

nominet[®]

Domain name industry report 2009





“Welcome to our third domain name industry report”

As the organisation responsible for running the .uk registry we are presenting this report to continue to share information and insight about trends and developments within our industry.

This report continues the theme of presenting and analysing global and UK specific trends in the domain name market and introduces some interesting new analysis about domain name renewal activity in the UK.

The global market for domain names has shown a much slower rate of growth over the past 2 years, but it is still growing. This slowdown does mirror global economic conditions, however, it could also be attributed to many markets for domain names reaching maturity. Those territories with less well established markets for domain names are bucking the economic trend and still posting double digit growth figures for their country code top level domains.

This report examines trends in both the global and domestic UK market for domain names:

- An analysis of global domain name statistics
- Trends in the UK domain name market
- Statistics relating to .uk registrars and .uk renewal trends
- Consumer confidence and trust in .uk

For those registrars involved in the .uk market, this report presents a detailed analysis of domain name renewals. It is a known fact that those domain names that have actively been in use for a number of years are much more likely to be renewed. This report looks at the trends in those renewal rates and evaluates the typical renewal rates that registrars should expect based on the ages of their customers' domain names. These statistics should help registrars to more accurately forecast future business levels for the .uk product that they sell and maintain.

The report also investigates customers' perception of trust in .uk and their preference for .uk web sites. Whilst these findings are positive, it does highlight that UK consumers expect .uk to deliver a safer browsing and shopping experience. These elevated levels of expectation are a tough challenge for the UK Internet industry to deliver on. By developing best practice throughout the industry and encouraging consumers to develop safer browsing and shopping habits, they are challenges that the UK Internet community is well placed to meet.

We hope that you find this report informative and useful whatever your role in the Internet industry. If you have any comments or questions on any of the information presented in this report, please email them to communications@nominet.org.uk.

Lesley Cowley,
Chief Executive Officer, Nominet UK



Contents

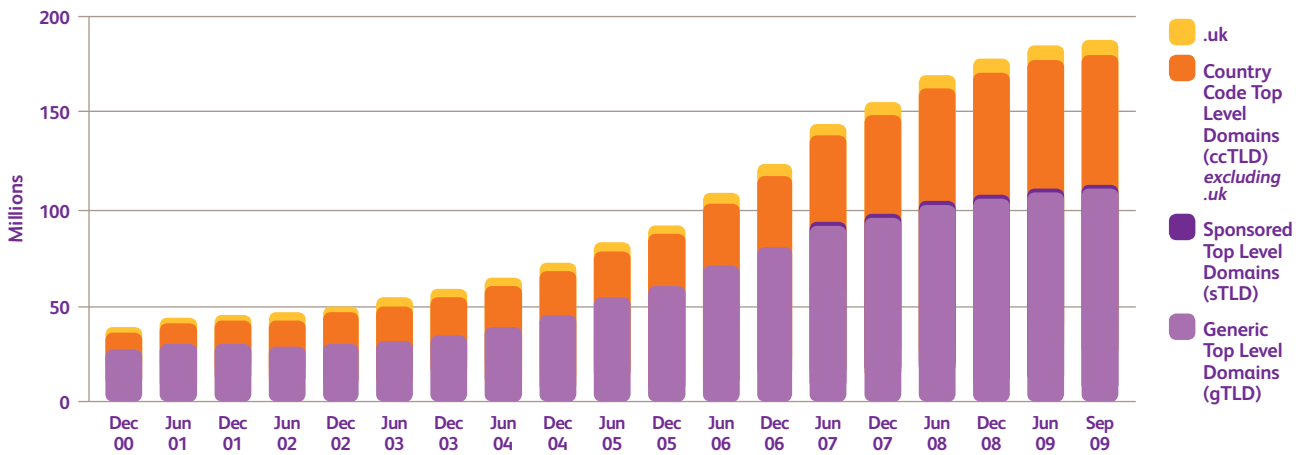
1. Global domain name statistics	4
2. UK domain name statistics	8
3. The UK registrar market	14
4. Trust and awareness	22
5. Summary	25
6. Glossary	26

1 Global domain name statistics



The global market

Global domain name registrations

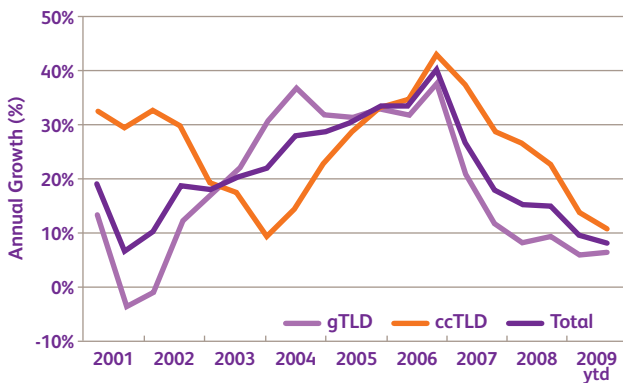


At the end of September 2009 there were 187.6 million domain names registered worldwide. This is an 8% increase on figures from September 2008.

Growth rates across all top level domains were as high as 33% in 2006, but have generally been declining since

then. The boom in registrations in China (.cn) sustained growth rates for country code Top Level Domains (ccTLDs) through 2007 and 2008. However, growth in Chinese domain names has not continued, resulting in ccTLD growth rates falling in line with generic Top Level Domains (gTLDs) such as .com and .org.

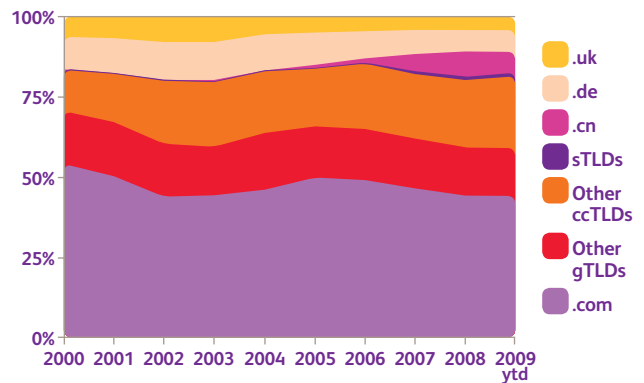
Global domain name growth



gTLD growth averages out at 6%, whilst ccTLD growth has fared slightly better at 10%.

Despite the fall in growth rates the overall 8% increase equates to over 13.5 million new domain names in the past 12 months. Whilst the global economic recession has undoubtedly affected registrations and growth rates, it must be acknowledged that as the market becomes more saturated and the base level increases, high percentage growth is likely to become a thing of the past for the more established top level domains.

TLD - market share



Market share has remained consistent over the past 12 months with little change being seen. .com has fallen by 1% to 44% market share with ccTLDs accounting for 40%.

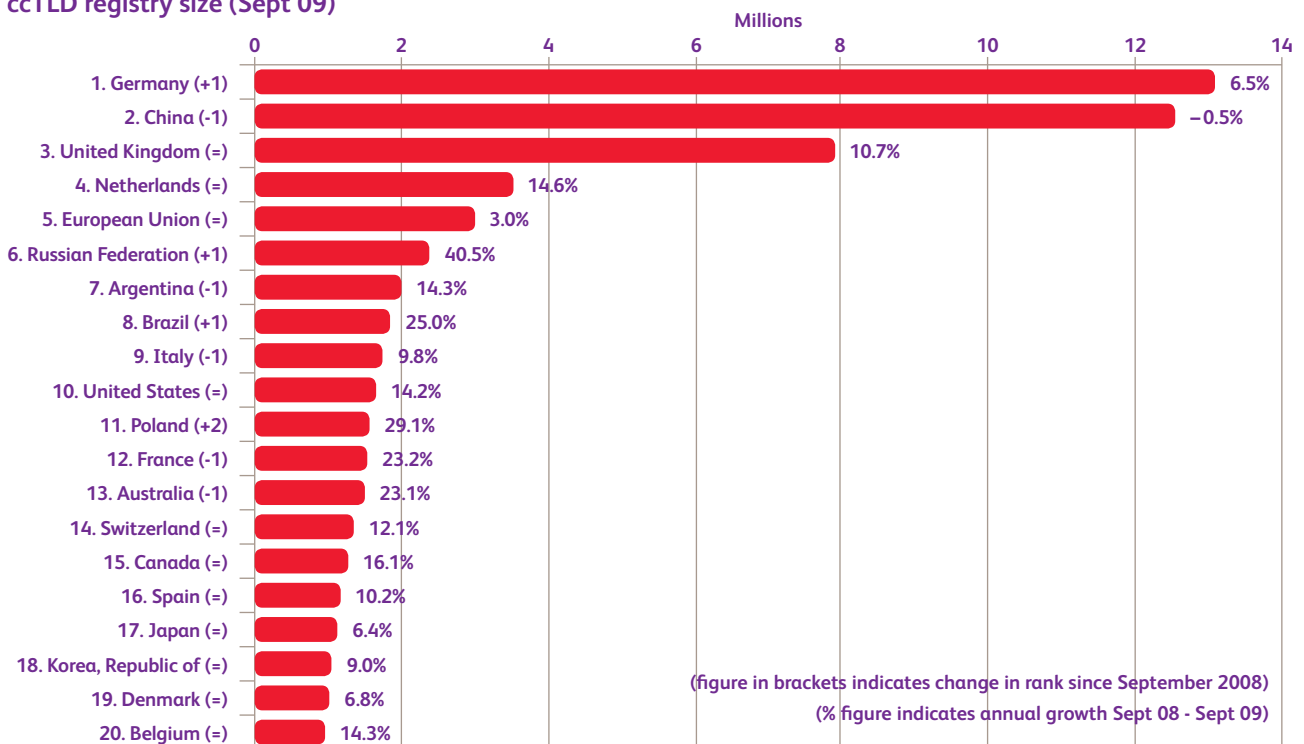
The newest entry to the TLD market was .tel that launched in December 2008. Although at around 250,000 domain names this has had a very small impact on total volumes, it is the only sponsored Top Level Domain (sTLD) that has had significant growth in 2009.

Country code top level domains

2009 has been an interesting year for ccTLDs. During 2007 and 2008 China has seen phenomenal growth rising from under 2 million domain names to over 13 million at the end of 2008. In last year's report China was the leading ccTLD. This growth has not been sustained in 2009 and promotional discounting of .cn domain names

has come to an end resulting in poor renewal rates and low new registrations. As a result, the size of the .cn registry has actually decreased by 0.5 % in the past 12 months. Throughout this period Germany (.de) has continued to see steady growth and has regained its position as the largest ccTLD by volume.

ccTLD registry size (Sept 09)



The Russian Federation has continued to see significant growth with an increase of 64 % in 2008 being followed with growth of 40.5 % in 2009. This has moved them above Argentina to 6th position in the ccTLD ranking.

