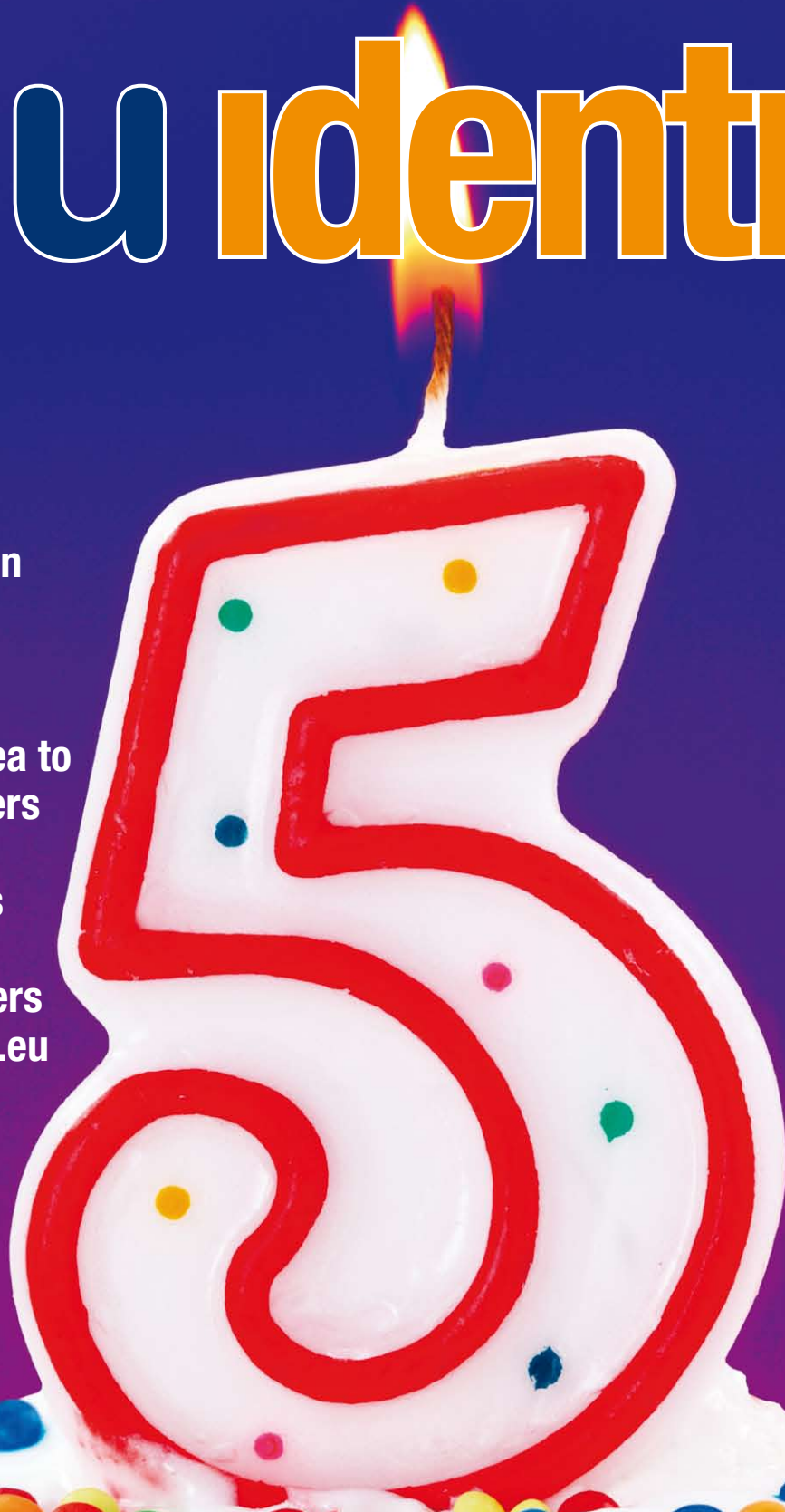# .eu identity

The Internet security option you need to know about

A low cost idea to keep customers focused on your business

Thought leaders on 5 years of .eu

Happy Birthday .eu!
Cakes, cocktails and nights out

"We're an international company. That's why .eu fits us like a glove."

"All our designs are produced locally, but we don't think of ourselves as a local business. On the contrary, we've had European ambitions from the start, and .eu has helped us to realise them. With .eu, we sell our gloves, sweaters, cardigans and bags across Europe."

Learn how to register your own .eu web address at link.eurid.eu/howtoeu

www.eurid.eu

.eu
Your European Identity

candycakes.eu

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The European Registry of Internet Domain Names

www.eurid.eu

From the **Editor in Chief**

I N THIS SPECIAL EDITION of .eu Identity we wish .eu a happy fifth birthday. In honour of the occasion, we put the spotlight on companies in the party industry that use a .eu website to promote their businesses.

The man behind cocktaillovers.eu shares how he turned his passion for the perfect cocktail into a mobile catering business that brings the party to wherever you are. And Candy Cakes, a London-based patisserie with a twist, proves that with a bit of hard work you can have your cake and eat it too. For city fans we feature tonight.eu, one of the earliest .eu domain names. This must-see website for revellers in Europe features hotspots, local events and activities in many European cities.

EC Vice-President Neelie Kroes reflects on how the European top-level domain actively contributes to building strong cross-border business in Europe, and ex-ICANN CEO Paul Twomey looks back on the evolution of the domain industry and shares his thoughts on its future. EURid's Marc Van Wesemael gets nostalgic and tells the story of how .eu began.

We also share ideas that will keep customers focused on your business and describe the steps that .eu has taken to boost Internet security.

Happy reading and enjoy the party!

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Brigitte Lagrou

Do you own a successful .eu website? Would you like to be featured in Identity? Write to us at identity@eurid.eu.

Words of wisdom

Some thoughts on birthdays and growing to celebrate .eu's fifth birthday.

"All the world is birthday cake, so take a piece, but not too much."
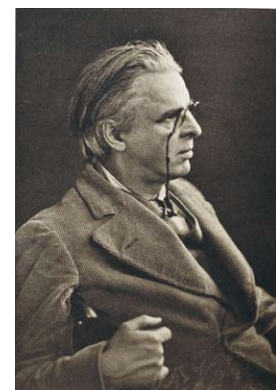George Harrison

"None are so old as those who have outlived enthusiasm."
Henry David Thoreau

"Happiness is neither virtue nor pleasure nor this thing nor that but simply growth. We are happy when we are growing."
William Butler Yeats

Keep customers focused
on your business

The online press release is an unsung hero when it comes to increasing your company's visibility online. It doesn't have to cost much, but the results it can generate are often priceless.

