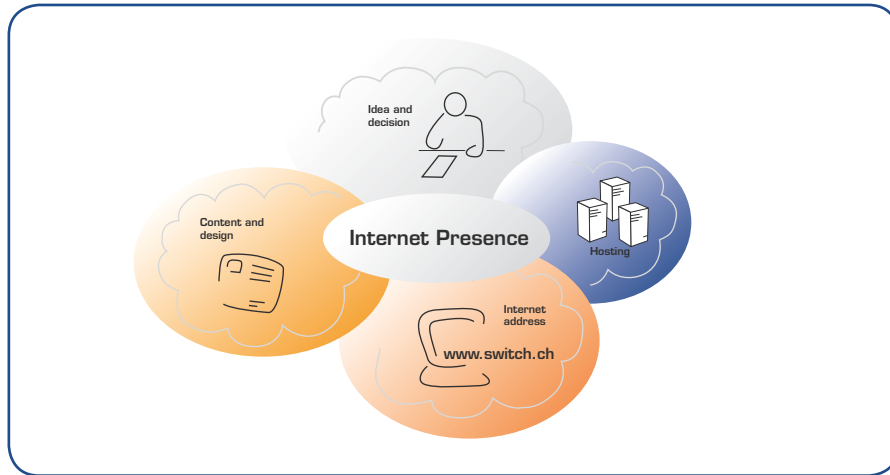


Your Internet Presence



Your Internet Presence in Four Steps

Whether you are a large multinational corporation, a public administration, a one-man/one-woman business or a private individual, the question remains the same: what is in it for me to have an internet presence of my own or what am I aiming to achieve with it? If you are a private individual or a small business, you can establish your own website quickly and simply. Once you've decided to go ahead, there are four things you are going to need:



First the idea, then the decision with the appropriate planning a
→ Idea and decision

An address at which your website can be found a
→ Internet address

The website itself, needing to be designed and looked after a
→ Content and design

A place where your website can be stored and from where others will be able to call it
→ Hosting

First come, first served

In the majority of cases, people want to have a particular domain name. Domain names are issued in accordance with the "first come, first served" principle. That means that whoever manages to get their desired name registered for themselves first prevents any other prospective holders from claiming it. For that reason, it is a good idea for you to start by getting a domain name registered.

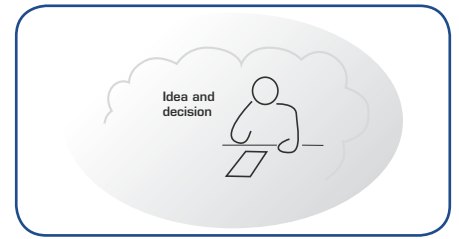
SWITCH's role

SWITCH, being a domain registry, is only active in the field of internet addresses. All the other components you are going to need for a successful internet presence are explained in the sections on "Idea and decision", "Content and design" and "Hosting". If you need further assistance in any of these areas, we recommend you to contact an internet service provider or a web-design company.

Idea and decision

What is in it for me to have an internet presence of my own?

Today, it has become unthinkable for businesses of a certain size or with a recognised name not to have an internet presence of their own. The internet offers many different ways of establishing contact with customers and interest groups worldwide. Depending on what you want to achieve, there are different types of presence to choose from. These include:



Business sites

- presentation of the whole business
- publication of the most significant data, such as contact details, location, business hours
- outline description of products or services
- detailed catalogue of services, possibly including some means for placing orders
- interactive tools for customers, such as your own system for administering customer master data
- feedback form
- visitors' book
- separate webpages for key products, current services or particular events,
- etc., etc.

That is far from the end of the story, since private individuals, clubs and other groups are more and more seizing the opportunity of creating a fast and easy-to-use information platform with a massive outreach. Websites do not always have to be permanent, remaining in place for several years. Shorter-lived sites dedicated to special events are becoming ever more popular.

Private sites

- presentations of clubs and other groups and information about activities
- photo collections or first-hand reports for others who share a given interest
- personal sites, just for you and your friends
- life events (marriages, births, anniversaries, and so on)

When contemplating having your own internet presence, costs naturally play a part, as does planning the whole operation:

Costs

Domain name: CHF 40.– one-off registration fee plus a CHF 35.– annual fee. In other words: CHF 75.– for the first year and CHF 35.– for each subsequent year.

