



.brands Industry Report

Everything you need to know about .brands

OCTOBER 2022

What is a .brand?



A .brand is a top-level domain (TLD) like .com or .co, but with your brand name to the right of the dot. It's your own custom-branded digital ecosystem, where you have total control over the entire namespace.

More than 470 of the world's leading global brands have gained a strategic competitive edge by securing a .brand TLD.

www.makeway.world

Contents

06

By the Numbers

12

A Decade of .brands on
the Web – Analyzing Our
Progress Thus Far

18

Showcase Highlights

20

.brands Spotlight:
ads.amazon

22

.brands Spotlight:
investo.bnpparibas

Foreword



To our regular readers and .brands friends, a big welcome to the second edition of the GoDaddy Registry .brands Industry Report for 2022.

What a great amount of progress we've seen thus far in 2022 and in this report we'll be sharing a huge amount of exciting information, stats and use cases that have been music to our ears and hopefully to yours also.

In this edition, we focus on two of our favourite recent .brand activations from Amazon and BNP Paribas, using our regular Spotlight series to highlight these use cases and the thinking behind each of them. There have been hundreds of examples we could have selected in this really busy period but we think these are just great utilizations that are worth shining a light on.

Also in this edition, our GoDaddy Registry .brands evangelist, Tony Kirsch takes a look at the .brands movement ten years on from the New TLD application window back in 2012. This holistic look at the progress that .brands have made is eye opening and a great source of inspiration for those that are passionate about this space and where we're heading as a collective.

As always, don't forget to check out the Showcase Highlights where we show you many of the recent .brands use cases and also the 'By the Numbers' section with all of the relevant stats on TLD performance and global insights on industry usage.

After a decade of .brands, I think it's fair to say that this movement has proven itself to be more of a consistently evolving marathon rather than a sprint to the finish line.

However, through this edition of the GoDaddy Registry .brands Report, we trust that you will agree that the progress that we're making as a global community continues to shine and we are proud to support you and your organization on this journey.

Best Regards,



Jason Loyer
Director, Client Services,
GoDaddy Registry

By the Numbers

Source data from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022

Total Domains

22,920

up 7.28%

Total Resolving Domains

4,232

up 6.2%

Total Redirecting Domains

11,806

up 4.83%

Average Number of Domains per TLD

48.05

up 7.28%

Total Number of .brands as at 30 June, 2022

477

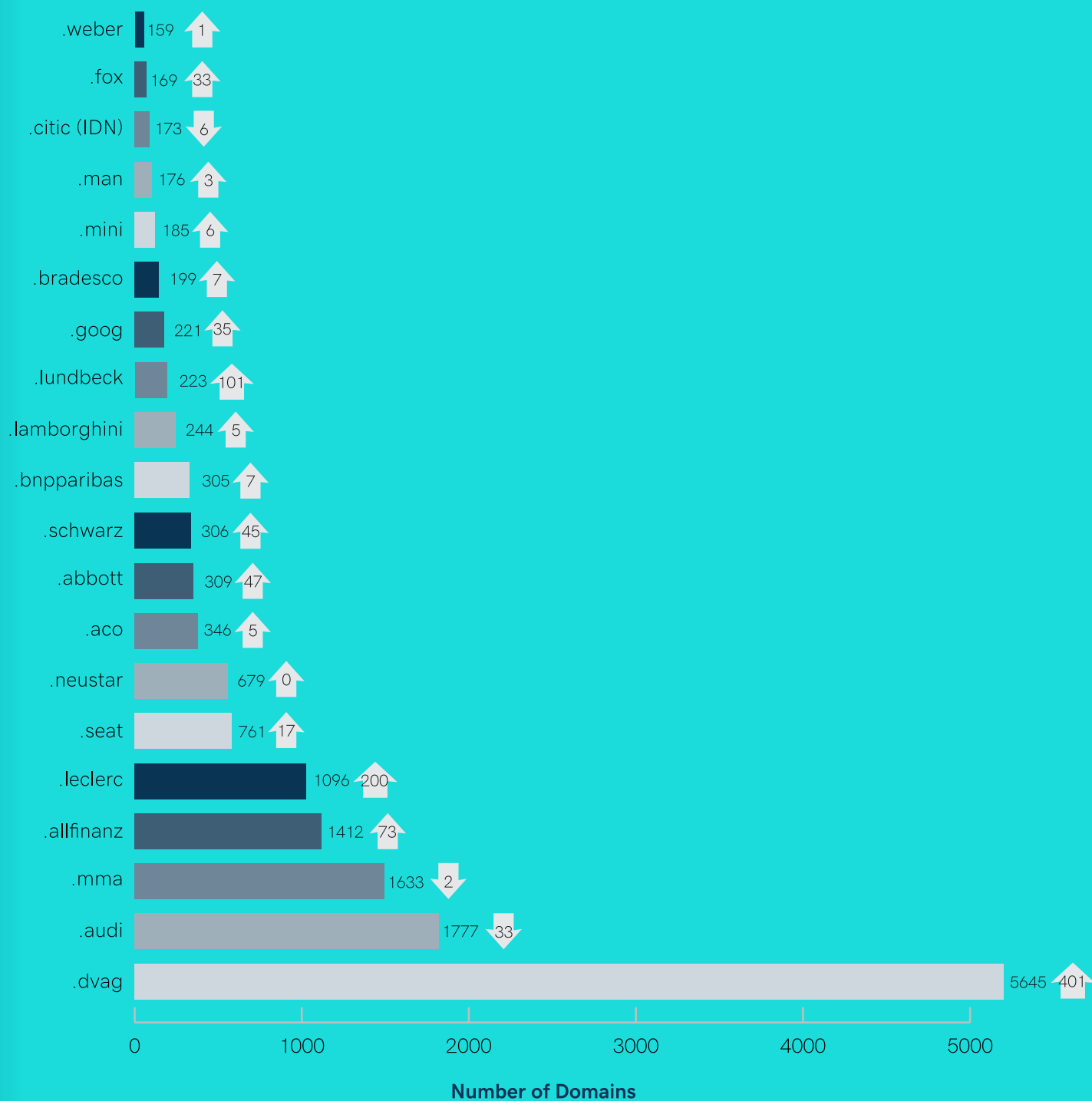
.brand Domain New Registrations Over the Last 12 Months

