

The New Gravity in Premium Domains

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Most domainers know the big Western registrars by heart — GoDaddy, Namecheap, Dynadot, Sav. But the market is quietly shifting, and a new wave of Asia-based registrars is building serious traction with investors around the world. One of the fastest-growing names in that group is [GNAME.com](#), a Singapore-headquartered registrar and aftermarket platform that's carving out space in premium auctions, portfolio transfers, and high-volume trading.

To understand what's driving their growth and how they view the global investor landscape, I sat down with Brandon, part of the team leading GNAME's international outreach. We talked about the registrar's expansion, the challenges of bridging East and West in domain culture, and what investors can expect as global marketplaces keep merging closer together.

Mike: What first drew you to the domain industry, and how did you end up joining GNAME?

Brandon: My background sits at the intersection of marketing, product, and digital strategy in VC-backed startups — an environment that deeply understands the value of a great name. So when the opportunity with GNAME came along, it felt like a natural fit. After all, I've spent plenty of time ideating and refining names that just click.

At GNAME, I look after partnerships alongside my colleague, Jocelyn. Together, we're focused on building a meaningful ecosystem that connects registrars, aggregators, domain tools, and passionate domainers like yourself.

Mike: For readers who may not be familiar, how would you describe GNAME's core business today?

Brandon: Our hero product is our drop-catching service and for the same price you'd pay elsewhere, you can secure a .com with a 98% success rate on our platform. This remains the cornerstone of our business and will continue to be our primary focus moving forward.

Another area where GNAME excels is connecting global domainers with the Asian market — particularly high-value Chinese investors and the rapidly growing Southeast Asian community. These audiences often value different kinds of [names from those that dominate Western markets](#). That said, brandables still perform strongly here; for example, a domain like 95w.com recently auctioned for \$350,000, having both opened and closed on October 24th.

Mike: GNAME has grown rapidly among international investors — what do you think is driving that momentum?

Brandon: We have big ambitions, and our biggest goal is to defragment the domain discovery process. Two key initiatives drive this mission. First, we're consolidating fast-transfer listings from every major registrar to create a truly seamless browsing experience for registrants. Second, we're continuously enhancing our platform — not just through product upgrades, but by partnering with industry sites to integrate their tools directly into our ecosystem. Some will appear as discounted affiliate offerings, others as built-in features. It's a work in progress, and we're pushing hard to make it happen.

Mike: What differentiates GNAME from more established registrars in the U.S. and Europe?

Brandon: GNAME boasts one of the highest drop-catching success rates in the industry, with more than half of our user base coming from the Chinese market. This presents a powerful new opportunity for our U.S. and European domainers to tap into a growing and highly active buyer segment.

At the same time, passive parking (by just listing on our marketplace indefinitely) offers a distinct value proposition for global sellers: exposure to the Asian buyers. As organizations continue to globalize, owning region-specific domains can strengthen brand recognition and credibility across markets. These secondary domains often become valuable assets in sustaining relevance when the flavour of the month ebbs and flows.

Mike: How do you approach serving both retail buyers and high-volume domain investors under one platform?

Brandon: As of yet, we're geared towards the prosumer segment, especially if you operate a team or have distinct business units; our multi-account linkage and authorisation system lets you work across accounts and by batch at ease. For the rest of the world, we're working tirelessly behind the scenes to create a new iteration of GNAME that is much simpler and intuitive. One of the biggest feedbacks is how distractingly bad our UI language is. We hear you, and it's on us to do better. Expect an all-new and exciting GNAME in Q1 next year.

Mike: You're based in Singapore — how does being in Asia influence how GNAME thinks about domains and the aftermarket?

Brandon: Being based in Asia gives GNAME a unique vantage point into how domain culture differs across regions. In Asia—especially in markets like China and Southeast Asia—domains are often seen not just as digital assets, but as symbols of identity, prosperity, and investment potential. Numeric and short-letter domains, for instance, can hold deep linguistic or cultural meaning, which influences how people buy and trade them.

