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## Recent Changes to Domain Names: How Does This Affect You?

By Robin Schachter and Robert King

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The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (“ICANN”) has recently taken steps that could significantly increase the number of internet domain addresses. Right now, there are 22 current domain addresses, such as .com, .org and .net. Soon there could be hundreds, with the possibility of having almost any word in any language as a domain address. So, instead of a domain address like [ryanswanson.com](http://ryanswanson.com), with the familiar .com address ending, it will now be possible to simply have [lawyer.ryanswanson](http://lawyer.ryanswanson) as a domain address.

This is a sweeping change that will greatly open up domain names for use on the internet. Registration of new domains is expected to go through an extensive application and objection process that will allow other parties to protect popular names and trademarks before a domain address is awarded to any applicant.

The fee to register new domain addresses is expected to be very high. Evaluation fees are estimated to be \$185,000 with applicants required to pay a \$5,000 deposit fee per requested application. ICANN expects to begin taking applications for new domains in January 2012 and ending in April 2012. If we can be of any assistance to you or your company to help you register a new domain name or in protecting your trade name, please give us a call.

### **Please contact Ryan Swanson’s Trademark and Intellectual Property Group with questions:**

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