

dotJoburg domain names available soon

.joburg (dotJoburg) domain names will soon be a reality, offering an opportunity to create more awareness of Johannesburg-based businesses and organisations and locations, venues, tourism products and services, from a destination marketing perspective.

The ZA Domain Name Authority (ZADNA) welcomes the success of .joburg in the initial evaluation stage of ICANN's new generic Top Level Domains (gTLDs) project. The ZA Central Registry (ZACR) submitted the application alongside the dotAfrica (.africa) dotCapeTown (.capetown) and dotDurban (.durban) applications.

The initial evaluation success of the .joburg application follows that of .durban, which passed the same evaluation phase three weeks ago.

ICANN (The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names & Numbers) is currently processing around 1300 new gTLD applications. The applications are considered in the order determined by the prioritisation draw held in Los Angeles on 17 December 2012. The .durban application drew position 303, and passed its initial evaluation in May 2013. Joburg drew 566 and has now just been evaluated. Cape Town with position 761 has a little more time to wait.

Distinct association

"Joburg is a city with its own unique atmosphere and is undoubtedly Africa's leading business and financial centre," says Vika Mpisane, GM of ZADNA. "It's fitting that it should have its own domain name that companies and organisations can use to convey a distinct association with the city. Once the Cape Town initial evaluation is completed, we will be on our way to giving our three major cities a sound platform on which to market themselves on the internet," he concludes.

"The .joburg project gives the City of Joburg many possibilities that will help us position the city as a tourist destination of choice for business and leisure", says Phelisa Mangcu of the City of Joburg. "It aligns with our vision of taking the Joburg brand globally and marketing the city as a World Class African City."

The Joburg metro municipality will receive priority when it comes to registering names for its entities and programs. Entities such as the City of Joburg, Joburg Tourism, Joburg Water, City Power, Soweto and Sandton can now have URLs such as city.joburg, tourism.joburg, travel.joburg, hotels.joburg, water.joburg, citypower.joburg, soweto.joburg and sandton.joburg. South African government will also be given an opportunity to reserve its department and entity names and names of national interest such as heritage names.

Complimenting ICANN measures

These measures compliment those set by ICANN that require the new TLDs to give trademark owners an opportunity to register their trademarks in a database that will be used by TLD operators to ensure that names that are applied for do not infringe in trademarks.

Preparations for the launch of the .joburg namespace are underway following a progress report workshop that ZADNA and ZACR held with the representatives of the three cities on 31 May 2013. The workshop gave the cities an opportunity to understand first-hand the plans for the launch and operation of the three city TLDs. It also kicked off an iterative consultation process that will allow the cities to influence policy and operation of the three namespaces.

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