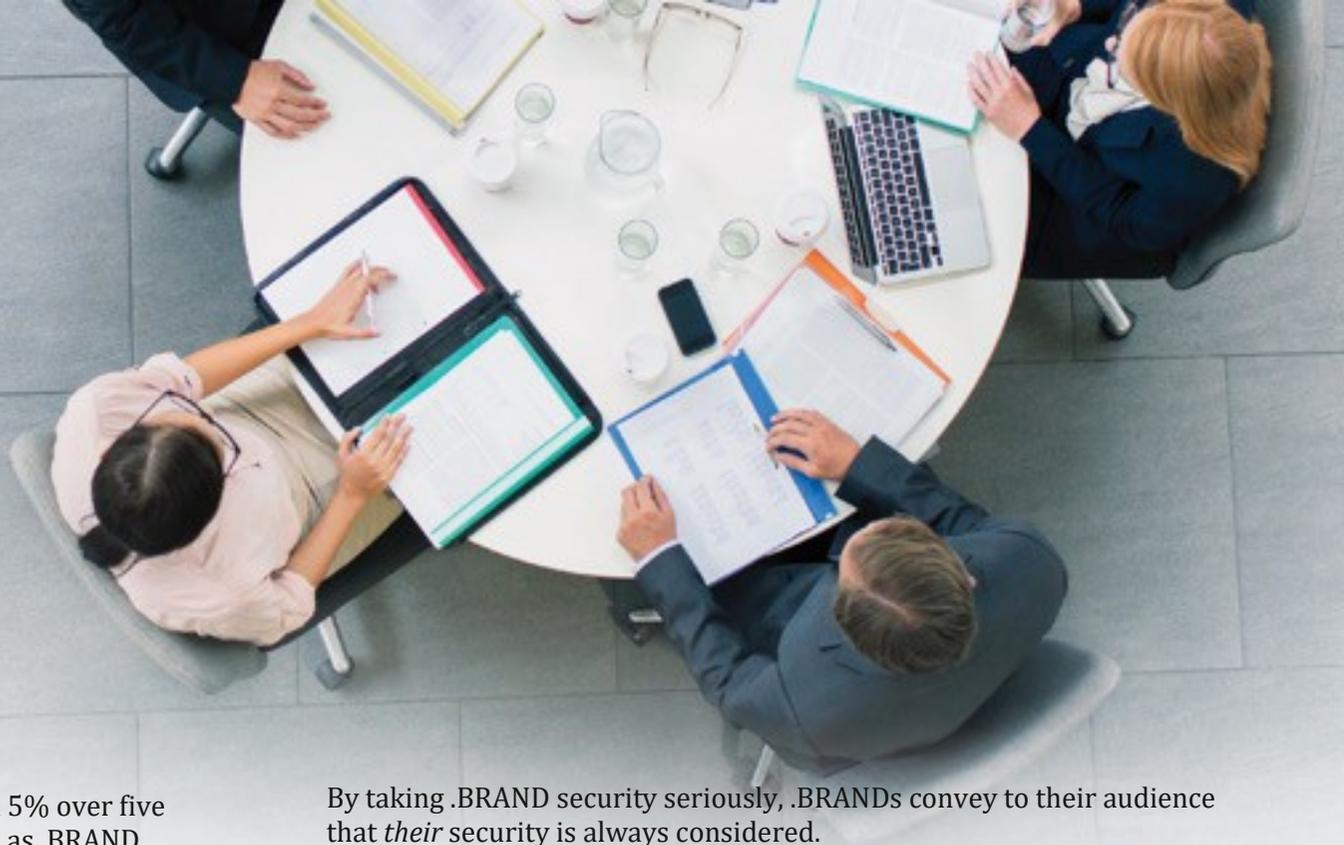




**CSC Dot Brand
Insights Report**
October 2019



Executive summary

The number of activated .BRANDs increased by more than 5% over five months while the total number of active domains (defined as .BRAND domains that resolved to content) maintained its peak of 74% over the same time period. This tells us that .BRAND owners are commendably hard at work activating their .BRAND domain names as they are registered.

Other observations include a 4% jump in the number of active domain names that use HTTPs and an increase of city domain names ending in .BRANDs.

.BRAND owners create all rules within their .BRANDs. They can provide additional security and trust within their .BRAND ecosystem by insisting that every online interaction that takes place between their brands and their audiences only occurs on a .BRAND website.

