InterNetX
sedo

Global Domain Report

2026



DOMAIN TRENDS | NEW GTLD | DNS ABUSE | WEB3 | AI | DOMAIN SALES

Welcome

Explore the domain universe

In this year's journey through the domain universe, we'll navigate bright constellations of domain data, trace the orbits of market trends and zoom in on the hot spots shaping our industry: policy and governance, the impact of **AI**, **Web3**, the upcoming **new gTLD round**, and the shifting landscape of **DNS abuse**. Page by page, we invite you to explore this star map of insights, signals and stories from across the global domain galaxy.

InterNetX and **Sedo** welcome you on this mission. Fasten your seatbelt — we're ready for liftoff!



Arthur Mai
CEO, Sedo

In 2025, the domain aftermarket proved its strength as a dynamic and liquid global marketplace. With decades of expertise and one of the industry's most extensive networks, Sedo doesn't just observe market trends — we help shape them by connecting serious buyers with premium digital assets worldwide. The future of domains is defined not only by creation, but by exchange.



Elias Rendón Benger
CEO, InterNetX

Domains are more strategic than ever: expanding TLD options, rising security threats, stricter compliance, and agentic AI are reshaping digital identity. Domains remain the foundation of the internet infrastructure and therefore the trust and verified identifier for websites, email, and online & agentic commerce. As a market leader, we pair expertise with end-to-end domain services—and our report delivers actionable insights.

Mission briefing

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arsys Cronon fasthosts home.pl InterNetX IONOS sedo.com STRATO united domains we22 world4you

Mission overview

Aboard the Domain Voyager GDR-26, our mission overview charts a course through a 2025 domain universe that is expanding and intensifying at once. Rising security demands, an ever-broader namespace and new regulatory waves are reshaping processes and priorities.

We begin by mapping the market through registration data, then navigate key domain clusters. The next wave of new gTLDs takes center stage as we trace their evolution over the past years. We also explore Web3, track DNS abuse, and examine the aftermarket, where investors and professionals look for reliable data and context.

Our mission: provide a more data-driven understanding, practical insights and fresh reflections, whether you're shaping strategy or simply exploring the domain galaxy.



Mission objectives

- Assess the 2025 coordinates of the domain universe
- Identify the brightest TLD constellations
- Analyze the star map of the new gTLD nebula
- Detect dark spots and warning lights in the DNS cosmos
- Capture reflections from industry navigators

Select your orbit

1 For Resellers & Hosting providers

Optimize your storefront for the "vibe-coding" surge while non-technical builders are driving a market rebound. Analyze the top TLDs to align your inventory with the two-thirds of the market where registrations are most concentrated.

Your Focus: Market trends & top TLDs

Chapter 1 Chapter 3

2 For Domain Investors

Identify the "workhorse" extensions transitioning to global status, and capitalize on buyer preferences for negotiations and Buy Now listings. Track the AI trajectory as it reaches new milestones.

Your Focus: Sedo galaxy & AI innovation

Chapter 1 Chapter 2 Chapter 4

3 For Corporate Brand Managers

Benchmark your security against a shifting threat landscape. With UDRP cases at an all-time high, leverage the New gTLD Program 2026 and digital 'shields' like DomainSafe to secure your brand's perimeter.

Your Focus: InterNetX cosmos & Brand Protection

Chapter 2 Chapter 3

4 For AI builders & Vibe-coders

As autonomous agents begin to transact independently, ensure your domains serve as stable 'origin labels' and verified API endpoints. Learn how security protocols like DNSSEC and DMARC have become essential trust signals for AI discovery.

Your Focus: Vibe coding & AI agents

Chapter 1 Chapter 2

Survey

Once again, InterNetX and Sedo launched a survey mission to capture the sentiment and opinions of those at the heart of the domain universe. The 2026 survey results are woven throughout this report, appearing like signal beacons on the pages dedicated to each topic. The numbers in these charts show what is happening in the market. Your answers help us understand why these constellations look the way they do.

To everyone who took a few minutes to share their perspective: thank you for adding your voice to this year's star map!



New stars in the TLD galaxy

These TLDs reached General Availability (GA) in 2025



Find out more

Looking back at 2025



In 2025, a key surprise was the surge of new on-ramps to getting online. No-code and “vibe-coding” tools made building a web presence dramatically easier, driving higher domain registrations. From early Q2 2025, the market clearly rebounded after a sluggish period. Domains remain the foundation of digital identity, and will keep growing with Internet adoption.

Neha Naik
Sr. Vice President, Channel Partnerships, RADIX



2025 was a strong year across the domain industry, and .ORG’s performance reflects continued efforts to keep the namespace safe and secure for end users. This momentum shows that trust and security are the foundation for long-term growth. A safe, reliable Internet remains essential for individuals, organizations, and communities advancing their mission online.

Tim Switzer
VP of Business Affairs, PIR

The domain industry matured commercially: major ccTLDs shifted infrastructure, registry wholesale costs rose again & registrar groups continued consolidating. The new gTLD round moved from theory to reality with the AGB’s release, clearing the path for 2026 applications. Regulation also tightened as gTLDs transitioned to ICANN’s Minimum Data Set & European registries rolled out NIS2-driven identity checks. The future will reward operators who are ready, compliant & built to scale.



Michaela Cruden
Director, Domains, SSL & DNS, IONOS Group

Looking back at 2025

2025 was the year AI became mainstream: generative AI apps doubled from 2024. In parallel, it.com domains grew from ~25,000 DUM at end-2024 to 150,000+ by Jan 2026, a 6× rise (500% net gain) in one year. Growth was driven by onboarding several of the world's largest registrars.



Joe Alagna
Chief Strategy Officer, it.com



In 2025, end users and SMBs increasingly looked beyond traditional extensions, attracted by better availability, lower prices, and more brandable options. The aftermarket also stayed strong: a publicly reported .xyz sale above $287,000 highlighted rising demand for high-value names in new gTLDs.

Mike Ambrose
COO, XYZ Inc.



2025 marked a transition for the domain industry. AI is lowering the barrier to building real, functional websites, turning more ideas into live projects and activating more domains. Meanwhile, anticipation of the next gTLD round is sharpening long-term strategy, and demand for premium domains is rising as brands compete to stand out.

Eshan Pancholi
VP Marketing, ShortDot

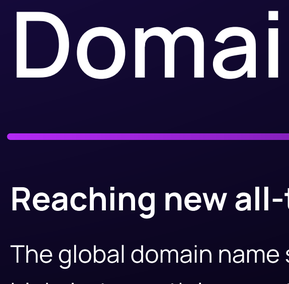
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Domain universe

Domain trends 2026

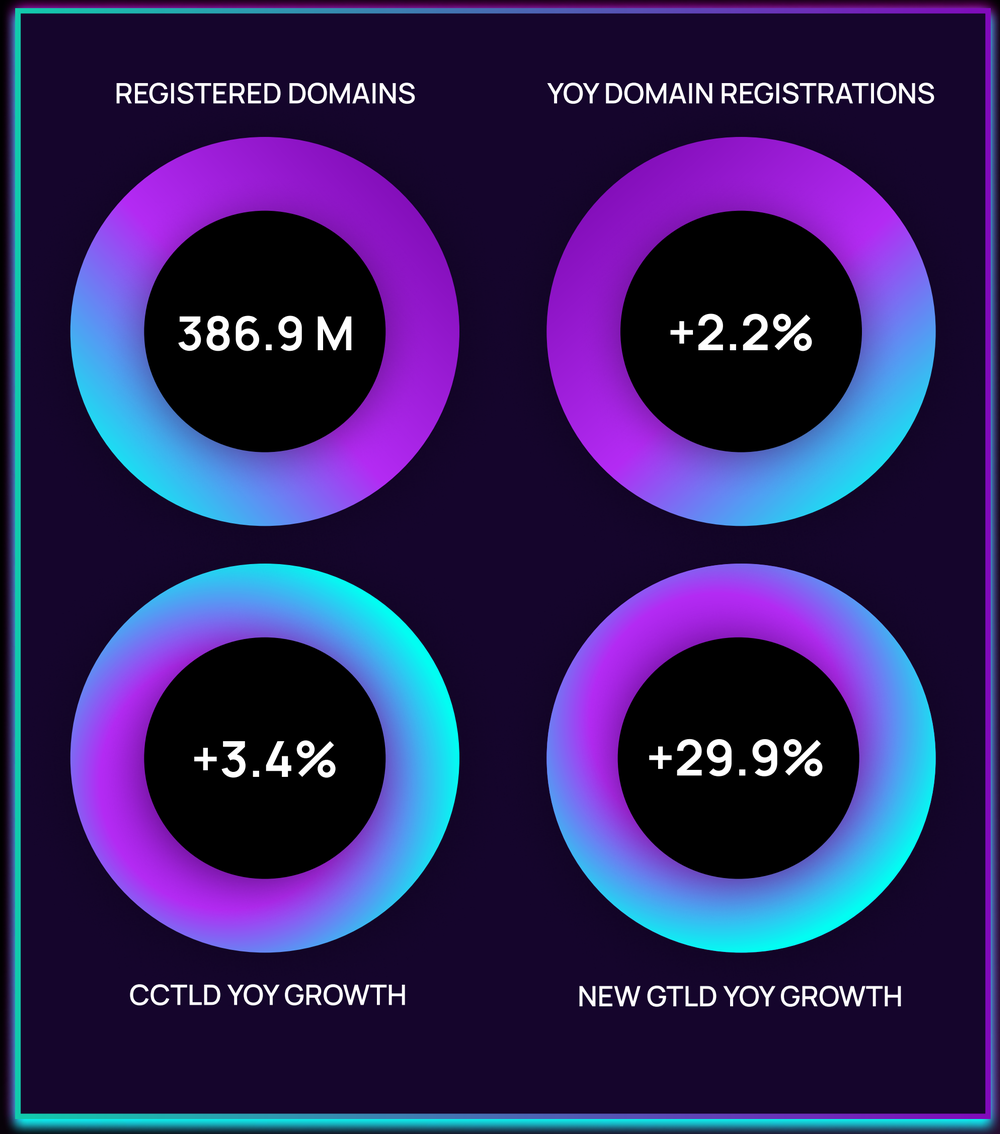
Reaching new all-time highs in a mature industry

The global domain name space continues to expand and has reached a new all-time high, but growth is now steady rather than explosive, reflecting a more mature industry. ccTLDs are back in positive territory after earlier waves of deletions, while new gTLDs currently show the strongest momentum, even if they still build on a smaller base than legacy TLDs. Legacy gTLDs remain the backbone of the market, yet their dominance is slowly decreasing as ccTLDs and selected new gTLDs gain share. Overall, the industry looks mature but dynamic: less driven by one-off spikes, and more by ongoing competition, consolidation, regulatory change and new naming options.



In its sixth edition, the Global Domain Report distills domain data into a clear picture of what's trending and how the market is shifting. As the industry matures & expands — and as AI, Web3, security, and compliance reshape digital presence — decision makers need reliable coordinates. It delivers the news, benchmarks, & context to understand what's changing and navigate what's next.

Simone Catania
Global Content & Communications Manager, InterNetX



Source: Verisign "The Domain Name Industry Brief", Q4/2025.

Registration activity

Growing optimism characterizes the market

Our survey results suggest that the “center of gravity” in domain registrations has shifted back towards growth. In 2025, almost 39% of respondents reported an increase in registration activity (with more than one in five seeing a significant increase), compared to around 29% who experienced a decrease and roughly a third whose volumes stayed about the same.

Envisioning 2026, optimism strengthens: about 45% expect their registration activity to increase, while only around 23% anticipate a decline. The share expecting stable activity remains roughly one third, indicating a solid core of steady demand. Overall, the data points to a market that feels more expansionary than contractionary, with many players planning to stay active—or become even more active—in the domain universe.



How do you expect your domain registration activity to change in 2026?

Significant increase	20%
Slight increase	25%
About the same	31%
Slight decrease	14%
Significant decrease	10%

How did your domain registration activities in 2025 compare to 2024?

Significant increase	22%
Slight increase	17%
About the same	33%
Slight decrease	14%
Significant decrease	14%

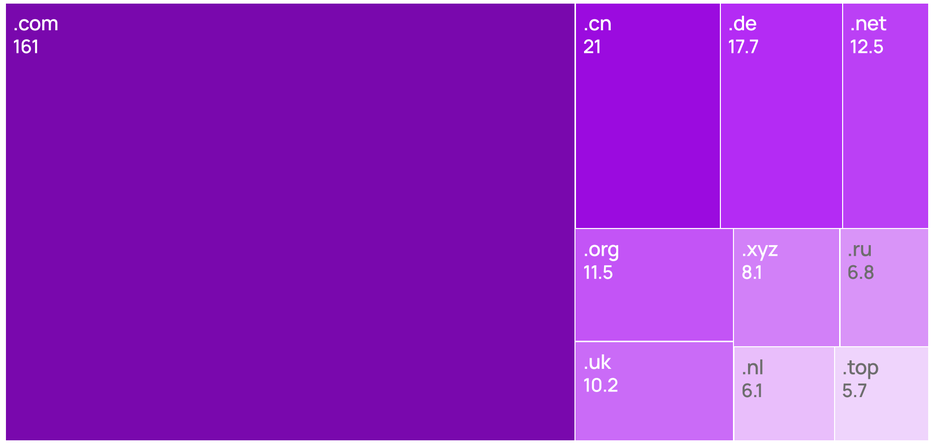
Most popular TLDs

.com remains strong, .xyz & .top breaks into the top 10

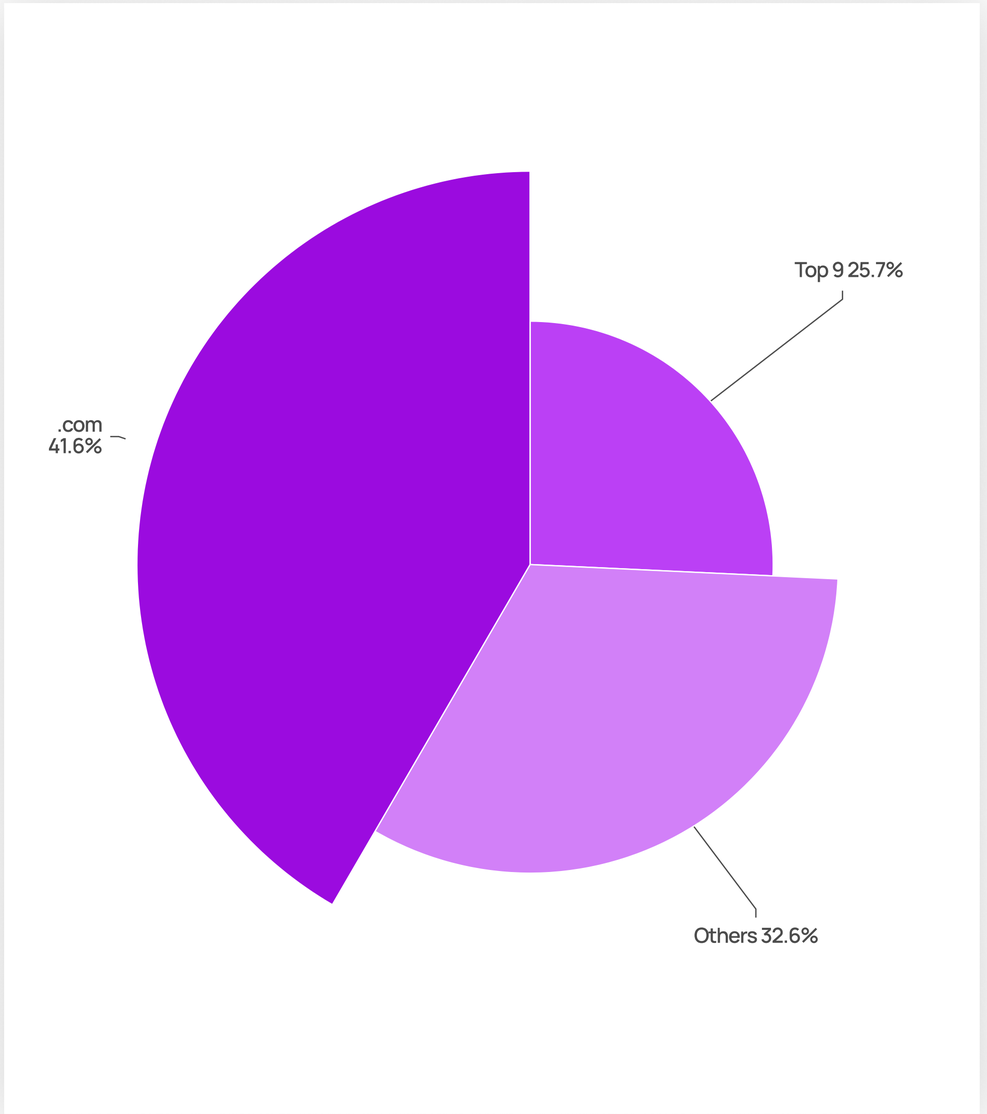
The top 10 TLDs account for roughly two thirds of all registrations, underlining how concentrated the market remains at the very top. The extension .com dominates the chart, with a volume that is many times higher than that of most other TLDs in the top 10.

Year on year, most leading extensions show moderate growth or slight declines, reflecting a largely stable but mature segment. The most visible change happens at the edge of the ranking: .xyz and .top enter the top 10 for the first time, while .br and .au drop out, signaling strong momentum for some high-volume new gTLDs. Overall, a small group of legacy gTLDs and major ccTLDs continues to anchor the market, with newer extensions now increasingly embedded among the largest players.

Top 10 TLDs registrations in M [1]



Top 10 share vs other TLDs [2]



[1] Verisign “The Domain Name Industry Brief” Q4/2025.

[2] Calculation based on the Verisign “The Domain Name Industry Brief” Q4/2025.

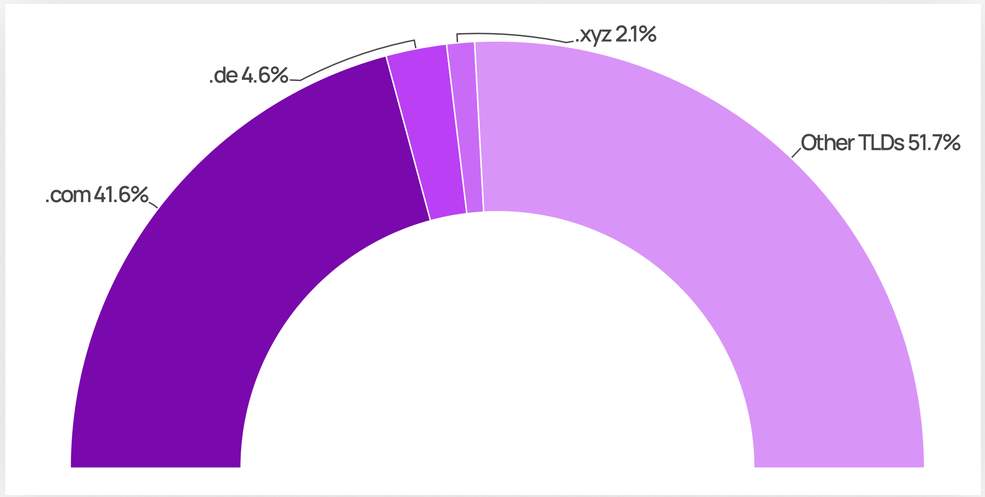
TLD share

New gTLDs becomes substantial secondary layer

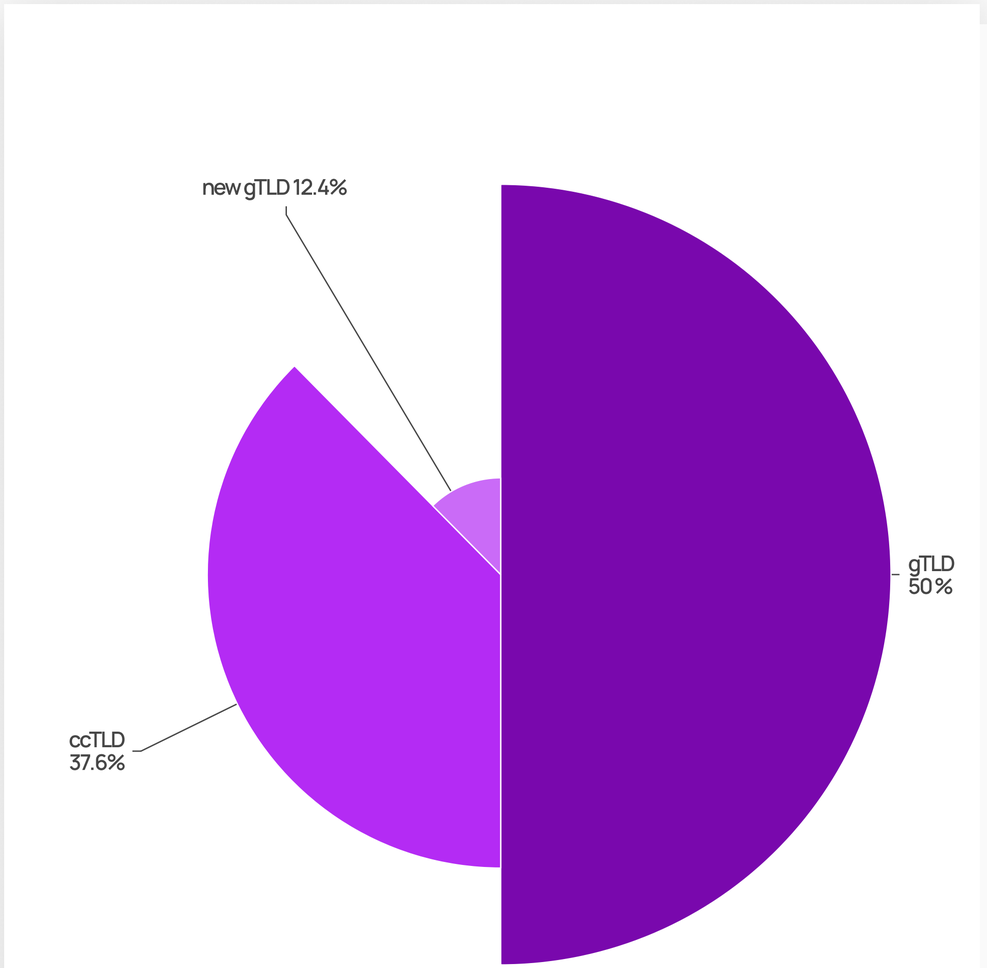
The current TLD landscape is built on three strong pillars: around 194 million gTLDs, 146 million ccTLDs and nearly 48 million new gTLDs, making all three categories meaningful parts of the overall market. Legacy gTLDs still form the core of the namespace, but ccTLDs account for well over a third of all domains, underlining the continued importance of local, country-based identities. New gTLDs, with close to 50 million names, now represent a substantial secondary layer rather than a niche segment.

Within this picture, .com alone reaches about 161 million registrations, while the remaining 200+ million domains are distributed across a wide range of country codes, legacy gTLDs and newer extensions. Together, the figures point to a market where a few very large TLDs coexist with a long tail of specialized options.

Top TLDs share vs other TLDs [3]



TLD category share [4]



[3&4] Calculation based on the Verisign "The Domain Name Industry Brief" Q4/2025.

Highest 2025 growth in %

Brands prioritize semantically rich, purpose-driven naming

The fastest-growing TLDs YoY are a very mixed, niche group. Such high percentage jumps often reflect growth from relatively small starting volumes, but they still signal where new naming experiments and marketing efforts are concentrated. Many of these extensions map well to the demand drivers our survey highlights: new businesses, SEO and marketing needs, AI-generated brand names and speculation/investment all favor memorable, semantically rich strings that signal purpose or community. In that sense, their growth fits a broader pattern where targeted, meaning-heavy namespaces benefit most from today's brand, content and campaign-driven registration activity.[5]



What are the top drivers of new domain demand?

New businesses	53%
AI-generated brand names	40%
Speculation/investment	39%
SEO/marketing needs	31%
Geographic/IDN growth	17%
Corporate defensive regs	16%
Security/email deliverability	12%

[5] Domain Tools (31.12.2025).

Largest 2025 growth in

Largest gains to TLDs with established reputations or utility

While high percentage growth highlights "niche experiments" like .forum (+1,050%), absolute numbers reveal the true market drivers. For instance, .com added 5 M registrations, proving that legacy players still generate the bulk of industry volume despite lower growth rates.

Rapid percentage jumps often stem from small starting bases. In contrast, absolute growth identifies "workhorse" extensions like .xyz and .top—adding 4,2 M and 2,7 M respectively—as they transition from niche satellites to established global players.

High absolute growth in legacy TLDs like .com, .info, and .org signals professional usage and long-term trust. Conversely, spikes in vertical strings like .beer or .food (+571% and +385%) often reflect specific marketing campaigns rather than broad market adoption.

The .ai extension continues to prove its durability by adding 0.4 M new registrations, confirming that its momentum is driven by commercial adoption rather than a temporary trend.

High percentage growth identifies future marketing "hot zones," while absolute growth pinpoints where immediate revenue and infrastructure demands—like security and support—are most concentrated.[6]



[6] Domain Tools (31.12.2025).

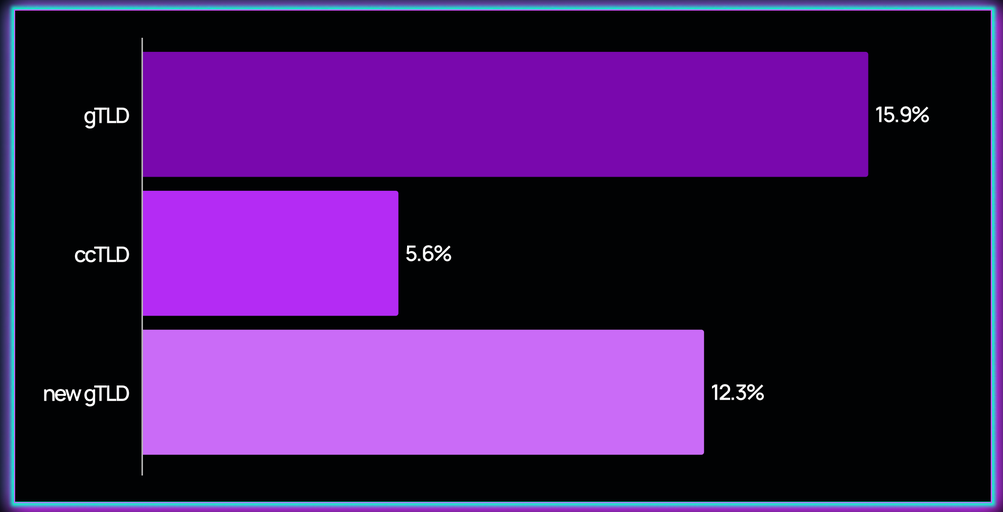
Parked domains

High parking rates show new gTLDs favor investment over use

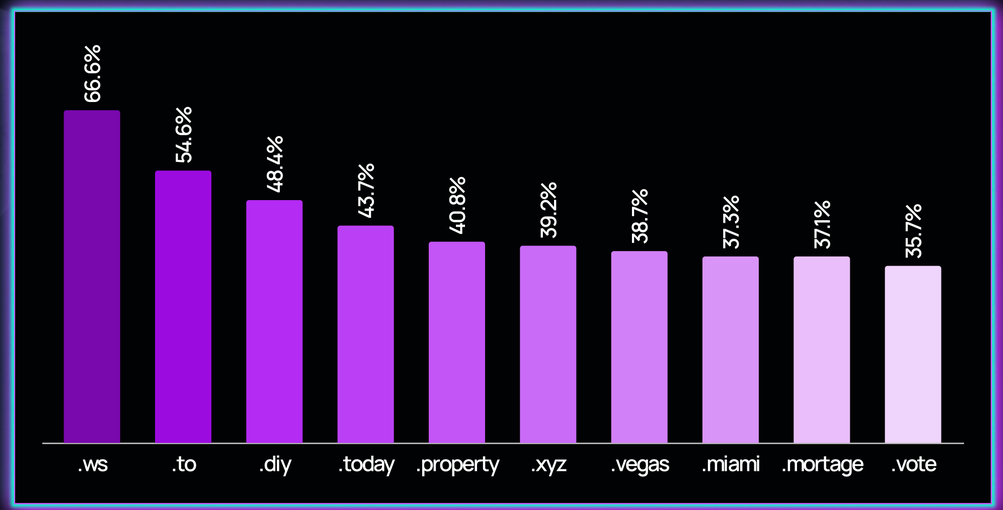
Domain parking describes domains that are registered but not yet “brought to life” with real websites. Instead, they sit on placeholder pages – often with ads or “for sale” signs – like ships waiting in orbit. For domain professionals, parking rates are important signals: they hint at investor activity, portfolio strategies and potential aftermarket liquidity within specific TLDs.

In the data, .ws and .to stand out with particularly high parking rates, suggesting these namespaces are frequently held rather than developed. Several new gTLDs also show elevated parking levels, reinforcing the idea that parts of the newer TLD galaxy are driven more by registrations and investment than by active usage.

Domain parking rate by TLD category



Top 10 TLDs by parking rate



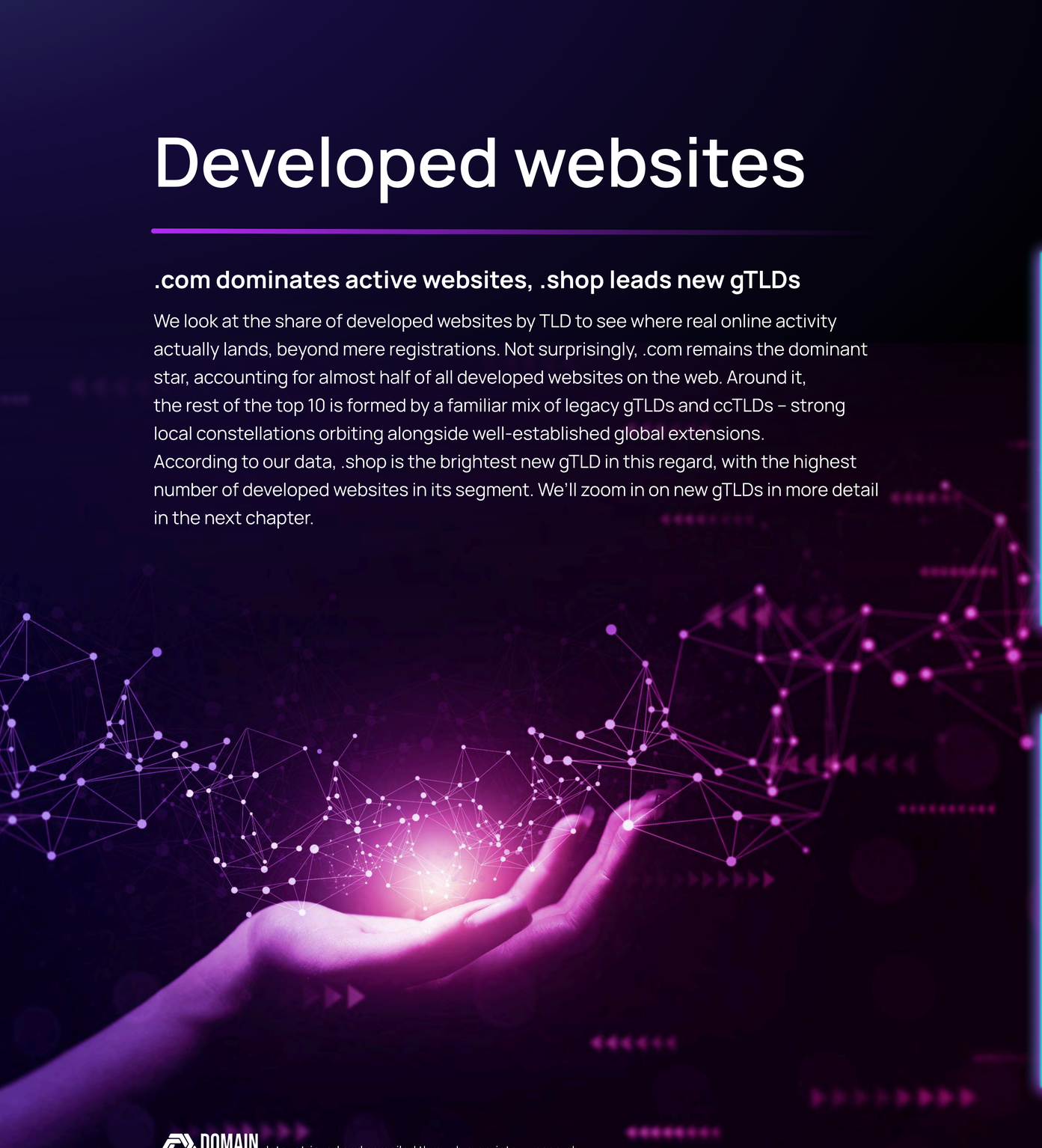


DOMAIN CRAWLER data retrieved and compiled through proprietary research.

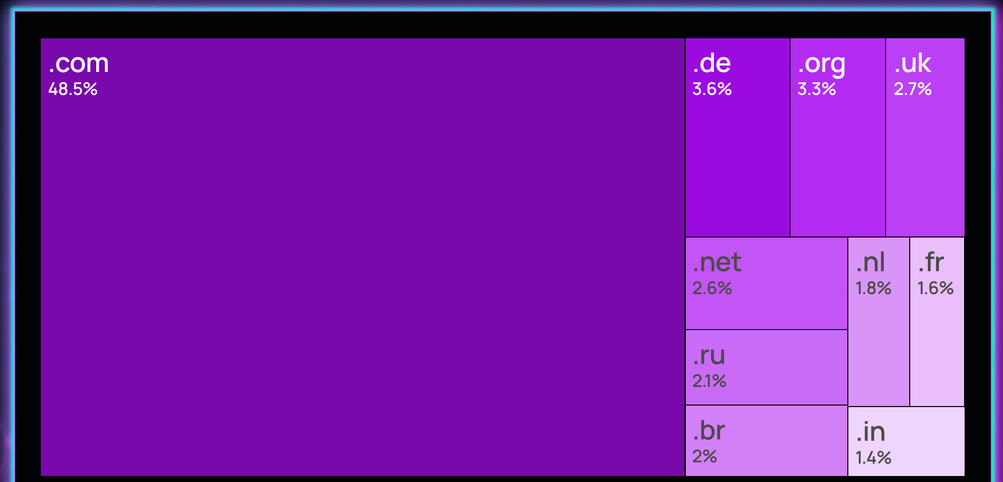
Developed websites

.com dominates active websites, .shop leads new gTLDs

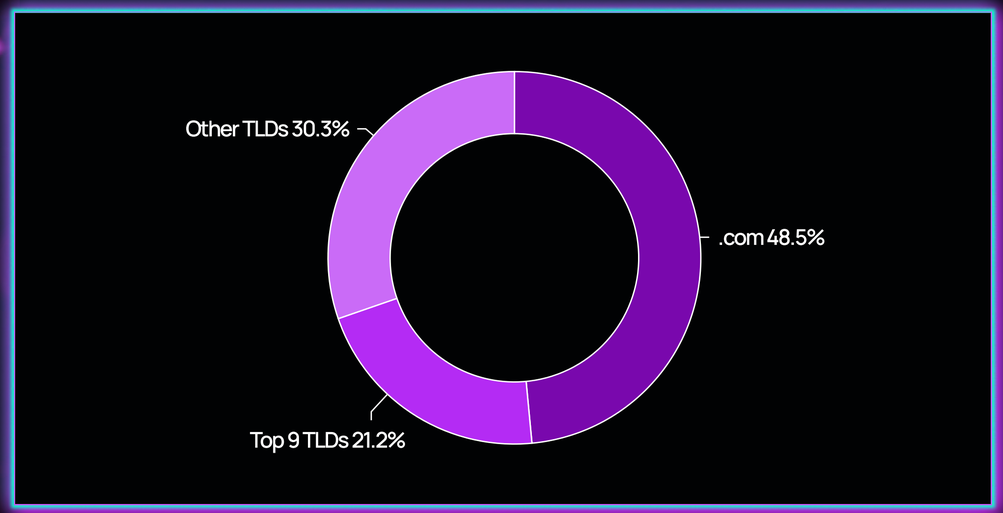
We look at the share of developed websites by TLD to see where real online activity actually lands, beyond mere registrations. Not surprisingly, .com remains the dominant star, accounting for almost half of all developed websites on the web. Around it, the rest of the top 10 is formed by a familiar mix of legacy gTLDs and ccTLDs – strong local constellations orbiting alongside well-established global extensions.
According to our data, .shop is the brightest new gTLD in this regard, with the highest number of developed websites in its segment. We'll zoom in on new gTLDs in more detail in the next chapter.



