



Expiring Domain Name Auction Service Service Provider User Guide

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Domain Name Auction – Service Provider Guide

Introduction

This document describes a dropped domain name auction service, its interface, and guidelines for using the interface. The parties involved in the expiring domain name auction process include Tucows, the registrant of the expiring name, buyers, and hosting Service Providers (Resellers).

The Domain Name Auction service is white labeled, and Service Providers make the auction available to their buyers via a link on their (the Service Provider's) website. The Service Provider's brand is then advertised to new and existing customers.

Throughout the auction the expiring registrant retains all of their rights to renew and retain the domain.

The Domain Name Auction service supports the .com, .net, .info, .org, and .biz domains.

About the Domain Name Auction

The Domain Name Auction allows registered users to bid on expiring domain names and manage their auction accounts.

To be able to offer Domain Name Auction service to your customers, you must be a Tucows Domain Name Reseller. Auction participants must create a user account with an auction Reseller. Every user account is unique, however, a user can choose to register with several Resellers. A registered user cannot place a bid for the same domain at another Reseller's site.

Auction Type

An open auction model is used in preference to a closed or sealed auction period to reduce the complexity of the auction model. In order to avoid users being outbid by other users who place a bid in the final minutes of the auction, as well as to reduce the strain and prevent system load, the auction is extended by 5 minutes.

Proxy Bidding

You place your maximum bid by using the Domain Name Auction service's proxy bidding system during a 3-to-5 day [challenger](#) auction. The highest bid determines the winner of the domain at the end of the auction date and time.

Maximum Bid

When placing a bid, you will be asked to enter your maximum bid amount. Subsequently, during a live auction, the Domain Name Auction service's proxy bidding system will bid up to this amount on your behalf. Once the current bid amount exceeds your maximum bid, the system will no longer place bids on your behalf.

Reserves

The minimum reserve on auctions must be a universal configurable price that if only one bid is placed on that domain, the domain will be sold for that reserve price.

Currency

Auctions are performed in U.S. currency.

Escrow period

If won in auction, a domain is placed in escrow and held for 100 days total from the expiry date, with a 24 - 48 hour margin. The domain will be released to the winning bidder at the end of the escrow period.

Note: The original registrant can redeem the domain during the escrow period. If the original owner redeems the domain, the winner of the auction will not be granted the domain, but will be refunded the bid amount paid.

Refunds

If a domain is won in auction but the original owner redeems the domain during the escrow period, the winning bidder will not be granted the domain, but will be refunded the bid amount paid. Refunds will be credited to the credit card used to pay the winning bid, and will be applied within 10 business days from the date that the domain was redeemed. A domain can be redeemed any time during the 61-day period after the auction end.

Renewal / registration fee

The winning bid amount does not include the renewal fee for the domain. The renewal fee registers the domain to the winning bidder for one year. The renewal fee will be debited from your Reseller account, and you are responsible for billing and collecting the registration fee from your customer.

Bid increments

Bid increments are preset by the Domain Name Auction service. Bid increments can be \$1, \$2, \$5, \$10, \$25, and \$50 U.S. depending on the next user's maximum (proxy) bid.

Here are the increments required by bid range:

Bottom Range	Top Range	Bid Increments
\$ 15.00	\$ 99.99	\$ 1.00
\$ 100.00	\$ 249.99	\$ 2.00
\$ 250.00	\$ 499.99	\$ 5.00
\$ 500.00	\$ 999.99	\$ 10.00
\$ 1,000.00	\$ 2,499.99	\$ 25.00
\$ 2,500.00	\$ 4,999.99	\$ 50.00

Note: The winning bid amount does not include the renewal/registration fee for the domain.

Reporting features

Reporting includes the total number of domains that have been sold through the auction from which you will be receiving a portion of the total sale price and by what date these funds will be funded to your account. Reports also summarize the total number of domains your users are currently bidding on and the total value of those bids.

Key Components

The key components of the Domain Name Auction include:

Auction System – A process built within the Domain Name Auction service framework that facilitates the auctioning of expired domains through the new interfaces provided for you as a Service Provider. You can link to:

- Domain names that are up for auction
- Domain names that have been awarded in auction (current and historical)
- Expired Inventory Publication – A list of domain names that meet the following current criteria:
 - Names that will be up for auction
 - Names that have current bids, along with the current highest bid
 - Names that are in auction with or without any bids

Provisioning - This new service exists outside of the OpenSRS platform and has an independent interface that service providers must use to manage and customize the service. Links to the Auction Reseller Web Interface have been placed within the existing Reseller Web Interface, and are visible once a service provider has been approved and activated for this service.