Going further, .BRAND owners can ensure that every .BRAND site has domain name system security extensions (DNSSEC) in use, digital certificates, and two-factor authentication—and that all .BRAND domains used for email use domain-based message authentication reporting and conformance (DMARC).

By taking .BRAND security seriously, .BRANDs convey to their audience that *their* security is always considered.

We curate and share what six .BRANDs have to say about their domains, and what they are intent on communicating to the world when they migrate away from their legacy websites to their new .BRAND homes. Jump to [Dot brands: reasons to migrate](#).

Tensions from the U.S.-China trade war, the contraction of numerous economies, negative interest rates, and growing income inequality have occupied financial headlines for the most part of this year. In these times of economic turmoil, large organizations grapple with further challenges from an evolving regulatory landscape, a tightening labor market, and disruptions from technology and social media.

Soon, we'll experience what new challenges are in store for corporations in the 2020s, and how .BRANDs will help you overcome challenges of the new economy. Jump to [How your .BRAND can help overcome challenges of the new economy](#) to find out what tactics you can deploy with your .BRAND.

Number of activated dot brands

186

Top 5 active industry sectors

Top 10 activated dot brands

Rank	TLD	# Activations	Industry
1 Last report: 1	→ dvag	3117 +316	Finance and money
2 Last report: 2	→ mma	1641 -3	Insurance
3 Last report: 3	→ audi	1336 +24	Automotive, tires, other vehicles
4 Last report: 4	→ allfinanz	877 +93	Insurance
5 Last report: 5	→ seat	673 +15	Automotive, tires, other vehicles
6 Last report: 6	→ neustar	647 +18	Internet services
7 Last report: 7	→ mini	611 +1	Automotive, tires, other vehicles
8 Last report: 9	↑ crs	578 -+106	Associations and clubs
9 Last report: 8	↓ gmx	473 --+66	Internet services
10 Last report: 10	→ aco	304 +14	Construction, engineering, equipment

- 1 Insurance
- 2 Automotive, tires, and other vehicles
- 3 Finance and money
- 4 Internet services
- 5 Associations and clubs

Activated dot brands

.BRANDS that have registered five or more domain names in their respective .BRAND top-level domain (TLD).

Active domains

.BRAND domain names that resolve to meaningful content, including those that redirect to existing websites using 301 and 302 redirects. For an accurate representation of the level of activation in .BRAND domains, we have omitted NIC.TLD and testing domains.

Apart from .CRS and .GMX that switched places, all .BRANDs remained in their spots. .DVAG and .ALLFINANZ activate shared information sites while members of Federated Co-operatives Limited are allocated one .CRS website each.

Active dot brand domain names

74%

unchanged since last report

Percentage of active domains using HTTPS

87%

+ 4% since last report



■ Inactive ■ Active

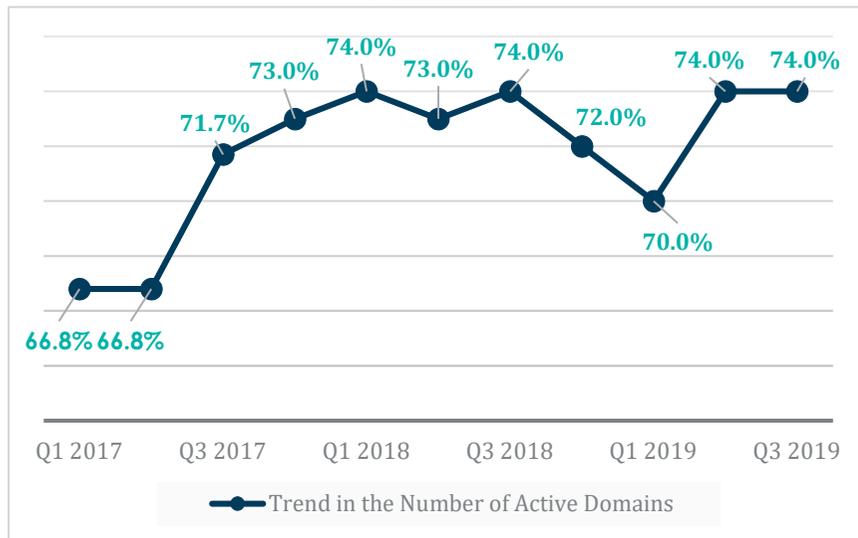


■ No SSL ■ SSL

As of the last report, nearly three quarters of .BRAND domain names are active, resolving to meaningful content. Compared to all registered domains globally, where merely 12% resolve to content, .BRAND domain names have a far higher rate of use. Activation and registration numbers are largely driven by the top activated .BRAND and do not reflect the overall rate of activation across .BRANDs with fewer domains.

