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How to explain "URLs" so anybody can understand them

One of our tech support guys just had a conversation with somebody who wanted "to register the URL <http://example.com/something.html>", where example.com was already registered, the person couldn't understand why he couldn't have that URL with "something.html" after it. We've heard variations of this one a lot. Like somebody who knows "xyz.zz" is taken "but can I register "www.xyz.zz?", no, you can't.

The easiest way to explain a URL such as this one:<http://www.example.com/something.html>

Is to think of it as HOW, then WHERE and finally WHAT:<http://www.example.com/something.html>« how?The method we are going to use to retrieve or "get to" the document described by the URL. Common ones are "http" (Hyper-Text Transfer Protocol), you may also see "ftp://" or "mailto:"[www.example.com](http://www.example.com/something.html)« where?This is the hostname of the server, somewhere on the internet, which is holding the document we actually want/[something.html](http://www.example.com/something.html)« what?Finally, after we know what server we are looking for and how we're going to retrieve the document from it, we now specify exactly which document we want off of the remote server.

Understand those three components and you basically have URLs down cold.

Your web browser (firefox, safari, IE, Opera) is all about "how", what protocols to use to pull all these documents over the web to your desktop.

The web host is the "what" machine. It sits on a server and serves document after document to remote web browsers who send it requests.

Something has to bridge the browser to the web host/server and that's the "where", that's where DNS and domains come in, and that's primarily what we do here at easyDNS. We tell web browsers (and other client applications) the "where" aspect of retrieving and transmitting documents (the "whats") across the internet. We do this via "DNS lookups" ...about a quarter billion times a day.

Posted by easyDNS: Tips and Tricks in via easyDNS blog at 09:47