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## New .Jobs Web Sites Elbow In On Job Advertising Industry

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A new online job network is on the scene, with the kind of worldwide reach that has older job recruiting sites in a tizzy.

The [huge new job network](#)--consisting of over 40,000 sites, and continually growing--is actually its own domain that will use the suffix ".jobs" to designate sites that display job opportunities by profession and location. For example, sanfrancisco.jobs or engineer.jobs would take you to a page listing job openings in San Francisco, or for engineers. Or you might go to sanfrancisco.engineers.jobs for engineering jobs in San Francisco.

Though there's something absurdly intuitive about labeling a job-seeking domain with .jobs, the move has career-building sites like Monster.com wrathfully worried over what they perceive as a massive threat to their own profitability.

Actually, the .jobs domain has existed since 2005, when it was licensed by a company called Employ Media. But until recently, it functioned primarily for established companies to list the job opportunities in their own organizations--a prospective photocopying maven might go to xerox.jobs to find a position with Xerox.

Last year, Employ Media decided they wanted to expand the domain's use to job-seeking organized more generally by region and occupation. To do so, they turned to the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, or [ICANN](#). ICANN is the group responsible for maintaining the virtual infrastructure of the web by coordinating the use and registration of web domains like .com and .edu so that the global network can function smoothly.

ICANN approved their request, but a number of job-seeking websites and related organizations calling themselves the .JOBS Charter Compliance Coalition viewed the proposed expansion as unjustly dangerous to their own interests. They in turn [filed with ICANN](#) to reverse the decision,

arguing that the expansion violated the [charter](#) Employ Media had agreed to back in 2005. In December, ICANN ruled that [they would allow the expansion](#), but would also keep a close eye on Employ Media.

The site universe.jobs, a central point for the .jobs network, is live. In a strange twist, the company partnering with Employ Media to execute the universe.jobs initiatives, the DirectEmployers Association, is led by a former Monster.com president, Bill Warren.

The coalition [warned ICANN](#) that the .jobs domain was "causing substantial and continuing harm to numerous members of the Internet community, including many smaller, regional and niche job boards that are suffering immediate and irreparable harm from the operation of the Charter-violating Dot Jobs Universe."

But there's a divide between those who see .jobs as a jobsite-killing beast circumventing the code of business competition, and those who see it as simply another step forward in the continually morphing landscape of our World Wide Web.

Peter Weddle, the executive director of the International Association of Employment Web Sites, was unreserved in his fear. "This is an economic recovery killer," he [told the Washington Post](#). "It's going to infringe on the trademarks and undermine thousands of small businesses who have spent the last 15 years serving job seekers very well."

But others note that .jobs is merely doing exactly what job recruiting websites did back when newspapers were the go-to source for job information: taking the industry into a yet-unrealized future.

"It strikes me as rather disingenuous of the online job recruitment sites to cry foul over the creative destruction caused by broader applications of the .jobs domain. These very same online job recruitment sites were the former disruptors themselves, and the great beneficiaries of the Internet domain name land grab. They were all for disrupting the traditional models of job recruitment companies ten years ago. Now that they are the entrenched players in job recruitment, they are crying for support to curb the new disruptors," said Jonathan Askin, a professor at the Brooklyn Law School, who compared the job seeking sites' push to block .jobs to a counterfactual scenario where the "government outlaw[ed] the automobile because it would destroy the horse and buggy industry."

Ultimately, .jobs will test the way that domain use and registration functions, especially if the imbroglio draws scrutiny to ICANN's activity. Though ICANN does not control content, or access to the Internet, its role as a coordinator of the naming system puts it in a unique position to aid or forestall the growth and transformation of the web. The .jobs squabble is not the first, nor will it be the last of the battles to come as new Internet practices inevitably supplant or transform old ones.

"Every technological leap leaves a few dead companies in its wake," Askin said.