Active .BRAND TLD sites are increasingly implementing digital certificates. More .BRAND websites and microsites use the HTTPS protocol compared to non-.BRAND websites. This is a sign that .BRAND sites are very responsive to calls from search engines for HTTPS to be implemented to improve user experiences in terms of security and reliability.

Trend in the number of active domains



This quarter, the number of active domain names as a percentage of all register .BRAND domain names maintained its three year peak of 74%. The year 2020 may bring higher peaks, for .BRANDs are expected to rev up adoption throughout the year as the industry receives further news of the Round 2 .BRAND application framework from ICANN. Percentages were derived from data one month after the end of each calendar quarter.

Top 5 registered domain names

- 1 home
- 2 www
- 3 my
- 4 careers
- 5 jobs

“Home” and “www” have a huge lead over the third most popular .BRAND domain name. “My” is used for secure login portals, links to authentic mobile apps, and even as a URL shortener in social media content. “Careers” and “jobs” are popular too, as .BRAND owners recognize that innovation and industry leadership are intrinsic qualities their .BRANDs provide, and are therefore useful for attracting the best talents to their organizations.

Top 5 registered two-character domain names



Third place “it” displaced “de” while “uk” dropped off from the Top 5 list entirely. “my,” “go,” and “id” are popularly used to represent secure login portals, network logins, action sites, and sites with personalized content. Most two characters are eligible for registration in any .BRAND except for those reserved for intergovernmental associations such as “au” for the African Union, “ec” for the European Commission, and “eu” for the European Union. If you are unsure of the eligibility of any two character domain, please consult newgtlds@cscinfo.com.

Top 5 non two-character geographic domain names



Aligned with our prediction that more city names will join the list, “london” has jumped into the second spot, while country name “usa” has dropped off the Top 5 list. Meanwhile, “global,” “worldwide,” and “asia” continue to be popular representations of corporate websites. These can be used to drive home the message that the corporate entity is both successful and reliable, and can be also used as online directories of global offices.



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Active domains with an Alexa ranking (high-traffic sites)

124

Alexa.com ranks websites based on their estimated traffic.

The Alexa Top 1M is a listing of the million most popular sites on the web based on traffic, and has been commonly used by the domain industry for many years.

Dot brand domain	Current Alexa ranking	Previous Alexa ranking
about.google	1,345	1,830
oui.sncf	1,660	2,173
express.dhl	1,842	--
mabanque.bnpparibas	3,569	3,236
logistics.dhl	5,222	4,183



Do you need advice on your dot brand?

Request a CSC .BRAND strategic analysis.

Dot brands: reasons to migrate

You decide all rules in your .BRAND ecosystem.

You can build additional security and trust online by insisting that the only interactions you'll have with your audience happens within your .BRAND sites, and all the sites under your .BRAND deploy security tools.

You can assign standardized .BRAND sites to your dealers, brokers, franchisees, and independent consultants, strengthening compliance management of affiliates and business partners.

By creating a trusted neighborhood for your .BRAND, you are communicating to your audience that you take their security seriously.

Hear what .BRANDs have to say about migrating from .COM to .BRAND.

HOME.KPMG

Alexa ranking: 13,477
Monthly unique visitors: 226,000

The move enhances the KPMG brand through a strong, simplified name, and provides end users with a level of assurance that any site that ends with .KPMG is owned and operated by KPMG.

Since the top level domain can only be used by KPMG, visitors to sites that use the new top level domain can easily confirm its authenticity and be assured that the information they contain is reliable and secure.



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GLOBAL.CANON

Alexa ranking: 41,669
Monthly unique visitors: 151,000

Because ".CANON" can only be used by Canon Group companies and services, visitors to sites that use the new TLD can easily confirm their authenticity and be assured that the information they contain is reliable. Additionally, by leveraging the simplicity of the TLD, which is easy to remember and easy to understand, Canon aims to enhance the Company's global brand value.

