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DS | THE DOMAIN STANDARD

The Voice of the Quarter

THE FUTURE OF IDENTITY: KALIYA YOUNG (AKA IDENTITY WOMAN) ON DECENTRALIZATION, ETHICS, AND THE WEB3 FRONTIER

Innovation & Technology

DOMORA: THE STOCK MARKET OF DOMAIN NAMES

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DIGITAL IDENTITY IN THE WEB3 WORLD

REFLECTING ON DOMAIN OWNERSHIP

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From Web2 Roots to Web3 Frontiers

The Domain Standard is the voice of a new era in digital identity and investment. Bridging the worlds of Web2 and Web3, each issue explores the evolving role of domain names as strategic assets, financial instruments, and cultural signifiers in the decentralized internet. With original reporting, market analysis, and expert insight, we track the forces reshaping how domains are owned, traded, and understood, from blockchain-based infrastructure to AI-driven valuation. Whether you're a seasoned investor, a curious builder, or simply navigating the naming layer of the digital world, *The Domain Standard* offers a clear lens on where the internet is going and who gets to name it.

Editorial Manager
Matteo Stettler

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Setting the Standard

The story of the internet has always been, at its heart, a story about identity. In its earliest days, we discovered ourselves through screen names and email addresses. In the social media era, curated profiles became central to how we worked, connected, and even lived. Today, with the rapid emergence of Web3, identity once again stands at the frontier. This time it is shaped not by centralized platforms but by decentralized technologies that return agency to the individual.

This issue of *The Domain Standard* is dedicated to exploring what that shift means. In our 'Quarterly Focus' article, we reflect on digital identity in the Web3 world, showing how domain ownership is becoming more than a technical tool: it is an existential claim to freedom, authenticity, and self-determination in digital life. Following on, our 'Voice of the Quarter' interview with Kaliya Young — known to many as *Identity Woman* — offers a thought-provoking perspective on decentralization, ethics, and what is at stake in building this new digital frontier.

In 'Innovation & Technology,' Yotam Katznelson introduces *Domora*, a groundbreaking platform that enables the fractionalization of domains, opening up new possibilities for ownership, investment, and liquidity. Alongside it, Nicky's Thomas Medard shares insights on bridging domains and crypto, two spheres that are increasingly more and more intertwined.

As always, our 'Who's Who' section highlights leading figures shaping today's domain landscape, from entrepreneurs to innovators, while our 'Market Reports' track the developments in Q2 2025 in both aftermarket activity and domain registrations. With insightful comments by Page Howe, these reports help frame where the industry stands and, more importantly, where it is heading.

Finally, our 'Calendar Events' section brings together the highlights of recent months and a look ahead at what's to come, including an in-depth conversation with Munir Badr on Dubai Domain Days and the collaborative spirit driving global domain culture forward.

Taken together, these contributions remind us that domains are no longer just about naming websites. They are becoming anchors of digital identity, passports to decentralized networks, and foundations for new communities. As Web3 continues to mature, the responsibility — and opportunity — lies in ensuring that this transformation empowers individuals everywhere to claim, express, and protect their digital selves.

The Editorial Team

The Domain Standard

Introducing freename

Freename is a leading Web3 company pioneering the future of digital identity through blockchain-based domain names. With a vision to decentralize internet naming infrastructure, Freename empowers individuals, brands, and communities to register, own, and control their domains without reliance on centralized authorities.

Freename's platform allows users not only to mint and trade top-level and second-level domains (TLDs and SLDs) on-chain, but also to integrate them across Web3 ecosystems for use in wallets, websites, applications, and beyond. Built on open standards and designed for interoperability, Freename domains are fully owned by their holders, bringing transparency, permanence, and user sovereignty to the naming layer of the internet.

Founded with the belief that domains are more than digital addresses, Freename supports a growing global community of creators, developers, and investors exploring the potential of Web3-native naming systems.

> **"Founded with the belief that domains are more than digital addresses, Freename supports a growing global community of creators, developers, and investors exploring the potential of Web3-native naming systems."**

To learn more, visit **freename.com** and explore how you can own your digital identity, one domain at a time.

The Freename Team

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Quarterly focus

Digital Identity in the Web3 World: Reflecting on Domain Ownership

Introduction: The Evolution of Digital Identity

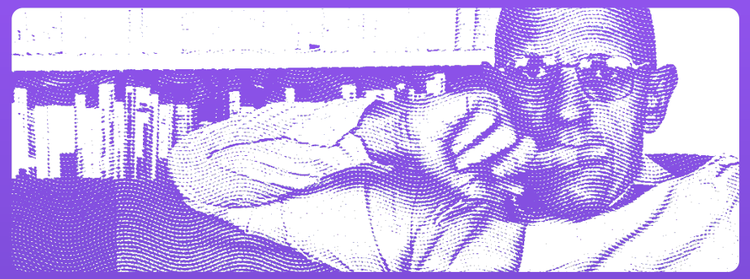
Who are we? While the question of our identity has been a bone of contention among philosophers and intellectuals from Plato to Foucault, it has never ceased to haunt us. Today, the age-old problem of identity resurfaces in a novel terrain: the digital world. Our interactions, desires, and social lives are increasingly – oftentimes *entirely* – mediated by digital platforms, prompting us to rethink what it means to be some-*one* – not merely some-*where* – online. So: *who are we when we are online?* That is to say: what's our digital self? From email addresses and internet usernames to comprehensive profiles curated on social media platforms (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn etc.), our digital personas have become central to how we present ourselves, connect with and, perhaps most importantly, are recognized by others. There is no going around it: given how much of our day we all now spend online, much of what we are nowadays is what we are *online*. "We surf, therefore we are", we could say, actualizing Descartes' formulation of the *cogito ergo sum* ('I think therefore I am').
Could you imagine applying for a job today without a LinkedIn profile, or starting a creative career without cultivating an Instagram presence? It would be at least as unthinkable as trying to organize a community event or promote a new project without a Facebook page. Whether for professional advancement, personal expression, or collective action, our digital profiles are no longer mere representations of who we are, mere digital projections of our real identities: they are the infrastructures through which we actively *become* who we really are or at least *build* who we want to be.

According to C. Weisgerber and S. Butler (St. Edward's University, Austin), contemporary digital practices – particularly content curation and self-writing on social media – are a modern analogue of the Greco-Roman *hupomnemata*, described by Michel Foucault as techniques for shaping the self through written reflection. Though digital in form, these curatorial acts are framed as practices of self-exploration and self-care that extend beyond the screen, actively shaping the offline, embodied subject.

Weisgerber, C., & Butler, S. H. (2015). [1]

[1] *Weisgerber, C., & Butler, S. H. (2015). 'Curating the Soul: Foucault's concept of hupomnemata and the digital technology of self-care.' Information, Communication & Society, 19(10), 1340–1355*

In this perspective, our online profiles could be considered, to distort only slightly a term coined by the French post-structuralist philosopher Michel Foucault, digital 'technologies of the self,'[2] which is to say, in his definition, technologies that "permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection or immortality."[3]



Michel Foucault | Historian of ideas and philosopher

Curating a social media presence today, for instance, can be understood as just such a technology: a set of mediated practices through which individuals work on themselves, often with the implicit or explicit goal of achieving success, recognition, coherence, or authenticity in both online and offline domains.
Seen in this light, the digital realm is not merely a space for communication or entertainment, but a domain in which practices of self-fashioning unfold with radical, potentially life-altering consequences. One thing is clear: our digital self – this curated, algorithmically shaped projection that we incessantly build online, day by day – can open doors, build trust, or just as easily exclude us from visibility, relationships and professional opportunities.

Our digital self is not just a game, a mere façade to our real identities, either. It could be claimed that it actually reaches down to our truest self. As the rock star, Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Žižek once put it:

"Precisely because I think ... it's only a persona, a self-image I adopt in virtual space, I can be there much more truthful. I can enact there an identity which is much closer to my true self."[4]

Slavoj Žižek
Political philosopher and cultural critic

Yet these identities are fragmented, mutable, and often controlled by opaque, centralized systems, raising pressing concerns about privacy, autonomy, and authenticity. As we shall explore in the 'Quarterly Focus' of the present issue, the advent of Web3 – a decentralized and user-empowered iteration of the internet grounded in blockchain technology – offers an opportunity to reimagine our digital identities and rethink anew our entire online presence. Here, domain ownership emerges not merely as a functional necessity but as an expression of one's claim to a free and autonomous digital existence.

[2] *The parallel has already been explored at some lenght by the contributors of the volume edited by Yasmine Abbas and Fred Dervin, Digital Technologies of the Self, Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing (2009).*
[3] *Foucault, Michel (1988), Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault. London: Tavistock, p. 18*
[4] *Citation drawn from the documentary directed by Sophie Fiennes and presented by Slavoj Žižek, The Pervert's Guide to Cinema (2006).*

From Centralization to Decentralization: A Paradigm Shift

Traditional digital identities are managed by centralized authorities, be it social media companies like Facebook, email providers such as Gmail, or domain registrars like GoDaddy. These entities hold significant – if not, in many cases, *complete* – power and control over user data, opening the door to potential issues like data breaches, censorship, and loss of access.

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Consider the case of investigative journalist Alexa O'Brien, who in June 2017 found herself abruptly locked out not only of her Gmail and YouTube channel, but also of Google Drive, where she'd stored hundreds of hours of irreplaceable research. A reviewer had misclassified her work as "terrorist propaganda." With no meaningful appeal options and limited transparency, her access was suddenly revoked — demonstrating how fragile a journalistic identity can be when centralized platforms control your digital presence. What about the journalist's digital identity? As this case reveals, it's not truly theirs, because it's owned and controlled by a centralized authority that can revoke it at any time, with little transparency or recourse. [5]

In contrast, Web3 introduces a decentralized framework where individuals can own and manage their own digital identities without any intermediation. Blockchain-based domain systems, such as the Ethereum Name Service (ENS), Unstoppable Domains and Freename, exemplify this shift by allowing users to register and control domain names on decentralized networks. These domains are not merely web addresses, but they function as unique identifiers, wallet addresses, and gateways to decentralized applications (dApps), representing the user's digital identity across the Web3 ecosystem.

The good news is: the infrastructure for this revolution in digital identity is already here and it's growing by the day. In recent years, the Web3 domain ecosystem has expanded rapidly, as the data available clearly show. According to the Global Domain Report 2025 by InternetX and Sedo, by the end of 2024, over 10 million Web3 domains had been registered across various naming services, including popular extensions like .eth (2.815.259), .nft (789.013), and .crypto (744.186).

Table 1

Number of SLDs

2.815.259	.eth
789.013	.nft
744.186	.crypto
601.304	.wallet
393.265	.x
291.313	.blockchain
207.270	.bitcoin
195.158	.zil
158.635	.dao
157.423	.888

data from internal report by Freename

While platforms like ENS and Unstoppable Domains saw their registration volumes stabilize after the initial surge in 2022, both continued to grow steadily, with ENS expanding its cumulative base by almost 11% between 2023 and 2024, and Unstoppable by roughly 10.5% over the same period. This reflects the natural maturation of an emerging technology, echoing early adoption patterns in the Web2 domain space. Crucially, Web3 domains are still in their first decade and have already reached adoption levels that took Web2 years, if not decades, to achieve.

The rise of Freename, growing from just 9,413 domains in 2022 to 170,142 in 2024 – a staggering increase of approximately 1,708% – underscores the continued momentum and growing opportunities in the Web3 space.

This growth is further supported by broader crypto adoption, integration with wallets and dApps, as well as institutional milestones, such as Freename becoming the world's first Web3 namespace to achieve ICANN registrar accreditation.[6] High-profile sales like "paradigm.eth" ($1.512.000) and "wallet.crypto" ($250.000), along with the rollout of verifiable on-chain identity features, are positioning Web3 domains as essential tools for decentralized authentication, branding, and interoperability across the evolving digital landscape. As such, they are becoming foundational building blocks for decentralized digital identities – an idea at the heart of the emerging paradigm of digital self-sovereignty, to which we shall now turn.

[5] *Dell Cameron (September 15, 2017), "Journalist Nearly Banned from YouTube and Gmail for Posting Al-Qaeda Videos From Chelsea Manning Trial," Gizmodo, retrieved from https://gizmodo.com/journalist-nearly-banned-from-youtube-and-gmail-for-pos-1815314182*

Autonomy and Digital Self-Sovereignty

Decentralized identity systems represent a profound shift away from the centralized models that have long dominated the digital landscape, in which platforms like Facebook, Google, or LinkedIn not only host but effectively own user identities. In these traditional frameworks, individuals depend on corporate gatekeepers to authenticate, manage, and even access their personal data, often without meaningful transparency or consent. Needless to say, this arrangement compromises individual autonomy and reduces the user to a passive – and monetized! – object within the digital economy.

In contrast, what is now increasingly known as the paradigm of Self-Sovereign Identity (SSI) challenges this dependency by asserting that individuals should own, control, and manage their digital identities directly and completely. At the core of SSI, as defined by internet security pioneer, now advocate for decentralized identity systems Christopher Allen, is a set of ten foundational principles, which establish identity not as a commodity to be controlled and monetized by corporations and institutions, but as a fundamental human right.

focus

This emphasis on personal rights also has a crucial humanitarian dimension. As Christopher Allen notes, over a billion people, many in the Global South, lack formal identification, excluding them from access to healthcare, education, financial systems, and democratic participation. Self-Sovereign Identity offers a decentralized alternative that can empower these individuals to assert and verify their identities without relying on fragile or exclusionary state systems, potentially restoring access to rights and services that many in the developed world take for granted

Christopher Allen, "The Path to Self-Sovereign Identity," 2016

These principles include: the recognition that users have an independent existence; the right to control their identities; access to their own data; transparency about how systems operate; the assurance of persistence and portability of identity across platforms; the enforcement of minimal disclosure (only sharing what's necessary); and the importance of interoperability and consent. Together, these principles form a framework in which identity is not imposed from above but emerges from the ground up, shaped and fully controlled by the individual.

The Ten Principles of Self-Sovereign Identity

Christopher Allen

Blockchain & Decentralized Identity Architect
Internet Cryptography Pioneer — Co-author TLS Security Standard

1. Existence

Users must have an independent existence.

Any self-sovereign identity is ultimately based on the ineffable "I" that's at the heart of identity. It can never exist wholly in digital form. This must be the kernel of self that is upheld and supported. A self-sovereign identity simply makes public and accessible some limited aspects of the "I" that already exists.

2. Control

Users must control their identities.

Subject to well-understood and secure algorithms that ensure the continued validity of an identity and its claims, the user is the ultimate authority on their identity. They should always be able to refer to it, update it, or even hide it. They must be able to choose celebrity or privacy as they prefer. This doesn't mean that a user controls all of the claims on their identity: other users may make claims about a user, but they should not be central to the identity itself.

3. Access

Users must have access to their own data.

A user must always be able to easily retrieve all the claims and other data within his identity. There must be no hidden data and no gatekeepers. This does not mean that a user can necessarily modify all the claims associated with his identity, but it does mean they should be aware of them. It also does not mean that users have equal access to others' data, only to their own.

4. Transparency

Systems and algorithms must be transparent.

The systems used to administer and operate a network of identities must be open, both in how they function and in how they are managed and updated. The algorithms should be free, open-source, well-known, and as independent as possible of any particular architecture; anyone should be able to examine how they work.

5. Persistence

Identities must be long-lived.

