

# FROM A \$111 PREMIUM NEW GTLD HAND REG TO A \$6,500 SALE IN 12 MONTHS



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Episode 382



Michael Cyger: On today's profitable Flip show, a newer investor turned a \$111 new GTLD purchase into a \$6,500 sale in less than 12 months. Wanna hear all the details? Stay tuned.

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Michael: Hey Sherpa Network. Thank you so much for joining me today. My name is Michael Cyger and I'm the publisher of DomainSherpa.com, the website where you can learn how to become a successful domain name investor or entrepreneur directly from the experts. This is the DomainSherpa show called "Profitable Flips." In this series, I invite domain name investors to share all the details of how they bought low and sold high, and in doing so, reveal some of the mystery around domain name investing. Today I'm pleased to welcome investor John Arsenault. John, welcome to the show.

John: Thank you, Mike. I'm happy to be here. It's exciting. Appreciate your time.

Michael: Well it's great to have you. I know you've seen the DomainSherpa show in the past. So let's jump right into it because I know people wanna know, John, what's the domain name that you recently sold?

John: So it's Prop.bet. It is the .bet, new GTLD extension and it sold off...

Michael: Cool, so P-R-O-P.bet?

John: Yep, Prop.bet.

Michael: And on what date did you purchase the domain name?

John: So I got it February 8th, 2016. I think it was the first day of availability, general...

Michael: General availability.

John: Yep.

Michael: Awesome. And where did you purchase it?

John: Through my registrar, 101domain.

Michael: 101, I just had dinner with, I think the general manager of 101 when I was at NamesCon. And so when did you sell Prop.bet, and how much did you sell it for?

John: So the transaction closed January 6th of this year, 2017, for a total of \$6,500.

Michael: \$6,500. That's awesome. Wow. And so the one question that I didn't ask you was how much you paid for the domain name.

John: So it was a premium name. It was \$105 for the registration. I also, you know, the eye can fees, the Whols privacy, so it's a total of a little over \$111.

Michael: Wow, so you went from \$111 registration cost to \$6,500 sales cost. So a profit of almost \$6,400 in just shy of a year through that one domain name.

John: Yeah, yeah, it was great. So it worked out really well.

Michael: So this is a new GTLD domain name. When you emailed me, I wasn't even sure that .bet was a top level domain, right? Like many of these TLDs had funky cost for registration during Land Rush and general availability, like and I couldn't even keep track of it. I don't even remember the .bet registry. I'm not even sure who owns .bet when it came out. But you bought it soon as it went to general availability, and it was a premium domain name. And so you paid, instead of \$14.99, which if I wanted to go register DomainSherpa.bet today I could pay \$14.99 at 101. You paid \$111.17 because that was the premium markup that they had on it.

John: Yeah, so I mean, I subscribe to newsletters and I got an email saying that it was gonna be available on the 8th, so you know, I'm not involved in betting, gambling, anything of that sense. But I knew just from being a sports fan that proposition bets, you know, shortened to prop bets were very popular. So I just jumped on it, and I thought the fee was reasonable. And I happen to work with a couple people in the industry who buy and sell domains, and I honestly thought it would be worth money. So that was my thinking...

Michael: So you know, I follow sports as well, you know? I go to Vegas, I see the odds. I know that I can make bets on, you know, different games. But I've never heard of a prop bet before. Like a shortened, like a proposition bet, I got it. I went and did a search on Google. I think I found the Wikipedia page, but how did you first hear about prop bets, you know, that phrase?

John: Honestly, just listen to sports talk radio. You know, ESPN, Mad Dog Radio. I have Sirius XM in my car, so during big games, like the World Cup, it's not limited to football. It's any big game really. And a proposition bet is a bet on anything that doesn't really have to do with the outcome of the game. It can in some ways, but a proposition bet could be about how long the national anthem takes to sing, or the color of Lady Gaga's hair during the halftime show of the Super Bowl. How many times they're going to show Tom Brady's wife on TV? So it seems silly, but people bet on these things and they're talked about a lot, especially during the Super Bowl. So I don't gamble but it's, you know, something I hear constantly when there's big games, so it made sense to me.

