

STAKING YOUR CLAIM ON THE WEB

ORGANIC PRODUCTS: THE DOMAIN NAME IS PLAIN

A web address, www.organicformulations.com.au, has proven to be the best business card Daniela Tarantello's company has ever had.

"I did not know where to start it from, made a few phone calls, got a few quotes on web design, maintenance and updates. The design to start off with was to be very simple, we just wanted to get the message across," says Daniela.

Daniela concedes that her company's process in seeking a web address would "most certainly" have been easier, if her company had had access to a simplified domain name guide.

When they started out trading organic products as Organic Formulations in 1999, Daniela and her partner Anthony were new to building a business. Customers' queries were increasing and a lot of the time was spent on the phone answering basic introductory questions about who they were and what the company did.

"The idea to build a website came out of a service strategy to supply information and satisfy the customers' basic need before getting into real business. A website would allow all that at the customers' own pace."

Daniela happily reports that since Organic Formulations has had their website running, their business has grown considerably, due to the national and international exposure it has online.

"We've spent less time on the phone and more time in getting things done. We display our web address



Daniela Tarantello at work.

in all advertising material, product and packaging. It is the best business card we ever had."

Daniela's company, based in Victoria's Macedon Ranges, grew from her personal passion for organic products and fundamental concern for health and the state of the planet.

"Ever since I can remember, I have always had an interest in how we affect the environment and in turn how the environment affects us. As I became familiar with organics, I also became aware of the chemically polluted environment I was living in. From the farms to our table, from our own backyards to inside our homes and directly to what we put onto our bodies on a daily basis."



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"I started to grow my own food organically, no use of pesticides at all, and use natural cleaning products, but there was nothing in the market that satisfied my need for a natural and organic product for personal care. So I began making my own. Many of my friends asked me to start making for them as well and at that point I realised there was a gap in the market I could fulfil."

Daniela has been an active member of the Organic Retailer & Grower Association of Australia (ORGAA) for 12 years and is currently a member of the Biological Farmers of Australia (BFA) an Organic Certification Body. In addition, she has a financial background achieved through finance courses and by managing account departments and business administration through previous years as an employee.

Seeking domain name registration and trademark proved to be a complex maze that Daniela and her partner used their own initiative to navigate.

"We spoke to a few register service providers asked and hoped to learn something. It was difficult at first as there was no helpful information available anywhere, so we needed to undertake our own research.

"We trademarked our business name long before we established the website. It was important that our domain name was to be our business name and logo, because that is what customers are looking for. Why make it difficult for them to find us!

"Therefore when we learnt about registering a domain name. We made sure that our business name was registered even before the web design was completed."

Daniela's experience can help provide useful tips to other small businesses about domain registration.

"Registering a domain name is like registering your business name – take it seriously – don't lose your hard work to somebody else. Make sure it reflects your business name and service you provide as

closely as possible. I believe every new upcoming business should register a domain name as well as registering and trademarking their business name."

The key design elements Daniela selected for her company's website were critical to maximise business efficiency and returns, and can provide useful advice to other companies.

"We decided on not having too many moving objects or huge pictures and sounds, as it would slow the site down. Not everyone has a powerful computer. It has to be easy to navigate back and forth . We opted to say everything about the company in a concise manner on the first page - customers are not willing to wait for long.

"A good business site should also repeat some of the key words related to the service you provide – this will contribute to pop up, or searchability, when customers ask for it on search engines. In addition, make it easy for the customers to contact you by listing phone numbers and/or e-mail addresses."

Organic Formulations decided it was important to register a .com.au and .com domain address to avert the risk of another business registering their name as a .com.

"We really needed to emphasise that we are an Australian company, therefore it was important to have a .com.au domain. We also needed to protect our business name by preventing anyone from registering with a .com, therefore we registered both domains. In fact if you enter our address with just a .com you will automatically be redirected onto the .com.au domain.

Organic Formulations were not at first aware of the consumer protection guidelines implemented by auDA. However, a year later Daniela and her partner came across their current register service providers and they were advised of the guidelines and received a lot of support