Top 10 TLDs for developed websites



TLD shares for developed websites



DOMAIN CRAWLER data retrieved and compiled through proprietary research.

Buzz terms

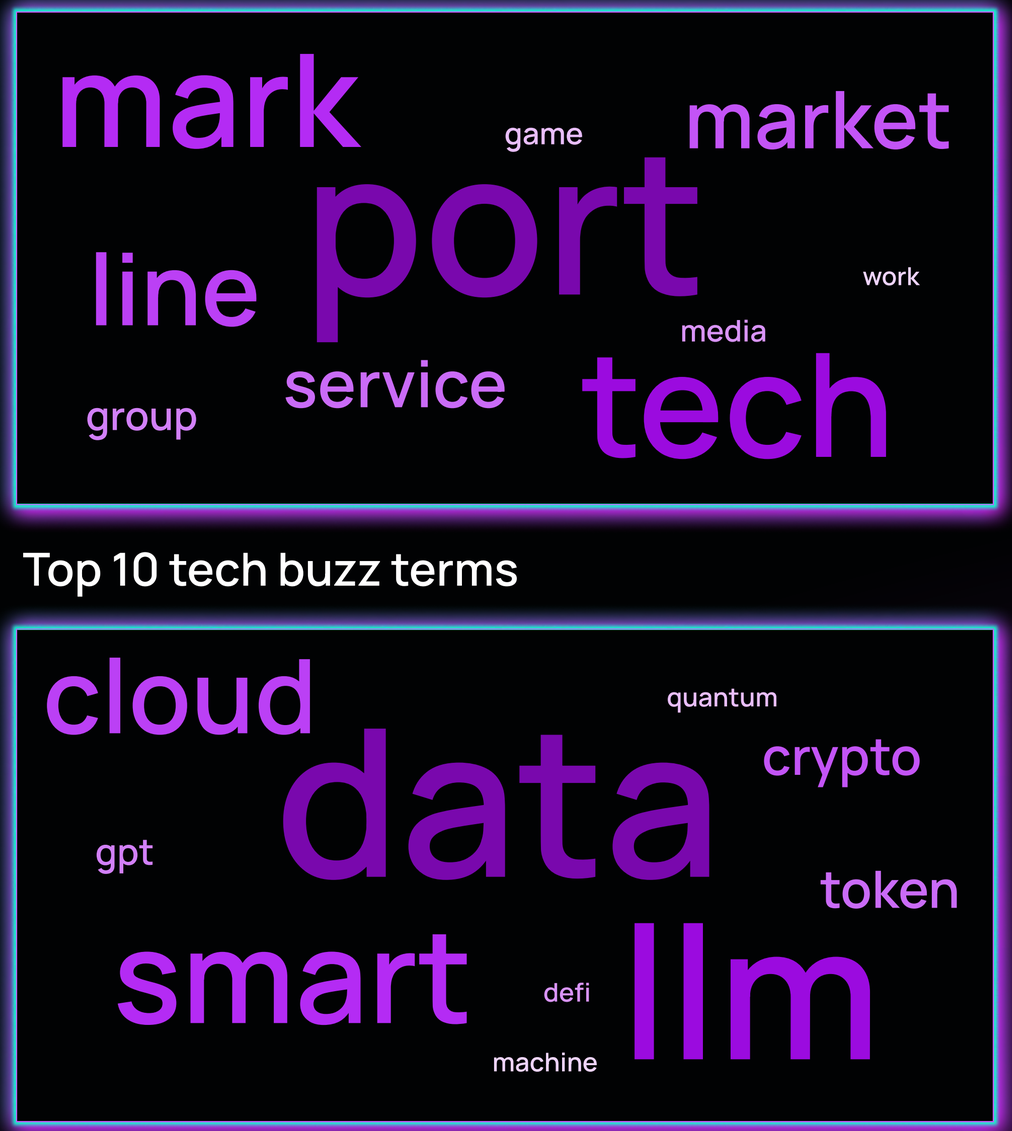
Naming trends mix classic business & with high-tech terms

The 2025 buzz terms in domains cluster around two big themes: broad business language and cutting-edge tech. On the general side, frequently used strings act as flexible building blocks for brandable names, especially for agencies, platforms and B2B services.

In the tech-focused cloud, the terms reflect strong interest in AI, data infrastructure and Web3/crypto, often combined to signal innovation and future-readiness. Together, these patterns suggest that many new names try to sit at the intersection of broad commercial appeal and hot technology narratives, leaving room to pivot as trends evolve.



Top 10 buzz terms



Top 10 tech buzz terms

0 DOMAIN CRAWLER data retrieved and compiled through proprietary research.

Most popular ccTLDs

The top 3 ccTLDs control nearly 50% of ccTLD regs

The global ccTLD landscape in 2025 remains highly concentrated, with .tk, .cn and .de still leading the field and together accounting for roughly 45% of all ccTLD registrations. Formerly low- or no-cost extensions such as .tk, .ga, .ml and .gq continue to occupy prominent positions in the ranking, but their growth has largely normalized to low single digits, suggesting that the “free boost” phase has given way to more stable usage patterns.

Strong positive momentum can be seen in several large markets, including .cn, .in, .br, .fr and .us, all of which post solid YoY gains. By contrast, a few long-established European ccTLDs such as .nl and .pl show slight contractions, reflecting maturity rather than structural weakness.

Overall, European extensions remain very well represented, making up a substantial share of the top 20 and underlining their continued importance in the global country-code ecosystem.

Top 20 ccTLDs [7]

	TLD	Country	Registrations (in M)	Market share
1	.tk		27.5*	18.9%
2	.cn		21**	14.4%
3	.de		17.7	12.1%
4	.uk		10.2	7.%
5	.ga		9.7*	6.6%
6	.ml		8.0*	5.5%
7	.ru		6.8**	4.7%
8	.nl		6.1	4.2%
9	.gq		6.0*	4.1%
10	.br		5.5	3.8%
11	.fr		4.3	3.0%
12	.au		4.3	2.9%
13	.eu		3.7	2.5%
14	.it		3.5	2.4%
15	.ca		3.4	2.4%
16	.co		3.3***	2.3%
17	.in		3.3***	2.2%
18	.ch		2.6	1.8%
19	.pl		2.6	1.8%
20	.us		2.5	1.7%

[7] Unless otherwise specified, all registration data has been retrieved from the respective registry websites.
* Domain Name Stat (31.12.2025).
** Verisign “The Domain Name Industry Brief”, Q4/2025.
*** Domain Tools (31.12.2025).

The Americas

Top 10 ccTLDs

	TLD	Country	Registered domains in M	Change YoY	Registered domains per 100,000 inhabitants
1	.br		5.5	2.6%	2,600
2	.ca		3.4	1%	8,299
3	.co		3.3***	-0.5%	6,328
4	.us		2.5	8.7%	736
5	.mx		1.4	0.8%	1,058
6	.ai		1.0*	66.9%	6,277,985
7	.cl		0.7	3.1%	3,652
8	.ar		0.7	5.8%	1,467
9	.pe		0.1	2.0%	434
10	.uy		0.1	2.0%	3,169

Africa & Middle East

Top 10 ccTLDs

	TLD	Country	Registered domains in M	Change YoY	Registered domains per 100,000 inhabitants
1	.ga		9.7*	0.1%	380,157
2	.ml		8.0*	0.1%	32,564
3	.gq		6*	0.2%	316,894
4	.za		1.4	0.0%	2,171
5	.ng		0.4*	19.6%	200
6	.il		0.3	1.7%	2,909
7	.ke		0.2*	21.9%	497
8	.ma		0.2*	20.6%	572
9	.cm		0.08*	14.8%	286
10	.cf		0.02***	-2.8%	486

[7] Unless otherwise specified, all registration data has been retrieved from the respective registry websites.
* Domain Name Stat (31.12.2025).
*** Domain Tools (31.12.2025).

Europe

Top 10 ccTLDs

	TLD	Country	Registered domains in M	Change YoY	Domains per 100,000 inhabitants
1	.de		17.7	0.0%	21,150
2	.uk		10.2	-0.2%	14,790
3	.nl		6.1	-2.1%	33,763
4	.fr		4.3	2.6%	6,317
5	.eu		3.7	1.4%	825
6	.it		3.5	1.2%	6,001
7	.ch		2.6	0.5%	28,684
8	.pl		2.6	-0.9%	7,009
9	.es		2.1	1.9%	4,369
10	.be		1.7	-0.9%	14,352

Asia & Oceania

Top 10 ccTLDs

	TLD	Country	Registered domains in M	Change YoY	Registered domains per 100,000 inhabitants
1	.tk		27.5*	0.1%	1,669,082,453
2	.cn		21.0**	-6.6%	4,589
3	.ru		6.8**	3.0%	4,738
4	.au		4.3	1.5%	15,792
5	.in		3.3***	6.4%	226
6	.jp		1.8	2.9%	1,477
7	.kr		1.1	1.5%	2,070
8	.nz		1,1	0.9%	14,312
9	.vn		0.7	8.5%	679
10	.tw		0.5	-4.6%	1,959

[7] Unless otherwise specified, all registration data has been retrieved from the respective registry websites.
* Domain Name Stat (31.12.2025).
** Verisign "The Domain Name Industry Brief", Q4/2025.
*** Domain Tools (31.12.2025).

European ccTLDs

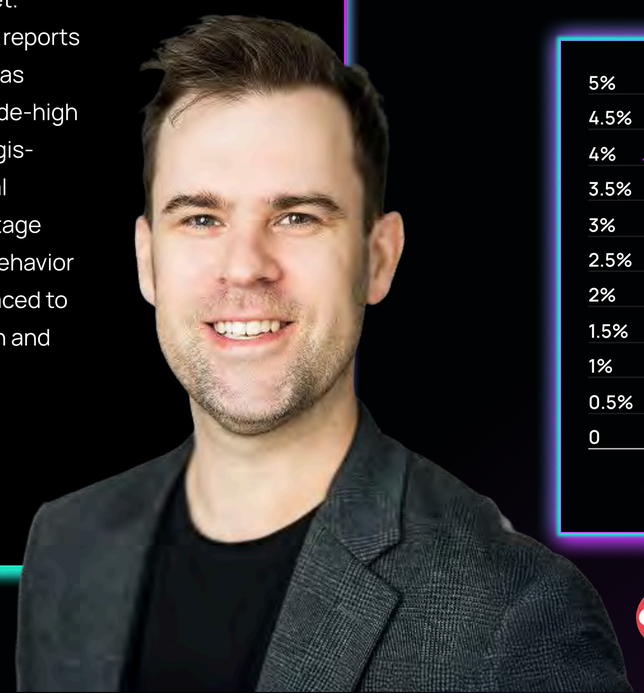
European ccTLDs are permanent, resilient business assets

Over the past decade, European ccTLDs have shifted from high-velocity expansion to a mature, steady orbit. Median 12-month growth for the 30 largest European ccTLDs in CENTR membership ran at around 3–4% in 2015–2018, spiked during the COVID years, and then moved through elevated deletions before returning toward "business as usual". In 2025, the median 12-month growth rate for the CENTR30 was 1.9%, while only a few ccTLDs remain in contraction and show early signs of recovery.

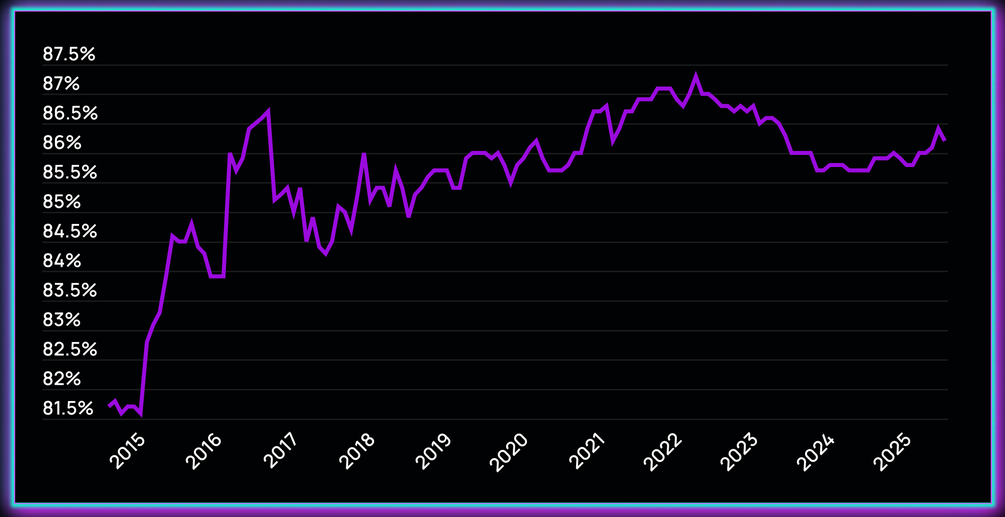
At the same time, retention has improved, rising from around 82% in 2015 to a stable ~86% in 2023–2025, indicating that once registered, European ccTLDs tend to be renewed. This combination of slower net growth and strong renewal rates is typical of a maturing market: fewer speculative surges, more established usage.

European ccTLDs reflect a mature and resilient market. CENTR, the association of European ccTLD registries, reports elevated deletions, median growth for the CENTR30 has returned to business as usual post-COVID, with decade-high retention rates. Most ccTLDs draw the bulk of their registrations from local markets, are well embedded in local business communities, and retain a clear price advantage over many gTLDs. As URL visibility declines and user behavior shifts with the rise of apps and AI, the ccTLDs best placed to thrive will be those with strong local brand recognition and active domain use.

Patrick Myles,
Data analyst



European ccTLD median retention 2015-2025



European ccTLD median growth 2015-2025



data retrieved and compiled through proprietary research.

European ccTLDs

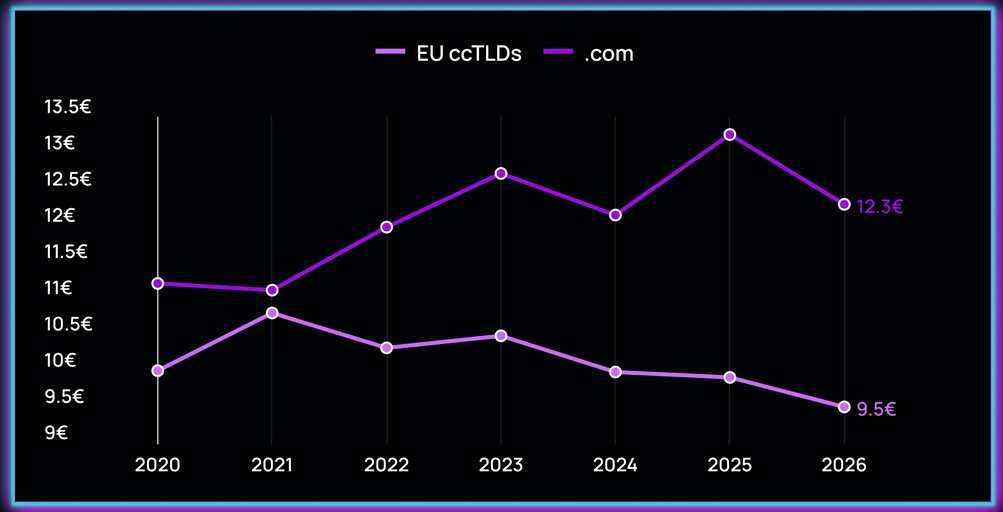
Price advantage over .com, first choice for local businesses

European ccTLDs remain an affordable choice with retail prices sitting generally below .com in most markets. While initial registration costs are competitive, renewal prices have been trending upward, which may influence registrant behavior and retention.

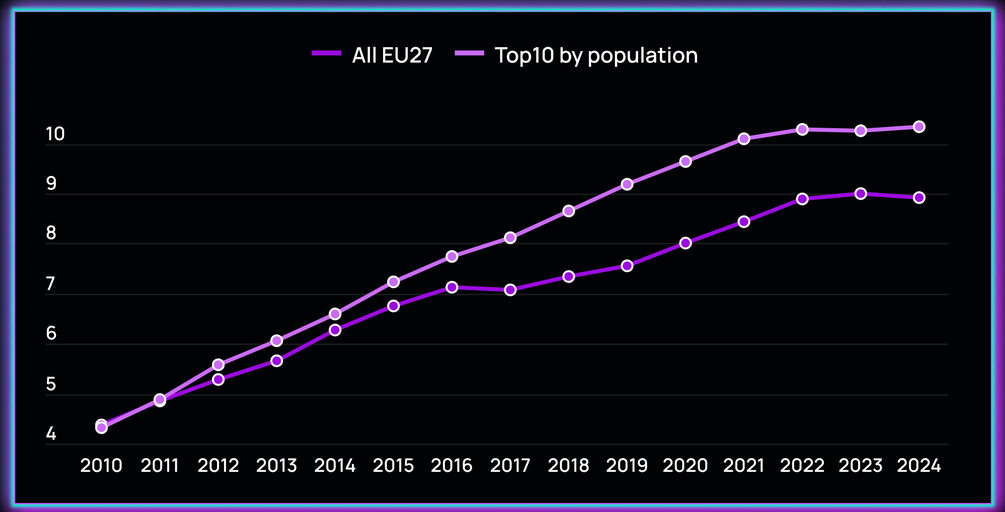
Most ccTLDs derive around 90% of registrations from their local market and are well embedded in local business communities. With respect to penetration data, the median hovers around 9 ccTLD domains per 100 inhabitants, which is roughly double from 2010 rates. In some larger markets, penetration is lower, particularly where .com established an early foothold and continues to capture a significant share of registrations.

Future growth will be driven more by active use & quality of service than by speculative holdings, as domain visibility is reshaped by apps, browsers and AI-driven user behavior.

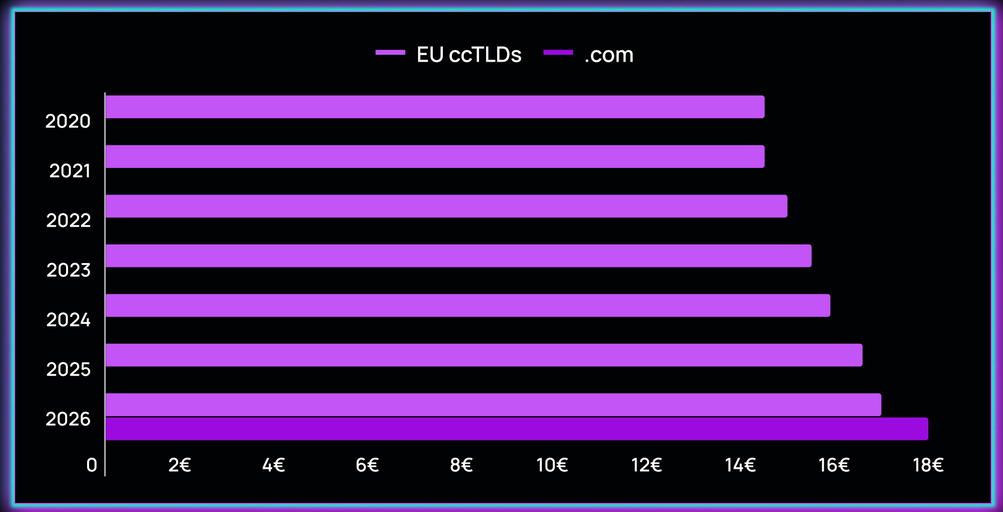
European ccTLD median create prices vs .com



Median ccTLD demand per 100 inhabitants



European ccTLD median renewal price



data retrieved and compiled through proprietary research.

Policy update

Compliance the new "cost of entry" for operators

NIS2 Directive: The deadline to transpose the NIS2 Directive expired in October 2024. By the end of 2025 not all EU Member States had transposed the directive into their national legislation.

Digital sovereignty: Reducing Europe's dependence on foreign tech remains one of the highest policy priorities in the EU. In January 2026, the European Commission published the EU Cybersecurity Act 2.0 proposing to exclude third country technology from EU critical infrastructure and requiring European infrastructure providers to diversify their supply chains.

Digital Omnibus: In November 2025, the EU unveiled plans to simplify key digital laws—cutting incident-reporting burdens and refining the definition of personal data to reduce compliance overhead for businesses.

Domain enforcement: Recent EU financial regulation empowers authorities to order registries and registrars to delete domain names used by financial services as a punitive measure. Domain operators can now be directly targeted with enforceable takedown orders under multiple laws.

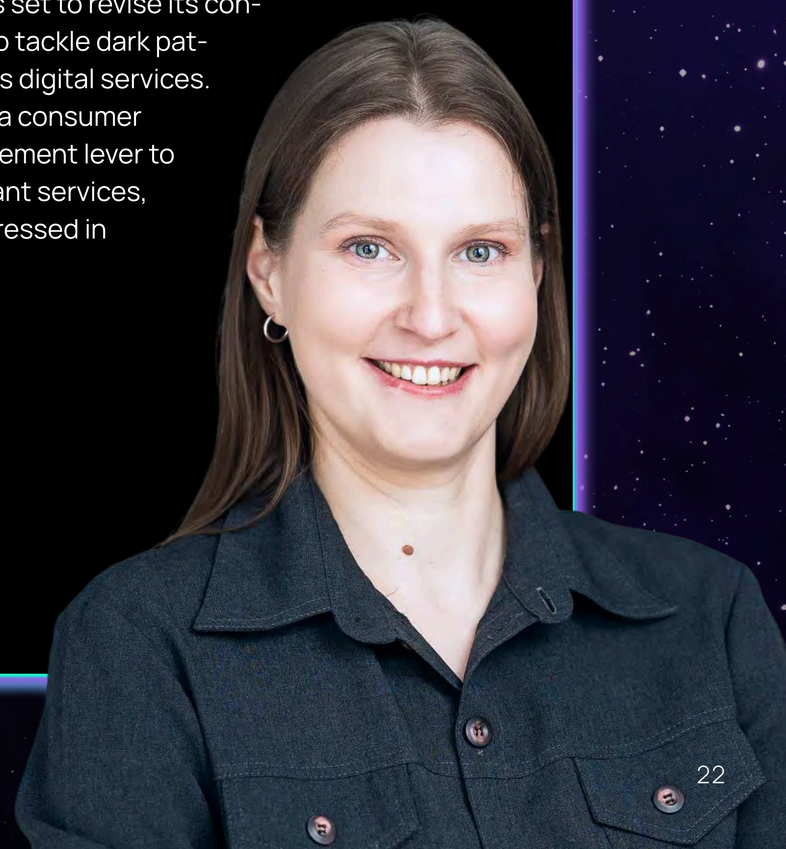
What do we expect in 2026?

More simplification: The EU is conducting a Digital Fitness Check to identify further opportunities to simplify legislation, primarily in cybersecurity.

Cloud and AI: The EU is preparing the Cloud and AI Development Act, which aims to triple the EU's data center capacity within the next five years, and ensure secure EU-based cloud capacity for critical sectors. The DNS is considered a critical infrastructure in the EU.

Digital Fairness Act: The EU is set to revise its consumer protection framework to tackle dark patterns & addictive design across digital services. Since domain names are both a consumer product and a powerful enforcement lever to restrict access to non-compliant services, domains may be explicitly addressed in the upcoming reform.

Polina Malaja,
Policy Director



Top new gTLDs

Despite hundreds of choice, a few strings dominate

There is no single “official” source for new gTLD registration figures and different datasets diverge, so this year we chose to show exact numbers only for the six largest new gTLDs and to complement them with a broader Top 30 view without precise volumes. Both perspectives tell a similar story: a small group of high-volume, strongly “online keyword”-oriented strings dominates the new gTLD galaxy. Behind them, the wider top 30 is populated by versatile namespaces and focused vertical TLDs clustered around business, finance, tech, content and communities.

Overall, the pattern suggests that while hundreds of new gTLDs exist, real registration activity is concentrated in a relatively compact constellation of meaning-rich, broadly marketable extensions.

Top 6 new gTLDs [8]



Top 30 new gTLDs [9]



[8] Verisign “The Domain Name Industry Brief” Q4/2025.
[9] nTLDstats (31.12.2025).

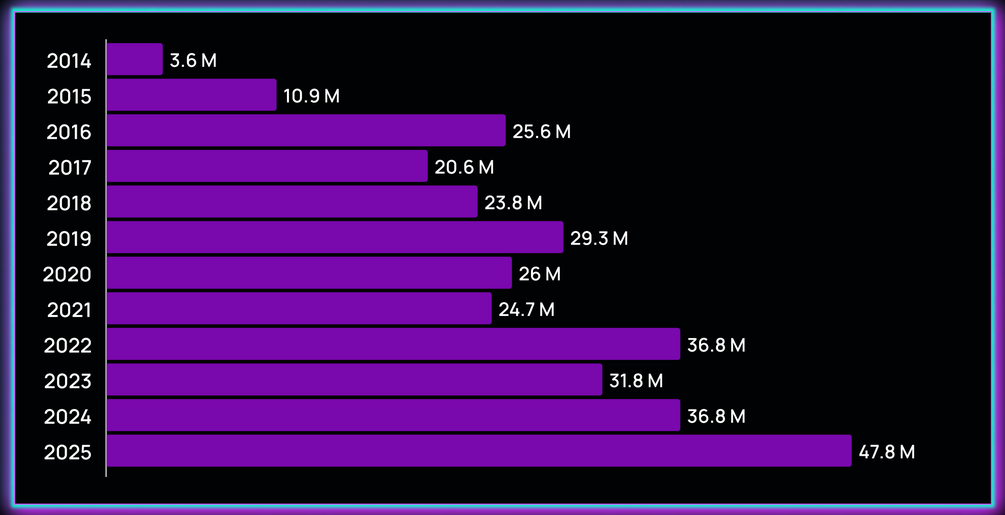
New gTLD growth

After 10 years new gTLD segment achieve structural relevance

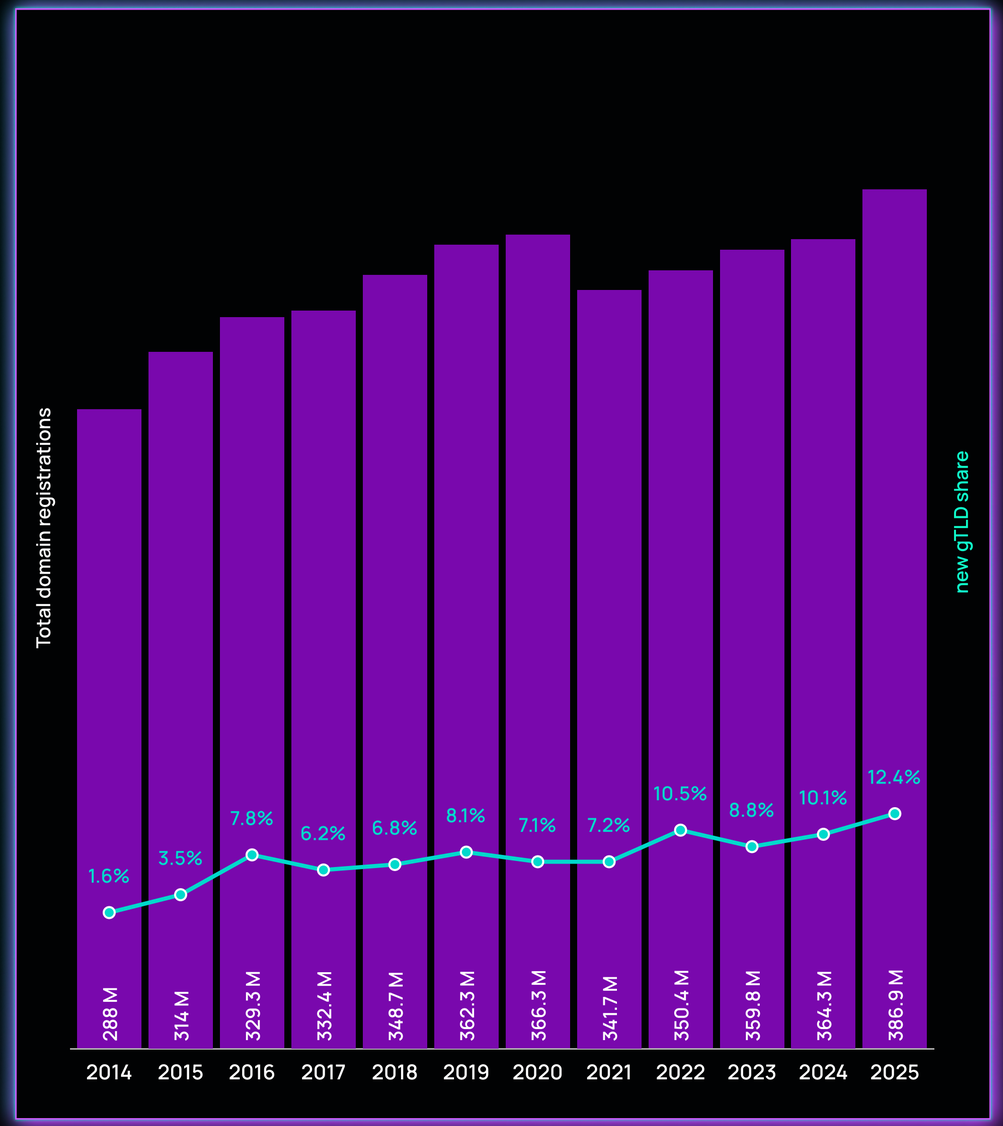
The data show that new gTLDs are now a firmly established part of the namespace. In 2025, domain registrations under new gTLDs increased again, bringing their share of total registrations to 12.4%—the result of an initial surge, a subsequent phase of correction and portfolio clean-up, and renewed growth from 2022 onward. It has taken roughly a decade for many of these extensions to find their place in the market, with a number of clear success stories emerging.

With the next new gTLD round planned for 2026, attention on this segment is likely to rise once more as new strings enter the ecosystem and existing players reassess their strategies. Overall, new gTLDs now form a meaningful secondary layer of the domain market rather than a marginal side segment.

New gTLD registrations (2014–2025)[10]

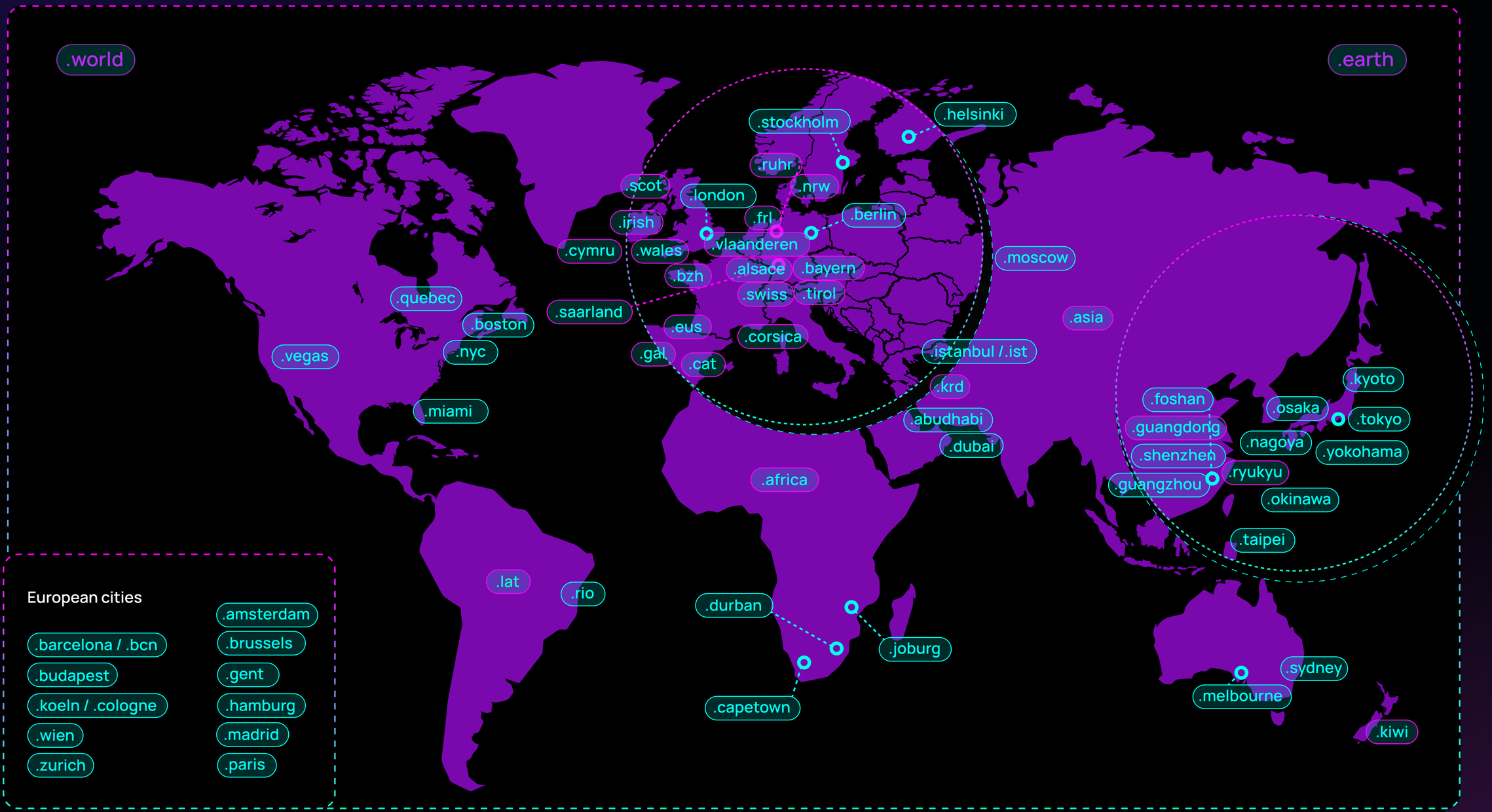


Total registrations vs new gTLDs share [11]



[10&11] Calculation based on the Verisign "The Domain Name Industry Brief" Q4/2025.