Note that these sums apply for any registration made directly with SWITCH. It is possible that providers handling a registration for you may charge different amounts. You should clarify this beforehand.

Hosting: The lowest charges today are around CHF 20.– per month, but they may be very much higher, depending on the range of services supplied. You might well find it worthwhile to get quotations from more than one hosting provider before deciding.

Webdesign:

- Buying your own web-design software will cost several hundred francs at least;
- The use of web-design tools may be included in the price of some hosting packages;
- Web designers charge a couple of hundred francs for simple designs, and there is virtually no upper limit, depending on the degree of sophistication.

Miscellaneous expenses:

- Maintenance and updating – usually invoiced as a function of effective outlay
- Licences (for photographs, software, etc.)

Planning

You must consider that your internet presence has got to be interesting for your target group(s). That not only means selecting content and language to suit them, but making sure that the overall impression appeals to them too.

You ought also to think about each of the following points, all of which could have an impact on your website:

- The website's purpose:**
 - retaining the loyalty of existing customers
 - winning new customers
 - selling products
 - provision of information
 - dissemination of first-hand experiences (such as travelogues)

- Target group:**
 - existing or prospective customers
 - people who share your views or interests or those you would like to win over
 - friends and acquaintances

- Looking after the site:**
 - your available financial resources
 - your available time resources
 - your skills and know-how

Even at the planning stage, you must realise that your commitment is going to go beyond simply setting up the website. Once the website is up and running, it ought to be kept up-to-date. The more complex it is, the more this is likely to cost. Every website needs looking after and requires updating!

DIY or commissioning someone else?

DIY

You do not have to be a programmer to create your own website. Various web-design programs (such as FrontPage, Adobe GoLive or Dreamweaver) are easy to use – at least for creating simple websites. Just reasonable familiarity with Word will already take you a long way. An image-processing program is also likely to be a useful asset.

Many hosting providers offer packages which include not only the space for storing websites but also a number of internet-based tools for creating them. You can use these with your browser and do not need to install any further program on your own computer.

Commissioning someone else

If professional design and expert programming are important to you, your best move is to contact a web-design company. From experience, these generally know how to get the best possible display out of various browsers with differing characteristics and will also be able to advise you on improving your chances of being found by search engines. Once again: it is well worth comparing a number of companies.

Considering the following criteria may help you decide whether to create your website yourself or to commission an expert:

Decision criteria

Costs

– Professionals will ask for a couple of thousand francs upwards for simple sites. The increase in complexity is roughly paralleled by higher costs. It costs least to create your own website – provided you don't have to consider the value of your time! If you decide in favour of DIY, all you will still need is suitable software.

Time

– How much time can you make available for creating your website? Don't forget that, even if you get a web-design company to do the central work for you, there will still be some demands on your time. At the very least, you will have to provide some input for the content and you will need to be available for consultation.

Positioning

– Do you want a professional presence for a business or a simple site for your family and friends? What are decisive here are your own graphical and technical skills.

Complexity

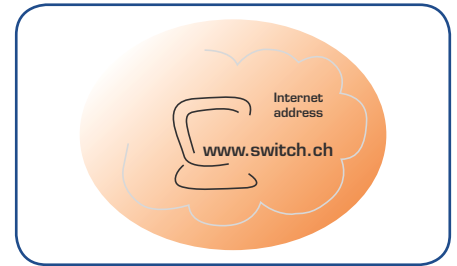
– A high level of complexity and/or demanding functions, such as a web shop, online database access, the use of multimedia technologies or links into special applications are rather strong arguments for having the website constructed by specialists. Once again, however, it is your own skills that are the decisive factor in the final analysis.

Internet address

Domain name: the address for your internet presence

If you are looking for a person or a place in a town, you use road names and house numbers to try and find them. In the internet too, special addresses have been created to help users find their way around.

Each website needs its own, unique address. These addresses are called domain names. Domain names are normally structured as illustrated here.



