

THE .ESPSPORTS TLD

Onchain Namespace and the Esports Industry

A first audit of decentralized TLD coverage
across the global esports ecosystem.

95%

of the esports industry's most significant entities
have no registered onchain TLD presence -- while
.esports exists as the canonical onchain namespace.

** Estimated figure. See Methodology.*

.esports

Key Finding

An estimated 95% of the esports industry's most significant organizations, publishers, leagues, and media outlets have no registered onchain top-level domain presence on the Freename decentralized registry as of Q1 2026. This includes the majority of the sector's most recognized teams, the publishers whose titles define competitive gaming, the leagues that structure it, and the media that covers it.

At the center of this gap sits a single registered asset: .esports -- a top-level domain registered on the Freename decentralized registry, representing the canonical onchain namespace for an industry valued at over \$5 billion and growing at a compound annual rate exceeding 20%.

** Estimated figure. Freename registry data is not exhaustively searchable via public API at time of publication.*

Introduction: The Esports Industry in 2026

Esports in 2026 is no longer a niche. The global esports market is estimated at \$5.34 billion, with projections reaching \$6.78 billion by 2031. Hundreds of millions of viewers watch competitive gaming events annually. Teams like T1, Team Liquid, TSM, FaZe Clan, G2 Esports, Cloud9, and Natus Vincere command valuations in the hundreds of millions of dollars. Publishers including Riot Games, Valve, Activision Blizzard, Epic Games, and Electronic Arts operate competitive ecosystems that attract millions of concurrent viewers and generate nine-figure prize pools.

The sector has embraced digital infrastructure at every layer -- streaming, social media, fan tokens, NFT memberships, blockchain-based collectibles, and Web3 loyalty programs. Fnatic launched NFT-based membership programs. Cloud9 partnered with Web3 developer platform XBorg. Team Secret joined the Checkmate Ecosystem. The esports industry's core audience is among the most digitally native and blockchain-literate of any consumer segment on earth.

And yet, at the infrastructure layer that matters most for long-term digital identity -- the onchain namespace -- the industry is almost entirely absent.

What Is an Onchain TLD and Why Does .esports Matter?

A top-level domain registered on a decentralized blockchain registry is a structurally different asset from a traditional domain name. Under conventional DNS, a domain name is leased, not owned -- rented from a registrar, subject to annual renewal fees, and ultimately governed by ICANN. It can be transferred, seized, or disrupted by centralized authorities.

An onchain TLD is a permanent, non-fungible asset. Registered on a public blockchain, it does not expire. It cannot be revoked by a central authority. It exists as a verifiable record on an immutable ledger, owned outright by the registrant. The namespace beneath it -- every second-level domain of the form name.esports -- is the registrant's to develop, assign, or commercialize as they see fit.

The .esports TLD is registered on the Freename decentralized registry. It is the only onchain top-level domain that captures the canonical identity of the entire global esports sector. In a sector that has built its identity on digital ownership, player handles, team tags, and brand recognition, the onchain namespace layer is the infrastructure that makes those identities permanent, sovereign, and interoperable across the decentralized web.

The Freename Registry: Infrastructure Context

Freename (freename.com) is the largest independent onchain TLD registry by registered namespace count, hosting over 32,000 registered TLDs and over 500,000 second-level domains as of Q1 2026. Unlike ICANN-governed registries, Freename operates on a multi-chain architecture -- TLD registrations are recorded across multiple blockchain networks.

TLD owners on Freename retain full sovereignty over their namespace. They can issue second-level domains to third parties, integrate the namespace into Web3 applications, enable decentralized website resolution, map wallet addresses, and build agent-ready digital identity infrastructure. As of Q1 2026, Freename has confirmed the forthcoming launch of a Vibe AI Website Builder enabling TLD owners to deploy AI-powered websites with built-in Web3 functionality, SEO and GEO agents, x402 payment protocol integration, and agent-ready domain identities directly from their onchain namespace.

Methodology

This report cross-references a representative sample of the global esports ecosystem against the Freename decentralized TLD registry. The sample includes: the top esports organizations by prize money and valuation; the major game publishers whose titles anchor competitive esports; the principal esports leagues and tournament operators; and the primary esports media outlets. Each entity was assessed for the presence of an exact or near-exact match TLD registration on the Freename registry.

Subsidiary brand names, team-specific handles, and player names were not included. This report establishes a baseline from which more granular reporting will follow in subsequent editions of the .esports Namespace Intelligence series.

Esports Organizations: Namespace Coverage

The top esports organizations by prize money and valuation represent the most recognized brand names in competitive gaming. Team Liquid leads all-time prize earnings at over \$56 million. T1 is valued at approximately \$48 million. Team Falcons leads by active roster count with 36 competitive teams. TSM, Cloud9, FaZe Clan, G2 Esports, Natus Vincere, Fnatic, 100 Thieves, Gen.G, Evil Geniuses, Virtus.pro, and Team Spirit round out the tier of organizations with global brand recognition.