- Growth in the top 20 ccTLDs is 9.5 %
- Growth in ccTLDs outside the top 20 is 15 %

- Net growth in ccTLDs is 10 %
- The top 20 ccTLDs account for 82 % of all ccTLDs (2008: 83 %)
- The top 5 ccTLDs account for 21 % of global domain names.

The economic angle

With global growth in GDP slowing, no country in the top 20 ccTLD list has posted double digit GDP growth in 2008. Despite this, a number of countries are still continuing to see strong growth in domain name registrations through 2009. These tend to be countries where the base level of domain names is smaller and strong growth is more

easily achieved. This is, however, closing the gap between the more well-established TLDs and proving that global consumers are becoming more familiar with domain names and expect to see local and national businesses with a domain name appropriate for their territory.

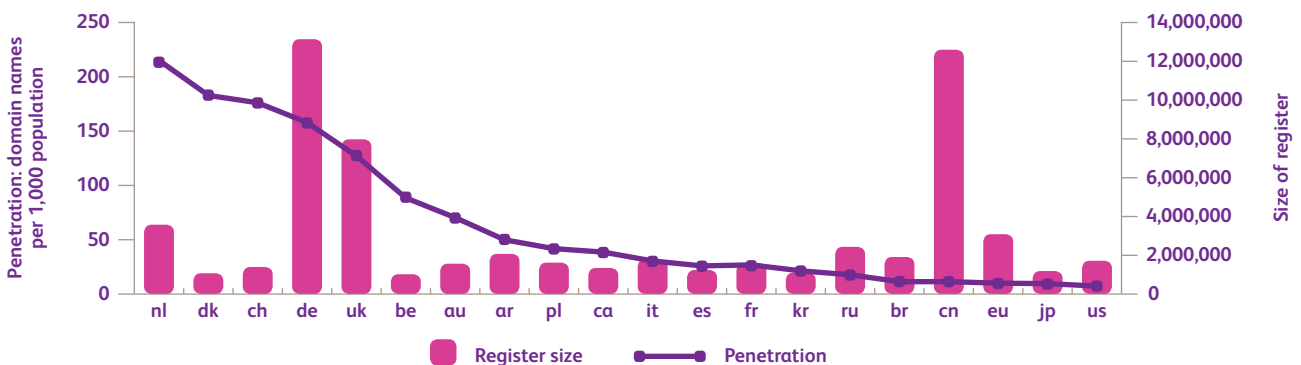
Country	2009 DN Rank	2008 GDP Rank	Rank difference	08/09 DN Growth	07/08 GDP Growth
Germany	1	5	+4	6.5%	1.3%
China	2	2	=	-0.5%	9.0%
United Kingdom	3	7	+4	10.7%	0.7%
Netherlands	4	20	+16	14.6%	2.1%
European Union	5	n/a	n/a	3.0%	0.0%
Russian Federation	6	6	=	40.5%	7.3%
Argentina	7	22	+15	14.3%	7.0%
Brazil	8	9	+1	25.0%	5.1%
Italy	9	10	+1	9.8%	-1.0%
United States	10	1	-9	14.2%	1.1%
Poland	11	19	+8	29.1%	4.8%
France	12	8	-4	23.2%	0.4%
Australia	13	18	+5	23.1%	3.7%
Switzerland	14	34	+20	12.1%	1.6%
Canada	15	14	-1	16.1%	0.4%
Spain	16	12	-4	10.2%	1.2%
Japan	17	3	-14	6.4%	-0.7%
Korea, Republic of	18	13	-5	9.0%	2.2%
Denmark	19	50	+31	6.8%	-1.1%
Belgium	20	29	+9	14.3%	1.1%

Market penetration

The countries of Western Europe have the greatest level of market penetration with The Netherlands having more than one domain for every 5 residents. Denmark, Switzerland, Germany and the UK all score well on market penetration with greater than 100 domain names per 1,000 inhabitants.

With a global population estimated at 6.7 billion there are 28 domain names per 1,000 people on earth. This figure has risen from 23 when estimated in 2007.

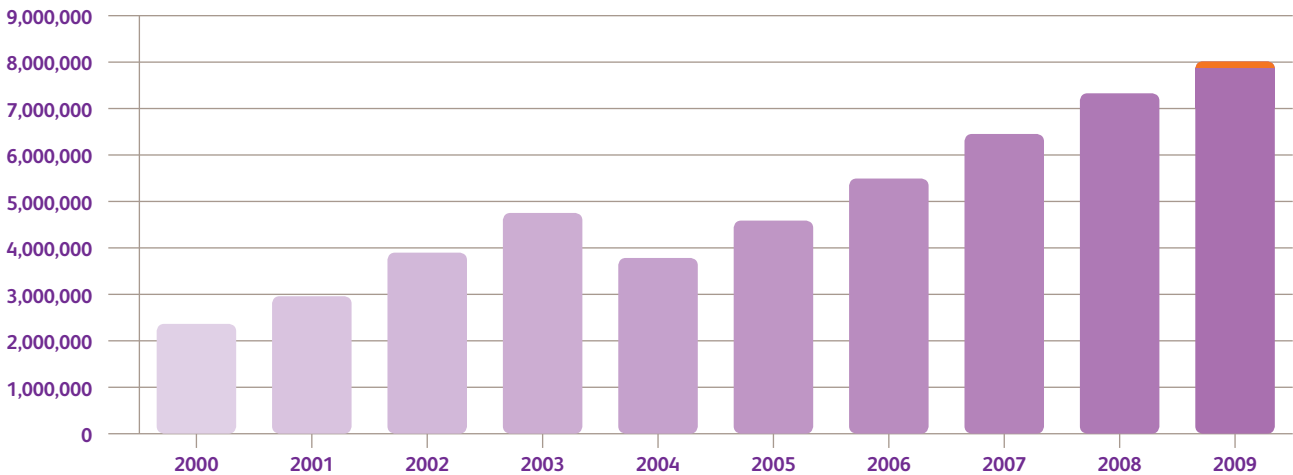
Market penetration



2 UK domain name statistics

Size of the .uk register

Size of .uk register

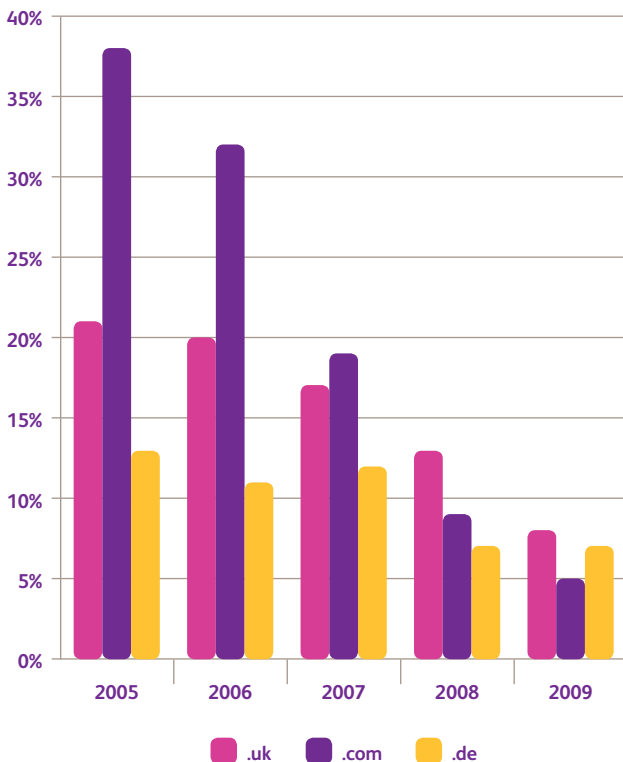


The .uk register at the end of September 2009 stands at 7,904,894 domain name registrations. We forecast that it will reach the 8 million mark during November, with a

final year register size of 8,050,000. (The drop in 2004 was due to a major data cleanse which saw 1.4 million domain names removed from the register.)

Growth of .uk

Annual growth of the .uk register



The register grew by 13 % in 2008 and we are predicting a final growth rate of 8 % for 2009.

The rate at which the .uk register is growing has been reducing over the past 5 years, perhaps more accentuated in the past 18 months. More recently this could be due to the economy, but additionally, as the size of the register grows the base volume increases therefore requiring larger volumes of new registrations to maintain growth rates.

A similar decline in growth rates can be seen across the whole industry; however, different TLDs have been affected to different degrees. Although most of the established TLDs such as .com, .de and .uk have been around for a similar amount of time, their sensitivity to market conditions do vary.

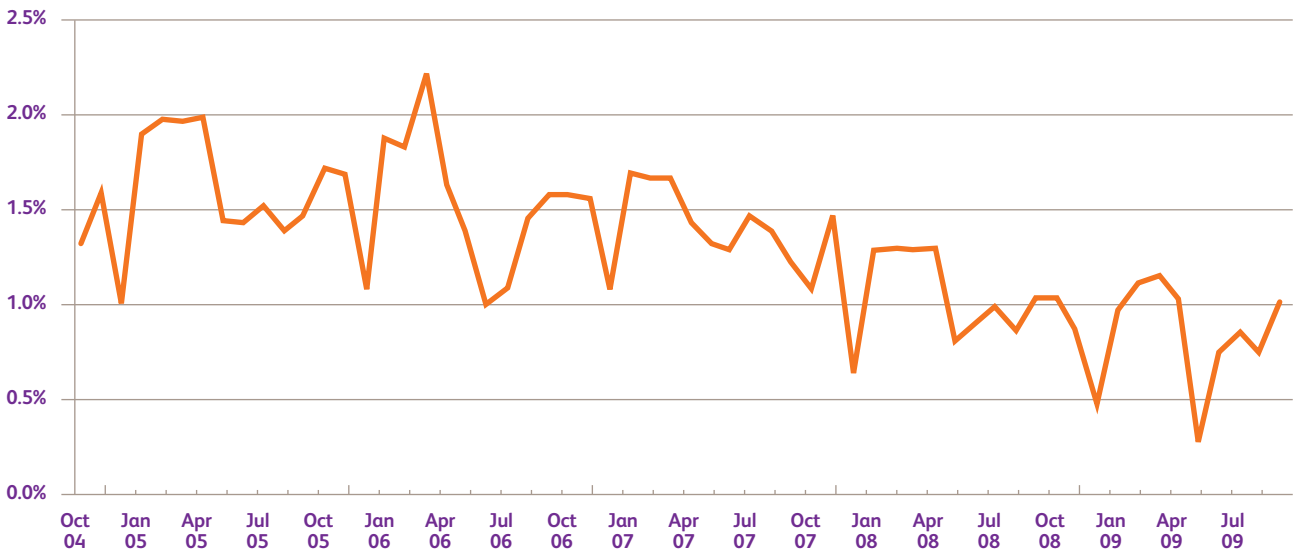
For example

- .de could be considered to be reaching maturity. Annual growth rates are not staggering, but are consistent despite economic conditions.
- Although .com is the most established and popular TLD, it has declined rapidly in growth from 38 % 5 years ago to an estimated 5 % growth in 2009.
- .uk could be considered to be somewhere between the two. Not as mature and stable as .de, but also not as sensitive to global trends as .com.