This perspective shapes how we think about the aftermarket. We design for diversity in behavior: investors in Asia might prioritize liquidity and value retention, while Western domainers often lean toward brandability and creative naming. By bridging these approaches, we aim to make GNAME a global hub where East meets West in the domain ecosystem—helping our users tap into new markets, mindsets, and monetization opportunities.

Mike: What trends are you seeing among Chinese and Southeast Asian investors right now?

Brandon: In China you still see a strong preference for numeric domains (for example, numbers with auspicious cultural meanings). At the same time, Chinese investors are becoming increasingly sophisticated: they're using market research, big data and analytics to identify domains that align with emerging business trends and branding direction.

Because of this, domains that might look "plain" to a Western domainer (e.g., short, numerical, easy Chinese-pronunciation) are very actively sought after in China.

Southeast Asia as a whole is still an emerging market, and we're excited to see how it continues to evolve. At the moment, brandable domains, especially those tied to tech and local identity, are leading the way. Localized names, in particular, resonate strongly because we Southeast Asians take great pride in our heritage.

Mike: Many Western investors still find Asian marketplaces intimidating. What's your advice for bridging that gap?

Brandon: It can seem intimidating at first because Asian markets operate on a different rhythm — driven by cultural nuances, trust, and long-term relationships. My advice to Western investors is to observe before assuming. In China, numbers and short-letter domains carry deep meaning, while in Southeast Asia, localized and brandable names are gaining ground.

The key is to engage, not just list. This means to always outbound. Relationships and context matter here. At GNAME, we bridge that gap — combining the data-driven approach of Western investors with the relationship-first mindset that defines Asia's [domaining](#) culture.

Mike: Can you walk us through how premium auctions and aftermarket listings work on GNAME?

Brandon: For premium auctions, we focus on high-value or expiring domains that are likely to attract competitive interest. These auctions are fully automated; users can place bids in real time, and the highest bidder at the close secures the domain. We've optimized this process for speed and reliability, which is especially important for drop-catching premium .coms. You can also expect features such as reserve prices, proxy bidding, and bid rebates if you own a premium account on GNAME.

On the aftermarket side, sellers can list their domains for a fixed price or make-offer sales. What sets GNAME apart is that we aggregate listings across multiple registrars and fast-transfer networks, so buyers get a unified marketplace experience and sellers reach a truly global audience.

Essentially, whether it's an auction or a listing, our goal is the same: make discovering, buying, and selling domains seamless — for everyone from first-time buyers to seasoned investors.

Mike: Are there particular extensions — .com, .io, .ai, or new gTLDs — where you're seeing stronger performance lately?

Brandon: From a topdown perspective, .com is still king. Everything else is a good, even mix; of course as of recent, .xyz has seen a massive jump and we owe it to Swetha for carrying this TLD.

Mike: What role do you see AI-related names playing in the current market?

Brandon: There's definitely a part to play, given how AI is the buzzword that companies and people are looking at. We will have to analyse the market further to see how far it will grow.

Mike: How does GNAME view Web3 or blockchain domains — opportunity, competition, or both?

Brandon: I believe that there's a space for everything for domains. We are still focused on Web2 domains and the growth of web3 has its purpose.

Mike: What advice would you give to a domainer who's considering expanding their buying or selling to Asian platforms for the first time?

Brandon: Haha maybe we could give 3. market understanding, platform adaptation, and cultural fluency.

Differing logic in valuation could be the biggest need to understand the market. Even as Asian investors are moving towards English/global domains, there's still a huge significance to numeric domains etc.

Processes over platform adaptation: due to the difference in timezone, processing timing might differ from time to time as well as probably language. Though, that can be mitigated rather easily nowadays.

Cultural influence in terms of communication, how tonation is worded or how things are being said could play a difference. Be respectful and once the rapport is built, all will be smooth sailing.