Preferably, identities should last forever, or at least for as long as the user wishes. Though private keys might need to be rotated and data might need to be changed, the identity remains. In the fast-moving world of the Internet, this goal may not be entirely reasonable, so at the least identities should last until they've been outdated by newer identity systems. This must not contradict a "right to be forgotten"; a user should be able to dispose of an identity if he wishes and claims should be modified or removed as appropriate over time. To do this requires a firm separation between an identity and its claims: they can't be tied forever.

6. Portability

Information and services about identity must be transportable.

Identities must not be held by a singular third-party entity, even if it's a trusted entity that is expected to work in the best interest of the user. The problem is that entities can disappear — and on the Internet, most eventually do. Regimes may change, users may move to different jurisdictions. Transportable identities ensure that the user remains in control of his identity no matter what, and can also improve an identity's persistence over time.

7. Interoperability

Identities should be as widely usable as possible.

Identities are of little value if they only work in limited niches. The goal of a 21st-century digital identity system is to make identity information widely available, crossing international boundaries to create global identities, without losing user control. Thanks to persistence and autonomy these widely available identities can then become continually available.

8. Consent

Users must agree to the use of their identity.

Any identity system is built around sharing that identity and its claims, and an interoperable system increases the amount of sharing that occurs. However, sharing of data must only occur with the consent of the user. Though other users such as an employer, a credit bureau, or a friend might present claims, the user must still offer consent for them to become valid. Note that this consent might not be interactive, but it must still be deliberate and well-understood.

9. Minimalization

Disclosure of claims must be minimized.

When data is disclosed, that disclosure should involve the minimum amount of data necessary to accomplish the task at hand. For example, if only a minimum age is called for, then the exact age should not be disclosed, and if only an age is requested, then the more precise date of birth should not be disclosed. This principle can be supported with selective disclosure, range proofs, and other zero-knowledge techniques, but non-correlatibility is still a very hard (perhaps impossible) task; the best we can do is to use minimalization to support privacy as best as possible.

10. Protection

The rights of users must be protected.

When there is a conflict between the needs of the identity network and the rights of individual users, then the network should err on the side of preserving the freedoms and rights of the individuals over the needs of the network. To ensure this, identity authentication must occur through independent algorithms that are censorship-resistant and force-resilient and that are run in a decentralized manner.

Retrieved on https://www.lifewithalacrity.com/article/the-path-to-self-soverereign-identity/

This vision of identity, as Allen himself reminds his readers, echoes the same Enlightenment's emphasis on personal freedom, self-determination, and rational agency, that underpin much of Western culture, making it what it is today. In the end, SSI offers not merely a technical solution, but an ethical stance: the idea here being that individuals should define and represent themselves online on their own terms. Enabled by Web3 technologies, this model brings the promises of transforming users from passive data subjects into active participants in the governance and presentation of their digital selves, marking an evolution that might restore dignity, agency, and trust in the complex architecture of our publicly shared life online.

> **"Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-imposed immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to use one's understanding without guidance from another"**

Immanuel Kant
'What is Enlightenment' (1784)

Domain Names as Digital Identity Anchors

In the context of Web3, domain names have taken on a far more meaningful role than simply pointing to websites. They've become central to how individuals present themselves, transact, and connect in decentralized digital environments. A Web3 domain – say, for instance, username.eth – is no longer just a web address. It's many things: a wallet, a login, a profile, a statement of identity.

What makes these domains different is that users actually own them. Rather than being rented from a registrar, a Web3 domain is recorded on a blockchain and secured by private keys. That means no third party can take it down or reassign it. It's yours, permanently, unless of course you choose otherwise.

> **"Your digital identity travels with you everywhere in Web3 and the data that goes along with that identity is also owned by you."**

Sandy Carter
Senior VP
Unstoppable Domains

A Web3 domain is what makes that vision tangible. An example? Take Lena, a digital artist who registered the ENS domain lena.eth. This is so much more than just a clever branding move. With this single identifier, Lena receives payments from collectors, showcases her portfolio on a decentralized website, and logs in to various dApps without juggling multiple usernames or passwords. The domain ties all of this together. It's her nameplate, her storefront, and her passport – all rolled into one.

This kind of consolidation is powerful. In today's internet, identity is scattered across platforms: social media handles here, email addresses there, wallets somewhere else. Web3 domains streamline and simplify that chaos. They bring everything under one roof and give users the tools to build a consistent and trustworthy presence online. And it's not just about convenience. In a digital world where reputation often carries more weight than a legal name, having a recognizable, self-owned identity matters. That's what Web3 domains make possible. They don't just say who you are, they show the world what you've built – the digital self you've built yourself, to go back to Foucault's technologies of the self.

> **"In today's internet, identity is scattered across platforms: social media handles here, email addresses there, wallets somewhere else. Web3 domains streamline and simplify that chaos. They bring everything under one roof and give users the tools to build a consistent and trustworthy presence online."**

Owning your domain in Web3 may seem like a small act, but it brings with itself big implications. It's a way to claim space in a digital landscape that's still being drawn and to do it on your own terms.

Conclusion: Embracing a New Digital Identity Paradigm

At its core, the question of digital identity is a question about the self: Who owns it, who expresses it, and how it is recognized. Just as classical philosophy explored the soul, the person, and the self, so too must we now consider our digital being, its rights, and its conditions of flourishing. Web3 – like a modern-day digital Socrates – invites us to reconsider the architecture of our online lives, not as mere consumers of a service but as co-creators of a new common space. Domain ownership in this context becomes an existential act, a staking of claim not merely on space, but on selfhood, on who we are online.

The emergence of decentralized technologies marks a paradigm shift in the way we conceive and manage identity. By reclaiming autonomy, practicing digital self-determination, and participating in the design of the systems we inhabit, we are not just building a better internet, we are redefining what it means to be someone in the digital age. If we are to fulfill the ethical and democratic potential of Web3, we must ensure that this technological revolution serves not only the powerful or the tech-savvy, but all who seek to dwell authentically in the emerging digital world.

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The Voice of The Quarter

The Future of Identity

Kaliya Young (aka Identity Woman) on Decentralization, Ethics, and the Web3 Frontier

In every issue of The Domain Standard, The Voice of the Quarter opens a window into the minds shaping today's domain ecosystem. This feature presents in-depth conversations with the visionaries, builders, and decision-makers whose work defines how we register, trade, and imagine digital identities. From pioneering entrepreneurs and technical architects to policy leaders and creative disruptors, these are the voices setting the pace of change. Our goal is to move past headlines and market trends, uncovering the personal journeys, challenges, and convictions that drive innovation. By sharing their perspectives, we aim to give our readers a deeper understanding of where the domain industry has come from and, more importantly, where it is headed next.

In This Issue

This quarter, we sit down with Kaliya Young – better known with her alias 'Identity Woman' – a pioneer in the field of decentralized digital identity. For nearly two decades, she has been one of the leading voices arguing that people, not platforms, should be at the center of their online lives.

In our conversation, Kaliya reflects on the evolution of self-sovereign identity (SSI) from its early roots in "user-centric" frameworks to today's decentralized architectures. We explore the technical building blocks (DIDs, verifiable credentials, and identity wallets) as well as the social and ethical challenges that come with them: questions of trust, interoperability, exclusion, and the balance between personal sovereignty and community.

We also ask how domain ownership intersects with identity in the decentralized web, what governments and institutions are getting right (and wrong) in deploying new systems, and what a thriving SSI ecosystem might look like by 2030. For anyone invested in the future of names, ownership, and online presence, this conversation offers a rare inside look at both the promise and the pitfalls of digital identity's next chapter.

Kaliya Young

Identity Woman

Kaliya Young (aka Identity Woman) is a leading expert in self-sovereign identity and decentralized digital identity systems. She co-founded the Internet Identity Workshop in 2005, a semi-annual unconference that has been instrumental in developing open standards such as OpenID, OAuth, and Decentralized Identifiers. Kaliya is the author of two books on the topic, *The Domains of Identity* and *A Comprehensive Guide to Self-Sovereign Identity*, and currently teaches Computer Information Systems at Merritt College in Oakland, California. She holds a Master of Science in Identity Management and Security from the University of Texas at Austin and was recognized as a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum in 2012.

"Self-Sovereign Identity to me means that people should be at the center of their digital lives."

Kaliya, you've been one of the central figures in shaping the self-sovereign identity (SSI) movement for nearly two decades. From co-founding the Internet Identity Workshop (IIW) to authoring foundational texts in the field, your work has helped define the boundaries and possibilities of user-centric identity.
How would you define self-sovereign identity in the Web3 world today, and in what ways has the concept evolved from its original formulation?

Self-Sovereign Identity to me means that people should be at the center of their digital lives and there should be an infrastructure to support their sovereignty. The concept was inspired by the cryptography developments of Web3.

We didn't start out 20 years ago with the term "Self-Sovereign Identity". We started out trying to figure out "user-centric identity". I was inspired by the vision of user-centric identity outlined in the article "Augmented Social Network: Building Identity and Trust into the Next Generation Internet," published in First Monday Peer-Reviewed Journal on the Internet in August 2003. When I read this and met the folks working on the vision, I wanted to be a part of making it real . Here we are, still at it 20 years later.

At the first IIW in 2005, a group met to share strategies for URL based sign-on across the web. That meeting evolved into OpenIDConnect.

We also innovated OAuth when it became clear to the engineers that there was a security danger in the proliferation of the "password anti-pattern" (where people would be asked by a new service they were enrolling in to give over the password to a service they were already using to move data to the new service). These protocols are now used over a billion times a day on the internet.

The drawback of these protocols is they are triangles among the individual, the relying party (site they are logging into) and their identity provider connecting them. Sometimes this architecture is referred to as "phone home" because the relying party pings the identity provider of the individual. This means that a person's IdP sees everywhere they login on the net and effectively disintermediates them. This underlying "flaw" in the design motivated us to continue working to find better architectures that don't do this.

About 10 years ago, work began, in part inspired by blockchain technologies, to break apart the triangle with new infrastructure. One important element is figuring out how to identify users outside of either private name spaces (Twitter, Facebook) or globally managed registries (phone numbers, e-mail addresses). The other key element is how entities attest about another entity in a way that can be believed or trusted without going back to the originating source.

> "This underlying 'flaw' in the design motivated us to continue working to find better architectures that don't do this."

Many of our readers are curious about what's actually "under the hood" of decentralized identity systems. They hear terms like DIDs, verifiable credentials, and identity wallets, but it's often unclear how these components fit together.
Could you walk us through the essential infrastructure that enables decentralized digital identity, and what still needs to be built to make it viable at scale?

DID stands for Decentralized Identifier. There are many different varieties of DID. Some are one-time use and ephemeral, some are anchored into blockchains and some are using more conventional architecture and rest on DNS infrastructure. The decentralized identifier specification[1] is standardized at the World Wide Web Consortium and provides a specification for a minimum viable DID method with the same core elements. You can think of that as how someone refers to you. There might be some people who call you by your first name and other people who call you "Mom". If you took a number and waited your turn, you are "Number 15". That's a one-time use identifier.

Continue →

[1] *https://www.w3.org/TR/did-1.0/*

The standard elements of DID doc

1. DID
for self-description

2. Set of public keys
for verification

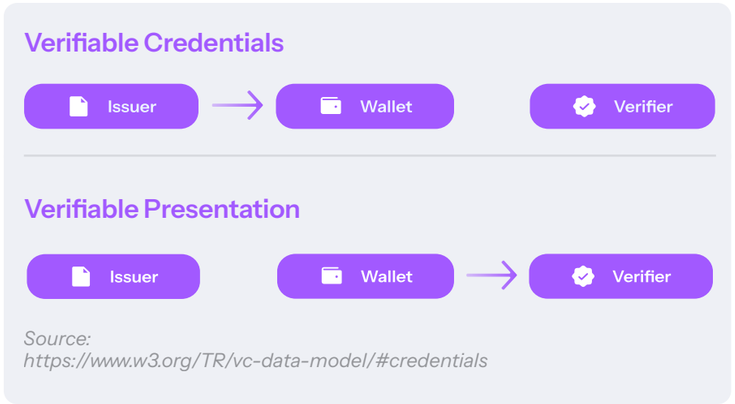
3. Set of auth protocols
for authentication

4. Set of service endpoints
for interaction

4. Timestamp
for audit history

5. Signature
for integrity

When one resolves, or looks up DID you get the associated DID Document. Each DID document has 1) the DID for self-description; 2) a Set of Public Keys for verification; 3) a set of authentication protocols (Algorithms) that can be used to authenticate that the DID is controlled by the owner of the private keys associated with the public keys in the document; 4) a set of service endpoints to interact with the owner of the DID; 5) a Timestamp for Audit history and finally; 6) a Signature for integrity. There are more than 100 DID methods[2] work is now ongoing to standardize some of these methods and to make recommendations of methods by the Decentralized Identity Foundation.
Sometimes when I present the technology, I finish describing DIDs and say "who cares about really long numbers?" because DIDs are really long numbers and so are public keys. They provide a valuable infrastructure service globally resolvable decentralized public key infrastructure. However, they aren't human friendly and don't "do enough" on their own to provide meaningful identity or attribute data about people, organizations, things, machines or anything else.
Verifiable Credentials were developed in parallel with DIDs. They can be easier to understand because they map more easily to existing physical certificates. For hundreds of years, institutions and organizations have issued documents to help people prove things about themselves. Certificates allowed for people to navigate in a world where you moved beyond your family of birth into cities and institutions like guilds and universities. Contemporary documents issued by governments to people with their photos have been around for 100 years. Documents like driver's licenses and passports are "sealed" by the issuer with fancy paper and plastics that help the party looking at the document believe they are real and authentic.
Verifiable Credentials are "sealed" with cryptographic signatures by the issuer with their private key. The issuer shares their public key and anyone wanting to know if indeed they did sign a particular verifiable credential held by a bearer they just need to use the public key to check the signature. An issuer issues a credential to a holder wallet (mostly the holder is the subject of the credential. The holder uses their wallet to share proof they have the credential to the verifier (relying party in the old lingo).
What is needed to really help at scale is the trust infrastructure registries and directories of registries for looking up the keys of issuers.



Source: https://www.w3.org/TR/vc-data-model/#credentials

> "DIDs provide a valuable infrastructure service — globally resolvable decentralized public key infrastructure."

At The Domain Standard, we think a lot about ownership: ownership of names, spaces, and digital presence. Domains have long served as markers of online identity and reputation. In the decentralized future, they might also play new roles.

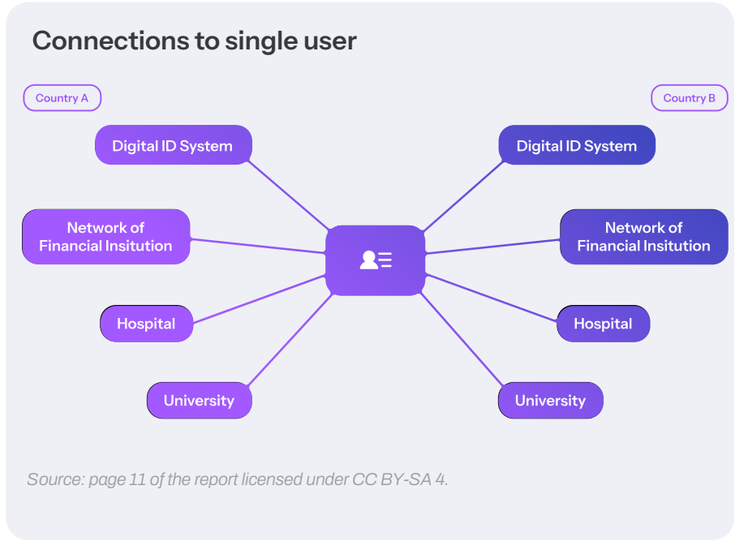
Do you see a convergence between self-sovereign identity and domain ownership? Could domains become a form of verifiable identity, or are they serving a fundamentally different function?

