

Global Domain Activity Report

Q1 2026



Jonathan Zhang

**CEO of WHOIS API, Inc.,
doing business as WhoisXML API**

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Dear Reader,

We are happy to share the new version of our quarterly domain activity report. This improved version provides deeper insights into the internet landscape, offering a more comprehensive view of global domain trends and dynamics for Q1 2026.

While we continue to focus on NRDs, we've added QoQ comparisons to better illustrate how the Internet is evolving. We've also included our unique predictive threat intelligence data, highlighting how many NRDs were likely registered with malicious intent.

Let's dive in! Feel free to use this data as you see fit and share it with your team.

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Methodology

This quarterly report draws insights from WhoisXML API's comprehensive DNS, domain, and cyber threat intelligence sources.

We begin by examining global domain activity trends for Q1 2026, focusing on newly registered domains (NRDs) based on data from the Newly Registered Domains (NRD2) database.

We then explore NRD-related trends in more detail, including their use of specific TLD categories, as well as the leading TLDs and registrars.

We also assess how many Q1 2026 NRDs were likely registered with malicious intent from the start, based on data from the First Watch Malicious Domains Data Feed.

Next, we highlight the most widely used MX and NS domains using the data from the DNS Database Download.

Finally, we analyze domains confirmed to be malicious by our Threat Intelligence Data Feeds to determine the most commonly used TLDs.



Executive Summary

In Q1 2026, 26.5+ million NRDs were observed, a 7.4% decrease from Q4 2025. Of these, 6.7+ million were flagged by First Watch as likely registered with malicious intent.

Domain activity remained concentrated across a small number of TLDs, with declining gTLD volumes and continued growth in ccTLDs.

Our analysis of billions of MX and NS records showed increasing reliance on a limited set of providers. Registrar rankings also shifted, with new entrants into the top 5 as others dropped out.

Finally, 3.3+ million confirmed malicious domains continued to cluster within a small set of TLDs, indicating persistent patterns in malicious domain usage.

26.5M+

Newly registered domains in Q1 2026

7.4%

decrease in the total NRD volume from Q4 2025 to Q1 2026

6.7M+

NRDs likely registered with malicious intent in Q1 2026

3.3M+

confirmed malicious domains in Q1 2026



Q1 2026 Findings



26.5M+

NRDs registered in Q1 2026

28.6M+

NRDs registered in Q4 2025

We saw a

7.4%

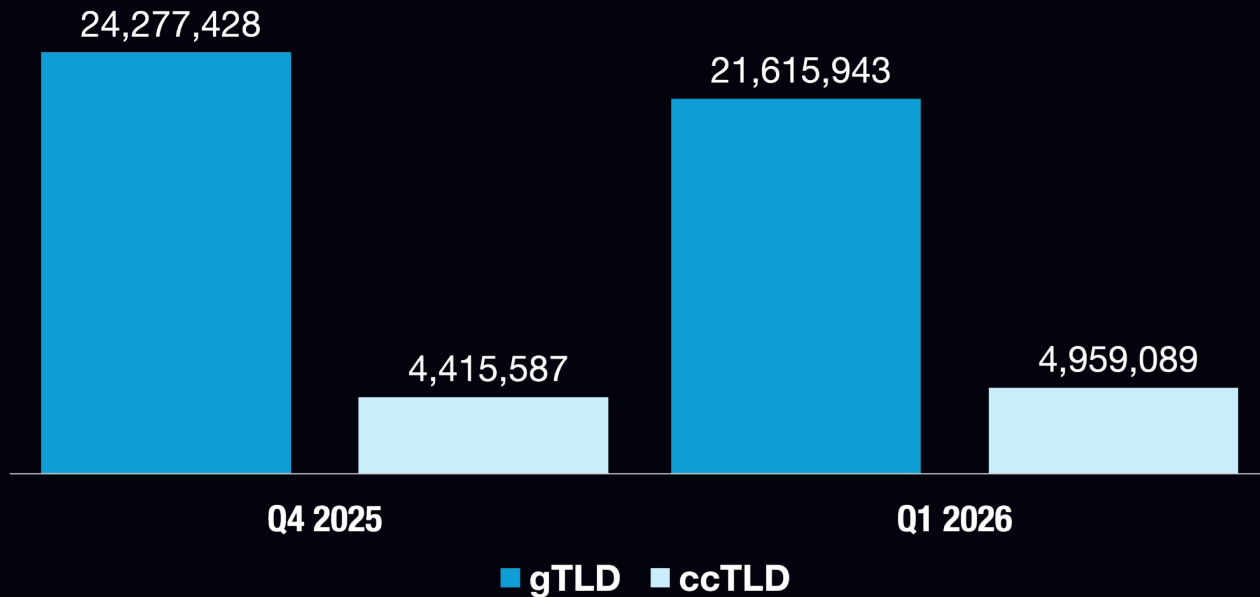
decrease in the total NRD volume
from Q4 2025 to Q1 2026.