Geographic TLDs star map



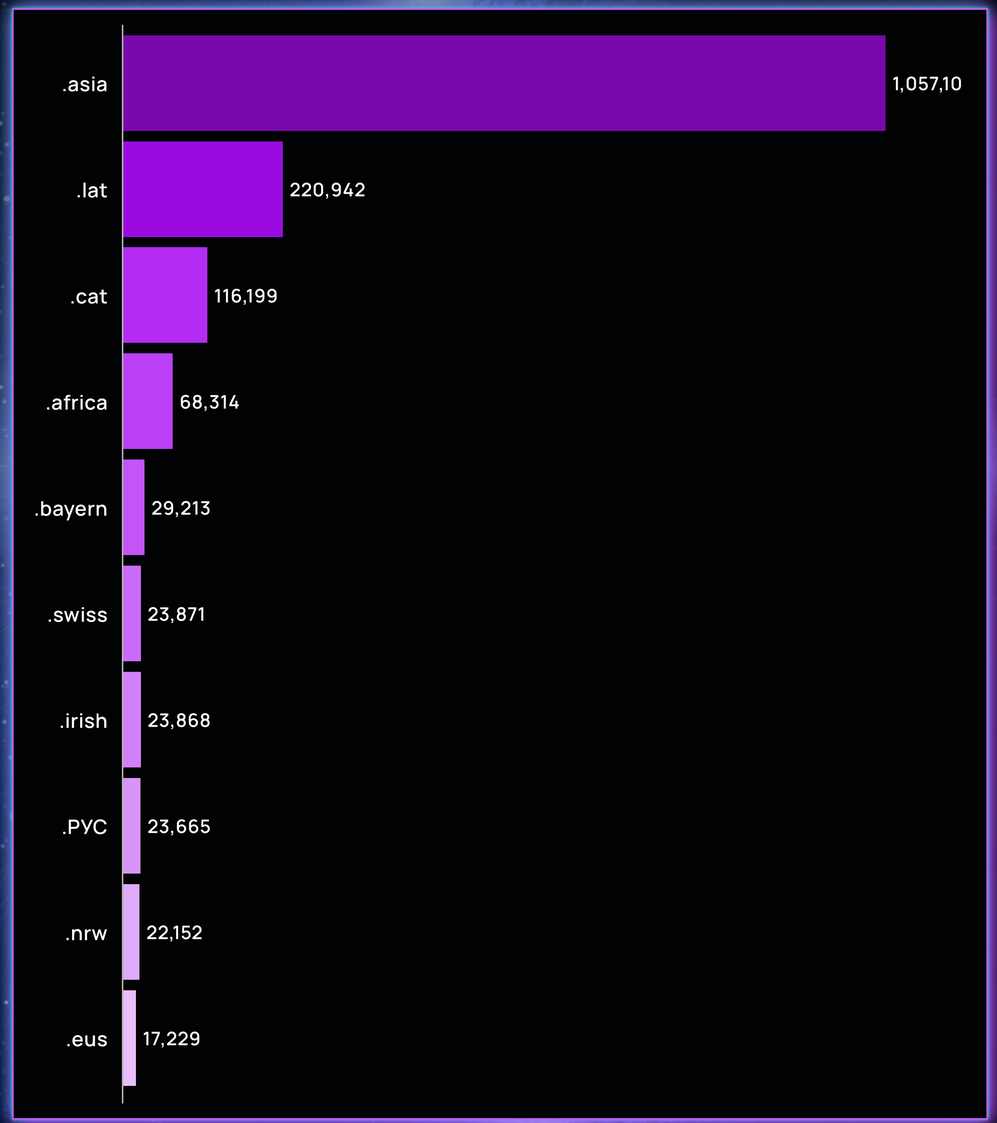
geoTLDs

geoTLD growth proves ongoing need for local digital identities

GeoTLDs are like digital coordinates on the world's namespace map, representing specific regions and geographic communities. In our data, all major geoTLDs show YoY growth, confirming steady demand for location-based online identities. The overall ranking has remained largely stable over the years, suggesting a well-established galaxy of regional extensions.

The chart is dominated by European geoTLDs (seven in total, including two German ones), but South America, Asia and Africa are also clearly visible in this constellation. At the top, .asia continues to shine brightest, holding its leading position in the geoTLD charts for several years. It is worth noting that .asia benefited from a significant head start; Established in 2007, it has been in orbit far longer than the newer geographic extensions.

Top 10 geoTLDs [12]



[12] nTLDstats, Domain Name Stat, Zonefiles (31.12.2025).

cityTLDs

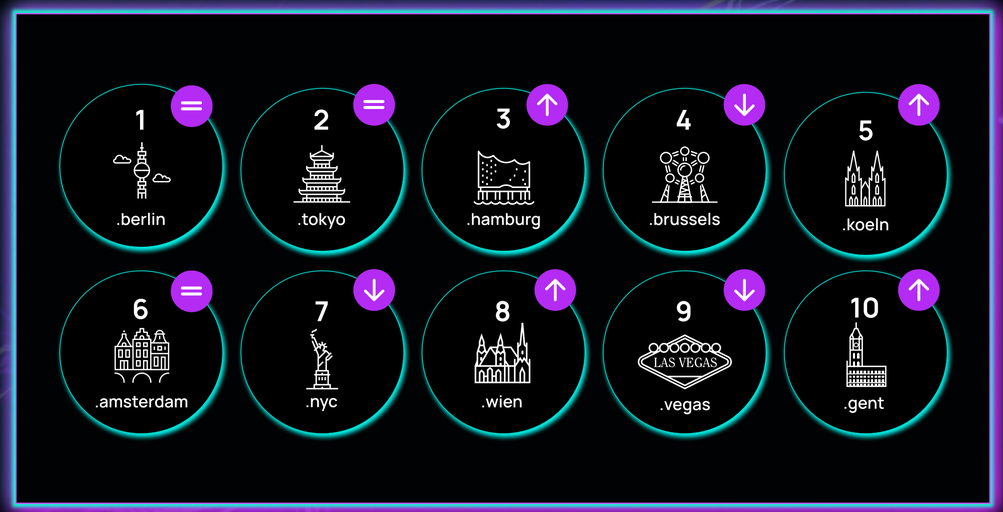
CityTLDs extend digital visibility beyond political capitals

Within the geoTLD galaxy, cityTLDs form their own bright cluster: extensions that carry the names of cities and mirror their urban identity in the domain universe.

When we ask, “Which city lights shine brightest from the namespace?”, this year’s ranking shows quite a bit of movement, with noticeable ups and downs—and the Belgian city .gent entering the chart for the very first time. Seven out of ten top cityTLDs are European, and interestingly, three of them are German cities, underlining Europe’s strong presence in this segment.

Yet only six of the leading cityTLDs are capital cities, proving that digital visibility doesn’t always follow political maps.

Top 10 cityTLDs [13]



[13] DOTZON Digitale Stadtmarken 2025 report (January 2026).

The Star Map Behind Your Domain Business

AI & data-driven domain services, security and automation for the professionals charting the next routes online.

Explore the InterNetX cosmos



02

Domain dimensions

New gTLD insights

Registration numbers describe interest at a moment in time. Crawl data reveals behavior over time. By observing how domains resolve, redirect, or host content, DomainCrawler's data adds behavioral depth to traditional metrics, enabling a clearer picture of adoption, use, and trust across the global internet surface. DomainCrawler provides large-scale, independent crawl data that reveals how domains are actually used across the global namespace.
By observing websites, redirects, and infrastructure signals at scale, Domain Crawler enables a move beyond registration counts toward real usage intelligence. This partnership adds depth, scale, and interpretability to the Global Domain Report 2026.



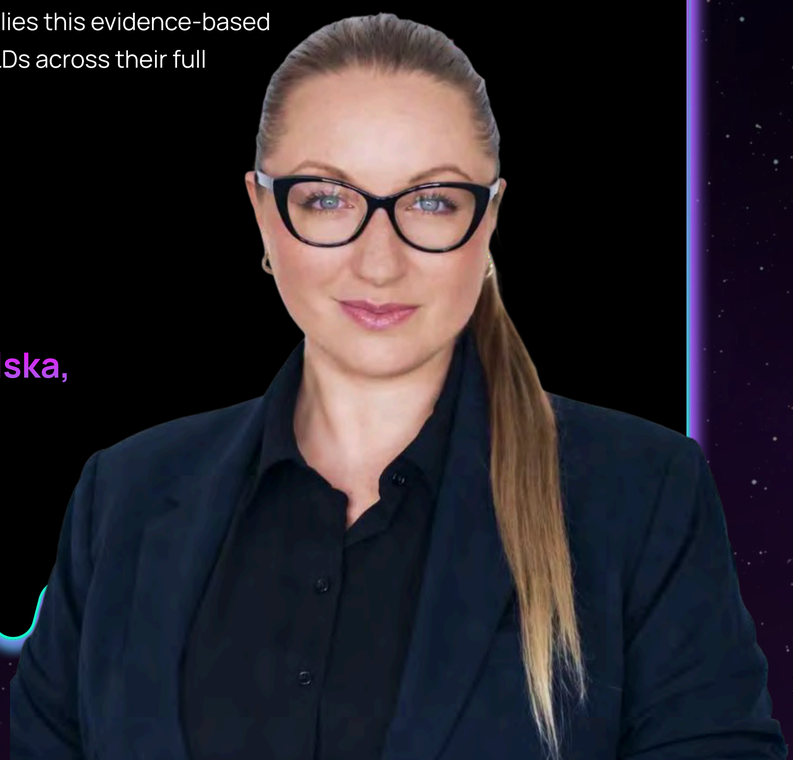
DOMAIN CRAWLER

Rickard Vikström,
Founder

Launching a new TLD is an investment decision that benefits from evidence rather than assumption. By analyzing historical and current usage patterns across the domain ecosystem, operators can validate demand, understand competitive dynamics, and reduce risk before committing capital. DomainCrawler's methodology is based on longitudinal web observation, combining more than a decade of historical data with continuous monitoring of present-day behavior.
This approach enables operators to identify sustainable adoption trends, distinguish temporary effects from structural signals, and design go-to-market strategies grounded in proven patterns. The following analysis applies this evidence-based perspective to new TLDs across their full lifecycle.

DOMAIN CRAWLER

Anna Dobrovolska,
CEO



Active use

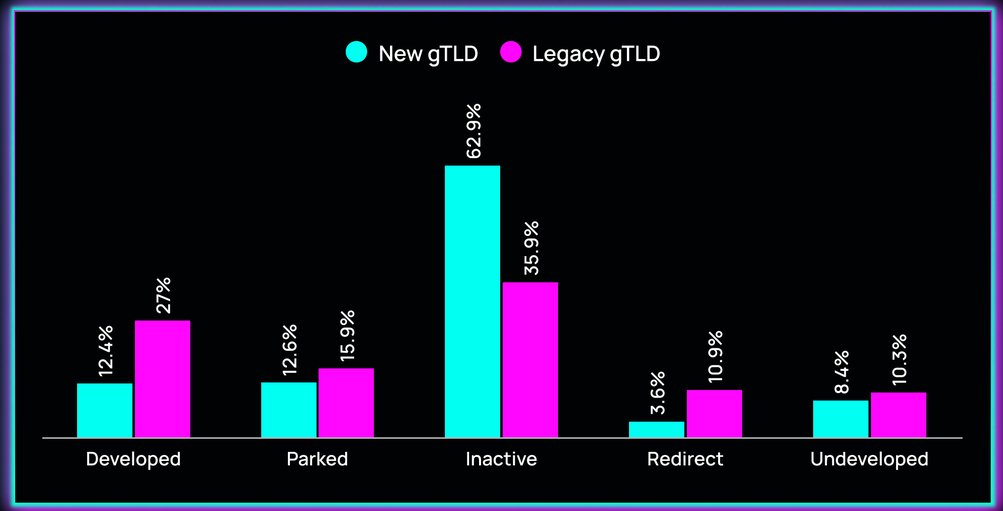
High reg volumes do not always correlate with active sites

In the new gTLD nebula, one pattern stands out: many of these extensions still show a relatively high share of inactive domains, like stars registered but not yet lit.

Among the most registered new gTLDs, several also rank high in active use, but there are notable exceptions such as .dev and .space. Not in every constellation does high registration volume translate into many developed websites: .xyz, for instance, has more registrations but comparatively few active sites, while .space shows the opposite trend.

This underlines how different new gTLDs follow very different usage orbits within the same galaxy.

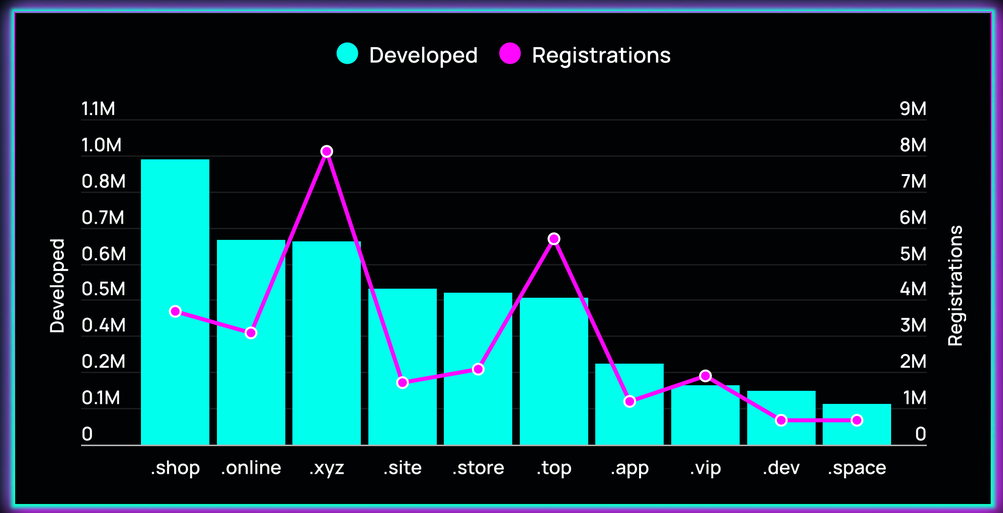
Active-use rate: new gTLDs vs legacy gTLDs



New gTLDs with highest active-use rate



Developed websites vs domain registrations



New gTLD redirects

.com acts as the source & destination of new gTLDs

Redirects act like navigation trails, showing where users are really being guided and which namespaces are used as entry points.

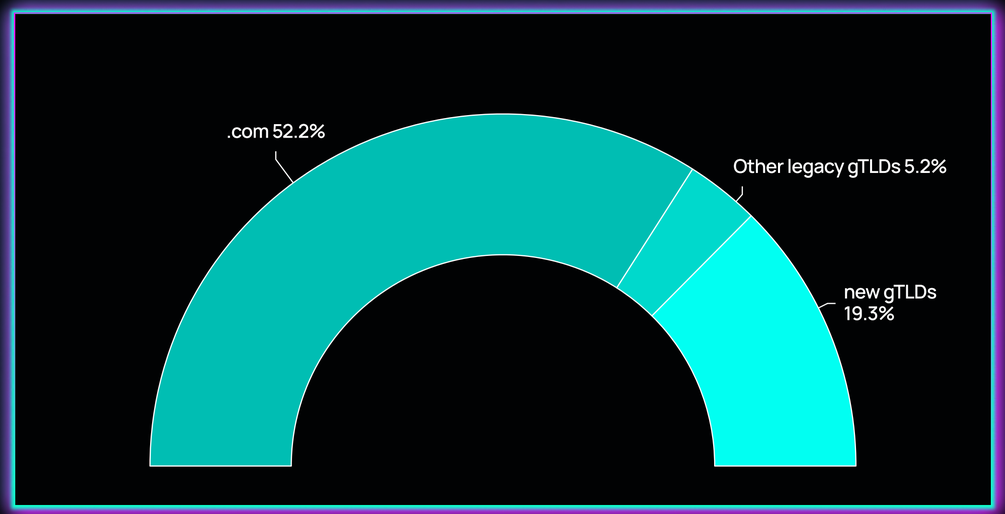
Looking at redirects helps us understand how new gTLDs are positioned: as primary destinations, experimental satellites, or supporting domains in a broader naming strategy. In this constellation, .com remains the dominant launchpad, accounting for more than 50% of all redirects pointing toward new gTLDs.

At the same time, our data shows a healthy mix of legacy gTLDs, ccTLDs and even other new gTLDs acting as sources of redirects, underlining how interconnected the modern namespace has become.

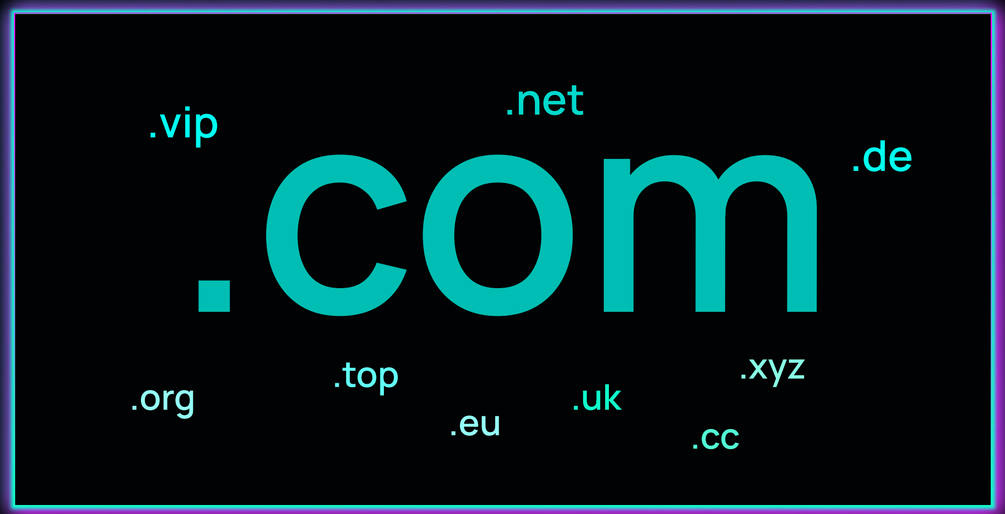
New gTLD redirect top 10 destinations



Redirect share of new gTLDs by destination



Top 10 TLDs redirecting to new gTLDs



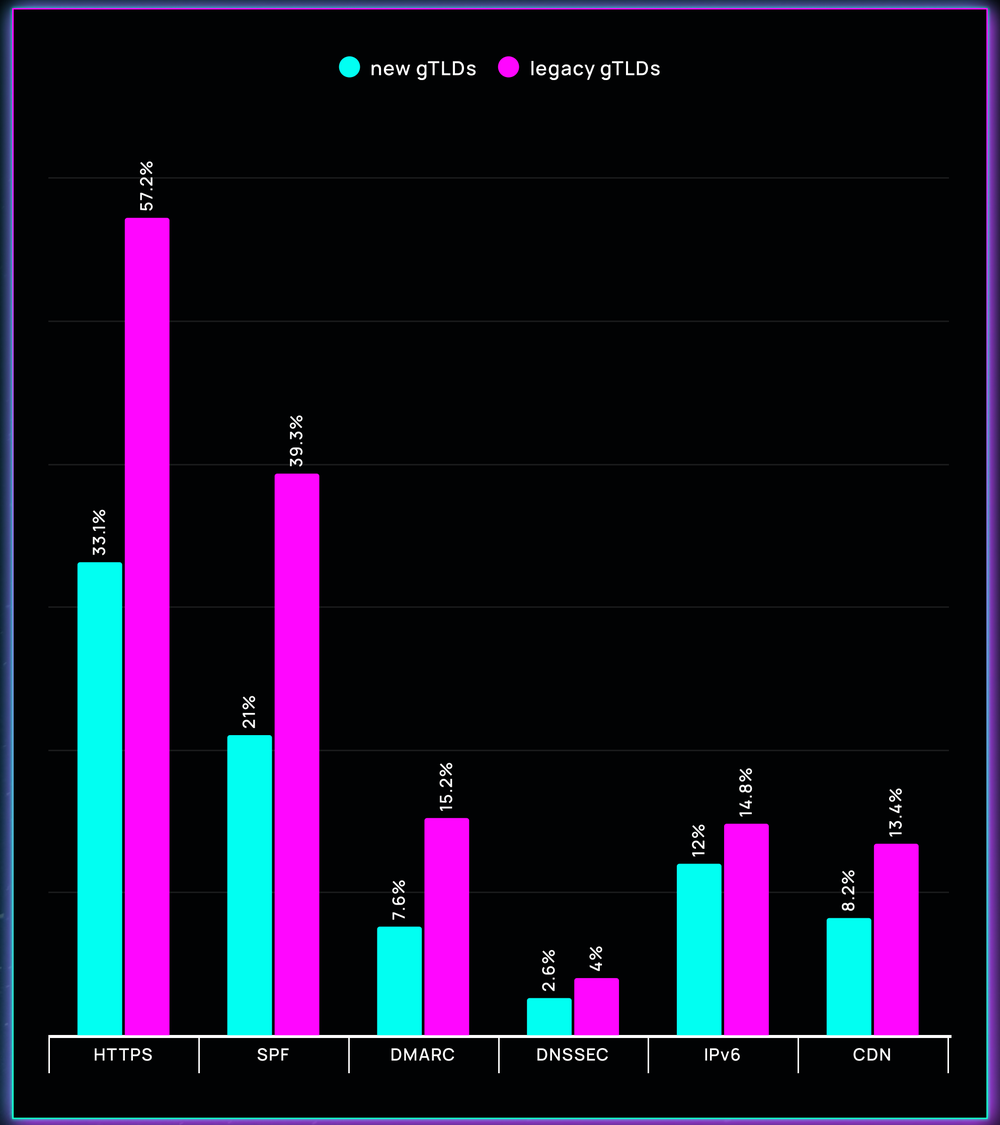
Security signals

New gTLDs still lag behind in adopting key security measures

Good DNS hygiene acts like a protective shield: HTTPS encrypts traffic, SPF and DMARC help prevent email spoofing, DNSSEC safeguards DNS answers from tampering, while IPv6 support and CDNs improve resilience, reach and performance. Together, these protocols make domains harder to attack and more trustworthy to use.

In our data, however, new gTLDs generally show lower adoption rates for several of these safeguards. Possible reasons include younger, more volatile portfolios, a higher share of parked or speculative registrations, and many smaller registries or hosting setups that have not yet fully aligned with best-practice security baselines.

Security key protocols adoption 00



Brand TLDs

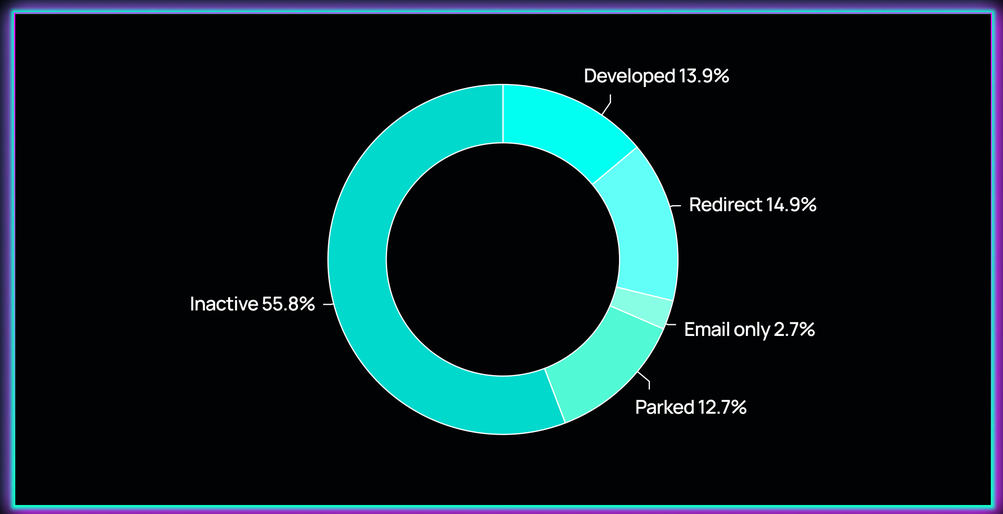
Brand TLDs remain inactive, German brands lead segment

Brand TLDs (dotBrands) are like private constellations in the namespace: instead of using generic endings such as .com, companies operate their own closed extension for corporate content, campaigns or infrastructure.

In the 2012 new gTLD round, they accounted for about 34% of the 1,930 applications, with 664 brand TLDs submitted. According to our data, most domains under brand TLDs remain inactive so far, with only around 14% showing developed websites and additional cases where domains are used for email only.

Interestingly, more than half of all top brand TLDs belong to German companies, underlining Germany's role in the namespace with .de among the most registered and actively used TLDs, a wide adoption of geoTLDs, and a leading footprint in brand TLDs.

Domain usage classification under brand TLDs



Top 10 brand TLDs by domain count



New gTLD program

Strategic positioning, security and compliance are non-negotiable

The New gTLD Program 2026 will be the next major expansion of the DNS, opening the door for a new wave of extensions – from sector- and geo-specific strings to brand TLDs and more experimental namespaces. For registries and registrars, this means fresh opportunities but also tougher questions around positioning, policy, security and long-term sustainability: not every string will find a clear market fit. For brands and communities, the round offers a chance to secure more meaningful, controlled namespaces, but with higher expectations around marketing, compliance and abuse mitigation. On the industry level, the influx of new options is likely to sharpen competition, accelerate consolidation and make data-driven portfolio and pricing decisions even more important.

Overall, the next few years will be less about raw expansion and more about how well new and existing TLDs can demonstrate trust, relevance and real-world use.

2026



The New gTLD Program: 2026 Round lets businesses, communities, governments, and others apply to operate a secure online space, tailored to their organization, community, culture, language, or customer interests. With applications expected to open in late April 2026, applicants should begin preparing now. The 2026 Round Applicant Guidebook, available on the program website, is the key resource for navigating the process.

Theresa Swinehart
SVP, Globald Domains & Strategy, ICANN

Key dates

November 2024
Applicant Support Program (ASP)

April 2025
Applicant Guide Book (AGB)

November 2025
Applicant Support Program deadline

April 2026
Application window opens

July 2026
Application window closes

August 2026
Result announcements

New gTLD program

Brand and reveue opportunities but high costs hold back

Our survey shows that while revenue opportunities are clearly seen as the main driver for joining the new gTLD Program 2026, the motivation landscape is much richer than pure monetization. Brand-related goals (protection, defensive strategies and portfolio synergies) score almost as highly, indicating that many players view new gTLDs as strategic assets to strengthen and structure their existing namespace “constellations”. Geographic identity, and community- or mission-driven ideas also rank highly, showing applicants weigh both commercial and positioning value when considering new extensions.

On the obstacle side, the biggest gravity wells are costs and marketing: application and ongoing fees and the budget needed to build awareness are seen as the main brakes on participation. By contrast, internal resources and technical complexity are viewed as less critical, suggesting many potential applicants feel technically capable but remain cautious about the long-term financial and branding commitments that come with running a new gTLD.

2026

What do you believe will be the primary objectives for participation in the new gTLD Program 2026?

Revenue opportunities	40%
Brand protection/defensive application	33%
Portfolio synergies with existing TLDs	32%
Geographic/sector identity	31%
Filling gap in TLD namespace	24%
Community/mission-driven TLD	21%

What are the biggest obstacles to participation in the new gTLD Program 2026?

Application/ongoing costs	41%
Marketing/awareness budget	38%
Contention/auction risks	25%
Legal/intellectual property risks	24%
Timeline/uncertainty	22%
Compliance/registry obligations	21%
Internal resourcing/technical complexity	17%

new gTLD round 2026



The 2026 gTLD round is the first since 2012, but it enters a mature market where the most obvious strings are taken. Higher operating costs and crowded registrar storefronts make visibility expensive, so success demands differentiated go-to-market plans and conviction. Rising transparency—companies sharing targets and strings—signals a confident, long-term focus on digital identity.

Matt Overman
CRO, Identity Digital



The 2026 new gTLD program is a once-in-a-generation chance to build scalable, long-term registry businesses. For brands, it's a rare opportunity to own a digital category with a meaningful domain ending, rather than renting attention on someone else's platform. Applicants with sharp positioning, operational readiness, and patience will be best placed to create durable value.

Eshan Pancholi
VP Marketing, ShortDot

Entri supports SaaS platforms, so we see which extensions users actually choose for live projects. Some TLDs outperform because they align with how people define their work, brand, or community. The 2026 new gTLD round will bring more user-focused options that fit our customers' audiences. With Entri Sell, customers recommend relevant domains in-product; the next round expands those matches, boosting adoption and revenue.

Destiny Hagest
Director of Sales & Product Marketing, Entri



new gTLD round 2026



The 2026 new gTLD round will bring fresh entrants, new ideas, and new partnership models across the industry. Competition will be fierce, and a few standout extensions will emerge as in the last round. After a decade of learning, applicants will approach strings more strategically. For registrars, it's both a challenge and an opportunity: how to merchandise and surface new extensions effectively in the year ahead.

Neha Naik
Sr. Vice President, Channel Partnerships, RADIX



After 14 years, the 2026 round reopens meaningful to DNS expansion. The industry has absorbed hard lessons from 2012, from contention sets to procedural pitfalls, and can refocus on competition at the root. For registrars, the challenge is execution at scale: integrating new backends, onboarding new operators, and launching many TLDs at once. Across our 11 brands in 18 markets, we're streamlining tech and operations to reduce friction, so we can focus on matching the right domains to the right users.

Michaela Cruden
Director, Domains, SSL & DNS, IONOS Group



A new gTLD round creates the biggest upside for registry operators: new strings unlock fresh markets, pricing power, and long-term recurring revenue if paired with strong positioning and distribution. For domain investors, the opportunity is real but highly dependent on economics: premium tiers, renewal rates, and price-change rights can make or break returns. Diligence on pricing and renewals will matter as much as the domain itself.

Ron Jackson
Editor & Publisher, DNJournal

New gTLD aftermarket

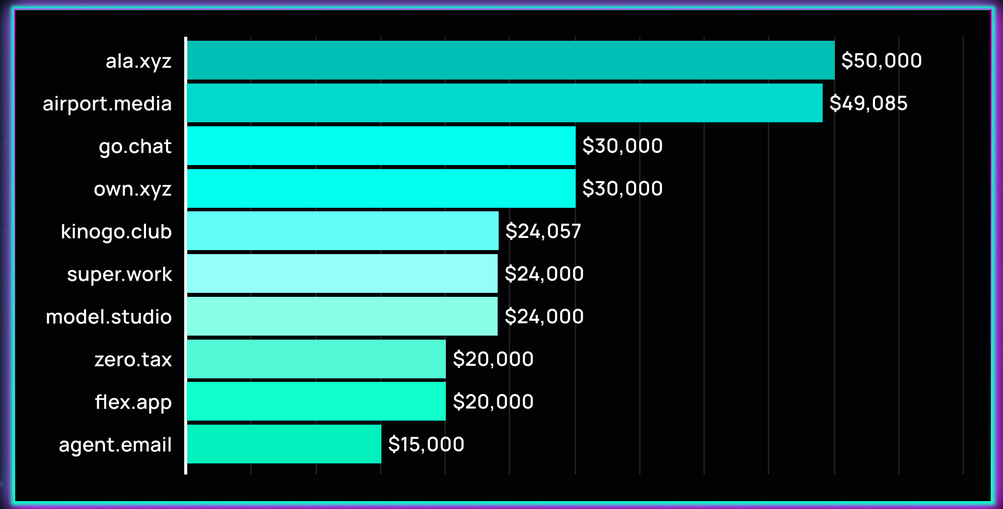
New gTLDs led by .xyz prove their aftermarket worth

In 2025, demand for new gTLDs remained strong on the Sedo marketplace, with sales recorded across a broad range of extensions. Activity was spread over many different TLDs, underlining the continued acceptance of new gTLDs as viable alternatives to traditional extensions, particularly for brandable and project-driven use cases.

At the volume level, extensions such as **.xyz, .online and .app** continued to rank among the most popular new gTLDs, reflecting their broad applicability and global recognition. At the higher end of the market, premium sales were observed across several extensions, demonstrating that buyers remain willing to invest in well-positioned new gTLD domains when the naming and use case are compelling.

Overall, new gTLDs are no longer perceived solely as experimental options. Instead, they have become an established part of the aftermarket, attracting both end users and investors seeking flexible, modern domain alternatives beyond the traditional TLD landscape.

Top 10 public new gTLD domain sales 2025



Top 10 new gTLD sales at Sedo 2025



sedo data retrieved and compiled through proprietary research.

New gTLD aftermarket

New gTLDs enter a phase of stabilized, targeted demand

New gTLD transfers show the secondary market for these extensions maturing through distinct phases—early adoption, rapid growth, correction, and stabilization—based on Sedo's aftermarket data. Today, new gTLDs are a recognized but more selective part of the domain aftermarket, complementing the continued dominance of .com and strong ccTLDs.

1 Early adoption phase (2014–2018)

In the early years of the new gTLDs, aftermarket activity remained limited. Most market activity was still concentrated in the primary registration market, as investors and businesses focused on securing names rather than trading them on the secondary market.

2 Aftermarket growth phase (2019–2022)

From 2019 onward, aftermarket activity increased, reflecting stronger market acceptance of new gTLDs. During this period, alternative extensions became more used for branding, startup projects and digital services.

3 Market correction (2023–2024)

After expansion, the market experienced a slowdown. This phase may be linked to a cooling technology and startup environment, reduced speculative activity and portfolio adjustments among investors.

4 Stabilization and renewed demand (2025)

The renewed increase in activity observed in 2025 may indicate a phase of stabilization. Demand appears focused on extensions with clear use cases or niche positioning, suggesting a more mature market in which transactions are driven less by speculation and more by targeted demand.

new gTLD domain sales volume (2014-2025)



sedo data retrieved and compiled through proprietary research.

