

# The Business Case for a .BRAND TLD

A .BRAND is a top-level domain (TLD) that uses a company's trademarked brand or product name (e.g., .xbox or .barclays) for the company's exclusive registration and use. It can significantly impact brand and reputation by enhancing security, trust, and marketing control. A .BRAND namespace can help companies prevent brand abuse and cybersquatting, build customer confidence in the authenticity of their digital spaces and protect their intellectual property. This control allows for the creation of clean, meaningful URLs (e.g., support.xbox or home.barclays) and strengthens brand consistency and innovation in the digital space.

**Companies that secure and use a .BRAND can realize the following specific benefits:**

## → Authenticity and security

By having exclusive control of the .BRAND namespace, a company creates a clear signpost on the internet for customers to identify authentic sites and email, protecting them from fraudulent, look-alike domains and increasing trust and confidence in online interactions. Companies can clearly say to the market, customers, and partners, "If it doesn't end in our .BRAND, it's not us!"

## → Customer protection and reputation management

A .BRAND helps companies safeguard their reputations and customers by providing a clear mechanism to ensure interaction only with legitimate, company-controlled spaces, reducing the risk of and harm caused by financial fraud, identity theft, and misinformation.

## → Future proofing

A .BRAND allows companies to manage future technological developments that are reliant on the domain name system (DNS), such as new apps, application programming interfaces (APIs) and Internet of Things (IoT) devices, under their own secure TLD.

## → Risk mitigation

By driving awareness and adoption of a company's .BRAND namespace, companies can reduce the risk of customers, partners, and internet users being duped by fraudulent, lookalike domains, which are often used in phishing and malware campaigns on other TLDs—like .com—thereby reducing financial and reputation losses.

## → Brand consistency

A .BRAND allows for a consistent and recognizable brand presence across all digital platforms, from customer-facing websites to internal communications tools. Everything ends in .BRAND.

## → Data and insights

A controlled domain space can enhance a brand's ability to manage customer data and gather valuable insights through exclusive access to non-existent domain (NXD) data (i.e., data that shows domains that are being typed into browsers for which there is not a currently registered domain name in the TLD). This enables increased insight and intelligence about what domain names should be registered to improve online engagement and conversion rates.



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## → Enhanced user experience

A .BRAND helps create simplified, branded URLs (e.g., shop.brand or jobs.brand) to quickly bring your audience to the specific content they seek. This eliminates long, complicated, or otherwise forgettable links and enhances the offline to online customer journey. Further, with a .BRAND, your company has exclusive access and use of all the best generic names on the .BRAND and will not need to fight third parties or pay premium prices to get them.

## → Control and agility

Companies that use a .BRAND gain complete control over their digital real estate, allowing them to quickly create new domains, respond to market changes, and adapt their online strategy with greater speed and flexibility. Companies can simply switch on and off domains used by agents, distributors, retailers, and other affiliated entities.

## → Market and industry leadership

A .BRAND helps organizations stand out in the digital landscape as security conscious, forward thinking and in full control of their brand identities. It further enforces the sentiment that the brand is strong, vibrant, and enduring in the marketplace, helping enhance the status of the company as both a market and industry leader.

Owning and using a .BRAND does not mean a company must completely abandon use of their current .com and country-code sites and email. Use of a .BRAND can be a complementary strategy, for which adoption and use grows over time, as a brand experiments and the online landscape and its risks evolve. A .BRAND can also be an important tool in the security and compliance toolbox.

- **Email.** Help separate domain names used for email and the main website, providing a clear signal of authenticity of email communications to mitigate phishing and business email compromise risks.
- **Disaster recovery planning.** Replicate key web properties and email under .BRAND. Then if the registry on which current email, key operational, or customer-facing sites are hosted (e.g., Verisign for .com) is a victim of cyber attack and goes down or experiences a sustained outage, a company with a .BRAND can quickly get back online by redirecting staff, clients, and customers to email and .BRAND sites hosted on a completely different registry infrastructure (i.e., that are owned and controlled by the .BRAND).
- **Third-party compliance.** Issue and require use of .BRAND domain names by resellers, franchisees, agents, and dealerships when selling company products and services. Not only does a .BRAND domain name signal to the market the partner is legitimate and authorized, but it provides a quick and easy takedown mechanism for noncompliance that is not mediated.

To date, The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) has only provided one time-limited opportunity to apply for a .BRAND in 2012. The second time-limited opportunity is expected in April 2026. There were more than 500 .BRAND applications in the first round, with companies from around the globe applying, including brands like Apple®, Microsoft®, Google®, Ford®, Honda, Toyota, Barclays, Bank of America®, PwC, Hermés®, ZARA, and FedEx®.



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