

Case Study

.GENT

“.GENT is proving to be quite popular with the local Gent community, as it offers an effective way to align one’s online presence with a city that is known for its start-up ecosystem.”



 Website
<http://www.nic.gent>

 Registry Name
.GENT Registry

 Location
Gent, Belgium

Background

The city of Gent, Belgium (Ghent in English) is home to a thriving start-up community and is considered by many to be Belgium’s center of start-up activity, despite not being the capital city. Combell, a Gent-based hosting and domain company, saw an opportunity with ICANN’s New gTLD Program and applied for the .GENT top-level domain (TLD).


Initially, the registry required that .GENT registrants prove a local tie, such as a Gent region postal code. However, .GENT is now open for everyone. The majority of .GENT registrants are local businesses and entities seeking to align their brand with the city.


Objectives

Combell’s objectives with .GENT are to promote Gent as a start-up destination, as well as give local organizations and individuals the opportunity to leverage Gent’s entrepreneurial reputation by demonstrating affiliation with the city.

The city of .GENT has embraced the new domain and now all official municipal websites have switched to .GENT domains, including <https://stad.gent/>, the official website of Gent (“stad” means “city” in Dutch). .GENT is also used by numerous start-ups, including CoPlace, a local co-working space, Overpoort, a web portal featuring news on Gent’s nightlife scene, Mouthful, a local eatery, and many other local organizations. The registry anticipates that its 3,300+ .GENT registrations will only increase as the TLD continues to gain traction.

TRIVIA

 Date TLDs available on Internet: **24 November 2014**

 Number of registrations: **more than 3,500 as of January 2017**

- **Intelligent, Combell’s holding company, demonstrated a clever use of the .GENT TLD by switching its web address from intelligent.be to intelli.gent.**
- **Gent joins Brussels as the only other city in Belgium with its own TLD.**

New gTLD Fast Facts

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers' (ICANN) New gTLD Program is responsible for introducing new generic top-level domains (gTLDs) into the Internet, which will result in the largest-ever expansion of the domain name system. The goal of this expansion is to enhance competition, innovation and consumer choice. Top-level domains are the letters immediately following the final dot in an Internet address. Through the program, the domain name system is expanding from 22 gTLDs to hundreds.

The New gTLD Program, led by ICANN's Global Domains Division makes it possible for communities, governments, businesses and brands to apply to operate a top-level domain registry. Operating a registry is a responsibility that requires a major commitment. In essence, the registry operator becomes the custodian of a piece of the Internet's core infrastructure. For this reason, ICANN established a rigorous process for those who applied for a new gTLD. The application process is a cornerstone of the New gTLD Program.

THE NEW GTLD PROGRAM BY THE NUMBERS

gTLD Key Stats



1930 total applications received by the deadline (May 2012)

1300+ new gTLDs or "strings" possible

Language Options



1st time Internationalized Domain Names will be available as gTLDs, enabling new extensions in different language scripts such as Arabic, Chinese and more.

Applications By Region



17 Africa **675** Europe

303 Asia/Pacific **911** North America

24 Latin America/Caribbean

Safeguards In Place



17 new safeguards created to help lay the foundation for a broader, more mature domain name industry. Examples include Rights Protection Mechanisms and DNS Security.



One World, One Internet