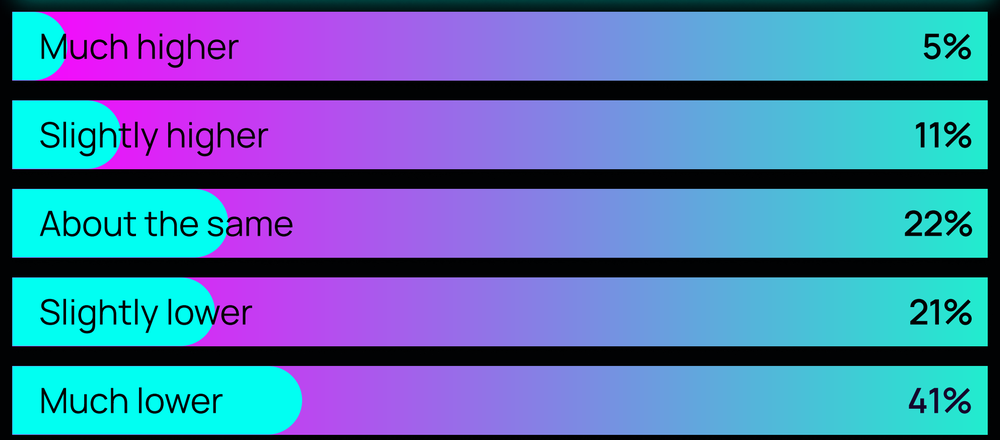
New gTLD aftermarket

High costs & low awareness limit new gTLD resales

Our survey paints a cautious picture of new gTLDs in the aftermarket. Most respondents see their resale potential as weaker than that of classic TLDs, with only a minority expecting them to outperform .com & co., and many viewing them as roughly on par. That perception is mirrored in portfolio structures: for most participants, new gTLDs are either a small side-orbit or completely absent, rather than a core asset class.

When asked about what holds wider adoption back, respondents point first to low buyer awareness and higher renewal/acquisition costs, closely followed by concerns about limited resale data and liquidity—a combination that makes it hard to build confidence in long-term value. Registry policies and restrictions are seen as an additional friction point, but clearly secondary to the fundamental question: "Will buyers really pay for these names at scale?"

In the light of the new gTLD program, how do you view the resale potential of new gTLDs compared to classic TLDs?



What are the main challenges to wider adoption of new gTLDs?



What percentage of your portfolio consists of new gTLD?



DNS abuse

Stricter mitigation requirements demand robust data to target and resolve phishing and malware

The DNS enables the global connectivity we enjoy every day on the Internet. Like the Internet itself, the DNS is not immune to malicious activity, and managing DNS abuse is an essential task for any navigator of the domain universe.

Since 2024, gTLD registries and registrars have been contractually required to mitigate or otherwise disrupt well-evidenced reports of DNS abuse within their orbits. With an ICANN Policy Development Process (PDP) on DNS abuse set to begin in 2026, there's never been a better time to understand how the DNS is used for phishing and malware.

We draw on NetBeacon Measurement and Analytics Platform (MAP) to analyze overall trends, concentration, and mitigation across TLD constellations. Registries and registrars can access more detailed dashboards for free from the NetBeacon Institute, along with educational information and reporting services.

In collaboration with our research partner KOR Labs, NetBeacon MAP provides an academically robust, sophisticated, and transparent methodology to understand the use of the DNS for phishing attacks and malware distribution.

NetBeacon MAP goes well beyond aggregating blocklists, which are typically created for the purpose of network protection. KOR Labs refines source feeds to unique domains, removing IP addresses, duplicates, and domains for which mitigation at the DNS level would be inappropriate: e.g., file hosting sites, dynamic DNS providers, and subdomain providers.

KOR Labs apply a sophisticated proprietary classifier to distinguish between compromised websites and maliciously registered domains. They follow the domain for 30 days to monitor mitigation. Where possible, live malicious domains are packaged into reports with evidence and sent to registries and registrars via NetBeacon Reporter, our free centralized abuse reporting conduit.

For the Global Domains Report 2026, the NetBeacon Institute analyzed data from December 2024 through November 2025. In this section, we detail phishing and malware trends, mitigation rates and speed, and recent campaigns. We also highlight TLDs who consistently maintained low rates of abuse over the 12 month period.2024. We evaluated the presence of key security and anti-abuse measures, specifically.

NETBEACON INSTITUTE

Rowena Schoo,
Senior Director
Industry Affairs & Policy



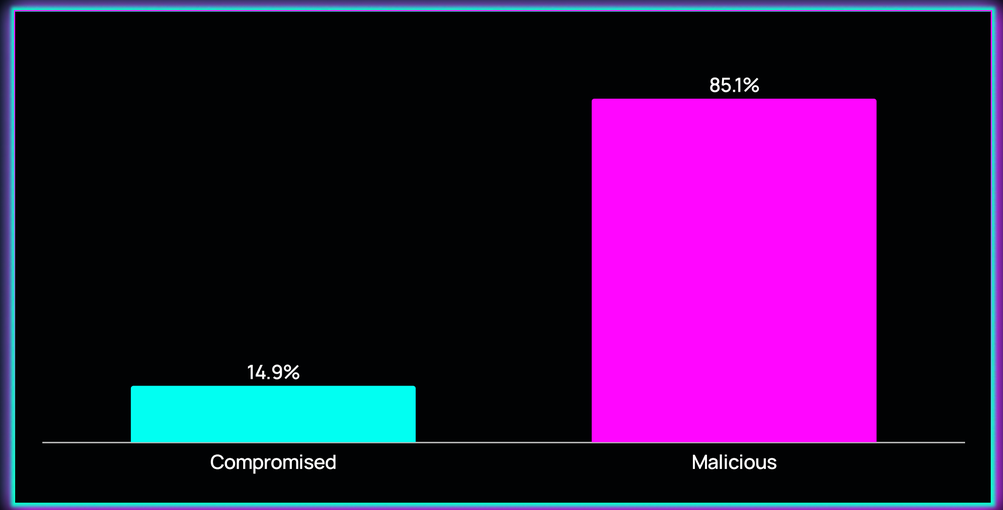
Compromised vs. malicious domains

Malicious registrations drive DNS abuse

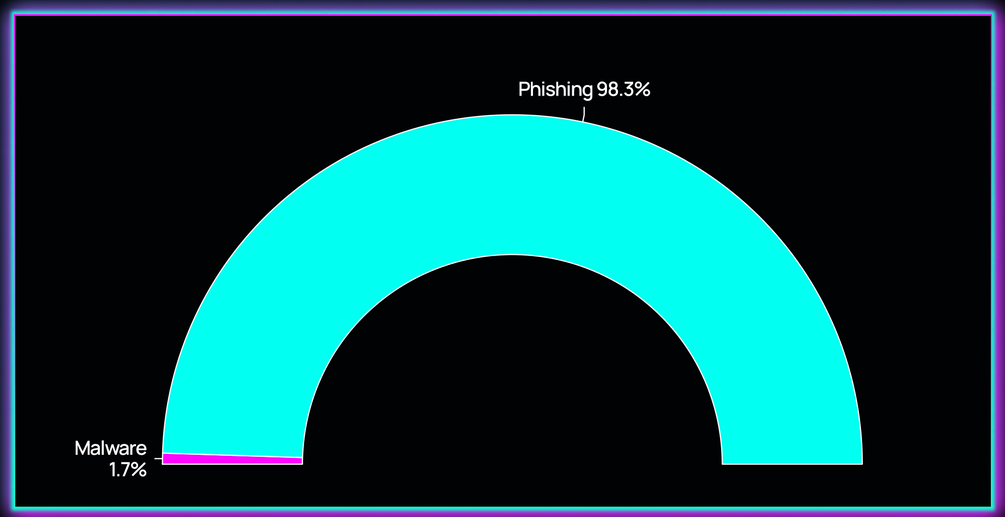
From December 2023 through November 2025, NetBeacon MAP measured far more unique domains associated with phishing (98%) than malware distribution (2%). DNS abuse generally appears as either maliciously registered domains or compromised domains hacked via unpatched vulnerabilities outside registry control. Using KOR Labs' MalCom machine-learning classifier, researchers identified that roughly 85% of abusive domains (350,367) over the last 12 months were maliciously registered.

This share is lower in legacy gTLDs (69%) and ccTLDs (76%), likely because their older domain usage base accumulates unpatched software, increasing the pool of easily compromised sites.

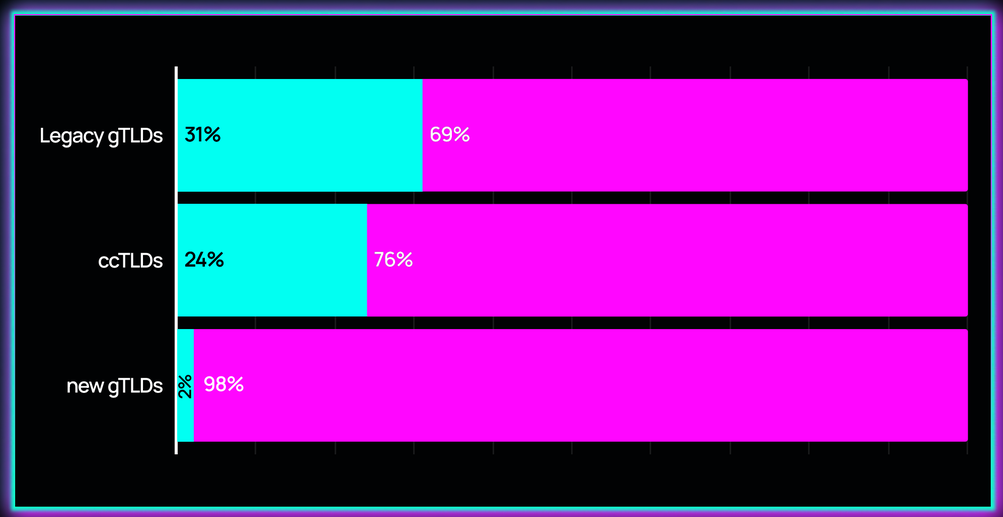
Compromised domains vs malicious registrations



DNS abuse types



Compromised vs malicious domains by TLDs



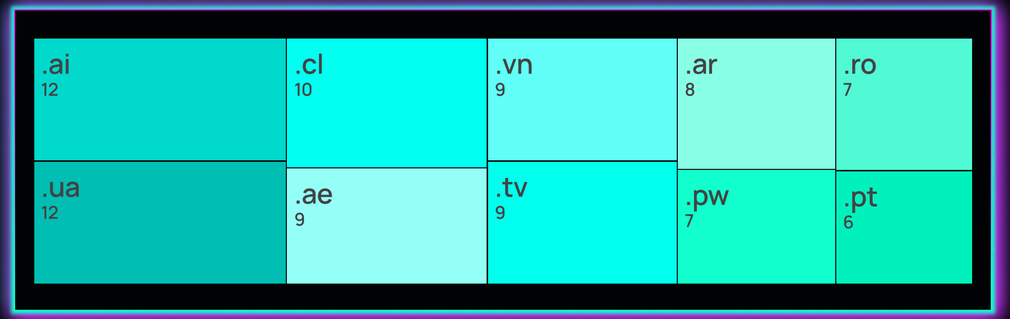
Safest TLDs

Large TLDs show scale doesn't compromise safety scores

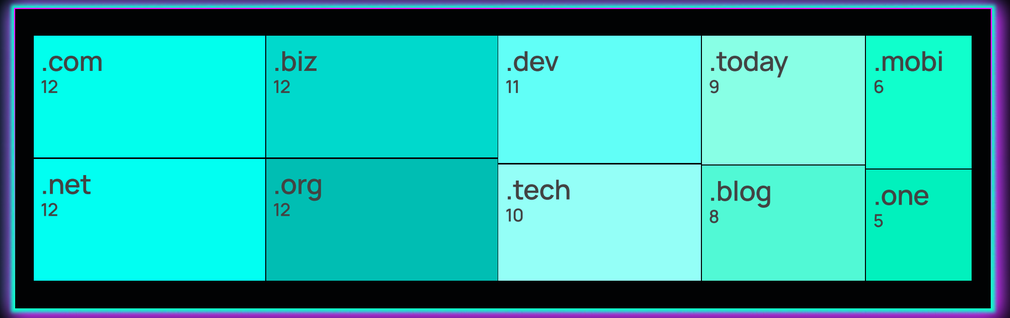
One way to gauge how much abuse is really out there in the DNS universe is to look at malicious abuse per 100,000 domains under management (DUM). Across the period observed, NetBeacon MAP identified 404,757 domains as malicious phishing or malware, with a final DUM of 364,868,178 in November 2025. On this basis, the monthly malicious abuse rate fluctuated between 6.23 and 11.76 per 100,000 domains, with a 12-month average of around 8.2: a relatively small fraction of the total namespace, but still a significant "noise level" operators must manage.

NetBeacon MAP also tracks the "safest stars" in the TLD sky by publishing monthly tables of extensions with the lowest malicious abuse rates. The graphic in this report highlights those TLDs that have appeared most consistently in the low-abuse tables over the last 12 months, with a "perfect score" meaning 12 out of 12 months. A small group of TLDs, including .biz, .com, .net, .org, .de, .ai and .ua, show that strong security practices and vigilant stewardship can keep abuse at a minimum even in very large namespaces.

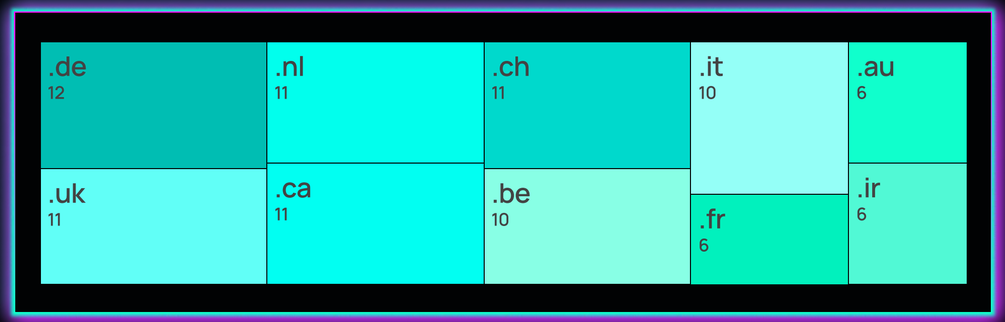
Safest ccTLDs 1 - 999,999 DUM



Safest gTLDs ≥ 1 million DUM



Safest ccTLDs ≥ 1 million DUM



Safest gTLDs 1 - 999,999 DUM



Mitigation rate

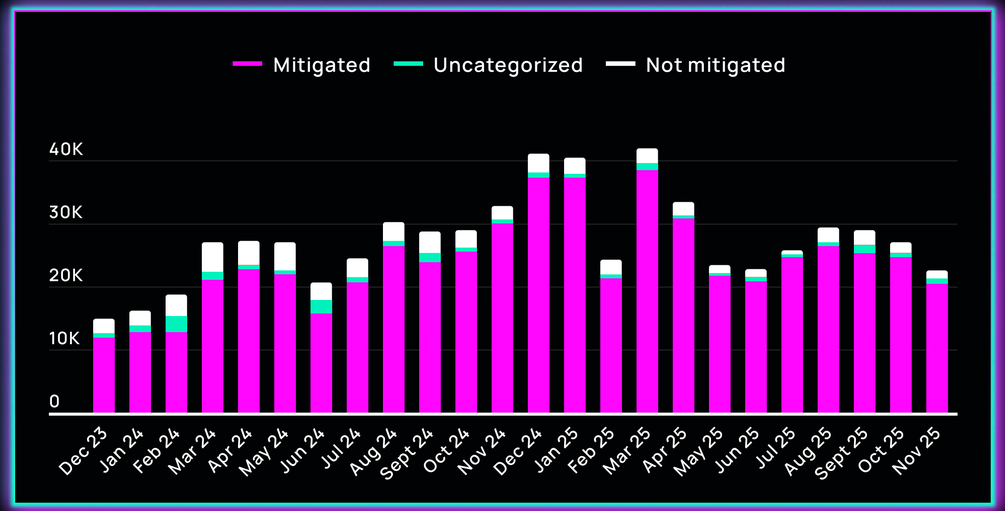
Mitigation efficiency peaks as security standards tighten

Over the 24-month period from December 2023 to November 2025, DNS abuse mitigation rates remained consistently high, even as overall abuse volumes fluctuated across the domain universe. Mitigation is measured holistically—focusing on whether the harm has stopped—without assigning credit to specific actors, since action can be taken at registry, registrar or hosting level, and referrals between them are common. Notably, new gTLD contractual obligations raising mitigation expectations came into force in April 2024.

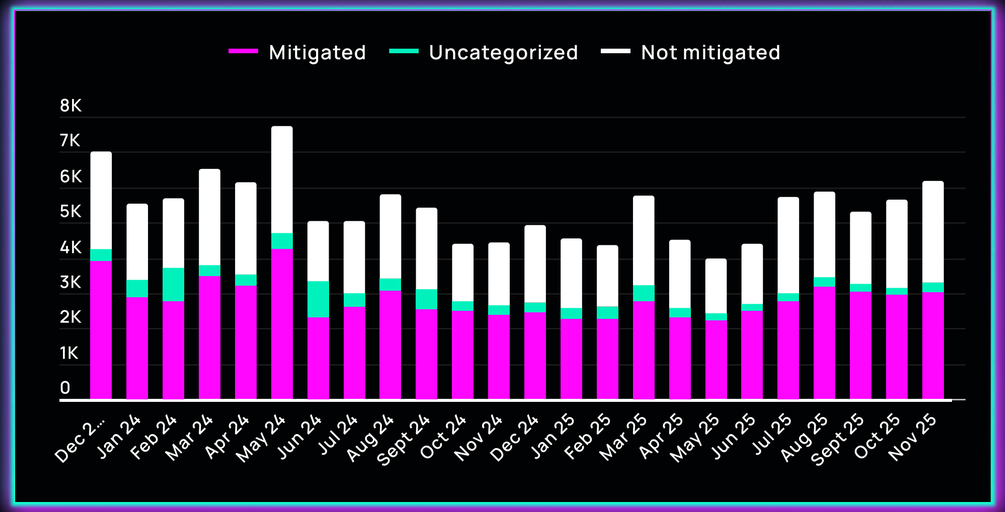
For malicious registrations, which fall more within the remit of registries and registrars, mitigation improved significantly: in the most recent 12 months the average rate was about 91% (range ~87–93%), compared with roughly 80% (range ~68–88%) in the preceding 12 months. For compromised domains, where an innocent registrant is typically involved and DNS-level takedown is not always appropriate, mitigation is more complex and rates are lower but stable at around 52% on average across both periods (range ~46–57%), highlighting that clearly malicious abuse is much easier to remediate than compromise cases.



Malicious mitigation



Compromised mitigation



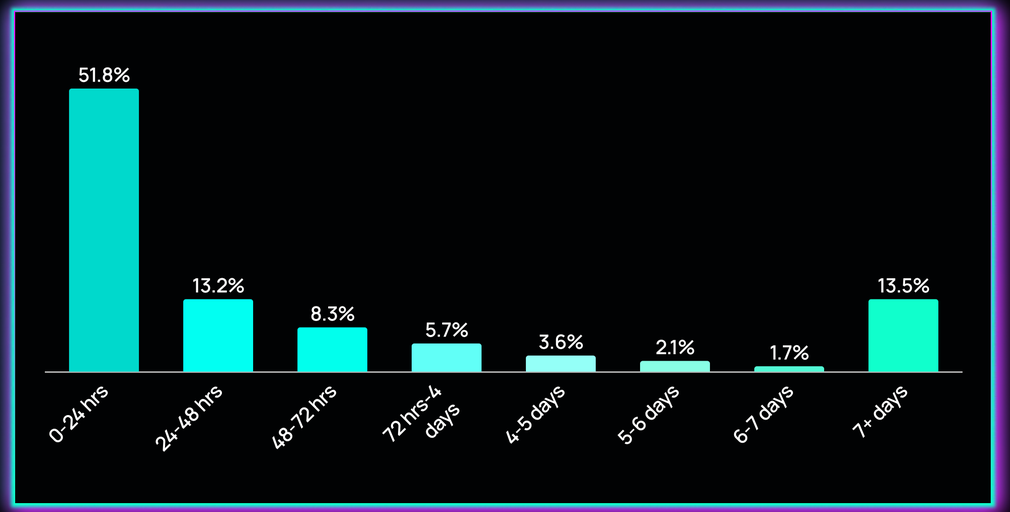
Mitigation speed

50% of malicious domains disrupted within 24 hours

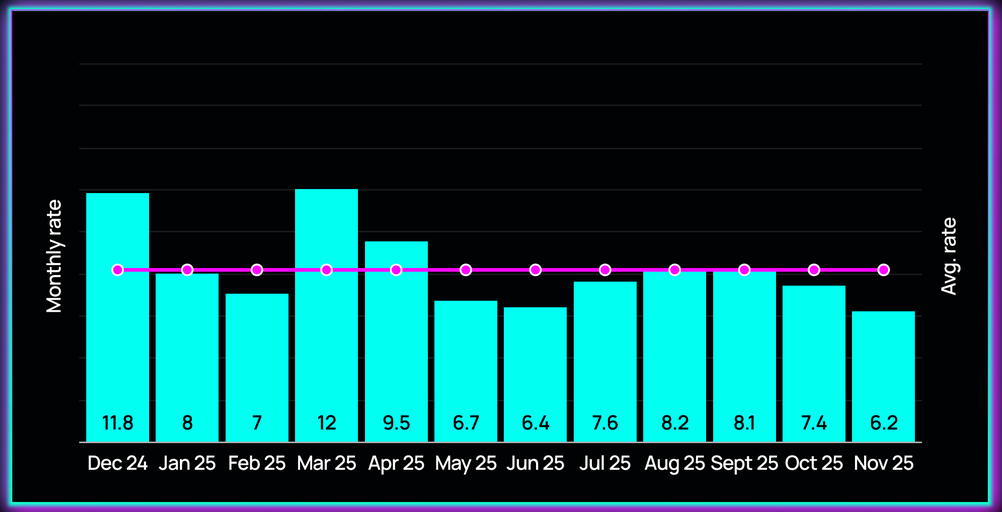
From December 2024 to November 2025, most DNS abuse (phishing and malware) was mitigated quickly: 73% of cases were addressed within 72 hours, and a solid 51.8% within 24 hours. There is no industry-wide standard for mitigation speed, and operators—especially when acting at the DNS level—must balance the risk of false positives against the need to stop harm early, when attacks are often most damaging. While cybercrime is often assumed to follow seasonal patterns, any seasonality looks weak and hard to separate from normal fluctuation, with anomalies like the March 2025 spike appearing linked to specific campaigns rather than broader seasonal effects.

It remains challenging to tell whether the true volume of abuse is changing, or whether we are simply getting better at detecting and reporting it.

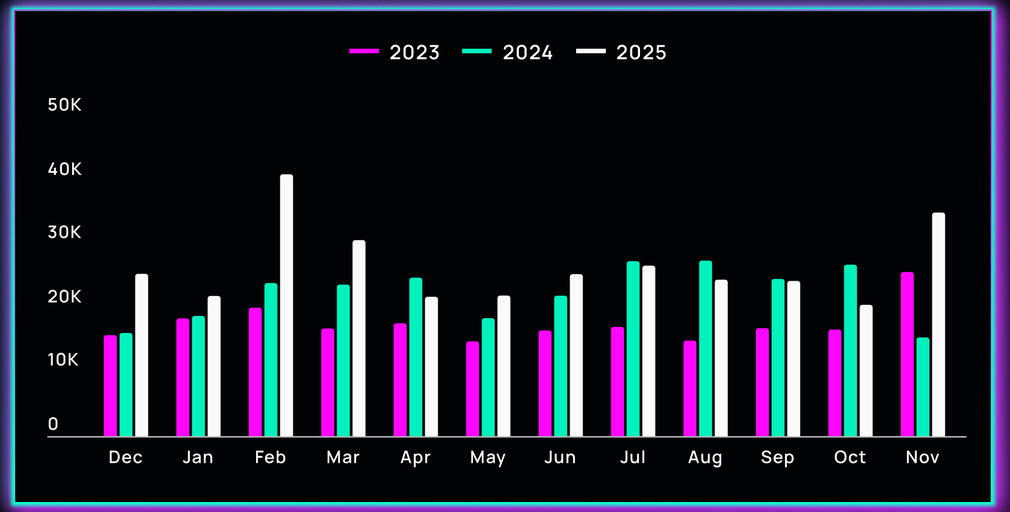
Mitigation speed



Malicious abuse rate DUM 100,000



DNS abuse seasonality



Web3 domains

Demand in Web3 aligned with functional on-chain activities

Web3 domains have evolved into a distinct parallel namespace, with their own leading “anchor” extensions and ecosystem-specific trends. At the top of the chart, .eth, .nft, .crypto and .wallet dominate by volume, reflecting strong demand around identity, NFTs, payments and wallets, while other strings show how closely naming follows major blockchain and DeFi projects.

Taken together, the leading Web3 TLDs show that adoption remains diverse, spanning both long-established extensions and newer entrants that are rapidly gaining traction. Overall, the data highlights a vibrant and expanding ecosystem, with room for both mature and up-and-coming Web3 TLDs to attract users.

Top 15 TLDs in Web3 domains

1 .eth 1,503k	2 .nft 800k	3 .crypto 758k	4 .wallet 618k	5 .bnb 474k
6 .x 408k	7 .blockchain 335k	8 .zil 321k	9 .arb 230k	10 .bitcoin 228k
11 .dao 167k	12 .888 167k	13 .polygon 137k	14 .metaverse 104k	15 .go 62k

Web3 is driving a structural shift in how domains are created, owned and used. As blockchain adoption grows, domains are evolving beyond static identifiers to become active digital primitives that interact with on-chain identities, applications and value flows.

By bringing domains on-chain, blockchain technology unlocks new features and liquidity for the domains industry. Tokenization enables programmability and interoperability, while allowing traditional Web2 domains to be mirrored and represented within Web3 environments. Building on this foundation, the fractionalization of domains is emerging as a key development in 2025, introducing shared ownership models and new market dynamics that benefit stakeholders across the ecosystem, from domainers and end users to registrars and B2B providers.

This data is based on aggregated on-chain sources covering leading Web3 TLDs, registration activity over time, the on-chain representation of traditional DNS domains, and market dynamics related to tokenized and fractionalized domains, providing a structured view of how Web3 is reshaping the global domains industry.

freename

Gherardo Varani,
Head of Business Development



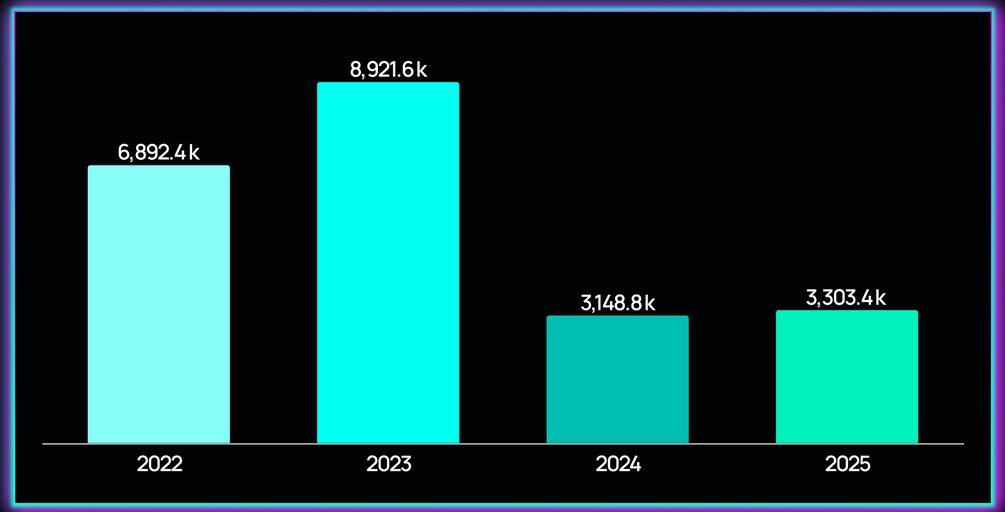
Web3 domain volume

Speculative peak recedes as ecosystem undergoes correction

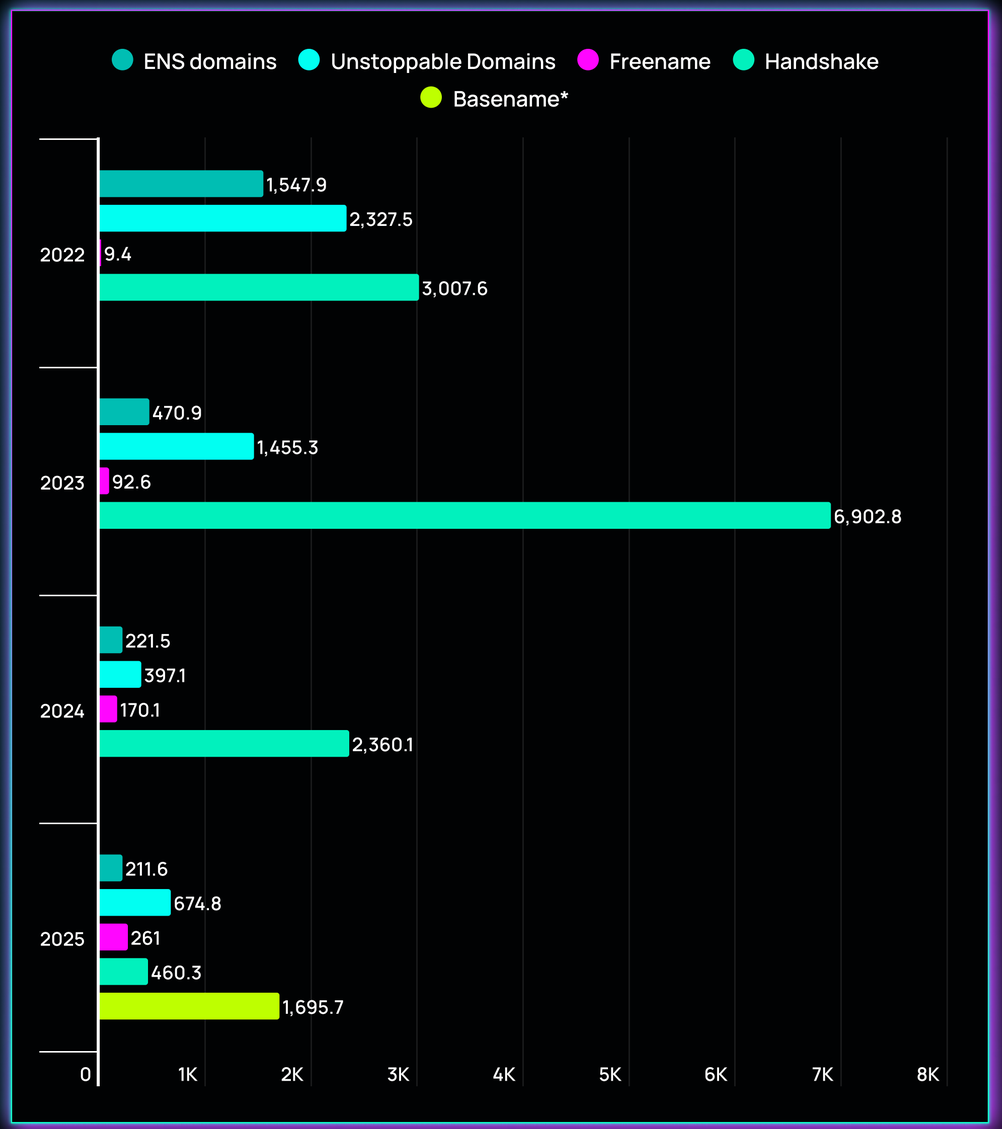
Following the intense flare of 2022–23, the Web3 domain galaxy has seen volumes contract significantly, with total registrations leveling off at a lower, more consolidated baseline. While the initial speculative surge has cooled—leading to a marked decline in overall numbers—the remaining activity is shifting toward established platforms and specific emerging systems that maintain steady momentum.

This pattern reveals a hardening landscape: the era of rapid, unchecked expansion has passed, replaced by a more disciplined market. Web3 domains remain a resilient part of the digital namespace, but value is now strictly concentrated in platforms that offer clear utility and a stable position in this recalibrated environment.

YoY registration total change



YoY registration total by provider



* Since Basename launched on OpenSea in July 2024, full-year data is only available starting from 2025.

TLD collisions

Unified standards are critical for future trust & usability

Data from 2025 indicates that name collisions are now a visible feature of the Web3 naming landscape. There are over 4,300 colliding TLD strings and more than 200 colliding SLDs, with TLD collisions increasing by 602 since 2024.

As a result, a single domain, label, or suffix may be valid in multiple environments at the same time. This overlap can create ambiguity about which entity truly controls the name and how it should be resolved by applications or users. These scenarios highlight the challenges of interoperability in a decentralized ecosystem and the importance of alignment, standards, or resolution mechanisms to ensure clarity & trust across Web3.



Web3 adoption & trends

Web3 adoption joins AI and regulation as industry pillars

Our survey shows that a sizable minority is experimenting with or actively moving into Web3 domains, while the rest are still watching this new orbit from a cautious distance. Among those interested, the main drivers are very pragmatic with deeper use cases like decentralized identity or NFTs playing more of a supporting role.

When we zoom out to broader industry trends, Web3 sits alongside other major forces rather than eclipsing them: respondents rank consolidation, the next new gTLD wave, AI name generation, and stronger regulation/data privacy as equally important currents shaping their strategy. Web3 adoption and domain tokenization are clearly on the radar, but for most Web2 players they are still emerging themes rather than the central star of their roadmap. Overall, the data suggests a domain universe where Web3 is transitioning from buzzword to concrete opportunity—just not yet the dominant gravity well for most traditional operators.

Do you own or consider registering Web3 domains?

Yes	41%
No	59%

Which factors drive adoption of Web3 domains?

Speculation/investment value	40%
Ease of crypto payments/wallet addressing	39%
Marketing, branding, novelty effect	37%
Integration with Web3 apps and marketplaces	36%
Decentralized identity, self-sovereign identity	28%
NFT ownership & collectibility	23%
Censorship resistance, decentralization appeal	20%

Which trends will have the greatest impact on your organization's strategy, revenue, or operations?

Consolidation (registrars, marketplaces, registries)	36%
New gTLD activity & launches 2026	35%
AI-driven name generation	31%
Increased adoption of Web3	31%
Stronger regulatory, data-privacy requirements	31%
Rising domain abuse due to automated regs and AI	23%
Domain tokenization & DeFi use cases	21%

AI demand & trends

66% of respondents seeing AI impact on demand and sales

Our survey shows AI is a force in daily operations: around two-thirds of respondents report an impact on demand, sourcing, or sales in 2025. This sentiment is validated by the growth of the .ai, which reached the 1,000,000 registration milestone in January 2026 with an YoY growth rate of 67%. A pivotal moment was the +73% spike in regs in mid-2023, corresponding to ChatGPT going public and the subsequent global AI boom. Looking ahead, the greatest potential lies in AI name generation (44%) and automated valuation (41%), designed to streamline the "discovery and decision" journey.

Interestingly, AI for abuse detection is mentioned less often, hinting at untapped defensive potential. It is clear that AI demand has moved from a niche trend to a structural market pillar defined by deep commercial integration.

