

# Travel Weekly <sup>17.03.06</sup>

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## UK slow to sign up to dot travel

Britain risks being left behind on new domain

REPORT BY IAN TAYLOR

TRAVEL organisations are signing up to the Internet domain name dot travel at the rate of 1,000 a week - but those in the UK risk being left behind.

The fears were raised by the Tralliance Corporation, which operates the registry. It warned take-up in the UK has proved slower than elsewhere.

Ron Andruff, president and chief executive of Tralliance and the dot travel registry, said it could take five years for the name to become the industry standard, but argued companies that adopt early would have an advantage.

The registry was launched in January.

He said the priority rights to dot-travel names would expire at the end of this month. Despite this, UK organisations were failing to sign up. He said: "It's not happening. For Britain not to claim its sites is crazy. Not enough people recognise what this is going to be."

Andruff said: "It's a way to cut information overload and remove the ills of the Internet, such as cyber-squatting.

"Travel is the most searched category online,

but the clutter and lack of relevance stop people finding what they want."

He conceded the growth of dot travel is unlikely to continue at the current pace.

"It could take four or five years to get most industry names on board. We're not going to announce the number of names we have every few weeks."

Andruff added: "Domain names will come in sooner or later. Companies are lost in the online anonymity of dot com or co.uk"

It is likely domain names will designate the type of content or business on sites generally - with names such as 'dot museum' for museums or 'dot xxx' for porn sites.

The dot-travel directory can be searched in 10 languages, including Mandarin Chinese, said Andruff.

Registration costs from \$100 to \$250, following a free process of authentication as a legitimate travel business.

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## Canada shows the way

THE CANADIAN Tourism Commission could provide a model for organisations considering adopting the dot travel domain name.

The commission has created a Canada dot travel website for consumers after paying about US\$100 a time to register the names of almost 100 Canadian destinations and attractions that it believes may want the domain name in future.

The commission's executive director of strategic marketing Jens Thraenhart said: "This is about more than a domain name, it's about bringing relevancy to consumers. Everything will be on one platform, where before there were 50 websites, each managed separately."

The commission will demonstrate its model to the industry and will offer it to destinations in North Africa and the Middle East at a dot travel forum in Cairo in June.

Thraenhart said: "We want to protect the integrity of the concept by encouraging others. But it's not just about the name, it's about marketing all the small tourism players."

