

South African city domain names now open to all - .capetown leads

Domains.co.za has announced the pricing for .joburg, .capetown and .durban - and thus far, .capetown leads the pack.



.capetown is leading the pack, thanks largely to one individual's efforts, so the ranking could well change. (Image: NASA)

From today, (4 November 2014) any individual or organisation may register a .joburg ('dotJoburg'), .capetown ('dotCapeTown') or .durban ('dotDurban') city Top-Level Domain (cTLD) on a first-come, first-served basis.

That's according to Domains.co.za Managing Director Wayne Diamond who says that today marks the launch of the ZADotCities General Availability (GA) phase that follows the parallel Sunrise and Landrush periods. These two ZADotCities launch phases were designed to give intellectual property owners time to apply for their own cTLDs.

"GA means that anyone - whether in South Africa or abroad - can register a dotJoburg, dotCapeTown or dotDurban city domain name with Domains.co.za for just R275," explained Diamond. This price excludes premium domain names, which are subject to premium pricing from ZACR.

On the value of South African city domain names, Diamond said that the new domain names lent themselves to specific geographic-based marketing campaigns while also appealing to anyone with a particular connection to South Africa's three best-known cities.

Local is lekker

"Choosing a domain name with some local flavour should work well for many companies. As dotJoburg, dotCapeTown and dotDurban are new domains, everyone has an equal opportunity to get on board early," said Diamond.

According to the ZA Central Registry (ZACR), intellectual property owners and others had by yesterday evening already applied to register well over 1,100 ZADotCity domain names during the 120-day Sunrise and Landrush periods. The current

GA phase of the ZAdotCity domain names should see a substantial upward swing in the number of dotJoburg, dotCapeTown and dotDurban domain names registered by individuals and organisations.

Registration of names from today will follow the usual process where applicants register names through their chosen accredited registrars such as www.domains.co.za, which is South Africa's only operational ICANN-accredited registrar. ICANN is the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers that helps regulate and organise the web. For

.capetown leads applications for ZAdotcities domains

The 623 applications for .capetown ('dotCapeTown') city Top-Level Domains (cTLDs) received to date by the ZA Central Registry (ZACR) far outstrip the predicted favourite of .joburg ('dotJoburg') which has seen 297 cTLD applications. The ZACR has received 250 .durban ('dotDurban') cTLD applications. In total, this means that there are currently some 1,170 launch applications for ZAdotCity domain names.

However, it's not all doom and gloom 'upcountry', as the Capetonians would say. That's because a staggering 237 dotCapeTown domain name applications have been submitted by just one person, skewing the cTLD stakes.

Three of South Africa's four major banks have applied for a ZAdotCity domain name. There are 32 auctions pending for domain names that have more than one applicant. Most of South Africa's favourite technology brands have applied for all three ZAdotCity domain names.

"From November, any Internet user globally with an affinity for South Africa's three best-known cities will be able to register a South African cTLD, on a first-come, first-served basis," said Lucky Masilela, CEO of the ZA Central Registry (ZACR). The ZACR operates co.za, web.za, org.za, net.za and now the SA cTLDs.

Registration of names from today, 4 November, will follow the usual process where applicants register names through their chosen accredited registrars or resellers. As is normal practice, different registrars will charge different prices due to bundled services they provide in addition to the basic domain name registration service.

ZACR has developed a robust trademark protection system called the Mark Validation System, which can be accessed at www.markvalidation.co.za, in order to assist in mitigating against trademark abuses. ZACR, a non-profit organisation, was established in 2012 following the renaming of UniForum SA, which had operated co.za since 1995. More information about ZACR is available at www.registry.net.za.

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