

Your Guide to the Domain Aftermarket and Getting the Domain Name You Want

The Domain Aftermarket Shouldn't Be An Afterthought



YOUR GUIDE TO THE DOMAIN AFTERMARKET AND GETTING THE DOMAIN NAME YOU WANT

When it comes to digital marketing and overall branding, having the right domain name is an important part of a business' online success. The ideal domain name is easy to remember, on-brand and supports your Search Engine Optimization (SEO) efforts.

That's why branded, memorable domains are sought after so fervently. Many have been known to sell for millions of dollars; the domain name dating.com sold for \$1.75 million in 2010, and investing.com sold for \$2.45 million in late 2012.

While you may not have millions to invest in a domain name, that doesn't mean you can't get the one you want at a price that works for your budget. Every day, an estimated 100,000 domains are registered, which demonstrates that there are still desirable domain names available.

However, you'll probably have to get creative to secure your preferred domain name. In this eBook, you'll learn how to buy a domain that's right for your brand, including specific strategies for how to acquire an amazing domain name on the aftermarket.

— Table of Contents

4 Options If Your Domain Name Is Already Taken: Introducing the Aftermarket

What Is the Domain Name Aftermarket? Is My Domain Name Available on the Aftermarket? Why Buy on the Aftermarket?

9 Buying a Domain Through the Aftermarket: The Key Players

12 Who's Who in the Aftermarket

Domain Name Marketplace / Brokerage Services / Domain Investors

15 How a Typical Aftermarket Transaction Works

18 The Two Best Strategies for Securing Your Preferred Domain

22 When You Can't Secure Your Preferred Domain Name: The Alternatives

25 Summary

Options If Your Domain Name Is Already Taken: Introducing the Aftermarket

If you've ever had a brilliant idea for a domain and did a quick search to see if it's available, chances are it wasn't long before you found out it was already owned by someone else.

The good news is that this doesn't mean you can't get the domain you want. Through what's known as the Domain Name Aftermarket, you have the ability to secure a domain name that's currently owned by someone else.



What Is the Domain Name Aftermarket?

The 'Aftermarket' in 'Domain Name Aftermarket' refers to the fact that someone still owns the domain. It is a secondary market for domain names where you can register a bid or make an offer to purchase a domain name.

Is My Domain Name Available on the Aftermarket?

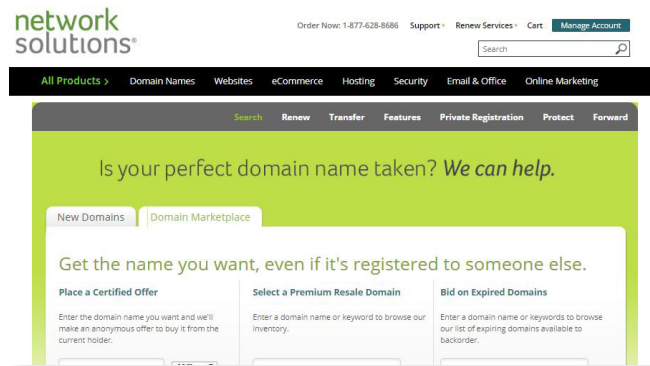
A simple way to figure out if someone already owns your preferred domain name is to type it into your browser. If there's a website on that domain, you can likely rule it out as an option, particularly if it seems to be in active use.

In other cases, you may discover that there is not an active website or that the domain is currently "parked" and not in use. These are signs that the domain may be available for purchase on the aftermarket or as a premium domain.

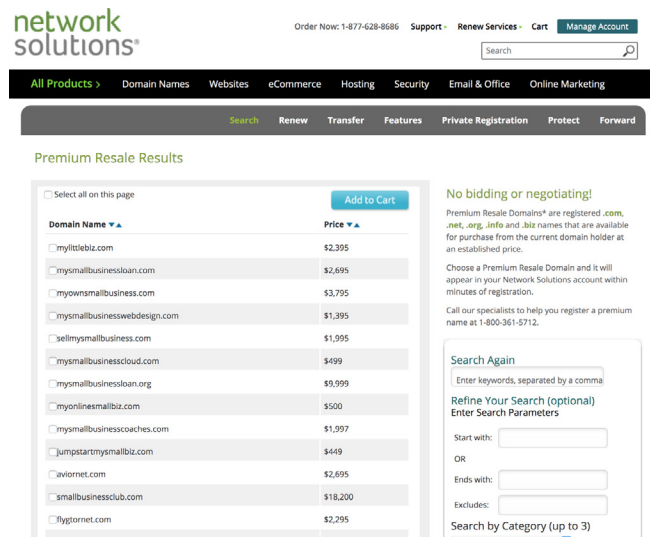
You can quickly check out if your domain is available for purchase by:

1- Visiting the [Network Solutions website](#).

