



CASE STUDY



Major League Baseball Advanced Media (MLBAM)

The .tv Domain Name is Compelling For All Of
MLBAM's Live Broadcast TV Services



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SOLUTION SUMMARY

In launching a unique TV service to baseball fans, MLB's interactive media and Internet company, MLB Advanced Media (MLBAM), needed an appropriate brand name and URL—it selected MLB.tv. Having seen over 800,000 fans subscribe to the MLB.tv broadcasts, MLBAM is assured of its success.

Industry

- Media

Challenges

- Creating a powerful brand name with an intuitive URL
- Finding a reliable, trustworthy registry for domain name resolution services

Solution

- VeriSign® Naming Services, operator of the .tv Domain Name Registry

Results

- The .tv domain name helps subscribers easily understand its focus on the delivery of live TV.
- VeriSign has consistently demonstrated its ability to deliver robust domain name resolution.
- MLBAM has created a strong brand with .tv—over 800,000 fans subscribe to MLB.tv broadcasts.

Since 1903, U.S. baseball's National League and the American League have had a joint organizational structure known as Major League Baseball (MLB). MLB effectively operates as a single entity, and as such it constitutes one of the predominant professional sports leagues in North America. The winning spirit of MLB teams makes fans keen to know everything they can about the game and players. MLB's interactive media and Internet company, MLB Advanced Media's (MLBAM) effective use of its Web sites to enable access to a wide array of communication services has been very successful at meeting this need.

Kristen Ferguson, vice president of marketing for MLBAM, described the organization's domain name strategy: "We're very focused on the MLB brand name, and we've owned the MLB.com URL since January 2001. Over time, our domain name strategy has become more formalized—we are big fans of always using the brand name as the destination URL whenever possible. For example, for each baseball team, we've purchased the appropriate domain name such as "nationals.com" for the Washington Nationals team. We believe in owning the URLs that fans are most likely to turn to first. To date, we have about 2,250 domain names in our portfolio."

+ Naming a Unique Service

In 2003, MLBAM was about to launch a unique video service—one which enables fans to watch live games online—and it needed an appropriate brand name and URL. "We wanted to select something that would reinforce the MLB branding but would also convey the interactive and innovative side of this new service," recalled Ferguson. "We were after a name that was short and sweet—the fewer letters you have to type in a Web address, the higher the accuracy of getting to the correct destination. We also wanted a name that fans would instantly recognize."

The Branding team brainstormed and researched different naming renditions—such as MLB.com/xxxx—emerging with MLB.tv as the clear favorite. "The general public is becoming more aware of Internet TV broadcasting and so the .tv domain is broadly known," noted Ferguson. "We knew that the MLB.tv domain name was available, it was a perfect fit for all our criteria, and it worked well as both a brand name and URL."

+ Comfort Knowing VeriSign is Behind the Scenes

MLBAM registered the new domain name through an independent registrar—a company that processes domain name registrations for Internet end-users, and then sends the necessary address information to a registry. In this case, the registry was operated by VeriSign, because it is the authoritative directory provider for all .com, .net, .cc, and .tv domain names. In turn, VeriSign works with registrants to help expand markets and increase renewals, and is committed to providing clients like MLB with the very best processes to establish and manage a recognized and secure presence on the Internet.



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"I associate the VeriSign name with security and stability, so the knowledge that it is behind the scenes ensuring the accurate resolution of our domain names makes me feel very comfortable."

Kristen Ferguson
Vice President of Marketing
MLBAM

The .tv Domain Name Registry that VeriSign® Naming Services operates is a large series of databases that instantly translate domain names into IP (Internet protocol) addresses, so that users can easily surf the web using simple domain names versus the complex numeric strings utilized by IP addressing conventions. VeriSign handles this type of translation about 18 billion times a day and has been doing so for eight years (as of 2006) with 100 percent accuracy. Ferguson noted, "I associate the VeriSign name with security and stability, so the knowledge that it is behind the scenes ensuring the accurate resolution of our domain names makes me feel very comfortable."

+ MLB.tv is a Huge Success

It appears that MLB.tv has proven to be an intuitively obvious Web site for baseball fans to turn to for online coverage of games. Ferguson stated, "Visitors to the site don't always realize that they are seeing live action because they are used to seeing recorded video broadcasts on other Internet sites, but slowly it dawns on them that we're streaming the action live and they love it."

While it is too complex to accurately measure the direct return on investment from the .tv domain name, having seen over 800,000 fans subscribe to MLB.tv broadcasts, MLBAM is assured of its success. Ferguson reflected, "In working with some of our partners—other sporting businesses—we're continuing to leverage the success of the .tv domain name. For example, we have set up MiLB.tv for Minor League Baseball, and WCSN.tv for World Champion Sports Network enthusiasts. Consumers obviously understand what TV is, so the use of the .tv domain name is compelling for all of our live broadcast TV services."

Visit us at www.Verisign.com for more information.

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