

Domain name renewal scams

<http://www.scamwatch.gov.au/content/index.phtml/tag/DomainNameRenewalScams>

What are domain name renewal scams?

A domain name is simply an internet address, used to help people get to a website. For example, the SCAMwatch domain name is scamwatch.gov.au. Domain names must be renewed every couple of years.

Domain name renewal scams can work in one of two ways. You might be sent an invoice for a domain name that is very similar to your current domain name – the scammer hopes that you don't notice the difference and just pay the invoice.

Alternatively, you could be sent a letter that looks like a renewal notice for your actual domain name, but is from a different company to the one you have previously used to register your domain name.

Warning signs

You receive a letter that looks like an invoice for the registration or renewal of a domain name.

The domain name listed in the invoice is very similar to your actual domain name, but may have a different ending. For example, it may end in .net.au instead of .com.au or the .au at the end may be missing.

The domain name may be correct, but the letter is not from the company that you previously used to register your domain name.

Protect yourself from domain name renewal scams

Use your common sense: the offer may be a scam.

Check the website address carefully. Scammers often set up fake websites with very similar addresses.

Try to avoid having a large number of people authorised to make orders or pay invoices.

Always check that goods or services were both ordered and delivered before paying an invoice.

Make sure the business billing you is the one you normally deal with.

Read all the terms and conditions of any offer very carefully: claims of free or very cheap offers often have hidden costs.

You can [contact your local office of fair trading, ASIC or the ACCC for assistance](#).

As well as following these specific tips, find out [how to protect yourself](#) from all sorts of other scams.

Do your homework

Be sure to check that the domain name listed in the invoice is the same as your actual domain name. If it is the same, also check to make sure that the invoice is from the company that you have

previously used to register your domain name.

If you want to shop around for domain name renewal, find out when your current registration expires to make sure you are not paying when you don't have to. Also keep in mind that if you get your IT services (e.g. email or web hosting services) from an external company this may include domain name registration for free or at a lower cost.

Make sure you know all the terms and conditions of the offer before agreeing to anything. You may also wish to check if the provider is legitimate with the .au Domain Administrator ([auDA](#)).

Further information about [domain name renewals](#) can be accessed on the ACCC website.

Decide

If you are happy with your current domain name registration provider, simply ignore other 'renewal' or 'registration' letters that you may receive.

If you want to switch domain name registration providers, make sure you know the full cost, terms and conditions of the offer before agreeing.

Report them

If you think you have seen a domain name renewal scam, you can let the authorities know through the [report a scam](#) section of SCAMwatch. You should also warn your family, friends and colleagues about the scheme or product. <http://www.scamwatch.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/694011>

What to do if you've been scammed; Scams & the law; Report a scam.
<http://www.scamwatch.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/693989>