How to Contact the Owner of a Domain with WHOIS and Website Contacts Products

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The Internet is one giant marketplace. If you are looking for a software-as-a-service (SaaS) option that you can use for your department, a simple Google search will give you dozens of them. Meanwhile, if you need someone to promote your business, the Internet can suggest several influencers depending on your niche. Once you find a company or person that matches your requirements, all of you have to do next is to contact the domain owner or website representative(s).

Contacting them may be easy since chatbots or contact forms are always available. But how can you connect with the owners of hundreds or thousands of domains without going through a chatbot or waiting for someone to answer the customer service line in each and every case? To help you, we explored four different ways to contact the owner of a domain.

4 Ways to Contact a Domain Owner

Let's say that an established software company developed a new hotel management system. Aside from partnering with software review sites in the sector, it also wants to tap travel bloggers to subtly market the app since it knows that hotels also look at travel blogs. How can the new company contact the owners of travel websites?

The first thing the business needs is to create a list of travel blogs or websites. Once it has the domain names, it can use any of these four ways to retrieve the contact details of a domain owner.

Option #1: Find Domain Owners' Contact Information via ICANN Lookup

A reliable source of domain owner's contact information is the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). It's an organization that supervises the assignment of the domain names and IP addresses on the Internet. Domain registrars such as GoDaddy, BlueHost, and NameCheap need ICANN accreditation before operating. These registrars are also required to collect the contact details of all registrants, which get stored in WHOIS databases.

To retrieve the contact points of a domain owner via ICANN, you can use ICANN Lookup.

However, as you will see, it has become hard to get personal details that way, notably due to the use of domain privacy services and the implementation of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) restricting the disclosure of personal information. Nonetheless, a few options are available to get in contact with the domain owner. Let us illustrate that.

In the search box, type the domain name and click on the Lookup button. For illustration purposes, we used a random travel website, theplanetd[.]com, and ran the domain on ICANN Lookup.

As is shown in the screenshot below, details will be redacted for privacy as expected. But if you scroll further down, you would also see the registrar's contact details, which could be useful information.

Domain Information

Name: THEPLANETD.COM

Registry Domain ID: 1353539660_DOMAIN_COM-VRSN

Domain Status:

clientTransferProhibited

Nameservers:
KATE.NS.CLOUDFLARE.COM
PETE.NS.CLOUDFLARE.COM

Dates

Registry Expiration: 2020-12-12 18:31:12 UTC

Created: 2007-12-12 18:31:12 UTC

Registrar Information

Name: NameCheap, Inc.

IANA ID: 1068

Abuse Contact Email: abuse@namecheap.com

Abuse Contact Phone: tel:+1.6613102107

Even though the registrar's contact details are meant for reporting abuse, you may try to ask the registrar how to contact the owner of a domain. You can explain why you need to get in touch with the registrant so the registrar can either forward your email to the registrant or give you the domain owner's contact details.

Most privacy regulations, such as GDPR, allow contact information sharing as long as the owner gives his or her consent. Thus, the registrar can give you the contact details of a domain owner as long as they are allowed to do so. But there is no guarantee that the registrar would do this, and all you can do is give it a try.

There are also instances when ICANN Lookup would return the privacy-protected registrant details, as in the case of amateurtraveler[.]com.

Contact Information

Registrant:

Name: Contact Privacy Inc. Customer 0134927258

Organization: Contact Privacy Inc. Customer 0134927258

Email: AMATEURTRAVELER.COM@contactprivacy.com

Mailing Address: 96 Mowat Ave, Toronto, ON, M6K 3M1, CA

Technical:

Name: Contact Privacy Inc. Customer 0134927258

Organization: Contact Privacy Inc. Customer 0134927258

Email: AMATEURTRAVELER.COM@contactprivacy.com

Mailing Address: 96 Mowat Ave, Toronto, ON, M6K 3M1, CA

Billing:

Name: Contact Privacy Inc. Customer 0134927258

Organization: Contact Privacy Inc. Customer 0134927258

Email: AMATEURTRAVELER.COM@contactprivacy.com

Mailing Address: 96 Mowat Ave, Toronto, ON, M6K 3M1, CA

While this contact information belongs to the privacy protection service provider, you are closer to learning how to contact a domain owner. For domains protected by Contact Privacy Inc., such as

amateurtraveler[.]com, you can use their online portal to contact the owner of the domain.