1,807

.brand Domain Renewal Rate Over the Last 12 Months

98.26%

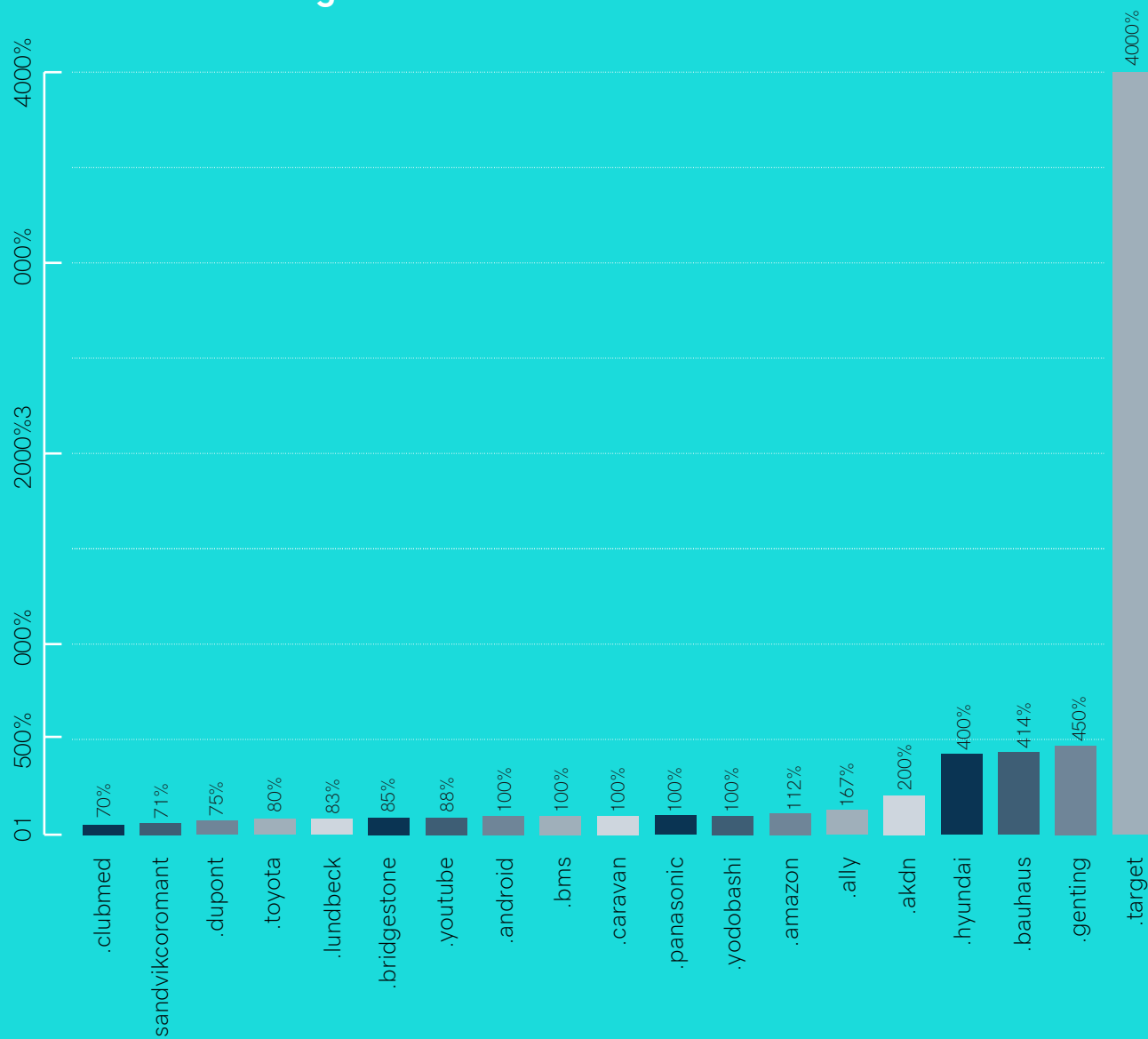
.brands TLDs by Registration



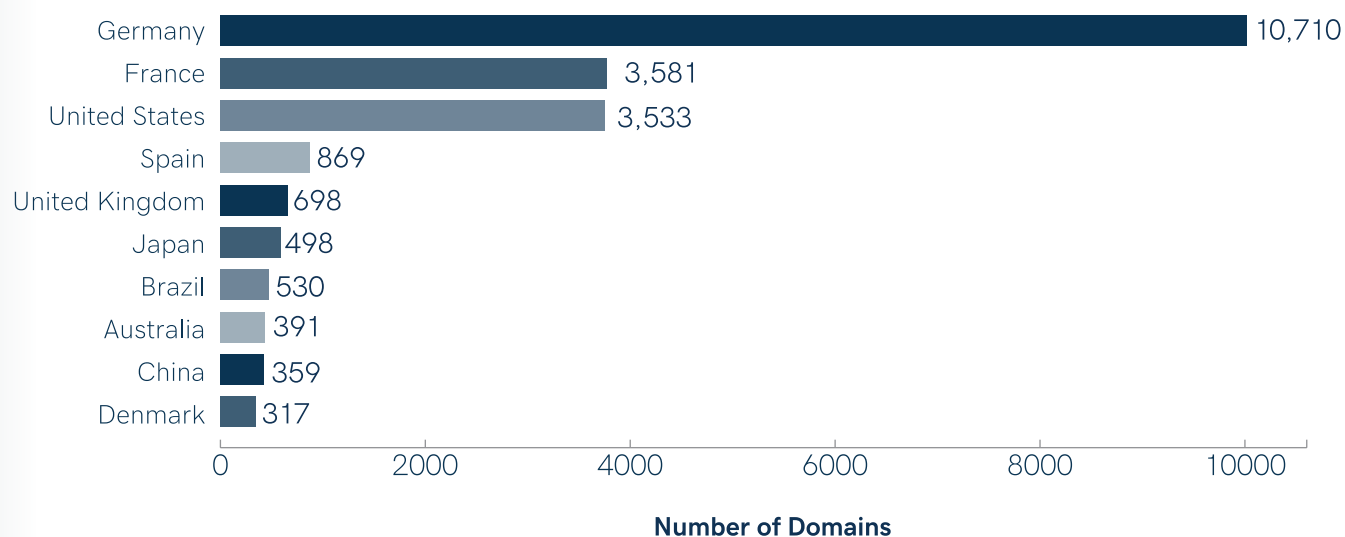
.brands TLDs Registration Volumes

Number of TLDs	As at June 30, 2021	As at June 30, 2022	Growth Rate
> 2 domains	248	253	2.02%
> 20 domains	105	113	7.62%
> 50 domains	57	62	8.77%
> 100 domains	31	33	6.45%
> 200 domains	12	14	16.67%
> 500 domains	7	7	0.00%

