



UserInsight.



WHOIS Consumer Trust Research

In-Depth Interviews – September 12 & 13, 2011

Project Background

User Insight, in conjunction with ICANN, conducted In-Depth Interviews in Atlanta, GA with 20 Participants on September 12 & 13, 2011.

User testing was conducted on a retail gardening website, as well as the WHOIS website.

<http://www.directgardening.com/>

<http://www.whois.net/>

Project Goals

- Utilize in-depth interviews to understand consumers' perceptions, concerns, and overall trust for websites
- Determine awareness and understanding of WHOIS
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of WHOIS policy and its implementation as it relates to promoting consumer trust
- Determine similarities across countries as well as distinct differences as result of unique cultures and perspectives
- Gather feedback on Users' experience of finding WHOIS, their understanding of the content provided, and how they utilize the information
- Utilize feedback to inform the creation of a quantitative survey

User Profiles



20 Total Users

8 Males

12 Females

All use the Internet and are comfortable making purchases online

3 Users 18–24 years 2 Users 35–39 years
4 Users 25–29 years 7 Users 40–49 years
2 Users 30–34 years 2 User 50–56 years

11 out of 20 do not own a website domain

12 out of 20 have concerns about websites they have visited in the past

Countries Represented



Discussion Guide

Part 1: Background & Context

- Create a conducive environment where respondents willingly cooperate on a task and share their thoughts, insights, and impressions with one another and the moderator.

Part 2: Internet Security and Sharing Personal Information

- Respondents complete an individual questionnaire covering the following topics:
 - ▶ Internet security
 - ▶ Sharing specific personal information
 - ▶ Knowledge of resources, including national and international organizations that help make the Internet safer
 - ▶ Participation in social media
 - ▶ Website domain ownership.
- Respondents discuss answers in dyad to help set the stage for a series of tasks over the next 60 minutes.

Part 3: Attempt to Resolve Unfulfilled Order

- Respondents work to resolve an unfulfilled Internet order for nursery plants.

Part 4: Uncover Owner of Website

- Respondents work together to find as much information about the owner of the Internet site and who registered this particular business domain.

Part 5: Respondents use WHOIS to Find the Owner of Website

- Respondents work together to find the WHOIS website and use the website as a resource to find the owner of the website.

Project Lifecycle

Preparation



Planning Meeting



Recruiting



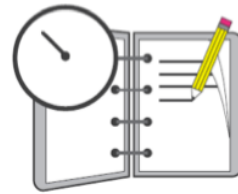
Discussion Guide
Development



Research



In-Depth Interviews



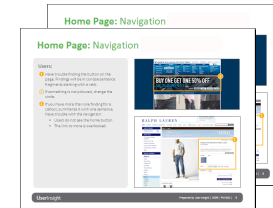
Recording & Notes



Synthesis



Recap Meeting



Reporting/Develop
Quantitative
Questionnaire

Major Findings: Website Trust

- Users' trust in a website is enhanced when they find familiar logos and signage when visiting e-commerce sites (i.e., VeriSign, BBB, etc.)
- Websites that exhibit user-centered design encourage trust, particularly simple navigation, easy to find information, contact details, and overall aesthetics
- Users prefer website addresses ending in .com, believing they are more trustworthy
 - When asked about .net, Users assume the registrant was not able to get the .com address and expect the site to be inferior
- Users do not think that country code top-level domains are more trustworthy than .com

Major Findings: WHOIS Awareness

- Overall, awareness of WHOIS is low. When asked to find a website domain owner, most Users do not think to utilize the WHOIS site
- Some Users recognize the name “WHOIS,” but are not aware of what service or value WHOIS provides
- Current domain owners use the most familiar domain register provider to search for a domain owner rather than the WHOIS website (i.e., GoDaddy, Network Solutions)
- Those who no longer maintain a website do not feel they need their own personal website because social media websites allow them to share information easily

Major Findings: Domain Provider Findability

- Users without domain names and who are unfamiliar with WHOIS use a variety of strategies to find domain owners
 - By utilizing Google (Maps, Search), Facebook and User-generated reviews about the websites (Forums), Users are able to track down information they find credible and actionable
- Current domain owners are successful in finding the domain owner through their preferred domain register provider.

