

A DECADE IN DOMAINS

2010-2020

Presented by MarkUpgrade



Part5

Main Points



1 Brands simplified their names

2 Brands rebranded: complete name change

3 Short & sweet: brands picked short names

4 Descriptive names

5 Personal names as brands

6 Generation Alpha of brands

7 Epic fails of the decade

8 Direct to consumer brands that shine

9 Blockchain and AI brands

Blockchain and AI brands

Blockchain started its journey across the world on January 3rd, 2009, in the wake of a global financial crisis. A mysterious figure - Satoshi Nakamoto launched a virtual currency named Bitcoin that functioned on what he called a « Proof of Work chain. ».

By December 2010 Satoshi disappeared as mysteriously as he appeared and stopped communication with the world. But for blockchain that was only the beginning. In the decade to follow we saw blockchain giants raising and falling, crypto currencies being accepted widely across the world, regulations changing and adapting, even countries accepting tax payments in Bitcoin! What's next? Only time will show but let's look at the names some of the most known players in the field have chosen.



“If you don’t give the market the story to talk about, they’ll define your brand’s story for you.”

- David Brier -

Robinhood.com

Founded in April 18, 2013, Robinhood is a U.S.-based financial services company that offers people the ability to invest in stocks, ETFs, and options through Robinhood Financial and crypto trading through Robinhood Crypto. According to Wikipedia, the company's name comes from its mission to "provide everyone with access to the financial markets, not just the wealthy".

The company has secured the exact brand match domain name Robinhood.com and their website was set for the first time on 28th February 2014. The domain name is 24 years old, back in 2000 it was owned by Apple and later on redirected to SpeedSite.com



Blockchain.com

Launched in 2011, Blockchain.com (formerly Blockchain.info) is a Bitcoin block explorer service, as well as a cryptocurrency wallet supporting Bitcoin, Bitcoin Cash, and Ethereum. Nearly 9 years after the launch, the company has grown from a small data-focused website for early adopters to the most trusted crypto platform with products used by people in every corner of the globe. The name of the company makes a reference to bitcoin, along with other cryptocurrencies. However, Blockchain is a bitcoin startup that is focused on current applications, rather than a company building blockchain software.

The company started off with the domain name Blockchain.Info but, in order to remove any confusion they changed their brand name from Blockchain to Blockchain.com on December 17, 2019.

“We think it’s really important that people understand what crypto is and the power of owning their own financial future. That’s hard to do when our name in and of itself isn’t very clear.”

Peter Smith, CEO and Co-founder of Blockchain.com

In December 2014, the company has reached a five-year deal to manage the premium domain name ‘www.bitcoin.com’. Previously the domain was used by Coinbase as a customer acquisition channel.

Bitcoin.com

Bitcoin.com is a company that hosts a Bitcoin-related web portal and provides a number of Bitcoin and Bitcoin Cash services such as purchasing and selling these cryptocurrencies. The company's CEO, Roger Ver, gained control of the Bitcoin.com domain name in April 2014 when he leased it to Blockchain.info, and then later to OKCoin.

In May 2015, OKCoin announced that the company will no longer be managing the domain Bitcoin.com, due to contract conflict with domain owner Roger Ver. In June 2015, Roger Ver re-launched Bitcoin.com dedicating it to helping and grow the Bitcoin network. In November 2017, the Bitcoin.com wallet was ranked third on Google for that search term and was in the top five search results at the Google Play store.

Ethereum.org

Ethereum is an open source, public, blockchain-based distributed computing platform and operating system featuring smart contract (scripting) functionality. Ethereum was officially announced on the Bitcointalk forum in 2014.

One fine day, Vitalik Buterin, the Co-Founder of Ethereum was browsing through a list of elements from science fiction on Wikipedia. He came across the word Ethereum and he liked it more in comparison with all the other words as this word consisted of another deep word, Ether. Ether refers to the hypothetical invisible medium which permeates the universe and permits the light to travel. This is how Buterin came to a decision of naming his network Ethereum. The company broke into the mainstream in early 2017 when the price of ETH increased by 1000 percent over the course of a couple months.

The company uses the domain name ethereum.org. The .com doesn't resolve and is registered to someone in the Cayman Islands. The first activity on the domain can be traced back to 2013 but we could not locate any functioning website on it ever since. In 2017 the domain name was listed for sale for \$10 million.

