



# **Visual WhoIs 2004 Manual**

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# **Visual WhoIs 2004**

## **Introduction**

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*Welcome to Visual WhoIs 2004 a very handy application that allows you to find information about web sites, ip addresses, email addresses and find their physical location on a 3D globe of the world. In addition - visual trace route function could help you locate network problems.*

## **Visual Whols 2004 Help**

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# 1 Introducing Visual WhoIs 2004

## *Visual WhoIs 2004*

Welcome to Visual WhoIs 2004. A useful network tool that will help you protect your privacy by locating websites, email addresses and IP addresses on a 3d globe of the world and get detailed information about website owners and their servers.

- ▶ [Why Visual WhoIs 2004?](#)
- ▶ [Requirements](#)
- ▶ [How to buy Visual WhoIs 2004](#)
- ▶ [Quick Start](#)

## 1.1 Why Visual WhoIs 2004?

### ▶ Simple, intuitive user interface

Visual WhoIs 2004 user interface is a result of careful design to make its operation simple to use yet offer many powerful features.

After typing an address or clicking on the "Locate" button in your browser Visual WhoIs 2004 will determine not only where to look for information, but also what kind of information you are interested in.

For example: Typing an email address into the main location bar and pressing the enter key will actually find the email servers for the given domain and offer you a list of servers to choose from.

### ▶ Convenient

Sometimes, before you decide to share your personal information with a certain web site, you would like to know where that site is located and who is the owner of the site. Clicking on the "Locate" button in your browser will bring that information quickly on your screen and show the physical location of the web site on the 3D globe as well as detailed information about the web site owners.

### ▶ Anyone can use Visual WhoIs 2004

You don't have to worry about finding the correct WhoIs server for a given domain or to research additional data. Visual WhoIs 2004 will find all relevant information for you and present it in an easy to understand format.

### ▶ Visual TraceRoute

Visual WhoIs 2004 includes a visual traceroute functionality on a 3d Globe. You can identify network problems and see the approximate network route to the target destination.

### ▶ Identify Spammers, Hoaxes and Fraud sites

It is easy to identify a web site or where particular email came from. Just put the IP address found in the "Received" header of the email message into Visual WhoIs 2004 and you will find out the ISP that was used to send the email message. Then you can extract the "abuse" email address from the given records and notify the appropriate person on that network.

### ▶ Fun!

It is fun to unveil the Internet and find more about where certain servers are located. 3D globe can be rotated and you can zoom in and out using your mouse wheel.

## 1.2 Requirements

Visual WhoIs 2004 will run on following operating systems - Windows 98, Windows NT SP6a, Windows Me, Windows 2000 and Windows XP.

To use the browser plug in - you must have Internet Explorer installed on your system.

## 1.3 How to buy Visual WhoIs 2004

You can purchase Visual WhoIs 2004 for only \$28.95.

To buy Visual WhoIs 2004, please go to <http://www.softwareriver.com/html/buy.html>

Once there - please follow the instructions to complete your purchase.

Once you purchase the license - a confirmation email will be sent to you containing the Serial Number that you must enter to register your application.

When you start Visual WhoIs 2004 - a window will pop up that allows you to enter your name and your serial number. Once entered - click on the "Register" button to complete your registration. Alternatively - this dialog can be shown either from the about dialog or directly from the "Help" main menu.

If you have any questions about your purchase, please contact us at [sales@softwareriver.com](mailto:sales@softwareriver.com)

## 2 Quick Start

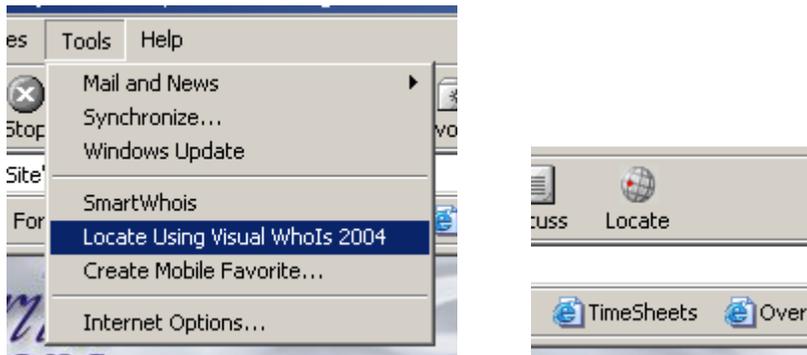
Using Visual WhoIs 2004 is extremely easy. Follow the steps below to get started quickly.

**The easiest way to start and use Visual WhoIs 2004 is by launching it directly from your browser.**

*NOTE: This option is available for Internet Explorer browser only.*

1. Open the desired web site in your browser.
2. Click on the new "Locate" button on the browser toolbar or select "Locate using Visual WhoIs" from the tools menu in your browser.
3. Visual WhoIs 2004 will start showing you the information about that server.