Administration - The Domain Name Auction service framework allows Resellers to manage their auction users and to view the status of auctions.

Process Overview

Typical purchase scenario

1. Using the service provider's branded auction interface, an end user signs up for their personal auction account. A \$15 hold is placed on their card to enable them to start bidding.
2. The end user may browse for and bid on domain names. Note they may browse for names if they have not set up an account, however, they will not be able to bid on names.
3. The end user may set up watchlists and be notified if an expired domain includes specified keywords.
4. The end user places a bid on the name they want.
5. If they win, the user will be notified via email, and is required to pay for the name within 8 days. The name will be re-auctioned if the user does not pay in time.
6. Approximately ninety-five days after the original expire date, the name is transferred to the gaining registrant and placed in the profile of the service provider which facilitated the sale. The service provider who gains the domain is charged the one-year registration fee for the domain.
7. On day 130 post expiration, the net proceeds of the auction are distributed to the gaining reseller.

Timing considerations

A domain name goes through several stages before it expires. Details concerning the Domain Name Auction timeline follow.

5 days before a domain expires:

- Renewal message sent by Reseller
- Capture payment and contact information

The day the domain expires:

- Put domain on Registrar hold
- Domain name does not resolve

25 days after a domain expires:

- All domains not currently renewed are flagged as available for auction and announced as an upcoming auction

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33 days after a domain expires:

- Auction starts

36 to 38 days after a domain expires:

- Auction ends
- Email sent to winning bidder
- Any domains not flagged with a winning bid are deleted

39 days after a domain expires:

- Owner can renew a domain from expiry until now

40 days after a domain expires:

- Owner can no longer renew domain, however, owner can redeem domain
- Domain name and payment are placed in escrow
- Email sent to winning bidder

45 days after a domain expires:

- Gaining Reseller is charged the one-year renewal / registration fee for the domain. Reseller can then charge the winning bidder for the renewal fee

75+ days after a domain expires:

- Unless a bid is placed on a domain name by now, it will be released by the Registry

100+ days after a domain expires:

- Winning auction name is released from escrow to the winning bidder
- Once a winning bidder obtains a domain name, all the regular domain rules apply, for example, no transfers for 60 days, etc.
- Auction proceeds are paid to the Reseller

Logging-in and Logging-Out

This section provides information to help you get started with the Domain Name Auction system.

Logging-In

To log-in to the Domain Name Auctions Management system:

1. Go to your **Domain Name Auction Management Login** page in your web Browser. The URL is specific to each Reseller:

`http://<resellername>.domainauctionservice.com/rwi`

where <resellername> is the username that you use to log-in to the OpenSRS Reseller Web Interface (RWI), for example:

`http://jsmith.domainauctionservice.com/rwi`

2. In the **Login** section, enter your username and password, then click the **Submit** button. This is the same username and password that you use for the RWI.

To clear the fields: click the **Reset** button.

If your login is successful, the **Domain Name Auctions Management** page opens. From this page, you can manage end-user auction accounts; search domains and domains paid, and view auction commission data; and view and edit your auction preferences.

If your login is not successful, a message appears in red text.

Logging-Out

To log-out of the Domain Name Auctions Management system, click the **Logout** link at the top of any page. You are returned to the **Login** page for the system.

Customizing Your Instance of the Expiring Domain Auctions Service

Every Auction service Reseller is given a sub-domain for use as their instance of the service. In order to customize your instance, you should apply branding settings, which include:

- Auction service name (e.g. Bud's House of Expiring Names)
- logo
- links to your website
- custom stylesheet

Viewing and Editing Your Branding Settings

From the **View Reseller Preferences** page, you can view and edit your auction preferences.

1. If you are not there already, go to the **Domain Name Auctions Management** page.
2. Click the **View/Edit Preferences** link in the **Auction Preferences** section. The **View Reseller Preferences** page opens.

From here you can view, but not change, the current settings of:

- **Reseller** (read-only) displays your business name.
- **Active** (read-only) displays your business's status.
- **Domain** (read-only) displays the domain for your instance of the Auction service.

To change the name that appears on your auction page: in the **Auction Engine Name** field, enter your business name, then click the **Submit** button. This name can be no more than 30 characters.

To upload your logo: in the **Logo Image Source** field, enter the path to the location of your logo image file. Click the **Submit** button.

To add a link to your logo image: in the **Logo Link** field, enter the URL that you want to link to, such as your business's home page. Click the **Submit** button.

To use a custom stylesheet for your auction page: in the **Stylesheet Path** field, enter the path to the location of your .css file. Click the **Submit** button.

