



CASE STUDY



Entertainment Studios, Inc.

Leading Independent Media Production and Distribution Company Leverages .tv Domain Name as a Catalyst for New Business Initiative



Entertainment Studios, Inc.

Founded in 1993 by current Chairman and CEO Byron Allen, Entertainment Studios, Inc. produces and distributes television programs, as well as selling related advertising. The Los Angeles, California headquartered company is the largest independent producer/distributor of first-run syndicated television programming for broadcast television stations in the country.

A constantly growing library of over 4,000 hours of wholly-owned content and a growing array of licensed titles is disseminated across a wide variety of distribution channels, including broadcast television stations, mobile and multimedia platforms, and the Internet.

+ The Pathway to Excellence Leads Directly to .tv

In keeping with a commitment to leadership and innovation, a recent agreement with telecommunications powerhouse Verizon Communications presented a unique opportunity for Entertainment Studios. Patrick Mahoney, Senior Vice President of Digital Media, explained, “When we signed the contract with Verizon to create six high-definition television networks, we knew we had the chance to create a new set of brands that would be immediately recognizable across all of our distribution platforms. So while television is still our primary platform, it certainly isn’t our only vehicle for distribution—we decided to name the network to correspond to an intuitive web address. A .tv domain name was the perfect vehicle to achieve this.”

He continued, “By creating an obvious pairing between each network and a self-describing Web domain name we were able to achieve a nice flow that facilitated an easy transition between the television channels, the Web-based properties, and our future expansion into mobile platforms. We calculated that not only did a .tv domain aftermarket make a lot of sense, but that it gave the extra benefit of a marketing tool without additional marketing costs for all of our alternative platforms.”

+ Hitching a Ride on the .tv Express

Mahoney and his colleagues at Entertainment Studios saw the rapidly escalating benefits of becoming part of the .tv phenomenon. Over half of the U.S. population use the Internet, and of those, 80 percent watch online video at least once a month—most importantly, the trend hasn’t showed any signs of slowing down (Source = eMarketer, December 2008).

Every day, new Web sites using the .tv domain name are coming online. While these sites represent multiple industries and foci, from MLB.tv to Vogue.tv to TNT.tv, they all have one thing in common—engaging online video content. Unquestionably, .tv domain names have established themselves as a global brand synonymous with Web-based rich media content.

The more traditional .com suffix was briefly considered, but it was felt that it would not convey the Studios’ heavy focus on video content. Entertainment Studios’ new high-definition (HD) networks are intuitively named cars.tv, pets.tv, comedy.tv, mydestination.tv, and recipe.tv, with the sixth, ES.tv, being Entertainment Studios’ own vehicle for providing the latest on entertainment news, variety shows, celebrity profiles, and superstars.



SOLUTION SUMMARY

Entertainment Studios, Inc. brands its new portfolio of high-definition channels using intuitive .tv domain names to highlight focus on quality video content distributed across television, Web-based, and mobile platforms.

Industry

- Media and entertainment

Challenges

- Create innovative branding strategy for launch of six new high-definition channels that reflect video-centric focus and availability across multiple platforms.
- Ensure that each channel name intuitively reflects its specific area of focus and can be immediately recognizable across all distribution platforms.
- Leverage unique position of outright ownership of content by maximizing distribution effectiveness and scope.

Solution

- VeriSign® Domain Name Services

Results

- New set of brands created using intuitive names, relevant across all distribution platforms.
- Use of .tv domain names for channels dramatically increasing traffic to Web properties, and gave the extra benefit of a marketing tool without additional marketing costs.
- Independent of platform, viewers immediately know that the site is focused on video-related content relevant to the topic declared in the domain name.

“We are certain that the approach of using .tv in the naming of our television networks will drive a significantly greater volume of traffic to our Web sites, and we’ve made a consummate investment in infrastructure to be able to deal with the anticipated volumes.”

Patrick Mahoney,
Senior Vice President of Digital Media,
Entertainment Studios, Inc.

+ .tv Clearly Conveys Intent, Independent of Platform

The company is one of the few full production studios that own all of its content outright. Mahoney expanded, “Traditionally there are significant, painstaking issues around content ownership and distribution rights—however, we own everything outright, in perpetuity. With the utilization of .tv domain names we are able to make all of our content viewable in the same format across any distribution platform—coupled with our ownership rights position, we can readily differentiate ourselves from the majority of other content producers and networks.”

Mahoney further commented, “We were very attracted to .tv domain names when we saw the ways in which people were interacting with our content becoming increasingly blurred as new technologies came into the marketplace, particularly broadband and mobile—so we were keen to reinforce the video-centric nature of each site, which is the core focus of our business. With the .tv label, our viewers, independent of their chosen platform, know that the site is focused on video-related content—it clearly is a very robust and rewarding strategy to pursue.”

Entertainment Studios’ belief in the power of .tv has given the company the confidence to register multiple additional domain names. Mahoney elaborated, “We are certain that the approach of using .tv in the naming of our television networks will drive a significantly greater volume of traffic to our Web sites, and we’ve made a consummate investment in infrastructure to be able to deal with the anticipated volumes.”

“We registered a number of .tv domain names and want to be a leader in creating a world where .tv is synonymous with an excellent video experience—that’s why we’ve acquired so many domain names. Our intent is to drive business success by developing quality content for each of these properties across all target genres.”

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00026925 02-02-2009