Major Findings: WHOIS Usability Issues

- Users do not understand the information they find on domain owners and how to use this information due to confusing terminology and formatting
- They overlook pertinent domain owner information because it is underneath Ads for Available and Premium domains

The image features a large, light gray, semi-circular graphic at the top. Below it, the text "UserInsight." is written in a green, sans-serif font, followed by a vertical line and the words "Cultural Differences" in a larger, bold, green, sans-serif font. The background is white with light gray curved shapes at the top and bottom.

UserInsight. | **Cultural Differences**

Cultural Differences: Australia & China



“We have to order online all the time in Australia. We have the same ‘rights’ as America; you’ll find a lot of our regulatory issues are the same in Australia as US, we adopt US policies”



• “No problem to put in personal information, I am comfortable with sharing information online. There are no secrets on the Internet”



• “I don’t know who to talk to in China. My brother won’t even do bank transactions online, it’s not safe”



• “There’s no way to ‘police’ Internet usage”



• “You don’t have to go far; It’s better to shop in person – you don’t have to go online”



• “Also, shipping is problem [shopping online]. It’s about education – in rural areas, there’s no tracking system”

Cultural Differences: Argentina & Brazil

- **Trust:**



“I think being from Argentina and Brazil we don't trust a lot (Argentina & Brazil)”



“I had to trust and let my guard down a little in my neighborhood coming to the US”



- “I noticed that Americans are more trustworthy. I would be more skeptical in Argentina”



Purchasing:



“We get ripped off easily when buying things; I approach transactions with concern”



“I feel comfortable buying products online in Brazil and having them delivered, if I lived in Brazil”

- “In Argentina, it depends. Maybe if someone already gave me a good experience with the website. But I would be at home if it was delivered;

Cultural Differences: France & Spain

- **Purchasing:**



“It’s no good to buy online in Spain because you have to wait so long”



“My sibling lives in Spain; One doesn’t buy anything online”



“The French place a high value in personal relationships, prefer to shop in person, not online”



“I try not to have any automatic charges unless I know how much it’s going to be”



“Buying music from an Argentinian website, I was nervous until someone told me word of mouth to make me feel comfortable”

Cultural Differences: South Africa

- **Better Business Bureau:**



- “South Africa has a similar group – the return policies here (US) exceed the return policies in South Africa”

- **Reviews:**



- “It is not easy to get reviews in South Africa; In the US, people review more”

- **Bandwidth & Security:**



- “We don’t have free wireless in South Africa, bandwidth is difficult”



- “I have South African customers and they are paranoid because the level of security in South Africa is bad”

Cultural Differences: South Africa (Cont)

- **Obtaining a domain:**



“Here you can have a domain name in five minutes but South Africa is highly controlled and it is difficult to get or even change a domain”

- **Purchasing & Tracking:**



“Buying in South Africa is final with certain companies”



• “I do not fear too much – I do buy things in South Africa because sending things from this country (US) is a pain with customs, it’s better to use a South African site when I buy a gift for my mum”



• “Tracking purchases is important, otherwise it will be taken if you can’t track it”



“If you want to send something to Africa it’s best to get it to you and then send it yourself and track it; if you leave anything outside your house in South Africa it would be stolen, so you should get a signature”

The image features a large, light gray, semi-circular graphic at the top. Below it, the text "UserInsight." is written in a green, sans-serif font, followed by a vertical line and the words "Detailed Findings" in a larger, bold, green, sans-serif font. The background is white with light gray curved shapes at the top and bottom.

