

An aerial night photograph of a city, likely Los Angeles, showing a dense network of highways. The image is characterized by numerous long, bright light trails from cars, creating a complex web of white, yellow, and blue lines that radiate across the dark landscape. The city lights are visible in the background, and the overall scene conveys a sense of constant movement and connectivity.

# **.brands Industry Report**

Everything you need to know about .brands

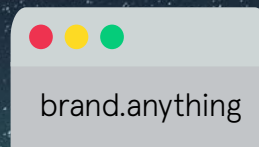
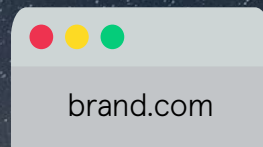
APRIL 2020

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[www.registry.neustar](http://www.registry.neustar)



# What is a .brand?

Over **550** of the **world's largest brands** now have their own piece of internet real estate. It's time to end the search, and start connecting.  
**.brand The future for a connected world.**





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# Foreword.



**Jason Loyer**

Senior Director, Client Services –  
Neustar Registry Solutions

Welcome to another edition of Neustar's .brands Industry Report. This is the sixth edition of the report and the team at Neustar are proud to share it with the .brand community around the world.

In the last edition of the .brands Industry Report, we interviewed global professional services firm KPMG. They bravely chose to drop their .com and move their global footprint to the home.kpmg web address. This was a significant undertaking and its significance on the global .brand stage should not be underestimated. Nearly a year after their transition, we check back in with KPMG to learn more about their journey; specifically - the benefits, the challenges, and the impact to their SEO ranking.

Also in this edition, we explore cost reduction and portfolio management efficiency opportunities- this should be of particular interest to brand portfolio managers who make up a large portion of our readership.

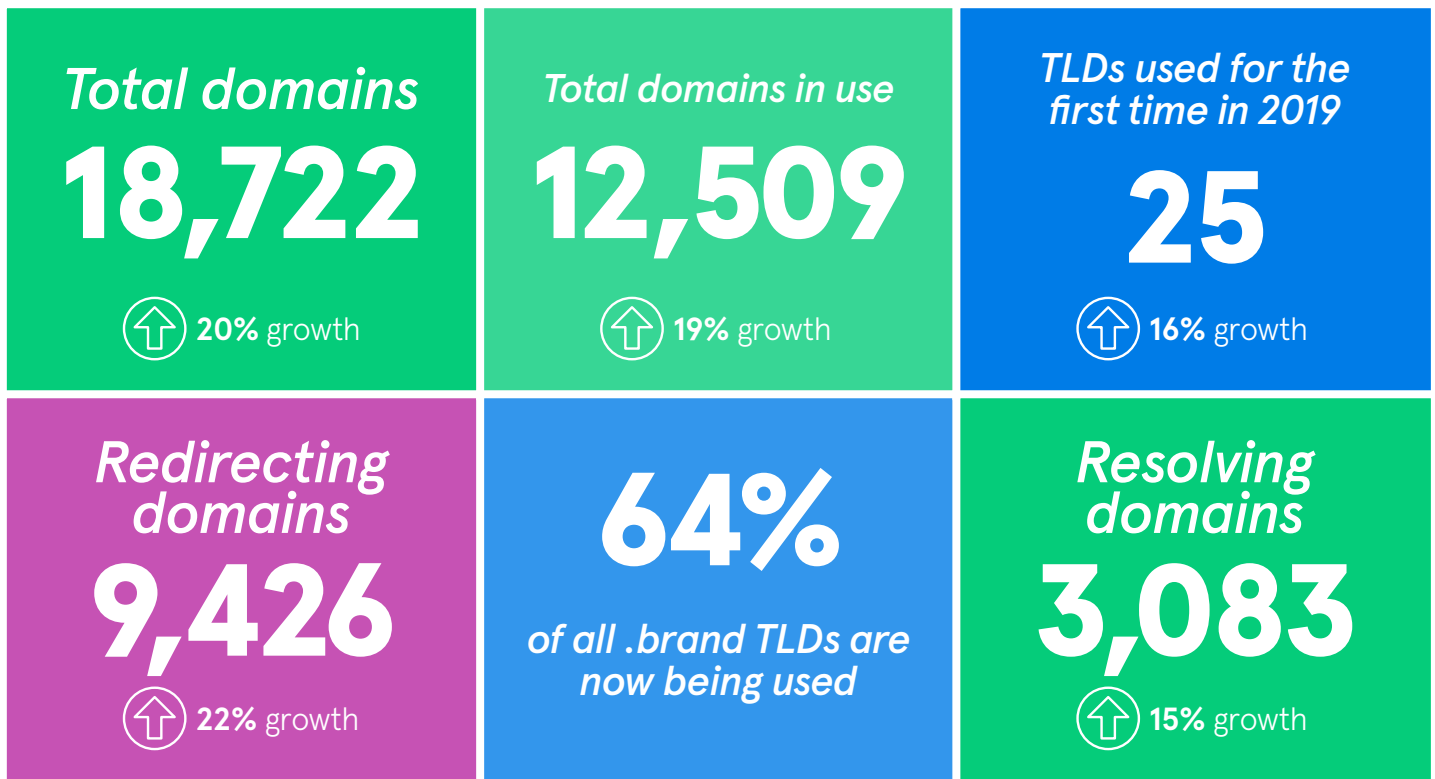
We've also included a snapshot of some of our favorite .brand sites from around the world along with the latest .brand statistics which we hope you enjoy. 2019 saw .brand growth of 20%, as more and more .brands realize the benefits of managing their very own namespace.

