

## **Why you should use a separate registrar and web host**

We mentioned earlier that a web host can act as a registrar. On reflection, you might think this makes sense and is more convenient since you only need to deal with one company rather than two. However, I have been building websites for over 10 years now, and during that time, I've heard a lot of horror stories about web hosts acting as registrars.

Let's consider **the main reason** to use separate companies for these two services. I'll walk you through a few examples of what can go wrong.

### **Example 1.**

1. You've signed up with a hosting company, and use them as registrar.
2. Your web hosting company start having problems with their servers and you find the down time totally unacceptable.
3. You decide to move your website to a new host.

In this scenario, you need to:

1. Contact your host and tell them you want to move your domain to another registrar. Your host needs to "unlock" your domain and give you an authorization code.
2. Contact your new registrar/host to tell them you are moving your domain to their services. Give them your domain name and authorization code.
3. Assuming everything goes smoothly, and your current host doesn't play hardball (and I've read stories of some that have), the domain transfer takes around 7 days. You then need to upload your site to the new hosting service.

Potential downtime for your site, if everything goes well, is around 7 days.

### **Example 2.**

You have a problem with your existing host (maybe a dispute over a late payment, or you've used up too much bandwidth), so they close down your site temporarily until the dispute is resolved. During the dispute, your host may refuse to allow you to transfer your domain from their service, depending on the nature of the dispute.

### **Example 3.**

Your web host goes out of business. In this scenario, you may lose your site altogether since they are the registrar in charge of your domain name. With

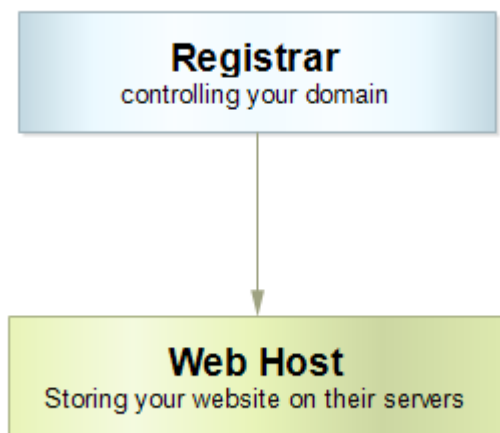
their website down, and therefore your access to your site, you may struggle to get a domain transfer to a different host or registrar.

### **The solution - a separate registrar**

OK, we need to make one assumption about the registrar for this to be a real solution. That assumption is that the Registrar won't go out of business. If you use a reputable registrar, the chances are negligible and not something I lose sleep over.

So, how can a separate registrar help in the above examples?

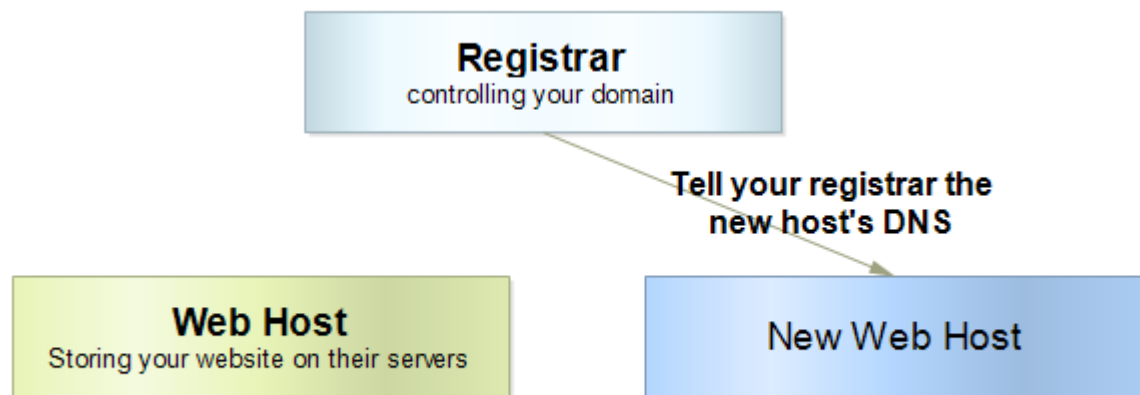
The relationship between registrar and host is like this:



**QUICK DEFINITION:** DNS stands for **Domain Name System**, and is a unique name for a computer connected to the internet. All web hosts use a unique DNS for each of their servers.

The registrar uses your web host's DNS to point your domain at the correct server where your website is stored.

If you need to move your website to another host, for ANY reason, simply upload your website backup to the new host, and:



Switch DNS at your registrar. This is as easy as editing the DNS values at your registrar, and I'll show you how to do that later in this course.

As soon as you switch the DNS at your registrar, the switchover begins. It can take several hours to fully propagate around the world, but after that time, anyone visiting your website will be directed (by your registrar) to the new host, effectively cutting the old host out of the loop. If your website is still working on the original host at the time of the transfer, then as the switch takes places, chances are you will not experience any downtime at all. This is because your site will be served from your old host, right up until the moment it starts being served from the new host.

If your site is not working on the old host, then the maximum potential downtime for your site is hours, rather than days.

In lecture 7 in this course, I'll show you how you can move your domain from one registrar to another. I'd recommend doing this if you are currently using your host as a registrar.