NRD TLD Types

gTLDs: -11.0% registrations

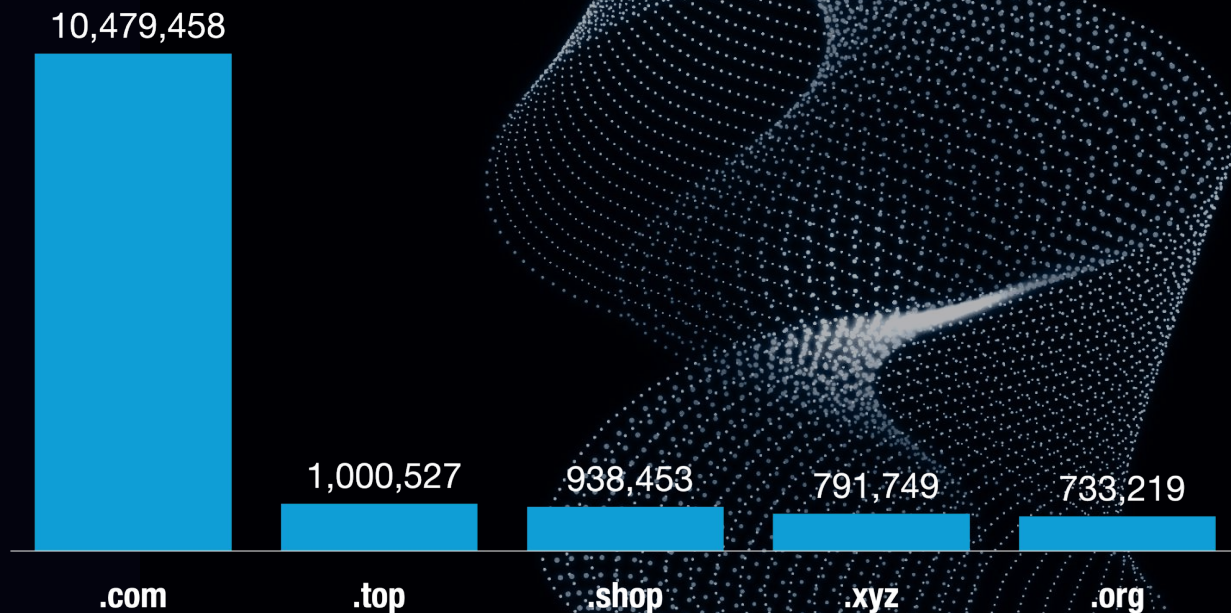
ccTLDs: +12.3% registrations



Top NRD TLDs

13.9M+

Number of NRDs sporting the top 5 TLDs



Top NRD TLD QoQ Growth

The .shop and .org TLD extensions ousted .bond and .info from the top 5 NRD TLDs list. None of the ccTLDs made it to the top 5.

