How trademarks and domain names differ

What is a trademark?

A trademark is a brand. It is any word, name, symbol, design, or combination of these that identifies the source of your goods or services and distinguishes them from the goods or services of another owner.

- You register trademarks with the United States Patent and Trademark Office to secure nationwide ownership rights.

Examples of registered trademarks include:

Payless

U-HAUL

PNC

What is a domain name?

A domain name is simply the internet address of your website. Some people refer to it as a “Uniform Resource Locator,” “URL,” or “web address.”

- You register domain names with a domain name registrar to secure a website location on the internet.

Examples of domain names include:

PAYLESS.COM

UHAUL.COM

PNC.COM

See the reverse side to find out whether a trademark and a domain name can ever be the same.
Can a trademark and a domain name be the same?

Yes. They can be the same. It all depends on how and where they are used.

- Trademarks are used to attract attention.
  - They might appear in a large size on the front of packaging for goods.
  - They might appear in a traditional location on a building where services are provided, such as on a sign or over the door of a restaurant or retail store.
  - They might appear in a traditional location on a website for services, such as the top left corner.

- Domain names are used to indicate a website location on the internet.
  - They appear in the address bar of a web browser.
  - They might include “www.” at the beginning of the name.
  - They might include “.com,” “.net,” “.org,” or other top-level domains at the end of the name.

It is your choice whether to use the same wording as both a trademark and a domain name.

For an example, see the webpage below. “flycheap.com” appears as a domain name in the address bar of the web browser and as a trademark in the main body of the webpage.