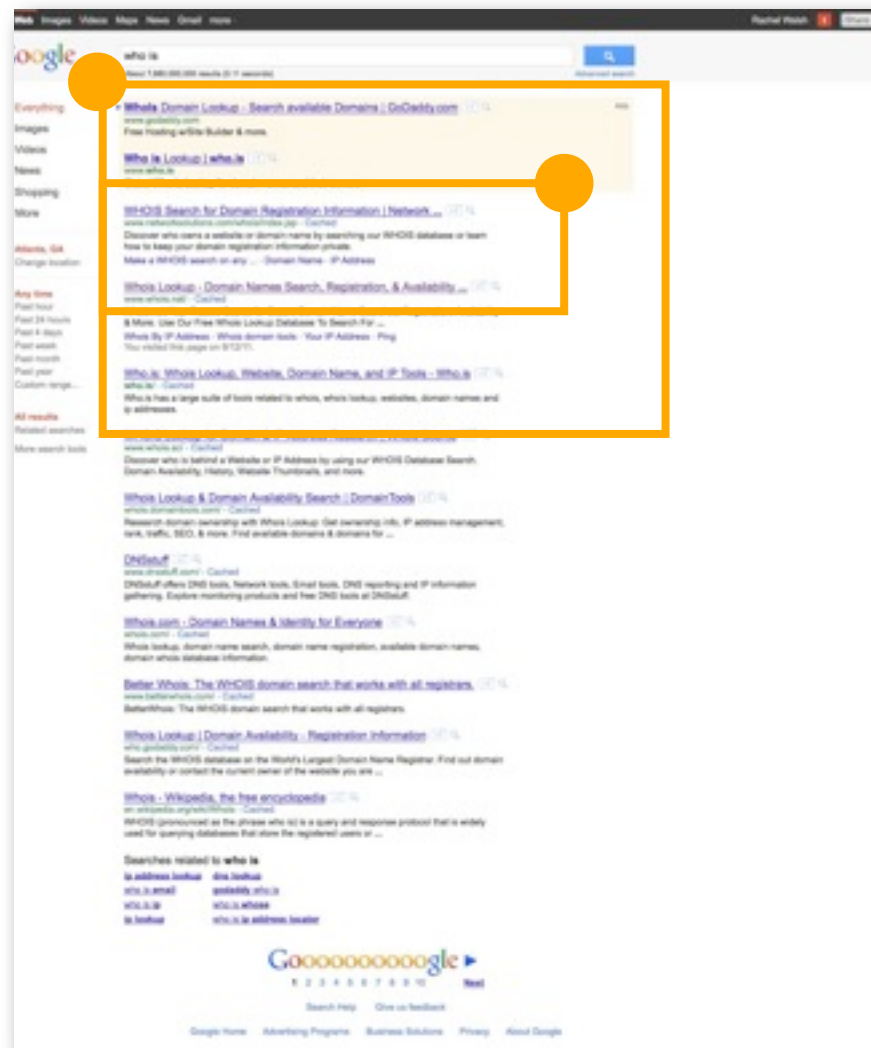
UserInsight. | **Detailed Findings**

Google Search for WHOIS

Users:



- 1 who do not own their own domain name, utilize search engines to look up information about WHOIS
 - Users find a number of site links to click on:
 - www.godaddy.com
 - www.who.is
 - www.networksolutions.com
 - www.whois.net
- 2 are unclear about which link to choose based on the search results

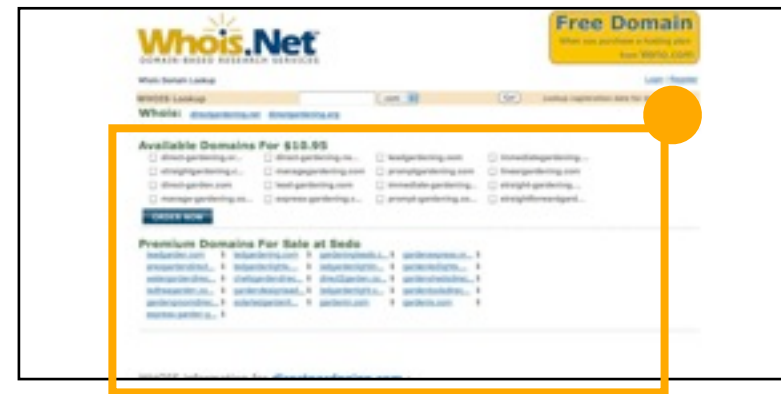


WHOIS.net

Users:



- 1 are confused by advertising and messaging on WHOIS.net search and results pages
- 2 overlook content below the fold
 - Users struggle to find helpful information and do not understand what the content is telling them to do (go to Network Solutions and perform a domain owner search)
 - Users do not think to copy and paste the link at the bottom of the text to get to the Network Solutions website



