

On Becoming an e-Agent—Internet Vernacular

By Jo Becker, BA

The Internet is a great and massive thing. It is defined as an interconnected system of networks that links computers around the world and is comprised of both the World Wide Web (www) (AKA: Internet websites) and email.

Here's a quick primer on some distinctions between websites and email for those of you (or those you know) who can tend to get confused.

- Email addresses will ALWAYS include an "@" symbol
- Most web site addresses will NOT include an "@" symbol (unless, of course it is a very, very long and complex address, in which case it seems no rules apply)
- Both addresses typically end in ".com," or perhaps ".net," ".org," ".gov," etc.
- Email addresses NEVER include "http://" and/or "www."
- Web addresses will often include "http://" and/or "www." Whether one or both of these 'prefixes' is needed is a matter of trial and error.

Both email and web addresses have to be keyed in accurately or they won't work (IE: no typos or misspellings). The one exception to this is that very often capitalization doesn't matter.

Most often when someone asks for your address (assuming they're not asking for your postal address), they mean your email address and you'll want to give them the one with the "@" symbol. If you have a website address, you should give them that as well and ask them to visit your site!

As a side note, "http" stands for Hypertext Transfer Protocol and is used interchangeably with the acronym URL, which is short for Unique Resource Locator—both terms being pretty much Greek to most people. You needn't worry about that they mean, just know that they're equivalents and mean you want the address with the "http://" and/or the "www." (vs. the one with the "@" symbol).

Another source of confusion online is up- and downloading. You upload when you send information from your computer (say a picture of your kids, or a flyer for your new listing) to others via email or post it on a site. You download anytime you save a document (software, forms or documents, etc.) from an email message or a website to your computer. So uploading is sending a document from your computer to the world (so to speak). Consider downloading the reverse function; saving a document to your computer.

I hope this was a useful primer for some and a good refresher for others. If all of this seems too overwhelming, ask for help, but keep trying! Before long you will get the hang of it. In the meantime, *hang it there!*

Jo Becker has eight years of licensed real estate experience. As a former broker, she knows how important, and sometimes scary, technology and self-promotion can be. Jo has provided personalized one-on-one marketing consultation and computer software training to the industry since 2002.

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