Crypto.com

Monaco, the pioneering cryptocurrency and financial services firm, announced its rebrand to CRYPTO.com in July 2018. To accelerate the global development, adoption, and transition to cryptocurrency, the company acquired the exact brand match domain CRYPTO.com from Matt Blaze, the college professor who registered it in 1993. According to the article on Cheddar, Monaco paid \$12 million for the URL as part of a rebranding strategy.

With this rebranding campaign, Monaco has secured the Crypto.com domain which will be the new name for its parent company while MCO – the name carried by its currency – will be adopted for its Visa card and wallet.

„CRYPTO.com gives us a powerful new identity in line with our original vision to put cryptocurrency in every wallet. As the name we are taking on is also representative of the entire space, it comes with a huge responsibility to carry the torch. We will strive to deliver impact worthy of the name and build infrastructure that enables growth of the ecosystem, delivering on the promise of a decentralized future.“

Kris Marszalek, Co-Founder and CEO of CRYPTO.com

Coinbase.com

Founded in June of 2012, Coinbase is a digital currency wallet and platform where merchants and consumers can transact with new digital currencies like bitcoin, ethereum, and litecoin. According to Brian Armstrong, Co-founder & CEO at Coinbase, the project was initially called BitBank but their lawyers told him not to use the word 'Bank' in the name so he started brainstorming new names. He saw the word 'coinbase' in the Bitcoin Wiki (it is a part of the Bitcoin protocol) and he liked it. He purchased the matching domain Coinbase.com a few days later for ~\$1,800.



Kraken.com

In September 2013, Kraken launched after two years of testing and development. The exchange initially offered bitcoin, litecoin, and euro trades. Wanting a name that will appropriately convey his hopes for the exchange – intelligent, powerful, agile, robust and secure – Kraken CEO Jesse Powell named the exchange after the legendary sea monster. The company acquired the exact brand match domain name Kraken.com

Another pretty cool brand was after the domain - Kraken Rum. You can [check the details in this interview with Chris Zuiker](#), but long story short - they failed to secure the name two years before Kraken exchange was born and now, well, that train is gone.

Binance.com

Founded in 2017 by Changpeng Zhao, a developer who had previously created high frequency trading software, Binance provides a platform for trading various cryptocurrencies. As of January 2018, Binance was the largest cryptocurrency exchanges in the world in terms of trading volume. The name "Binance" is based on a combination of the words binary and finance.

The company acquired the exact brand match domain name [Binance.com](https://binance.com) in December 2017. The amount they paid for the name is not public. In 2018 Binance added the domain name [CryptoWorld\(.\)com](https://cryptoworld.com) to their brand for \$195,000.

Liquid.com

Quoine is a fintech company headquartered in Japan with offices in Singapore and Vietnam. Founded in 2014, their core web application called Liquid became a highly sophisticated cryptocurrency trading platform supporting fiat and dozens of cryptocurrencies. Mike Kayamori, CEO of Quoine, shared the news of rebranding to Liquid on 5th March 2019. The company secured the exact brand match domain name Liquid.com in March 2019 for US\$ 750,000.

Libra.org

In June 2019 Facebook, Inc. announced a digital currency called Libra that will allow its billions of users to make financial transactions across the globe. The name was inspired by the origins of money in Ancient Rome, where the Libra was a unit of weight used to mint coins, according to a Facebook spokesperson. Libra also evokes the French “libre” (“free”), and reflect the corresponding astrological symbol – the scales of justice, relevant in theory because the crypto is meant to make financial inclusion standard around the globe.

The new crypto’s symbol, a wave, represents the energy that flows. Libra operates on Libra.org, a domain that was registered in 1997. While there are no recorded sales for the domain, it was most definitely acquired by Facebook to serve as the cryptocurrency’s primary domain.

Social media giant acquired the rights to the “Libra” trademark from a little-known tax company in June 2018.

In June 2019, Facebook announced plans to unveil in 2020 a subsidiary called Calibra, which will allow access to Libra. Operating from Calibra.com, that domain was sold for \$7,550 dollars in October 2018 on GoDaddy auctions.


On July 15, 2019, Facebook announced the currency will not launch until all regulatory concerns have been met and Libra has the "appropriate approvals". PayPal left the Libra Association on 4 October 2019. eBay, Mastercard, Stripe, Visa and Mercado Pago followed on 11 October and Booking Holdings on 14 October.

Libra(.)com belongs to The Libra Group - an international business group that is active in 35 countries across six continents, owned by the Logothetis family.