Q1 2026 TOP TLD	Q1 2026 TLD Volume	Q4 2025 TLD Volume	QoQ Ranking Change
.com	10,479,458	9,707,072	→ (Unchanged)
.top	1,000,527	1,212,056	↑ from 4 to 2
.shop	938,453	1,042,209	↑ from 6 to 3
.xyz	791,749	3,033,998	↓ from 2 to 4
.org	733,219	670,756	↑ from 7 to 5

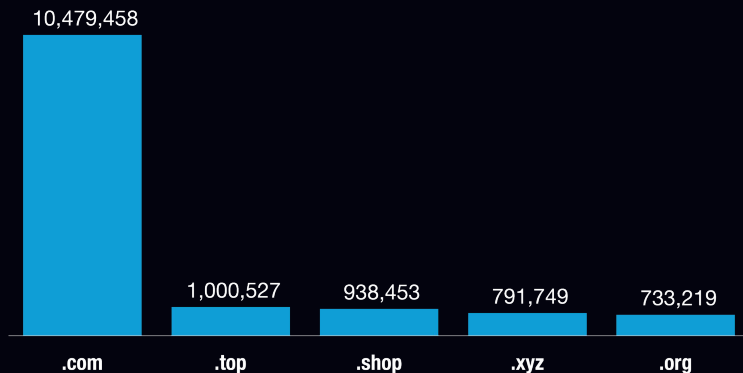
NRD TLD Type Trends

The total number of NRDs sporting the top 5 gTLD extensions decreased by 14.6% from Q4 2025 to Q1 2026. That of NRDs using the top 5 ccTLD extensions, meanwhile, dropped by 1.5%.

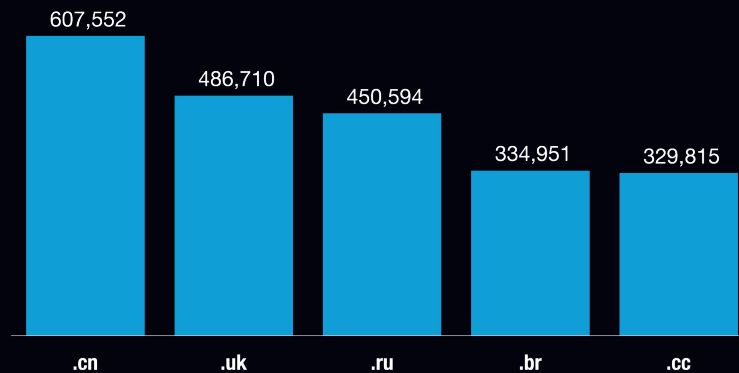
gTLDs: 13.9M+
ccTLDs: 2.2M+

* Top 5 only

Top gTLDs: Q1 2026



Top ccTLDs: Q1 2026



Top NRD gTLD QoQ Growth

This table essentially repeats the overall top 5 TLDs. The .shop and .org gTLD extensions replaced .bond and .info in this quarter's top 5 NRD gTLDs list.

Q1 2026 TOP gTLD	Q1 2026 gTLD Volume	Q4 2025 gTLD Volume	QoQ Ranking Change
.com	10,479,458	9,707,072	→ (Unchanged)
.top	1,000,527	1,212,056	↑ from 4 to 2
.shop	938,453	1,042,209	↑ from 6 to 3
.xyz	791,749	3,033,998	↓ from 2 to 4
.org	733,219	670,756	↑ from 7 to 5