Michael: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So last year at NamesCon 2016, we were having breakfast one morning and one of the guys threw out like Trump is going to get the nomination for the Republican Party. I'm like that's just crazy talk. Do you ever listen to this guy? And so they're like I'll bet you money. So I threw down \$500 with three different people. So that's a prop bet basically, that whether we was going to get the nomination or not.

John: I would think that that's more of a, just a win/lose bet. A prop bet might be what color jacket is he wearing after he accepts the nomination, but you know, you're not too far off.

Michael: Okay, okay, so it...

John: So it's more about the small details of the contest that makes it a prop bet.

Michael: Gotcha. So you know, I love this example of the domain name sale. It's a perfect example of how you can make money with any GTLD. And you know, I'm really glad that you submitted this to the show. A lot of people are naysayers one way or another. You know, naysayers about .com. It's dying out. Or naysayers about these new Gs because nobody's actually using them, or whatever the case may be. But you know, if you use your background, if you use your professional experience. If you, you know, you listen to sports

radio during a two hour commute a few days a week, or you watch TV shows and you're exposed to certain pieces of information, that give you knowhow. That give you, you know, a leg up on other people that aren't exposed to that, and you took advantage of that by your knowledge about proposition bets and buying prop.bet. So well done, John.

John: Thanks. You know, I was honestly surprised it was available when I went to register it. So to me, being a rookie and you know just in my mind, I don't know how to value these things. But I thought it was exciting because I know that some .coms can go for high dollars, and they're not really sure how to value the new GTLD space, but yeah, just keeping your ears open. And to me, it was just exciting that I was able to get it.

Michael: All right, so let's dig into the details. You bought prop.bet January 6th, 2016. And you went to 101, you registered it. You told me just before I hit the record button that you put it under privacy. You have Whois privacy on it, right? So you paid an extra amount for that.

John: Yeah, so like \$5.99 I think so...

Michael: And I think it's like \$10 at Go Daddy, and it's free and Uniregistry. What made you want to put it under privacy to begin with?

John: I just thought it made sense. I mean, with my background, I have some background in the domain space. Not a ton, but using something like domain tools, you know, we can do a Whois lookup. Some people you can see their name, their address, their phone number, their personal email. So for me, it just made sense. I didn't want my information out there like that, and it's a practice I kind of since reversed, and I have to kind of edit my strategy on what I put out...

Michael: Why did you reverse it?

John: With some new ones I registered recently because you never know. Someone goes to your domain page, or type in a name, they see it's

registered, they look it up, and you know, I would want them to contact me now if they want to make an inquiry. So that's actually how this, I believe how this one happened. So yeah, I don't think...

Michael: Yeah, it's interesting. So we'll go through the rest of the story to find out how that happened. But a quick tip for anybody watching is you go to your local UPS store and you get one of the really small boxes for like \$50 or \$60 a year. It might be cheaper in your city. You sign up for that, you can use that as your address on all of your Whols so that nobody can ever look up and see, you know, where you live, and your home price using Zillow.com, and you know, weird stuff that you don't necessarily want other people to know about. And that only costs you like five Whols privacies. It's equivalent to like five or six Whols privacies a year. So it's well worth the investment if you're going to be an investor in domain names to get a box. And if you, you know, at UPS stores as opposed to the US Postal Service, they can receive, you know, packages for you and sign for them, and hold them for a number of days if you're on vacation, you bought something that's being shipped to you.

So the first thing you did was sign up for Whols privacy when you were registering the domain name. And then what happened if I type prop.bet into a browser? Did it actually resolve, or show a webpage or anything?

John: It would just resolve to a 101domain landing page saying this is the future site of prop.bet. I never had any plans to populate it with anything, but at least something came up.

Michael: Yeah, and so did it even, you know, it's not really a landing page per se. It's sort of telling you you as the owner, like hey, you need to go and put something here. Does it even allow you to put in your email address if somebody wanted to contact you regarding the domain name?

John: You know, I'm sure they have something where I could customize the landing page, but I didn't mess with it. To me, the name was of value. I wasn't trying to create any type of business from it.

