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Web addresses will enter a new and bigger domain

Kansas City Business Journal - by [Steve Vockrodt](#) Staff Writer

The corporation that assigns Internet addresses is preparing to allow the registration of domain names that end with phrases other than the common suffixes such as “com,” “net” and “org.”

The **Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers** anticipates that in the first quarter of 2010, companies and businesses can buy domain names that end in whatever extension they choose.

For example, the city of Kansas City could buy a domain name and change its address from [www.kcmo.org](#) to [www.kcmo.kansascity](#) if it so decided.

Some trademark lawyers and social media experts suggest that businesses will want to update their trademarks before 2010, lest a competitor or a rogue domain-squatter buys an extension and sets up a mirror Web site to an existing corporate site.

“It seems kind of scary for a big brand. Perhaps ... **Coca-Cola** would have to buy all those extensions,” said Angelo Trozzolo, president of **Trozzolo Communications Group**. “I don’t see it being as big an issue for the smaller companies.”

New domain extensions are not cheap: \$185,000 for the initial registration and an additional \$75,000 annual maintenance fee.

“They have been debating how high to make the cost because they want to make it high enough that legitimate businesses are doing this but not so high that people are discriminated against,” said Joan Archer, an intellectual property lawyer at **Lathrop & Gage LLP**.

Buying new domain extensions offers possible upside as an avenue to extend brand control with additional Internet domain names, Archer said.

“It gives you greater control over your brand. Basically (it) gives you the ability to do a lot of things with those extensions,” she said.

Others are less certain that new domain names will catch on.

Ed Marquette, an intellectual property lawyer at **Sonnenschein Nath & Rosenthal LLP**, likens the new domain extensions for 2010 to ICANN’s decision in 2002 to allow suffixes such as “info” and “biz,” which have gone largely unused because sites affixed with unusual domain names project less credibility.

“It’s like it’s secondary, and they’re not uptown,” Marquette said.

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