We hope all of our readers are safe and healthy and thanks for taking the time to read the first edition of the .brands Industry Report for 2020.■

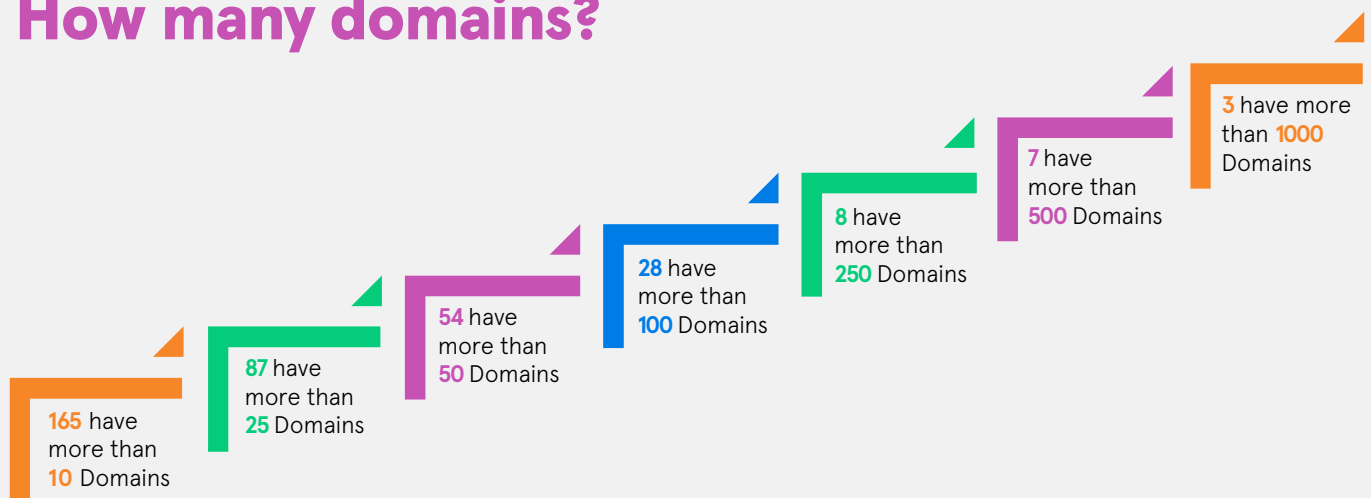


# 2019 by the numbers.

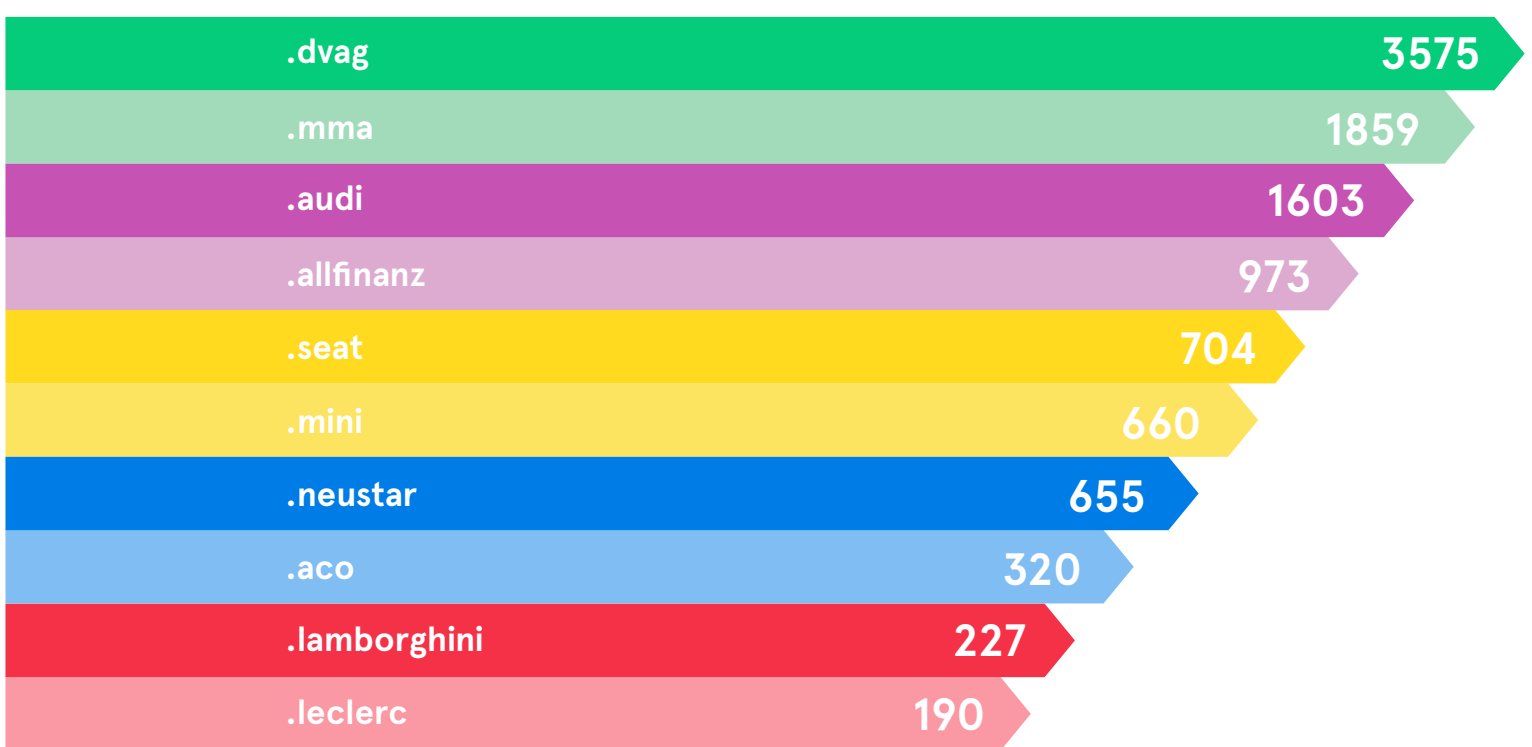
Stats correct as at Decemebr 31, 2019. Growth rates indicate change over twelve months from Jan 01 – Decemebr 31, 2019.