Domains are already a form of identity that has great power on the internet. I've had my URL and blog at "identitywoman.net" and "unconference.net" for 20 years and built my two career areas because I had a web presence.
This question reminds me of the original vision that more than one community had at the first Internet Identity Workshop. They envisioned a future where Domain Names and URLs would be the primary identifiers that people would use around the web in a user-centric system. At that time, it seemed like everyone would have a blog and use it as a login everywhere else.
Web 2.0 meant the arrival of new ways to interact on the web with individuals and organizations created accounts within private name-spaces. These accounts were then used by individuals to login to other sites and systems. Login with Google, Login with Facebook, Login with Github, Login with LinkedIn, Login with Amazon are all using OpenID Connect on top of an OAuth substrate.
Verifiable Credentials can be anchored to any identifier including domain names. Issuers get to pick the identifier of their choosing for the subject and clearly Domain Names are a type of identifier.
Some decentralized identifier methods like DID:Web Verifiable History[3] anchor in the DNS system and resolve to a URL where the DID Doc can be found along with a history of the key rotations over time.

[2] *https://www.w3.org/TR/did-extensions-methods/*
[3] *https://identity.foundation/didwebvh/next/*

You've consistently emphasized the idea of people owning and controlling their identities online. This vision resonates deeply with the ethos of Web3, but turning it into reality seems to involve navigating a maze of technical, regulatory, and social challenges.
In your view, what are the biggest obstacles to realizing truly self-sovereign digital identity in practice?

Human identity is formed through culture. The African word Ubuntu that is sometimes translated "I am because we are" recognizes the interconnectedness of people. Despite the term "self-sovereign", humans are not islands in isolation. People don't determine our identity individually. Identity is socially constructed and contextual.
Decentralized identity protocols, decentralized identifiers, verifiable credentials, the exchange protocols are for the most part and complete. The question before is what value do they bring to whom and who will invest in leveraging these tools.
The US Government actually invested in the development of the protocols at the W3C via the DHS Silicon Valley Innovation Program.
Systems at scale are being built using Verifiable Credentials including the European Digital Identity (EUDI) project which aims to give every European the option to download a wallet and receive a government issued credential in the wallet. In Asia, some governments are going all in with the adoption of decentralized identity protocol stack. Two to look at are Bhutan and Taiwan.
MOSIP is working on open source infrastructure for countries to deploy national ID systems. It includes modules for wallets, issuer code and verifier code.
The Center for Digital Public Infrastructure published a Vision Paper on "User-Centric Credentialling and Personal Data Sharing"[4] that articulates how this works at scale across a wide variety of institutions.
It is heartening to see government adoption, because it means they are stepping aside/away from classical "phone home" architectures that were deployed in the first large scale identity systems by governments in Singapore, Estonia and in India's Aadhaar system.
With all that said, I don't believe that governments are the "definers" of our identities.
It is true that many institutional systems rely on government issued identities as a trust anchor for their operation. When a person enrolls in a university, they present a government issued ID. Based on that, the university issues a physical university identification card. Hospitals also request government issued ID cards to enroll people into their system. This pattern occurs again and again and can scale to the size of the internet and the world.
I believe in Ubuntu - "I am because we are." To make this real in our digital identity systems we need to figure out how groups of humans that have nothing to do with the government can be root anchors for people in relationship to each other inside communities. For example, if you identify with a religious group or social movement, there is no reason why such groups couldn't issue root-anchor identifications vouching for you or declaring your personhood. This type of social identity and its proliferation would really get us to a world where we are credentialing each other in community. We have founded the verifiable community project within Sidways.earth to develop and work on this infrastructure. This would give everyone the right to identify with multiple groups of belonging and truly declare their own identity.



Source: page 11 of the report licensed under CC BY-SA 4.

Interoperability is a word that comes up often in both the identity and Web3 spaces. Yet, we continue to see new platforms creating identity silos or applying standards inconsistently.
Are we moving toward meaningful interoperability between decentralized identity systems, or are we at risk of replicating the same fragmentation we saw in Web2?

Interoperability is important and it emerges in marketplaces of adoption. Sometimes we get interoperability through standards bodies, and sometimes we get interoperability through technology that translates between protocols.
Several SDOs have developed different formats for standards-based digital credentials. If you want to learn more about them you can read this paper I co-wrote[5].
Different communities worked on the similar problems in SDOs they felt comfortable working in. Mobile driver's licences innovators worked in the ISO standards body, because that is where physical driver's licences are standardized. Web oriented folks working on Verifiable Credentials worked in the W3C, where they knew the process and wanted transparency. Work on selective disclosure of JSON web tokens is happening within the IETF because they could rapidly iterate in an open forum. Similarly, each industry segment adopts the format with the features they need.

[4] *Centre for Digital Public Infrastructure. (2025). Vision Paper: User-Centric Credentialing and Personal Data Sharing*
[5] *Standards-Based Digital Credentials: Flavors Explained*
https://identitywoman.net/wp-content/uploads/Standards-Based-Digital-Credentials_Flavors-Explained-Whitepaper.pdf

The higher education community is adopting Verifiable Credentials because they are rooted in JSON-LD, which provides semantic pointers for the more than 1 million different types issued. The members of American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (US State and Canadian Provinces) are adopting the Mobile Driver's Licence Standard (mDL/mDOC). The EU Architecture Reference Framework has both the mDOC and SD-JWT format.

For the foreseeable future, a small number of credential format standards will be adopted in different markets for different reasons. This is a reasonable outcome.

Another critical element for interoperability is validating that credential was actually signed by the entity that claims to have signed it. I can sign a credential and issue it to my friend and claim that I "am" the State of California. Obviously, I'm not the State of California. So the question is how a verifier can confirm that keys are the "real public keys" for the State of California or the real keys for a university institution or the real keys for a corporation. A verifier might be interested in knowing what types of credentials a particular institution issues, and if they have the right accreditation to do so. This is where registries of public keys, credential types and institutional identity are critical. Many registries exist but don't yet have public key listed in them. The State of California maintains a list of all the accredited higher education institutions. For the credentials issued by these institutions to be trusted, the registry needs to publish the public keys associated with the private keys that they use to sign credentials.

Directories of registries are also going to be needed to look up and find real or reliable registries. In Europe, research institutions have created a protocol called TRAIN that is being used for both Registries and Directories of Registries.[6][7]

> "For the foreseeable future, a small number of credential format standards will be adopted in different markets for different reasons. This is a reasonable outcome."

With decentralized identity comes a renewed focus on ethical questions: Who gets to issue identity? Who gets to verify it? And what safeguards do we have to prevent exclusion or exploitation?
What ethical principles do you believe should guide the development of SSI and decentralized identity systems as they move into the mainstream?

Decentralized Identity doesn't mean there are no issuers of identity credentials. It means that there is not "one" issuer of identity. It means there can be a diversity of authorities who have capacities in different areas, for example, multiple competing registries. Decentralized identity also means that the underlying architecture is fundamentally user-centric and does not involve "phoning home" to a digital identity provider. I was part of an Obama administration effort called the National Strategy for Trusted Identities in Cyberspace. In that initiative, the government was trying to figure out how private sector entities would "issue digital identities" to residents/citizens and have those widely used. In our current systems the paperwork we file with the government to get a birth certificate for our children when they are born, a passport for when we travel and to get a driver's licence when we are of age to drive is the basis of identity documentation issued by the government. In other words, the government serves as the main trust anchor for identity documentation that the private sector relies on. The private sector didn't want to be in the position of "digital identity issuance" and face the liability involved.

We live in a real world where real entities have particular social meaning and particular social authority and issue particular credentials. Currently, nation states issue passports to people. In the United States, DMVs issue Driver's Licences. Decentralized Identity technologies allow these entities to issue digitally native forms of the documents they currently issue in paper-based form.

Issues of exclusion arising from the enrollment process (registration requirements) are not changed because the credentials issued are digital. The requirements that entities that issue identity documents ask of people remain the same (often identity documents are required to get other identity documents). Questions arise about how people are "protected" from entities that might glean information about them from these digital credentials. Will governments require that relying parties inform the holder of a credential when any entity requests the information? People who do physical document checks for their own business processes do not have to report to the government that they do so. So how does this work in the digital world.

Where and when can a person be asked for digital identity? These questions are not easy to answer but we need to grapple with them to have a system that works and doesn't erode the default anonymity of everyday life.

Decentralized Identity protocols and architectures are aligned with identity practices that have evolved in the west for over 500 years. There are pros and cons to how identity has evolved. I have put my life energy for 20 years into the development of protocols that make digital versions of these same paradigms possible because I believe that it is the only potential future where there is hope for true, human centric, bioregional rooted communities in alignment with the earth.

To me, decentralized identity protocols provide the only realistic alternative to three very dystopian futures that are also possible: authoritarian control, surveillance capitalism, and libertarian anarchism Authoritarian control is possible in the highly centralized phone home architectures that are mainstream in China in its most extreme form and in India in the lite form.

Surveillance Capitalism is already prevalent with the large identity providers and latent surveillance architectures on the web, in physical shops, and in products such as cars, smart speakers, phones, and IoT devices.

Crypto-Libertarian-Anarchism envisions a world where people with cryptocurrency "rule" because they have all the money. The creators of this world also have aspirations to build centralized biometric identity systems like WorldID, Humanity Protocol and Proof of Humanity.

> "Decentralized Identity doesn't mean there are no issuers of identity credentials. It means that there is not 'one' issuer of identity."

[6] https://www.hci.iao.fraunhofer.de/de/identity-management/identity-und-accessmanagement/TRAIN_EN.html
[7] https://gitlab.grnet.gr/essif-lab/infrastructure/fraunhofer/train_project_summary

The Internet Identity Workshop has played a pivotal role in gathering and growing the decentralized identity community. You've witnessed first-hand how thð conversation has shifted over the years, from academic and activist circles to startups and standards bodies.
How has the community around identity changed in recent years, especially as Web3 technologies have entered the mix? Are we seeing deeper collaboration or growing tensions?

You are right about your characterization of the Internet Identity Workshop and how it has shifted to include new types of people. I would add in there enterprise actors like Google, Ping, Okta, Oracle, Microsoft who have been engaged from very early on.

Unfortunately Web3 culture seems to have a default that doesn't really look around before it just goes and "invents" answers. For the most part they have chosen not to participate actively. As a result, they are making quite a few avoidable mistakes as they try to re-invent the wheel.

Several years ago Web3 propagated an idea for how to do identity for all sorts of use-cases at scale in a widely circulated paper about Soul Bound Tokens[8]. For whatever reason, they also are attracted to evil-sounding names. Maybe that's good because this SBT idea involves putting public statements on blockchains, using their associated Ethereum address. Really? Does this feel or seem safe to put all identity information about people in public on blockchains? The paper was co-authored by a group of people who spent zero time engaging with communities that participate in IIW. Now they have something called the Ethereum Attestation Service, which again attaches everyone's attestations to their Ethereum address, and it completely ignores W3C standards for VCs.

You've also got Web3 projects that are even more dangerous, like enrolling everyone in the world via their eyeballs in a system called World. They were inspired by India's Aadhaar system. I know they are pitching this system to governments. Fortunately, World has been declared illegal in several countries.

Agentic AI creates new challenges when it comes to figuring out who agents work on behalf of. Are they people or are they organizations or are they completely fake? How do we figure out which agents are working on behalf of which people and which organizations? We are just starting to figure out how to leverage these decentralized identity tools on these problems. A client of mine, KYAPay, has released a white paper on a direction to solve this.[9]

AI also brings new challenges in terms of the authenticity of all things we view online or interact with on a network. With the advent of voice and video AI, you can't trust video or voice lines of communication. There is work being done to figure out how verifiable credentials can be brought into these channels. The Content Authenticity Initiative[10] and its sister code project C2PA[11] are working on attaching verifiable credentials to media content as it passes through the supply chain from camera to news article.

Finally, if you were to imagine the digital identity landscape in 2030, five years from now, what would a successful, self-sovereign ecosystem look like? What needs to happen between now and then to make that vision a reality?

A tremendous amount of change will happen in the next 5 years, and a lot of it won't be good, so thank you for asking just for the best-case scenario.

I think we need to consider how people connect with each other and learn how to collaborate in a much deeper way in our local neighborhoods and in connections with our watersheds, food sheds and bioregions. An ideal system would generate credentials and systems rooted in communities of people who actually know each other and vouch for each other because they work together to care for and steward the places they live. Rather than being issued by some central authority, people and their chosen communities would rebuild trust at local and regional levels, interacting with the government technology as they need to.

I do worry that the technologies we have built can be used to create a very negative dystopian future, as I mentioned above. But a tremendous amount of work is being done for social and ecological good, and those communities can use self-sovereign identity for coordination in ways that align with a more socially and ecologically sustainable future.

> **"I have put my life energy for 20 years into the development of protocols that make digital versions of these same paradigms possible because I believe that it is the only potential future where there is hope for true, human centric, bioregional rooted communities in alignment with the earth."**

[8] https://theblockopedia.com/in-a-31-pages-whitepaper-ethereum-founder-vitalikbuterin-introduces-and-explains-the-soulbound-token/
[9] https://github.com/skyfire-xyz/kyapay
[10] https://contentauthenticity.org/
[11] https://c2pa.org/

domora

The Stock Market of Domain Names

For decades, domain markets have been standardized, predictable, and unfortunately, largely illiquid. The typical journey of a domain has remained straightforward: domains move from a registrar to a registrant, where they usually sit dormant, waiting for occasional buyer interest. Transactions have primarily occurred through private sales, auctions, or broker-mediated transfers. This traditional process, while functional, has left substantial room for innovation.

The domain industry, despite being fundamental to the internet's infrastructure, has operated on principles established in the 1990s. While other digital assets have evolved with technology, domains have remained trapped in outdated trading mechanisms. The result? A market characterized by high entry barriers, limited liquidity, and inefficient price discovery. Premium domains often remain locked away in portfolios, their true value unrealized, while aspiring entrepreneurs and investors find themselves priced out of meaningful participation.

Today, I'm excited to introduce a transformative solution developed by the innovative minds at Freename:
Domora - The Domain Fractionalization Marketplace.

Yotam Katznelson
Author
Leading Engineering Teams to Bold Innovations in Product & Technology

Understanding the Revolution

Domora represents an entirely new paradigm in the domain industry by leveraging blockchain technology. Fractionalization itself isn't entirely new—it's been successfully applied to real estate, art, and other high-value assets. However, bringing this capability seamlessly to the domain industry represents an unprecedented leap forward.
The concept of asset fractionalization has proven transformative across multiple industries. In real estate, platforms have enabled investors to own shares in commercial properties previously accessible only to institutional investors. In the art world, masterpieces once confined to private collections now trade as fractional investments. This democratization of ownership has created new markets, enhanced liquidity, and opened investment opportunities to millions previously excluded from these asset classes.
Why fractionalize domains? Simply put, it introduces liquidity, flexibility, and unprecedented market opportunities. Domora transforms the static nature of domain ownership into a vibrant and dynamic market accessible to all. By breaking down the barriers that have traditionally separated domain owners from their asset's true value, and investors from premium domain opportunities, Domora creates a win-win ecosystem where value flows freely and efficiently.

