marketo domain rather than helping the company valued at \$1.8bn, reinstate their website. Marketo chalked the ordeal up to a human error in the process and vowed to perform regular internal audits to avoid potential loss of revenue due to an expired domain.

## TIPS FOR RENEWING YOUR DOMAINS

### KNOW WHO HAS ACCESS TO YOUR ACCOUNT.

Many times, domain renewals fall through the cracks because the person in charge of domain management left the organization, or changed roles, with passwords and usernames lost in the process.

### TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EXTENDED RENEWAL PERIODS.

You can't avoid the renewal process indefinitely by purchasing a domain for life, but you can extend the time between renewal encounters.

Registration terms can be extended up to 10 years for many domain extensions. Renewing for longer terms reduces the number of invoices you have to send to accounting as well as the number of times you have to log in to your account to manually renew your domains and services.

### ENABLE AUTO-RENEW

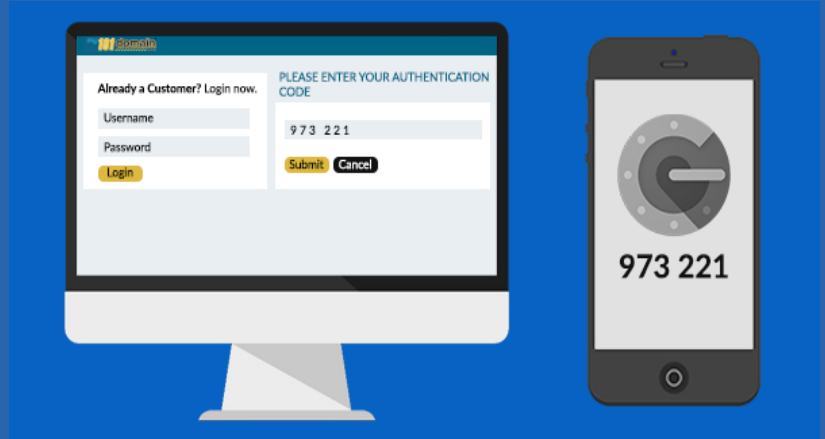
Auto-renew is the best aversion for human error. Conduct an annual or semi-annual audit of your account to ensure your payment information is valid and let us do the renewal work for you, automatically.



## SET-UP 2-FACTOR AUTHENTICATION

We are willing to bet that you have probably already encountered Google 2-factor authentication for one of the various services you use.

With 2-factor authentication, even if someone manages to obtain, crack, guess or steal your password, they will not be able to sign in without access to your additional verification code generated by the Google Authenticator app on your phone. 2-Factor Authentication is an easy way to add a second layer of protection to your account.



## CREATE MULTIPLE ACCOUNT USERS

At 101domain you can create account users based on a user's role in your company. Creating multiple user accounts ensures that everyone who needs to have access to the account will but only those who require access to critical functions will have that ability. User accounts are also a great way to give your client or other people in your company enough access to feel involved without the permissions to make a critical account or DNS changes (after all, they are not fluent in tech talk like you).



## ENABLE IP LOCK

An IP address is a unique numerical label that gets linked to all online activity you do. Everyone has one. An IP Account Lock allows users to restrict account access to designated IP addresses you know and trust. IP Account Lock is a straightforward way to protect your account from being hacked.

# MASTERING YOUR PRACTICE

DNS is essential when it comes to making your website available to the world. DNS controls your website and email settings the entire Internet depends on it. Unfortunately, tech talk can seem daunting, but just like anything once you define it in simple terms, it becomes a lot easier to understand. Mastering the basics of DNS and hosting empowers you to quickly and efficiently handle all requests thrown your way. Now that your repertoire consists of tech talk, we hope you feel more confident in your role and have a positive experience with domain and DNS management in the future.



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