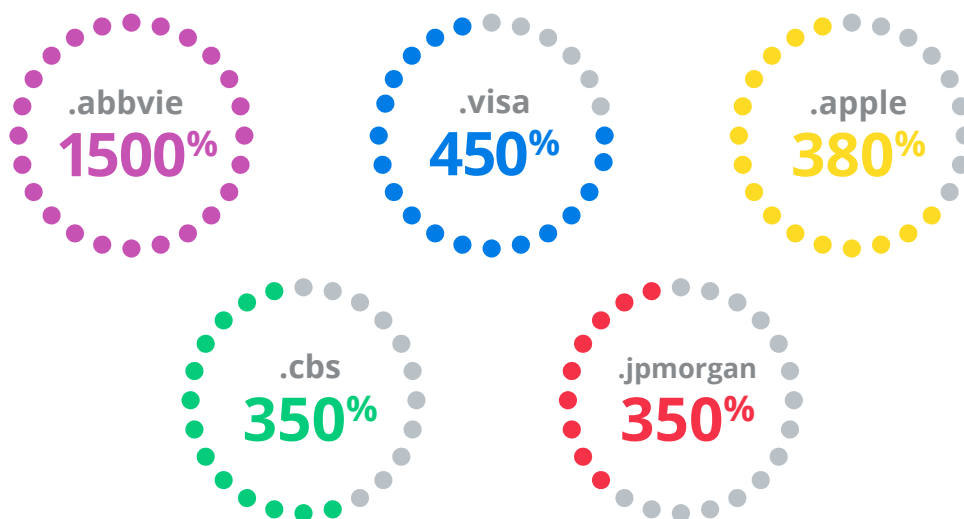
## How many domains?



## .brands TLDs with the most domains.



## Notable fast growing top level domains in 2019.



## Top 10 .brand resolving domain owners.

1 .audi	2 .seat	3 .bmw	4 .schwarz	5 .weber
6 .bradesco	7 .leclerc	8 .abbott	9 .canon	10 .cern

## Which sectors have the most domains?



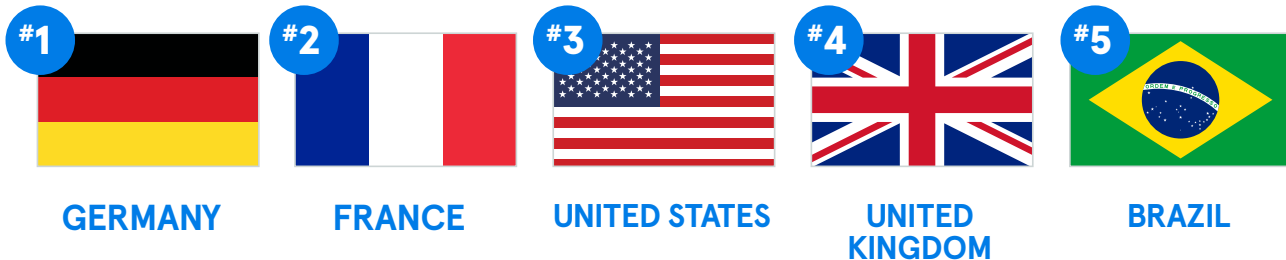


## 2019 .brand data from around the world.

### Top 5 countries fastest .brand domain growth.



### Top 5 countries for total redirect domains.



### Top 5 countries for total resolving domains.



# KPMG drops .com and moves to **home.kpmg** – Insights with 12 months experience.

**Tony Kirsch**

Head of Professional Services  
Neustar Registry Solutions

**Domenic Torani**

Senior Program Manager, Global Digital  
Marketing at KPMG International

KPMG's decision to embark on a journey to revolutionize their digital brand and move from kpmg.com to their new home.kpmg branded domain was many years in the making. In this makeway.world exclusive, KPMG's Senior Digital Transformation Manager, Domenic Torani speaks with Neustar's Tony Kirsch on the process to make such a revolutionary change and the benefits the organization has enjoyed since moving to their home.kpmg web address.

**Tony Kirsch:** Let's go back to the start if that's ok Domenic? I think to set the scene for our readers, we need to get a bit of perspective on what the old landscape was with KPMG's digital footprint, and what you had in place before you began this initiative.

**Domenic Torani:** Sure thing. Firstly, when we look at our central kpmg.com domain, it's important to note that it has traditionally been KPMG's first point of entry to the web and due to the size of our organization, it has a lot of eyes on it.

One of our key advantages as an organization is that we operate in over 150 different countries and as a result, we have different member firm sites, different member firm digital assets that operate in their own spectrum of the World Wide Web.

Granted we're not a B2C organization like many other .brand owners, but we're still B2B and we have a huge global outreach with a website that has hundreds of thousands of pages. We have so

many different product integrations – for example, third party API, RAS, SAS, IDM, integration with internal IT systems, integration with other member firm systems – just to make our website work like it does.

**Tony Kirsch:** OK, so how does the previous domain and content hosting strategy work for you at KPMG?

**Domenic Torani:** Each of our member firms internationally has their own Country Code Domain that they used to promote their local activities – for example kpmg.co.uk – but all of our content was hosted under one central domain which was kpmg.com and after the migration, is now home.kpmg.

This required us to have a complex series of redirects so that a user visiting kpmg.co.uk would have actually ended up performing their activity on kpmg.com/uk and so on.



**Tony Kirsch:** So what was the background with .kpmg? What was the original plan for it and how has it been managed across the organization?

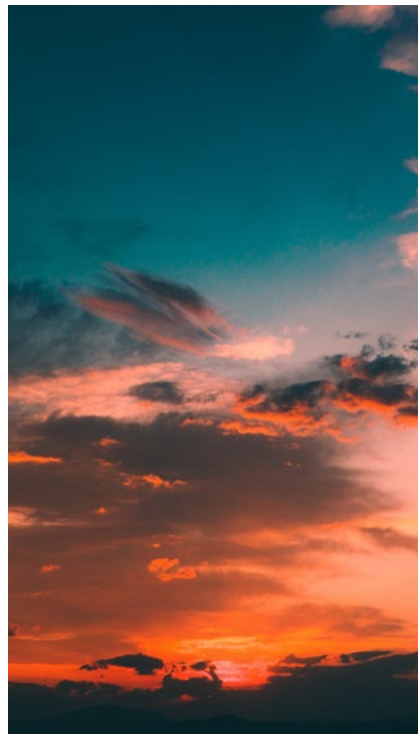
**Domenic Torani:** We really just wanted to break what I call the “handcuffs” of the .com domain and .kpmg gave us the impetus to do that.