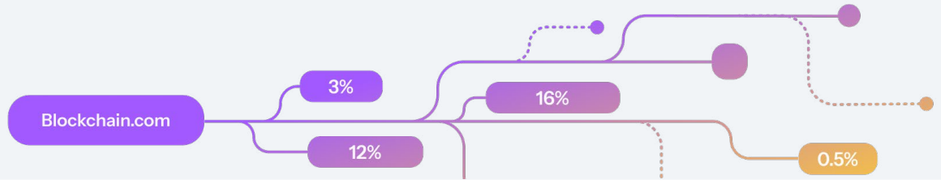
The Current State of Domain Markets

To fully appreciate Domora's revolutionary approach, we must first understand the challenges plaguing traditional domain markets. The domain aftermarket, estimated at several billion dollars annually, operates through antiquated channels that create friction at every turn.
Currently, domain transactions face numerous obstacles. Price opacity remains a significant issue, with domain values often determined through private negotiations lacking market transparency. Transaction costs, including broker fees and escrow services, can reach 15-30% of the sale price. Settlement times stretch from days to weeks, creating uncertainty and tying up capital. Perhaps most critically, the all-or-nothing nature of domain sales means owners must choose between holding indefinitely or selling entirely—there's no middle ground.
These inefficiencies have created a paradox: while domains represent some of the internet's most valuable digital real estate, they remain among its most illiquid assets. Premium domains sit idle in portfolios, generating no returns for their owners while remaining inaccessible to businesses and investors who could utilize them productively. This inefficiency represents billions in locked value waiting to be released.

How Domora Works

For Domain Owners

Traditionally, domain owners had limited options. They could either sell their domain outright, lease it, or wait passively for its value to appreciate. Domora fundamentally changes this narrative. Domain owners now have the power to unlock the inherent value of their domains immediately by fractionalizing ownership into tradable units. These units can be sold directly to a community of interested investors, allowing domain owners to raise capital instantly without surrendering full ownership or control.
The fractionalization process through Domora is elegantly simple yet powerful. Domain owners begin by transferring submitting their domains to the underlying Domora registrar (Freename) for verification and valuation. Once approved, they can determine the number of fractional units to create, setting parameters for minimum holdings, and trading restrictions rights.The platform's smart contracts automatically handle the technical complexity. Imagine owning a high-value domain such as AI.com or Blockchain.com. Instead of waiting indefinitely for a singular high-paying buyer, owners can now create multiple ownership units, monetizing their asset immediately and efficiently. They maintain ultimate control while benefiting from immediate liquidity. For instance, an owner might fractionalize their domain into 1,000 units, keeping 51% with themselves while selling capital for the remaining 49%, thus retaining majority control and decision-making authority. This flexibility extends beyond simple sales. Domain owners can structure their fractionalization to align with specific goals. Need quick capital for a new venture? Sell a larger percentage. Want to maintain strong control while building a community of stakeholders? Limit the fractionalized portion. The possibilities are as diverse as the domains themselves.

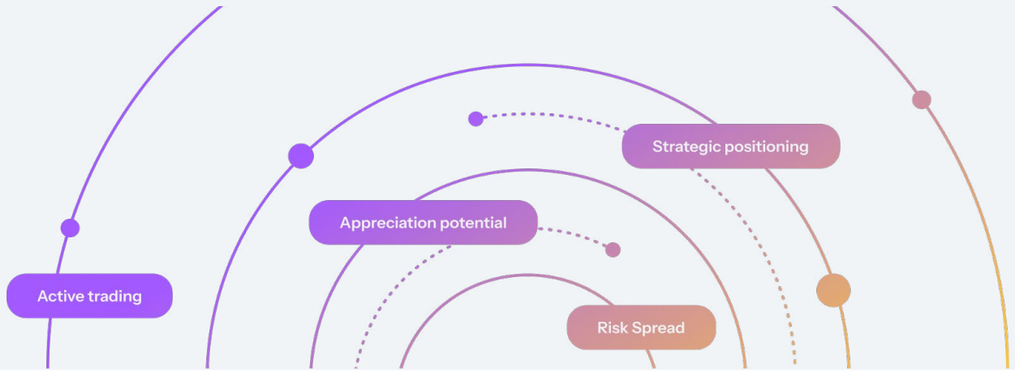


For Investors and Enthusiasts

Domora isn't just beneficial for domain owners; it's also revolutionary for investors and everyday users. Previously, domains with substantial value were often beyond reach for the typical investor. With fractionalization, anyone can purchase a stake in high-value domains without the prohibitive upfront costs.

The investment opportunities Domora creates are multifaceted. Investors can now build diversified domain portfolios, spreading risk across multiple premium domains rather than concentrating capital in a single asset. They can participate in the appreciation of category-defining domains like Crypto.com or Health.com without needing millions in capital. Moreover, fractional ownership creates new trading strategies, from long-term holds to active trading based on market sentiment and domain performance metrics.

Consider this scenario: You've always wanted exposure to an iconic domain but found the financial commitment daunting. Domora allows you to own fractional units of prestigious domains, diversifying your investments and participating in the domain's appreciation and potential earnings from future sales or leasing activities. A startup founder might acquire fractional ownership in their industry's premium domain, positioning themselves for future acquisition while building their business. An investor might create a basket of domain fractions across emerging technologies, betting on sector growth without picking individual winners.



Blockchain-Powered Trust: Enabling Transparent and Secure Trading

Domora is built on a decentralized foundation designed to ensure transparency, trust, and efficiency in digital asset trading. While full technical details will be shared upon release, the platform's architecture leverages advanced blockchain standards to enable innovative capabilities like asset representation, secure trading, and future interoperability.

What this means for users:

Transparency

All transactions are recorded on-chain and are publicly auditable, ensuring full traceability of ownership and activity. This builds confidence and opens the door to real-time analytics and market insights.

Security

Once confirmed, transactions are immutable and tamper-proof. Smart contract logic automates trade execution and removes the need for trusted intermediaries.

Efficiency

Settlements occur near-instantly, reducing delays and unlocking capital that would otherwise be tied up in traditional domain transfer processes.

Interoperability Potential

The system is being built with future integrations in mind, laying the groundwork for use cases across decentralized finance (DeFi), staking, and more.

While Freename is keeping the underlying mechanisms under wraps for now, their goal is clear: to redefine how digital domain assets are owned, traded, and valued.

The Domora Marketplace: Q4-2025

With an anticipated launch during Q4 of 2025, Domora will debut with a robust platform designed to simplify domain fractionalization. The intuitive user interface ensures a seamless user experience, whether you're fractionalizing your domain for the first time or investing in fractional domain units.

The platform architecture prioritizes both functionality and user experience. Built on modern web technologies with blockchain integration at its core, Domora offers a responsive, intuitive interface that makes complex transactions feel simple. Advanced features hide behind clean design, accessible when needed but never overwhelming for newcomers.

Key Features

Easy domain fractionalization and unit issuance

A guided process walks domain owners through fractionalization, with smart defaults and expert guidance at every step. Advanced users can customize every parameter, while beginners can rely on recommended settings.

Secure wallet integration for trading and storing fractional domain tokens

Support for major Web3 wallets ensures users can trade with their preferred security setup. Multi-signature options and hardware wallet support provide institutional-grade security for high-value holdings.

Real-time market analytics and insights

Comprehensive dashboards display domain performance metrics, trading volumes, holder distributions, and price trends. Advanced charting tools enable technical analysis,

Robust P2P marketplace for transparent and efficient trading

Order books, automated market makers, and instant swaps provide multiple trading options. Liquidity pools incentivize market making, ensuring smooth trading even for newer fractional domains.

Utility features

Fractional owners can participate in domain-specific activities such as dedicated forums and other unique utilities that add another layer of value to unit ownership.

Impact on Domain Valuation

Fractionalization inherently improves domain liquidity and accessibility, positively influencing domain valuation. Domains that previously held speculative value due to their rarity or branding potential can now realize their market value rapidly and transparently. By creating a broader pool of potential investors, Domora effectively enhances market efficiency and optimizes price discovery.

The valuation implications extend beyond simple supply and demand dynamics. Fractionalization creates continuous price discovery through active trading, replacing sporadic private sales with real-time market pricing. This transparency benefits all participants: sellers know their domain's true worth, buyers can make informed decisions, and the market operates more efficiently.

Moreover, Domora encourages community-driven valuation, where the collective market sentiment directly influences the domain's perceived worth, reflecting a fairer, market-oriented price. When thousands of investors trade fractional units daily, the resulting price reflects genuine market consensus rather than isolated negotiations between two parties.

Historical data from other fractionalized asset markets suggests significant valuation premiums for liquid assets. Real estate investment trusts (REITs) often trade at premiums to their underlying property values due to liquidity and accessibility. Similar dynamics could emerge in fractionalized domains, potentially increasing overall domain market valuations by making previously illiquid assets tradeable.

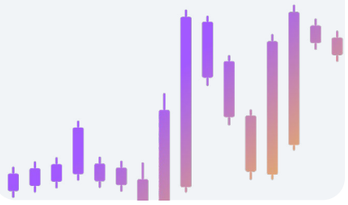
> **"Fractionalizing ownership turns domains into actively traded, transparent markets, revealing true value and often driving premiums by making them accessible to more investors."**

Potential Use Cases

Beyond individual investors, fractionalization opens doors for diverse business use cases:

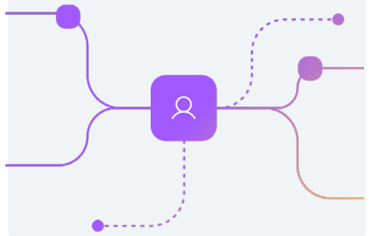
Investment Portfolios

Investors can diversify their portfolios by including fractionalized domain units alongside traditional financial instruments. Domain fractions offer uncorrelated returns, potentially improving portfolio risk-adjusted performance. Professional managers might create domain-focused funds, offering exposure to this emerging asset class.



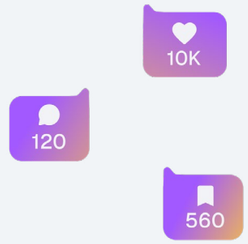
Domain Brokers

Brokers can efficiently handle fractional domain assets, opening new revenue streams and enhancing their service offerings. They might facilitate large block trades, arrange fractional consolidations, or create structured products combining multiple domain fractions.



Content Creators

Creators can offer their audience fractional ownership in their brand domains, creating deeper engagement and aligned incentives. Fans become stakeholders, motivated to promote and support the creator's success.



Technical Innovation and Future Development

Domora's technical architecture represents cutting-edge blockchain engineering. Built for scale from day one, the platform can handle millions of users and billions of dollars in transaction volume without compromising performance or security.

The future roadmap includes ambitious features that will further revolutionize domain trading:

Automated market making

Sophisticated algorithms will provide liquidity for fractional domains, ensuring smooth trading even for newer listings.

Derivative products:

Options, futures, and structured products on fractional domains will enable sophisticated trading strategies and risk management.

Integration with traditional finance:

Bridges to traditional financial systems will allow institutional participation and fiat on/ramps.

AI-powered analytics:

Machine learning models will provide valuation estimates, predict trends, and identify investment opportunities.

Economic Impact and Market Transformation

Domora's impact extends beyond individual transactions to potentially transform the entire domain economy. By unlocking liquidity in a multi-billion dollar market, Domora could catalyze significant economic activity.

Conservative estimates suggest that even fractionalizing 10% of premium domains could create a liquid market worth tens of billions of dollars. This liquidity injection would have ripple effects: more efficient capital allocation, increased domain development, and new business models built on fractional ownership.

The democratization of domain investing could particularly benefit developing economies, where capital constraints often prevent participation in digital asset markets. Entrepreneurs worldwide could access premium domains previously monopolized by wealthy individuals and corporations.

> **"By unlocking liquidity in a multi-billion dollar market, Domora could catalyze significant economic activity. Conservative estimates suggest that even fractionalizing 10% of premium domains could create a liquid market worth tens of billions of dollars."**

Community and Ecosystem Development

Domora's success depends not just on technology but on building a vibrant community of domain owners, investors, developers, and enthusiasts. Planned initiatives include:

Educational resources

Comprehensive guides, tutorials, and courses will help newcomers understand domain investing and fractionalization.

Developer tools

APIs and SDKs will enable third-party applications, expanding Domora's ecosystem beyond the core platform.

Events and conferences

Regular gatherings will build community connections and showcase platform developments.

Partnership programs

Collaborations with registrars, brokers, and domain marketplaces will create seamless integrations and expand reach.

The Vision Ahead

Domora is not just another platform—it's an evolutionary shift for the domain industry. At Freename, we see this innovation as a cornerstone of the future domain economy. Fractionalization democratizes domain investment, introducing a model where domains are no longer static assets but dynamic financial instruments with vibrant trading ecosystems.

We envision Domora fostering a new wave of domain market participants, increasing liquidity, driving domain valuations upward, and empowering domain owners and investors alike to maximize their assets' potential. The platform will evolve from a marketplace to a comprehensive ecosystem, supporting every aspect of fractionalized domain ownership.

In five years, we see a world where domain fractionalization is standard practice, where premium domains trade as liquid assets, and where anyone can participate in the domain economy regardless of capital constraints. Domora will be at the center of this transformation, continuously innovating to serve our community's evolving needs.

Join the Future of Domain Trading

Domora represents the future, and the future is fractional. As we approach our Q4-2025 launch, we invite you to join us on this revolutionary journey. Whether you're a domain owner looking to unlock immediate value or an investor eager to explore new opportunities, Domora offers the platform, technology, and community to redefine your domain investing experience.

The domain industry stands at an inflection point. Traditional models have served their purpose, but the future demands innovation. Domora provides that innovation, transforming static domain holdings into dynamic, tradeable assets that benefit everyone in the ecosystem.

Welcome to Domora—where domains become dynamic assets accessible to everyone. Together, we're not just trading domains; we're building the future of digital asset ownership, one fraction at a time.

> "Domora represents the future, and the future is fractional."

Thomas Medard

COO | Nicky

Thomas Medard is the Chief Operating Officer and co-founder of Nicky.me, a crypto payments platform designed to make accepting cryptocurrency as simple and secure as traditional payment methods. A veteran of the domain and hosting industry for over 25 years, Thomas has built and scaled products that helped millions of people establish their online presence. Before launching Nicky.me with co-founders Lars Jensen, Stevan Lieberman, and Matheus Leite, he led initiatives in domain registration, hosting, and website creation, with a focus on usability and accessibility. Featured in outlets including The Wall Street Journal, Forbes, Bloomberg, BBC News, and USA Today, Thomas combines deep industry knowledge with a builder's mindset, spotting opportunities early and turning them into practical solutions. At Nicky, he is spearheading efforts to bridge the gap between crypto-native users and mainstream businesses, with an approach rooted in simplicity, trust, and long-term value creation.

In the fast-evolving intersection of Web3, crypto, and the domain industry, few voices carry as much practical insight as Thomas Medard. As the COO of Nicky.me, Thomas is on a mission to make crypto payments not just possible, but practical for domain registrars, hosting providers, and digital entrepreneurs. With a career spanning over two decades in building tools that help people get online—from domain platforms to website builders—he has seen the internet move from a niche frontier to a mainstream necessity. Now, he sees crypto following a similar path, and he's determined to ensure the domain and hosting world is ready. In this conversation, Thomas shares how Nicky is tackling trust and complexity barriers, why crypto payments could drive long-term retention for registrars, and what lessons the industry can borrow from e-commerce's rapid adoption of new payment methods.

> "It's not just about accepting crypto. It's about creating lifetime value: from transactions, from referrals, and from higher retention. That's the flywheel we're building with Nicky."

Nicky positions itself at the intersection of Web3 and the domain industry, aiming to bring crypto payments to registrars and hosting providers. How is Nicky contributing to the development of the domain and hosting industry through its crypto payment solutions?