Otherwise, you can use the other options to learn how to contact a domain owner.

Option #2: Third-Party WHOIS Database Lookup and WHOIS History

A third-party WHOIS lookup solution retrieves domain information from data provider's WHOIS database like ours to tell you how to contact a domain owner. Our products come in the form of a web-based tool or an integrable API.

Either way, a WHOIS database lookup returns the domain name's registrar, registrant, administrative, billing, and technical contact details—or it's redacted equivalent. Depending on the data provided by the domain owner, you could retrieve his or her postal address and email address and telephone number.

For the sample domain name theplanetd[.]com, WHOIS Lookup returned more or less the same web contact information as shown earlier. Although WHOISGuard protected the WHOIS registrant details, the result still shows telephone numbers and an email address that you can contact.

```
      </registrant>
      <administrativeContact>
        <name>WhoisGuard Protected</name>
        <organization>WhoisGuard, Inc.</organization>
        <street1>P.O. Box 0823-03411</street1>
        <city>Panama</city>
        <state>Panama</state>
        <country>PANAMA</country>
        <countryCode>PA</countryCode>
        <email>6b32fb5305834295ab57561bb411364f.protect@whoisguard.com</email>
        <telephone>5078365503</telephone>
        <fax>5117057182</fax>
        <rawText>Admin Name: WhoisGuard Protected
Admin Organization: WhoisGuard, Inc.
Admin Street: P.O. Box 0823-03411
Admin City: Panama
Admin State/Province: Panama
Admin Country: PA
Admin Phone: +507.8365503
Admin Fax: +51.17057182
Admin Email: 6b32fb5305834295ab57561bb411364f.protect@whoisguard.com</rawText>
```

At this point, you have two options—contact the owner of the domain through the privacy protection service or dig into the domain's WHOIS history to see the registration details before redaction.

For the domain amateurtraveler[.]com, for example, WHOIS History Search reveals the owner's contact details (which we kept hidden except for the first letter of each field) before he employed the services of Contact Privacy Inc.