Monthly growth rates of .uk reflect the overall annual decline in growth. The monthly breakdown, however, shows

that the decline in growth rates is particularly in line with the change in economic climate from mid 2008 onwards.

Monthly growth of the .uk register

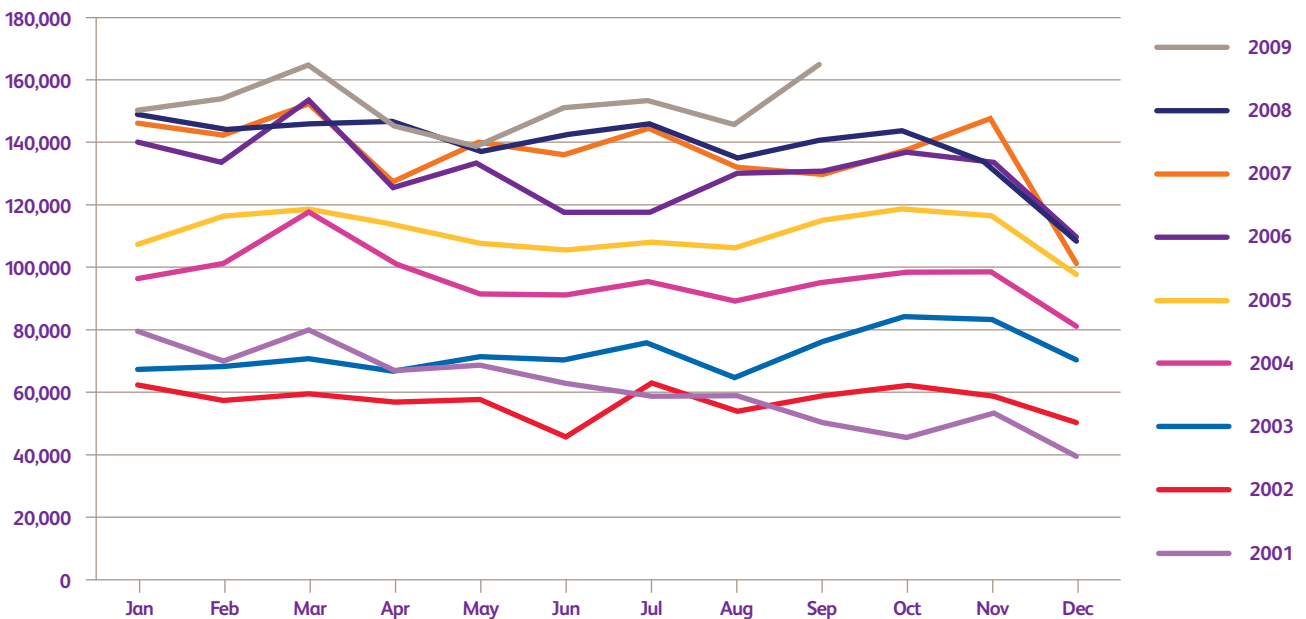


Monthly registrations

When looking solely at new registrations, volumes during 2009 have been higher than in previous years. For the 12 months to September 2009, new registrations have grown by 5% over the previous 12 months. We have also seen

a boost to new registration volumes due to promotional activity from registrars over the past few months as they strive to claim market share during difficult trading conditions.

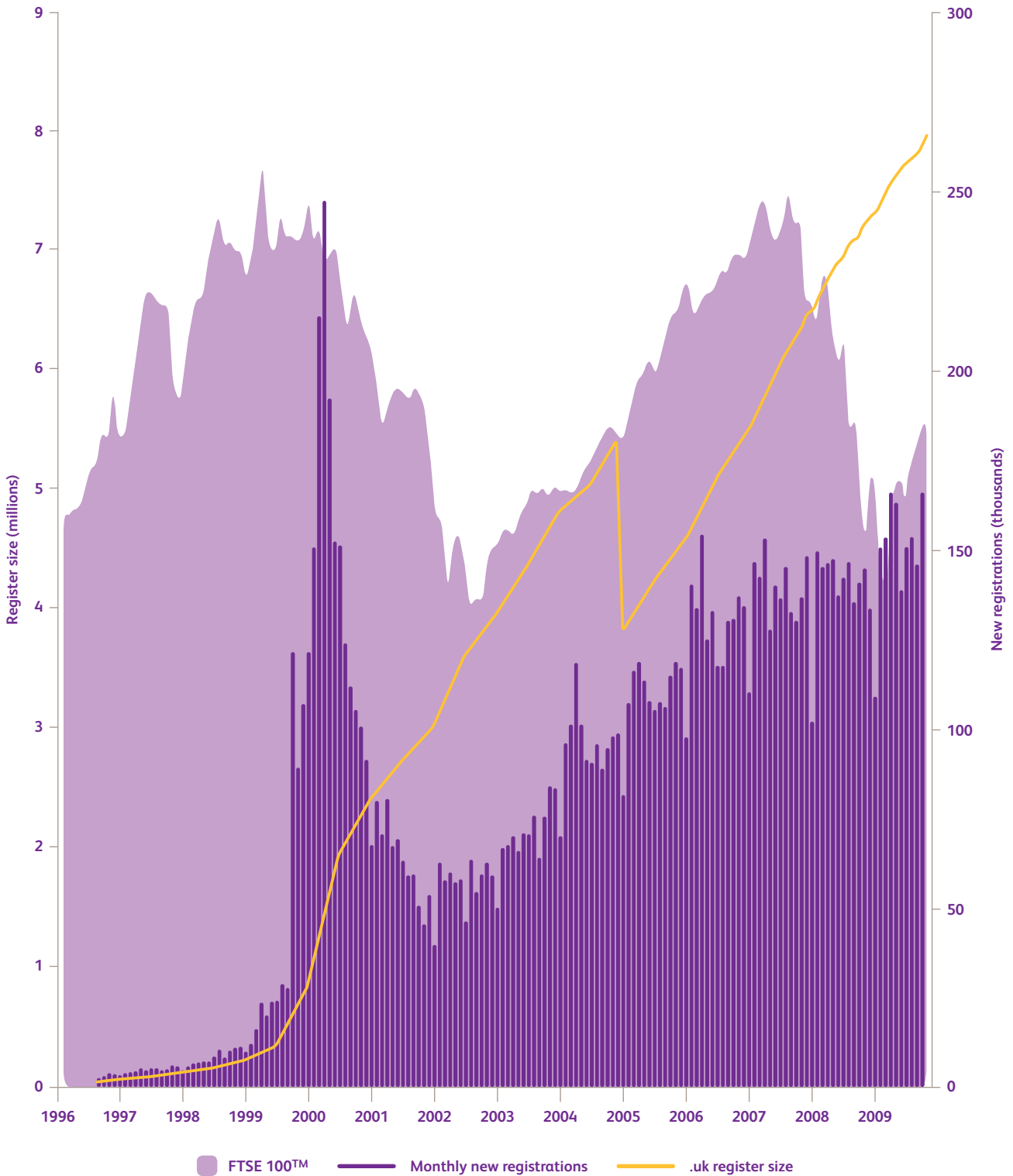
Monthly new registrations



The economic climate has undoubtedly had an effect on domain name registrations as can be seen in registration volumes, particularly in Q3 2008. The recovery seen in

the FTSE 100™ in 2009 is perhaps a contributing factor to the 5% increase in monthly registrations previously mentioned.

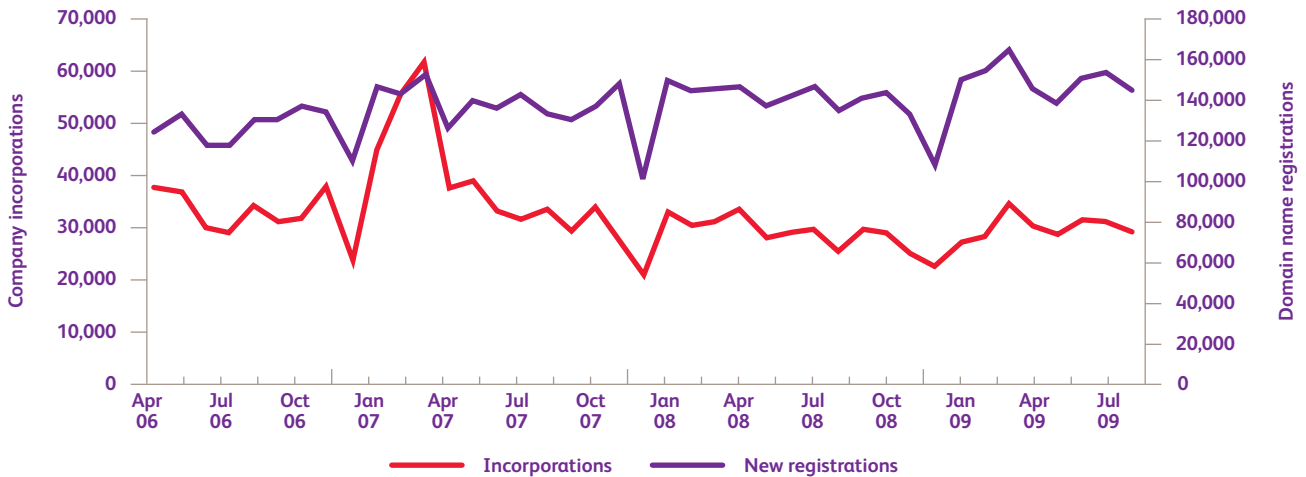
Macro economic influence



Company incorporations in the past 12 months (to August 09) are only 1.5% less than the previous 12 months and monthly domain name registrations show a strong correlation to company incorporation data from Companies House. The number of companies in

liquidation and receivership, however, has increased by 16% in the same period. The effect of this has probably yet to be fully seen on the .uk register, as domain names are generally left to naturally expire through non-renewal rather than being actively cancelled.

