Module 12

DNS & Email Hosting

Module 12: DNS & Email Hosting

❏ Introduction

DNS, or "domain name service," is an internet service that translates domain names into IP addresses. DNS hosting services are included for all BigCommerce pricing plans. In the BigCommerce control panel, the DNS section is where you manage the records that associate your custom domain name with your BigCommerce store. Third-party DNS hosts can also be used with BigCommerce stores if you prefer.

BigCommerce includes email forwarding by default. When you're ready, you can host email accounts with a third party either while hosting DNS with BigCommerce or with a third party.

In this module, you will explore DNS concepts, review the process of moving a BigCommerce store to a domain, and explore moving email hosting to a third party.

❏ Learning Objectives

After completing this module, you should be able to:

- Describe the free DNS hosting services provided by BigCommerce
- Describe the connection between email and DNS hosting
- Identify the DNS hosting options available BigCommerce stores
- Move a store to any unused *.mybigcommerce.com domain
- Purchase and use a domain from BigCommerce
- List the BigCommerce name server addresses
- Move a store to a domain purchased through a third party
- Troubleshoot common DNS issues
- Create and manage email forwarding addresses in BigCommerce

❏ Lessons

This module includes the following lessons:

Lessons
Lesson 1: DNS Hosting
Lesson 2: Moving a Store to a Domain
Lesson 3: Basic Mail
Lesson 4: Configuring Third Party Mail Hosting

DNS & Email Hosting Lesson 01: DNS Hosting

❏ Introduction

DNS, or "domain name system", is an internet service that translates domain names into IP addresses (e.g. 123.34.67.89). This translation is necessary because computers on the internet communicate via IP addresses to help identify where a server is located and route accordingly. DNS also controls where your domain name's website and email are hosted. If you've purchased a 3rd party domain name from a registrar like GoDaddy or Namecheap and are using BigCommerce's DNS settings, visitors will reach BigCommerce's servers when visiting your domain name.

In this lesson you will explore DNS hosting and the connection between email and DNS hosting.

❏ Learning Objectives

After completing this lesson, you should be able to:

- Describe the free DNS hosting services provided by BigCommerce
- Describe the connection between email and DNS hosting
- Identify the DNS hosting options available BigCommerce stores

❏ Content

This lesson includes the following content:

Content
Video: Domain Names & Email Hosting
Glossary: DNS Vocabulary
Diagram: DNS

❏ Reference

This lesson may reference the following content

Reference
KB Article: Domain Name Basics   https://support.bigcommerce.com/articles/Learning/Domain-Name-Basics/
KB Article: Domain Name System (DNS) Basics   https://support.bigcommerce.com/articles/Learning/Domain-Name-System-Basics/
KB Article: https://support.bigcommerce.com/articles/Public/Changing-Domains

Video: Domain Names & Email Hosting

❏ Video

Watch the *Domain Names & Email Hosting* video on YouTube:
https://youtu.be/j__5zeiFi_A

❏ Notes

Use the area below for writing down any notes or key takeaways from the video:

Glossary: DNS

DNS - Domain Name System, the phone book for the internet. The Domain Name System translates domain names meaningful to humans into the numerical identifiers associated with networking equipment (IP addresses) for the purpose of locating and addressing these devices worldwide.

IP Address - An Internet Protocol address (IP address) is usually a numerical label assigned to each device (e.g., computer, printer) participating in a computer network that uses the Internet Protocol for communication.

Domain Name Registrar - An organization or commercial entity, accredited by a generic top-level domain registry (gTLD) and/or by a country code top-level domain (ccTLD) registry, to manage the reservation of Internet domain names to the public.

Domain Name - A name that is reserved on the internet for a website. As most websites are actually an IP Address, the domain name changes the ip address into a recognizable name.

Name Server - A DNS name server is a server that stores the DNS records, such as address (A) records, name server (NS) records, and mail exchanger (MX) records for a domain name. These records allow traffic to be directed correctly for any user trying to navigate to a particular domain or send mail to an email account associated with a particular domain.

