



MASTER YOUR DOMAIN NAME

If you are an insurance provider or distributor, the world of the Internet – as you currently know it – is about to change. This year members of the global insurance community, led by fTLD Registry Services and supported by dozens of associations and industry leaders around the world, will have the opportunity to create a new online location for their businesses. During the last eighteen months more than a thousand new Internet web extensions have made their way to the Internet – but only one has been created by and for the global insurance community.

It's called .INSURANCE.

This new extension is the place for insurance providers and distributors to enhance and differentiate their online presence in the marketplace. Directed by insurance and security experts, .INSURANCE is a trusted, verified, and more secure location online. All .INSURANCE domain names must meet strict Security Requirements, and only verified members of the global insurance community will be approved.

Insurance providers and distributors today face a multitude of challenges including competing for and retaining customers, protecting their data, and enhancing their online presence. Registering and migrating to a .INSURANCE domain name offers a solution to all of those issues.

“In the past year, the global financial services community has undergone a seismic shift online, recognizing a better way to serve their customers and protecting their information through financial top-level domains,” said Craig Schwartz, managing director of fTLD, the private company that is owned, operated and governed by banks, insurance companies and their respective trade associations. “Initially offered in May 2015, today, more than 2,568 banks in the U.S. and 262 abroad have registered a .BANK domain name. Now, we’re excited to announce the debut of .INSURANCE.”

However, it's important to note that the launch of .INSURANCE will be distinctly different from that of .BANK.

“The number of members eligible for the .INSURANCE domain is significantly larger than it was with .BANK. Today, there are more than 38,000 independent insurance agencies in the U.S. alone. Competition for domain names will be fierce. fTLD encourages insurance providers and distributors to prepare now, or run the risk of being unable to secure their preferred web address.”

Members of the global insurance community can take proactive steps now to ready themselves for the launch of .INSURANCE this spring:

1. Organize a .INSURANCE project team, and include marketing, plus those responsible for your Internet platform, IT, and legal. By forming a working group of these representatives, the company can get a broad sense of the needs and possibilities for a .INSURANCE domain name.

2. It's likely an insurance provider or distributor uses a third-party to host its website or to provide other online services. That external resource should be part of the working group, to ensure that all technical aspects are considered – even if the group does not plan to use its .INSURANCE domain name immediately.
3. Consider protecting trademarks. Insurance providers and distributors who have registered their trademark in ICANN's Trademark Clearinghouse (TMCH), may apply for an exact match of that mark during the Sunrise registration period. If an entity does not have a registration in the TMCH, they may apply for a domain name that corresponds to their trademark, trade name or service mark during General Availability.
4. Evaluate whether to move all activities to .INSURANCE or to maintain certain activities in an existing domain such as .COM. Many entities will purchase domain names related to their main brand trademark, but also for their products, services or locations.
5. Check into the names available through a registrar. Due to the Security Requirements for .INSURANCE, including mandatory verification of eligibility, the .INSURANCE domain can only be purchased from fTLD-approved registrars and the current list is available [here](#). Registrars will continue to be added as they are approved by fTLD.
6. Once insurance providers and distributors have made the decision to purchase one or more .INSURANCE domain names, they need to consider how it will be deployed. It is expected that some will transition their consumer-facing online presence to .INSURANCE to maximize the value of participation, while others will use the new address as a channel to communicate with customers, vendors, regulators, etc.

“Like .BANK before it, fTLD is proud to say no other domain can match the caliber of value, security and trust like a .INSURANCE address.” fTLD will implement a series of critical controls not currently required by the operators of any other commercial domain, in order to mitigate existing cyber risks and build a high-trust environment for users of .INSURANCE.

The .INSURANCE domain will be available in May for insurance providers and distributors with trademarks registered with ICANN's Trademark Clearinghouse. However, the majority of interested parties will be eligible to purchase their domain during the general availability period that starts in June. .INSURANCE domains will initially be available on a first-come, first-served basis, so it is important to start preparing now. Check out the timeline [here](#) for details.

For more information, consult the .INSURANCE website [here](#) for updates on the registration process, registrars and additional information on policies and requirements.

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