Registrant Contact

Registrant Name: C█████████████ ›

Registrant Organization: A████████████ ›

Registrant Street: 6████████████ ›

Registrant City: S███████ ›

Registrant State/Province: C██ ›

Registrant Postal Code: 9█████ ›

Registrant Country: U████████ ›

Registrant Email: c███████████████████ ›

Registrant Phone: 1████████ ›

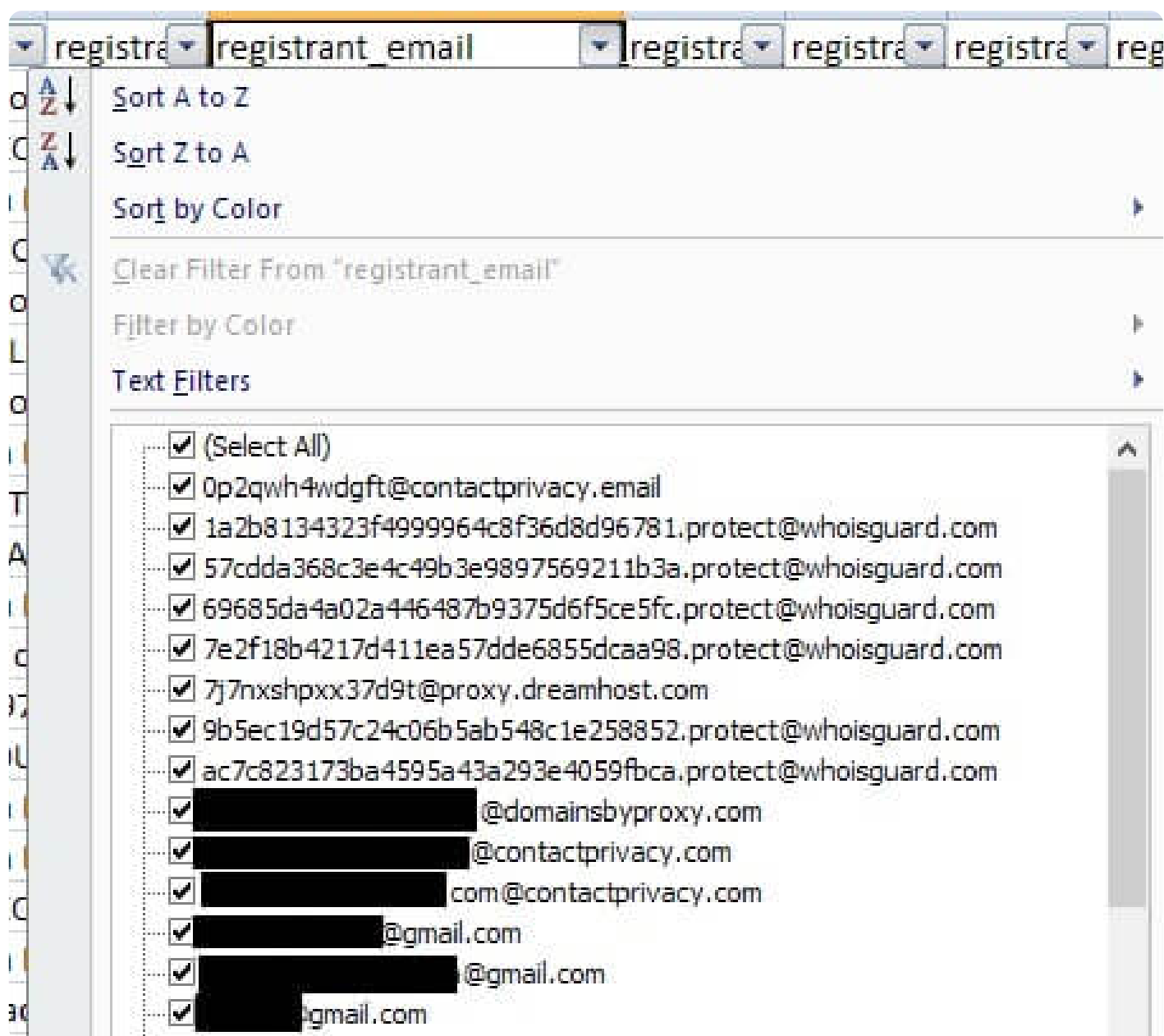**Option #3: Bulk WHOIS Lookup and API**

If you need the web contacts of several domain names, a bulk WHOIS database lookup can come in handy. Our bulk WHOIS database lookup solutions also come in two consumption models?a web-based service and an API.

When not redacted, you can retrieve the contact details of thousands of domain names at a time, which helps build your marketing contact list, especially when you already have target websites in mind. Aside from the registrar and registrant contact information, you would also see other

relevant WHOIS record details such as domain age, expiration date, WHOIS server, and nameserver.

In our hypothetical scenario, the hotel management software company could create a list of travel blogs and websites that it wants to collaborate with. It can then upload the file in CSV format on Bulk WHOIS Lookup.

The screenshot below was taken from the Bulk WHOIS Lookup sample we ran, and it shows the column labeled "Registrant Email."

As you can see, some registrants can be immediately contacted as their email addresses are not privacy-protected. For those registrants with redacted information, it is still possible to get in contact with the domain owners via the privacy service's online portal (as in the case of ContactPrivacy) or by sending a message to an alternative email address, which will then be forwarded to the actual email address provided at the time of domain registration. The best way to get in touch with domain owners who kept their info private varies according to the policies of each

domain privacy service provider.

Alternatively, you may also combine your bulk WHOIS queries with a WHOIS history search to retrieve the domain owner's contact details before it was redacted, as illustrated in the previous section.

Option #4: Rely on Website Contacts Products for Domain Owners' Contact Details and More

ICANN Lookup, WHOIS Lookup and API, and Bulk WHOIS Lookup and API rely on the contact information that registrants provided when they registered their domains.

Another method for obtaining web contacts relies on machine learning (ML) to gather the contact details of a domain owner. Unlike the first three approaches that retrieve data from WHOIS databases, our website contacts products obtain contact information from the websites' contents too. They come in two different consumption models—a database and an API.