Domain name registrations and company incorporations

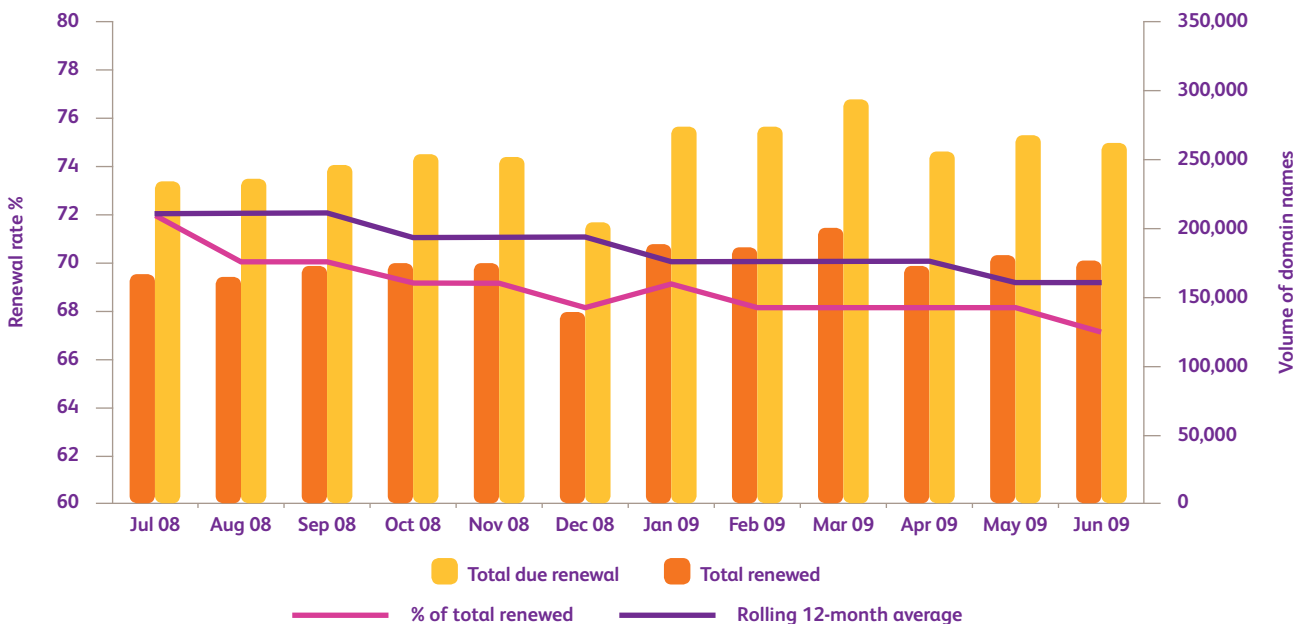


Renewals

With a register size of nearly 8 million, sustainable growth is reliant on strong renewals figures. Renewal of .uk domain names is currently running at a 12-month average

of 69%, down 1% on the previous year. Registrars' renewal programmes and the age of a domain name can have a significant impact on renewal rates and a more detailed analysis of this is covered in the next section of this report.

Renewal rates



We have recently researched the reasons why people choose to renew or not to renew their domain name.

For those people renewing a domain name:

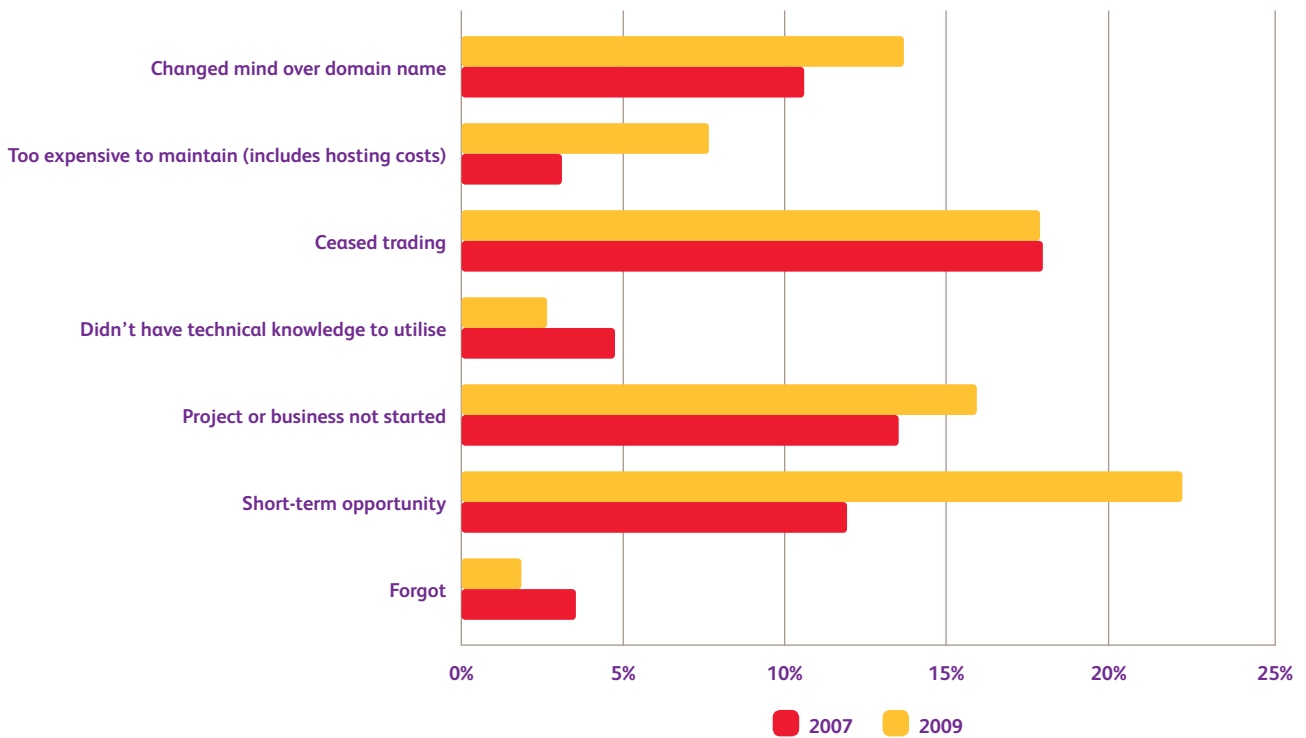
- 60 % renew due to a reminder from their registrar (same figure as similar research from 2007)
- 25 % believe their domain names renew automatically (2007: 22 %)
- 7.3 % renewed after receiving reminders from Nominet (2007: 8.6 %)

- Irrespective of what actually prompted the renewal, 68.6 % of people recall a reminder from their registrar against 14.2 % who recall receiving a reminder from Nominet.

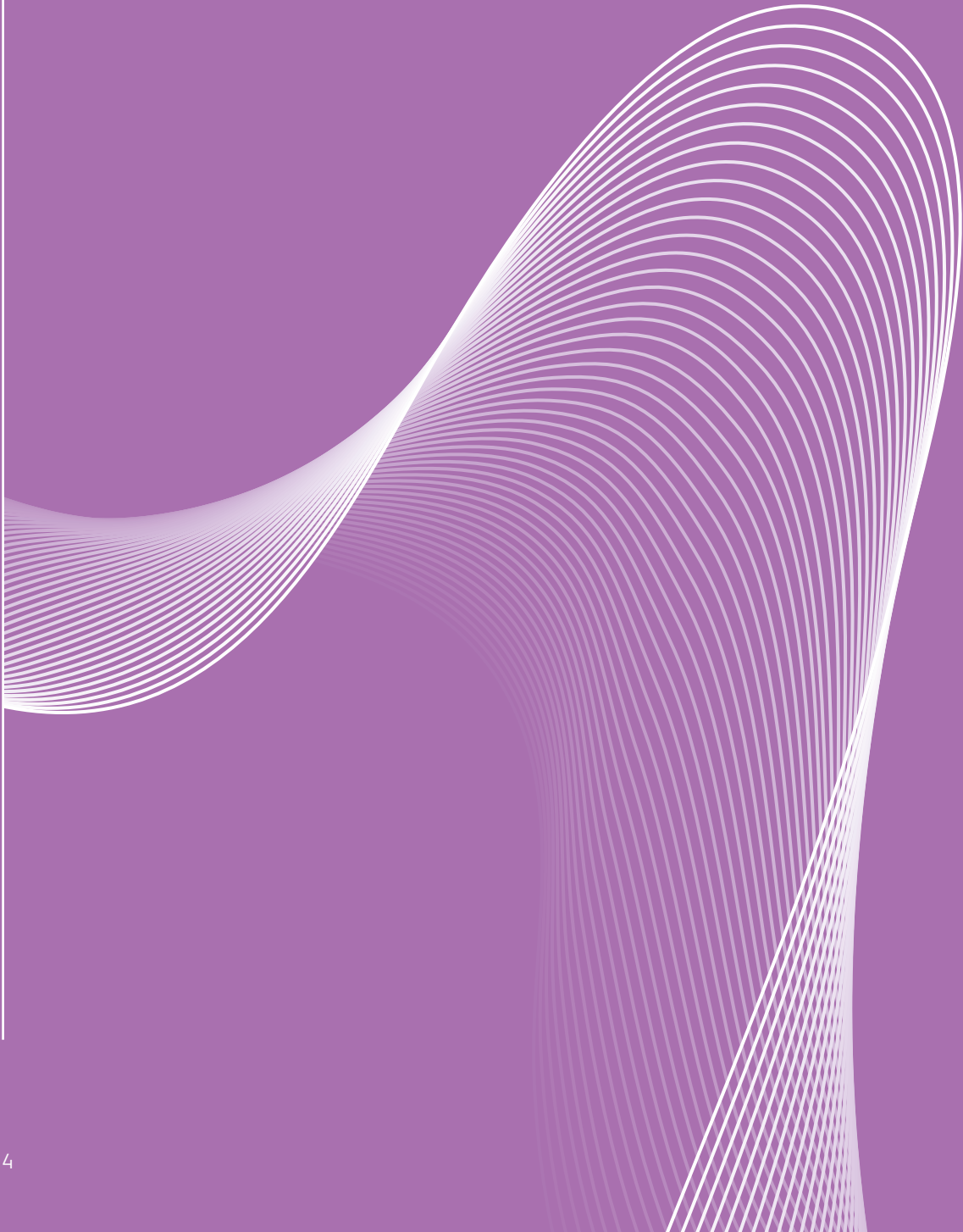
For those people who did not renew their domain name:

- 98.2 % recall receiving reminders about renewal
- 83.4 % recall reminders from their registrar
- 65 % recall reminders from Nominet.