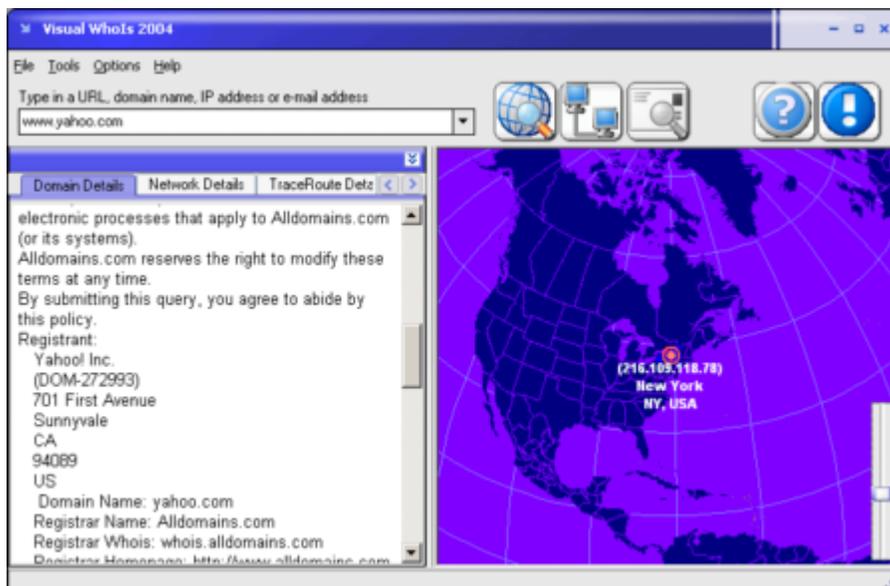
Here is how the menu item and the button look like in your IE browser.



**You can also start the application first and then enter the information you are looking for.**

1. Start Visual WhoIs 2004 by selecting it from the "Start" menu.
2. Type in a URL, domain name, email address or an IP address into the address bar.
3. Press the "Enter" key or click on the appropriate button on the right hand side to get the desired information.

Here is how the main window will look like after your query.



**Alternatively you can call the program from the command line with a query argument like this**

VisualWhoIs2004.exe domain.com

See also:

 [How do I read the Domain WhoIs records?](#)

 [How do I read the Network WhoIs records?](#)