Regardless of which consumption model you use, a website contacts product can help you build a marketing contact list. It already categorized millions of sites based on their content and meta tags.

In our scenario, the software company can then use the database or API to retrieve the domain owners' contact information. The products return the following details when available:

- Company name

- Meta description

- Email address

- Phone number

- Facebook account link

- Instagram account link

- LinkedIn account link

- Twitter account link

To illustrate, we used Website Contacts API to retrieve the contact details of the travel website blancotravels[.]com:

- **Email address:** info@blancotravels[.]com

- **Phone number:** 317-399-4020

- **Facebook:** http[:]//www[.]facebook[.]com/blancotravels

- **Instagram:** https[:]//instagram[.]com/blancotravelsllc

```
{
    "callHours": "",
    "description": "",
    "phoneNumber": "317-399-4020"
}
],
"postalAddresses": [],
"socialLinks": {
    "facebook": "http://www.facebook.com/blancotravels",
    "instagram": "https://instagram.com/blancotravelsllc",
    "linkedIn": "",
    "twitter": ""
},
"websiteResponded": true
}
```

We also retrieved the contact details of theplanetd[.]com, the travel blog that we ran earlier on ICANN Lookup and our WHOIS database lookup tool:

- **Facebook:** https[:]//www[.]facebook[.]com/ThePlanetD

- **Instagram:** https[:]//instagram[.]com/theplanetd/

- **Twitter:** https[:]//twitter[.]com/theplanetd

theplanetd.com

Search by **Domain name**

```
------ - LJ,
"meta": {
  "description": "Adventure travel blog that features travel advice
  "title": "Adventure Travel Blog - The Planet D"
},
"phones": [],
"postalAddresses": [],
"socialLinks": {
  "facebook": "https://www.facebook.com/ThePlanetD",
  "instagram": "https://instagram.com/theplanetd/",
  "linkedIn": "",
  "twitter": "https://twitter.com/theplanetd"
},
"websiteResponded": true
}
```

Decoded format

Website Contacts API culls information from the Website Contacts & Categorization Database. You also have the option to download the database and customize it according to your needs. The database is useful if you want to expand your list of target websites, as it already classified domains into different categories. Currently, the groups available are:

- Arts and Entertainment

- Autos and Vehicles

- Beauty and Fitness

- Books and Literature

- Business and Industry

- Career and Education

- Computer and Electronics

- Finance

- Food and Drink

- Gambling

- Games

- Health

- Home and Garden

- Internet and Telecom

- Law and Government

- News and Media

- People and Society

- Pets and Animals

- Recreation and Hobbies

- Reference

- Science

- Shopping

- Sports

- Travel

- Adult

The hotel management system provider looking to collaborate with travel websites, for instance, can filter the database to show only the domain names under the Travel category. It can then obtain the contact details of the domain owners from the other columns on the database.

![WhoisXMLAPI logo]

e ▼ | category[0]

A→Z ↓	**S**ort A to Z
Z→A ↓	**S**ort Z to A
	Sort by Color ▶
▽	**C**lear Filter From "category[0]"
	Filter by Color ▶
	Text **F**ilters ▶

☐ Internet and Telecom ⌃
☐ News and Media
☐ People and Society
☐ Pets and Animals
☐ Recreation and Hobbies
☐ Reference
☐ Shopping
☐ Sports
☑ **Travel**

Note that a domain may have up to three categories, so users can also filter the other columns for the remaining categories.

Website contacts products can help individuals and companies alike contact the owners of domains for whatever purpose. They may want to tap the owner to participate in a marketing campaign, negotiate the sale of the domain, or avail of the vendor's products or services.

Other Use Cases for Website Contacts Products

Aside from telling users how to contact the owner of a domain, Website Contacts API and its database counterpart can also support other vital business processes. It can help generate leads, allow researchers to find out more about a market, enable marketers to learn about their competitors, and aid organizations in assessing third-party risks.

Use Case #1: Generate Leads

Web contacts products can help our hypothetical hotel management system provider create a stronger marketing strategy. The company can use the tool to get the contact information of hotels, effectively enabling its marketing and sales teams to jumpstart lead generation.

