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**'co' registry releases European IDNs
Colombia - Hogan Lovells LLP**

Domain names

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[.CO Internet SAS](#), the registry managing '.co', the country-code top-level domain (ccTLD) for Colombia, has announced the launch of European internationalised domain names (IDNs) in the '.co' domain name space.

The launch includes the special characters used by the Russian, German, French, Portuguese, Polish, Latvian, Lithuanian and Hungarian languages. Spanish and Scandinavian IDNs are already available for registration under '.co', while Chinese, Japanese and Korean IDNs were made available in April 2013. The '.co' registry views the further expansion of '.co' IDNs in the domain name space as a natural step towards making '.co' domain names available and accessible to an increasing number of non-English speakers.

There are now more than 1.5 million '.co' domain names currently registered. The impressive growth rate of '.co' has been due to the liberalisation in 2010 which removed the requirement that '.co' domain names could be registered only by Colombian entities. In addition to the liberalisation, '.co' is now seen by many as a viable alternative to '.com', which is in no small part due to the ongoing marketing efforts of the registry.

Thanks to the lack of restrictions and various potential double meanings which transcend mere reference to Colombia (thus enabling the registry to position '.co' as an interesting alternative to the saturated '.com' TLD - for example, '.co' can make reference to '.companies', '.commerce', '.communities' and '.connections'), as well as a strong and continuous marketing campaign, '.co' has managed to make quite a buzz and is one of the fastest growing ccTLDs so far. The recent launch of more European IDNs is likely to increase the number of '.co' domain names registered, and is a further demonstration of the registry's aim to make '.co' domain names as widely available for registration as possible.

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