How important is the domain name for your business?

The role of your website, your contact with customers and your advertising plans all affect how much your business name and domain name matter. Start with your intended uses and ambitions to decide which qualities to prioritise and which compromises you can accept.

Published: 7 November 2026 · Updated: 7 November 2026

BEFORE YOU START

The same project can lead to very different uses

Let's return to our bicycle repair workshop. You could open a shop serving mainly local customers, with a website showing opening hours, services and contact details. Or you could develop an online shop selling second-hand bicycles to customers further afield.

Both businesses need to think about their domain name. But should they give it exactly the same importance? Think about how people will hear about the workshop, too. A recommendation from a neighbour, an online advert and a radio message ask different things of someone trying to find you.

YOUR PATH AT A GLANCE

- Understand what the website and email addresses will be used for.
- Consider customer journeys, planned campaigns and your marketing ambitions.
- Set your priorities, decide how much effort to invest and identify acceptable compromises.

Contents

What will you use your domain name for? . . . 2

How will customers find and contact you? . . . 2

What advertising campaigns are you planning? . . . 3

Which qualities should you prioritise? . . . 4

How much effort should you put into this choice? . . . 5

Key points / What to remember . . . 5

Mini-glossary . . . 6

Sources and method . . . 6

Read the article and find its tools online

CHAPTER 01

What will you use your domain name for?

EXPECTED RESULT

Connect your choice of domain name to how your business will work.

A domain name is used to reach your website and can also be used in your email addresses. Its role therefore depends on what you expect these tools to do. A website presenting your services does not play the same part in the business as a website handling every sale.

For the local workshop, the website can help an interested customer check opening hours or plan a visit. The business name, shopfront and recommendations from neighbours also help people discover it. A domain name that differs slightly from the business name may be a perfectly acceptable compromise, provided it remains easy to understand.

For a bicycle shop operating entirely online, the website is the place where sales happen. The domain name will be used to promote the shop and help customers find it again. Any difficulty in spelling or remembering it deserves particular attention. You might decide to spend more time researching it before settling on the business name.

Many projects sit somewhere between these two situations. A workshop might welcome customers in person, offer online bookings and sell a few accessories on its website. Look at your actual plans rather than relying on labels such as “local shop” or “online business”.

KEY POINT

The useful question is “What role will the website and email play in my business?” Your sector provides context, but it does not determine the importance of the domain name on its own.

CHAPTER 02

How will customers find and contact you?

EXPECTED RESULT

Identify situations where people need to understand, remember or write the domain name.

Imagine a customer’s journey. A neighbour recommends your workshop. The customer then searches for the business name online, opens the website and checks the opening hours. Another customer discovers a social media post and follows a link straight to your shop. They have not needed to remember the domain name in the same way.

This does not make the choice irrelevant when visitors follow links. The domain name is still visible and should fit the business they expect to find. If you often give it over the phone or in person, making it easy to understand and write becomes an obvious priority.

Consider email as well. A consultancy might have a very simple website but email its customers every day. Even if sales do not happen on the website, a domain name that is awkward to dictate can cause regular difficulties. Its importance cannot be measured only by the number of online orders.

For your project, write down two or three common situations. A customer might receive a quote by email, recommend you to someone else or try to find your website after a first visit. These will give you concrete uses to examine when comparing domain names.

CHAPTER 03

What advertising campaigns are you planning?

EXPECTED RESULT

Choose the business name and domain name with your intended communication channels in mind.

Your plans may include substantial campaigns online, by email, on television or on the radio. Your business name and domain name need to fit these ambitions too. They will be part of the messages you put out to help people recognise and find you.

Take a radio campaign for Second Spin. Listeners hear the business name and domain name, but cannot see them. If the domain name always needs spelling out, a hyphen requires an explanation or several spellings seem possible, consider whether it suits a spoken message.

Some listeners will later search for the business name. Others will try to type the domain name directly. The business name therefore needs to be easy to recognise and remember, while the domain name needs to help people reach the right website. Plan the two choices together.

DO THIS NOW

Imagine a short radio message

Play someone a message that introduces the business and gives its domain name, without showing how either is written. Then ask what they remember and how they would look for the website. Do not correct them while they listen. First observe what they understood. The more detailed tests in the next article will help you take this further.

Other channels raise different questions. In an online advert or email, someone can follow a link. On television, they may see the business name and domain name during the message. On a poster, they need to read them and find you later. If you combine several channels, check that the whole remains consistent and recognisable.

This matters for local shops too. A workshop relying mainly on word of mouth and one planning a radio campaign across the region have different communication needs. Conversely, an entirely online business may receive most of its visitors through links. Your sector matters, but your ambitions and planned campaigns also shape the qualities to prioritise.

The larger the role these campaigns play in your project, the more useful it is to spot difficulties before paying to create and run them. That is a reason to take care over the choice and test it properly. An advertising budget alone does not tell you what a reasonable price for a domain name would be.