.ai registration growth (2018-2026)[14]



To what extent has AI-driven name generation impacted your organization's domain demand, name sourcing, or sales conversion in 2025?

Significantly	15%
Moderately	29%
Slightly	23%
Not at all	26%
We do not track AI effects	8%

What AI technologies have the greatest potential for your domain product, sales, or operations?

AI name generation/creative suggestions	44%
Automated domain valuation/dynamic pricing	41%
AI for customer support & automated domain lifecycle	30%
AI chatbots & agents for brokerage/negotiation	29%
AI for trademarks/similarity screening	27%
AI for domain abuse detection	18%

[14] Official registry data and 2026 projections.

TLDs in LLM training

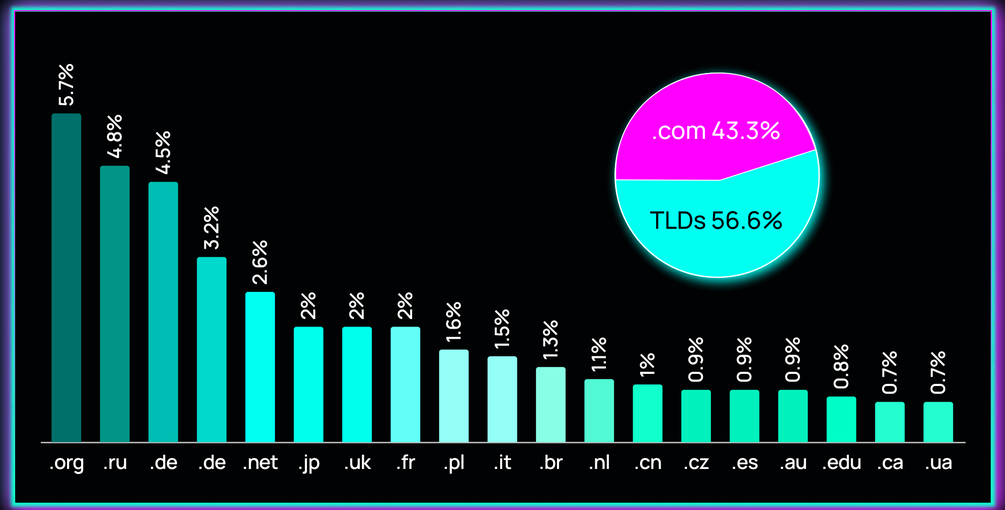
The "digital diet" of AI becomes less .com-centric

Common Crawl is a non-profit initiative that regularly crawls the public web and publishes large-scale datasets containing billions of web pages. The archive is widely used in academic research and has also become one of the key raw data sources for training large language models (LLMs), as it provides a broad snapshot of how the web looks at a given point in time. In this sense, it represents part of the “digital diet” of AI systems, although the data is typically filtered, cleaned, and combined with other sources before model training.

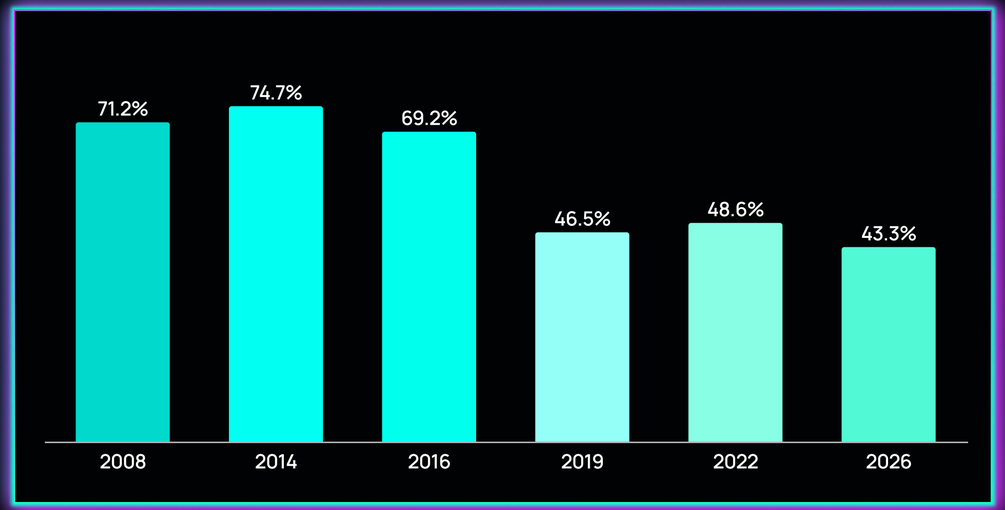
Looking at the Top 20 TLDs in Common Crawl therefore offers insight into which parts of the web are most heavily represented in large-scale web data. The dominance of .com, alongside strong positions of major country-code TLDs and established generics like .org or .net, reflects the structural concentration of the global web. At the same time, newer or niche TLDs tend to appear far less frequently, which may indicate lower visibility in large web corpora and, indirectly, in AI training data. The long-term trend shows .com's share slowing/declining sharply: from ~71–75% (2008–2014) down to 43.3% (2026). Interpreted cautiously, this points to a web that is becoming less .com-centric in Common Crawl snapshots—either because ccTLD ecosystems have grown, or because crawl composition and coverage have changed (or both).

While this overview does not directly translate into influence or quality, it provides a useful macro-level indicator of web presence in the AI era.

TLD distribution in web crawl data (2026)[15]



.com share in web crawl data (2008-2026)[16]



[15&16] Statistics of Common Crawl Monthly Archives, (31.12.2025)

Domains in AI web

Domains shift from destinations to verified trust anchors

AI is rewriting how people navigate the internet: instead of “search → click → website,” more journeys now end inside AI chats, assistants, and overviews. In this machine-mediated layer, domains don’t lose value—they change jobs, shifting from being mainly a destination to becoming the identity, trust, and control layer behind what AI delivers. A domain turns into the stable “origin label” that helps LLMs (and users) understand who is speaking, where information comes from, and whether it’s safe to rely on.

That’s why the next role of domains is less about traffic and more about selection: being picked as a source, being attributed correctly, and being reachable when an AI agent needs to act. The points below highlight the key ways domains will influence visibility in AI overviews, establish authenticity through security signals, and serve as the governance and transaction endpoint for an increasingly automated web.

1 GEO for LLM ranking

Generative Engine Optimization shifts focus from “rank and click” to “be chosen and used” by models. Clear entity signals, consistent branding, and strong domain authority help LLMs select your source for answers.

2 Destination to identity layer

Your domain is no longer just where content lives—it’s who stands behind it. In AI answers and summaries, the domain becomes the reputation tag attached to extracted facts.

3 Security as trust signal

Certificates and DNS records turn domains into verifiable trust anchors. TLS, SPF/DKIM/DMARC, and DNSSEC help prove authenticity, reduce impersonation risk, and reinforce confidence for both users and machines.

4 Control surface for AI

Domains increasingly shape how machines access and reuse information. From crawl rules to preview controls, your domain becomes a governance layer for what AI can read, summarize and attribute.

5 Ready for agent transactions

As AI agents start to book, buy and act, they need reliable endpoints to interact with. Domains underpin secure APIs and trusted workflows, positioning Agent Name Service (ANS) as the core infrastructure for automated commerce.

Vibe coding

Domain registration embedded into the idea-to-app flow

Vibe coding defines a new AI-assisted way of building software where people describe what they want in natural language and large language models generate the code, often all the way to a deployed app. Vibe-coding platforms sit right at the intersection of this trend and the domain industry. Their promise is simple: going from idea to live product in a single conversational flow, and at the end of that flow, you still need a domain as the stable address, brand and trust anchor for whatever the AI has created.



1 From search box to conversation

Vibe coding shifts domain discovery from manual search to natural-language prompts. Instead of typing keywords into a domain checker, users describe their idea, audience and positioning, and AI proposes matching names, TLDs and variants in context.

2 Embedded domains in the build flow

As AI tools go from “idea → prototype → hosted app” in one conversational flow, domain registration moves inside that flow. Domains become a default step in deployment rather than a separate, later decision.

3 Agents as new enablement channels

AI agents increasingly act as domain resellers: checking availability, comparing pricing, suggesting alternatives, registering and configuring DNS without human intervention – all inside code assistants, website builders or SaaS dashboards.

4 Compliance and protection by design

In an AI-first flow, domain distribution can integrate trademark checks, abuse filters, WHOIS accuracy and security add-ons (DNSSEC, monitoring) as defaults, turning policy and protection into part of the automated registration pipeline.

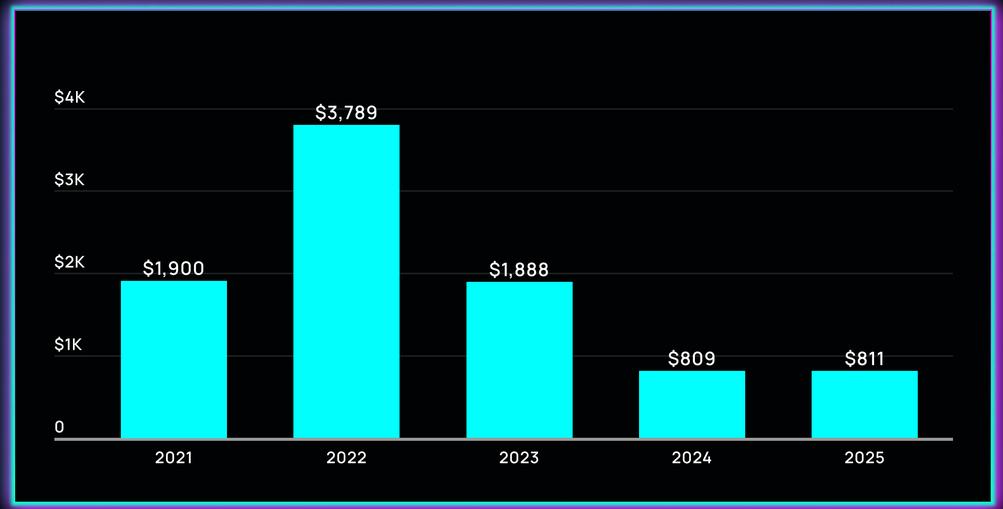
.ai in the aftermarket

.ai domains are no longer driven by hype but practical adoption

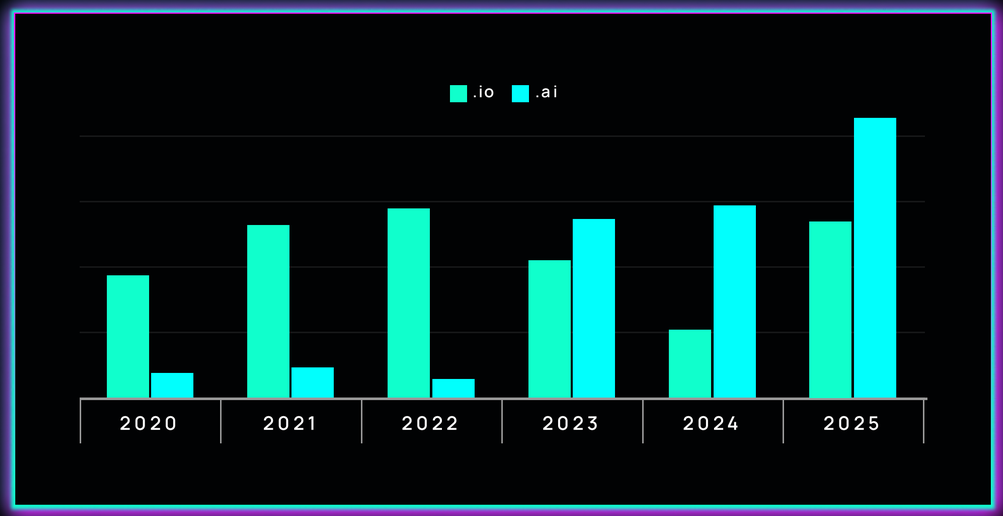
.ai domains remained prominent on the Sedo marketplace, confirming AI as a key 2025 theme. What began as a niche trend has evolved into a relevant segment, attracting startups, established companies and investors. Integrating AI into business processes, consumer products and digital services has sustained demand for **short, brandable and application-focused names**. While the market has matured compared to the rapid surge seen in previous years, buyer interest remains high, supported by sales activity across a wide range of price segments.

In 2025, .ai domains achieved strong results, particularly for short and versatile names suitable for global use. This performance underlines that .ai domains are no longer driven by hype, but by practical adoption and long-term commercial relevance. As AI technologies continue to expand into new industries, .ai remains positioned as a key asset within the domain aftermarket.

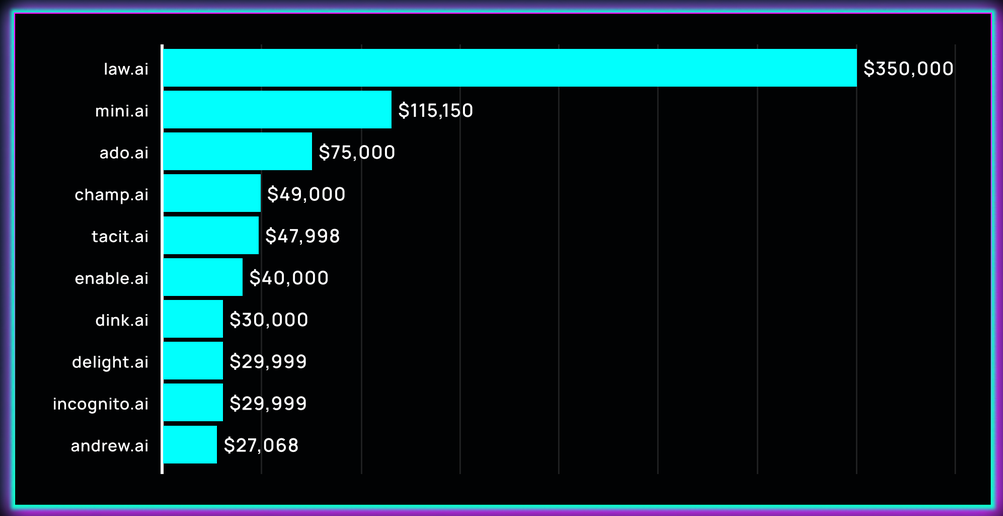
Median price development of .ai



Number of sales development



Top 10 non-confidential .ai sales 2025



sedo data retrieved and compiled through proprietary research.

AI Insights 2026

AI reinforced what we've long seen at Entri: when custom domains are effortless, users publish faster. In 2025, surging waves of non-technical builders accelerated this shift. Projects launched on custom domains create stickier, higher-value accounts. In an AI market where time-to-publish determines retention, domains have become a core lever for our customers to keep users and grow lifetime value.



Destiny Hagest
Director of Sales & Product Marketing, Entri



AI is transforming domain strategy from speculation into a science, optimizing everything from instant valuations to complex M&A synergies. These tools allow investors to move with unprecedented speed, identifying undervalued assets before the broader market can react. In 2026, this data-driven intelligence is creating a tighter, more professional integration between domain portfolios and corporate brand ecosystems.

Theo Develegas
President, DomainGang LLC

In 2025, .ai domains kept surging, fueled by rapid AI adoption and investment. Registrations and the secondary market rose, with 11 of the top 50 public aftermarket sales in .ai, led by wisdom.ai at $750k. As the internet becomes more AI-built & agentic, creation is commoditized and brand becomes the differentiator. Domains will sit at the center, anchoring trust, proving authenticity & ownership, helping users cut through AI-generated noise.



Matt Overman
CRO, Identity Digitali

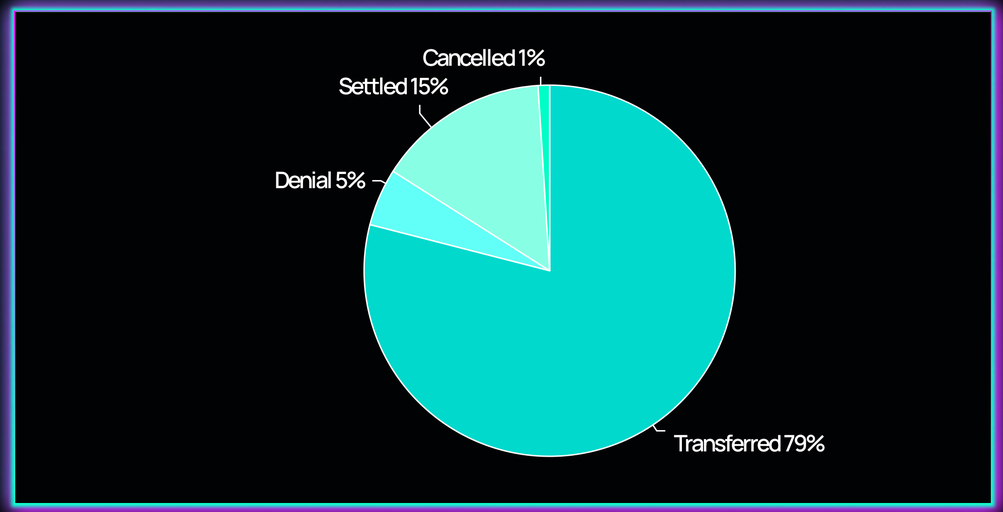
UDRP trends

79% success rate drives UDRP to record-breaking 6,200 cases

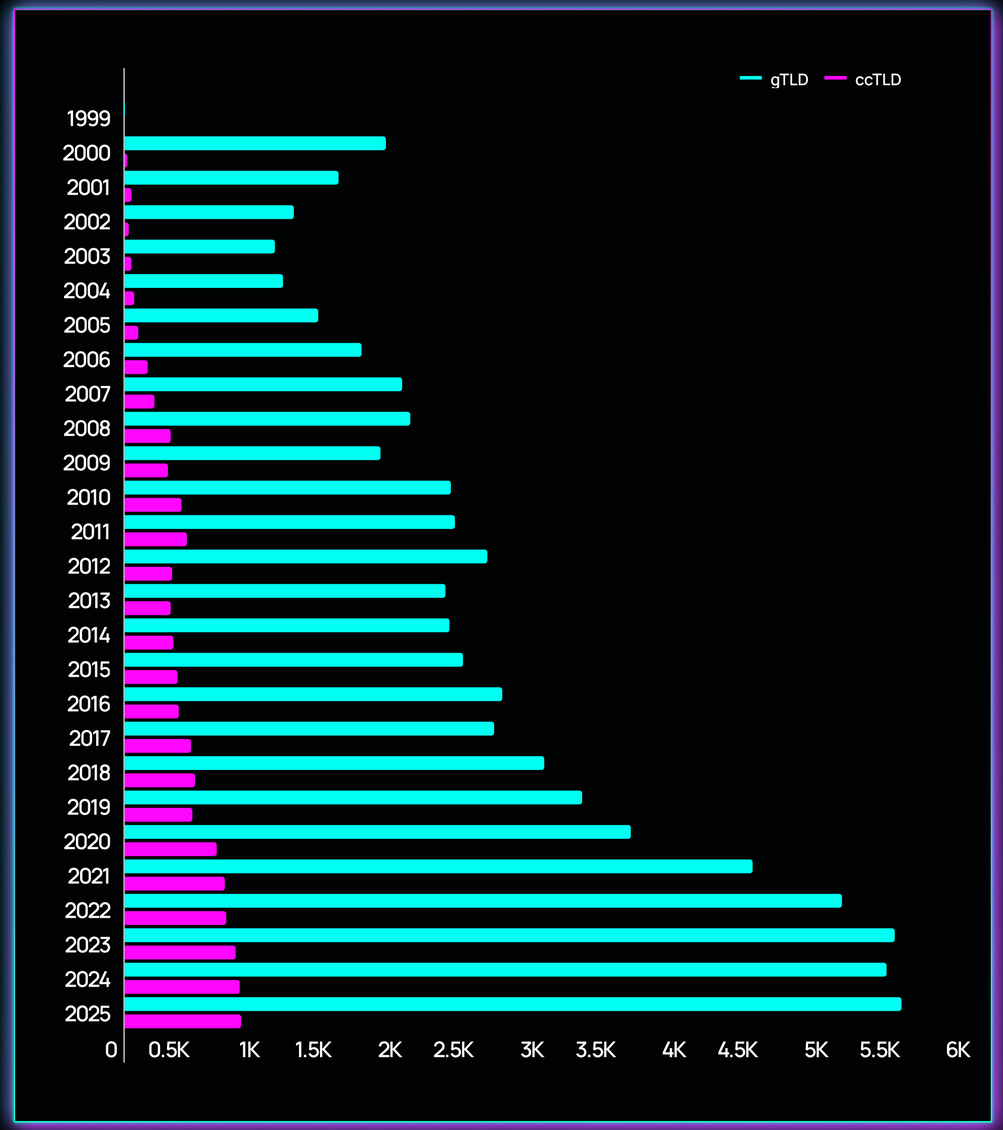
The UDRP (Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy) is the key mechanism that allows trademark holders to challenge domain registrations made in bad faith, without going through traditional courts. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) is the leading provider of UDRP services and plays a central role in resolving these disputes globally.

In 2025, WIPO reached a new milestone, managing over 6,200 domain name cases, its highest caseload on record. Over the past 25 years, it has resolved more than 80,000 cases, including over 70,000 gTLD and nearly 10,000 ccTLD disputes. Trademark holders worldwide continue to rely on WIPO and the UDRP to combat digital infringement, with most cases originating from the United States, France and the United Kingdom.[17]

UDRP case outcomes



UDRP and ccTLD cases (2000-2025)



[17] WIPO: "2025 Marks Record-Breaking Year for WIPO Domain Name Disputes", (14.01.2026)

UDRP across TLDs

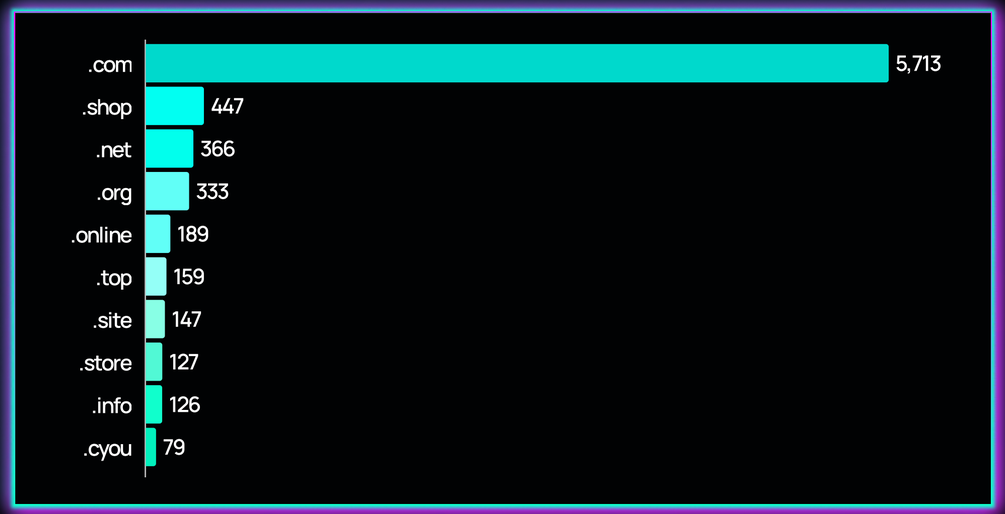
UDRP now critical across many TLDs beyond .com

WIPO's role now extends across a broad slice of the namespace: with new additions each year, it currently provides dispute resolution services to 87 ccTLDs, alongside its gTLD work. In 2025, the most active ccTLDs in terms of UDRP case filings included both established markets and newer digital business hubs.

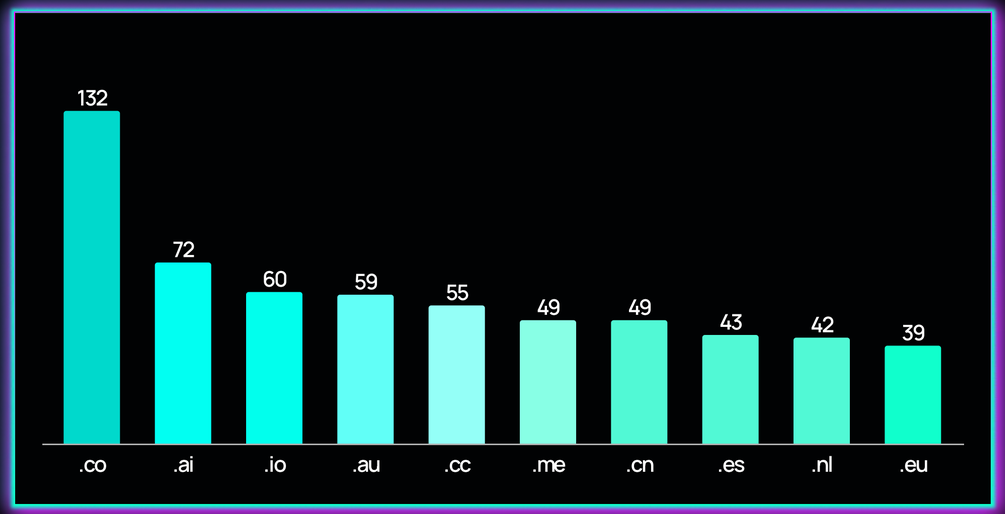
On the gTLD side, .com remains by far the main arena with 5,713 cases, followed at a distance by .shop and .net, with several new gTLDs also appearing in the statistics—an indication that brand disputes have firmly reached the newer parts of the domain galaxy too.



Disputed domains by TLDs



Top 10 ccTLDs by case volume



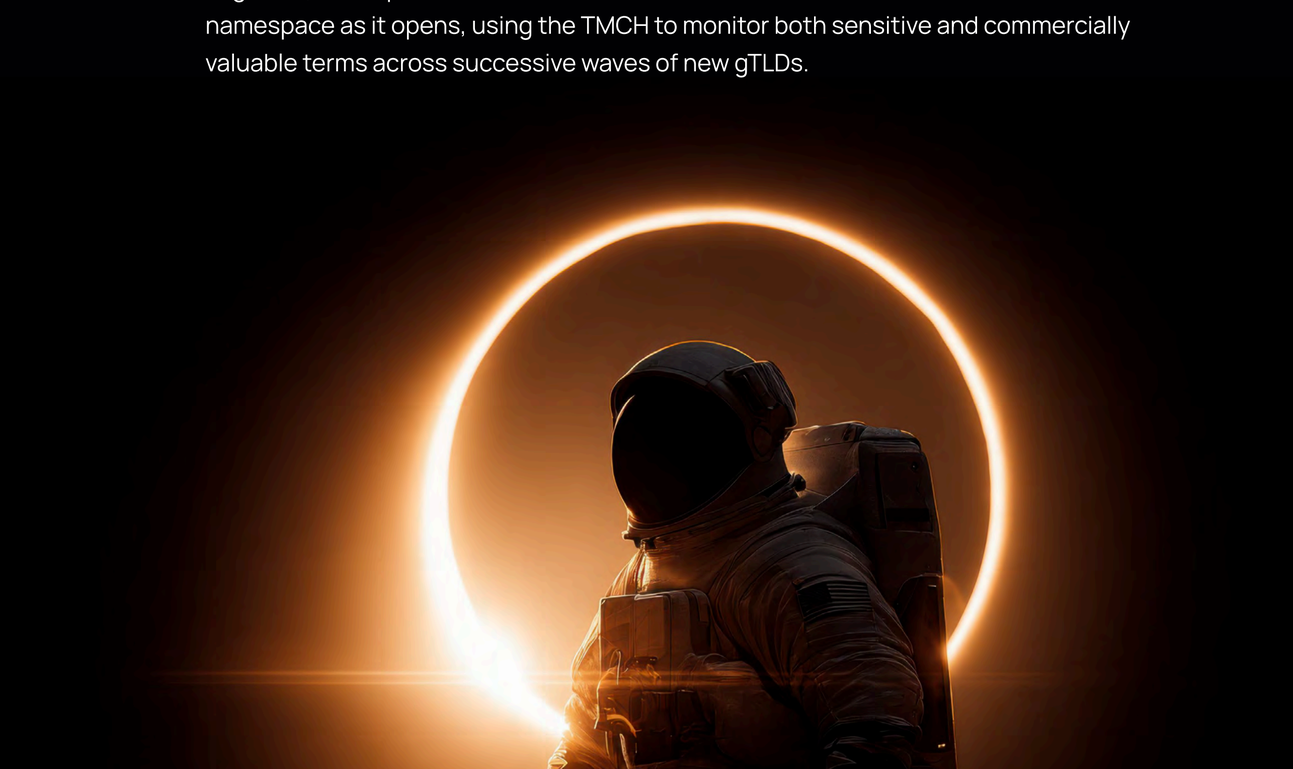
TMCH - Sunrise

Brand owners use sunrise to secure high-risk namespaces

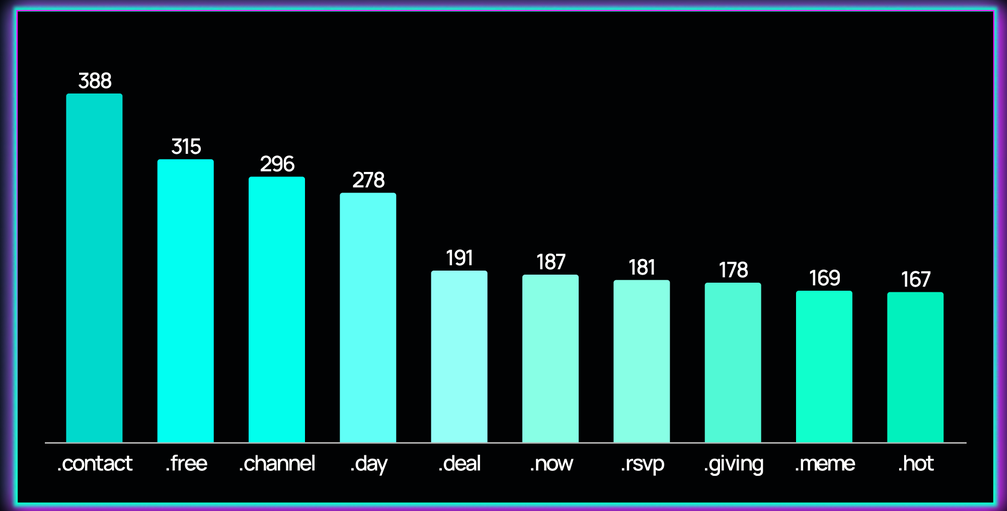
The Trademark Clearinghouse (TMCH) is a centralized database where verified trademark data is stored so rights holders can be notified when matching names are registered in new TLDs. It underpins key rights-protection mechanisms like Sunrise (early registration phase for trademark owners) and Trademark Claims (warnings to both registrants and rights holders when a mark is being registered).

Looking at the 2013–2025 range, we see many early-wave new gTLDs, where brand owners clearly anticipated reputational risk and used the TMCH heavily for defensive registrations and enforcement. In the 2020–2025 view, other new gTLDs like .contact, .free, .channel move into focus—more generic, communication- or service-oriented strings that intersect with a broad range of trademarks.

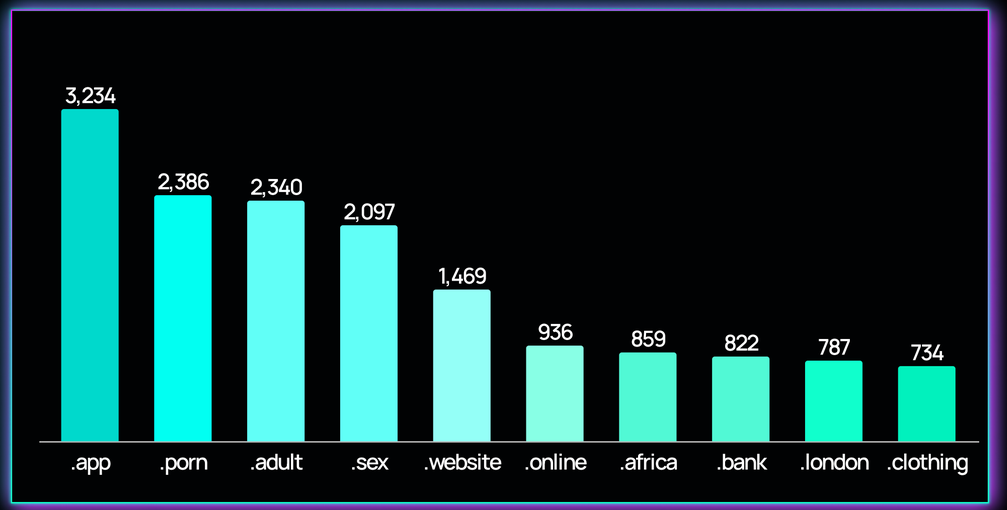
Together, these patterns show how brand owners follow each new “slice” of the namespace as it opens, using the TMCH to monitor both sensitive and commercially valuable terms across successive waves of new gTLDs.



Top 10 TLDs sunrise notifications (2020-2025)



Top 10 TLDs sunrise notifications (2013-2025)



TMCH - Claims service

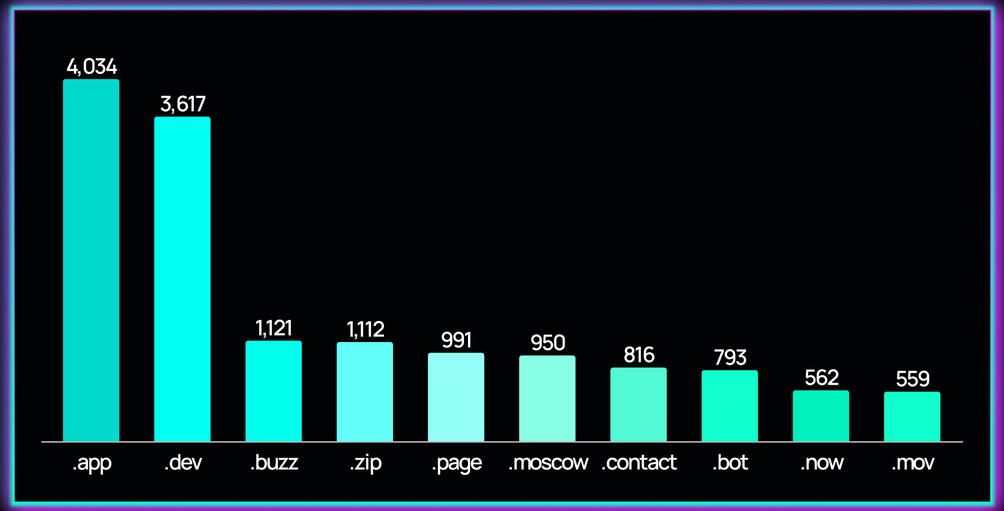
Brand protection shifts to tech and app-driven namespaces

The TMCH Trademark Claims service acts like an early-warning radar, flagging when trademarks are registered in new gTLDs (the only space where Sunrise and Claims services apply). From 2013–2025, .app stands out as a major hotspot: it leads both Sunrise (3,234 notifications) & Claims (8,035 notifications), showing how strongly brands moved to secure & monitor their names in this highly generic, app-driven space.