Michael: Yeah, so you just saw the long range prospects of this domain name. You know it was gonna appreciate. You had feeling that it was gonna appreciate in value and you were happy to just own it and wait on it.

John: Yeah.

Michael: Yeah, and so you know, January...I'm sorry. You bought it February 28th, 2016, so the year progress. The NFL was picking up and the Super Bowl was coming. And you know prop bets are big for Super Bowls. So what did you do next?

John: Well I didn't do anything for a while. But as the year progress, you know, December rolled around, and I knew in a couple months I'd have about, you know, 50 domains to renew. And in the back of my mind, I always thought, you know, I have this great name. I think I can sell it for a lot of money. So throughout the year, I emailed this one company a couple times to see if they would be interested, and I believe they were propbet.com. I never got a response so I wasn't that focused on selling it, but around early/mid-December I got the idea to, you know, put it up for auction. You know, I browsed some domain sites. I've looked up reviews, Flippa seemed to be a good place to put it. So I put up a blind auction there with a reserve. And I didn't pay any premium fees to get on the home page or newsletter. And it just kind of sat in the middle of thousands of other names.

And I didn't have high hopes. And I got one request for to know...for someone to know the reserve price. So Flippa emailed me. I uncovered the reserve price for the potential buyer and nothing happened. And I think all told, my auction site got about three views and I know I was one or two of them.

Michael: That's terrible. So you paid the \$9 regular listing fee for the domain name. You put it up for two week or four week type of auction probably?



John: It was between three or seven days. It might have been seven days, yeah. It was pretty short.

Michael: And what was the reserve you set on it? Do you remember?

John: I put \$7,500. And it wasn't visible to anybody, but in my mind I thought that was a decent price.

Michael: But it didn't even get any bids on it.

John: No, no, it got one inquiry to reveal the price and that was it.

Michael: Yeah.

John: So it got no action.

Michael: No action. So the auction ends. You're like there went \$9, you know? I still own the domain name, which is great, but I've got \$111, you know, renewal fee coming up. What happened next?

John: You know, I was a little bit disappointed. I thought maybe I should go back and, you know, subscribe to get on their premium homepage listing, but honestly maybe three or four days after the listing ended, I got...called email outreach from a guy who runs a Bitcoin gaming company who said he was reaching out on behalf of his client who wanted to see if prop.bet was for sale. So I mean, in my mind I'm thinking people are trolling the auction sites to see what doesn't sell, and then contacting the owners if they can do a look up to, you know, entice them to sell. So I think that's what happened. But you know, it was an email out of nowhere.

Michael: Huh. So the email came through your WhoIs information, is that correct?

John: Yep, yep.

Michael: Okay, and so in order to validate that you are to authenticate that you actually own the domain name that you were listing at Flippa, you needed to turn off the Whois privacy.

John: I did that ahead of time, yeah.

Michael: And it was by revealing your Whois information that it led to this inquiry coming in about the domain name?

John: Yep, yeah.

Michael: Whether it was related to the Flippa auction whether they saw it there or not, you're not sure about that.

John: I'm not sure and we didn't get into it. I was just trying to move the process forward. I'm in sales so I know kind of backtracking to uncover the truth can kind of make things go away. But yeah, I'm pretty sure he did a Whois lookup.

Michael: Gotcha, so he emailed you and he said, what did he say in his first email? Is the domain name for sale or how much do you want for it?

John: In about one or two sentences he said hey, I'm working on behalf of my client who's gonna be launching a startup and they'd like to know if prop.bet's for sale.

Michael: Yep, and you said yes.

John: Well, I thought I said yes. It wasn't clear to him. And I reviewed my email thread. I did say yes, thanks for getting in touch with me. Who is your client? I was just kind of curious.

Michael: And he explained that they're trying to do a Bitcoin gaming startup and they want it all for prop bets, and he again asked me if it was for sale.

And I said yes, sorry that wasn't clear. It is for sale. What did you have in mind?