## 3 Explaining the user interface

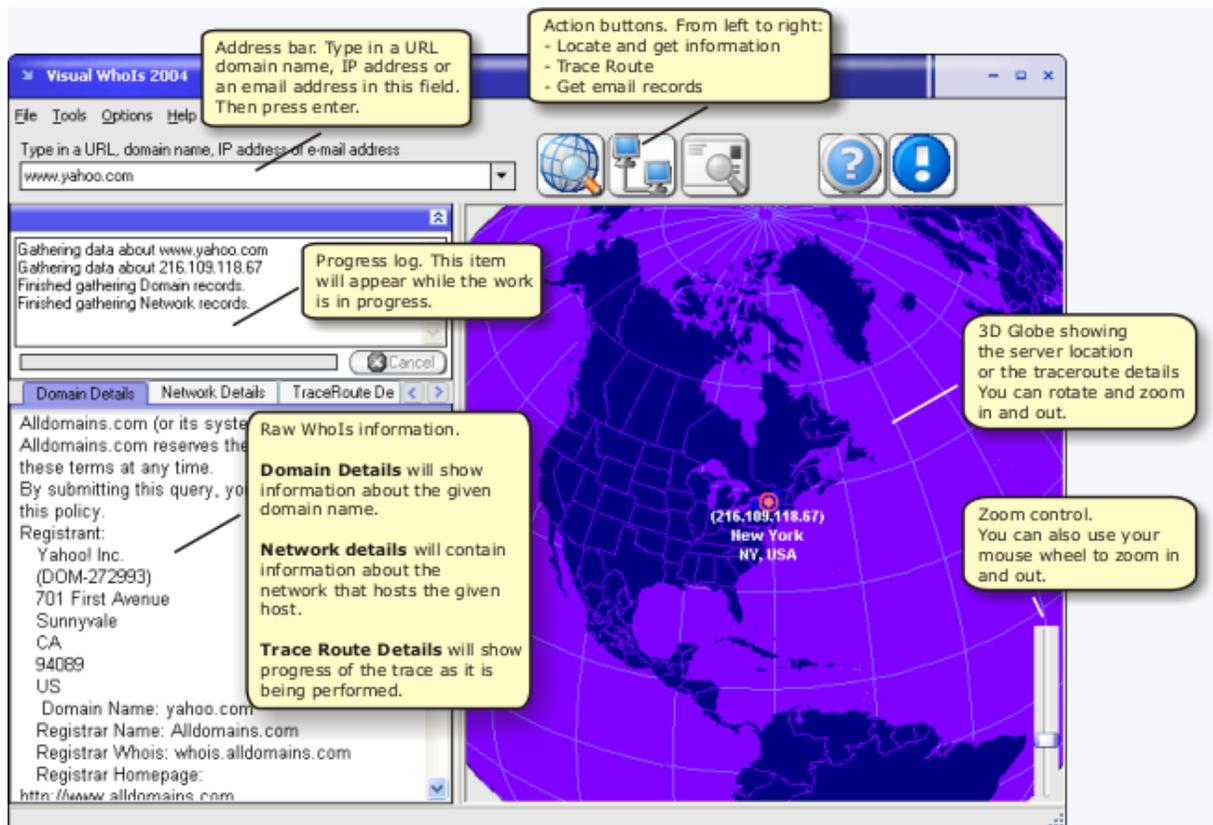
### Visual WhoIs 2004

In this section we will help you to quickly become familiar with Visual WhoIs 2004 user interface.

- ▶ [Main Visual WhoIs 2004 Window](#)
- ▶ [General Options Window](#)
- ▶ [Mail Server Selection Dialog](#)

### 3.1 Main Visual WhoIs 2004 Window

This is the main Visual WhoIs 2004 window.



Domain Details tab will contain the actual answer that came from the domain WhoIs server. These records contain the owner of the domain name, office location(s) and in most cases there should be a few email addresses listed as well as phone numbers. [Domain records](#) usually contain the actual person or a company that is the owner of the domain name.

Network Details tab will contain the network WhoIs records. These records will contain [information about the network](#) that given computer is connected to. Using these records - the location of the actual machine can be located and presented on the globe. Note that with some extremely large ISPs the location information does not have to be 100% accurate.

These records can be used to report spammers, fraud web sites hosted on this network or any other problems. There is usually an "abuse" email address in these records which you can use to report any network abuse or problems.

**NOTE:** Domain and Network Details may contain a license agreement at the top. We deliberately did not remove this information so that you have the full and raw answer that is coming from the server. Simply scroll down a bit and you will find the information you need.

Traceroute Details will contain the progress of your current traceroute operation. First the actual traceroute is performed and then network locations are extracted and connected together. Note that the network locations of the nodes do not have to be the actual locations, but will rather indicate the ISPs responsible for that portion of the network route.

See also:

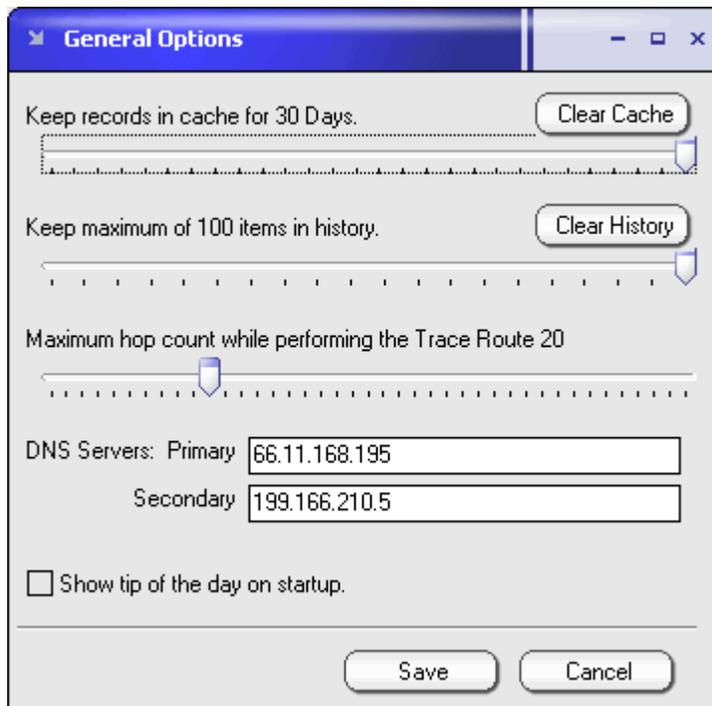
 [How do I read the Domain WhoIs records?](#)

 [How do I read the Network WhoIs records?](#)

## 3.2 General Options Window

This is the General Options Window

*To open this dialog select Options|Edit Options... from the main menu.*



This window will allow you to change some general settings that influence the operation of Visual WhoIs 2004

