

How to Find Out Who is Hosting Your Domain Name

This is something I have to do practically every day. We get a call from a client or come across a website and we need to find out where the website hosting is. Clients call and need help with their websites but they don't know where the website is hosted. Maybe someone who was working on the website left or maybe nobody has ever worked on the website.

I'll give you some ways to find out who is hosting your domain name and website.

Domain Name or Website?

The first thing to figure out is, are we talking about the domain name or website? There's a difference.

Your domain is registered somewhere, the DNS is somewhere, the website is somewhere and the email is somewhere. Yes, there are 4 things:

- Domain name
- DNS (domain name service)
- Website
- Email

Don't worry too much about this – many times, either all or a bunch of these things are hosted at the same place. The main point here is that they can be at different places, so don't see one thing, make an assumption, and be wrong.

Start With the Domain Name

Domain names are unique. That's great because when you look one up, you'll get the right info.

I have a habit of copying and pasting everything. I probably copy and paste over 150 things a day. I use it all the time because it helps ensure that I don't mess up. So for this first step, bring up your website in your web browser and copy the domain name from the address bar to make sure you get it right (versus typing it in).

What you want is the domain name without the "www" part. When you add the "www" part to it, that's actually (technically) a sub-domain. So, for example – the domain name for this website is:

- tonyherman.com

It's not these:

- www.tonyherman.com (this is a sub-domain)
- <https://www.tonyherman.com/> (this is a URL)

Once you have the domain name copied (to ensure it's correct), you want to do what we call a "whois" lookup on the domain name. You can do this online – go to: [whois.net](http://www.whois.net) (this will open in a new window).

Search on your domain name (paste it in) and you'll get some results. It looks like this:

Whois Server Version 2.0

Domain names in the .com and .net domains can now be registered with many different competing registrars. Go to <http://www.internic.net> for detailed information.

Domain Name: TONYHERMAN.COM
Registrar: WILD WEST DOMAINS, LLC
Sponsoring Registrar IANA ID: 440
Whois Server: whois.wildwestdomains.com
Referral URL: <http://www.wildwestdomains.com>
Name Server: NS.RACKSPACE.COM
Name Server: NS2.RACKSPACE.COM
Status: clientDeleteProhibited <https://icann.org/epp#clientDeleteProhibited>
Status: clientRenewProhibited <https://icann.org/epp#clientRenewProhibited>
Status: clientTransferProhibited <https://icann.org/epp#clientTransferProhibited>
Status: clientUpdateProhibited <https://icann.org/epp#clientUpdateProhibited>
Updated Date: 19-apr-2015
Creation Date: 26-jun-2001
Expiration Date: 26-jun-2016

>>> Last update of whois database: Tue, 03 May 2016 01:31:16 GMT <<<

For more information on Whois status codes, please visit <https://icann.org/epp>

NOTICE: The expiration date displayed in this record is the date the registrar's sponsorship of the domain name registration in the registry is currently set to expire. This date does not necessarily reflect the expiration

Gibberish, right?

There are a few parts you want to look at here – the **registrar** (where your domain name is registered) and the name servers:

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Registrar: WILD WEST DOMAINS, LLC

Sponsoring Registrar IANA ID: 440

Whois Server: whois.wildwestdomains.com

Referral URL: <http://www.wildwestdomains.com>

Name Server: NS.RACKSPACE.COM

Name Server: NS2.RACKSPACE.COM

Status: clientDeleteProhibited <https://icann.org/epp#clientDeleteProhibited>

Status: clientRenewProhibited <https://icann.org/epp#clientRenewProhibited>

Status: clientTransferProhibited <https://icann.org/epp#clientTransferProhibited>

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With the registrar, you can see where the domain name is registered. This is a clue – hang onto it. You might also see more information about the registrar, like the “Referral URL” or other information.

The registrar is where the domain name was purchased.

Sometimes, the registrar is a reseller. In this case, that's true. Wild West Domains is the reseller arm of GoDaddy. There are other ones like Enom that do the same thing.

But, we're trying to figure out the hosting, so let's look at the name servers:

Name Server: NS.RACKSPACE.COM

Name Server: NS2.RACKSPACE.COM

Name Servers

The name servers tend to be where the website is hosted. I'd say this is true about 60-70% of the time.

Now, to find the host, you don't paste in the name servers, but remove the sub-domain part and paste in the root domain name. In this case, put “RACKSPACE.COM” in your

browser and you'll see the host is Rackspace. And yes, this IS where this website is hosted but this isn't always the case.

Do a Reverse Lookup

Here's another way to find out where a website or domain name is hosted and it's actually a little more reliable – maybe. Again, sometimes it's a mystery.

A reverse lookup takes the domain name and turns it into an IP address. You can then do a lookup up the IP address and see who owns it. So it's a combination of 2 lookups.