2- Typing in your desired domain name and the associated extension.



3- Reviewing the list to see if your domain is available, and, if not, looking at suggested alternatives.



Why Buy on the Aftermarket?

What many domain buyers may not realize is how easy it can be to purchase their desired domain on the aftermarket.

If you're not convinced it's worth the effort to shop for your domain, keep in mind that a branded domain that's short in length and easy to remember can make all the difference in the minds and memories of your customers. Using names that are clever but hard to remember or including punctuation marks like dashes can keep people from finding and visiting your website.

Your domain name should also make it clear what your business offers or reflect your brand. If you can get a keyword directly related to your business or one that includes your company name, that's even better. Speaking of SEO, some domains that have already been purchased may bring authority with them, which can be an added bonus when buying on the aftermarket.



HOW MUCH SHOULD YOUR DOMAIN NAME COST?

In the auto industry, if you're buying a used car, you can look it up with Kelley Blue Book and get an idea of the perfect price. If you're ready to make an offer on a new home, your real estate agent will take the time to ensure you're not overpaying by pulling details on comparable listings.

While the purchase price is standardized in the domain name aftermarket, the cost does vary according to various factors. You can purchase one domain name for \$20, while another may be priced at \$500,000.

This can be a challenge when deciding if you should invest in a domain from the aftermarket. The key is to determine the potential return on investment of a specific domain name before you purchase it.

Take the time to decide if a premium domain is worth it for your brand. Also, consider whether another domain will do the same job at a lower price.

— Buying a Domain Through the Aftermarket: The Key Players

Now that you're considering purchasing a domain on the aftermarket, it's important to understand who the key players are and the options available to you.



Options for Purchasing on the Aftermarket

You can purchase domains on the aftermarket in several ways. The inventory of domain names can generally be broken down into three different categories.

Expiring Domains

Expiring domains are exactly what they sound like: domains that are set to expire soon if the existing owner doesn't renew them. It's possible to keep tabs on which domains are set to become available for purchase and then buy the ones the owner is willing to release. When domains are set to expire, the owners are typically given a grace period of 30 to 60 days before that domain becomes available.

Dropping/Deleting Domains

Domains in this state of limbo are considered dropping or deleting and offer a way to identify domains that may be available for purchase. Dropping/deleting domains are ones that the owner has decided they no longer want and have indicated to their domain registrar they won't be renewing.

This option is particularly appealing, as the domain is likely to become available for purchase quickly.

Third-Party or Direct Listers

Domain names will be sold by the owner or via a third party, such as a broker. In this case, domains may be available for purchase immediately; in other situations, you may be required to bid on them. The process is similar to eBay where you can make an immediate purchase or compete with others to buy the item through bidding.

There is also the more complicated option of looking at the contact information for a domain name on WHOIS to contact the current domain name registrant directly to make an offer.

Who's Who in the Aftermarket

If you're in the market for a domain, there are three key players you need to be aware of when deciding whether or not to buy a domain on the aftermarket.



Domain Name Marketplace

These services auction off domain names that are currently available. This is the online equivalent of a real-life auction where people bid on domains they wish to buy.

There are many reputable and established auction sites, including [Sedo](#) and [Namejet](#). These sites act as a real estate agent, selling the domains for a third-party looking to sell. Like real estate agents, domain name auction services make their money using a combination of listing charges and/or commission on domains that are sold.

A key benefit of marketplace sites is that many include an escrow service. This service collects payment from the buyer and holds that payment until they're satisfied that the domain has been successfully purchased by the buyer. This helps mitigate risk for both buyers and sellers.

Brokerage Services

Brokers act as an intermediary between the buyer and the seller. They offer a variety of ways for you to purchase a domain on the aftermarket, including those that are expiring, dropping or deleting.

[Network Solutions](#) offers automated tools that make it simple for you to backorder a domain so you're notified if it becomes available. Plus, you have the power to track domains that come up for sale.

Additionally, brokers can help you identify which domains are available and suggest alternative domains that you can purchase now.