Text: Megan Vosloo

These tips will inspire you to come up with your own ideas for online press releases, write them and distribute them, all free of charge.

No news is bad news

One of the main reasons that small companies don't issue online press releases, also called social media releases, is because they think they have nothing newsworthy to say. But the news doesn't have to be momentous or ground-breaking, it just has to be regular enough to keep you in the minds of your customers. Here are a few online press release ideas:

- Launching new products or features
- Winning an award
- Announcing survey results
- Contributing to a charity or helping the environment
- Giving away free information, such as survey results or market studies.

Writing powerful press releases

When you sit down to write your press release, remember that you will distribute it online. This means that you can enjoy all the benefits of the web 2.0 and are able to bypass traditional media to speak to your customers directly.

When you're writing, remember to include:

- Lots of key words, terms that people would use to look for you online. This will increase the release's search engine rankings

- A quote for credibility - preferably from a third party who endorses your news, although a quote from a company spokesperson is acceptable too. Make sure it adds value to your announcement
- Direct links to landing pages on your website. This will allow prospects or customers to easily learn more about your products and company with just one click
- Relevant videos, images or other interactive media. While also increasing search engine rankings, this will get you attention and make you stand out.

Remember to avoid:

- Industry jargon that your customers might not understand and words like "greatest", "industry leading" or "pioneering", which have been used so many times that they are no longer effective
- An overly formal tone
- Verbosity. Keep it short - between 500 and 600 words only.

Most importantly, make sure your release contains news and is not just a poorly disguised promotion of your company. Consumers do not like promotion, they like news.

Getting the word out

You can, but don't have to, spend money or rely on journalists to get coverage for the releases you write. Publishing the release on your company's website,

Facebook page or Twitter feed is often all that's needed for it to gain momentum and reach your consumers.

You should also forward your release to the key influencers in your online communities. If they forward it to their connections, it's a big endorsement for you and another, free way to reach a larger audience.

If you do have some money set aside, online public relations companies will distribute your release to major search engines like Google, Yahoo! News and Bing, as well as influential bloggers in your industry, for as little as 18 euro a time. Search for "online press release distribution" or similar to find the companies active in your country or region.

Lastly, you can always pitch your release to online industry journalists and editors with a phone call. It's old school PR, but it works. Internet publications are constantly looking for news and if your release is timely and newsworthy it might just make the grade.

Don't be offended that your news is actually their second choice. Focus on the fact that, by being published, it will reach your target audience and increase your company's online visibility. ●

What's on tonight.eu?

As .eu celebrates its fifth birthday, so do all the .eu domain names registered five years ago. Tonight.eu is a European website network dedicated to urban nightlife and they registered their .eu domain name during .eu's first month, April 2006.

Text: Catherine Dowdell   Photos: Courtesy of Tonight.eu

TONIGHT.EU was founded by Federico Pomi to answer the question, "What shall I do tonight?" The website started life in Milan, Italy, in 2000 to help plan nights out by offering up-to-date venue and event information with unbiased reviews. Growing beyond Italy meant a change in web address from milanotonight.it to tonight.eu. Now, tonight.eu is available for 16 European cities, providing an easy way to discover concerts, restaurants, exhibitions, parties and other social happenings in each city.

The decision to use .eu was part of the growth to scale up to more cities after achieving success in Milan. "I'd say the first benefit of using .eu was a different perception from other companies that we had switched our vision from a local to global market," remembers Federico Pomi. "We immediately boosted the revenue we got from website advertising and started signing deals with companies we previously struggled to get in touch with before."

Federico sees the main benefit of .eu is "to be European and local at the same time". "When we open a new city, it is a sub-domain under our main tonight.eu domain," he explains. "We use tonight.eu not just as a domain name but as a brand for all our marketing activities."

Active nightlife communities

Tonight.eu keeps in with the "in" crowd by using different information sources to give extensive coverage of what is going on in each city. User-generated content is a vital component and website visitors, venue owners, promoters and ticketing partners can upload material. This means that an active nightlife community has sprung up around each city's website – especially in Italy – as users share their unbiased suggestions, reviews, videos and pictures on a daily basis.

"We think that the credibility of our brand is in allowing people to write what they want and immediately publish it," says Federico. "You get a complete idea of a venue by reading just three or four different points of view, be it a huge nightclub or a cosy wine bar."

Information sharing about the latest, coolest event is vital and each city's tonight.eu website makes use of Facebook, Twitter, email and RSS feeds to spread the word.

And taking tonight.eu with you on a night out is as simple as typing "http://m.tonight.eu" into your mobile phone's browser. The mobile version is free and compatible with most mobile phones. The tonight.eu team know the importance of the mobile version, with Federico observing that it generates "about a tenth of our traffic and has been growing at an amazing rate in the past two years."

Our audience is your business

Tonight.eu has an urban audience aged between 18 and 35 years and according to Federico, the website network currently gets more than four million visits per year. This audience dynamic helps drive tonight.eu's business model, where they sell online advertising space to global companies who target this age profile. Similarly, tonight.eu also sells promotional services and marketing tools to venue owners and event promoters, as tonight.eu users are also their potential customers.

TONIGHT.EU

Amsterdam   Berlin   Brescia
Barcelona   Bologna   Bucharest
Dublin   Florence   Genoa   London   Milan
Monte Carlo   Paris   Rome   Turin   Verona

"We use tonight.eu not just as a domain name but as a brand
for all our marketing activities."

Yourcity.tonight.eu
Today there are 16 tonight.eu websites, published in multiple languages. Expansion continues as the tonight.eu team has launched a partnership programme inviting businesses and third parties to create their own "Cities Tonight". When asked which is his favourite tonight.eu city, Federico responds "Well, obviously it is Milan as it is the website with the longest history. I am also very proud of the job done in Bucharest – it has huge potential and is proving the value of our franchising model." ●

Visit tonight.eu.

Federico Pomi, CEO and founder of tonight.eu

"The 1000 .eu registrars who registered one million names for their customers in less than 13 hours made our launch the biggest in TLD history."

The untold story

EURid General Manager Marc Van Wesemael looks back on the run up to the launch of the .eu top-level domain (TLD), one of the highlights of his career in the domain industry.

Text: Brigitte Lagrou   Photo: Studioworks

As with many big projects, EURid started by chance. "I was General Manager of DNS Belgium at the time and we had just implemented a state-of-the art automated registration system. That prompted other registries to ask us if we wanted to collaborate on a bid for the .eu top-level domain," Mr Van Wesemael explains. However, following a decision by the board, .be chose not to pursue the idea any further. "Then we thought about it for a while and came to a conclusion: If our system is so good, why not make a bid for .eu ourselves?"