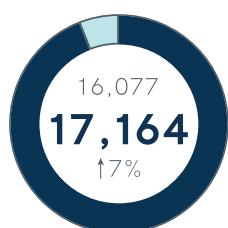
Fastest Growing .brands TLDs



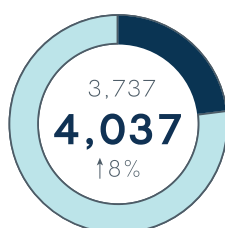
Top 10 .brands Usage by Country



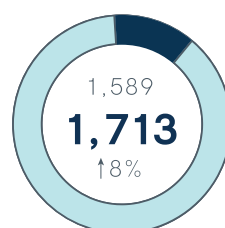
TLD Growth by Country



EUROPE



AMERICA

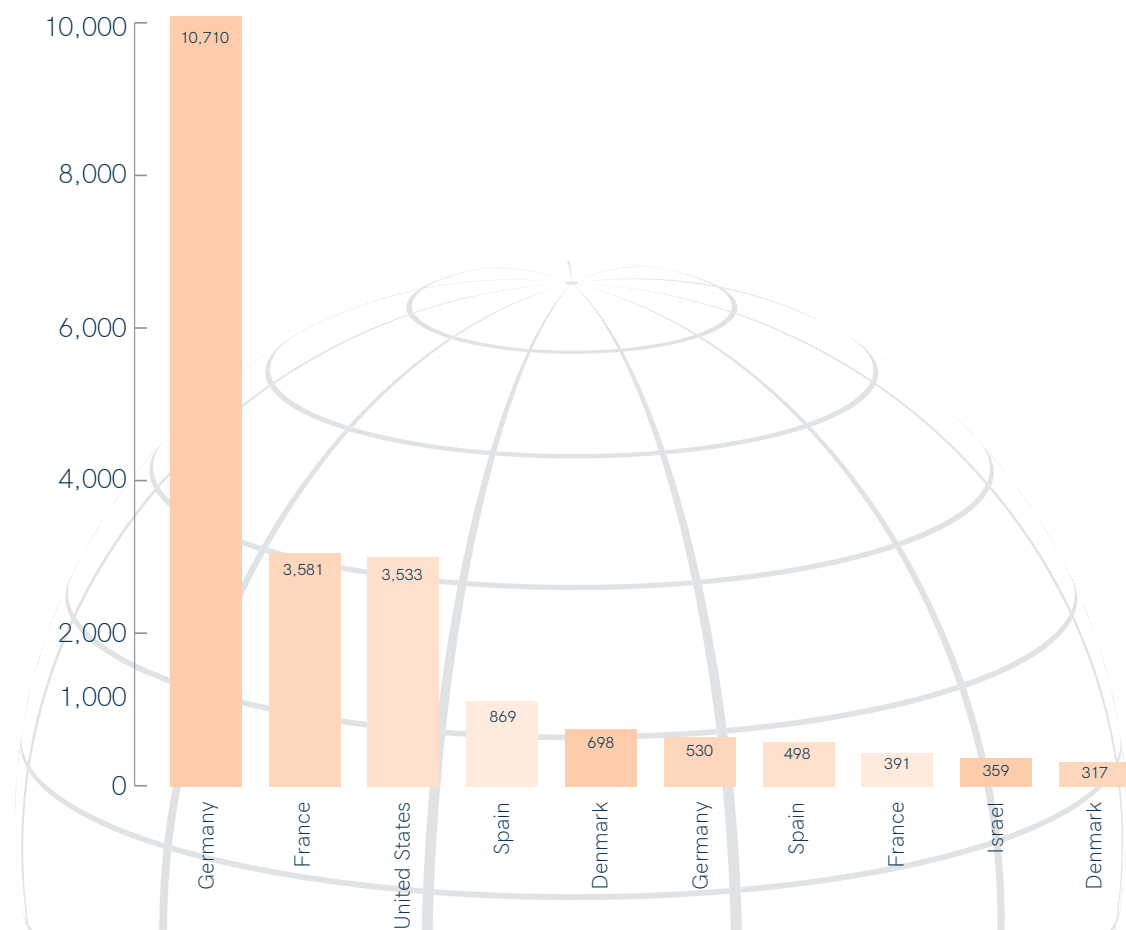


ASIA PACIFIC

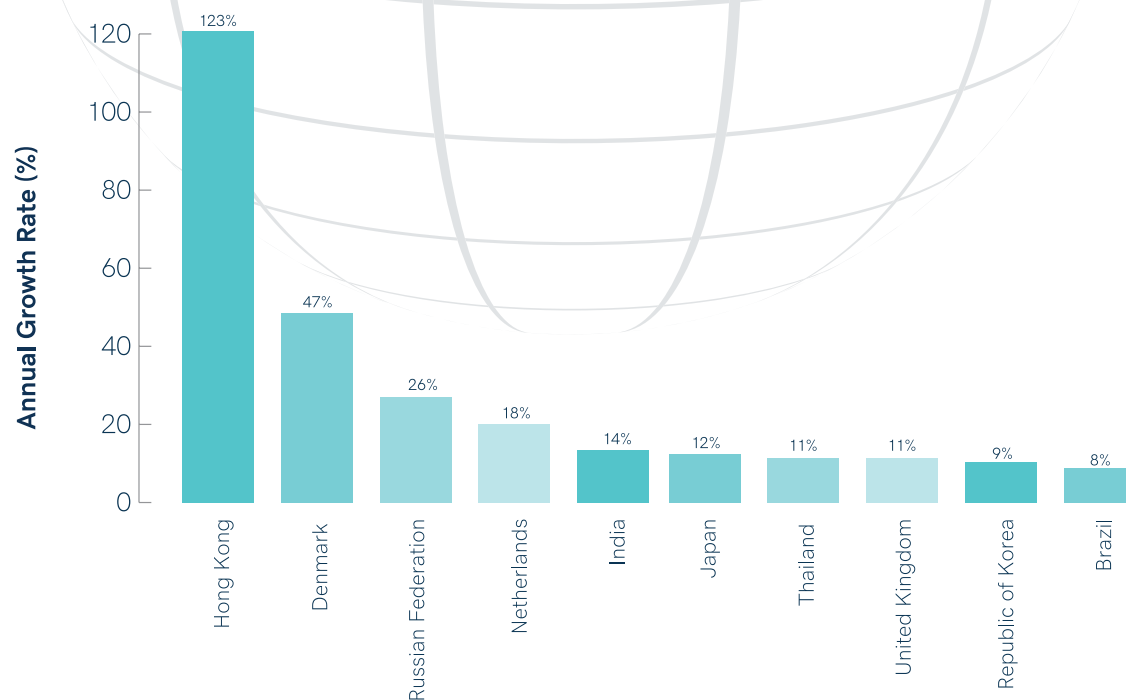


AFRICA

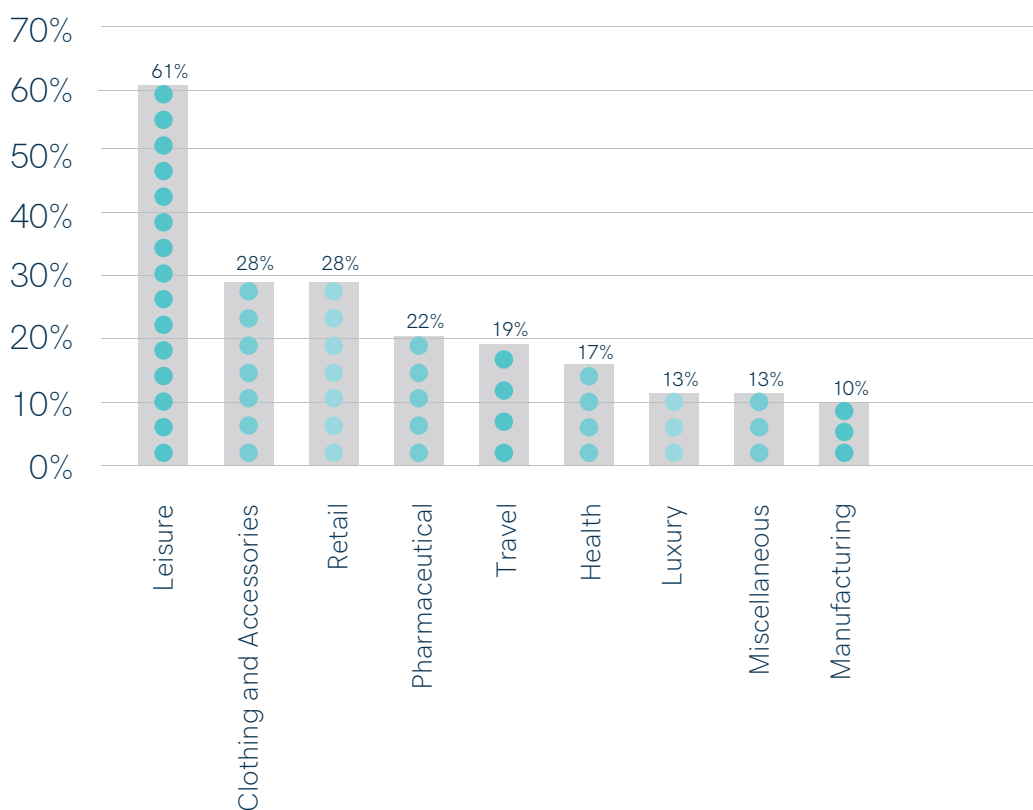
Top 10 .brands Usage by Country



Top 10 .brands Growth by Country



Which Industry Sectors Hold the Most .brands TLDs?



.brands TLD Domain Registration Volume



A Decade of .brands on the Web – Analyzing Our Progress Thus Far



Tony Kirsch

Head of Professional Services,
GoDaddy Registry

With the .brand movement being more of a ‘marathon’ rather than a ‘sprint’, it’s easy to forget all the amazing progress that this global innovation towards a better online brand identity has generated.

In this exclusive article, GoDaddy Registry .brand evangelist Tony Kirsch shares his Top 12 historical moments that have driven this innovation and reminds us just how far we’ve come.

My journey with .brands is indeed a long one, commencing in 2008 when I was first introduced to the idea of new TLDs and the concept of expanding the internet naming landscape.

Initially it should be said, this concept was less about branded extensions and more so about creating TLDs that were more generic or community focused in nature. Slowly however, the idea of proprietary extensions became more and more popular, and so too did the amount of corporations that were willing to invest in owning ‘their own slice of the internet’.

In full disclosure, I think it’s reasonable to admit that my time over the last 14 years with .brands has been a love/hate type of relationship.

On the positive side, I have been extremely fortunate to have traveled the world and spent numerous hours helping .brand owners, enjoying insightful conversations and developing life-long relationships with some

incredible people with widely variable skill sets and backgrounds. Even today, I continue to take great enjoyment and personal satisfaction in watching their .brand campaigns get off the ground, sharing in their excitement and satisfaction as each one launches on the web.

Conversely, the challenges surrounding the launch of application periods and the level of effort to get each .brand moving has been tiring. And although we are growing at a steady rate across the .brand industry and hopefully a next round is just around the corner, it is absolutely reasonable to say that .brands are not yet adopted as a consumer standard yet.

I hope you enjoy reading this collation of reflections on the critical pieces of the .brand movement to date. In honesty, it has been somewhat cathartic to write it – but most importantly I hope that it gives you a sense of pride and comfort that we are indeed heading in the right direction and that many more exciting innovations are yet to come.