To be clear, we were really focused on carving out our public facing content from kpmg.com and moving it to home.kpmg to make a better global experience for our community within this specific part of the projects. All of our internal background ITS infrastructure still operate on KPMG.com and time will tell if we do transition slowly, or perhaps find it’s working just fine for us in that way.

**Tony Kirsch:** You mentioned the “handcuffs” of the .com single domain. What does that mean specifically and how does that manifest in an organization the size of yours?

**Domenic Torani:** This is really

one of the cruxes of why we feel so confident with our move to home.kpmg and why we made this decision and still have support from the different groups in our organization.



Due to the oversight we have over the global kpmg.com domain and its traffic, we’re fortunate that we have that

visibility into the reality of our customer engagement. Customers in North America and many other places see kpmg.com as their ability to access the US site; in their eyes “.com” is their first answer.

However, we communicate with over 150 different member firm nations and this statement is not true of everyone globally. For example, the member firms in different countries will type in their own Country Code extension before they will type .com.

**Tony Kirsch:** OK, so .kpmg gives you the ability to be a truly global organization. How do you handle the needs of the individual countries?

**Domenic Torani:** There’s multiple ways for us to be able to manage this, and we’re still playing around in this space.

Is home.kpmg linked to a specific country? No, not per se.

But we have localization, which attaches at the end through a subfolder structures like /ch,



/au, /uk, etc. Our redirect strategy already included the various country code domains like kpmg.co.uk and still redirect to the appropriate content within the home.kpmg site.

**Tony Kirsch:** Ok, the big topic for many of our readers – let's talk SEO and what was your experience when migrating to home.kpmg.

**Domenic Torani:** When we think of search engines, it's important to realize that they have their own respective algorithms that are changing by the day. They may have guidelines, but they will probably never tell you exactly what you need to do. You have kind of this foggy guideline of how you should

have your sites configured so that you are taking advantage of SEO.

But by setting yourself up with all the safety nets and the proper configurations, you can easily pop back up to where you were in your overall SEO ranking quickly and even improve in many areas.

We're already at that point, and we've actually exceeded where we were before in terms of our SEO.

But to do that, it requires having the proper configurations in place, ensuring that you have the safety nets, proper redirects and changes to your current platform or current web

presence SEO that even makes it better than what it was.

**Tony Kirsch:** So this is more of a philosophical question. Why do you think the organization was interested to make this move? What was the drivers for people wanting to get excited about this?

**Domenic Torani:** As I mentioned earlier, one key advantage for us was the concept of strengthening our brand identity when considering how kpmg.com was looked upon from around the world from an end user perspective. It was North America-centric and we saw an opportunity to use home.kpmg to join us all together, where it was no longer a thing about which domain would exist in which country, it's now just the one.

Another key selling point was helping us with the management of domain assets. In an organization of our magnitude, you wouldn't believe how often it feels like you have dozens upon dozens of new domains being registered because of just different lines of business or marketing groups or IT going out to procure them. While we may not be able to stop that instantly per se, with .kpmg we've started building our long term digital identity under a single umbrella and, over time, we can see that this will help ensure that domain registrations globally will want



to be under .kpmg. They would therefore need to come through us which gives us the ability to better control domains, DNS, and brand and marketing compliance. That is enormous. We see significant time and financial savings occurring in this piece alone.

And the piece that we're really finding exciting is from the security standpoint. As a manager of a digital environment, it's getting worse and worse by the day where there's phishing scams, there's impersonations etc. We regularly have people reaching out to our security team on behalf of a member firm saying "I got this email, this is for you guys to discover that someone out there registered a fake domain impersonating a KPMG partner, firm or entity, etc." So we see security as a bonus as well, and have been fortunate to have the backing of our local IT security officers and KPMG International's IT security officers.

**Tony Kirsch:** Let's talk specifics about the actual technology shift. How did you know what you were working with and do you have an idea of the number of pages or the amount of content that you needed to move the content from kpmg.com to home.kpmg?

**Domenic Torani:** I can't speak to specific numbers per se, but as I touched upon earlier, our CMS houses well hundreds of thousands of pages, different landing pages, home pages etc. Again, it's across almost 150 member firms and their

whole respective digital assets that sit on that one single domain under numerous folders. We've come a long way over the past 15 years, as kpmg.com has been evolving all these years to consider the complexity of our organization.

The first step for us was a full audit of our web content because if you're an organization the size of KPMG, you'll uncover stuff that you never even knew and you'll start saying "this is interesting, we didn't know we had that". This is a lot of work, but it's actually given us the ability to have a clean look at what we have and its role in our future – it really allowed us to align our content and redirect approach.

So, as big as SEO was for us, I would say the second largest consideration that we had to ensure that was in place was redirect logic. This is huge it was another part that was either going to make or break our SEO or even the platform working the next day.

But we actually walked away from



the project saying we did two things in preparing for the technical migration really well – specifically SEO and managing the redirects.

**Tony Kirsch:** What can you share with us about 'Migration Day'? What was your approach and how did it work from a technical and stakeholder feedback perspective?

**Domenic Torani:** There's never a good time to do something like this. So when picking a date, you obviously do your best to pick a point in time where it have the least potential impact. I think different firms would see this differently depending on the locations, access to resources during holiday period, time zone requirements etc.

