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04. YOUR BRAND LAUNCH

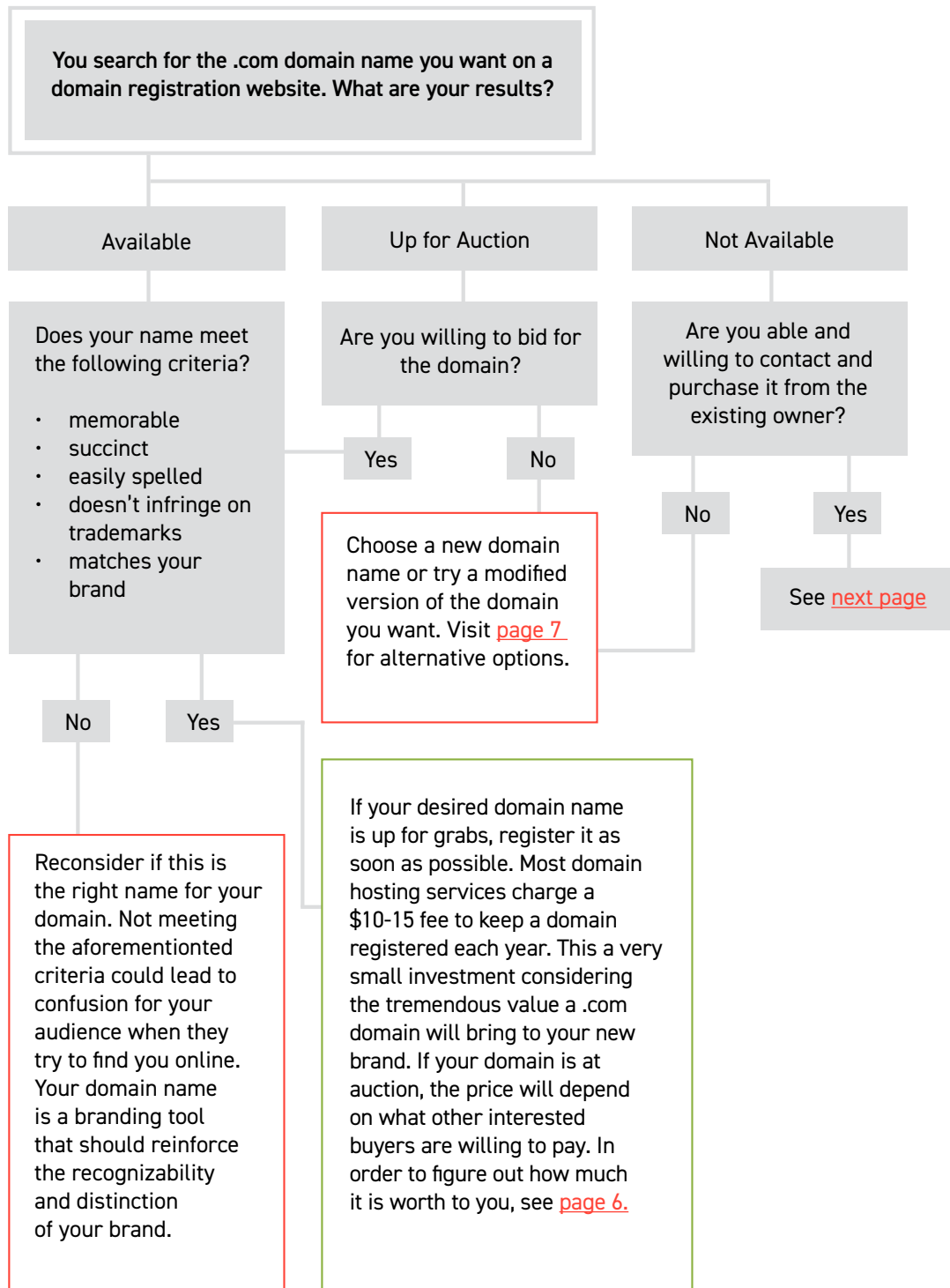
HOW TO MATCH YOUR NEW BRAND NAME WITH AN APPROPRIATE DOMAIN NAME

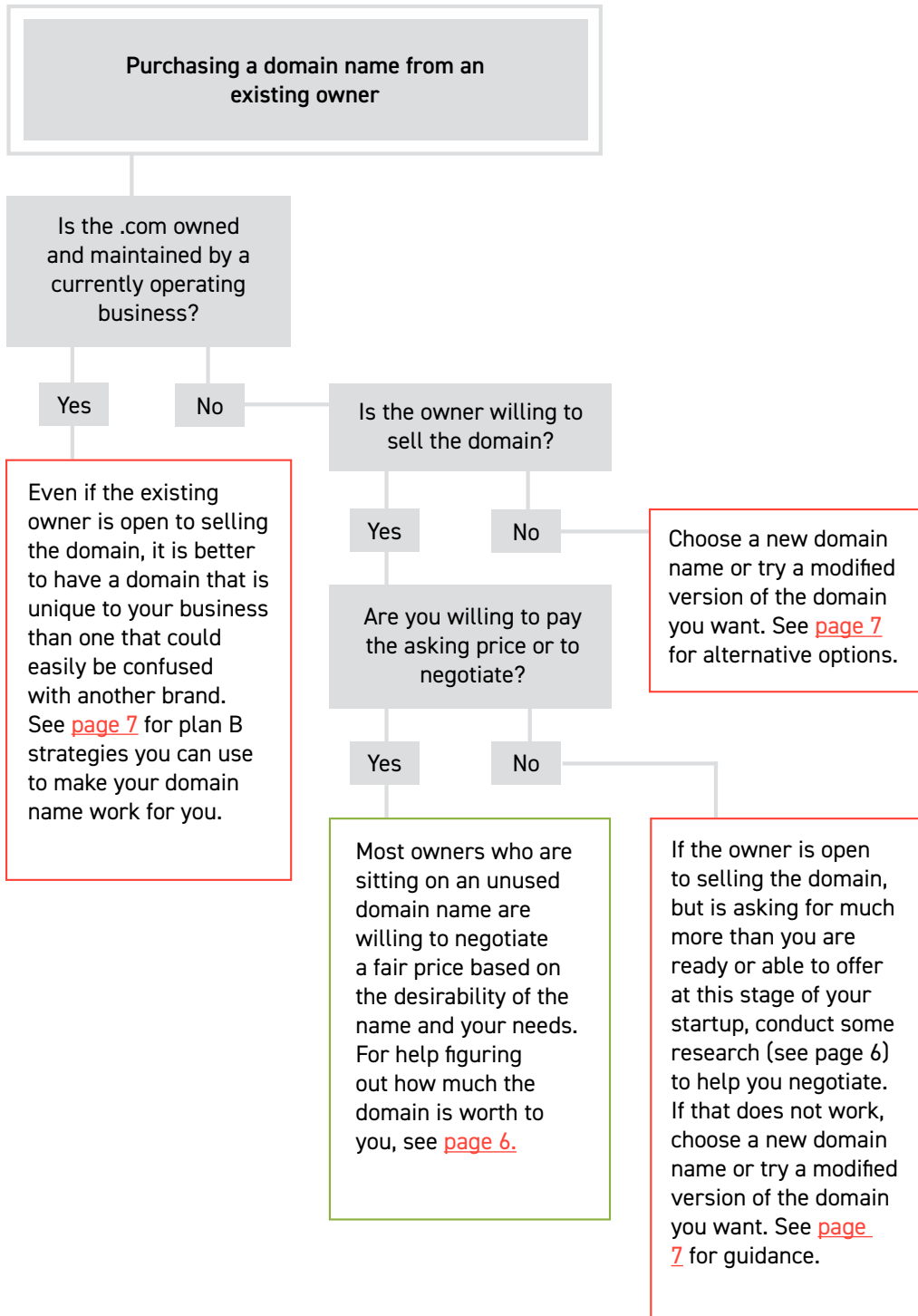
*by Fabian Geyhalter
Principal, FINIEN*

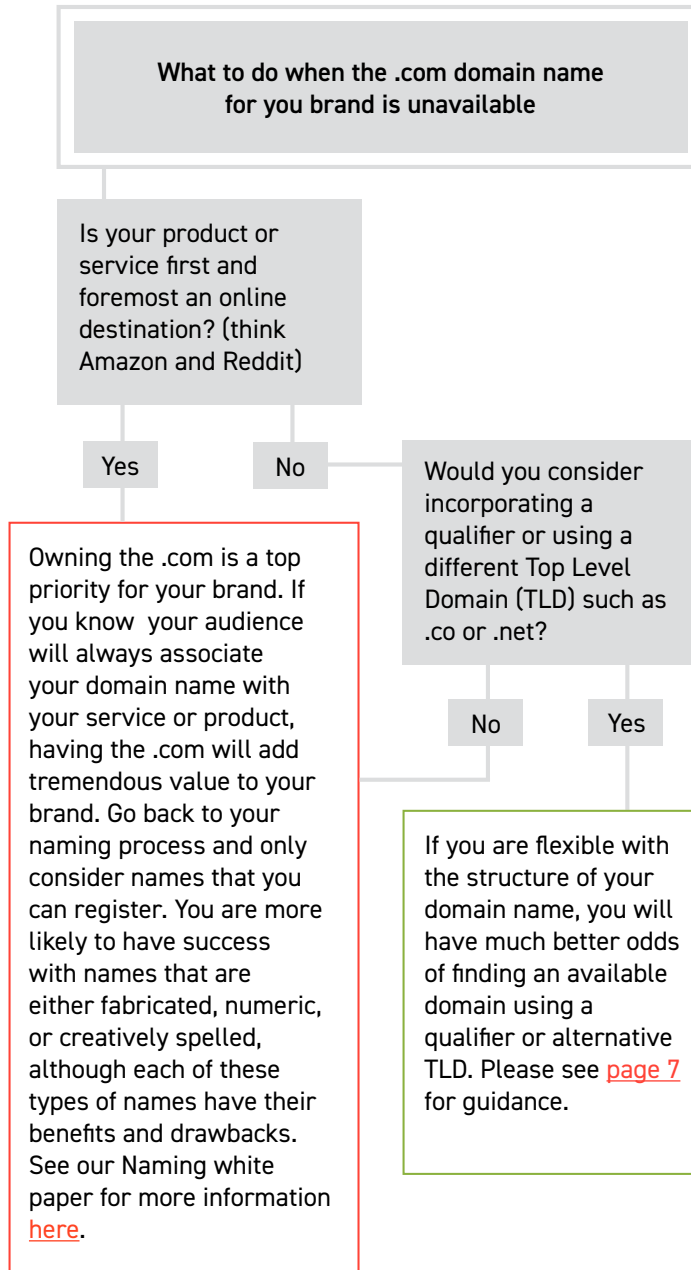
BRANDING YOUR DOMAIN NAME

Naming your brand successfully (see our [White Paper](#) on this topic) and formulating your domain name go hand in hand. Every startup has different needs when it comes to domain ownership. Is owning your .com domain outright the only way to go? Or are there other ways you can have success with a creatively modified domain? Even if you have already answered these questions, factors such as domain availability, pricing, and trademark rights will all influence your final decision. In this white paper we offer a personalized guide to help you make strategic and informed decisions as you go through the process of choosing your new domain name.

THE PROCESS OF CHOOSING A DOMAIN







PURCHASING A DOMAIN

How much money is a .com domain worth?

Most startups can expect to pay at least \$5,000 to \$50,000 for a quality .com domain name, however, pricing a domain is not an exact science and can go into the 6 and 7 digits. Fund.com sold for \$9,999,950 and slots.com for \$5,500,000. Similar to buying real estate offline, there are many factors that affect the price of a domain. According to the domain experts at DN Sale Price (an online database with the sales history of domain names) these factors include: length, number of words, spelling, commercial potential, brandability, memorability, search engine potential, and more. To get a better sense of what your domain is worth, start by reviewing the history of domain sales with similar structures or keywords on websites such as Dnpric.es or NameBio.com.

TOP LEVEL DOMAINS AND QUALIFIERS

Alternatives to “brand.com” ownership

