

How to Evaluate a Domain in Under 60 Seconds

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People often ask me how I can tell if a domain's worth buying. They think there's some secret formula or that I'm running complex calculations. Truth is, after doing this for years, most names reveal themselves pretty fast. My usual answer "you really need to learn for yourself." But I get that is not satisfying at all.

I'm not claiming I can nail the exact price in 60 seconds, but I can definitely tell you if it's worth your time or if you should keep scrolling.

First Thing I Look At: Length

Short wins. Always. If I see a one-word .com that makes sense, I'm interested. Two words can work if they flow together naturally — like "CloudStorage" or "HomeLoans." But the moment I spot hyphens or numbers? Nope on numbers. Hyphens, I am finding data causing me to reconsider. And don't get me started on creative spellings like "Kool" instead of "Cool." That stuff might work for a startup with millions in marketing budget, but it won't help you flip a domain.

Extensions Matter More Than You Think

.com is king, and I don't see that changing anytime soon. After that, I'll consider .net or .org for the right name. .io has been solid for tech stuff, and .ai is hot right now if it actually relates to artificial intelligence.

What I won't touch? Those weird extensions nobody uses. I don't care how perfect your keyword is — if it's sitting on .biz or .info, you're fighting an uphill battle.

The Billboard Test

I ask myself: would this look normal on a business card or a billboard? If I have to explain the name or if it looks awkward in real life, that's a red flag. Good domains should feel obvious once you see them.

Does Anyone Actually Spend Money Here?

Some markets have money, others don't. Finance, insurance, real estate, health — these industries pay for good domains. Gaming, tech, marketing too. But if your domain is for something like "artisanal soap makers in Vermont," you might be waiting a while for a buyer with serious cash.

I learned this the hard way with a few hobby-related domains that sat in my portfolio for years.

Say It Out Loud

If someone heard the domain name on a podcast, could they spell it correctly on the first try? If not, it's probably not worth much. I've passed on some names that looked great on paper but were impossible to communicate verbally.

What My Gut Says

After handling thousands of domains, you develop instincts. Sometimes a name just feels right, even if you can't articulate why. Other times, everything looks good on paper but something feels off. I've learned to trust that feeling.

If a domain reminds me of something that sold well before, that's usually a good sign. Not that I'm expecting the same price, but it puts the name in the right neighborhood.

The Real Skill

Most domain advice focuses on finding winners. But honestly? The money is in avoiding losers. I'd rather pass on ten decent domains than get stuck with one terrible one that costs me \$12 a year forever or that I paid a bundle for.

That's what this quick evaluation is really about — not finding the next million-dollar domain, but making sure you don't waste time and money on names that'll never go anywhere.

Keep your standards high, your registrations selective, and your renewal bills low. That's how you actually make money in this business.