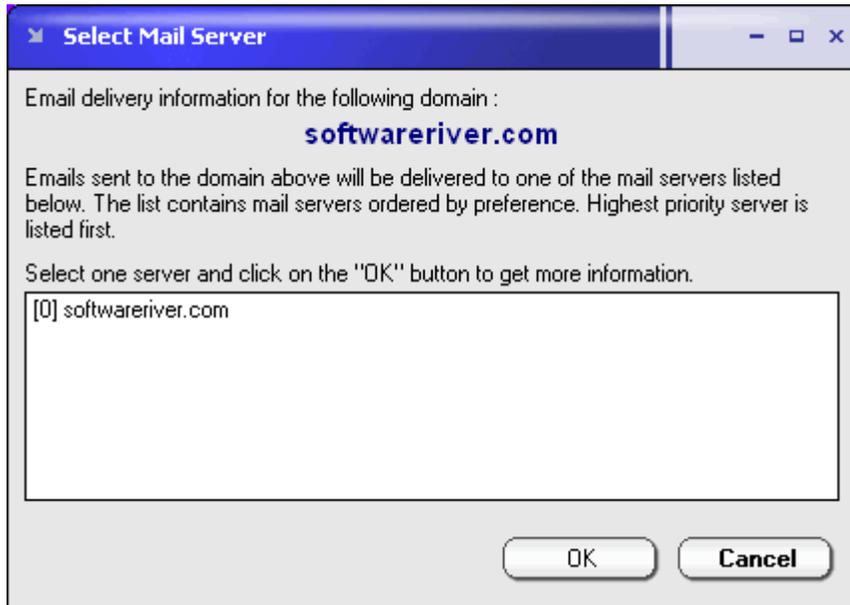
- **Cache control** allows you to change how long retrieved records stay cached on your computer. This will reduce the time required to retrieve the WhoIs records and improve the performance. In addition - certain WhoIs servers do not like to receive too many requests from the same host. Click on the "Clear Cache" button to clear the current records permanently.
- **History control** allows you to specify how long items in the address bar stay in history. This option works similar to a standard browser history option. Click on the "Clear History" button to clear the history right away.
- **Trace Route hop count control.** While performing a Trace Route, you can limit the number of network hops Visual WhoIs 2004 will perform until it gives up the trace. Default setting is 30 hops and should be ok for most applications.
- **DNS Servers edit boxes** will usually be already populated with DNS servers you are using. If Visual WhoIs 2004 was unable to extract your DNS servers you should take a look at your network properties and type in one or both DNS servers. The easiest way to get your DNS server information is to open a command prompt and type in "ipconfig /all" This will show various network parameters for your computer including IP addresses for your DNS servers.
- **Show tip of the day check box** will allow you to turn the tips that show on startup on or off.
- Click on the "**Save**" button to save your changes or on the "**Cancel**" button to discard your changes.

**NOTE:** If reverse DNS lookup is failing during the traceroute - most likely your DNS server entries are missing or incorrect. Visual WhoIs 2004 can try to correct the problem if you delete both DNS entries and restart the application. If that does not help - please take a look

at the "ipconfig /all" method described above to get the correct DNS addresses.

### 3.3 Mail Server Selection Dialog

This window will show up when you try to query an email address.



Standard email addresses are composed out of two parts. The mailbox name and the domain name.

For example, in this email address "support@softwareriver.com" - "support" is the mailbox name and "softwareriver.com" is the domain name.

Domain name determines where the email will be delivered to. Each domain can have multiple mail servers that can be located using so called MX records. MX records are simply a final destination for an email sent to certain domain. Each MX record has a "preference number". Lower preference number means higher priority. Same preference numbers mean that there is an equal chance of mail being delivered to each of the servers.

This window will show you the list of all email servers (MX records) for the given domain. Servers will be ordered by preference (most important first). You can select any of the servers shown and click on the OK button to find detailed information about it.

## 4 FAQ - Frequently Asked Questions

Frequently asked questions.

- ▶ [What is WhoIs database?](#)
- ▶ [How do I read the Domain WhoIs records?](#)
- ▶ [How do I read the Network WhoIs records?](#)
- ▶ [Should I look for domainname.com or www.domainname.com?](#)
- ▶ [How to use Visual WhoIs 2004 to fight spam?](#)
- ▶ [How to use Visual WhoIs 2004 to protect your privacy?](#)
- ▶ [Which location is show on the 3D globe?](#)
- ▶ [How accurate is the traceroute?](#)
- ▶ [My firewall software warns me that Visual WhoIs 2004 is attempting to access the internet.](#)
- ▶ [Can I call Visual WhoIs 2004 from the command line?](#)
- ▶ [What is the difference between an IP Address, hostname and a domain name?](#)

## 4.1 What is Whols database?

**WhoIs database is a storage place of registration information about Internet domain owners and networks.**

Every computer connected to the internet must have a **unique IP address** that identifies it on the network. In addition, some IP addresses also have hostnames associated with them. This association is stored inside the **domain records** for that domain. This makes life easier for us humans and allows us to type something like <http://www.softwareriver.com> rather than <http://64.235.234.128>

The WhoIs database contains records about both - the network that the given IP address belongs to and about the people or companies who own the given domain name.