Strength in numbers

The .be team decided to put together a bid with other smaller European ccTLDs to stand a better chance of being successful. After talking to several candidates, they approached the ccTLD registries for Sweden and Italy. "By that time, the European Commission had planned an information session in Brussels to provide more bid details. During a breakfast session, .be, .it and .se sat around the table and we decided: 'Let's do it'."

Seven other bids were submitted in total. A nail-biting time followed as each one was evaluated. "When we learnt that we had won we were really happy. And then it dawned on us: the real work had only just begun." So began a series of meetings with the European Commission. During this time EURid was officially founded as a not-for-profit organisation and the fledgling registry advised the EC on the Public Policy Rules, guidelines explaining the implementation and function of .eu and the .eu charter.

Under pressure

The official launch of .eu was planned for 1 December 2005, 14 months later,

"It was a truly memorable moment when the first .eu domain names started to scroll across the screen."

to coincide with an important EC meeting in Brussels. In line with launch requirements, EURid had to publish all the necessary information at least two months beforehand, on 30 September, but as a supplier hadn't delivered the necessary operational hardware and couldn't even guarantee a delivery date, the team wasn't sure they would be able to publish the information on time. "We faced a tough decision: to go ahead with the launch on 1 December or not? After many sleepless nights and consultation with the .eu board, we decided it was just too risky."

While the EC understood EURid's concerns, they were keen to launch .eu before the end of 2005 as originally planned, so EURid proposed a launch date of a week later after organising that replacement hardware be on standby should the original supplier not deliver on time. On 7 December 2005, .eu's four-month registration period, known as Sunrise, began. During this time governments and trademark owners could register their .eu domain names ahead of the general public, provided they could prove their rights to the domain names they wanted.

Dawn of Sunrise
There had been Sunrise periods before for other TLD launches, but EURid was the first to introduce the concept of a Sunrise validation agent, an organisation with the necessary expertise that examines each domain name application to check if the applicant has the right to the domain name they are applying for. "We felt a validation agent was necessary given that we were going to receive applications in 23 languages, some of which were unfamiliar to us. We are quite proud of the validation agent concept, as it has been copied by

all the TLDs that have launched since," notes Mr Van Wesemael.

Record breakers
"The day we opened .eu to the public, on 7 April 2006, is a day I'll never forget: the 1000 .eu registrars who registered one million names for their customers in less than 13 hours made our launch the biggest in TLD history." There was a record amount of traffic that day, at some points up to 146 transactions per second, but EURid had everything in place to make sure the launch went flawlessly. The EURid General Manager recalls, "It was a truly memorable moment when the first .eu domain names started to scroll across the screen." And that was five years ago.

Looking ahead
Mr Van Wesemael is optimistic about the future of EURid and .eu. "Steady and healthy growth will allow us to become and remain a market leader, because what we offer is more than just a domain. Through .eu, EU residents can express their European identity online and feel confident while doing so, thanks to our efforts to increase online security. Our registrars too see the added value of .eu for their business because we strive to simplify procedures and give them a user-friendly registration interface."

The TLD market is changing as new extensions compete for market share, but Mr Van Wesemael hopes that the hype around the new TLDs will draw attention to the existing, more established extensions. He notes, "We certainly have challenging times ahead, but the .eu team is looking forward to the future. We have every reason to believe that the next five years will be as fulfilling as the last five." ●

Registrars remember the .eu launch

"The high point was getting total.eu for the French petrol company Total. As that came through, there were shouts of satisfaction and I was reminded of one of those movies where there's a successful Cape Canaveral launch and everyone in the control room is high-fiving each other and hugging."

Stéphane Van Gelder, INDOM Group NBT, France

"The Italian developer we'd hired to develop our EPP system in time for the launch refused to hand over the application until we had paid his invoice in full. Two days before the launch we still had no system and, because I knew it took four days to process an international bank transfer, I was getting desperate. I tried to persuade him to hand over the files, but he refused to send anything until his invoice had been paid. Only once I had promised to get in my car and drive all the way to Italy to give him the money in cash if that was what it took to get our system on time, did he agree to send us the files."

Taranov Kuzma, Versanus Kft., Hungary

"We had prepared all our systems in anticipation of the launch and that morning we were all nervously waiting to register our first .eu domain name. But as the clock struck eleven nothing happened. We panicked and started checking our systems to see if they were functioning correctly, although everything seemed to be fine. It turns out that the EURid systems were dealing with a flood of .eu domain name requests and, after the first fifteen minutes, once the initial rush had passed, we were finally able to start registering names."

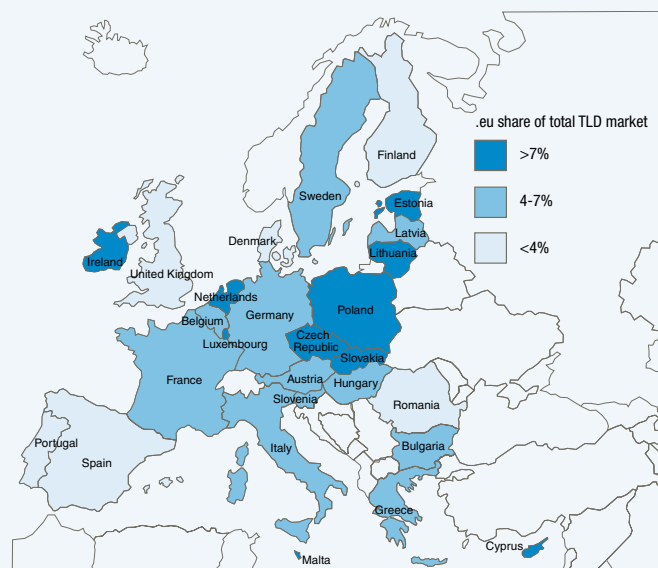*Marek Erneker, IGNUM s.r.o., Czech Republic*

Who loves .eu?

With 3.4 million registered domain names, it's a fact that .eu is popular with EU residents. But some have embraced it more than others. We examine whether there is a pattern to .eu's popularity.

TEXT: STAFFAN WALLIN

A measurable indicator of .eu's attractiveness is its share of the total domain name market in each EU Member State.[1] The map below reveals large regional differences. .eu is well established in the north-eastern part of the EU and the Netherlands.[2] In Estonia, Poland, Slovakia and Lithuania it is even competing with .com to be the second most popular extension after the national top-level domain (TLD).

.eu is less well established in the periphery of the EU, however. In Spain, Portugal and the United Kingdom, for example, only one registration in 40 is a .eu domain name.

