

Entrepreneur Watch

Billionaires
unlock the value
James Packer and
Rupert Murdoch are
reshaping their empires
to position themselves
for the future.



Wednesday, 27 June 2012

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Private equity firm spends over \$133,000 on homeloan.com.au, homeloancalculator.com.au domain names

Monday, 16 April 2012 10:51

Patrick Stafford

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A private equity firm has paid over \$133,000 for the homeloan.com.au and homeloancalculator.com.au URLs, in yet another sign the market for URLs is continuing to grow even more important and lucrative.

Both purchases come after a string of expensive purchases in the past year. Woolworths reportedly bought Hardware.com.au for \$33,000, while Zoupon turned into Deals.com.au after a \$100,000 transaction.

The real estate market for URLs is also heating up, after investmentproperty.com.au sold for \$125,000 last year – although a failed bidder criticised the transaction and said it was overvalued.

Aura Capital has confirmed to *SmartCompany* it spent over \$100,000 for homeloan.com.au last week. It also spent \$33,000 to buy homeloancalculator.com.au, after the previous owner let the name lapse. This is the second-highest price ever paid for a URL bought after a name lapse.

Aura Capital director Calvin Ng told *SmartCompany* both purchases were "purely opportunistic", although the business does have investments in home loan companies and services.

"We haven't determined the exact strategy for these yet, it's opportunistic," he says. "The guy who owned the calculator URL had let it lapse, and so we just snapped it up."

"Two weeks prior to that we were contacted about the homeloan.com.au URL, and the two URLs together made the transactions more attractive."

Aura Capital, which has investments in the minerals, insurance and hospitality industries, has dealt with large URL transactions before. In 2007, it spent over \$1 million on 1300homeloan.com.au, and was also involved in the sale of electricity.com.au, which sold for about \$30,000.

"This space is really heating up," Ng says. "It's just becoming more competitive."

Buying a simple and memorable URL is essential for any successful business. But as so many of them have been scooped up since the late 1990s, buying the most popular website names becomes an expensive proposition.

Some businesses view it as an investment. Last year, Zoupon purchased Deals.com.au for over \$100,000, although co-founder Adam Schwab told *SmartCompany* at the time he felt it was an investment in the business.

Many businesspeople are also finding it lucrative to become individual domain traders, recognising URLs that are likely to become popular and then selling them for a premium.

Ng says about 35,000 people search for "home loan calculator" every month, and about 200,000 search for "home loan" every month, all but guaranteeing high Google rankings for these URLs.

And although he says the exact opportunity for these URLs hasn't been confirmed yet, it's an example of how businesses should be paying attention to movements in the URL space if they want to scoop up a bargain.

"This is a very competitive space, and we're also watching to see what happens."

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people will one day realize this is still a unique opportunity in time

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It's a great buy - 200,000 exact searches on Google and \$15 CPC for 'home loan'. Even just used for an Adwords campaign a company could get that money back in a few short years plus have an appreciating asset to boot...

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Simon Johnson • 2 months ago

A great buy. Good to see some other private equity firms in here.

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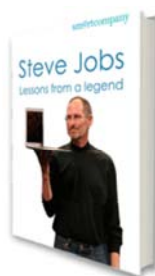
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