

New Yorkers' new domain: '.nyc' gets initial OK

JENNIFER PELTZ, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) -- New York City likes to think of itself as a domain like no other, and now it's close to being able to boast as much on the web.

The city has gotten a key approval for a ".nyc" suffix online, Mayor Michael Bloomberg and City Council Speaker Christine Quinn announced Tuesday. That would mean web addresses could end in ".nyc" instead of such common suffixes as ".com" or ".org."

"Having our own unique, top-level domain - .nyc - puts New York City at the forefront of the digital landscape and creates new opportunities for our small businesses," Bloomberg said in a statement.

The city's new virtual realm is one of hundreds of new suffixes worldwide that have passed what are called "initial evaluations" by the agency in charge of online addresses, the Internet Corporation of Assigned Names and Numbers. The list includes Istanbul, London and Paris, among other cities.

While some further approvals are needed, New York officials envision the new ".nyc" addresses becoming available late this year to city residents and entities with offices here. Fees haven't yet been determined.

The city has striven to cultivate technology companies during Bloomberg's administration while City Councilwoman Gale Brewer and Quinn championed the idea of a ".nyc" domain several years ago.

Officials say it will make it easier for residents and visitors to pinpoint local services, give businesses an easily visible tie to what the city sees as a valuable locale-as-brand and help spread New York's image around the world.

For businesses and other local website owners, it also could mean a shot at getting their chosen name in ".nyc" if someone else already has taken it in the ".com" address or other established domain.

Neustar Inc., a Sterling, Va.-based communications company, will run the ".nyc" registry and is covering the costs to get it approved, the city said.

Nearly 2,000 bids for new top-level domain names - from ".app" to ".pizza" to words in Chinese and Arabic - were submitted last year after ICANN decided to embark on the largest expansion in the history of the online address system.

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