Reasons for not renewing a domain name



3 The UK registrar market

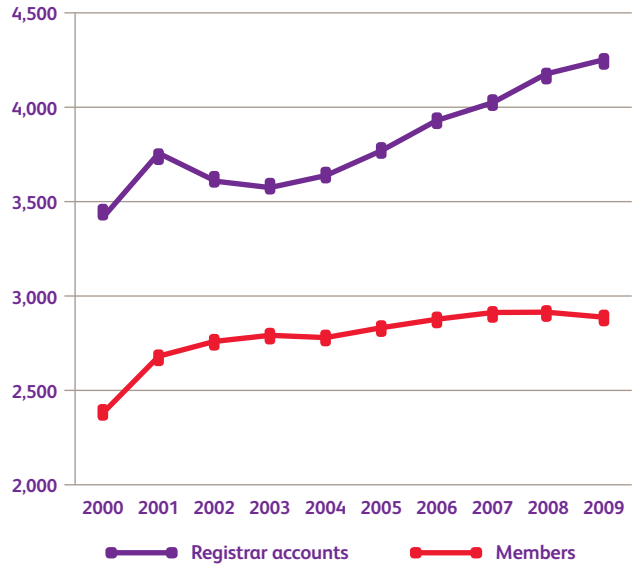


Members and registrars

The number of Nominet members in the previous 3 years has seen little change at just under 2,900. 2009 has seen a slight decline in the number of members with the figure falling from 2,891 to 2,869.

Whilst most members are also registrars, there are 73 non-registrar members, and conversely 893 non-member registrars. The total number of registrar accounts has risen from 4,157 last year to 4,237 in September 2009, resulting in a registrar to member ratio of 1.48 (2008: 1.44). Members have an increased tendency to operate different elements of their business on different registrar accounts. This may relate to registrars maintaining different registrar brands offering registration and hosting services to different industry sectors, either through brand development or horizontal expansion through mergers and acquisitions.

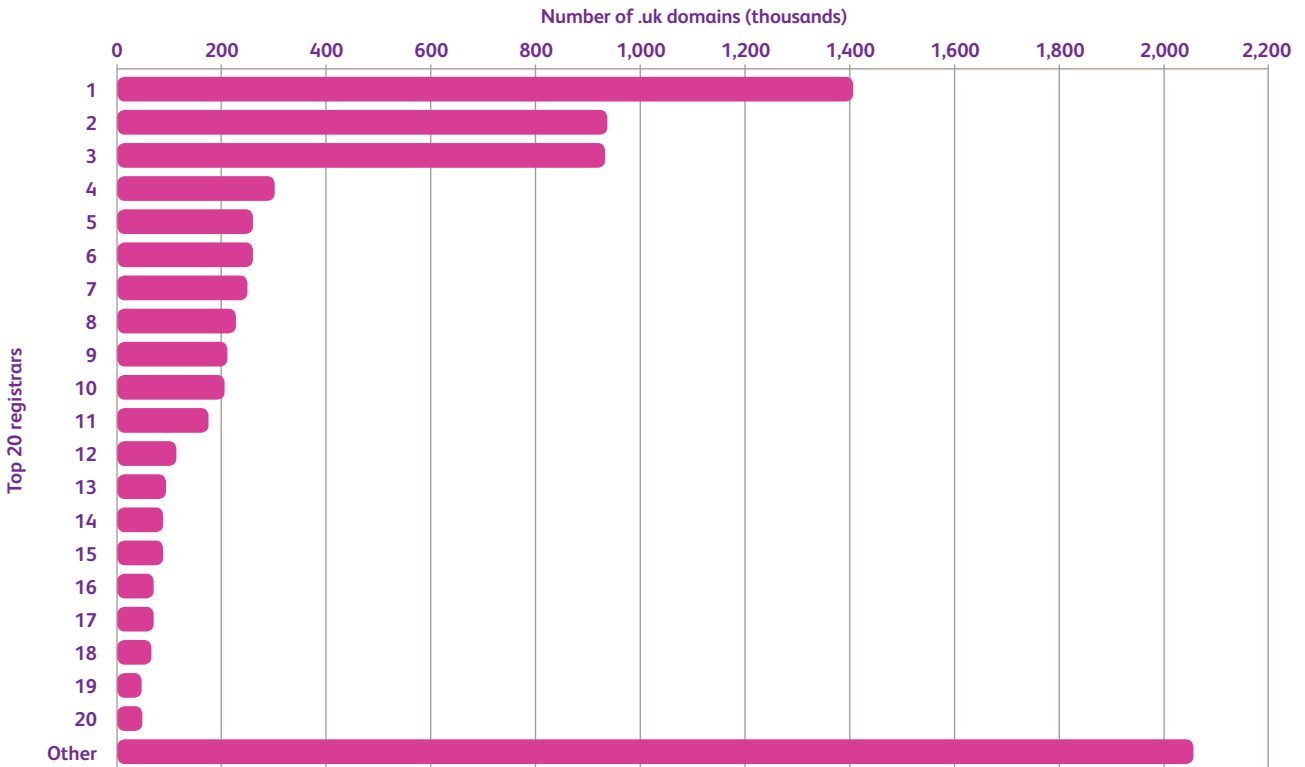
Members and registrars



Registrar spread

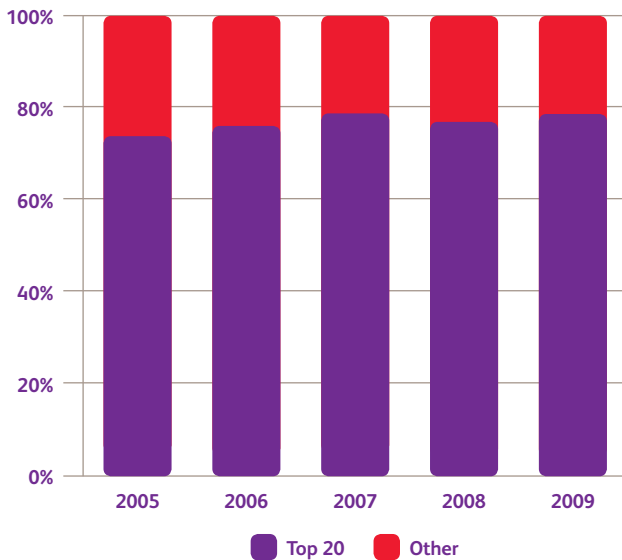
The top 20 registrars currently hold 73.5 % of the register by volume. This has increased from 71 % in 2008 and 68 % in 2007.

Top 20 registrars (by member)



The top 20 registrars, holding 73.5 % of the register, are continuing to grow. The volume of new registrations made by these registrars account for 79 % of all new registrations made in 2009. This indicates that the market share of the top 20 registrars is set to continue increasing.

New registrations by top 20 registrars

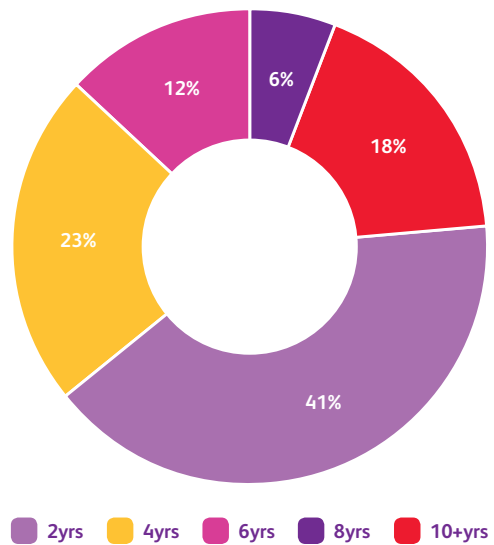


Renewals activity

The likelihood of a domain name being renewed is very much dependent on how long it has been registered for. A domain name reaching its 5th renewal date being 10 years old is much more likely to be renewed than a 2-year-old domain name reaching its first renewal.

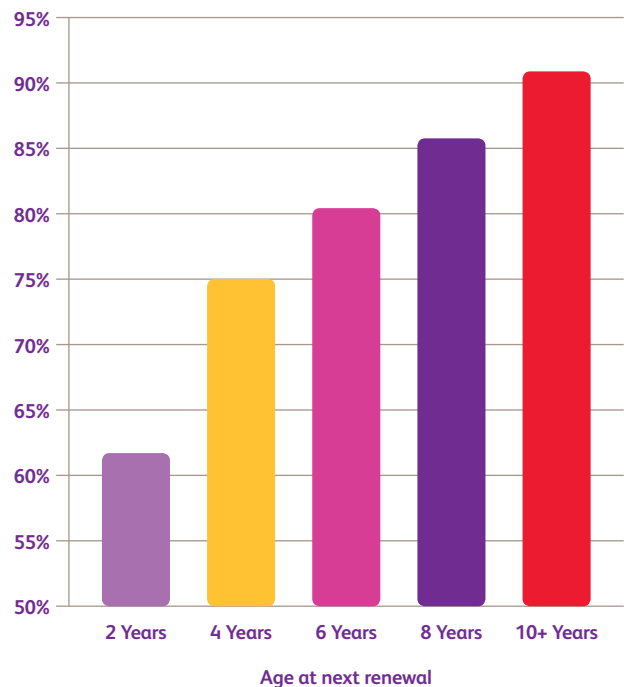
The .uk register currently stands at 7.9 million domain names of which 41 % have not yet reached their first renewal.

Register by age of domain at next renewal



Analysis of domain name renewals shows us that a domain reaching 10 years old is 50 % more likely to be renewed than a 2-year-old domain name.

Average renewal rate by age of domain



Given that 41 % of the register has yet to reach first renewal and the current average renewal rate for 2-year-old domain names is 61.5 %, any variance in this renewal rate will have a big impact on the future size of the .uk register.

Registrar portfolio by age of domain

The success of large registrars in attracting new business is shown by the fact that the portfolio for those top 20 registrars is heavily weighted to younger domain names, whilst smaller registrars have a larger proportion of longstanding customers with older domain names.

In the analysis that follows, we have split registrars by size into the following segments:

- Segment 1 – Top 20 registrars by size, average of ~ 290,000 domains each
- Segment 2 – Registrars ranking 21 – 100 by size, average of ~ 15,000 domains each

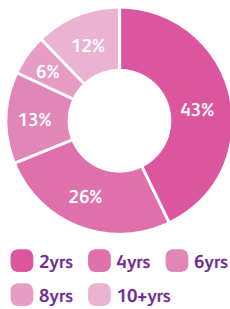
- Segment 3 – Registrars ranking 101 – 500 by size, average of ~ 1,625 domains each
- Segment 4 – Registrars ranking 501 – 1,000 by size, average of ~ 325 domains each
- Segment 5 – Registrars ranking 1,000+ by size, average of ~ 47 domains each

We have also measured average renewal rates using data from the past 2 years of renewal statistics.

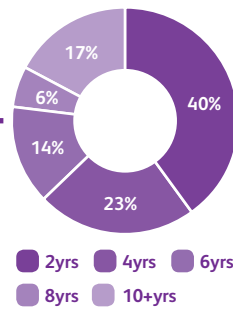
Definitions: A 2-year-old domain is a domain name that has been registered in the past 2 years and at its first renewal will be 2 years old. A 4-year-old domain name will be approaching its second renewal when it will become 4 years old.