While registering a domain name, the usual procedure is to add administrative information, technical contact, billing information and so on. These records then get stored into the WhoIs database for public lookup.

Similar procedure is required for the owners of one or more public ip addresses.

WhoIs servers responsible for keeping records about public IP addresses are usually divided by geographical regions.

WhoIs servers for domain records can be more distributed and the search usually starts with the server responsible for certain "type" of domain. For example .com, .co.uk, .ca and so on ending with the registrar WhoIs server that contains the information about the domain that we are looking for.

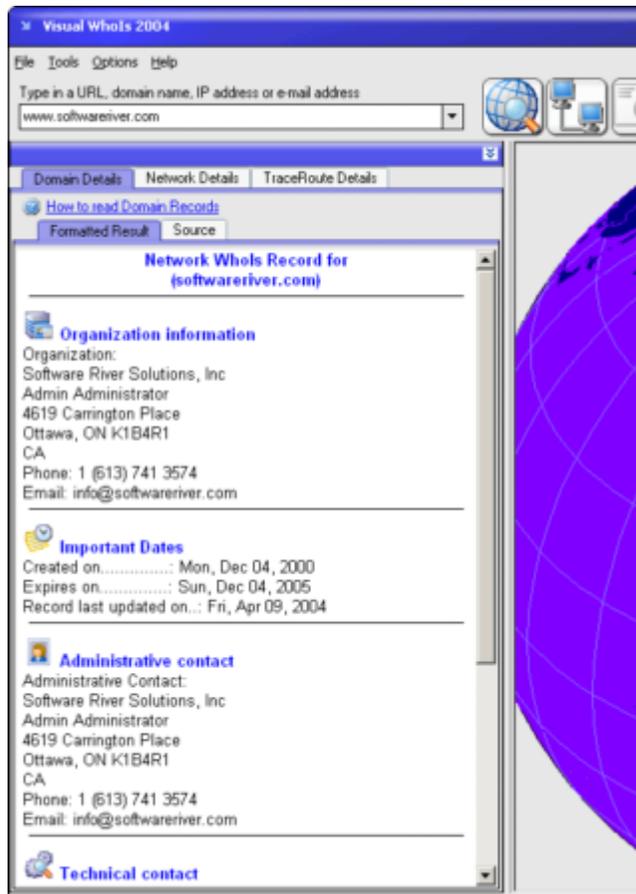
See also

- ▶ [How do I read the Domain WhoIs records?](#)
- ▶ [How do I read the Network WhoIs records?](#)

 [What is the difference between an IP Address, hostname and a domain name?](#)

## 4.2 How do I read the Domain WhoIs records?

Usually, Domain WhoIs records are parsed and formatted by Visual WhoIs 2004. Several sections are separated and presented on the "Formatted Result" tab under "Domain Details". Here is how a typical result would look like.



You can easily find information about the organization that owns the given domain. The information will vary depending on the WhoIs records.

If, for any reason, Visual WhoIs 2004 cannot parse and format the returned results or if you wish to see the raw source result returned by the whois server you can switch to the "Source" tab and take a look. Here is more about source result with a sample and explanation about each section of the record.

Domain WhoIs records are meant to be read by humans. Therefore the information is usually very clear and readable.

**Here is an example from our own softwareriver.com domain. The right hand side explains what each section means and how you can use it.**

The data in Register.com's WHOIS database is provided to you by Register.com for information purposes only, that is, to assist you in obtaining information about or related to a domain name registration record. Register.com makes this information available "as is," and does not guarantee its accuracy. By submitting a WHOIS query, you agree that you will use this data only for lawful purposes and that, under no circumstances will you use this data to: (1) allow, enable, or otherwise support the transmission of mass unsolicited, commercial advertising or solicitations via direct mail, electronic mail, or by telephone; or (2) enable high volume, automated, electronic processes that apply to Register.com (or its systems). The compilation, repackaging, dissemination or other use of this data is expressly prohibited without the prior written consent of Register.com. Register.com reserves the right to modify these terms at any time. By submitting this query, you agree to abide by these terms.