John: So at that point, I kind of put the ball in his court to come out with a number. So I just didn't wanna put a price on it right away. And I had to wait a bit for him to get back to me because I think he was in Australia, which is maybe 18 hours ahead of, you know, East Coast time. So it's a bit of waiting, and he came back saying that his client would offer, I believe it was \$3,000. If I recall correctly, I'm sorry. It might have been \$3,500. He said that he could value the name based on other domain purchases he made. So he purchased I think coingaming.io, and there was another .io domain that he registered. And they were both higher priced than mine that I wanted, which was to me, you know, I felt a bit defeated.

You know, I gotta backtrack actually. I'm sorry, I'm going a bit out of order trying to remember these things.

Michael: That's okay.

John: So after he asked me if it was for sale, I asked him, yes, what did you have in mind? He said, what do you think it's worth? I came back to him, I said it's, you know, I'd unload it for \$20,000. Outside of 75% of that, let's negotiate. So you know in my mind, I'm thinking you know, someone wants to buy it. I didn't try to sell it to him. He must really want it. I wanna get everything I can for it.

Michael: Yeah.

John: But it was after that point he came back justifying his lower offer of, I think it was \$3,500 saying, "Well you know, I bought coingaming.io and there was another .io name, and yours can't be worth more." So...

Michael: It wasn't like gaming.io or coin.io. It's coingaming.io. Come on. Well done to him for referencing comps and trying to determine the value. That's the right way to do it, but he's not giving you good comps.

John: No, he's not. It was coingaming.io, casino.io. Just looking at my notes.

Michael: Casino.io is good.

John: Yeah, so he paid 11K for casino.io and \$7,500 for the other one. So he valued mine at less than half.

Michael: Yeah.

John: And that point I was thinking is this really what it's worth, you know? Am I being a rookie? Am I just having silly dreams that it's worth, you know, what I think it is? Because it's just a name. It's not handing anything over than a brandable name that someone can use and easy find within Google. So when he put that offer out there, I said, eh, you know...I tried to get more realistic with myself. What can I actually get for this? So I came back saying, okay, well let's do \$8,500. You know, I understand how you price it out and how you valued it, and what your client's willing to pay, but this is what it's worth to me. And he came back saying, \$5,000 let's do it today. I said no. And then he came back saying, okay, we'll do \$6,500. So at that point, I just, you know, I was holding my breath the entire time. I was like okay, that's good enough. I didn't wanna elongate it. You know, I was traveling for my other job at the time, and dealing with the time difference, and things can be misconstrued via email. It's, you know, I wanted to make the sale. So I did and was happy with it.

Michael: Yeah, and that's a great price. \$111 to \$6,500. And so it wasn't as quick as he offered 3.5K, you countered to \$8,500. He offered 5K, you countered. There was some time in between due to the delays, right? There was probably a day or two between each of those emails?

John: Yep, yep. There was a day or two in between each of them. And to be honest, some nights I was up until 3:00 AM kind of waiting for him to get back to me. Because I was looking at my thread and I would email at, you know, maybe 3:00 AM and hear nothing. And then I'd email him at 9:00 PM,

you know, that same day for me and hearing nothing until maybe 2:00 AM my time, which at that point, you know, time caught up with me and I had to go to sleep. So but to be honest, in hindsight, he was a really good person to work with. He didn't over complicate things and...

Michael: That's awesome. And so you came to an agreement on price, and then how did you actually transact the money and the domain name?

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John: So he recommended escrow.com. And I looked into it and it looked legit. It got a lot of good reviews. It was easy enough to set up a transaction. So he told me to create an account, set up a transaction, and you know, include them on the emails so he gets notification of it. And from there, it was smooth. The only issue we had was the transfer of the name. So his

registrar wouldn't accept the name. They considered it a premium name. And he went to his other registrar. I think it was IWantMyName.com was the other one that said that they couldn't take it either. So then he had to tap into his GoDaddy account.

And when GoDaddy got involved, it kind of confused me a bit because I guess when he put in the inquiry to receive a transfer of name with my contact info and my name attached, GoDaddy emailed me saying I had to set up an account and pay \$75 to transfer the name. And I'm not a GoDaddy customer. I have nothing against them but just not who I use. So and that point I'm in a client's office and I asked, you know, to be excused. Just we were just kind of chit-chatting at that point. So I was chatting online with GoDaddy, and then I had to go back to 101domain. I had to make sure GoDaddy knew...I didn't have the account. My name is not in your system. 101 said that all you should need to do is generate the auth code. So once they said that, and then I confirmed with the buyer that's all I needed to do, I didn't worry about the GoDaddy stuff. But honestly for someone new to it, it was confusing to say I had to create an account and pay for something that didn't make sense.

