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New .health domain aims to be go-to source for credible health information

The backdrop

Generic top-level domains (gTLD) are known to internet users as the suffix at the end of a domain name (such as .com, .edu or .org). Top-level domains are managed and registered by the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). In 2008, ICANN began to allow private companies to operate new gTLDs. There are currently over 1,500 registered gTLDs, from .aaa to .zzz. One such new gTLD is .health, which was recently launched by dotHealth LLC.

Why .health

dotHealth LLC hopes that .health will be the go-to gTLD for credible health information, eliminating confusion and ultimately making it easier for users to find reliable, relevant information needed for healthier lifestyles. The domainscape will house information on health care, health information, health providers and services, health-related technology and those in the broader health and wellness space.

.health's Sunrise/Trademark Access phase ended on July 7 with 287 registrants, including: BlueCross BlueShield, CVS, Johnson & Johnson, Mayo Clinic, Pfizer, and United Healthcare. Some big tech giants with health interests also secured names, including: Amazon, Apple, Facebook, Google and Instagram.

.health registrants will be required to follow terms and policies developed by an advisory board in an effort to ensure that domain users are reliable sources of information. Additionally, dotHealth LLC announced a partnership in June with internet pharmacy verification and monitoring firm LegitScript to monitor all registered names for health-related content that is unsafe, illegal or puts internet users' health and safety at risk.

Industry Access Phase is now open

Through Nov. 30, health-related brands, organizations and individuals may apply for a .health domain name through a single use token system administered by dotHealth LLC. The token is a non-transferable, single-use code, which allows the holder to register a domain at the registrar partner of their choice. Applications for the token are now being accepted.

General public registration (including those outside of the health care industry) will begin Dec. 5, 2017.

Whether or not a .health domain name will be useful to your organization, we always strive to keep our clients apprised of new developments in the health care industry.