DNS Hosting Service - A type of network service that provides domain name system resolution services. A DNS hosting service builds, operates and provisions domain name servers, which are used and integrated with domain name registrars, Web hosting services and Internet service providers (ISP).

MX Record - A type of resource record in the Domain Name System that specifies a mail server responsible for accepting email messages on behalf of a recipient's domain and a preference value used to prioritize mail delivery if multiple mail servers are available.
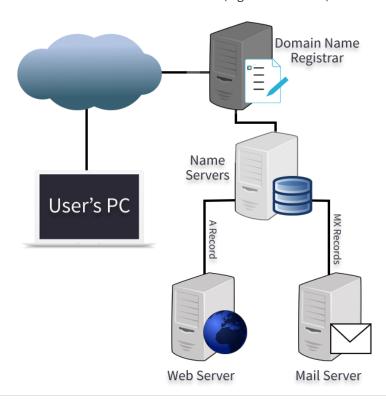
A Record - A type of resource record in the Domain Name System that specifies an IP address to which the domain will point.

CNAME Record - A type of resource record in the Domain Name System (DNS) that specifies that the domain name is an alias of another, canonical domain name.

Permanent Address - (BigCommerce-specific; Also known as Canonical URL, Temporary URL, or Store-Hash URL) The URL that can always be used to access the store. The permanent URL is used to load pages over HTTPS prior to installing a dedicated SSL certificate and uses this format: *http://store-[store hash].mybigcommerce.com/*
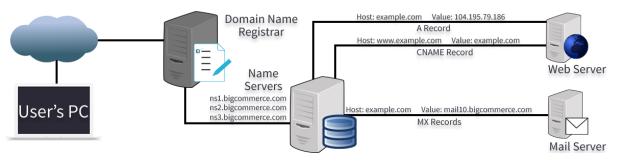
Diagram: DNS

DNS is an internet service that translates domain names into IP addresses (e.g. 123.34.67.891).
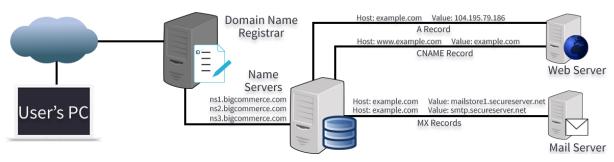

Domain Name Registrar	A domain name registrar is an organization or commercial entity, accredited by a generic top-level domain registry (gTLD) and/or by a country code top-level domain (ccTLD) registry, to manage the reservation of Internet domain names to the public.
	
	Examples:
	
	    Enom
	    GoDaddy
	    Namecheap

Nameserver	Nameservers are used to point your domain name to the company that controls the rest of your domain's DNS records. Typically, you will point your nameservers to the company who will host your website.
	
	BigCommerce's Nameservers:
	
	    NS1.BIGCOMMERCE.COM
	    NS2.BIGCOMMERCE.COM
	    NS3.BIGCOMMERCE.COM

A Record	A Records point your domain name to an individual server using an IP address.
MX Records	MX Record means mail exchanger. These are used point your domain name's email to a specific provider.

BigCommerce name servers and BigCommerce mail servers
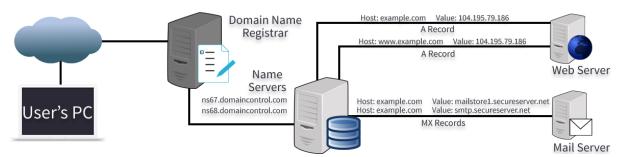
In this scenario, BigCommerce hosts the DNS and email for example.com. BigCommerce only provides email forwarding services.

BigCommerce name servers and GoDaddy mail servers

In this scenario, BigCommerce hosts the DNS and GoDaddy hosts email accounts for example.com.

