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New .tel Domain Name – Available to Trade Mark Owners from December 2008

The next generation of Domain Names will arrive later this year.

Unlike its predecessors (like the **.mobi** Domain) the **.tel** Domain is not targeted to those wanting a Domain from which to run, for example, a company website. Rather, the **.tel** Domain aims to act as a name based navigation system.

What does this all mean? Basically **.tel** will provide a single contact point for companies and individuals to store a large variety of contact details – accessible to the world over the Web without the need to build, host or manage a website. So rather than a few contact lines at the end of webpage (which may become out of date and inadvertently accessed by web users), the **.tel** will provide a central unified location, which can be universally accessed, to manage and publish those all important ways of contacting you or your business. It also provides the mechanism to ensure that these details remain up to date and active, rather than becoming static data in old outdated web pages.

The type of contact details which might be stored in a **.tel** Domain are not limited to those which traditionally come to mind, such as a physical location address, facsimile or telephone number. It is envisaged that **.tel** will also encompass the new forms of communications now being utilised by business and individuals, including Skype, other instant messaging platforms such as Twitter or IChat, for example, as well as web based communication platforms, such as Facebook or MySpace – which are no longer used just by University students, with business firmly targeting these non-traditional communication spaces.

For business, the **.tel** Domain would appear to offer a new, effective way to ensure those looking for your business can find you quickly on the Web and gain access to all of your relevant contact information and contact your business directly through the links provided in the **.tel** Domain. By way of example, by putting in **[Your Business Name]** or **[Your Brand]** followed by your **.tel** Domain extension, any internet enabled communication device will take the user to your corresponding page – which can include everything from contact information, contact links (for blogs or websites for example); navigation links (through your countries, branches, departments and brands), your geographical location (including maps and addresses) and keywords (which can be multi-lingual) - just for a start. Users can then

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use these links, for example, a regional or head office telephone number, to make direct contact with you from their mobile device.

Applications for a **.tel** Domain Name will be considered on a first-come, first-served basis. As with some of the recent inclusions into the Domain Name space, a Sunrise Period for Trade Mark owners will apply. The application process will progress in three stages.

Eligible registered Trade Mark owners have the opportunity to apply for a **.tel** Domain Name from **3 December 2008**, during the Sunrise Period and prior to registration opening to the general public. In order to participate in this Sunrise Period you must have an eligible Trade Mark and meet other related criteria.

On **3 February 2009**, the Land Rush Period will commence and registration will open to the public at a premium price until **24 March 2009**, when the third stage will commence and non premium priced general registration will become available to the public.

As we have seen with earlier Domain extensions, new Domains can create exciting new opportunities for business – and the ability for pre-emptive registration as a Trade Mark Owner can assist in obtaining the valuable names and brands promptly. On the flipside, a new Domain also creates another opportunity for Domain Name traffickers and infringers to hijack the name or trade mark of a business, which can be its most valuable asset.

Accordingly, if you are interested in protecting your name and/or brands in the new **.tel** Domain, we recommend that you consider your list of appropriate names now so you are ready to make application for your important names and brands when the Sunrise period begins on 3 December.

Please do not hesitate to contact Karen Hayne or your Addisons' contact for any additional information or assistance with a **.tel** Domain.

Thank you to Elyse Gorman for assisting with this Focus Paper.

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