SETTING UP YOUR CUSTOM DOMAIN

A custom domain is a unique "branded' name that makes it easier for visitors to find and identify your website. If you are ready to move from your free HOA Start subdomain *(free.hoastart.com/yourcommunity)* to an existing domain your community owns from a previous website, or to a newly purchased domain name, there are several detailed steps you will need to take.

Please note that it's best to start this process before announcing the new website URL to the organization if a website doesn't currently exist on the domain. In the event you have a current website on your domain, DO NOT start this process until you :

◆ *Are a paid member of our services.*

◆ *have everything copied and saved (text, documents, photos, member data, etc.) from your previous community website that you're replacing.*

◆ *have Admin managing access to your domain's DNS records through your domain registrar.*

In order to have a custom domain through our services, you must be on one of our paid plans. Once your organization has signed up for services beyond the Free Trial, you can start the custom domain name process.

The first step in this process is to enable the custom domain option. This is done in Site Setup. Once you are in the Site Setup, click on the "Site Setting" button located in the upper right corner of the page. From the modal window, toggle on the "Enable Custom Domain" switch and enter the custom domain name for your community. Once these changes have been made, be sure to save your changes. The next steps are performed through your registrar's site (examples: GoDaddy, Network Solutions, Google Domains, and many others).

If your community currently does not have a custom domain URL name, you will need to find an available name and purchase it through a domain registrar. GoDaddy is the largest registrar in the U.S. andworld, so we will use their admin settings for our example of the onboarding process. You are free to register your domain with any service provider, but they must offer full Domain Name System (DNS) access to manage and create new records. Every provider's

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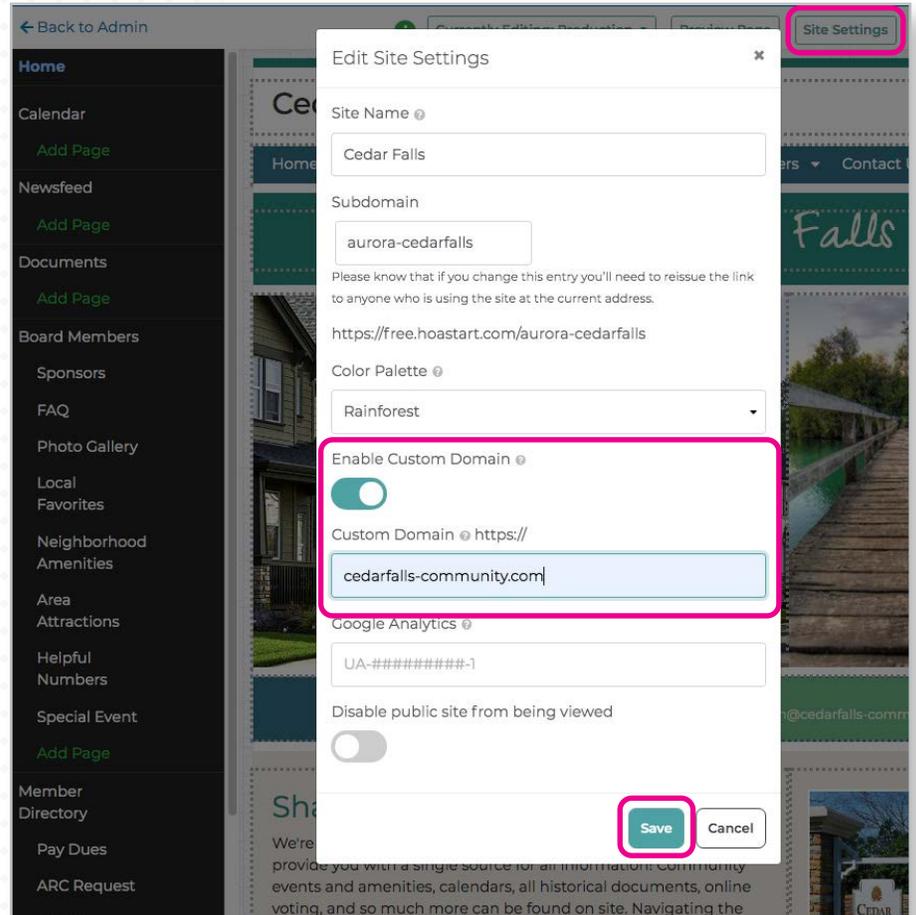
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settings are slightly different, so their back-end admin setting locations might be unfamiliar to our technical support team if you're having issues finding what you need in their dashboard. We will do our best to help you along in this process.

