

What is Withheld for Privacy ehf (and How to See WHOIS Data Beyond It)

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When you run a WHOIS lookup for a domain name you're interested in, you may find that some details are *redacted for privacy*. You can't see who owns that domain because "Privacy service provided by Withheld for Privacy ehf" is on the registrant organization field. What, exactly, does this mean? And is there a way to find out the actual domain owner's email address and contact them?

We'll talk about registration data redaction in general and Withheld for Privacy ehf in particular in this post, as well as cover how it works, and some of the other most common domain privacy protection companies. We will also demonstrate how you can possibly still uncover domain ownership data despite redaction.

Why Is Everything "Redacted for Privacy" or "Withheld for Privacy"

Domain registration details, such as the registrant's name, email address, street address, and company name (if the registrant is a business entity), have always been required by the [ICANN](#) through domain registrars.

Since domain name holders enter into a registration agreement with their registrar of choice, they would have to provide personal information, which the registrar would then use to populate the WHOIS data—which was traditionally made publicly available.

But when the GDPR went into effect in 2018, ICANN adopted the “[Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data](#).” While this still allowed registrars to collect registration data, access to it is now restricted through a tiered-access system.

This spawned a chain reaction where several registrars began offering or expanding their WHOIS privacy protection or proxy services—and many registrants immediately employed these services to mask their personal information in the public WHOIS records in the hopes that they could avoid spam, identity theft, and other malicious campaigns.

It’s worth noting that domain privacy protection services have existed for decades. Domains by Proxy, for instance, have been around since 2002. But it wasn’t until GDPR came into effect that the demand significantly increased.

The widespread WHOIS redaction is set to take on a more permanent tone as ICANN’s Temporary Specification will be replaced by the [Registration Data Policy](#), which registrars and registries must comply with starting on August 21, 2025.

What Is “Withheld for Privacy ehf”

[Withheld for Privacy](#) is a popular domain privacy service, which is offered through [Namecheap](#)—the second largest domain name registrar, as per our [Global Domain Activity Report for Q4 2024](#). It is used to protect the domain registrant’s private data, substituting it publicly with its own.

Withheld for Privacy ehf is a private limited Icelandic company. Iceland is known for its strict data protection laws and a strong commitment to privacy rights. The legal entity designation “ehf” is the Icelandic equivalent of a Limited Liability Company (LLC).

How Domain Privacy Works

With the ICANN Registration Data Policy that's set to take effect in August 2025, registries and registrars are still required to collect information from the domain's registered owner. However, it aims to strike a balance between privacy (and compliance with privacy laws) and the need for legitimate access to domain registration data.

As such, personal contact information will be redacted by default, but parties like law enforcement, legal representatives, and intellectual property holders can still access them through the [Registration Data Request Service](#) (RDRS).

This means that, despite a significant shift in how the ICANN, registrars, and registries handle domain registration data, registrants would likely continue using domain privacy protection services. So, how does this work?

Withheld for Privacy essentially substitutes the domain registrant's information with its own, as, for example, in the case of maysahehealth[.]com (screenshot of its WHOIS registration details obtained using [WhoisXML API's WHOIS lookup](#) is below). For most registrants, this information, except for the email address, would be the same – that's the legal address where Withheld for Privacy ehf is registered.

The email addresses though, are always different. And, despite looking very fictitious, these addresses actually work. If you send an email to this address, it would be forwarded automatically to the actual registrant.



Registrant Contact

Registrant Name: Redacted for Privacy >

Registrant Organization: Privacy service provided by Withheld for Privacy ehf >

Registrant Street1: Kalkofnsvegur 2 >

Registrant City: Reykjavik >

Registrant State/Province: Capital Region >

Registrant Postal Code: 101 >

Registrant Country: ICELAND >

Registrant Email: 2d2f0c2fde7a4e73a3b214d162ffe56a.protect@withheldforprivacy.com >

Registrant Phone: 3544212434 >

In other instances, Withheld for Privacy fully hides the WHOIS details, like for `fnordprefect[.]org`.