In choosing a domain name, you lay down the address at which your website is going to be accessible. The World Wide Web (for instance: <http://www.domain.ch>) is not the only service in the internet; there are others too. For example, you can set up e-mail addresses that also run under the domain name (such as contact@domain.ch). For all the services and all the different spellings you have registered, the domain name is always the unique designator of where they are stored. Your domain name thus becomes your universal designation and accessibility point in the internet.

What do I need to know about domain names?

Your domain name is your identity in the internet; it is comparable with your home address. It is usually structured as illustrated here.

Instead of the word "domain", you can have a name of your choice, such as a company name, a product name or an idea.

A good domain name

The skilful choice of a domain name is the basis for the success of your internet presence. But what is a good domain name? It is best to choose a name that it is easy to associate with your company, your product or yourself. Of course, you are free to invent a totally fictitious name if you want to.

The most important rules for a good, readily memorable domain name are:

1. Short and succinct
2. Simple and easy to read
3. Self-explanatory

Common examples are:

company.ch
 company-product.ch
 product.ch
 name.ch
 fistname-lastname.ch

The domain name's ending, such as .ch and .li (or .de, .at, .fr and so on), is known as the country code Top Level Domain (TLD). There are also several so-called generic TLDs (such as .com, .net or .org).

Characters permitted in domain names

You are basically free to choose whatever domain name you want; there are certain restrictions, however, that you must take good note of. A domain name can only be comprised of digits and letters of the alphabet; its minimum length is three characters and its maximum length is 63 characters. We have produced a special list as an annex to this document showing you all the characters that are permitted in domain names with SWITCH.

Is the domain name I want still available?

Each domain name is only available once. There is always a chance that someone else or some other company may already have registered the name you want. If that is the case, you will have to opt for an alternative.

All the domain names that have already been issued are stored in a special directory. You can find out if your preferred name is still available by conducting a search on our website www.switch.ch/id/. This service goes under the name of WHOIS.

How do I make a domain name mine?

In each country, domain names are issued by particular organisations known as registries. In Switzerland and Liechtenstein this function is in the hands of SWITCH. SWITCH registers domain names with the endings .ch and .li.

You can register your own domain name yourself directly on our website at www.switch.ch/id/. If you don't want to do that yourself, it is more than likely that the provider whom you intend to have to host your website will also register a domain name on your behalf.

At SWITCH, your own domain name will cost you a one-off registration fee of CHF 40.– and an annual fee of CHF 35.–. That makes a total of CHF 75.– for the first year and CHF 35.– per year for each subsequent year.

I want to go ahead and register a domain name

You have decided on a domain name, you have checked that it is available, and now you want to go ahead and register it. Domain names ending in .ch and .li can be registered directly on SWITCH's website or through a provider. For domain names with other endings, you could contact a provider or go directly to the registries of the countries concerned.

Various domain names

Specific national endings give the website a particular national or local note, even though they do not permit any conclusions as to its true origin. Depending on circumstances, you might find it worthwhile to register your domain name under several TLDs.

On the other hand, it might make good sense to register several domain names for one and the same website or to register several domain names with marginally different spellings.

It is possible to have more than one domain name pointing to the same website.

www. abc .ch
www. abc .li
www. abc .de
www. abc .com

www. abc .ch
www. a-b-c .ch
www. abece.ch
www. xyz .ch

Your website

Each combination of domain name and ending must be registered separately. If you want to have different TLDs, you will need to go to each of the registries concerned. That, of course, is going to mean multiple costs for you, and you might well have to deal with different registration terms and conditions. As far as .ch and .li are concerned, there are no limitations on the number of domains you are permitted to register.

Good domain names are very much sought after. So you may want to have a domain name that has already been registered – in other words, that has been issued to someone else. If you feel that you might have “stronger” rights to a name than its current holder, we advise you to study the information published on our website under the heading of “Dispute Resolution Service”.

On the other hand, it is possible that someone else could also have rights to the domain name that is still free and that you would like to register. In order to prevent conflicts from arising later, it is important for you to make sure before you register your domain name that you are not infringing any rights others may have in marks. For your guidance, we have compiled a non-exhaustive list of directories with company rights and trademarks, etc., on our website at www.switch.ch/id/directories.html.

