

# Local Pride, Global Reach: The Story of .capetown, .durban, and .joburg

The success of .africa set the stage for a new digital frontier: city-specific top-level domains (TLDs), or Geo TLDs. Recognizing the vibrant, distinct personalities of Cape Town (a tourism hub), Johannesburg (an economic powerhouse), and Durban (an emerging global player), the mission was clear: forge unique digital identities for these South African metropolises.

## Objectives: Setting the Course for Digital Growth

The core aim was to ignite fierce local pride, spark economic growth, and empower every resident and business to wave their city's digital flag online.

Early days saw modest adoption, but a surge of strategic local marketing and direct engagement with city leaders quickly ignited momentum. Local businesses, especially in hospitality and culture, were quick to embrace the power of a city-centric online presence. Over 65% of domains registered in the first year were small and medium businesses. Furthermore, there was adoption by local influencers, bloggers, and creative businesses in order to stand out. Local government and civic projects also started leveraging the TLD for public service portals and campaigns, which added further credibility and visibility.

Though initially marketed together, the future promises to unleash each TLD's individual charm, amplifying their unique appeal within the global digital landscape.

"We've been able to thrive because we remind ourselves of the importance of being locally rooted but globally connected. This means we've secured strong community buy-in and local relevance while embracing global best practices and collaboration with ICANN," says Lucky Masilela, CEO, ZA Central Registry.

## Tangible Impact: Strengthening Local Identity

Today, these city TLDs collectively boast nearly 10,000 registrations, evolving beyond mere addresses into symbols of community spirit and economic dynamism. They offer a powerful platform for digital storytelling, showcasing local businesses and creatives who build trust and credibility through their city's domain.

In a crowded digital world, their inherent place-based relevance offers an irresistible edge, cultivating robust local digital presences and paving the way for even greater adoption through targeted education and accessibility.

To learn more about operating and applying to run a gTLD, visit:

<https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/en>.