Registrant Contact

Registrant Name: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY >

Registrant Organization: Privacy service provided by Withheld for Privacy ehf >

Registrant Street1: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY >

Registrant City: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY >

Registrant State/Province: Capital Region >

Registrant Postal Code: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY >

Registrant Country: ICELAND >

The amount of information shown on the lookup results depends on the registry's and registrar's policies. Some registrars may display more information than others, even for domains that use privacy services.

Other Popular Domain Privacy Protection Companies

WHOIS privacy protection is a serious business—the market was valued at [\\$1.64 billion in 2024](#). Withheld for Privact ehf is just one of the players, along with these other companies.

WhoisGuard

[WhoisGuard](#) is a free WHOIS protection service historically [associated with Namecheap](#) before the registrar shifted its domain privacy service provider to Withheld for Privacy.

WhoisGuard is Panama-based and has been around since 2013. Their domain privacy protection service works by replacing the registrant's email address and other information with a randomly generated @whoisguard.com address and forwarding messages to the owner's email address.

Here's an example of the registrant contact details of cleverti[.]com, a domain name protected by WhoisGuard.

Registrant Contact

Registrant Name: WhoisGuard Protected >

Registrant Organization: WhoisGuard, Inc. >

Registrant Street1: P.O. Box 0823-03411 >

Registrant City: Panama >

Registrant State/Province: Panama >

Registrant Country: PANAMA >

Registrant Email: b3de5f6d7915457ab05a4777b24e7445.protect@whoisguard.com >

Registrant Phone: 5078365503 >

Registrant Fax: 5117057182 >

Domains By Proxy

[Domains by Proxy](#) is perhaps the oldest WHOIS data protection service. It was established by GoDaddy's founder, Bob Parsons, and offers its services through GoDaddy, Wild West Domains, and other registrar partners.

Domains by Proxy replaces the registrant's information with its own and forwards any

communication to the domain owner's email address. The company also gives users the option to filter messages for spam. Take a look at the registration details of toolmarket[.]com below.

Registrant Contact

Registrant Name: Registration Private >

Registrant Organization: Domains By Proxy, LLC >

Registrant Street1: DomainsByProxy.com 100 S. Mill Ave, Suite 1600 >

Registrant City: Tempe >

Registrant State/Province: Arizona >

Registrant Postal Code: 85281 >

Registrant Country: UNITED STATES >

Registrant Phone: 14806242599 >

Contact Privacy

You might encounter domain names whose registrant name field says, "Contact Privacy Inc. Customer" and then a series of random numbers, such as that of thedivinedetailers[.]com.



Registrant Contact

Registrant Name: Contact Privacy Inc. Customer 0171291245 >

Registrant Organization: Contact Privacy Inc. Customer 0171291245 >

Registrant Street1: 96 Mowat Ave >

Registrant City: Toronto >

Registrant State/Province: ON >

Registrant Postal Code: M6K 3M1 >

Registrant Country: CANADA >

Registrant Email: thedivinedetailers.com@contactprivacy.com >

Registrant Phone: 14165385457 >

This means that the registrant's domain privacy protection provider is Contact Privacy, Inc, which is associated with the registrar Tucows. [Contact Privacy](#) has a website that anyone can use to contact a domain owner.

Registrar-Provided Privacy Protection

Some registrars offer their own domain privacy protection services. [Cloudflare](#), for one, fully redacts registration details and offers this as a standard feature. Here's an example showing the registrant contact details of fexyr[.]com.



Registrant Contact

Registrant Name: DATA REDACTED >

Registrant Organization: DATA REDACTED >

Registrant Street1: DATA REDACTED >

Registrant City: DATA REDACTED >

Registrant State/Province: OR >

Registrant Postal Code: DATA REDACTED >

Registrant Country: UNITED STATES >

Meanwhile, Dynadot gives registrants more flexibility, allowing them to choose between partial (all fields except registrant name) and full domain privacy. The registrant of domain wawrzyniewi[.]cz opted for full privacy, as you can see in the screenshot below.