**Organization:**

Software River Solutions, Inc  
Admin Administrator  
4619 Carrington Place  
Ottawa, ON K1B4R1  
CA  
Phone:  
Email: info@softwareriver.com

Registrar Name.....: Register.com  
Registrar Whois...: whois.register.com  
Registrar Homepage: <http://www.register.com>

Domain Name: SOFTWARERIVER.COM

Created on.....: Mon, Dec 04, 2000  
Expires on.....: Sat, Dec 04, 2004  
Record last updated on..: Fri, Apr 09, 2004

**Administrative Contact:**

Software River Solutions, Inc  
Admin Administrator  
4619 Carrington Place  
Ottawa, ON K1B4R1  
CA  
Phone: 1 (613) 741 3574  
Email: info@softwareriver.com

**Technical Contact:**

Software River Solutions, Inc  
Admin Administrator  
4619 Carrington Place  
Ottawa, ON K1B4R1  
CA  
Phone: 1 (613) 741 3574  
Email: info@softwareriver.com

**The first section of the record is the registrant information that is responsible for the domain. In addition, this section contains the contact information for the registrar. The information in this section is provided to you automatically, we think you will find it useful.**

**Organization information including the organization name, address, contact email address, and phone number.**

**Registrar name responsible for the domain, the WhoIs server hosting the domain, and the Home page of the registrar.**

**The actual domain name.**

**Creation date.  
Expiration date.  
Last record update date.**

**This section contains the contact information for the administrative contact.**

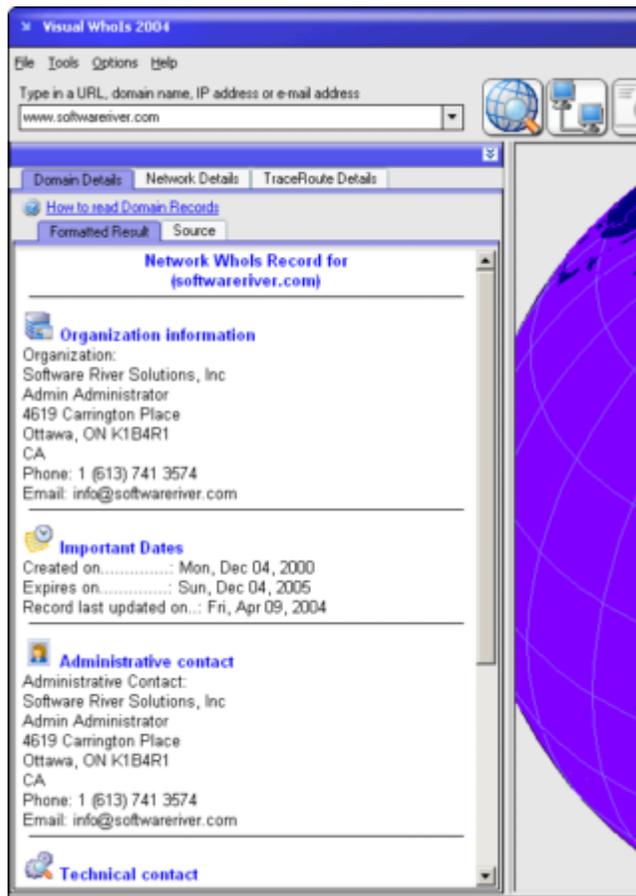
**This section contains the contact information for the technical contact.**

See also

 [How do I read the Network WhoIs records?](#)

## 4.3 How do I read the Network WhoIs records?

Usually, Network (or IP based) WhoIs records are parsed and formatted by Visual WhoIs 2004. Several sections are separated and presented on the "Formatted Result" tab under "Network Details". Here is how a typical result would look like.



You can easily find information about the organization that owns the given IP address or address range. The information will vary depending on the WhoIs records.

If, for any reason, Visual WhoIs 2004 cannot parse and format the returned results or if you wish to see the raw source result returned by the whois server you can switch to the "Source" tab and take a look. Here is more about source result with a sample and explanation about each section of the record.

**NOTE:** When you look for an IP address - Visual WhoIs 2004 will automatically try to perform a reverse DNS lookup and determine the domain name for the given address. It will then display both - domain and network records.

**Network WhoIs records (IP address based records) are meant to be read by humans. Therefore the information is usually very clear and readable.**

These records contain the actual physical location of the given IP address. While domain records may be located elsewhere - the actual computer can be located anywhere in the world.

**In the example below showing the records for our web server - note that our company is located in Ottawa, Canada. Our web server however, is located in United States, CA. That is where our web server hosting company is actually located.**

**Here is an example from our own web server at [www.softwareriver.com](http://www.softwareriver.com) domain. The right hand side explains what each section means and how you can use it.**

OrgName: Lunarpages  
OrgID: LUNAR  
Address: 14730 Beach Blvd. Suite 102  
Address: IP Management Department  
City: La Mirada  
StateProv: CA  
PostalCode: 90638  
Country: US

**Organization name.  
Organization ID.  
Mailing Address.**

NetRange: 64.235.234.0 - 64.235.234.255  
CIDR: 64.235.234.0/24  
NetName: MZIMA01-CUST-LUNARPAGES  
NetHandle: NET-64-235-234-0-1  
Parent: NET-64-235-224-0-1  
NetType: Reassigned  
NameServer: NS1.LUNARPAGES.COM  
NameServer: NS2.LUNARPAGES.COM  
Comment:  
RegDate: 2002-12-19  
Updated: 2002-12-19

