

.Beer, The New .Com?

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Prior to 2014, there were 22 domain extensions, called generic top-level domains (gTLDs) (.com, .org, .edu, etc.), available to direct internet users. In response to a shortage of available gTLDs, the international body responsible for the Internet domain naming system, ICANN, authorized the creation and release of thousands of new gTLDs. One of those new gTLDs is .beer, and the .beer extension has been released is now in the Trademark Sunrise Period. The Sunrise Period for .beer expires **September 10, 2014**.

The Trademark Sunrise period is specifically for trademark registration holders. However, to be eligible to secure a domain registration during the Sunrise Period, a trademark owner must file their federal trademark registration with ICANN's Trademark Clearinghouse. Once registered with the Trademark Clearinghouse, the trademark owner retains the first right to register domains that are exact matches to their existing trademark registration and the released gTLDs.

Due to ICANN's first-come, first-served laws for domain registration, many times domain registrations are granted to squatters and other domain registrant hoarders despite existing trademark registrations. Consequently, there is a strong benefit to filing with the Trademark Clearinghouse and ensuring first right of registration during the Sunrise Period. After the Sunrise Period, the .beer gTLD will be released to the open market for registration and will be administered and available for purchase in the same way all other gTLDs – first come, first served.

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