

# Findability, Identity, and Growth: The .berlin Advantage

Founded in 2005 by [dotBERLIN GmbH & Co. KG](#), the .berlin top-level domain (TLD) emerged from a revolutionary idea: If countries could have TLDs, why not cities? This vision led to the creation of dotBERLIN GmbH & Co. KG, a company with limited liability, currently owned by 100 shareholders. This innovative, community-owned model, with a low investment threshold of 100 euros, ensures .berlin functions as a public resource "owned by Berliners."

## **Objectives: Empowering the "City of Freedom" Digitally**

.berlin aims to strengthen local identity, allowing anyone to digitally affiliate with Berlin. By improving visibility and findability, it enhances the discoverability of local offerings for both residents and tourists. Crucially, it supports the local economy, with 95% of registrants being small businesses, demonstrating its direct value to Berlin's economic fabric. While not an initial focus, security awareness has also grown in importance.

## **Tangible Impact: Building a Vibrant Digital Community**

dotBERLIN GmbH & Co. KG structure ensures true community ownership and accessibility, with a tie-to-Berlin requirement preventing cybersquatting. The company actively supports its users through targeted marketing and assistance – particularly for startups. Studies, including one by Searchmetrics, show significant search engine optimization advantages for .berlin websites in local searches, providing a competitive edge.

As Katrin Ohlmer, CEO of dotBERLIN GmbH & Co. KG, aptly puts it, ".berlin is akin to a digital supermarket. It not only hosts big, well-known brands but also actively promotes and supports smaller, local products and startups. It's characterized by its community-owned structure, commitment to sustainability, and role in enhancing Berlin's digital presence and local economy."

To learn more about operating and applying to run a gTLD, visit:  
<https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/en>.