But why?

Two factors offer possible explanations as to why .eu has become popular in certain countries.

- The population is accustomed to using two-character extensions, like their national TLD. These are often countries where the national domain is more popular than .com.
- The population is positive towards the EU.

To investigate the relationship between popularity of .eu and preference for the national TLD, we compare .eu's market share with national TLD registrations divided by .com registrations for each country. The relationship (shown in the graph below) is clear. The main exceptions are Denmark and Romania, where .eu has not been widely adopted in spite of national domain popularity, and France, where .eu is doing well in spite of the prevalence of .com.[3]

.eu market share in EU Member States
Sources: CENTR, EURid, national TLD registries, ZookNIC
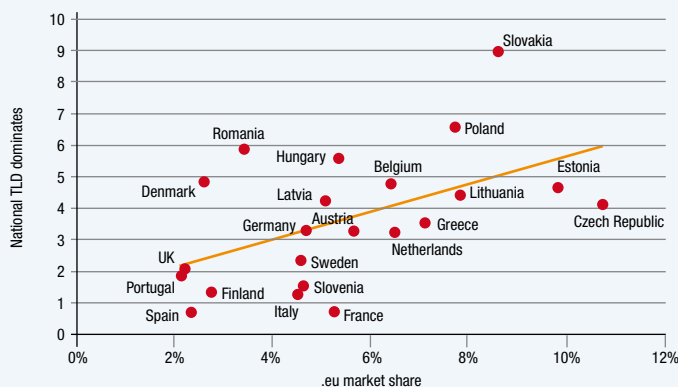
National TLD popularity vs .eu market share
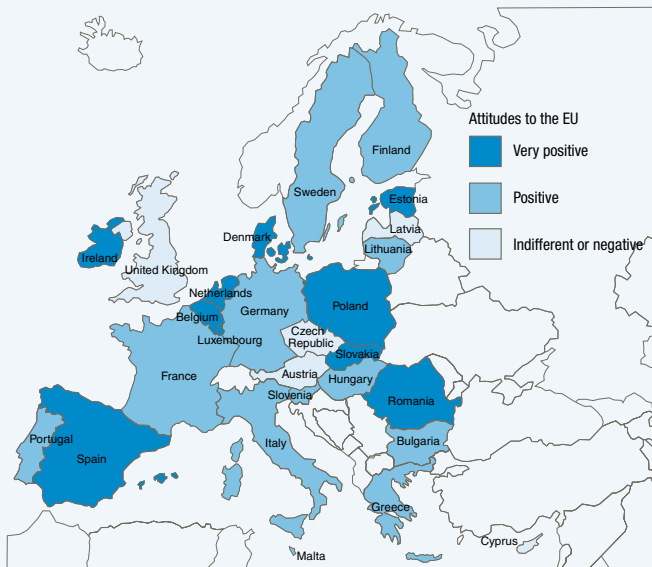Sources: CENTR, EURid, national TLD registries, ZookNIC

To see whether there is a relationship between .eu's popularity and attitudes towards the EU, we compare .eu's market share with information from the Eurobarometer survey on public opinion in the EU. Using this EU membership attitude data, the results show that while the relationship is weaker, a trend can still be seen. .eu has a low market share in the UK while it has captured a sizeable fraction of the market in EU positive countries like Estonia and the Netherlands.

[1]   A country's domain name market is defined as the total number of domain names, including the national domain, .eu and the larger generic TLDs, .com, .net, .org, .info and .biz.

[2]   Registration numbers for .eu in Cyprus, Ireland, Luxembourg and Malta do not accurately reflect .eu's popularity in those countries as they are strongly driven by domain name speculators who register large numbers of domain names with the aim of selling them for a profit.

[3]   Data from Bulgaria has been omitted due to unavailability as has data from Cyprus, Ireland, Luxembourg and Malta, where numbers are distorted by domain name speculators.

There are exceptions, however. .eu is not widely used in EU positive Spain and Denmark, while the less positive views in the Czech Republic have not had a visible impact on the Czech interest in .eu domain names.

Attitudes toward the EU

Source: Eurobarometer
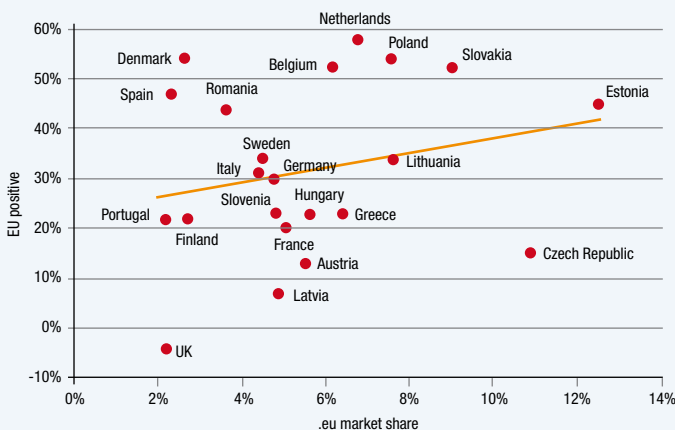
EU attitudes vs .eu market share

Sources: Eurobarometer, CENTR, EURid, national TLD registries, ZookNIC

Based on these two factors, it appears that .eu is popular in EU positive countries with a developed market for their national TLD, while it is less used in most EU sceptic countries and countries where the population is accustomed to .com. The exception is Denmark, where .eu has not been widely adopted despite the popularity of .dk and an EU positive population.

Looking ahead

Using the two factors, we can predict, to some extent, how well .eu will be adopted in the EU Candidate Countries once they are eligible to register .eu domain names.

Turkey

Although the Turkish population is positive towards the EU, .tr, Turkey's national TLD, is not well established. Since the strength of the national domain is more influential in determining .eu's popularity than a population's attitude towards the EU, this means that .eu might not be widely adopted.

Macedonia

Information about the strength of the Macedonian national TLD is not readily available, but seven leading Macedonian daily newspapers use .mk for their websites, indicating a strong national domain. Coupled with a very EU positive population, this signifies that .eu could be widely used in Macedonia.

Iceland

Even though its population is less positive towards the EU, .eu could do well in Iceland too, thanks to the strong national TLD .is. However, the country's geographic location could mean that Icelanders view the domain as less useful.

Croatia

The Croatian national TLD, .hr, is widely used. This means that, despite an EU sceptic population, .eu could enjoy widespread use in Croatia once the country becomes a member of the European Union. ●

A true cocktail lover

Fred Vandenhoeke, owner of Cocktaillovers

Armed only with his determination and a cocktail shaker, enterprising Belgian Fred Vandenhoeke founded Cocktaillovers - a mobile catering company that brings deliciously sophisticated cocktails to wherever you are.