OUI.SNCF

Alexa ranking: 1,660
Monthly unique visitors: 4,790,000

"The extension has allowed us to create simple URLs that are easily remembered, for services in line with the company's new promises. The deployment began in December 2017 with the redesign of voyages-sncf.com as OUI.SNCF. Since then, we have registered other URLs under the .BRAND TLD for daily services eagerly awaited by our customers such as Wi-Fi on board our trains (WIFI.SNCF and WIFITER.SNCF) and for daughter brands such as garesetconnexions.sncf."

MABANQUE.BNPPARIBAS

Alexa ranking: 3,569
Monthly unique visitors: 2,790,000

Any address ending with .BNPPARIBAS is managed by BNP Paribas and has an advanced security certificate. Even more reliable, this new extension now acts as a signature.

HOME.CERN

Alexa ranking: 118,527
Monthly unique visitors: 27,500

"Before .CERN, our websites were subdomains within our legacy domain name CERN.CH. But the .CH domain was a consequence of the Organization having its administration in Switzerland and being an early adopter of the technology. But, consequently, it didn't reflect the truly international nature of CERN as an intergovernmental organization. This was one of the advantages of exploring a move to .CERN across the organization."

HOME.SAXO

Alexa ranking: 27,424
Monthly unique visitors: 112,000

"Having all our online presence moved to HOME.SAXO was an exercise in reducing complexity, and it was a pretty successful exercise, in most parts. The teams maintaining each site (directory) are now more efficient and feel more empowered as they are able to work faster and speed up installations of any changes or updates that are in relation to campaigns. We are essentially in greater control of all our sites, even throughout further modifications and revisions, but we also need to be fluid enough to respond effectively to changes.

"As long as we have anything that is going to be publicly announced, or engage the public in any shape or form—plus likely to be crawled by search engines—we put them on .SAXO so as to add SEO value."

Sources: [KPMG press release](#), [Canon press release](#), [Oui.sncf: AFNIC blog](#), [Mabanque.bnpparibas: TrademarksAndBrandsOnline.com news article](#)



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How your .BRAND can overcome challenges of the new economy

Tensions from the U.S.-China trade war, the contraction of numerous economies, negative interest rates, and growing income inequality have occupied financial headlines for the most part of this year.

In these times of economic turmoil, large organizations grapple with further challenges from an evolving regulatory landscape, a tightening labor market, and disruptions from technology and social media.

How can business executives overcome these challenges and turn them into opportunities for growth in the 2020s?

By strengthening the core in five ways:

- Establishing a go-to-market strategy
- Attracting and retaining talent
- Being nimble to regulatory changes and disruptions from tech
- Attracting and retaining customers in a post-truth world
- Securing data flows

If you're reading this, you already have or are contemplating a tool that can set you apart from the competition—a .BRAND. We'll show you how you can adopt a .BRAND as your unique engine for growth.



Establishing a go-to-market strategy

Go-to-market¹ strategy is an organization's plan to deliver their *unique value proposition* to customers and *achieve competitive advantage* using their inside and outside resources (e.g., sales force and distributors).

In the earliest stages of developing a go-to-market strategy for a new product or service, the company has to initially conduct accurate research to define the target market.

The target market can be defined using myriad segmentation methods not limited to geographic location, industry, or how the target market uses the product or service.

Regardless of market segment, most, to a certain extent, are influenced by the online value proposition² (OVP) of the internet. The OVP equates to a brand adding value for its audience and this can be achieved in a number of ways.