Top NRD ccTLD QoQ Growth

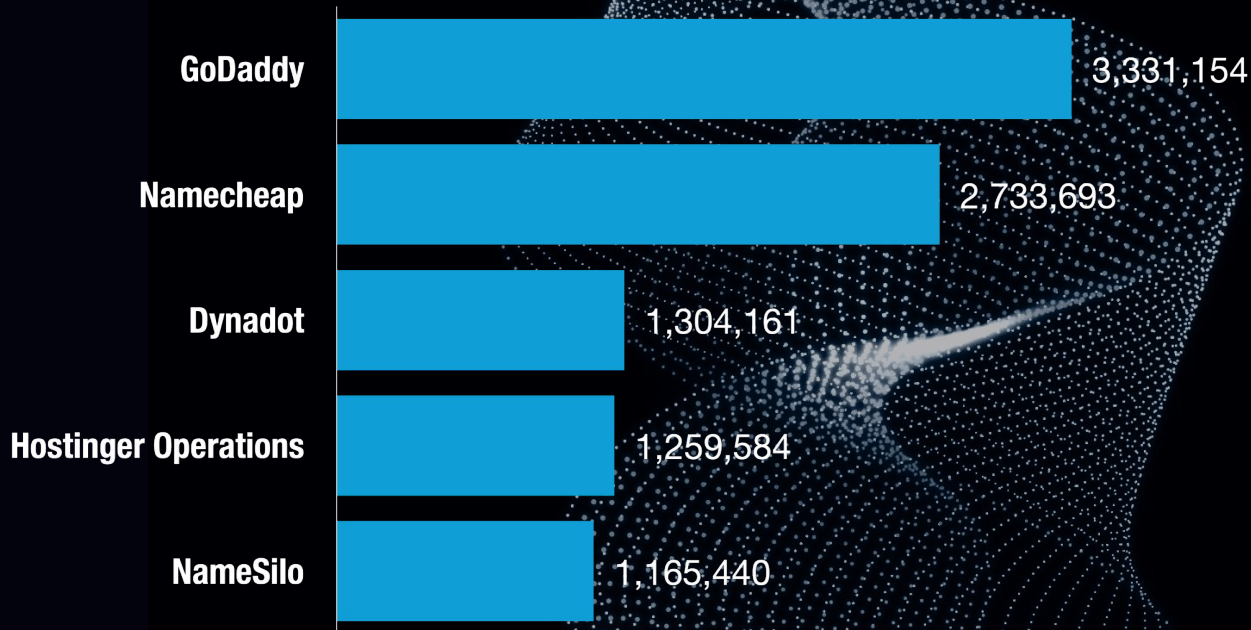
The top 5 ccTLD extensions remained the same from Q4 2025 to Q1 2026 albeit ranking changes for some.

Q1 2026 TOP ccTLD	Q1 2026 ccTLD Volume	Q4 2025 ccTLD Volume	QoQ Ranking Change
.cn	607,552	769,406	→ (Unchanged)
.uk	486,710	415,301	↑ from 3 to 2
.ru	450,594	440,699	↓ from 2 to 3
.br	334,951	267,366	↑ from 5 to 4
.cc	329,815	349,695	↓ from 4 to 5