Text: Megan Vosloo   Photos: Lies Duerinck

THE IDEA FOR Cocktaillovers came in 2006. After four years in the hospitality industry, Fred was a master cocktail maker, but wanted to be his own boss. So with no financial backing, but a very strong business vision, he took a leap of faith: "When I started, I planned to operate Cocktaillovers part time," he says, "but within a month the demand was so high I had to focus on it one hundred percent."

In the five years since he set up his business, Fred has served cocktails all over Belgium and further afield, including Germany and France. He caters both private and business events and also offers workshops on location, in which he passes on cocktail recipes and techniques to fellow cocktail enthusiasts.

To each event he brings all his own supplies, from the fresh strawberries and mint he needs for Daiquiris and Mojitos to the glasses, cocktail shakers and refrigerators. He will even organise the bar.

He explains, "I don't have my own bar because I work with external partners. This allows my customers to choose which bar they want for an event, depending on the theme or atmosphere they want to create. I can provide design bars, tropical bars, even an ice bar if that's what they want."

Location, location, location

While a unique selling point of Cocktaillovers is its mobility, Fred is aware that he does not have the option of using a brick and mortar store to drum up business. This is why he finds his location on the Internet, cocktaillovers.eu, particularly important.

"My website is my business card. It's important for me to have a site that allows people to find me," he stresses.

And as the innovative Belgian had always planned for Cocktaillovers to be an international operation, a .eu website was the obvious choice. "European clients are more likely to visit my .eu website than my .be website because .eu

tells them I'm international," he says. Although 80 - 90% of Cocktaillovers' business is generated through its website, Fred also promotes his company on other online platforms, such as Facebook and Twitter. "Social networking plays an important role in the Cocktaillovers marketing strategy," he notes. "It stimulates the market by continuously letting people know where we are and what we are doing."

He confirms that many of the workshops and private events that he caters, like weddings or family parties, begin with contact via social media channels.

Create and communicate

As the owner of a cocktail catering company, Fred relishes every opportunity he gets to pass on the art of cocktail making, be it at a bachelor party or a large corporate fair. In his years behind the bar, he has observed that people are always fascinated to see a product being made by a craftsman. "There is not much work involved in pouring someone a pint or serving them a glass of

"European clients are more likely to visit my .eu website than my .be website because .eu tells them I'm international."

wine, but I can captivate people when I prepare a cocktail," he says.

Of the 2000 - 3000 existing cocktail recipes, he knows about 100 by heart. He also enjoys developing new cocktails to add to his repertoire.

The Mustard, a signature Cocktaillovers' cocktail which he developed last year, is an unusual but delightful drink based on the Belgian lemon brandy called Jenever, cucumber syrup, mustard and egg white. "It's not typical, but it's the ideal cocktail to have with mussels or crayfish. When people think of cocktails they often think of something sweet or tropical, but actually they are far more diverse," he notes.

Fred derives a lot of satisfaction from this aspect of his work, coming up with new flavours and serving cocktails to people who are truly appreciative of what he does. "Yes," he confirms, "it's being able to be creative and interact with people that makes it worth it for me." ●

Visit cocktaillovers.eu.

DNSSEC

The next level in online security

To many people, Internet security is about anti-virus software, firewalls and regularly changing passwords. However, .eu has a wider view and has taken steps within the Internet's infrastructure to protect 3.4 million .eu domain names.

Text: Catherine Dowdell

The behind-the-scenes security measure that .eu has implemented is called DNSSEC - short for Domain Name System Security Extensions. It gives online consumers greater confidence by reducing the chance that they will be led to fake websites and tricked into supplying personal information.

What is DNSSEC?
The basis of any Internet presence is a domain name, such as eurid.eu, which is used for websites and email. Looking up a domain name, or URL, involves a set of questions and answers whenever a browser issues a request to find the website it is looking for. But can the browser trust the answer it receives? Has the answer been modified or intercepted by a third party?

With DNSSEC, name servers and browsers can verify and authenticate the answers they receive. This means that there is a smaller chance that Internet users can be redirected to ill-intentioned websites or have their email intercepted by rogue systems.

How does it work?
DNSSEC works by checking answers at each level of the Internet infrastructure – the Domain Name System (DNS) – where each level in the hierarchy verifies the level above through what is known as a 'chain of trust'. As a top-level domain, .eu is an important part of this DNS infrastructure.

.eu implemented DNSSEC in September 2010 and was one of the first of the world's largest top-level domains to have a complete DNSSEC chain of trust.

EURid, the .eu registry, has protected the .eu top-level domain, but for DNSSEC to reach its full potential, all .eu domain names also need to be protected by joining the chain of trust so that each level of the DNS can authenticate answers and be trusted by the level above.

Why is DNSSEC important?
The major benefit of DNSSEC is that it gives authenticity and integrity to DNS replies by building security into the fabric of the Internet.

Without this security protocol, attackers can position themselves next to genuine DNS servers and launch so-called cache-poisoning attacks by supplying false data and so redirecting traffic. While this kind of attack is rare in proportion to Internet traffic volume, when it does occur the consequences are severe.

Unfortunately, this very important DNSSEC benefit is the least obvious as it is not visible to Internet users. Currently there are no logos or messages that website owners can use to promote their DNSSEC-enabled status, although the Internet community is discussing ways to clearly show that a website is DNSSEC-enabled.

A more tangible benefit of DNSSEC is that it can prevent website owners from losing valuable traffic to their websites.

If a potential customer types a web address into their browser, but makes a spelling mistake, they should normally get an error page saying that the domain does not exist, which tells them that the address they typed was incorrect.

However, if the website is not protected by DNSSEC, there is a chance that the answer to their browser's DNS request is modified to return an answer which might redirect them to a third-party webpage. This website will present a list of alternatives, which may not include the website they were originally looking for.

Although this may seem helpful to the end user, website owners end up losing web traffic and therefore customers. And the end user may never know that they made a spelling mistake and were redirected.

Protecting your website with DNSSEC ensures that your customers will see a DNS error page if they misspell your URL. This means that they will type it again and successfully reach their desired destination - your website.

What can I do?
DNSSEC helps make the Internet safer. As more top-level domains implement DNSSEC, it is gaining momentum and becoming more commonplace. But more work is needed so that everyone with a .eu domain name, website or email address can benefit from the collective online security that DNSSEC offers.