To use one of the generic stylesheets for your auction page: choose a stylesheet from the **Default Stylesheet Name** drop-down list. Click the **Submit** button.

To revert to the current settings: before you click the **Submit** button, click the **Reset** button to clear the fields of new data.

Managing User Auction Accounts

From the **Domain Name Auctions Management Home** page, you can manage user auction accounts.

Searching for a Specific Auction User

You can search for a specific auction user to provide good customer service.

To search for a specific auction user:

1. If you are not there already, go to the **Domain Name Auctions Management** page.
2. Enter the username or email address in the **Manage End User Auction Accounts** field in the **Auction Management** section, then click the **Go** button. The **Auction User Management** page opens.

If the search is successful, auction user information is displayed.

If the search is not successful, a message appears in red text. In this case, conduct a wildcard search using part of the user's name and a * (an asterisk) and then check the results.

To return to the Domain Name Auctions Management Home page: click the **Main Menu** link at the top of the page.

Searching for All Auction Users

You can search for all auction user to learn how many users you have.

To search for all auction users:

1. If you are not there already, open the **Domain Name Auctions Management** page.
2. In the **Auction Management** section, leave the **Manage End User Auction Accounts** field clear and click the **Go** button. The **Search Auction Users/Auction Users** page opens.

If the search is successful, auction user information is displayed as well as the total number of auction users and the number of pages over which the results are displayed.

If the search is not successful, a message appears in red text.

To sort the results by user name: click the **UserName** column title.

To refine your search: enter at least one of the user's username or email address in the **Search Auction Users** section, then click the **Submit** button.

To view detailed information for a specific user: click that user's link in the **UserName** column. The **Auction User Management** page opens, displaying

information concerning that user. From this page, while most of the user information is view only, you can view/edit details of the user's bid history, view/edit notes and comments, send the username and password to the email contact, or suspend/activate the user's account.

To return to the Domain Name Auctions Management Home page: click the **Main Menu** link at the top of the page.

Viewing Auction User Information

1. If you are not there already, go to the **Domain Name Auctions Management** page.
2. In the **Auction Management** section, click the **Search/Manage Auction Users** link. The **Search Auction Users** page opens.
3. Enter either the user's username or email address, then click the **Submit** button. The **Search Auction Users/Auction Users** page opens.
4. In the **Username** column in the **Auction Users** section, click the username link for the auction user whose information you want to view. The **Auction User Management** page opens, displaying the auction user's information.

To view the user's bid history: from the **Bid History** drop-down list in the **Auction User Information** section, choose the timeframe for which you want to view bids, and then click the **View Details** button. The **Bid History For Auction User <username>** page opens.

To view any notes associated with the auction user's account: click the **View - Edit** link in the **Auction User Information** section. The **Notes** page opens, displaying the date and time, note, and owner. The owner's IP address, not name, is shown.

To return to the Domain Name Auctions Management Home page: click the **Main Menu** link at the top of the page.

Viewing a User's Bid History

A bid history for a user shows you the domain name, won/lost status, auction end date, and amount of the winning bid.

To view an auction user's bid history:

1. If you are not there already, go to the **Domain Name Auctions Management** page.
2. In the **Auction Management** section, click the **Search/Manage Auction Users** link. The **Search Auction Users** page opens.
3. Enter either the user's username or email address, then click the **Submit** button. The **Search Auction Users/Auction Users** page opens.
4. In the **Username** column in the **Auction Users** section, click the link for the auction user whose information you want to view. The **Auction User Management** page opens, displaying the auction user information.
5. From the **Bid History** drop-down list in the **Auction User Information** section, choose the timeframe for which you want to view bids, and then click the **View Details** button. The **Bid History For Auction User <username>** page opens. From this page you can view the **Domain Name**, **Status**, **Auction End Date**, and **Winning Bid** information for the user.

To sort the information: click either the **Domain Name** or **Auction End Date** column heading.

To return to the Auction User Management page: click the **Back to User** link.

To return to the Domain Name Auctions Management Home page: click the **Main Menu** link at the top of the page.

Managing a User's Auction Account

On the **Auction User Management** page you can [view the auction user's bid history](#), [send the username and password to the email contact for the account](#), and [suspend or activate the user's auction account](#).

To manage a user's auction account:

1. If you are not there already, go to the **Domain Name Auctions Management** page.
2. Click the **Search/Manage Auction Users** link in the **Auction Management** section. The **Search Auction Users** page opens.
3. Enter either the user's username or email address, then click the **Submit** button. The **Search Auction Users/Auction Users** page opens.
4. Click the user's link in the **Username** column. The **Auction User Management** page opens.

To return to the Domain Name Auctions Management page: click the **Main Menu** link at the top of the page.

