

Safeguarding Your Online Brand with .hk LOCK and .hk WATCH Services

Rising cyber security threats have been posing challenges to not just corporation websites, but also their brands and trademarks. Visitors to the affected sites were redirected to fraudulent websites, which cause substantial loss in business, reputation and brand loyalty to the victimised companies. In many cases, cyber-criminals find it easier to hack into the Internet domain name, a pointer to the website, rather than modifying the website itself. It is high time for corporates to deploy additional measures for protecting their Internet domain name, their most valuable asset online.

In view of this, HKIRC, being the .hk domain name registry, launched .hk LOCK last year aiming at protecting users' .hk / .香港 domain names from unauthorised seizure by cyber criminals, an activity commonly called "domain hijacking". Not only do cyber-attacks come from outsiders but also employees who mistakenly made modifications or deletions of .hk domain names that would bring down the company website, resulting in service disruption and brand damage. The prohibition is at the "registry side", that is, at HKIRC's system. Requesting HKIRC for "unlocking" the modification functions is possible, though only for a short interval, after a thorough and rigorous offline verification process with the authorised persons.

With .hk WATCH introduced this year, any attempt by brand infringers or cybersquatters to register .hk domain names which are identical or similar to the protected brand names or trademarks will be brought to the attention of brand/trademark owners. Subscribers to this service receive a report listing existing .hk domain names which resemble their brand names or marks, followed by daily email updates on new .hk domain name registrations which meet the same criteria. In addition to the exact brand names or trademarks, .hk domain names with common misspellings of the protected words, as well as those combining prefix/suffix "wildcards" can also be traced instantly, which allows you to take necessary prompt actions.

.hk LOCK and .hk WATCH are effective tools for protecting your brands from "domain hijacking" or online infringement. Looking ahead, HKIRC will continue to help protect .hk domain name holders against possible threats and safeguard the intellectual property rights of brand and trademark owners. For details or enquiry, please contact us on +852 2319 2303 or by email at info@hkirc.hk.