The Green Address Bar Is Back

Maybe some readers have noticed that the green address bar of browsers that was often seen when surfing the Internet is gone, and only the IE browser can still see the green address bar. So, where did the green address bar go? Why was there a green address bar before, but not anymore? The author answers these questions in detail in this article.

To answer these questions, we must go back to the CA/Browser Forum autumn face-to-face meeting held in San Antonio, Texas, USA on September 20-21, 2006. According to the minutes of the meeting, Microsoft will update the IE 7 browser in January 2007 in Windows Vista operating system to support the green address bar of websites with EV SSL certificates deployed.

Why did the global CAs and browsers industry launch the EV SSL certificate product? Why is there any special treatment for a website that deploys this type of SSL certificate - the address bar turns green? To answer these questions, we must first talk about the history of SSL certificate. The author said in the article "The history of SSL Certificates" that GeoTrust invented the DV SSL certificate that everyone is familiar with now, which has made great contributions to the popularization and application of SSL certificates. Because there was only one SSL certificate type – OV SSL at that time, it was not only expensive but also took a long time to be issued, because it took time and increase human resource to complete the identity validation of the website. The DV SSL certificate can be issued immediately by validating the ownership of the domain name, which is very fast and automatically, so it can be very cheap or even free.

However, with the popular use of DV SSL certificate, many counterfeit bank websites can also get the DV SSL certificates, and the browser displays the DV SSL certificate, and the OV SSL certificate is same, all have a security padlock, which cannot help users accurately identify fake banking websites. For this reason, the CA/Browser Forum has launched a new type of SSL certificate - EV SSL certificate. The full English name is Extended Validation SSL Certificate, which is intended to validate the identity of the website more strictly and display it in the browser address bar as green to highlight the website where EV SSL certificate is deployed. Green means secure. If the user sees the address bar turns green when surfing the Internet, the website is a trusted website! Although the author did not participate in that meeting, I think it is the greatest innovation in the CA and browser industry, and it can help netizens to identify which website is a trusted website very simply and intuitively.
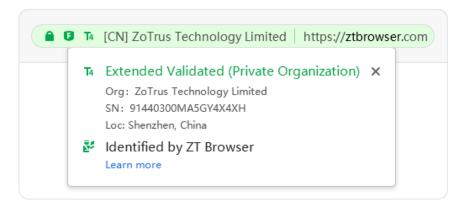
Unfortunately, in September 2019, Google Chrome released the Chrome 77 version, which no longer displays the EV SSL certificate as a green address bar, and then Firefox and other browsers followed. By the end of last year, basically all browsers no longer displayed the EV SSL certificate as green address bar. This change has been opposed by many CAs and many well-known CA experts when the Chrome released the public beta version, but after all, it did not prevent the disappearance of the green address bar, browser have the right to modify their own UI, how to display the SSL certificate is not bound by any international standards. The author also does not like to publicly comment on why these browsers make such a decision.

Now, the ZT Browser has brought back the green address bar that is very familiar to netizens all over the world. The author wrote this article on the day of release to share with readers my thoughts on the green address bar.
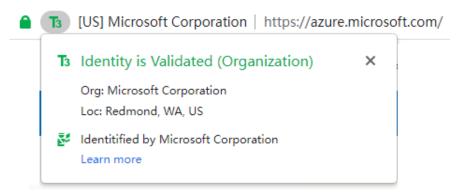
First, let's go back to the original intention of introducing the green address bar. The green address bar is to help netizens to easily identify whether the website is trusted, because the security padlock can only prove that the website connection is encrypted. This original intention is very correct, but unfortunately, some browsers have changed it according to their own ideas. The author thinks that this change is because they forgot the original intention and lost their way! Therefore, we need to not forget the original intention, the first product launched by my company is the ZT Browser, which is to bring the green address bar back to the eyes of global netizens and make the Internet surfing more secure for

global netizens! This is more important in this day that free DV SSL certificates are readily available.

Second, now that the widespread deployment of DV SSL certificates has become a reality, in order to make up for the lack of identity of the website that deploys the DV SSL certificate, the Browser released this time not only supports the display of the deployment of EV SSL website as green address bar, but also supports the green bar display for websites that passed the website identity validation, even if it is deployed a DV SSL certificate. This will greatly reduce the burden of users having to purchase more expensive EV SSL certificate. This solution is separating the website trusted identity authentication and https transmission encryption into two things, users can still deploy cheaper or even free DV SSL certificate to achieve https encryption, and at the same time, they can apply for the trusted website authentication service to achieve a green address bar, which can not only ensure transmission security and can also ensure that the identity is trusted, which is a solution for the best of both.
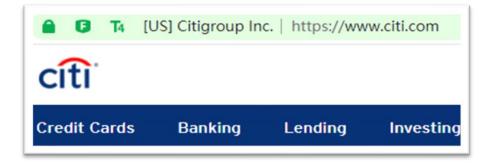

Third, ZT Browser not only has a return of the green address bar, but also innovatively displays the name of the OV SSL certificate that validates the identity of the organization, so that the OV SSL certificate can also reflect its true value and help users can easily identify the real identity of the website and prevent website identity fraud.
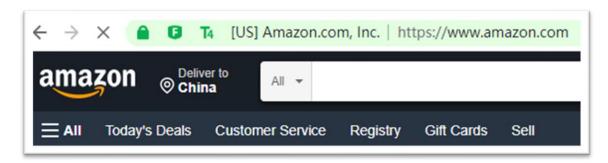
ZT Browser has made many CA experts and green address bar fans who want to see a green address bar to realize the dream of green address bar, and it will surely be favored by all netizens. Welcome to download the ZT Browser for free, to enjoy the familiar green address bar, stay secure online.

Richard Wang

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In Shenzhen, China