Name server entry

The name server entry points to the server on which your website is stored. At SWITCH, domains can be registered either with or without name servers. If there is no name server entry, it will be impossible to find the website. It can, however, still make sense to register a domain name without a name server if you want to secure a particular domain name for yourself immediately, but want to wait until some time in future before actually creating the website and arranging its hosting.

For registering a domain name with a name server entry, you will need the name server addresses, which your hosting provider will be able to give you.

After registering a website, you have a period of ten days within which to withdraw from the contract for the new registration. If you decide to use this right, please make sure that you comply with the necessary formalities.

The internet as a public space

With your website you are going to draw attention to yourself – much more than you would probably want to. There is a legal requirement for all domains to be listed in a publicly accessible directory called WHOIS. The other data that can be consulted there are the name and address of the domain holder and the date on which it was registered.

SWITCH – the registry in Switzerland

Note that as far as your internet presence is concerned, SWITCH's job is limited to registering your domain name. SWITCH does not provide any services for the content, design or hosting of your website. These subjects are only mentioned in this document for the sake of completeness. If you need any further assistance in any of these areas, please contact an internet service provider or a web-design company.

SWITCH is a foundation set up under Swiss private law by the Swiss Confederations and those Swiss cantons that have universities on their territories. Its goals include the creation, promotion and provision of the necessary foundations for the effective use of teleinformatics in Switzerland. The services concerned with the registration of domain names are provided by its Internet Domains division. In its other divisions, SWITCH provides networks, net services, security and other teleinformatics services for universities.

Administration of the domain name

Registering a domain name is like taking out an open-ended subscription. It is renewed annually and ends when the domain holder terminates the contract, or passes the domain name on to another holder, or when it is revoked by SWITCH.

As the holder of a domain name, you are responsible for looking after the registered data. It is important to make sure that the registration information is always complete and entirely up-to-date. If, for instance an annual renewal invoice cannot be delivered because the address data is out-of-date, that will lead to the deletion of the domain name. If that happens, the homepage as well as e-mail and any other services running through the domain name will cease to be accessible very shortly afterwards.

Invoicing and payments

The price for a domain name is comprised of the fee for the initial registration as well as a recurrent annual fee. The invoice for the registration fee and the first annual fee will be sent to you immediately after registration. The invoice for the fee for each subsequent year will be sent to you 30 days before the end of the subscription period.

You can pay by either bank transfer (invoice) or credit card, whichever you find more convenient. Failure to pay in whole or in part may lead to the loss of the domain name.

Checking and changing registration data

You can check your own individual data online at any time and update it whenever necessary. For this purpose, you will be given a user ID and a password. These give you quick and easy access and also protect your account against any unauthorised access.

If you move to a new location or change your name, place of residence or place of business, please do not forget to update the registration data for your domain name.

Transfer or termination of domain names

You can submit a deletion request at any time for the deletion of your registered domain name if you decide you do not want it any more. The domain is released for a new registration after a transitional period, which usually lasts a fortnight.

It is also possible for you to transfer your domain name to someone else. Regardless of how much of your subscription is still left, the new holder must pay a new registration fee and the first annual fee, totalling CHF 75.–.

You will find a detailed description of all the tasks concerned with administering domain names in SWITCH's General Terms and Conditions (GTCs).

Note that the information given above applies to domain names ending in .ch and .li.

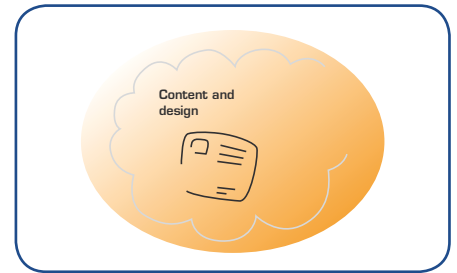
Content and design

How does a successful internet presence come into being?

Content First of all, you ought to think seriously about the content. What is it that you really want to communicate?

Structure The next important point is the structure of your website – especially if it is an extensive one. The content ought to be quick to find, and users ought to be able to make their way around the site with ease.