1. ICANN Board approves the decision to push forward with a round of new top-level domains (TLD) - June 2008

During ICANN's 2008 Paris meeting, the ICANN Board approved the GNSO recommendations for introducing new gTLDs to the internet's addressing system after years of debate and policy development. This was seen as a milestone outcome for the industry, with previous expansions of the naming system only occurring in extremely rare circumstances with smaller, sponsored number of extensions allowed. This resolution however, create an application process that was open to the public and effectively signaled the beginning of a "anything" internet in the future.

2. Canon send shockwaves around the world - March 2010

Even before ICANN had finalized the application window timing and application guidebook requirements, Japanese tech giant Canon caused a big stir by announcing their desire to apply for .canon and use it in their global communications activities.

This may have just been posturing in the attempt to scare off competing bids, or even an attempt to hurry ICANN along. Either way, those in the industry were enthralled by this as most organizations had decided to keep their interest secretive which caused a lot of speculation and fears on exactly who would be applying when the program commenced.

Eventually Canon were successful in applying for their TLD and were loyal to their word - they did drop the .com and moved their worldwide portals to global.canon in 2016.

3. Reveal Day - June 2012

After months of waiting, ICANN finally shared the details of the applications that were received earlier that year at an event in London. Applicants were eager to find out if others had applied for the same TLD, whereas for many of the .brand applicants, this was simply about finding out whether or not their competitors had applied and indeed, was this going to actually be a 'global movement'.

Despite a small number of .brands having multiple applicants, the overwhelming majority were issue free across the 600+ applications.

4. Google and Amazon's application numbers provide a sigh of relief - June 2012

Of significant interest for many folks was the level of interest that the big tech companies would have in this new domain extension program, given their influence and platforms that are used every day by the majority of consumers.

In particular, all eyes were on Google's participation given their dominance in search engine activity for the majority of the world, and the relief to find out that not only was there an application for .google, but that Google had applied for 100 others was enormous.