I've been around the domain and hosting industry for 25+ years. And what we're doing with Nicky reminds me a lot of the early days of domains and websites going mainstream. Back then, most people didn't understand domains. Today, it's crypto that feels like the "weird tech thing" - but we're making it easy, useful, and relevant for businesses. Nicky is a crypto payments platform helping businesses accept payments from customers who prefer crypto - without worrying about wallets, volatility, or regulation headaches. So instead of building complex integrations or becoming a blockchain expert, a registrar can activate Nicky and start accepting crypto the same day. It's about making crypto useful in the real world. That's the play.

But here's where it gets interesting.

Accepting crypto is just the start. Registrars can also become resellers of Nicky by offering it to their own customers. Here's how the flow works:

A customer pays with crypto for a domain or hosting plan. That payment goes through Nicky. Once it's confirmed, we automatically send a follow-up email to that customer inviting them to open their own Nicky account. It's a soft intro - helpful, not pushy. And if they sign up and start using Nicky themselves, your company (as the referring partner) gets a revenue share on everything they do. So you're not just processing a payment. You're onboarding users into a new revenue stream. Nicky becomes part of your upsell engine.

There's another bonus too: stickiness. When a user creates a Nicky account and ties it totheir domain, they're more likely to renew that domain. Why? Because it's no longer just a web address - it's now part of their payment setup. It becomes functional and that connection between domain and crypto wallet drives higher renewal rates on the domain.

So it's not just about accepting crypto. It's about creating lifetime value: from transactions, from referrals, and from higher retention. That's the flywheel we're building with Nicky.

> "Today, it's crypto that feels like the 'weird tech thing' – but we're making it easy, useful, and relevant for businesses."

Recently, Nicky partnered with Namingo and began integrations with platforms like NameSilo to offer crypto-based transactions for domains and hosting services. Can you elaborate on the technical aspects of Nicky's integration with these platforms? What value does this bring to registrars and end users?

Continue →

Sure. When we integrate with platforms like NameSilo or Namingo, we focus on keeping things dead simple – for both the business and their end users.
We offer a lightweight API and a WHMCS plugin that can be dropped right into their existing billing flow. When a customer selects crypto at checkout, Nicky takes over:
We generate the wallet address and QR code.
The user sends their crypto.
We confirm the transaction in seconds, convert it to fiat, and notify the system instantly.
From a registrar's perspective, they don't even touch the crypto. Everything's reported in EUR/USD/whatever they prefer. Settlements happen automatically. No volatility, no manual checks.
For end users, it just works. Whether they want to use BTC, ETH, USDT, or something else, they get a clean and fast experience. That's key if we want crypto to go from niche to normal.

As crypto matures, more digital infrastructure companies are exploring blockchain-based solutions. What trends are you observing in the domain industry's openness to crypto payments, and how is Nicky responding to or driving these changes?

There's definitely a shift happening. Five years ago, offering crypto was seen as "experimental." Now it's more like, "Okay, we should probably do this - but how?"
What we're seeing is companies responding to demand from web3-native users who are already paying with crypto for everything else.
What we're doing at Nicky is removing the friction. We're turning that curiosity into action. The registrar doesn't need to build a wallet system or explain blockchain to support crypto. We give them a ready-to-go solution that's practical and safe.
We're also driving change by showing up - at ICANN, at domain events, in founder circles - and telling the story of how crypto fits into a mature industry like the domain industry. That matters more than people think.

> "What we're doing at Nicky is removing the friction. We're turning that curiosity into action."

Despite growing interest, the adoption of crypto in traditional industries still faces hesitations and hurdles. What are the main challenges Nicky has encountered in promoting crypto payments in the domain and hosting sector, and how are you overcoming them?

Biggest challenge? Trust.
Crypto has a reputation - some of it deserved, a lot of it not. So when we talk to domain companies, the first hurdle is convincing them that this is real, legal, and financially sound.
Second challenge: complexity. Crypto feels overwhelming to a lot of business owners. The tech, the regulation, the volatility - it all sounds like a huge risk.
So we've built Nicky to be the opposite of that.
We don't ask registrars to hold crypto. We don't force them to ask their CFO to take crypto into their books. We convert crypto to fiat instantly. It's boring in the best way.
We also do a lot of hand-holding. Demos, onboarding, testing. We don't just send a plugin and walk away. I believe that our level of support builds trust fast. And we're transparent. No hidden fees. No lock-ins. That alone is a differentiator in this space.

> "It's boring in the best way — we convert crypto to fiat instantly, with no hidden fees and no lock-ins."

Adoption often depends on understanding. Educating users about the advantages of crypto remains essential. Is Nicky involved in educational or community-building initiatives to support awareness and responsible use of crypto in the domain space?

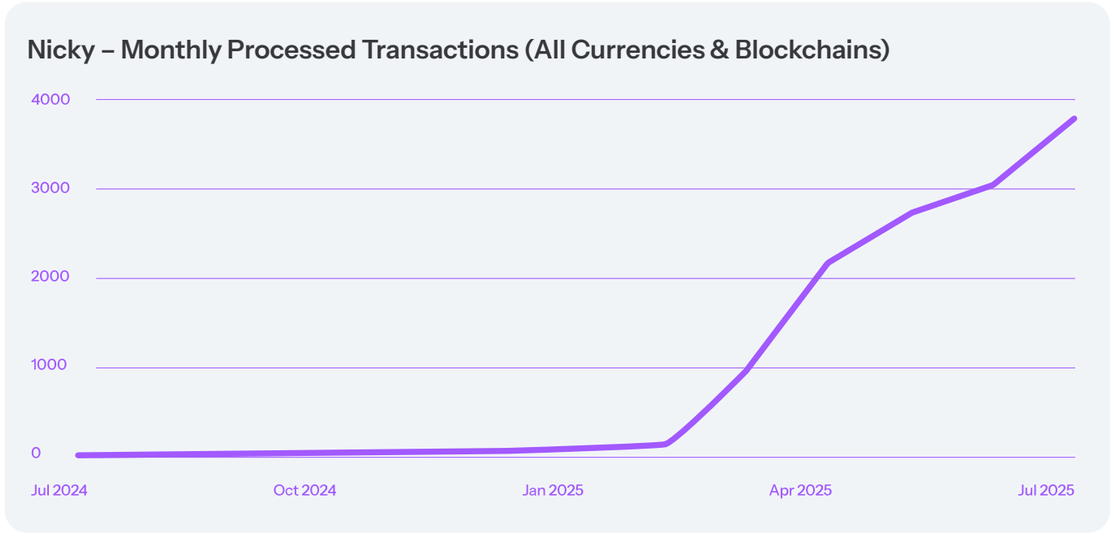
Absolutely. Education is baked into our strategy. You can't grow adoption if people don't understand the basics.
We run webinars, do talks at industry events, participate in podcasts and offer onboarding sessions where we explain how crypto payments work - all in plain English - no buzzwords, no hype. We've also put together simple explainers and white-label material that partners can share with their own customers.
We also share what we're doing on social platforms like LinkedIn, giving updates, highlighting use cases, and keeping the conversation going outside the inbox.
On the community side, we're active in the domain world - ICANN, hosting meetups, registrar forums. We talk to people. We listen. And we use that feedback to shape the product.
Longer term, we'd like to create a mini knowledge hub - a place where domain providers can learn about crypto payments without getting bombarded with technical jargon. The goal isn't just to sell Nicky. It's to help the industry grow into this new payment layer.

> "You can't grow adoption if people don't understand the basics. That's why we explain crypto payments in plain English — no buzzwords, no hype — through webinars, talks, podcasts, and hands-on onboarding."

Mainstream businesses are increasingly experimenting with crypto payments, from retail to SaaS. What lessons can the domain industry learn from how e-commerce has approached crypto integration, and how is Nicky applying these insights to its strategy?

E-commerce taught us something simple: crypto users will spend, if you let them.
Platforms like Shopify or WooCommerce made crypto payments available with a few clicks. They didn't try to "educate" everyone upfront. They just added the option, and people started using it.That's a big lesson for the domain space: don't overthink it. If someone wants to pay with crypto, let them. Make it easy. Let the product do the explaining. That's how we built Nicky. Low lift, quick setup, fiat settlement, no crypto exposure. Just plug us in and go.
We also learned from e-commerce that visibility matters. If crypto is buried three layers deep in the checkout, no one clicks it. So we work with our partners to promote crypto payments clearly - banners, calls-to-action, etc. That drives usage. And usage drives adoption.

> "Don't overthink it. If someone wants to pay with crypto, let them. Make it easy. Let the product do the explaining."



Widespread adoption of crypto in business often hinges on demystifying it for both merchants and customers. In your view, what role should companies like Nicky play in bridging the gap between crypto-native users and mainstream audiences?

Our job is to make crypto boring.
That might sound weird, but what I mean is: crypto shouldn't feel like some wild west experiment. It should feel like a regular credit card payment. Or Apple Pay. Just another way to pay.
So we focus on creating trust. A simple flow, clear fees. No surprises. That's what drives adoption.
We also help companies talk to both audiences. Crypto users want payment options like USDT or Solana. Mainstream users want support and explanations. We help businesses speak to both.
In short, we play the translator. And the guide. That's how adoption spreads.

Educational efforts can often be overly technical. What approaches do you believe are most effective in educating not just users, but also decision-makers at registrars and hosting companies about the benefits and mechanics of crypto payments?

Keep it simple.
No one wants a whitepaper when they're just trying to understand if crypto is worth the effort.
So we break it down like this:
Here's how many people use crypto today.
Here's how much you're probably leaving on the table.
Here's how fast you can start accepting it (hint: today).
Here's how little risk you take with Nicky.
Then we show a demo. People love demos.
We also focus on real-world use cases. "This registrar in Europe saw 18% of payments go through crypto within 30 days." That hits harder than theory.
On top of that, we've created a clear, step-by-step playbook for registrars and resellers. It walks them through everything - how to activate Nicky, how to promote crypto payments to their users, how the affiliate model works, and even how to handle basic support questions.
It's designed to make adoption easy, even for teams who've never touched crypto before.
And we make sure the onboarding team, finance team, and even customer support folks all get it. Education isn't just for the CTO. It's for the whole crew.

Thomas Medard

> "Crypto shouldn't feel like a wild west experiment — it should feel like paying with a credit card or Apple Pay."

Who's Who

Who's Moving the Domain Industry Forward

Welcome to our Who's Who section, a curated space dedicated to the people redefining the industry's present and shaping its future. Here, we bring you closer to the visionaries, decision-makers, and disruptors whose ideas and achievements set the pace for what comes next. Each profile highlights not only career milestones and accomplishments but also the passions, values, and insights that drive their work. From pioneering founders and bold entrepreneurs to influential executives, these are the figures leaving their mark and inspiring others along the way. Step inside their journeys, explore their stories, and discover the inspirations that keep them moving forward.

In this issue:

This edition's Who's Who brings together six distinctive personalities from across the domain world, two of whom have taken an active role in shaping this issue itself: Page Howe, long-time investor and educator, lends his perspective to our 'Quarterly Report: Aftermarket,' while Helmuts Meskonis, the force behind Domain Summit, adds his insight to our Calendar Events coverage.

We also feature Lars Jensen, whose ventures such as ShortDot and NameBlock continue to push the boundaries of new domain extensions and digital infrastructure; Janis Kasper, leading product strategy at IONOS SE with a focus on mass-market platforms and DNS innovation; Jen Sale, founder of Evergreen.com and TenWithJen.com, recognized for her brokerage expertise and community initiatives; and Jeff Sass, now CMO of .ART, whose marketing acumen has helped bring meaning and creativity to domain branding.

Together, these six figures reflect the diverse expertise, entrepreneurial energy, and global reach that continue to drive the industry forward.

Helmuts Meskonis

Founder | Domain Summit & HostMaria

Years in the industry
Built my first website in 1999

Location
Maidstone, Kent, UK

Specialization
Obsessed with growing and perfecting Domain Summit

Notable Achievement
Bought and transformed DNForum.com - the world's oldest domain name forum est 2001 — from near-inactivity into a thriving, high-traffic forum with a busy marketplace and a 30,000-subscriber weekly newsletter

Fun Fact
When moving in may Maidstone office, bought over 1000 Penguin books to fill in shelves

LinkedIn
Helmuts Meskonis

Motto
"Most real relationships are built in person, not online. Industry events aren't optional - they're essential for building trust and taking your business to the next level. And above all, your name is only as strong as your word. Keep your promises - your reputation is everything."

Lars Jensen

CEO & Founder | ShortDot SA
Co-CEO | WebUnited
Co-Founder & Board Member | NameBlock A/S
Co-CEO & Founder | Nicky.me

Years in the industry
Started in domains back in 2000

Location
Luxembourg (originally from Denmark)

Specialization
Bringing new domain extensions to life (.icu, .bond, .cyou, .sbs, .cfd), building strong registrar partnerships around the world, and working at the intersection of Web2 and Web3 to help businesses grow with meaningful digital infrastructure.

Website
www.shortdot.bond
LinkedIn | Lars Jensen

Notable Achievement
Have had the privilege of building and leading several domain and tech ventures across the global naming and blockchain industries — always with a focus on scale, innovation, and helping others succeed along the way.

Fun Fact
Terrible with names, but great with ideas. Proud dad of three amazing kids.

LinkedIn
Lars Jensen

Motto
"Massive action leads to massive results."
Also: "Nail it, then scale it." (Still a work in progress!)

Janis Kasper

Product Lead Domains & DNS | IONOS SE

Years in the industry
Working in the domain space since 2015

Location
Karlsruhe, Germany

Specialization
Mass market domains, DNS, domain monetization, web3 domains, platform migrations

Notable Achievement
Building Europe's largest platform with about 22 million domains under management

Fun Fact
I skipped Web2. My first personal domain was my identity in Web3 registered with ENS. Thus my first domain wasn't just an address; it was a declaration because I chose digital ownership over renting

Motto
"Domains function as both a digital identity and a valuable asset."

LinkedIn
Janis Kasper

Jen Sale

Founder | Evergreen.com & TenWithJen.com

Years in the industry
Developer since '98, domains since '02

Location
Australia

Specialization
Brokerage (buy & sell), portfolio management, ccTLD investor (AU), branding, digital wellbeing

Website
Evergreen.com
TenWithJen.com

Notable Achievement
Produced TenWithJen.com to inspire greater community connection in the domain name space
(I've brokered a few domains too)

Fun Fact
Owned pet turtles as a kid

Motto
"Spend time like it's your last dollar"

LinkedIn
Jen Sale

Jeff Sass

CMO | .ART Registry

Years in the industry
I've been in the domain space since 2012

Location
.ART is EVERYWHERE!

Specialization
Marketing and Sales for gTLDs that have meaning and context, such as .CLUB and .ART

Notable Achievement
Co-founder and CMO of .CLUB which was sold to GoDaddy in 2021. Former board member of The Domain Name Association (TheDNA.org). At .ART we are seeing continued growth and impressive usage rates (over 53% of registrations), and in December 2024 we acquired the artist platform and community, HUG (Hug.art), co-founded by Randi Zuckerberg and Debbie Soon.

Fun Fact
I started my career in the entertainment industry, and wrote a book about it: "Everything I Know about Business and Marketing, I Learned from THE TOXIC AVENGER"

Motto
Joseph Beuys said "Everyone is an Artist."
Therefore everyone should have a .ART domain!

LinkedIn
JW Sass

Page Howe

Domain Investor | PageHowe.com

Years in the industry
26

Location
Tennessee, USA

Specialization
Everything Domains, Web 2.5, Education

Website
X.com: @joedomains

Notable Achievement
Two of the top sales of all-time, both over 1,000,000.
Speaker and Educator across shows, podcast and communities.

