



# An Analysis of the Most Infringed Terms within Domain Names

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Domain name infringers target names that deliver the most value. Don't allow a cybersquatter to target your brand – instead, familiarize yourself with the tactics used by domain name infringers, and use that knowledge to protect your intellectual property. Recent research conducted by Corporation Service Company (CSC) into the most common terms used by domain name infringers can help you proactively identify and register important variations of your domain names and prioritize names that you need to enforce.

Major Findings from the CSC Research Team:

- Third parties commonly register the prefix “www” in conjunction with a brand name – for example, “wwwbrand.com”.
- Third parties commonly register the suffix “online” in conjunction with a brand name – for example, “brandonline.com”.
- Of 100 top corporate domain owners, 64% do not own these common variations of their primary domain names.
- Domain name infringers use 30 common terms to register infringing domains, 10 of which were identified in two independent research findings.
- Approximately 80% of third-party domain names containing the “www” prefix (“wwwbrand.com”) point to pay-per-click advertising sites.
- Of the domain names containing the “www” prefix owned by brand owners themselves, 67% do not point to a live Web site.
- Companies that do not own a variation of their domain name containing the “www” prefix or do not properly direct it to their Web site could lose 1% of their site’s traffic.



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## II. Background

Through 2009, companies and individuals had registered more than 192 million domain names. Although the growth in domain name registrations has slowed, 2009 registrations still represented a 15% increase vs. 2008.

With more than 700 domain name extensions available, an increase in internationalized domain names, relaxed registry requirements, and the upcoming launch of new gTLDs, many companies struggle with this question: "Which domain names should we own?"

To register one brand name across all extensions, even with no variations, can cost a company hundreds of thousands of dollars.

To help our customers with their domain name strategies, CSC set an objective to identify the most infringed terms for brand names. For example, common variations registered by domain name infringers include **term + brand.com** or **brand + term.com**.

Our research examined three data sets:

1. The Cyberscape research CSC carried out on more than 400,000 domains that contained brand names and variations
2. An analysis of Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (UDRP) cases filed
3. 100 top corporate domain name owners

CSC researched the owners of the domain names in question, the content found on the corresponding Web sites, and how much traffic each site receives.



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## III. Methodology and Findings

### Cyberscape Research

The CSC professional services team analyzed data for 100 randomly selected brands from a core list of 300. The brands we researched came from 23 different industry sectors. More than 400,000 domain registrations were examined in the search.

Analysis of the data indicated that a remarkable 84% of the registered domain names containing a defined brand did not belong to the legitimate brand owner. Instead, they belonged to a third-party registrant.

CSC analyzed the most commonly registered terms by domain name infringers through analysis of common prefixes (like “wwwbrand.com” or “mybrand.com”) and suffixes (like “brandonline.com” or “brandcom.com”).

Table 1: Cyberscape Most Common Prefixes and Suffixes

Prefix	Rank
www	1
my	2
e	3
i	4
buy	5
shop	6
the	7
new	8
ww	9
go	10

Suffix	Rank
online	1
s	2
usa	3
tv	4
sucks	5
store	6
shop	7
com	8
world	9
e	10



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## UDRP Research

CSC aggregated all Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (UDRP) disputes filed between January 2000 and May 2009 through the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the National Arbitration Forum (NAF). Our research examined more than 45,000 domains filed during this timeframe. We did not analyze disputes through country code top-level domain (ccTLD) operators (like Nominet for .uk) that manage their own dispute process.

Like with our Cyberscape research, our UDRP research revealed the prevalence of “www” prefixes and “online” suffixes among variations of domain names under dispute. In fact, five terms from our UDRP findings (see Table 2 below) matched our findings from the Cyberscape research report.

Common prefixes and suffixes identified from this research include more industry-specific terms. For example, because many pharmaceutical companies file disputes, “generic” appears as a common prefix.

Table 2: UDRP Most Common Prefixes and Suffixes

Prefix	Rank
www	1
buy	2
my	3
the	4
e	5
free	6
generic	7
online	8
order	9
cheap	10

Suffix	Total
online	1
casino	2
usa	3
store	4
hotel	5
hotels	6
com	7
shop	8
bank	9
r	10



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## 100 Top Corporate Domain Owners

### Domain Name Ownership

To determine whether the common prefixes and suffixes we identified in our Cyberscape and UDRP research were truly the most commonly infringed terms, CSC analyzed domain name data from 100 of the top corporate domain owners.

Our research team examined the main corporate Web site (using the .com extension) for each of the 100 companies on our list. In total, these 100 companies have more than 5,000 domain names under their management. CSC evaluated whether domain name infringers had registered variations of the companies' domain names with "www" prefixes or "online" suffixes.

Remarkably, 64% of the domain names identified using these variations did not belong to the brand holder. In fact, in some cases, no one has registered the domain name variation at all.

From this simple analysis, CSC believes that the "www" prefix and "online" suffix represent the most commonly used domain name variations for brand infringement. Companies should consider these two variations as part of their domain name strategy.

### Content

For the 100 companies we researched, CSC also analyzed the content of the Web pages reached by visiting domain name variations including the "www" prefix and "online" suffix. We encountered markedly different results for these two variations.