Top NRD Registrars

9.7M+

Number of NRDs
administered by the top 5
registrars

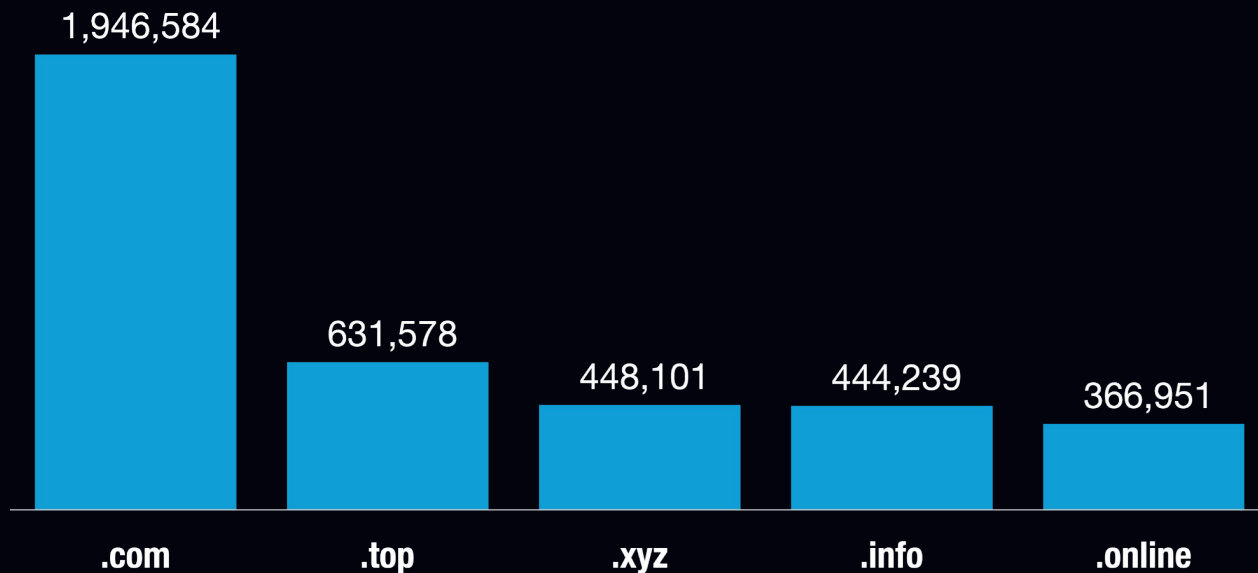


Top NRD Registrar QoQ Growth

Slight variations in the ranking of the top 5 registrars, particularly the fourth and fifth placers, were seen. The aggregate number of NRDs administered by the top 5 registrars also dropped slightly by 2.9% from Q4 2025 to Q1 2026.

Q1 2026 TOP REGISTRAR	Q1 2026 Volume	Q4 2025 Volume	QoQ Ranking Change
GoDaddy	3,331,154	3,352,118	→ (Unchanged)
Namecheap	2,733,693	2,718,308	→ (Unchanged)
Dynadot	1,304,161	1,537,120	→ (Unchanged)
Hostinger Operations	1,259,584	1,026,345	↑ from 5 to 4
NameSilo	1,165,440	933,076	↑ from 6 to 5