For instance, users can immediately obtain the contact details of Grand Solmar Resorts with one API call. They can add the hotel's phone number and social media account details to their list of prospects.

grandsolmarmembers.com

Search by **Domain name**

      "description": "",
      "title": "SOLMAR HOTELS & RESORTS"
    },
    "phones": [
      {
        "callHours": "",
        "description": "",
        "phoneNumber": "1 866 978 2578"
      }
    ],
    "postalAddresses": [],
    "socialLinks": {
      "facebook": "https://www.facebook.com/SolmarResorts",
      "instagram": "http://instagram.com/solmarresorts",
      "linkedIn": "",

Decoded format

The company can also obtain a list of hotels owned by another organization with the help of Website Contacts API. When you look up dorsetsquarehotel[.]co[.]uk, for instance, you would get a list of the hotels it owns.

- The Whitby Hotel

- The Soho Hotel

- Haymarket Hotel

- Ham Yard Hotel

- Firmdale Hotels

- Fanny Royol

- Crosby Street Hotel

- Charlotte Street Hotel

Aside from this, you can also get a list of email addresses and phone numbers with Website Contacts & Categorization Database. The screenshot below shows some of Dorset Square Hotel's email addresses and phone numbers from the database. A Website Contacts API call can also

give all these details.

Email	Phone
██████████p@gmail.com	305 ████████
dorset@firmdale.com	888 ████████
thepottingshed@firmdale.com	646 ████████
reservations@dorsetsquarehotel.co	212 ████████
██████████@firmdale.com	212 ████████
pr@firmdale.com	44 ████████
██████████@firmdale.com	44 ████████
sales@firmdale.com	44 ████████
██████████@firmdale.com	44 ████████
██████████@firmdale.com	44 ████████
██████████e@firmdale.com	44 ████████
██████████x@firmdale.com	44 ████████
██████████l@firmdale.com	44 ████████
design@firmdale.com	44 ████████
██████████@firmdale.com	44 ████████
accounts@firmdale.com	44 ████████
crosby@firmdale.com	44 ████████
events@crosbystreethotel.com	44 ████████
concierge@crosbystreethotel.com	44 ████████
bar@crosbystreethotel.com	44 ████████

Use Case #2: Third-Party Risk Assessment

Website contacts products can also help with background checks on potential vendors, suppliers, partners, and even clients. Third-party risk assessment is a critical business process as most companies reportedly suffered a data breach because of a stakeholder compromise.

Aside from relying on domain intelligence, checking for third-party risks and avoiding fraud is also possible by confirming the company's contact information.

When you are on the lookout for professional photographers for your advertising and marketing portfolio, you want to make sure that the person or agency is trustworthy.

Take, for example, a photographer who said she is Esther from estherphotography[.]com. She gives you the phone number 311-520-2263 and email address estherphotography@gmail[.]com. You check the website and the artist's portfolio, and you're impressed. But before sealing the deal, you decide to use Website Contacts API to do a background check and find that the domain estherphotography[.]com has the following contact details:

- **Phone number:** 310-384-6372

- **Email address:** esther@estherphotography[.]com

- **Facebook:** https[:]//www[.]facebook[.]com/esthercastingandphotography

- **Instagram:** http[:]//instagram[.]com/esthercasting

- **Twitter:** http[:]//twitter[.]com/esthercasting

With the help of Website Contacts API, you found a different email address than the one you have been interacting with. While it might still be that Esther is the person behind both addresses, you might want to double-check to avoid dealing with an impostor.

Aside from the risk of dealing with an impostor, there are also other third-party risks. Note that

third-party vulnerabilities increased by 80.6% in 2019. So, regardless of the type of third party you're dealing with, it's best to investigate before finalizing any contracts or purchases.

Several options are available if you want to know how to contact the owner of a domain. We listed four of them in this post and provided illustrative examples. To recap, you can use any of these tools to obtain the contact details of a domain owner albeit with limitations in certain cases:

- ICANN Lookup

- WHOIS & WHOIS History Lookup and API

- Bulk WHOIS Lookup and API

- Website Contacts API or Website Contacts & Categorization Database

For more information on these our WHOIS and Website Contacts products, don't hesitate to contact us.