Domain Investors

Premium domains are high-value names that are more expensive than the average domain name. Domain investors purchase premium domains to sell them for a higher price.

Think of domain investors as real estate investors who purchase a property, fix it up and then sell it for more than the original price.

Domain investors often work with a broker or list their domain name for sale with an aftermarket marketplace site as a way to find buyers.

— How a Typical Aftermarket Transaction Works

There are many options available for buying a domain on the aftermarket, so it's critical to get a handle on the steps involved before deciding to finalize your purchase. With so many ways to purchase your domain, it can feel overwhelming to figure out who you need to work with and how to ensure a smooth transaction.



At the core of every transaction on the aftermarket, you'll have two parties: a buyer and a seller. Here are the roles of each:

Role of the Buyer

- May contact the seller or use a third party or platform to do so.
- Makes a bid, offer or negotiates the price (reference auction).
- Makes payment to the seller.

Role of the Seller

- Determines the price of the domain.
- Accepts the offer.
- Provides the authorization code or otherwise transfers the domain.

In many cases, the domain name registrar or a domain name auction site may also be involved in the transaction. This adds steps to the process but reduces the work for buyers/sellers and helps ensure a smooth transaction.

These are the two most common aftermarket scenarios when working to buy a domain:

Scenario 1: Via Aftermarket Marketplace *NameJet*

- Seller lists domain for sale.
- Buyer identifies domain, places bid, makes an offer or pays 'buy-it-now' price.
- Successful bidder "wins" domain at seller's price.
- Marketplace site facilitates sale and transfer.

Scenario 2: Via Domain Name Registrar *network solutions*

- May contact the seller or use a third party or platform to do so.
- Makes a bid, offer or negotiates the price (reference auction).
- Makes payment to the seller.

Role of the Seller

- Buyer searches for potential domain.
- Registrar checks availability and price with registry who manages all available domains.
- Buyer purchases domain.
- Sale and transfer completed.

— The Two Best Strategies for Securing Your Preferred Domain Name

At this stage, you likely have an idea of the domain name you want to secure, but you don't want to waste time, energy or money to make the deal. When it comes to buying your preferred domain name, you want to ensure you're not paying too much while also eliminating needless back and forth with potential sellers.

While there are many ways to buy a potential domain name, here are the two best strategies:

Strategy 1: Backorder Your Domain

Every day, thousands of short, memorable and highly brandable domain name registrations expire and become available.

Backordering a domain offers a proven, simple way to acquire a domain you want. This strategy can be cost-effective, as you're able to buy domains where the registration has lapsed due to the domain being left unused or forgotten by the owner.

To get an expiring or dropping domain name, search the list of expiring domain names or backorder the domain. Usually, you can tell your domain registrar the domain names you want and they'll notify you when they're set to drop or expire.

Keep in mind that most registrars have a grace period built in when domains expire, so it may take up to 60 days to get a domain once it's expired. You can backorder a domain anytime to state that you're interested in purchasing it once it becomes available near the end of the grace period.

Many times, you can place a small deposit (\$10 with Network Solutions) to backorder your domain. This covers a set period where your domain registrar will automatically monitor the status of the domain and notify you should it become available. This small investment can lead to big rewards when you get the domain you've been after for your website.

Strategy 2: Buy a Premium Domain Name

A premium domain name is one that a domain investor or a domain registrar currently has the rights to sell. Typically, these domains are seen as more desirable, so they have a higher price tag attached to them. Premium domains can be priced at hundreds or even thousands of dollars; however, depending on your company's needs, a premium domain may be worth the investment.

For a domain to be considered premium, there are usually a number of factors involved, including:

- 1- The potential brand for the domain.
- 2- The number of characters in the name.
- 3- Any included keywords.

As previously mentioned, there's no right or wrong way to purchase a domain. Based on these factors, it's often worth it to invest in premium domains.

There are two types of premium domains: those that are currently available and those that are already owned.

Option #1: Currently Available

Premium domains that are currently available can be purchased immediately through a domain registrar. These domains can be identified by searching on your registrar's site and you can complete the purchase in a few clicks.

Option #2: Currently Owned

For premium domains that are currently owned, you can work with a broker to help identify the owner and negotiate a deal. In this scenario, you may also be able to purchase the premium domain on the aftermarket.



BEFORE YOU BUY YOUR DOMAIN ON THE AFTERMARKET

Before you buy your domain on the aftermarket, take some time and do your homework.