Percentage of register by segment

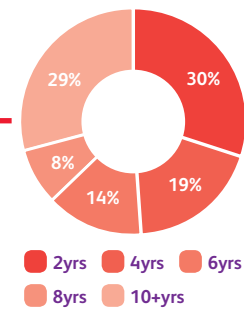
Segment 1 (Top 20) Age of domain



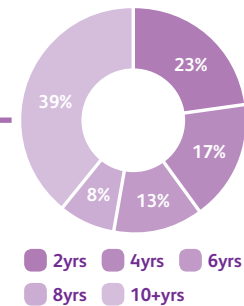
Segment 2 (21-100) Age of domain



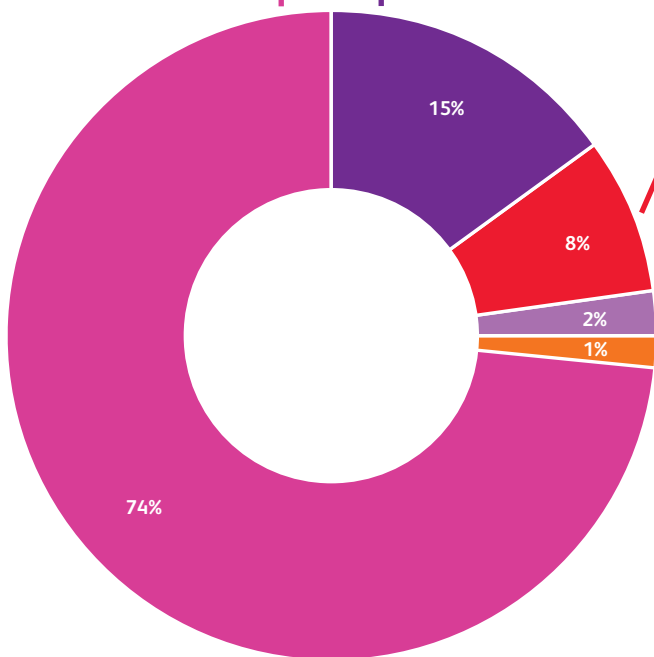
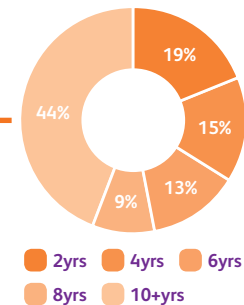
Segment 3 (101-500) Age of domain



Segment 4 (501-1,000) Age of domain



Segment 5 (1,000+) Age of domain

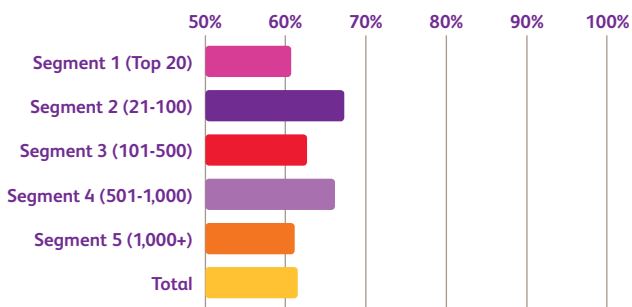


- Segment 1 (Top 20)
- Segment 2 (21-100)
- Segment 3 (101-500)
- Segment 4 (501-1,000)
- Segment 5 (1,000+)

2-year-old domains

2-year-old domains currently make up 41 % of the register. This means that there are over 3.2 million domain names due to reach their first renewal in the next 2 years. The average renewal rate for 2-year-old domain names is 61.5 %. However, this rate does vary by size of registrar:

Average renewal rate for 2-year-old domain names

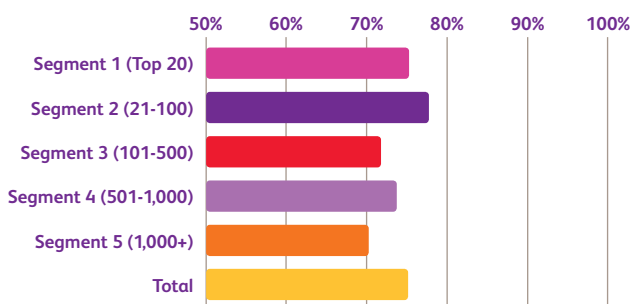


Generally, smaller registrars achieve a higher renewal rate for 2-year-old domains, whilst the very large registrars only achieve a renewal rate of 60.6 %. There are 3.2 million domain names on the register yet to reach their first renewal of which half, 1.6 million, are due for renewal in the next 12 months. Any improvement on these renewal rates will have an impact in overall renewal rates and register size.

4-year-old domains

4-year-old domains currently account for 23 % of the register (1.8 million). In the next year there will be 900,000 .uk domain names reaching their second renewal. Once a domain name has passed its first renewal, it is much more likely to be renewed with the average renewal rate rising to 75.11 %.

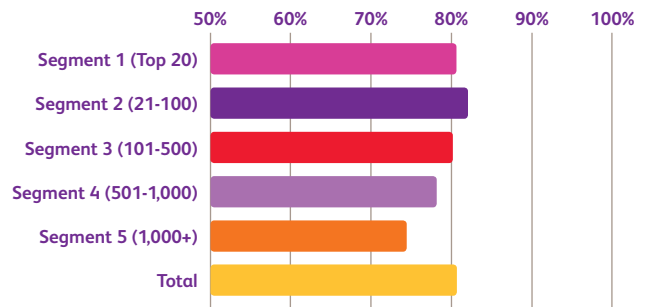
Average renewal rate for 4-year-old domain names



6-year-old domains

12 % of the register will be 6 years old at next renewal; just over 1 million domain names. The average 3rd renewal rate is 80.5 %.

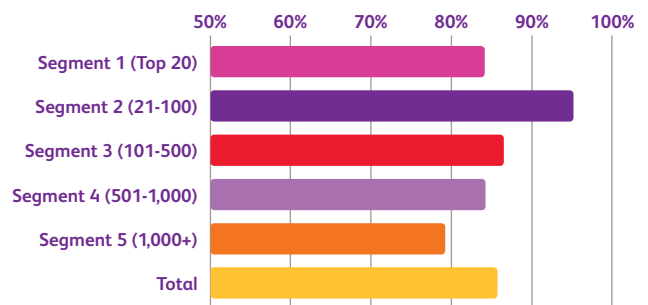
Average renewal rate for 6-year-old domain names



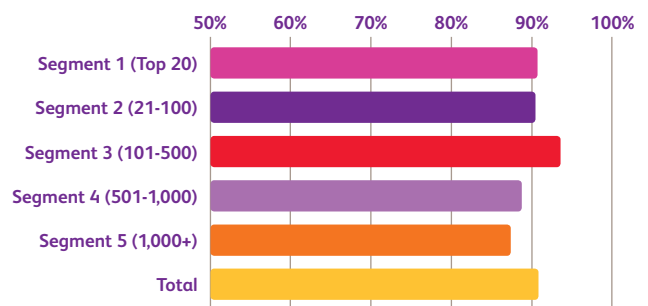
8 years and older

Once a domain name reaches its 8th birthday and beyond it is usually well established and renewal is very likely. Renewal at 8 years (4th renewal) is 85.7 % and for domain names 10 years plus, the renewal rate is 90.9 %.

Average renewal rate for 8-year-old domain names



Average renewal rate for 10+ year-old domain names

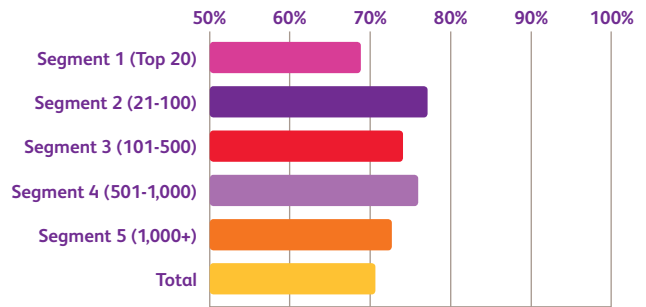


There are 466,000 domains approaching 8 years (6%), and almost 1.5 million domain names coming up to their 5th or greater renewal. The next six months is particularly busy for 10-year renewals. In September 1999, the registration price for .uk was reduced to £5 and record registration volumes were seen in the months that followed. These domain names are now approaching their 5th renewal.

When looking at renewal rate for all age of domain names the largest registrars have the lowest overall renewal rate by some margin at 68.8%. Since the largest registrars by default also hold a larger proportion of the register

(74%) our overall renewal rate is most affected by their performance.

Average renewal rate

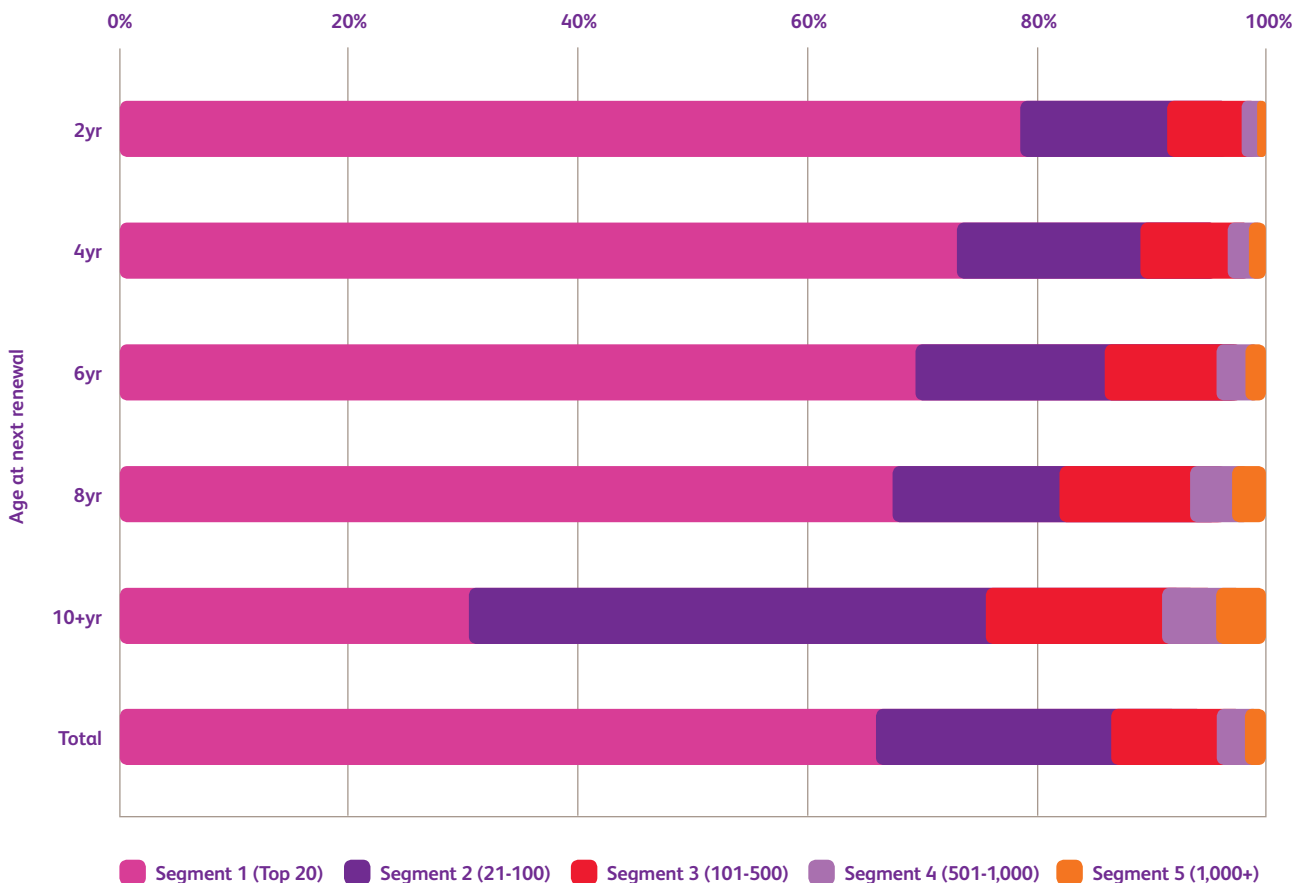


Renewals due

Over the next 12 months, there are around 3,700,000 domain names due for renewal. For domain names reaching their first renewal, 78% are held by the top 24 registrars. The split in registrars' holdings by age of

