

# DISPATCHES

News from The Bureau

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## Domain Names

growing in number and value

The growing importance of having an online presence plus the increased global access to the Internet and broadband technology have led to a big rise in the number of Domain names being registered over the past 18 months.

The number of Domains being registered is growing every year and now stands at just over 160 million worldwide. Whilst the rush for Domain names in the late 1990s was often to simply bag the best ones, today Domains are being hosted and more often than not associated with an active Website.

The UK has about 7 million Domains registered and as a country is third in the Domain League table behind China and Germany. Most are .co.uk names with others like .org.uk , ltd.uk, me.uk and plc.uk taking less than 1% each.

We have always recommended clients select a .co.uk Domain whenever available rather than a .com simply because it suggests that you are based in the UK and are therefore local. Recent research carried out by Yougov confirms that British Internet users are six times more likely to select a .uk Domain than a .com address when looking for information and products online. The survey also found that 62% believe that a .uk address suggests a company is local or more relevant than a .com.

Faced with a search engines results page with a mixture of .coms and .co.uk the .UK Domain is more likely to be selected, even if they are further down the page rankings. If you have a .com Domain it might be worth checking whether an equivalent .co.uk or at least very similar Domain is now available.

Now that Domains are more highly prized, it is worth noting that Nominet, the UK principal registrar of .uk Domain registrations, has become very strict about renewals. Failure to renew .uk Domain on time or at least within the allowed period of grace, will almost certainly result in the Domain being removed from the register and made available for others to buy and use.

The length of a Domain name can vary from between 3 and 63 characters. The median length is 11 characters and those with over 30 characters account for less than 0.5% of the total register. It is good to keep your Domain name as short as possible but odd abbreviations do not always have the best results. Even if your company and or product name is long, it may be the best Domain to select.

### Understanding the acronyms -

**ccTLD:** Country code top level Domain eg: .uk

**DAC:** Domain availability checker

**ICANN:** Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers

**Registrant:** Individual or company name to which a Domain is registered—make sure yours is in yours.

**SLD:** Second Level Domain eg: .co.uk or .org.uk etc

**Tag:** The registration details or name tag of a Domain



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