In our case, we had decided to upgrade our CMS to the most recent version at the same time and this lined up for us to actually combine exercises December 29th just going into New Year's. From there we developed a full cut-over checklist, making sure that we had the proper groups contribute and had all these proper groups on standby and available on the phone, email thread etc. We created a central hotline to handle any queries. I'd say we had 20 to 30 people available at any one point, ranging from our internal groups to our external vendor that controlled the most important aspects of our technology – for example, our Content Delivery Network and other different technologies.

**Tony Kirsch:** So, if you cast your mind back to that three-week

period that you mention you know you're holding your breath, what's happening to the SEO? Can you sort of tell us a little more about what you're seeing in those reports what the general trend is?

**Domenic Torani:** Well, with something like this you're really holding your breath for the next several weeks after migration, despite the months of planning. You watch your phone to see if an internal group is going to reach out to say something is not working. Now as we're approaching a year since migration, we're still keeping an eye on how it's progressing.

In the days following the switch, the SEO didn't disappear, it's all still there. At the end of the day, the browsers are smart, acknowledging what's going on and there are some changes for sure, but we were focused on watching our overall SEO ranking – in particular, monitoring the SEO strength of the kpmg.com domain which we knew very well, against the home.kpmg domain.

What we saw was not a fall, but rather a slow decrease naturally in one, and increase in the other. To clarify, I don't mean it's a 1:1 rise and fall. In our move to home.kpmg we had, in many cases, removed some of the historical SEO 'best practices' as we knew they were no longer relevant in the

algorithms at the time so the engines were analyzing the sites differently.

In the past, in terms of how SEO logic worked, you built up your



SERP and your equity based on older rules. If it's working, the browsers and the algorithms from Google or Bing are smart enough to not mess with that, but this migration gave us the opportunity to apply all the latest logic.

I would say it took several months and monitoring to see the domain equity move completely from the old domain

to the new one. We can see the trend is now is going up and we keep following that week in week out. All the SEO redirects are working and the rankings just keep improving; it's actually much better overall than what it was before.

**Tony Kirsch:** Do you have any views on why your SEO is better with home.kpmg than what it was with kpmg.com? Is it related to that point you made about the older pages having legacy SEO practices versus the new best practices or something else?

**Domenic Torani:** I couldn't say necessarily that this was specifically because we changed top-level domains, because we've installed best practices for our CMS. 301 redirects are huge proponent to this ensuring that proper SERP, considering the new algorithm/ logic that Google is putting out there. So, that's part of the pre-SEO work.

What I could say is that I know we've been giving attention to areas of the site that we may have not focused on before and we're achieving a level of digital maturity that has been built with experience and as part of this project, we've become even more knowledgeable.

Our hope is that one day, people will know about home.kpmg or something.kpmg and will navigate using the browser



organically rather than searches. But until then you obviously have to ensure that you're still doing your SEO due diligence, ensuring that you still have the proper catch rules for redirects to still catch all the different permutations of possible customer behavior.

**Tony Kirsch:** A year down the road, what's the general feeling about the move? What's what sort of feedback you received from a project perspective?

**Domenic Torani:** So, to speak as someone being very close to the project, we have not gotten any negative feedback internally, which is a great thing.

What I can tell you is that the folks that see our website are seeing it and noticing it. In our blogs and our promotions we're using .kpmg wherever possible and when our members are promoting their activities, they are promoting the new Top Level domain also which is only increasing the awareness of .kpmg on global basis day by day.

We see this part of our commitment to innovation and evolving into new technologies and best practices and there's a number of potential benefits that we can imagine over time.

Granted, we're only using a fraction of this potential right now and we're already happy with the outcomes it's generated for our business – which is great.

What we can still do with .kpmg is so much more, so much bigger as .kpmg evolves. I can't say that there's been discussion of moving back. Everyone's happy with it, and it's becoming second nature for us to say home.kpmg and use .kpmg in our vocabulary.

**Tony Kirsch:** Okay, one final question. What's next for .kpmg?

**Domenic Torani:** Firstly, if we want to promote this further and bring disparate digital assets fully onboard, we need to make sure that this has a very robust kind of nomenclature and in doing so, account for the difference scenarios, use cases, permutations, groups using it and so on.

Like I said earlier, we're operating a domain portfolio of thousands of domains. How long is that sustainable? You could literally go on forever spending extraordinary amounts on domains that aren't being used or providing any real value.

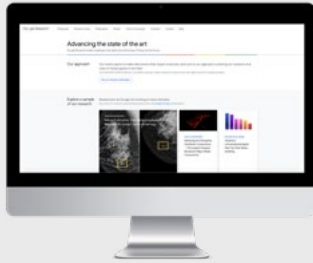
That's not to say our domain portfolio is going to disappear overnight as we know it needs to run in parallel but if we can continue to build awareness and direct type traffic around .kpmg, I suspect that this will help bring some degree of consolidation as well streamlining our day to day operations.

**Tony Kirsch:** Yeah, that's really interesting. It really sounds like it's been a trigger or an impetus for a fresh look and maybe even create some long-term change. So, if that's a lovely little side benefit to doing a project like this, then that's great.

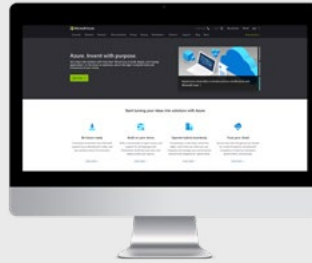
Domenic, this has been super helpful. I know that there are a lot of people around the world who are either doing parts of what you're doing or watching very closely to see what you've experienced so that they can take it to their organization.

So, on behalf of the .brand global community, thanks for being so open. It's very generous of KPMG to allow you to do this and absolutely helpful for everyone to understand a little bit more about what's happened to you guys over the last 12 months.

**Domenic Torani:** Thanks Tony. ■

**research.google**

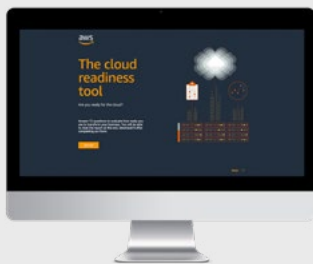
Google Research tackles challenges that define the technology of today and tomorrow.