domain clearly shows the market dominance of the larger registrar in recent new registrations. Older domains are more likely to be held by customers of smaller registrars.

Renewals due in the next 12 months, by age and registrar segment

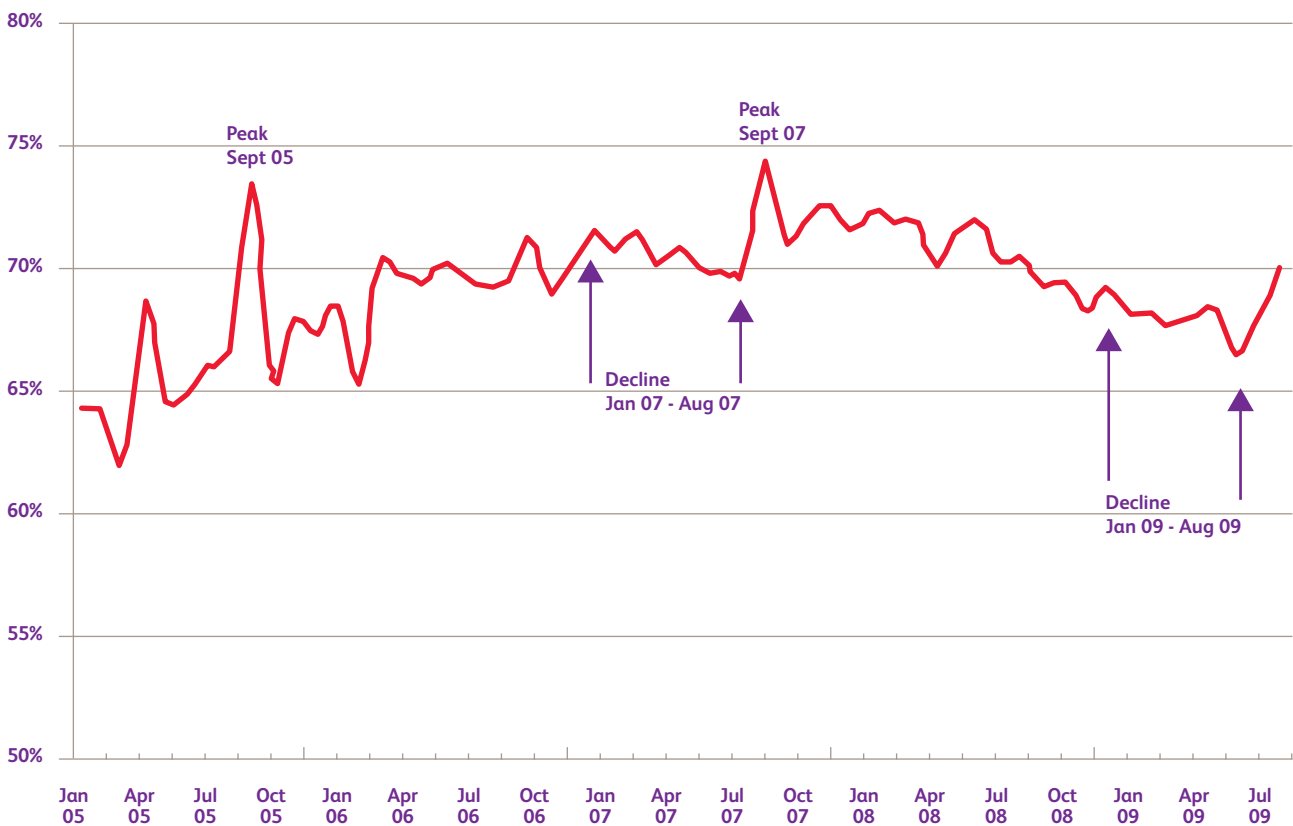


Renewal rate cycle

Analysis of renewal rates by age of domain clearly shows that if a domain name is used and renewed in its early life, it is likely to continue to be renewed. Whilst our overall renewal rate has declined in the past 12 months, this is not too surprising. Renewals for the period January – July 2007 also saw a decline from 72% to 69%.

We also experience a significant peak in renewals rates every other September. As previously mentioned this corresponds to record new registrations made in September 1999. As the volume of older domain names on the register increases we would expect renewal rates to increase. However, this is offset by the volume of new registrations and the significantly lower renewal rate achieved on new domains.

Renewal rate cycle



Forecast register size

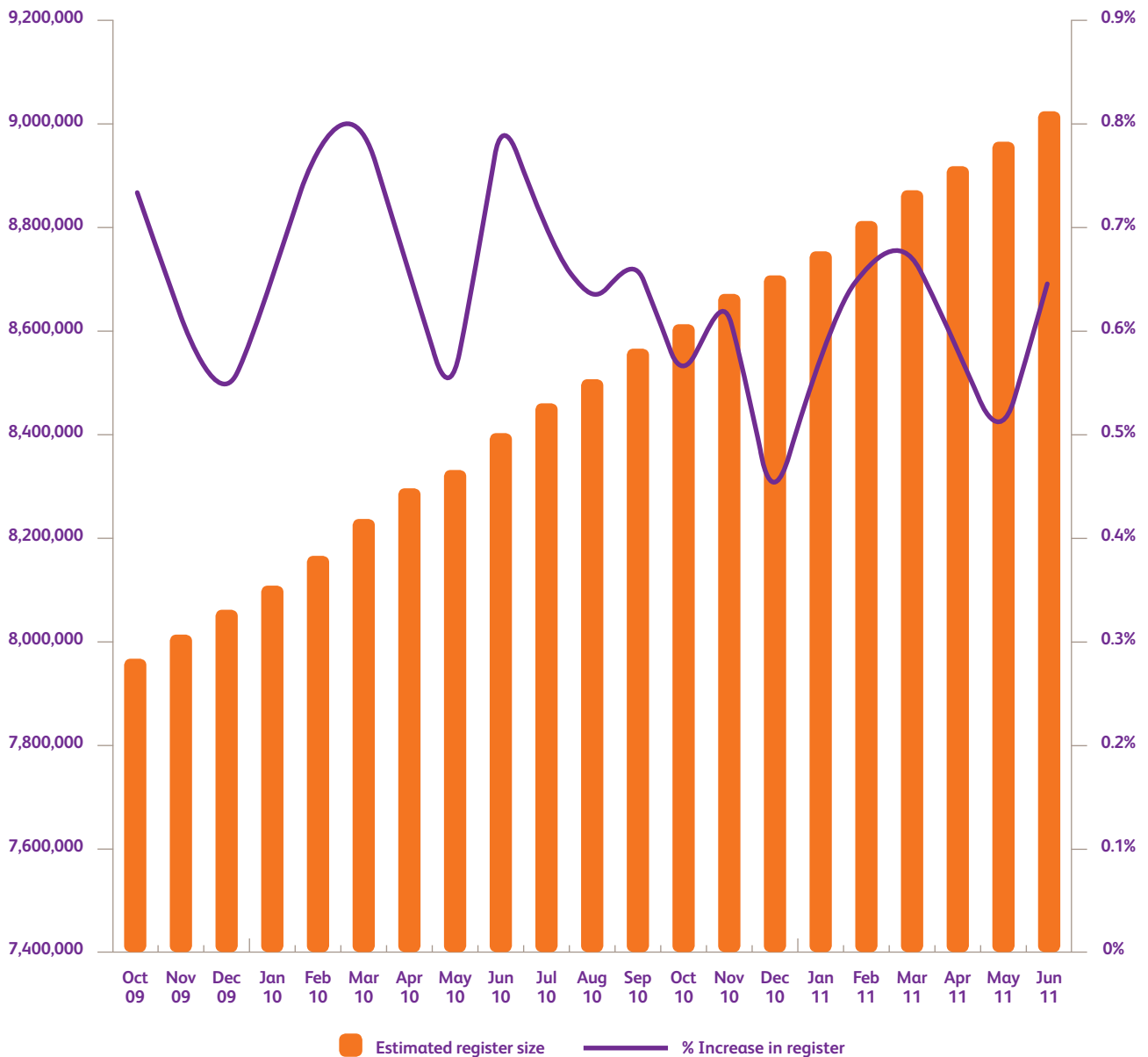
Using historical renewal rates based on age of domain and predicted new registrations, it is possible for us to build a complex model of the .uk register going forward. A conservative estimate would see the register grow by 8.3% over the next 12 months, with a final 2010 year end figure of 8.7 million domain names on the .uk register. This is based on:

- Monthly new registration rates growing at similar rates to the past 12 months (4.8%)

- Renewal rates remaining static based on averages over the past 12 months by age of domain.

As the register grows in total volume, it is increasingly difficult to achieve impactful growth rates. Growth can only be achieved through strong renewal rates maintaining register volume, and year-on-year growth in new registrations to replace domains not renewed and provide incremental growth.