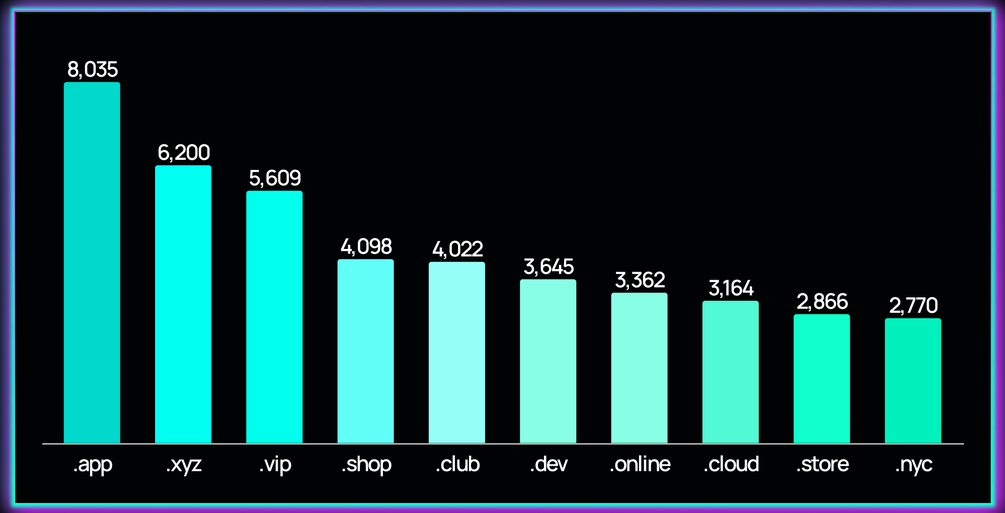
In the 2020–2025 graph, we see a shift in the constellation with many tech-oriented TLDs, i.e. extensions that are particularly appealing for software, platforms and digital services. This pattern suggests that as the domain universe expands, trademark owners concentrate their defensive strategies and monitoring on new gTLDs sitting close to everyday digital use—apps, tools, content and online services—turning these strings into key “pressure points” for TMCH activity.



Top 10 TLDs claims service (2020-2025)



Top 10 TLDs claims service (2013-2025)



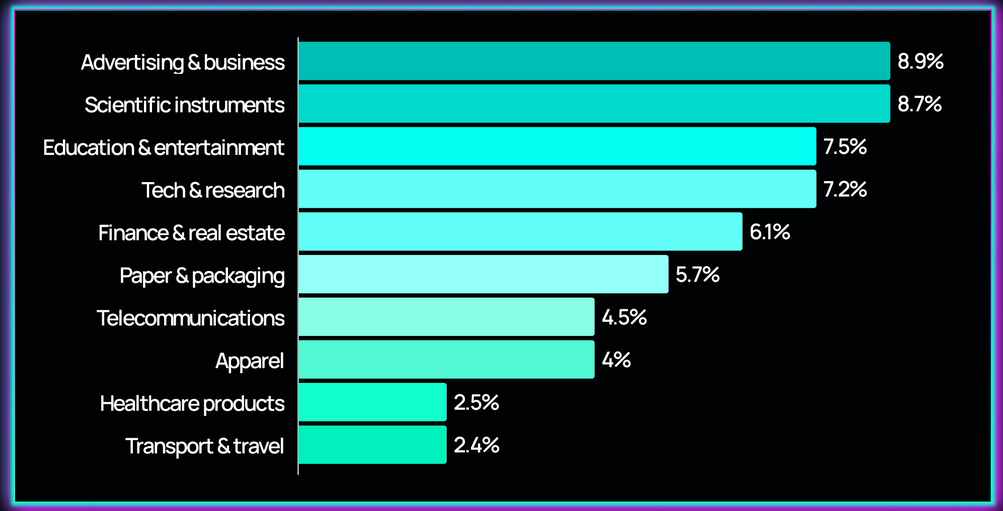
TMCH distribution

TMCH adoption mirrors mature IP markets where registration is easier

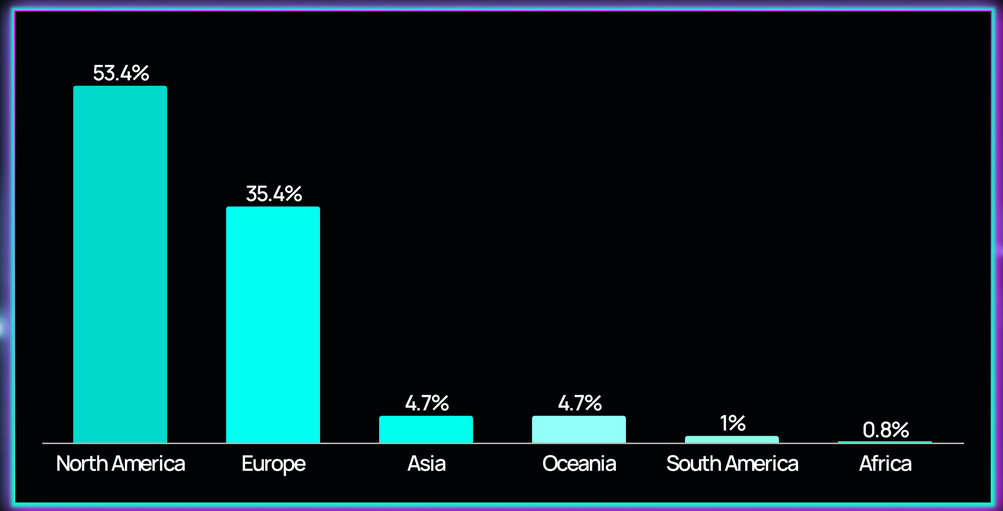
Based on the distribution of active TMCH holder and agent accounts, the TMCH galaxy remains heavily concentrated in the global North. North America and Europe together account for almost nine out of ten active accounts, with Asia and Oceania forming smaller but visible constellations and South America and Africa only faintly represented. TMCH-based protection remains concentrated in mature, brand-driven markets. Lower representation in regions like Africa and South America is often due to procedural hurdles; because the TMCH requires final registration certificates rather than just applications, longer local processing timelines limit participation.

Looking at industry segments, innovation-heavy, IP-sensitive sectors are the ones most actively securing their marks in the TMCH, while areas like transport, travel and healthcare appear more softly lit in this star map. Together, the geography and industry data show a TMCH universe that is global in scope but still uneven in adoption, with clear gravitational centres in certain regions and sectors, and procedural factors that may influence how different parts of the world appear in this picture.

TMCH by industry segment



TMCH user location distribution by region



Outlook 2026

Domains are now anchors that machines can trust with value concentrating in high-authority, secure namespaces

As we look toward, the domain industry is moving from being a simple addressing layer to becoming part of the core infrastructure of the AI-driven web. A domain name is no longer just a signpost for human users; it is increasingly a signal for models, a stable anchor for training data and retrieval, and a trust marker that agents and automated systems use to decide which sources to surface or ignore.

The next new gTLD round in 2026 will accelerate this shift. Alongside broad, open strings, we are likely to see more "semantic" and tightly governed namespaces – extensions that clearly encode a sector, role or assurance level, and that come with explicit policy and security expectations. In parallel, regulatory frameworks such as NIS2, evolving DNS abuse standards and debates around digital sovereignty will push TLDs and operators to demonstrate not only availability and price, but also resilience, accountability and local control.

Business models will adapt as well. Registries and registrars will move further from simply selling "domains" toward offering bundled trust services – verification, identity checks, security add-ons and compliance tooling. Domains that can prove something about who is behind them, and how they are operated, will have an advantage in a world of deepfakes, impersonation and automated agents.

At the content layer, the long tail of low-quality sites will find it harder to compete as search, assistants and chat-based interfaces compress and summarize information. Value will concentrate in high-authority, well-maintained domains that are frequently crawled, trusted and reused by AI systems. For investors, businesses and registries, the key insight is simple: the primary "consumer" of a domain is increasingly a machine, and the domains that are easiest for machines to trust will define the next chapter of the domain industry.

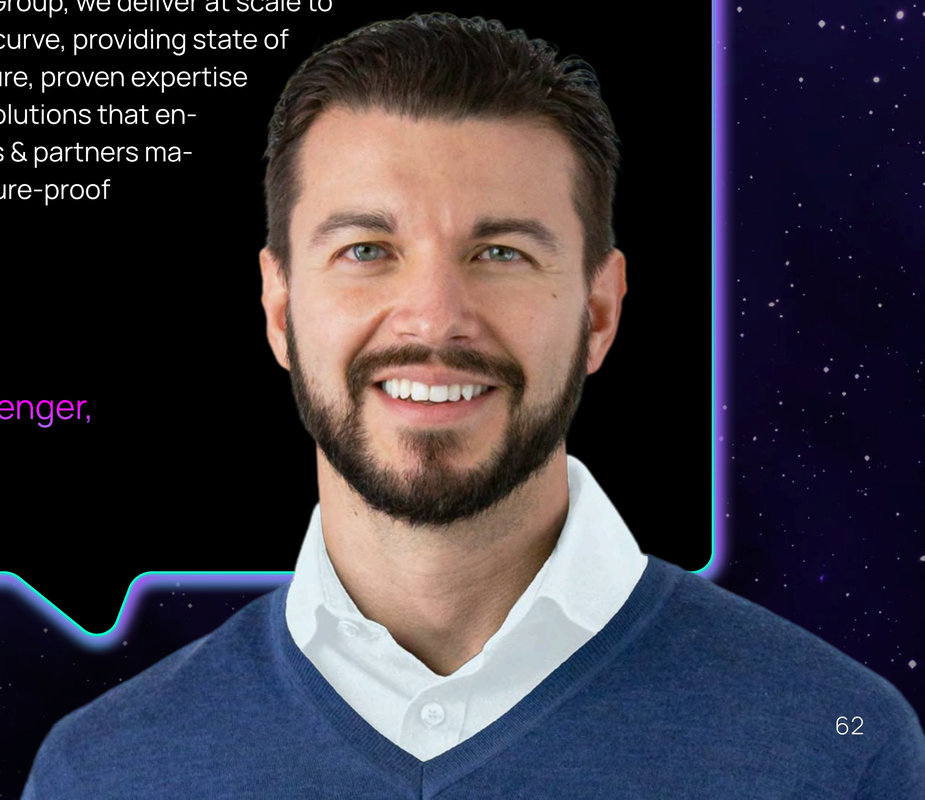
What do we expect in 2026?

As the Global Domain Report 2026 shows, the domain market is evolving rather than slowing down: close to 400 million domains online, a growing share of new gTLDs and rising demands around security, policy and trusted infrastructure. The next few years will be shaped by AI-driven use cases, new regulatory frameworks & another new gTLD round, with domains acting increasingly as identity anchors and reference points in an AI-dominated web.

Domain tokenization will add an extra layer on top of this foundation, connecting classic Web2 assets with emerging Web3 ownership and finance models. At InterNetX, as part of the IONOS Group, we deliver at scale to stay ahead of this curve, providing state of the art infrastructure, proven expertise and outstanding solutions that enable our customers & partners making domains a future-proof strategic asset.

InterNetX

Elias Rendón Benger,
CEO



What's next in domains?



2026 will be a windfall for the domain industry, especially for insiders. The new gTLD round creates opportunities to support others, build tools, and secure your own TLD. AI will accelerate innovation, but tightening government policy and privacy rules will raise the bar, and today's frameworks still lag global, multi-jurisdiction requirements.

Joe Alagna
Chief Strategy Officer, it.com



ccTLDs and strong new gTLDs will keep growing as users look beyond .com for meaning, availability, and relevance. AI will power domain discovery and site building, accelerating launches. Web3 features will integrate into existing domains, while premium names become strategic assets—not optional upgrades.

Eshan Pancholi
VP Marketing, ShortDot

Looking ahead to 2026, AI will reshape the domain journey end to end from smarter name discovery and premium recommendations to more effective cross-sell and upsell at checkout. As search shifts toward AI assistants, content discovery will rely less on links and more on answers. Domains and websites will need stronger signals of trust, brand, and relevance to be surfaced in this new AI-first web.



Neha Naik
Sr. Vice President, Channel Partnerships, RADIX

What's next in .domains?



In 2026, "best practices" are becoming enforced requirements. With NIS2 fully operational, security and consumer protection are now the cost of entry, raising the operational bar and accelerating registrar consolidation as smaller players struggle to keep up. We're embedding these requirements into our infrastructure to make compliance scalable, and using agentic AI to automate DNS and portfolio operations so teams can focus on strategy and growth.

Michaela Cruden
Director, Domains, SSL & DNS, IONOS Group

We expect domain-based email authentication (SPF, DKIM, DMARC) to keep strengthening as a primary lever to reduce spam and fraud. As phishing and digital impersonation grow more sophisticated, verified sending domains will matter even more. The shift to custom, properly authenticated domains will be critical to protect brands, improve deliverability, and support industry-wide anti-abuse efforts.



Destiny Hagest
Director of Sales & Product Marketing, Entri

In 2026, more players will try to bridge Web2 and Web3 by bringing legacy domains on chain to improve portability and unlock new forms of liquidity. Models like fractionalization and "DomainFi" could expand access and capital formation, but they require rigorous diligence on the underlying mechanics, custody & governance, pricing & risk, and — critically—regulatory and compliance exposure across jurisdictions.

Raymond Hackney
Publisher, TLDinvestors.com

Cosmic coordinates

Visit Snapshot our knowledge hub to fuel your domain strategy

1 AI and vibe-coding redefine the user journey

AI-assisted "vibe-coding" has drastically lowered the barrier to building a web presence, making domain registration an embedded, automated step in the deployment flow. Furthermore, AI agents are increasingly acting as the primary "consumers" of domains. Registrars must optimize their infrastructure for this new era of machine-to-machine commerce and automated discovery.

2 Security is the new baseline for digital trust

A domain is no longer just a destination: It is a verifiable digital trust anchor. With frameworks like the EU's NIS2, robust security protocols like DNSSEC and DMARC are now mandatory baselines. This is critical because AI models heavily rely on these security markers to evaluate reputation and surface trusted sources.

Discover Snapshot

3 Local trust vs. global versatility

The global registration market is increasingly driven by a dual demand for proven stability and creative flexibility. Legacy extensions and ccTLDs continue to dominate overall volume with exceptional retention rates, serving as the trusted bedrock of digital identity. Simultaneously, new gTLDs have secured a 12.4% market share and 29.9% YoY grwoth, capturing the surge in demand for highly brandable, versatile global alternatives.

4 Defensive strategy & the 2026 new gTLD opportunity

While brands actively expand their defensive perimeters to combat record-high domain disputes, the broader industry catalyst is the new gTLD application window. This massive expansion of the namespace will introduce a fresh wave of TLD offerings, requiring new registrar contracts and technical integrations. For domain professionals and resellers, this translates directly into highly diversified portfolios, new bundled service opportunities, & fresh revenue streams across the ecosystem.



03

InterNetX cosmos

InterNetX

A MEMBER OF IONOS GROUP

InterNetX is the go-to partner for every strategic question around domains from registrations and DNS to security, policy, trademarks and Web3 use cases. With 13 nameservers worldwide, we manage around 22 M domains across the IONOS Group, covering more than 1,100 extensions, over 15 M premium domains and 24+ M marketplace domains. We serve around 3,000 domain resellers and customers in 85 markets worldwide, with more than 14,000 AutoDNS users relying on our platform for daily operations.

In a landscape shaped by the new gTLD round, NIS2, DNS abuse, digital sovereignty and AI-driven change, we combine EU-based infrastructure with policy-aware, security-focused and compliance-ready services, supported by solutions like AutoDNS, and the AI Domain Studio. In this chapter, we share internal insights that InterNetX is uniquely positioned to analyse, offering a domain-centric view on market trends, risk and opportunities in the evolving digital ecosystem.



We support all aspects of a global digital presence from domain registration, DNS and portfolio management to security, compliance, trademarks and monitoring. In a landscape shaped by AI and regulation, we provide the infrastructure, data and guidance to keep domain operations resilient and future-ready.

Marco Schrieck
Head of Development, InterNetX

NUMBER OF AUTODNS USERS

14,000

MANAGED DOMAINS ACROSS IONOS GROUP

22 M

15+ M

PREMIUM DOMAINS

24+ M

MARKETPLACE DOMAINS

The data presented in this chapter are internal figures calculated by InterNetX, providing an in-house analytical perspective.

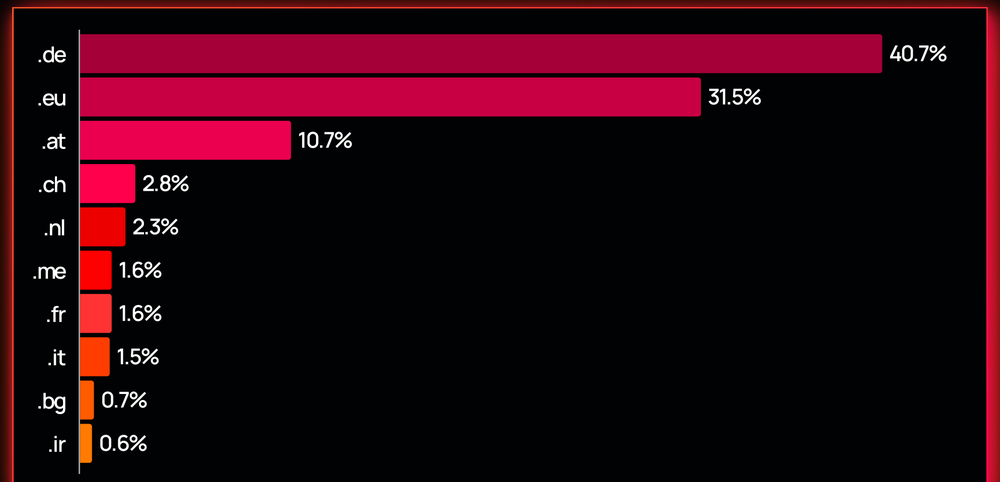
WHOIS query trends

Demand for .de lookups is rising while .com declines

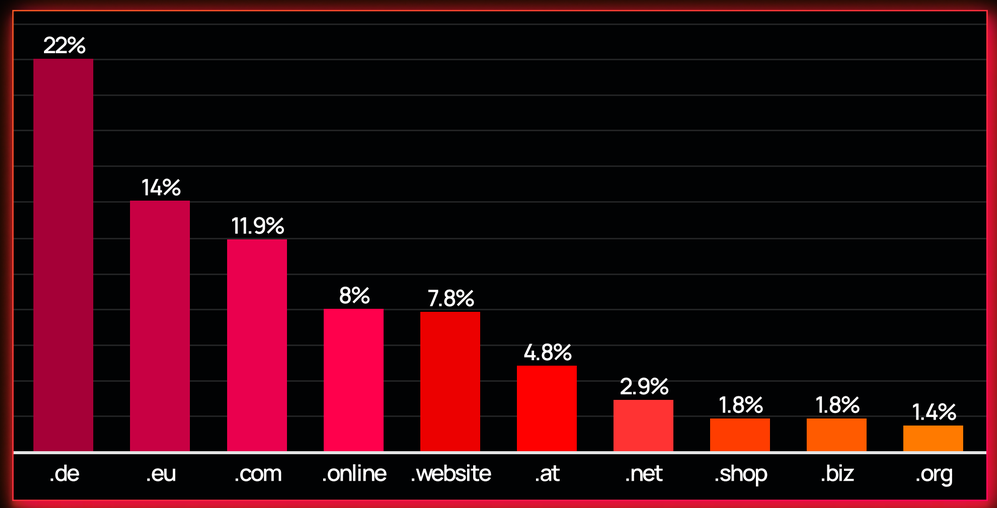
WHOIS acts like a scanner in the domain universe, revealing key details about a name's registrant, registration dates and registrar – a sort of public "ID check" for domains.

In our internal data, InterNetX observes a YoY increase in WHOIS queries for .de domains, while interest in .com lookups has declined compared to the previous year, underlining the strong relevance of .de in our part of the galaxy. The ccTLD WHOIS chart is made up exclusively of European country codes, reflecting the regional focus of many of our customers and partners. Even more striking is the new gTLD ranking, which looks very different from the top 10 most-registered new gTLDs, a sign that actual lookup demand does not always follow pure registration volume, but instead clusters around specific niches, risks or branding interests.

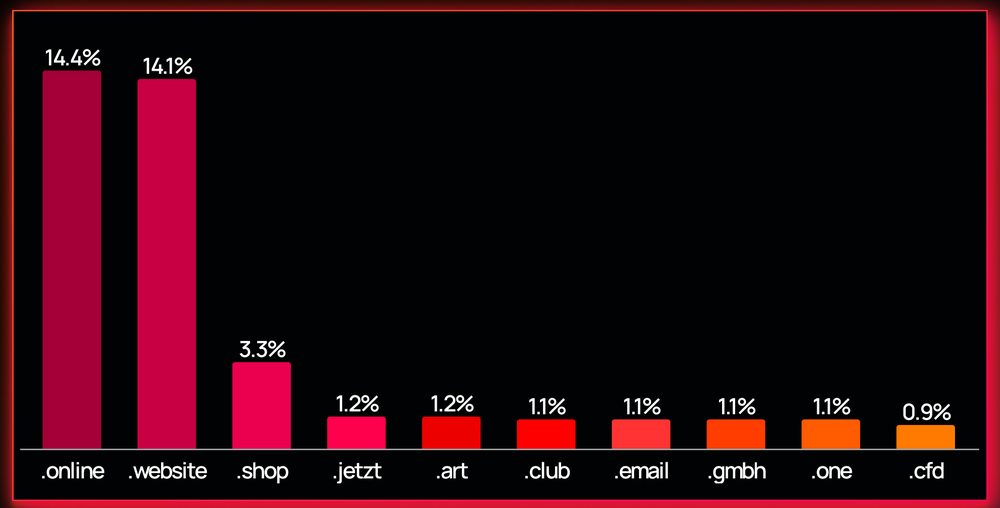
Top 10 ccTLD WHOIS queries



Top 10 WHOIS queries per TLD



Top 10 new gTLD WHOIS queries

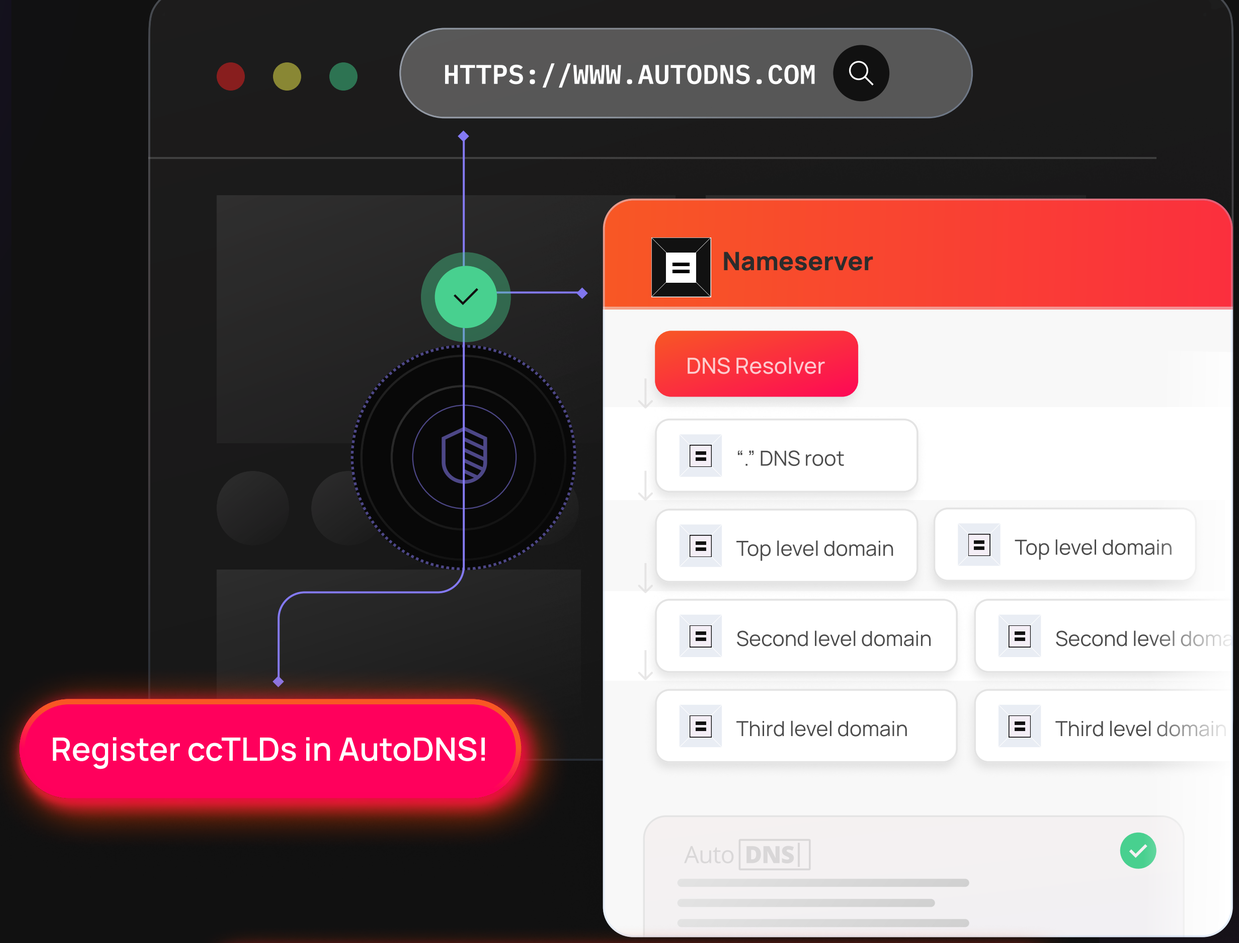


Trustee Service

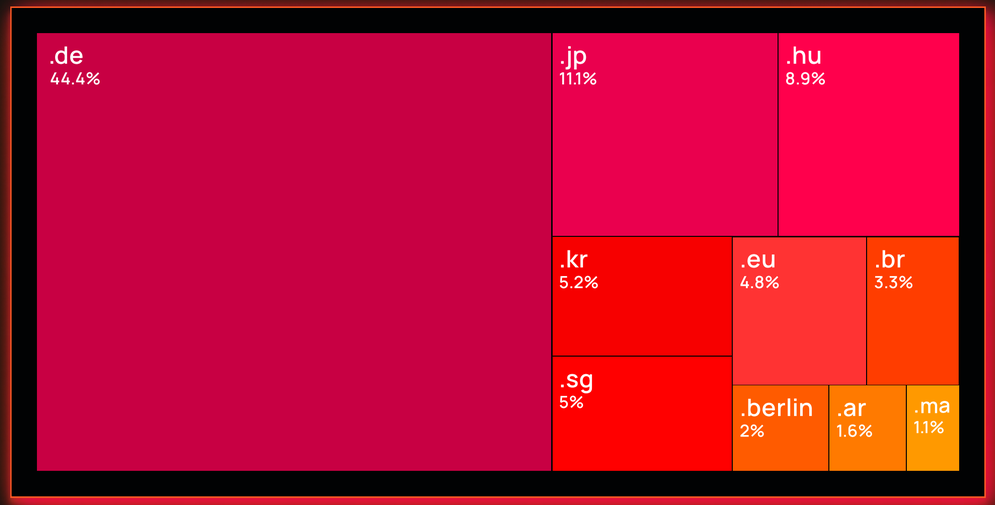
Local presence requirements drive global ccTLD expansion

The Trustee Service helps registrants meet local presence or proof-of-residence requirements by providing a compliant trustee contact in the target country, enabling domains in markets that would otherwise be out of reach. This is particularly relevant for InterNetX as a Germany-based company and first registrar for .de, where .de accounts for more than half of all Trustee Service usage, once again underlining the strength and importance of this TLD in our cosmos.

Year-on-year, we observe more ccTLDs appearing in the Trustee charts, reflecting growing interest in locally anchored namespaces. The extension .jp continues to show solid demand with a visible spike compared to the previous year, while .berlin and .ma enter the ranking for the first time, signaling fresh expansion into city-specific and selected country markets via Trustee solutions.



Top 10 TLDs requested for Trustee Service





InterNetX offers the market’s largest domain portfolio. Supported by our Trustee Service, clients can register ccTLDs even without a local presence— expanding into new markets faster, reducing legal and administrative effort, and keeping their domain strategy centralized with one provider.

Thomas Pezza
Product Marketing Manager, InterNetX

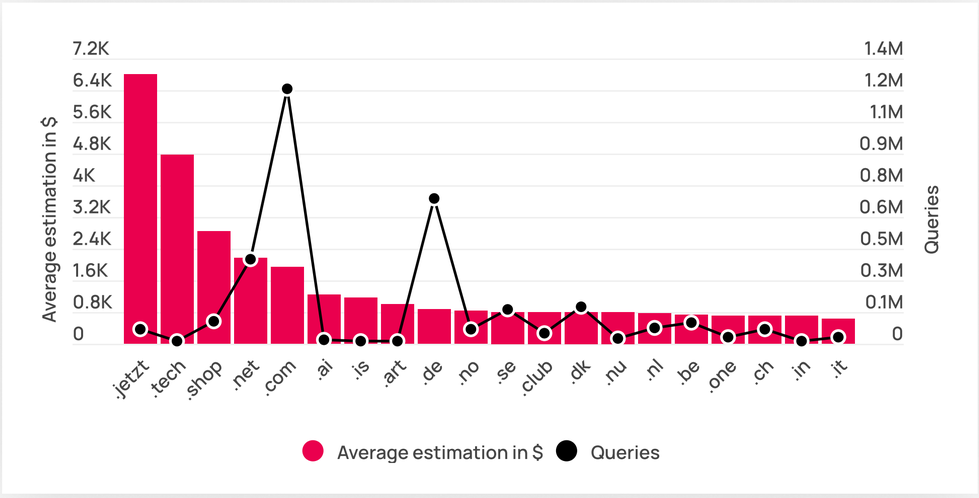
Price estimations

Popularity and reg value often trend separately

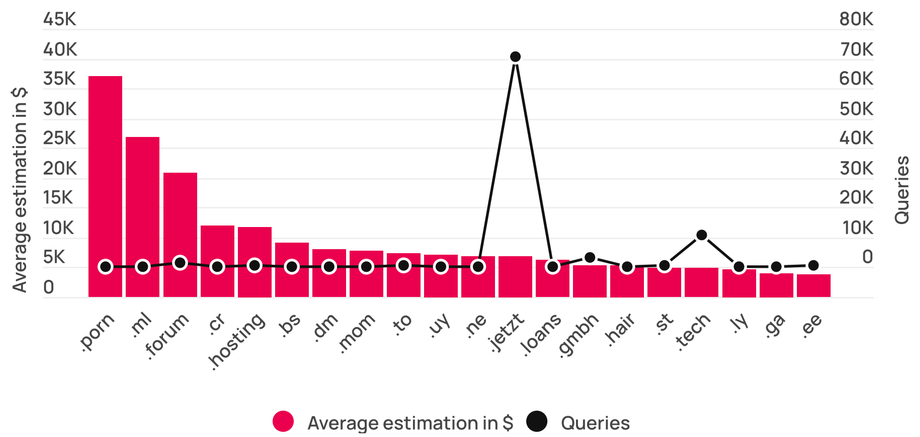
Our Domain Price Check acts like a telescope for the value side of the namespace, and the picture it shows is far from linear. The brightest “price stars” are often niche or exotic TLDs, which command very high average estimations despite comparatively modest query volumes. In this comparison .jetzt stands out with both premium-level estimations and relatively high query-volumes. When filtering this data for TLDs with more than 10,000 queries, a few TLDs, such as .tech, .shop, .ai and several European ccTLDs stand out, combining both strong demand and elevated price estimates, marking them as particularly interesting “hot zones” in the domain galaxy.

By contrast, the workhorse constellations .com, .de, .net dominate when looking at the amount of queries, but sit at more moderate average price levels, showing that popularity and perceived resale value don’t always travel in the same orbit.

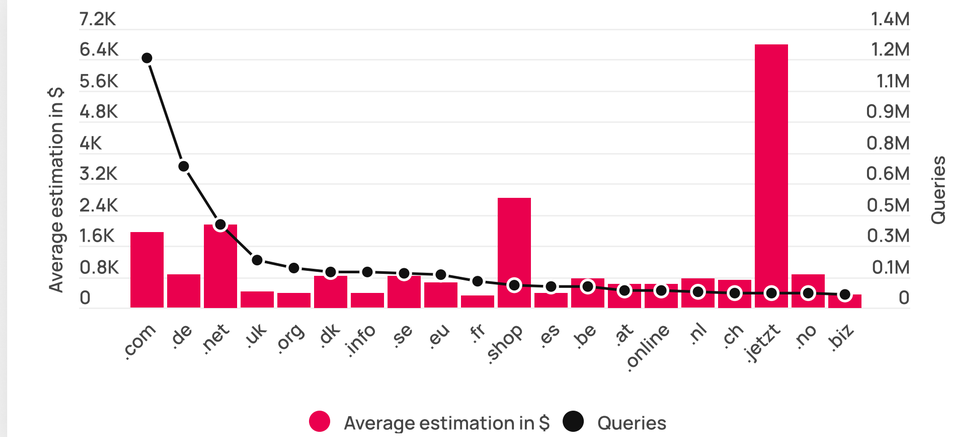
Highest prices vs queries >10,000



Highest mean prices vs queries



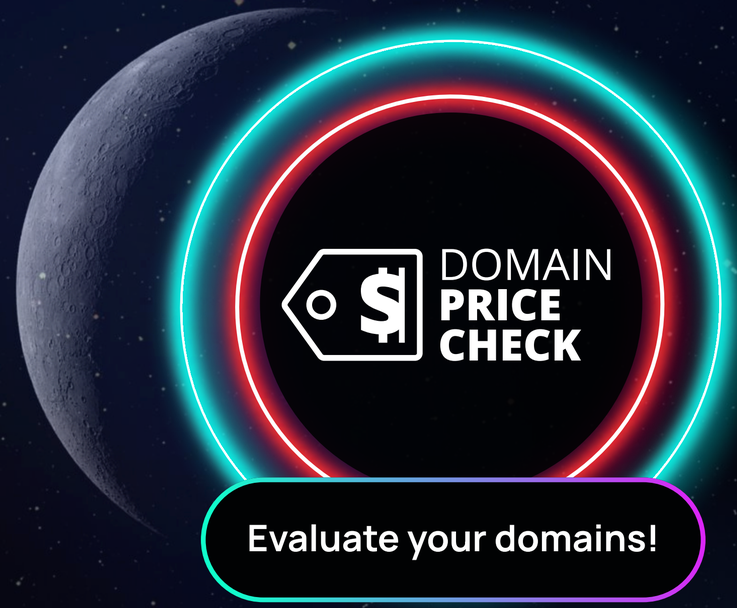
Highest number of queries vs mean prices



Domain search trends

E-commerce terms and European ccTLDs lead search

The Domain Price Check not only helps compare prices, it also gives us exclusive insight into what users are actually searching for across the namespace. By filtering out test terms and brands, the resulting TLD rankings mirror our real research trends: a strong showing for .com and .de, supported by solid demand for European ccTLDs & a number of new gTLDs that have established themselves as “strong” choices in European markets. On the keyword side, searches are dominated by general e-commerce and business-related terms, with a visible share of German-language keywords. The number “24” has established itself in the German web, originally inspired by the idea of 24/7 availability and now widely adopted by local brands in their naming.