Registrant Contact

Registrant Name: Super Privacy Service LTD c/o Dynadot >

Registrant Organization: Dynadot Privacy Services >

Registrant Street1: PO Box 701 >

Registrant City: San Mateo >

Registrant Postal Code: 94401 >

Registrant Country: CANADA >

How to See WHOIS Data Beyond “Withheld for Privacy”

Even with ICANN's RDRS mechanism, access to non-public domain name registration data is not guaranteed since requesting parties need to provide a clear and compelling justification for accessing the data.

But there are still other ways. The historical WHOIS data of domain names, particularly those that have been registered before 2018, may reveal some information. To illustrate, we'll take you through the WHOIS history of [bitcoin\[.\]org](#)—and maybe closer to Satoshi Nakamoto, the person or persons who developed bitcoin.

First, we run the domain name on [WHOIS History Search](#). Its most recent WHOIS records are masked by Withheld by Privacy ehf, so there's nothing interesting to see.



Compare with WHOIS record: Mar 08, 2025

Changed fields are highlighted in blue. Raw Text, Clean Text fields are excluded from comparison. Hover over the changed field to see the past value.

Domain age

Created Date: August 18, 2008 13:19:55 UTC
Updated Date: October 31, 2023 09:45:27 UTC
Expires Date: August 18, 2029 13:19:55 UTC

Registrar Name

NameCheap, Inc.

WHOIS Server

whois.namecheap.com

Name Servers

keanu.ns.cloudflare.com|meera.ns.cloudflare.com

Status

clientTransferProhibited

Registrant Contact

Registrant Name: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Registrant Organization: Privacy service provided by Withheld for Privacy ehf
Registrant Street: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Registrant City: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Registrant State/Province: Capital Region
Registrant Postal Code: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Registrant Country: ICELAND
Registrant Email: ---
Registrant Phone: ---
Registrant Phone Extension: ---
Registrant Fax: ---
Registrant Fax Extension: ---

However, if we scroll down to the domain name's WHOIS record prior to 2018, we can find more details—including the registrant name, email address, and country.



