

# Domain names are disappearing

A recent survey carried out by names register Names Direct.com has shown that nearly all the words in the English language have now been spoken for.

It would seem that this stems mainly from the drop in price of domain names, nearly ninety percent in over just ten years.

What does this mean for the everyday business? Well companies who haven't already registered their domains could have a hard time finding a suitable substitute if they find their business title has been taken.

With almost 9 and a half million dot com names and almost 20 million dot org, net and gov domains worldwide off the menu, it is easy to see why many companies have resorted to hiring web naming companies. But this service doesn't come cheap.

These hi powered brand guru's will locate the best possible domain for your company based on their high-end focus groups, mood boards and identity exploration techniques, and just a snip at £50,000.

Some of the companies currently enjoying this service include Lexicon, Idiom, Metaphor, NameLab, NameBase, Name/It, Namestormers and TrueNames.

Of course, one of the greatest problems facing anyone who is still looking for a domain name are cyber squatters. It seems that buying domain names on the cheap and then "Parking them" (leaving them inactive) can be quite a lucrative business. One court case showed this when musician STING lost his legal battle to evict Michael Urvan the legal owner of the website

sting.com amid claims that Urvan had offered to sell the domain for £16,500. Due to the word sting being a popular word amongst the English language the case was quashed.

Other victims of this type of brand hijacking include Microsoft in its battle to remove microsof.com and hotmaill.com. Many future cases are expected to arise until the registration and the regulation of domain names improves.



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