

Queuing up for the .PФ domain

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It has been quite a while since the idea of .PФ domain took shape. Taught by the widespread cybersquatting in .RU domain the authorities took very cautious approach before they allowed full fledged registration. At first reservation of .PФ domains for the state bodies and owners of the Cyrillic trademarks only was allowed. After some time the owners of the Latin trademarks got access to .PФ domain (in Cyrillic transliteration). Later in time, the owners of geographical indications, the names of the media, company name owners joined the process. At long last, beginning November 11, 2010 free registration of the domain names in the .PФ zone started.

By that date more than 200,000 aspirants filed their applications to obtain a cyrilic domain. The Coordination Center of the national domain even set a limit for registration: not more than 4.500 applications an hour. The fever around the new domain is expected to subside quickly. All the applications will be processed within days. As for the massive use of the new domains, that time most probably will come after a year or so. It may happen before if new sites appear with a unique Russian content.

Now that the free registration opened the new zone will be quickly populated. Intellectual property problems may be expected with .PФ zone in the same way as other zones are not free from them but it should be stated that everything possible was done to minimize possible problems at the preparation stage. Whatever happens further may be laid at the door of the IP owners who might not have exercised enough care to stake their claims.

The .RU domain may also be available for non Russian residents. During the first year the formal owner of the domain name will be the Registrar company. The owners of such domain names will have all the rights of an administrator with the exception of assigning the domain to other persons, transfer of the domain name service to another registrar and cancellation of the domain name.

The domain name plays an ever growing importance in trade. Basically, the trademarks push forward the trade. A Latin trademark which is converted to Cyrillics and registered as a Cyrillic domain name will enhance the business potential of the trademark owners. Even if the trademark owner is barely visible on the Russian market or not visible at all it is worthwhile registering a Cyrillic domain before someone else "helps" him and proposes selling it. This activity is rampant today in other zones, such as .com, .ru and though everyone seems to know it the lawyers come across the offended trademark owners practically wishing to obtain misappropriated domains every day.

Another reason to register a Cyrillic domain is proving identity of the trademarks. It is usually recommended today to register both versions of the trademark - Latin and Cyrillic. This double registration helps fight against pirates and prove the proper use of the trademark if necessary. Without prejudice to this line of behavior it seems that if there is a Latin trademark and a Cyrillic domain all of those problems will have an easier solution because there will be yet another powerful tool to prove the all round possession of the trademarks.

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