Most frequent TLDs



Most frequent keywords



Trademark services

New gTLDs surge to 29% of trademark protections

At InterNetX, our **trademark services** protect brands in the namespace. Historically, protections were concentrated on legacy gTLDs (especially .com) and major ccTLDs, with new gTLDs forming a small satellite belt in the overall mix.

In 2025, that picture shifts: new gTLDs account for almost a third of new trademark protections, compared with only a small single-digit share in the long-term view, while legacy gTLDs and ccTLDs lose a bit of relative weight. This matches what we see at TLD level, where extensions like .xyz, .shop, .store or .online appear more often among new protections than their historical footprint would suggest, as brands fortify positions in younger, niche namespaces. At the same time, long-established spaces such as .de or .co.uk show up less frequently in the latest flow of new protections, likely because portfolios there are already well defended and brand owners are now extending their perimeter into new orbits of the namespace.



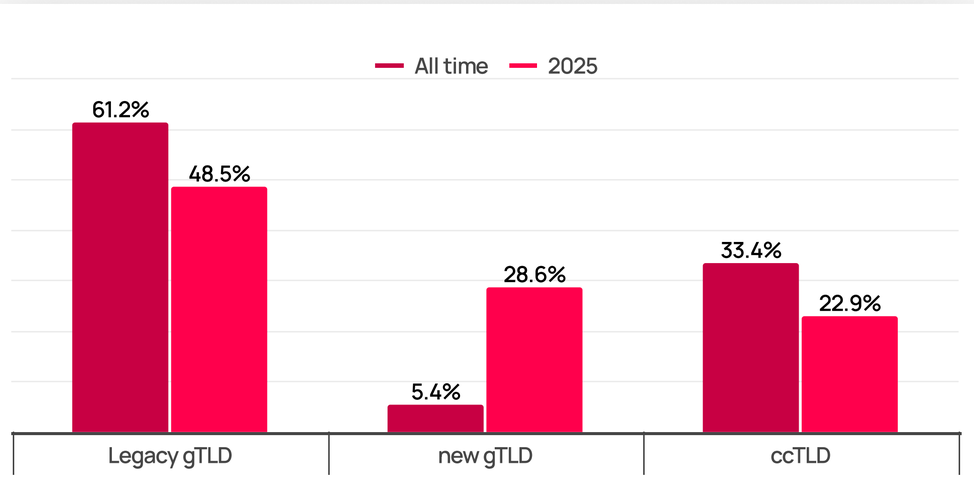
Protecting trademarks across the namespace is more important than ever, especially with the expansion driven by the new gTLD program 2026. InterNetX provides the right products and expertise to help clients secure their brands, prevent abuse, and maintain full control over their digital identity.

Olivier Guerdan
Manager B2B Domains, InterNetX

Top 20 TLDs under trademark



TLD category with trademark services



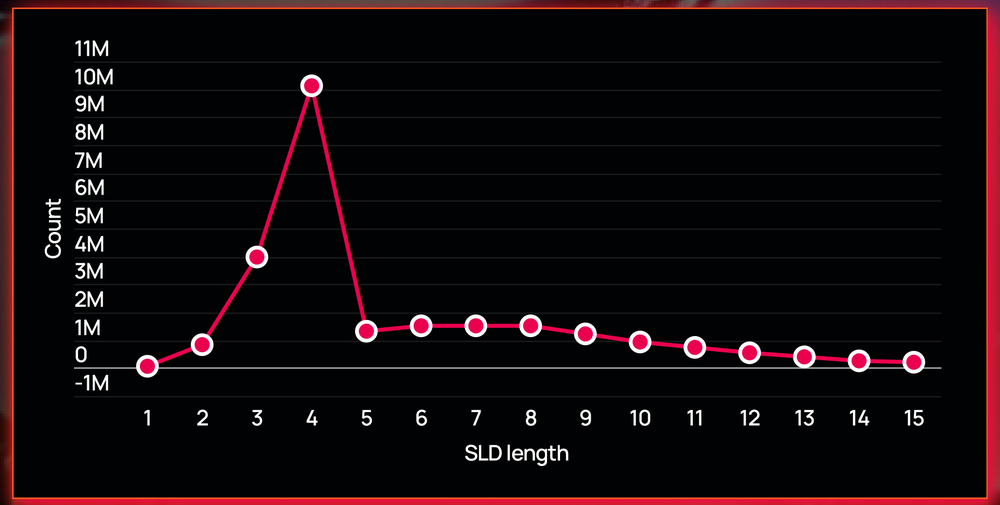
Premium domains

Price sensitivity meets four-character, high-value domains

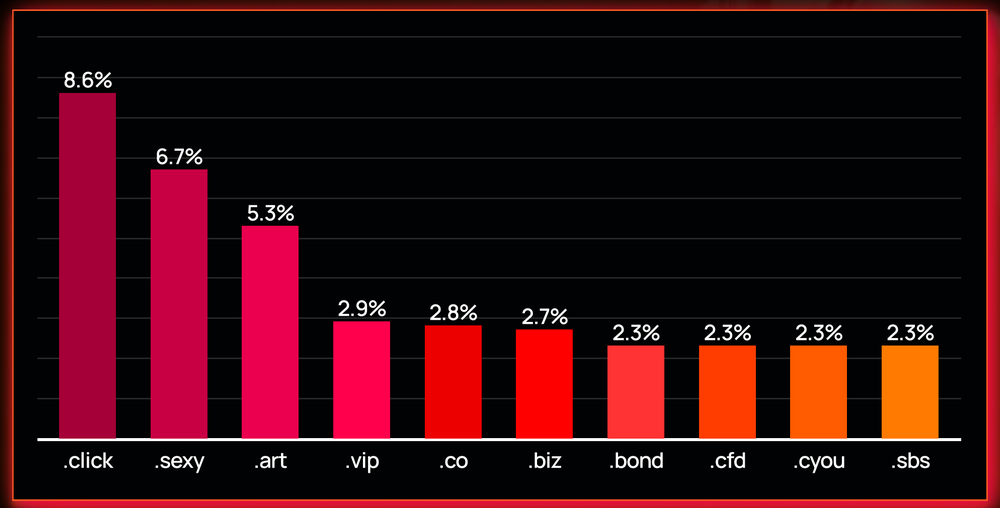
The premium segment of our namespace is clearly dominated by new gTLDs, with .click, .sexy and .art taking the top three positions; overall, the chart looks very similar to last year, with only minor shifts in ranking and .sbs entering the Top 10 for the first time. Across these extensions, premium domains cluster strongly around four-character names, likely driven by their memorability, brevity and strong usability in branding and marketing.

At the same time, our survey shows most buyers are moderately to highly price-sensitive, while only a small share is truly relaxed about price. In practice, this means premium labels need clear added value—through strong positioning, niche relevance or standout naming potential—to justify higher pricing in a cost-aware market.

Premium domains length vs count



Top 10 TLDs for premium domains



How sensitive are you to price when registering your domains?	
Very high: Price is the main factor in my decisions	14%
High: Price influences my decisions	29%
Moderate: I balance price with other factors	46%
Low: I'm flexible on price	6%
Very low: Price is not an important factor	5%

Security adoption

European ccTLDs leads the way in "born secure" naming

Our data shows that customers are activating extra “shields” around their domains. DomainSafe, our digital vault that locks domains behind PIN/mTAN protection, is used most frequently on .de, followed by .com and a cluster of European ccTLDs – a clear sign that high-value, business-critical names are the first to be “locked in”. DNSSEC adoption is led by European ccTLDs, with .nl and .ch showing particularly high rates, not least because registrants benefit from price discounts when DNSSEC is activated.

Among new gTLDs, tech-focused and geoTLDs show notable DNSSEC uptake, suggesting that many newer namespaces are “born” with a stronger security posture. Taken together, these patterns point toward a layered security strategy, where both classic TLDs and carefully chosen new gTLDs are increasingly protected by a mix of DNSSEC and registrar-side vaulting.

Top TLDs by DNSSEC adoption



Top TLDs with DomainSafe enabled



Top new gTLDs by DNSSEC adoption



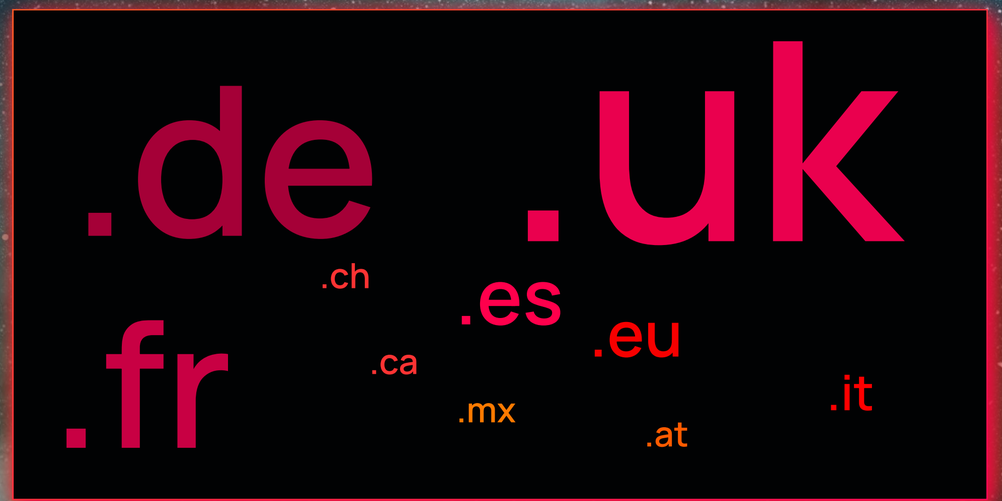
IONOS Group insights

Strong European roots meet .com dominance & tech trends

Within the IONOS Group universe, the TLD mix clearly reflects both global reach and deep European roots. .com anchors the portfolio as the main global constellation, while strong volumes in European ccTLDs underline IONOS' role as a leading provider of local digital identities across Europe. Alongside these classic country codes and legacy gTLDs, a solid cluster of new gTLDs shows that customers are also embracing more specialized namespaces for e-commerce and tech-driven projects.

Particularly dynamic are .me, .io and .ai, which record the strongest YoY growth and mirror the momentum of personal branding, developer ecosystems and AI innovation in the wider web. Taken together, the data positions the IONOS Group as a registrar group that spans key global TLDs while shining especially bright in the European ccTLD and modern new gTLD galaxies.

Top 10 ccTLDs



Top 10 TLDs



Top 10 new gTLDs



IONOS Group insights

Massive +135% YoY surge driven by few scalable namespaces

In the new gTLD galaxy, domain inflow at the IONOS Group accelerated in 2025, growing +135% YoY—more than 2.3× the 2024 volume. The picture is highly concentrated: the top 5 new gTLDs by absolute increase account for about 87% of the uplift, and the top 10 for roughly 96%, meaning very few extensions are powering most of the expansion. Percentage growth needs careful reading, as many new gTLDs started from very small 2024 bases, so we looked only at strings with an inflow of at least 100 domains.

Under that lens, the fastest-growing strings are large, scalable namespaces such as .cloud, .xyz, .app and .store, showing real acceleration on meaningful volumes. The pattern suggests a clear shift in channel and offer positioning toward a few mass-market, globally versatile new gTLDs, rather than a broad-based lift across the entire new gTLD segment.



IONOS combines strong European roots with global scale, offering one of the most comprehensive domain portfolios worldwide. With top-tier domain products and solutions, enhanced by state-of-the-art AI technologies for domain management and security, we empower customers to build, protect, and scale their digital identities with confidence.

Patrick Schaudel
SVP Products, IONOS

Top 10 new gTLDs by YoY growth



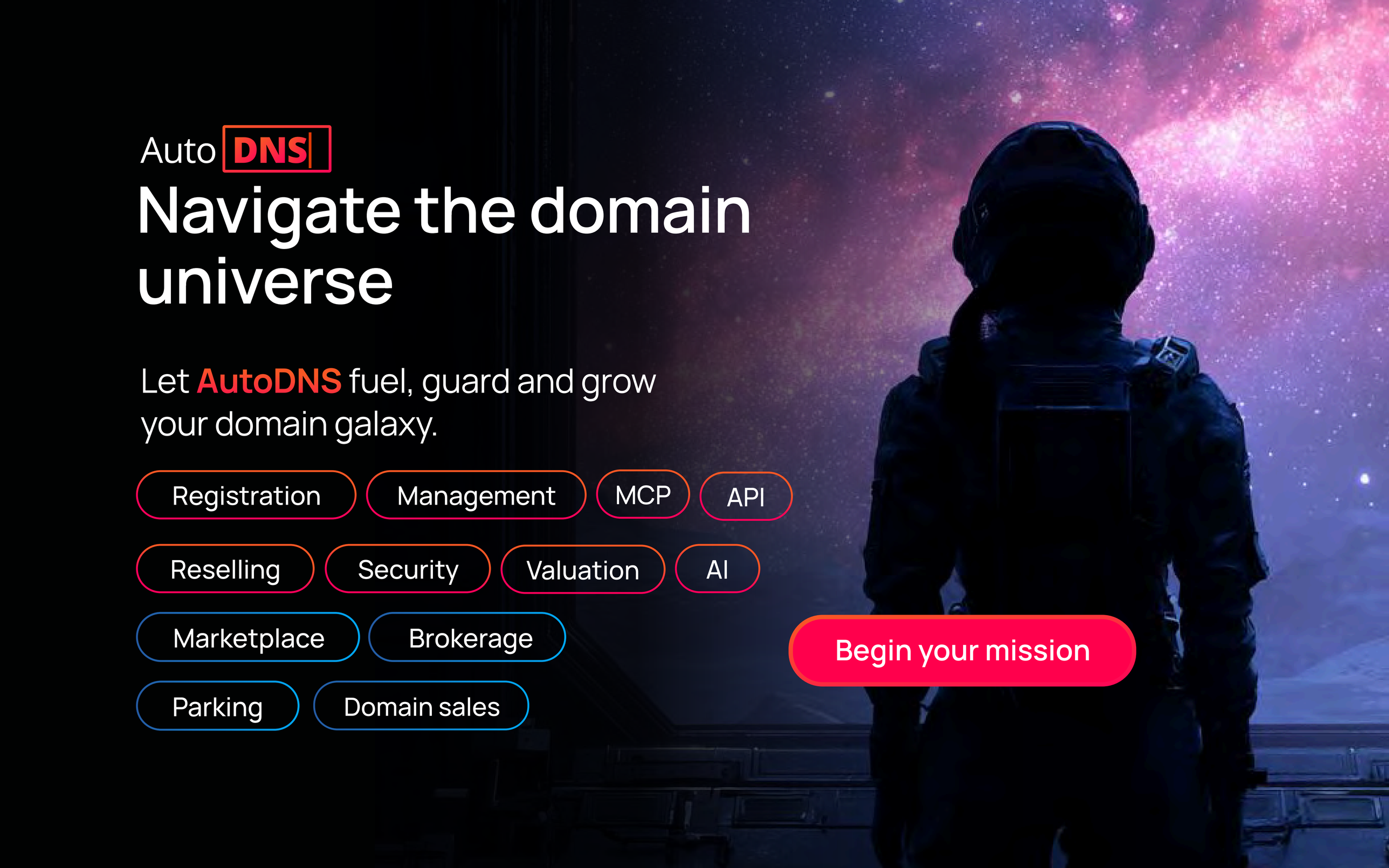
Auto DNS

Navigate the domain universe

Let **AutoDNS** fuel, guard and grow your domain galaxy.

Registration
Management
MCP
API
Reselling
Security
Valuation
AI
Marketplace
Brokerage
Parking
Domain sales

Begin your mission



04

Sedo galaxy

Aftermarket in 2025

Higher liquidity and shifting channels

In 2025, the aftermarket recorded a strong increase in activity on the Sedo marketplace, reflecting sustained demand despite ongoing economic uncertainty. Transaction volumes rose significantly, making 2025 one of the most dynamic years in recent history.

Buy Now transactions clearly dominated sales, highlighting a growing preference for fast, transparent purchasing processes and stronger end-user participation. At the same time, market diversity continued to expand, with a record number of different TLDs traded, confirming broader acceptance of alternative and new extensions.

Price development remained positive, with rising average and median values pointing to stronger demand not only at the top end but also across the mid-range segment. A key structural shift was the growing role of SedoMLS, which accounted for the majority of transactions for the first time and further strengthened aftermarket liquidity.



In 2025, Sedo marketplace data highlights a faster and more liquid aftermarket, driven by strong end-user demand, transparent Buy Now pricing and Sedo's role as a key driver of liquidity through its global SedoMLS distribution network.

Arthur Mai
CEO, Sedo

76%

OF ALL SALES WERE BUY NOW SALES

383

NUMBER OF ALL TRADED TLDS IN 2025

$2,753

AVERAGE PRICE

$818

MEDIAN PRICE

Looking back at 2025

2025 marked a fundamental shift in demand. While AI-driven content automation disrupted the traditional blog and media sector, it simultaneously lowered the barrier for web app development. This pivot fueled a surge in high-intent B2B registrations, moving the aftermarket focus away from content-heavy domains toward functional, app-ready .ai and .com assets.



Andrew Allemann
Publisher - Domain Name Wire



High-profile founders "flexing" six- and seven-figure .com acquisitions on social media have revitalized domain prestige, while .ai and AI-centric keywords continue their record-breaking run. Simultaneously, the surge of New gTLDs in offline advertising is driving mainstream awareness, proving that market success now hinges on the "harmony" between a premium keyword and a relevant extension.

Leanne McMahon
Founder, Crunch.id

2025 was a landmark year for aftermarket liquidity, marked by record transaction volumes despite economic headwinds. While price growth strengthened across all segments, the record diversity of traded TLDs proved that the market is evolving into a highly accessible, multi-extension ecosystem.



Theo Develegas
President - DomaingGang LLC

Top sales & TLDs

.com dominates top-end, ccTLDs stay relevant

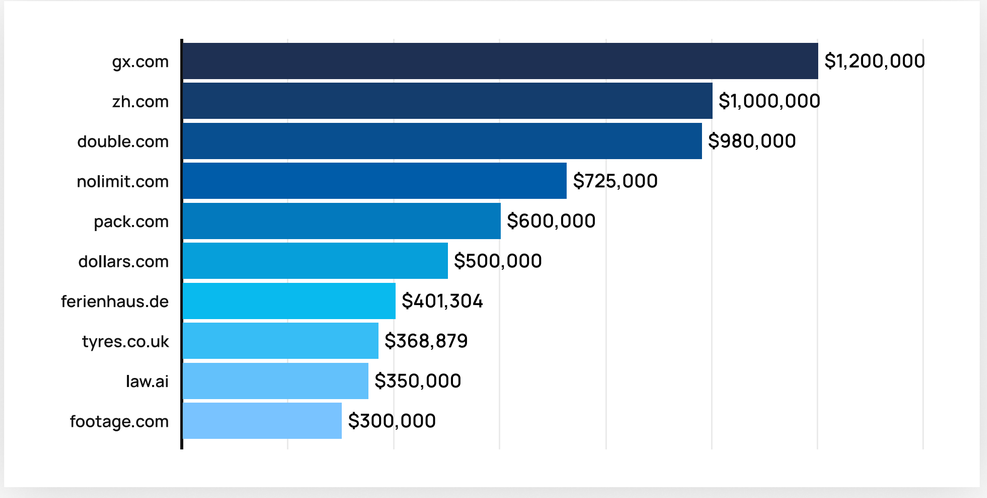
.com domains dominated the top end of the Sedo marketplace, accounting for the majority of the highest public sales. Premium short and highly brandable .com domains achieved the strongest results, reinforcing the continued preference for globally recognized extensions in high-value transactions. Compared to the previous year, .com further strengthened its position at the top of the market.

At the same time, strong individual sales were recorded outside the .com space. ccTLDs such as .de and .co.uk delivered notable results, reflecting ongoing demand for local and regional branding. In addition, .ai secured a high-ranking sale, underlining its continued relevance in the premium segment.

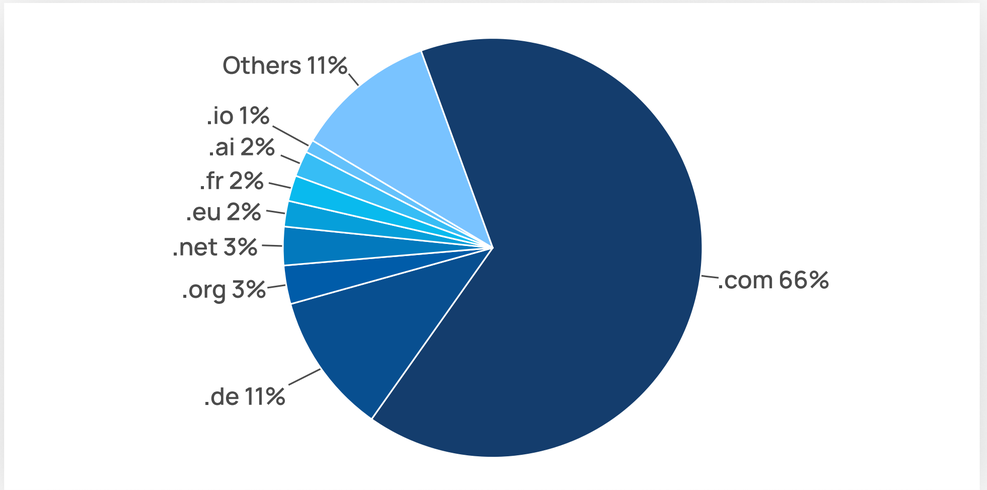
Overall, Sedo marketplace data confirms that .com remains the benchmark extension for top-tier sales, while alternative TLDs and selected ccTLDs continue to play a meaningful but clearly more selective role at the upper end of the market.



Top 10 highest public domain sales 2025



Popular TLDs in 2025



gTLD insights

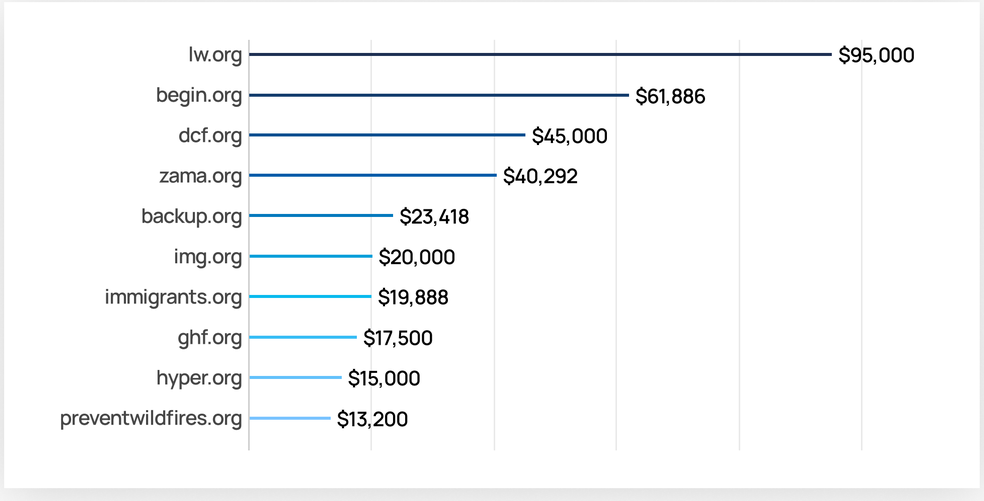
.org steady, .net shifts lower

The gTLD aftermarket showed a more differentiated picture on the Sedo marketplace. **.org remained an important extension**, supported by several solid mid- to high–five-figure sales, confirming continued end-user and institutional interest. However, activity was more evenly distributed across price segments rather than driven by standout peak sales.

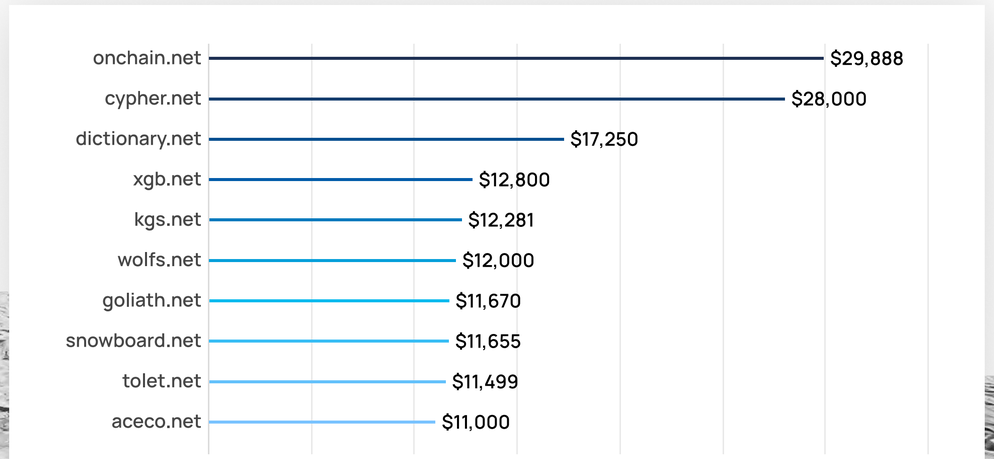
For **.net**, the market shifted noticeably compared to the previous year. While overall sales activity remained stable, **there were fewer high-value transactions**, with most sales concentrated in the lower five-figure range. This indicates sustained relevance of .net for practical and infrastructure-related use cases, but with reduced premium pricing momentum.

Overall, gTLD performance in 2025 suggests a **normalization of demand**, with buyers focusing more on utility, recognizability and realistic pricing. Rather than speculative spikes, Sedo marketplace data points to steady, use-case-driven demand across established gTLDs.

Top 10 public .org domain sales 2025



Top 10 public .net domain sales in 2025



ccTLD trends

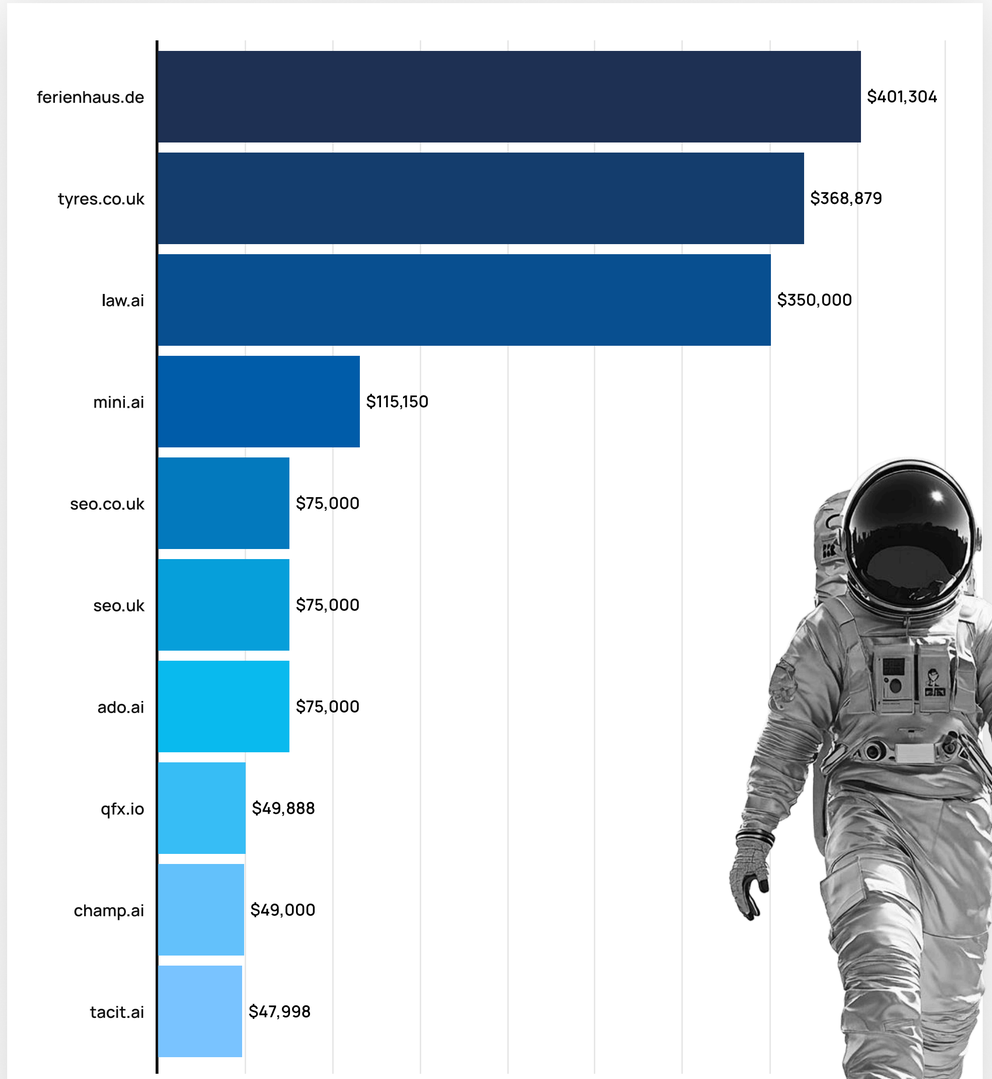
.ai and .co.uk strengthen, .de stays stable

In 2025, ccTLDs continued to play a central role on the Sedo marketplace, driven by sustained demand for local branding, regional SEO and market-specific online presence. Sales activity remained high across several country-code extensions, confirming ccTLDs as a stable and relevant segment of the aftermarket.

A notable development was the **strong presence of .ai domains within ccTLD sales**, reflecting the ongoing relevance of AI-related naming beyond the traditional gTLD space. In addition, UK **domains showed a clear recovery**, with .co.uk and .uk achieving several high-value transactions and regaining momentum after a quieter period. By contrast, **.co performed less strongly in 2025**, indicating a shift in buyer focus toward either well-established European ccTLDs or AI-linked extensions.

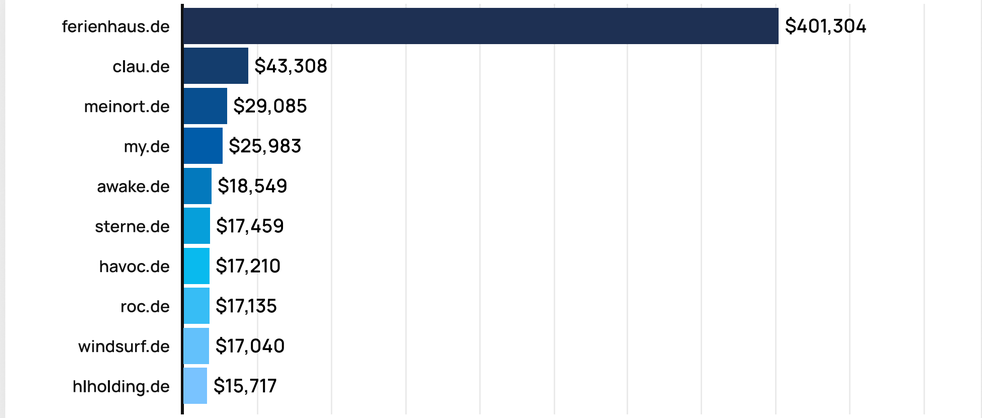
Within individual markets, **.de sales remained highly consistent year** over year, with price levels largely unchanged and one standout sale acting as a clear highlight rather than a broader trend. For **.es domains**, a striking number of English-language keywords appeared among the top sales, while **.fr continued to show a stable, locally focused profile**, with French-language terms dominating transactions. Overall, ccTLD performance in 2025 underlines the importance of regional relevance combined with global thematic trends.