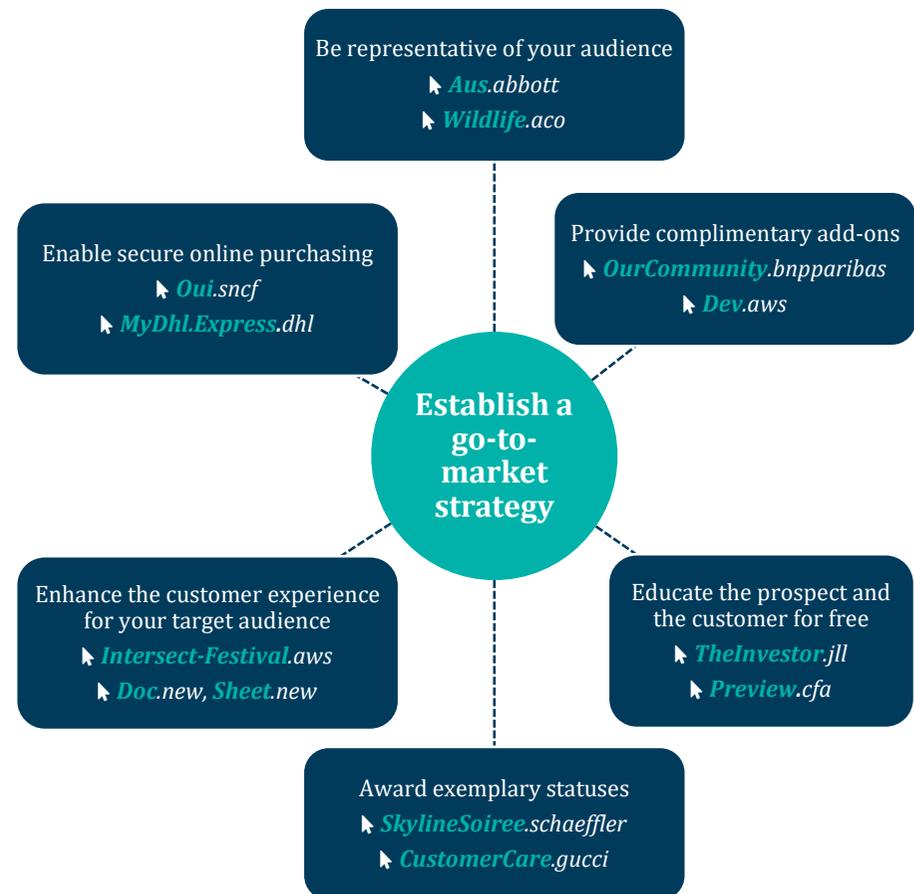
The OVP today is often synonymous with:

- Being readily accessible
- Providing complimentary add-ons
- Sharing thought leadership (aka, educating the customer for free)
- Awarding exemplary statuses
- Enhancing the customer experience

These are in addition to ensuring the customer is satisfied with the tool they paid for.

How your dot brand can be used

Here are numerous tactics that you can use to deliver your OVP.



Attracting and retaining talent

In the past, the media has postulated the idea that robots will replace humans in the workforce. There's even a website³ to check to find out if your job is safe.

While we now learn that automation can indeed affect jobs with "predictable physical and cognitive tasks⁴", jobs that tend to be more creative, require higher interpersonal social skills, or higher education are somewhat more secure.

Although the pool of skilled labor may grow partly due to automation, there will also be more than ever jostling for the best talent.

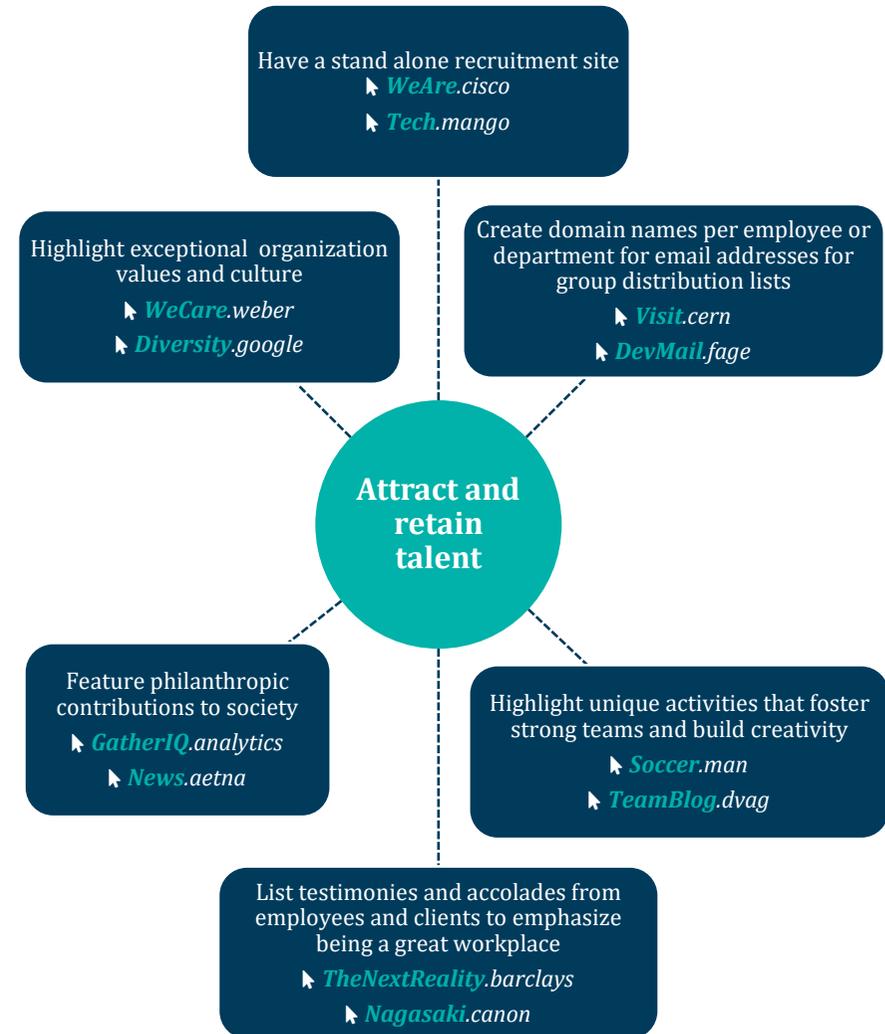
We already see this in the information security sector.

