

# **Saudi Network Information Center (SaudiNIC)**

Since its establishment, King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology (KACST) has continuously carried out the task of technology transfer as one of its goals and maximize its utilization and make it available to researchers and the society as a whole. KACST had a major role of establishing and operating the Educational computer network, GULFNET, and connecting it to BITNET in the late 1980's. Furthermore, KACST has a main role also in introducing Internet to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in the end of 1998 based on the decree number 163 dated 24/10/1417AH, in which an Internet Services Unit (ISU) was established.

In the same direction, KACST has managed the domain name registration under the country code (ccTLD) of Saudi Arabia (.SA) since 1995. After establishing ISU in 1998, the task of domain name registration has been handled by the Saudi Network Information Center (SaudiNIC) of ISU.

Therefore, SaudiNIC is the entity that is responsible for the administration of the domain name space for the country code (ccTLD) of Saudi Arabia (.SA). This includes the operation of the DNS root servers for .SA domains as well as the registration and maintenance of all third-level .SA domain names. Additionally, SaudiNIC is a Local Internet Registry (LIR) authorized by RIPE, which is the responsible entity for distributing IP addresses in Europe, Middle East and North Africa. SaudiNIC is responsible for allocating blocks of IP addresses to universities and local ISPs in Saudi Arabia only since 1998.

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of SaudiNIC is to provide an equitable, just and competent technical and administrative management of domain name registrations and IP address allocations for Internet community in Saudi Arabia.

## **Main Tasks**

- ◆ Setting up policies regulating domain name registrations and IP address allocations.
- ◆ Domain name registrations
- ◆ Provide databases for the registered domain names
- ◆ IP address allocations
- ◆ Coordinating with other GCC, Arab, and International ccTLDs.
- ◆ Participating in international events supervised by ICANN, RIPE, ISOC, and WIPO related to domain names and IP numbers.

## **Domain Names Registration**

A domain name is a name that represents an entity on the Internet. It is, usually, similar to the entity name or derived from it. It is a distinctive and simple way to identify the entity's site on the Internet. It is used by others to visit the site or to send electronic mail. It is often that the entity will choose a domain name that is short using Latin letters and register it with the organization supervising domain name registration, such as SaudiNIC.

Currently, SaudiNIC is the registration authority of the domain name space for the country code Top-Level Domain (ccTLD) of Saudi Arabia (".SA"). Thus, SaudiNIC is responsible for the registration of domain names under the second-level domains. Any entity that wants to register a domain name under .SA has to submit a request to SaudiNIC. A domain name has the following format:

`<name>.<cat>.sa`

Where, `<name>` is a name that is chosen to represent the entity, `<cat>` represents the category in which the entity is classified.

The Saudi ccTLD (.SA) domain hierarchy is based on general category of organizations. The following are their definitions:

- com.sa: Dedicated only for entities that provide commercial services with valid Commercial Registrations from Ministry of Commerce (MOC) or any equivalent documents. Also, registered trade names and marks with MOC can be registered as domain names under com.sa.
- edu.sa: Dedicated only for educational and training institutions, e.g., universities, training institutes, etc., with valid licenses from official government offices.
- sch.sa: Dedicated only for Kindergartens, elementary schools, secondary schools, and high schools with valid licenses from Ministry of Education or from General Presidency for Girls Education.
- med.sa: Dedicated only for entities that provides health services such as hospitals, medical clinics, pharmacies, etc., with valid licenses from Ministry of Health.
- gov.sa: Dedicated only for Governmental entities including ministries, authorities and government organizations.
- net.sa: Dedicated only for entities that provide Internet-related services, e.g., ISPs, web hosting, portal sites, etc.
- org.sa: Dedicated only for non-profit organizations including societies, charities, clubs and public organizations.
- pub.sa: Dedicated only for entities or individuals that do not fit with any of the above definitions, including personal names.

SaudiNIC has written regulations as well as forms and procedures for domain name registration under .SA that can be found in its site: <http://www.saudinic.net>.

### **IP Address Distribution**

Each host connected to the Internet has an Internet address called IP address. It is used to route information to the host. An IP address consists of four decimal numbers separated by a dot (each number extends from 0 to 255), e.g., 212.138.18.5. Usually, IP addresses are obtained from an ISP that acts as a Local Internet Registry (LIR).

SaudiNIC has distributed IP addresses from the spaces (212.26.0.0/17 and 212.138.0.0/16) that were allocated by (RIPE).

### **Contact Us**

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domreg@saudinic.net.sa for domain name registrations only.  
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<http://www.saudinic.net.sa>  
Office Hours: From Saturday to Wednesday,  
From 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM (Riyadh time GMT+3).

## Frequently Asked Questions

### How do I choose a domain name for my organization?

It is most probable that users online will try out names that are similar to your organization name (e.g., transliteration, English translation, or abbreviation).

### Can I check if a domain name is available?

Yes, you can check if the name you want is available or not by conducting a domain name search at SaudiNIC database:

<http://www.saudinic.net.sa/cgi-bin/whois.cgi>

### What do I need in order to apply for a Domain Name in Saudi Arabia ?

To register your organization domain name, you will need to submit the following:

1. A letter requesting the domain name. It must be on an official letterhead.
2. Legal documents. For-profit entities requesting names under the "com.sa", "sch.sa", or "med.sa" domains should submit a copy of their legal documents (e.g., commercial registration, license, trade mark registration, ...). For all others, a copy of any official documents showing the relationship between the proposed domain name and the name of the organization is required.
3. An Application form. You can use one of the following links:  
<http://www.saudinic.net.sa/cgi-bin/online.cgi>  
<http://www.saudinic.net.sa/regservices/application.txt>
4. Two valid DNS name servers that maps IP addresses to their corresponding domain names. Such domain name servers may be arranged through third party providers.

Technical Note:

Registering a domain name requires that you must have arranged at least two operational domain name servers serving this domain. One of them is a primary name server and the others are secondary name servers. They must be continuously connected to the Internet but need not be dedicated, i.e., they can run on servers performing other services such as email or web.

If you do not have your own dedicated server, a local ISPs can provide name services to you.

### Are there any companies that provide domain name hosting?

Yes, there are many companies, mostly ISPs, available whether locally in the Kingdom or outside that offer domain name hosting services.

### Do I need to have a web site (ready or hosted) to register a domain name?

No, you only need to have your domain name hosted, provide SaudiNIC with the two

name servers hosting your domain name, and have your domain registered. All this does not require having your web-site ready.

[My company is the sole agent for X-product in Saudi Arabia, can I register that product/mark under “com.sa”? How?](#)

Yes, you need to provide a valid Trade Mark certificate. If your company does not have a TM certificate on that product, then a letter from the foreign company (the original manufacturer or holder of X-product rights) is needed to approve your request.

[My organization registered a domain name through an ISP, who owns that domain, our organization or the ISP?](#)

Domain names are owned by the requesting organizations and not the agents (e.g., ISPs).

[How much dose it cost to register a domain name with SaudiNIC?](#)

Currently, there are no fees for registering any domain under “.sa”.