Sending Username and Password to the Account's Email Contact

1. If you are not there already, go to the **Domain Name Auctions Management** page.
2. In the **Auction Management** section, click the **Search/Manage Auction Users** link. The **Search Auction Users** page opens.
3. Enter either the user's username or email address, then click the **Submit** button. The **Auction Users** page opens.
4. In the **Username** column, click the username link for the auction user you want to manage. The **Auction User Management** page opens, displaying the auction user information. Scroll down to the **Send Username and Password to Email Contact** section.
5. Optionally, in the **Notes** field, enter any comments you want to include in the email message.
6. Click the **Submit** button. The Domain Name Auction service sends a message containing the recorded username and password to the email contact for the auction account.

Suspending or Activating a User Account

1. If you are not there already, go to the **Domain Name Auctions Management** page.
2. In the **Auction Management** section, click the **Search/Manage Auction Users** link. The **Search Auction Users** page opens.
3. Enter at least one of the user's username or email address, then click the **Submit** button. The **Auction Users** page opens. To sort the information by username, click the **UserName** column title.
4. In the **Username** column, click the link for the auction user you want to manage. The **Auction User Management** page opens, displaying the auction user information. Scroll down to the **Suspend or Activate User Account** section. This menu provides a toggle to move between states.
5. From the **Status** drop-down list, choose either **Suspend** or **Activate**, as appropriate.
6. Optionally, in the **Notes** field, enter any comments regarding the action being taken.
7. Click the **Submit** button in the **Suspend or Activate User Account** section. Wait for a confirmation message to appear at the top of the page. Your setting takes effect immediately.

Searching Auction Data

From the **Domain Name Auctions Management Home** page, you can search for specific domains, domains paid, and view your auction commission data.

Searching for a Specific Domain in the Auction

You can search for a specific domain in the auction for customer service or general interest.

To search for a specific expired domain:

1. If you are not there already, go to the **Domain Name Auctions Management** page.
2. Enter the domain name in the **Search Domains** field in the **Auction Financials** section, then click **Go**. The domain name should be entered in the format **example.com**. The service carries out the specified search.

If the search is successful, the search result is displayed. The **Domains** page opens, displaying domain name, selling price, number of bids, winning bidder, payment status, start date, and end date information for the specified domain name.

If the search is not successful, a message appears in red text.

To specify a domain from a subset of available domains: enter part of the domain name and a * (an asterisk) as a wildcard in the **Search Domains** field, then click **Go**. For example, enter **auto***, then click **Go** to get several search results matching that wildcard. Copy-and-paste the domain name sought into the **Search Domains** field, then click **Go**.

Searching for all Domains in the Auction

You can search for all domains available in an auction and review their domain names, selling price, number of bids, winning bidder, payment status, start date, and end date information.

To search for all expired domains:

1. If you are not there already, go to the **Domain Name Auctions Management** page.
2. Leave the **Search Domains** field blank in the **Auction Financials** section, then click **Go**. The service carries out the specified search.

If the search is successful, the search results are displayed. The **Domains** page opens, displaying domain name, selling price, number of bids, winning bidder, payment status, start date, and end date information for all domain names in the auction.

If the search is not successful, a message appears in red text.

To sort the information: click the **Domain Name**, **Selling Price**, **# of Bids**, **Winning Bidder**, or **Payment Status** column heading.

Searching for a Specific Paid Domain

A paid domain is a domain:

- That was won in an auction.
- That the winning bidder has paid the clearing house for.
- For which, after 100 days, the Registrar and former Registrant can expect payment.

To search for a specific paid domain:

1. If you are not there already, go to the **Domain Name Auctions Management** page.
2. Enter the domain name in the **Search Domains Paid** field in the **Auction Financials** section, then click **Go**. The domain name should be entered in the format **example.com**. The service carries out the specified search.

If the search is successful, the search result is displayed. The **Domains Won and Paid For** page opens, displaying domain name and reseller cut information for the specified domain in your auction that has been won and paid for.

If the search is not successful, a message appears in red text.

To use a partial name to find a specific domain: enter part of the domain name and a * (an asterisk) as a wildcard in the **Search Domains Paid** field, then click **Go**. For example, enter **auto***, then click **Go** to get several search results.

Searching for all Paid Domains

As a Reseller, you can see all auctions hosted by the clearinghouse.

To search for all paid domains:

1. If you are not there already, go to the **Domain Name Auctions Management** page.
2. Leave the **Search Domains Paid** field blank in the **Auction Financials** section, then click **Go**. The service carries out the specified search.