Choosing a Top Level Domain (TLD) extension: While owning a .com is the most desirable way to go, your brand can still have success with a carefully chosen TLD. If you decide to go this route, make sure the owners of the .com are not in the same industry as it would lead to customer confusion, brand dilution and trademarking disputes. Below are some recommended alternative options

.net - This is the second most popular extension after .com. It was originally intended for network use, but is open to anyone, and has established itself as a respectable, but slightly dated alternative to the .com.

.org - This TLD is often associated with non-profits, open source content, and cause related websites, but anyone can register with this extension.

.co - Popular among tech innovators, entrepreneurs and startups, including AngelList (angel.co) and VINE (vine.co). It was originally a country extension for Colombia, but is now open for general registration.

.pro/.shoes/.bike etc. - A number of industry specific extensions have started to gain popularity. They are pricier to register, but if your brand falls into one of the offered categories, a unique extension can be a good solution, even though customer adaptation rates are still an unknown. For a current list of extensions and their restrictions see [Wikipedia](#).

Using Qualifiers: Having a list of qualifiers that you believe work with your domain (without diluting your brand) can help you get around a .com that is taken. Let's say you are launching a new educational product for kids and you want to name it "BrainWhiz," but the .com domain name is taken. You may consider adding "kids" to buy the domain "BrainWhizKids.com" If you are launching a landing page for an app, which mainly lives in app stores on mobile devices, a structure such as get_(app name)_.com or _(app name) app.com is a great way to own your .com and set apart your app from other products with similar names.