CircleID⁵ reported in early August, "with companies realizing the threat of hefty fines, lawsuits, and executive resignations that can follow security breaches, companies are scrambling to scoop up scarce security experts."

Corporations will fight to retain talent and attract the very best as their organizations, facing tidal waves of change, must become more sophisticated to distance themselves from the competition.

How your dot brand can be used

Your brand's reputation is vital in recruiting and retaining people with aptitude. Your .BRAND in itself will set you apart from the competition for as long as you use it in recruitment drives and to build up brand loyalty within the organization.





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Being nimble to regulatory and tech disruptions

When the U.S. government banned U.S. companies from selling to Huawei at the start of the U.S.-China trade war, many corporations had to build up inventory and seek alternative suppliers before the ban was enforced.

Blockchain, machine learning, deep neural networks, AI, cloud computing, the internet of things, online marketplaces, autonomous machines, robotics, and other significant tech disrupters are not only making billions⁶, they're taking market share at scale because their business models identify and agitate market needs previously unnoticed by legacy corporations.

The advantage tech unicorns bring to large corporations is learning. From *their* successes and failures, corporations can better understand new technologies, how these work, and how they can be applied to their businesses.

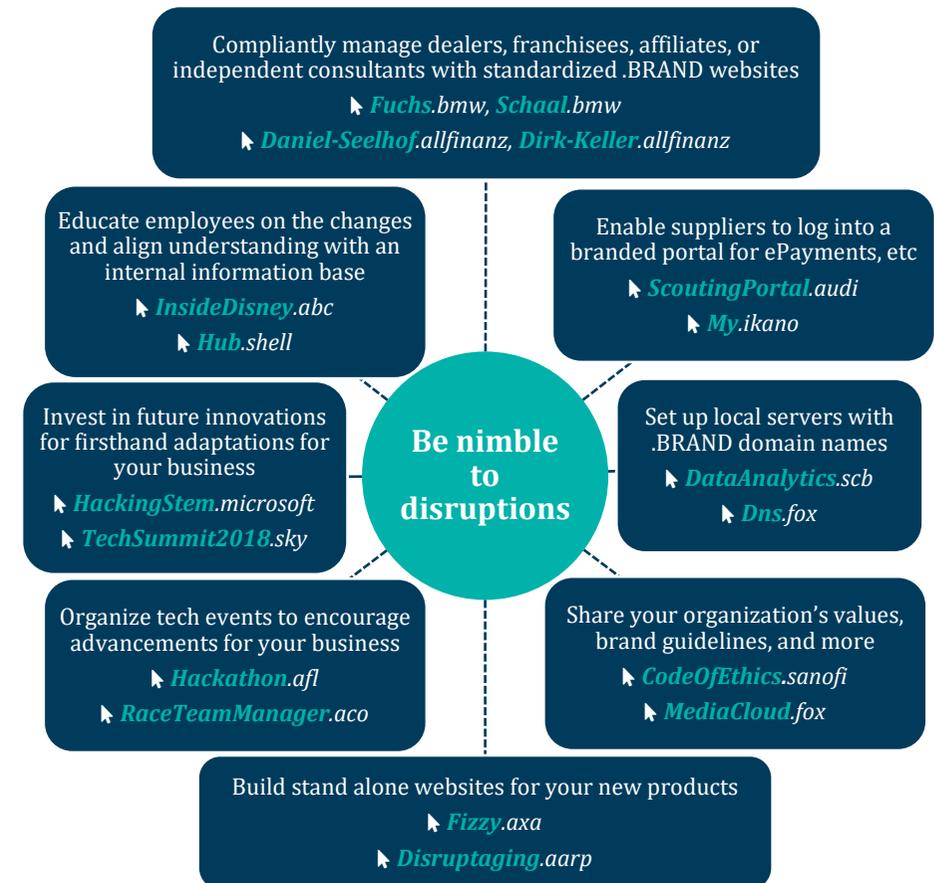
Whether disruptions are from regulatory changes or tech, market share and the new tools alike wane and grow with time. Being nimble in changing workflows and embracing changes are key to sustaining success.

