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SXSW Accelerator Spotlight: RootOrange Delivers Localized Domains

Author: [Leslie Grandy \(/people/gearheadgal/\)](/people/gearheadgal/)

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If you have ever tried to lease a vacation property, you know how valuable a property manager can be. Property management companies handle the overhead of finding renters, keeping the unit clean, and ensuring the transaction occurs.

[RootOrange \(/www.rootorange.com/\)](/www.rootorange.com/), a three person startup that is a contender in this year's SXSW [Microsoft BizSpark Accelerator \(http://sxsw.com/interactive/accelerator/finalists\)](http://sxsw.com/interactive/accelerator/finalists) competition, acts as a property manager for domain name owners who are looking to optimize monetization of their valuable - and usually very discoverable - URLs. The company creates "localized" versions of highly coveted, generic domain names, and re-directs a customer who enters a URL from a specific geography to an iframe of the local business' website within the page of the original generic domain name owner's page.






Many local businesses struggle to afford popular keywords from Google that would make them discoverable. With RootOrange, small businesses pay just for the regional pool of customers for the generic domain names they lease, bypassing the purchase of the Google keyword. For instance, the legal keyword, "attorney" gets over one million searches monthly, making it a very expensive keyword to buy. For example, a personal injury lawyer in Seattle can now lease the domain "attorney.com" from the owner through RootOrange - acting as the property manager - and all traffic that comes from the greater Seattle market to "attorney.com" will view that lawyer's web page.



BizSpark judges expressed their concern about Google's reaction to RootOrange's business plan. The search engine company generally discourages a practice called, "[domain cloaking](http://www.abcseo.com/seo-book/domain-cloaking.htm)" (<http://www.abcseo.com/seo-book/domain-cloaking.htm>), but RootOrange describes what they do as "domain splitting." Domain cloaking and RootOrange's domain splitting both employ



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page frames which many [web developers believe](http://www.thesitewizard.com/sitepromotion/cloaked-domain-redirection-issues.shtml) (<http://www.thesitewizard.com/sitepromotion/cloaked-domain-redirection-issues.shtml>) cause issues for search engine indexing and consumer usability.

Companies hoping to win the [Accelerator](http://sxsw.com/interactive/accelerator) (<http://sxsw.com/interactive/accelerator>) competition are being judged on creativity, functionality, longevity and caliber of the team. Judges, including executives from [ReadWriteWeb](http://www.readwriteweb.com) ([/www.readwriteweb.com](http://www.readwriteweb.com)) and [Blippy](http://blippy.com) (<http://blippy.com>), grilled contestants on business strategy, revenue growth plans, and value propositions in a forum that looked like a geek version of speed dating. [Finalists in the competition](http://sxsw.com/interactive/accelerator) (<http://sxsw.com/interactive/accelerator>), which include mobile application darlings, Bump, Siri, and ShopSavvy, will be announced this evening. A final round of grilling takes place tomorrow, when a winner will be crowned. For both days of the competition, a live stream can be heard [here](http://sxsw.com/interactive/accelerator). (<http://sxsw.com/interactive/accelerator>)

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Article Author: [Leslie Grandy](/people/gearheadgal/) (</people/gearheadgal/>)

Leslie Grandy serves as EVP, Products and Services at R2Integrated, and digital marketing and technology design firm. Grandy combines sixteen years in technology product marketing and development with thirteen years of previous experience in motion ...

[Leslie Grandy's author page](/people/gearheadgal/) (</people/gearheadgal/>) — [Author's Blog](http://gearheadgal.net) (<http://gearheadgal.net>)

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Christopher Herring
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