**azure.microsoft**

A redirect for Microsoft's cloud services offering.

**europetour.lamborghini**

The Italian manufacturer's product launch page.

**readyforcloud.aws**

AWS's microsite to help customers evaluate their readiness for cloud services.

**investimentos.bradesco**

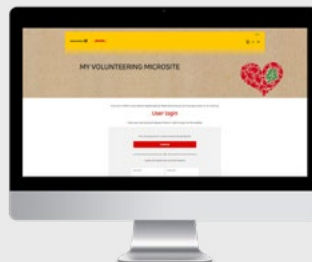
The investment portal for one of Brazil's largest banks.

**turbo.ipiranga**

The entrepreneurial hub for the Brazilian fuel organization.

**engage.abbott**

Abbott Nutrition's program page for nutritional therapy.

**volunteering.dhl**

German logistic's firm launches a microsite for their employee giving program.

**applemusicforbusiness.apple**

Going into the business market for Apple's music program.



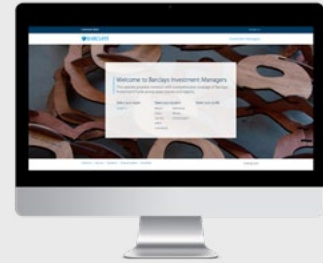
[hsifbangkok.hitachi](https://hsifbangkok.hitachi)

A microsite for Hitachi's 2020 forum in Bangkok.



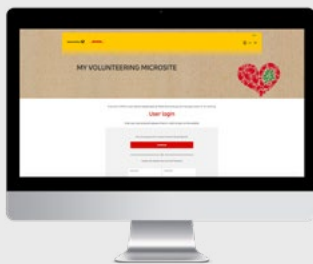
[privacy.cbs](https://privacy.cbs)

CBS's portal for their privacy policies.



[investmentmanagers.barclays](https://investmentmanagers.barclays)

Barclay's site to highlight Barclays Investment Funds across asset classes and regions.



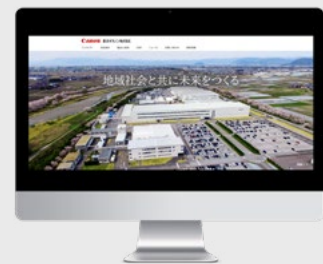
[xmas.lidl](https://xmas.lidl)

Fun and innovative microsite by the German supermarket.



[partner.bugatti](https://partner.bugatti)

Want to find a Bugatti partner? This makes it easy.



[nagahama.canon](https://nagahama.canon)

A great site dedicated to Canon's Nagahama location.



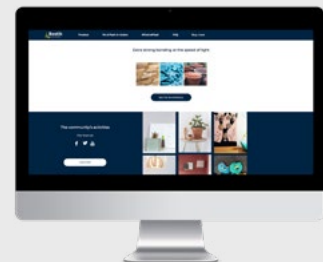
[plt2020.mini](https://plt2020.mini)

A brilliant looking training program for the new 2020 Mini range.



[insight.fujitsu](https://insight.fujitsu)

Launching the Fujitsu Digital Transformation Customer Conference.



[glue.bostik](https://glue.bostik)

A domain that's 'sticky' to remember for Bostik.



# Real world .brand insights from a Brand Management Professional.



**Jason Loyer**

Senior Director, Client Services –  
Neustar Registry Solutions

Here's a consistent story from our clients that's becoming commonplace as we travel the world sharing the .brand story.

A new person comes into domain management. They're technically astute, but find themselves managing a large portfolio of domains, sometimes tens of thousands of names. There is a sense that this is more of a historical benefit to the business than a current one – especially with the clear data indicating that the vast majority of them are not receiving noticeable volumes of traffic.

Nonetheless, the portfolio is maintained in order to mitigate risky domain non-renewal, helping to keep the IP professionals comfortable, and avoiding BEC scams to clients/customers.

A large amount of time and money is spent in managing these domains, and despite the efforts of the domain management team to advocate their strategy and business purpose, they are constantly digging up websites that have been created by some well-intentioned individuals who weren't aware of the internal domain registration policies. The process to acquire these domains and put them onto the companies centralized domain platform has to be done – but it's never as easy as it should be and finds the domain manager generally spending hours chasing employee owners.

One such client at a global advisory firm, who has asked to remain anonymous, recalls their first reactions to finding out that their company had their own .brand TLD.

"I saw the immediate value of the .brand in terms of running our business unit and cutting costs. From the domain management perspective, we're always being asked to create domains for areas across our global business – and increasingly, these are not available and force us into expensive campaigns to purchase domains. Having our .brand allowed us to create the domains that we wanted, in real time, without fear of availability or expensive purchase prices."

This is a common experience that we hear from our clients. Often what starts as a key reason to use their .brand turns into a range of downstream benefits that were previously not apparent.

Similar client experiences reveal a pivotal moment where the downstream benefits changed things substantially.

A global financial services client shared such a moment for their firm.

"As we experimented with our .brand, we found that its capability was so much deeper than we had expected. We completed a couple of test cases with our .brand which created a significant amount of internal interest. We took the opportunity to collaborate with Marketing to define the 'perfect end state' for our Brand utilizing our .brand. The elimination of one

off domains, and the defensive portfolio, for limited campaigns reduced our domain portfolio costs and significantly increased global Brand awareness. It also provided an easier way to track campaign effectiveness"

Not only did we increase the awareness of the Brand Management function through our usage of .brand, we also created significantly less subdomains on our main .com site. We see this as a significant advantage for managing and securing the site as we have over 1000 subdomains off our main site today.

In the past, managing all the subdomains on our .com Zone File was significantly more complicated and very difficult to track. In reality, this was fundamentally riskier for the organization due to constant changes to our core Zone File and we were regularly finding traffic going to the wrong place as promotions or products died off but were not updated within the main site's Zone File.

With our new focus on using our .brand, management and ownership of the domains are easier to track and when a promotion is over, we can simply remove the domain or forward the traffic to the main .com page. This reduced the risk of domains being used for fraudulent purposes.

