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## CeBIT nurses cause Twitter uproar

By [Suzanne Tindal, ZDNet.com.au](#)

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URL: <http://www.zdnet.com.au/news/software/soa/CeBIT-nurses-cause-Twitter-uproar/0,130061733,339296399,00.htm>

**Domain name specialist NetRegistry has come under fire for using women dressed as nurses to promote its services at Australia's largest trade fair CeBIT this week.**

Throughout today a number of members of Australia's ICT and marketing communities used the Twitter social networking platform to flag their belief the use of what many described as NetRegistry "booth babes" was demeaning to women, comments that came after discussion had initially appeared to take a lighthearted view of the marketing technique.

Social media expert [Stephen Collins](#) wrote: "Association of sexist imagery with women in the ICT industry is ipso facto degrading. Perception = reality" and was answered soon after by [US-based Aussie Jo White](#) who said: "It's more than that too. It suggests the company doesn't have a product/service that is worth looking at on its own. Cheap tactic".

"The idea of 'booth babes', no matter how they are dressed, has had its day. Professional people, professional image," added Collins. [Said Perth-based web designer Taa Brennan](#): "I put it to you that more women are starting up online businesses than men. This is a trend. You don't want them offside."

Bloch also used [his own Twitter account](#) to play down the sexism allegations.

Bloch said the nurses' uniforms had only come into play because of NetRegistry's medical theme — the nurses had been asking passers by about the health of their websites. He insisted that there had also been male nurses and doctors. "There would have been female doctors if any of our sales people were female — but they're not," he told [ZDNet.com.au](#).

**“ I think it's political**

He also pointed out that women who were manning other booths were showing considerably more flesh than the nurses. "They are deliberately not wearing what one might call ultra-sexy outfits," he said.



**One of the controversial nurses**  
 (Credit: [Liam Tung/ZDNet.com.au](#))

**correctness  
going gang  
busters 99**

NetRegistry CEO Larry  
Bloch

According to Bloch, the costumes really had all been about the medical theme — a little fun — and were not supposed to have been offensive. "I think it's political correctness going gang busters," he said.

The thick and fast tweets drew annoyance from former Linux Australia president Pia Waugh, who currently works as a political advisor for Senator Kate Lundy, although Waugh didn't seem annoyed at the nurses'

uniforms, only that people's admiration or disgust at the marketing ploy was clogging up the twitter tubes with related tweets.

"Imagine the 'nurses' at CeBIT are big hairy and Victor-esque men and perhaps we can all get back to interesting topics :)," she wrote.

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