Top First Watch TLDs

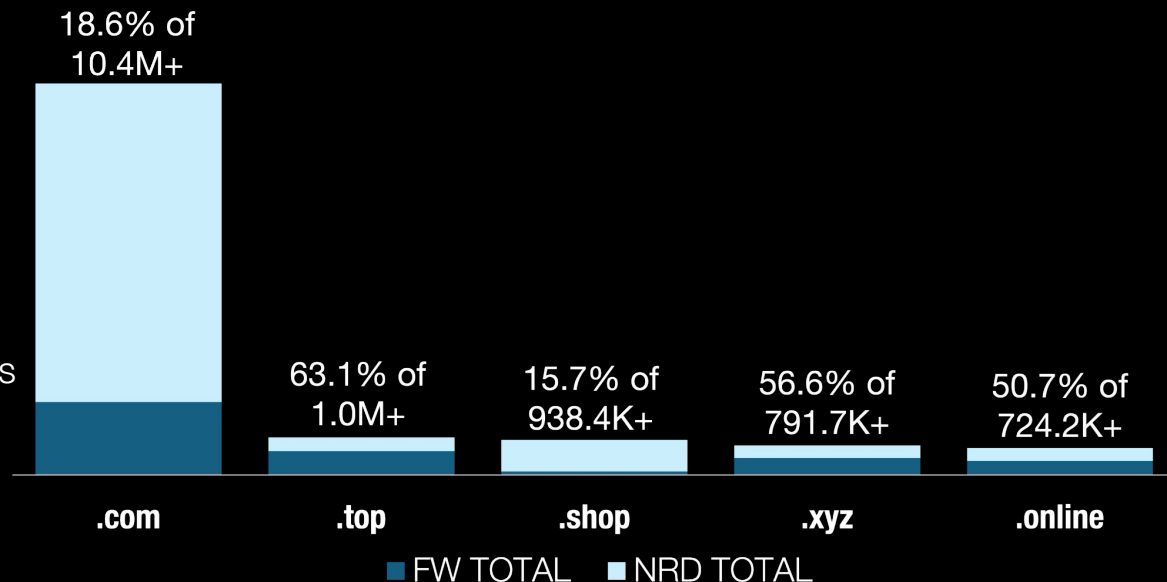


3.8M+

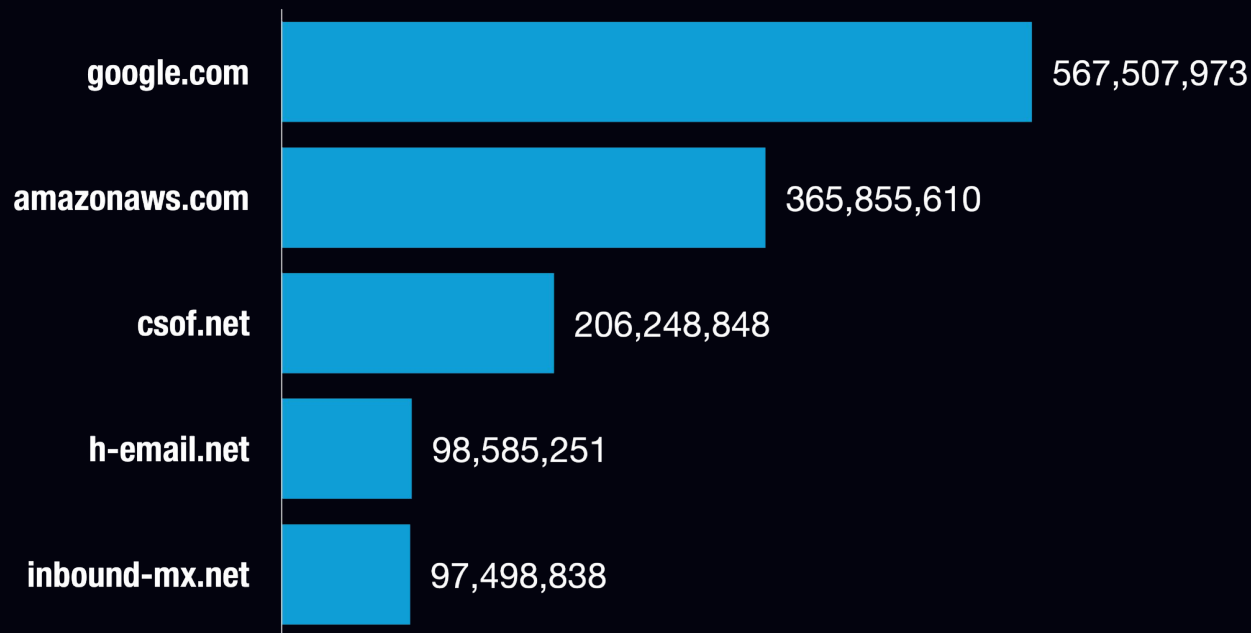
Aggregated number of NRDs that were likely registered with malicious intent across the top 5 First Watch TLDs

25.4%

of the NRDs using the top 5 NRD TLDs were likely registered with malicious intent.



