

A Milestone in Domain History: The First New gTLDs

CORE brings two of the first three new domains to the Internet

After a long preparation period of seven years, the first three new gTLD applicants have successfully completed Pre-Delegation Testing (PDT), the final examination for new registries. In intensive tests executed by Internet regulator ICANN, the passing applicants have proven to meet the technical and operational requirements necessary to operate the gTLD in a stable and secure manner. ICANN's Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) department will now delegate these new gTLDs into the Root Zone of the Internet.

The delegation into the Root Zone marks the point when the new TLDs actually become part of the Internet's Domain Name System (DNS). This is expected to occur in late September 2013, meaning that the first registrations of domain names under the new TLDs could become possible this very year.

Anyone who expected .shop, .hotel or .apple to be the first new TLDs might be surprised when reading the names of the new domains. Those who bet on .site, .web, or .online are closer to the mark. However, it is not the English spelling of these terms that will start as the first of more than 1,900 new domains, but the Cyrillic variants of site and online, and the Arabic "shabaka" for web.

All of the first new TLDs to be introduced are so-called "internationalized domain names" (IDNs), i.

e., domain names which include special characters or which entirely consist of letters from alphabets other than the Roman one. ICANN decided to favor internationalized TLDs in the new gTLD program in the hope to open up the Internet for new audiences and to develop new markets. The high demand for the new TLDs and the coverage of the topic in the media all over the world seems to prove them right.

The usage of IDNs, however, makes high demands on the operation of the new TLDs, partly originating from the representation of the characters in the ASCII-based Domain Name System, but also because of other peculiarities like spelling from right to left. CORE, the "Internet Council of Registrars", is the operator of two of the three first new TLDs, namely the Cyrillic variants of .online and .site.

The Swiss-based non-profit association of Internet domain name registrars uses a specialized system to provide the full spectrum of registry services for the new gTLDs. CORE's registry system was designed from scratch in such a way that it seamlessly integrates all aspects of internalization, i. e., the registration process itself and all bevels of the domain management, ranging from customer support up to the invoicing.

The company that has developed CORE's registry system is the Internet infrastructure provider Knipp Medien und Kommunikation GmbH, headquartered in Dortmund, Germany. Knipp, which is a founding member of CORE, is also responsible for the global operation of the name servers that translate the new domain names into IP addresses. For that purpose,

the specially developed ironDNS technology is used at ten locations around the world.

Bringing two of the first three new domains to the Internet underlines the global leadership of CORE in the domain name industry. Some smaller hurdles are yet to overcome before the new domains become registrable for everyone. But already now, the delegation of these first three into the Root Zone marks an important milestone in the history of the Internet.

About CORE

CORE is a not-for-profit membership association of Internet domain name registrars. Its purpose is to operate, on a cost-recovery basis, a neutral-channel shared registration system (SRS) for Internet domain names.

About Knipp

Knipp Medien und Kommunikation GmbH is an Internet infrastructure provider that develops and operates cutting-edge software solutions for the domain name industry. It is specialized in mission-critical systems like the premium name server service ironDNS.

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