Gemini.com

Founded in 2014, Gemini is a digital currency exchange and custodian that allows customers to buy, sell, and store digital assets.

“Gemini is the Latin word for “twins” and as such, it inherently explores the concept of duality. We were drawn to this both because of the two worlds of money (old and new) that will intersect on the Gemini platform as well as the two-way nature of trade that it will facilitate. But that’s not all. Once we picked our name, a fun fact emerged. We realized that NASA’s Project Gemini was a spaceflight program focused on laying the groundwork for Apollo’s later mission to land man on the Moon. As such, it was coined (no pun intended) man’s “bridge to the moon”. In this spirit, we’ve built Gemini to be “your bridge to the future of money”. Oh, and Tyler and I just happen to be identical twin brothers.” Tyler and Cameron Winklevoss, Co-founders of Gemini

 The exact brand match domain name Gemini.com was acquired by the company about October 19, 2014 according to whois history records and was put into use on January 23, 2015.

Whether it's good or bad, Artificial Intelligence is the next big thing, and there's no shortage of companies using AI in their brand/domain names. Many startups in the field run on .ai domain extension. .ai is the Internet country code top-level domain (ccTLD) for Anguilla. It is administered by the government of Anguilla. The domain extension exists since 1995 but until 2009 you could only register one if you are resident of Anguilla. Another popular extension for AI is .io, the top-level domain .io refers to domain names of websites from islands that belong to the British Indian Ocean Territory.

There have been a number of controversies from the distribution of funds from the .io to technical issues due to registered .io domains becoming suddenly unavailable due to misconfigured or unresponsive root DNS servers.

Hippo.com

Hippo Insurance is launched in 2015 with the deep belief that homeowners deserve better home insurance. They use AI and big data to aggregate and analyze property information.

„To be honest we just really like the name, and now it seems our customers do too!” Hippo team
The company has upgraded its domain name from MyHippo.com to the exact brand match Hippo.com in August 2019.

csDisco.com

DISCO is a legal technology company that applies artificial intelligence and cloud computing to legal problems to help lawyers and legal teams improve legal outcomes for clients.

Corporate legal departments, law firms, and government agencies around the world use DISCO as an ediscovery solution for compliance, disputes, and investigations. The company is operating from the domain csdisco.com and the exact match .com is not resolving. In October 2020 the company announced US\$ 60M equity financing and is currently valued at US\$ 785M. Well, there are some things money can't buy apparently, and your perfect domain may be just one of those!

Vacasa.com

Vacasa is creating and using AI-driven tools to improve their customers' experiences renting vacation homes around the world. Guests book Vacasa homes with confidence, relying on 3D tours and honest listings to help them find exactly what they're looking for, and know exactly what they'll get.

The company topped the list of best funded AI startups in 2019 and operates on Vacasa.com

HansonRobotics.com

Hanson Robotics Limited is a Hong Kong-based engineering and robotics company founded by David Hanson, known for its development of human-like robots with artificial intelligence for consumer, entertainment, service, healthcare, and research applications. They are the developers of Sophia, a human-like robot that can imitate human gestures and facial expressions and is able to answer certain questions and to make simple conversations on predefined topics.

They operate on [HansonRobotics.com](https://www.hansonrobotics.com)

Samsara.com

Samsara was founded in 2015 by the co-founders of Meraki (now part of Cisco Systems), the cloud-managed networking leader that powers over 2 million networks worldwide. Samsara's team is headquartered in San Francisco with offices in San Jose, Atlanta, and London.

Samsara has emerged as one of the leading Industrial IoT companies. Today, over 15,000 organizations around the world, from emerging businesses to Fortune 500 enterprises, use Samsara to lower fuel consumption, prevent accidents, automate manual processes, and improve product quality.

From whois records we can see they've acquired their exact brand match domain in 2017 and are since operating on Samsara.com. The name "samsara" means "the cycle of death and rebirth to which life in the material world is bound".

Faire.ai and Faire.com

San Francisco-based Faire, which has raised at least \$266 million since it was founded in 2017 is another prove you can make it without your perfect address online. The company offers a wholesale marketplace that uses machine learning to match local retailers with goods that are predicted to sell well in their specific location. They operate on Faire.ai and Faire.com with each site targeting a specific audience.

Thank you for reading our report on brands of the decade 2010 - 2020. We hope it will help you in the process of creating and growing a successful brand. Feel free to reach out if we can assist you in the process.

