

Media release

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More shoppers are seeking out Aussie businesses online.

A *com.au* domain name says your business is local.

- 70% of respondents to a survey from auDA said supporting Australian business is important when online shopping
- 92% of respondents associated the *com.au* domain with local businesses
- 57% of respondents were unlikely to purchase from an online business without a website

New research commissioned by auDA, the Australian domain name administrator, found that 70 percent of Australians believe it is now more important than ever to support local retailers when shopping online, an increase from 52 percent pre-pandemic.

The research also found that the most common way online shoppers identify a business as Australian is via the *com.au* domain name extension. The findings highlight an opportunity for businesses to connect with consumers who are seeking out homegrown brands online, by registering a domain name which reflects their Australian presence.

“With a *com.au* domain, Australians can be sure in a split-second that a business has a local presence. If you are putting your business online, don’t risk being overlooked by consumers who are telling us they want to support Australian businesses,” auDA Chief Executive Officer Rosemary Sinclair said.

The auDA research also highlighted that domain names influence Australian consumers’ perception of a business’ website.

“Businesses with *com.au* domain names were almost twice as likely to have their website associated as trustworthy and secure than businesses with other common commercial domain names,” Ms Sinclair said.

Rebecca Day opened her own chocolate business, The Cheeky Chocolate Queen, 11 years ago. She has a store in South Adelaide and an online shop.

“In 2019 I changed my website domain to *com.au* after being advised that it quickly shows customers my business is Australian. I focused on building my online presence and now my business reaches chocolate-lovers around the country, with online purchases making up 40 percent of total sales,” Ms Day said.

“Being visible online has been especially important during the current pandemic and thankfully, my customers have continued to support me. I’ve even connected with new customers who are consciously seeking out Australian businesses – this was particularly obvious at Easter.”

The COVID-19 restrictions have also seen growth in new businesses, with recent research from Dynata finding one in 25 Australians has started a side-hustle during lockdown.

Pointing to a trend among some new Australian business owners to opt out of websites in favour of building their business on social channels, Ms Sinclair offers some advice.

“Our research found Australians are significantly less likely to buy direct from social media if a business does not have a website. Building a website with a *com.au* domain name and adopting a *com.au* email address are two ways to build an online presence that enhances a social media marketing strategy. Australian consumers are telling us they prefer buying from websites,” Ms Sinclair said.

“Countless hours go into setting up and running a business, so make sure you don’t overlook something as simple as choosing the right domain name.”

Businesses can find a trusted *com.au* domain name in seconds by visiting www.getyour.com.au.

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Note to editors:

This research was undertaken by Pureprofile on behalf of auDA. The research took place in August 2020 and was completed on 17 August. 1,003 Australian-based respondents aged 18+ completed the survey and they were proportionally spread across ACT (1%), NSW (31%), NT (1%), QLD (20%), SA (7%), TAS (2%), VIC (26%) and WA (11%).

Insights from research:

Question: Before the coronavirus (COVID-19) situation started, how important was it to you to support Australian businesses when shopping online?

Very Important	21%
Important	31%
Moderately Important	30%
Slightly Important	11%
Not Important	7%

Question: Currently, how important is it to you to support Australian businesses when shopping online?

Very Important	37%
Important	33%
Moderately Important	19%
Slightly Important	6%
Not Important	5%

Question: Do you associate any of the following domain name extensions with local (Australian) or overseas businesses?

	Australian	Overseas (please specify country)	I don't associate this domain name extension with a country
.com	21%	47%	32%
.co	11%	48%	40%
.net	18%	37%	46%
.com.au	92%	2%	7%
.net.au	87%	3%	10%

Question: How trustworthy are websites with these domain name extensions to you?

	<i>Strongly trusted</i>	<i>Trusted</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Distrusted</i>	<i>Strongly distrusted</i>	<i>Don't know</i>
.com	5%	24%	56%	5%	1%	8%
.co	2%	10%	52%	17%	3%	16%
.net	2%	15%	60%	9%	1%	12%
.com.au	19%	46%	28%	1%	0%	5%
.gov.au	42%	40%	12%	1%	1%	5%
.net.au	11%	38%	39%	3%	1%	8%
.org.au	23%	42%	25%	2%	1%	7%
.edu.au	34%	41%	17%	1%	1%	6%

Question: Do you associate any of the following attributes with a particular domain name extension?

	<i>Australian</i>	<i>Secure</i>	<i>Used for spam</i>	<i>Global</i>	<i>Transparent</i>
.com	9%	12%	12%	75%	9%
.co	4%	5%	37%	55%	9%
.net	8%	9%	21%	65%	9%
.com.au	88%	21%	3%	5%	10%
.gov.au	85%	46%	1%	4%	15%
.net.au	81%	16%	7%	9%	9%
.org.au	81%	27%	3%	8%	14%
.edu.au	83%	36%	2%	4%	15%

Question: When shopping online, how do you most commonly identify if a business unfamiliar to you is Australian?

I look for the com.au domain name extension	71%
I locate the contact details and identify if the phone number or address is Australian	46%
I identify if the business mentions it is an Australian-owned business	38%
I locate the business on social media and use information on the business profile to work out if it is Australian	20%
I get in contact with the business via phone or email and ask if it is Australian	5%
I have never tried to identify if an online business is Australian	14%

Question: Some Australian businesses have no website and sell goods or services via social media only. How likely are you to buy from a business via social media pages if it has no website?

Extremely unlikely	28%
Unlikely	29%
Neutral	30%
Likely	11%
Extremely likely	2%

About auDA:

.au Domain Administration Limited (auDA) is a not-for-profit organisation that works with a range of stakeholders including industry, government and the Australian and International community to develop the rules for and administer the .au country code Top Level Domain (ccTLD). The .au ccTLD is a key to part of Australia's digital infrastructure, and auDA is endorsed by the Australian Government, and has an agreement with the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), to ensure that the .au domain namespace is a secure, reliable and trusted Australian public asset for all Internet users.