With our .brand, we manage it completely and no-one can access the TLD, or take over a domain which we feel will create much less confusion long term – especially when these historical subdomains were allocated to third parties.■

## Spotlight — applemusicforbusiness.apple.■

The launch of Apple's business product in the music industry has certainly made a big splash globally.

Not the least bit due to the fact that along with Spotify, Apple has seemingly captured a huge market share when it comes to holistic music streaming services that have revolutionized the days of owning LPs, CDs or other forms media. And for businesses, this means easy access to a limitless amount of music for a far more affordable price than traditional distribution models.

But when it comes to the domain itself when looking at the new website, having the brand in the left hand part of the domain name as well as after the dot seems a little strange to the eye.

As we continue down this road of global .brand usage, this is something that seems to be appearing from time to time as rational domain branding bumps up against historical brand guidelines. When you consider many products are associated with the brand leading the product name – think BMW X5 – it's easy to understand that some may be struggling with the nomenclature.

Nonetheless, we see this is a brilliant website for a number of reasons.

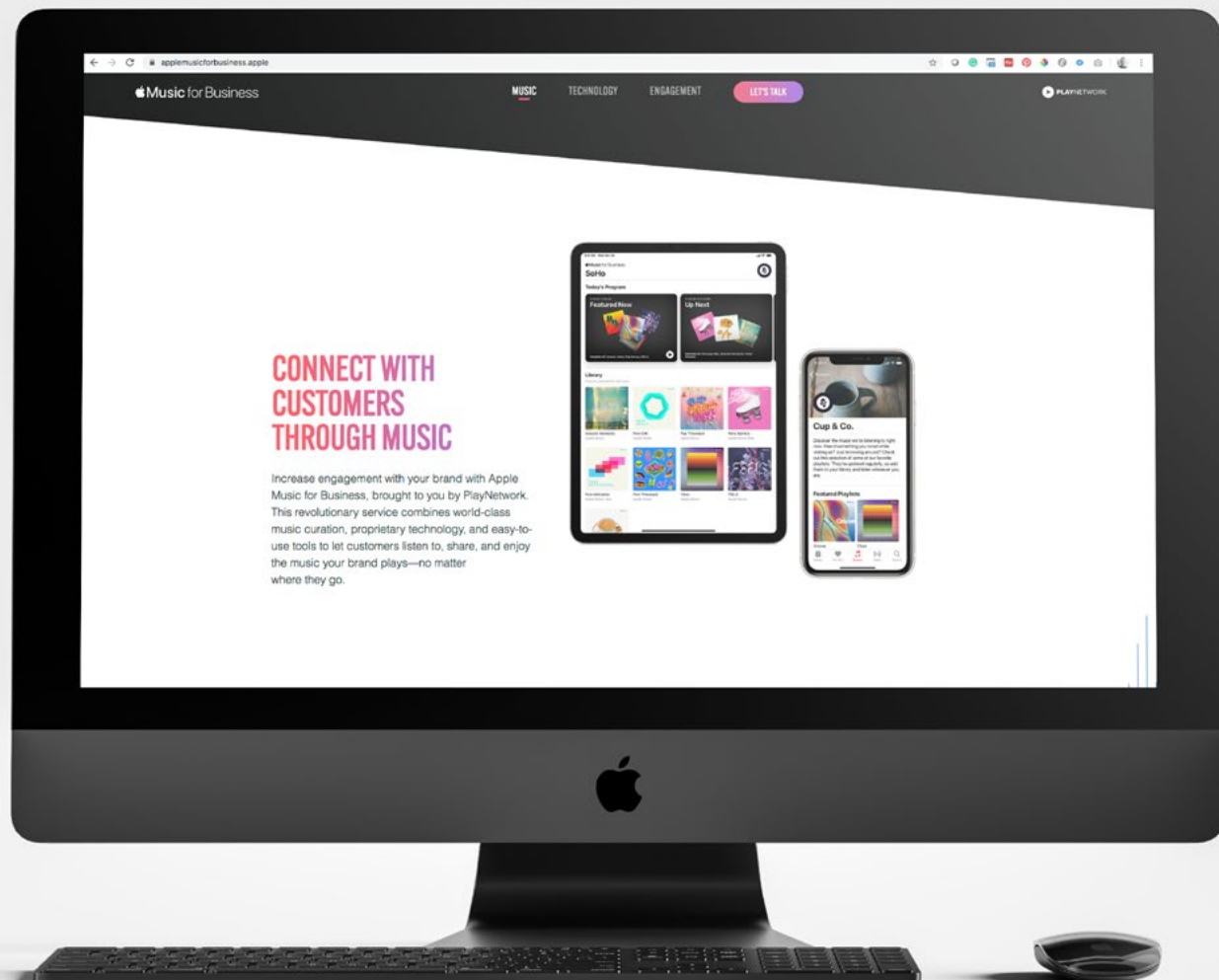
Firstly, Apple continues to lead the way with web design best practice and the user is allowed to seamlessly scroll through panels of information that are both easy on the eye and also highly informative. The use of adaptive menu bar items also allows the user to navigate with ease and we love the prominent call to action button of 'Let's Talk' on each section of the site.

Secondly, it's just so masterfully laid out and takes you through the journey of what the product is and outlines a range of not so obvious benefits for business owners that can be gleaned by using Apple's streaming service in your business.

As domain lovers, we were initially a little concerned to see the brand appear twice in a domain, however on reflection Apple have done a great job to minimize this impact and yet remain true to the brand guidelines – guidelines that have served Apple very well for decades which products like Apple TV etc.

Taking a little care to help users with any potential confusion by adding an additional sub-logo to the menu just shows us that Apple continues to lead the way when it comes to taking care of the little things that matter most. ■







## Spotlight — What does international spy James Bond and .brand domain names have in common?

The winner for the coolest domain in the .brand world right now must surely go to German logistics company DHL with their recent promotional campaign highlighting their alliance with the globally recognized James Bond series of movies.