**Range of network IP addresses this organ**

**Additional network information.**

AbuseHandle: LUNAR1-ARIN  
AbuseName: Lunarpages Abuse  
AbusePhone:  
AbuseEmail: abuse@lunarpages.com

**Abuse information.  
Very useful if you need to complain to the  
just discovered!**

OrgTechHandle: LNTS-ARIN  
OrgTechName: Lunarpages NOC Technical Support  
OrgTechPhone:  
OrgTechEmail: hostmaster@lunarpages.com

**Technical contact information.**

# ARIN WHOIS database, last updated 2004-04-08  
19:15  
# Enter ? for additional hints on searching ARIN's  
WHOIS database.

See also:

 [How do I read the Domain WhoIs records?](#)

## 4.4 Should I look for domainname.com or www.domainname.com?

**We recommend that a fully qualified domain name (FQDN) or a hostname is used while performing the lookup.**

The reason is that high level domains (for example softwareriver.com) do not have to represent the web server, mail server or any other computer on that domain. Therefore - domain records will always be the same, but the network records including the physical location of the server may be different.

For example try to perform a search on two of our own domain records.

*www.softwareriver.com*  
*north.softwareriver.com*

You will notice that www.softwareriver.com is located in United States, CA which is correct as that is where our actual web server is hosted.

For north.softwareriver.com however the location will be in Canada, Ontario where our headquarters are which is also correct.

Same goes for any other domain record. The query will be more accurate if you use the hostname for your lookup.

See also:

 [How do I read the Domain WhoIs records?](#)

 [How do I read the Network WhoIs records?](#)

## 4.5 How to use Visual WhoIs 2004 to fight spam?

**Every piece of email contains the exact records about its route on the way to your inbox.** You will have to take a look at the raw message headers to get this information. In Outlook Express simply right-click on a message and select properties In Outlook - you can right click on a message and select "Options" to get to this information. In Eudora - there should be a "blahblah" button for this purpose. Most email applications will allow you to take a look at the raw message content. Note that IP addresses and domain names are completely fake in example below.

At the top of the message you will find text similar to this.

```
Received: from mail.somewhere.com (mail.somewhere.com [63.249.95.37])
    by yourispmailserver (8.12.8/8.12.8) with ESMTP id h7Kmp9QB032161
    for <youremailaddress>; Wed, 20 Aug 2003 18:51:10 -0400
Received: from COMPUTERNAME (dsl3-63-000-00-102.somewhere.com
[63.000.00.102])
```

by mail.somewhere.com with SMTP id h7KMqaNT099675  
for <youremailaddress>; Wed, 20 Aug 2003 15:53:09 -0700 (PDT)

**These are called "received headers" and contain information about the message route. You can have as many Received: headers in a message as there was servers involved in delivering this email.**

The very top header contains the final message destination before it reached you computer and that is usually the mail server at your ISP.

We are particularly interested in the last Received: header as that header will contain the first trace of message transport. In other words - the first header will contain information about the computer and server used to send this message to you.

In our example above that would be the following:

```
Received: from COMPUTERNAME (dsl3-63-000-00-102.somewhere.com  
[63.000.00.102])  
  by mail.somewhere.com with SMTP id h7KMqaNT099675  
  for <youremailaddress>; Wed, 20 Aug 2003 15:53:09 -0700 (PDT)
```

**The first part "Received: from COMPUTERNAME (ipaddress)" is the actual computer used to send this message.**

**"by ..." section indicates the server that first accepted this mail for delivery.**

"for ..." simply indicates who should receive this message.

**Armed with this information you can use Visual WhoIs 2004 to find information about the network this computer used to send the message. In this case simply type 63.000.00.102 into the address bar to get the information. (note that the IP address in this example is completely invalid). The records will usually contain an Abuse contact information where you can notify the network administrator about abuse of their network and that spammer is using it to relay mail trough their servers.**

**You can also look for the information in the "by..." section and contact the people responsible for that server as they may have a security breach.**

Happy hunting!

See also:

 [How do I read the Domain WhoIs records?](#)

 [How do I read the Network WhoIs records?](#)

## 4.6 How to use Visual WhoIs 2004 to protect your privacy?

You can use Visual WhoIs 2004 to protect yourself against many frauds and hoaxes by verifying the identity of the site you are looking at.