Sources: [1]

CHAPTER 04

Which qualities should you prioritise?

EXPECTED RESULT

Choose useful priorities rather than seeking a domain name that is perfect on every measure.

A domain name can be short yet difficult to spell. Another may be slightly longer but immediately clear to your customers. Quality is therefore about more than character count or the absence of a hyphen.

Different uses, different priorities

In your business...	The quality to examine first
You often say the domain name aloud.	How easily someone can understand and write it after hearing it.
You plan radio advertising or other spoken messages.	How well people understand and remember the business name and domain name without seeing them.
Customers need to find the website after a first contact.	Memorability and a clear connection with the business name.
You communicate extensively by email.	The simplicity of the domain name in your email addresses.
Your customers use several languages.	Reading, pronunciation and possible ambiguities in those languages.
You plan to develop new services or markets.	A domain name that will continue to suit that development.

Afnic recommends considering qualities such as memorability and readability, then testing several candidates. These are useful starting points. Compare them with the ways your customers will use the domain name to decide your own priorities.

POINT TO WATCH

A domain name alone will not bring in customers

A simple domain name can make communication easier and help people find you. It does not replace a clear offer, a useful website or the work needed to make the business known.

Nor does it guarantee a better position in Google. Google explains that keywords in the domain name alone have very little effect on rankings. Start by choosing a domain name that suits the people who will use it.

Sources: [2], [3]

CHAPTER 05

How much effort should you put into this choice?

EXPECTED RESULT

Decide what deserves more research and what you are willing to accept.

Once you have clarified the uses and campaigns, you can decide where to invest effort. If the website is central to sales or you plan substantial promotion, reconsider a domain name that is difficult to communicate before committing to a logo and campaigns. If a simple solution already suits your business, you may have little to gain from extending the search just to save one character.

The same reasoning helps if your preferred domain name is already registered. You can compare buying it with another combination of business name and domain name. The asking price alone cannot tell you whether a purchase would help your project. Look at what the difference would offer in the situations you have identified.

Finally, think about a realistic development of the business. If the workshop already plans to collect bicycles from several towns, a domain name closely tied to one street might become less suitable. You do not need to anticipate every possible development, but you can avoid a limitation already visible in your plans.

DO THIS NOW

Write down your priorities before comparing domain names

Complete these sentences in your own words. “My domain name will mainly be used for… Customers will discover it through… My advertising campaigns will use… The business name and domain name therefore need to be easy to… I am willing to accept…” You can add these points to your naming brief.

You now have a basis for making a choice. In the next article, you can test the business name and possible domain names together, in the situations that really matter to your business.

Key points / What to remember

YOUR KEY POINTS

- The importance of the domain name depends on the role of the website, email and other uses in your business.
- A local shop may need a domain name that is very easy to communicate. An online business may receive many visitors through links. Look at actual customer journeys.
- Your marketing ambitions matter too. A radio campaign asks people to understand and remember the business name and domain name without seeing them.
- Choose your priorities, including understanding, recall, spelling, languages and the planned development of the project.
- A short or expensive domain name is not automatically the most suitable. It guarantees neither sales nor a better position in Google.
- Define acceptable compromises before comparing candidates or considering a purchase.

FURTHER READING

Test your name aloud, in writing and online

Compare your options when an obstacle appears

Mini-glossary

Term	In a few words
Domain name	A name used to reach a website, which can also be used in a business's email addresses.
Business information website	A website presenting the business, its services and contact details, without necessarily handling sales.
Online shop	A website where customers can order products or services.
Search engine optimisation	Work to make website pages understandable and accessible in search engine results.

Sources and method

The questions and examples used to assess domain name uses and campaigns are proposed by Wize. Afnic's general recommendations, its September 2018 study of domain names heard aloud and Google's explanations of search engine optimisation were consulted on 7 November 2026. The spoken-domain study involved 30 French-speaking participants in an experimental setting. It does not predict campaign returns or represent every audience in Luxembourg. Rules specific to .fr are not applied to .lu. This article offers neither a universal score nor an estimate of a domain name's market value.

1. Afnic - Choosing a domain name for spoken communication (September 2018, in French)
A study of recall and spelling after hearing domain names, conducted in 2018 with 30 French-speaking participants. It does not measure advertising returns or represent every audience in Luxembourg.
https://www.afnic.fr/wp-media/uploads/2021/01/Choisr_un_domaine_diffuse_a_loral_etude_complete.pdf

2. Afnic - Choosing a domain name (in French)
General recommendations on memorability, readability and testing with users. Rules specific to .fr are not applied to .lu.
https://www.afnic.fr/noms-de-domaine/tout-savoir/creer-un-nom-de-domaine/

3. Google Search Central - SEO Starter Guide
The limited effect of keywords in a domain name on Google rankings. No choice of domain name guarantees a top position.
https://developers.google.com/search/docs/fundamentals/seo-starter-guide

References in brackets identify the sources above.