Domain age

Created Date: August 18, 2008 13:19:55 UTC

Updated Date: May 18, 2011 04:47:13 UTC

Expires Date: August 18, 2019 13:19:55 UTC

Registrar Name

eNom, Inc. (R39-LROR) >

Name Servers

DNS1.LOUHI.NET >

DNS2.LOUHI.NET >

DNS3.LOUHI.NET >

Status

OK

Registrant Contact

Registrant Name: Louhi Net Oy >

Registrant Organization: Louhi Net Oy >

Registrant Street: Italahdenkatu 22 A >

Registrant City: Helsinki >

Registrant State/Province: ---

Registrant Postal Code: 00210 >

Registrant Country: FINLAND >

Registrant Email: hostmaster@louhi.net >

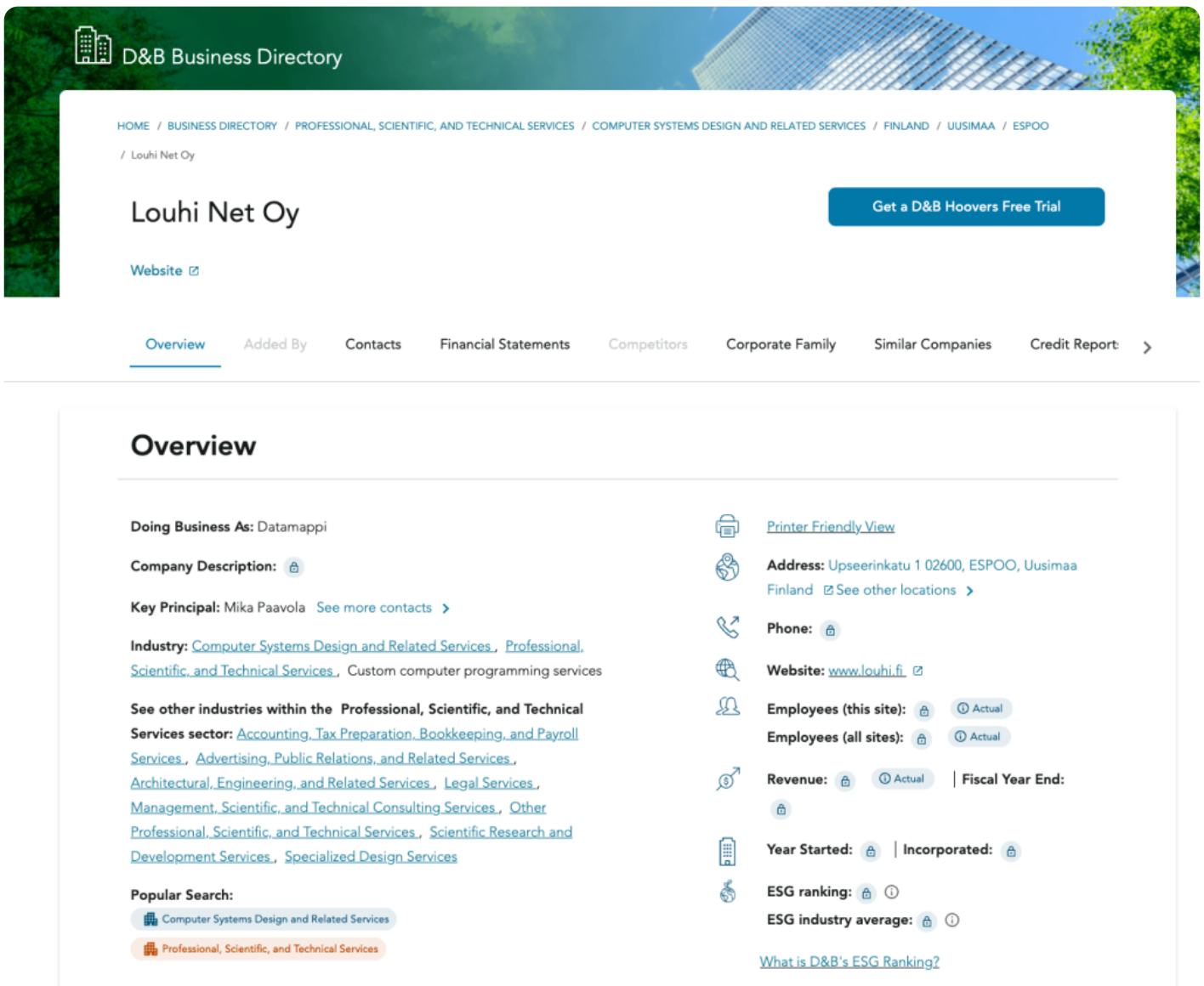
Registrant Phone: 358925122180 >

Registrant Phone Extension: ---

Registrant Fax: 1123 >

Registrant Fax Extension: ---

A quick search of the name appearing on the registrant organization field led us to a company profile which contained a name of its key principal – a person we could potentially talk to about the history of bitcoin.org, and, who knows, maybe even about the identity of Satoshi Nakamoto. While the person may no longer be the current owner of bitcoin[.]org, at least we have a starting point.



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Key Principal: Mika Paavola [See more contacts](#) >

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Phone: [🔒](#)

Website: [www.louhi.fi](#) [↗](#)

Employees (this site): [🔒](#) [🕒 Actual](#)

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Revenue: [🔒](#) [🕒 Actual](#) | **Fiscal Year End:** [🔒](#)

Year Started: [🔒](#) | **Incorporated:** [🔒](#)

ESG ranking: [🔒](#) [🕒](#)

ESG industry average: [🔒](#) [🕒](#)

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The registrant email domain also led us to a web hosting provider that the first owner of bitcoin[.]org may have used.

As we demonstrated, WHOIS history services can help you access registration data that was there before the registrant employed the services of Withheld for Privacy ehf or other domain privacy providers.

Conclusion

Registrars and registrars implement domain privacy protection to comply with GDPR and other regulations in different ways. Withheld for Privacy ehf is one of the companies providing those methods and is primarily used by Namecheap.

Given the many privacy protection mechanisms and ICANN's mandate to redact registration data by default, finding a domain name's owner has become next to impossible. However, you can still contact the owner using the email address listed in the WHOIS record. Also, if a domain was registered before the worldwide implementation of stricter privacy measures, it might have some historical records that can reveal some more information. You can uncover this using [WHOIS History](#).