Step 1: Research the Domain for Any Potential Trademark Issues

Even if you own a domain you might infringe on someone's intellectual property if they own the trademark. Consider working with a lawyer and clearing any names with a trademark search.

Step 2: Do the Math on Your Investment

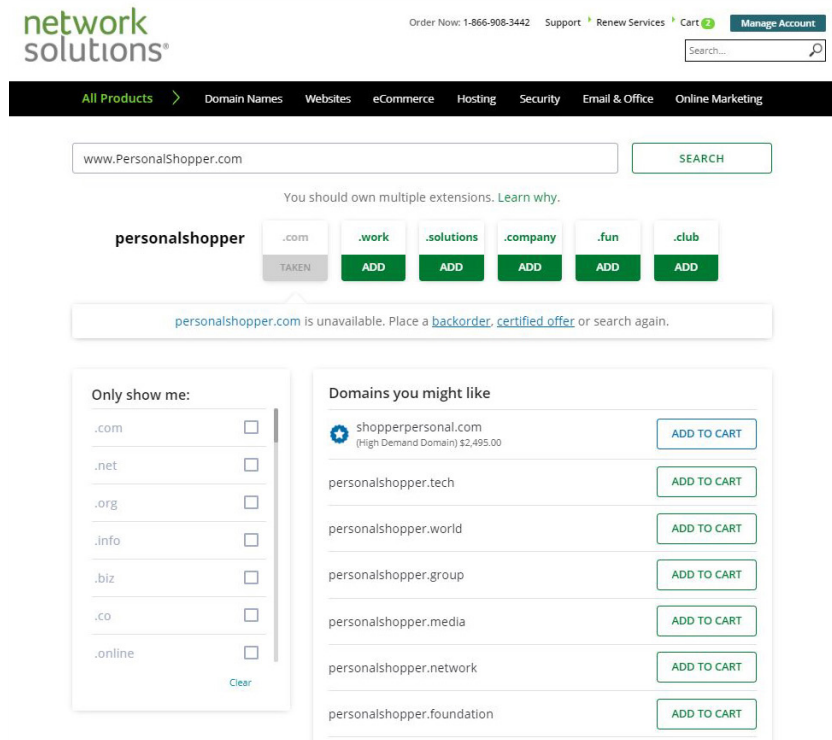
Consider the potential value of a domain name to your company and brand. Find an option that fits in your budget and delivers the right level of clarity and memorability to your target audience.

When You Can't Secure Your Preferred Domain Name: The Alternatives

There may be times when getting the domain name you want is simply not possible. Maybe someone already owns it and is using it, or it isn't in your budget.

That doesn't mean you're out of options. You can still come up with a great domain name. Sometimes, you'll come up with an even better one!

Start by searching related terms to get some fresh alternatives. With [Network Solutions](#), you can search for your desired domain name and get a full list of recommendations—many of which you may not have even thought of.



Coming Up With a Variation on Your Domain Name

It used to be that the .com extension was the only one worth having, but the market has evolved in recent years. Now you can find an equally viable domain name using one of these tactics:

Try a Variation

Look at your chosen name and see if there's a way to use a variation. For example, if your business is called 'Two Way Street', variations may include 'twowaystreet' or '2waystreet'.

Use a Common Extension

Check out extensions, like .biz, .org or .co as they are growing in popularity and use.

Consider a Local Extension

For local businesses, consider using a city-based domain, such as .nyc or .miami.

Business Extension

Try an extension that tells people what your business does, like .expert, .accountant or .photography.

Have Fun With It

Use one of the newer, quirky extensions such as .luxe, .guru, .shopping or even .express.

Summary

No matter what route you choose to secure your desired domain name, it's important to know your options and to watch out for potential hazards along the way. The aftermarket offers a proven way to secure your domain name — even if it's not available at a glance.



DID YOU KNOW?

Network Solutions is the expert in domains. In 1993, Network Solutions was the sole company registering the .com, .net, .org and .edu extensions. Since then, we've been an active part of the evolution of the internet and our Customer Service team is here to help you succeed online.

Whether you're looking for assistance, insight or answers, we'll be glad to provide the solutions you need.

Find your ultimate domain name:
[Search now by clicking here.](#)

Is your perfect domain name taken?
[We can help.](#)

For help registering your premium domains call us:
1-800-361-5712