

vb.ly

Violet Blue's "sex-positive URL shortener" vb.ly was deleted by the .ly domain registry in 2010 allegedly for not adhering to regulations for the TLD related to "text referring to adult content and offensive imagery." Basically, pornography is illegal under Libyan law (which is not to say Sharia law, these are different) and although vb.ly was operating outside of Libya, it was still expected to adhere to Libyan law. Later that same year, access to less than four-letter .ly domains became restricted to Libyan residents.

Scenario: Contentious Use of Your TLD

This is a scenario in which someone outside of a player's country uses their TLD in a way that doesn't necessarily reflect the country's political or cultural experiences, and the player has to decide whether to allow that use of their TLD or intervene, potentially damaging their TLD's reputation and position on the political stage or damaging their reputation in their country as a political leader.

.ly

Libya's two governments, as well as other splinter groups, are competing over the ability to communicate officially via the internet, and in places it comes down simply to who holds the login details: "the government domains are distributed between the two parties and it depends on who has the password which allows them to change the details of the domain."

Scenario: Political Unrest

While similar to the government collapse scenario, this more typically refers to chaos within a government more like a revolution or coup than confluence of several factions dissolving the nation. Players can choose a few scenarios to resolve or not resolve their conflict.

.tv

The domain is currently operated by dotTV, a Verisign company; the Tuvalu government owns twenty percent of the company. In 1999, Tuvalu negotiated a contract leasing its Internet domain name ".tv" to a company formed by idealab for \$50 million in royalties over a 12-year period. The Tuvalu government receives a quarterly payment of US\$1 million for use of the top-level domain. With the first \$1 million payment the government received, Tuvalu was finally able to afford the \$100,000 it cost to join the United Nations. Lou Kerner joined .tv as its CEO in January 2000, and the company began selling .tv domain names in April 2000. Verisign acquired .tv in December 2001.

Scenario: Middleman Offer

In this scenario, a ccTLD hands over maintenance and management of their TLD to a third-party operator. They can choose to do this for lots of reasons, though the most common reason is that the country itself lacks the IT infrastructure to actually run a domain registry and needs assistance promoting the TLD. However, this choice comes with caveats—technically the players only receive a percentage of profits from the TLD.

.yu

Computer Scientists at the Jožef Stefan Institute in Slovenia, then part of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, registered the .yu domain in 1987.

When SFR Yugoslavia dissolved during the Yugoslav Wars beginning in 1991, the republic broke up into several smaller countries. Slovenia and Croatia quickly registered their own TLDs (.si and .hr, respectively, registered in 1993) but through a weird game of governance hot-potato the new Slovenian government now controlled the .yu TLD. and IANA facilitated the transfer of the TLD from Slovenian hands to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia via an association at the University of Belgrade.

In 2003, the FR Yugoslavia became Serbia and Montenegro, and the .cs ccTLD was registered for the newly named country. However, it didn't really end up going into use. .yu ended up lingering for a while, basically being the only ccTLD that wasn't based on an ISO code. In a way, it kind of didn't make a huge difference since the Serbia and Montenegro split apart in 2006, which led to the creation of the .rs and .me TLDs. In 2007, ICANN handed control of .yu to the Serbian National Register of Internet Domain Names, with the intent of slowly phasing the TLD out and letting the domain expire, which it ultimately did in 2010.

Scenario: Government Collapse!

This is a scenario in which political unrest within your country leads to your country being divided into multiple independent states, leading your current TLD being retired and new rules being established.

.io

.io is one of the fastest-growing top-level domains on the internet, a particular favourite among start-ups and technology companies. It refers to the British Indian Ocean Territory, a remote but strategically-important scattering of islands in the middle of the Indian Ocean, also known as the Chagos Archipelago. It consists of seven atolls and over 1,000 tiny islands.

All Chagossians were driven off the island starting around 1967, when Mauritius was declared independent from the British government and the islands were annexed from Mauritius, and they have not and probably will not ever be allowed to go home. The archipelago's largest island is currently home to a U.S. military base, which has played a pretty cool role in propagating the war on terror.

All this to say, when ccTLDs were being registered Chagossians weren't exactly prepared for it, which is where Paul Kane and the Internet Computer Bureau come in. Kane registered the TLD way back in 1997, and is just now reaping the benefits of the .io TLD. The ICB also manages 2 other British territory TLDs, .ac (Ascension Islands) and .sh (St. Helena). Kane has previously stated with regard to the TLDs that "Each of the overseas territories has an account and the funds are deposited there because obviously the territories have expenses that they incur and it's offsetting that." Whether that's actually true or whether the account Kane describes actually goes to a representative of the Chagossian people is entirely unclear.

Scenario: Middleman Offer

A few ccTLDs are managed by middlemen not necessarily by choice or in the service of financial gain or support. Some countries' TLDs were registered early in the TLD creation process, and representatives from that country weren't necessarily able to actually engage in the process.

.cat

Created in 2005 after extensive lobbying, payment, and the pursuit of letters of support from the Spanish and French governments, this TLD is dedicated to the promotion of Catalanian culture and identity. While it has the potential to be an incredibly lucrative TLD given all the domain hacks that can be applied to it, the requirement that .cat sites promote the Catalanian language in some respect has somewhat limited its expansion.

Scenario: Endorsement Letters

For a non-recognized nation-state or cultural entity to receive a TLD, they have to do a bunch of things. One of those things is submit letters of support from government and cultural bodies, as well as businesses and individuals with a connection to the region or entity seeking a domain.

.sucks

The Canadian company Momentous acquired the .sucks TLD in 2014 after a private auction between the company and fellow gTLD purveyor Donuts. It's been mired by concerns over defamation and intellectual property for reasons that are probably pretty self-evident (also, Saudi Arabia's Communications and Information Technology Commission filed an objection to the TLD because of the possibility it might be used for pornographic sites, shruggie).

Momentous, through their subsidiary Vox Populi, in some ways is kind of just running an extortion scheme through this TLD. During the "sunrise" registration period for the TLD they set up a "Trademark Clearinghouse" as a mechanism for allowing corporations to register a .sucks domains in advance—at the price of about \$2500 a domain. (Stories about this TLD like to note how Taylor Swift has already acquired `taylorswift.sucks`, which like, of course she has.)

Scenario: Contentious Use of Your TLD

Similar to the ccTLD scenario, but generally the politics have less to do with cultural identities and more to do with money and power.