GoDaddy name servers and GoDaddy mail servers

In this scenario, GoDaddy hosts the DNS and email for example.com. Please note that this method is not recommended since store IP addresses are not static and are subject to change. If the store's IP address changes, the A record will no longer link the domain name and store, resulting in the store being unavailable.

DNS & Email Hosting Lesson 02:
Moving a Store to a Domain

❏ **Introduction**

Using a domain name in BigCommerce consists of two steps: pointing a DNS record to BigCommerce and changing your store's domain. Stores can also be moved to any unused *.mybigcommerce.com subdomain at any time.

In this lesson you will start a trial store and get acquainted with the control panel.

❏ **Learning Objectives**

After completing this lesson, you should be able to:

- Move a store to any unused *.mybigcommerce.com domain
- Purchase and use a domain from BigCommerce
- List the BigCommerce name server addresses
- Move a store to a domain purchased through a third party
- Troubleshoot common DNS issues

❏ **Content**

This lesson includes the following content:

Content
Lab Activity: *.mybigcommerce.com Subdomains
Simulation: Purchase a domain from BigCommerce
Simulation: Move a store to a domain purchased from a third party
Q&A Activity: Advanced DNS Hosting

❏ **Reference**

This lesson may reference the following content

Reference
KB Article: Managing DNS https://support.bigcommerce.com/articles/Public/Managing-DNS
KB Article: Changing Your Store's Domain https://support.bigcommerce.com/articles/Public/Changing-Your-Store-s-Domain
KB Article: Pointing Your Domain https://support.bigcommerce.com/articles/Public/Changing-Domains#point
KB Article: Purchasing a Domain from BigCommerce https://support.bigcommerce.com/articles/Public/Purchasing-a-Domain-from-Bigcommerce
KB Article: Locating Your Store's IP Address https://support.bigcommerce.com/articles/Public/What-is-my-stores-IP-address
KB Article: How long will it take for my domain change to happen? https://support.bigcommerce.com/articles/Public/How-long-will-it-take-for-my-domain-change-to-happen
KB Article: Changing Your Domain > Changing from One BigCommerce Subdomain to Another BigCommerce Subdomain https://support.bigcommerce.com/articles/Public/Changing-Domains#bcsub-bcsub

Build-A-Store: *.mybigcommerce.com Subdomains

Duration: 5 minutes

In this lab you will...
- Move the store to a new subdomain of mybigcommerce.com
- Access the store using the permanent address

Background

Every store is provisioned with a subdomain of mybigcommerce.com using the store's name and a second subdomain of mybigcommerce.com using the store's hash (called the permanent or canonical address). Sometimes it is necessary to change the original mybigcommerce.com subdomain generated using the store's name, but it is not possible to change the mybigcommerce.com subdomain generated using the store's hash.

> ⓘ If at any point during this lab you see an error or warning message indicating your contact information is incomplete, navigate to *My Account > Account Details* in the BigCommerce Account Dashboard. Then click the *Edit* button for your contact and complete the required fields.
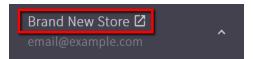
Complete These Steps

1. **Move** the store to a new subdomain of mybigcommerce.com

    a. From the control panel, **navigate** to the BigCommerce Account Dashboard by clicking *Account Settings > Account Summary*

    b. In the new tab/window where the BigCommerce Account Dashboard opened, **click** the name of your store in the *Your Stores* list

    c. In the *Details* section, **click** the *Change mybigcommerce.com Domain Name* link

    d. **Check Availability** for your desired subdomain

        i. **Type** the subdomain you would like to use in the text field to the right of *https://*

        ii. **Click** the *Check Availability* button

        iii. If the subdomain is unavailable, try a new one. Repeat until you find a subdomain that is available

    e. **Click** the *Next* button

> ⓘ At this point, you should see a message stating:
>
> Store subdomain was successfully updated.

    f. **Navigate** to your control panel and **refresh** the page

    g. **Click** the *View Store* link in the lower-left corner of the control panel to confirm your store has moved to the new subdomain