Fun Fact
First Domain: BlueHorseshoe.com

Motto
"There's nothing like Domain Names."

X.com
@joedomains

News from the market

Quarterly report Aftermarket

Record-Breaking $12M Sale of Icon.com Headlines Q2 2025 Domain Market Boom

The second quarter of 2025 delivered some of the most headline-worthy domain sales in recent memory, led by the monumental $12 million acquisition of Icon.com, a clear signal that ultra-premium, one-word .com domains remain the gold standard for digital identity. Brokered by Hilco Digital Assets, this blockbuster deal not only reaffirms the enduring value of category-defining names but also cements the status of .com as the domain extension of choice for global branding.

Trailing not far behind, Fuse.com sold for over $2.1 million, reflecting sustained demand for short, energetic .coms ideal for startups and consumer-facing brands. The top tier of the market is clearly alive and thriving. But the energy doesn't stop there. The AI boom continues to shape the domain landscape, with high-dollar .ai sales making a strong showing once again after the good numbers recorded in Q1 2025. Names like Rush.ai ($300K), Breeze.ai and Seed.ai ($225K each) highlight the premium placed on sleek, vertical-relevant domains that can power emerging tech ventures.

> **"From multimillion-dollar domains to robust sales of other TLDs and two-word domains, buyers demonstrate the high value they place on rare, desirable domain names. "**

Page Howe
Local Marketing Director
iLove.LA; Advisor
Freename.com

Meanwhile, there's healthy movement across other segments too. Mid-range .coms such as Sonora.com ($92K), Bedroom.com ($87.6K), and HomeBattery.com ($75K) demonstrate steady end-user demand for meaningful, brandable domains in key verticals like geo-targeting, e-commerce, and clean energy.

Short acronyms and numerics remain liquid assets, with domains like 441.com, OKP.com, and OKS.com all fetching six figures. And in the alt-extension space, Grid.xyz and Tempo.xyz (both near $150K) show that next-gen buyers continue to embrace modern alternatives for tech-forward branding.

From eight-figure blockbusters to fast-moving AI assets and strategic brand names across every tier, the market is showing balanced, diversified strength. The message is clear: buyers remain confident in the power of a strong domain and are willing to pay accordingly.

Top 30 Sales

in Q2 2025

As anticipated above in the intro, the blockbuster $12 million sale of Icon.com through Hilco Digital Assets dominates this period's domain market activity, reaffirming the enduring appeal – and astronomical value – of ultra-premium, single-word .com domains. As a powerful, universal term with broad brandability across industries, Icon.com joins the rarefied ranks of eight-figure domain sales, underscoring just how potent a top-tier .com can be in the right hands.

Another headline-grabber this cycle is Fuse.com, which commanded over $2.1 million in a sale brokered by Hilco and the Pollock Fund. Like icon.com, fuse.com is a short, high-energy word that lends itself to use in tech, media, and consumer brands, further confirming that the market for concise, evocative .coms remains red hot.

> **"Icon.com and Fuse.com, two top reported domain sales, exemplify dual ultra-premium qualities: single-word dictionary terms and four-letter brevity. Many similar sales likely occurred privately and remain undisclosed."**
>
> **Page Howe**

Meanwhile, AI-related domains continue their steady run, with names like Rush.ai ($300K), Breeze.ai ($225K), and Seed.ai ($225K) making strong appearances. Their continued climb reflects sustained demand from artificial intelligence startups for sleek, vertical-relevant identities.

> **".AI domain sales, reaching 10-30% of comparable .com values, mark a rare trend unseen since .net and .org in the late 1990s or .io in 2021-23. This reflects .AI's popularity and the scarcity-driven value of one-word .com domains."**
>
> **Page Howe**

There's also solid activity among numeric and acronym domains. 441.com fetched $139K, while OKP.com and OKS.com both cracked six figures. These kinds of short domains retain strong liquidity and value due to their versatility and appeal in global markets.

In the alternative extensions space, Grid.xyz ($150K) and Tempo.xyz ($149,888) highlight that .xyz continues to enjoy favor among tech-forward ventures looking for modern, creative branding alternatives beyond .com.

All told, this period's sales showcase a balanced market with appetite across the spectrum: from elite .coms to startup-friendly .ai and emerging new gTLDs – each attracting buyers ready to invest in naming assets that stand out.

Domain name	Price	Date	Venue
icon.com	12,000,000 USD	2025-04-24	Hilco Digital Assets
fuse.com	2,129,509 USD	2025-05-20	Hilco/Pollock Fund
slash.com	1,000,000 USD	2025-05-22	Snagged.com
abtc.com	699,999 USD	2025-04-08	Afternic
mine.com	680,000 USD	2025-04-28	DropCatch
dollars.com	500,000 USD	2025-06-16	Sedo
carbonenergy.com	400,000 USD	2025-06-18	Nametra.com
rush.ai	300,000 USD	2025-05-09	Atom.com
breeze.ai	225,000 USD	2025-05-22	Afternic
seed.ai	225,000 USD	2025-05-13	Atom.com
rank.ai	200,000 USD	2025-06-17	Spaceship.com
linea.com	200,000 USD	2025-04-30	NameJet
youcoin.com	198,000 USD	2025-06-08	Afternic
grid.xyz	150,000 USD	2025-06-26	Afternic
okp.com	150,000 USD	2025-06-25	Dynadot
hechoenmexico.com	150,000 USD	2025-04-13	Afternic
tempo.xyz	149,888 USD	2025-06-16	Afternic
441.com	139,000 USD	2025-04-05	GoDaddy
crossfire.com	125,000 USD	2025-06-19	Afternic
agenticai.com	120,000 USD	2025-05-28	Spaceship.com
mini.ai	117,192 USD	2025-06-29	Sedo
weaverobotics.com	113,566 USD	2025-04-13	Sedo
oks.com	112,006 USD	2025-06-22	GoDaddy
bitz.com	112,000 USD	2025-06-27	Dynadot
remotepay.com	110,000 USD	2025-05-13	Atom.com
myvehicle.com	105,000 USD	2025-05-16	Private
estate.ai	100,000 USD	2025-06-21	Atom.com
jcl.ai	95,500 USD	2025-05-28	Spaceship.com
sonora.com	92,000 USD	2025-04-09	GoDaddy
champion.ai	89,500 USD	2025-05-01	Spaceship.com

Other Relevant .Com Sales

The mid-tier .com market remains vibrant, with a diverse mix of brandable, geographic, and keyword-rich domains changing hands in the $50K–$100K range. These sales reveal strong end-user and investor interest in names that, while not headline-grabbing like icon.com, offer real utility and branding potential.

Leading the pack is Sonora.com, which sold for $92,000 via GoDaddy. As a geo-name with broad resonance – from Mexico's Sonora state to the musical term "sonorous" – this domain boasts multi-market potential across tourism, music, and lifestyle branding.

Bedroom.com fetched $87,600 at CanavasMedia, capitalizing on its status as a core e-commerce keyword in furniture, interior design, and real estate. In a similar vein, HomeBattery.com ($75,000) sold at Sedo as demand for residential energy storage solutions grows, making it a timely, niche-relevant asset.

Cultural and personal branding were also well-represented. Adios.com ($75,000) offers memorable multilingual flair with global recognition, while Raju.com ($68,000) targets a common South Asian name with strong personalization potential.

Short, brandable names continue to perform steadily. Nise.com ($75,000), EDC.com ($72,500), and Chit.com ($56,389) offer compact versatility for tech, finance, or lifestyle startups. Meanwhile, YYBet.com ($70,003) and MrBet.com ($57,281) reflect the ongoing strength of the betting and gaming verticals.

> "Mid-tier domains show the greatest price variance, driven by the platform or seller's goals. Some secure wholesale prices, while others, narrowed to a single domain, meet sellers who hold firm, reflecting the domain's current and future value."
>
> **Page Howe**

Other standout deals include PlayID.com ($60,000), hinting at a future in gaming or identity verification, and AI-Candy.com ($50,000), which combines AI branding with a catchy, playful twist.

Altogether, these sub-six-figure .com sales reveal a healthy appetite for domains that balance affordability with clear use cases, whether tied to real-world products, digital identity, or high-potential niches. The data suggests that savvy buyers are still keen to secure strong assets before they ascend into higher price tiers.

Domain name	Price	Date	Venue
sonora.com	92,000 USD	2025-04-09	GoDaddy
bedroom.com	87,600 USD	2025-06-22	CanavasMedia
northridge.com	82,500 USD	2025-04-16	LegalBrandMarketing
adios.com	75,000 USD	2025-06-22	CanavasMedia
homebattery.com	75,000 USD	2025-06-11	Sedo
nise.com	75,000 USD	2025-05-20	Atom.com
edc.com	72,500 USD	2025-05-31	NameJet
yybet.com	70,003 USD	2025-04-19	DropCatch
raju.com	68,000 USD	2025-04-20	Sedo
playid.com	60,000 USD	2025-06-08	Sedo
safes.com	59,388 USD	2025-05-31	Snapnames
borj.com	58,427 USD	2025-05-04	Sedo
mrbet.com	57,281 USD	2025-06-23	Sedo
chit.com	56,389 USD	2025-04-05	GoDaddy
debridge.com	50,999 USD	2025-05-31	NameJet
x77.com	50,004 USD	2025-06-09	GoDaddy
sollers.com	50,000 USD	2025-05-02	Sedo
aicandy.com	50,000 USD	2025-04-27	GoDaddy
heritageholdings.com	50,000 USD	2025-04-09	DomainMarket.com
technologyadvisor.com	49,888 USD	2025-06-04	DomainMarket.com

New gTLDs

The new gTLD (ngTLD) space is showing steady maturity, with two standout .xyz sales leading the charge: Grid.xyz closed at $150,000, followed closely by Tempo.xyz at $149,888, both via Afternic. These sales affirm .xyz's continued reputation as the go-to extension for cutting-edge tech ventures and crypto-native brands seeking brevity and modern appeal.

Also impressive is the .app namespace, with Mega.app selling for $50,000 and Sigma.app for $28,572. These names are concise, brandable, and ideal for consumer-facing mobile or web applications, explaining their growing value. Matrix.app and Cap.app further round out the list, each commanding five-figure sums.

A surprising entrant is A.capital, which changed hands for $30,000. As a lesser-used extension, .capital can be hit-or-miss, but this succinct and finance-aligned domain shows potential when paired with the right keyword.

Back in the .xyz field, a wave of mid-tier brandables—Yield.xyz, Calyx.xyz, Atum.xyz, Recess.xyz, and Morten.xyz—sold in the $17K–30K range. These prices reflect both the versatility and speculative promise of .xyz names in Web3, finance, and tech ecosystems. Even quirky or niche names like Boba.xyz and Nomi.xyz are attracting premium buyers, hinting at broadening use cases and cultural appeal.

> "A decade on, new gTLDs continue to attract high-value end-user purchases, suggesting sellers who patiently wait can achieve excellent returns."
>
> **Page Howe**

Meanwhile, Crypto.agency at $24,004 indicates continued value in combining industry-defining terms with relevant extensions. Similarly, Hedge.fun ($15,000) and One.vision ($10,815) reflect the brandability of mission-driven or emotionally resonant domain pairings, particularly in emerging sectors like finance, wellness, or content creation.

Overall, this batch of ngTLD sales shows that while .com remains king, forward-looking buyers are increasingly willing to pay real money for premium new extensions, especially when they signal innovation, modernity, and sector relevance. Expect continued growth in this space, especially from .xyz, .app, and other expressive TLDs that combine brevity with branding potential.

Domain name	Price	Date	Venue
grid.xyz	150,000 USD	2025-06-26	Afternic
tempo.xyz	149,888 USD	2025-06-16	Afternic
mega.app	50,000 USD	2025-06-30	Spaceship.com
a.capital	30,000 USD	2025-04-16	LegalBrandMarketing
yield.xyz	29,746 USD	2025-04-22	MetisNames.com
sigma.app	28,572 USD	2025-04-09	Afternic
crypto.agency	24,004 USD	2025-06-21	Afternic
calyx.xyz	22,888 USD	2025-06-26	Afternic
cap.app	20,000 USD	2025-06-17	Afternic
atum.xyz	17,888 USD	2025-06-16	Afternic
recess.xyz	17,888 USD	2025-04-30	Afternic
morton.xyz	17,888 USD	2025-04-16	Afternic
aux.xyz	15,999 USD	2025-04-17	Afternic
realms.xyz	15,000 USD	2025-06-16	Afternic
hedge.fun	15,000 USD	2025-04-24	Afternic
boba.xyz	14,999 USD	2025-04-02	Afternic
nomi.xyz	13,750 USD	2025-06-16	Afternic
matrix.app	13,000 USD	2025-04-02	Afternic
one.vision	10,815 USD	2025-04-01	Sedo
ontology.xyz	10,000 USD	2025-06-16	Afternic

Country codes

The country code top-level domain (ccTLD) market continues to show exceptional strength, particularly within the .ai namespace, which has become a de facto extension for artificial intelligence startups and platforms. With more than a dozen high-value .ai sales this period – eight of them above $85K – the trend confirms that the AI naming boom is far from slowing down.

Topping the list is Rush.ai, which secured a $300,000 sale via Atom.com. Closely following are Breeze.ai and Seed.ai, both changing hands for $225,000, while Rank.ai landed a solid $200,000. These brisk, one-word domains signal startup readiness and strategic branding power, all qualities that continue to attract buyers in the fast-growing AI space.

Even longer or more specific .ai domains found traction. Names like InteriorDesign.ai ($75,000), Conduct.ai, Trains.ai, and Virtuoso.ai (each around $70K) show that investors and companies are increasingly willing to pay for vertical-specific AI domains, reflecting the growing specialization of AI solutions across industries.

Notably, JCL.ai ($95,500) and Champion.ai ($89,500) show that even acronyms and motivational terms can command five-figure prices, especially when associated with the AI space's performance-driven ethos.

> **"Strong in-country end-user sales in the ccTLD space signal a bright future as nations cultivate their own premium domain name markets."**
>
> **Page Howe**

Outside of .ai, we saw standout sales from other ccTLDs as well. Fietsen.nl sold for $85,500 – d "fietsen" being the Dutch word for bicycles – underscoring the continued value of localized, category-defining names in strong consumer markets like the Netherlands. Meanwhile, Brain.co ($83,725) and Shine.co ($80,000) reflect ongoing interest in premium .co domains for cutting-edge and wellness-oriented branding, respectively.

Glow.io at $75,000 also demonstrates the rising profile of .io domains, which remain popular among startups and Web3 ventures thanks to their tech-savvy appeal.

All told, this period's ccTLD activity paints a clear picture: .ai is now firmly entrenched as a premium namespace, rivaling .com in certain niches, while high-quality .co, .io, and country-specific extensions like .nl continue to offer strong value for both regional businesses and global-facing tech brands.

