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' .tc' registry to offer short domain names

Domain names

Turks & Caicos Islands - Hogan Lovells International LLP

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Yet another country-code top-level Domain (ccTLD) will soon be joining the now not-so-exclusive one and two-character domain name club. The extension in question is '.tc', which is the ccTLD for the Turks and Caicos Islands in the West Indies. The registry is managed by UK-based organisation [AdamsNames](#), which is also responsible for the management of the extensions '.gd' (Grenada) and '.vg' (British Virgin Islands).

According to the registry's website, the registration of domain names under the extension '.tc' has been suspended until further notice due to the upgrading of technical infrastructure. However, the registry is indicating that normal service will be restored at some point during the month of October 2012. Any '.tc' domain names already registered are not affected by the suspension and the renewal of existing '.tc' domain names is still available.

According to the registry's terms and conditions, when the registration of domain names under '.tc' is relaunched, it will also be possible to register short one and two-character domain names. However, there will be no sunrise period allowing holders of trademarks consisting of one or two characters to register in priority.

Generic top-level domains, such as '.com', are regulated by the [Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers](#) (ICANN) and, as such, must seek approval from the ICANN Board of Directors to launch one and two-character domain names, unlike ccTLDs which are not regulated by ICANN. More and more registries are releasing one and two-character domain names because they are traditionally of most value, being short and easy to remember. Both '.biz' and '.mobi' have released one and two-character domain names in recent times. However, both extensions favoured an initial request for proposals approach, rather than immediately selling the domain names to the highest bidder, on the basis that this was more likely to encourage appropriate and relevant content and appeal to serious candidates, not simply those seeking to sell on domains at vastly inflated prices.

It seems that the same cannot be said for '.tc'. The registry's pricing of these one and two-character domain names will be much more expensive than for domain names with three or more characters (£3,000 per year for a two-character domain name and £6,000 per year for a one-character domain name). Moreover, this is only the annual fee payable to the registry, and registrants who are able to obtain such domain names upon launch may try to sell particularly valuable combinations on at much higher prices. In addition, there is no obligation on the registry to hold its annual fees at this level, thus effectively meaning that a brand owner who invests time and money in building up a brand under a one or two-character '.tc' domain name may be faced with a nasty shock if the registry drastically raises its renewal fees in future.

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