Similarly, Amazon's 70+ applications also stirred some excitement that innovation was soon to follow, along with other key brands such as Microsoft and Apple who also applied. Notable absences from some organizations such as Facebook and Disney surprised others within the industry.

5. Brand Registry Group (BRG) is formed – March 2013

With over 500 .brands delegated on the internet and some real logistical challenges for .brand TLD owners starting to develop due to the constraints of a cookie cutter Registry Agreement, a group of dedicated people from the industry came together to form an association to support .brands in 2013.

Since this time, the BRG has been responsible for driving policy change with ICANN – most notably the development of ‘Specification 13’ (see below) – as well as promoting some of the most significant usage of new TLDs in mainstream activity across the globe.

The BRG remains part of the multi-stakeholder model via the Registry Stakeholder Group within ICANN and its members include many of the biggest organizations in the world such as Amazon, Microsoft, Fox and JP Morgan Chase.

6. First .brands hits the internet – January 2014

Monash University in Melbourne, Australia may not be immediately recognized as one of the global powerhouse educational institutions such as Harvard, Oxford or MIT, but they do hold the prestigious title of being the first .brand to appear on the internet.

At the time, Monash University told the world that...

“Greater control over our content and domains will strengthen our online presence and better represent Monash as a global institution. Monash University is an early adopter of new technologies and this is an innovation that will ultimately benefit users by allowing us to develop a new customer-focused University web presence.”

Shortly after, Monash launched a small number of domains that included about.monash and study.monash, forever changing the landscape of corporate domain utilization.

7. ICANN approves Specification 13 and legitimizes .brands – April 2014

Many recent watchers to the domain name industry will be aware of the .brand concept, but few will be aware that the ability to identify these clearly was not always the case.

Brands were indeed allowed to apply for their .brand during the 2012 application period, but were required to undertake a large number of unnecessary activities in order to apply and retain their top-level domain due to the fact that ICANN had mandated a ‘one size fits all’ baseline agreement with little consideration for the needs of .brand owners.

Fortunately, a group of .brand owners and advisors came together via the BRG (mentioned above) to request ICANN create an addition to the baseline agreement that gave specific provisions that allowed .brands owners to avoid having to sell their names to third parties and a range of other elements such as being able to avoid the need to sell their domains via multiple registrars.

This was key for many .brand owners beginning to trial usage of their assets and remains an important function for ensuring that .brands have a key segment within the ICANN community.

8. Barclays starts the first major transition from .com – May 2015

UK financial institution Barclays were successful in applying for .barclays and .barclaycard during the application window but it was the migration of the barclays.com site to home.barclays that really got tongues wagging across the industry.

Whilst the site was more of a corporate page for investors and recruitment rather than the main consumer banking portal (barclays.co.uk), it was still an enormous vote of confidence in .brands and was supported shortly thereafter by a number of other domains from Barclays.

This key transition set the tone for other organizations to undertake similar initiatives, with professional services firm KPMG and technology company Neustar amongst that group.

9. Various usage models start to emerge

Initially, the .brands usage was restricted to a couple of main usage models. The first involved using .brand for a small initiative as a microsite or portal which was increasing in popularity but required the organization to be undertaking an activity that typically wasn't related to their core business revenue source – for example, careers portals or social responsibility activity.

Whilst this was an important step, it wasn't helping .brands to be used in advertising – with the notable exception of Amazon's buildon.aws campaign that was promoted extensively in a variety of media forums, most notably at many major international airports.

Shortly after, the concept of redirecting users to a 'deeper' content location by using a more memorable .brand domain gained traction and has become the most common usage of .brands today. This allowed for more commonplace usage of .brands and for many, avoided the tricky conversations with webmasters and IT teams that were yet to understand .brand TLDs.

Since then we've seen a wide range of usage models – from internal sites (intranet, Single Sign On), to social media handles that avoid unbranded links, product naming and network addressing which shows the breadth of benefit that .brands can bring across an entire organization.

10. Google drives unprecedented security with own .brands – October 2018

Google applied for 101 TLDs in the first round of new TLD applications with ICANN and many of them were for the brands they manage.

But when they took the plunge that required domains in their TLDs to be compliant with the HTTP Strict Transport Security (HSTS) protocol and the concept of pre-loading, it was time to take their efforts more seriously.



Put simply, protocol prohibits domains that do not have SSL certificates from working in the majority of the world's most popular browsers, including Chrome, Firefox and others. But in reality, it was Google showing the world that with .google, .youtube and other .brand TLDs, they intend to apply world class security protocols for their new TLD activity and lead the way for all others to follow.

11. home.kpmg – April 2019

We spoke above about home.barclays setting the tone, but KPMG's decision to move to home.kpmg for their main corporate site was the next level ahead in many ways.

Firstly, they dumped the .com and moved the entire site to home.kpmg for their entire business which was an enormous step in itself. But to simultaneously redirect all of the

international sites and their respective ccTLD domains (for example kpmg.co.uk) into home.kpmg was just incredible.

With their extensive staff resources and even broader client base, KPMG's move was enormous progress and a vote of confidence for the .brand community and even three years on, remains the most prominent shift from legacy domains we've seen to date.