How your dot brand can be used

Adapting new tech to your business can result in innovations, better workflows, new products and services, and more in the long run. Establishing good rapport with existing and new suppliers is useful in building up sensitivity to your organization's needs, having better input and information to enhance your business, ramping up priority status for your organization in their output pipeline, improving outcomes for price negotiations, and in growing your business. After all, *if you are successful, they are successful.*

Again, we say, you decide all the rules in your .BRAND ecosystem. You can build additional security and trust online by insisting that the only interactions you'll

have with your audience happen within your .BRAND, and all those sites deploy DNSSEC, digital certificates, and two-factor authentication. You can also decide that all your .BRAND domains used for email use DMARC. By going above and beyond regulatory requirements, you communicate to your audience that you take their security seriously.



Attracting and retaining customers in a post-truth world

According to a Q3 2018 survey⁷ conducted by Pew Research in the U.S., Reddit, LinkedIn®, YouTube™, Twitter®, and Facebook®, in that order, have the largest proportion of users whom Pew described as “news focused,” meaning they use those sites to get news. Of the news focused users, 42% are between 30 to 49 years old, and the same percentage of them have received college education or higher.

In the November 2016 U.S. presidential elections⁸, top fake news election stories generated more total engagement on Facebook than the top election stories from the 19 major news outlets combined.

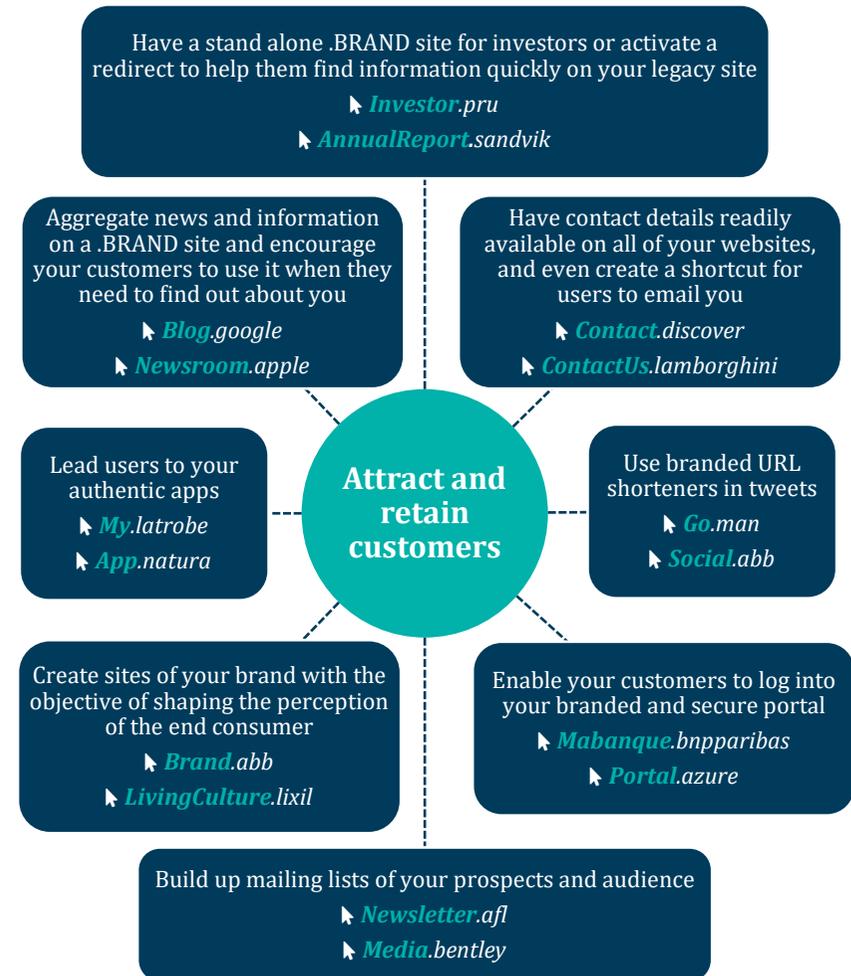
What does this mean for public corporations?

