

February 2, 2010

## Another Detour? Steer Internet Traffic to Your Sites by Registering .CO Domains

In what may be a new opportunity for cybersquatters, the Colombian .CO registry will soon allow for registration of domain names ending in simply .CO. Such domain names may be a prime platform for social networking sites and brand owners. As the registry explains, the acronym .CO can be associated with terms that include company, corporation, commerce, communities, content, connect, communication, collaborate, and consumers. Unfortunately for brand owners, these domains also may be attractive to poachers because of the similarity to the reigning .COM extension, as bad guys will hope that Internet users accidentally land on their [www.company.co](http://www.company.co) sites rather than the legitimate brand owners' sites at [www.company.com](http://www.company.com). Brand owners will have the opportunities to pre-register their brand names with the .CO extension, as early as March, depending on their current domain portfolio and existing trademark registrations. Already owning another Colombian domain name, such as one ending in .COM.CO, or a Colombian trademark registration will enable brand owners to register .CO domains before other interested parties. It is advisable for brand owners to consider taking advantage of the pre-registration option, at least for defensive purposes and to help direct consumers to their own sites.

Depending on its current domain portfolio and existing trademark registrations, a brand owner may have the opportunity to register domain names corresponding exactly with its trademarks and ending in .CO, during the following pre-registration periods:

- March 1 – April 20, 2010: If you had previously registered your brand with any .CO domain extension, such as .COM.CO or .ORG.CO, before July 30, 2008.
- April 1 – April 20, 2010: If you own a Colombian trademark registration for the brand.
- April 26 – June 10, 2010: If you own a trademark registration from another jurisdiction for the brand.

Starting on June 21, 2010, anyone may apply for registration of a .CO domain name.

We encourage brand owners to speak with their trademark counsel about domain name registration options and to ensure that an effective and efficient domain name registration and renewal process is implemented and maintained.

For more information on the Trademark practice group and its members, you may visit the [Trademark, Advertising and Brand Management](#) page of our Web site. If you have questions or desire further information, please contact one of the following:

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