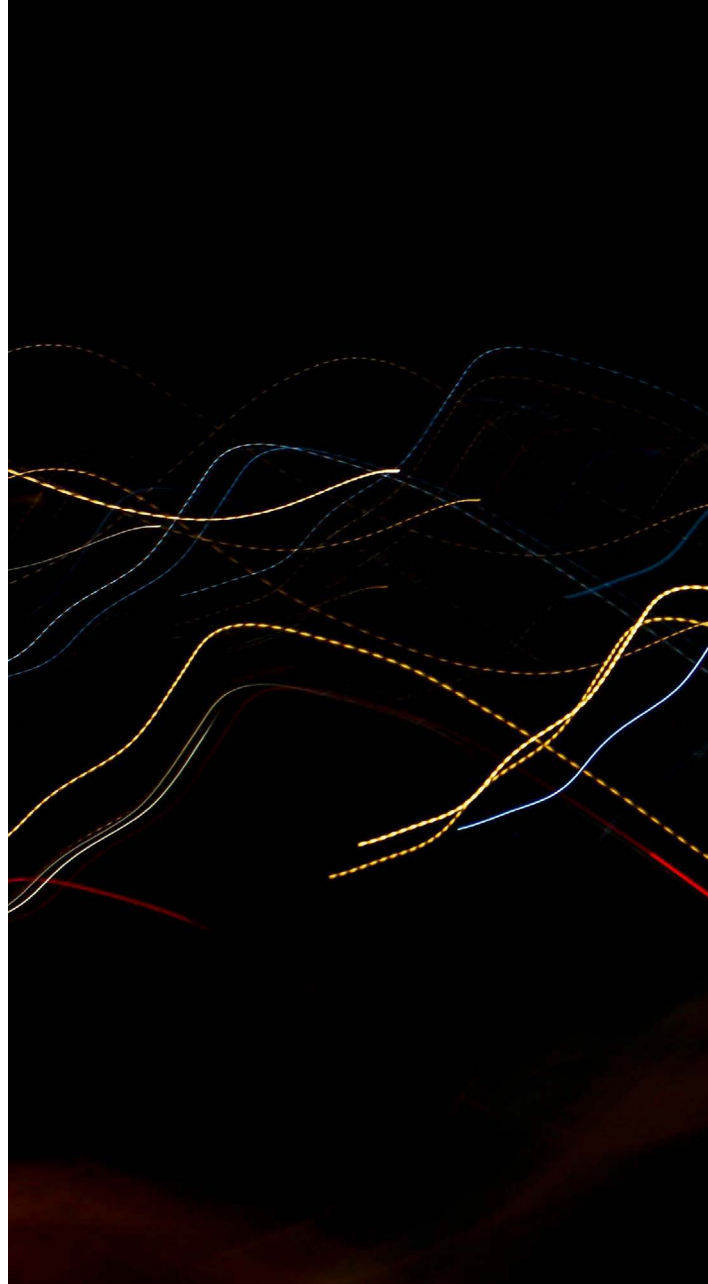
12. Amazon finally gets .amazon – June 2019

Despite following the rules with their application for .amazon, the tech giant was on the receiving end of significant post-application objections from some South American governments and ICANN's Governmental Advisory Committee that caused significant delay and threatened the chance of the TLD being used.

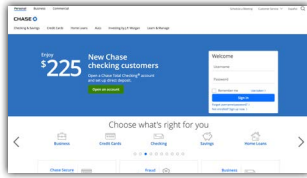
After many years of negotiations and policy review, Amazon were finally successful in obtaining the .amazon TLD and have begun using this in addition to their extensive .aws usage.

We'll refrain from commenting on the policy side of this argument but from a .brand perspective, having Amazon using .amazon is a great thing for the industry and they immediately began to start some innovative uses of their TLD – see the ads.amazon spotlight article later in this edition.

Finally, one company helping to give its staff and customers a piece of their digital identity was a huge step towards their plans for personalization. They can't wait to put this into play now that they've understood how easy it is to do.