Public corporations raise funds in capital markets around the world and answer to their investors as well as (broad-based) buy-in from the public at large. Corporations not only need to stay close to investors and their immediate customers, but they also need to maintain a pleasant public image, be present, and be accessible to the retail market—especially in times of change and uncertainty.

How your dot brand can be used

Build your own platforms for each group of users and employ these extensively while relying less on social media sites. The idea is to have investors, the media, customers, and consumers use your .BRAND sites when they need to find out about you or engage with you. *Being accessible is key.*

By building up a .BRAND ecosystem, you are strengthening trust for all online interactions with your brand. *Anything ending with your .BRAND can only be from you.*





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Securing data flows

In 2018, privacy regulations such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in Europe, the updated Privacy Act in Australia, and the California Consumer Privacy Act were implemented. These come with stricter rules and heftier punishments for offending institutions than the privacy policies that were already in place in 42 other nations. Companies hired security experts, changed processes and upgraded systems to accommodate these regulations; many are still in the process of making changes at the time of writing.

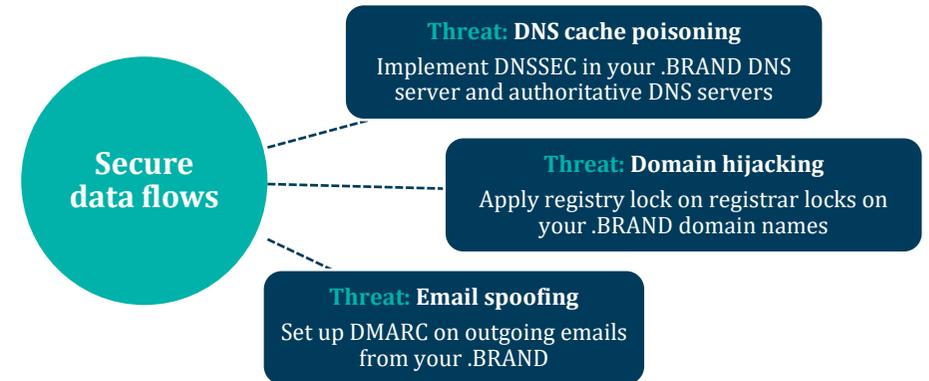
In our February report, we described that data breaches can happen for a variety of reasons. Sometimes, data is mishandled or sold to third parties. Sometimes, databases are hacked. Elsewhere, loopholes in an organization's online infrastructure leave information unprotected.

It's in the last two categories—hacking and loopholes—that .BRAND owners can use the power of their . BRAND to overcome security threats such as DNS cache poisoning, domain hijacking, and email spoofing.

How your dot brand can be used

Unlike most organizations whose domain names end in a generic top-level domain such as .COM, .BRANDs are uniquely positioned to enforce security tactics because the branded domain owns and controls their DNS infrastructure.

Here is a brief recap of the tactics .BRANDs can use to mitigate the respective security threat. For a detailed read, please refer to our February 2019 CSC Dot Brand Insights Report.



Conclusion

On August 19, 2019, 181 leaders of some of America's biggest companies voted in The Business Roundtable⁹ to change the rhetoric of the purpose of a corporation.

Changes pledged by the companies include fairer employee compensation and benefits, fostering diversity, inclusion, dignity, respect, and better protection of the environment.

As more companies recognize that investing in their workers and communities is the only way to be successful over the long term, it's more important than ever to communicate these changes in the public .BRAND domain. These communications anchor the organization's causes and ensure they're heard.

For the many ways your business can benefit from your .BRAND, email us at newgtlds@cscinfo.com.

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About CSC

CSC supports companies that are making significant investments in their security posture by exposing blind spots that exist within fundamental internet assets such as domain names, DNS, and digital certificates. By leveraging our proprietary security solutions, CSC secures companies from cyber threats to their digital assets, helping them avoid devastating revenue loss, brand reputation damage, or significant financial penalties as a result of policies like GDPR. Along with internet assets, CSC protects online brands that are being exploited via counterfeit websites, fraud, and IP violations, and helps monitor and mitigate this, providing enforcement and advisory services to protect many of the world's largest brands.

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