Top MX Domains



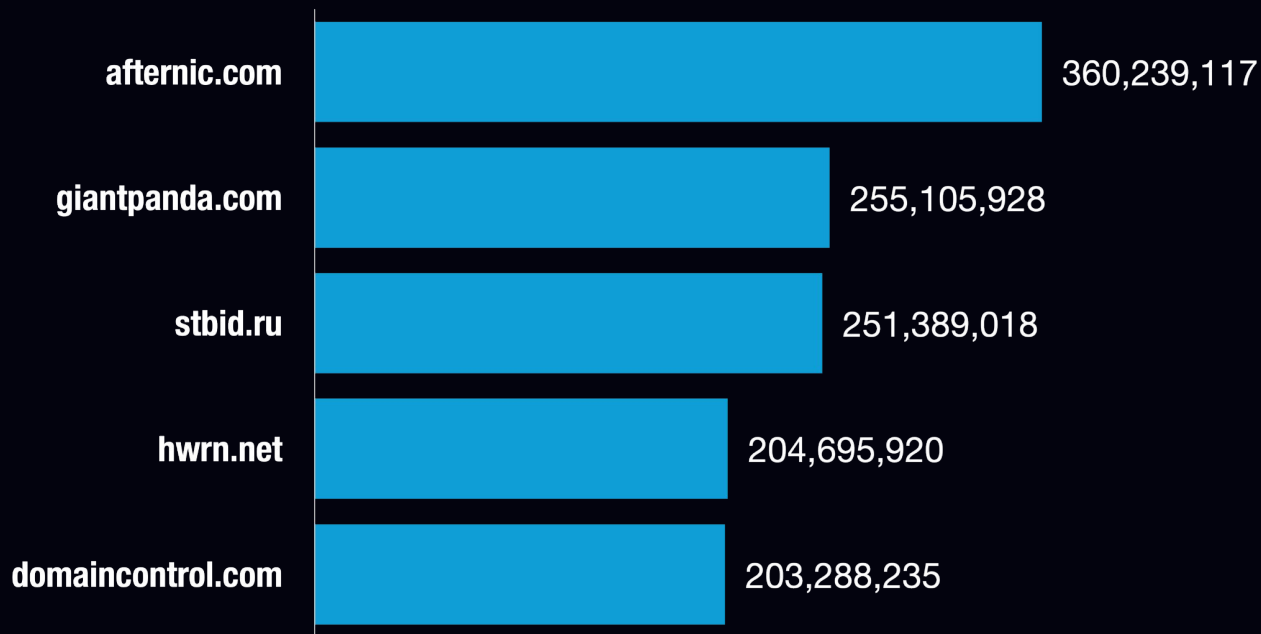
The number of domains using the top 5 MX domains increased by 12.8% from 1.1+ billion in Q4 2025 to 1.3+ billion in Q1 2026.

Top MX Domain QoQ Growth

The MX domain inbound-mx[.]net ousted gmail[.]com from the top 5 list this quarter.

Q1 2026 TOP DOMAIN	Q1 2026 Volume	Q4 2025 Volume	QoQ Ranking Change
google[.]com	567,507,973	545,556,558	→ (Unchanged)
amazonaws[.]com	365,855,610	322,829,811	→ (Unchanged)
csof[.]net	206,248,848	139,311,052	→ (Unchanged)
h-email[.]net	98,585,251	79,870,634	↑ from 5 to 4
inbound-mx[.]net	97,498,838	75,800,589	↑ from 7 to 5

Top NS Domains



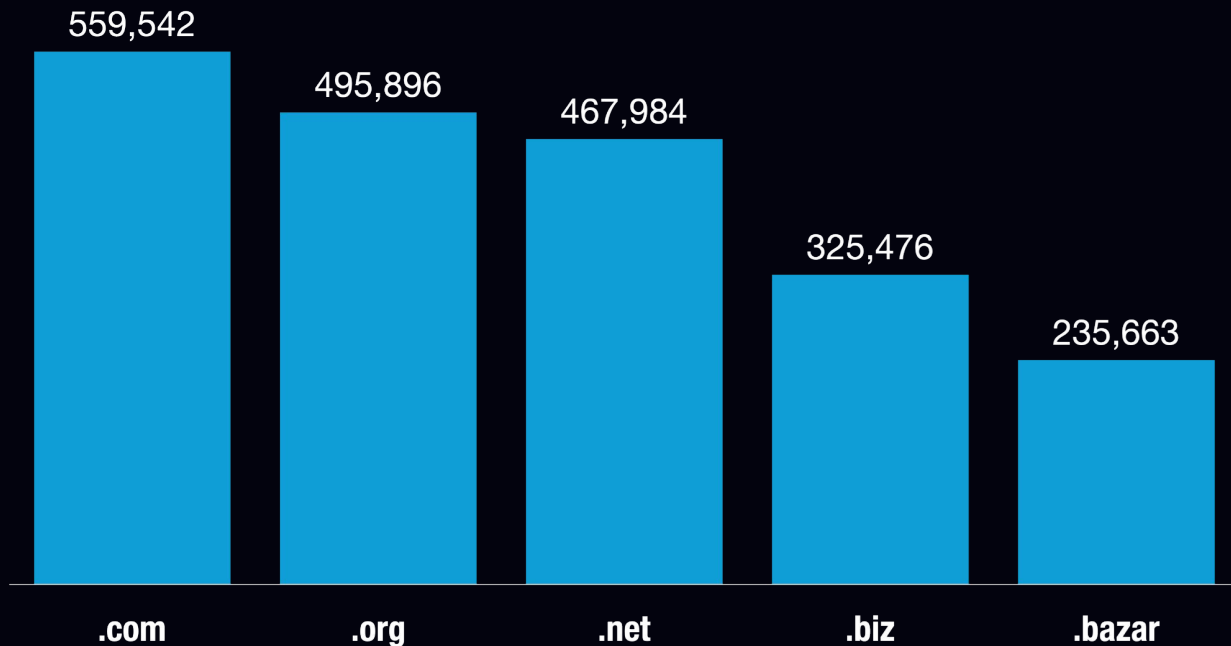
The number of domains using the top 5 NS domains increased by 20.2% from 1.0+ billion in Q4 2025 to 1.2+ billion in Q1 2026.