Top 10 public ccTLD domains sales in 2025

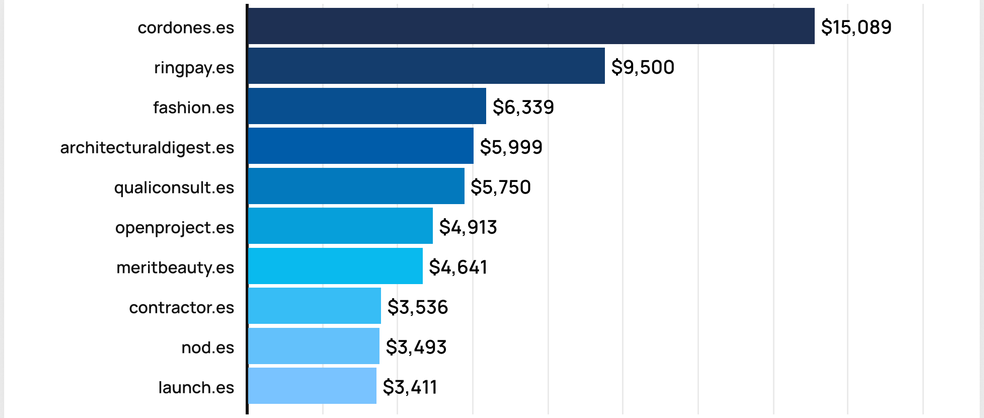




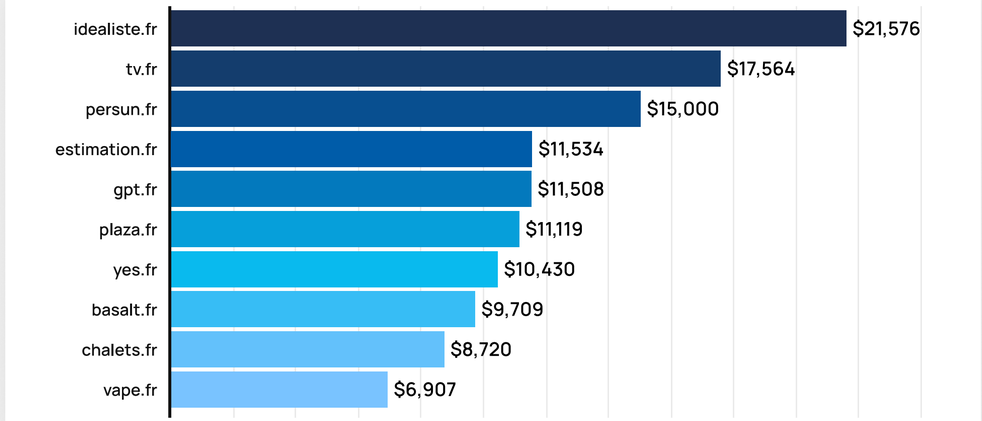
Top 10 public .de domain sales in 2025



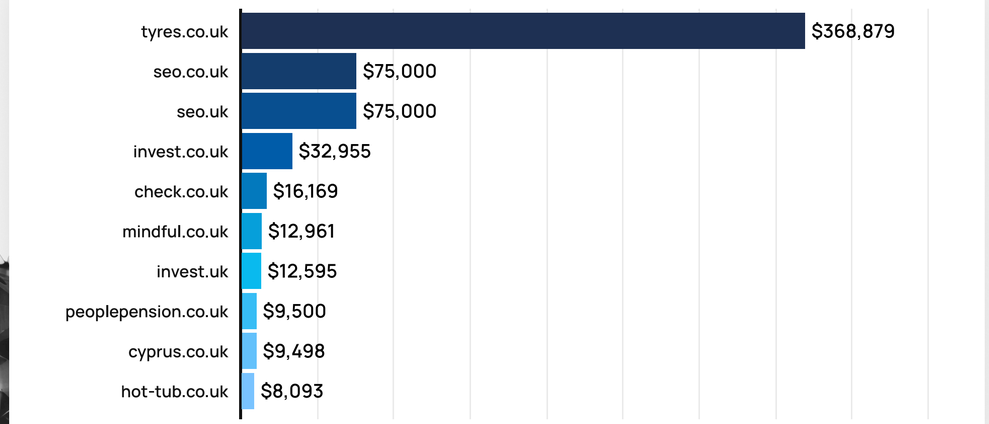
Top 10 public .es domain sales in 2025

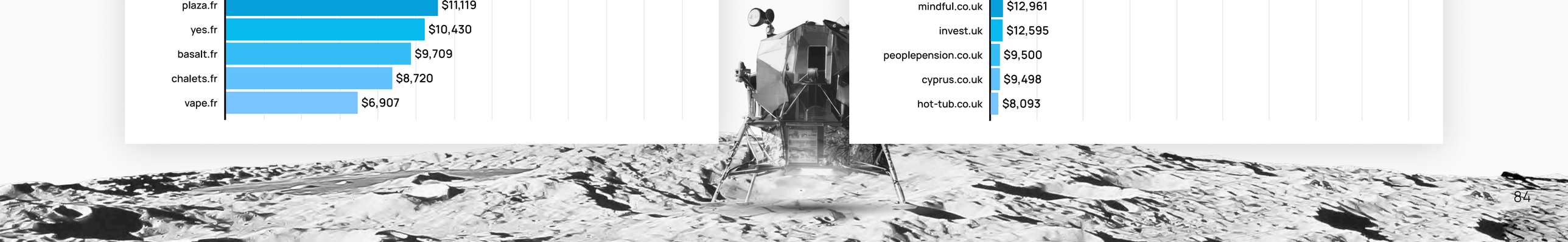


Top 10 public .fr domain sales in 2025



Top 10 public .uk domain sales in 2025





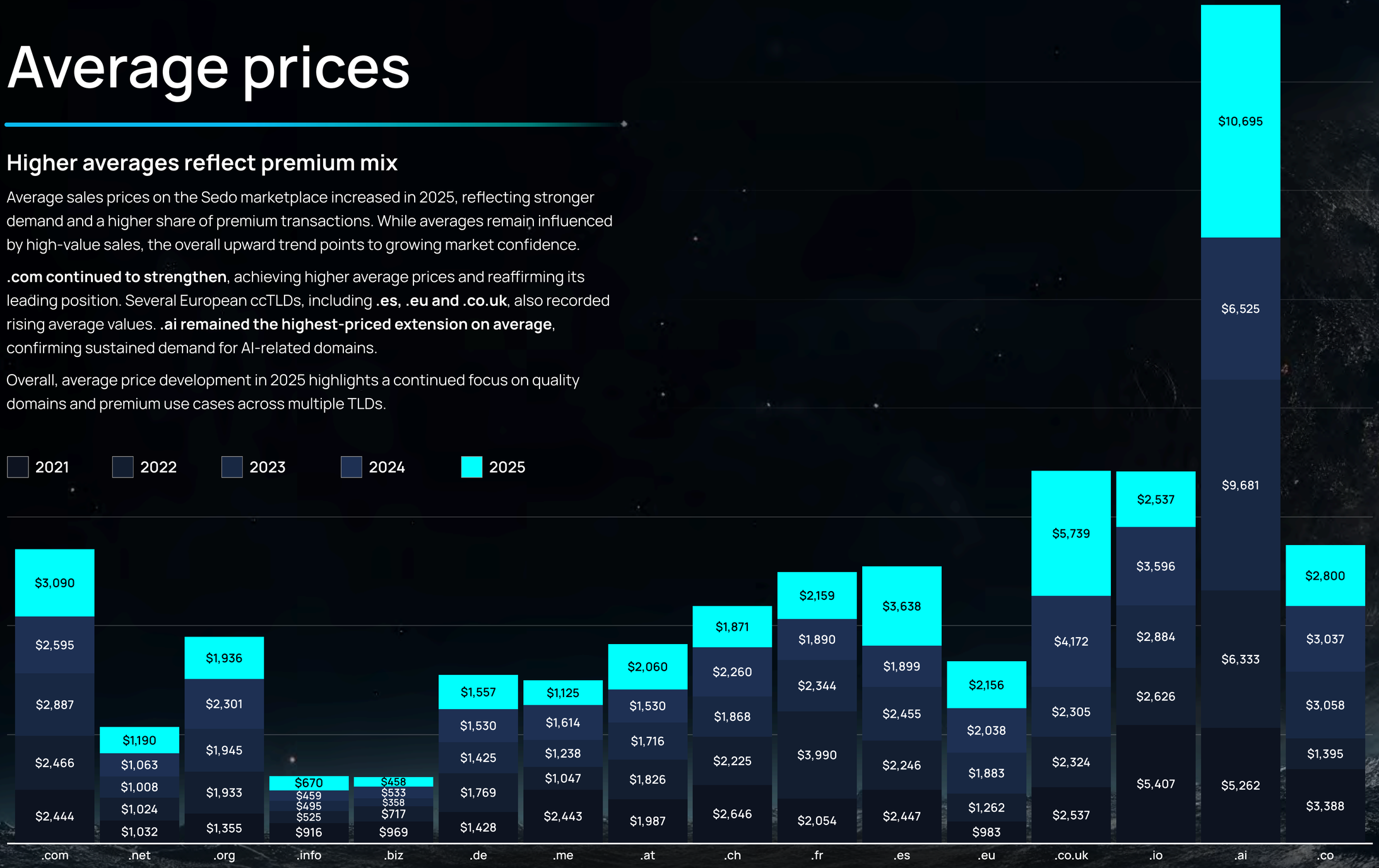
Average prices

Higher averages reflect premium mix

Average sales prices on the Sedo marketplace increased in 2025, reflecting stronger demand and a higher share of premium transactions. While averages remain influenced by high-value sales, the overall upward trend points to growing market confidence.

.com continued to strengthen, achieving higher average prices and reaffirming its leading position. Several European ccTLDs, including **.es, .eu and .co.uk**, also recorded rising average values. **.ai remained the highest-priced extension on average**, confirming sustained demand for AI-related domains.

Overall, average price development in 2025 highlights a continued focus on quality domains and premium use cases across multiple TLDs.



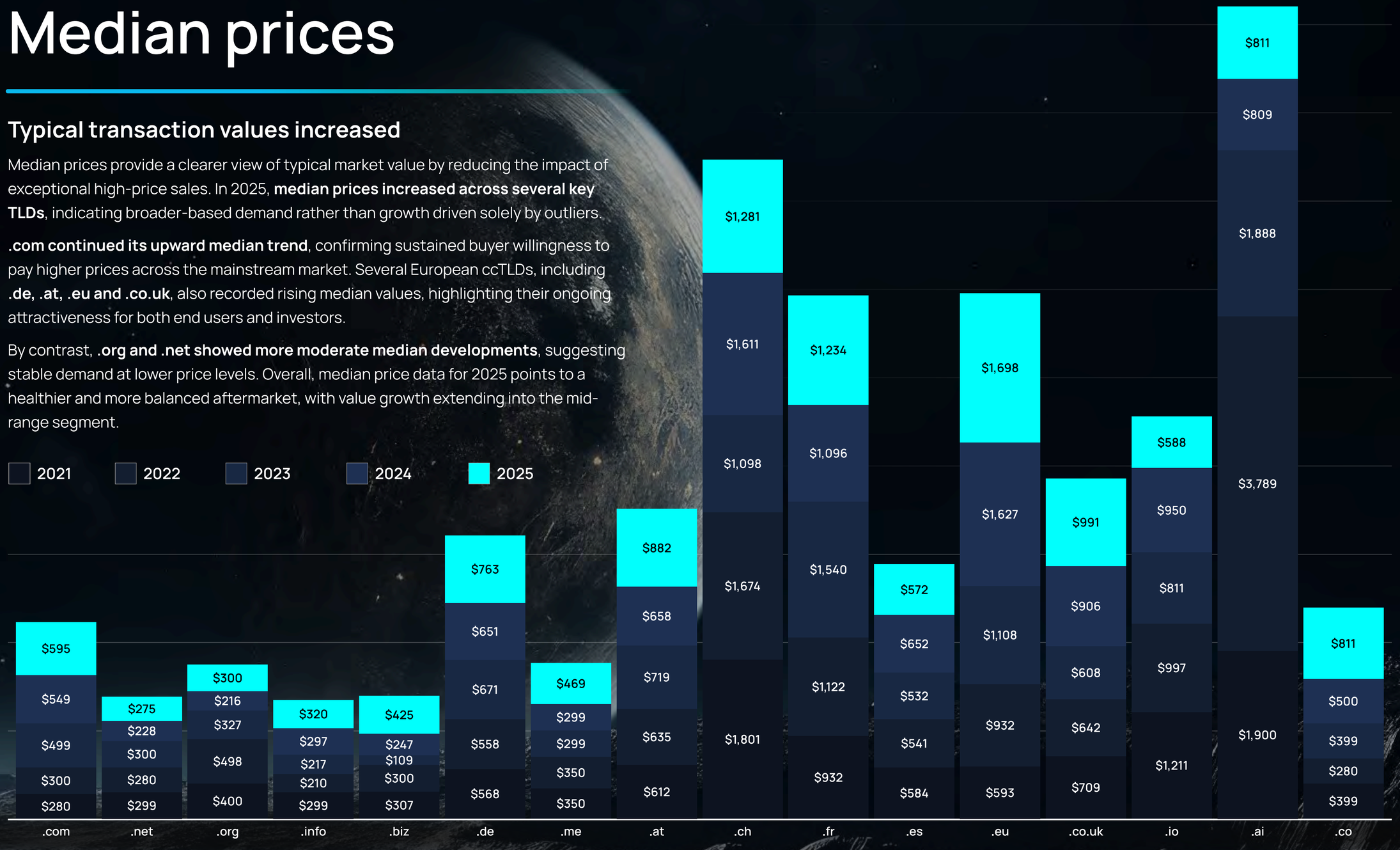
Median prices

Typical transaction values increased

Median prices provide a clearer view of typical market value by reducing the impact of exceptional high-price sales. In 2025, **median prices increased across several key TLDs**, indicating broader-based demand rather than growth driven solely by outliers.

.com continued its upward median trend, confirming sustained buyer willingness to pay higher prices across the mainstream market. Several European ccTLDs, including **.de, .at, .eu and .co.uk**, also recorded rising median values, highlighting their ongoing attractiveness for both end users and investors.

By contrast, **.org and .net showed more moderate median developments**, suggesting stable demand at lower price levels. Overall, median price data for 2025 points to a healthier and more balanced aftermarket, with value growth extending into the mid-range segment.



SedoMLS impact

Partner distribution drives reach

In 2025, SedoMLS played a more prominent role than ever in the aftermarket. For the first time, the majority of transactions were completed via SedoMLS partner channels rather than directly on the Sedo marketplace, signaling a clear structural shift in buyer behavior.

SedoMLS sales were driven primarily by .com domains, highlighting strong end-user demand for globally recognized extensions within registrar and hosting environments.

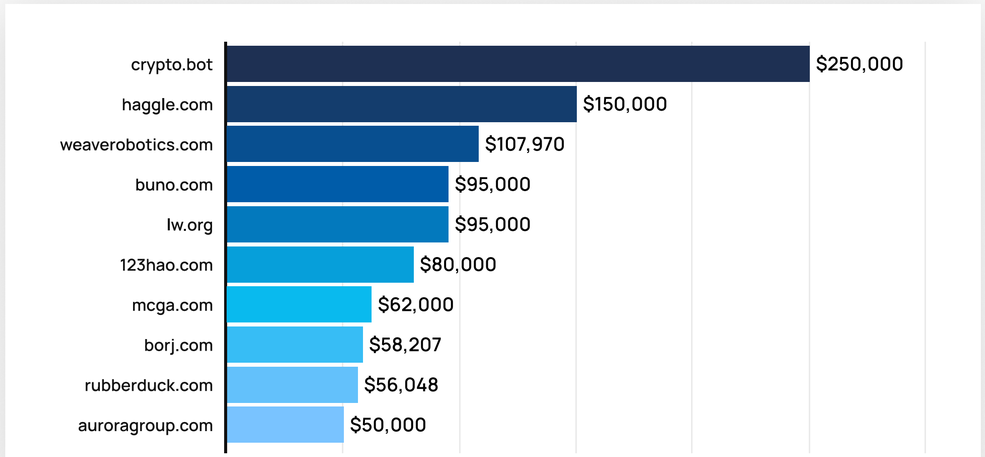
Overall, the 2025 data confirms SedoMLS as a key driver of aftermarket liquidity, expanding domain visibility while connecting premium domains with end users at the point of registration.

With an average SedoMLS sale price of $1,704 and a median of $600, we clearly see that users are willing to invest significantly more in premium domains even at the point of registration, with each premium sale also showing strong VAS attachment rates. SedoMLS demonstrates how strong registrar distribution can translate visibility into real aftermarket liquidity.

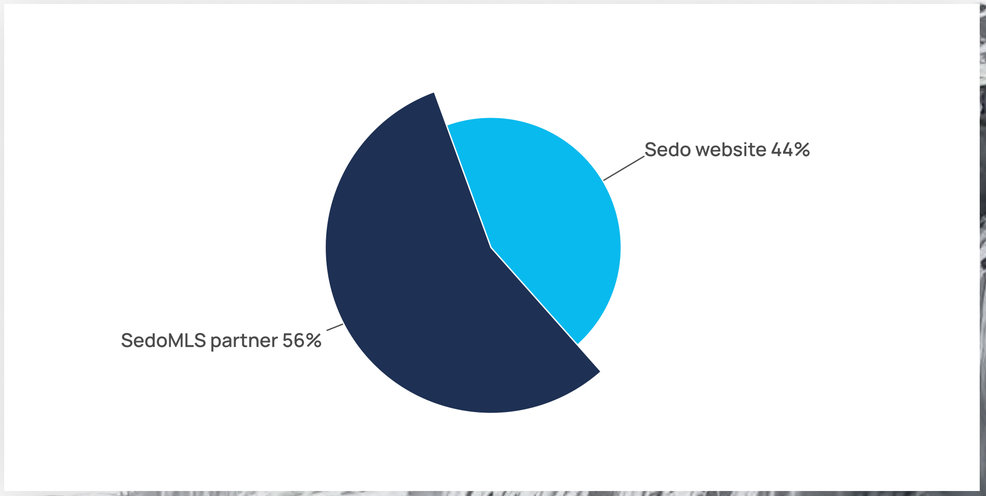


Arthur Mai
CEO, Sedo

Top 10 public SedoMLS domain sales in 2025



Sales channels in 2025



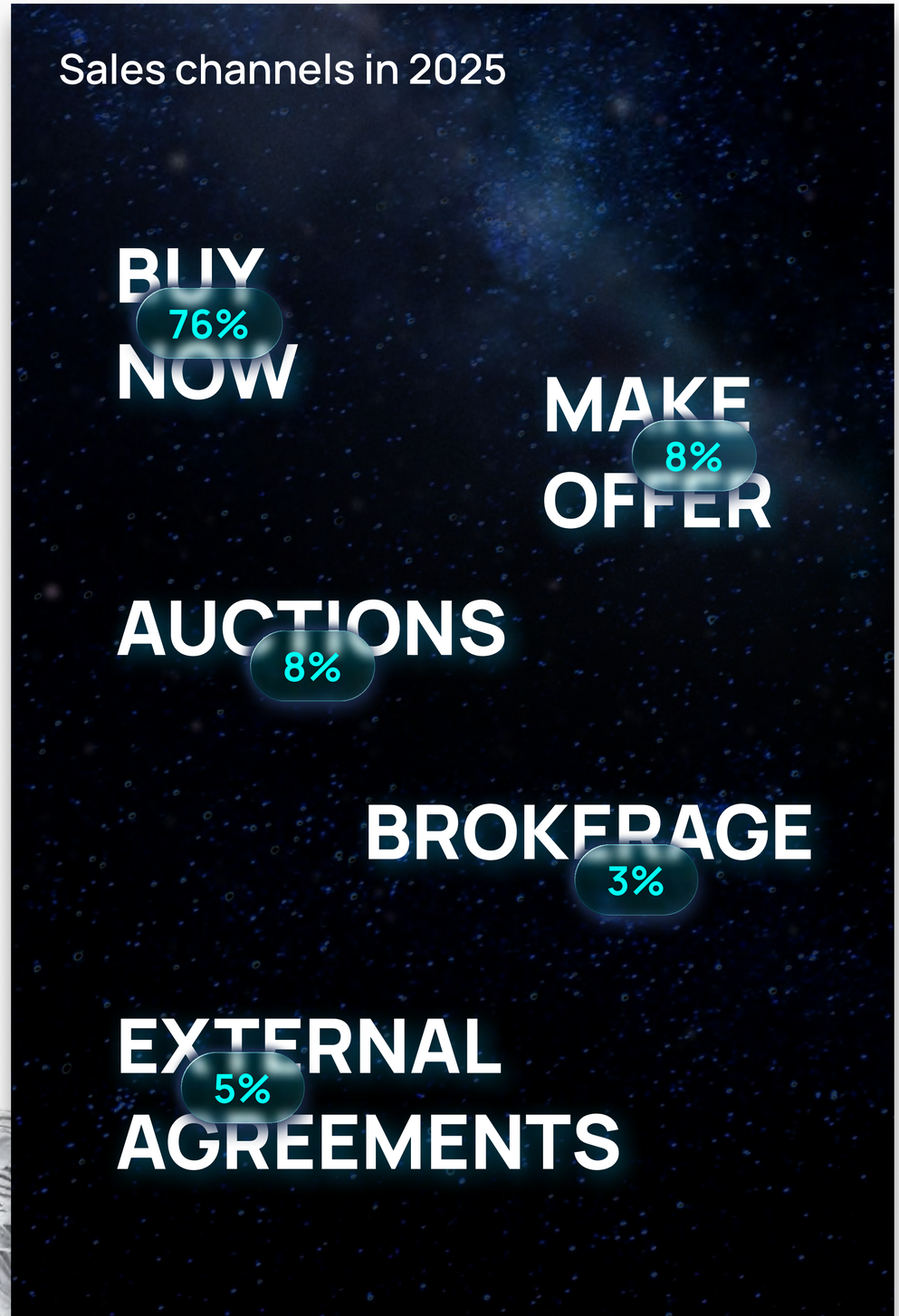
Popular sales types

Buy Now dominates deal flow

Fixed-price (Buy Now) domain sales clearly strengthened their position on the Sedo marketplace, becoming the dominant transaction type. This development reflects a growing preference for fast, transparent purchasing processes, particularly among end users seeking immediate acquisition without negotiation.

At the same time, **brokerage and auction-based sales remained relevant**, especially for higher-quality and premium domains. While these sales types represent a smaller share of overall transactions, they continue to play an important role for complex negotiations and high-value assets.

Overall, sales type distribution in 2025 indicates a market increasingly driven by efficiency and accessibility, while still offering flexible options for premium and ultra-premium domain transactions.



> Brokerage may account for fewer transactions, but it carries substantial monetary weight. High-value domains still require expertise, negotiation and tailored deal structures that go beyond automated sales models.



Dave Evanson
Senior Sales & Brokerage Consultant, Sedo

Domain price ranges

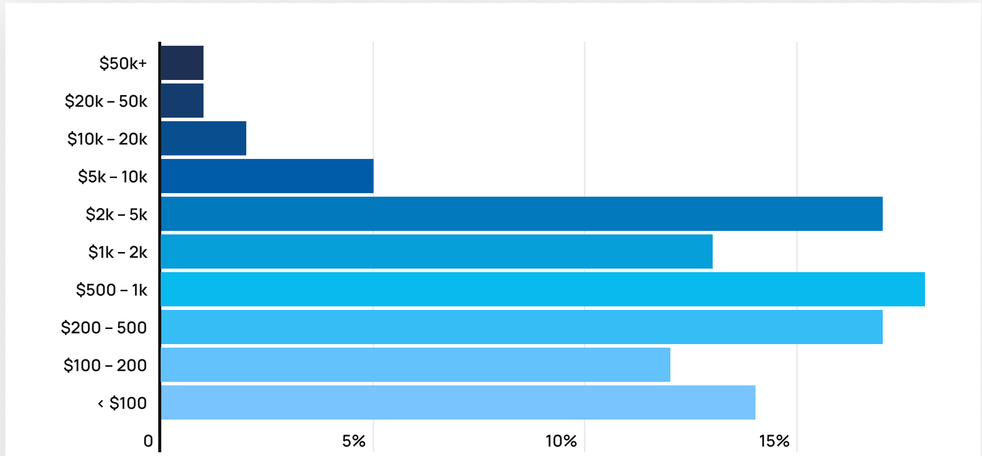
Mid-market activity drives the aftermarket

Sedo's marketplace data shows that the domain aftermarket is largely driven by transactions in the **lower and mid-price segments**, which account for the majority of sales. While high-value domains continue to attract attention, most trading activity takes place at price levels accessible to startups, small businesses and investors.

Seller feedback reflects a similar pattern, with most respondents reporting sales in the **sub-$10,000 range**. At the same time, survey results highlight broader market dynamics influencing pricing, particularly the **limited availability of strong .com domains**, as well as **AI and technology trends** and the **global economic environment**.

Together, these insights underline that while premium sales shape market perception, the **mid-market remains the core driver of domain trading activity**.

Sales distribution by price range



What do you see as the most important factors influencing domain prices today?

Shortage of good .com names	50%
AI and technology trends	46%
Global economy	40%
Branding trends and startups	36%
New gTLD adoption	24%
Consolidation of marketplaces	23%
Other	5%

Prices by length

Shortest names achieve top medians

Very short domain names commanded the highest median prices on the Sedo marketplace, with one- and two-character domains standing out as the most valuable segment.

Beyond ultra-short names, descriptive domains in the .com namespace typically performed best in the five- to eight-character range, where clarity and memorability align with broad commercial usability.

Overall, the 2025 distribution confirms established pricing dynamics: as names get longer, median values tend to decline, reinforcing the premium placed on brevity and brandability.

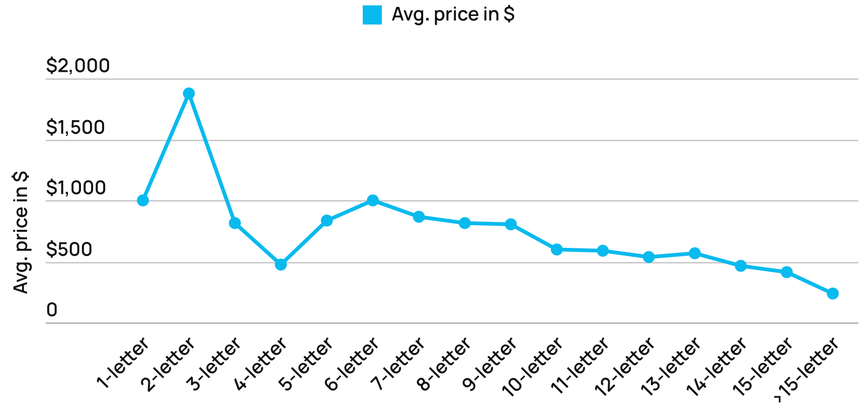
Explore domains of any length on Sedo

Our domain search and advanced filters help you quickly identify names that match your exact criteria. From short brandable domains to longer descriptive names, Sedo offers a broad selection to support both branding goals and domain investment strategies.

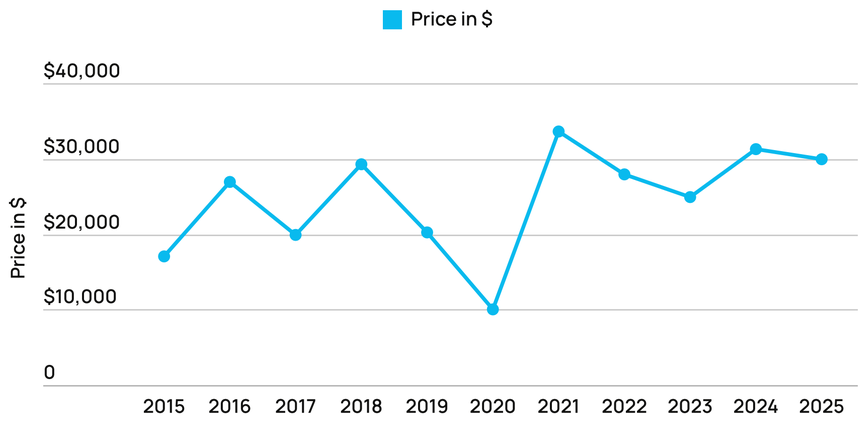


Explore domains now →

Median sales price by length



Median price development of 2-letter .com



Top keywords

AI remains the strongest driver

An analysis of keyword demand on the Sedo marketplace throughout the year 2025 highlights a small number of highly consistent themes driving buyer interest. AI clearly dominated keyword searches, appearing in every month and frequently ranking at the top. This reflects sustained demand for AI-related domains across a wide range of industries, well beyond the core tech sector.

Alongside AI, **Crypto, Bet**, and **Casino** remained consistently strong performers. These keywords form a stable demand cluster, combining finance, investment, and online gaming. Despite market volatility and regulatory uncertainty, buyer interest in these segments remained resilient throughout the year.

In the second half of the year, **Chat** gained noticeable momentum, indicating growing demand for domains linked to conversational AI, automation, and digital interaction. This shift suggests that buyers are increasingly focusing on user-facing technologies and communication-driven business models.

Overall, Sedo marketplace data shows a clear balance between long-term demand drivers and emerging trends. While AI and gambling-related keywords continue to anchor the market, newer themes are gaining traction without displacing established demand patterns.



Emerging trends

Tech and energy terms rising

- **Bitcoin & crypto-related variants** – increasing keyword diversification
- **Energy** – growing interest in sustainability-driven domains
- **Cloud** – steady demand for infrastructure-focused names
- **Dubai** – strong regional and investment-related appeal
- **Digital / Code / Deep** – rising technical and development-oriented terms



Looking ahead to 2026, domain demand on the Sedo marketplace is expected to be shaped primarily by AI-driven use cases, conversational technologies and energy-related innovation. At the same time, structurally strong segments such as crypto and online gaming continue to provide stability in the aftermarket.

Semra Körner
Head of Marketing, Sedo

Which keyword-based domain categories have generated the best results for you this year?

AI, technology & SaaS	54%
E-Commerce & Retail	42%
Finance & Investing	35%
Cryptocurrency/Blockchain	28%
Health & Wellness	23%
Travel & Hospitality	20%
Education & E-Learning	18%
Casino/Gambling/Betting	17%

End-user demand signals from the aftermarket



What we observe

Publicly identifiable aftermarket transactions completed via Sedo in 2025 point to broad and resilient end-user demand across both digital-native and traditional industries. While not exhaustive, these sales provide a clear indication of where premium domain demand is most visible among end users.

What this means for the domain ecosystem

Across all segments, end users increasingly view domains as strategic business assets rather than technical necessities. Demand extends beyond startups to include well-established companies, reinforcing the aftermarket's role as a key channel for premium digital identity.

- **Investors**: Confirms sustained demand for brand-ready domains across multiple industries
- **Registrars**: Highlights continued end-user activity beyond primary registrations
- **Domain sellers**: Underscores the importance of positioning domains for real-world commercial use cases

Disclaimer: Insights are based on publicly identifiable end-user purchases; many end-user transactions are not immediately attributable and are therefore not reflected here.

Most visible end-user segments

E-commerce & consumer brands

Retailers and direct-to-consumer brands across fashion, food, and lifestyle use the aftermarket to **upgrade brand asset**s, improve memorability, and strengthen marketing performance.

Technology, AI & software

AI-driven services, SaaS platforms, automation tools, and developer products consistently appear among identifiable buyers. These companies typically acquire domains to support **product launches, scaling efforts, and brand credibility**.

Travel & hospitality

Travel and leisure businesses stand out for both **transaction frequency and deal size**. Generic, category-defining domains continue to play a strategic role in customer acquisition and long-term brand value.

Established SMEs & traditional industries

Manufacturing, construction, logistics, energy, and professional services regularly appear among end users, reflecting ongoing **digital transformation, rebranding, and market expansion** initiatives.

Digital finance & crypto

Fintech, payments, and crypto-related companies remain active in the aftermarket. Domain acquisitions in this segment are closely tied to **trust, regulatory perception, and global positioning**.

Aftermarket outlook

Stable demand with selective, quality-driven growth

Based on Sedo marketplace data from 2025, the aftermarket enters 2026 from a position of strength. Continued demand for premium domains, structurally strong buyer interest and the dominance of efficient sales channels underline a resilient market environment shaped by quality rather than volume.

Looking ahead, AI-driven use cases, digital transformation and established online business models are expected to remain key demand drivers. At the same time, market growth is likely to be more selective, with buyers increasingly prioritizing clarity, usability and long-term value. High-quality .com domains and strong ccTLD portfolios are expected to outperform, while alternative TLDs continue to gain relevance mainly within clearly defined niches.

Overall, 2026 is set to favor quality-focused portfolios and marketplaces that effectively connect global demand with trusted distribution and transparent purchasing processes.

What's next in the aftermarket?



As new gTLDs gain corporate mainstream adoption, the aftermarket will favor high-conviction, premium assets over bulk holdings—especially as the .ai hype cycle plateaus into a utility market.

Leanne McMahon
Founder, Crunch.id



AI has fundamentally changed the game: investors are using it to hunt for value, while end users are discovering names they never would have brainstormed manually. The real breakthrough for 2026 is the rise of autonomous sales agents that don't just find domains, but actively close deals for investors.

Andrew Allemann
Publisher - Domain Name Wire

The global domain market enters 2026 in a remarkably healthy state, even as we navigate an increasingly complex political climate. This year is set for a massive surge as new AI tools finally erase the technical barriers to entry, inviting a long-awaited wave of new registrants to claim their digital identity.



Ron Jackson
Publisher - DNJournal

Aftermarket playbook

How to position domains for performance in 2026

How do you expect the domain aftermarket to evolve in 2026?

Strong growth	9%
Moderate growth	31%
Stable performance	33%
Slight decline	22%
Major decline	5%

For domain investors

Invest along long-term demand drivers

AI-driven applications, automation and digital services remain structurally relevant. Domains aligned with real business use cases and scalable models show greater resilience than speculative or trend-driven keywords.

Diversify with purpose

Alternative TLDs and new gTLDs offer opportunities, but performance is strongest in clearly defined niches. Focused diversification tied to specific industries, technologies or regions is more effective than broad exposure.

Prioritize quality over volume

Sedo marketplace data shows that value growth is increasingly driven by high-quality domains rather than large portfolios. Short, clear and commercially usable names continue to outperform, particularly within the .com namespace and strong European ccTLDs.

Leverage regional strength

Consistent performance of ccTLDs highlights the importance of local branding and SEO. Well-positioned regional domains remain a strong complement to global extensions.

For domain sellers

Optimize portfolios for clarity

Buyers increasingly favor domains that are easy to understand, brand and deploy. Streamlining portfolios and reducing overly complex or speculative names can improve overall performance.

Use Buy Now to increase liquidity

With fixed-price sales accounting for the majority of transactions, Buy Now listings significantly improve visibility and sales velocity. Transparent pricing aligns with end-user expectations and reduces purchase friction.

Price realistically and data-driven

Rising median prices point to stronger mid-market demand, but buyers remain selective. Competitive, market-aligned pricing increases conversion rates more effectively than peak-value expectations.

Maximize reach through SedoMLS

The growing share of SedoMLS transactions highlights the importance of distribution at registrar and hosting touchpoints. Sellers benefit from increased exposure beyond the core marketplace.



In a more selective market environment, success for investors and sellers alike is driven by quality assets, realistic pricing and efficient distribution rather than volume-based strategies.

Nadine Forgia Del Arco
Head of Sales, Sedo

Unlock Higher Profits, Lower Fees

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At Sedo, we're committed to helping you succeed in the domain market. Our competitive commission rates - as low as 10% and capped at 20% - put more money in your pocket. With a wide range of services designed to boost sales and minimize costs, you can focus on growing your business. Join thousands of satisfied domain sellers who trust Sedo to help them achieve their goals.



Start selling smarter.

Get started with Sedo today!

Mission accomplished

As our 2026 expedition through the domain universe concludes, we hope these insights serve as your navigational star in an ever-expanding digital sky. From the birth of agentic ecosystems to the steady pulse of new gTLDs expanding the namespace, you have now traversed the farthest reaches of the naming nebula.

Though this mission ends here, the orbit of innovation never rests. But charting the future of the internet requires more than just a map — it requires the right launchpad. Whether you are registering new domains at the speed of light, automating your digital infrastructure, or acquiring a premium name to anchor your brand, InterNetX & Sedo are your ultimate mission control.

Thank you for being part of our crew on this year's voyage.

Ready to launch your next digital venture?

Visit InterNetX and Sedo today to fuel all your domain needs.

InterNetX Sedo

Data sources

All information is subject to change. InterNetX and Sedo assume no liability for the accuracy of the information. The data base of the report has been compiled and researched with great care.

InterNetX

Latest internal data InterNetX

sedo

Latest internal data Sedo

Latest internal data Sedo

European ccTLDs & policy update

DOMAIN CRAWLER

Domain insights & new gTLDs

NETBEACON INSTITUTE

DNS abuse

freename

Web3 domains

TRADEMARK CLEARINGHOUSE

TMCH

Registry data

Afnic
auDA
CIRA
CNNIC
Coordination
Center for TLD .RU
DENIC
DNC nz
DNS Belgium
Dns.pl
Dominios
EURid
IRNIC
ISOC
JPRS
KeNIC
KRNIC
NIC Argentina
NIC Chile
NIC MEXICO
NiRA
Nominet UK
Punto.pe
RADIX
Registre.me
Registro.br
Registro.it
SIDN Labs
SWITCH
TWNIC
Uynic
Verisign
ZADNA

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