home.chase

The US retail bank creates a simple redirect to its home page



masters.afl

Australian Football League's page for its upcoming seniors tournament



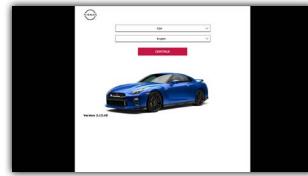
security.ntt

Japanese technology organization's microsite for new security products



skyup.sky

ISky tackling digital inequality with their .brand



ncar.nissan

Japanese auto giant's awesome new car login site



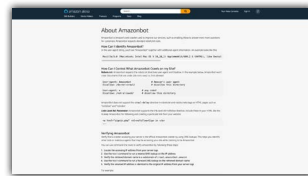
investo.bnpparibas

The French bank is an established .brand leader and is at it again



webforms.pfizer

Global pharma leader using .brand for internal web requirements



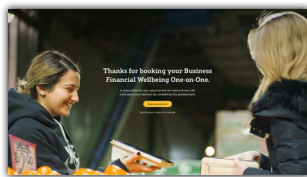
amazonbots.amazon

Amazon's developer tools for bot crawling



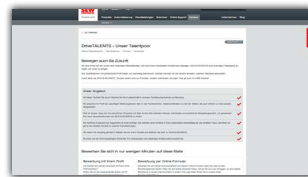
kpc.komatsu

Japanese industrial giant launches a Philippines based site



businessfinancialwellbeing1on1.cba

Australia's largest bank launches first retail foray with their .brand



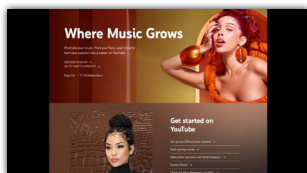
talentpool.sew

Redirect to the global careers hub for the German industrial firm



career.dell

Looking for a job with the tech icon? Look no further



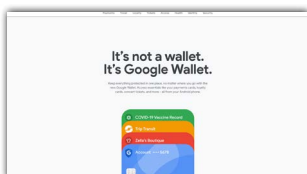
artists.youtube

YouTube's awesome space for aspiring songwriters



placedelagare.sncf

The French train network using .brand once again for their customers



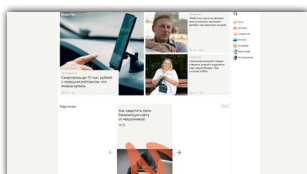
wallet.google

Google's launch of their new Android wallet service



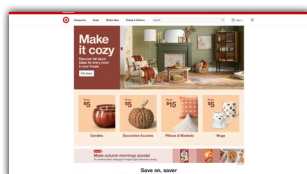
global.brother

The Japanese giant tech company moves their main identity to .brand



mediapro.yandex

The Russian media giant sharing their innovation hub on .brand



www.target

A redirect to the home page for the giant US retailer



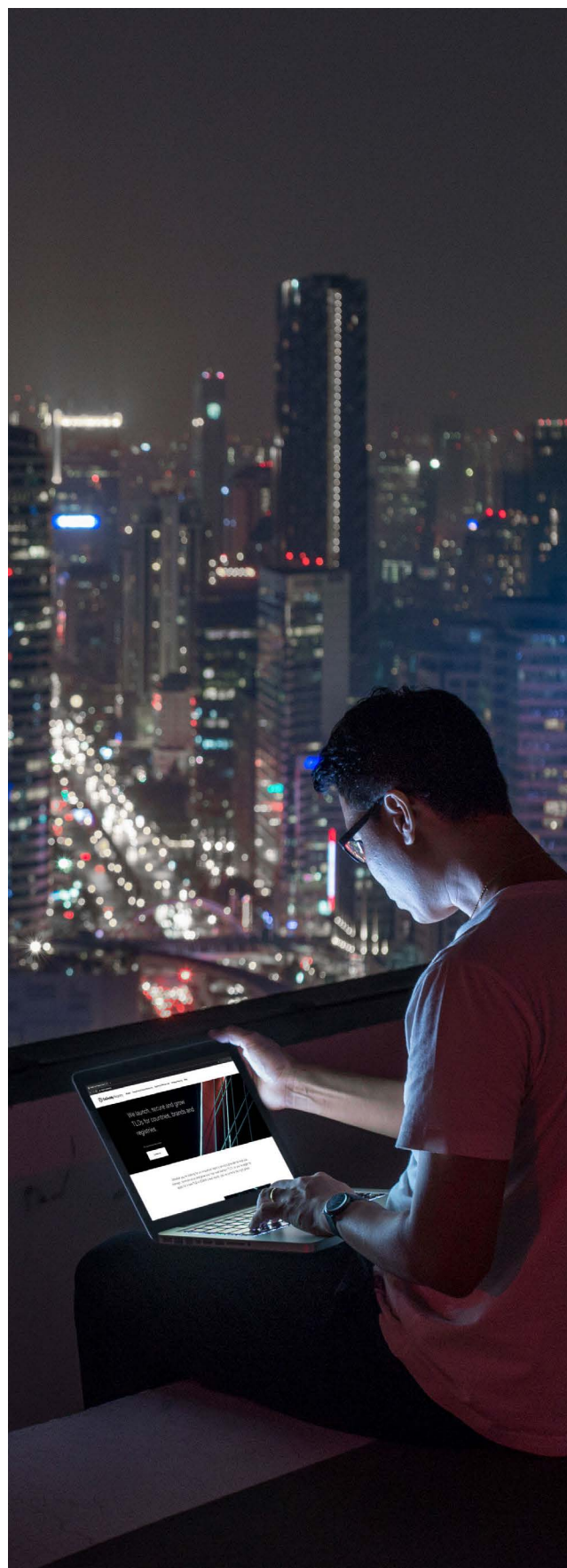
ataglace.fresenius

Global healthcare provider sharing their annual results via .brand



global.lundbeck

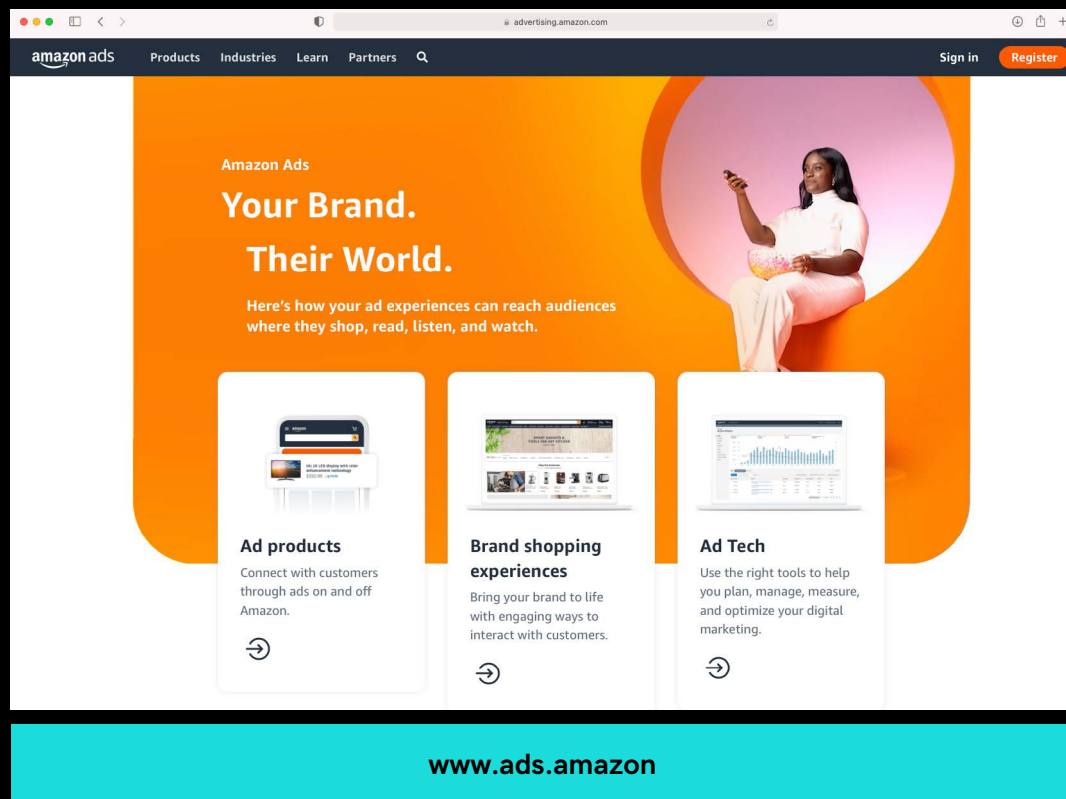
Danish healthcare firm using .brand as a redirect for their home page



.brands Spotlight: ads.amazon

It's been almost ten years since the application for .amazon was submitted to ICANN and for the majority of this time, it seemed entirely possible that the global giant may not have the opportunity to get its own .brand.

However, the team at Amazon worked their way through a myriad of 'interesting' policy and international governmental challenges to finally get access to .amazon last year and the launch of the TLD in the last few months is big news for the .brand community.



Creative use of .amazon should come as no surprise however. Amazon have been incredibly active in the new TLD program through the submission of over 70 TLD applications, numerous launches of generic TLDs to date and of course, the extensive use of .aws in global campaigns that we have commented on regularly on makeway.world.

A number of redirects are in place for the key Amazon brands – including prime.amazon, kindle.amazon and alexa.amazon – but these seem to have minimal activation to date.

However, ads.amazon is the organization's first foreray into using .amazon with some vigour and is designed to support Amazon's advertising business which generates nearly 7 Billion in quarterly revenue according to recent reports.

What we really love is the use of ads.amazon/<code> as a short link on social media, replacing the previous link identity of advertising.amazon.com/<code> in April this year.

We've long proposed that organizations invest in improving the link identity and consumer brand trust for their social media links given that scammers can create branded alternatives with ease.

Using ads.amazon as a link shortener delivers unprecedented security for Amazon and simply cannot be spoofed by cyber criminals.

What's next for .amazon? Only time will tell.

What we can say is that we're really excited to see what they come up with given their reach and historical focus on innovation and pushing the industry boundaries.