Please instruct your domain name provider, your registrar, to add DNSSEC to your .eu domain name – a process known as signing – so that it joins the chain of trust and protects visitors to your website. ●

Five questions
to mark a fifth birthday

Dr Paul Twomey was President and CEO of ICANN, the chief rule-making body for Internet policy, at the time of the .eu launch in 2006. Five years on, he answers five questions on .eu and the new developments in the domain industry.

Text: Catherine Dowdell and Megan Vosloo Photo: Courtesy of Paul Twomey

Dr Paul Twomey, President and CEO of ICANN from March 2003 to June 2009

1 **.eu is one of the ten largest top-level domains (TLDs) in the world. What was ICANN's expectation when it opened to the public on 7 April 2006? Did you think it would be a success?**

.eu launched at an interesting time. Back then, many of the Domain Name System's (DNS) founding fathers felt that domain names were nothing more than technical identifiers, ways of linking to IP addresses, while I believed that Internet users increasingly saw top-level domains as a form of identity, not just identifiers. So when .eu came along, I was very curious to see whether European businesses in particular would use it to express the identity they wished to present to their suppliers and customers.

Despite the early fluctuations thanks to top-level domain speculators, .eu's long-term growth seems to have been driven by a demand from the real economy to be identified with the European Union market. Its success has confirmed my hypothesis.

2 **What is the next big thing in the domain industry?**

Probably the liberalisation of the generic top-level domain space so that anyone can create their own TLD, like .com, .biz or .museum. This will encourage competition because it will result in more types of top-level domains: entrepreneurial extensions like .shop, or city and regional TLDs and TLDs based on brands and organisations. This will be a fascinating period in the history of

"I was very curious to see whether European businesses in particular would use .eu to express the identity they wished to present to their customers."

the DNS. Just as with .eu, I expect that the success of this process will be driven by producer and consumer perception of online identity and their desires to be associated with particular extensions.

3 **What is big in the industry right now?**

A very big thing is the introduction of internationalised country code top-level domains (ccTLDs). Internationalised ccTLDs are top-level domains that contain characters other than the standard "a" to "z" or "0" to "9", like the Greek .δοκιμή. They are particularly important for Internet users who don't write in the Latin alphabet.

IDN ccTLD applications for East Asia, the Arab world and countries that use the Cyrillic alphabet have already been 'fast tracked'. I know .eu has comprehensive plans for being part of this change to the DNS.

4 **Domain Name System Security Extensions (DNSSEC) uptake worldwide is quite slow. What can registries do to encourage the public to adopt the protocol?**

I think they should promote DNSSEC to the domain name holders for whom it offers the most value, like banks and companies doing e-commerce. Registries should work with these registrants and their industry bodies directly to help them brand DNSSEC as yet another step they are taking to improve online security for their customers. This will allow DNSSEC to achieve broader recognition and become more widely adopted.

Companies like legal practices, that rely on the DNS to move intellectual property and may be vulnerable to attack, should be another point of focus.

5 **How do you see the opening up of the TLD market affecting existing TLDs, like .eu?**

I doubt that .eu domain name holders will abandon the TLD, precisely because they consider top-level domains to be a source of identity. I do expect large companies to turn their brands into top-level domains, but I don't think they will walk away from the identity opportunities offered by country code TLDs, including .eu.

Having said that, competition has numerous consumer benefits, particularly in terms of product innovation and price. I look forward to seeing what DNS innovations will emerge as more competitors enter the market. ●

Colourful cakes
for all occasions

Candy Cakes is the brainchild of Mike Thomaides, a London patisserie owner with an entre-preneurial eye. Mike realised that the products that he and his competitors offered their customers were, although of high quality, a bit traditional and boring. This gave him an idea.

Text: Megan Vosloo   Photos: Courtesy of Candy Cakes

Mike Thomaides, owner of Candy Cakes

"We needed to position ourselves in the heart of the European Community. I thought the best way to start would be to get a .eu domain name."

Queue Candy Cakes, the modern patisserie and café that specialises in high quality cakes and cupcakes with unusual flavours that delight the eye and tantalise the taste buds.

"I wanted to bring something unique and innovative to the cake and café world and bring the fun back into baking," Mike explains. "I spotted a gap in the market and Candy Cakes was born."

The enterprising patissier makes his cakes using only the highest quality ingredients. Each creation is finished off with a fusion of vibrantly coloured icing and an exotic candy topping. The result is a confection that stands out in a crowd. The candied cakes are sold in the Candy Cakes stores, cake shops that look like sweetshops, where customers can order bespoke cakes, buy their favourites or enjoy them in store with a hot cup of Brazilian coffee.

While Mike's offerings are unusual and, some would say, not for the faint hearted, the Candy Cakes concept has obviously been a success. Since he started in 2006, Mike has expanded his business to include seven shops in central London employing 45 people, and an online store, candycakes.eu.

Candy Cakes on the web

Not only can UK customers order cakes online from a staggering product range, including low-sugar and gluten free options and cakes for every special occasion, holiday, national or international sporting event, they can also create their own cupcakes with the Design a Cake application.

Three easy steps are all it takes to create the perfect cupcake. Goods ordered online are delivered the next working day - freshness guaranteed.

Mike explains how it works, "We can guarantee quality because, once we have set up a local franchise, the cakes are made locally and delivered by a

local courier company, ensuring that our customers get them as quickly and as fresh as possible." The cakes are also dispatched in packaging that preserves flavour and moisture.

Currently a healthy 20% of Candy Cakes' business is generated through its website, but Mike has no intention of resting on his laurels. He wants to take Candy Cakes into mainland Europe and registered the .eu web address, candycakes.eu, to help him realise his ambitions.

Candy Cakes on the continent

"I had always envisioned that Candy Cakes would become a European business and knew that, to achieve this, we would need to position ourselves in the heart of the European Community. I thought the best way to start would be to get a .eu domain name," he says.

He has also already registered the Candy Cakes trademark in the European Community in preparation of his move into the rest of Europe.

Mike believes that Candy Cakes is a truly European brand that can offer something unique to consumers and he and the Candy Cakes team are currently in negotiation with new franchise partners, many of whom are European.

So, if all goes according to plan for the ambitious baker, it won't be long before mainland Europeans too will be able place their orders on candycakes.eu or visit a local franchise to get their taste of a delicious Candy Cake. ●

Visit candycakes.eu.

On .eu and the European *digital landscape*

.eu Identity spoke to the EC Vice-President and European Digital Commissioner, Neelie Kroes. She shared her thoughts about .eu's achievements during the past five years and future European online initiatives.

