



New TLD Applicants: Start Marketing Now!

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October 16, 2010

If you are planning to apply for a new top-level domain (TLD), the time to start marketing is now and the best way to do it is through social networks. You need to create public awareness and gather information about the potential demand for your TLD.

You cannot rely on past TLD data to forecast demand. New TLDs will represent new business models and new signals/messages to customers. No data is available for them. Even if there were, you can improve your forecast by using [prediction markets](#), your own personal experience and expertise, and above all the information generated by social media.

Because you don't yet have a well-conceived product, and no performance measures to rely on, you must concentrate on conversations with potential customers. So, at this stage, your marketing campaign must focus on social networks.

The social media objectives will create TLD awareness that will lead to dissemination through word of mouth (WOM). With blogs, you can measure brand awareness through the number of new and repeat visits. For the success of brand engagement, you can measure variables such as the volume of comments and responses to surveys. You also need to measure tweets about your TLD. As for the effectiveness of WOM, you need to collect data—for example, on the references to your blog and the number of “likes.”

However, before you embark on a social media campaign, you must set the objectives to be achieved and determine the set of metrics that can best capture the necessary data. The metrics should be adjusted as you learn from your marketing campaign. You must continue to study trends in these variables and listen to conversations with your potential customers.

If you are planning to apply for a TLD, you need to create public awareness and gather information about the potential demand. The time to start marketing is now, and the way to do it is through social networks. ■