> Brand New Store ⧉
> email@example.com

2. **Access** the store using the permanent address

    a. While viewing the control panel, **copy t**he URL in the browser's address bar from https:// to .com

> ⓘ Although the Legacy Client Area refers to it as the "temporary URL", your store's canonical URL is actually a permanent, secondary address that is assigned to your store. This address remains the same even when you change your store's domain or if there are other DNS issues preventing the storefront from being visible on another domain.

    b. **Navigate** to the copied URL in a new tab or window to confirm the storefront is visible

Simulation: Purchase a domain from BigCommerce

❏ Simulation

Complete the *Purchase a domain from BigCommerce* click-through simulation accessible from
https://marvelapp.com/f505f3g/

❏ Reference

The following reference material may support this activity:

Reference
KB Article: Purchasing a Domain from BigCommerce https://support.bigcommerce.com/articles/Public/Purchasing-a-Domain-from-Bigcommerce

❏ Notes

Use the area below for writing down any notes or key takeaways from the simulation:

Simulation: Move a store to a domain purchased from a third party

❏ Simulation

Complete the *Move a store to a domain purchased from a third party* click-through simulation accessible from https://marvelapp.com/52a00be/

❏ Reference

The following reference material may support this activity:

Reference
KB Article: Changing Your Store's Domain https://support.bigcommerce.com/articles/Public/Changing-Your-Store-s-Domain

❏ Notes

Use the area below for writing down any notes or key takeaways from the simulation:

Q&A: Advanced DNS Hosting

Duration: 7 minutes

Instructions
Using your test store, experience, and the BigCommerce KB, answer the following questions

1. What are some possible points of failure if a store is unavailable on its domain, but still available on the permanent URL?

2. If a store is using a domain purchased from a third party and BigCommerce is hosting the DNS, what would be the effect of deleting the A record from the BigCommerce control panel?

3. If a store is using a domain purchased from a third party and third-party DNS hosting, what would be the effect of deleting the A record from the BigCommerce control panel?

4. When using a CNAME record to point a subdomain from third party name servers to a BigCommerce store, why is it recommended to point to the store's permanent address instead of the store's IP address?

DNS & Email Hosting Lesson 03: Basic Mail

❏ **Introduction**

BigCommerce provides free email forwarding. In order for BigCommerce to forward your email, you will need to have pointed your domain's nameservers to BigCommerce.

We strongly recommend using a hosted email solution, which will let you host email for accounts on your domain. These solutions also have advanced features such as spam protection and email filtering. To use a hosted email solution, you will need to point your MX records from BigCommerce to the email host.

In this lesson you will create email forwarding addresses.

❏ **Learning Objectives**

After completing this lesson, you should be able to:

- Create and manage email forwarding addresses in BigCommerce

❏ **Content**

This lesson includes the following content:

Content
Lab Activity: Basic Mail

❏ **Reference**

This lesson may reference the following content

Reference
KB Article: Third-Party Email Hosting > MX Records https://support.bigcommerce.com/articles/Public/Third-Party-Email-Hosting/
KB Article: Email in BigCommerce https://support.bigcommerce.com/articles/Public/Email-in-BigCommerce
KB Article: Email in BigCommerce https://support.bigcommerce.com/articles/Public/Email-in-BigCommerce#legacy

Build-A-Store: Set Up Basic Mail

Duration: 5 minutes
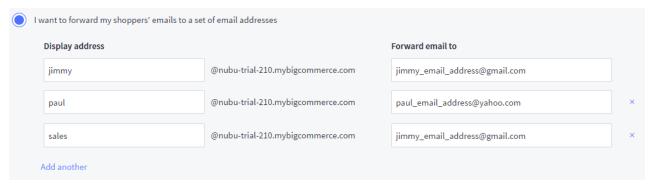
In this lab you will...
- Create an email forwarding address