Michael: Yeah, that is confusing. I don't know why that was generated from GoDaddy. I can't even think of a reason. When you created the escrow.com transaction, I know a lot of people wonder who should pay the fees. You know, there's some fee that needs to be, you know, paid to escrow to handle the escrow. Who paid it, the buyer, you, or was it split?

John: So it was the buyer who paid it. And I didn't wanna be out of any money. And I looked into other transactions for domain names, and it all makes sense for the buyer to pay the fees.

Michael: Definitely. The buyer's coming to you, they should be the one to pay the fee, and that's what I assume if somebody comes to me to buy a domain name unless they negotiated like, hey, I'll agree to that price, but you have to pay the escrow. Or I'll agree to that price, but let's split the escrow, you know? Yeah, great.

John: Yeah, he was reasonable. And the fees weren't that extravagant to even worry about making a fuss over, but I'm happy he said yeah sure, I'm gonna pay them.

Michael: Yeah, so you did outreach to one company a couple of times. Did you list prop.bet for sale on Afternic, or Sedo, or any other marketplace?

John: No, it was really just Flippa. And you know, my day job, I'm in sales, and I kind of get consumed in it, so it's my day job, my night job. And I have two little ones at home, so you know, for me I liked having the name and the other names I have, but it didn't occur to me until a couple months ago in December to really just try to see what I could get for them. So Flippa was just the only one I considered, and I didn't really wanna put out much money to see if there was interest. And it was like \$7, \$9, and for me, it was fine. It made me think that, you know, I bought a silly name that had no interest even though I thought it was great, but that's the only avenue I took.

Michael: Yeah, definitely. And you know, I love the story also because a lot of people say well, you need to...you're not a real investor unless you're doing this fulltime, or you have you know, X number of domains or whatever. And you know, it's like saying I'm not an investor because I have money in a 401(k) that has certain mutual funds or stocks that I'm investing in. I'm like, you know, that's BS. I'm an investor, and I have a day job that I work fulltime, and I have my money working for me, you know, all the time while I'm not there. Just like you're having your domain names working for you, and increasing in value as you're doing your day job and you're putting money into your 401(k). And maybe you're putting money into your domain names as well because that is appreciating over value. So that's the other reason I love this story, John.

I took a look at your domain names using domainIQ.com and it seems like you invest primarily in new GTLDs. Is that correct?

John: Yeah, so I think .com may be over saturated. It's highly valuable, but can you get a good name? You know, maybe if you have a company or a big

brand behind it that you can launch, but that's why I'm really disinterested in that space because it's largely untapped right now.

Michael: Yeah, and what are few of your favorite, you know, GTLD investments?

John: You're putting me on the spot. Honestly, I have directory.toys. I have playon.cloud, gameon.cloud, mobile.yoga's one I like, and donate.red is another one I really like for a specific purpose of offloading that one. So I'm not super confident that any of these are great as I was with prop.bet, but I'm trying to just find my way around, you know? If I think a name might be good, then I'll buy it. I'll look it up, I'll hand register it if I like it, so there's a lot of .clouds I have. And some of the .colors like pink and red. But I can't tell you what's my favorite, but the ones I listed are pretty decent.

Michael: Yeah, I really like mobile.yoga. I can see businesses wanting that one, and it easily selling for \$2,000 to \$5,000 easily. Yeah, very cool.

John: Yeah, there's all these yoga practitioners that their core offering is that they travel to you, the corporate yoga sessions, you know? I don't know if there's a Google of yoga yet that needs that name. A lot of it's pretty territorial but I think it's useful enough that it could go one day.

Michael: Yeah, are all of your domain names, you know, regular renewal rates or did you buy some like prop.bet that have premium renewal rates?