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For variations of domain names including the “www” prefix:

- Of variations owned by third parties (infringers), more than 80% pointed to pay-per-click advertising sites.
- Of variations owned by brand owners themselves, 67% did not point to any Web site.

Variations of domain names including the “online” suffix proved more intuitive and less likely to attract traffic as a result of typos:

- Only 38% of third-party registrations pointed to pay-per-click advertising sites.
- Only 22% of these domain names failed to point to any Web site.
- Approximately 26% pointed to legitimate web sites.

### **Traffic**

As part of this research, the CSC research team wanted to empirically determine whether these domain name variations result in legitimate Web traffic.

Based on the high number of infringers who redirect domain name variations to pay-per-click advertising sites, we assumed that these sites received a large number of visits.

Where we could obtain Web visit history, CSC examined domain name traffic for names that include the “www” prefix. These sites experienced a great deal of variability in traffic.



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Based on our analysis, CSC concluded that the main factors that influence Web traffic include:

1. The domain name extension
2. Whether the domain name represents an exact match to the brand name
3. The number of visitors the “main site” attracts
4. Whether the brand represents a consumer vs. a business

### IV. A Real-World Example

CSC cannot publish examples or research related to specific domain names owned by the 100 companies. However, we can provide a real-world example using domain names owned by CSC.

Although we maintain many registrations, CSC uses [www.cscglobal.com](http://www.cscglobal.com) as our primary domain name. Since we provide business-to-business services, our Web traffic is less than that of Web site targeting consumers. However, we have incorporated the registration of domain name variations, including the “www” prefix, into our domain name strategy.

Currently, traffic from “wwwcscglobal.com” represents approximately 1% of all CSC Web traffic. Though this percentage sounds small, consider its impact on your Web site. Does your site bring in 1,000,000 visitors per day? If your traffic follows the same pattern, you could be missing 10,000 visitors per day or 3,650,000 in a year, if you haven’t registered this simple domain name variation.

The traffic to a “wwwbrand” Business to Consumer site could even be significantly higher since consumers using mobile devices are more likely to make a typo than the majority of CSC’s contacts who are business professionals





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sitting at their desks.

Businesses must also ask themselves what their current and potential customers see when they visit a third party's variation of your domain name. Pay-per-click advertising sites may look innocuous, but they often advertise your competition. You could potentially lose your Web traffic and revenue to one of your competitors.

Consider how much your marketing department spends on online marketing. How much does your organization pay for a click on an online advertisement? Assuming that you pay \$1 per click, your marketing department must spend an extra \$3,650,000 per year to obtain 3,650,000 visitors.

Alternately, your marketing department could invest a small cost per year on a .com domain name. You can recoup the cost of the domain name within hours of beginning to use it.

In future research, CSC plans to investigate how "domainers", or people who register domain names, research popular product names. This research involves identifying keyword search traffic and Cost Per Click (CPC) value on a global or country basis in order to capitalize on direct navigation traffic with domains.

For example, the keyword term "EbayIndia" gets approximately 150,000 exact-match searches in all the search engines within India. It has a CPC value of \$0.38. Therefore, according to our traffic estimation models, the URL [www.Ebayindia.in](http://www.Ebayindia.in) would be a very profitable domain name. However, a third party currently owns that domain name and directs it to a pay-per-click advertising site.





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The issue is compounded if the targeted domain name is optimized to achieve better positioning in the organic results of search engines or the domainer markets the infringing site using social media, email campaigns, or other Web 2.0 platforms. Experienced domainers also leverage the fact that search engines seem to give preferential treatment to “keyword-rich domains” in com, .net, .org, and the most popular commercial domain extensions in the local market.

For instance, if you visit [www.google.co.uk](http://www.google.co.uk) and type in “Wii Consoles”, the first listing in the search engine results is [www.Wii-Consoles.co.uk](http://www.Wii-Consoles.co.uk). The Nintendo-owned Web site [www.Nintendo.com/wii](http://www.Nintendo.com/wii) has the eighth spot. At [www.google.com](http://www.google.com), the same search would have listed the Nintendo-owned Web site as the first result.

### V. Conclusion

Companies cannot register every permutation of their brands in all domain extensions. However, brand owners can understand infringement patterns and use that knowledge to help mitigate risk and drive growth in Web traffic.

Out of the 445,000 records analyzed by CSC, we identified 30 terms that can make a measurable impact on the way that companies like yours manage your domain name portfolio and protect your brand.

By incorporating our findings into your domain name registration strategy, you can help stop infringers and increase your marketing efforts.

Third parties register these valuable domain name variations in order to monetize their Web traffic. Although you certainly won’t monetize them in the same way, your marketing department can take advantage of these simple, effective, and measurable ways to drive more traffic to your Web sites.



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## About Corporation Service Company

Corporation Service Company, a privately held company headquartered in Wilmington, Delaware, is a leading provider of legal and financial services for many of the world's largest companies, law firms, and financial institutions. Founded in 1899, CSC offers clients an integrated, comprehensive portfolio of services that includes corporate compliance and governance, entity management, litigation and matter management, public record document and retrieval, uniform commercial code, trademark and domain monitoring, motor vehicle titling, and registered agent services. To learn more about CSC, visit [www.cscglobal.com](http://www.cscglobal.com) or call 800-927-9800 or +44 (0)207565 4090.