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Thawte® [Wildcard SSL Certificates](#) provide encryption and authentication for multiple hosts sharing the same subdomain level – for example, www.thawte.com, support.thawte.com, and mail.thawte.com. Compared to purchasing and deploying individual certificates for each subdomain in use, Thawte Wildcard Certificates are a powerfully versatile, simple, and cost-effective solution. Benefit from the flexibility and value provided to help you demonstrate that data-in-transit remains protected, no matter which subdomain is accessed.

Before you choose the efficiency of a wildcard certificate, make sure that you understand the benefits alongside the disadvantages and possible risks. In determining whether a wildcard certificate is right for your needs and environment, consider:

- Pages requiring Extended Validation (EV) SSL cannot be secured by a wildcard certificate. Instead, Thawte recommends SSL Web Server Certificates with EV for pages involving passwords, Personally Identifiable Information (PII), and eCommerce fixtures such as shopping carts, checkout, and payment.
- Deploying the same wildcard certificate across multiple subdomains and servers carries inherent risk: if one server or subdomain is compromised, all subdomains can be equally compromised. Ensure that your environment is protected with multiple layers of defense from all external and internal threats.

Key Benefits

Lowers administrative and deployment costs via deployment of a single SSL certificate for multiple subdomains

Dramatically simplifies certificate installation and management by securing an unlimited number of subdomains that share the same domain name

Allows immediate deployment of SSL to new or currently-unprotected subdomains, eliminating the need to wait for issuance of new certificates for those servers and providing valuable future-proofing

Fulfills administration needs of feature-rich environments that require secure client-server and server-server communications, beyond or behind the firewall

Assures users and increases trust by demonstrating full authentication of the organization identified in the certificate

Delivers compatibility by supporting over 99% of desktop and mobile browsers, preventing users from encountering confidence-sapping error messages

Increases value by incorporating all you've come to expect from a Thawte SSL certificate: up to 256-bit session encryption, caring and friendly support, and unlimited free replacements for the lifetime of the certificate

- Managing one certificate can certainly make certificate management easier, but wildcard certificates can't lessen the administrative burden of deployment given multiple subdomains or servers. For example, should a wildcard certificate need to be revoked, the risks mentioned previously will persist until the certificate is removed from every subdomain and server on which it's deployed.
- Wildcards have limitations regarding multiple domain names and multiple servers. Thawte recommends any of its three SSL certificates with Subject Alternative Name

(SAN) functionality for securing multiple domains (such as www.thawte.com and www.thawte.co.uk). Additionally, each Thawte Wildcard SSL Certificate is licensed for multiple subdomains, but not for multiple servers; an additional license is necessary for each additional server.

- Some older browsers do not support wildcard certificates – and some cannot support the accepted standard of 128-bit SSL session encryption. For support of older browsers, Thawte recommends SGC SuperCert to extend SSL protection to the maximum number of visitors to your site.

To learn more, contact our sales advisors:

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- Visit our website at <https://www.thawte.com/log-in>

Protect your business and translate trust to your customers with high-assurance digital certificates from Thawte, the world's first international specialist in online security. Backed by a 17-year track record of stability and reliability, a proven infrastructure, and world-class customer support, Thawte is the international partner of choice for businesses worldwide.