Complete These Steps

1. **Create** an email forwarding address

   a. **Navigate** to *Server Settings > DNS Records*

   b. **Select** *I want to forward my shoppers' emails to a set of email addresses*

   c. **Type** your first name in the *Display address* field

   d. **Enter** an existing email address where you can receive email in the *Forward email to* field

   e. If desired, **click** the *Add another* link and **repeat** steps 1.c and1.d

   f. **Click** the Save button

   g. **Test** the forwarding address by sending an email to the forwarding address(es) you configured

DNS & Email Hosting Lesson 04:
Configuring Third Party Mail Hosting

❏ Introduction

To grow your business, we recommend creating an account with a third-party email hosting service that will give you access to webmail, filtering, and other advanced functionality. There are a number of hosting services such as G Suite, GoDaddy, Office 365 and even some that offer a free plan like Zoho.

In this lesson you will configure MX records to point to a third-party mail hosting service.

❏ Learning Objectives

After completing this lesson, you should be able to:

- Configure MX Records on the BigCommerce nameservers to point to a third-party mail host

❏ Content

This lesson includes the following content:

Content
Lab Activity: Configuring Third Party Mail Hosting

❏ Reference

This lesson may reference the following content

Reference
KB Article: Third-Party Email Hosting https://support.bigcommerce.com/articles/Public/Third-Party-Email-Hosting/

Build-A-Store: Configure Third Party Mail Hosting

Duration: 10 minutes

In this lab you will...
- Configure MX, TXT, and CNAME records for GoDaddy hosted email
- Reconfigure original MX records

Background

In this lab, you will enter MX records to allow a third party to host your domain's email when your nameservers are pointed to BigCommerce. Note that following these instructions will cause the built in email forwarding to no longer work. These instructions are for demonstration purposes only and will not actually result in functioning third party email, as no GoDaddy account has been set up for email hosting.

Complete These Steps

> ⓘ Is Google G Suite your email host? Check out the *Using G Suite (formerly Google Apps) for Email* article for easy steps to configure Google G Suite email hosting without needing to edit or create any DNS records.
>
> https://support.bigcommerce.com/articles/Public/How-do-I-use-Google-Apps-as-my-e-mail-service

1. **Configure** MX, TXT, and CNAME records for GoDaddy hosted email
   a. **Navigate** to support.bigcommerce.com
      i. In the search bar, **type** Using GoDaddy for Email
         1. Alternatively, **navigate** to https://support.bigcommerce.com/articles/Public/Third-Party-Email-Hosting/#godaddy
      ii. **Locate** the table of MX records under *Changing Your DNS Records*

Fully Qualified Host	Value	Time to live	Priority
yourdomain.com	yourdomain-com.mail.protection.outlook.com	900	0

   b. In the Control Panel, **navigate** to the *Server Settings > Email & DNS Records*
   c. **Select** *I'm setting up an external email hosting solution*
      i. **Create** the first MX record:
         1. **Type** the domain of your store in the Fully Qualified Host field
         2. **Navigate** back to the support article
            a. In the table of MX records, **Copy** the first value in the Value/Answer/Destination field

Fully Qualified Host	Value	Time to live	Priority
yourdomain.com	yourdomain-com.mail.protection.outlook.com	900	0

         3. In the Control Panel, **Paste** the copied value into the Value field of the MX record
         4. **Replace** *youredomain-com* with your domain in the pasted text
         5. **Type** 900 in the Time to live (TTL) field
         6. **Type** 0 in the Priority field

            ⦿ I'm setting up an external email hosting solution

            Learn how to set up an external email hosting solution. [Learn More]

Type	Fully Qualified Host		Value		Time to live	Priority
MX	ladlesandgentlemen.com		Mail handled by	ladlesandgentlemen.mail.protection.outlook.com	900	0