Across this tier, onchain namespace coverage on the Freename registry is estimated at zero for primary organizational brand names. Not one of the top esports organizations by valuation or prize earnings has registered its primary brand TLD on a decentralized registry.

Game Publishers: The Namespace Paradox

The game publishers whose titles define esports -- Riot Games (League of Legends, Valorant), Valve (Counter-Strike 2, Dota 2), Activision Blizzard (Call of Duty), Epic Games (Fortnite), Electronic Arts (EA Sports FC, Apex Legends) -- invest hundreds of millions annually in esports infrastructure. Riot Games alone allocated \$25 million in annual prize pools for its restructured Valorant Champions Tour in January 2026. Epic Games partnered with the IOC to host the Olympic Esports Games in Singapore in 2025.

These publishers operate the most complex digital identity and asset systems in gaming. Yet onchain namespace coverage for major game publishers on the Freename registry is estimated at zero. Publishers who operate the most complex digital identity systems in gaming have not extended their namespace strategy to the decentralized layer.

Esports Leagues and Tournament Operators

The structural layer of competitive esports includes the League Championship Series, Valorant Champions Tour, ESL Gaming, BLAST Premier, PGL, and the Esports World Cup. The Esports World Cup, backed by Saudi Arabian sovereign wealth, distributed over \$60 million in prize money in its inaugural edition.

Onchain namespace coverage for major esports leagues and tournament operators on the Freename registry is estimated at zero. The competitive infrastructure of the world's most digitally native sport has no onchain namespace presence.

Esports Media: The Uncovered Namespace

The media outlets that cover the esports industry -- Dot Esports, Esports Insider, The Loadout, Upcomer, and ESPN Esports among others -- cover blockchain gaming extensively. Their readers are among the most blockchain-literate audiences in media. Yet onchain namespace coverage for major esports media outlets on the Freename registry is estimated at zero.

The Gulf Esports Dimension

Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund has made esports a cornerstone of its Vision 2030 entertainment strategy, backing the Esports World Cup, acquiring stakes in major organizations, and establishing the Saudi Esports Federation as a government body.

The organizations driving this investment -- PIF, the Saudi Esports Federation, the Esports World Cup Foundation -- have no registered onchain namespace presence on the Freename registry. Entities investing at the infrastructure level of the global esports industry have overlooked the identity infrastructure layer beneath it.

The .esports Namespace: What It Enables

At the organizational level, a second-level domain under .esports provides a permanent, verifiable onchain identity that exists independently of any centralized platform. It cannot be deplatformed, suspended, or transferred without the owner's consent.

At the player level, player.esports provides an onchain identity anchor that persists across games, platforms, and organizations. At the fan level, the .esports namespace provides the basis for verifiable fan identity and loyalty programs that operate independently of any single platform.

And as the agentic internet arrives -- as AI agents begin to browse, transact, and communicate on behalf of organizations and fans -- onchain TLDs are emerging as the foundational identity layer for agent-ready infrastructure. An esports organization with a .esports namespace is building on the infrastructure that AI agents will use to resolve, verify, and interact with esports entities in a decentralized internet.

The Second-Level Domain Economy

The .esports TLD enables a sovereign second-level domain economy beneath the .esports extension. There are hundreds of professional esports teams globally, thousands of professional players, dozens of major leagues and tournaments, and hundreds of media organizations covering the sector. Each has an interest in a verified, permanent onchain identity. The .esports namespace can serve all of them -- a sovereign registry for the entire global esports identity layer.

Observations and Forward Outlook

The global esports industry, for all its sophistication in digital asset management and blockchain-adjacent product development, has not addressed the decentralized namespace layer. This gap is consistent across organizations, publishers, leagues, media, and investors.

The gap will close. The ICANN Round 2 new gTLD application window opening in 2026 is prompting esports organizations to think more carefully about namespace strategy. The growth of agentic AI is creating demand for onchain identity infrastructure that the sector has not yet built.

When that gap closes, the .esports onchain namespace will be the canonical identifier for an industry that has spent a decade building the world's most digitally native sports ecosystem. The infrastructure is already registered. The sector has not yet arrived.

About the .esports Namespace Intelligence Series

This report is the first in a dedicated series examining onchain namespace coverage across the global esports ecosystem. Forthcoming editions will audit the top 20 esports organizations by valuation, examine game publisher namespace strategy in detail, map Gulf esports investment against onchain namespace coverage, and explore the second-level domain economy beneath the .esports TLD. The series is published by Kooky Domains, operator of

the .esports top-level domain on the Freename decentralized registry.