

HOSTPOINT


Case study:

HOSTPOINT GMBH, SWITZERLAND

About Hostpoint:

All good things are simple: – like love, good food and the business idea with which Hostpoint entered the market in 2001: Web hosting for everyone! Today with its 30 members of staff, the company based in Rapperswil-Jona, which went public in 2005, hosts 150,000 websites and 170,000 domains. Its clientele includes established businesses such as Swiss Post, Migros, Phonak, Diners Club and

Hero as well as illustrious personalities such as Alex Frei and Chris von Rohr. Our foundations however are built on our many private customers. 2011 was a record year for Switzerland's largest webhosting provider with 8,5 million francs in sales – Hostpoint's most recent chapter in its success story.



The graphic displays three service plans for Hostpoint, each associated with a representative image and a server icon. The 'STANDARD' plan is shown with a young man in a green t-shirt and a server icon labeled '10 GB'. The 'SMART' plan is labeled 'BESTSELLER' and shown with a woman in a white top and a server icon labeled '50 GB'. The 'BUSINESS' plan is labeled 'KMU' and shown with a man in a suit and a server icon labeled '100 GB'. Prices are listed as 9.90, 14.90, and 24.90 respectively.

Plan	Price	Storage	Target Audience
STANDARD	9.90	10 GB	General
BESTSELLER SMART	14.90	50 GB	General
BUSINESS	24.90	100 GB	KMU

Hostpoint GmbH	Before	After
TLDs offered	.com/.net/.org and .ch	Over 200
Registration process	PDF form on website	Online registration
Availability check	Manually, on competitors' website	Online, 70 TLDs fully automated
Growth in domains	Null	228%
Domain portfolio	2002: 7,000 domain names	2007: 23,000 domain names

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A Successful Domain Business

Hostpoint officially launched in 2001 with only 36 private customers. Their shared hosting platform at an optimal price/performance ratio convinced so many people that today Hostpoint welcomes up to 300 customers a week to its portfolio. Of course the product offering has been expanded since the first days to several shared hosting packages, dedicated hosting and many related services.

Hostpoint started out with .ch registrations but soon felt customer requirements became more complex. Offering a broad TLD range was considered core, but not important enough to justify building a separate interface for every TLD, including:

- Accreditation with every Registry
- Payment in different currencies and different forms of payment
- Support: language and time zones
- Technical Interface and requirements

That is where Ascio came into the picture. With our backend domain registration system, AscioNIC, we were able to deliver a centralised

interface enabling a high degree of automation.

The implementation phase was significantly reduced due to the fact that Hostpoint did not have to seek accreditation in many countries and build the technical interfaces alone. Instead it was decided to build one "home" interface to the Swiss NIC and another to Ascio for all remaining TLDs. In doing so, significant resources could be invested in other product lines. In the end Hostpoint was able to launch earlier than expected.

Hostpoint launched its online portal with Ascio as the registrar in spring 2003. They also decided to implement Ascio's Availability Check and GlobalWhois at the same time to save them the trouble of setting up a direct connection with every NIC.

The launch included:

- Availability Check and GlobalWhois for over 70 TLDs
- Online registration
- Online initiation of transfers

Now, with Ascio in the background, Hostpoint is in a position to:

- Automatically say "yes" to any request for even the most exotic TLDs
- Actively cross-sell domain names in other TLDs
- Promote the latest domain products to their customers

We provide the knowledge of how to register in different TLDs and supply forms necessary for the registration. Ascio's TLD database is a great resource for Hostpoint to unravel any transaction on any given TLD.



Selling exotic TLD's has turned out to be a profitable business for Hostpoint.

"Having all the TLD information at hand in one single place and being able to call Ascio with questions puts us in a position to optimally serve our own customers," says Sales Manager Dino Ciampi.

Domains are included with Hostpoint's hosting packages or as a single, stand-alone product. This decision has proven very valuable as one out of three hosting customers was initially attracted solely by Hostpoint's domain product.

"We were surprised at the high demand for exotic TLDs from our customers," comments Sandro Bertschinger (CEO), "...and suddenly new customers started calling because they were drawn by our online

ccTLD offerings. They requested TLDs they obviously could not register with their current hosting companies."