WHOIS Results

Users:



- ① struggle with the terminology on the domain registrant information page
 - Users mistake “Registrar” as the website owner, in this case, thinking Network Solutions owns the website

○ No specific corresponding call out

The screenshot shows the InterNIC Whois Search Results page. At the top, there are navigation links for Home, Registers, FAQ, and Whois. The main heading is "Whois Search Results". Below this, there is a search bar and a list of search criteria: Domain (selected), Registrar, and Nameserver. The search results for the domain DIRECTWARDENING.COM are displayed, including the Registrar (NETWORK SOLUTIONS, LLC), Name Servers, and various dates. A notice at the bottom of the page states: "This page last updated 01/04/2005".

Results on Network Solutions

Users:



- 1 appreciate level of detail of the content on this page (e.g., the registrant's name)
 - This format and presentation is the most successful

WHOIS Results for directgardening.com

Available domain names similar to directgardening.com

Available Domains	Available Domains	Premium Resale Domains
<input type="checkbox"/> directgardening.net	<input type="checkbox"/> netdirectgardening.com	<input type="checkbox"/> directgardening.com \$1,000
<input type="checkbox"/> directgardening.us	<input type="checkbox"/> usdirectgardening.com	<input type="checkbox"/> directgardening.com \$999
<input type="checkbox"/> directgardening.eu	<input type="checkbox"/> euirectgardening.com	<input type="checkbox"/> directgardening.com \$999
<input type="checkbox"/> directgardening.info	<input type="checkbox"/> infoirectgardening.com	<input type="checkbox"/> directgardening.com \$999

directgardening.com
is this your domain name? [View Details](#)

Current Registrar: NETWORK SOLUTIONS, LLC
IP Address: 192.178.25.248 & 192.178.25.249
Registrar Type: Standard
Domain Status: OK
Last Renewal: 2011-06-24
Website Status: Active

Administrative Contact: "Technical Contact"
Name: "Nancy"
Company: Network Solutions, LLC
Address: 14000 Woodloch Forest Dr
Suite C
Scottsdale, AZ 85260-4001
US
Phone: 480-485-4040
Fax: 480-485-4040

Recent updates on 03 Dec 2011
Record created on 03 Dec 1999
Database last updated on 24 Jun 2011

Domain expires in 169d 00h 00m

GOING ONCE, GOING TWICE, SOLD!
Domain name you want expiring soon?
Get more & could be yours!
Network Solutions, LLC
Network Solutions, LLC
Network Solutions, LLC
Network Solutions, LLC

Member with Network Solutions
[Affiliate Program](#) | [Reseller Program](#) | [Refer a Friend](#)

Contact Us | Follow Us: [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)



UserInsight. | **Next Steps**

Quantitative Survey

Demographics

- Gender
- Age
- Job Class (White, Blue, Pink)
- Experience with Domain registration

Internet Usage Habits

- Reporting current activities you do online (e-commerce, use of social media, scholarly research etc.)
- Self identified level of expertise (we could analyze by this)

Preferred method of payment online

- Paypal
- COD
- Visa/AMEX

Comfort in sharing

- Personal Info
- Credit Card and other banking info
- Ideological statements
- Photos of children and family

Rank elements that make a website secure, this list would include but is not limited to:

- Visual Design (the website looks up to date)
- Endorsements (VeriSign, Better Business Bureau, etc.)
- Trusted Brand or Company
- User Generated Content (reviews, etc.)

Ask users when faced with a fraudulent website which methods would they use 1st, 2nd 3rd etc. (randomize list)

- Look for contact information on the site (phone, address, email and/or chat)
- Google search of domain name
- Google search of user reviews
- A database of Web Registrants

Ask users to use [WHOIS.net](#) and find who owns [xyz.com](#) (an exemplar site that is global and consistent across nations)

- Ease in finding this information
- Trust in this information
- Visual Design / Style rating

Are users aware of the existence of [WHOIS.net](#) before they participated in this survey?

Thank you and Exit

The logo for UserInsight, featuring the word "UserInsight." in a green, sans-serif font. The "U" is significantly larger than the other letters. The background of the slide features large, light gray curved shapes that frame the central text.

UserInsight.

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