

The cyber-real estate race

By [Naseem Javed](#)

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Forget the bricks and mortar for a minute, and just dream of owning a universal domain name identity in cyberspace, along the likes of priceline.com, food.com, creditcards.com or cheapflights.com, as such identities are valued in tens of millions and continue to double in price every year.

The entire domain name industry has advanced to a more mature level, which now fully recognizes the super value of having a generic globally recognizable domain identity as a true cyber-real-estate asset. But the name game in this current race must be played under the correct laws, as most of these assets sometimes simply evaporate into thin air.

Business.com was originally sold for \$150,000 - in what was once considered an outrageous amount, but later it sold for \$7.5 million, and was resold again for \$350 Million in 2007. Fund.com was sold for \$9.9 million, AsSeenOnTv.com was sold for \$5.1 million, Altavista.com \$3.3 million, Express.com \$1.8 million, Wallstreet.com \$1 million, Creditcards.com \$2.75 million, Pizza.com for \$2.5 million, Cruises.co.uk \$1.2 Million, Recycle.co.uk \$300 000, Taste.co.uk \$250,000, Sex.com \$12 million, Porn.com \$9.5 million, Datarecovery.com \$1.7 million... As you read this, all over the globe, big and small similar auction deals are being consummated every hour.

Roadmap to victory

A powerhouse name on universal cyber space is a sure bet to get the customer's attention. Spending millions on promoting a deadbeat name the old-fashioned way is like dragging a dead horse. Instead, why not acquire a name that shoots straight into the spotlight like an arrow? This way, the premium price would cover lingering costs, as the old-fashioned branding processes are now being replaced by the linguistic forces that drive names to extraordinary heights, on top of search engines, resulting in massive hits, quick success and instant stardom. There are also many not-so-promoted mega failures, as the game is often played on creative impulses with little or no knowledge of cyber nomenclature or global domain management systems. Most become trapped for failing to assess their project through a Name Evaluation Report. The real challenge is not to acquire the most expensive and most bizarre name, but rather how that name will appear to the global customers at large, and how the name positioning game will be played, and under what laws.

Whimsical, intuitive and creative concepts often become dead on arrival. Prudence is in getting a solid name evaluation before the launch, and not after.

What's in a name?

All over the corporate world, there has been a sudden realization that it's only the name that can be referred to, talked about, typed, scribbled, chatted and sung about. While logos remain elementary, they have become irrelevant branding tools, as the name's memorability becomes questionable among global customers.

The current cyber-real-estate domain assets also lack long-term trademark protection, as many similar name-variations can easily be created, causing massive confusion within cyberspace. Food.com can be varied along the lines of Food.net, Food.tv, or region-specific suffixes like Food.asia, food.in or food.jp. There are 5000 possible permutations that can be derived from a single word alone. On the other hand, a Five Star Standard Name like Sony is truly one of a kind, alongside its matching Sony.com domain name, making its name alone, a billion-dollar asset.

There are many other great billion-dollar value names and the question is how to own one.

For global and serious regional players, having universal name identities is based on professional corporate nomenclature and laws of the Five Star Standard of Naming www.fivestarstandard.com for global navigation. Time is running out, as new emerging players from all over Asia are capturing the space at a frantic pace, poised to become global entities and this will make name identities even more important.

Today, most businesses seem to have some serious disconnection between their old identity and their cyber-presence, and now the battlefield is forcing the logo based branding shops to scratch their heads and start thinking.

The cyber platform, which has crushed the bulky print medium and shrank large TV's into handheld devices, has made domain name identities a sure-powerhouse issue. No brand identity would survive without being a frontline champion of the mobile society, and this has created a serious shortage of good 5 Star Standard names worldwide. Simply put, when it comes to such universally accepted and recognized cyber-real-estate assets, the question is; you have it or you don't; you're either in the game or out. It's that simple.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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