

Use the right Web address

When the Web was in its infancy, there wasn't really that much stuff online. It didn't require the level of sophistication we need today.

One of the methods Web creators first used to sort out content was a prefix. WWW was one such prefix. There were also other prefixes for file transfers and others for e-mail.

These prefixes tell your Web browser what type of server it's connecting to. By now, we all know that WWW stands for World Wide Web. Typing in WWW tells your browser that you are connecting to a Web server.

However, as the Internet and related-technology evolved, prefixes became mostly unnecessary. Different types of servers didn't really matter that much anymore. One server can do a host of tasks.

But humans are creatures of habit, and the WWW stuck. So many Websites use both WWW and non-WWW addresses.

This caused a few discrepancies, though. **Search sites, for instance, would see these as two separate sites. That true even though the content was the same. That would have the unfortunate affect of diluting the content.**

Today, advances in search sites have made this a non-issue. **Search sites are now smart enough to know that both addresses have the same content.**

Additionally, most Websites use a forwarding strategy. This means that one domain will be used as the actual site and another domain will be used to forward users. So if a user types in wherever.com it will automatically take them to www.wherever.com.

Basically, this makes for a pretty simple solution to the question. It usually doesn't matter if a site address uses WWW or not. It's just a leftover from the early days of the Internet.

These days, it's a bit redundant to use WWW with a URL. Your browser can figure out what it's connecting to on its own.

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Kim Komando hosts the nation's largest talk radio show about consumer electronics, computers and the Internet. To get the podcast or find the station nearest you, visit: <http://www.komando.com/listen>. To subscribe to Kim's free e-mail newsletters, sign-up at: <http://www.komando.com/newsletters>.

However, you may run into a few sites where the WWW is necessary. It's pretty rare, but some sites require it. If you have trouble loading a site, try putting the WWW back in. Occasionally, this will fix the issue and route you to the correct site.

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