

Registerfly Summary - Godaddy

Thursday, 12 July 2007

For those of you who are unfamiliar with what's happened with Registerfly and the transfer of domain names to GoDaddy, I wanted to post an update. There are some of you that may have landed on this site being somewhat confused about what is going on with Registerfly, GoDaddy, Enom, ICANN and all other parties involved in this domain name debacle that has turned the domain name industry on its ear. Please read below.

What's the deal with Registerfly?

First of all, for those of you who aren't familiar with Registerfly... Registerfly started out as a decent domain name registration company on the internet. Registerfly were resellers for Tucows as well as Enom (ICANN Accredited Registrars). Essentially, Registerfly purchased bulk domain buying rights from Accredited domain Registrars, marked them up a bit then sold them to the Registrant, (domain owner). What Registerfly provided was ease-of-use and crisp, clean front end management that far surpassed any other reseller or registrar on the internet. Registerfly also resold additional services from other vendors including web hosting, ssl certificates, email hosting and much more. During the failure of Registerfly, they somehow or other managed to purchase another ICANN Accredited Registrar, moving up the ladder in the food chain of the domain name game without actually going through the accreditation process. One of the biggest failures within the Registerfly company was the inability for domain owners to renew their domains. Even though you paid for a renewal, your domain was still set to expire and did and if the domain was valuable, it would be snapped up by another registrar such as Enom to taste the domain for traffic and profitability in their domain monetization program or was lost altogether to another registrant.

However, like many small businesses with partners and a handful of employees, they encountered infighting within the company that ultimately caused problems with their customer support and missing domains. Registerfly during this period of about two and a half years, caused the losses of thousands of domain names and many more thousands of dollars for their customers and their customers clients. The failure in this company was brushed under the rug for 2 years while more and more people from around the world continued to be effected by this company that was having personal problems within its (micro) management structure. That's when this site started to get busy and the victims of Registerfly started to get noticed and heard by the only organization that could do something about it... ICANN, (They provide domain registrar accreditation).

ICANN Finally Reacts

When ICANN was finally ready to deal with the situation, the losses suffered by domain owners was already out of control. They went to court and received a court order stripping Registerfly of their domain accreditation status and then ultimately tried to force Registerfly to hand over the data identifying the domains in their database as well as the owners of them. Registerfly was unwilling to cooperate so eventually ICANN was granted a court order for Registerfly to give up the data. Instead of working off the court order, ICANN, GoDaddy and Registerfly came up with a deal where GoDaddy would purchase the data and forcefully take control of all the domain names in Registerfly. This was a bulk transfer of all the domain names. The problem is that the data within Registerfly was corrupted and mixed up, much do to Registerfly themselves transferring domain names from their reseller accounts to their own system as a Registrar. Most of these domain names were listed as being owned by the officers of Registerfly and Administration contact as such. Registerfly was listed as the owner of the domain name within the Registries thus Registerfly being the only entity with accurate information on the true owner of the domain name. Registerfly did not act accordingly or efficiently.

GoDaddy to save the day?

The deal with GoDaddy looked sweet for many of us who were stuck at Registerfly however this didn't come with it's own issues as well. Several domain name extensions and country code extensions weren't supported in this so those domain names are now assumingly lost, stolen or re-registered after they expired and some priced with a hefty price tag. Another issue that people have had with the GoDaddy deal is the 60 day Transfer Prohibited policy in ICANN. This means that once their domain transferred to GoDaddy and for those who gained control over it, they could not transfer out of GoDaddy for 60 days. If the domain was set to expire then it forces the user to renew the name with GoDaddy which is why GoDaddy purchased the database from Registerfly.

NOTICE TO CONSUMERS.

THE INTERNET CORPORATION FOR
ASSIGNED NAMES AND NUMBERS - THE NON FOR PROFIT ENTITY THAT ADMINISTERS
THE INTERNET'S DOMAIN NAME SYSTEM, HAS ISSUED A NOTICE OF TERMINATION
OF THIS COMPANY'S ACCREDITATION TO SERVE AS AN INTERNET DOMAIN NAME
REGISTRAR.

PLEASE SEE WWW.ICANN.ORG FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

Registerfly today...

Today, Registerfly has big, bold letters on their website that is there due to a court order and above that it has a link to the explanation of it. It's a letter written by Robert O'Neill who claims to be the Operations Manager of Registerfly now. The note states:

RegisterFly.com was for 6 years a reseller of domain names for multiple different domain registrars. We used the backend and systems of our registrar partners to register and manage domain names through those six years. In January of 2006 we become operational as a registrar and registered names directly under our own accreditation. In May of 2007, we reached an agreement with another registrar to assume the management of some names in our portfolio that were under our own accreditation.

The notice that we are required to display (per a court order icann was granted) on our homepage can be misleading for a number of points

We did a bulk transfer of names that were under our accreditation to another registrar, hence we do not function as an ICANN accredited registrar

We are a reseller of domain names, the same as we have been for 6 years prior, this has not changed. We are NOT OUT OF BUSINESS as the message may imply to some

You can still purchase new domain names or transfer names. If you had a domain name that was part of the bulk transfer please contact your service provider to learn more.

Many of our valued customers have been with us for the past several

years and remain very loyal to RegisterFly.com. We sincerely appreciate your loyalty and rest assured we are working hard on enhancing our interfaces, offering more frequent promotions and bolstering customer service staff.

We hope this clarifies this notice and we sincerely look forward to your continued patronage - Robert O'Neill

While the above sounds real nice, it was written by a relatively new employee of Registerfly... maybe the only employee with Kevin Medina as the owner. While the above states that they are a reseller of domain names, many of these relationships were severed due to their inability to provide services. To our knowledge, their site is only available to take money and we aren't aware of anyone actually getting services they purchase including domain names. As far as loyal customers... there are none. They cost their loyal customers a lot of money, time and headaches. Registerfly is there but we believe it doesn't work just like it hasn't worked since late 2004.

This is a brief summary of the Registerfly situation for those of you who may be landing here without knowing what's going on. Soon we will be organizing the content of this site in an understandable fashion.

For those of you who come here often and have been involved in the community over the past couple years I must apologize for not updating the site in a while. Please understand that I'm very busy with other projects at the moment but will do my best to spend more time here. If anyone here would like to write articles relating to the domain name industry, please contact me . Your comments are welcomed.