Domain name	Price	Date	Venue
rush.ai	300,000 USD	2025-05-09	Atom.com
breeze.ai	225,000 USD	2025-05-22	Afternic
seed.ai	225,000 USD	2025-05-13	Atom.com
rank.ai	200,000 USD	2025-06-17	Spaceship.com
mini.ai	117,192 USD	2025-06-29	Sedo
estate.ai	100,000 USD	2025-06-21	Atom.com
jcl.ai	95,500 USD	2025-05-28	Spaceship.com
champion.ai	89,500 USD	2025-05-01	Spaceship.com
fietsen.nl	85,500 USD	2025-04-27	Nameshift
sheets.ai	85,000 USD	2025-05-28	Spaceship.com
brain.co	83,725 USD	2025-04-08	Efty
shine.co	80,000 USD	2025-04-24	Afternic
interiordesign.ai	75,000 USD	2025-06-24	Spaceship.com
glow.io	75,000 USD	2025-05-23	Private
nash.ai	73,000 USD	2025-05-28	Spaceship.com
conduct.ai	70,000 USD	2025-06-30	Spaceship.com
daft.ai	70,000 USD	2025-06-24	Spaceship.com
trains.ai	70,000 USD	2025-06-24	Spaceship.com
virtuoso.ai	70,000 USD	2025-04-18	Spaceship.com
ponder.ai	69,000 USD	2025-05-01	Spaceship.com

Graph

Top Selling Countries by ccTLD

Based on the 100 highest-value country-code domain sales

Methodology

All data presented in this report were derived from publicly available records on NameBio, the leading searchable database of historical domain name sales. NameBio aggregates verified sales across a wide range of venues, including Sedo, GoDaddy, Afternic, DropCatch, NameJet, and more.

For this report, we focused on domain transactions recorded between April 1 and June 30, 2025. Sales were filtered by extension (e.g., .com, .ai, .xyz, .bet, etc.) and categorized into three main groups: legacy gTLDs, ccTLDs, and new gTLDs. The data include domain name, sale price (in USD), sale date, and marketplace venue.

While NameBio does not capture every domain sale globally (particularly private and unreported transactions), it offers the most reliable and comprehensive snapshot of the publicly visible domain aftermarket available.

News from the market

Quarterly report | Registrations

Most Important gTLDs

170.5 million
Total .com and .net domains by June 2025

+0.7 million
Quarterly growth in .com and .net registrations

10.4 million
New .com and .net domains registered in Q2 2025

+1.2 million
Increase in new registrations vs Q2 2024

As of the end of June 2025, the combined domain base for .com and .net reached approximately 170.5 million registrations. This reflects a slight increase of 0.7 million domains, or 0.41%, compared to the 169.8 million recorded at the end of March 2025. On a year-over-year basis, however, the total declined by 0.1 million, representing a marginal decrease of about 0.05% from the 170.6 million registered in June 2024. In terms of distribution, .com domains accounted for 157.9 million registrations, while .net domains totaled 12.6 million. New registrations for these two TLDs in Q2 2025 amounted to 10.4 million, up from 10.1 million in the previous quarter and 9.2 million in the same quarter of the prior year.

All TLDs

371.7 million
Total domain registrations worldwide as of Q2 2025

+3.3 million
Increase compared to Q1 2025

During the second quarter of 2025, domain name registrations across all top-level domains reached approximately 371.7 million. This marks an increase of 3.3 million domains from the previous quarter's total of 368.4 million, representing a 0.89% quarter-over-quarter growth. Year-on-year, registrations rose by 9.3 million from 362.4 million in Q2 2024, corresponding to an annual growth rate of 2.56%.

ccTLDs

143.4 million
Total ccTLD registrations as of June 2025

+0.5 million
Growth in ccTLDs since end of Q1 2025

By the end of June 2025, country-code top-level domains (ccTLDs) had reached a total of 143.4 million registrations. This marks an increase of 0.5 million, or 0.34%, compared to the 142.9 million registered at the close of March 2025. Year over year, ccTLD registrations grew by 3.5 million, representing a 2.50% rise from the 139.9 million recorded in June 2024.

ngTLDs

39.5 million
Total ngTLD registrations as of Q2 2025

+1.7 million
Quarterly growth in ngTLD registrations

At the close of Q2 2025, new generic top-level domains (ngTLDs) totaled 39.5 million registrations. This reflects a quarterly increase of 1.7 million, or 4.49%, up from 37.8 million in the previous quarter. Compared to the same period in 2024, when registrations stood at 34.6 million, ngTLDs grew by 4.9 million year-over-year, marking a notable 14.16% rise.

Other Legacy gTLDs

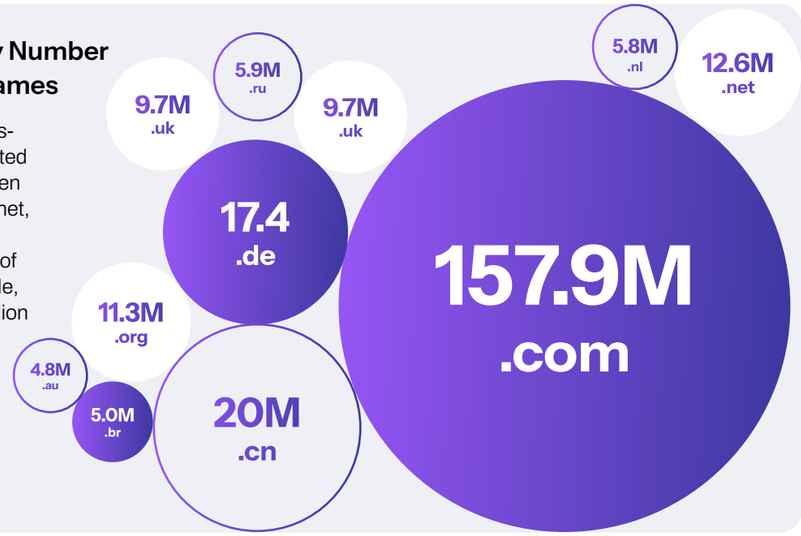
18.3 million
Total legacy gTLD registrations as of Q2 2025

+0.4 million
Growth compared to Q1 2025

By the end of Q2 2025, domain registrations for legacy generic top-level domains (gTLDs) other than .com and .net reached 18.3 million. This marks an increase of 0.4 million, or 2.2%, compared to the 17.9 million recorded at the end of Q1 2025. On a year-over-year basis, these legacy gTLDs grew by 1.1 million registrations, representing a 6.39% rise from the 17.2 million recorded in the same quarter of 2024.

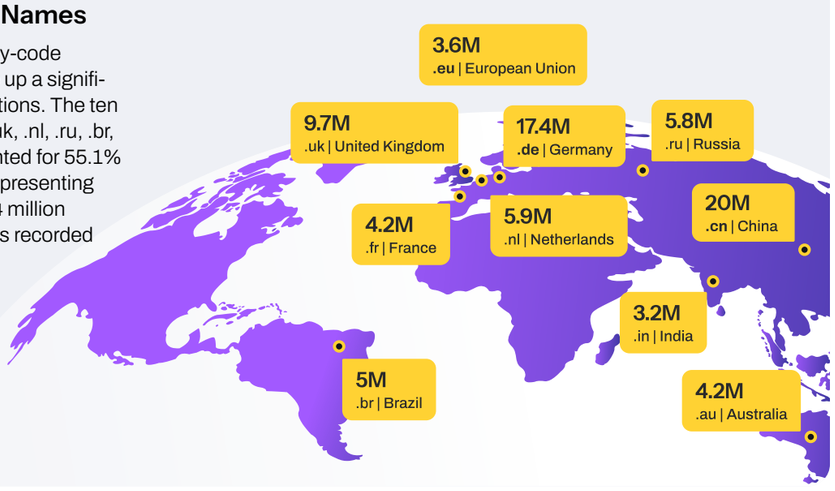
Top 10 Largest TLDs by Number of Reported Domain Names

By June 30, 2025, domain registrations were heavily concentrated in a handful of extensions: the ten largest TLDs – .com, .cn, .de, .net, .org, .uk, .nl, .ru, .br, and .xyz – collectively represented 67.3% of all registered domains worldwide, amounting to roughly 371.7 million names.



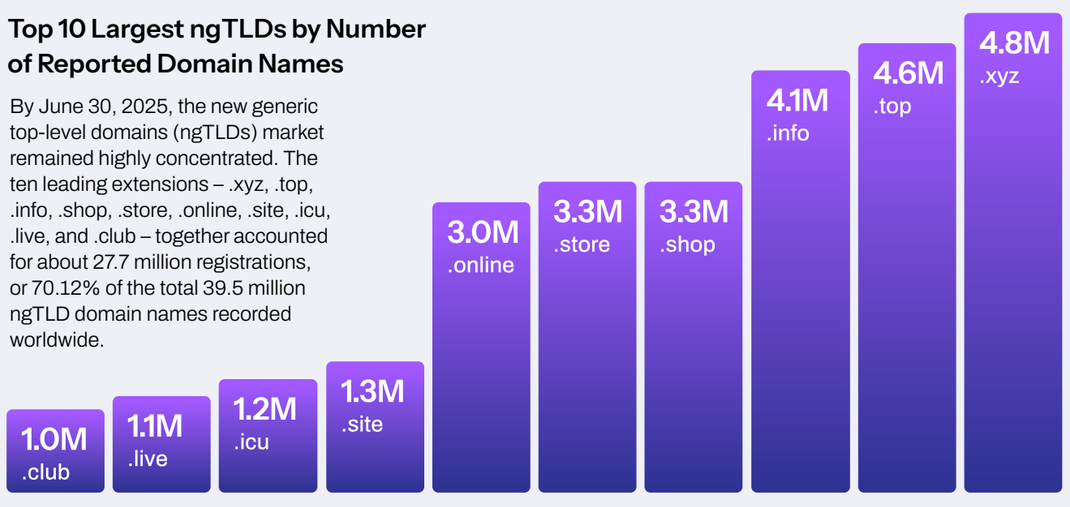
Top 10 Largest ccTLDs by Number of Reported Domain Names

As of June 30, 2025, country-code domains continued to make up a significant share of global registrations. The ten leading ccTLDs – .cn, .de, .uk, .nl, .ru, .br, .au, .fr, .in, and .eu – accounted for 55.1% of all ccTLD registrations, representing about 79 million of the 143.4 million country-code domain names recorded worldwide.



Top 10 Largest ngTLDs by Number of Reported Domain Names

By June 30, 2025, the new generic top-level domains (ngTLDs) market remained highly concentrated. The ten leading extensions – .xyz, .top, .info, .shop, .store, .online, .site, .icu, .live, and .club – together accounted for about 27.7 million registrations, or 70.12% of the total 39.5 million ngTLD domain names recorded worldwide.



Key Takeaways

Global domain registrations continue to grow, but at a measured pace

The second quarter of 2025 saw continued growth in domain registrations, with nearly 372 million domains recorded across all TLDs. However, the modest quarterly increase (0.89%) and moderate annual growth (2.56%) suggest that domain name adoption is becoming incremental rather than explosive, reflecting the ongoing consolidation of the internet's namespace rather than a surge in first-time adoption.

.com and .net registrations appear to have plateaued

The combined footprint of .com and .net remains dominant, but the trend in Q2 points to a levelling off. Their slight quarterly growth is offset by a marginal year-on-year decline, indicating that while these domains remain attractive, their share of new registrations is no longer expanding, and many users may be seeking alternatives that offer greater availability or relevance.

Country-code domains show steady, sustained relevance

Registrations of ccTLDs grew modestly in Q2, continuing a trend of measured, long-term growth. The persistent strength of domains like .cn, .de, and .uk shows that local identity and national-level branding remain important factors in domain selection, particularly for organizations aiming to emphasize trust, regional presence, or language alignment.

New gTLDs are emerging as viable and attractive alternatives

New generic TLDs posted the strongest growth of any category in Q2, with a 4.49% quarterly and 14.16% annual increase. This confirms that users are increasingly open to creative and thematic extensions, such as .xyz, .shop, and .online, which offer more availability and brand-relevant naming options compared to legacy domains.

Lesser-known legacy gTLDs continue to grow quietly

Outside .com and .net, other legacy gTLDs like .org and .info saw moderate growth in Q2, suggesting a stable base of users who value traditional domain structures without the overcrowding of more popular extensions. These TLDs continue to serve specialized audiences, including non-profits, educational initiatives, and communities.

The most popular domains still dominate, but diversity is increasing

The top 10 TLDs still account for over two-thirds of all registrations, showing that a small number of extensions continue to shape the domain space. At the same time, the relative growth of new and non-traditional TLDs indicates a slow shift toward greater diversity in naming conventions, as users explore more expressive and differentiated options.

Conclusion

Domain name registration patterns in Q2 2025 point to a system that is stable, slowly growing, and gradually diversifying. While established TLDs like .com and .net continue to account for the largest share of total registrations, their growth has slowed, suggesting a saturated space with limited room for expansion. In contrast, new gTLDs are gaining traction, reflecting users' interest in more flexible and expressive naming options. Country-code domains remain strong, reinforcing the importance of regional identity in the digital space.

Overall, the data suggests that while the domain name system continues to be shaped by a few dominant TLDs, users are increasingly exploring alternatives that better reflect their needs, communities, and branding goals.

Methodology

The data presented in this report is based on domain registration statistics obtained from a combination of industry sources and internal analysis. For Q2 2024, we use data published by the Domain Name Industry Brief (DNIB), a recognized and authoritative source on global domain trends. For Q1 2025 and Q2 2025, the data comes from Freename's own queries on publicly available zone files, which are open resources widely used across the industry to monitor domain registrations. This mixed-method approach ensures both accuracy and real-time relevance, allowing us to deliver up-to-date insights into the domain name ecosystem.

About **The Quarterly Report | Registrations**

The Domain Standard Quarterly Report - Registrations provides an in-depth analysis of global domain registration trends across all top-level domains (TLDs) for each quarter. It offers insights into the performance of the most prominent generic TLDs (gTLDs), country-code TLDs (ccTLDs), and new generic TLDs (ngTLDs), providing a comprehensive view of the state of the domain name market.

This report is designed for investors, analysts, and industry professionals who require up-to-date data on the registration patterns and growth trajectories of domain names. It tracks key metrics such as the total number of domain registrations, quarter-over-quarter growth, year-over-year changes, and the performance of individual TLDs. Furthermore, it highlights significant trends, emerging opportunities, and shifts in the market, making it a valuable resource for decision-makers in the domain and digital property sectors.

The report offers both a high-level overview of the global domain landscape and detailed insights into specific segments of the market, including the continuing dominance of .com and .net, the growing popularity of localized ccTLDs, and the explosive rise of ngTLDs. By analyzing these trends, the report aims to inform strategic decisions, uncover investment opportunities, and guide stakeholders through the ever-evolving domain name ecosystem

Learn more →

For comments or questions about
The Domain Standard's Quarterly Report,
email **matteo@freename.com**

Calendar Events

Events That Shape the Industry

The domain world never stands still and neither do its people. From global policy forums to high-energy summits and community-driven workshops, industry events continue to shape the way we connect, trade, and build together our digital future. In this section, we look back at some of the most significant gatherings of the past quarter, spotlight the key events of the present quarter, and look ahead at what's coming in the next. The past months featured milestone gatherings, from ICANN's Prague forum to the Ethereum Community Conference in Cannes. At the same time, the key event of this quarter – the London Domain Summit 2025 – confirmed its reputation as one of Europe's leading hubs for industry leadership, innovation, and collaboration. Its founder, Helmuts Meskonis (also profiled in the 'Who's Who' section of this issue), shares in a few comments what makes the Summit so distinctive and why it continues to draw such a diverse community of domain professionals. As September marks the start of a packed autumn schedule, attention now turns to upcoming gatherings such as Token2049 Singapore, Baltic Domain Days in Tallinn, Domain Days Dubai, the landmark 40th edition of the Internet Identity Workshop in California, and NamesCon Global in Miami. This issue also includes an exclusive interview with Munir Badr, founder and organizer of Domain Days Dubai, offering insights into what makes the event unique and what to expect from its 2025 edition.

