

.Org Domain Names with German Umlauts Get Off to a Successful Start

Public Interest Registry (PIR) Rolls Out .ORG German Language Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) and Announces Plans for Other Languages to benefit the International Community

Reston, VA - January 18, 2005 - Public Interest Registry announces the availability to register .ORG domain names containing the umlauts ä, ö and ü. The technical systems transition to the IDN standard went exactly according to plan.

Users input internationalized domain names by typing names or concepts into their browser the way they are actually written. So the name "Müller" for example, no longer needs to be entered as "Mueller." Technically, IDNs are based on the internationally agreed IDNA Punycode standard that converts German umlauts into ASCII-compatible character sets with an "xn" prefix. It does so in the background, unnoticed by the user. In this way, concepts that include umlauts can be registered as domain names and handled by Internet browsers that support IDN standards.

"This is the first phase of our IDN strategy in support of the international .ORG community. Principal beneficiaries are expected to be nonprofit & non commercial organizations which is the category that the .Org top-level domain is mainly intended to support." said Edward G. Viltz, President and CEO of the Public Interest Registry (PIR). "We are very satisfied with the preliminary results of the launch and look forward to eventually offering the benefits currently being experienced through German language IDNs to all languages".

During the 3rd quarter of 2005, PIR plans to introduce domain names in 10 other languages including: Danish, Hungarian, Icelandic, Korean, Latvian, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Polish, Swedish, and Tamil. Other languages will be announced following the 3rd quarter introduction. The significance of these announcements is the ability to register domain names with non-English characters in support of languages internationally.

According to PIR Chairman, Marc Rotenberg, "The Public Interest Registry is supporting changes in the technical management of the Internet that will eventually enable access to a broader range of the world's cultural heritage." Rotenberg continued, "PIR strongly supports the use of ICTs to promote access to knowledge and cultural diversity. We also acknowledge the important work of organizations like UNESCO and others in the promotion of cultural contents and artistic expression. The .ORG community will benefit by continued efforts to promote dialogue and development which the International Domain Names will help make possible."

About .ORG

The .ORG domain, which has come to be associated with non-commercial activities, is the Internet's third largest "generic" or non-country specific top-level domain with over 3 million domain names registered worldwide. In 2002, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) Board of Directors selected ISOC's proposal from among 11 organizations bidding to operate the .ORG top-level domain. PIR assumed control of the registry on January 1, 2003.

About PIR

Public Interest Registry (<http://www.pir.org>) is a 501(c) (3) not-for-profit corporation created by the Internet Society (ISOC) to manage the .ORG domain. .ORG is the Internet's third largest "generic" or non-country specific top-level domain with over 3 million domain names registered worldwide. It is viewed as the home of non-commercial organizations on the Internet. PIR's mission is to manage the .ORG domain in an exemplary manner while educating and empowering the global non-commercial community to more effectively utilize the Internet. PIR is based in Reston, Virginia, USA.

Further information is available at www.pir.org or from:

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