**Strong Interest in .CPA, the Internet Domain for the Accounting Profession**

By Erik Asgeirsson, President and CEO of CPA.com

The AICPA and CPA.com wrapped up the early application phase for .cpa domains last month, and we were pleased to see strong interest from the profession. Thousands of firms submitted applications, mostly to secure their existing branding but also to take their digital presence in new directions.

For those of you who may not be familiar with .cpa, it’s the new restricted domain for the accounting profession and you’ll start seeing it more and more in the digital world. .CPA is what’s known as a top-level domain, which refers to the letters to the right of the dot on a website URL or email address. The most common of these are .com, .org, and .edu.

Restricted or protected domains such as .cpa are part of the next, more secure, generation of the Internet. Internet crime is rising, according to the latest FBI statistics, and many instances of phishing or other fraud are tied to look-alike or spoofed domain addresses. To combat this, the use of restricted domains has grown dramatically in recent years as businesses and organizations seek to promote visibility and authenticity in their digital operations. (You may have noticed, for example, such recent restricted domains as .bank and .pharmacy.)

Only licensed CPA firms and – starting next year – individually licensed CPAs can sign up for .cpa. The new restricted domain offers several advantages:

* It allows better, more focused branding
* It provides [better security](https://www.cpa.com/blog/cpa-domain-bright-line-security-and-trust-digital-world) and resistance to Internet fraud
* It promotes greater trust in firms’ online interactions with clients and the public
* It demonstrates that firms are progressive and professional in the digital sphere

Now that the early application phase is over, firms can apply for their preferred domains on a first come, first served basis. Individually licensed CPAs can apply starting in January 2021.

If you have additional questions, we have a wealth of resources at [domains.cpa](https://register.domains.cpa/), including a [white paper](https://register.domains.cpa/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/dot-CPA_Positioning_Paper_Summer_2020.pdf), FAQs and sign-up information for the new service. We also have a [video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OnTSU5kfTkw&feature=emb_logo) in which I discuss how firms are creating new branding opportunities with their .cpa domains by moving beyond just their firm names. We live in a digital age, and CPAs can improve the trust and security in their online calling cards with this new restricted domain.