Text: Catherine Dowdell   Photo: Courtesy of the European Commission

When the first regulation on .eu was passed in 2002, the hope was that a European top-level domain (TLD) would promote the use and access to Internet networks and virtual markets, improve the interoperability of trans-European networks and give the internal market higher visibility on the Internet. Do you think that these objectives have been realised?

Yes, absolutely. Since its creation, .eu has marked out a European territory on the web. It has made it possible for businesses, associations and individuals with a European calling to show their identity on the Internet and offer guarantees of quality and security.

In this respect, the EU internal market has obtained much larger visibility on the Internet.

For businesses, opting for .eu is a very simple way to show that they are established in one of the 27 EU countries and therefore subject to the high standards set by EU law - particularly regarding data protection, consumer rules or the EU's financial market regulations.

This is one of the ways in which the Commission has sought to reassure Europeans and encourage the growth of exchanges on the web, resulting in the promotion of the use and access to Internet networks and virtual markets.

"Since its creation, .eu has marked out a European territory on the web."

Did you foresee .eu appealing to small and mid-sized enterprises (SMEs)? What is it about the .eu TLD that makes it attractive to European businesses?

Certainly, when the Commission began working on the idea of a single top-level domain for Europe, we thought about the potential benefits for both large companies and small businesses.

The Internet is a tool that businesses can use to reach out globally, far beyond their traditional local or national markets. The added value for any business in using a .eu rather than a country code (for instance .de or .fr) top-level domain name is to show clients that their specific company is doing business in all of Europe. This is the "brand power" of .eu and it is particularly attractive for SMEs which can now use this additional tool to "go global".

Of course, not only businesses are involved. EURid statistics show that businesses have played a major part in

.eu success by putting up the largest volume of names for registration. However, they are followed by the names of families and persons, an interesting phenomenon, which shows that .eu is not just a business concern.

What do you consider to be .eu's greatest achievement during the past five years?

I think the overall number of registrations speaks for itself. To date 3.4 million businesses and citizens have signed up for a .eu domain name - an increase of 6% between 2009 and 2010. This means that in just a few years, .eu has become the preferred option for a very large number of European companies and individuals.

.eu is confirming its position as the ninth largest top-level domain in the world.

In the third quarter of 2010, some milestones were reached in terms of registration numbers: Germany passed the one million .eu domain names mark and Belgium registered its one hundred thousandth .eu domain name. In Baltic countries, .eu names are becoming increasingly popular: at the end of 2010, registration numbers in Estonia were up by 39% and in Lithuania by 16%, compared to just one year earlier.

Neelie Kroes, EC Vice-President and European Digital Commissioner

"...in just a few years, .eu has become the preferred option for a very large number of European companies and individuals."

This is for me the greatest achievement of this Commission initiative: .eu establishes a direct link between an individual or company and the European Union. It values Europe beyond any territorial boundaries or market place – it is an expression of European identity.

How do you see .eu evolving in the next five years and how will its role in the community change?

I would hope to see a continued steady growth of .eu, both in quantity (number of registrations) and quality (services). The Commission will work with EURid to keep and improve these trends in the following years to expand the success of .eu in the TLD community. The areas of potential further progress are many, stability, security, multilingualism, etc.

Just take the example of multilingualism on the Internet, and more specifically the introduction of Internationalised Domain Names (IDNs) at all levels of the DNS. Whereas in the past, domain names registered under .eu could only contain the characters "a" to "z", digits "0" to "9" and "-", we are glad that since December 2009, it is possible to register names in all the alphabets used in the 27 EU Member States (which include not only Latin, but also Cyrillic and Greek) and therefore in all characters (for instance "à", "ą", "ä", and so on), used in the 23 official languages of the European Union.

By the end of 2010, the number of IDNs in the .eu portfolio was 57 826, in other words, 1.74% of all registrations. I expect this number to keep on growing.

The Commission is currently discussing with the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) to introduce IDN also at the top level. This is a very important issue for us: I see no reason why every European citizen – and indeed every Internet user – could not use the scripts of all our 23 languages at the end of the URL. **>>>**

> *"Half of Europe's productivity growth in the past 15 years has been driven by information and communication technologies. We need to capitalise on this potential even more."*

This can be a win-win: I believe introducing IDNs at the top level will bring less confusion and more stability and clarity for users.

How do you see the opening of the TLD market affecting .eu?

The Commission welcomes, in principle, ICANN's intention to extend the top-level domain market, as this would bring the key benefits of increasing consumer choice and of promoting competition and innovation. It has to be done in a reasoned way, taking into account the comments of all stakeholders, including of course the public authorities, when the general interest is at stake.

Overall, I see this as a further incentive for .eu to always improve its offer of services in a more competitive environment.

Is the EC planning any other online initiatives that will benefit Europeans?

Half of Europe's productivity growth in the past 15 years has been driven by information and communication technologies. We need to capitalise on this potential even more.

This is the reason I launched the "Digital Agenda for Europe" which sets ambitious targets to deliver sustainable economic and social benefits to our continent.

The Digital Agenda addresses seven major priorities: a digital single market, increased interoperability, higher Internet trust and security, much faster Internet access, more investment in research and development, enhanced digital literacy skills and inclusion, and the application of information and communications technologies to social challenges such as climate change and the ageing population. The Internet is central to this plan, with interoperability, security and inclusiveness as central features of its development.

Let me give you a couple of examples – out of a list of more than a hundred concrete actions: for instance, the Digital Agenda for Europe proposes measures to eliminate regulatory barriers to cross-border e-commerce, such as the completion of the Single Euro Payment Area, making a proposal for a legal framework for cross-border recognition and interoperability of secure eAuthentication systems, or initiatives on consumer dispute resolution and enhancing customer trust by updating the EU's data protection regulatory framework.

Another stream of action in the Digital Agenda for Europe sets out initiatives related to fostering trust and security. We have already launched legislative initiatives on the modernisation of ENISA, the European Network and Information Security Agency, and fighting botnets as a criminal activity. Other measures push for Member States and the EU establishing fast reaction mechanisms in the event of cyber attacks, notably through national and governmental Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERT).

Private stakeholders and public administrations have joint obligations to fight against spam, phishing and identity theft, and protect the resilience of the Internet against accidents or deliberate cyber attacks. With the new EU telecom rules, the obligations of telecom companies and ISPs regarding the integrity of networks, services and privacy have been more clearly defined in case of privacy or security breaches.

For all these aspects, we should therefore ensure all players share their best practices and I take EURid's role in managing .eu as one of these key experiences.

What can the EC do to further increase Internet penetration in Europe?

Access to fast and ultra fast Internet is one of three conditions that will speed up economic recovery and allow Europe to grow strongly into the digital age. The other two being richer content and services, and the take-up of ICT tools by all.

