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Christmas themed .ie domains increase by 345% in 2020

New data from .IE shows Covid-19 restrictions have encouraged Christmas-themed Irish businesses to move online this festive season

- **276 new festive themed .ie websites registered in 2020, compared to 62 in 2019**
- **143 new .ie domains include 'Christmas' or 'Xmas' in their title**
- **Significant spike in websites relating to 'Santa Claus' and 'Christmas Trees'.**
- **.IE comment *"The increase in .ie registrations this festive period is a testament to the resilience and entrepreneurial spirit of Irish SMEs"***

The number of Irish Christmas-themed websites has grown by 345% per cent this year versus the previous year, according to new data released by .IE, the managers of Ireland's unique online .ie address.

The data released today shows that there were 276 new festive-themed .ie domains registered this year, compared to 62 .ie domains in 2019. This large migration online from Irish SME's comes as businesses and consumers are forced to pivot from the traditional Christmas retail environment to find new ways to conduct business and facilitate online shopping this festive period.

According to the data, a total of 143 Christmas domains registered this year contain the words 'Christmas' or 'Xmas' in their title.

Santa's grotto goes virtual

2020 has also seen the traditional children's 'Santa's grotto' experience move online in light of Covid restrictions. This is reflected in the sharp spike in 'Santa Claus' specific website registrations. Santa Claus .ie domains have risen from seven in 2019 to 101 in 2020.

Similarly, Christmas tree websites have increased from 13 in 2019 to 32 in 2020 (146% increase), as many Irish businesses are now delivering Christmas trees through online orders from their website.

Other popular festive terms to feature in .ie domain registrations in 2020 include 'festive', 'seasons greetings', 'turkeys', 'stockings', 'presents' and 'grottos'.

Consumer trends

The recent shift online by Irish SMEs aligns with an increased desire by Irish consumers to support local this Christmas

According to .IE's recent *Tipping Point* report*, Irish consumers estimate that 53% of their online purchases have been with Irish SMEs since the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis. This compares to 48% of their online purchases prior to the onset of the pandemic.

Comment by David Curtin, CEO of .IE:

"The increase in .ie registrations in 2020 is testament to the resilience and entrepreneurial spirit of Irish SMEs. Following what has been an extremely challenging year for Irish businesses, many were quick to recognise the opportunities that exist online and were equally timely in their response. Over the course of the past nine months, we have experienced a significant growth

in .ie registrations across the board, with many of these linked to SMEs who have been working to ensure they can continue to trade during these uncertain times.

“This is particularly evident as we approach the Christmas period, with many businesses who have a niche seasonal offering also moving online to ensure they can capitalise on what is traditionally the busiest time of year.

“This Christmas more than ever, Irish consumers are keen to support local and having a .ie domain is the quickest and easiest way for businesses to show that they are Irish online. According to recent research, 91% of consumers associate .ie websites with Irish businesses over other websites such as .com, demonstrating the value of a .ie domain for SMEs looking to establish a presence in the Irish market.

“While current guidelines permit businesses to open their bricks and mortar stores, we anticipate that much of this year’s seasonal shopping will still be carried out online because consumers will be put off by long queues and in-store restrictions. Therefore it is vital that these businesses ensure they have a compelling online offering.”

ENDS

*.IE Tipping Point Report 2020 in partnership with Digital Business Ireland – [.IE Tipping Point Report 2020](#)

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Methodology

.IE analysed the total number of .ie domains registered in 2020 and 2019 using a series of keywords associated with Christmas.

About .IE

.IE is the national registry for .ie domain names and is the trusted and progressive guardian of Ireland’s unique online .ie address. We operate the domain name system (DNS) for the .ie namespace, facilitate an independent dispute resolution service, and operate a public WHOIS lookup service for .ie domains.

Our purpose is to enable and empower people, communities and businesses across Ireland to thrive online.

In cooperation with our Registrars, technical partners and stakeholders we help advance Ireland’s internet ecosystem. Good governance is evidenced in our policy development process for the .ie namespace which follows a bottom-up, consensus-driven approach through a multi-stakeholder Policy Advisory Committee.

.IE is committed to digital advocacy for the SME community. Through stakeholder engagement initiatives such as .IE Digital Town we work with and support SMEs organisations to improve

their members' online presence and e-commerce capabilities so they can unlock the power of the internet.

.IE also produces fact-based research for the business community and policymakers, such as the [.IE Tipping Point Report](#), charting the attitudes of Irish SMEs and consumers to digital during the Covid-19 pandemic.

We are focused on providing excellence in customer service through our ongoing customer experience (CX) innovation and improvement programmes. Since March 2018, it is easier and faster to register a .ie domain. There are over 300,000 domains in the database.

Based in Dun Laoghaire, Co Dublin, .IE employs 22 people.