Forecast .uk register growth



4 Trust and awareness



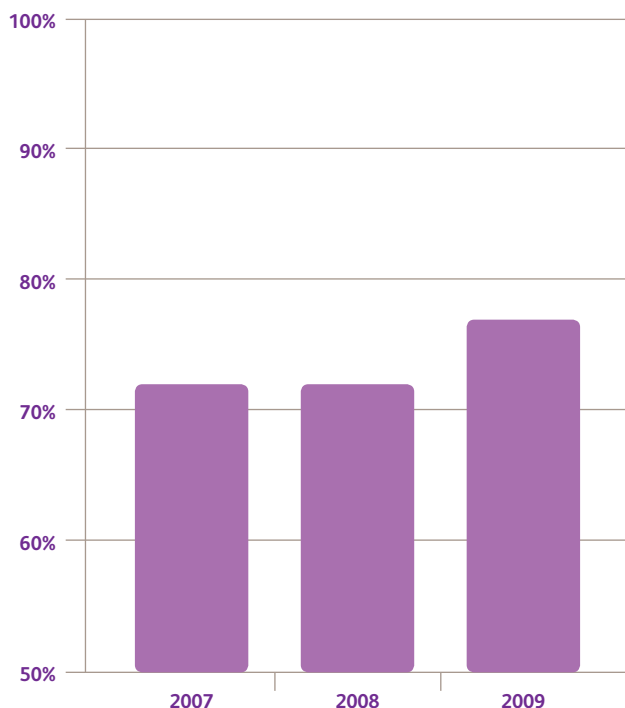
Trust in .uk

For the last three years we have carried out research amongst Internet users into the perceived level of trust in .uk and the preference for .uk when browsing.

The specific question we have asked is “If you did a web search and were presented with the choice of a .com or .uk web address, which ONE would you be most likely to click on first?”

This year saw an increased level of preference for .uk over .com with 77 % of people stating that they would select the .uk search result first.

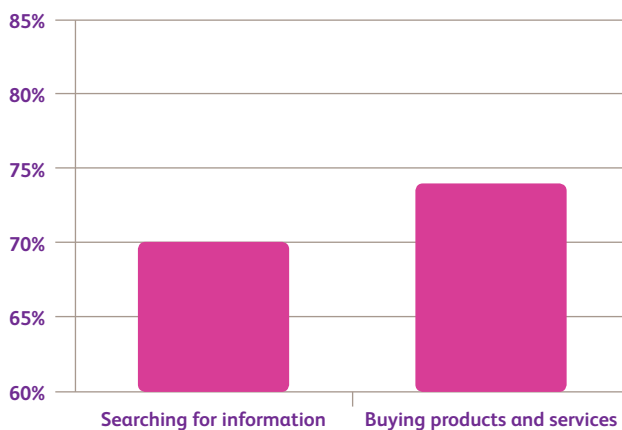
Trust in .uk



This reinforces previous research that consumers see .uk as a trusted environment, presenting relevant and local information. For businesses, it highlights that a .uk web address is an important asset when doing business in the UK with UK consumers and businesses.

There was some variation when the question was asked about preference and trust in .uk for general browsing and, specifically, making a purchase online. Surprisingly, the preference for .uk fell slightly in both of these cases, however, when making a purchase, a .uk web address was seen as more important than for general browsing.

Preference for .uk



In all cases, there was little regional difference in preference for .uk, with a marginally higher preference for .uk in northern England and the midlands, and a less pronounced preference for .uk in London, southern England, Scotland and Wales.

There was a distinct variation in the results between male and female Internet users with a 12 point difference being found. The average figure of 77 % preference for .uk in search results was derived from individual results of 83 % for women and 71 % for men.

Whilst these figures for preference and trust in .uk are encouraging, it does show that the expectation of UK consumers is increasing. UK consumers are increasingly demanding about the level of security they expect from the .uk domain name space and it is up to the industry to meet these expectations. Phishing attacks, fraud and ID theft risks are prevalent across the whole of the Internet and .uk is no exception.

Fraud and phishing

Over the past 18 months .uk, like most other domains, has come under increasing attack from phishing. We have been working closely with those registrars affected to identify phishing attacks and minimise phishing site uptime. We have developed a ‘phishing lock’ that can be placed on a domain name that removes it from the DNS and locks it down. This prevents fast-fluxing: a technique used by phishers where they transfer a domain name between providers to extend its lifespan.

We are continuing to develop our anti-phishing tools and in 2010 will launch a phishing feed that will alert registrars to reported phishing attacks using domain names registered on their account.

Online fraud is a concern for all Internet users, and again .uk is not immune from this. Media reports of ID theft, fraudulent shopping sites and malware are always very high profile and can dent the reputation of .uk as a safe environment.

Domain names in .co.uk are allocated on a first come, first served basis and there are currently over 140,000 new registrations every month. Whilst we don't police applicant locations, it does not automatically follow that consumers in countries with stricter registration policies or application vetting are necessarily any better protected. In practice, the physical address used to register a domain name does not in itself provide any guarantee of legitimate supply of goods. Nor does dealing with a business based in the UK. People generally understand that the worldwide web does not conform to national physical and political borders, however, it is imperative that Internet shoppers are careful, especially when dealing with a new site for the first time, or in response to unsolicited email.

Our excellent relationship with law enforcement agencies, security advisors and trading standards enables us, along with our registrars, to take rapid action when fraudulent sites are detected. We make it easy for consumers to complain about such web sites and act quickly in combination with the appropriate authorities. We also

participate in pan registry initiatives such as the Anti-Phishing Working Group (APWG) and the Registry Internet Safety Group (RISG) in order to stay ahead of 'bad actors' in the cyber crime/prevention arms race. We take these responsibilities to UK consumers very seriously and we will be introducing a programme of education to alert consumers to potential pitfalls they may face when using the Internet.

Our initiatives will encourage best practice, raise awareness of the threats and promote techniques for self-protection when using the Internet. There are many great resources for consumers to use to learn about and protect themselves from threats. These include:

www.childnet-int.org

www.banksafeonline.org.uk

www.tradingstandards.gov.uk

www.ripofftipoff.net

www.getsafeonline.org

www.thinkuknow.co.uk

www.antiphishing.org

www.e-victims.org

www.registrysafety.org

5

Summary

2009 has continued to be a difficult year for businesses globally. The economic downturn has had a major impact on businesses and consumers alike. The Internet is such an integral part of UK business that it, and the domain name industry, have both felt the impact of reduced investment and cost-saving measures. Whilst delivering products and services online generally has a lower cost structure, the development of these services for new and existing businesses does require investment.

Growth is still evident in all but a few top level domains, however, the level of growth globally for the domain names has reduced for the third year running. There are, however, a number of areas where growth is still strong. Territories with an immature domain name market are continuing to grow and there is certainly the potential for increased market penetration.

The .uk registry has now reached a size where strong growth figures are difficult to maintain. Growth is reliant on maintaining high renewal rates whilst also continually adding new registrations. The analysis of renewal rates shows us that encouraging businesses and consumers to actively utilise their domain names is paramount in maintaining the size of the register, particularly for those domain names most recently registered. As 41 % of domain names on the .uk register have been registered during the past 2 years, we will be relying on registrars to keep customers engaged and using their domain names. Services, such as easy to use development tools and cost effective hosting packages, will help maintain the customer base for .uk and deliver revenue streams to .uk registrars.

Change in the domain name industry has been on the horizon for some time now. ICANN's preparation for the launch of new TLDs was expected during 2009, however, extended industry consultation and concerns over trademark protection have seen the launch delayed. Whilst the timeframe is still unconfirmed, the issue of new TLDs is one that registry operators, registrars and businesses alike must be aware of. These changes offer both opportunities and concerns for all involved and it will be interesting for everyone in the domain name industry to see how these plans unfold over the coming year.

6 Glossary



ccTLD

A Country Code Top Level Domain (ccTLD) is a top level domain used and reserved for a country or dependent territory. Examples of ccTLDs include .uk for the United Kingdom, .de for Germany, .us for the United States of America, .ca for Canada, and .fr for France. Each country appoints a manager for its ccTLD and sets the rules for allocating domains. Nominet manages the .uk ccTLD.

FTSE 100™

The FTSE 100™ is a share index of the 100 most highly capitalised UK companies listed on the London Stock Exchange. This index covers 80% of the market capitalisation of the LSE and is a widely used UK stock market indicator.

GDP

A country's GDP or Gross Domestic Product is one of the ways of measuring the size of its economy. It is usually defined as the total market value of all goods and services produced within a country in a given period of time, usually a calendar year.

gTLD

A Generic Top Level Domain (gTLD) is a top level domain that is open to registrants worldwide in contrast to Country Code Top Level Domains that are often restricted to registrants located in a particular country or region. The most popular gTLDs are .com, .org and .net.

ICANN

Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). An international, not-for-profit, private sector organisation created to coordinate four key functions of the Internet: managing the domain name system, allocating IP address space, assigning protocol parameters and managing the root server system.

Nominet members

Nominet is a not-for-profit membership organisation that encourages members to participate in .uk policy decision making through a number of discussion groups, consultations and committees. Members can exercise their voting rights at our Annual General Meeting and elect non-executive directors to the Nominet Board, and members of our Policy Advisory Body. Nominet members have access to our reduced wholesale prices for domain names.

Register

The definitive database of all domain name registrations within the .uk Top Level Domain.

Registrant

The individual or organisation (e.g. limited company, partnership, sole trader etc.) that registers a specific domain name. They hold the right to use that domain name for a specified period of time (two years for a domain name ending in .uk). The registrant is the 'legal entity' who is bound by Nominet's terms and conditions of domain name registration.

Registrar

A registrar is the company or organisation that people register their domain name through. The registrar is the agent through which people register domain names – it does not mean that they are an agent of Nominet. The registrar may be a member of Nominet, but they act on their customer's behalf rather than our behalf.

Registry

An Internet domain name registry receives domain name service (DNS) information into a centralised database and transmits the information in Internet zone files on the Internet so that domain names can be found by users around the world via the world wide web and email. Nominet is the registry for the .uk Country Code Top Level Domain (ccTLD).

Second Level Domain (SLD)

The .uk Top Level Domain code is separated into a number of Second Level Domains, abbreviated to SLDs. Nominet manages the following SLDs: .co.uk for commercial enterprises; .org.uk for non-commercial organisations; .me.uk for personal domains; .ltd.uk and .plc.uk for registered company names only; .net.uk for Internet Service Providers and .sch.uk for schools.

sTLD

A Sponsored Top Level Domain (sTLD) is a generic top-level domain proposed by an independent agency that sets the rules about the eligibility of registrants to use the TLD. Current sTLDs include .mobi, .aero, .coop and .museum.

Tag

A Nominet Tag allows registrars access to our automated systems for registering and managing domain names.

The data contained in this report has been acquired from a variety of sources:

- Statistics on volume of global TLDs courtesy of Matthew Zook: www.zooknic.com.
- Global economic and population data courtesy of the World Bank: www.worldbank.org.
- Company incorporation data taken from Companies House: www.companieshouse.gov.uk.
- All other data is taken from the internal analysis of operational statistics in managing the .uk registry and relevant research undertaken by Nominet UK.

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