If the search is successful, the search results are displayed. The **Domains Won and Paid For** page opens, displaying domain name and reseller cut information for domains in your auction that have been won and paid for.

If the search is not successful, a message appears in red text.

To sort the information: click the **Domain Name** column heading.

Viewing Total Auction Commission

To view the total value of your auction commissions to date:

1. If you are not there already, go to the **Domain Name Auctions Management** page.
2. Click the **View Auction Commission Data** link in the **Auction Financials** section. The **View Auction Commission Data** page opens, displaying the total value of commissions closed to date.

Glossary

Term	Definition
Bid	The amount offered to purchase a domain listed for auction.
Bid History	A historical list of all the bids made on a particular auction during or after the auction.
Bid Increment	The standardized amount a domain increases in price after each new bid. The Domain Name Auction service sets the increment, which increases according to the present high bid value of a domain.
Bid Retraction	The legitimate retraction or cancellation of a bid on a domain by a bidder during an auction.
Buyers	Refers to the end-users of the Domain Name Auction service.
Challenger Auction	An auction in which participants bid against one another, with each bid being higher than the previous one. The auction ends when either no one is willing to bid higher or a pre-determined price is reached. When the auction ends, the highest bidder pays the price. The seller may set a reserve price and unless someone places a bid higher than the reserve figure, the sale typically does not proceed.
Escrow	<p>The period after a domain expires when the domain is held in trust by a third party to be turned over to the winning bidder. The escrow period is 60 days and begins on the 40th day of expiry, with a 24 - 48 hour margin.</p> <p>Note: The domain's original owner can still redeem the domain during the escrow period. If that happens, the winning bidder will not be granted the domain.</p>
Free and Clear	<p>The former registrant will have the ability to digitally sign away their rights to the domain name allowing auctioning of the domain and bypass the redemption period.</p> <p>If the registrant selects the Free and Clear option to allow the domain to go into auction when it expires:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For a domain where the payment is done by credit card, the domain will be kept for 60 days and it will follow the normal rules for a domain won • For a domain where payment is done by wire transfer, the domain will be released to the winning bidder as soon as the payment has been received and it will follow the rules outlined for a domain on day 60 • Renewal from the original Registrant must be rejected
Keywords	Keywords allow the user to search the list of expiring domains for domain names that are similar to one of the user's keywords. When expired domains match any of the user's keywords an email message is sent to the user, communicating that the domain name is being auctioned.

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Outbid	To submit a maximum bid that is higher than another buyer's maximum bid. The Domain Name Auction service will notify the user by email if their maximum bid has been outbid.
Proxy Bid	To submit a confidential maximum bid to the Domain Name Auction service's automated bidding system. The system's electronic proxy will automatically increase the buyer's bid to maintain the high bid. The proxy bidding system will stop when it has won the auction or reached the maximum bid.
RGP	Redemption Grace Period
Selling Reseller	Refers to the Reseller whose site the winning buyer was on.
Starting Price	The price at which you want bidding for your item to begin in an auction-style listing. Note that the starting price may not necessarily be the lowest price you are willing to sell your item for. The user can also set a secret reserve price that represents the user's true minimum. If the high bid does not meet the user's reserve price, then the user is under no obligation to sell the item to the bidder. This feature enables the user to set a lower starting price to stimulate bidding among buyers.
Terms and Conditions	The terms and conditions under which registered members are offered access to auction services. All registered members must agree to these terms before they can bid on domain names.
Top	The Top Future Auctions are the future auctions anticipated to offer the most highly sought after domain names. The Top Current Auctions and Top Ending Today Auctions are the most popular auctions by price. The Top Most Active Auctions are the most popular auctions by number of bids.
Username	The "nickname" users choose to identify themselves. A user chooses a User ID when they register.
Watch List	A list the user can create to monitor domains and their associated auctions without having to place a bid on these names.

Revisions and Updates

January 15, 2007

Clarified escrow period information in the [About the Domain Name Auction](#) topic and the [Glossary](#).

November 15, 2006

Updated the [Process Overview](#) topic to include escrow period, renewal fee, and refund information.

May 10, 2006

- Renamed section "Managing Auction Financials" to "Searching Auction Data".
- Updated the [Process Overview](#) topic to indicate that the gaining Reseller is charged the one-year registration fee for the domain once the domain is moved to the new registrant.

March 20, 2006

Minor revisions and corrections made to content and organization.

February 17, 2006

- Replaced domain edna.tucows.com with domainauctionservice.com for Reseller login.
- The time interval when domains are flagged as available for auction and added to the future auction list has changed from day 16 to day 25. This is seven days before auction goes live.

January 31, 2006

Initial release of this document.