The most popular domain extension is *.com*. If your desired first choice name is not available, consider a different popular extension like *.net* or *.org* or adding a hyphen between words (i.e *cedarfalls-community.com* vs *cedarfalls-hoa.net*). The extension can sometimes be referred to as the TLD or top-level domain.
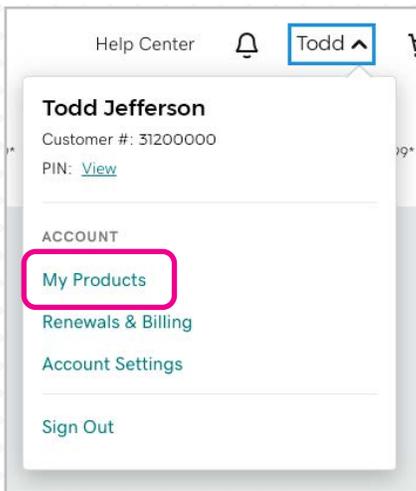
Once you have found and purchased an available domain name for your community, you're ready to update your DNS records. To get to your DNS records on GoDaddy, make sure you're logged into your account. Once logged in, use the account drop-down menu in the upper right corner to select "My Products" listed under Account.

From the My Products page, you should see a dialog box named "Domains" listing your newly purchased or existing domain. Click on the manage "DNS" link which takes you to a Records page where you can manage your DNS records. You will need to update or create the following 4 records for your domain to work with and without the subdomain "www." listed in front of your domain. If a record already exists for a specific Type and Name combination, you will need to update the record by clicking on the edit icon. If one of these records doesn't already exist, you can create one by clicking on the "Add" link.

Records

|	Type	Name	Value	TTL	
1)	A	@	52.176.104.120	600 seconds	✎
2)	CNAME	www	Your-Custom-Domain.com.	1 Hour	✎
3)	TXT	asuid	D60A9A43101CC16D7DA59657882B65FEEFC294A040CC292687BAA32682958353	1 Hour	✎
4)	TXT	asuid.www	D60A9A43101CC16D7DA59657882B65FEEFC294A040CC292687BAA32682958353		✎

ADD

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Once these records have been generated, please email with confirmation to **support@hoastart.com** to indicate you're ready for the next step.

◆ *Please note, if you have a current website running on your domain, this process is best started early in the business week to avoid longer downtime delays by running into the weekend. In most situations, our servers will recognize your created records within a few hours, but it could take up to 48 hours. To avoid added delays between your original site going down and the activation of your new site on the custom domain, it is important these records are set up properly the first time or the server will not recognize them at all.*

After our support team has added - and our servers have successfully recognized - your domain, we will schedule the process of creating the Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) Certificate. This will establish your site's security. Encryption ensures that data transferred between users and website servers remains impossible for hackers to access. This process can take another 24-48 hours. We will be sure to notify you when the SSL Certificate has been assigned.

◆ *Please note there may be a short time period where your new website is live on the custom domain, but browsers like Google will show that it's not secure. This is because we cannot create the SSL Certificate until the SSL Certificate service recognizes that the domain exists on our server.*

You will know your new custom domain website is secure when you see a "padlock" icon in the URL address bar.
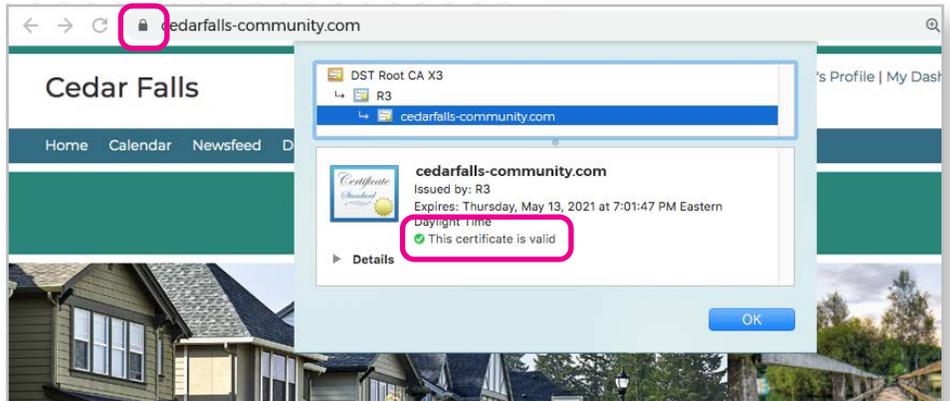
If you have any further questions about using the Custom Domain, please visit support.hoastart.com where you can open a support ticket.

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