Another way to think about descriptors is through the lens of your brand purpose and personality. For example, the brand Bolla is a Los Angeles based company offering goods that relate to skateboarding, art, design, and pop/street culture. The artist who started the brand states "My life motto is Carpe Diem. Pretty much put in everything you got or nothing, go hard or go home. Kill at everything I do." His brand embodies this spirit and is reflected in his domain choice BollaKills.com, which caters to the young urban community. Another example of a creative domain solution comes from the mobile meditation app Headspace. The app was created to help people get more "headspace" through a regular guided meditation practice, so they appropriately named their website getsomeheadspace.com.

Keep this document on-hand when you plan your (next) brand launch and share it with your project team when planning your brand's vision and purpose.

Please share your opinion or own findings with me via fgeyrhalter@finien.com or engage with us to take you there safe and sound. I look forward to hearing from you!



Fabian Geyrhalter
Principal, FINIEN

BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE

Gain continuous branding insights and actionable advice: finien.com/insights

Listen to conversations with founders about the intersection of brand clarity and startup success: Hittingthemarkpodcast.com

Need swift, personalized brand advice? Schedule a brief call with me using Clarity. I would love to connect: Clarity.fm/FabianGeyrhalter

Establish your brand platform through my online course: eresonaid.com

To work with me and/or my consultancy, FINIEN, on your brand strategy, name, or brand identity design or to book me for a workshop, panel, or speaking engagement, please email me directly at fgeyrhalter@finien.com

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