TinyURL

TinyURL is a URL shortening web service, which provides short aliases for redirection of long URLs. Kevin Gilbertson, a web developer, launched the service in January 2002[2] so he would be able to post links in newsgroup postings which frequently had long, cumbersome addresses.

TinyURL

Type of site	URL shortening
Owner	TinyURL LLC
Created by	Kevin Gilbertson
Revenue	Donations, Advertising
Slogan(s)	Making long URLs usable!
Website	TinyURL.com
Alexa rank	▼ 378 (April 2014)[1]
Registration	No
Launched	January 2002[2]
Current status	Active

Service

The TinyURL homepage includes a

form which is used to submit a long URL for shortening. For each URL entered, the server adds a new alias in its <u>hashed</u> database and returns a short URL such as

<u>https://tinyurl.com/2unsh</u>

in the following page. If the URL has already been requested, TinyURL will return the existing alias rather than create a duplicate entry. The short URL forwards users to the long URL.

TinyURL offers an <u>API</u> which allows applications to automatically create short URLs. This is done by simply reading the result returned from

```
tinyurl.com/api-create.php?
url=URLENCODED_SOURCE_URL
```
.

Short URL aliases are seen as useful because they are easier to write down, remember or pass around, are less error-prone to write, and also fit where space is limited such as <u>IRC channel</u> topics, email signatures, <u>microblogs</u>, certain printed newspapers (such as the <u>.net Magazine</u> or even <u>Nature</u>), and <u>email clients</u> that impose <u>line breaks</u> on messages at a certain length. People posting on <u>Twitter</u> make extensive use of shortened URLs to keep their <u>tweets</u> within the

service-imposed 140 character limit (Twitter had used TinyURL until 2009, then it switched to <u>bit.ly</u>;[3] now Twitter uses its own t.co domain for this purpose).

Starting in 2008, TinyURL allows users to create custom, more meaningful aliases. This means that a user can create descriptive URLs rather than a randomly generated address. For example, `https://tinyurl.com/wp-tinyurl`.

The ability to preview the full URL is present at TinyURL. If the user has

previously enabled previews or visits a URL under preview.tinyurl.com in place of tinyurl.com, the site will display the target URL and a hyperlink to it, instead of redirecting to it automatically. This feature is not well documented at the TinyURL site, but the alternative shortened URL with preview capability is offered as an option at the time of creation.[4]

Impact

The popularity of TinyURLs influenced the creation of at least 100 similar websites.[5] Most are simply domain

alternatives while some offer additional features.

TinyURL-whacking

The TinyURL method of allocating shorter web addresses has inspired an action known as TinyURL-whacking. Random letters and numbers can be placed after the first forward slash in an attempt to hit interesting sites without knowing what they will be.[6][2]

See also

- URL redirection

- URL shortening
- Bitly

References

1. _"Tinyurl.com Site Info"_ . _Alexa Internet_. Retrieved 2014-04-01.

2. Katie Dean (March 16, 2004). _"Honey, I Shrunk the URL"_ . _Wired_. Retrieved November 17, 2016. "So the 24-year-old Web developer from Blaine, Minnesota, launched TinyURL.com in January 2002, a free site that converts huge strings of characters into more manageable snippets."

3. *Weisenthal, Joe (May 6, 2009). "Twitter Switches from TinyURL to Bit.ly" . Business Insider. Retrieved February 15, 2013.*

4. *"How to Preview Shortened URLs (TinyURL, bit.ly, is.gd, and more)" . 2009-04-11. Retrieved 2014-05-30.*

5. *90+ URL Shortening Services , Mashable.Com, 8 January 2008, page 84*

6. *New Scientist, vol. 179, issue 2404, 19 July 2003, page 84*

External links

- Official website

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