

## China to Open .CN Domain to All in Deal with NeuLevel

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By Jonathan Webdale

China will open its domain names to the international community from the beginning of next week, offering companies the opportunity to register Web addresses with specific Chinese appeal.

The China Internet Network Information Centre (CNNIC) has formed a partnership with US .biz domain registry NeuLevel which will release the newly deregulated .cn domain to businesses outside China from 16 March.

CNNIC, a non-profit making body set up by China's Ministry of Information Industry, took the decision to free the country's Web suffix following accession to the World Trade Organization.

It's predicting that the number of Chinese Web users will explode over the next few years, opening up a huge market opportunity for native and overseas companies.



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Jennie-Marie Idler, European general manager of NeuLevel parent NeuStar, said, "Chinese e-commerce totaled \$500m [£313m] in 2002. This is expected to rise to \$26bn [£16bn] in 2004 and \$600bn [£375bn] the following year. That represents a massive opportunity for all businesses that have ideas of trading with China."

Idler said .cn would give international companies an online identity that would achieve instant recognition with Chinese Internet users.

Businesses within China, which are also gaining access to the domain for the first time, will have their interests represented in the Internet's dominant Roman character script.

CNNIC anticipates the majority of initial registrars will com from domestic businesses. Idler said that around 5% to 10% would com from companies outside China.

[For more information, please visit [www.getmy.cn](http://www.getmy.cn).]