These iconic films have been filling global screens with action packed adventure since 1962 and the 24 films have generated over \$7 billion in ticket sales in this time. The next movie in the series, the upcoming 'No Time to Die' is supposedly star Daniel Craig's final film and is expected to be yet another blockbuster in this amazing series.

But what does a logistics company and a global cinematic phenomenon have in common?

Seemingly plenty - DHL have been working very closely with the films over the last

decade or so according to this taken from their new website [notimetodie.dhl](https://www.logistics.dhl/fr-en/home/press/press-archive/2020/licence-to-deliver-dhl-on-duty-for-the-25th-james-bond-film-no-time-to-die.html)

*"Since Casino Royale (2006), DHL's logistics experts have been responsible for the transport and logistics solutions related to the shooting of the production of the 007 films. For No Time To Die – in theatres from the 2nd April 2020 – DHL transported the film and stunt equipment. From the legendary Aston Martin to key props, the logistics specialists of DHL ensured everything was delivered on time."*

This site has everything you'd like to see in a new website. Video footage of previous Bond movies and an awesome new .brand domain name. Additionally, the site also has the [007.dhl](https://www.007.dhl) domain name redirect to the [notimetodie.dhl](https://www.logistics.dhl/fr-en/home/press/press-archive/2020/licence-to-deliver-dhl-on-duty-for-the-25th-james-bond-film-no-time-to-die.html) website itself.

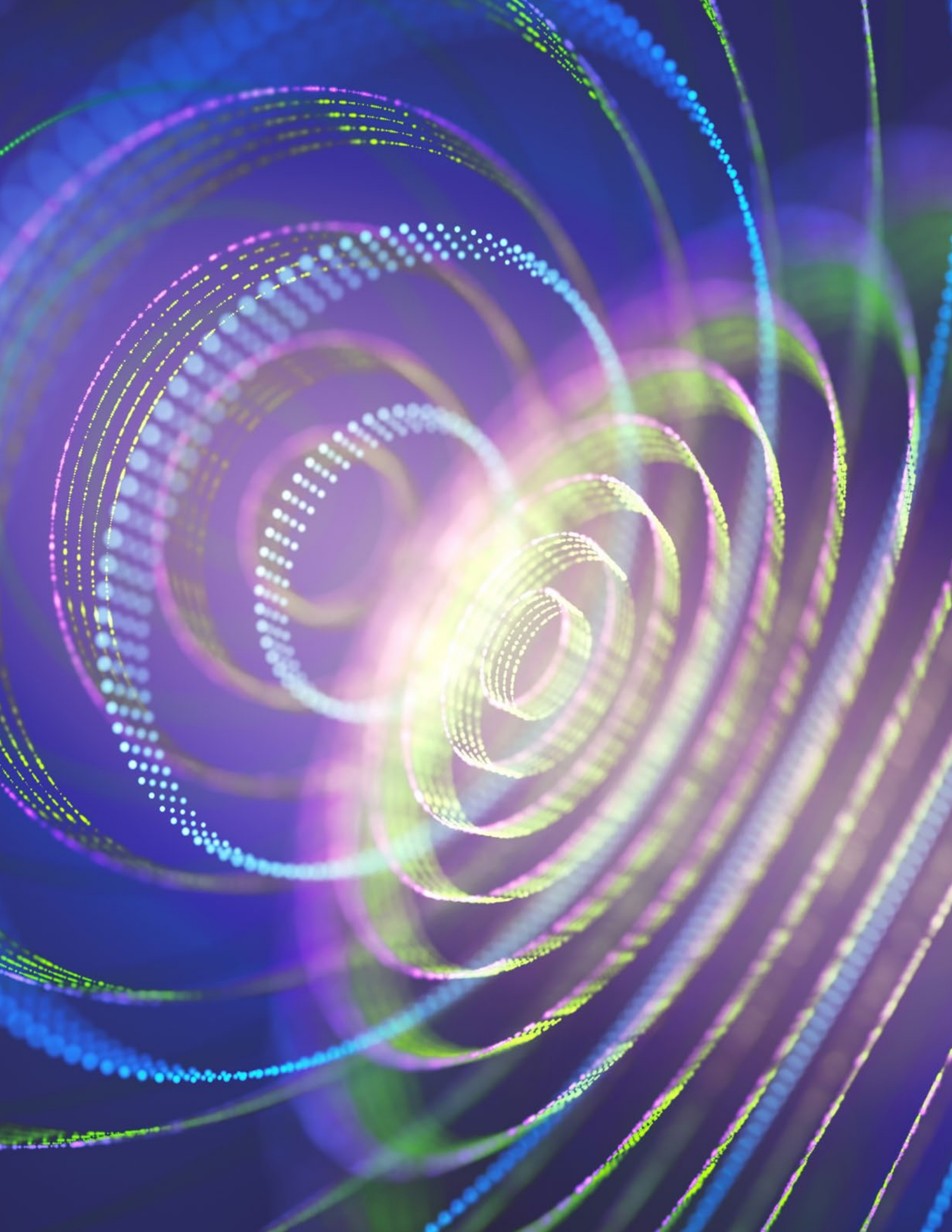
It also has a series of videos giving the public behind the scenes access to what it actually takes to create a series of movies like these – including shipping huge amounts of cargo across the world to fill movie sets and create the infamous moments we've become accustomed to in James Bond files.

Most importantly for us in the domain world, this is a great initiative from a company such as DHL in using their .brand and is a demonstration of their ongoing faith in the Top Level Domain. No doubt this is in part to the fact that the Germany .brand community is the most active globally with other leaders such as Audi, DVAG and others leading the way.

Perhaps this is the start of other brands finding something as cool as James Bond to bring their TLD to life. ■

<https://www.logistics.dhl/fr-en/home/press/press-archive/2020/licence-to-deliver-dhl-on-duty-for-the-25th-james-bond-film-no-time-to-die.html>





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