John: I think prop.bet was the only one, yeah. Prop.bet was the only one that's a premium name. So all the other renewal rates are, you know, they're actually just kicking in now because I did a lot of my activity in February of last year. So they're all pretty much the same, regular renewal rates.

Michael: Yeah, and are you now look...and how many domains do you have roughly?



John: I have about 60. So I bought a couple others. I saw .shop was out there, and I got oemparts.shop and really just kind of just playing around with it, you know? It's not an insignificant amount of money when you have 60 names maybe averaging, you know, \$15 to \$20 each because they're new GTLDs, but you know, it's something that keeps my mind working and, you know, it helps me kind of relate to the information I read out there about, you know, domaining. So I like to be a part of it. And I don't know where it's gonna go, but you know, it's out there and I wanna be a part of it if, you know, if it escalates.

Michael: Yeah, so \$6,400 profit. Clearly you need to pay some of that in taxes. And then the rest you're gonna renew your domain names. And so what are you gonna do with the rest of the profits? Are you gonna plow it all back into domain names and like double down as they say in Vegas? Or are you going to take some money off the table and put it away for the family?

John: Well I'm either lucky or unlucky that my wife is in finance, which means that she's great with money, but you know, I can't splurge, you know, without having the checks and balance in front of it, which is great. But so the profit went back to the family, you know, bills to pay. We have two kids so we, you know, do things that are nice for them. But in my mind, I'm in the black. I made money. But for me, I'm gonna have to take a look at, a little bit of a finer look into what names I buy because I don't wanna buy, you know, a crap name not have it go anywhere. That hasn't been my strategy, but I'm just gonna be a bit more careful about what names I register and, you know, being active with them. You know, actively trying to sell them. And I've read threads where people buy and sell names within a couple days of each other. They just buy a name and make an outreach, and they sell it. So I think it's something I'm gonna start spending time doing.

Michael: Awesome. And so 2017, you're definitely gonna do more outreach on those domain names. I suggest even passively marketing them by getting them into the marketplace service, like Afternic, like Sedo, and Uniregistry because if it can be found, then more people are likely to make an inquiry to

you and make an offer. Are you going to be looking at the domain names coming up for renewal and potentially dropping some of them?

John: Yeah, so that just happened. I got a couple .restaurants and I got chinesetakeout.restaurant last year, but I just realized I misspelled Chinese wrong, so it wasn't worth it for me to register. And I got some iPhone names last year that I thought, you know, might have lined up with the naming of a new product, but I dropped those. So I'm taking a look at what I really do wanna renew, and you know, am I gonna invest effort into it. So yeah, there's definitely been some I've dropped.

Michael: Awesome. John, if somebody wants to contact you to discuss domain names maybe that you've mentioned, oemparts.shop I really like. There's a big market for that. What's the best way for them to reach out to you?

John: Email at Jon, J-O-N.Arsenault, A-R-S-E-N-A-U-L-T@Outlook.com. That's email. I'm always on email so I think honestly that's the best way.

Michael: Very cool. If you have questions for John that I didn't ask, please post them in the comments below this video and I'll ask John to come back and answer as many as he can. I also encourage you, the person who is watching this interview to get out from behind your computer, reach out to other people in the industry, and start making connections. Business is done through relationships. Somebody watching this show may reach out to John and say hi, and then may have a need for one of his cloud domain names, or may wanna, you know, buy the yoga domain for a little bit more than wholesale, but not quite retail because they have connections in that space. That's how business is done.

Easiest way for you to start making a connection is just post a comment below this video. All you have to do say, "Thanks, John," or "I appreciate you telling your story because it's motivating," or "I have a day job too and I hate it when people always say that you need to have so many domains or whatever to feel like you're an investor. It's not the way it needs to happen.

If you're listening to this show on your commute like John does sometimes through iTunes or Stitcher, make a note on your calendar to come back to DomainSherpa and post a comment later today. John Arsenault, thank you for coming on the DomainSherpa show, sharing all the details of your profitable flip sale, and thanks for being a Domain Sherpa for others.

John: Hey no problem. It was highly enjoyable. It's been great speaking with you and I look forward to more of your shows to come, so it was great, thank you.

Michael: Thanks John. Thank you all for watching. We'll see you next time.