Past Events

ICANN83 Policy Forum

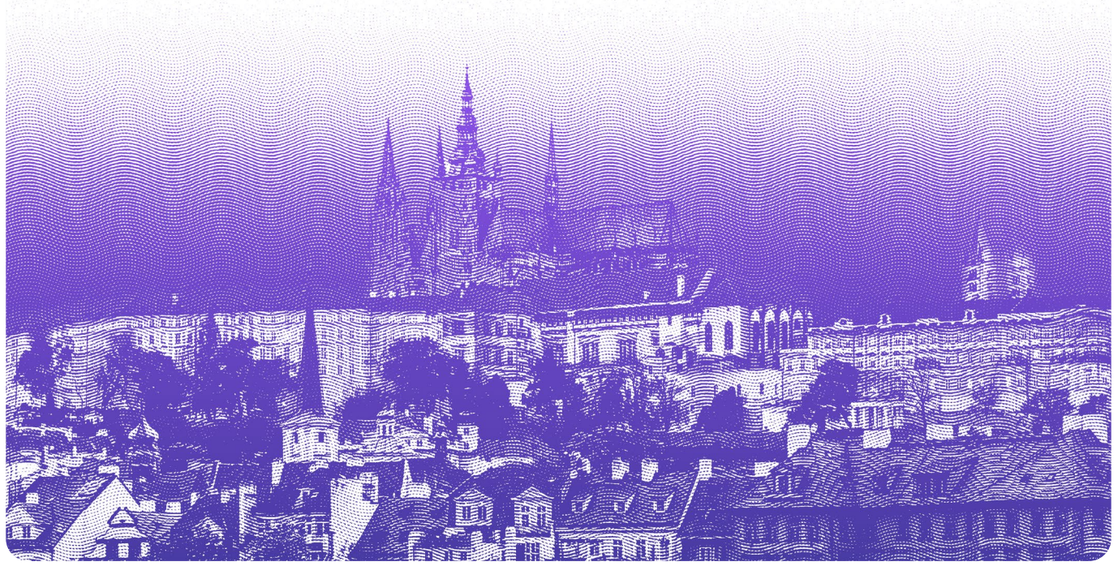
9–12 June 2025 | Prague

Visit the official website: meetings.icann.org

In early June 2025, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) convened its 83rd Policy Forum at the Prague Congress Center, in a hybrid format enabling both in person and virtual engagement. This gathering was notably timed to precede the 20 year review of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS+20), offering a stage to re evaluate global digital development ambitions and reaffirm the relevance of the multistakeholder governance model.
Participants from governments, businesses, technical communities, and civil society tackled a broad policy agenda. The forum included working sessions and dialogues aimed at shaping the future of the Domain Name System (DNS). Central themes included Universal Acceptance of domain names and email addresses, tackling DNS abuse, and preparing for the next round of new generic top level domains (gTLDs). Over 100 sessions facilitated technical coordination, policy development, and networking across stakeholder groups. A highlight for many was the opening panel on the future of blockchain in the domain space, which signaled growing interest in how Web3 technologies might integrate with traditional DNS infrastructure.

> **Gherardo Varani | Freename** @0xVarano
>
> Kicked off ICANN83 with a strong panel on the future of blockchain in the domain space, where interest is rapidly growing. Web3 isn't here to replace—it's here to expand, bringing a powerful new layer of infrastructure, fresh use cases, and real utility to the naming ecosystem. It was a pleasure to speak alongside Daniel Greenberg from Lexsynergy and Nicholas Cervantes from ArmeniaDomains—true visionaries and first movers who clearly recognize the potential of this emerging technology. Big thanks to Kathy Nielsen, Lars Jensen and WebUnited for powering this great session.

ICANN's President & CEO, Kurtis Lindqvist, emphasized the urgency of cultivating practical, community-led solutions at a time when global Internet frameworks are under intense scrutiny. Their Czech host, CZ.NIC (.cz registry), underscored the meeting's contribution to maintaining a secure, stable, and interconnected Internet.



InternetX Domain Summit 2025

25–26 June 2025 | Frankfurt

Visit the official website: internetx.com

Held at PSD Bank Arena and Union Halle in Frankfurt, the two-day InternetX Domain Summit brought together domain industry leaders, resellers, and decision-makers for two days of insight, exchange, and networking. The Summit served as a platform to explore key market trends, regulatory developments, innovative strategies, and best practices shaping the present and future of the domain space.

The agenda spotlighted decisive dialogues and keynotes from ION-OS board members Arthur Mai and Markus Noga, focusing on the intersection of the Sovereign Web and AI-driven monetization in the domain landscape. Attendees also benefited from panel discussions featuring experts from ICANN, DENIC eG, eco – Verband der Internetwirtschaft e.V., and dotBerlin GmbH & Co KG, reinforcing dialogue between registries, registrars, and regulatory bodies.

> **"The June 2025 InternetX event was an exceptional event. As the co-founder of the popular NamesCon conference, I noticed the attention to detail and the attendee-facing grace of the InternetX team and their moderators and speakers. From the quality of the attendee experience to the well-curated agenda and experiential activities and networking opportunities, the calibre of attendees, speakers and performers, and the venues used, I give this an A++++ grade and it valuable use of my time and expense to attend. It is now on my "do not miss" list for events."**

Jothan Frakes

An energetic highlight session was delivered by Eric Reutemann of Frankfurt Galaxy, earning buzz within the community for its motivational and forward thinking tone. The event also showcased major sponsors—Radix, Sectigo, Entri, and D3—whose presentations energized the program and underscored their strategic roles within the domain ecosystem. As always, the Summit featured a lively pre event reception on 25 June and wound down with a celebratory party, maintaining its tradition of fostering community in a spirited atmosphere.

Overall, the InternetX Domain Summit 2025 successfully blended visionary keynotes, regulatory and technological discussions, sponsor-driven insight, and robust networking—further solidifying InternetX's role as a pivotal convener in the domain industry.

Ethereum Community Conference (EthCC)

30 June-3 July 2025 | Cannes

Visit the official website: ethcc.io

The Ethereum Community Conference (EthCC 2025) took place from June 30 to July 3 in Cannes, France, marking its eight edition and its largest gathering yet. Organized by Ethereum France, the event brought together over 6,400 participants, more than 500 speakers, and dozens of sponsors, creating a dynamic environment that combined high-level technical discussions with a vibrant community spirit. Over the four days, attendees engaged with talks and panels covering topics ranging from DeFi and zero-knowledge cryptography to core protocol development, security, and the intersection of AI and blockchain. Alongside the main program, more than 200 side events animated the city, with workshops, hackathons, investor summits, and even beach parties contributing to the lively atmosphere. This year's edition stood out for the increasing presence of institutions and regulators, signaling Ethereum's shift toward broader mainstream relevance. Announcements such as Robinhood's plans for tokenized stocks and the launch of a new Layer 2 solution underscored this growing convergence between traditional finance and decentralized innovation. Set against the backdrop of Cannes and its red-carpet allure, EthCC 2025 offered not only a showcase of cutting-edge ideas but also a clear indication of Ethereum's expanding role in shaping the future of technology and finance.

In case you missed it, all the talks and presentations from EthCC[8] are available to watch on their official website: ethcc.io

Key Events of the Quarter

London Domain Summit 2025

September 2–3, 2025 | Business Design Centre, London, UK

Visit the official website: london25.domainsummit.com

The London Domain Summit 2025 will take place on September 2–3 at the Business Design Centre in London, UK. This two-day event is one of Europe's largest gatherings focused on the domain industry, drawing more than 500 professionals including domain investors, registrars, registries, hosting providers, SEO specialists, legal experts, and tech entrepreneurs from across the continent and beyond. The Summit is designed to facilitate high-level networking, business development, and strategic insights into the evolving domain ecosystem.

Attendees can expect a rich agenda of keynotes and panel discussions featuring prominent figures such as Michael Riedl (Team Internet), Lars Jensen (ShortDot), Christopher Mondini (ICANN Europe), Nigel Roberts (.GG), Andriy Khvetkevych (NicNames), and David Barnett (Stobbs). Sessions will address pressing themes such as market trends shaping domain valuation and trading, regulatory developments in internet governance, monetization strategies using AI and Web3 technologies, and best practices in domain management, security, and branding. In addition to talks and debates, the event will feature practical workshops, masterclasses, and an exhibitor hall showcasing companies like Sedo, DN.com, Open-Xchange, Majestic SEO, Site.Pro, and It.com Domains. Side events, networking opportunities, and a possible live domain auction will round out the programme. Open to executives, investors, brokers, and innovators, the Summit continues to solidify its status as a key hub for leadership, innovation, and collaboration in the domain space.

> **"What makes the London Domain Summit unique is the in-person energy and wide diversity of our attendees - everyone here is looking for more business, more opportunities, and better ways to work with existing clients and service providers.**
>
> **I built Domain Summit on my unshaken belief that strong, face-to-face relationships are the foundation of all meaningful business in this space. These are crucial for taking any business to the next level. No exceptions. Even Mark Zuckerberg wouldn't have taken Facebook beyond its early stage without meeting Peter Thiel and others - people who showed him the next steps and guided him forward. I believe this applies to everyone: from solo domain investors to major registries, registrars, and branding agencies.**
>
> **I'm fortunate that I don't need to chase speakers just for their big names or logos. I invite those who have something real to say. The goal has always been to keep the event business-focused, friendly, independent (I'm the 100% owner - no investors with hidden agendas), and international. Domain Summit is a place where a newcomer can sit next to the CEO of a global domain marketplace and have a genuine business conversation.**
>
> **Most importantly - none of this would be possible without the financial and informational support of key industry players like it.com Domains, Freename, Site.pro, and Sedo. As in life, the most generous are often the hungry — not those who have plenty - and that's absolutely fine. It's a proven way to win business from older, slower competitors. There's an old Roman saying: a victor should not rest on his laurels. Or, in the words of ABBA: The Winner takes it All :) .. ahh, I love ABBA. To sum it up: Domain Summit isn't just a conference. These are global events where power shifts, deals are made, names are remembered, and the future of the domain industry gets debated over coffee, beer — or both."**

Helmuts Meskonis

Founder of Domain Summit & HostMania

What's to Come?

Token2049 Singapore

October 1–2, 2025 | Marina Bay Sands, Singapore

Token2049 Singapore is Asia's largest and most influential crypto and Web3 focused event. Over two days, it brings together more than 25,000 industry leaders from over 7,000 companies across 160+ countries, including C suite executives, founders, investors, and developers . Spread across five floors, attendees can dive into over 300 speaker sessions and explore 500+ exhibitor booths, as well as participate in keynote presentations, product launches, startup competitions, workshops, and side events. The summit combines cutting edge demos with a festival style atmosphere—complete with live entertainment, DJ sets, and interactive experiences—offering unparalleled networking opportunities and insights into crypto infrastructure, regulatory trends, AI crypto convergence, DeFi, NFTs, and more.

Visit the official website: www.asia.token2049.com

Baltic Domain Days 2025

October 7–8, 2025 | Tallinn, Estonia

Hosted by the Estonian Internet Foundation, Baltic Domain Days is the leading regional event for the domain industry in the Baltic States. Since 2018, it has brought together registries, registrars, hosting providers, cybersecurity experts, and policymakers from Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The 2025 edition will continue the tradition of fostering dialogue around DNS security, domain abuse, internet governance, EU regulatory updates, and innovations such as IDNs. Held in rotation among the Baltic countries, the event serves as a platform for collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and strengthening the regional internet infrastructure.

Domain Days Dubai 2025

October 22–23, 2025 | Dubai, UAE

A premier event in the Middle East, Domain Days Dubai brings together domain industry professionals for two days of insights and networking. The conference covers a broad spectrum of topics including domain name registration and management, auctions, investing, parking and monetization strategies, as well as web hosting and digital marketing. Curated by Munir Badr (check the 'Who's Who' section of the present issue), the event serves as a key platform to explore emerging trends and business opportunities in the global domain sector.

Visit the official website: domaindays.com

Munir Badr

DOMAIN DAYS

Munir Badr is the Founder and CEO of AEserver, a leading UAE-based domain name registrar accredited for .ae, .qa, .bh and over 500 global extensions. A trilingual Internet entrepreneur and UAE resident since 1996, he has built AEserver into one of the region's most trusted registrars and a winner of the NBAD SME Stars of Business Award (Best Technology & Online, 2014). Munir is also the founder and curator of Domain Days Dubai, launched in 2023 as the first dedicated domain industry event in the Middle East. The event quickly became a landmark platform connecting registries, registrars, investors, and innovators from around the world. He frequently speaks at regional and international forums including MEDNSF, APTLD, MENOG, and the Affiliate World Summit.

Munir, I cannot but start from Dubai Domain Days, which are coming up soon on October 22-23. This has quickly become a key event in the region. What originally motivated you to start this summit, and how do you see it standing out from other domain events worldwide?

I wanted the Middle East & Africa to have its own event for the domain and web-presence industry: where real local providers meet, learn, and do deals. We stand out by being MEA-first, friendly, and outcomes-driven: curated 1:1 meetings, practical sessions with insights from the local market all in Dubai's energy on Oct 22–23 - afterall this is the most talked about city currently. Everyone wants to be here!

This year's program covers a lot, from domain strategies to digital branding and the changing internet economy. Which of these themes are you personally most excited about, and why?

I am most excited about the trending topics which are the new gTLD round as well as the use of AI in domains and web presence and everything else web-related. These are the 2 hottest themes right now and there is a race to succeed in them across the globe. Keeping an eye on them will ensure that we don't miss the next big leap that is about to change our industry. This doesn't happen very often.

You've brought together a really diverse group, starting from registries and registrars to marketers and tech experts. How important do you think this kind of cross-industry collaboration is for growing the domain space in the MENA region?

Essential. Domains don't live in a silo - registries, registrars, hosts, marketers, and SaaS vendors all touch the same customer journey. When those groups plan together, adoption accelerates and the region leaps forward, not step-by-step.

Having launched and curated Dubai Domain Days for some time now, what's been the biggest surprise or highlight for you in how the global domain community has embraced the event?

How quickly it felt like a global family. People fly in, stay the extra day, and tell me the "hallway track" was priceless - real deals, partnerships, even product ideas that were born on the spot in Dubai. So many deals happened that I personally know, but can't speak about :)

Looking ahead to this year's attendees, what do you hope they walk away with? New insights, connections, or something more personal?

Three things: one sales playbook they can ship next week, a handful of warm introductions they'll actually follow up on, and renewed confidence to scale in MEA and beyond. If they leave with that (and a BIG Dubai inspiration), we've done our job.

Internet Identity Workshop (IIW) XL – 40th Edition

October 28–30, 2025 | Computer History Museum, 1401 N Shoreline Blvd, Mountain View, CA, USA

Now in its 40th edition, the Internet Identity Workshop (IIW) is a landmark event dedicated to open, user-controlled digital identity. Held at the iconic Computer History Museum, IIW XL gathers a global community of technologists, policymakers, researchers, and industry leaders to explore and co-create the future of decentralized identity systems. Since 2005, IIW has catalyzed key developments like decentralized identifiers (DIDs), verifiable credentials, and self-sovereign identity (SSI). The event follows an open space format, allowing attendees to shape the agenda in real time and engage in collaborative, in-depth discussions on identity protocols, interoperability, trust frameworks, and open standards.

Visit the official website: www.lfdecentralizedtrust.org

NamesCon Global 2025

November 5–6, 2025 | Ice Palace Studios, 1400 N Miami Ave, Miami FL 33136, United States

NamesCon Global is a premier event for the domain name industry, bringing together domain investors, registrars, hosting providers, and tech experts. The 2025 conference marks a return to Florida, celebrating the 40th anniversary of the domain industry. The event will explore themes like AI, Web3, and the upcoming expansion of the gTLD program, offering attendees insights into the future of digital assets and domain-related services.

Visit the official website: namescon.com

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