More concretely, the Commission's vision focuses on offering broadband coverage (combining fixed and wireless) for all Europeans by 2015, with Internet speeds gradually increasing up to 30 Mbps and fostering the deployment and take-up of next generation access networks (NGA) above 100 Mbps in large parts of the EU territory by 2020. This vision was endorsed by all EU Ministers when they met in December 2010.

The Digital Agenda will also boost penetration by improving digital literacy and competences. This will be made a priority for the European Social Fund and of the "New Skills for New Jobs" flagship of the Europe 2020 initiative.

Finally, The Digital Agenda will increase penetration rates by promoting new services, such as eHealth and ICT-based support for the independent living of elderly people; promoting creative content and cultural diversity, such as with the europeana.eu portal and further developing e-government services and intelligent transport systems for better and more sustainable mobility, etc. These are all converging initiatives that will help Internet penetration in Europe. ●

"We cross borders every day on the road, and online too."

"Our trailers cross national borders every day. As a truly European transport service, we rely on .eu to cross borders on the Internet too. Over the last few years, .eu has certainly helped us attract new customers and grow our company. It's efficient, safe and trustworthy. Much like our own business." **Learn how to register your own .eu web address at link.eurid.eu/howtoeu**

www.eurid.eu

.eu
Your European Identity

.eu mini-guide
to celebrating

Make your good times unforgettable with our inspiring list of .eu websites from companies in the celebration business.

Text: Catherine Dowdell

Candy Bouquet

As a delicious alternative to sending flowers for special occasions, why not send a colourful bouquet of chocolates and sweets? Candy-bouquet.eu, in Limassol, Cyprus, will deliver bouquets of stem-wrapped confectionaries and fun accessories that won't wilt or fade. A memorable way to mark a special day.

Website: candy-bouquet.eu

Photo: Thomas Nylén

Pure Gifts

Puregifts.eu from Riga, Latvia, offers enticing chocolate truffles in various gift box sizes that can be personalised with your company's logo. With flavours that range from passion fruit to tiramisu, served as dark or milk chocolate truffles, and boxes that hold from two to 72 chocolates, there are plenty of options to choose from.

Website: puregifts.eu

Photo: Helder Almeida

Fantasy Costumes

Nothing to wear to that fancy-dress party next week? Fantasycostumes.eu offers fancy-dress outfits, shoes and accessories to customers in Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Two online stores, for the Baltic region and United Kingdom, helpfully organise costumes by theme – such as 1970s, fairytales or pirates – and gender.

Website: fantasycostumes.eu

eWine

Surprise your host with a bottle of wine from ewine.eu. eWine, a German online wine retailer, specialises in the import of South African wines. In cooperation with South African partners, eWine offers the latest and most interesting wines South Africa has to offer, currently listing over 500 wines from 90 producers.
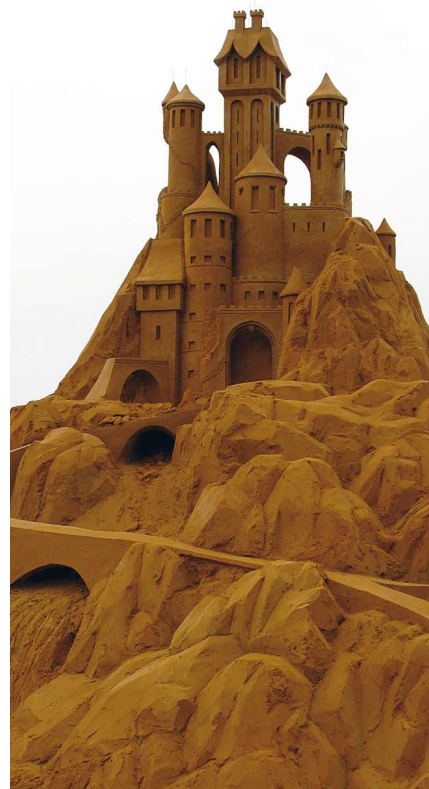
Website: ewine.eu

Photo: David Tuttle

Ice and Sand Events

Based in The Hague in the Netherlands, Ice and Sand Events put on spectacular ice and sand sculpture events throughout Europe. Their expertise is also available for parties and corporate events, where an eye-catching ice sculpture or ice bar can add a dramatic focal point to any occasion.

Website: iceandsandevents.eu

Just So

Just So, from London in the United Kingdom, offers tailor-made event management with the guarantee that everything will be "just so". Product and press launches, fashion shows, gala and society dinners, and award ceremonies are but a few of the many types of events that Just So organises for some of Europe's best-known brands.

Website: justso.eu

Buy a Rose

Send beautiful flowers that last and last with buyarose.eu. Located in the Dutch province of Limburg, this online store sells roses and all things rose-related. Take your pick from rosebushes, rose-flavoured food, rose-infused cosmetics and rose-patterned household goods.

Website: buyarose.eu

Photo: Sarah Rich

Crazycakes

Crazycakes sells bespoke cakes in Stamford, the United Kingdom. Birthday and wedding cakes take all forms, including sculpted and tiered, and come in vanilla, chocolate, coffee, lemon and orange flavours. Order a cake online at crazycakes.eu or learn to bake and decorate your own at one of the company's cake-making workshops.

Website: crazycakes.eu

Xantra

Greek company Xantra specialises in creating luxurious yet affordable hand-made jewellery pieces, perfect for any occasion. Designer Kiki Tsiliakos incorporates diverse materials, including Swarovski crystals, semi-precious stones, pearls, glass beads and leather, into her one-of-a-kind creations. You can purchase Xantra jewellery wholesale or online at xantra.eu.

Website: xantra.eu

Concept Catering

Treat your guests to stylish, gourmet cuisine from Portuguese party caterer, Concept Catering. Weddings, cocktail parties, wine tastings and gallery openings are only a few of the events they cover. You can also turn your own hand to gourmet cuisine by attending a Concept Catering workshop to learn the tricks of the trade while enjoying great tasting food.

Website: conceptcatering.eu

Photo: prism68

PartyRama

United Kingdom-based PartyRama provides an extensive range of party accessories for all occasions. Table decorations, invitations, bags, streamers and banners are just the tip of the iceberg for this e-shop which delivers across Europe. ●

Website: partyrama.eu

A million thanks

3.4 million, actually

Over the last five years, 3.4 million domain names registered across Europe have put .eu on the Internet map. Thank you all for making this happen. And the story continues. Every day, more and more companies rely on .eu to achieve their European ambitions. At EURid, we share your aspirations and will continue to invest in the safety and reliability of your .eu web address.

www.eurid.eu

.eu
Your European Identity