

VIRTUAL REAL ESTATE | Online craze sweeping world

\$2550 and all of SA is yours

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REAL ESTATE EDITOR

WANT to buy Adelaide Airport? That only will cost you \$30.

Or maybe the Barossa Valley, you can get that for the same price.

High rollers actually can pick up the whole of South Australia for just \$2550, well, virtually, that is...

Described as "monopoly on steroids", cities, states and landmarks worldwide are being sold off to the highest bidder in new internet craze, Weblo.com

Part MySpace, part Second Life, Weblo is a recreation of the world online, where places are bought and sold for real money. In fact, only recently our fair city of Adelaide was picked up for just \$95.

Murray Bridge, Port Pirie, Victor Harbor and Woomera also have gone.

Mt Gambier buyer Ray Doyle owns 94 cities around the world. "I saw an

article on Weblo and thought it sounded interesting, so I signed up and got addicted to it," the Sydneysider said.

"I bought Mt Gambier as I wanted to buy a city in SA. Mt Gambier was available and is a fairly well-known city, so I thought I would snap it up. It cost me about \$7 to buy."

I signed up and got addicted

Weblo.com spokesman Colin Trethewey said the site, founded last December, had attracted more than 34,000 members.

"The founder, Rocky Mirza, wanted to give the average person a chance they'd never get - to own the places or people they love."

That is right, you can buy people, too. Celebrities are a popular purchase.

Want Brad Pitt? He is yours for \$1785. If you are

more in the market for someone such as Paris Hilton, she comes with a \$8326 tag.

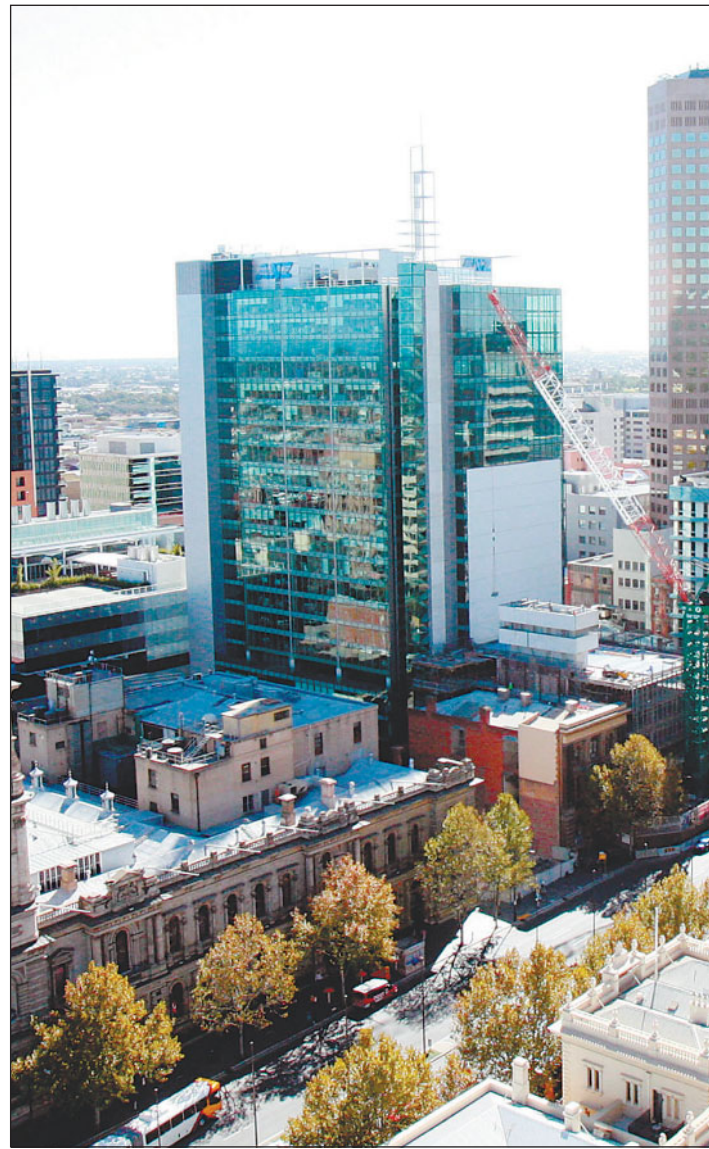
If you want it, you can pretty much buy anything, for the right price.

That is like just throwing away money, right? Wrong, Mr Trethewey explained. When you buy a place you become its virtual mayor.

For those who enjoy a little entrepreneurial dabbling, the site actually gives you the opportunity to make cash by developing your city or property's site or creating a portfolio and reselling.

"Once you own a place or person, you get their site and you develop it like you would a piece of real estate," Mr Trethewey said.

"You can add blogs, forums, put up ads and then you get paid revenue the more traffic you get through. You can buy and resell and make money that way." Will this be the next online craze?



THE COST

- Adelaide: \$95
- Melbourne: \$196
- Sydney: \$231
- Kangaroo Island: \$30
- Port Pirie: \$23
- Bill Gates: \$1191
- Brad Pitt: \$1785
- Paris Hilton: \$8326
- Sydney Opera House: \$864
- Crown Towers, Melbourne: \$858
- The Great Barrier Reef: \$120

FOR SALE: The fair city of Adelaide retails for just \$95, according to Weblo.com, just a fraction of the price Paris Hilton would fetch. Hilton is worth much more than Brad Pitt and Bill Gates combined.

Picture: SAM WUNDKE

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