

New rules allow foreign companies to register '.nl' names

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The Dutch Foundation for Internet Domain Name Registration (www.sidn.nl) has announced changes to the regulations governing the registration of '.nl' names. The new rules are due to take effect by the end of the year and will, among other things, remove previous country-specific requirements.

The changes were made on the basis of recommendations from an independent project team, which coordinated a public debate for domain name holders. As a result of the debate and the team's recommendations, the foundation revised its regulations so that foreign companies not based in the Netherlands will be allowed to register names in the country-code top-level domain. Under the previous system, individuals and foreign companies could only register '.nl' domain names by means of Dutch intermediaries (eg, web hosting companies), which retained legal ownership of the names.

The rules have also been changed to allow (i) arbitration as means of alternative dispute resolution in domain name disputes, and (ii) individuals to register domain names more easily.

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