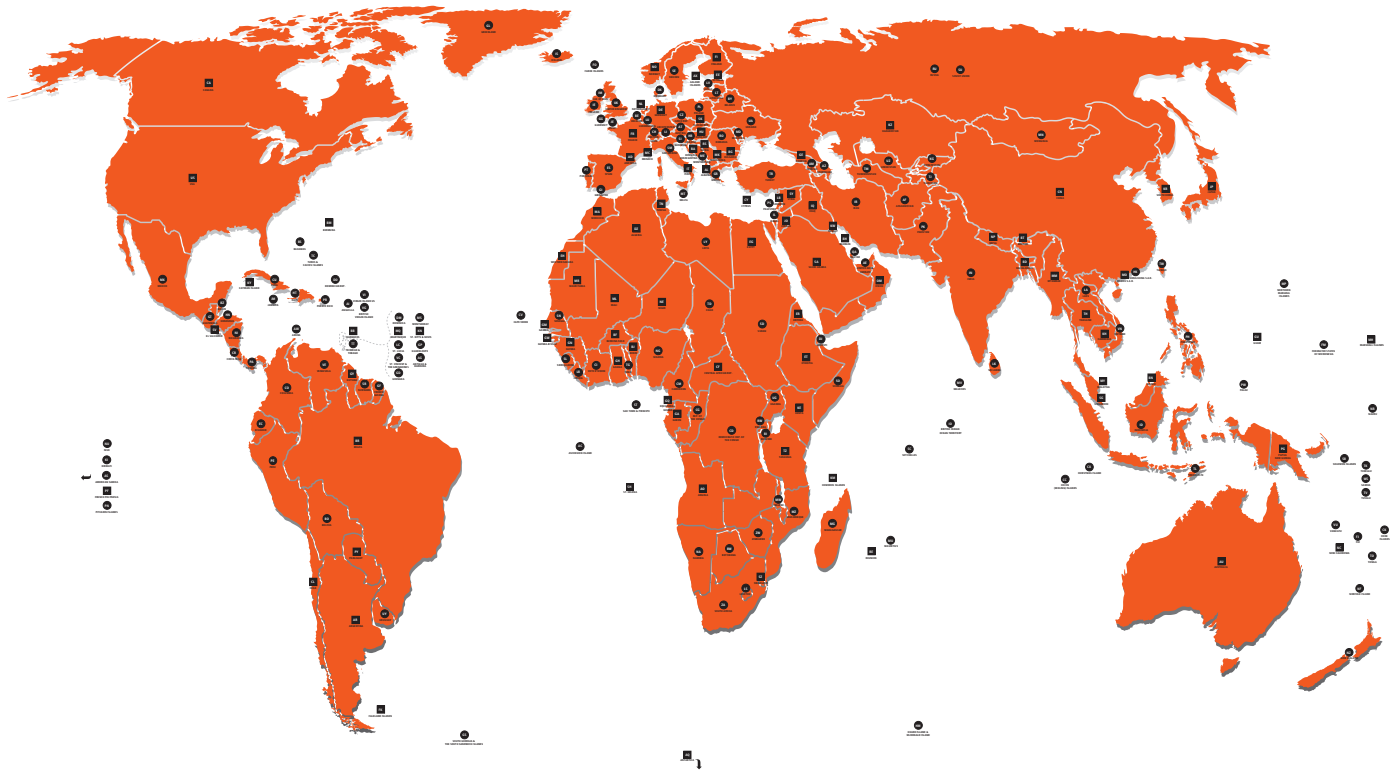
He adds: "The consolidated management of domains is very important for our customers. Consequently, we won one out of three of our new hosting customers through our extensive ccTLD offering when the customer moved their entire hosting to Hostpoint in the end."

As a result, ccTLDs have become an important tool for new customer acquisition at Hostpoint.

By the end of 2007 Hostpoint's domain portfolio had grown 228%. Hostpoint's share of ccTLDs (all except CH and CNOBI) has grown

from 3% to over 8% in the same time frame offering much higher gross profit margins than the standard TLDs.

Key to this success is the extensive online availability check where customers can play and anonymously check the availability of their names worldwide as compared to a simple note on the website saying "Other TLDs available on request." This puts the customer in 100% control of the process from checking availability to purchasing the domain name, thereby saving Hostpoint considerable time on the phone.



About Ascio

Ascio, founded in 1999, currently has a total of more than two million domains under management and employs 350 people in offices in Copenhagen, New York, London, Paris, Nice, Zurich, Oslo and Munich. Ascio is responsible for the provision of Domain Portfolio Management services indirectly through more than 350 partnerships. These partners primarily include telecom operators; web hosting companies, Internet access providers and IP law firms.

Ascio is a separate division of Netnames Group Ltd., one of the world's largest corporate brand protection specialists.

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