Stats Overview - .amazon

Total Domains = 21

Active Websites = 3

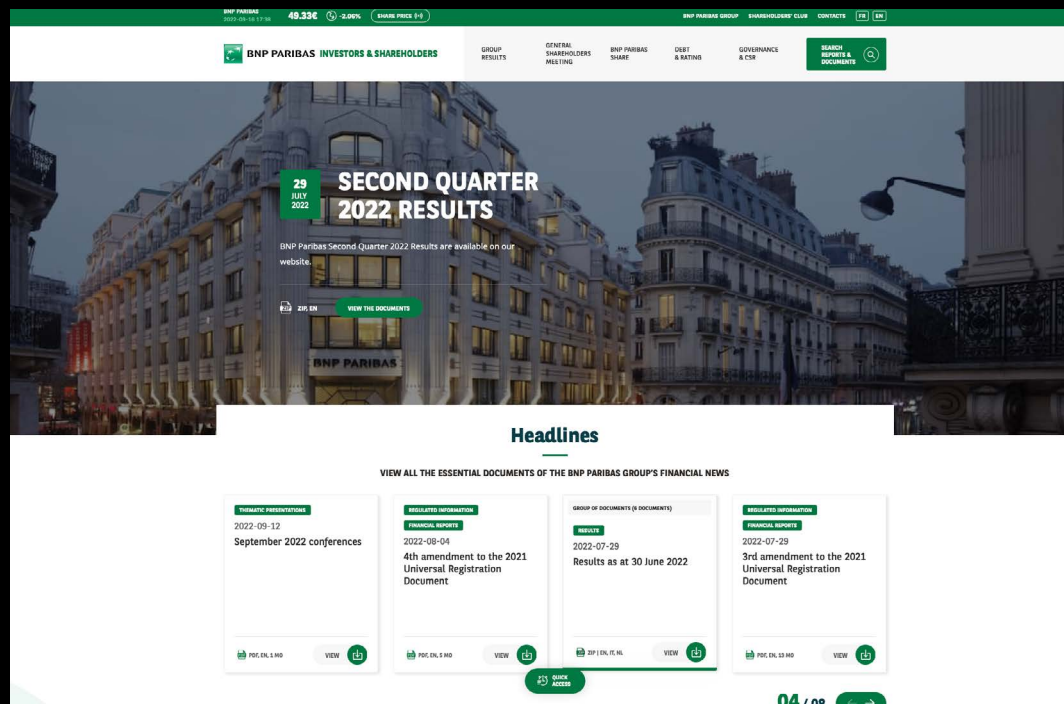
Redirect Domains = 8

Not Yet Activated = 10

.brands Spotlight: investo.bnpparibas

The French bank has always been a .brand leader and was one of the first to provide customer facing banking services on their new TLD way back in 2015.

Seven years on and with multiple other .brand activations under their belt, this new site may be the most exciting yet.



www.investo.bnpparibas

It feels like a long time ago that we first reported that the French bank with significant reach and growth in international markets was going big with their .brand TLD.

Seasoned .brand aficionados may recall that as .brands were being delegated slowly and the first signs of activations were occurring, BNP Paribas suddenly launched the mabanque.bnpparibas portal which allowed customers to manage their finances online using the .brand TLD exclusively for the service. At the time, we'd seen a few small campaigns, a few career portals and even the emergence of a few redirects, but no one had yet taken the plunge to allow a full customer services portal to reside on a .brand, let alone one where money was involved.

Fears of universal acceptance and technical compliance quickly evaporated for the global community off the back of this innovation and confidence demonstrated by BNP Paribas.

Consequently, we think it is reasonable to assert that their pioneering mentality drove significant increases in adoption from many others in the industry and their subsequent usage of .bnpparibas in outdoor advertising across the world really set the benchmark for the entire .brand industry.

It should also be noted that such a move was an enormous step for a financial institution, especially one who at the time was ranked the 4th largest in the world. This is typically an industry whose reputations are typically built around stability rather than innovation and so a move from the .com or .fr country code extension was extremely courageous.

Now 7 years on, BNP Paribas are at it again with investo.bnpparibas - a great looking site dedicated to building awareness about their new app focused on investing and managing fund portfolios.

A quick look at the site shows you just how impressive BNP Paribas are as an organisation. From their seamless branding, to superior UX and design, this site just shines with beautiful content and of course, a .brand domain name.

BNP continue to set the benchmark for .brand usage and promotion across the world and we'll be keeping an eye on what they do next.

Stats Overview - .bnpparibas

Total Domains = 305

Active Websites = 61

Redirect Domains = 19

Not Yet Activated = 225

Definitions

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Disclaimer

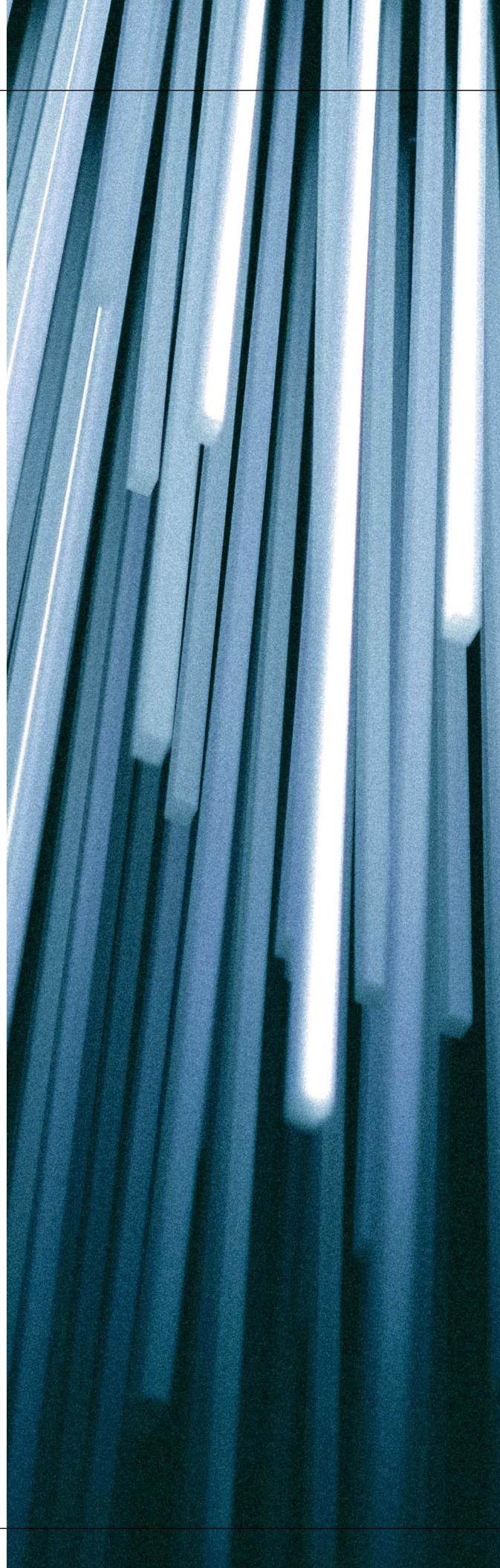
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Find out more

www.registry.godaddy

