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## Beware of cool couples with websites

Typical couple sites have directions to their house, pictures of kids and other trivial details that could only be of use to burglars

By NIALL MCKAY

Do you know those couples that have matching bathrobes, toothbrushes and turn up to dinner parties with identical jumpers?

Yes, that's right, sometimes you see them cycling their tandem down the street. Giving people a simultaneous wave.

Well, guess what? Now they have websites, called things like hisnameandhername.com. And do you know what's worse? A Silicon Valley hospital is giving new-born babies their own domain name no sooner than the umbilical cord is cut. A few weeks ago, I met a couple at a dinner party. They were the type of people who would regularly finish each other's sentences and, well, I got talking to them because the guy on the other side of me was a funeral director.

After hearing that I covered the high-technology industry they told me about their own Web portal.

"We love technology. We have. . ." she said.

". . .our own website," he finished.

"It's very handy," she said.

"We used it to plan our wedding," he said.

"And we've got photos. . ." she said.

". . .of the kids," he finished.

"And our house," she said.

"And the five tons of compost delivered last week," he chuckled.

Mystified, I scratched my head and joked that soon they would issue website addresses to kids as soon as the doctor held them up and smacked their butt.

"Yes our son. . ." he said.

". . . has got his own Web address," she said.

"And you can e-mail him," he said "But of course he doesn't read yet," she finished.

When I got home I decided to investigate this Web couples phenomena so I typed in a number of his names and her name and came up with dozens of websites.

I will not give specific names least I insult people any more than I already have.

But of course, most of them are about as interesting as looking at other people's wedding photos. They have directions to their house, pictures of their kids and all sorts of really trivial detail that could only be useful to burglars.

Then I found that any child born at the Sequoia Hospital in Palo Alto, in the heart of Silicon Valley, could under an arrangement with Web provider Namezero get their own website with email forwarding. It even offers assistance with building baby's Web page and offered suggestions if you were having difficulty finding a name.

Six months ago, the Web was going to revolutionise business as we know it. New media empires were going to spring up that would break the stranglehold of big publishing. Businesses sprang up over night and shopping was going to move from the main street to e-street. Now it has become the bastion of boredom.

But perhaps I am being too harsh. After all, I don't have to look at these sites if I am that bored by them and well, I hate to admit it but I have a website myself. So really I am a hypocrite as well. So if you want to register a website with your true love then good luck to you and if you think that baby would benefit from becoming part of the New Economy then I say register the kid.

Of course, most single names are already registered. So

it might be better just to give the child an IP address. I think 192:168:1:1 sounds nice.

Niall McKay is a freelance journalist living in Silicon Valley. His boring website can be found at [www.niall.org](http://www.niall.org)

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