

Tips for choosing the right domain name

By [Guest Contributor](#)

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For the Internet entrepreneur, a domain name is just as important as the brand name itself, says Michael Osterloh, CEO of Host Africa. For this reason, it requires a lot of thought and consideration.

Osterloh suggests that your domain name stands as your identity across the Internet and it's imperative that you choose a name that fits your business but is also easy to find and market. Here are a few tips for choosing your domain name wisely.

It should be brandable

If your domain name is an extension of your brand's identity, then it's logical that when your market reads it, they see your brand. Repeat the name to yourself and ask yourself whether it sounds like your brand or not. Hyphens and numbers will detract from this branding and should be avoided (unless there's a number in your brand name).



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It should be simple and easy to pronounce

An easily pronounceable name is important because of a concept called processing fluency. This is a cognitive bias that we have where we remember, and have more positive associations with, things that we can easily say and remember. So if your market can't easily say the name, then you've lost that memorability factor and are hurting your brandability.

To .com or not to .com?

Every web address ends in a domain extension – a series of letters known as top-level domains (TLDs). The general trend is to choose the .com TLD. But it's curious that it's still as popular as it is, even when there are so many other extensions to choose from. The reason for this is that phrase again, processing fluency – the bias that people have towards the familiar and easily understandable. And if you want to build your brand, then you're going to want to stick with this. Inevitably, if your business grows, you're likely going to need to get a .com eventually. If you don't go with a .com, or can't get it, here are several good options for you:

- .co: An abbreviation for company, commerce and community

- .info: For informational sites
 - .net: If your site is technical
 - .org: Non-commercial or non-profit organisations
 - .biz: Great for e-commerce sites
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- .me: For blogs, resumes or personal sites

Try to make it instantly intuitive

If your market can immediately associate your domain name with what your business does, it's a real positive. Having your audience look at the domain name and think, 'Oh, they probably do this, or provide this service' is good for the *processing fluency* and the brandability of your business.

Remember, domain names sell quickly. They're also inexpensive and as accessible as ever, so it's best to register your favourite domain names soonest. If you're having trouble finding an available domain name, do a quick [domain check](#) with a domain registrar, which will help suggest alternate names for you and help match your perfect domain name with your business.

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