You can do it at this website: whois.domaintools.com

You'll see results (below) – hover over the IP address and there will be a link to do a reverse lookup:

— Whois & Quick Stats

Registrant Org	The Original Source is associated with ~55 other domains	
Registrar	WILD WEST DOMAINS, LLC	
Registrar Status	clientDeleteProhibited, clientRenewProhibited, clientTransferProhibited, clientUpdateProhibited	
Dates	Created on 2001-06-26 - Expires on 2016-06-26 - Updated on 2015-04-19	
Name Server(s)	NS.RACKSPACE.COM (has 245,825 domains) MS2.RACKSPACE.COM (has 245,825 domains)	
IP Address	67.192.51.67 is hosted on a dedicated server	 Reverse IP 
IP Location	 - Texas - San Antonio - Webstix Inc	
ASN	 AS33070 RMH-14 - Rackspace Hosting, US (registered Sep 24, 2004)	
Domain Status	Registered And Active Website	
Whois History	45 records have been archived since 2007-07-21	
IP History	11 changes on 8 unique IP addresses over 11 years	
Registrar History	2 registrars	
Hosting History	3 changes on 3 unique name servers over 10 years	
Whois Server	whois.wildwestdomains.com	

— Website

Website Title	TonyHerman.com Website and Marketing Tips	
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That information can help you – another clue.

And the other part you'll notice is that this page might list the host. Here, it says who the host is:

clientUpdateProhibited	
Dates	Created on 2001-06-26 - Expires on 2016-06-26 - Updated on 2015-04-19
Name Server(s)	NS.RACKSPACE.COM (has 245,825 domains) NS2.RACKSPACE.COM (has 245,825 domains)
IP Address	67.192.51.67 is hosted on a dedicated server
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The Offline Method

There's a method that often works where you don't really even need a computer. It's pretty simple and people often forget about it.

At your company, go talk to the Accounts Payable people and ask them what company they pay to do your website hosting. They might pay it monthly or annually. They should be able to look it up for you.

Simple, right? ?

Use Some Apple Terminal / Linux Tools

Here's the geeky way using the Terminal app on a Mac or it works in Linux. Most IT people live in "Windows land" and don't have access to great tools like this. I don't know how many emails I've received from supposed "IT People" asking me to tell them the IP address of a website. It's public info – you just need to look it up but they don't know how. Here's now...

Do a dig. Type in "dig" and then the domain name (with a space in between, of course):

Copy

TonyMacbookPro:~ tony\$ **dig tonyherman.com**

```
; <>> DiG 9.8.3-P1 <>> tonyherman.com
;; global options: +cmd
;; Got answer:
;; ->>HEADER<<- opcode: QUERY, status: NOERROR, id: 7602
;; flags: qr rd ra; QUERY: 1, ANSWER: 1, AUTHORITY: 0, ADDITIONAL: 0
```

```
; ; QUESTION SECTION:  
;tonyherman.com.           IN      A  
  
; ; ANSWER SECTION:  
tonyherman.com.      86400    IN      A      67.192.51.67  
  
; ; Query time: 71 msec  
; ; SERVER: 10.0.1.1#53(10.0.1.1)  
; ; WHEN: Mon May  2 20:50:17 2016  
; ; MSG SIZE  rcvd: 48
```

And then take that result (the 67.192.51.67 in this case) and do a “dig -x” on it to find out more...

Copy

```
TonyMacbookPro:~ tony$ dig -x 67.192.51.67  
  
; <>> DiG 9.8.3-P1 <>> -x 67.192.51.67  
; ; global options: +cmd  
; ; Got answer:  
; ; ->>HEADER<<- opcode: QUERY, status: NOERROR, id: 24104  
; ; flags: qr rd ra; QUERY: 1, ANSWER: 1, AUTHORITY: 0, ADDITIONAL: 0  
  
; ; QUESTION SECTION:  
;67.51.192.67.in-addr.arpa.    IN      PTR  
  
; ; ANSWER SECTION:  
67.51.192.67.in-addr.arpa. 3600    IN      PTR      web2.webstix.com.  
  
; ; Query time: 37 msec  
; ; SERVER: 10.0.1.1#53(10.0.1.1)  
; ; WHEN: Mon May  2 20:50:23 2016  
; ; MSG SIZE  rcvd: 73
```

So the “web2.webstix.com” is another clue. That’s the hostname of the server it’s on. We’re getting another domain there (webstix.com), so that might be our host.

Put the Clues Together

At this point, you might have found out who is hosting your site (if so, why are you still reading?) or you might have a bunch of clues.

If you’re still not sure, then put the clues together. Do some Google searches on your clues. See what you can dig up. The good thing is, you’re closer than you were before – you have a lot more information using the tools I listed here.

More Resources

If you're still stuck, then here are a few more websites/resources that might help.

1. The ICANN whois lookup: <http://whois.icann.org/>
This website might give you different information about your domain. It's worth a try.
2. [Identify Your Domain Host](https://support.google.com/domains/answer/62571) (google.com)
This is Google's help page on this topic.
3. [Figure out where email is hosted.](#)

Conclusion

Again, put together clues, do some searching around, ask people – just get creative. You have a problem and there's a solution out there so keep working toward that solution. There IS a possible answer.

Don't give up – just keep looking and you'll find out who is hosting your website.

Original article: <https://www.tonyherman.com/find-whois-domain-host/>

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