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### Agooddomainnameishardtfinddotbiz

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## ***A good domain name is hard to find dot biz*** *by Sabine Niederer*

Constant Dullaart was commissioned by Impakt Online to develop an online artwork for the program titled “The Slow Web”. For this program, artists were invited to slow down the Web, like the slow food movement, and revisit its specific features. Dullaart decided to delve deep into the realm of pre-made websites up for sale, a dark side of the Web.

The world of domain names seems so orderly. But domain names have a wild reality of appropriation, misuse and free trade. Organizations such as ICANN are in place to distribute IP ranges and manage top-level domain names. Some countries are purists (for instance the Netherlands with only .nl), and others add a second level (such as Britain with .org.uk, .co.uk, etc). Certain countries are precious about their domains, and others promiscuous. Tuvalu (.tv) and Armenia (.am) have been appropriated by television and radio.

The domain name industry has always been seedy. There is underground trading, poaching, theft and hijacking. The moment a well-known company’s domain name expires, a domain name trader (‘domainer’) buys it and sells it back to its rightful owners for a nice price. At domain auctions, domainers build businesses around the buying and selling of promising domain names for hundreds and thousands of dollars, or for very little money. Business is often small-time.

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In his Ready Mades project, Constant Dullaart presents a collection of around 40 domains for sale, in the spirit of the artist Marcel Duchamp. Websites have been collected and archived before as historical and evidential resources. But what is a collection of sites for sale? It is a showroom of what websites could be again.

By isolating and collecting these intriguing existing objects, Dullaart invites the viewer to take a concentrated look into what reads as a prediction of the future. These domain names might one day be popular! Whoever visits them and starts exploring these sites enters a landscape of both fata morganas and Web real estate in spammy neighbourhoods. Like model houses, fully furnished and dressed with fresh flowers and finger food for the ‘open house’, these sites seem in use by successful companies and their handsome employees. Clicking on the links in the templates of these parked sites helps the domainer carry on. Wandering around the ready mades is not an online cemetery visit. It is a fairground, waiting to be revived.