



ICANN

4676 Admiralty Way, Suite 330  
Marina del Rey, CA 90292  
USA

**Endorsement of HOTREC – Hotels, Restaurants and Cafés in Europe for HOTEL Top-Level-Domain Sarl’s application for .hotel**

Dear Sir/Madam,

HOTREC represents the hotel, restaurant and café industry at European level. It counts 1.7 million businesses, with 92% of them being micro enterprises employing less than 10 people. The micro and small enterprises (having less than 50 employees) in the hospitality industry representing 99% of businesses make up some 64% of value added. The industry provides some 9.5 million jobs in the EU alone. HOTREC brings together 43 National Associations representing the interest of the industry in 26 different European countries. Europe is the largest tourism destination in the world with a market share of more than 50, representing some 503 million international arrivals. People are spending over 1.5 billion nights in hotels and similar establishments in the EU27.

HOTREC has liaised with HOTEL Top-Level-Domain Sarl (dotHOTEL) for more than two years. We have reviewed and contributed to the concepts and policies of dotHOTEL concerning its .hotel top-level domain application at ICANN. Therefore, we have the pleasure to announce that HOTREC fully and exclusively supports this initiative. While online distribution is getting increasingly important for the hospitality industry in Europe, hotels all over Europe are concerned to lose more and more control over their rates, distribution channels and the hotel product itself to the so-called Online Travel Agencies or OTAs.

With dotHOTEL’s Eligibility Criteria for a verified and secure domain name space exclusively for the hotel industry as defined in ISO 18513, .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.

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 Sarl 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.

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.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kent Nyström', with a horizontal line underneath.

Kent Nyström  
President of HOTREC

Brussels, 11 April 2012