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Cybersquatting Cases Reached New Record In 2011, WIPO Reports

By Maricel Estavillo for Intellectual Property Watch on 06/03/2012 @ 6:41 pm

The number of cybersquatting cases filed with the arbitration body of the World Intellectual Property Organization reached a record high in 2011 with 2,764 cases filed by trademark owners, the UN agency reported today. WIPO also expressed alarm over the potential impact on cybersquatting of a move underway to add more generic domain names to the internet.

WIPO said last year's number of cases was an increase of 2.5 per cent and 9.4 per cent from 2010 and 2009 numbers, respectively. "The expanding international reach of the Internet is reflected in the diversity of the domain name disputes filed with the WIPO Center in 2011," it said in [a release](#) ^[1].

The WIPO panels that worked on the cases found evidence of cybersquatting, which refers to the act of registering names in bad faith, in 88 per cent of the cases filed last year.

The top five areas with the most number of complaints were retail, internet and information technology, biotechnology and pharmaceuticals, fashion and banking and finance. WIPO said the cases for last year included many well-known names in business and public interest sectors.

Of the generic top level domain (gTLD) cases filed with WIPO in 2011, 77 per cent of these cases concerned registrations in the .com domain, prompting the UN agency to say, "possibly foreshadowing what lies ahead with the advent of further domains, the WIPO Center in late 2011 received the first UDRP case concerning a domain name in the new .xxx domain."

More domains will be available with the move of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) to expand the number of new gTLDs this year ([IPW, Information and Communications Technology/Broadcasting, 31 January 2012](#) ^[2]).

"With the domain name coordinating body, ICANN, allowing for a massive increase in the number of new domains, brand owners' resources will likely be stretched further," WIPO Director General Francis Gurry said in the release.

For its dispute services, WIPO charges between US\$1,500 and US\$5,000 per case for up to 10 domain names in a case. More [information is here](#) ^[3].

WIPO said the percentage of the cases to the total number of cases filed last year concerning country code top-level domains (ccTLDs, such as .ch for Switzerland) rose to 16 per cent from just 1 per cent in 2000.

Since the launch of the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (UDRP) in 1999, WIPO Arbitration and Mediation Center has received over 22,500 cases, covering approximately 40,500 domain names in both gTLDs and ccTLDs.

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URLs in this post:

[1] a release: [**http://www.wipo.int/pressroom/en/articles/2012/article_0002.html**](http://www.wipo.int/pressroom/en/articles/2012/article_0002.html)

[2] *IPW*, Information and Communications Technology/Broadcasting, 31 January 2012:

[**http://www.ip-watch.org/2012/01/31/new-internet-domain-process-off-to-smooth-start-icann-says/**](http://www.ip-watch.org/2012/01/31/new-internet-domain-process-off-to-smooth-start-icann-says/)

[3] information is here: [**http://www.wipo.int/amc/en/center/faq/domains.html#11**](http://www.wipo.int/amc/en/center/faq/domains.html#11)

[4] WIPO Says Cybersquatting Filings Sharply Up, Watches ICANN's Domain Name Expansion:

[**http://www.ip-watch.org/2011/03/31/wipo-says-cybersquatting-filings-sharply-up-watches-icann%E2%80%99s-domain-name-expansion/**](http://www.ip-watch.org/2011/03/31/wipo-says-cybersquatting-filings-sharply-up-watches-icann%E2%80%99s-domain-name-expansion/)

[5] WIPO Sets Record For International Patent Filings In 2011; LDCs Not A Factor:

[**http://www.ip-watch.org/2012/03/05/wipo-sets-record-for-international-patent-filings-in-2011-ldcs-not-a-factor/**](http://www.ip-watch.org/2012/03/05/wipo-sets-record-for-international-patent-filings-in-2011-ldcs-not-a-factor/)

[6] WIPO Offers Dispute Services For Objections To New TLDs At ICANN: [**http://www.ip-watch.org/2012/02/13/wipo-offers-dispute-services-for-objections-to-new-tlds-at-icann/**](http://www.ip-watch.org/2012/02/13/wipo-offers-dispute-services-for-objections-to-new-tlds-at-icann/)