



INTERNATIONAL  
HOTEL & RESTAURANT  
ASSOCIATION

ICANN  
4676 Admiralty Way, Suite 330  
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USA

Lausanne, March 2012

Endorsement of the International Hotel & Restaurant Association IH&RA  
for HOTEL Top-Level-Domain S.à.r.l.'s application for .hotel

The International Hotel & Restaurant Association (IH&RA) is the only global business organization representing the hospitality industry worldwide. It is a global network of independent and chain operators, national associations, hospitality suppliers and educational centres in the hotel and restaurant industry, representing over 750.000 establishments in more than 150 countries.

The IH&RA is the only representative of the global hotel and restaurant industries that is officially recognized by the United Nations. The IH&RA monitors and lobbies all international agencies on behalf of these industries, estimated to comprise 300.000 hotels and 8 million restaurants, employ 70 million people and contribute 950 billion USD annually to the global economy.

The IH&RA has cooperated closely in the development of the concepts and policies of HOTEL Top-Level-Domain S.à.r.l. (dotHOTEL) concerning its application for the .hotel top-level domain at ICANN since 2009. The undersigned, President of the IH&RA, is an active member of dotHOTEL's Advisory Board; at the same time, one of the CEOs of the company, Mr. Lenz-Hawliczek, serves on the Board of Directors of the IH&RA. We are very confident by the approach chosen by dotHOTEL to focus on the individual needs of the global Hotel Community and to actively consult and cooperate with eminent representatives of this Community.

Therefore, we have the pleasure to announce that the IH&RA fully and exclusively supports dotHOTEL's initiative to apply for and operate the top-level domain .hotel. While online distribution is getting more and more important for the hospitality industry worldwide, hotels are concerned to lose more and more control over their rates, distribution channels and the hotel product itself to the so-called Other Travel Agencies or OTAs.

We fully support dotHOTEL's Eligibility Criteria as defined in ISO 18513 to establish a verified and secure domain name space exclusively for the hotel industry. Thus, .hotel domain names will help to increase direct bookings by which profit margins of hotels rise and to reduce dependency from OTAs. It will also help enhance search engine rankings and visibility for hotel websites since .hotel domains are likely to be more relevant for search engines than any of the existing Top-Level Domains such as .com or .eu.

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**International Hotel & Restaurant Association**

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We are convinced that many consumers are reluctant to purchase hotel rooms over the Internet because of uncertainty about the reputation and reliability of websites under .com or other TLDs which may be geographically remote and whose qualifications and capabilities have not been verified by any independent party.

We believe that the .hotel top-level domain will contribute due to its verified domain names and security measures to more reliability, trust and credibility in e-business for customers and hotel guests. We are also very content with regard to the well thought out brand protection measures dotHOTEL has installed in its policies after constructive dialogues with members of the Hotel industry worldwide.

We strongly encourage ICANN to grant the .hotel top-level domain to HOTEL Top-Level-Domain S.à.r.l. since this is the only application that gives a voice to the interests of the global Hotel community. This will not only enable an innovative concept to be proven but may also have positive implications for other sectors of the economy.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ghassan Aidi'.

Dr. Ghassan AIDI  
IH&RA President