Top NS Domain QoQ Growth

Q4 2025's top 6 giantpanda[.]com placed second in Q1 2026, while former top 9 hwrn[.]net placed fourth this quarter. The NS domains parklogic[.]com and parkingcrew[.]net dropped out of the top 5.

Q1 2026 TOP DOMAIN	Q1 2026 Volume	Q4 2025 Volume	QoQ Ranking Change
afternic[.]com	360,239,117	254,084,597	→ (Unchanged)
giantpanda[.]com	255,105,928	149,371,943	↑ from 6 to 2
stbid[.]ru	251,389,018	250,717,519	↓ from 2 to 3
hwrn[.]net	204,695,920	138,221,384	↑ from 9 to 4
domaincontrol[.]com	203,288,235	229,457,852	↓ from 3 to 5

Top loC TLDs



The total number of confirmed malicious domains sporting the top 5 loC TLDs dropped by 3.3% from 2.1+ million in Q4 2025 to 2.0+ million in Q1 2026.

Top IoC TLD QoQ Growth

The confirmed malicious domains detected in Q1 2026 used the same top 5 TLDs as those found in Q4 2025. Each extension retained its ranking.

Q1 2026 TOP TLD	Q1 2026 Volume	Q4 2025 Volume	QoQ Ranking Change
.com	559,542	599,480	→ (Unchanged)
.org	495,896	504,866	→ (Unchanged)
.net	467,984	485,280	→ (Unchanged)
.biz	325,476	332,075	→ (Unchanged)
.bazar	235,663	232,993	→ (Unchanged)

Q1 2026 Wrap-Up



Wrap-Up

This quarterly report provides insights into domain registration patterns of Q1 2026. We determined the total number of NRDs for Q1 2026 and how many of them were likely registered with malicious intent. Pertinent DNS MX and NS-related activities were also examined.

Analyzing these movements can reveal the preferences and behaviors of legitimate and malicious entities alike, enabling organizations to make data-driven decisions and security teams to stay ahead of ever-evolving threats.

Our market-leading domain, IP, DNS, and cyber threat intelligence sources enable us to provide deep insights. We are always seeking to partner with cybersecurity community members to share this intelligence and collaborate on developing innovative solutions to combat cyber threats.

[Get in touch with us](#) to access the data behind this report and discuss collaboration opportunities.



50B+

domains and subdomains

116B+

DNS records

25.5B+

WHOIS records

15+

years of data crawling

About Us

WhoisXML API empowers all types of cybersecurity enterprises, including MSSPs, SOCs, Fortune 1000 organizations, government agencies, and SMBs. We relentlessly collect, process, and deliver the most comprehensive and readily available domain, IP, and DNS intelligence on the market.

To explore how our data can support your product strategy, visit [our website](#) or [contact our sales team](#).