Design The last stage is to sort out questions concerning design. How do you want to present the content? The design ought to be attractive and should make the most out of the content.



DIY or have it done by someone else?

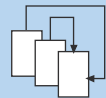
Before you start with implementation, consider carefully if you really want to make your website yourself or if it might not be better to get a web designer to do it for you. There are several closely linked criteria, which you ought to consider. You will find details in the subsection on Planning in the section called “Idea and decision”.

Implementation practicalities

This is where you put your creativity to use. If you don't yet have any clear ideas, take a look at existing websites: which ones do you like? Which ones do you find inspiring? Make a collection of all the information you would like to present and sort through any pictorial material you already have.

Before, however, you start to put together individual pages, you should have at least an outline definition of each of the following points:

The site's structure – number of pages
– hierarchies and interlinking of pages



Structure of pages – structure and size of the individual pages
– type(s) of navigation provided



Design – ratio of text and images
– colours
– type of images (photographs, diagrams, etc.)
– effects (animations, sound, etc.)



Functions – possibilities for visitors to your website to interact (forms, tools, etc.)



Avoid the classical “website pitfalls”:

- Excessively big music and image files slow down the loading process and annoy your visitors.
- Unusual fonts may appear original, but they are often problematical to display. Stick to common fonts.
- Weak contrasts and particular colours may similarly impair the readability of the text.
- Different browsers display websites differently. Test your website with several browsers and make sure that they all display it acceptably.

Make your website well-known

Your website can, of course, be called directly by entering the domain name. However, websites are frequently found indirectly through search engines. These spend all the time combing the internet automatically, looking for websites. You can increase the number of visitors to your website if it is better known to the search engines. The way to achieve this is as follows:

Optimisation of the website: really meaningful domain names, keywords, page titles, text content and links

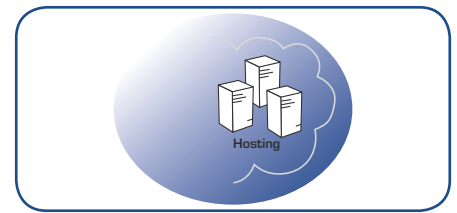
Remunerated entries: preferential placing in the search results

Direct registration: free direct entry made by yourself

Hosting

Where is your website to be found?

The place at which your website is stored is called the webserver. Theoretically, it could also be your private computer at home. To be able to run a webserver dependably, however, there are some things you simply must know beforehand, and there are certain preconditions to be met:



Accessibility	The webserver must be connected up to the internet permanently to make it possible for your customers, friends and acquaintances to visit your website at any time.
Security	You must also make sure that your data is protected against misuse or loss.
Bandwidth	Finally, you are going to need sufficient bandwidth to ensure acceptable access times.

Of these, it is especially the security aspect that makes it into a more or less mandatory requirement to operate a separate computer as a webserver, which is something that private individuals and many small businesses are unlikely to take upon themselves – for cost reasons if no others.

This is where web hosting (or simply “hosting”) comes into play. Hosting means that a so-called provider acts as host for your website. You pay rental for storage space on a server owned by the provider which is connected up to the internet.

Who does what?

You bear the final responsibility (even liability) for the content and presentation of your website. You can edit it at any time – even from your home. The provider’s job, on the other hand, is to ensure that your website is accessible at all times and that your data is protected against misuse or loss.

Who is the best provider for you?

There are numerous providers of hosting services, and there are remarkable differences in what they have to offer. The range of functions included in these providers’ packages varies tremendously, and you are free to choose simple “electronic visiting cards” or fully-fledged professional packages, including a webshop, or virtually anything else in-between these extremes.

Precisely for that reason, it is worth making comparisons and choosing an offer that really matches your needs. If you have already called on a web designer to arrange your website, they are likely to be able to assist you in choosing a provider too.

There is a website called www.providerliste.ch that you might find useful when looking for an internet service provider in Switzerland.

Criteria for choosing your provider:

- Monthly costs
- Connection speed
- Storage space for your particular website (size in MB)
- Number of e-mail addresses provided along with the website
- Extent of the available service and support facilities
- Availability of statistics
- Software included in the package for designing and administering your own pages
- Expandability/modularity
- etc.