DOMAINTOOLS API:
Whois Evaluation Plan

The DomainTools Whois API provides programmatic access at large scale to the Whois records of domain names and IP addresses. Options exist to obtain structured data parsed out of the domain Whois records.

CACHED WHOIS DATA

The DomainTools Whois API is primarily delivered as a cached Whois lookup. It is powered by sophisticated technology that works asynchronously to obtain Whois records on newly discovered and recently updated domain names. Currently, the system is adding millions of Whois records every day.

API queries to this system operate only against the DomainTools infrastructure, which permits high-volume access with consistently fast query responses and the ability to scale to meet virtually any demand. It offers significant value over less-mature query-based APIs and especially raw queries, and when properly implemented, it can even be superior to periodic Whois databases delivered in bulk that become outdated as soon as they are generated.

DomainTools has also established mechanisms to detect parsing failures and cache misses in API requests and feed those into the asynchronous update process.

For these reasons, an effective evaluation of the DomainTools Whois API should include a process to measure how often a domain name is missing from the cache. A production implementation should store those domains in a queue to be tried again several times over the next 12-24 hours.

BASIC IMPLEMENTATION

1. Query the DomainTools Whois API or the DomainTools Parsed Whois API for a domain name.

2. Store the results in a persistent data store.

3. If no results were returned, store the domain name and the HTTP response code for further analysis.

USAGE TIPS

1. The Parsed Whois API is a distinct product from the non-parsed (raw) Whois API. Ensure you are using the correct URL for the product you are accessing (see documentation for details) and that your account is authorized to access it.

2. You can obtain the Whois record for IP addresses in the same way you obtain the raw Whois record for domain names. Parsed records are not yet available for IP Whois records.

3. The cache date for a Whois record is returned as a distinct field in the response for both parsed and Raw API. Use that date to determine if the result is "fresh enough" for your purposes; if it is not, create a record of how often that happens and for which top-level domains and communicate that to your DomainTools sales engineer.

4. A response code of 206 from the Parsed Whois API indicates a parsing failure. The raw Whois record is still available in the result, and it is likely that the parsing error for that specific Whois format will be fixed over the next few days by the DomainTools engineering team.