         7. **Click** the *Save* button

d. **Edit** the TXT record
    i. **Click** the *Web Hosts* tab
    ii. **Navigate** to the support article
        1. **Locate** the table in the step instructing you to edit the existing TXT record
        2. **Copy** the text in the Value field
        3. **Return** to the Control Panel
    iii. **Paste** the copied text into the Value field of the record with TXT as the Type
    iv. **Enter** 900 in the Time to live field

TXT ▾	ladlesandgentlemen.com	v=spf1 include:_spf.bigcommerce.com include:spf.protection.outlook.com -all	900	×

    v. **Click** the *Save* button

e. **Create** the new TXT record
    i. **Click** the *Add another* link below the existing DNS records on the *Web Hosts* tab.
    ii. **Choose** *TXT* from the *Type* dropdown
    iii. **Navigate** to the support article
        1. **Locate** the table in the step instructing you to create another TXT record
        2. **Copy** the text in the Value field
        3. **Return** to the Control Panel.
    iv. **Paste** the copied text into the Value field of the new TXT record
    v. **Enter** 900 in the Time to live field

TXT ▾	ladlesandgentlemen.com	netorgft######.onmicrosoft.com or MS=msXXXXXXXX	900	×

    vi. **Click** the *Save* button

f. **Create** the CNAME records

> ⓘ Do NOT edit the existing CNAME record. Instead, follow these steps to create new CNAME records. Editing the existing CNAME record may make your site inaccessible.

    i. **Click** the *Add another* link below the existing DNS records on the *Web Hosts* tab.
    ii. **Choose** *CNAME* from the *Type* dropdown
    iii. **Navigate** to the support article
        1. **Locate** the table in the step instructing you to create CNAME records
        2. **Copy** the text in the Value field for the first record

Record	Fully Qualified Host	Value	Time to live
CNAME	autodiscover.yourdomain.com	autodiscover.outlook.com	900
CNAME	sip.yourdomain.com	sipdir.online.lync.com	900
CNAME	lyncdiscover.yourdomain.com	webdir.online.lync.com	900
CNAME	email.yourdomain.com	email.secureserver.net	900
CNAME	msoid.yourdomain.com	clientconfig.microsoftonline-p.net	900

    iv. **Return** to the Control Panel
        1. **Paste** the copied text into the *Value* field of the new CNAME record
    v. **Return** to the support article
        1. **Copy** the text in the Fully Qualified Host field for the first record

Record	Fully Qualified Host	Value	Time to live
CNAME	autodiscover.yourdomain.com	autodiscover.outlook.com	900
CNAME	sip.yourdomain.com	sipdir.online.lync.com	900
CNAME	lyncdiscover.yourdomain.com	webdir.online.lync.com	900
CNAME	email.yourdomain.com	email.secureserver.net	900
CNAME	msoid.yourdomain.com	clientconfig.microsoftonline-p.net	900

    vi. **Return** to the Control Panel

1. **Paste** the copied text into the Fully Qualified Host field of the new CNAME record
2. **Replace** *yourdomain.com* with your domain
3. **Enter** 900 in the Time to live field

vii. **Repeat** the previous steps for the remaining records in the support article

CNAME ▾	autodiscover.ladlesandgentlemen.com	is an alias of	autodiscover.outlook.com	900	×
CNAME ▾	sip.ladlesandgentlemen.com	is an alias of	sipdir.online.lync.com	900	×
CNAME ▾	lyncdiscover.ladlesandgentlemen.com	is an alias of	webdir.online.lync.com	900	×
CNAME ▾	email.ladlesandgentlemen.com	is an alias of	email.secureserver.net	900	×
CNAME ▾	msoid.ladlesandgentlemen.com	is an alias of	clientconfig.microsoftonline-p.net	900	×

viii. **Click** the *Save* button

2. **Reconfigure** original MX records (optional)

ⓘ Follow these steps if you wish to restore email forwarding functionality to your store.

a. **Click** the Mail Servers tab
b. **Select** *I want to forward my shoppers' emails to a set of email addresses*
c. **Click** the Save button