Examples:

- There is a well known fraud email message where you would receive and email that looks like it came from PayPal or eBay asking you for your credit card information or your username and password to access these services. These frauds are getting better and better each day and they actually create a similar looking site to trick you into thinking that you are on some other, secure server, from a well respected

companies like the two mentioned earlier. **To protect yourself - simply click on the "Locate" button in your browser and Visual WhoIs will give you full records as well as location of the site. These records cannot be fake and you will quickly discover the fraud.**

- **Before submitting any kind of personal information, use the "Locate" button in your browser to verify the records for the site you are browsing** as well as the company and server location (physical location is also shown on the globe). Do not submit any personal information if you have any reservations about the site!
- **Before you submit your credit card information - use the "Locate" button in your browser to verify that this really is the site you are looking at as well as the physical location of the server and the company owning that domain.** If you don't feel comfortable submitting your credit card information to a server physically located outside your own country - don't do it. Use their email address to contact someone at the site to make sure you are not dealing with a fraud. (you can also always use Visual WhoIs 2004 to verify the origin of the message sent back to you)!

There are many other cases where you may want to verify the information posted on the site by looking at the WhoIs records for that site. If the records in either network or domain registrar don't match with the information given on the site - be careful. If you look up our web server - [www.softwareriver.com](http://www.softwareriver.com) you will find that our web server is hosted by a company located in California. This location will be shown on the 3D globe as well. Our domain records however will show you our main mailing address which is the same as the information we have on our web site.

**If you find a site that claims to be located in one country, but both of the records (domain and network) are located elsewhere - try to verify the information before you submit any personal information through that site. Again... it is ok to have one of these records (usually the network record which contain the physical server location) showing a different location than the domain records since the actual server hardware could be located anywhere in the world.**

See also:

 [How do I read the Domain WhoIs records?](#)

 [How do I read the Network WhoIs records?](#)

## 4.7 Which location is shown on the 3D globe?

3D globe in Visual WhoIs 2004 will always show you the [actual location of the network](#) hosting the given server. This location may be different from the [domain records](#) and company's mailing address since the server can be hosted by any company in the world.

To find the mailing address of the company that owns the domain you are looking for - take a look at the Domain Information section of the main screen.

## 4.8 How accurate is the traceroute?

Actual traceroute function inside Visual WhoIs 2004 is as accurate as any other traceroute you might have used in the past. The difference is that Visual WhoIs 2004 will also show you the network locations starting from your ISP to the ISP hosting the destination server.

Note that the route shown on the globe uses [network locations](#) that do not have to be the actual network "nodes". Therefore the route shown on the globe may be slightly inaccurate in some cases, but the addresses of the networks that are hosting these nodes will be accurate.

## 4.9 My firewall software warns me that Visual Whols 2004 is attempting to access the internet.

To retrieve the records and resolve the domain name and IP addresses, Visual WhoIs 2004 must connect to the WhoIs servers and DNS servers located on the Internet. Visual WhoIs 2004 will not be able to perform these operations without accessing these servers and performing the queries.

We do not have any hidden activities and there is no spyware in any of our software products.

## 4.10 Can I call Visual Whols 2004 from the command line?

Definitely! You can call Visual WhoIs 2004 from the command line or from your application or a script. The syntax is very simple, just pass it an IP address, URL or a domain name as the first command line argument like this:

```
VisualWhoIs2004.exe 127.0.0.1
```

```
VisualWhoIs2004.exe www.somedomain.com
```

## 4.11 What is the difference between an IP Address, hostname and a domain name?

- An **IP address** is a unique number that identifies a computer on the Internet, for example 66.11.174.89. Every computer connected to the Internet has at least one unique IP address. A WhoIs query of an IP address usually returns the information about the network this computer is using to connect to the Internet. These records will usually return the physical location of the given computer. The location shown on the 3D globe is extracted from the IP address whois records.

- A **hostname** is simply an easy to remember, unique name that is associated with an IP address. For example `www.softwareriver.com` points to `64.235.234.128`. Performing a WhoIs query on a hostname usually yields the same results as performing a query of an IP address.
- A **domain name** is a network name registered to a person or an organization. A domain name can have many hostnames. For example `www.softwareriver.com`, `north.softwareriver.com` and so on are all hosts on a `softwareriver.com` domain. Performing a WhoIs query against a domain name gives back the information about the owner of that domain name and in many cases technical and other contact information for that domain name.

**Visual WhoIs 2004 will try to perform all of these queries automatically**

regardless if your original query was an ip address, a domain name or a host name.

In case of an IP address, Visual WhoIs will perform a reverse DNS lookup to try to determine the domain name for that address. If there is a reverse record for the given address a domain query will be performed as well.

In case of the hostnames - Visual WhoIs 2004 will also resolve the hostname to the IP address associated with it and perform the IP address query as well.

See also:



[Should I look for domainname.com or www.domainname.com?](#)



[How do I read the Domain WhoIs records?](#)



[How do I read the Network WhoIs records?](#)

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